Books *beautiful* books

TITLE: Open wide: memoir of the dental dame
AUTHOR: M. Seward
PUBLISHER: The Memoir Club, www.thememoirclub.co.uk
PRICE: £19.95
ISBN: 9781841041070

Dame Margaret Seward's memoir is a thoroughly good read. Like others I have spoken to, I found it difficult to put down. It is written in an informal style, just as Dame Margaret might tell it when walking by the seashore in her home town of Bournemouth. Despite this the book is obviously the result of meticulous research. As she says in the preface: 'I was determined to consult minutes, documents and speeches so that the description of events is as accurate as possible.'

'Margaret dreamed of gaining recognition for DCPs'

Dame Margaret has 'lived and breathed dentistry' from her earliest years. Many of the numerous illustrations in the book relate to the early years. The account of these contains a fair number of surprises. This is a memoir of the past 50 and more years of dentistry and running throughout it are three themes, her involvement with women's issues and her work to gain recognition and registration for professionals complementary to dentistry (now called DCPs). She had dreamed of this over three decades; as she says: 'Patience in dental politics is an essential virtue.' The other theme which will

interest the reader is her love of overseas travel and involvement in international dentistry.

Her involvement with DCPs dates back over 40 years when she went on a tour of Australia and New Zealand. What she saw there 'stirred (her) commitment to raise awareness of their unique contribution to providing oral health.' Twenty years later Dame Margaret was the driving force behind *Teamwork*, the distance learning programme for dental nurses. The dental team featured strongly at the Bournemouth BDA conference, where she became President. The conference logo reflected the team approach: five seagulls each representing one of the team members, including the dentist.

Dame Margaret was described as the 'arch networker' and this is borne out by 562 people mentioned in an extensive index. Not just 'the great and the good' however, but she remembers from nearly 50 years ago at Highlands hospital, a man called Joe, who had lived in the hospital for 40 years and every Friday would wash her car. In the book we find how she used this extended network to move dentistry up the agenda as secretary of state, Alan Milburn, recognised on her retirement.

We also gain an insight into Dame Margaret's way of working, bringing people together, organising workshops and working parties. Many will find in the book fascinating glimpses of what went on 'behind the scenes' and the close working relationships she encouraged between the profession, the BDA, the Department of Health and its ministers.

There are so many 'Margarets' in this book, but the one that sticks in my mind is Margaret the wife, mother and now grandmother. In particular her marriage to Gordon Seward who has given her his 'unfailing support'; in Dame Margaret's words: 'He truly has been my rock in all my endeavours'. The memoir is truly a remarkable story of a remarkable couple.

Michael Watson

Michael Watson

TITLE: Dental team companion
AUTHOR: M. Slater
PUBLISHER: Quintessence
PRICE: £28.00
ISBN: 9781850971214

An easy to read tool.

This book is written for and aimed at all members of the dental team and aims to bring about an understanding of the concept of teamwork with a view to providing the best patient care.

The book is broken down into 16 chapters. It starts by addressing how society has changed with regards to lifestyle, culture and habits in relation to dentistry, looking at the ways dentistry has changed and indeed questioning how dentistry may need to move forward in the future to adapt to the needs of the patient.

'This book enables you to analyse the best balance for your team, perhaps getting colleagues together who complement each other.'

Other chapters touch on patient interaction dealing with issues such as gaining patient trust and confidence and how to turn negative complaints into positive outcomes. I particularly