

The end of an era ... and new beginnings



Barbara Weller

After sterling service as Editor of the *Journal of Neonatal Nursing* (1994-2004) and then Nursing Editor of *Infant* (2005-2009) Barbara Weller has finally decided to retire to spend more time on her studies. She will be sadly missed as she has played a key role in the success of both journals and also over the years has become a personal friend.

Barbara has had a very varied and interesting career in nursing. She started working with children as a ward sister to a children's ward (including sick neonates) in Woolwich having completed both general and sick children's training. As an early supporter of the National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital (NAWCH), formed by a group of Battersea mothers, she introduced facilities for resident parents and encouraged unrestricted visiting – quite revolutionary at the time. In 1961 she moved to the Hospital for Sick Children, London as a ward sister, working with Dr Newns and Mr Waterston with some of the first general surgical neonates.

From 1967 she became a tutor in the School of Nursing having completed a two year diploma course at the Royal College of Nursing. Four years later she moved to become a Regional Nurse with the Regional Hospital Board North East Thames, London and then joined the Department of Health as Nursing Officer in 1973, working initially with the Department of Information and COI in recruitment drives for nurses.

In 1977/8 she moved to the Children's Division and became involved in policy issues. This was an interesting and varied job which involved supporting the Neonatal Nurses Association (established by Beryl Chadney in 1977) and travelling widely. Following her marriage to David Fisher in 1984, she first retired in 1988, in order to spend more time at home and undertake some academic study. She pursued a BA Humanities and also an MSc Anthropology which she found thoroughly absorbing. At the same time she was appointed to the post of Professional Officer of the Neonatal Nurses Association (NNA) which she filled for ten years. She used her considerable energies to increase the profile of the NNA, including launching the *Journal of Neonatal Nursing* in 1994 and helping to organise the Third International Neonatal Nursing Conference 'Bridging the World' in Harrogate in April 1999. Increasingly she took on various consultancies both in the UK and overseas for WHO, British Council and private companies.

In her spare time she also found time to author many papers and textbooks, including *Paediatric Nursing* and seven editions of *Baillière's Nurses' Dictionary*, which has been translated into many different foreign languages. Having resigned from the *Journal of Neonatal Nursing* she helped launch *Infant* journal in 2005, and has been a stalwart supporter ever since.

Even in retirement, Barbara will not be idle. For the past three or four years she has been a postgraduate student at Anglia Ruskin University researching 'The Role of Working Class Women in the Early Salvation Army 1865-1900'. She now wants to have more time to analyse her material and write it up for the required dissertation, a demanding and time consuming task, which she obviously finds fascinating. I wish her well!

Barbara will be a hard act to follow, but I am delighted to be able to announce that Claire Greig has accepted the post of Nursing Editor of *Infant*. Claire too has had a long and illustrious career in neonatal nursing. Having trained as a nurse in Edinburgh, she undertook midwifery training in Aberdeen. She then returned to Edinburgh to do the neonatal course at the Simpson Memorial Maternity Pavilion. Although she thoroughly enjoyed her staffing experience in this unit she wanted to broaden her horizons and so emigrated to Canada.

While working in the Foothills Hospital in Calgary she attended the University of Calgary graduating with a bachelor's degree. She then accepted a Head Nurse post in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in the biggest neonatal unit in Eastern Canada – which must have been a fantastic experience. Returning to Scotland, she worked as a midwife, then was seconded to the University of Edinburgh gaining a Master's degree in Nursing Education and thus began her career in teaching. Since then, she has been based in Edinburgh and has specialised in neonatal nursing education, developing modules and programmes in conjunction with clinical colleagues across Scotland, and at the same time gaining a PhD and promotion to Senior Lecturer. In October 2007 she officially retired but has continued to teach on a part-time basis since.

With her wealth of experience in the neonatal field, Claire is ideally suited to taking on the nursing editorship of *Infant* journal and I look forward to working with her.

Christine Bishop
Publisher *Infant*



Claire Greig