

MARGARET BARNES DSc FRSE FIBiol 1919-2009

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Early days

Margaret Barnes was born in Manchester on 26 August 1919. After a brief period in Wales her family moved back to England where she continued her education in Devon and in 1939 was awarded a BSc from the University of London. Her further education was partly interrupted by the outbreak of World War II and she went to work in industry where she spent the following six years using her training as a chemist to investigate colloidal graphite lubricants. During this time, and with characteristic determination, she used her spare time to study for an MSc which she was awarded in 1945 at the end of the war.

Husband and wife team

She had met her future husband Harold while at college and they married in 1945. Harold was also a chemist but in 1943 had been seconded to the Scottish Marine Biological Association's (SMBA) Marine Station at Millport in the Firth of Clyde where he was involved in the development of antifouling paints. After their marriage Margaret joined him in Millport and it was there that their lifelong partnership in science began.

Barnacle research

Harold's early work was varied, but he had developed an interest in barnacles during his antifouling work and began publishing on the group in the early 1950s. Margaret acted as his assistant, officially designated by the Marine Station in the SMBA's restrictive practices of the time as an 'unpaid permanent visiting worker'. It is remarkable that in all the years she was associated with SMBA/SAMS her employer never offered her a salaried permanent position. Their first joint paper appeared in 1953, albeit on *Calanus finmarchicus*.

Their barnacle papers then came on stream covering a very wide range of topics including general biology, morphology, distribution, reproduction and development, settlement, biochemistry, physiology and metabolism.

In 1967 the SMBA opened its new laboratory in Oban and Harold and Margaret moved there from Millport to continue their barnacle studies.

An editor's life

Before moving, however, in 1963 Harold had started the review series *Oceanography and Marine Biology: An Annual Review*. The husband and wife team, now becoming recognised as world authorities in barnacle biology, continued their partnership in editing 'The Review', as they called it. Not content with starting one journal, and with Margaret's continuing support,

Harold followed *Oceanography and Marine Biology* four years later in 1967 with the *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology* (JEMBE). The first issue of JEMBE was published in September of that year and it is significant that the first paper in the issue was co-authored by Harold and Margaret. Margaret was an integral, experienced and tireless other half of the editorial team on both periodicals, so that on his sudden and untimely death in early 1978 it was natural for her to assume the editorship of both publications and so ensure their smooth continuation. The year following Harold's death was a difficult one for Margaret but she showed little outward signs of her grief and buried herself in writing up unfinished manuscripts and in the considerable amount of editorial work the two journals entailed. She also had to be involved in the painful task of discussing with the publishers her future role. Fortunately, Aberdeen University Press (AUP) were aware of her contribution to the regular appearance of past volumes of *Oceanography and Marine Biology* and were content to allow her to continue as Editor. The transition for JEMBE was not as smooth and Elsevier insisted that others joined her on the editorial team. Although Margaret was not initially happy with this arrangement she realised it was for the best, because one person could not have managed the burden of editing both journals single-handed. In the late 1980s she invited colleagues to become Assistant Editors on *Oceanography and Marine Biology* to share the load. In 1998, and approaching her 80th

birthday, she decided it was time to take a back seat in the editorial team and Alan Ansell took over the reins as Managing Editor. Prior to this, however, in 1993 AUP collapsed as a result of what was known at the time as the 'Maxwell affair' and the rights were bought by University College London Press. Another change of publisher took place in 1998 (to Taylor & Francis) and Margaret continued as co-Editor until Volume 40 was published in 2002 when she decided to stand down, having retired from JEMBE in 1999, thus ending a 57 year contribution to marine science.

Her long standing contribution was publicly recognized in 1972 when the University of London awarded her a DSc for her cirripede studies and in 1976 when she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Subsequently she was made a SAMS Honorary Research Fellow in 1978 and the Institute of Biology invited her to become a Fellow in 1980.

She was a meticulous editor with a fine eye for detail, who insisted on high standards of English and spent many hours improving the texts both of authors whose first language was not English and many whose it was. She dealt diplomatically but firmly with tardy or recalcitrant authors and I well remember her patience when meticulously compiling the indexes for early volumes of *Oceanography and Marine Biology* from entries on scraps of paper which were then sorted and typed out by hand, a task now done in a fraction of the time by computer. She brought to both publications standards that few others could match.



Margaret and Harold travelled extensively in the course of their barnacle work and they were founder members of the European Marine Biology Symposium. In 1988 Margaret was elected for a term as President. She was intimately involved with the two Symposia that were held in Oban in 1974 and 1989 and was instigator, organiser and Senior Editor of the Proceedings of the latter meeting. In later years when she no longer felt able to attend the Symposia, I was frequently asked by participants "How's Margaret?" and to pass on their regards. At the EMBS and during her visits to numerous laboratories throughout Europe and the US she made contact with people the world over and many of these contacts developed into lasting friendships. She was always encouraging to young scientists, especially young women. As one of them explained to me, "Although she was a very traditional woman in many respects, she did buck the trends of the time by being very successful in her own right and by demonstrating intellectual independence from her husband and I believe she was very proud of her DSc, a public acknowledgment of her contribution to science. She told me she had to strongly argue the point and explain why several of her publications had Harold as first author when in fact she had done the work." This comment sums up Margaret's attitude to her work. She was an independent and determined

woman largely overshadowed by her husband and her true scientific and editorial abilities only really became apparent after his death.

Outside interests

She was a gentle, modest, courteous and charming person, a good listener and had a terrific sense of humour. In her younger days she was very active as a keen cross-country skier, mountaineer and long term member of the Austrian Alpine Club. She remained sprightly until her death, working in her garden throughout the year and we had numerous conversations about hill walking and the state of her crops. She was also a keen sports fan and could talk knowledgeably about tennis, rugby and snooker. However, I suspect that many will particularly remember her for her coffee mornings and dinner parties. They were deservedly famous for their wide ranging and relaxed conversation and their cuisine, and it gave her great pleasure to entertain students and visiting scientists of all ages and nationalities at her home overlooking the sea.

Margaret died peacefully in Oban on 30 October 2009, leaving the legacy of a considerable and longstanding contribution to the scientific output and social life of the SMBA/SAMS Laboratories. She will be greatly missed by all who were privileged to call her friend or colleague.