

## JPMHN report on the 2018 Skellern Lecture and JPHMN Lifetime Achievement Award—held at the University of Greenwich Maritime Campus, June 14th 2018

Eileen Skellern's contribution to the development of the modern profession of psychiatric and mental health nursing in the United Kingdom was considerable in terms of both practice and policy development. Skellern organized the first major International Mental Health Nursing Conference in the United Kingdom in 1980, but sadly she died two months before the conference. In 1982, the Skellern Lecture was established to remember Eileen. Since then, there has been a long list of leading nurses who have delivered the Skellern Lecture. Each year, nominations for the Skellern lecturer are received and a panel made up of previous Skellern lecturers and representatives from event sponsors presides over the appointment of the new Skellern lecturer. In 2006, the Skellern Lecture was augmented by the addition of a new Lifetime Achievement Award sponsored by Wiley-Blackwell's *Journal of Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing*. The appointments panel also vote on a shortlist of Lifetime Award candidates. In recent years, the panel has grown with the repute of its membership and so the Skellern Lecturer and JPMHN Lifetime Achievement recipient are positions which have the accolade of being identified as leaders in the field chosen by their peers.

The 2018 Skellern Lecturer and JPHMN Lifetime Achievement were held this year at the University of Greenwich, and cohosted with Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, and the Director of Nursing Jane Wells welcomed the audience. This year's Skellern Laureate was Geoff Brennan, and his lecture had the enigmatic title: "The Dark Art of Motivating Inpatient Mental Health Nurses." Though there was little that might be described as dark, in his lecture, Brennan was able to tell us how he goes about facilitating staff to find their strengths, and how he helps staff to shape up their own successful therapeutic ward community environments. Inspired by Marion Janner, a former service-user (and JPMHN Lifetime Achievement Recipient) and Professor Len Bowers, Brennan reflected on why projects such as Safewards and Starwards have been so well received on the ground. Not only does the model work, there is also Brennan's personal hint of unseen magic, his capacity for humour and an unstinting compassion and belief in human potential.

The 2018 JPMHN Lifetime Achievement appointee was Professor Phil Burnard of Cardiff University. Many nurses and other health care professionals owe Phil Burnard a debt of gratitude for all that he has done, via his books and articles, where he has illuminated interactional and interpersonal skills, how to do face-to-face

communication better, how to do research and how to write for publication in ways which are immediately understandable and accessible. Burnard has been a prolific author, and Liam Clarke once quipped that: "Burnard is a man who has never had an unpublished thought." If you go to the Amazon United Kingdom, you will find seven pages of books listed that Phil has written, cowritten or edited. If you go to the Scopus database, you will find details of 181 articles Phil has written, with one of them—A method of analysing interview transcripts in qualitative research, published in *Nurse Education Today* in 1991—attracting well over 1000 citations, 28 of which are in papers published in 2018. Phil has been a long-standing Fellow of the Florence Nightingale Foundation, and in 2012, he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Nursing. Phil Burnard's address was a gentle humorous virtuoso tour of his life, work and struggles, with some profound reflections on the field of psychiatric and mental health nursing. Phil received hearty and lengthy applause and a standing ovation.

The evening also featured a special presentation from the University of Greenwich mental health nursing students to Dr Deborah Watkins for her inspirational teaching. The evening was closed with a vote of thanks to the sponsors by Dr Ben Thomas, Professional Nurse Advisor for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities at the Department for Health, and Ben announced that the 2019 Skellern Lecture and JPMHN Lifetime Achievement will be hosted by South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust and Kingston University, St Georges University, London on 13 June 2019. For visit [www.skellern.info](http://www.skellern.info).

Gary Winship PhD, Associate Professor<sup>1</sup>

Ben Hannigan PhD, Professor MHN<sup>2</sup>

Sally Hardy PhD, Professor, Head of MH and Learning Disabilities<sup>3</sup>

Joy Bray PhD, MHN Specialist<sup>4</sup>

Mary Chambers PhD, Professor of MHN<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Education, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK

<sup>2</sup>Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK

<sup>3</sup>London South Bank University, London, UK

<sup>4</sup>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT),  
Cambridge, UK

<sup>5</sup>Kingston and St Georges University, London, UK

Email: [gary.winship@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:gary.winship@nottingham.ac.uk)