

The Bulletin legacy

Jois Stansfield delves into the monthly theme of 'firsts' by tracing the history of the RCSLT's professional magazine

The College of Speech Therapists (CST) had a difficult gestation and birth, drawing together two competing organisations: the Society of Speech Therapists and the Association of Speech Therapists, which were both established in the 1930s. The journal *Speech*, founded in 1935, had taken the role of both academic journal and news bulletin for the Society of Speech Therapists, and as the Association of Speech Therapists had no similar publication, the CST agreed to

adopt *Speech* as the professional journal. Following several name changes, *Speech* became known as the *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. At the time, a need for a less formal publication was recognised, and this resulted in the *CST News Bulletin*, first published in March 1945.

Formality is a relative concept, and by today's standards the first editions of the *News Bulletin* are very formal indeed. Meetings and votes of thanks are reported in earnest and tedious detail. No first names were seen, unless someone had recently married, with married women

being known by their husbands' names (eg Mrs John Smith). The first edition of *Bulletin* was characterised by exhortations to members to be collegiate, and to contribute to the CST and *Bulletin* alike. Due to the wartime restriction on paper, this first edition was published on four sides of foolscap paper, with dense text, no illustrations and, of course, no colour. Each of the 1945 editions were edited by a different person, but themes rapidly emerged. Editorials requested contributions and bemoaned poor responses, reports of Area (formal, prestigious) and District meetings (still formal but apparently less important), seem to reflect the divisions of the CST's predecessors, and there was a how-to-do-therapy article from

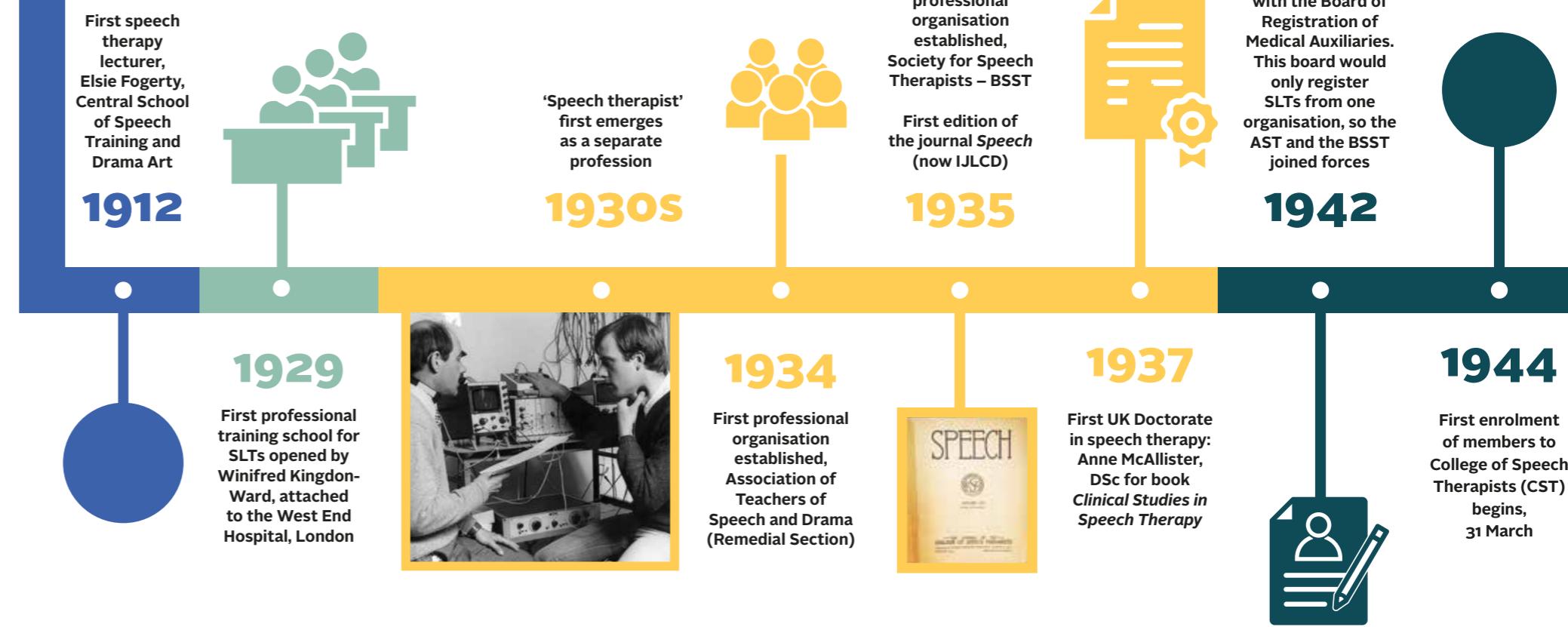
a senior contributor in each issue. The editor of the third edition was from Glasgow and this was reflected in the emphasis on Scotland, the ordering of the Area news (Scotland first) and two articles by Dr Anne McAllister, the founder of the Glasgow School of Speech Therapy, written to ensure her contribution to the profession was recognised.

The fourth edition listed membership of all the CST committees, appearing to include a good half of the registered therapists. It was also the first to publish letters to the editor, with one taking exception to the contents of an earlier therapy article, while another thanked members for their entry to a competition to design a model speech therapy

clinic. A 'personal' column was also suggested and established from 1946—something that has continued in the magazine in the decades following.

Over the decades *Bulletin* has had many facelifts, and today the range of material would be unrecognisable to the founders of the CST. Nevertheless, *Bulletin* then, as now, reflected members' interests. Tracing the changes made to the magazine helps us to see how the profession has viewed itself during the past 75 years. ■

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