



# Pauline Hughes reflects

Pauline Hughes looks back at 50 years' experience and urges members to make the most of opportunities to keep in touch with colleagues and to 'be an athletic supporter'\*

When Paul Simpson asked me to write an article for the March 2017 magazine as part of BATOD's 40th Anniversary celebrations, I had lots of lovely ideas. Unfortunately for me, those lovely ideas and many more appeared in the November 2016 issue. I complained to Paul. 'It'll be fine,' quoth he. So I started an essay of unashamed reminiscences of my 50 years' involvement in the education of deaf children entitled 'Half a Century Not (Quite) Out.'

Many memories and anecdotes about children and young people I have worked with sprang to mind, but I kept making margin notes of things that didn't fit in with the chronology. They were to do with individual professionals, groups and organisations that have supported, encouraged and inspired me throughout my career.

A bit of context is needed. I first taught in a School for the Deaf in 1967 (hence the half century). I trained at Manchester in 1969; worked for 20 years in the ILEA in a variety of roles; worked in Surrey as Head of Service and County Co-ordinator for 14 years; was Head of a School for the Deaf for 3 years; and have been CEO of the Ewing Foundation for nearly 12 years. I know, that doesn't add up to 50: I had some time off when my son was a baby, and I did a little private tuition.

In my first full year of teaching, I was given a job in a Primary School for the Deaf. I was not primary trained. If it hadn't been for the support and encouragement of my colleagues, that would have been the end of it. There was no probationary year or formal induction whatsoever. Sue Richardson gave up precious non-teaching time to model lessons for me. Others

showed me how to use the Peters Portable Group Hearing Aid and the ATU.

Taking Manchester University's CTD course in 1969 was like switching the light on. The course was aimed at end-on graduates with no teacher training, let alone actual teaching experience, so as well as covering Audiology (such as there was), Speech and Language teaching (ditto) and History of Deaf Education, we were taught the basics of classroom practice, including the primary curriculum (such as it was). Our first essay title was '*I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand. (Chinese proverb). Discuss in relation to the education of deaf children.*' Still an interesting topic.

At Southfields PHU, Wandsworth, in pre-radio aid days the pupils' integration was limited, and a lot of subject teaching took place in the Unit. Science teacher Bill Millar gave up two 'free' periods a week to team teach with me in his science lab, using a portable loop system, so that the pupils could have hands-on experience. (Ask me about the Van der Graaf generator when you see me.) This co-operative working had a positive effect in the school, and eased the way in persuading other subject teachers to use radio aid equipment when it came along, which allowed the 25 Unit students to take most of their lessons in mainstream classrooms.

At this time, the ILEA had a Teachers' Centre at Webber Row, and the Heads of PHUs met there once a term. The Heads of Schools for the Deaf had a long tradition of meeting for mutual support, but there had been nothing in place for us. They were an invaluable forum for exchanging ideas and information, and that feeling of comradeship and joint enterprise was so motivating. (The 'Heads of Schools' conference eventually became 'Heads of Schools and Services'. This meant a lot more of the attendees were women, as the vast majority of school Heads were men. The change definitely had an effect on the programme, and the après-work activities.)

At Southfields, we had support from Specialist Speech Therapists Heather Boucher-Hayes and Janice Oakley. There was terrible professional jealousy and rivalry between ToDs and Therapists, such that BATOD and the College of Speech Therapists set up a working group to produce guidelines on who should or shouldn't do what. Fortunately Heather, Janice and I got on extremely well, and developed practical protocols to make best use of their limited time at the Unit. Janice and I gave a presentation about our approach to a joint audience of ToDs and Speech Therapists which was well-received.

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UNION MEMBERSHIP

ATHLETIC UNION MEMBERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5
CALENDAR	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20

Numbers for purpose of Union Elections

(To be completed by student.)



It was in the theatre of the Magic Circle, which might have had something to do with it.

Sue Knowles was Head of Service for Kingston-upon-Thames, and the best organiser and chivvler I have ever met. She had connections with the Middlesex Hospital in London and, by the time I became a Peripatetic ToD, she was organising Saturday meetings there for Heads of Services. Colleagues came from all over the country, and like the Heads of PHUs meetings, the side-effect of attendance was renewed energy and enthusiasm for our work. The meetings engendered the Regional Heads of Services groups, which addressed issues such as consistency and equality of provision. Malcolm Garner's Midlands group was very active and influential. Malcolm was key to the DfE setting up a Working Party on Regional Provision, which led to Regional Partnerships, and eventually NatSIP. Ted Moore and I ran HOSSHIS (Heads of Schools and Services for the Hearing-Impaired South) for a number of years. A notable achievement of the group was the re-establishment of the Oxford ToD course and a new MSc Audiology course at Mary Hare School, now on the books of Hertfordshire University.

And so to BATOD. Having joined the STD, I duly became a member of BATOD in 1977. The Journal, with its 'pull-out supplement'-style magazine, was essential reading. I wasn't a particularly active member until I moved to Surrey in 1988. That role required me to have a much better handle on the politics of special education than I'd needed before. By joining the BATOD South committee, I felt I was giving something back to the profession, as well as improving my own knowledge of the key issues of the day. BATOD was gaining momentum, and by the time I was elected on to the NEC, it had a voice and influence at Government level. Ted Moore particularly made significant gains for ToDs' Pay and Conditions. Margaret Eatough, another daunting woman who wouldn't take no for an answer, ran the BATOD Survey. This survey was the progenitor of CRIDE. BATOD representatives contributed to the Boards of the ToD training establishments, and the RNID. Over the years, several Special Interest Groups

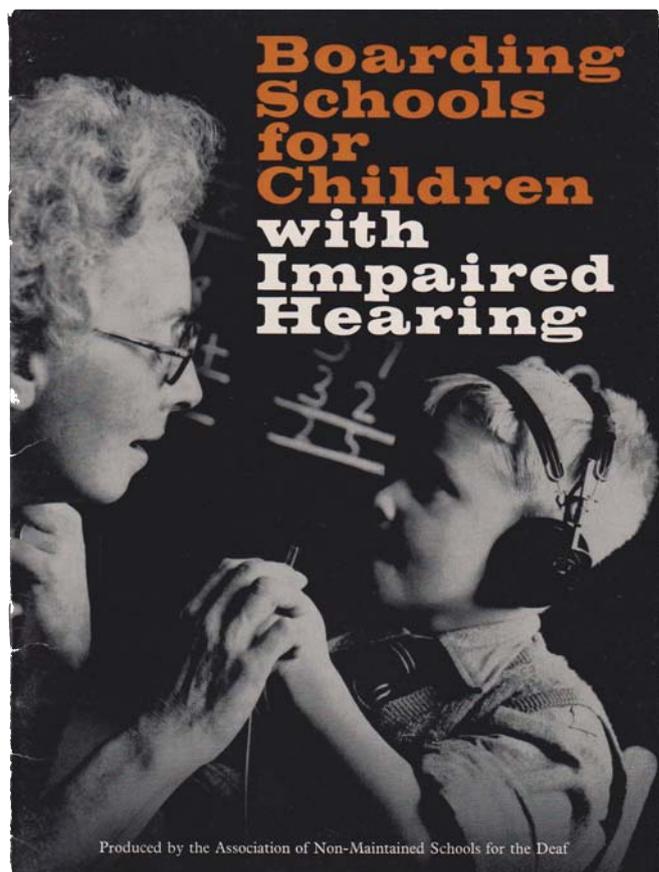
have been formed, as umbrella organisations.

I served as President from 1995 to 1997, and Past President for the next 2 years. Throughout, my boss in Surrey had supported my involvement. I was allowed to take Friday afternoons when needed to travel to weekend NEC meetings. He too appreciated that I was able to do a better job in Surrey because of my involvement with BATOD, and had the freedom to give his permission.

The BAEA (British Association of Educational Audiologists) had a very active South branch in the 90s.

Before Universal Newborn Hearing Screening, the Ewing's Distraction test was the principal tool for diagnosing hearing loss in babies. Prof John Bamford gave a talk to the South group on VRA with insert earphones, which Surrey Ed Auds Sue Keen (then Westhorp), Katie Jillians (then Moger) and the indefatigable Margaret Glasgow pursued for Surrey babies. The local hospitals weren't interested, but David Evans offered free use of two rooms at the old Connevens factory to dedicate for this procedure. The current Chair, Peter Keen, sends out frequent news and information to members via email.

Please don't think that this is a lamentation for 'temps perdu'. You and deaf children and young people today



have advantages that I and my contemporaries could not have dreamt of. The accumulation of research and knowledge over BATOD's 40 years is immense. Others have written about the amazing technological developments that benefit us all. So much information is available over the internet. Use the BATOD and NatSIP websites, MESHGuides and the HOSS forum. Don't overlook the papers in 'Deafness and Education'. Articles in the November 2016 magazine highlight how positive developments and outcomes for deaf children and young people have often been on the back of new research. However, reading and screen-learning have their limitations, and cannot replace face-to-face interaction with others. NatSIP has regular working days, which receive very positive evaluations from attendees. The Ewing Foundation organises GLADE workshops for ToDs in the Greater London area, ditto.

The Ewing Foundation is now 65 years old. Named after Sir Alexander and Lady Irene Ewing, it was founded and funded by Malcolm and Sheila McAlpine, in appreciation of the Ewing's help with their deaf son, to support professionals involved in the education of deaf children and young people. It has grown and evolved over the decades to meet contemporary needs. The current team has developed a portfolio of training packages as well as offering bespoke on-site professional development and support. Through Ewing and the Ovingdean Hall Foundations, BATOD now offers bursaries to teachers

who want to train as QToDs, but are not eligible for LA funding. These grants are in memory of BATOD's first President, and Ewing Foundation's first CEO, Con Powell.

Collaboration and mutual support are key to improving outcomes for deaf children and young people. Today, ToDs are very likely to be professionally isolated, making communication with colleagues even more essential. I know the constraints of teaching and funding now make it difficult to take time out of the week to attend meetings or conferences, but it is so worthwhile making the effort to get to twilight or weekend events. Be a supporter!

*Pauline Hughes is the out-going CEO of the Ewing Foundation.*

[www.ewing-foundation.org.uk](http://www.ewing-foundation.org.uk)

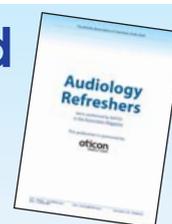
*\* From the film, Grease, Principal McGee announced "If you can't be an athlete, be an athletic supporter".*

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