



March 1st, 2017

Hospital volunteer calls it a day at 92

South Tyneside District Hospital's oldest volunteer, Dorothy Robertson, has said goodbye after more than 70 years.

Mrs Robertson, of South Shields, who will be 92 on March 12th, is well-known as one of the greeters in the Outpatients department, welcoming patients and their families and carers and helping them with enquiries.

"I'm very proud to have been associated with the hospital and I will be sad to go but I think perhaps the time has come to call it a day," she said. "I have had a very happy, active life and my hospital volunteering has been very much part of that. I will miss seeing everyone regularly but I will keep in touch."

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust Chairman Neil Mundy said: "Dorothy will be sorely missed and I can't thank her enough for all she has done. Her selfless commitment to our hospital and to her local community has been truly remarkable."

Her long history of service to her local hospital goes back to the Second World War. At the age of 17, she was too young to fulfil her ambition of becoming a nurse but, appreciating her enthusiasm, the matron at the Ingham Infirmary took her on as a volunteer in Outpatients. She became so trusted that she was allowed to dress wounds and she would go in on days off from her office job. She has volunteered at the hospital in various ways ever since.

Her interest in local health extended to involvement in bodies such as the Community Health Council, of which she was vice chairman, and the Alzheimer's Society in South Tyneside, of which she was chairman.

She was also a magistrate for more than 30 years, specialising in family courts, and a founder of the Relate marriage guidance service in South Shields. As a chaperone for child actors in the North East, she got to know the young Anthony McPartlin and Declan Donnelly (Ant and Dec) well on the set of Byker Grove.

Widow Mrs Robertson has two sons, a grand-daughter and three great-grandchildren. Her husband, Frank Robertson, was a funeral director in South Shields.

ends



Pictured above: Friends and colleagues say goodbye to South Tyneside District Hospital's oldest volunteer Dorothy Robertson

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan
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