

# HomeVisit

News for supporters of the QNI

The charity dedicated to improving patient care by supporting nurses working in the community



## Season's Greetings to all Queen's Nurses from the QNI

3/ Tribute to Her Majesty The Queen

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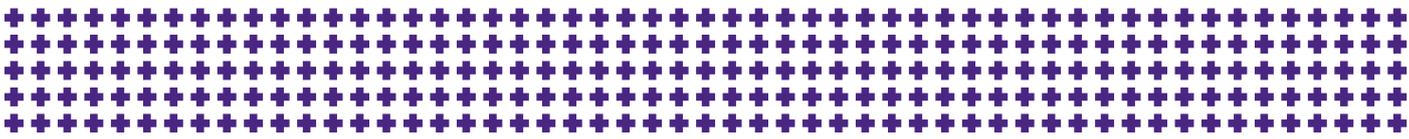
4/ Michael Cooper, QNI Trustee

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# Heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family on the death of Queen Elizabeth II



Along with the rest of the nation, the QNI extended heartfelt condolences to all members of the Royal Family on the death of Her Majesty the Queen. It was with a huge sense of gratitude and respect that we remembered the leadership and wisdom of the Queen in so many areas of national life. The Queen’s Nursing Institute, and Queen’s Nurses, are inextricably linked to the Queen as our royal Patron.

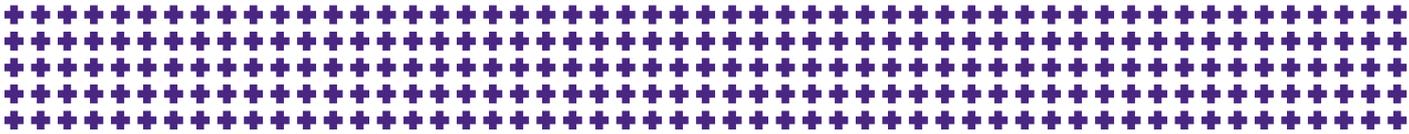
Queen’s Nurses have worked in her name, as a great supporter of nursing and healthcare throughout her long reign. They will continue to work in the name of Her Majesty the Queen and each and every one of our Queen’s Nurses was deeply saddened by the death of our beloved Royal Patron.

It is thanks to Her Majesty that the title of Queen’s Nurse was reintroduced in 2007, which has led to such a growth in the appreciation and understanding of the work of community nurses in promoting the health and wellbeing in people of all ages and backgrounds in every part of the UK.

Nearly 500 people wrote in our digital book of condolence in memory of Queen Elizabeth.

*One Queen’s Nurse wrote, ‘It is with a heavy heart that I write this as I and the rest of the nation mourn. You have been an inspiration to us all, with your selflessness and unquestionable dedication. It has been an honour to serve in your name and I will continue to practise, as you have, with compassion and an unwavering belief in the importance of developing and empowering others. I will devote the rest of my career to providing exceptional care to others in the same tireless way as you committed yourself to your subjects during your long reign. Rest in well-deserved peace.’*

We have now closed the book of condolence, but to view the messages, please go to, <https://qni.org.uk/queen-elizabeth-ii-book-of-condolences/>



## Tribute to Her Majesty The Queen by QN Sue Wynne

Queen’s Nurse Sue Wynne wrote two poems in memory of Her Majesty the Queen.

‘Look up to the light, wherever it may be.  
A star in the sky, shining down on thee,  
The one that illuminates the best, or hides behind  
a tree,  
Or radiates its presence, that is where she’ll be.  
For she who blessed us with her life and taken  
from us now.  
The light she brought into a room, won’t fade, or  
be put out.  
God bless dear one, with Angels, forever now at  
peace,  
Rest well in all beloved arms, until at last we  
meet.’

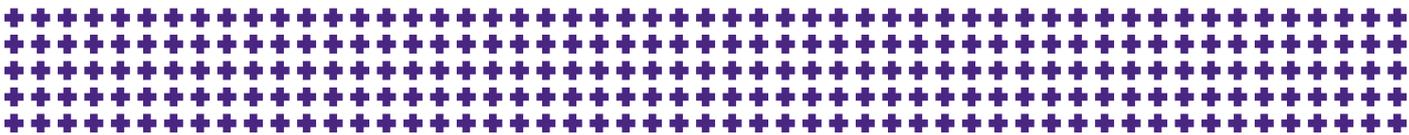
‘With regal and majestic smile, through boundless  
care did walk the earth.  
A timeless, ageless spoken word, to comfort  
others, we witnessed great worth.  
In our times of sorrow, her compassion shone  
through, her faith and love steadfast and true.  
A life thus spent, serving us all, her spirit and  
strength an example to all.  
Upon this earth her legacy will last, both of our  
future and of her past,  
Her life her constance, a lasting treasure, our  
Queen, our Patron, forever beloved.’

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## Tribute to Her Majesty The Queen by QN Gill Boast



Queen’s Nurse Gill Boast shared a beautiful painting she created in memory of Her Majesty the Queen.



## Michael Cooper, QNI Trustee



The trustees and staff of the QNI were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Michael Cooper, QNI Vice President, on 19th September 2022.

Michael Cooper was a patron appointed trustee of the QNI for 18 years, from 2003 until 2021 and served as Vice-Chair until 2013. He became a Vice President of the QNI in 2019. Michael also served as a member of the QNI's Finance Committee for many years, he was also a grants advisor and the Chair of the 'Support for Nurses' annual review meeting throughout his time as a trustee.

As an active member of the Finance Committee, Michael gave very sage advice, having been the Chief Executive of Diabetes UK for many years prior to his retirement. Michael was also the link Trustee for the Support for Nurses function at the QNI throughout his time as a trustee. This included supporting the QNI Keep in Touch and Talk To Us programmes, meeting volunteers annually and also promoting the support of nurses through grants for financial hardship and education.

His contribution to the work of the QNI and to advancement of nursing in the community was outstanding. We would like to express our sincere condolences to his family.

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, Chief Executive, The QNI said, 'Michael was the most wonderful Trustee, Vice Chair and later Vice President. He was relentless in his active support of the QNI and I shall be forever grateful for his wisdom and kindness in supporting me as Chief Executive over the last nine years. He was a true champion of the Support for Nurses work of the QNI and was deeply committed to ensuring nurses in the community were supported with grants for financial hardship and education. Michael was deeply interested in the work of all nurses in the community and their power to impact on peoples'

lives. Michael was a true gentleman and he will be deeply missed by all at the QNI.'

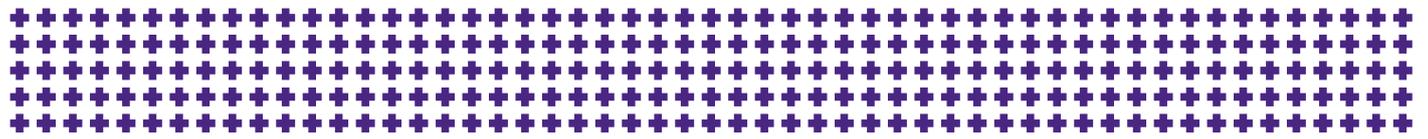
Professor John Unsworth OBE, Chair of Council said, 'I was very saddened to hear of the death of Michael Cooper our Vice-President. Michael was a very passionate supporter of community nurses who was committed to the work of the QNI for more than 20 years. I was very proud to know him, work with him as a trustee and more recently as Chair of Council. His good grace, humour and considerable experience will be sorely missed. My condolences go to his wife and children and wider circle of friends.'

Zahir Fazal, QNI Vice-President, said, 'Working alongside Michael on behalf of the QNI for over twenty years was a joy as were the conversations we had about everything under the sun often over a convivial lunch or dinner! He was knowledgeable, supportive and challenging in a most constructive way. I will miss him as a friend.'

William Rathbone OBE, QNI Council Member, said, 'Both as Vice Chairman and as a member of the Finance Committee, Michael's contribution was outstanding over such a long period - and it was always such fun working with him!'

Ros Lowe CBE, QNI Council Member and QNI Fellow, 'Michael was the most wonderful Vice Chair, friend and support when I was Chair. He always had time for a question, a discussion, or just a chat, offering such wise advice, which was invaluable. I shall so miss his kindness, generosity, and fun.'

The QNI's Support for Nurses Team (Jo Moorby, Justine Curtis, and Suzanne Rich) said, 'We will always appreciate Michael's wisdom and knowledge as the 'Support for Nurses' Trustee. He will be sorely missed for his support, his understanding and of course his sense of humour. His guidance over the years was invaluable. He was empathetic, knowledgeable and genuinely interested in people and we thank him for all he did for us over many years.'



## QNI Honours Nursing Professionals from the UK and internationally at its 2022 Awards Ceremony



The QNI held its annual Awards Ceremonies on 28th November at Friends House in London.

The programmes of the two ceremonies included presentation of the following: Fellowship of the Institute; The Outstanding Service Award; The Executive Leadership Programme; The Aspiring Leaders programme; The International Community Nurse of the Year Award; The Queen's Nurse title; Leaders of community nursing innovation programmes; Memorial prizes for post-registration community nursing students.

The presentations in the morning ceremony were made by Dame Elizabeth Anionwu, QNI Vice President, Professor John Unsworth QN, and Gill Boast QN. The presentations in the afternoon ceremony were made by Deborah Sturdy OBE and Professor John Unsworth OBE.

Fellowship of the Institute was presented to: Howard Catton, Rachel Hollis, Elizabeth Iro, Professor Brian Webster-Henderson.

The Award for Outstanding Service was presented to: Ben Bowers, Karen Coles, Katy Welsh, Komal Patel, Patricia O'Meara.

The Executive Nurse Leadership programme is designed to help prepare nurses in a strategic leadership position for positions of national leadership in the health and care systems.

The Aspiring Leaders Programme is designed to support the professional development of nurses working in the community to become future leaders in healthcare, to the benefit of the people, families and communities they serve.

The International Community Nurse of the Year Award was presented to Ananthu Ashok, Practice Development Nurse, Sussex Community NHS FT.

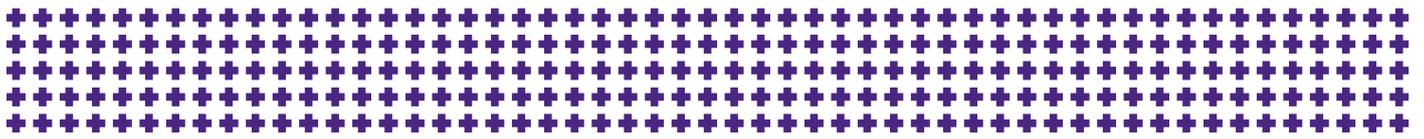
Queen's Nurses have at least five years' experience of working in community settings and undergo a rigorous selection process to receive the title. The Queen's Nurse programme is generously funded through the support of the National Garden Scheme and there are now almost 2000 Queen's Nurses.

Certificates were presented to the leaders of ten projects in Complex Care in the Community. The QNI has recently published final reports of all the projects, featured on our website. The projects were generously funded by The Burdett Trust for Nursing.

The QNI currently offers three academic prizes to graduates of specialist practitioner qualifications in three specialisms, at every university where the courses are offered. The prizes were awarded to one recipient of each award.

In his address to the evening ceremony, George Plumtre, Chief Executive of the National Garden Scheme, announced that £400,000 would be donated to the QNI from the charity's fundraising this year, the largest total ever donated to the QNI in the shared history of the two charities. The National Garden Scheme announced a total of £3.1m in donations to nursing and caring charities today.

To read the full list of Award Winners and their citations and to see more photos of the event, please go to <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/news/qni-honours-nursing-professionals-at-its-2022-awards-ceremony/>



## Queen's Nurse and QNI member of staff, Kendra Schneller, wins the CNO's Silver Award



Kendra Schneller, Queen's Nurse, Nurse Practitioner in the Health Inclusion Team, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust and Homeless and Inclusion Health Project Lead at the QNI, recently won the prestigious Chief Nursing Officer's Silver Award.

Launched in March 2019 at the Chief Nursing Officer for England's Summit by Ruth May, CNO at NHS England and NHS Improvement, this award recognises; 'performance that goes above and beyond the expectations of the nurse or social care worker, and what is expected in their current role'. Kendra received the award for her leadership, including achievements in Homeless and Inclusion Health services. It was presented to her by Professor Jamie Waterall, Deputy Chief Nurse at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.



Kendra said, 'It was a huge surprise to be awarded the CNO silver award for my contribution to homeless and inclusion health and I thank Professor Jamie Waterall for nominating me and my QNI and GSTT colleagues for being there. I don't work in silo and since working in the speciality I have come across many dedicated, inspirational and innovative colleagues who are all worthy of this recognition. It's important for us all to highlight the continuing barriers that our clients face and how we work with them to ensure they have information and knowledge on how to navigate services. We have come a long way from when I started almost 14 years ago and with more visibility around inclusion health and under the current climate, it remains high on the agenda to ensure equity of access to care and services'.



## QNI Field Specific Standards for Community Nursing - progress update



The Advisory Board overseeing the QNI's Field Specific Standards for Community Nursing held its second meeting on 2nd November.

The Board discussed the official prospectus outlining the QNI's rationale and strategy to

develop nine sets of Field Specific Standards, due to be published in 2023.

The QNI's Field Specific Standards build on the NMC's core standards for post registration community nursing Specialist Practitioner Qualifications (SPOs) published earlier this year. The QNI's standards are being developed with the support and involvement of the NMC and representatives of nursing and health education organisations from across the UK.

The QNI standards are being developed and agreed for all four countries of the UK, in response to calls by employers and educators for guidance when applying the SPO core standards to specific fields of practice within community nursing. Under the QNI's proposals, individual nurses will have access to clearer and more distinctive and nationally agreed educational pathways, contextualised within each specific field of practice and reflecting an advanced level of practice.

Professor John Unsworth OBE said, 'Creating our future community nursing workforce requires a consistent approach to the development of excellent practice and clinical leadership. Our work on specific standards is designed to build

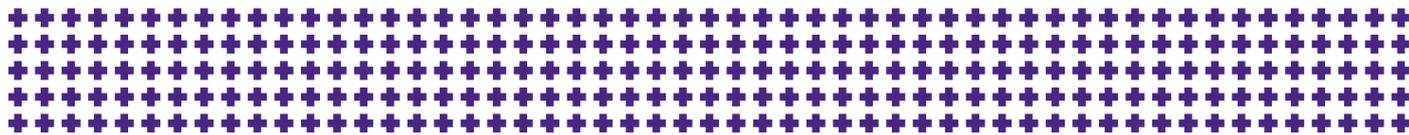
upon the broad regulatory standards of the NMC to ensure that wherever a person lives, works or accesses services the care they receive is of the highest quality, based on evidence and tailored to their own individual needs.

Universities will be invited to map their post-registration Specialist Practitioner Qualification programmes to the QNI's field specific standards. Benefits of mapping these courses to the QNI's field specific standards include:

- Articulating the essential skills and experience necessary to practice and autonomously and at an advanced level in situations that are complex and challenging
- Enabling employers to know that nurses applying for posts around the UK have the necessary skills and knowledge for particular roles
- Supporting community nurses to lead teams of regulated and unregulated staff in high-risk, complex nurse-led services, to deliver the best patient care possible in the community.

Each of the nine standards is being developed by a Standards Reference Group, composed of experts in the relevant field. When complete, the draft standards will be reviewed by the QNI's Advisory Board, Chaired by Professor John Unsworth OBE, the QNI's Chair of Council.

The QNI's CEO, Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, said, 'The QNI's field specific standards of education and practice will enable the development – and assessment – of Specialist Practitioner Qualification (SPO) programmes that are tailored to deliver the field specific skills and knowledge required for specialist community nursing practice. Universities offering SPOs mapped against the QNI's field specific standards will have an attractive offer for post-registration students wishing to progress their career and practice at an advanced level, within a recognised specialism.'



## QNI publishes new resource for nurses supporting those with Long Covid in the Community



The QNI recently published a new resource for nurses working in the community and primary care to support their knowledge base and practice around 'Long Covid', or Post-Covid Syndrome.

The new document, *Living with Long Covid – A*

*Community and Primary Care Nursing Resource*, updates and expands on previous resources created by the QNI in 2020. The resource was launched at the QNI's Annual Conference 2022 by its author, Eve Thrupp QN, Nursing Programmes Manager (Leadership) at the QNI.

In the community, nurses are treating, signposting, and leading on care for patients with Long Covid and supporting them to live as independently as possible. The new Resource seeks to extend and empower that role further by providing references to literature, websites, and other resources. The Resource has been peer reviewed and 'tested out' with the QNI's Nurse Expert Group and with commissioners.

Community nurses are highly skilled at assessing complexity of need within the home and other community healthcare settings. A multi-factorial approach must be employed when completing assessments and supporting patients with post-covid syndrome, and the Resource seeks to encourage and facilitate this.

It is also important to recognise that registered nurses need to collaborate with numerous other professionals, carers and volunteers to support people living with Long Covid. Therefore, the Resource signposts to many other professional sites to amplify nurses' knowledge base.

Eve Thrupp QN, the QNI's Nursing Programmes Manager (Leadership) commented, 'While much work has been done to investigate and analyse the health disparities that Covid, and Post-Covid Syndrome has caused, much still remains to be done. The evidence that Covid-19 has had a disproportionate impact upon Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities serves as a stark reminder that further work and exploration is needed to investigate the serious health inequalities within health systems.'

To read the report, go to: <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/news/qni-publishes-new-resource-for-nurses-supporting-those-with-long-covid-in-the-community/>

## QNI Conference attracts thousands of online viewers

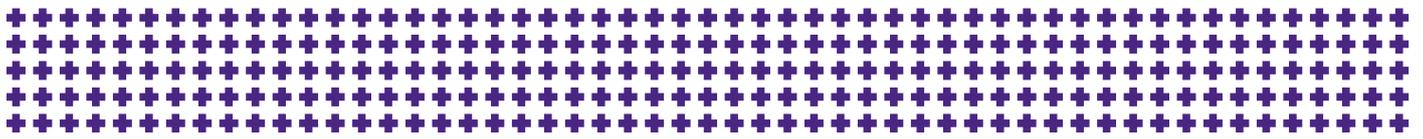


The theme of this year's conference was, 'Inspired, Intrepid, Indispensable – Creating a

Supported Community Nursing Workforce'.

It took place online over five days in October and featured a huge range of inspiring and informative speakers.

To read summaries of each day, please go to <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/events/qni-annual-conference-2022/>



## Nurse-led projects improve care for people with complex needs



The QNI has published the final reports of ten nurse-led projects that improved care for people with complex needs in the community.

The ten projects took place over 12 months starting in 2021 and were based in community provider organisations, primary care, care homes, and a prison, located in England and Wales. The projects were supported as part of the QNI's Community Nursing Innovation Programme (CNIP), its flagship innovation and quality improvement programme for nurses in any community setting.

In the QNI's report, each project describes its process, challenges and outcomes and gives a case study of how the project improved the health of an anonymised individual within the target beneficiary group. People who benefited from the projects included frail older adults, people with learning disabilities, and people living

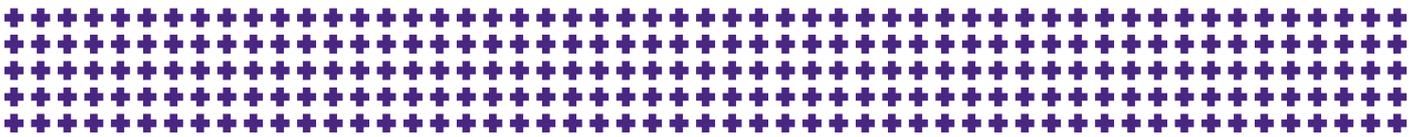
with diabetes and other long term conditions.

Sue Boran, Director of Nursing Programmes (Innovation) said, 'It has been an absolute pleasure to support these projects over the past year. They started in the middle of a pandemic and all workshops and support meetings were held online. It is to the credit of all the project leads and co-leads that they have succeeded with such extraordinary improvements to the health and wellbeing of people with complex needs in diverse community settings such as Care Homes, General Practice, prison and at home.'

QNI staff members gave regular individual and group support to the projects online, but also undertook visits to all the projects during the year to see them being delivered. Project outcomes are developed with the QNI in the planning stage, and the projects also work with the QNI's communications team to develop key messages and marketing materials. The project leaders will receive certificates acknowledging their work at the QNI's Awards Ceremony taking place in London later this month.

Dr Amanda Young, Nursing Programmes Manager (Innovation), said, 'All the projects demonstrated care that was highly personalised and this approach contributed to their effectiveness. Promoting self-care and education for patients and for staff were also key themes that we observed in all the projects. Reducing unplanned hospital admissions was an objective for all the projects and this underlies the contribution that community nurses make to cost saving as well as to excellent patient care.'

To read the report, please go to: <https://qni.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Community-Nursing-Innovation-Programme-Complex-Needs-Summary-of-Final-Reports-and-case-studies.pdf>



## Queen’s Nurse opens her garden for the National Garden Scheme



rounds for tea and cake as he had never seen behind our gate!

We had a beautiful sunny day on the Saturday and typical British weather on the Sunday, rain and wind! But we had plenty of tea and cake for our visitors who battled the Sunday weather!

It was lovely to share the garden and receive lots of positive feedback from our visitors including ‘charming, stunning and like the nooks and crannies’, ‘perfect garden and like the encouragement of wildlife’ and ‘You should be proud, we can see you have worked hard’.

I am just sowing my ladybird poppy seeds for May 2023, to brighten the garden up!’

Queen’s Nurse Hazel Dent, opened her garden for the National Garden Scheme this summer.

Hazel said, ‘Falconers Garden opening was a success, with 150 visitors over the weekend and we raised just over £1000, we were very pleased. Even our Postman popped in off his

If you would like to open your garden for the National Garden Scheme and raise funds for health and nursing charities, like the QNI, please go to: <https://ngs.org.uk/get-involved/open-your-garden/>

## Covid-19 Healthcare Support Appeal (CHSA) grant available for all community nurses

Funding from CHSA is still available for distribution to community nurses (retired too) in financial need - these funds are specifically for nurses whose financial circumstances have been impacted by the pandemic.

We would like to take the opportunity to remind all readers of HomeVisit of our ‘Keep in Touch’ service which is a practical way in which we aim to strengthen the Queen’s Nurse community, past and present.

The project offers opportunities to speak to retired Queen’s or community nurses regularly on the phone, to talk about life experiences, aspects of nursing past and present, memories and future plans. It encourages social interaction, creates new bonds and as one of our volunteers said, is truly ‘a two-way benefit’!

To find out more, please go to: <https://qni.org.uk/support-for-nurses/>



## Queen’s Nurse holds auction for QNI’s Keep in Touch project



I am a Queen’s Nurse and am actively involved in the KIT project. I currently work part-time as a nurse lecturer in the adult field at Wrexham Glyndwr University. In January I will be retiring after nearly 20 years in nurse education.

Since September this year I have been co-ordinating a module for the 3rd year nursing students titled ‘Innovations in Practice’ and the taught sessions came to an end last week. As I had so many books relevant to the module assessment I decided to auction off the books. In collaboration with the students we decided on a silent auction as an excellent way to bid for the leadership and management books. I gave a brief summary of each book and they bid on a piece

of paper for the book – the highest bidder winning the book. The students loved the activity and we raised £155 in total. Jointly we made the decision to donate the money to the KIT project as the students felt it was an area that I was passionately involved with and was going to continue being involved with after retirement in 2023.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the September 2020 nursing cohort from Wrexham Glyndwr University for their generosity, kindness and engagement in the auction. They will all be our shining stars in their future nursing careers.

KIT provides regular telephone contact for retired nurses from volunteers. KIT has now been running for over six years, and quite a few of the volunteers have been calling their contact since the start of the programme – some wonderful telephone friendships have evolved. I have been volunteering with KIT for over five years, and enjoy it enormously. I know that the funds so generously raised will be put to good use for KIT.

*Angela Williams, QN*

## Queen’s Nurse holds cake sale for QNI in memory of Queen Elizabeth II

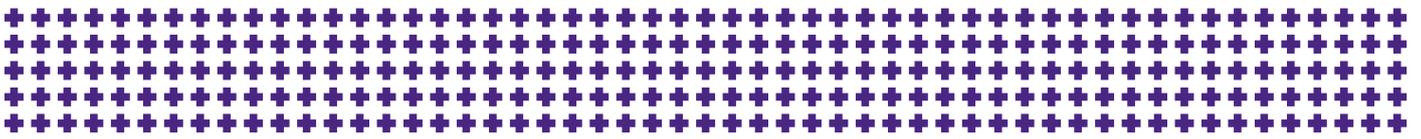


Photos left: Helen Ballinger and Jane Harros; Above: the cake sale team; Right: one of the beautifully decorated cakes



On Wednesday 5 October, Queen’s Nurses, Jane Harros and Helen Ballinger held a cake sale in the hub of Sanger House for the Queen’s Nursing Institution (QNI) in memory of our late Queen Elizabeth II.

The Ageing Well Team all contributed to baking and buying cakes for the event which raised £114. A big thank you to all that baked, brought and bought cakes on the day.



## QN Vanessa Hurley opens her garden for the NGS



The sun shone on The Old School House Ashcombe Dawlish Devon for the NGS garden opening the last 2 days of July.

Over 250 visitors came and enjoyed the two days. We were helped by 10 wonderful volunteers each day , this included 5 Queen’s Nurses helping with the teas and chatting to the visitors about the QNI and what it means to be a Queen’s Nurse.

The teas , coffee and cakes went down well with people queuing to taste the beautiful selection of home made cakes which were all donated.

Down the bottom garden people sat listening to the live playing of the mandolin and enjoyed buying plants and local honey.

Prior to the opening I did a radio interview on Devon live where I talked about the garden and this helped to bring in more visitors. Although we only open to the public two afternoons a year, the garden is often used to help others who may enjoy the sanctuary and calmness it can bring when they are experiencing distress. We also employ some help from people with a learning disability to get the garden ready the week before we open which is always a busy fun time .

It’s always lovely meeting the visitors and seeing people enjoying the time and effort we have put into the garden to make it a special place . People are always so interested in hearing about the work of the QNI and love meeting the Queen’s Nurses in person.

The garden opening this year raised £1630 for the NGS and we are looking forward to next years opening the 29th and 30th July 2023.

*Vanessa Hurley, Queen’s Nurse*

## Keep In Touch volunteer meeting



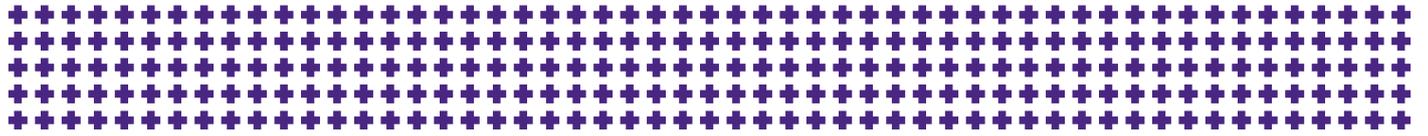
The Keep InTouch (KIT) Team meets up annually – this year their meetings were held online on two consecutive Saturday mornings in November. The meetings provided an opportunity for volunteers to share their experiences as part of KIT, discuss any concerns, as well as meet up with other volunteers.

We were delighted that the QNI’s Chief Executive, Dr Crystal Oldman CBE was able to attend both meetings, and provided an update on current QNI activities.

The KIT programme has now been running for over six years, and some of our volunteers have been calling their contact since the beginning – some amazing friendships have been forged!

Most of the Team were able to attend one of the meetings – it is hoped that our next meeting will be held next April/May in London and we will meet up in person - everyone is looking forward to being together again!

*Suzanne Rich, Keep In Touch Programme Manager, [suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk](mailto:suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk)*



## Lady Minnie Margaret Astley-Cooper obituary, 1937 - 2022



Life began for Margaret "Minnie" Harrison on 4th June 1937, and she was brought up in Liverpool with her sister Joan. They were blessed with kind and caring parents and it was a happy childhood. Minnie

was educated privately at Windsor High School, Liverpool, from 1948 to 1954, but said on many occasions that the school placed too much emphasis on social skills and not enough on general education!

Minnie began her nursing career training at Clatterbridge Hospital in the Wirral, Liverpool and became an SRN in 1959. Minnie then did a six months theatre course at Clatterbridge in 1960 and started district nursing there for two years. From 1962 Minnie was a district nurse in Skelmersdale, Lancashire and surrounding area.

In 1976 Minnie became a practical work teacher and also became a Queen's Nurse. From 1978 until 1992 Minnie was a theatre sister in Walton Prison, Walton Hospital, Wellesley private hospital at Southend-on-Sea, Essex and finally Hartswood hospital in Brentwood, Essex. Sadly, due to ill health Minnie had to retire in 1992.

Minnie had three children with her first husband, then married yours truly in 1974 – we were married for 48 happy years. Minnie had seven grandchildren, nine great grandchildren and three great nieces. On the other side of her family, she had two nieces and one nephew.

Minnie's sense of adventure saw her touring Europe with a friend on scooters for six months in 1960, visiting Spain, France, Portugal and Italy. During Minnie's stint as district nurse in Liverpool she would park her car in various locations and would be immediately surrounded by young people who would "keep an eye on" her vehicle for a small fee!

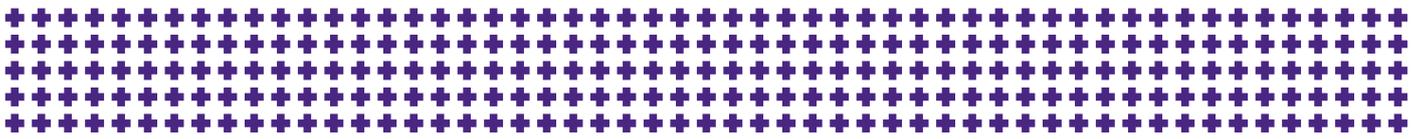
Minnie was a member of the W.I. Rayleigh, Essex Branch and served on the Executive Committee for some years, playing in their darts team and regularly attending croquet sessions and helping with coaching. In 2004 Minnie was elected as a Governor of Southend Hospital, Essex, and remained in post until 2010. Minnie drew strength from her Christian belief and attended St Aidan's Church in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

In 2000 Minnie was watching television and saw in the background a group of people doing nothing in particular – curiosity got the better of her and she decided to join a local film agency which led to another life! Minnie worked as a film and tv extra after joining a couple of London agencies and appeared in many productions including My Family, Jonathan Creek, The Da Vinci Code (she was a nun!), Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, Calendar Girls, Thunderbirds (a whole weekend!) and many more.

Minnie was a special person in every way – she was kind, considerate, intelligent and warm-hearted, but she never suffered fools gladly! Minnie was always there for her family offering practical advice and sensible thoughts plus financial assistance when required – she supported her three children Penny, Anne and Andrew in every way she could. The grandchildren will have their own special memories, especially open-top bus tours around London, feeding those "pesky" pigeons in Trafalgar Square, having a wonderful time at Legoland, Longleat and Colchester Zoo, as well as playing boules on the lawn at home and learning to bake in Grandma's kitchen. Also, outings whilst on holiday to a gnome reserve (my favourite), more trips to zoos, animal sanctuaries and coves/mines in Cornwall.

I can only say from the bottom of my heart how much she is and always will be missed – Minnie is and always will be a true inspiration to her family and all who knew her, leaving a lasting legacy and remembered for her love, consideration, kindness and practicability.

*Alex Astley-Cooper*



## Rita Dennison (nee Cobbett) obituary, 1949 - 2022



I met Rita in 1949 when she was a staff nurse at the Haslemere Hospital – we fell in love. But within a few months I was posted abroad as I was doing my National Service in the R.A.M.C. From then on our courtship was mostly by daily letters.

Rita felt the urge to do midwifery, so she applied to do her Part I at the Clatterbridge Hospital on the Wirral. Her sister tutor had never had a failure and Rita kept up the success rate. Having gained her Part I Rita returned to her home town of Woking to do her Part II, which she obtained. Being now an S.R.N. and an S.C.M Rita decided to train as a Queen’s Nurse, which she did at Guildford, toiling round the hills on a bicycle. Rita qualified and loved it.

In the meantime I had been doing a degree at Hull, nearly 300 miles away. When my ministerial training took me to Bristol Rita decided to get a post a little nearer to me – she obtained a post as District Nurse/Midwife to three little villages in the Cotswolds outside Stroud. Being only 30 miles from Bristol, and using a little autocycle, I visited her as often as I could and soon saw the high esteem in which she was held.

Rita looked upon her three years there as the happiest of her long nursing career. The folks there loved her and she loved them, to whom she was “our nurse”. Again, we can see how highly she was regarded from something she herself wrote, “When at the end of three years we said we were getting married, the villagers took over. The fishmonger, who was also the taxi man, provided the cars. The inn did the catering at the church hall. The florist did the flowers and the baker made our wedding cake. When we came out of the church there was a guard of honour of babies I had delivered there, with an assortment of rolling-pins, wooden, horseshoes, etc.”

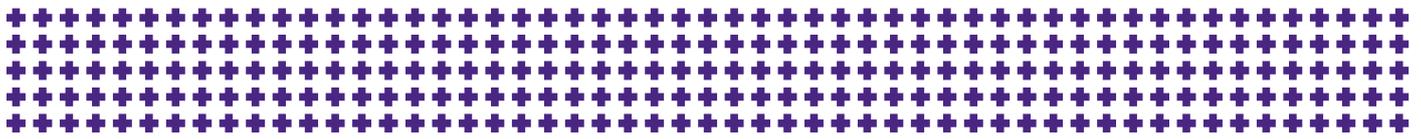
Rita also arranged our honeymoon at what the local newspaper described as “an unknown destination”. Since neither of us could afford much we were “guinea pigs” at the Common Cold Research Unit – we enjoyed it so much we went back the following year!

In time we had two children, in 1958 a girl and in 1962 a boy. Both were born at home attended by the district midwife. When the children were old enough Rita returned to district midwifery – this time in the mining town of Barnsley. But that is another story...

*Stanley Dennison*

*‘We would like to thank Rita Dennison’s family most sincerely for the very generous donation in Rita’s memory which was possible due to the death of a cousin who was intestate.’*

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, Chief Executive, The QNI



## Rosemary (Rosie) Russell obituary, 1941 - 2022



Rosie was one of life's characters – she was dearly loved by everybody. The large number of people who attended her funeral and the number of visitors and cards of condolence

her family received gave testament to all of the lives that Rosie touched. Rosie had the innate ability to say exactly what came into her head, and with Rosie "unfiltered" you knew just where you were with her.

Rosie had a rebellious and naughty streak. She was once driving her VW Polo car – it had a glass sunroof which could be lifted out. Rosie had just done her hair and was not happy when it started pouring down with rain. Ever resourceful, Rosie reached across and found her umbrella and pushed it through the hole in the roof of the car, hooking her broly under her arm. Back in the 80's the policeman who stopped Rosie could not fathom which rule of the Highway Code she had broken and let her go, but only after she bossily instructed him to put the sunroof back in for her! Rosie had a fulfilling career in nursing and health visiting, and also a long spell of bank nursing in the twilight of her career. During a long and varied career in nursing, Rosemary has been a Ward Sister, a District Nurse in East Yorkshire, a Health visitor in Lancashire, and a specialist diabetic nurse for many years working in the community and at regular diabetes clinics at Chorley and Royal Preston hospitals. Rosie was very proud of being a Queen's Nurse, and travelled to Frogmore Gardens at Windsor in 2017 to join other QN's – Rosie caught a train at 6.00 am to make sure she arrived at Frogmore in good time and travelled back home the same day.

After serving on the local council for many years she became the lead for health, and this led to one piece of work she was particularly proud of, as one of the charity trustees of the benevolent fund of the Lancashire County Nursing Trust.

Rosie had many hobbies and interests: the Mother's Union, the WI, U3A, the conservation group, bowling and in recent times pickleball! In May this year at the Mothers' Union Deanery Festival she was awarded her long service certificate in recognition of her 40 years of loyal, supportive and committed membership.

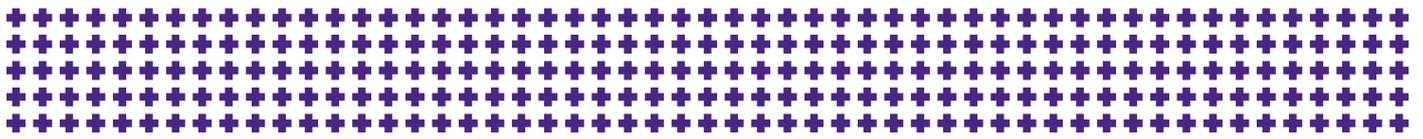
Community and her Catholic faith were important to Rosie, and she was first to help out with her care and advice, a complete tonic to all her patients and friends as a busy nurse, a pioneer of her day, a full-time working mum who found the capacity to help others. Rosie was a prolific card and letter writer, offering the right words in the right way at the right time.

Rosie met her husband Geoff when she was a trainee nurse, and they had a long and happy 60 year marriage. Geoff composed his own love song, titled "the day we met," with beautiful lyrics and he played the piano and sung it at their golden wedding anniversary. Rosie was also a kind and generous Grannie and indulged all her grandchildren with her love and gifts.

Rosie's one excess was shopping and her penchant for clothes, demonstrated by her sartorial but quirky stile with matching shoes and handbags. Rosie's one dislike was photos but this one, which was taken on her last holiday, encapsulates Rosie's jaunty character with the cocked hat, Breton top and huge smile showing her sense of fun and friendship.

Rosie truly was a "one-off" – her ebullient, exuberant and energetic personality made her a very popular lady and the life and soul of the party – she will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

*Geoff Russell*



## Pets Corner

**1.** Keep in Touch volunteer Della Powell with her kitten Rosie; **2.** the QNI's Dr Amanda Young's borderdoodle (half collie, half poodle), Millie, who is 4 years old, completely ball obsessed and can do lots of tricks, like play dead after being shot (just say bang); **3.** the QNI's Suzanne

Rich's cat, Maisie who loves jigsaws; **4.** the QNI's Louise Bellamy's cats, Sooty (black one) and Sweep (tabby) having a well deserved snooze; **5.** the QNI's Dr Agnes Fanning's 5 year old labrador Porter after a lovely swim in Herne Bay; **6.** the QNI's Charlotte Fry's two

dogs, Luna, 9, (the black and white collie) and Isla 8.5 months, (brown collie).

If you would like to feature your pet, we would love to hear from you! Please email a photo (including your pet's name) to [suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk](mailto:suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk).



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## Feedback

We would love to know what you like (or would like less of!) about the newsletter, and if you would like to send in any reminiscences, we would be delighted to feature them. Please email us at [suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk](mailto:suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk), or write to Suzanne Rich, QNI, 1A Henrietta Place, London W1G 0LZ.

## Address changed?

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