

## **For: IWM International Women's Day Wikipedia Edit-A-Thon March 2020**

### **Suggestions of Women with Wartime Connections**

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#### **Pre-First World War**

##### **Bertha von Suttner**

Austrian baroness whose novel *Lay Down Your Arms* (1889) brought the reality of war to millions. Advocated the founding of the The Peace Palace in The Hague for the settlement of conflicts by arbitration and adjudication, rather than with arms. In 1905 became the first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

#### **First World War**

##### **Moina Belle Michael**

American woman. War worker with the US YMCA. On November 9, 1918, conceived the idea of the poppy remembrance symbol to raise funds for returning war soldiers and their families.

##### **Madame Anna Guérin**

French woman. War worker with the French YMCA. In 1918 introduced the remembrance poppy idea to Field Marshal Earl Haig, founder of the newly-formed British Legion in London.

##### **Eglantyne Jebb**

Together with sister Dorothy, founded Save the Children in 1919 after witnessing mass starvation, death, tuberculosis and rickets among children in Europe and Russia in the aftermath of the First World War. Eglantyne wrote the Declaration of Children's Rights in 1922, which is enshrined in today's UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.

##### **Lady Haig Poppy Factory, Edinburgh**

In 1918 Lady Dorothy Maud Vivian Haig, founded the Lady Haig Poppy Factory in Edinburgh. Today the factory employs around 40 veterans.

##### **Elsie Knocker and Mairi Chisholm, the 'Angels of Pervyse'**

Elsie Knocker and Mairi Chisholm, the only women known to nurse on the frontline in World War I. Raising their own funds, they set up their own Poste de Secours (British First Aid Post) in a vacant cellar in the village Pervyse, north of Ypres in Belgium.

##### **Margaret Strickland-Constable**

Served as a VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) nurse during WWI in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Among her surviving papers are lists of family and friends killed, wounded, missing or decorated for their services.

#### **Second World War**

**Teruko Ueno**

Survivor (hibakusha) of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. She was 15 and in her second year of a nursing programme at the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital. Remained at the hospital for the rest of her career, assisting with burns.

**Reiko Hada**

A survivor (hibakusha) of the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. She was aged nine. Became an international advocate for international peace to campaign against weapons of mass destruction.

**Iby Knill**

Born in Czechoslovakia 1923. In 1944 taken to Auschwitz. Volunteered as a nurse with a slave labour transport, taken on forced march to Bergen Belsen. Moved to Yorkshire and wrote her book *A Woman Without a Number*. Toured schools to educate about the Holocaust.

**Iris M. Newbould**

One of the few remaining Land Army Girls from WWI. Until recently, toured schools, anniversaries, events to educate on the role of the Land Army Girls. Often on TV including Land Army garden makeover by Alan Titchmarsh.

**Marguerite Hudson**

ACW2 Marguerite Hudson WAAF (882414). First WAAF to die by enemy action on August 15, 1940 when the German Luftwaffe attacked RAF Driffield in one of the largest offensives by the Luftwaffe.

**Daphne Doreen Doran**

Born 1928. After her husband, Albert Charlton Doran, a Sapper with the Royal Engineers, died in 2002, she became the first woman to be voted in to the York Normandy Veterans. Known as the 'poppy lady' she began selling poppies and fundraising for many causes.

**Joan Reynolds MBE**

Born in Wales in 1925. Served in the Royal Artillery Regiment during WW2. Trained in Heavy Anti-Aircraft Command Post Instruments. Served on gun sites around Britain. At 17 became Lance Corporal. In 1982 became secretary of the Bassaleg and Rhiwderin branch of the Royal British Legion in 1982 which raised more than a quarter of a million pounds for the Poppy Appeal. Awarded MBE for charity work.

**Joy Lofthouse**

In 1943, aged 20, Joy and her sister Yvonne joined the ATA (Air Transport Auxiliary). They spent WW2 ferrying 18 sorts of warplanes between factories, maintenance units and frontline squadrons. In doing so they helped release pilots for frontline combat. Known as the 'flying sisters' they flew single-seat Hurricanes, Mustangs and the legendary Spitfires.

**Zofia Posmyz**

Born in 1923 in Poland. At age 18 arrested by the Gestapo for possession of leaflets advertising underground education for young Poles. Tortured and sent to Auschwitz. After three years transferred to Ravensbrueck concentration camp. After the war became a journalist, author and screenwriter. Received acclaim for semi-autobiographical novel *The Passenger*.

**Muriel Gofton**

In 1939 joined the civilian relief section of the Red Cross to help feed Europe's starving. She entered Belsen-Belsen concentration camp three days after it was liberated in 1945, stayed six weeks to assist. Went on to work in camps for displaced persons in Western Germany. In 1959 founded Cala Sona Court in Lanarkshire, Scotland as a sanctuary for a small group of war refugees from Eastern Europe.

### **Alicia Melamed Adams**

Born in 1927 in Poland. At age 15 became sole survivor of her Jewish family. Brother, parents and grandmother murdered by the Gestapo. Alicia was taken to the Beskiden forced labour camp. Escaped and went into hiding. After the war emigrated to London and enrolled in St Martin's School of Art. Created the 'Holocaust' series of paintings (two are in IMW's permanent collection).

### **Maria Gilda Rovelli (Mary)**

Italian resistance worker. At age 19 began secretly helping Jews and persecuted Italians escape over the Alps.

### **Dr Runa Mackay**

#### **WW2/Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

Born in 1921 in Hull. Home bombed during the Hull Blitz. Runa and her parents survived. Moved to Edinburgh. Runa studied paediatrics and worked 40 years in The Israeli-Occupied Territories. After she retired in 1985, continued working in a children's hospital in Hebron. Awarded The Elsie's Hidden Heroines Award 2004. Joined the Women in Black Scotland peace vigil.

### **Ifanwy Williams**

Also Cold War/Modern Day Conflicts. Born in 1922 in Liverpool, Ifanwy was evacuated during the Second World War to Denbigh in Wales. For seventy-plus years Ifanwy has been part of the peace movement in Wales. For ten years she has chaired the Glaslyn and Dwyryd Branch of Cymdeithas y Cymod (Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales).

## **Cold War**

### **Jill Gough**

Volunteer chair of Aberystwyth CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) in 1984, National Secretary for CND Cymru in 1991 and editor of its bilingual magazine *Heddwch* for a quarter of a century. Her activism has reached out to thousands of people well beyond Wales.

### **Sarah Hipperson**

Sarah, a mother of five, midwife and magistrate, spent seventeen years at Greenham Common Peace Camp. Imprisoned 20 times for peaceful direct action. Her appearances in court were opportunities to question openly the legality of nuclear weapons. Sarah was instrumental in the creation of the present-day peace park at Greenham Common.

### **Concepcion Picciotto**

Also Modern Day Conflicts. Known as Connie. Believed to be a Spanish immigrant who arrived in New York in the 1960s. Maintained an anti-war/peace vigil for 30 years in a plastic makeshift tent outside the White House in Washington DC. Her vigil is considered to be the longest political protest in American history.

### **Lindis Percy**

Also Modern Day Conflicts. For over 40 years been a persistent protestor against nuclear weapons, first at Greenham Common. Has staged countless protests against the presence of US Department of Defense at RAF Menwith Hill near her home in North Yorkshire.

### **Ann Metcalfe**

Joined the Royal Observer Corps (ROC) aged 17 and served from 1964 to 1991. In 1982 became the first female Group Officer in charge of four monitoring posts in Yorkshire. In 1988 promoted to Honorary Observer Lieutenant.

### **Corporal Janet Huitt**

Joined RAF Patrington in 1959 at age 17 as Senior Aircraftwoman (SACW) until 1973. Served as Air Defence Operator underground at the Holmpton Cold War bunker on the East Yorkshire Coast. In 1969 received a Commendation from RAF Strike Command.

### **Gina Wright**

One of the first female Emergency Planning Officers for the former region of Humberside. In 1988 Gina, a new mother aged 29, joined County Main at Wawne, a new bunker which housed the civilian emergency planning centre.

### **Sandra Holle**

One of 220,000 children born in 1978 in the totalitarian system of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). Now lives and works as an artist in East Yorkshire. Through paintings, drawings and sculpture she shares her memories of growing up as a child behind the Iron Curtain.

### **Eileen Burn**

Joined RAF Patrington and served underground at the Holmpton Cold War bunker on the East Yorkshire Coast 1959. Served for a short time only as her husband was posted to Norway. However during service was chosen as the 'face of the WRAF' model and photographed for its recruitment drive for local service women.

### **Modern Day Conflicts**

#### **Claire Brisebois Starnes**

American woman. One of an estimated 1,200 female staff and line officers and enlisted personnel of the US Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines who served in the Vietnam War. Until 1999 the women were not officially recognised as Vietnam Veterans. In 1997 formed the Vietnam Women Veterans (VWV) Inc was formed to bring recognition for non-nursing women who served in Vietnam.

#### **Rose Gentle**

In June 2004 her son, Gordon Campbell Gentle, was killed in Basra by a roadside bomb. He was 19. Rose, a domestic worker who had never made a public speech began a long fight to bring former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair to justice over the legality of the Iraq War. Became one of the best known campaigners against the war and provided support and comfort to other bereaved mothers.

#### **Jan Wattleworth**

A widow of a soldier who served in Iraq and died after returning home. In 1997 representing widows of Gulf War servicemen, Jan hand-delivered a petition of 5,000 signatures to 10 Downing Street in London demanding a public inquiry into Gulf War Syndrome. She is still awaiting a reply.

#### **Colonel Debbie Telford**

Colonel Debbie Telford T.D. L/QARANC. First female to command the 208 Field Hospital. She was twice deployed to Afghanistan to the Role 3 Hospital at Camp Bastion.

### **Jenny Matthews**

Photojournalist who has, since 1982, documenting the tragedy and aftermath of war on women. Her book *Women and War* is a visual testimony to how conflict shatters communities and families. Exhibition *Women and War* shown in venues around the UK and overseas, including at the IMW Manchester.

### **Jane Harries**

One of the original members of Mothers for Peace (later Women to Women for Peace) founded during the Cold War to bring women of conflicting ideologies together. Member of Amnesty and CND, and volunteers with the Alternatives to Violence Project and the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales. Overseas work has included a civilian diplomacy visit to Iran and three months on the West Bank in Palestine as an Ecumenical Accompanier to report on human rights abuses.

### **Judi Blank**

In 1988 in response to the first Palestinian intifada was one of a group of women who founded Women in Black. It grew into a worldwide network of women actively opposed to injustice, war, militarism and violence.

### **Bushra Awad**

Palestinian mother whose 17-year-old son, Mahmoud, was killed in 2008 during clashes with Israeli soldiers. Active member of the Parents Circle Families Forum which brings together families of those killed in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2015 Bushra joined Israeli bereaved mother Robi Damelin (see below) to address the Women in the World Summit in New York City, the first time the two addressed a live audience together outside the Middle East.

### **Robi Damelin**

Israeli woman whose 28-year-old son, David, was killed by a Palestinian sniper in 2002. Became International Relations Director of the Parents Circle Families Forum which brings together families of those killed in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (see above re Bushra Awad).

### **Awel Irene**

In 2015 among four Gwynedd women who made national headlines for protesting against drone testing (unmanned reconnaissance and bombing aircraft) in Wales. A founder member of the Heddwch Nain/Mam-gu (Grandma's Peace) 2024 peace campaign which aims to collect more than 400,000 signatures across Wales and beyond, to present to the United Nations as a call for international peace. The campaign remembers the 390,296 Welsh women who, in 1923, signed a petition for peace and presented it to American President Calvin Coolidge.

**ENDS**





