

Celebrating Dr Elsie Inglis – a full programme of events in Edinburgh to enjoy

A full range of events to raise funds for a statue to commemorate Dr Elsie Inglis is being held in Edinburgh in the next couple of weeks, including a series of Sit Still events organised by GirlGuiding Edinburgh.

When the First World War began, Dr Elsie Inglis offered to set up a fully equipped medical unit staffed by women for the war front. She was told by the British War Office, “Dear lady, go home and sit still”.

She refused to do that. Instead, she raised large amounts of money and established the Scottish Women’s Hospital in France and Serbia. She travelled to Romania, Malta and Russia and helped provide medical assistance on the Western Front.

Now the Elsie Inglis Tribute Campaign aims to raise £50,000 for a Royal Mile statue memorialising the pioneering Scottish doctor and suffragist, one of few women who have been recognised in this way. Others include Queen Victoria, the Woman and Child in Festival Square, Helen Crummy, MBE, at Craigmillar Library and heads of Jackie Kay, and Naomi Mitchinson in Edinburgh Park.

Dr Inglis was born in India in 1864 and brought up in

Scotland, studying medicine in Glasgow, Dublin and Edinburgh. She was a pioneer, founding hospitals for poor women, joining the suffragette movement and setting up the war hospitals which were entirely run by women.



Dr Elsie Inglis

In Edinburgh many people were born in the Elsie Inglis Maternity Hospital which was set up near Holyrood in 1925 to continue the work Dr Inglis had begun in a hospital on the Royal Mile. The building was later converted to a nursing home.

Dr Inglis died in hospital in Newcastle from cancer, and her funeral held was held at St Giles Cathedral with members of the Royal Family in attendance. Her body lay in state at St Giles before the service, and she was buried in Dean Cemetery. Edinburgh's streets were full of hundreds of mourners.

The Rt Hon Lord Provost, Frank Ross, said: 'There is no doubt that Dr Elsie Inglis – war hero, pioneering medic, advocate of women's rights – is a truly revered and treasured figure in Edinburgh's history, so I am delighted that as we look ahead to 2022 there are plans afoot to raise funds to make sure a fitting tribute is achieved.'

Elsie was one of the first Scottish Women Doctors and a keen suffragist. She also set up 26 medical units for the Scottish Women's Hospitals money for the women's medical units in 11 war affected countries. She was ejected by the War Office and other organisations who told her, 'Dear Lady go home and sit still' Elsie did not Sit Still – and within months of the start of World War 1 she raised the equivalent of £50 million pounds and set up the first SWH in France at Royaumont in 1914 on the front line. The Elsie Inglis Memorial Maternity Hospital was established in 1925 at Abbeyhill to replace the Hospice which Elsie had set up in 1904. The hospital facility closed in 1988.

Elsie represents today much of the pioneering and determined spirit required to break down bias and barriers. She was an active member of the Scottish Federation of Women's Suffrage Societies, fighting not only for votes for women but for equal rights for education and medical careers. Elsie's characteristics and achievements make her an incredible role model for young people, her life and work can inspire the next generation to realise they can do anything they set their mind to.

Co-founder of the campaign Fiona Garwood said: 'We have lined up speakers for a week of special events including Hugh Pym BBC Health Editor, Professor Linda Bauld, author Sara

Sheridan, and many more. With their support we hope to get the statue and hold up Elsie Inglis as a role model who deserves to be celebrated.'

Tickets are available now for a number of special events which will kickstart fundraising. Here's what's on:

[St Giles exhibition – FREE – Monday 7 and Tuesday 8 March](#)

A rare opportunity to see the Cathedral's own memorabilia along with a remarkable collection of Scottish Women's Hospital medals. Discover the famous wall memorial plaque to Elsie Inglis, in the place where her funeral service was held in 1917.

[An evening with Alistair Bruce – £20 – Monday 7 March](#)

Venture behind the scenes of Downton Abbey with anecdotes from renowned historian, broadcaster and militarist Alistair Bruce.

[International Women's Day Event – £20 – Tuesday 8 March](#)

Join Consul General Mrs Laurence Pais to discover archival film footage of Dr Elsie Inglis within the French Institute's cinema. Hear about women who have made history from WW1 historian **Jenni Minto MSP**. **Be inspired by writer and broadcaster Ros Taylor**, who will speak on Empowering Women.

[An Afternoon with Linda Bauld and Kate Murray-Browne – £20 – Sunday 13 March](#)

A fascinating discussion not to be missed with the great, great, niece of Elsie Inglis, Kate Murray-Brown, the 'go-to pandemic pundit' **Professor Linda Bauld OBE** and Dr Nathalie Rochefort of the Centre for Discovery Brain Sciences at the

University of Edinburgh.

[Elsie Inglis Walking Tour – £16 – daily between Saturday 5 until Saturday 13 March](#)

Join a 90-minute walking tour along a wheelchair accessible route to learn about Elsie Inglis' remarkable life. Discover the story of the Edinburgh Seven; pioneering women medics who led the way in the 1870s.

Commenting, co-founder of the campaign Fiona Garwood said: 'We have lined up a great list of speakers for a special week of events in Edinburgh. With this support and local community engagement – the first '[Sit Still](#)' event will be held in the Meadows by Girlguiding Edinburgh – we hope to get the statue and hold up Elsie Inglis as a role model who deserves to be celebrated.'

A Statue for ELSIE INGLIS

An exciting programme of events in support of the campaign to build a statue to recognise surgeon, suffragist and Scots hero Dr Elsie Inglis 1864 – 1917.



Monday 28 February: 5.30pm – 7.00pm

Famous Women Doctors in WW1 Scottish Women's Hospitals

BBC Health Editor Hugh Pym speaking about his great Aunt Dr Frances Ivens at Royalmont Hospital, France and Ross Cameron, Glasgow City Archives and Glasgow University on Dr Elsie Inglis and her achievements in setting up the Scottish Women's Hospitals.

Saturday March 5 - Sunday March 13

Elsie Inglis Walking Tour

Join your expert local Blue Badge guide for a 90-minute walking tour to learn about Dr Elsie Inglis' remarkable life and discover the story of the Edinburgh Seven, pioneering women medics who led the way in the 1870s. Our wheelchair-accessible route, visits places connected to Elsie and women's medical history along the way.

Monday 07 March – Tuesday 08 March 10.30am – 3.30pm

St Giles Cathedral Elsie Inglis exhibition and 'Sit Still'

Visit the Holy Cross Aisle to view the Cathedral's memorial to Elsie Inglis and to Scottish Nurses along with a remarkable collection of Scottish Women's Hospitals medals.

Monday 07 March 7.30pm – 9.30pm

An evening with Alastair Bruce of Crìonaich

Historian, Broadcaster and Militarian, media and historical advisor, a unique opportunity to hear his fascinating stories including behind the scenes of Downtown Abbey.

Tuesday 08 March 7.30pm – 9.30pm

International Women's Day Event

Consul General Laurence Pais will be joined by speakers Jenni Minto MSP and Ros Taylor - who will speak about historical perspective on women who make history and Empowering Women.

Thursday 10 March 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Celebration of Dr Elsie Inglis by Edinburgh Gin

Hosted by Philip Kingscott, Edinburgh Gin and Laura Stephen, an Elsie Inglis Campaign Supporter, together they will explain Edinburgh's place in the story of gin and how it played its part during the First World War.

Friday 11 March 3.00pm – 5.00pm

An Afternoon Tea in the City Chambers with Sara Sheridan & Kate Murray-Browne

Sara Sheridan - Writer and Activist will talk about her book 'Where are the Women?' and Kate Murray-Browne - Author of 'The Upstairs Room' will unravel tales of the family life of Dr Elsie Inglis, her great, great aunt.

Saturday 12 March 3.00 – 5.00pm

Bringing Elsie Inglis to life

Dr Iram Qureshi - award-winning British Film & TV Producer will talk about producing her film 'The Woman with the Torch - Elsie Inglis' war' and Historical Enactor Aissa Clarke on Dr Elsie Inglis and Scottish Women's Hospital.

Sunday 13 March 2.00 – 4.00pm

An Afternoon with Prof Linda Bauld OBE and Kate Murray-Browne

Professor Linda Bauld - Chief Social Policy Advisor to the Scottish Government, 'one of the reassuring voices of the pandemic' and Kate Murray-Browne - Author of 'The Upstairs Room' will unravel tales of the family life of Dr Elsie Inglis, her great, great aunt.

Tickets on sale now www.elsieinglis.org

All proceeds will go to 'The Statue for Elsie Inglis' campaign.



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<https://www.elsieinglis.org>