## Editorial

The Chairman of the RCN History of Nursing Group and the Editor of this Bulletin submitted evidence to the RCN Commission on Nursing Education. Extracts from that evidence are reproduced in this issue. The message - that the history of nursing is relevant and necessary for the development of a research-based profession - cannot be reiterated too often. The welcome growth in interest in nursing history at home and abroad (see note about Kansas below) demonstrates the vitality of nursing history. What is needed is the courage and the commitment by senior nurses to build up the history of nursing as one of the pillars upon which the profession rests.

In 1978 I wrote of the need to encourage more micro-historical studies as one step on the way to a better understanding of the development of nursing. Far too many 'macro-histories' had been produced which paid little attention to the local and regional contexts and too many local histories failed to take account of national or other contexts. This issue is given over to three local studies in the history of nursing and in a major review article Malcolm Newby looks at local studies and nursing history and points out the ways in which such studies need to develop in order to produce real understanding and not mere antiquarianism.

The Annual General Meeting of the Group was held in London in November. The business meeting was followed by a Lecture given by Dr Charles Webster. The paper will be published in full in the next issue of the Bulletin.

Members will be aware from reports submitted at the AGM of the contacts made between the RCN Group and similar groups in the United States. The latest organisation to contact us is the Kansas Nursing Heritage Foundation. An article on that group will also appear in a future issue. Anyone interested in finding out more about the Kansas Group should contact Christopher Maggs, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Bath, Bath.