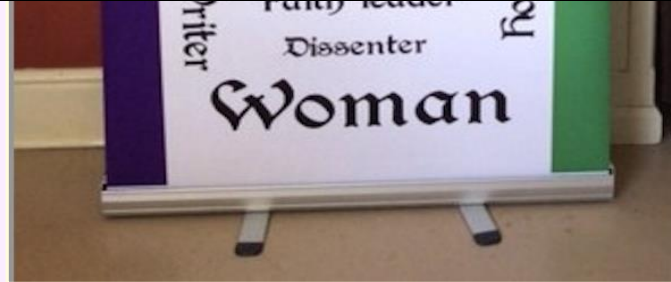
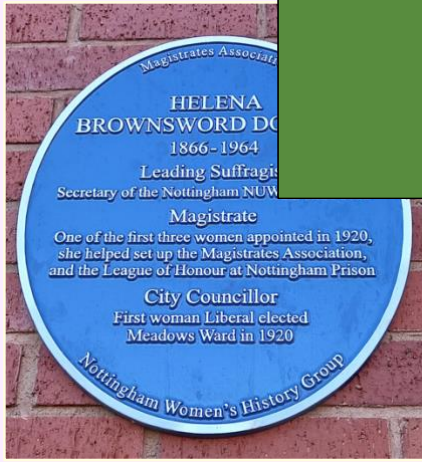




NOTTINGHAM WOMEN'S HISTORY GROUP NEWSLETTER ISSUE 20 SPRING 2026



Chair's Welcome

Hello members

Well, Spring has finally arrived and not a moment too soon, although the beautifully warm spring sunshine has disappeared while I write and it is perishing cold again.

We've done a lot since our last Newsletter. We had a fantastic talk at our AGM last October when Karen Winyard vividly recreated Dame Laura Knight's early life in Nottingham from the word pictures in her memoirs. If you missed the talk, Karen will be giving it again at the very last Lowdham Book Festival in June – more details in Diary Dates below.

We've done the usual round of talks for groups as varied as WIs, a care home, local history groups, schools, a golfing dinner and even a Rainbows group which was a delightful experience. The requests keep pouring in so word is definitely spreading. We are incredibly pleased that NWHG is not only still going but that its reputation is actually growing, thanks in no small part to your support.

We also have organisations contacting us for collaborations. We had displays for International Women's Day at both Nottingham Central Library and Bromley House Library. We hope the latter will become a long-standing event – there is a more complete report about it below.



Miriam Jackson manning NWHG's stand at the Central Library for IWD. Photo Linzi Kemp.

Karen Alvey of the University of Nottingham's School of Pharmacy invited us to trawl their archive to produce display material for their Centenary Celebration Conference on 17th April. Women were influential in shaping the school from very early on and we discovered some amazing individuals who were Chairs of Nottingham and District Branch of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain such as Frances Bertha Prince and Mary Agnes Burr.

We are also working with Rachel Shaw of Deaf-initely Women. This 100% deaf-led charity supporting deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing women across the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire area has received Heritage Lottery funding to provide accessible local heritage experiences. We have had one meeting to explore possibilities and will update you in our next newsletter.

Another exciting collaboration is working with Clare Brace of Listening After Life who is developing a documentary series for YouTube which will bring information about our wonderful women to a wider audience. We have arranged our first meeting and will keep you updated about the results.

On an entirely personal note, I had a lovely visit to London in February where I saw a plaque to Jennie Lee (albeit lumped in with her husband Aneurin Bevan) and a plaque on Mary Quant's former boutique Bazaar, both near Sloane Square. Even better, I had a ride on the recently renamed Suffragette Line which runs from Gospel Oak to Barking. The name was chosen as a tribute to the East London Federation of Suffragettes, which was a largely working-class suffragette movement in the East End, so Transport For London gets a Gold Star from me!

And of course, I simply have to tell you about the unveiling of the plaque to Margaret Glen Bott on 21st March. The turnout was beyond our wildest dreams – not just our wonderful NWHG members but former pupils of the Margaret Glen Bott school, members of the Glen Bott family and even gynaecology and obstetrics professionals who felt that Miss

Glen Bott's commemoration was of vital importance for the profession and for the medical safety of women. The plaque was very much Miriam's initiative and she has written more about the event below.

But we're not done yet. We are working towards our next plaque so watch this space! Thank you again for your loyal support and enthusiasm without which none of our activities would be possible.
Siân Trafford

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 10th June 2026: Walk - Some Remarkable Nottingham Women led by Miriam. Meet at 7pm in front of Theatre Royal. £5 - no need to book, just turn up.

Saturday 20th June 2026: Come and visit us at the very last Lowdham Book Festival and make sure this wonderful event is given a fitting farewell. We will have a stall, as will Rowena Edlin-White, and Karen Winyard will be giving her fascinating talk about Laura Knight's early life in Nottingham. Booking details here: <https://www.thebookcase.co.uk/>

Saturday 27th June 2026: Talk – by University of Nottingham's Charlotte May on "Nottingham's C18th & C19 Cavewomen". Explores how the caves were used by women during those centuries. Gather 2 pm at International Community Centre, Mansfield Road NG1 3FN, £5 donation for coffee, tea, biscuits, raffle and enlightenment.

Wednesday 15th July 2026: Walk – 1826: The year of the poet (Mary Bailey) and the bookseller (Susannah Wright) led by Karen Winyard. Meet at 7 pm at the Lions. £5 - no need to book, just turn up.

Sunday 16th August 2026: Walk - Some Remarkable Nottingham Women led by Miriam. Meet at 2pm in front of Theatre Royal. £5 - no need to book, just turn up.

Sunday 6th September 2026: Walk - 1826: The year of the poet (Mary Bailey) and the

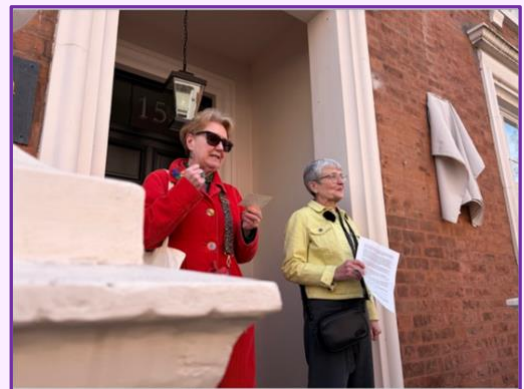
bookseller (Susannah Wright) led by Karen Winyard. Meet at 2 pm at the Lions. £5 - no need to book, just turn up.

Saturday 17th October 2026: NWHG AGM and talk by Miriam Jackson on Plaque Attack, the progress of NWHG's aim to get more plaques commemorating women installed in Nottingham. Gather 2 pm at International Community Centre, Mansfield Road NG1 3FN, £5 donation for coffee, tea, biscuits, raffle and a top-quality afternoon.

London until 8 November 2026 – The Last Princesses of the Punjab exhibition at Kensington Palace, highlighting Suffragette Princess Sophia Duleep Singh and the women who influenced her. Duleep Singh's godmother was Queen Victoria, making her commitment to the suffrage cause all the more laudable.

Plaque To Margaret Glen Bott

On a bright Saturday 21st March, 57 years after her death, a blue plaque was unveiled by homeowner Shinade Fisher on the house in Regent Street where Miss Margaret Glen Bott had lived for over 25 years.



Siân Trafford and Miriam Jackson at the unveiling. Photo Linzi Kemp

NWHG were delighted to see a gathering of over fifty people attend the unveiling and the short celebration ceremony which followed at the Nottingham Playhouse. A commemorative

cake depicting the plaque was cut by descendants of Margaret.



Malcolm and Bruce Glen Bott cutting the cake.
Photo Miriam Jackson

It was particularly pleasing to have members of the Glen Bott family with us. They had travelled from Lytham St Annes and West Sussex for the occasion having learned about the event via the crowdfunding appeal. The fundraising campaign was launched on 1st December 2025. Two weeks later the target amount of £900 was reached! And then a final donation came in from a 'Glen-Bott'. Naturally, I pursued this but at first got no results. Thankfully, as the event got closer I was contacted by both Malcolm and Bruce Glen Bott to say they were coming to Nottingham. I was thrilled to hear from them and to meet them on the day.



Siân Trafford with Malcolm and Bruce Glen Bott.
Photo Linzi Kemp

It was gratifying also to have a number of gynaecological and obstetrics professionals attend together with people from the MedChi Society who were aware of Margaret's

pioneering work and were delighted to see the plaque. Other attendees included former staff and pupils from Margaret Glen Bott School, Wollaton (now closed) who were similarly pleased to see the school's namesake remembered.

It was quite a day, rounded off by having a room generously provided by the Playhouse theatre. This was apt as Margaret had been active on its early fundraising board. The theatre venue meant attendees were able to talk and share stories as well as viewing display boards created by NWHG that contained a range information about her life and work.



The plaque now in position on Regent Street.
Photo Miriam Jackson

The event was covered by both BBC News and BBC Radio Nottingham.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c7vq6y7pme4o>

It also featured on NWHG FB page and both a profile and a podcast about her are available on our website under the 'Notable Women' <https://nottinghamwomenshistory.org.uk/nottingham-notable-women/>

The campaign to install the plaque is part of our 'Plaque Attack' initiative which aims to have more plaques put up around the city to raise the profile of some of Nottingham's amazing achieving women. We'll let you know who will be next.

Miriam Jackson

Celebrating International Women's Day in Style

Saturday 7th March saw NWHG collaborating with Bromley House Library where Clare Brown (Library Director) and Matt Dolman (Development Manager) welcomed us as part of their celebration of International Women's Day. Bromley House had taken the opportunity to extend their commemoration of Jane Austen's anniversary with a display of books in their catalogue that featured in Rebecca Romney's *Jane Austen's Bookshelf*. Library member Alison Halligan curated the display based on her piece in Bromley House's newsletter, <https://bromleyhouse.org/jane-austens-bookshelf-at-bromley-house-library-by-alison-halligan/>

Bromley House opened its doors to non-members for the day and we greatly enjoyed talking to members and visitors over our display in the Neville Hoskins reading room. In addition, we provided three short talks on women writers from Nottingham: Eliza Oldham, Annie Matheson and Rose Fyleman.



Rowena Edlin-White talking about Annie Matheson.
Photo Siân Trafford.

We were thrilled that all three talks were so well attended. Everyone who came along to chat with us brought something new for us to think about, including a discussion about women's role in the growth of the Temperance movement, questions about women in the history of Nottingham's Jewish community and whether there really might be fairies at the bottom of our gardens.

The opportunity to find out more about Eliza Oldham has raised an interest in the Temperance movement in 19th century Nottinghamshire and its importance to women, which we may research further in the future. The day also led me to take a quick look at the women involved in Bromley House throughout its history. The library was ahead of its time by welcoming women members from the start. More details can be found in:

<https://bromleyhouse.org/hiding-in-plain-sight-the-women-of-bromley-house-library/>

It was lovely to meet Alison Halligan and to talk to her about Jane Austen and the women writers Austen read and enjoyed. And it was great to see Alison and her daughter two weeks later at the plaque unveiling to Margaret Glen Bott. We were also joined in the Neville Hoskins room by Victoria Sheldon who creates beautiful scarves, cushions and other items with designs inspired by historical women. Her work can be viewed at her website:

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/GirlandtheGardenia>



Karen Winyard, Siân Trafford & Rowena Edlin-White with Alison Halligan far left and Victoria Sheldon far right. Photo courtesy of Bromley House Library.

The day proved really productive and fruitful for both NWHG and Bromley House Library. It allowed us to celebrate and promote women's history with a large and diverse audience, as well as to raise awareness of NWHG and what we do. Our thanks go to Bromley House Library and their fantastic team of staff for welcoming us so warmly and organising the day so efficiently. We hope we can continue to collaborate together.

Karen Winyard

NWHG – Adding Women to Wikipedia

September 2025

Members of NWHG were invited to training workshops for a Wikipedia editing project, instigated by the Nottingham Feminist Archive Group and organised in collaboration between Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Central Library's Local Studies team. This campaign by Women in Red works to increase the amount and accuracy of information on Wikipedia relating to women, who are currently under-represented.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Women_in_Red

November 2025

Following the workshops, those who wanted to continue with editing Wikipedia agreed to work together at Nottingham Central Library, where a table was reserved for us each Monday in the Local Studies section. This has provided us with time and space to help each other research and reference additions to Wikipedia entries, for example with members from the Nottingham Nursing History group.

<https://nottinghamnursinghistory.wordpress.com/>

December 2025

Names and dates of Nottingham Suffragettes and Suffragists have been added to the List of British Suffragists and Suffragettes held on Wikipedia. These were members of the Dowson family, which references research by NWHG.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_British_suffragists_and_suffragettes#cite_note-149

Following a project for NWHG with Nottingham High School for Girls in contribution for their 150th anniversary, we have added information about the early headmistresses into the public domain.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nottingham_Girls%27_High_School

January 2026

We toured Inspire Nottinghamshire Archives who displayed various artefacts for us, including a scrapbook of suffragette Helen Kirkpatrick Watts, who has a profile on NWHG's website under Notable Women. Helen is commemorated in the Arboretum with a stone plaque and a juniper tree.



Helen Kirkpatrick Watts scrapbook held at Inspire Nottinghamshire Archives, Ref, ACC 10180. Photo Linzi Kemp

Information about a lace finisher and business woman of Nottingham, Frances Fraser, were added to the page of her son, Sir Edward Fraser, a Nottingham Sheriff and Mayor. For more about this remarkable woman see Issue 19 and below.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Fraser

February 2026

There is ongoing work to create pages of notable women on Wikipedia incorporating research by NWHG, beginning with Margaret Glen Bott OBE (1892 – 1969).
Linzi Kemp

Always Something New to Learn!

Having researched Helena Brownsword Dowson in some detail for our booklet on her life and achievements, I was delighted to come across some information which I didn't know. A photo of her Red Cross service card was shared on Ancestry and I learned that during WW1 Helena used her own car as an ambulance and drove for some 405 hours delivering patients to various hospitals around Nottingham.

Miriam Jackson

Frances Fraser: Nottingham lacemaker to businesswoman

Your [Autumn/Winter, 2025 edition of the NWHG newsletter](#) contained the opening chapter of the life of Frances Fraser, a Nottingham lace-finisher and subsequent business woman. Read this next chapter to consider whether Frances was the catalyst for her family's vast fortune.

Previously, we learned that Frances was born in either 1830/32 and became the very young unmarried mother of Edward Henry, whose birth certificate stated 'father unknown'. Edward was to become Sir Edward Fraser, a solicitor who served as an Alderman and Councillor in Nottingham. A Liberal, he was three times Mayor of Nottingham and also Sheriff.

Frances was also the mother of five other children: the Reverend, the Solicitor, the youngest son and two daughters (their occupations are unknown). No father was named for any of Frances' children on any available documentation. The 1871 Census records Frances as a widow, although there is no evidence of a marriage and, indeed, she retained her 'maiden' name throughout her life.

By 1871 Frances and her elder, unmarried sister Janet had moved to a prosperous Victorian suburb, with Frances heading the household. Both the sisters' means of support was described as 'income derived dividends'. In 1881 Frances Fraser's name appears in Wright's Nottingham trade Directory.

Evidence of Frances' wealth and the extent of her family network is revealed in records relating to her death. Frances died on 25 January 1889, leaving a personal estate of £1,641 (£176,664.38 today). She was buried in a monumental grave in the Church (Rock/Municipal) Cemetery. The grave inscription reads: *In loving memory of Frances Fraser who fell asleep in Jesus January 25th, 1889 in her 57th year.*

Alongside Frances were buried three sons, a grandson, a daughter and daughter in law. Nearby lies Frances' eldest son, Sir Edward Henry Fraser and his wife (Jane - Lady Fraser).



Grave of Frances Fraser. Photo Linzi Kemp

Also, not far away in the Rock Cemetery is the grave of Mr Samuel Morley, who died less than two months after Frances Fraser (March 12th, 1890, aged 73 years).

But who was Samuel Morley? And how is he linked to Frances Fraser?

Samuel Morley was a single man all his life, had origins in his family lace production companies but had taken early retirement. Described as a 'landowner' on the 1861 census, by 1871, Samuel was living at 'Lenton Grove', now located on the University of Nottingham campus. Along with him there were his three sisters plus brother-in-law, John Wells Leavers (a cotton merchant married to Morley's sister Sarah).

The 1871 Census recorded that Samuel's income was derived from 'income from house'. That of his sisters was from 'invested property'. According to the 1881 Census Samuel was a property owner and he and sister Ann were 'proprietor of houses & dividends' living at The Ashe near Etwell, Derbyshire.

Samuel Morley left a personal estate valued at £171, 018,10,4d" (worth £19,038,483.67 today). Note from the copy of the probate, that the executors of Samuel's will (dated June 1881) were his brother-in-law, John Wells Leavers (1818-1897) and two of Frances Fraser's sons, Edward and Arthur. Samuel

Morley died at the Leavers' home in The Park, Nottingham, where Edward Fraser also owned a house.



Hermitage (Leavers' home), Courtesy of Nottingham and Notts Photographic Society.

Samuel's Will revealed that his considerable fortune was divided between his own and the Fraser family. Morley left 'the income of £10,000 for her life to Mrs Frances Fraser and of £5,000 for his life to Mr Hugh Lawson Fraser on Mrs Frasers demise' (£10,000 in 1890 is worth £1,113,361.62 current day). Hugh, Frances' youngest son benefited from half a million pounds per year (at current prices), for seven years until his death in 1907, aged only 39 years old – he had been harshly described as 'an imbecile' on one census.

There was also £7,000 each in trust for Miss Mary Fraser and Miss Annie Fraser, plus £2,000 in trust for Miss Jessie Fraser. Mary and Annie were Frances' two daughters, and Jessie was probably Frances' sister, Janet. They lived together most of their lives. Morley also left £10,000 each to his nephews, Mr E H Fraser, the Rev. Arthur Fraser, and Mr William Frederick Fraser. Furthermore, the residue of all his property was left to nephews and nieces: Edward Henry, Arthur, William Frederick, Mary, and Annie Fraser.

Those Fraser children could not have been Samuels' nephews and nieces unless he had married a Fraser, but as we know he was a single man. Alternatively, one of his siblings could have been married to a member of the Fraser family, but none were eligible.

Morley's assets were sold off by his executors, the Fraser brothers and brother-in-law John Wells Leavers, at a 'sale of valuable live and dead stock carriages harnesses and other

assets' held at Morley's residence, The Ashe, by 'instructions from the executors of the late Samuel Morley' (*Derby Mercury*, 30 April, 1890). The *London Echo* (5 June 1890), claimed that the 'total value will be nearer seven than five millions of money'. Note, £5,000,000 in 1890 is worth £821,066,227.60 today, and £7,000,000 in 1890 would be worth over one billion pounds.

Ms Frances Fraser was originally a Nottingham lace finisher and Samuel Morley was also from a lacemaking family. Income for Frances and her sister Janet was from 'income derived dividends' and Morley was a landowner and 'proprietor of houses & dividends'. Samuel Morley was single all his life. Frances was recorded as 'unmarried' on the 1851 census, when she already had her eldest child, Edward. The 1871 Census recorded her as a widow. No marriage record exists for Frances, she always retained her 'maiden' name of Fraser, and a father's name is not recorded for any of her six children. Yet Samuel Morley left his fortune to Frances and her family.

Samuel Morley and many of the Fraser family (allegedly Morley nephews and nieces) were buried in the same cemetery. Frances' eldest son, Sir Edward Fraser, died 10 November 1921, aged 70. He left a considerable estate: £111,089.16 (£5,472,881.03 today).



Park House, (Fraser Home), Photo Linzi Kemp

What were the reasons that lay beneath this story of seemingly unmarried parents of six children who maintained separate households? Frances Fraser and Samuel Morley's relationship remains somewhat undetermined but of course we can speculate!

Linzi Kemp

Acknowledgements:

David Stewart, OBE, local historian.

Inspire Nottinghamshire Archives.

Name that street!

NWHG heard that there were to be some streets in the Bilborough area named to commemorate the artist Evelyn Gibbs who had come to the city from Goldsmith's college in London when it was evacuated because of WW2. After the war she painted a stunning mural rediscovered in the 2010's at St Martin's Church in Bilborough.

We got in touch with the City Council to find out more and offer our support. We had a very useful and helpful meeting and learned that the City Council has legal responsibility to name streets, and that they are keen to celebrate the city's diverse heritage and recognise more of Nottingham's remarkable women in this way, particularly those who have influenced the cultural, social and artistic heritage of the City.

Evelyn Gibbs (1905–1991) is now recognised through names like Gibbs Avenue and Etching Drive. The City Council worked on this with Pauline Lucas, herself an artist and someone who has researched and written extensively about Evelyn's life and work.

Secondly, Dame Laura Knight (1877–1970), a renowned artist and former Nottingham School of Art student, whose work gained international acclaim. Her legacy is reflected in street names inspired by her artistry such as Laura Avenue, Parade Way, Feather Lane and Sundown Close, all in the Bestwood area. Similarly, Amy Atkin (c1890–19??) a trailblazer in Nottingham's lace industry. Believed to be the first woman to design machine-made patterns, Amy's influence continues through streets named after both her and her delicate pattern work – including Atkin Drive, Thread Way and Bobbin Gardens in the New Basford area.

Finally, Dowson Road celebrates Helena Brownsword Dowson, a leading suffragist, and later JP and City Councillor. Who knew?

Looking Ahead: NWHG and the City Council will collaborate on future street naming proposals combining our knowledge of

Nottingham's many remarkable and achieving women with the City Council's desire to celebrate the city's diverse heritage and the remarkable women who have shaped it. Sarah Abbott from the City Council said: 'This is an exciting step forward—helping us tell Nottingham's story more fully, honour women's achievements, and inspire future generations.'

Miriam Jackson

For more information and updates about Nottingham Women's History Group contact us:

Website:

www.nottinghamwomenshistory.org.uk

Email: nottmwomenshistory@gmail.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/NottinghamWomensHistoryGroup/>

Twitter: @NottsWomensHist

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Key to cover images from top left:

- Suffragette banner, courtesy of Siân Trafford
- NWHG banner, courtesy of Siân Trafford
- Plaque & juniper tree in the Arboretum commemorating Helen Kirkpatrick Watts, courtesy of Siân Trafford
- Caroline Dexter, Bloomerite and journalist, courtesy of Rowena Edlin-White
- Florence Paton sculpture by Hilary Cartmel, Rest Garden, Carlton Hill, courtesy of Siân Trafford
- Eileen White opening for Midlands v Australia, Trent Bridge 1951, courtesy of Rowena Edlin-White
- Plaque commemorating Women Magistrates, courtesy of Siân Trafford
- Plaque commemorating Helena Brownsword Dowson, courtesy of Siân Trafford