

Volunteering



December 2023

Getting to know you!

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Let's break the ice!



Getting to know Lucy



I am currently a Ward Helper in the Western General Hospital.

I would say that becoming a volunteer is the best decision I've ever made!

I was inspired to become a volunteer...

Because ever since I was a little girl I have always wanted to work in the medical sector and it was the perfect opportunity to know if it would be a good career choice for me.

The best thing about being a volunteer is...

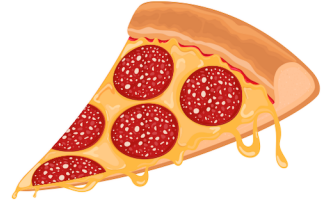
Knowing the difference that you make, and getting a chance to meet all the patients and staff to get to know their stories. You also leave the hospital after a day of helping out with a good feeling and a sense of achievement.

My come dine with me menu would be...

Starter: Mozzarella dippers with a sweet chilli dip.

Main course: It would have to be pepperoni pizza and chips.

Dessert: Brownies and ice cream.



The person who inspires me the most is...

My mum, because she used to work for the NHS which is amazing, and she is such a strong person.

The main thing I have gained since becoming a volunteer is...

My confidence, I am still shy but I'm slowly day by day coming more out of my shell.

My favourite Season is...

Autumn because it has beautiful scenery and it's not too warm or cold.

THIS OR THAT?

Cats or Dogs? I prefer dogs.

Sunrise or Sunset? I prefer sunsets.

Sweet or Savoury? I have more of a sweet tooth.

Early Bird or Night Owl? I would say I'm a night owl.

Pop or Rock? I prefer pop.

Singing or Dancing? I prefer to dance!



Getting to know Jacqui

Ward Helper, A&E, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh



I was inspired to become a volunteer because...

I aim to be part of solutions and the NHS is important to me.

People might not know this about me but...

I am able to read a book whilst I walk!

The book I've read over and over is...

A Town Called Alice by Nevil Shute.



A typical day for me Volunteering in A&E...

I finish in my day job as a Biomedical Scientist in the Edinburgh Fertility Centre in the RIE.

I throw on my volunteer shirt and head along to A&E. I alert the Senior team to my presence and tell them my start and finish time.

Then I introduce myself to the meal coordinator, I set up the dinner trolley and await the arrival of the baked potatoes! Accompanied by the meal coordinator staff, we go around the 4 main bays as well as Surgical Observations to offer dinner to patients who are allowed to eat. Those waiting on investigation results and surgery will be Nil By Mouth and are not allowed to eat, for their own safety.

If there is time, we will also do a refreshment round. This is a really nice part of volunteering in A&E. Many patients and their relatives may have waited hours on an ambulance and in A&E and a cup of tea and a biscuit is very welcome!

Talking to the patients whilst helping them eat and drink is a pleasure- I love people and if a chat and a biscuit can help alleviate some anxiety, then this is an easy thing to achieve. Empathy and a listening ear goes a long way. If there's time, I will clear away dishes and put them through the dishwasher cycle.

Getting to know Norman

Meaningful Activity Volunteer, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh



I was inspired to become a volunteer because...

Originally, after 13 years at school and halfway through my 4-year course at university, I got so bored with studying that I started volunteering for various charities. I ended up doing more voluntary work than studying because it was much more interesting and fulfilling than going to lectures on tax law! After I retired, the NHS seemed the best choice for becoming a part-time volunteer again.

My favourite thing to do in my spare time is...

Go to live music gigs, particularly heavy metal or old school punk in smaller venues.

People might not know this about me but I am able to...

Write novels and short stories, especially with a horror theme. I was short-listed by Hodder and Stoughton in Stephen King's 'On Writing' competition. On my fluffy side, I was runner up in a Good Housekeeping short story contest. Still never been published though!

If I could give one piece of advice to my younger self, it would be...

Don't be totally reckless but if there's something that scares you and you really want to do it, give it a go anyway.

I wish more people knew that...

I've made some unfortunate choices but overall I'm lucky! I've survived several near-death experiences including:

- I almost got strangled in mid-air when a solo parachute jump went wrong.
- I had a close shave when 2 hot air balloons just missed each other over the Valley of the Kings in Egypt (the year before, 2 actually collided and 1 burst into flames).
- I nearly died 3 times in 1 day when climbing in winter!

Getting to know Ann



Ann volunteers within St John's Hospital as a Book Service Volunteer.

Ann has been instrumental in getting this service to where it is today, delivering books to wards 1,3,8,9,14,17,18,21. Also REDU and Stroke unit and sometimes a few staff now and then.

"I believe words can change your world and that's why I do the Book Service".

I took up playing golf coming up to my 66th birthday. I'm a member of Greenburn golf club.

My favourite series on TV recently was...

French with subtitles 'Murder in Paris' with Astrid who is autistic and solved cases with her attention to detail, and Becker the ancient U.S. sitcom hasn't aged, still as relevant today. One of the films of recent times I enjoyed was Guardians of the Galaxy 3.



There's a painting in the portrait gallery that takes my breath away every time I look at it!

It's called the "Three Oncologists" depicting their skills and their probing light into the darkness of suffering.

Billy Connolly and Michael Caine

(Communicators) and many more who are able to relate to individuals with words. They help us to laugh at ourselves and tell us how it is!

My prized possession is...

A bible I gave to my mum who died of cancer 20 years ago. It has messages from grandad's bible transferred to it that were written when I was 17 and then the bible went into dad's coffin when he died in 2020.

In my prized possession is a picture of my mum on the beach of Cyprus where she loved and pictures of my grandchildren's births to remind me of the joys of living.

Getting to know Marika

Ward Helper, Ward 208, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh



The best thing about being a volunteer is... The interaction with patients and knowing that small things make a difference... an extra cup of coffee or a conversation with them which doesn't involve any treatment discussions etc.

Season preferred is... Definitely Spring. I love seeing new life beginning in my garden with Spring flowers full of colour popping up from beneath the soil, especially golden yellow daffodils.

Spare time...

I've danced since I was very small and still dance regularly. I attend a class that covers different styles and it's a great way to stay fit and socialise with others. Most are younger than me but I can keep up with them still! My dream would be to do a Quick Step with Giovanni from Strictly even although I've never done any ballroom. Dream on sadly.



I have lived in a different country: Saudi Arabia. It was fascinating to have experienced this very different culture for a year. Lovely people and very hot...every day!! Being a female, however, meant we were sometimes restricted on where we could go and what we could do.



People might not know this about me...

I'm a black belt in karate although I've not practiced in years!

Singing or dancing... Obvious choice is dancing but I like both, albeit singing in the car when alone as I don't have the best voice!

Some photos to the right including one with a friendly alpaca I met during some travels down south!



Getting to know Shirley

Ward helper, Ward 3, East Lothian Community Hospital



The one thing I'll never forget about my time volunteering is...

Supporting the vaccinators providing population vaccination during the pandemic at East Lothian Community Hospital. Worrying time for all age groups but proud to assist such a professional team as part of a significant global project which I hope never to see again in my lifetime but will always count it a privilege being able to help in some way having retired six months previously.

The best job I've ever had was...

Being a Zookeeper for the day at Blair Drummond Safari Park (a Christmas gift from my lovely husband). What a fun day getting behind the scenes of many of the animals which included feeding the giraffes (they were so elegant and gentle) and well as rubbing mud into the rhinos' tough skin.



I lived on lakeside Geneva, Switzerland, working as a bilingual nanny for a year back in the 80s. I looked after the son of the Van Cleef & Arpels Dynasty. I attended French lessons delivered by Henri Dunant's (co founder of the Red Cross) great, great granddaughter.

People might not know this about me...

I play a great deal of padel (cross between tennis and squash played outdoors) in my spare time. My husband and I recently won the over 50's mixed double tournament in Spain.



Random fact from one of my favourite 80s film...

'Gregory's Girl', a romantic comedy starring John Gordon Sinclair and Clare Grogan.
"Did you know when you sneeze it comes out your nose at 100 miles an hour".

Sunrise always rather than sunset...

After witnessing the sun rising in the Grand Canyon last year. Amazing and so worth getting out of bed early to get the best spot to marvel at the Canyon.



Getting to know Minne

Midlothian Community Volunteer and Reference Group
Volunteer



The best job I've had was....

Working with people with learning disabilities. I have a huge passion for being able to help people live independently, help them feel included in society and improve their quality of life. I love working with people and seeing them do something they have never done before. Big or small. Any achievement is amazing.

My favourite random fact is...

It is impossible to not think of a polar bear for a minute if you are told not to think of a polar bear for a minute.

The person who inspires me the most is...

David Attenborough. I think he is incredible as he has such a wealth of knowledge and passion for the natural environment. I used to want to be him.

If I could give myself one piece of advice to my younger self it would be...

Trust myself more and be nicer to myself. I am my own worst enemy at times.

My favourite food is...

Anything exotic. Absolutely love Sri Lankan food, Sushi, Mexican, pizza, and even enjoy a haggis now and again.



Sunrise or **Sunset** • Sweet or **Savoury** • **Sun** or Moon • Early Bird or **Night Owl** • **Beach** or Mountain • **Pop** or Rock • Singing or **Dancing** • **Swim** or Hike
• Bar or **Café** • **Tea** or Coffee • DIY or **Buy** • TV Series or **Movies** • Fiction or **Non-Fiction** • Cat or **Dog** • Dine in or **Take Away** • Indoor or **Outdoor**
• Planned or **Spontaneous**