

**Interview Summary:** Eileen Richardson, worked at the centre as a midwife.

**Interviewer/Transcriber:** Diane Gold

**Interviewee:** Eileen Richardson

**Date of interview:** 09 November 2013

**Interview code:** MG201303A

**Recording length:** 00:18:40

**[00:00:00 – 00:08:30]** (Tags: introduction; relationship with Manor Gardens; first impressions; clinics; job details; staff and mothers relationship; home visits)

Eileen was born in Islington, London in 1934. She remembers being taken to the dentist at Manor Gardens when she was a little girl, during the war.

She worked in the centre's antenatal clinic when she was training to be a midwife, and enjoyed the experience very much. After qualifying, she did a year's work experience at the City of London Maternity Hospital and then got a job as a district midwife from 1963 to 1993. During this time she worked at Manor Gardens antenatal clinic.

Eileen's first impressions of the centre were that it was well equipped and very professional. She remembers the superintendent, who was strict and precise. She recalls details of the weekly clinics and her work, including attending mums at home after delivery.

Eileen says that the relationship between the staff and the mothers was very good. Mothers enjoyed coming in and getting support. The staff used to assess home conditions on antenatal home visits. Eileen says there have been lots of changes over time, with more health centres being established.

**[00:08:32 – 00:09:50]** (Tags: Queen Mother)

Eileen remembers the Queen Mother coming to visit Manor Gardens. She remembers lining up in her uniform and her passing by to go into the centre in the 1960s. It was quite exciting but she didn't get to shake hands with her.

**[00:09:50 – 00:11:54]** (Tags: clinics; NHS)

It was normal for a midwife to work and run clinics in those days. Eileen says that the mothers loved coming in with their children, and she enjoyed working there. She mentions training at the Royal Northern Hospital next door, but is unsure whether it had any connection with the clinic. She remembers Manor Gardens becoming NHS but is unsure about its status before that.

**[00:12:00 – 00:17:25]** (Tags: work of the centre; midwives work and training)

Eileen remembers Manor Gardens work being concerned with the welfare of mothers and babies. She mentions specific activities, such as sunlight treatment, the weighing of babies, immunisation, and providing a place to buy national dried milk.

Eileen recalls some memories of the Second World War, and is not sure if the centre remained open during this time.

She discusses the role of midwife and their responsibilities, such as taking a medical history of the mother, check blood pressure and urine. She talks about working as a district midwife and how student midwives trained.

**[00:17:50 –00:18:40]** (Tags: leadership)

Never had any dealing with any information about the founding members of MG. Never went there for any parties.

## **END OF RECORDING 1**

**Interviewer/Transcriber:** Diane Gold

**Interviewee:** Eileen Richardson

**Date of interview:** 09 November 2013

**Interview code:** MG201303B

**Recording length:** 00:20:30

**[00:00:00 – 00:05:58]** (Tags: past and present; wages; relationship with patients; community)

Eileen is now retired and is an honorary member of the Royal College of Midwives, due to her 40 plus years of membership.

She mentions revisiting the centre recently and how it brought back memories.

Eileen feels that the facilities and services in the community today are not like when she was young. She says that they used to have district nurses who were well respected and loved by the patients. The continuity of care that patients had was very good, they got to know you very well and you became part of the family. Eileen sometimes meets her ex-patients today, who are now grandparents!

Eileen recalls starting on a salary of £9.00 a month.

She discusses her relationship with patients/mothers, some of whom she is still in touch with. She feels that people were very kind and helpful in the past. She fondly recalls the respect that people in the community had for nurses, midwives, and doctors then.

**[00:05:58 – 00:08:17]** (Tags: role of husbands; changes in midwifery)

Eileen talks about the role of husbands then, who 'liked to be out of the way'.

She also discusses some changes in midwifery during her practice years, including the rise of private midwifery.

**[00:08:18 – 00:12:05]** (Tags: diversity; service users)

Eileen speaks about patients and midwives from different backgrounds.

**[00:12:05 – 00:20:30]** (Tags: proudest moments; midwives work; future of the centre; clinics)

Eileen reiterates that she enjoyed her work, it was something she wanted to do and felt fortunate to do it in the area in which she lived.

Eileen discusses her proudest moments. She always felt proud if a midwife she were working with said 'well done'. She also felt proud of how mothers appreciated you. She says it was lovely to go to their home and be given a cup of tea.

She also talks about the many responsibilities midwives had then, including getting the mother to register the birth.

Eileen says that she isn't sure about what's happening at the centre today, although she knows that Age Concern is there. She hopes that Manor Gardens will continue as a clinic or welfare establishment. She feels that it would be very sad if the centre were to close down.

Eileen talks more about the clinics, the equipment and the advice they provided to mothers, such as how to support and feed the baby and promoting breast feeding.

**END OF INTERVIEW**

(Edited by TZ May 2016)