AIMS For a better birth...

Margaret Jowitt 1955 - 2025

AIMS Journal, 2025, Vol 37, No 3

It was with great sadness that we heard the news of Margaret Jowitt's death earlier this year. Margaret had been a great friend to AIMS working as our honorary treasurer for a while and writing for the AIMS journal. I was never fortunate enough to meet her in person, but we enjoyed occasional exchanges on the UK Midwifery Yahoo group where she kept us firmly grounded with reminders about human birth physiology, her area of expertise. As a childbirth educator, both of Margaret's books, 'Childbirth Unmasked' and 'Dynamic Positions in Birth' take pride of place in my book collection. I am grateful for her strong clear voice in lobbying for caution in the use of induction and continuous electronic monitoring, and for furniture in the birth room that supports the woman's freedom of movement. Margaret was a long-time runner in the relay race towards physiology-informed maternity care. I only hope there are people as passionate as her to take up the baton.

Alex Smith (Editor)

Margaret worked with the Association of Radical Midwives (ARM) for many years and it is with their kind permission that we republish their own tribute to her.



At the beginning of May we heard with great sadness of the death of our much loved friend and colleague Margaret.

Margaret has been a member of ARM since the early 1990s. She was not a midwife but a woman who was deeply committed to the wellbeing of women and babies, and was motivated by the desire to explain and promote physiological birth and its benefits. She became interested in childbirth in the process of bearing her own three children and always related how she obtained a home birth for her third baby through contacting ARM and being put in touch with an independent midwife. She undertook to edit our quarterly magazine Midwifery Matters from 1996 until 2013, making it a respected journal and fascinating read; a unique compilation of academic articles, news, and personal stories.

She was the main writer and editor of our New Vision for Maternity Care published in 2013 which was foundational in providing the themes for the UK National Maternity Review Document Better Births (2016). Margaret was a highly intelligent woman who published several books; Childbirth Unmasked (1993), Dynamic Positions for Birth: a fresh look at how women's bodies work in labour (2014) and The Natural Science of Childbirth (2019).

She corresponded with physiologists around the world and disseminated her very original ideas relating to the way in which the bodies of both women and babies operate with a beautiful synchronicity during labour and birth. Her insights met with interest and respect, and she spoke about and demonstrated them online and in-person. Her commitment led her to develop and market a birthing chair to facilitate positional change in labour and active birth.

She was particularly troubled by the negative impacts of interference with normal processes, in particular induction of labour and had developed a wide knowledge of understanding of the effects, particularly on the fetus.

Margaret was a talented musician, played the fiddle and was a devoted mother and grandmother, the birth of her three grandchildren over the last few years was a great joy. She had lived on the Isle of Wight for many years, sometimes having mixed feelings about the challenges of her geographical situation but that didn't stop her making enormous efforts to attend ARM gatherings and conferences, missing very few until she suffered from periods of poor health during the last few years.

Margaret was a vital, inspirational part of ARM, and was much too inclined to repeat that she was "not a midwife,". Many of us would tell her that she was in fact the best of us all, and of the Association of Radical Midwives, having more knowledge and understanding of birth than many midwives and obstetricians. I shall miss her very much, as will all of her friends in ARM and we send our deepest condolences to her family and friends.

Katherine Hales, National Co-ordinator

MIDWIFERY MATTERS | ISSUE 185 | JUNE 2025 | SUMMER