

West of England and South Wales

## Women's History Network

NEWSLETTER

August 2023

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**Co - Chairs:** Kath Holden and June Hannam    **Membership Secretary:** Elaine Titcombe  
**Treasurer:** June Hannam    **Publicity:** Lucienne Boyce    **Newsletter Editor:** Jane Howells  
**Committee:** Karen Hunt, Linda Henderson, Julia Neville

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### WESWWHN Events 2023

#### West of England and South Wales Women's History Network 30th Annual Conference

Women and the Natural World: historical perspectives on nature,  
climate, and environmental change.

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Venue: Exeter Central Library, Castle Street, Exeter, Devon, EX4 3PQ**

#### Programme

Registration from 9.45am

#### 10.10 Welcome and Keynote Speaker

*Professor Nicola Whyte*, University of Exeter: 'Landscape, Memory and the Life-course in the Travel Writing of Celia Fiennes'

10.55 Coffee Break

#### 11.20 Panel 1: Women and the Rural Environment

*Alice Burns*, University of Liverpool, 'Thinking, as I often do in travelling, of Shibden & alterations there – planting – making a road traversing along Bairstow': Anne Lister and the Gardens of Shibden Hall.

*Sarah Carter*, University of Alberta, Rural Life on a Scottish Country Estate in the Photographs of Lady Henrietta Gilmour, 1890s- 1910s.

*Cathryn McWilliams*, University of South-Eastern Norway "Of course the good naturalist must be a lady:" (Un)earthing K.C.M.'s "Land and Water".



12.40 Lunch Break

**1.40 Panel 2: Ecofeminism and Women's Activism**

*Charlotte Oakes*, University of St Andrews, Chernobyl: a reference point in a study of East German ecofeminism 1969-1989.

*Oyeshi Ganguly*, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, and *Shriya Dasgupta*, Pondicherry University, India, Jal, Jangal, Zameen: Locating the Indian Adivasi Women in South Asian Eco-literature.

*Zozan Cetin*, Independent scholar/writer, When Environmental History and Women's History Intersect: Looking at 20th Century Britain Press with Ecofeminist Philosophy.

3.00 Tea Break

**3.25 Panel 3: Natural Science, Education and Community Action**

*Kyriaki Hadjiafxendi*, Bath Spa University, Women's 'mimic oceans': Victorian popular science, the marine aquarium and living souvenirs.

*Tony Pratt*, Wiltshire College and University Centre, Lackham, Petit cultur in fin de siècle England: Women, Horticulture and Land-based education.

*Naomi Oakley*, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, Women and Community: From Archives to Action.

4.45 Conference ends

*Photo: A member of the women's land army in the First World War (Imperial War Museum)*

# The West of England and South Wales Women's History Network Conference

Saturday September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## Booking Form

NAME

EMAIL

**REGISTRATION** (includes morning and afternoon tea and coffee)

High waged £18

High waged members of regional network £15

Low waged/students £12

Low waged/student members of regional network £10

Please tick/highlight relevant box above.

Please note that lunch is not included. There is a café in the building and other cafes and pubs not far away or you can bring your own food.

Please tick this box if you are using direct bank transfer\* and use your name as a reference for the payment.  \*This is our preferred payment method.

Account name: Southwest Women's History Network

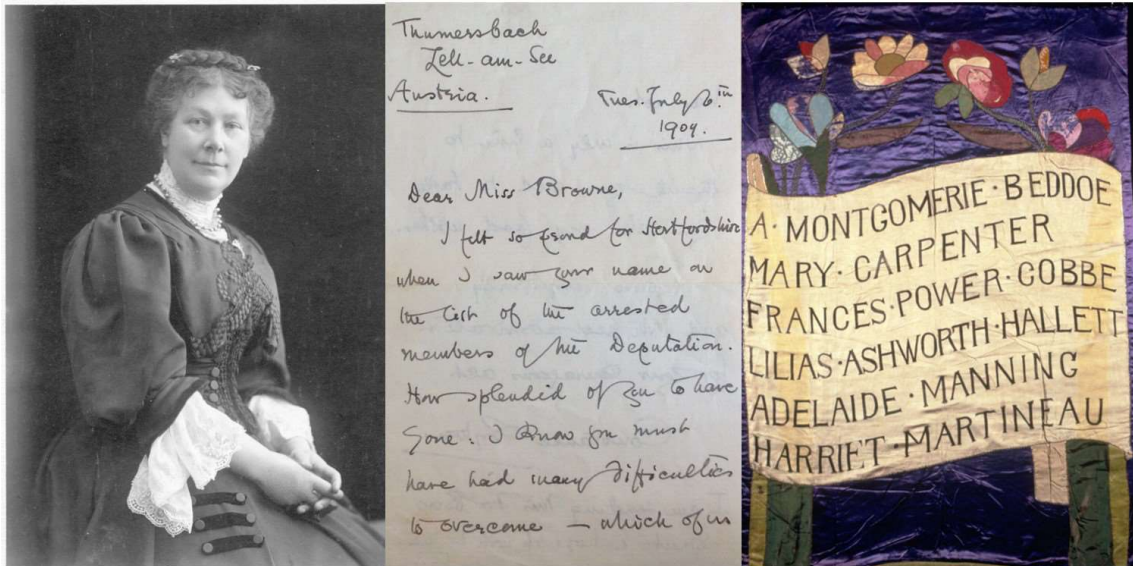
Sort code 40-14-18

Account no 41326295

Cheque for the total £..... payable to Southwest Women's History Network.

Send cheques to June Hannam, 2 Malvern Villas, Camden Road, Bath BA1 5JS and email a copy of your form to [junebhannam@gmail.com](mailto:junebhannam@gmail.com).

**Please email this completed form to [junebhannam@gmail.com](mailto:junebhannam@gmail.com)**



## Writing Women's Lives Lucienne Boyce, Suzie Grogan, Karen Hunt

**Radio Feature for Occupy the Airwaves, International Women's Day, Wednesday 8 March 2023**

WESWWHN committee members Lucienne Boyce and Karen Hunt, with writer and researcher Suzie Grogan, recently got together to discuss some of the rewards and challenges of writing and researching biographies of women.

We recorded our discussion for a radio feature for Dreadnought South West's Occupy the Airwaves, broadcast on International Women's Day, 8 March 2023.

Suzie Grogan (<https://suziegrogan.com/>) is writing a biography of Harriet Martineau, "the first female sociologist"; Karen is working on the life of socialist and suffragist Dora Montefiore; and Lucienne Boyce (<https://lucienneboyce.com>) is writing about suffrage campaigner and pacifist, Millicent Price (née Browne).

You can listen to the feature on Soundcloud at:

[https://soundcloud.com/suzie-grogan/writingwomenslives?si=c54e3b15464d49a4947a2488170cdbf9&utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/suzie-grogan/writingwomenslives?si=c54e3b15464d49a4947a2488170cdbf9&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

## New Blue Plaques for Women

- Mrs Frances Hale



In April a plaque was unveiled by Mayor Cllr Tom Corbin and Dr Jane Howells in New Street, Salisbury to honour Frances Hale who owned and ran a building firm which constructed and restored many Salisbury buildings; at its height 400 staff were employed. The plaque is on what is now the Cosy Club, but was built in 1871 by Hale for the Literary and Scientific Institution. The joint organisers were Salisbury Civic Society and Salisbury Soroptimists, whose project 'Her Salisbury Story' is contributing to increasing the

recognition given to women in the city.



The website <https://hersalisburystory.com> has to date collected the stories of over 60 women, past and present, who have impacted upon life in Salisbury. Some of these women featured in an exhibition at Salisbury Museum.

- Mary Willcocks

On Friday 9 June - a very hot day! – Exeter Civic Society unveiled a blue plaque at 88 Pennsylvania Road, the home for over thirty years of Mary Willcocks, author, lecturer and feminist. (See photo). We were pleased to welcome representatives of the WE & SW Women’s History Network committee to the event.



Mary Willcocks (1869-1952), was a novelist and suffrage activist who spent most of her life in Exeter. She was born on a farm close to Dartmoor, which provided the background for many of her novels, featuring strong women characters, often set in rural Devon. She moved to Exeter in 1907 when her early novels proved successful enough for her to risk abandoning teaching for life as a freelance writer and speaker. The publication of her seventh novel in 1913 prompted a feature in the Devonian Year Book with a portrait photograph (see below) showing her in her forties.



During her first ten years in Exeter she campaigned for Votes for Women, organising campaigns across Devon and Cornwall for the National Union of Suffrage Societies, including the 1913 Votes for Women march from Land’s End to Hyde Park. She retained an interest in political activism even after the vote was won, campaigning on issues such as employment opportunities for women. In 1943 she was awarded a Civil List pension for services to literature.

WE & SW WHN made a grant of £150 to Exeter Civic Society towards the cost of the plaque. Local city councillors also made a grant, as one of the criteria for the city's small grants programme has been to increase the awareness of women's place in Exeter's past. The balance of the cost was met by Exeter Civic Society.

## BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY



In a recent episode of *#LocalHistoryMatters*, Dr Angela Muir discussed her research into women in Wales in the eighteenth century.

Local History Matters is the BALH podcast. Each episode features key people and projects from the local history world. You can listen to all episodes of the podcast, here: <https://www.balh.org.uk/podcast>  
*#WeAreLocalHistory #LocalHistoryForAll*

## WESWWHN Blog

Recent additions to our blog have been contributed by speakers at last year's annual conference:

*'An Unsuitable profession for a woman? The work experience of women members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)'* by Jane Berney. In this blog, the barriers set before the first women accountants are explored, and how they navigated these, to consider how their experiences reflect societal views on women and money.



*"Trade is the Life of the Nation': economics in the petitions of Elinor James (1681-1716)'* by Rosalind Johnson. In this blog, she explores the content and motivation behind James's appeals to monarchs, politicians, and alderman.

*Eleanor James, by Unknown artist, oil on canvas, circa 1690, NPG 5592 © National Portrait Gallery, London*

*'How did women cope as Head of Household in 1901?'* by Sarah Villiers. This blog examines the lives of women living in Easton, Bristol, in the 1900s to reveal how hard life was for many of these women.

And Helen Wilson, who unfortunately could not be at the conference, has written about 'The Remarkable Pinwill Sisters'. This blog tells the story of some truly remarkable women pioneers – the Pinwill sisters, who ran their own ecclesiastical woodcarving business in Devon in the 1900s.

<https://weswwhnblog.blogspot.com>

If you would like to write for our blog, you can find the guidelines here  
<https://weswwhnblog.blogspot.com/p/write-for-us.html>



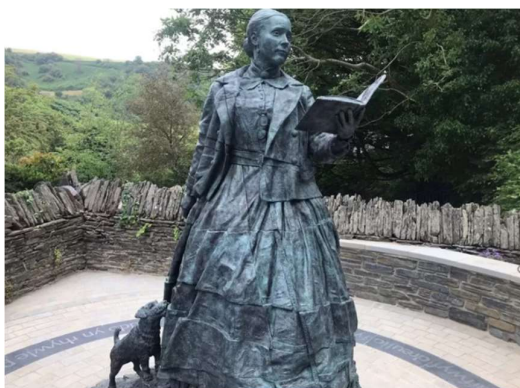
In the 1980s, Susan Gregory was living in Exeter and working for Women's Aid Refuge Centre. She joined the Exeter Women's Peace Group and first visited Greenham in 1982 for Embrace the Base, and returned many times. Susan, a member of the network, was interviewed by Jill 'Ray' Raymond for the *Greenham Women Everywhere* project in January 2022. You can now listen to her interview at: <https://greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk/susan-gregory-2/> From here you can also follow a link to the 'Exeter Women's Peace Group Timeline'. If you have further information that can be added to this, please let us know and we will pass on.



A launch event for an exciting new project **Menopause: New Perspectives** was held at Watershed on 13 July. The website <https://linktr.ee/menopausemuseum> launched at this event, includes an article by Jill Kirby (Sussex University), 'Exploring menopause through the lens of self-help books in the early 20th century'.

The project can also be followed on social media: Facebook @menopause\_museum; Instagram @menopause\_museum; Twitter @MenopauseMuseum

## Monumental Welsh Women



The third statue commemorating women in Wales, commissioned by *Monumental Welsh Women*, was unveiled in Llangrannog on 10<sup>th</sup> of June. Sarah Jane Rees, also known by her bardic name Cranogwen, was a pioneer in many fields – from poetry to journalism. In 1865 she became an instant Welsh celebrity, when she became the first woman to win a poetry prize at the National Eisteddfod with her poem, *Y Fodrwy Briodasal - The Wedding Ring*.

*Monumental Welsh Women* is a project that aims to unveil a new statue to commemorate a real woman each year for 5 years. So far, they have successfully delivered “the iconic Betty Campbell Monument in Cardiff, the beautiful statue of Elaine Morgan in Mountain Ash, and now the uplifting Cranogwen in Llangrannog”. For further details of this project and the women commemorated, visit <https://monumentalwelshwomen.com/>.



## YOUR NETWORK

The regional network exists for its members. Do let us know if you have any particular interests for topics and /or suggestions of potential contributors (and venues) for Study Days, or any alternative ideas for different events or activities.

## WEBSITE

<http://weswwomenshistorynetwork.co.uk/>

Here you will find all the current and historic information about the network, including programmes and abstracts from previous conferences, papers from study days, links to other relevant organisations and much more. It will continue to develop as a valuable resource for members and friends. It is the first place to go for details about all our forthcoming events.

Contributions are welcomed, please contact Kath Holden in the first instance: [katherineuna.holden@gmail.com](mailto:katherineuna.holden@gmail.com)

## TWITTER / X



The West of England and South Wales Women's History Network a **Twitter / X** account so you can keep up to date with events, resources, and member news. It is @WHNWestSWales and if you are on Twitter / X do follow and repost. We currently have 1,439 followers.



## MEMBERSHIP

Membership subscriptions are the regional network's only income. Please make sure you are paying the correct amount: the rates are £10 full or £5 unwaged/student. Subscriptions are renewable annually on 1 October. It helps us if you can pay by banker's order.

**MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES:** [elaine.titcombe@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:elaine.titcombe@hotmail.co.uk)

## NEWSLETTER

Please send contributions, to include notice of events, book reviews and suggestions to Jane Howells, [howellsjane2148@gmail.com](mailto:howellsjane2148@gmail.com)

For more information please email: [WHNWESTSWALES@outlook.com](mailto:WHNWESTSWALES@outlook.com)

Web site: <http://weswwomenshistorynetwork.co.uk/>