

Inspiring women

*The Legacy of the First World War
in South Gloucestershire*

Read about the nominated Inspiring Women from South Gloucestershire.....

- Industry and STEM
- Culture
- Sport
- Local Politics
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Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*

Thelma Bennett (1923 -)

Thelma Bennett was 18 in 1941 when she survived the bombing of Parnall Aircraft Factory, Yate at 14.30hrs on Thursday 27 February 1941. 4000 people worked at the factory and 55 were killed by the bombing. Thelma went back to work the very next day. The factory played a vital role in the war effort by specialising in making gun turrets and other parts for aeroplanes as well as being was a target for German bombers. Throughout World War Two the factory work force grew from under 100 to over 600 people by the end of the war many of whom were women. Like many other brave women, Thelma had joined up for war work before it was compulsory, knowing that the work might be dangerous. She worked as a “calculating machine girl”. The works pass was the only item salvaged from her burnt handbag.



© Yate & District Heritage Centre

Source of information / Further information: Yate Heritage Centre

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*



Image: With Kind permission of Meriel James

Meriel James

Meriel James was a translator for Rolls-Royce plc. She started work as a bilingual secretary in 1964 on the Concorde project with France and worked with the Chief pilot for three years. Foreign partner companies wrote in their own language, which meant a huge increase in translation work. She subsequently became Head Translator and then Translation/Technical Library Manager. Translators had a good language degree and gained a useful knowledge of the workings of a jet engine by working closely with the engineers. Exact meanings for engineering terms were precise. Staff often worked long hours.

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*

Deborah Jones

Deborah Jones is Centre Director at The Mall, Cribbs Causeway. Her innovative and exceptional leadership have provided floor space to complement surrounding attractions and so develop the visitor economy.

Partnering with Aerospace Bristol to launch Bristol Fashion week, Autumn/Winter 2017, under Concorde, has been her most significant project to date. The event reached 3 million viewers via ITV's 'Lorraine'.

Deborah is a remarkable woman, who supports the local community, development of The Mall and tourism across South Gloucestershire.

No image supplied

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*

Betty Morgan

Using her secretarial and accounting skills, Betty worked for the Chief Engineer at Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI). In 1961 she joined the British Aircraft Corporation's offices at Pall Mall, becoming secretary to the Vice Chairman of British Aircraft Corporation (BAC).

On her return to Filton, Betty volunteered with Bristol Aero Collection Trust at Kemble and now volunteers at the new Aerospace Bristol museum.



Image: With Kind permission of Betty Morgan

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*

Brenda Perry

Brenda worked under Nobel Prize Winner Professor Powell, in the Cosmic Ray Research Department, Bristol University. She helped to develop film exposed in the outer atmosphere for analysis showing high energy radiation from outside the solar system.

Brenda moved to British Aircraft Corporation (BAC) where she read instrument panel records during test flights including the Canberra High Altitude record of 65,890 feet. Brenda then worked at Smiths Industries in the materials laboratories where thermistors, extra sensitive temperature sensing instruments, were being developed. This experimental work with chemicals was exacting.

No image supplied

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*

Emma Robertson

Emma from South Gloucestershire is an Industrial Design Engineer at Renishaw. She is passionate about encouraging young people to consider a career in engineering and is a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Ambassador across South Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire and Bristol. Recently featured in the Bristol Post as an inspiring woman, Emma believes in challenging perceptions and stereotypes associated with engineering. She believes in how important education of young people, parents and teachers is to show that anyone can be an engineer. She aims to inspire more people to consider a career in engineering.



Image: With Kind permission of Emma Robertson

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*

Janet Tolman (- 2003)

Janet has the distinction of having been, not only the first woman manager at Rolls-Royce, Bristol, but the first Senior Woman Manager. She managed the important Design Services Department which provided the crucial printing, photographic, translation, typing and administration for the Design Service. Her judgement, organisational skills and ability to handle all levels of personnel were highly valued. She was respected by staff as being a totally fair Line Manager.



Janet Tolman, second from left. © Rolls-Royce plc

Inspiring women

*Industry and Science, Technology,
Engineering and Mathematics*



Image: with Kind permission of Jean Williams

Jean Williams

Jean started at Bristol Siddeley Engines in 1956, training in shorthand, typing and English, and worked for the Welfare Department, leaving in 1962. Returning in 1968, to the Inspection Department at British Aerospace, her duties included the vital work of keeping service records for Britannia aircraft. Jean also designed the form used for the check list of changes for Concorde, essential before each flight. Transcribing handwritten notes from technical staff sometimes included correcting their English.

Inspiring women

in culture

Romy Hardeep Gill, MBE

British-Indian chef, food writer, TV presenter and Thornbury restaurant owner, Romy Gill grew up in West Bengal. She moved to the UK in 1994, leaving behind friends, family and familiar food. In 2013, she opened a restaurant, Romy's Kitchen, in Castle Street, Thornbury. Since then, she has written for national newspapers and magazines, been a judge on Celebrity MasterChef and Radio 4's Food and Farming Awards, and featured on Woman's Hour, BBC Asian Network and 5 Live. She was appointed an MBE in 2016. Her first cookbook is due out soon.



Photograph credit: Kirstie Young

Inspiring women

in culture

Minnie Louise Haskins (1875 – 1957)

Minnie Haskins was a novelist and poet best known for being quoted by King George VI in his Royal Christmas message of 1939. The opening words of the poem "The Gate of the Year", struck a chord with a country facing the uncertainty of war. Minnie was born at 2 Kingswood Hill, Oldland, South Gloucestershire and she grew up in Warmley. Minnie worked in a Wesleyan Methodist mission in London and another in Madras, India. In 1918, she studied sociology at the London School of Economics and then taught there as an academic. Minnie was closely involved with creating Institute of Industrial Welfare Workers. She was given a presentation at Warmley Tower in 1951 during the Festival of Britain.



© Kingswood Heritage Museum

Source of information / Further information:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minnie_Louise_Haskins

Inspiring women

in culture

Margaret Lovell
D.Litt (Hon) DipFA (Lond) FRBS
RWA

Margaret studied Art in the UK, moved to Florence for a year on receiving the Italian State Scholarship, then returned to Portsmouth College of Art as a lecturer. Accolades for her work include the Greek Government scholarship and commissions from Grafham Water, Barclays Bank, and Cossham Hospital. She has exhibited in London, Porthminster Gallery, St Ives and Jonathan Grant Gallery, Auckland. In 2007, she was awarded a D.Litt. (Honorary Doctorate) for distinguished services to sculpture by University of Leicester. Margaret's works are largely in Bronze and vary in size from miniature to monumental.



© Margaret Lovell

Further information: www.margaretlovell.co.uk

Inspiring women

in culture



Photograph Credit: Pete Axford

Jekka McVicar

Living in Alveston since 1987 and with a passion for herbs, Jekka McVicar has gradually created an organic herb farm which currently grows over 650 varieties. She has won 62 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Gold Medals, 14 from Chelsea, and now has a worldwide business. Her 'Complete Herb Book' has sold over a million copies. A Vice President of the RHS, she is one of the few women to hold their prestigious Victoria Medal of Honour. Jekka still holds free open days for local people, telling marvellous tales about the herbs she grows.

Inspiring women

in culture

Jackie Sims

Jackie founded the Filton Community History Group and obtained Millennium funding for a history project for schools. She had Filton House listed (Pegasus House) and researched local subjects including Shield Laundry, Filton House, Bristol Aeroplane Company prefabs. Jackie volunteered for the Bristol Aero Collection. She edited the oral history book, 'Filton Voices', the 'Wartime Raid Memorial' book and eight other oral history books. She initiated the Bristol Aeroplane Company, 'BAC 100' Centenary project. Jackie edited the interviews in 'British Workmanship at its Best' so contributing to the new exhibition at Aerospace Bristol. Jackie's work for Filton's heritage is an outstanding legacy.



Photograph credit: Jackie Simms

Inspiring women

in culture

Jane Tozer

Jane was born in 1936, and worked in various secretarial capacities and as a civil servant. She took her first degree age 36, and a Medieval History MA at Bristol University in 1999. She joined Filton Community History group in Filton, and for 20 years, has acted as Treasurer and helped to collect and publish local memories.



Image: with Kind permission of Meriel James

For the Bristol Aeroplane Company (BAC) 'BAC 100' Centenary project, she was involved in administering the aviation industry Oral History project and editing the interviews. Jane also runs a history tutor group and gives talks on history subjects. Jane's work for Filton's heritage is of lasting value.

Inspiring women

in sports

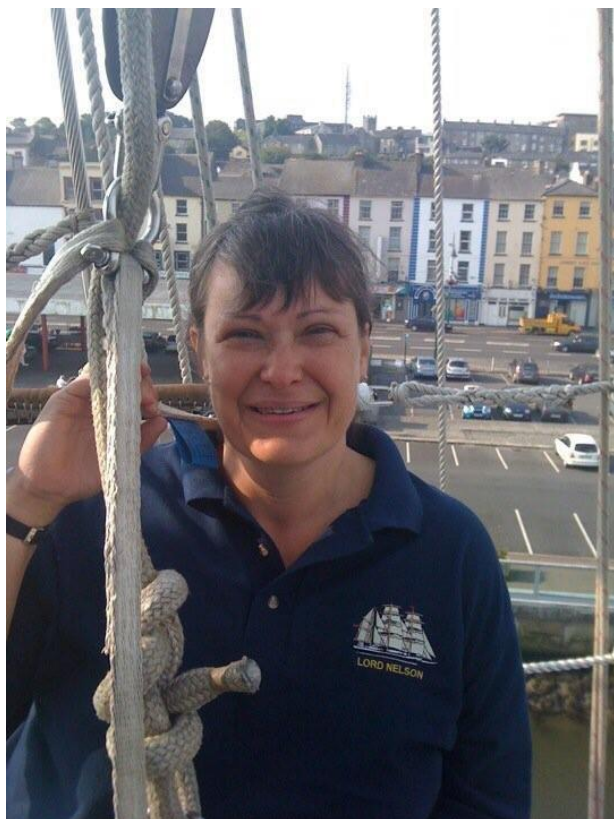


Image: with kind permission of Karen Butler

Karen Butler

Girl Guiding inspired Karen to start shooting while working towards her Gold Duke of Edinburgh award. Her first competition was the European championship in Bruges. Her Paralympic debut was at the 1992 Games in Barcelona, 18 months after taking up the air rifle. After Atlanta, Sydney and London 2012, as part of the 12 strong team, she also represented Paralympics Great Britain (GB) at Rio 2016. She is an assistant at her local Guide Unit, sails with the Jubilee Sailing Trust and is an Administrator for Bristol & South Gloucestershire Girl Guiding.

Inspiring women

in sports

Hannah Cushley

Hannah is the owner of Fitmums in Yate and has 17 years of experience in the health and fitness industry. She worked as personal trainer, gym instructor, manager and studio co-ordinator. Hannah started Fitmums when her youngest daughter was just nine months old. She found that there was a lack of specialist fitness classes where mums could bring their babies to class with them and get correct advice regarding pre and post-natal training. Hannah became a qualified pre and post-natal instructor. She has continued training in areas of outdoor post-natal fitness and advanced pregnancy and core restore programmes.

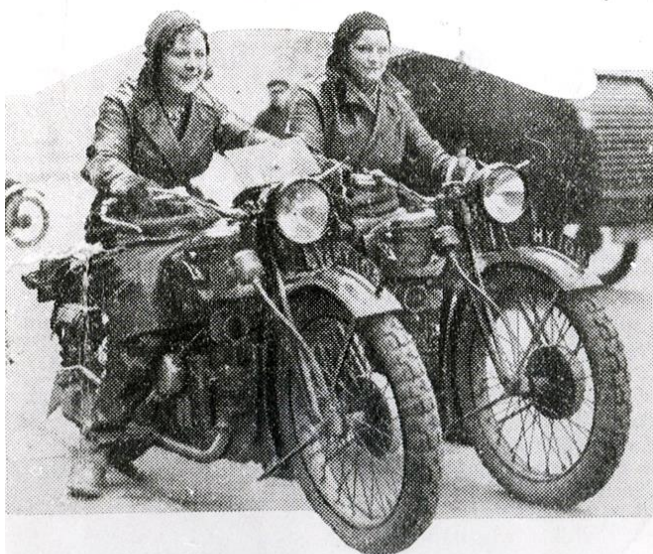


*Image: with Kind permission of Hannah Cushley:
www.fitmumsyate.co.uk*

Inspiring women

in sports

MOTOR-CYCLING WAY TO HEALTH



Rosie and Irene Douglas, of Bristol, who advocate motor-cycling as an aid to good health. They use their machines for short as well as trials.

Images: With kind permission of Kingswood Heritage Museum: Douglas



Rosie Douglas (1913 – 2000)

Rosie, daughter of William Douglas of Kingwood whose company manufactured Douglas Motor bikes, was educated by a governess at home. Later she attended a school that became Colston Collegiate Girls School. Motor Cycling in the 1920's and 1930's was a changing scene with machines ever improving. This meant that the once male dominated activity became open to women.

Rosie, with her sister Irene and cousin Margaret, successfully rode in competitions and promoted the Douglas product as reliable and, also, as a winning motor cycle. These successful women won in trails, hill-climbs and other events.

See the Irene Douglas in action on this video. Could the other girl be her sister, Rosie?

<https://www.britishpathe.com/video/excelsior-1>

Inspiring women

in sports

Dr Elizabeth Ann Trotman MBE (1952 – 1997)



© John Trotman

Ann was in a wheelchair for most of her life. In the 1980s she obtained an Open University (OU) PhD in Disability Studies. Ann represented Great Britain in the Paralympics, held in New York. She won three silver medals for Women's Club Throw, Javelin and Slalom, and a Bronze in the Discus. Great Britain came second in the Medal Table beaten only by the USA. She won four bronze medals and she was also presented with a special gold medal by the President of Korea for her role in the 1988 International Co-ordinating Committee of the games and in recognition of her outstanding service to disability sport. Ann was awarded the MBE for services to Disabled Sports in The Queen's Birthday Honours List, June 1989.

Inspiring women

in local politics

Pat Apps

Teacher, governor and Labour councillor, Pat chaired Health Scrutiny and Children, Adults and Housing Committees. She also chaired Connecting Kingswood, an information gathering body drawing together business and community leaders. She chaired the Over 50s Forum, and, with ward colleagues, instituted the Kingsmeadow at Made for Ever, a community centred support charity. She led the Kingwood Bus Project for disengaged young people and instituted annual breaks for children with emotional problems, which developed into weekend breaks as part of Families in Focus helping families relate more positively through shared activities.



Image: © South Gloucestershire Council

Inspiring women

in local politics



© Frenchay Village Museum

Mabel Flux OBE (1897 - 1966)

Mabel went to Frenchay village school, then on to Colston's Girls School. In 1914 she went on a cheese making course at the Country Dairy School, Bristol. She worked in the Women's Land Army in 1914 -18. When her brother, Tom died aged 26 the Mabel and her sister, Kit, were left to run the family farm for most of the war and deliver the milk from the farm's dairy. At the end of the war, Mabel met an Australian soldier, Norman, followed him to Australia and they married in Melbourne. Mabel became involved in local politics and served on the Portland Town Council in 1949-64 and was mayor from 1956-60. In 1954 she was made a justice of the peace and in 1960 she was appointed O.B.E.

Source of Information / Further information: Frenchay Village Museum

Inspiring women

in local politics

Heather Goddard

Heather was a teacher and a school governor. She was a Conservative District Councillor and served 32 years as a District Councillor, as elected member to Kingswood District and South Gloucestershire Councils. At South Gloucestershire Council, Heather was Cabinet member for Communities and Development of Strategic Partnerships and External Affairs and Developing Partnerships. These influential partners enhanced her passion to get involved and to make a difference to local people. Heather has been involved in saving Hanham Youth centre and has been a great supporter of Kingswood Community Transport.



© South Gloucestershire Council

Inspiring women

in local politics

Gladys Nelson

(1910 – 2008)

Born in 1910, Gladys was the daughter of a railway signaller and became a teacher at Yate Church School (now St Mary's Church of England Primary School) and The Ridge Junior Schools. She also co-founded a local playgroup. Gladys Nelson served as an Independent member for Yate Parish Council from 1964 to 1973 and later as a Liberal/Liberal Democrat for Yate Town Council from 1987 until 1999, until she was 89. She helped save the Poole Court building, reinstated Yate Carnival, was involved in the re-opening of Yate Station in establishing Yate Heritage Centre. As an active community campaigner, she was very well known and respected locally.



© Gazette Series:
Yate and District Heritage Centre

Inspiring women

in local politics



Image: With kind permission of Sue Walker

Sue Walker

Sue is married with one child and worked for social services in child protection. A Liberal Councillor with Yate Town Council and South Gloucestershire Council since 1979, she was Chair of both councils. Sue was a driving force behind numerous projects including Yate and District Twinning Association, Men in Sheds and The Dementia Worker post, Yate. Sue's also served many local organisations, the Baptist Church and Football Club, amongst others. Sue is most proud of offering a home environment where local residents felt able to seek help with their casework and problems.

Inspiring women

in local politics

Erica Williams

Erica Williams, a Conservative Councillor, was the Chair of South Gloucestershire Council for 2 years until 2017. In addition to her active role as a Councillor, she works tirelessly to assist people in her ward. Erica is also the Chair of the Batch Community Centre where she aims to ensure that this important hub in the local community is managed appropriately, to assist people and overcome their problems in her local ward. She is an inspiration to everyone she meets, with a strength and tenacity that shines through everything she does.



*Image: With kind permission of
Erica Williams*

Inspiring women

in local politics



Chris Willmore

Chris, was a barrister before becoming an academic. Her work, focusing on education for sustainability and engaging young people in change, has won awards, including the International Green Gown 2017, and a fellowship of the EAUC, IEMA and RSA. A Liberal Town Councillor since 1983, her dedication and commitment have been the driving force behind numerous projects like Yate Outdoor Sports Centre, Armadillo Youth Café, Peg Hill Skate and BMX Parks, benefitting our local young people over many years.

Image: With kind permission of Chris Willmore

Inspiring women

in local politics

Mary Blathwayt (1879 – 1962)

Mary's family were Blathwayts from Dyrham Park, South Gloucestershire. An active member of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), she worked closely with leader, Annie Kenny in the South West. In 1912, when the campaign became violent, she resigned from the WSPU but remained a member of National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. (NUWSS).



© Bath Preservation Society

Inspiring women

in public service



*Image: Margaret Bracey (center with glasses)
With the kind permission of Margaret Bracey.*

Margaret Bracey

On leaving school at 14, Margaret worked as a hairdresser and a nanny. She then married and became a volunteer for the Royal British Legion. She worked in welfare with service personnel and widows needing help with pensions and the loss of loved ones. She received the British Legion Golden Award and the Poppy Award for her work selling poppies for 75 years. Her voluntary work was recognised by attending the Queens Garden Party. She was a volunteer at the Pop Inn Café and Mayor of Yate when the café opened.

Inspiring women

in public service



Image: Bristol Library Services
Ref. No. BLS B248 Vol 1 - 045

Georgiana Budgett (1867 -)

Georgiana may have been responsible for inventing Red Cross Parcels. A letter from a Prisoner of War (PoW) in Germany detailing their terrible conditions, inspired her to start a PoW fund to raise money to send food and clothing to Bristol and Gloucestershire captives. These contained a postcard to confirm receipt. By 1918 over 1000 men were receiving 3 parcels fortnightly and she and her volunteers had to raise £40,000 annually. The soldiers called her their 'fairy godmother'. Revd. Burges invited her to unveil the Frenchay War Memorial in 1921.

Inspiring women

in public service

Olivia Burgess

A family friend of Robert Baden-Powell, Olivia started the first Chipping Sodbury Scout Troup in April 1914. She helped them to become messengers for the Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire). Olivia and her sister, Joyce, were scouting pioneers who had the idea for the first World Scout Camp. As daughter of Colonel W. Burgess, Commanding Officer, the 12th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment (Bristol's Own) Millicent was at the inauguration of Yate and Chipping Sodbury War Memorials.



Image: Gazette series: Yate and District Heritage Centre

Inspiring women

in public service



Image: © South Gloucestershire Council

Amanda Deeks OBE

As a qualified accountant, Amanda has spent her career in public services including District Councils and Health Authorities. Amanda moved to South Gloucestershire Council in 2001 to become Director of Corporate Resources for South Gloucestershire Council. She became Chief Executive in 2004. The council is a mixed urban and rural unitary authority with over 7,000 staff and a net budget of £216.9m.

Amanda leads South Gloucestershire's involvement in the new West of England Combined Authority and West of England Local Enterprise Partnership. She received an OBE in 2009 for services to Local Government.

Inspiring women

in public service



Mary Draper (centre left) YHC Gazette B1912 New Mayor and Past Chairs at Yate Town Council

Mary Draper

(1910 - 2011)

Mary Draper served for 12 years as a Liberal Yate Town Councillor, becoming Chair from 1990 to 1992. She helped save historic Poole Court from demolition and saw it restored as the Town Council offices. She was a popular and artistic Teacher at North Road Primary School, The Ridge Junior School and Abbotswood Primary School in Yate. Mary was also Chairman of the local branch of the Arthritis Research Campaign for 30 years and a stalwart fundraiser.

Inspiring women

in public service



1928 Ethel Gale front left © Gloucestershire Police Archives

Ethel Gale

(1885 – 1959)

Ethel served in the munitions factories as a member of the Women Police Service during the First World War and the Bath City Police. She joined the Gloucestershire Constabulary and became the first female sergeant.

Inspiring women

in public service

Gertrude Higgins

Gertrude Higgins was born in and lived all her life in Yate. She attended St Mary's School and was the organist of the Methodist Church and Sunday School Teacher. She was a Magistrate and school secretary.

Gertrude donated the clock in the Parish Hall, Yate, in her father's memory. Gertrude was a founding member of Yate Choral Society where she sang contralto, being made an Honourary member in 1996 on the society's 30th birthday. Gertrude continued to serve the town well into her 90s. She was utterly formidable and completely committed.

No image supplied

Inspiring women

in public service

YATE 27-2-41





JANNETTE BIDDULPH
recalls the day the
bombs fell on Yate



Mrs Clarissa Wheeler ... awarded the King's Commendation for brave conduct in Civil Defence.

Mr Leonard Callaway ... left his office minutes before it was devastated.

FEBRUARY 27, 1941, is a date indelibly marked in the memory of Yate's older people.

For at 2.30 in the afternoon Parnall's aircraft factory in Station Road was bombed without warning.

About 2,500 men and women were in the factory at the time working for the British aircraft industry's main supplier of gun turrets.

With the war in its second year, the factory was making six different types of turret, including the country's only powered model which they pioneered on an original design by a Parnall director.

They knew they must be a prime target for German raiders, and several bombs had already been dropped in the Yate area.

The old Midland Birmingham to Bristol railway line gave the game away.

A lone bomber followed it right to Parnall's back door and dropped six or eight bombs — about 500lb of explosives — directly on the office block.

The alert sounded too late for most people to get out of the building.

Seven women and 55 men died. About 80 were injured.

The first aid operation was led by the company's nursing sister, Clarissa Hobbs, then aged 30 with 10 years nursing experience at the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

Today, as widow Mrs Wheeler, she lives at Ridgeway, Yate, treasuring the King's Commendation for brave conduct in Civil Defence and its silver laurel leaf.

She was on her way to the underground first aid trench when the raid started and she was buried in debris. It took her some minutes to tunnel her way out alone — naked.

"The blast blew me clothes off and a passing man gave me a white coat," she recalls.

Mrs Wheeler immediately set to work with her first aid team and about 90 casualties were treated in the trench.

"One man whose ear I sowed back on came to see me only recently."

Two days after the disaster Mrs Wheeler had the horrific task of touring the temporary mortuaries with the company's managing director to identify the dead.

Mobile unit

"It was a dreadful time which I shall never forget. Everybody worked terribly hard — eight doctors, district nurses in the neighbourhood, and the local first aid/mobile unit all came to help."

"It was typical that £50 which I had left in the ambulance room was still there when I went back next day. Nobody had touched it."

"We knew the railway line had given us away — a farmer at Wickwar said he had seen the plane flying so low he could spot the pilot."

Mr Leonard Callaway, who was the company's service engineer and later general manager, left his office minutes before it was devastated.

"I was showing a Government visitor around the works and we were about 50 or 60 yards away."

"The drawing office suffered most when a delayed action bomb went off doing a good deal of damage. Some of us were on our way back to retrieve what we could when it exploded, but I was not hurt."

"Next day we found one of the draughtsmen dead in the rafters. There was not a mark on him, but his clothes were blown off."

Apart from the loss of life, the company's biggest catastrophe was the destruction of its records. Master plans for many original designs were missing and Mr Callaway spent many weeks visiting sub-contractors trying to get copies.

Escaped

He said: "On the whole we were fortunate that it was bad bombing, for the machine shop and plant escaped."

Almost immediately a big operation got underway to disperse the factory throughout South Gloucestershire and North Bristol.

"The government told us we were marked because of the railway line, and we had to get everything away."

"During the next 10 days or so lorries from all over the country came to move bits and pieces into workshops, sheds and anywhere we could find to take machinery."

"Some of the stuff we could not store we left under tarpaulins in the hedges to evade the bombers."

The wisdom of the move was proved just eight days later, when a second raider killed six workers.

"This time a warning was given and most people were in the shelters," said Mr Callaway, now aged 80 and living in retirement in Badminton Road, Downend.

After the war ended the company went on to make cookers, washing machines and later tumble dryers. Today they are known as Jackson Electric Ltd.

BRISTOL EVENING POST
JAN. 19th 1976

Clarrisa Hobbs

Nursing Sister, Clarissa, led Parnall's First Aid operation. On 27 February 1941 at 2.30pm, en route to the underground trench during a raid, she was buried in the debris, but tunnelled out, alone and naked. A passing man gave her a white coat, so with her First Aid team, she treated around 90 casualties, and two days later accompanied the MD to identify 53 dead. On 29 July 1941, Clarissa was awarded the King's Commendation for Brave Conduct in Civil Defence.

Inspiring women

in public service

Rosina Jones

Rosina worked in the canteen of Bristol Aeroplane Company from 1936, organizing the essential sustenance for workers. All food preparation was done by hand and ensuring hygiene meant scalding surfaces with boiling water, and scrubbing the floor with caustic soda, wearing clogs. She served in the management dining rooms, events and on-board food during the promotion flights for the Britannia aircraft. During the war, they fed hundreds of shift workers, including overnight. Canteen staff worked up to 12 hours shifts.

No image supplied

Inspiring women

in public service

Tina Mitchell-Skinner

Tina is the Chief Executive Officer of Brain Tumour Support, a charity she founded after the death of her husband Paul, aged 37. With Tina's vision, dedication and leadership, the charity runs support groups, home visits and specialist support across the South West and West Midlands. The charity helps approximately 2,200 people annually, including patients and their families, at any stage of the journey after hearing the devastating news of a brain tumour brings. The Charity also provides input to professional and international brain tumour support conversations.



Image: With permission of Tina Mitchell-Skinner

Inspiring women

in public service

Rosie Phillips

In 1999 Rosie founded the charity Developing Health & Independence (DHI), inspired by the need to bridge the gap between homelessness and addiction. The charity turns around the lives of 5,000 people annually. DHI established Home Turf Lettings, a not-for-profit social lettings agency which provides truly affordable homes for disadvantaged people. DHI administers the Two Bridges Trust helping over 130 people furthest from employment and they organise an annual conference (Reach Out) for families of those in addiction. Rosie is also a trustee of the local CVS.



Image: With permission of Developing Health & Independence

Inspiring women

in public service

Rosa Rouse

Rosa worked for Bristol City Police and was transferred to Gloucester Constabulary because of her ability to ride a motorbike. She was stationed at Staple Hill for 8 years and dealt with many cases in the 30s, including an air crash at Yate and cases of theft and elopement. She was active in raising awareness concerning child abuse, infanticide and demanding money with menaces. She was one of the few women to give evidence to the Savidge case enquiry.



Source of image: Gloucestershire Police Archives

Inspiring women

in public service

The Right Reverend Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester



Image: © Diocese of Gloucester

Rachel Treweek worked as a Speech and Language therapist within the National Health Service (NHS) before becoming the Clinical Manager for Paediatric Speech and Language Therapists in Health Centres across several North London health authorities.

After training at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, Rachel was ordained in 1994, appointed as Archdeacon of Northolt in 2006 and later Hackney in 2011. In 2015 Bishop Rachel was appointed as the first female diocesan bishop in the Church of England and the first female Bishop in the House of Lords. Her diocese extends across Gloucestershire and includes of most of South Gloucestershire.

Inspiring women

in public service

Susan Tubey

Susan was Parish Clerk to Frampton Cotterell Parish Council for 7 years while

juggling getting home for children, sharing childcare with girl friends who also worked and finding baby sitters for evening meetings when her husband was working away.

In 1984 Susan took on the role of Town Clerk at Yate Town Council until 2008 as one of the first female Town Clerks in the country and was fortunate to have a female Chair of the Council, female Vice Chair and female Chair of the Environment Committee supporting her in her role – collectively, they were a very formidable team. The Council went from strength to strength, representing and providing for the people of Yate and surrounding area. During this time, Sue was involved in many projects such as transforming Poole Court for multi-use purpose; saving of the Common, developing community facilities such as Yate Heritage Centre and the Pop Inn Café and many, many other projects that benefited the people of Yate.

No image supplied

Inspiring women

in public service

Rachel Whittard

(1885 – 1968)

In 1917, Rachel Whittard became a student nurse with the Red Cross and worked at a military hospital as a Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD). In 1920, Rachel qualified as a midwife but she also assumed the role of District Nurse. In 1926, she came to Marshfield and, in the severe winter of 1940, Rachel crawled upon her hands & knees in the snow to reach her patients. After the end of the Second World War, ill health forced her retirement from nursing. Over her career, Rachel had delivered over 900 babies. She was also the Superintendent of the Marshfield Congregational Chapel Sunday School and she was an active member of the Marshfield Women's Institute (WI). Another talent was appearing in the annual Marshfield pantomime.



Image: With kind permission of Marshfield Parish Council.

Sources of information:

Toll to toll and beyond: A history of Marshfield in words and pictures. (Self-published / Undated)

A history of Marshfield in words and pictures. Carolyn A. Williams, p.72 & p.283

Midwives Roll UK 1904-1959

Census Eve of War September, 1939

England & Wales Civil Registration of Births & Deaths, 1576 - 2014

Inspiring women

in public service



Image: With kind permission of Patchway Conservation Group and Lucy Hamid

Lucy Hamid

Lucy Hamid came to work in Patchway in 1989 as Clerk to Patchway Parish Council (now Patchway Town Council). With a young family, a sociology degree and lots of experience of community work, Lucy found opportunities to fill gaps in the community provision. She started summer holiday play schemes and persuaded the council to set up play areas in 5 areas. Lucy also set up Patchway Conservation Group in 1990 and Patchway Environmental Forum so that members of the community could work together to improve the open spaces and environment. Lucy set up Patchway Local History Group, which is now part of Southern Brooks Archaeology & Local History Group. She is a founder member of Patchway & Bradley Stoke Community Development Project, which is now Southern Brooks Community Partnership and of Coniston Community Association, achieving great things for the community.

Inspiring women

for social justice



*Image: With kind permission of Holly
(granddaughter of Brenda Bishop)*

Brenda Bishop

Brenda has given a lifetime of service in South Gloucestershire through the trade union and labour movement, community organisations and as an elected Labour councillor. Her greatest achievement is the establishment of the first women's refuge in Kingswood in the 1970s. Meeting women exposed to domestic violence drove Brenda to take the lead in starting a refuge for women, Kingswood Women's Aid. Over time, this evolved into the charity, Survive, through which work with local women continued for 44 years until the organisation closed this year.

Inspiring women

for social justice



Image: With kind permission of Primrose Granville

Primrose Granville

Primrose Granville is an award winning broadcast journalist with radios shows on BBC South West, BCfm and Ujima.

As a role model manager, global networker, community activist, phenomenal speaker and host, she promotes issues on race equality, human and disability rights, despite living with disabilities and severe health challenges, herself.

Primrose lives in South Gloucestershire and her involvement and contribution has brought success to many events and major initiatives. She aims to make a difference to local community groups such as the local Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), whilst bringing people together for fun and celebration.

Inspiring women

for social justice



Image: With kind permission from Aaliyah Hussain

Aaliyah Hussain

Aaliyah Hussain, a second Generation, British, Muslim woman has family roots in Pakistan, India and Zimbabwe. Since moving with her family to South Gloucestershire in 2014, she undertook a PhD in Politics and International Relations. Aaliyah became a community activist championing Muslim women's rights and challenging racial hatred and religious fundamentalism. She is a powerful advocate and leading local voice in the relationship between Islam, feminism and social justice. Her organisation WeRise (Women Empowered against Racism, Injustice, Sexism and Extremism) works to increase cross-cultural understanding through advocacy, training and community engagement.

Inspiring women

for social justice

Alex Raikes MBE

Alex Raikes is Strategic Director of Stand Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI), having worked there for 27 years. She was a founding member of South Gloucestershire Racial Equality Network (SGREN). In the 2009 New Year's honours list she was awarded an MBE for her work for Services toward Community Relations. A regular contributor on local news programmes and is an active member for several infrastructure organisations like Voscur, she is passionate about breaking down barriers so people can live in harmony. She hopes to find and promote ways to stop hate crime in our society. Alex is an innovative, dynamic and committed facilitator and co-ordinator who has an established reputation for successfully promoting people's rights.



Image: With kind permission of Alex Raikes

Inspiring women

for social justice

Sue Liebow (Susan Elizabeth)

(1955 – 2015)

Sue was an inspirational woman, herself a wheelchair user. Actively involved in local disability groups, her drive and personality helped change disabled people's lives. Following early retirement from teaching, she threw herself into activism around disability. Her passion for the arts led her to help found 'Photographers with Disabilities, and set up a Peer Support Group with WECIL in Yate. In her first year as Chair of South Gloucestershire Disability Network, the committee grew and council funding increased significantly.



Inspiring women

for social justice



Photo taken by Rose Mahon, November 2018

Sue Kelham

Sue Kelham is currently the Interim Principal at a South Gloucestershire school. She started teaching in 1989 against the background of Section 28, a particularly discriminatory piece of legislation with regards to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. Throughout her teaching career, Sue has been wholly committed to tackling discrimination and challenging stereotypes. Sue believes that being out at work has enabled her to bring about change in the schools she has been part of. This journey has sometimes been funny, but hasn't always been easy and, in fact, has been, on occasions, terrifying. It has been a journey of personal and professional growth; real change is happening in some of our schools.