

MINUTES OF THE MID-YEAR NATIONAL MEETING HELD IN WELLINGTON
ON 3rd. November, 1984.

Present:

Marilyn Walker, (President, Dunedin); Alison Locke (Chch.);
 Chris Voaden, (midwife, Nelson); Susan Moustafa, Henriette Kemp
 (Wellington); Lois Olivier, ^{Nat. Treasurer} Marilyn Wright (Palmerston North);
 Jenny Johnston (Dom midwife, Wellington).

Angela Sellwood (Nat. Sec.) and Annemiek McGrigor (^{Tauranga} Palmerston N.)
 were unable to attend because of a cancellation of their
 flight.

Timaru branch wrote Henriette a letter stating their views on
 dis-incorporation but this was not received in time to be
 read out at the meeting. Thanks for doing this, Timaru. Your
 views will be recorded in the minutes.

Opening

After a 1½ hour wait for our Tauranga delegates, we finally
 started. Henriette welcomed everyone and suggested a new
 method of running the meeting, based on the booklet and
 tapes put out by the Continuing Education Unit of Radio
 New Zealand. Wellington have been using this method
 for the past six months, after having an 'expert' demonstrate
 it to them, and have found it very successful. H. described
 the method briefly and the group felt that they would like to
 try it. The booklet was given to each delegate. H. agreed to
 facilitate.

Warm-up

It was found that after 1½ hour of tea and chat, there was
 no further need for a warm-up exercise. Everyone spoke to
 virtually everyone there during this time.

Agenda.

We did a 'round' asking everyone present to state what they
 would like to see discussed at the meeting. The topics were
 written up on a large piece of paper and hung on the wall for
 all to see. We decided on an order for topics based on the
 amount of time they would take and the amount of interest
 shown in it. Each topic was crossed out after it was covered.
 Rough time limits were set and a time-keeper appointed.

Topics on the agenda were:

Branch Reports; National Organisation/Auckland/Constitution; Relationships with Associated Groups; Promoting Home Birth nationally; Discussion Paper for Expanded Dom Midwifery Service; Women's Forums; Minutes of 1983 A.G.M; Home Birth Australia Conference; Submission to Conference on Medical Education; National Newsletter; Lobbying Politicians; Midwifery: ideas on training, registration and supervision, conditions of work and pay; lay midwifery; 1985 Conference.

Branch Reports.

Nelson

36 home births this year, no transfers, then two in one week. Most home births are with people who have had one already. Nigel is main source of energy and action. Writes newsletter and does health research and father of three home birth babies. Nelson are excited about the conference and are keen to make it a happy affair. Publicity Week: display in BNZ. 15 -16 people contributed to this large display which included a graph showing the various incomes of various occupations contrasted against that of dom midwives. Good photograph of Bronwen and Chris in paper with home birth babies, with good article. On radio news. About 30 financial members. Monthly newsletter. Send out letter to booked home birth parents asking ^{them} to join HBA. Chris has been doing antenatal education called 'new life learning group'. Bronwen's 'ladies' seem to be more the rural ones, Chris' in town. One very supportive female G.P., Lispeth Galloway, has had a home birth herself. Doing home births now. Comes to the 'new life learning group'. Feels a bit uneasy in relationship with other doctors. Things in Nelson generally positive. Trying to set up a 'G.P doing home births' support group. Two more G.Ps doing first baby home births. One 'fabulous' obstetrician (Hill), never even criticised after a transfer involving 37 year old primipara.

Dunedin

One of their D.M.s moving to Blenheim, not sure if she'll be doing home births. Trying to raise money for a new 'birth kit'. Other D.M., Adrian, coming to Wellington for a year while husband at Library School. May want to do some home births.

Has young baby. Adele does about 3 home births per month. Birth Centre opening today. DMs will probably be doing births there because they're the only ones willing to do postnatal care at home immediately after birth. Obstetrician in charge asked HBA to do antenatal classes for centre, HBA declined. (doing their own).

Wellington

Main energy/action has been antenatal classes and helping Jenny financially. Bought Telepager for Jenny. Meeting with Hospital Board- one enthusiastic member- article in paper about her and daughter and daughter's son (home births). Monthly newsletter. Group of 6 have been meeting and working hard at writing a draft discussion paper to be circulated around branches to be presented eventually to Bassett re our views on expanded dom. midwifery service promised in Labour Party Women's Health Policy. Most parents give Jenny a sizable donation, some through Assn., some directly. Jenny a bit worried about the legality of it. Had interesting meeting with a DM from Canada, Debbie Farnsworth. Jenny has done two deliveries in hospital and had two midwifery students accompany to a few home births. Works mainly with two G.Ps but 14 altogether. Demand has risen steadily, does about 6-8 a month. Has had to turn some down. Would like another midwife working in the area to be back-up and do 2-3 births a month. Doesn't do early discharges because there are 'domiciliary midwives' working in the area under same contract doing just these. Everybody very happy with Jenny. Jenny also does antenatal classes.

Palmerston North

Things fairly quiet. Main energy going into getting a newsletter under way again. Fiona is studying and also working part time weekends in hospital. Has been away to India. Other D.M. has small baby, won't do first births. Other midwife has just had baby, and one works fulltime in hospital and can do births only in evenings and weekends. Lois feels satisfied with way things are, aren't trying to get more parents to have more home births. All midwives doing part-time home births because it suits them, not because need money working in hospital. Would hospital midwife do home births full time

if pay was better? Lois didn't know. There wouldn't be enough demand to warrant a fulltime dom midwife (around 15 home births per year at the moment). 5 supportive G.Ps.. Did 1 antenatal class. 38 members receiving newsletter.

Christchurch.

Main event has been Ursula attending one waterbirth. Alison said she thought Dr. Dalley probably didn't know the parents wanted it to be a waterbirth. Another GP was asked to do one but refused. The group are trying to keep themselves disassociated from waterbirth people who also seem to be very much into 'rebirthing'. Have been hunted by the media to comment on the waterbirths. Bad news is that John Dalley will be almost certainly giving up obstetrics because he feels he is getting too old to be getting out to births at night. They're having some difficulties getting GPs to do first births. Some GPs are not happy to do home births with Ursula. Ursula has moved out of town (1 hour's drive from CHCH). Have done 5 series of antenatal classes. Had 70 home births, not many transfers. Pat Fuller has done some early discharges. Monthly meetings, small core of people. Just managing financially, getting subscriptions is a struggle. New pamphlet (copies circulated). Nearly finished paying a new answerphone. Pat wants a bleeper. More than 100 financial members.

National Organisation/Auckland/Constitution

We did a round to hear every person's opinion and that of their branch's. Then a discussion on points raised. Marilyn:(Dun.): Strongly for keeping Incorporated society, constitution (possibly new one), and national officers. Role of co-ordinator important as mediator and moderator, national officers interested and aware of nature of national movement and interestedⁿ and informed on national scene. Topic was discussed at their regional meeting held in Timaru recently, different alternatives looked at. Timaru in their letter have stated that ^{they} will only support disincorporating if an alternative national structure was thought out. Feel some structure necessary, otherwise danger of misuse of individual powers. Also needed to enable to speak with one voice and present unified points of view.

Chris (nelson): strongly in favour of having a constitution and national office holders, mainly for ensuring democratic representation and unified voice on matters of national interest.

Lois: (Manawatu). Can't decide.

Alison (Chch): Chch discussed the matter at a special meeting. Find that the national body restricts them and that it does nothing for them in return for the national levy. Understands it gives smaller branches a sense of security and belonging. Not happy with Auckland being a separate group. Felt they probably would put forward a remit at the next A.G.M. to disincorporate again, and if this was not passed, would withdraw from the Association. They feel that a good alternative would be to have individual groups register as incorporated societies. Not happy with 'petty' friction, e.g. over recycling labels. Not decided on whether there should be a national spokesperson. Probably good for official contact with the Govt.. Like the idea of branches with particular skills taking on responsibility for certain tasks.

Henriette (Wgtn): Wgtn branch has never really discussed the different alternatives. Personally not happy with Auckland being a separate group because of loss of membership and therefore 'weight' behind lobbying etc.. Also having two groups makes it harder to come to unified point of view on national issues- danger of different groups asking for different things. Also feel that things have never been thoroughly discussed, feelings aired, etc. with Auckland. Especially in the light of Chch possibly going the same way, feel it would be a good idea to convene a special meeting with sole purpose of looking at what has gone wrong in the past, what was good and what was bad, what we want to keep and what we want to change, with the aim of reaching a national structure that would suit everybody - probably something totally new. Important for branches to have done preparatory discussions, delegates very aware of branch's views, and for delegates to have no set position or ~~point~~ line of action planned; important to be open to suggestions, compromise, and a certain amount of sacrifice for sake of unity.

This idea was discussed by the meeting and was received positively. The meeting felt that 1. it should be 'tacked' on to the Nelsonian

conference to save travel costs, probably Friday evening, from 7 p.m/.2 Number joining in discussion should be limited (no more than two per branch:) Anyone welcome to listen.

3. An independent, skilled facilitator should lead the discusssion, along lines used at this meeting and described in booklet. (all branches please make sure you have read the booklet). Need for warm invitation to Auckland. Chris volunteered Nelson to write 'discussion' paper for branches to base their discussion on) Chch felt it had already had such a meeting. Felt happy with this decision and would not put forward disincorporation remit if this meeting was held. Angela Sellwood (Nat. Sec) to write to branches and Auckland re this meeting.

Constitution: Henriette explained that the alterations passed at last A.G.M had not been written into constitution because she had made no personal record of how the voting, amendments went, and Denise Arps (Then Sec.) had not circulated minutes. Alison said she would approach Denise again about them. Said Denise thought she had lost them. It was agreed that the constitution should be left until we see what is decided on after the 'special' meeting. Lois felt a completely new constitution, ~~with~~ written in language everyone could understand, would be desirable. Marilyn pointed out there was some confusion over being an Incorporated Society and being 'united'. The two are not mutually exclusive.

Lobbying Politicians.

Henriette went over correspondence and asked for feedback. Read our replies to Dr. Bassett's discouraging letter, copies of which went to Fran Wilde and Ann Hercus. Explained these two women MPs main 'targets' because have had personal contact with them here in Wgt. Reply to Bassett low key - felt important not to set him up as an adversary- only stated did not answer points in letter and could he please look at it again. Probably didn't even read our letter and his own reply. Letters to Fran and Ann mainly to ask for advice and a meeting. Ann has replied and said she would like to have a meeting with us in December.

H. asked if delegates happy with her representing HBA at this meeting.- everyone happy. Asked if there were any other MPs delegates thought would be good to include in our more intense lobbying. Marilyn: Mike Cullen.

Chch thought Mary Satchelor would not be receptive. Would try 'constituant' contact with Ann Hercus. Philip Woolleston, David Caygill, Helen Clark, mentioned as possible supporters. H. asked every branch to make personal contact with their MPs. Someone suggested the national submission being prepared on the 'expanded' dom. service should be sent to all MPs., and that branches should discuss it with their own MPs. Alison pointed out need to be careful when making statements to the media re. the submission and Dr. Bassett's letter: important not to give the idea that we see him as opposed to home birth.

Discussion Paper for Expanded Dom Midwifery Service.
~~Chris made the point that the ideas put in our submission~~ should be in accordance with D.M.S. ideas. She said that the DMS had some years ago written down their ideas on what a dom midwifery service should provide. Would try to find it and sent H. a copy so these ideas can be kept in mind when writing the paper.

The question of Supervision of Dom Midwives came up here (elsewhere on the agenda). H. outlined the things being looked into for the submission: Caseload (should there be a minimum); combined home/hospital midwifery; responsibility for recruitment; supply of equipment; range of practice - should there be any limits; safety and back-up services; supervision of D.Ms; registration and training of D.Ms.. Supervision one very controversial - should there be any at all? The meeting could not come to a consensus opinion. Decided to leave to branches to discuss more.

Marilyn mentioned that in writing the submission, we should keep our 'aims and beliefs' in mind. Wellington still working on a draft for other branches to look at and respond to. Won't be finished by end of this year, as we told Bassett. Jenny felt the Dom Midwives should present a similar submission around the same time as ours., also Save the Midwives Society. Need for Auckland ~~to~~ not to contradict ours' if they plan to write one. Chris pointed out that here is an example of the need for a unified national body - present one submission - looks better to Govt.. Alison mentioned that a CHch couple, Chris and Gaylene Hanson, will be going up to Auckland in the near future, could discuss this with them.

Women's Forums.

The meeting discussed the need for all branches to try and be present to present the home birth situation and push it mainly from a civil liberties point of view, because this is something all women can relate to. Wgt. went to a Wgt. Women's Summit and voiced their views. Resolution made at end of summit to call for 100% increase in pay for DMs.

Conference on Medical Training.

H. mentioned this conference which is to take place early next year in Dunedin. Organised by the Dunedin Medical School. Public have been asked to make submissions and send them into the Convenor of the Steering Committee, Mr. C.J Heath, Otago Medical School. Branches suggested to write their own submissions. H. already had some ideas typed up from Wgtn. branch, these were given to Chris who volunteered Nelson to write a submission incorporating these ~~in/a~~ for the NZHBA.. Submissions have to be in By end of November. It was suggested branches also get supportive home birth GPs to write.

Relations with other groups

Alison felt we could do more to liaise and communicate with groups like the Midwives' Section of the Nurses' Assn.. In CHch, DMs have been attending their local meetings and established good rapport. This has been good for their relations with hospital staff during transfers. A. felt it was important to back them because their aims are the same as ours, and home birth depends of there being midwives first of all. In CHch they seem to be reluctant to speak out on there own. Chris described good relations with Nelson midwives (in spite of a remark made about them in one of Nelson's newsletter which Alison was worried about). They wrote a letter of support to them when they met to discuss the future of midwifery in NZ. Bronwen attended International confederation of Midwives in Australia. Went with a Nelson hospital midwife who used to be anti home birth but is now very 'pally' with Chris and Bronwen.

Marilyn suggested all branches should join 'Save the Midwives! go to their meetings, and send them the national newsletter. Jenny described that the DMs were generally disillusioned with the 'Midwives' Section'. In Nelson, Chris said the group was called 'Midwives' Special Interest Group'- quite a different kettle of fish to Midwives Section of N.A. These also expressed dissatisfaction with 'Midwives' Section'.

Promoting Home Birth

Marilyn suggested an information booklet giving all the facts and figures, advantages, etc. of home birth. Possibly written by a journalist and funded by e.g. Mental Health Foundation. Along lines of La Leche League booklet. H. mentioned an application to MHF had been made for this in the past, but had been turned down. Jenny mentioned here that she had been approached by the Health Dept. to advise them on what should be put about home birth in the latest Health Department booklet : Having a Baby. Home birth is now mentioned in it as an alternative for women. (cheers!) Two Wellington journalists (Catherine McKenzie and Jenny Philips (Author of 'Mothers Matter Too') were suggested as possible authors for the booklet. H. said she might be interested in writing such a booklet after May next year. Chris mentioned V.O.T (Voluntary Organisation Training) scheme as possible source of funding. H will approach Labour Dept. for information. The person for whom the funding is asked needs to first be registered as unemployed. The national body would have to indicate certain 'training' courses (e.g. journalism) which the writer would need to go on. Chris will get more detailed information . Marilyn suggested it would be good to get done by next November.

Marilyn also suggested making badges, ballpoints, car stickers. Meeting agreed some money could be spent on this. Marilyn offered to do.

Home Birth Australia

Most branches have indicated they think it would be a good idea to send a delegate. It was felt we could only afford it by applying for special funding. No one at the meeting was able to go. Branches to check out if anyone interested. Chris volunteered Nigel Costley, but most at the meeting

felt it would be better to send a woman. Lois is to look into exact cost involved. Jenny mentioned she is planning a holiday next Easter and may be going to Australia. Could be delegate.

National Conference.'85

Chris circulated handout from Nelson, and asked for ideas. H. mentioned remits passed at last AGM were constitutional. It was suggested that ample time be given the type of discussion/resolution-making that has traditionally come under 'general business' of the AGM. Meeting felt that AGM should remain short and business-like, resolutions and discussion should be done separately after the A.G.M., say for the final afternoon of the conference.

Marilyn brought up the problem of branches not being able to afford to send a delegate to national meetings. She was concerned- felt there is no need for anyone to be left out for this reason, that smaller branches could apply for national subsidy. Needed to plan ahead. Several branches donated money in response to Marilyn's call for money to help Waikato come to this national meeting, and Marilyn had donated her airfare subsidy to the Branch as well.

National Newsletter

Timaru and Dunedin didn't feel entirely comfortable about Auckland doing the national newsletter. It did mean most of the articles were written by Auckland people which gave it a distinctive Auckland character, although she realised that it was up to other people to send in articles.

Christchurch and Dunedin still hadn't received theirs, when other branches had. Other branches felt OK about Auckland doing it, although it would be good to see another branch do it 'for a change' next year. Chris suggested it would be good for the President to write something for each national newsletter. Marilyn felt she did all her communicating through circulars to branches. Branches should start thinking now about whether they could take on this job next year.

Lay Midwifery

Marilyn said they had talked about this at the Southern regional conference. Felt that we needed to take another look at our stand on this issue. There are some lay midwives

practising in NZ at the moment and she personally felt that some of these might well be very competent midwives. Meeting decided this should be discussed at the next conference.

Evaluation

As the meeting ended, we did an 'evaluation round' with everyone being given an opportunity to say how they were feeling about the day's meeting.

Susan: Sorry not more representatives. Good wide spread of ideas have been discussed.

Lois: Felt some of the topics could have been dealt with at greater depth.

Chris: Found the meetings, as all meetings, very charging. It shows we are all working hard at it in our own ways around the country, which is good to know. Feeling generally very optimistic about the future of home birth.

Alison: New way of facilitating worked well. Feeling much more positive, especially knowing the issue of Auckland dis-incorporating was going to be looked at in the way we agreed.

Henriette: Felt good. Lots had been covered, positive decisions made on most of the topics. Asked branches to make sure they read the booklet and discussed the new way of taking groups with their committees and try it out. Could be used for A.G.M..

Marilyn: Felt very positive. Good recharging to get on and do things. (Manawatu)

Marilyn: (~~Manawatu~~) (Dun.) Felt very tired. Disappointed not more branches. there. Especially disappointed about Tauranga.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm.

POST SCRIPT

Alison rang me some days later, ^{10/6/67} she had been on the phone with Brenda Hinton (Auck), who had been trying to contact her by phone before the meeting to pass on some messages, which are as follows: Mary Nacey (Auck. member and married to Bob Fizard) passed on the message that Michael Bassett was feeling 'rushed' by small pressure groups all wanting their thing before he had even got time to settle in. Probably also never saw his own reply, important not to be too confrontational or upset about his letter.

Bassett probably has no great personal interest in home birth-
all his children are grown up, and were born in hospital
and apparently were not too positive birth experiences.

Helen Clark is very supportive and could be lobbied more.
Brenda would like to receive copies of any correspondence
between HBA and Govt..

Ann Hercus : probably snowed under. When approached by an
Auck member some time ago said she had forgotten the
promised 'expanded & service'. Probably not the best
person to lobby.

Feel NZHBA should not do any pay negotiating on behalf
of dom midwives. Felt this was best left to them.

That's it. (phew). Sorry about length of this rd quality
of typing (I lost my twink).

Arohanui,

Henriette