



The Midwife's Here!: The Enchanting True Story of One of Britain's Longest Serving Midwives

Linda Fairley

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The Sunday Times bestseller

‘Delivering my first baby is a memory that will stay with me forever. Just feeling the warmth of a newborn head in your hands, that new life, there’s honestly nothing like it... I’ve since brought more than 2,200 babies into the world, and I still tingle with excitement every time.’

It’s the summer of 1968 and St Mary’s Maternity Hospital in Manchester is a place from a bygone age. It is filled with starched white hats and full skirts, steaming laundries and milk kitchens, strict curfews and bellowed commands. It is a time of homebirths, swaddling and dangerous anaesthetics. It was this world that Linda Fairley entered as a trainee midwife aged just 19 years old.

From the moment Linda delivered her first baby – racing across rain-splattered Manchester street on her trusty moped in the dead of night – Linda knew she’d found her vocation. ‘The midwife’s here!’ they always exclaimed, joined in their joyful chorus by relieved husbands, mothers, grandmothers and whoever else had found themselves in close proximity to a woman about to give birth.

Under the strict supervision of community midwife Mrs Tattershall, Linda’s gruellingly long days were spent on overcrowded wards pinning Terry nappies, making up bottles and sterilizing bedpans – and above all helping women in need. Her life was a succession of emergencies, successes and tragedies: a never-ending chain of actions which made all the difference between life and death.

There was Mrs Petty who gave birth in heartbreaking poverty; Mrs Drew who confided to Linda that the triplets she was carrying were not in fact her husband’s; and Muriel Turner, whose dangerously premature baby boy survived – against all the odds. Forty years later Linda’s passion for midwifery burns as bright as ever as she is now celebrated as one of Britain’s longest-serving midwives, still holding the lives of mothers and children in her own two hands.

Rich in period detail and told with a good dose of Manchester humour, *The Midwife’s Here!* is the extraordinary, heartwarming tale of a truly inspiring woman.

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