

History of the Marcé Society (1980-2016)

Original information gathered by Nine Glangeaud, assisted by Jane Honikman, Carol Henshaw, Margaret Oates, Gene Paykel, Ian Brockington and Marianne Kumar and partially published in

- the Marcé Newsletter (Issue 11, February 2001)

- Psychological Medicine, 2002, 32, 559-561 by Glangeaud-Freudenthal N MC "Channi Kumar's Contribution to Perinatal Psychiatry. A personal tribute from France".

- Archives of Women's Mental Health 2003, 6/sup2, 79-82 by Glangeaud-Freudenthal N MC "Channi Kumar and the History of the Marcé Society".

Updated in November 2008 by Nine Glangeaud –Freudenthal

Update in July 2014 by Nine Glangeaud, assisted by Michael O'Hara,

update 2016 by Nine Glangeaud

In 1996, and again several times later, when I felt discouraged about the prospects of establishing a Francophone section of the Marcé Society, Channi Kumar encouraged me by telling me the story of the Society's beginnings. Like many others, I miss Channi's support and sympathy.

Channi explained that before the 1980s, although quite a few people, in different disciplines and professions, were working on postnatal disorders, they had no way to share their knowledge and ideas. Channi Kumar, James Hamilton, and Ian Brockington, exchanging views at meetings, came up with the idea of founding an international society; open to all pro-fessionals, aimed at improving the understanding, prevention and treatment of mental disorders related to child-bearing. They wanted members of the society, from all over the world, to meet at least biennially to exchange information and ideas about their practice and research and to initiate collaborative research.

In the Bulletin of the Society (spring 1993), Gene Paykel wrote:

"The parents of the Marcé Society were Jim Hamilton, Channi Kumar, Ian Brockington, Bob Kendell and George Winokur. An unusually large number for one child and also entirely single-sexed, but the Society has made up for that since then".

In 2008 and in 2015 Ian Brockington answered my question on the origins of the MS saying:

"My friendly rivalry with Channi Kumar started in 1969, when we both started training at the Maudsley Hospital (linked to the Institute of Psychiatry). I first made contact with James Hamilton early in 1975, within days of taking up my post as Senior Lecturer in Manchester, with its responsibility for the Mother and Baby unit."

"The idea of the Society arose out of correspondence I had with Jim Hamilton, starting about 1977 when I wrote to consult him about a mother with a bonding disorder (which was then terra incognita). I think he suggested it. He was more enthusiastic than I was. There was a small meeting at Queen Charlotte's organised by Merton Sandler, and I think I discussed the matter with Channi Kumar there. He and I discussed many things related to mother & baby units etc. It stimulated British interest in the puerperal mental disorders, and resulted in a book entitled, Mental Illness in Pregnancy and the Puerperium, published by Oxford University Press in 1978. By that time Channi Kumar was well into his cohort study, I was just beginning to study puerperal psychosis and bonding disorders in Manchester, and there were other British teams at work (especially Kendell in Edinburgh). In June 1980, I took the initiative of arranging an international conference, to which Jim Hamilton and Ralph Paffenbarger were invited. Getting it off the ground required a major effort from me and my part-time secretary Jane Oldham. Starting in November 1979, we obtained funding to invite numerous experts (including, for example, Prothero and Kendell). Although we advertised it only 7-8 months ahead, we had about 150 delegates. The meeting was a huge success. Someone compared James Hamilton to John the Baptist, and Merton raised the roof by saying that his quotations from Marcé were like the Pope's Christmas message. I could be wrong, but I think it was James Hamilton who introduced Marcé's writings to us. He brought both his major works to show us. Of course he read the French with a wonderful American accent

On the evening before the 1980 conference we had a reception in my house for thirty speakers, at which we served lobster salad, which was considered a ridiculous extravagance. The second soirée for all the delegates was held in the Manchester art gallery. After everyone had gone, Diana my wife and I, hosted a dinner for 6 individuals - Jim and myself, Channi, Ralph Paffenbarger, Bob Kendell and George Winokur - all Anglo-Saxon men, I am afraid. It was decided to found the Society there and then. It was left to Channi and me to do the work. During the next year we worked it all out, including the constitution and Channi arranged the second conference, at the Maudsley, in 1982, at which the first committee was elected. The original

constitution stipulated a Founding Committee consisting of the 6 founders (not "founding members" - there were many of those) and past presidents."

Ian Brockington also wrote in his obituary of James Hamilton:

"On the evening of Friday 20th we held a dinner at my house, attended by three Americans (James Hamilton, Ralph Paffenbarger and George Winokur) and three Britons (Robert Kendell, Channi Kumar and my self). James...urged us to create the new society. This was the birth of the association from which Channi Kumar suggested the name of Marcé Society." (Archives of Women's Mental Health, 1998, 1: 2)

Recently, Margaret Oates wrote to me, also answering my question on the origins of the MS:

"The Marcé Society was "conceived" in Frank Margison's house in Manchester in early 1980. Physically present at the meet-ing were Frank, Ian Brockington, Channi Kumar, John Cox and myself. I think Bill Deakin may also have been there. Paffenbarger, James Hamilton and George Winokur were contacted on the telephone. This group, together with Bob Kendell were the original "founding fathers" or "steering committee".

This Manchester meeting must have been a very stimulating and productive meeting.

Channi Kumar also told me that he was fascinated by the very early work of a French physician, Louis Victor Marcé, who was one of the first to describe specifically puerperal mental disorders. It was for this reason that he suggested naming this new association after Marcé. Recently Marianne Kumar told me a nice story: "At this time, Channi talked so much about this French physician that I looked for LV Marcé's book in all the used book-shops in Paris until I found it and could give it to him for Christmas".

Louis Victor Marcé (1828-1864) was born in Paris. In 1858, he wrote "Traité de la Folie des femmes enceintes, des nouvelles accouchées et des nourrices (Treatise on psychoses of pregnant women, and newly delivered and nursing mothers)" and some other works on mental illness. The treatise is said to have been translated at Keele University but no trace of this translation has been found (Carol Henshaw, 2006). In the Spring 1994 Marcé Bulletin, John Cox published some extracts and comments from it, together with LV Marcé's curriculum vitae.

The Marcé Society (MS) was officially launched during the first academic meeting on Puerperal Mental Disorders held in Manchester in July 1980.

The first MS President was **Ian Brockington**, Channi Kumar was Vice-president, and Frank Margison was Secretary/Bulletin Editor. The first "real" Biennial General Meeting (BGM), however, was held in London in 1982, organised by Channi Kumar at the Institute of Psychiatry.

Channi Kumar was elected President at the BGM held in Oakland (California) in 1984. Ian Brockington add "James Hamilton, as host, wrote 5,000 letters of invitation to American psychiatrists. Only one attended, while 29 Europeans came, at a cost of £1,000 each. During Channi's presidency, we held a large number of meetings all over Britain, in association with Persil soap ('The Soap Opera'), each attended by several hundred members of the public. This was to raise funds to pay off James Hamilton's debts."

The next president was **John Cox**, elected at the 1986 Nottingham BGM. The BGMs were then held in Keele in 1988 and in York in 1990.

Margaret Oates took over the presidency at the 1989 annual meeting in Amsterdam, succeeded by **Gene Paykel**, who took over at the 1992 Edinburgh BGM and served until 1994. During his presidency the constitution was rewritten, including pro-visions for two-year presidential terms. **Brice Pitt** was elected at the 1994 BGM in Cambridge, followed by **Mike O'Hara** in London (1996) and **Louis Appleby** in Iowa (1998). During Appleby's term, MS executive meetings began to be con-ducted by e-mail. The constitution was also amended to meet the Society's developing needs. These changes included the granting of official status to national groups. The first two were the Australasian and Francophone Societies - and the direct election of the President and other officers by the Marcé Society members. During the 2000 BGM in Manchester, **Philip Boyce** was elected president and Lynne Murray president-elect. Philip Boyce organised the next BGM, held in Sydney in 2002. **Lynne Murray** held the 2004 meeting in Oxford where Carol Henshaw was president elect. **Carol Henshaw** edited the Marce Resource pack an important instrument for perinatal mental health training and she included the journal Archives of Women's mental health in the membership of Gold members. She hosted the 2006 Biennial International Scientific Meeting and BGM at Keele University.

Kathy Wisner was President elect there. **Bryanne Barnett** held the 2008 Biennial International Scientific Meeting and BGM 2008 in Sydney; Nine Glangeaud was President elect.

Kathy Wisner have put the Society at a more safe position by increasing drastically the membership and having an professional administrator. She hosted the next biennial conference was in Pittsburgh back to the States in 2010. At the BGM at Pittsburgh in 2010; Jane Hanley was president elect.

Nine Glangeaud-Freudenthal was the first president from a non-English speaking country; she hosted the biennial congress in Paris in 2012. It was a big success with 780 participants from all over the world; at the BGM in 2012; Jeannette Milgrom was president elect.

Jane Hanley made us worked on changes in the constitution define new management that were voted for the Biennial General Assembly in Swansea during the Conference in 2014. This conference was very successful and put the society at a safe financial status; Jane Fisher was president elect.

Jeannette Milgrom worked hard in improving the relationships with the regional groups not only with UKIMS, Australasian, French or German speaking countries but also with Spain, Nordic countries, Turkey, Japan and may be some more to come from North America or Italy or Asia. The biennial 2016 congress will be in Melbourne hosted by Jeannette Milgrom. **Lisa Segre is elected president elect and Jane fisher will be President To follow.....**