



The British Polio Fellowship

Worthing & Sussex Branch

Newsletter

Oct 2023 - Dec 2023

Charity Number 1108335

Dates for your diary

Get Together Saturday 20th Jan 24 Games

Get Together Saturday 17th Feb 2024

A talk entitled "beside the seaside" by Sheila Willis

Get Together Saturday 16th March 2024

A talk by Chris Hare who is a local historian.

AGM Saturday 20th April 2024 AGM



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Editorial

I would just like to write a small narrative about a few stories from the past, one I remember well is when the Kids (Robin and Karen) were young and we had two members of the polio fellowship over for Christmas dinner with all the extended family, it was a jolly affair as everyone joined in with the festivities and the games we'd organised, one game I remember was a game we called "Artists" where each person in turn drew a well know film or TV program on a sheet of paper without saying a word and the other members of the team had to guess the title, the team that got the most right were the winners. Happy days, any way, thank you so much for all the contributions to the newsletter, very much appreciated. I do hope that I will be able to join you in more of the outings next year that I have missed so much.



I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous new year. Cheers for now Barbara xxx

Below are the confirmed dates for the get togethers in 2024.

Saturday 20th Jan 2024,

Saturday 17th Feb 2024,

Saturday 16th March 2024,

Saturday AGM 20th April 2024,

Saturday 12th October 2024,

Saturday 9th November 2024,

Saturday Christmas Draw 7th December 2024



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Just looking out of my study window I see the moon “Full and mighty”.

Surely it wouldn't be too difficult to fly up to it, as its only just up there. I do remember somebody talking about the man in the moon, isn't that him up there now? Actually thinking of the moon landings, 1969, the year I won a place on a research group to the USA, just 54 years ago! At that time I didn't know anybody

that had been so far away, America. Friends warned me that the food would be awful, like cardboard! But of course we hadn't seen anything like it, the STEAKS absolutely amazing and I do remember a reception at Buffalo (for Niagara falls and the Singer sewing machine factory) a three foot mountain of ice covered in prawns on toothpicks and all the free drinks were served with chipped ice from the bar.

Unfortunately Barbara and I had to miss the last get together, re wilding Knepp castle, sadly Barbara was taken ill and landed up in Hospital for ten days. The hospital it seems wasn't able to give us the reason for her extreme pain, but the physio recognised immediately that a disc in her lower spine was not very happy and gave her extremely violent sciatic pains in her left leg. Any way now with a great deal of assistance we are trying to return to our normal usual routine and hope to meet Sarah Milner the violinist at our November Get together (Janet reporting).



Last night we were warned by press and TV the batten down the hatches as storm Ciaran was about to hit us, torches to the ready in case of power cuts. However this morning, for us, it seemed that nothing had happened, lots of rain but here in Findon Valley no damage. Yet on TV Sompting and Shoreham just 5-7 miles away roofs blown off and in Ferring 3 miles away trees uprooted. I do just wonder if the clue why we were spared is in our address, Findon Valley?

I'd like to thank everyone who has donated prizes for the Christmas draw, we do like to make this one a bit special so thank you for your support. This year Gill and a team are doing the catering and daughter Karen is buying and wrapping the Christmas presents for all attendees.



I am pleased to say that the electric scooter, we were donated, has gone to a member locally who is delighted with the new freedom it has given her.

Remembering back to our annual lunch (report by Joan Upton) I received a message from Kripen our chief executive;
High Bob, I want to say a very big thank you for the warm hospitality extended to us yesterday by you and all the Worthing branch members.

What an excellent venue and as stated the lunch was superb. I went home raving about the top quality nature of the food. I think it was the best three course roast lunch I have ever had. Once again thank you for inviting us and wishing you all the best.

Kripen Dhrona BPF Chief Executive

To finish I must wish all branch members a really lovely Christmas and as I said last year, next year must be better.

Bob Stephens



Obituary

Sadly Anne Packham died on the 26th September after a long illness age 87. Anne was one of our longest serving members, back to when she was a child. She was one of our original child members, friends of Jim Tidy, Marjorie Lewis and Rose Fifield. Back in the 1950/60s when our patron and president was Mr “Dutch” Linfield of Linfield Mushrooms in Thakeham. He lived in Farncombe Road in Worthing and many of our activities were held in his house and garden.



Anne was a seamstress, Tailor, and worked for many years with her partner Vic. She had various assistance dogs from Canine partners and the latest dog, Jules had to retire a couple of years ago. Anne soon had to move into a care home in Hove but always hoping to see Jules again and move back into her own flat. But sadly not to be. In her later years she was visited and taken out by her good friend Diana Nicholls, to whom we send our condolences.

News of Members

Unfortunately our committee member and raffle maestro Roger Brand has now been in Re-hab at Arundel Community Hospital for over two months. He has lost all strength in his legs, possibly PPS and is working hard to be able to return home. We all send him our very best wishes and hope that he can help with the raffle at the Christmas Party on Dec 9th.



Membership

It is now time to think about paying your membership for 2024. The figure is £30 for each member or £45 for a family. However you don't have to pay but everyone who does pay over £5 will receive the copies of the bulletin. If you don't pay, central office still needs your name and address etc to keep you on their books. The membership form is in the bulletin or you can ask me for a copy or we could arrange it over the phone if you decide not to send central office any money.

Bob Stephens



Fellowship national finances, annual report 2022

For those members who do not receive the bulletin here is a quick summary of the financial situation of all of the fellowship, Branches and Central office combined for last year 2022.

Firstly the overall operating figure showed a small surplus of just over £10,000.00, which is almost quite acceptable these days but unfortunately the stock exchange had another bad year. Our investments including Loan Units had a paper loss of £281,190. Hopefully if the stock exchange does better this year we could well re-coup all or some of this, but at the moment I am not too hopeful. There is some talk that our trustees are considering others ways to invest our money other than the stock exchange.

Income

Overall income	£525,965
Legacies	£235,432 (Down £104,000 last year)
Membership	£41,510 (Down £9,500)
Expenditure Overall	£515,091
Heating and other grants	£48,714
Bulletin and Branch Newsletters	£30,623
Holidays and other grants	£96,599

Central Office has seven employees and their salaries, national insurance and Pensions cost £221,672.

No employee is paid in excess of £60,000
(Which wasn't the case just a few years ago!!)

Bob Stephens

Reunion of pupils at Steying.

I'm back from our exhibition/ Reunion of former Steying secondary school pupils from the years 1952 to 1968 and it was really interesting, firstly to try to guess the identity of everyone... I did know Alan and Julia and Ian, then Janet (skilton that was) came to speak to me, and we spoke about the time the school transport failed to pick us up.



Ruth (who had organised this) had made some very yummy cakes and I enjoyed a lovely piece of coffee cake.

It was quite crowded in the different rooms when we first got there and so we looked at photographs and news reports of the school before reading the reports of the old pupils which was very interesting!

I was a bit surprised that most of the reports mentioned that they didn't like the Headmaster; I thought it was just me!!

Before I knew it people were leaving and I had to rush through the folders of the ex pupils.

So we thought we'd better say goodbye so waving a cheery thanks for having us, and telling Ruth that her coffee cake was the best I've tasted in years, Mike skilfully manoeuvred my chair and I, down two steps of the old grammar school and away to

where Steve was waiting with the car.

I really enjoyed the exhibition and reunion and hope we could do something like that again.

Carol Gatford





Annual Lunch 20th September 2023





Worthing Golf Club

LUNCH IN PEACEHAVEN

At a recent committee meeting we discussed the possibility of holding an event in East Sussex to give some of our members who on live that side of Sussex and who find it difficult to travel to our get-togethers, a chance to meet up with committee members who, with the exception of Carol C. all live in West Sussex. With that in mind Gill, our lovely welfare lady, organised a date for lunch at the Stonehouse Pub in Peacehaven. So, on 18th October, Gill, Janet, Claire, Joan and Roger headed over. Very sadly, Bob and Barbara were unable to make it due to illness.



Little did we know at the time of booking that Storm Babet was heading our way. It was a slightly soggy drive over and we were joking that it had passed us by as so often happens here on the south coast. We duly met up with Carol C., Kathy, Jane and Barbara at the restaurant and after a little bit of table arranging all settled down to some good food and good chat. I have to say those desserts looked delicious, but very reluctantly declined due to a full tummy and very tight waistband!



Lunch over, it was time to wend our way back to the Wild West and I'm not joking. While we were busy eating, Babet had well and truly arrived; the coast road through Brighton and Shoreham was awash. I felt very sorry for any pedestrians who happened to be walking by as all the cars

were sending up huge fountains of spray.

I hope I speak for everybody at the lunch that it was great success and we look forward to catching up with our 'Eastern Friends' again soon.

Joan (Upton)

Polio Annual Lunch September 20th

Although Angmering Golf Club did us an excellent lunch last year, the room (albeit with a lovely view) was too small to manoeuvre wheel chairs round the tables causing the occasional gridlock.

So, on 20th September this year, around forty of us made our way to the Worthing Golf Club for our annual lunch. The weather forecast was dire, but fortunately the rain held off for our

midday arrival. This time, the room was a perfect size with no difficulties in getting around. Robin had set up his greeting card stall and a very enticing table of raffle prices greeted our arrival.

The Committee had chosen the menu and what a triumph it was. The starter was a delicious mini prawn fishcake, followed by some of the best roast lamb I have ever tasted accompanied by all the usual vegetables, all served piping hot by a very helpful team of waiting staff. Finally the dessert - a gorgeous summer

pudding even if the conditions outside didn't quite live up to the name with rain, by now, lashing at the windows. Everyone agreed it was one of the best annual meals we had ever had.

After we had finished eating it was time for the speeches. Our guest of honour was Kripen from head office accompanied by trustees Sue Brown and Linda Davis.

Unfortunately, I can't update on anything specific in his speech as, from where I was sitting, I wasn't able to hear him very well and only caught the odd snippet.

It was agreed that the Worthing Golf Club did us proud and we are very much hoping that we can book the same venue for next year's annual lunch. **Joan Upton**

Pictures in centre pages



Christmas and new year Greetings

Here i am again tackling my lazy brain to write something for our newsletter. As it covers the Christmas period I thought i would tell you a little story about my Christmas holidays in California with my family. Every Christmas, since my two nephews were about 3 and 4 years of age, i would spend two weeks with them during the holidays. My nephews loved having their crazy auntie stay because i was more excited over Christmas than anybody they knew. They did not have to worry about sleeping late to see if Santa came. I would keep checking to see if they were awake, probably from around 4am onwards. At 5am i would wake them and chaos would happen when they saw all Santa's presents. My wonderful brother-in-law has his birthday on Christmas Eve so dislikes that time of year. I would send the boys to get him out of bed. He would be pulled along, half asleep, by the boys. In his short dressing gown with his long hairy legs showing. It was a sight to behold. His words to me are not printable. Eventually my sister could not bear the noise any longer and joined us in the fun.

One year my brother-in-law forgot to buy my sister a Christmas gift and was in a panic. I offered to go with my sister and buy a present from him so he gave me his credit card. My sister fell in love with a beautiful cashmere coat so i bought it. Had it wrapped and gave it to him, together with





his card and receipt. He nearly collapsed and said “ !!!!! Clare I’m never giving you my card again!!!!!! I said that he should have told me his maximum spend. Great Christmas memories for me.

I got polio when i was six and spent the next eleven years in hospital. Christmas time in my early life was dull but that changed when i went to my sisters in California and was with family and the children. From the early 70’s - mid 90’s I was most fortunate to have those years of happy Christmas memories. Everyone will have loving and sad memories of Christmas. I hope, like myself, you will be able to look back and remember those happy times. Wishing everyone a loving and memorable Christmas. May the coming year be a healthy and peaceful one for you.
Happy Christmas and New Year. From Clare Bear.

A Christmas message from Gill

Hello to all of you who receive and read our newsletter. Christmas is upon us and I would like to send you all my warmest good wishes for this festive season. The New Year will quickly follow, and I trust 2024 will be a happy and healthy year for you too. Take care and keep warm, from Gill White.



Knepp Castle October 14th

At the Get Together on Saturday 14th October our speaker was Matt Phelps, a Safari Guide from Knepp Castle. I was aware of the castle and the fact that it was being “re-wilded” but the only real knowledge I had was seeing a ruined tower on the left of the A24 about 8 miles south of Horsham. Up until about 20 years ago it was an arable and dairy farm. It was not very successful,

partly due to the enormous depth of clay in parts of Sussex. This means that areas of the farm were often flooded. When it was realised that the farm was no longer viable it was decided to go in a different direction and the re-wilding began. The idea was to let the land go back to how it was before the farming began. Allow the land to go its own way, let the water flow where it wants.

There are Tamworth pigs to dig in the earth for food and act like



a plough to churn up the soil. There are long horned cattle. All cattle have horns but we cut them off to make cattle farming safer for humans. Also there are hardy ponies and deer. Over the years this has led to an enormous increase in the variety of wildlife at the castle.



Now there are many species of birds, including nightingales and storks, and butterflies and it is hoped that in the future water voles (Ratty from Wind in the Willows) will inhabit the area.

The castle now attracts many visitors each year. There is a shop and a restaurant. Some areas are suitable for wheelchair users and I hope that next year we might be able to include it in our summer outings.

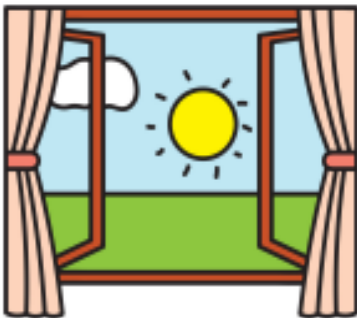
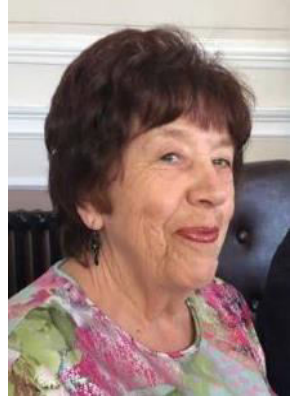
About 25 of us attended the Get Together where the talk was followed by the usual excellent tea of sandwiches and cakes. Thank you to everyone who helped especially Betty and Sue who kept us well supplied with cups of tea. Sue Kett



At last something is Right

After having a lot of hassle and distress this year with two different companies, one of which is still ongoing and both due to very poor service and customer relations, I wasn't looking forward to having my kitchen window replaced.

I was recommended to a local family run business who have restored my faith in good old fashion service. I phoned and left a message on their answer phone and a couple of hours later a very nice man phoned me back and made an appointment to come round on a specified date. He duly arrived on time to measure the window in question. The next day he hand delivered a paper quote as he knew I didn't use the computer. I phoned back the next day to accept his quote and there and then he worked out a date and time when the window would be fitted. Five minutes before the due time a very helpful and pleasant man arrived to do the job. He cleaned up after and put my curtain rail back up for me. During a conversation with the fitter he told me his boss is the nicest man he's ever worked for and its rubbed off on his work force. When I popped into the factory unit



the next day to pay the young lady I dealt with was also very polite, pleasant and helpful.

If on there were more companies like this one it would make life a little more stress free. Instead we seem resigned to have to accept the unacceptable, unless we're prepared to do battle!! Carole Cresdee.

The Shape I Am In

There's nothing the matter with me,
I'm just as healthy as can be,
I have arthritis in both knees,
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak, my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

All my teeth have had to come out,
And my diet I hate to think about.
I'm overweight and I can't get thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

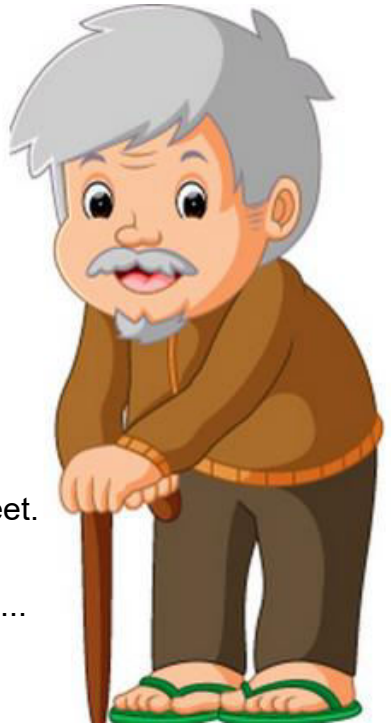
And arch supports I need for my feet...
Or I wouldn't be able to go out in the street.
Sleep is denied me night after night,
But every morning I find I'm all right.
My memory's failing, my head's in a spin...
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Old age is golden I've heard it said,
But sometimes I wonder, as I go to bed.
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,
And my glasses on a shelf, until I get up.
And when sleep dims my eyes, I say to myself,
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?

The reason I know my Youth has been spent,
Is my get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went!
But really I don't mind, when I think with a grin,
Of all the places my get-up has been.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,
Pick up the paper and read the obits.
If my name is missing, I'm therefore not dead,
So I eat a good breakfast and jump back into bed.

The moral of this as the tale unfolds,
Is that for you and me, who are growing old....
It is better to say "I'm fine" with a grin,
Than to let people know the shape we are in.



Our November Get-together

When Roger and myself arrived at the Community centre with Clare, we were delighted to see that the tables had all been put out, courtesy of Karen Robin's son Jamie. He was doing a poppy collection at Tesco's with the sea cadets and decided to give a hand with the tables. Betty and Karen were busy laying out the cups and saucers helped by Diane Ware. Diane, who previously worked for head office, decided after moving down to the coast, that she would like to give some of her time to help at the Get-togethers, and we are very grateful to her.

Due to both Roger Brand and Terry being absent due to illness, Bob stepped up to man the raffle table.

Our guest violinist, Sarah Milner arrived and set up her speakers and got out her violin. She told us that since the last time she was with us, she had got married and she is now Sarah Borg and has also got a baby daughter who is nearly one. Sarah started her play list with an ABBA medley, followed by The Bear Necessities from Jungle Book, we also had Andy Williams, Louis Armstrong, Dusty Springfield, and Nat King Cole to name just a few, there was also a minuet and some Musical Theatre. She ended her performance with Lord of the Dance, accompanied by hand clapping from



us all. While Sarah was busy with her violin, Roger was busy in the kitchen cooking the bacon for our rolls. But, could he find a frying pan, no, unless it was in one of the locked cupboards, and no one had any keys. Undeterred, Roger had to get the bacon cooked, so he used his initiative and used one of the baking trays that were in the oven, and put it on two gas rings. Not the usual way to do bacon. But it was that or nothing. Eventually all the bacon was cooked and Sue Milner helped Roger butter and stuff the rolls, and Diane helped to hand them out to one and all. We also had Banana cake from Susan Kett, Fruit cake from Joan Upton and Macaroon cakes, all washed down with ample tea from Betty.

Another productive raffle raised £115. And we had £11 from the jigsaw table.

Not a bad amount for just under 30 members. Janet Jones.

