



Recently a dysphasic patient asked me if I was an ‘*unpassionate*’ person? The conversation took various directions towards compassionate, passionate and enthusiastic. It eventually transpired he meant: was I an impatient person? This was because he felt I was hurrying him! Yes, it is true – I am compassionate, passionate, enthusiastic and all too often impatient! The aim of the British Society of Gerodontology is to improve, preserve and protect the oral health of older people. I am very glad to join the BSG committee who are passionate about this aim. It is with some trepidation that I am taking on the role of newsletter editor. As for me, I am a specialist in Special Care Dentistry with a particular passion for caring for patients with neuro-disability and an enthusiasm for making dentures. I am currently based at Loughborough Hospital, as a senior clinician for adults needing special care and involved in developing services for adults with neuro-disability, domiciliary services and oral care training for registered nurses. The continued success of this Society depends on the enthusiasm of you, the members. So, if you have ideas, experience and willingness to contribute to the work of the Society please consider joining the committee. The committee would particularly benefit from representation from dental care professionals.

There is much BSG work in progress and we thank Tim Friel for an enjoyable and successful Spring Study Day in June. Organising Study Days takes an enormous amount of effort – much of it behind the scenes – so we are grateful to everyone involved. The Oral Health Promotion group is involved with development of oral care resources, training material, courses and film making. BSG committee members are working in partnership with other organisations such as the Stroke Association, Alzheimer’s Society the Dementia Action Alliance.

Some of these projects will be reported in the Spring 2013 Newsletter. This newsletter is a ‘*work in progress*’, so please send your articles, examples of good practice and any other thoughts or comments relating to Gerodontology for the Spring edition by 10<sup>th</sup> February 2013. All that remains is for me to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Joanna Millwood

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### An Introduction from Barbara Hylton the President Elect

I graduated from Bristol Dental School in 1973, working in the school dental service in Bristol for the next 6 years. Moving to the West Midlands, I worked for Solihull CDS and part-time in general dental practice. Feeling rather inadequate in treating special needs patients, I embarked on an MSc special needs orientated course at Birmingham University, where I was taught by Gill Bradnock, Linda Shaw, Arnold Franks and Prof. Anderson. The greatest influence on my career was carrying out a dissertation/study on district nurses as ‘gatekeepers’ to housebound older adults for oral care. I learnt extensively about the attitudes and prejudices many of the nurses and patients had against dentists – leading to an appreciation of the real barriers to oral care training. This MSc course triggered a passion for special care dentistry and ‘eating my own words’ that on qualifying I said the last thing I would do would be to make dentures for older people – but for the past 12 years have been happily enjoying this challenge with other branches of special care dentistry. At a recent reunion of my undergraduate year, I realised how lucky I have been to sustain my interest in dentistry and a career I have found exhilarating and fulfilling as opposed to many of my contemporaries in dental practice. I enjoyed time several years ago, with an external mentor, which led to attending a teaching course at Birmingham University and subsequently developed my teaching skills with dental undergraduates and others. The most challenging part of my career was organising a portfolio when applying for status of associate in special care dentistry – but once completed, I had the satisfaction of successfully encouraging several more experienced colleagues to apply. I am still married and we have 3 sons and 2 grandchildren. I remain an avid reader (forever vowing to form my own book club), a dedicated gardener, updating my fluency in the Polish language & culture and frequenter to the RSC productions in Stratford-upon-Avon. I vow to walk more, travel and do less tracking of family members on Facebook (and pigs will fly!) and use Skype/Facetime instead.

### Gerodontology Journal

Many of our members will be aware of changes this year in editor-in-chief and the editorial board of Gerodontology. Michael MacEntee’s first editorial describes a brief history of the journal from its first publication in 1982 as ‘a journal devoted to the growing awareness of gerontologic problems associated with the tissues of the oral cavity.’ The journal then rooted in North America but attracting papers from elsewhere as interest in dental geriatrics grew internationally. Michael MacEntee expresses particular gratitude to Robin Heath for the role he played in sustaining the journal during a difficult period some decades ago, and to Jim Newton, who carried Robin’s torch forward to leave the journal in the healthy state in which he inherited it.

Gerodontology remains a valued, international journal of scholarship in dental geriatrics with a respectable impact factor and a steady supply of good manuscripts. We are grateful to the authors, referees and distinguished editorial board.

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### BSG Committee Membership 2011 / 2012

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| President                | Tim Friel  |
| Immediate Past President | Vicki Jones  |
| President Elect          | Barbara Hylton   |
| Honorary Secretary       | Jeff Wilson  |
| Membership Secretary     | Paul Zubkowski   |
| Honorary Treasurer       | Bob Baker  |
| Gerodontology Editor     | Mike MacEntee  |
| Web Editor               | Arun Srestha   |
| Newsletter Editor        | Joanna Millwood  |
| Sponsorship Secretary    | Geraldine Russell  |
| Committee Members        | Janet Griffiths<br>Tracey Welbury<br>Debbie Lewis<br>Liz Mavor |
| Co-opted Members         | Beshika Naidoo<br>Maria Ariyaratnam                            |

## Thank You Thelma!

Thelma Edwards was elected to the BSG committee six years ago as the Dental Care Professional representative. Her background as an oral health promotion coordinator for West Sussex Personal Dental Services plus MSc in Public Health was ideal for supporting the objectives of the society. Her enthusiasm, commitment and tenacity in ensuring good quality oral health promotion, education and training for carers of older people was soon evident. She admits herself that she has always been a 'why' person and had an interest in the reason for people reacting in the way they do towards mouthcare and explored ways in trying to make it easier for people and carers to improve their oral health.

Through her attendance at many conferences on behalf of BSG, Thelma forged links with health, voluntary sector and social care in order to further the improvement of mouth care for older people. The BSG Oral Health Promotion group (BSGOHP) was convened to look at the growing list of topics she urged BSG to develop. These included lobbying Department of Health which resulted in BSG OHP group working with Royal College of Nurses and DoH to publish 'Promoting Oral Health for Older People' in 2011, liaising with the Care Quality Commission to highlight the quality of oral care in care homes and working with the Resident and Relatives Association so that BSGOHP members were able to assist in updating their 'Keep Smiling' guide. She was a great trawler of the internet and brought to the attention of BSG members many teaching, training and educational mouthcare for older person projects and packages which she displayed at BSG study days. The BSG newsletters was resurrected by her and those of you who are long standing BSG members will appreciate how difficult these are to edit and produce on a regular basis – but this did not deter her.

In 2011 Thelma retired from her job and moved to the South West. Much to BSG's regret, she finally decided to retire completely and resign from the committee. It has been a great loss as she was so well respected and passionate about the 'mouthcare for older people' cause. BSG would like to thank her for all her hard work and commitment and wish her well in her retirement. There will never be another Thelma!

Vicki Jones BSG Past President, Chair, BSGOHP group

## An Appeal from the BSG Membership Secretary,

**Paul Zubkowski:** Following the BSG Study Day in June 2012, I have updated the membership database and, to date, 141 have renewed their membership. Since last year's AGM we have had 12 applications from new members. I will be contacting members by email with reminders for membership subscription renewal this year. I appeal to all BSG members to pay their subscriptions by bank standing order on January 1<sup>st</sup> each year. I would also be grateful if those members who do pay by standing order, but are paying from bank accounts that do not match their name, could contact me (preferably by email) as these entries on the BSG bank statements are difficult to match up to individual members. Please use my home email address: [phz.obiri@btinternet.com](mailto:phz.obiri@btinternet.com)

*The BSG Committee will be proposing changes to the membership subscription, this will be debated at the AGM.*

## BSG OHP Group

The BSG OHP group continues to work with BSDH in developing a video/e-learning package for carers of older people. Hopefully the first element will be completed by the Summer of 2013. Details will be posted on the BSG website with a link to the video. It is planned to produce a CD that can be used as part of training by oral health educators for carers in care homes. For further details, please send an email to: [contact@gerodontology.com](mailto:contact@gerodontology.com)

## Wales 1000 Lives Plus 'Mouthcare for Adults in Hospital'

This draft programme for nurses in acute hospitals in Wales includes an oral health risk assessment tool, care plans, data collection and training packages. It is currently being rolled-out in Wales following the PDSA model approach to health care project development.

The new Dalhousie University 'Brushing Up on Mouthcare' training package was launched this summer. I came across it whilst preparing for a lecture for the BDA and I think it is excellent!

Vicki Jones

## News from Wales

There have been a number of initiatives in Wales that are relevant to the wider issues of health and care for older people. Janet Griffiths attended two meetings to represent BSG.

**Delivering Dignity** on October 1<sup>st</sup> was a one day conference organised to discuss ways of delivering dignity in caring for older people in Wales, both in hospital and the home environment. Wales is the only country in the world that has an Older People's Commissioner; the first and current Commissioners have been actively consulting with older people about their experiences in hospital and have published a number of reports. The conference aimed to collate examples of good practice which will be published on the website. Apart from reports commissioned by the OPC, you can sign up for a regular newsletter at:

[www.olderpeoplewales.com](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com)

The Alzheimer's Society Wales Conference, **Delivering on Dementia** was held on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The main theme was the development of Dementia Friendly Communities and Dementia Champions to push forward changes in attitude towards dementia, as well as creating environments that support a person with dementia to remain living in the community.

Reports of both meetings and a reference list will shortly be published on the BSG website.

Janet Griffiths, December 2012

## Date for your diary – Spring Study Day 2013



**BSG and NOHPG Combined Study Day 2013 - Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June**

**Macdonald Burlington Hotel, Birmingham**

Title "Time to be inspired"  
Theme: Oral Health Improvement

[www.nohpg.org](http://www.nohpg.org)

[www.gerodontology.com](http://www.gerodontology.com)