Diamond Awards celebrate the NHS’s 60th birthday by honouring its shining stars

JEWELS IN OUR CROWN

Special 60th anniversary edition
Welcome to the first edition of your new-look Staff Newsletter (SN). As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS this year, we thought there was no better time to launch a new style of newsletter which we hope meets with your approval.

This first issue is filled with events that have been going on across Greater Glasgow and Clyde to celebrate the 60th anniversary with, of course, a special report from the official NHSGGC Diamond Anniversary Celebration Show at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

We’ve also been talking to some of those who have left the NHS this year after long service and we hear the thoughts of some of the newer people to join the organisation.

As usual, if you have any thoughts you want to share, drop us an email at: staffnewsletter@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

This month in Staff Newsletter

From sponsored walks to organising competitions, staff from East Dunbartonshire CHP really entered into the spirit of the celebrations.

Planning and performance manager Fiona McCulloch said: “We wanted to come up with ideas which would encourage local people of all ages to join in the celebrations.”

Primary schools in the area were asked to paint a picture with a health theme. Five schools submitted entries and the overall winner was Regan Gillian, six, from St Machan’s Primary, whose picture will be hung in the new Kirkintilloch Health and Social Care Centre which is currently under construction.

The runners-up were Amy Cassidy, Anna Canning and Danielle Forrest from St Machan’s, Amrit Mahem from Clober Primary, Eilidh Morrison from St Flannan’s, Catlin McGill from St Joseph’s and Catriona MacLean from Milngavie Primary.

Older people in East Dunbartonshire were asked to write in with memories, reflections or stories about the NHS. Hector McKendry, 80, won with his poem, A Simple Truth. Staff and their families also joined in the fun by taking part in a sponsored walk from Townhead Clinic to Lennoxtown Clinic.

A quiz was held during the 6K walk, which was won by 13-year-old Louise Kenny. She did the walk with her mum, Marjory Kenny, a nurse with the Joint Learning Disabilities Team. The walkers raised £490 for Kidney Research.

A display featuring archive images of health services in East Dunbartonshire also visited local libraries. This included a profile of Dr James Millar, the first resident GP in Bishopbriggs, who was chair of the BMA representative body from 1946-1948 and took a leading role in the negotiations between the Government and the medical profession in setting up the NHS.

Fiona said: “It’s been an eventful few weeks. Everyone has come together to celebrate this special anniversary with us. We had a great response to the competitions and have all learned some interesting facts about the history of the NHS in East Dunbartonshire.”

A Simple Truth

Hector receives his prize from old people’s team co-ordinator Elaine Marsh.

As I have grown older
And my aches and pains progress
This world would be a poorer place
Without the NHS.

Hector McKendry
(The Wayside Poet)

We appreciate all of our readers’ efforts and contributions. Please send articles, letters and photographs to:

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National celebrations in Glasgow

Health boards across Scotland mark 60 years

NATIONAL celebrations for the NHS 60th birthday came to Glasgow with a special “This Is Your Life” style event taking place at the Clyde Auditorium.

Hosted by the BBC’s Reporting Scotland presenter Jackie Bird, the event was attended by deputy first minister and cabinet secretary for health and wellbeing Nicola Sturgeon, and minister for public health Shona Robison.

Among the many invited special guests were staff representatives from all the boards in Scotland. NHSGGC was represented by Stobhill switchboard operator Angela Goudie and the Queen Mum’s maternity care assistant Tracey Innes, who explained more about her new role on stage in a brief chat with Jackie.

Other guests included John Copeland, the son of the man responsible for setting up the Blood Transfusion Service in Scotland.

John told how, as a 14-year-old boy, he could be woken in the night to drive to get a possible blood donor and take them to hospital to give blood to save a patient. “The police were very good and turned a blind eye to a 14 year old driving!”

Donald MacKillop – the first recipient of a “bionic” hand – came on stage and, through amazing technology, shook hands with Jackie by sending signals from his brain to his hand. His many operations have been well worth it as he is able to perform as many tasks now as he was before his accident.

Donald shared the stage with David Gow, who invented and developed the hand.

Jackie was also joined on stage by two men whose contribution to the NHS is credited with saving millions of lives worldwide. Sir John Crofton and Jimmy Williamson discovered a highly effective treatment for TB – a disease that swept Scotland in the 1950s and led to the introduction of the country’s first mass X-ray programme.

The show also featured film footage which highlighted many of the major milestones in the Scottish NHS from its birth to the present day. These included the introduction of free eye tests and dental examinations in 1948 to more recent advances such as the creation of keyhole surgery and the introduction of the smoking ban.
Dishing up a tasty treat for patients

OUR catering staff cooked up a treat to join in with the celebrations for the 60th anniversary. All hospital patients across our 24-plus sites enjoyed a special menu produced to celebrate the birth of the NHS.

NHSGGC facilities manager David Macdonald said: “NHSGGC planned some really spectacular celebrations for this milestone NHS birthday. “There’s the special celebrity packed show for patients and the public at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, the Diamond Awards, special publications and much more, but we also wanted to do something for those patients who would actually be in hospital.”

The lunch – offering a main course choice of braised sirloin steak chasseur, roast chicken or macaroni cheese – was laid out in a special menu card offering a potted history of the NHS from its beginning. The meal was served on a specially designed tray mat. A children’s version was also produced.

Blawarthill Hospital patient Jean Ferguson tucked into the meal and described it as lovely – adding that she wouldn’t mind if it was on the menu every Saturday!

Jean, who is 88 and a former children’s nurse, said: “It’s a lot fancier than the food in hospitals years ago. I remember doing my training in 1937. It was very strict then with long hours and low pay. “In those days, children died from diseases like polio, diphtheria and tuberculosis, but thankfully, nowadays, children contracting these diseases are few and far between and they can be treated.”

She added: “The NHS has come a long way and should be proud of its achievements.”

These views were echoed by Vale of Leven patient Mrs Helen Smith, from Cardross, who thought the special lunch was a lovely way to celebrate the 60th anniversary.

She said: “The menu was nice, but I have to say all the meals I have had during my stay have been very nice. “The nursing staff and everyone else involved in my care are a credit to the NHS.”

New arrivals share a very special birthday

TO CELEBRATE 60 years of the NHS in our maternity wards, special commemorative bibs with the 60th anniversary logo on them were presented to every baby born on Saturday 5 July.

A total of 49 babies were born across Greater Glasgow and Clyde and each received a bib.

Eleanor Stenhouse, head of midwifery, said: “It was lovely to be able to celebrate this historic occasion with new life coming into the world. “There was a great atmosphere on the wards and all the staff enjoyed being able to share this occasion with the parents and their new babies.”

John does summit very special for the anniversary!

CELEBRATIONS for the NHS 60th anniversary have been happening near and far, but our own head of resourcing, John McCarthy, took things a step further – by celebrating on top of Greece’s highest mountain, Mount Olympus!

John used the climb to raise money for the Beatson, collecting cash from HR and other colleagues as well as friends.

He said: “I was going to do the trip on my own, but then a few friends said ‘we’d be up for that’, so there were nine of us in total.”

The three-day climb was a test of extremes, with temperatures reaching 80˚ at the bottom and then very cold at the top, some 2919m/9570ft.

The trip was very rewarding. John said: “I like hillwalking and being out in the fresh air. I did Mt Vesuvius a couple of years ago which was a bit of a challenge! “For this trip, we knew we had to slow the pace down to allow for the heat as that can really takes its toll, not carry too much weight, but have lots of water and energy bars to keep us going.”

Now back on flatter ground, John admits it was a memorable way to celebrate the NHS 60th, adding: “On the way down, I was looking forward to grabbing a pint and getting back to work!”

Spoken like a true Olympian!
A huge day of celebration ended months of preparation for the Diamond Anniversary Celebration Show at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 5 July. Run in partnership with Radio Clyde and the Evening Times, the show was a huge success for everyone who attended, with the Diamond Awards proving a perfect way of showcasing the achievements of our staff and volunteers.

As well as all the nominees for the awards, the Celebration show, hosted by Radio Clyde DJ Gina McKie, also brought together a number of patients with particularly touching stories to tell. Michelle O’Hallorin was there with son Cole, now four – a child she thought she may never see grow up as she had to undergo a heart transplant only weeks after giving birth. Michelle was warned she could die without a transplant, but doctors managed to keep her stable until a suitable heart became available. The months of recovery were long and slow, but well worth it, as Michelle and her husband Paul spoke of the family life they had always dreamed of.

Also telling his remarkable story was 14-year-old judo gold medallist Brian Thomson, who carried the Olympic Torch through London as part of build-up to the Beijing Games. Brian spent five weeks in a coma after plunging 40 feet to the ground in an accident which left him paralysed and brain damaged. Staff at the Southern General revived him twice when his heart stopped.

Now aiming for the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014, Brian brought a lump to everyone’s throat as he thanked staff at the Southern General for all they’d done and then his mum for all her support.

The NHS Choir, which opened the show, were much appreciated by the audience, including those on stage – Clyde Djs’ Norman Ross and the ever popular “Tiger” Tim Stevens, who were there to present some of the awards. New Scottish girl band Atlanta also dropped in with a song to bring us up to the interval.

After the Diamond Awards, Gina invited a final special guest, who was also celebrating a 60th birthday that day, to join her on stage. Robert Entrican was born in Rottenrow on 5 July 1948, making him one of the first NHS babies born in Glasgow. His birth was not only celebrated by his family, but also made the front page of the Evening News!

### Diamond Awards

#### 1. THE UNSUNG HERO AWARD
**WINNER:**
Margaret Barnes, domestic, renal unit, Inverclyde Royal Infirmary

**RUNNERS-UP:**
- Rev Ann Purdie, minister, Southern General Hospital
- Ann Watt, receptionist, Dr Doak and partners, Pollok Health Centre
- Anne Hamilton, ward clerks, day care unit, Princess Royal Maternity Hospital
- David McCanny, porter, regional services, Southern General Hospital
- Douglas McManus, patient transport driver, Scottish Ambulance Service, Coatbridge

#### 2. THE OVERCOMING ADVERSITY AWARD
**WINNER:**
Julia Birkinshaw, youth services volunteer, Glasgow’s Royal Hospital for Sick Children

**RUNNERS-UP:**
- Aileen Campbell, specialist optometrist, Gartnavel General Hospital
- Alistair Kilpatrick, volunteer, Survivors of Stroke Club
- Sister Anne Byrne, early pregnancy team, The Queen Mother’s Hospital
- Annie Mitchell, counsellor, Hunter Street Homeless Health Centre
- Lyndsay Hill, patient advocate and fundraiser, Royal Alexandra Hospital

#### 3. THE EXTRA MILE AWARD
**WINNER:**
Lisa Morrison, cystic fibrosis physiotherapist, Gartnavel General Hospital

**RUNNERS-UP:**
- Carol Vennard, Parkinson’s nurse, Southern General Hospital
- Jacqueline Anderson, consultant psychiatrist, Avol Resource Centre
- Elizabeth Hendry, theatre nurse, Golden Jubilee National Hospital
- Donna Sweeney, speech therapist, Southern General Hospital
- Amahl Mathie, head and neck cancer nurse specialist, Glasgow Royal Infirmary

### What better way to mark the anniversary of the NHS than honour some of its outstanding people?
Our first-ever Diamond Awards were particularly special as they were voted for by members of the public and colleagues. Meet those who bring a little something special to everything they do.

**Diamond Awards**

**4. THE INSPIRATION AWARD**
**WINNER:** Dr Jim White, consultant clinical psychologist, South East Glasgow primary care mental health team (award accepted by Vicky Manson on his behalf)
**RUNNERS-UP:**
- Dr Grace Ballantyne, GP, Waverley Park Medical Practice, Dinmont Road, Shawlands
- Fiona Houlihan, team co-ordinator, children’s nursing team, Inverclyde Royal Hospital
- Laura Mehan, haematology oncology lead nurse, Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre
- Lorraine Peadies, programme manager, diagnostics directorate
- Anne Donnelly, occupational therapist, Royal Alexandra Hospital

**5. THE FRIENDLY FACE AWARD**
**WINNER:** Joe McDonagh, accident and emergency nurse, Royal Alexandra Hospital
**RUNNERS-UP:**
- Elizabeth McCallum and Elizabeth Murphy, volunteers, Yorkhill Tea Bar
- Dr Alistair Harper, GP, Baillieston Health Centre
- Plaster room staff, Western Infirmary
- Lindsay Gilmore, ECG technician, Inverclyde Royal Hospital
- Radiotherapy mask team, Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre

**6. THE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AWARD**
**WINNER:** Graham Simpson, senior dietician, Waverley Park Medical Practice, Dinmont Road, Shawlands
**RUNNERS-UP:**
- Agnes McIlroy, principal health promotion officer, Dalmarnock House
- Helen Ballantyne, occupational therapist, Hairmyres Psychiatric Hospital
- Helen Connolly, charge nurse, Rowanbank Clinic
- Lorna Sherratt, youth development worker, NHS Lanarkshire
- Northside NHS netball team, Shawpark Resource Centre

**UNSUNG HERO**
Unsung Hero Margaret Barnes was shocked and delighted to have won. Margaret, a domestic at the renal unit at Inverclyde Royal Hospital, was praised for being pride in her work, for always being happy, smiling and cheerful, and willing to go above and beyond the call of duty. Work is a sadder place when she’s not there, said colleagues.

**OVERCOMING ADVERSITY**
The Overcoming Adversity Award was presented to Royal Hospital for Sick Kids’ youth services volunteer Julia Birkinshaw. “I couldn’t believe it when I was nominated,” Julia said. “I love visiting the hospital – the young children are lovely to be with, but you can have a real relationship with the kids that are 12 and over and I just want them to see there is life after a disability, that there is still so much they can do.” Colleagues who nominated Julia said words alone cannot describe her enough to do her justice, but she is someone who always has a smile and a kind word for others. Her fundraising efforts have also helped many young people gain greater independence and develop important life skills.

**INSPIRATION**
The Inspiration Award was won by consultant clinical psychologist Dr Jim White from the South East Glasgow primary care mental health team. Dr White was on holiday, so it was left to one of his inspired colleagues, Vicky Manson, to collect the award on his behalf. She said: “Dr Jim White's team, I can say he is the most inspirational leader I’ve ever worked with and it is an honour to collect this award for him today.”

**EXTRA MILE**
Winner of the Extra Mile Award was cystic fibrosis physiotherapist at Gartnavel General Hospital. Lisa Morrison. Lisa was described as someone who consistently goes beyond her duties to ensure that the needs of her patients are met and someone who has many special qualities. Lisa played her role down, saying: “I’m just doing my job.”

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLE**
The Healthy Lifestyle Award was won by the Glasgow weight management service at GRI. Senior dietician Graham Simpson, physiotherapist Kim Ferriter and consultant clinical psychologist Dr Susan Boyle collected the award on behalf of the whole team. They were nominated by clients. John Kinneburgh, who first came to the service when he was 55 stone and bed bound. But, with the support of the service, has managed to put his weight down to 22 stone. John was there to watch the team collect the award. “I wouldn’t be here today without them. I had gastric bypass surgery and it was touch and go, but their care and support saved my life and gave me a new one.”

**FRIENDLY FACE**
The Friendly Face Award was won by RAH A&E nurse Joe McDonagh. Praised for being down to earth, amusing and caring, Joe was described as the perfect employee. In fact, it was suggested that bottling up Joe’s personality and prescribing it as a tonic would see patients getting better in no time. However, Joe was another reluctant Diamond, claiming: “It’s our job, part of our life and just what we do.”
The Top Team award was presented by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Nicola Sturgeon.

Everything about this team makes them special and I’m so proud to be working alongside them.

Irene Robertson, cardiac rehabilitation sister at Heart Centre in Paisley, was recognised for her outstanding contribution of Professor Clement Imrie, who recently retired from the Lister department of surgery at GRI.

Irene’s colleague Mhairi Campbell collected the award on her behalf as she couldn’t be there on the day. Mhairi said: “I have worked with Irene for 12 years and she really is the best person for the job.”

The Chairman’s Special Award, presented by NHSGGC chair Andrew Robertson, recognised the outstanding contribution of Professor Imrie, who recently retired from the Lister department of surgery at GRI.

The chairman said: “He has been praised by patients and colleagues for his outstanding dedication, care and compassion. Perhaps the qualities of this winter are best summed up by the following quote from the woman who put him forward for this award: ‘He gave my husband dignity in his dying days. I will never forget his kindness – he is truly a great man.’”

Professor Imrie said: “This is really an award for a big team at GRI. We have a health service which is the envy of the world and one that works best in Scotland more than anywhere else. There are many reasons for that, and the single most important one is its people.”

Winner of the Behind the Scenes Award was popular ward clerkess Esther Liddell, who works in the labour suite at the QMH. Esther was praised for her outstanding organisational skills, constant support and sunny personality. Her colleagues added: “She never complains and is always bright and cheerful. In fact, when she’s not here, it’s like working without a limb!”

Esther was sworn to win the award. Clyde 1 presenter George Bowie said she was shaking like a leaf, but she did manage to say she was “honoured for all her colleagues as they were all part of a team.”

The Local Hero Award was won by cardiac rehabilitation sister Irene Robertson at the Health at Heart Centre in Paisley. Described as truly remarkable, Irene has spent more than 40 years of her life caring for others in her local community, always performing to an exceptionally high standard. Nothing but the best is acceptable for her patients and she is always finding innovative ways of improving local services.

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7. THE BEHIND THE SCENES AWARD

WINNER: Irene Robertson, cardiac rehabilitation sister at Heart Centre in Paisley (Mhairi Campbell accepted the award on her behalf)

RUNNERS-UP:
- Lorraine Grieve, community children’s nurse, River Clyde Royal Hospital
- Kenny Irvine, community pharmacist, Broomhill Pharmacists, Alexandria
- Janie Carmell, district nursing sister, Woodhall Drive, Bishopbriggs
- Formartile, medical receptionist, homelessness health and resource service
- Maureen Morris, former chair, Greater Easterhouse Community Mental Health Forum

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WINNER: Irene Robertson, cardiac rehabilitation sister at Heart Centre in Paisley

RUNNERS-UP:
- Lynda Grieve, community children’s nurse, River Clyde Royal Hospital
- Kenny Irvine, community pharmacist, Broomhill Pharmacists, Alexandria
- Janie Carmell, district nursing sister, Woodhall Drive, Bishopbriggs
- Formartile, medical receptionist, homelessness health and resource service
- Maureen Morris, former chair, Greater Easterhouse Community Mental Health Forum

9. CHAIRMAN’S SPECIAL AWARD

WINNER: Professor Clement Imrie, Lister department of surgery, Glasgow Royal Infirmary (retired)

RUNNERS-UP:
- Helen Reilly, consultant mental health practitioner, Riverside Mental Health Foundation
- Maureen Williamson, life skills unit manager, MacKinnon House, Stobhill
- Janette Lindsay, midwife, early pregnancy assessment unit, Royal Alexandra Hospital
- Dr Linda Weight and staff, Yorgia Medical Centre
- Dr Malcolm Young, consultant dermatologist, Royal Alexandra Hospital (retired)

10. THE TOP TEAM AWARD

WINNER: Community out-of-hours district nursing team, Vale of Leven Hospital

RUNNERS-UP:
- Rheumatology team, Glasgow Royal Infirmary
- 87 ward team, Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre
- Diabetes care services volunteer team, North East Mental Health Partnership
- Volunteer driving team, cardiac rehab team, Edinburgh unit, Stobhill Hospital
- Surgical ICU team, Southern General Hospital

A special Ruff Diamond Award was presented to Poppy the therapist and her owner Anne Macdonald, who have helped many patients on the road to recovery with their hospital visits.
People

Uplifting meetings for the retired

FOR many staff who have retired over the last 60 years, the NHS Retirement Fellowship provides an ideal opportunity to keep in touch with friends and colleagues. Its meetings take place once a month, giving them the opportunity to catch up over a cup of tea.

The Retirement Fellowship arranges various outings encouraging retired staff to pursue a variety of interests and activities. Visits to the theatre, Burns night and Christmas dinner are just a small taster of what’s offered.

One of the first people to join the Fellowship was retired sister Janet Waters, who previously worked at the Western and the Beatson in Glasgow. Janet said: “The Fellowship gets you out and about meeting new and old faces. The committee has nice people and organises good social gatherings. I always go home uplifted after meetings.”

Janet has fond memories and loves getting the opportunity to relive them with friends and colleagues.

New trainee begins his NHS career

ONE of our three new graduate management trainees is all set to launch his NHS career when he starts work in September. Craig Broadfoot is taking part in the Graduate Management Trainee Scheme and is looking forward to starting his new role.

He explained: “This is a great opportunity for me to develop personally with great mentors who are very successful business people. I think it will be a very varied and interesting role with room for me to improve myself with great on-the-job training.”

Craig graduated from Strathclyde Business School with a degree in marketing in 2006 and has since been working with a plumbing and heating firm in Glasgow as a trainee estimator before training as a buyer. Having gone as far up the ladder as he could there, he applied for his current role after hearing about it at an SECC job fair.

RECRUITMENT

MOVING from private industry to the NHS could be a shock to the system for some, but recruitment and redeployment manager Lynne Stockey has made bigger moves before.

Starting her working life as a biologist at Glasgow Zoo, Lynne quickly discovered she didn’t like animals so working with people was the only other option.

“I found I didn’t particularly like taking snakes into schools, so a friend of mine who worked in recruitment suggested I give it a go,” she said.

Lynne moved to NHSGGC a little more than a year ago after working for 25 years in the private sector working with many organisations in Scotland and beyond.

“Years ago, Lynne swapped her job as a zoo biologist for a career in recruitment

Just the job for Lynne

“...I’ve worked a lot with companies which have all gone through periods of modernisation, reorganisation, expansions and downsizing just like NHSGGC,” Lynne explained.

Since joining NHSGGC, Lynne has been impressed with the tremendous knowledge of the whole recruitment team. She said: “The range of jobs we have is staggering – we have more than 70 different professions and more than 400 different job titles and the team know them all!”

“Every year we advertise more than 6000 vacancies and receive close on 50,000 applications, which all have to go through the recruitment service. A real challenge is trying to provide every one of those candidates a personalised service.”

Key to much of the success of this work has been creating a centralised recruitment service across the organisation.

Lynne explained: “This has provided a real sense of identity to the team with improved communication being one of the most important things.

“One thing we really tried to do when we were creating the single system service was to try to ensure that any changes we were introducing were not creating uncertainty for people. Over the last few years, there has been lots of change within the NHS and people need to feel confident about what is happening to them and their job.”

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

View current NHSGGC vacancies at www.nhsggc.org.uk and click on jobs.

View current NHSGGC vacancies at www.nhsggc.org.uk and click on jobs.
After 40 years with the NHS, May Bassy gives up her role as head of staff governance after witnessing some major milestones

Rolling with the changes

For head of staff governance May Bassy, the NHS 60th anniversary celebrations were very memorable indeed as they were among some of her last days with the NHS.

After 40 years of service, May finally decided that it was time to step down and take some time for herself, family and friends.

“At the last restructuring I started to think about retirement, then the post as head of staff governance came up, which had a very clear focus to establish the staff governance function and achieve the National Staff Governance Standard. I hope I have helped to move this agenda forward.”

From her first position as clerical officer at Lennox Castle Board of Management in 1967, May has always thought of the NHS as a career. An opportunity to join the school leaver training scheme in her first year with the NHS and study for the Diploma in Health Service Management, gave May a good grounding in all aspects of the NHS.

May explained: “From 1974, I worked in what was then called personnel. I enjoyed working with people and worked in both medical staffing and non-medical staffing. Later I moved to Forth Valley into training, which was the third ‘branch’ of personnel at that time.”

Changes in terminology is something else May is familiar with as personnel evolved. At one point she held the post of assistant director, manpower control. She laughed: “It just wouldn’t happen now, you couldn’t have that as someone’s job title.”

This is just one of the many changes May has seen over the years. When she started, May was part of the Western Regional Hospital Board which was abolished in 1974 to become five Area Health Boards, including Greater Glasgow Health Board. Greater Glasgow restructured from Districts to Units prior to the introduction of Trusts.

These were abolished to return to single system as NHS Greater Glasgow in 2004, and later in 2006 to NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

“It does seem like things go in cycles, sometimes it feels as if you have to go backwards before going forwards!”

However May has always maintained a healthy attitude to change. She said: “I’ve seen a lot of restructuring! I know some people view change as a negative, but I think it brings opportunities for new jobs and further development within the organisation.

“There are always opportunities if you are willing to be flexible and prepared to move about the organisation. You can’t stand still.”

May admits that her career in the NHS has been a good one. “I would recommend the health service. It has been very good to me and I like to think I’ve been good to it! There have been plenty of challenges along the way but many more ups than downs.”

It has been this forward-looking attitude that has helped May establish good relations not only with her management colleagues but also with staff-side representatives and full-time officers. She particularly remembers her post as director of personnel at Stobhill. “My time at Stobhill was always a special and I’m very proud of what was achieved there both for the organisation and for the HR function,” she said.

It was the establishment of these good working relationships that led one consultant to welcome ‘Mrs Bassy – the human face of human resources’ to a particularly tense meeting.

As May admits, not a bad way to be remembered.

For now, May is busy preparing for her “new life” of travel, flower arranging, improved golf and her new hobby of curling!

“There are always opportunities if you are willing to be flexible and prepared to move about the organisation. You can’t stand still”

May Bassy, former head of staff governance
Since its birth the NHS has been making headlines. We look back on some of the coverage it has received over the years as well as some of the more weird and wonderful stories that have graced the pages of our national press!

1 **In the beginning...**
The new free National Health Service began on 5 July 1948 and was well covered by Glasgow papers, as well as the nationals. Despite being “the biggest job ever”, the transition to a national service was reported to go “smoothly”.

2 **New hospitals**
A new hospital in the Vale of Leven – the first new hospital in Britain since the war and the first built under the NHS. Today, however, we know the secret role of the Vale of Leven. It was also to act as the main emergency centre in the event of nuclear war, as industrial Glasgow was viewed as a prime target. For this reason, the hospital came with larger than necessary catering facilities and morgue in case bodies had to be stored there or people evacuated out of Glasgow.

3 **Southern General Hospital expands**
No, not a headline from 2008 but from 1957, when an investment of £175,000 created two new surgical theatres, a chest clinic and a department of psychological medicine. This was part of the then Western Regional Hospital Board’s £2.7 million building plan for hospitals across Greater Glasgow including GRI, Victoria, the Western and Stobhill which had been announced in 1954.
NHS in the news

From the Weekly News in July 1955 it was reported a pig gobbled up his owner’s false teeth. The first beneficiaries of the National Health Service were those who required glasses and dentures. However, forms for replacement dentures often caused much laughter with a range of excuses given for the loss of false teeth. While pigeons and pigs made the headlines, it was mostly dogs who were blamed for teeth going missing. In 1959, eight claims blamed a dog for running off with, eating or destroying their wallies!

From the Sunday Dispatcher in July 1955, a Glasgow doctor had reported previously on a new wonder drug for baldness in the British Medical Journal, but further experiments found his claims to be untrue, leaving the poor doctor to lament: “I am sick of the cure and I do not want anything more to do with it.”

Concerns about the costs of the NHS proving not so bad after 10 years

The best of the rest

Here are some other events which hit the headlines during the NHS’s early days

- Celebrating 10 Years: Successful and Not So Extravagant – Glasgow Herald, 5 July 1958
- Value of TV in Treatment of Mental Illness – Glasgow Herald, 4 October 1956
- Slimming Drugs Cost to NHS – Glasgow Herald, 28 August 1953
- Filter Fallacy and Cigarette Danger – Glasgow Herald, 30 September 1955

In 1954, the Daily Record reported: “675 doctors... and there were only 10 complaints”. Good odds by today’s standards!
What a way to celebrate!

From boogie bus acrobatics to sparkling entertainment at the Royal Concert Hall, staff and public alike joined in the spirit of the 60th anniversary.