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60th Anniversary Special, Summer 2023

PEACOCK

The Friends of Moorfields Magazine



**Our special 60th
anniversary issue**



**Friends of
Moorfields
Eye Hospital**

A Note from Our Chairman

As we celebrate our 60th anniversary it is appropriate that we reflect on the original objective that was put in place by our first chair, Lady Hoare, and the treasurer at the time, her husband, Sir Frederick. It was:

“The raising of money to be spent on increasing the comfort of patients and the nursing staff, outside allocation provided by the Ministry of Health, and the recruitment of volunteers to help in the many ways which are of infinite importance to the happiness and general welfare of the patients, many of whom for shorter or longer periods are unable to see.”

Sir Frederick and Lady Hoare seem to have been remarkable people, being proactive in so many charitable endeavours, Sir Frederick as a former Lord Mayor of London and Lady Hoare in her work to support families affected

by thalidomide amongst other things.

Initially there were 57 subscribing members and 103 donors. The Friends had £250 in their bank account in 1963 and a voluntary scheme was organised with the aim of having 30 regular volunteer helpers at each main site (High Holborn, Highgate and City Road). Today we have nearly 800 subscribing members, almost 300 volunteers and provide support at clinics in Bedford, Croydon, Stratford, Brent Cross, Northwick Park, Potters Bar and St George's.

Though we remain true to the principles contained within the original objectives, we have significantly increased the range and scope of our offering, from guiding people around the venues to their appointments, supporting nervous patients during surgery, telephoning patients to remind them of

appointments, supporting the pharmacy at City Road, maintaining a shop supplying a wide range of goods and, last but not least, our Health Information Hub providing information to patients and others on all matters pertaining to eye health.

Today the Friends of Moorfields has grown into a voluntary organisation of some substance, one which not only provides a wide range of services but one which, over the years, has provided a range of financial support to the hospital to help support it, and its staff, in maintaining its position as the world-leading institution it has become.

Our most important piece of financial support is yet to come, when we donate £1 million towards the development of Oriel, the new eye care, research and education centre which will be home to Moorfields Eye Hospital and the UCL Institute of



Ophthalmology in Camden.

We are extremely grateful to Sir Frederick and Lady Hoare for establishing the Friends of Moorfields. I hope they would be immensely proud of what our volunteers and staff have done to build on their efforts, I have a sneaky feeling they would be. I know that I and our current Board of Trustees are. Here's to the next 60 years.

*Tim Hutchings,
Chairman of the Board
of Trustees, Friends of
Moorfields*

60 years of the Friends of Moorfields

As the world of eye health has evolved, so have the services we provide to support patients and staff at Moorfields.

Volunteers

Since we began in 1963, volunteering has been at the heart of what the Friends of Moorfields do. As the needs of patients and staff have changed, so too have the roles of volunteers. Our first volunteers read to patients and wrote letters on their behalf, brought them the telephone trolley, helped them access the talking book library, and did a variety of tasks to make them more comfortable at a time when many patients stayed overnight at Moorfields, some even for several days.

Since the 1960s our volunteers have been working in the Friends Shop and helping guide and direct patients - services that are still a



vital part of our work today!

Now, in addition to welcoming and guiding visitors, our volunteers do things like helping patients to use check-in screens and other technology around the hospital.

Friends of Moorfields volunteers work across several Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust sites, supporting a number of different teams, from theatre to pharmacy to appointments.

Patient Information, Education and Engagement

Over the years, the Friends of Moorfields have supported patient information, engagement and education in a variety of ways, from funding leaflet printing to producing colouring books that help young patients understand what to expect during their visit.

Today, our Health Information Hub at Moorfields City Road has two staff members and a full team of volunteers who provide accessible, non-medical, Moorfields-approved information, signposting and support for patients and carers.

Fundraising for Equipment and Research

Although in recent years we have refocused our charitable goals to concentrate mainly on patient experience and engagement, in the past we also raised funds for equipment needed by the trust,



from the day-to-day essentials to cutting-edge new technology.

We've also funded a number of research grants and fellowships, helping to advance the science of ophthalmology and improve understanding of eye health.

Dedicated volunteers have always been a vital part of our fundraising efforts, doing everything from organising book sales and "Mini Marts" around the hospital, helping plan events like the Eye Ball, and sharing stories of our work with friends and family. Today's fundraisers are running marathons, collecting at Tube stations, and much more! Find out about some of them later in this issue.

We've accomplished so much over the past 60 years that we couldn't possibly list everything, but here are a few highlights:

1963 The Friends of Moorfields are founded.

1973 The Friends raise half the cost towards an Argon Laser used to perform surgery on the retina - the only one in Europe at that time.

1974 The first Friends fish tank is installed at Moorfields City Road, at a cost of £15 installation and £9 per annum service costs. The Friends still fund fish tanks at City Road and the Richard Desmond Children's Eye Centre, as well as other environmental improvements like flowers and artwork.



1980 A Friends fellowship for research in ophthalmology, awarded to Dr. Wilhelmus, partially supports a study investigating the use of acyclovir and idoxuridine as treatment for ulcerative herpetic keratitis. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, grants from the Friends supported cutting-edge eye health research.

1986 The first ever Eye Ball fundraising gala takes place. Over the next 22 years, the Eye Ball would feature special guests including Sean Connery, Jimmy Choo and Jeffrey Archer, and raise almost £700,000.

1995

The Friends fund the new role of Patient Support Sister for one year, paving the way for the role of Nurse Counsellor and eventually leading to the creation of the Moorfields Counselling Service.

2002 The Friends establish a new Information Desk, staffed by volunteers, at the entrance to Moorfields City Road. The Information Desk helps 39,000 patients in its first year of operation, doing everything from providing directions to clinics to tracking down lost consultants!



2006 Radio Moorfields, an institution since 1974, plays its last request as technological advancements and changes around the hospital lead to decreased demand for hospital radio. Radio Moorfields was funded by the Friends throughout its lifetime, and staffed entirely by volunteers.

2007 The Ronald McDonald House at Moorfields Eye Hospital opens, providing accommodation which allows the families of young patients to stay close to their child whilst they are in hospital. A significant donation from the Friends of Moorfields contributed to the creation of the House, and the Friends continue to support the House today.

2012 The Friends of Moorfields fund new uniforms for the play staff at the Richard Desmond Children's Eye Centre. Since the 1990s the Friends have regularly supported the Play Team, from funding the salaries of 2.5 Play Specialists to providing grants for toys and entertainment.



2018 The Friends are awarded £75,000 from Helpforce to establish a handholding project, in which trained volunteers support patients during procedures. Since then, handholding volunteers have helped over 5000 patients.

2020 Volunteers take on vital new duties during the COVID-19 lockdowns, including PPE distribution, social distancing and queue management, helping to keep everyone safe.

2021 The Friends fund the Keratoconus Calculator - a new AI tool that can help predict risk in keratoconus and guide treatment options.

2022 A new Volunteer to Career initiative launches. The programme aims to launch volunteers into careers in healthcare by supporting them with tailored placements, as well as advice on applying to permanent roles, apprenticeships or further training.

Knitted creations celebrate Moorfields staff and volunteers



As part of our 60th anniversary celebrations, dedicated volunteer Brenda Marsh has put her knitting talents to good use making a set of dolls depicting staff and volunteers at Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust over the years, from traditional nurses' uniforms to modern-day scrubs! The dolls feature accurate details from watches to name badges, including scrub caps made from the real

thing.

One pair of dolls depicts a handholding volunteer with a patient in theatre. Our specially trained handholding volunteers support patients before, during and after surgery by offering reassurance, company, and a hand to hold if wanted. As a handholding volunteer herself, Brenda was inspired to create the dolls by her experience at Moorfields. As one of our most experienced handholders, she has first-hand knowledge of what a difference this service can make, especially to patients who are nervous or need a little extra one-to-one support.



These wonderful dolls are on display now at the Friends Shop at Moorfields City Road, and can be purchased for £14 each.

*From Laura Wade-Gery,
chair of Moorfields Eye
Hospital NHS Foundation
Trust*



*From Martin Kuper, chief
executive of Moorfields Eye
Hospital NHS Foundation
Trust*

Since joining Moorfields as chair earlier this year, I've been humbled and proud to learn about the hard work and history behind 60 years of the Friends. The Friends play a vital role in delivering our organisational purpose of working together to discover, develop and deliver excellent eye care, sustainably and at scale.

They do this through a range of services which support the work of our hospital – including guiding and directing patients, offering reassurance, and providing eye health information. Friends also provide innovative ideas, donations, and much more to help fund our services.

We value every supporter, volunteer and individual who has made the Friends what it is today.

I loved the wonderful cake made by long-serving volunteer Eve McClean, as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations, which I was thankful to be involved in. The kindness of the Friends is seen by all across our trust, and beyond, and I would like to say thank you, for everything.

Your organisation is a place where our patients and staff know they will find a friend.

Happy 60th anniversary to the Friends of Moorfields. 60 years of dedication to helping patients and continuously contributing to the excellence, equity, and kindness of our trust.

I feel privileged to watch the Friends grow in numbers. From seeing the wonderful volunteers as they answer queries by the door, to the incredible June who celebrated her 92nd birthday volunteering at the Friends Shop. Your efforts benefit patients and staff alike, and your support changes lives.

The handholding service is one of the many aspects of kindness and compassion shown by the Friends, and one our patients truly appreciate in their time of need.

On behalf of the hospital, I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who have made the Friends of Moorfields what it is today, 60 years on and for years to come, I'm confident of a positive future together. You make a huge difference to the hospital, our staff and our patients.

Thank you.

The Future of Eye Care

Join us on Saturday 4 November for a special information day for patients, exploring the latest developments in eye care and discovering what the future might hold for patients and their families.

As part of our 60th anniversary celebrations, we are hosting an education and information day where patients - and their carers and loved ones - can learn more about what their eye care might look like in the future and ask questions about developments in eye care.

Experts from Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust will share news on the

latest scientific advances and explore what effect they might have on the care patients receive for their eye conditions.

The day will begin at 10am with registration and free tea/coffee for attendees, and finish at 4.30pm. The venue is the King's Fund at No.11 Cavendish Square, close to Oxford Circus and Bond Street Tube stations and a number of bus routes.

The day will be broken up into short sessions, each covering a different eye care topic from a patient-focused perspective. The morning will focus on the general state of eye health research and what it might mean for patients, and the afternoon will focus more closely on how Moorfields is improving



the experience for patients.

Attendees can attend as many or as few sessions as they like, tailoring their experience to their own areas of interest. Away from the sessions, an exhibition area will also be available, where different eye health-related groups will have information stalls. During the lunch break, there will also be a chance for attendees to explore some of the research projects currently taking

place at Moorfields, and find out what impact they could have on patients.

Lunch and refreshments will be provided to attendees.

Attendance is free of charge, but places are limited so you will need to register ahead of time. To register or for more information, go to:

friendsofmoorfields.org.uk/futureofeyecare

£60 for 60 years

We're challenging our supporters to raise £60 for us in this 60th anniversary year. Take a look at some of the ideas people have had so far!

Jackie, a volunteer at Moorfields Potters Bar, raised almost £200 by baking an array of delicious cakes and treats for a bake sale. She was supported on the day by Clinic Manager Valerie, Friends of Moorfields Senior Volunteer Support Officer Liam and fellow volunteer Anne.



Isabel Dennett, who worked as a nurse at Moorfields for 32 years and spent more than 20 years volunteering with the Friends following her retirement, marked both our 60th anniversary and the King's coronation by holding a fundraising afternoon tea with her family.



In spite of a rainy day for it, Sandra Bracey had an excellent turnout for her coffee morning and raffle, held at her local community centre.



With help from friends Loraine and Helena as well as Alison from the community centre team, Sandra raised almost £160!

Volunteer Sophie, who is based at Moorfields City Road, challenged herself to run 60 miles in 60 days over May and June!

Sophie blew past her original £60 fundraising goal and raised £150.

"This was certainly a challenge but I'm so glad I've done it!" she said, after her final run on 30 June brought her total distance up to 60.2 miles.

A huge thank you as well to everyone who simply sent us a donation of £60 to mark the anniversary - it's very much appreciated!





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