

Founded 1905

*Centenary Issue October 2005*

# Newsletter

## **National Association of Women Pharmacists**

*'Celebrating women  
in Pharmacy'*

## *Celebrating women in Pharmacy*

### **The President's Letter**

Dear Fellow Members,

When I last wrote we were looking forward to a summer that was to be full of celebrations. What a summer it has been, starting with the Centenary Luncheon at the Society Headquarters on 15<sup>th</sup> June, exactly 100 years since the formation of NAWP; our visit to Edinburgh to present a paper at the International Congress for the History of Pharmacy; a visit by six members of the EC to the Conference of European Women Pharmacists in Heidelberg and finally our presence at BPC Manchester, where we were personally welcomed by the President, Hemant Patel. You will have received the Centenary Newsheet, sent out in July, that contained photographs and a report of the Luncheon and you will find details of most of the other events in this Newsletter.

Hardly surprisingly my most vivid memories are of HRH the Princess Royal who was our principal guest at the Luncheon. She joined us after a visit to the Traders Association at Smithfield Market and on leaving us was going on to Chair a meeting of the Royal Yacht Squadron followed by a Reception at the Indonesian Embassy. What a programme, we were all exhausted after just one of those events!! I am sure that she met and greeted all 120 people at the Reception and had something pertinent to say to everyone. Her speech, proposing a toast to NAWP, was about 10 minutes longer than we had expected and she picked up many of the points made by both the RPSGB President and myself. She spoke about the Princess' Trust for Carers and hoped that we might work together with them. All very impressive – I do have a tape recording if anyone is interested.

The Luncheon was only possible because of the support and encouragement that we received from the RPSGB and the generous donations of our sponsors and I should again like to thank them all.

Our visit to Germany was both enjoyable and interesting. We made contact with women pharmacists from eight European countries and had an opportunity to exchange views and ideas, some of which we hope to put into practice.

Your EC is now working on a vision for the future of NAWP which we hope to share with you in the near future. In the meantime there are two more events to look out for this year. We hope to unveil a plaque commemorating the first meeting of the Association of Women Pharmacists at 17 Bloomsbury Square (then the HQ of the Pharmaceutical Society) in November and on the same day, 16<sup>th</sup> November, Sue Symonds is giving a talk to the British Society for the History of Pharmacy.

Finally, I should like to say how delighted I am that Dr Christine Heading has agreed to serve as Vice President of NAWP for this year and to thank her and the rest of the EC for their help, encouragement and hard work over the last few months.

With my kind regards

*Monica Rose*



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### **Moving Forward**

At the Executive Committee meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup>, one of the key issues on the agenda was how to move our association forward over the next 100 years. Clearly a great deal of goodwill has been generated in this centenary year, and it is essential to utilise it before it evaporates. Nevertheless, although procrastination would be inexcusable, we must be thoughtful.

Our deliberations to date seem to have established a consensus that the *raison d'être* of NAWP is to address issues of concern to female pharmacists. With the resources we have, this usually translates as identifying problems, voicing concerns, contributing to problem solving and providing support - all in an atmosphere of comradeship. Probably the main difficulty the association has is how to convince the wider pharmacy community that we can make a significant contribution to the profession. Our failure in this respect almost certainly contributes to the lack of awareness of our existence by many pharmacists, and a membership level lower than we would like.

For the moment, the EC is exploring future options in several ways. We have split the Treasurer and Registrar roles so that the new Registrar (Hazel Baker) can focus on membership issues. Hazel's intention is to retrieve 'lost' members, boost retention and implement some new initiatives. Secondly, we plan to try and establish a stronger input into the profession's affairs, firstly by focusing on workforce issues. We believe we can make a valuable contribution in this area, and will persist in our intention to get our ideas heard. Thirdly, we plan to develop contacts and offers made to us during 2005. This includes looking at ways to

collaborate with BPSA and seeing if we can follow up some of the ideas mentioned by HRH The Princess Royal, via the Princess Royal's Carers' Trust. Other suggestions and contacts have not been forgotten.

As part of a broader assessment of where we should be going and/or how we should get there, we invited Maggie Cairney a Director of Next Step Forward Ltd to address our September EC meeting. Her company specialises in helping organisations change and develop their sense of direction. Certainly many significant points came out of her address, and these will be examined. To facilitate our move into the future, we have formed an informal working group and, as always, are happy to hear any ideas of members or other well-wishers.

*Christine Heading*

### **Medicine Taking: Learning From Patient Perspectives**

This meeting, held at the Royal Society of Medicine in September 2005, focused on patient choice. Billed as an opportunity to share information about research in the field, the aim was to explore how research findings could inform the development of health policy and practice and guide further research. The event, which was attended by about 130 people, was organised jointly by the Pharmacy Practice Research Trust and the Medicines Partnership. NAWP was notified of the event, and I attended on the association's behalf.

We are all probably aware that the term 'compliance' is now regarded as outdated. Patients should be stakeholders in their treatment plans and not required to 'comply' with decisions taken solely by

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prescribers. However, a controversy that developed during the presentations and ensuing discussion was whether healthcare professionals should use the term 'concordance' or 'adherence'. It became clear that this was not just a matter of semantics and the fashion of the moment, but that ethical and possibly financial issues were involved. For example, suppose a clinician wishes to prescribe for a hypertensive patient along guidelines of some type. If the patient refuses to take one of these items, the patient is non-adherent to the guidelines, but is he/she concordant? Does it matter to the prescriber that guidelines are not being adhered to, will reprimands follow, or monies not be paid?

*Christine Heading*

The detailed proceedings are posted on the website:

**[www.medicines-partnership.org](http://www.medicines-partnership.org)**

### Centenary Luncheon 2005

It was a wonderful experience to be present at our Centenary Luncheon. Friendships were renewed and memories made.

*Joan Brown*

A most enjoyable occasion and very well organised.

*Gwyneth Bedford*

A very memorable day, so many interesting people from different walks of life and very well organised.

*Pat Bolton*

Very well organised day--pity about the weather, would have loved to have had the Reception on the Roof Terrace. Also enjoyed the tour of the Headquarters.

*Christine Holden*

### Networking in Heidelberg

"The greatness of a profession perhaps primarily lies in the fact that it brings people together"

*Antoine de Saint Exupéry*

Monica Rose, Mary Gwillim-David, Brenda Ecclestone, Veronica Pearson, Sue Symonds and myself joined women pharmacists from Germany, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Poland, Slovenia and The Netherlands for the Second Meeting of European Women Pharmacists in Heidelberg on 27-28 August. The meeting was organised by the Deutscher Pharmazeutinnen Verband<sup>1</sup> (dpv) and was chaired by their President, Karin Wahl. A meeting had been held last year for the first time with the aim of bringing together women pharmacists from the European Union to share experiences and concerns, to provide united support in areas of concern and to ultimately become a voice for women pharmacists in Europe. It had been difficult identifying organisations to contact and Karin was pleased at the number of countries and the range of pharmacy experience represented at this meeting.

As the meeting was held at the Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum (German Cancer Research Centre), Barbara Bertram, their scientific collaborator and dpv member gave an interesting overview on the work of the centre, concentrating particularly on the epidemiology of cancer, an evaluation of carcinogenic substances, the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC study) and research at DKFZ into immune therapy, leukaemia, intervention trials including her own field of research into the activity of green tea. Most of the programme, however, consisted of presentations and discussions

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on pharmacy practice, education and employment of women pharmacists and career opportunities - discussions which continued throughout the weekend and long after the formal part of the meeting was over.

Representing the UK, Monica outlined the history and role of NAWP and gave a short summary of undergraduate and pre-registration training. Sue provided an overview of the employment and workforce issues of women in the profession, a theme that was also part of my talk on women pharmacists in the Pharmaceutical Industry and some of the problems and challenges they face, particularly with regard to career prospects and the 'glass ceiling'.

Maria Pia Orrú, Secretary of Federfarma Cagliari<sup>2</sup> Sardinia and a founder member, 15 years ago, of the Young Pharmacists Association in Italy, Aune Kirotar, President of the Society of Estonian Hospital Pharmacists, and Inka Puumalainen, President of the Pharmacists' Association, Suomen Farmasialiitto presented overviews of the practice of pharmacy in their countries. Monike Zeilinska, a PhD student at the University of Warsaw concentrated on the education of pharmacists in Poland including specialist courses for those intending to enter the Pharmaceutical Industry and mandatory CPD, which is based on a points system. NAWP appears to be the oldest surviving professional body for women pharmacists, but a similar organisation, existed in Germany. In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Germany, women were discussing problems of low pay, rejection by their male colleagues and disapproval by patients through the Apothekerinnenkränzchen<sup>3</sup>. The current organisation, dpv, is only three years old but was started because it was believed that this addressed a definite need.

In Poland, although several women continued to operate pharmacies after the death of their husbands, it was not until 1900 that a woman pharmacist was allowed to own a pharmacy. The first doctorate in pharmacy awarded to a woman was in 1939.

Although women have started to outnumber men on the register in the UK (52% women), most countries have a much higher proportion of women pharmacists. In Italy, 65% of pharmacists are women, in Estonia 54%, in Poland 89% and in Finland the majority of pharmacists are also female with 82% having a Master's degree (essential for pharmacy owners) and 96% having a Bachelor's degree. Despite the high proportion of women in the profession, women are paid 20% less than their male colleagues in Finland, and own fewer pharmacies in Poland (22% are owned or co-owned by women).

There was general concern that despite the increasing proportion of women in the professions, most of the key positions are held by men. This applied across all sectors of employment. For example, Maria Pia Orrú said that in Italy only 10% of women pharmacists progressed to positions of influence, but thought that it was probably a reflection of the emphasis in Mediterranean countries on family life. She believed that this was changing with the younger generation of women. Monike Zeilinska was concerned that in the academic setting there were few women professors. In Finland, although 69% of pharmacies are owned by women, there has never been a women President of the Pharmacy Owners Association.

There were some differences in the number of undergraduate pharmacy students and their education. In Italy there is unlimited entry but because it is

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not easy to get through the 5-year course, there is a high drop out rate and, in some parts of the country, it can be difficult to find employment. In contrast, in Estonia there are not enough pharmacists and only 30-40 students are allowed to enrol on pharmacy courses each year. In Poland, students follow the same curriculum for the first three years but then follow specialist options for the final two years. In Italy, there are two course, one of which (Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Technology) is designed for those who want to work in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

Other topics covered by the speakers during the day included training of technicians and pharmacy assistants, CPD, patient-counselling and health campaigns, retail price maintenance and deregulation of pharmacy medicines. There were so many issues that we could

all identify with and the day flew by.

It is hoped that this meeting will become an annual event. Certainly everyone in attendance was keen to support this. The venue for next year has not yet been decided but Berlin have been suggested as possible venue.

*Virginia Watson*



*Karin Wahl receives Centenary memento from Monica Rose. Photo reproduced from Deutsche Apotheker Zeitung*

*(Footnotes)<sup>1</sup> German Association of Women Pharmacists –<sup>2</sup> Association of pharmacy owners –<sup>3</sup> Women pharmacists circle*



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### **'In Heidelberg Fair'**

On arrival at Frankfurt Airport, thanks to Veronica's prior research, we were able to find our way to the bus that took us direct from the airport to Heidelberg – an hour's journey. We checked in to the NH Hotel on Bergheimer Strasse about 8 pm and then met Karin Wahl and other delegates who were staying at the same hotel. They had waited for our arrival before starting dinner and this very thoughtful and welcoming gesture set the tone for the warmth and friendliness we encountered throughout the weekend.

On Saturday evening a dinner was held in a restaurant in the historic Old Town, and we strolled back to our hotel along the cobbled Hauptstrasse, said to be the longest pedestrianised street in Europe. On that warm summer's evening it was thronged with people, mostly young students, probably from nearby Heidelberg University. In that storybook setting it was reminiscent of a scene from Romberg's 'The Student Prince', except for the music – more hip hop than 'Gaudeamus Igitur'.

On Sunday morning we travelled by funicular railway up to the red sandstone castle which overlooks Heidelberg and the Neckar valley. The view from the terrace is spectacular and we could see why Heidelberg is reputed to be one of the most beautiful small cities in Europe. Located in the castle is the German Pharmacy Museum, an extensive collection of pharmaceutical artefacts from all over Germany, displayed in a series of replica dispensaries from the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The intricately carved wooden cabinets held drugs and potions in the familiar porcelain jars, and drawers in the central work counters held the dry powders. As most labels were in Latin, it

was not difficult to identify the contents, many of which are still in use today, or have enjoyed a return to popularity.

The weekend concluded with a cruise on the River Neckar, on a boat powered by solar energy. From this vantage point it was possible to fully appreciate the beauty of Heidelberg in its attractive setting. The holiday Monday in UK meant that we could stay in Heidelberg for an extra day, and we took the opportunity to explore more of the Old Town and to have another meal in one of the many excellent restaurants. We returned to the UK next day, having learnt a great deal about the work of our European colleagues, and having made some friendships which will endure. Many of those women we met have expressed an interest in attending a NAWP conference in the future.

We hope that the links we have established will benefit women pharmacists in all countries of Europe, not just those represented in Heidelberg. The six of us who were present at this 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting hope to persuade other NAWP members that it will be an enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

*Sue Symonds*



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## Random thoughts Looking back at 1954-5

The Dinner was the highlight of the year. No State banquet could have been planned with greater attention to detail and we welcomed the chance to invite guests from the wider pharmaceutical world. I look with awe at a photo of myself, as President, in full evening gloves, entertaining the great and the good of the Pharmaceutical world of Merseyside.

Not every woman pharmacist supported NAWP. A few maintained that, having trained on equal terms with our male colleagues, we should confine our activities to branches of the Society. Speaking personally, I found it easier to learn about committee procedure, branch organisation, co-operation with others and much more with the help

and encouragement of a smaller group of supportive colleagues. Incidentally, in the future, I would find myself on the Guild of Hospital Pharmacists and also did a stint as Secretary of the Local Branch of the Society, so it would seem that an early apprenticeship with NAWP did no harm.

I am grateful for the help and friendship of many splendid women pharmacists, most of them, alas, no longer with us. Nora Jones, who cajoled (and sometimes bullied) us into correct procedure; Mary Dodd, with her own pharmacy in Liverpool; dear Marie Townley who, despite her gentle 'old lady' appearance, once startled me by admitting to have owned and ridden a motorbike. Perhaps, the last word should be from Jane Mills. I clearly remember, when discussion became a bit heated, she would say, "We may be WOMEN pharmacists, but let us remember that we are LADIES".

*Mary Hirst*





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### **Celebrating Women in Pharmacy online**

The Museum of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society has added a new online exhibition to its website about the history of women in pharmacy. Titled, *Celebrating Women in Pharmacy*, to tie in with NAWP's centenary year, the exhibition combines an overview of the main events in the development of women's roles in pharmacy, with a more in-depth look at some of the leading individuals involved. It also contains sections examining attitudes to women pharmacists from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

You can find a link to the online exhibition at the Museum's homepage

**[www.rpsgb.org/museum](http://www.rpsgb.org/museum)**

*Briony Hudson  
Keeper of the Museums Collections*

### **Centenary Luncheon Photographs**

Copies of photographs taken on the day are available for purchase at a cost of £6 for a 6" x 4" and £10 for a 10" x 8" print. If you would like to purchase any photographs please send your order, together with the correct money to

*Vela Burden*  
105 Scraftoft Lane,  
Leicester,  
LE5 2FE.  
**Tel:** 0116 276794.

Orders must be placed by 5<sup>th</sup> November

### **Secretary's Postbag**

NAWP receives items of news from women's groups. If you would like more information on any of these items please contact Brenda Ecclestone on 01453 759516.

As the members who were present at our centenary luncheon celebration will remember, HRH the Princess Royal spoke with great enthusiasm about the Princess Royal Trust for Carers - of which she is President - and the role pharmacists could play in its support. NAWP hopes to pursue such a link and we are currently exploring how we could work together. In 1999 the government launched the National Strategy for Carers that set out what service providers (e.g. pharmacists or voluntary organisations) should do for the carers themselves. This strategy has three key approaches: information for carers, support for carers and care for carers. Various groups providing financial support, e.g. Glaxo Smith Kline and Barclays Bank, have produced reports on the subject. The statistics found in these reports are alarming: five million carers in England and Wales, over a million of whom provide more than 50 hours care per week. One in five of these carers never have a holiday.

The National Service Framework for Mental Health had specified that carers should have an annual assessment of their physical and mental health needs and their own care plan. Although this does not protect the carer, it does recognise the stress they experience. This is an area in which the Princess Royal Trust wants to give practical help, to ensure that 'today's carers are not tomorrow's patients'.

Whilst visiting New York this summer, a tour of the United Nations headquarters reminded me of the tremendous and

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almost impossible tasks facing the UN. In March this year it held the ten-year review of the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Thousands of women, representing grassroots organisations from all over the world, met in New York and adopted ten resolutions to improve women's status.

The 1995 meeting was the largest international conference ever organised by the UN; 17,000 women took part from 189 nations and there was a parallel conference for NGOs (Non-governmental organisations) attended by 20,000. This year's meeting looked at the situation today, ten years later. On the positive side, there has been a dramatic change worldwide in attitudes to women's rights. An attempt by the USA to remove the abortion rights adopted in 1995 was successfully resisted. But many problem areas were identified, including HIV/AIDS among women, violence against women, trafficking in women and children, and lack of data specifically about women. There are also many shortfalls, for example in the still inadequate representation of women on decision-making bodies and too few women in senior positions.

In the PJ for 3 September (page 275) I was alarmed to read about 'hardline' proposals for deleting members from the Register who had been out of practice for five years. In fact, the article went on to make clear that this would only apply if the member did not undertake some retraining and updating. I'm sure we all recognise the need for CPD and CPE, but NAWP hopes that the Society will always be ready to help women returning to practice after five years or more working at home.

*Brenda Ecclestone*

## Women for Pharmacy Lunch FIP Conference

At the recent FIP Conference in Cairo, Grace Young, President of the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association (CPA) gave a lecture on 'Career Choices for a Woman Pharmacist- A Case Review'.

Grace Young said that recent data from the Pharmacy Council in Jamaica, for the period 2001-2004, indicated that 78 % of pharmacy graduates were women. It is anticipated that in the US, there will be a 2:1 ratio of women pharmacy graduates in the foreseeable future. Pharmacy is now a career choice for women in both the developing and developed world and it would be interesting to determine the percentage of women occupying heights of industry and the profession.

In developing countries such as Jamaica, postgraduate pharmacy education may require overseas travel and is therefore not accessible to many, but an option would be to study business, management or government related courses since these could lead to career enhancement. Women should also take advantage of online courses. However, it should be remembered that they will need to develop the skills to cope with the demands of work and study.

She continued by outlining the factors that may determine the employment choices made by women pharmacists in the Caribbean, relating this also to her own career development and involvement within the Pharmaceutical Society of Jamaica. She said that, 'all along the way there were others who made recommendations, tutored, allowed one space to grow in knowledge, express one's views and ultimately lead nationally,

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regionally and internationally.'  
Speaking about the challenges women face she referred to time management skills and prioritising commitments and finding the balance between professional and personal life. There is not yet an acceptance of women in leadership and she believes that women must learn from men – to bond and network for success, to support each other and to lead from in front.

In conclusion she urged every women in pharmacy to 'commit to living out her vision' and asked if there is a 'place for CPA/FIP collaboration in this area.

**Editors note:**

*I am grateful to Christine Glover for providing a copy of Grace Young's speech*

### Extracts from Half a Century of NAWP in Blackpool and District

At the National Council AGM in London in April 1954, Alice Greenwood was unanimously elected National President of the Association after receiving the highest number of postal votes for election to Council. In October 1954 the Merseyside Branch had organised a visit to the Illuminations and joined us afterwards for supper at the New Central Hotel.

In April 1958 five members travelled to Chester by taxi for the National Executive AGM, joining about sixty other members, where an offer was made to host a future AGM in Blackpool. An invitation was also made to the Chester branch to visit the Illuminations in October. This took place on 15 October, when twelve members

from Cheshire joined us for afternoon tea, a visit to the Tower and a meal at "The Lobster Pot" before the tour of the "Lights".

Our invitation to host the AGM was taken up in April 1960. After a meal, again at the "Lobster Pot" the AGM was held at the Imperial Hotel. During the meeting our branch expressed strong disapproval of the increase in membership fee from ten shillings to one guinea (twenty-one shillings in old money!) We were supported by the delegates from the Nottingham Branch, but after the vote, the resolution was passed.

This was discussed at our next business meeting in May, as we thought that the vote at the AGM was not representative of all members and a postal vote would have given all members, including country members, an equal vote. Letters were sent to the Nottingham Branch and to the National Executive Secretary, to present our views at the next AGM as a resolution. At a Council meeting at the Stork Hotel in Liverpool, at which six of us were present, our resolution was accepted after discussion, with slight amendments.

In August 1961 we sent our invitation to the National President and Council Members for a "social tea" and Illumination trip and on 4 October a Council meeting was held at the home of Mrs Greenwood. After a meal at a local restaurant, by arrangement with Blackpool Corporation a tour was booked on one of the illuminated trams - the "Sputnik" when we were mistaken for a group of MPs from the Labour Conference and treated as VIPs.

At our summer meal in 1976, Miss Noel Mackay was presented with a spray of flowers on completing 50 years on

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the Register and Lillian Anderson was congratulated on her second term of office as President of the Blackpool Branch of the Society and on being elected Deputy Mayor of Wyre Borough Council.

In 1979 Margaret Barnes returned to her native Blackburn and applied to join our NAWP Branch in spite of travelling thirty or so miles to meetings.

In 1982, coming into the age of equality of the sexes, Mr Alf Greenwood applied for membership of the Blackpool NAWP. His application was accepted and sent for approval by the National Executive thus becoming the first male member of NAWP. I think there was a second male - was it Mervyn Madge who always supported NAWP?

At the beginning of 1983 we met at the home of the newest member, Miss Jill Feaks, who is now our Secretary. Jill had returned from India and, dressed in a Sari, gave us an insight into her work as a pharmacist in Pakistan and the Punjab, and of her training for mission work and life in part of the Indian Continent. Also in 1983 we were pleased to congratulate Estelle Leigh on being presented with the Charter Gold Medal of the Society and Alice on becoming an Honorary Vice President of NAWP. To express our appreciation for her work for NAWP during the last 30 years, she was presented with a crystal bud-vase at our thirtieth birthday meal.

The North Euston Hotel was again the venue for our 40th anniversary in 1993. We were joined by the National President, Mrs Mary Gwillim-David and Peggy Baker from Cardiff, and among other guests a former member of our branch, Miss Janet Davis, who came back from Yorkshire and presented us with a lovely Ruby paperweight. The three founder members present cut the celebration cake which had the NAWP badge copied in the icing.

In 1994 Mrs Barnes was elected to the National Executive Council and in February 1995 we lost Alice, who had done so much for NAWP for over 40 years.

After a Council meeting, Mrs Barnes returned with the proposal to hold the Weekend School in Blackpool in 1996, so much of the year following was taken up with arrangements, visits to various hotels, letters to a number of firms seeking sponsorship and finally the Hotel Glendower in St Annes was chosen as the venue to take place on the 19/21 April. The weekend was voted a great success, much to our relief.

*Joan Alderson*

### All Change: Maternity leave and beyond

With the majority of pharmacists now women, and the proportion of women in the profession set to rise as those who are students qualify, the issue of combining a career in pharmacy with being a mum affects more and more of us. Unlike our mothers and grandmothers it is much more usual, almost expected of us, that once we start a family we will continue working. But how do women make this business of juggling what is essentially two careers work? As the mother of two young children I really wanted to know! I have been quizzing mums in various types of pharmacy and here are our tips for survival and sanity.

#### Tip 1: Get some support!

Whatever phase of motherhood you are in, you don't have to do it alone. During pregnancy talk to colleagues or friends with children, read books, go to an antenatal group, talk to your midwife and so on. Having your family nearby is an

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extra bonus in this day and age, do make use of their wisdom and experience! Once your bundle of joy is born and you feel able to get out the door with the mountain of equipment that babies seem to require for even the shortest trip, go to a baby group (try local places of worship or the NCT for details) and get to know other mums, it really helps to be able to confide concerns as well as joys to others, especially if their children have been through the phase yours are at and come out the other side in one piece. They can also be a useful source of second hand equipment! Some antenatal groups also stay in touch once children are born, providing another support and information network. Health visitors can be a huge help too.

### **Tip 2: Maternity leave and pay.**

Make sure you know what your Maternity leave and pay entitlements are, and plan well ahead. Currently mothers are entitled to 26 weeks of "Ordinary" Maternity Leave (OML), during this time they may be eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) this works out at 90% of their average earnings for the first 6 weeks and from then on £106 per week. Mums may choose to extend their maternity leave by an additional unpaid 26 weeks (Additional Maternity Leave) or to take a complete career break. Do check with your employer since some packages may be more generous than the minimum requirement above. Those who are self-employed may be able to claim maternity allowance from their social security or Jobcentre plus office. Useful websites for maternity and paternity benefits and rights include The Tailored Interactive Guidance on Employment Rights site, and those of the Department of Trade and Industry and the Maternity Alliance. It almost seems that you only just find out you are pregnant and immediately you have to make decisions on maternity

leave, how long you will take and when you will be back. This is all well and good, but babies do have a habit of putting a spanner in the works and then the best laid plans of mums and managers go out the window! If you are not ready to go back to work at the specified date try and warn your boss as soon as possible so she or he can plan for your extended maternity leave.

### **Tip 3: Breastfeeding.**

As pharmacists we all know how beneficial breastfeeding is to mother and baby. What is less obvious to those who haven't been there is that breastfeeding does not necessarily come naturally to either of you, it is a skill that both you and your baby have to learn. It takes time and patience and lots of support from those around you: midwives, health visitors and other mums can all help. An invaluable source of advice is the NCT breastfeeding line, where friendly and helpful counsellors can talk through problems.

### **Tip 4: Finances**

Babies and children are downright expensive, and maternity pay not particularly generous so do make sure you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to, for example child benefit as well as Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, visit the Directgov website for more information. Do also look into protecting your pension rights either with your employer or an independent financial advisor.

### **Tip 5: Keep in touch?**

In an ideal world you would read your Pharmaceutical Journal lovingly every week during your maternity leave or career break, for the sheer joy of it. In the land of babies and small children however the only thing you are likely to be allowed to read whilst they are awake

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is endless nursery rhymes and when they are asleep (eventually) all you want to do is join them! If you can manage to skim through your PJ every so often you deserve a medal, and you'll be really glad you did when you go back to work. If however you don't manage to follow what is happening in the profession (my PJs were predominantly unopened, I am ashamed to admit, for years!) do not despair! The good news is you can still get back up to speed with return to practice courses (more in the next article).

You will also have to consider what to do about your membership of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. At the time of writing the options for a mum taking maternity leave are to:

**a)** leave the register (disadvantages are that you sever links with the profession, do not receive the PJ (although it is available online to all) and you have to pay a restoration fee when you return of £125).

**b)** remain on the register as a practising pharmacist, the fee is likely to be £267 in 2006, but you will be obliged to demonstrate your continuing competence to practice, through the continuing professional development (CPD) process.

**c)** remain on the register as a non-practising pharmacist which means you cannot "engage in pharmacy practice" nor "work in or give advice in relation to the science of medicines or the practice of pharmacy or health care". This means considering very carefully your response to any requests for advice from other mums, and redirecting them to their community pharmacist, GP etc as appropriate. The non-practising fee is likely to be £60 in 2006. Non-practising pharmacists are not required to carry out and document CPD,

however they will have to demonstrate their competence to practise once they return to the register. What form this will take is currently under debate. In contrast membership of NAWP is free to those taking a career break!

### **Tip 6: Enjoy it!**

Lastly, it may seem hard to imagine when you are up to your knees in dirty nappies but time does pass fast, and children grow up very quickly. Time distorts somehow with individual days lasting forever but the months flying past. Try and take time to savour the moment, it's worth trying to do something special with them every day be it ever so simple, such as reading a favourite story or singing a silly song, or a trip out. One of the privileges we have when we have time with our children (however long or short it is each day) is the chance to build memories for their future. Enjoy!

### **Useful websites and phone numbers.**

**National Childbirth Trust**  
[www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com](http://www.nctpregnancyandbabycare.com)  
 Tel: 0870 444 8707

**Breastfeeding line**  
 Tel: 0870 444 8708

**Tailored Interactive Guidance on Employment Rights**  
[www.tiger.cov.uk](http://www.tiger.cov.uk)

**Department of Trade and Industry**  
[www.dti.gov.uk/er/workingparents.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/workingparents.htm)

**Maternity Alliance**  
[www.maternityalliance.org.uk](http://www.maternityalliance.org.uk)  
 Tel: 020 7490 7638

### **Editors note:**

*Sarah will be discussing returning to practice in a future issue of the Newsletter.*

## Celebrating women in Pharmacy

### **Centenary Luncheon 2005**

It was an exciting occasion, so good to meet people from varied backgrounds and to celebrate in style.

*Jill Feaks*

First impression--Greeting old friends and meeting other guests, then admiring the lovely blue and white floral arrangements at Lambeth.

The relief to see Joan B to come back smiling into the room. Remembering the third Joan who had planned to be with us. Finally, as Princess Anne shook my hand on receiving the bouquet hearing myself say "Oh your hands are cold!" to which she replied "They always are."

A wonderful, exciting day.

*Joan Alderson*

### **Letters to the Editor**

I have spent quite a long time mulling over the brainstorming session held at Abergavenny and indeed the one previously in Birmingham. Adding fuel to these thoughts has been the spate of correspondence in The Journal.

I don't think that enough emphasis has been put on the value of peer support to any group of people. More and more, as my life has gone on, I have become aware of this important resource and indeed I find myself, not infrequently, pointing people in this direction when counselling at work. Whether one has been bereaved, divorced, burgled or suffered serious illness, the people with the most understanding and practical advice are those who have trodden the same path. Likewise, in the workplace,

those who will be most supportive will be those with the same background.

Why should women pharmacists need to consort with other women pharmacists in this day and age? Because only other women pharmacists will know exactly what it is like to be a woman pharmacist building a career in today's world. Maybe this is the very asset we should be marketing to boost membership and strengthen our organisation.

*Sarah Insole  
Bristol*

Despite many letters in the PJ relating to the "non-practising pharmacist" and retention fee issues, and further to my letter, and that from Lee Helliwell, in the June Newsletter, I am dismayed to find that no satisfactory solution appears to be forthcoming.

A recent letter in the PJ highlighted an issue which must be applicable to many members for whom their background in pharmacy and the use of the MRPharmS designation is of considerable benefit in work in the voluntary sector. This would seem to be another good reason for members to be able to retain their contact with the Society, maintain due recognition as professional people and continue to call themselves pharmacists (even if required to add retired, or non-practising).

The report of decisions made at the August meeting of the Society's Council, as detailed on the PJ, 13 August, states that non-practising members with more than 50 years on the register will pay a retention fee of £20, whilst those with fewer than 50 years membership will be required to pay £60 (with no guarantee that this will not increase).

As no-one is likely to register under the

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age of 22 years and must therefore be 72 years old before being eligible for the reduced fee, the majority of women retiring at 60 or 65 years old face paying the higher fee for a considerable number of years. £60 p.a. may be a fair price to cover the cost of receiving the PJ, but when this is coupled with the necessity of signing the "non-practising" declaration, it does rather add insult to injury!

I seem to find myself faced with two options:

1) Pay £60 p.a., receive the PJ, but agree not to give any advice (despite years of experience and the integrity and intelligence to accept the limits of my knowledge).

or;

2) Resign, save £60p.a., download or borrow the PJ, lose the advantages inherent in the designation MRPharmS, but say whatever I like!

I should like to request that NAWP, as the representative body of over 50% of pharmacists, take up these issues.

Anita Sutcliffe  
Blackpool

**Editors note:**

*Arlette Alexander has written to both the Secretary and Registrar and the Pharmaceutical Journal on this same issue suggesting that the eligible length of service should be reduced from 50 years to 45 years.*

**STOP PRESS**  
**The Council has now deferred  
the proposal for a reduced  
retention fee**  
(PJ, 22 October)

### **International Congress for the History of Pharmacy, People and Places'**

**Edinburgh from 22nd  
to 25th June 2005.**

Approximately 260 delegates from 30 different countries, including Hazel Baker, Norma Cox, Joan Mawson from NAWP, attended this conference at which Monica Rose and Sue Symonds presented a joint paper, 'Celebrating Women in Pharmacy - National Association of Women in Pharmacy 1905-2005'.

The NAWP Poster board, prepared by Briony Hudson was on display. Briony also gave a presentation on the RPSGB Museum. Norma Cox had a Poster Presentation 'The Flower of Bristol' or Nonesuch flower, now the emblem of the City of Bristol.

The next Congress will be held in Seville in September 2007.

### **Celebrating Women In Pharmacy – DVD Now Available**

As part of NAWP's Centenary Celebrations we talked to two women pharmacists of different generations to compare their experiences of working in pharmacy and their thoughts on pharmacy as a career for women. The result is an interesting filmed record of very different working practices and of the stimulating exchange of ideas between the two interviewees. Although almost seven decades separates Elizabeth Doran and Edith Spivack, their enthusiasm for their



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profession and their interest in each other's working experiences is evident in this short 25-minute film. It provides a valuable historical comment on women in pharmacy in this Centenary year.

A DVD of this interview is now available for distribution. One copy will be sent free to all NAWP members.

Extra copies can be purchased by members or by non-members at a cost of £5 (includes postage). There are a very small number of VHS Video tapes available at the same price.

If you wish to purchase an additional copy of the DVD, please contact :

*Mrs Veronica Pearson,*  
41 Tynedale Road,  
Loughborough,  
Leics,  
LE11 3TA.

**Tel:** 01509 230 463

**Email:** vphmp@tiscali.co.uk

Cheques should be made payable to NAWP.

*If you think you are a NAWP member, but do not receive your free copy, it may be that your subscription is not up to date. We are currently reviewing our Register and asking everyone to check their membership status. Retired pharmacists can continue to be members of NAWP even when no longer on the RPSGB Register.*

The Editor would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue of the Newsletter.

If you would like to contribute to the next issue, please contact the Newsletter Editor or any member of the Executive Committee.

## Forthcoming Events

### Joint Meeting of the

*Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain  
British Society for the History of Pharmacy  
National Association of Women Pharmacists*

**'A meeting at once historical and novel'** The Foundation of the National Association of Women Pharmacists

**Wednesday 6.30 pm  
16 November 2005**

Royal Pharmaceutical Society,  
1 Lambeth High Street,  
London

This is the first time that a joint meeting has been held and non-members are welcome to attend. **Sue Symonds** is the guest speaker and we would like to see a good representation of NAWP members at this meeting.

Refreshments served from 5.30pm

## Executive Committee

(year to retire in brackets)

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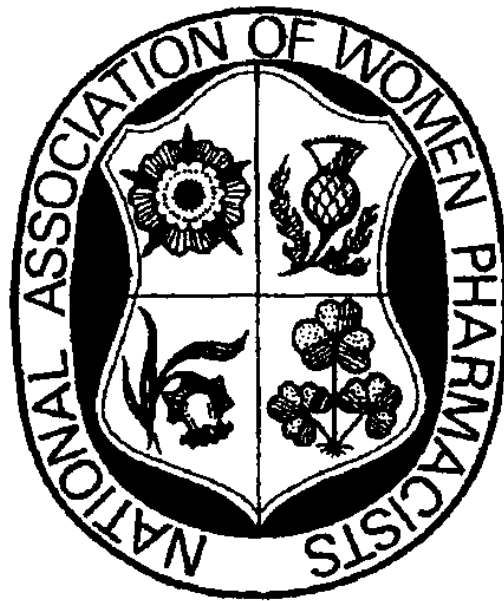
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