AfPP Celebrating 50 Years
Looking Back, moving forward

Interview with Florence Kinnear, NATN Librarian 1979-1998
Flo Kinnear is a retired theatre nurse whose area of specialism was cardiothoracic. Flo was the NATN Librarian from 1979-1998 who took on the role initially for only one year after being approached by the Chairman at the time, David Poole. All the work Flo did for the Association was completely voluntary and undertaken in her own time (mostly Wednesdays – her day off) when she was not working in theatres. Flo enrolled as one of the first members of NATN after being headhunted by founder, Daisy Ayris who at the time was the Leeds Infirmary Theatre Superintendent. Flo has extremely fond memories of the early days of NATN and Daisy’s enthusiasm to recruit new members and form a National Association.

Briefly describe your career and career accomplishments to date.

In 1969 Flo was one of five finalists for the Johnson & Johnson travel award. The winner of the award received funding to attend the AORN Congress in the USA. Flo did not win the award but is very proud to have reached the final. Flo was later invited to attend the AORN congress in Dallas separately from the award a number of years later.

“I was also involved in writing the ‘Learning to care in theatres’ book along with three others which I thoroughly enjoyed. The biggest highlight was probably being approached by Magnus Masterson of Mastermind fame who asked me to write questions for the programme around working in Operating Theatres. I also presented the Daisy Ayris Memorial Lecture one year at Congress which was a great honour.”

What is your fondest memory of your career or your time with AfPP?

Flo attended the first ever NATN Congress in 1965. She remembers that the evening dinner took place in a marquee on a very windy evening on the land that would now be the car park of The Crown Hotel in Harrogate.

Flo has very vivid memories of opening 22 Mount Parade, the first headquarters of the NATN. Because she was part of the local branch in West Yorkshire she helped prepare the building ready for its official opening in 1977. She remembers going over to the offices on a cold winters night after work and literally hanging out of the window to clean the outside as her friend grabbed onto her leg to make sure she didn’t fall out. She recalls how her and her fellow colleagues were so proud to have a head office locally in Yorkshire.

Once the building had been purchased, one full time member of staff was taken on shortly followed by two part time members and a librarian which was Flo herself who would correlate all the requests for information and send requests to relevant people throughout the country.
What did you most enjoy about your AfPP role?

“I made so many good friends and I still send Christmas cards to members of the education committee. I was a long standing member so met lots of nice people who I am still in touch with to this day. I have nothing but happy memories of happy times. We all worked hard with a common goal and enjoyed each other’s company.”

How did you raise funds for your branch? How were you involved?

“The West Riding Branch used to raise money for speakers and to get people the funds to buy a ticket for congress. We did this by holding discos in the recreation room of the smaller hospital opposite ours. We would connect up the old record player and the kitchen staff there would make sandwiches. There was only soft drinks of course as it was hospital property but a good time was had by all.”

Do you have any messages for AfPP as we celebrate our 50th?

“I hope AfPP carries on and continues to grow. My wish is that all the people directly involved and all the members have as many happy memories of the Association as I do”.