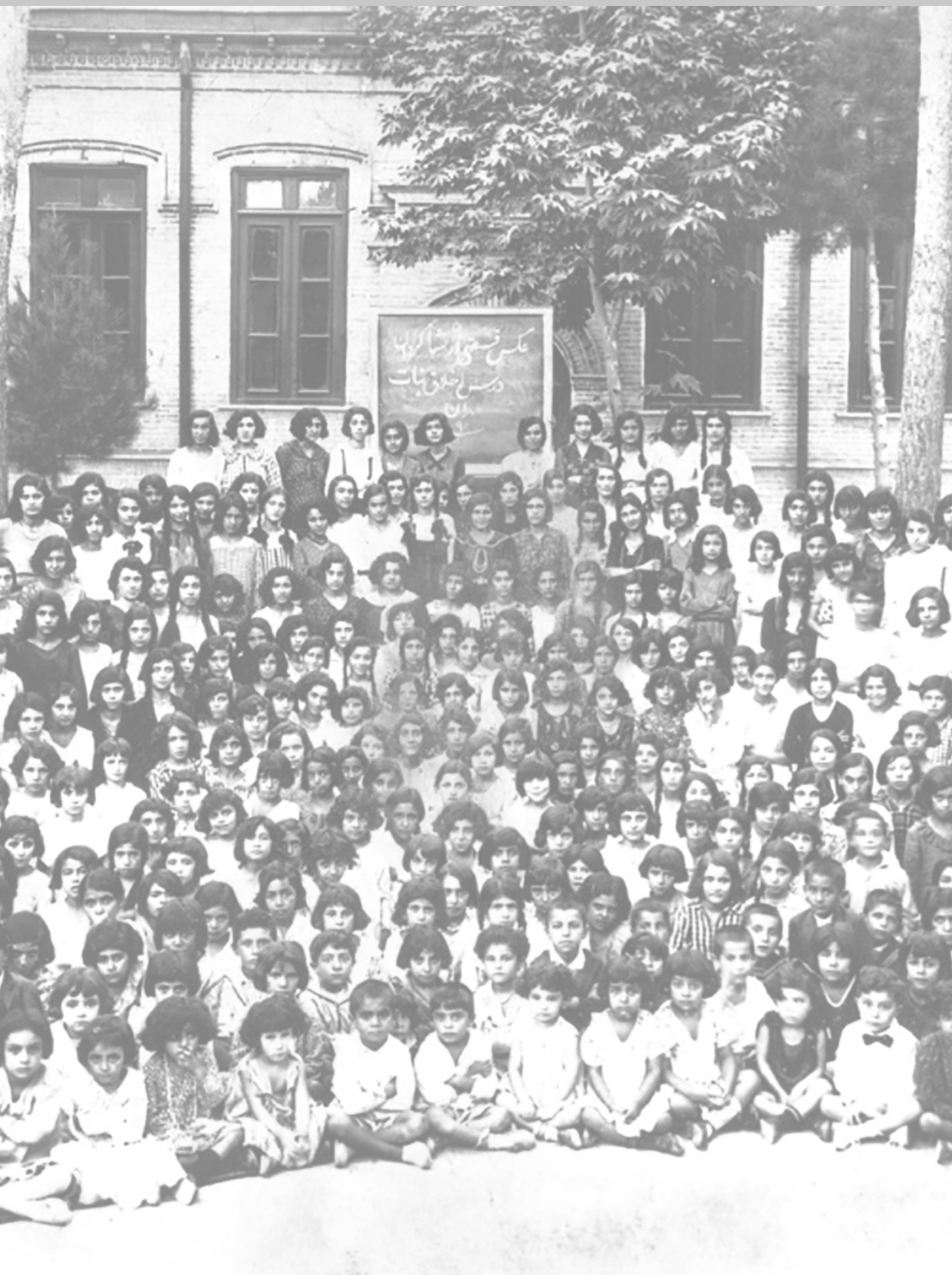




Untold Stories

Women Of Faith

Suffrage, Peace And Human Rights



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UNTOLD STORIES WOMEN OF FAITH

Suffrage, Peace And Human Rights

Background Introduction

This educational resource has been produced to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of women in the United Kingdom first being given the right to vote. It has also been written to tell the tales of women from diverse religious backgrounds who, despite great opposition, fought for equal rights and opportunities for women. The lives we have outlined are from the Christian, Sikh, Jewish, Baha'i, Muslim and Hindu traditions and recount the lives of suffragettes as well as peace and human rights activists, spanning 100 years of history. There are undoubtedly many other stories that could have been told but we hope those below stimulate the discovery of a great many more.

The stories are offered as a starting point for dialogue and to encourage women and girls to appreciate the importance of making their voices heard in civic society, celebrating proudly their right to vote, promoting peace and having their human rights fully upheld. With the inclusion of the story of Malala Yousafzai, we highlight the ongoing nature of the struggle that women face, globally and in Scotland, to truly realise their human rights.

To complement this booklet 3 events were held in Scotland that brought together women and men to explore women's rights and human rights more broadly. At the first event, held during Scottish Interfaith Week 2018, stories were told of two Scottish Christian and one British Sikh Suffragette; at the second event the story of the Jewish Women's League was shared along with the story of an unusual peace activist from the Baha'i faith; and finally in the third event the story of the youngest ever recipient of the Nobel Peace prize and a famous Hindu promoter of peace were shared. What all these events have in common is that they centred round the stories of women of faith who fought and suffered for the realisation of women's rights – a struggle that persists to this day.

Background to the Suffragette Movement in the United Kingdom

At the time of the Industrial Revolution, many women found themselves in full time employment giving them opportunities to meet in groups to talk about political and social issues. Acts of Parliament established in 1832, 1867 and 1884 had secured a degree of male suffrage but completely omitted female suffrage and therefore women were unable to stand for Parliament or to vote.

There was a traditional view in society at the time that women were to be kept out of the political realm for the following reasons:

- Women were viewed as inferior to men in their physical, mental and emotional capacity
- Women could not be trusted to vote in a rational manner
- A woman's place was believed to be in the home and raising children
- Women did not need the vote as their male relatives took this responsibility
- Political life was the domain of men

What was the suffragette movement?

Out of the above background came the beginnings of a movement that would be referred to as the suffragette movement. Campaigns for women's suffrage began in earnest with the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies created in 1887 by Millicent Fawcett. This group, known as the Suffragists, used non-violent means to persuade the country and Parliament that women should have the right to vote.

The methods of the Suffragist movement differed from the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), which was formed in 1903, by Emmeline Pankhurst. The WSPU published a newspaper called 'Votes for Women' and worked to increase the profile of the more radical Suffragette movement in the media and in Parliament. The WSPU achieved this through window-smashing government buildings, hunger strikes, organised marches and most prominently by Suffragette, Emily Davison, jumping in front of the King's Horse at the Derby and being killed.

What did it achieve?

On the 6th February 1918, the Representation of the People Act was passed by Parliament. This piece of legislation gave some women over the age of 30, who had property entitlement, the right to vote.

It was not until 1928, with the passing of the Equal Franchise Act, that the right to vote was extended to everyone over the age of 21.

It should be noted however, that women's rights to vote are still not fully realised across the world through a mixture of legislative, societal and practical barriers.

Christian Stories



Dr Dorothea Chalmers Smith
(also known as Elizabeth Dorothea Lyness)

1872 – 1944

“It is a matter now beyond argument, the justice, the righteousness and the necessity of granting the parliamentary franchise to the women of the country.”

Dorothea Chalmers Smith was one of Scotland’s first female medical graduates and a militant suffragette. She was born in Lisburn, County Antrim, Ireland in 1872 and grew up in a middle class family in Glasgow. Her father was a merchant and insurance broker and owned an acetic acid factory.

Dorothea studied medicine and graduated from the University of Glasgow in 1894, one of only four women in her medical class. Upon receiving her degree she worked at the Royal Samaritan Hospital for Women in the city.

In 1899, she married William Chalmers Smith, the minister of the Church of Scotland congregation of Calton Parish Church in East Glasgow and they had six children together.

Dorothea and her sister Jane were both engaged in the fight for women’s suffrage and in 1912, they joined the militant WSPU. Dorothea’s husband did not welcome her belief in the militant cause, firmly believing that a woman’s place was in the home with her family.

On 23 July 1913, Dorothea was caught, along with leading suffragette Ethel Moorhead, trying to burn down an empty property in Park Road in the West End of Glasgow. Both women were arrested and tried in Glasgow High Court in the October of 1913. Dorothea and Ethel conducted their own defence and refused to plead. The jury unanimously found both women guilty of breaking and entering and attempted fire-raising. The trial was attended by hundreds of suffrage activists who threw apples at the judge when he sentenced both women to 8 months in prison.

On arrival in prison, both Ethel and Dorothea went on hunger strike and Ethel became the first suffragette in Scotland to be force-fed. Dorothea was released under the terms of the Cat and Mouse Act and although her house was placed under surveillance, she was never taken back into prison.

In 1913, Dorothea began corresponding with Maud Arncliffe Sennett, a noted suffragist and organiser of the Northern Men’s Federation for Women’s Suffrage. In October, she wrote advising Arncliffe Sennett of how best to approach the Church of Scotland presbytery in Glasgow in order to seek a resolution in favour of women’s suffrage. Dorothea’s advice was successful and Glasgow Presbytery did agree to back the cause.

The Kirk Session of Calton Parish Church insisted that their minister, Reverend William Chalmers Smith, either control or divorce his wife. The couple separated and she left with her three daughters. Dorothea was forbidden from seeing her three sons again. The couple divorced after the First World War.

Upon leaving her husband, Dorothea continued with her successful medical career. She was a popular and respected community member and doctor. Dorothea was a pioneer in the care of children and worked in the newly established child welfare clinics in Glasgow.

When she died in 1944, her WSPU medal was donated to Glasgow People’s Palace museum. She is also commemorated by the Suffrage Oak on Kelvinway in the city.



May Pollock Grant
(also known as Mary or Marion Grant)
1876 – 1957

“As one who is deeply, passionately, attached to the Auld Reformed Kirk o’ the Realm, and who has served her for ten years at home and for four and a half years abroad, I protest against the attitudes of her ministers – an attitude as banal as it is insulting”.

Missionary, Suffragette and Liberal Politician

May Pollock Grant was a Church of Scotland missionary, suffragette, police officer and Liberal politician. She was born in Dundee, the oldest daughter of Dr C. M. Grant, the minister of St Mark’s Parish Church in central Dundee. Dr Grant’s congregation was known in Dundee as a ‘centre of religious and social influence’.

May was educated at the High School of Dundee and in Nordausques in France. In 1905, she became a missionary for the Church of Scotland in India. She returned to Dundee in 1911 where she joined the WSPU in order to support the struggle for women’s suffrage.

In 1912, as part of her militant action, May and a group of women were arrested for smuggling themselves into the Music Hall in Aberdeen with the intention of disrupting a Liberal meeting attended by David Lloyd George. For this crime, she was imprisoned in Perth Prison.

Upon her release May continued to disrupt public meetings and wrote numerous letters to the press advocating the cause of women’s suffrage throughout 1913 and 14.

In December 1913, the Presbytery of Dundee considered a letter from the Northern Men’s Federation requesting that the presbytery pass a resolution in favour of women’s suffrage. Reverend Harcourt Davidson proposed that no action be taken on the letter on the basis that “woman [sic] was fortunate in being relieved from the stupid and promiscuous medley of part follies and had as much influence without a vote as with one.” Despite others speaking against this, Mr Davidson’s motion was passed by a large majority. This was the subject of huge press interest locally and May was involved in responding publicly to the letter.

The Dundee Advertiser, despite having an anti-suffragist editor, questioned the logic of this argument, asking how Mr Davidson would answer women who asked ‘*if the vote is useless, why not give it to us?*’

May wrote to the Dundee Advertiser passionately defending the importance of women in the Church of Scotland and the cause of women’s suffrage:

I see that the Church of Scotland ministers in Dundee have decided that they will do nothing to help the women of this country to raise themselves to the status of free citizens. This is not the first time that the Church has refused to support progress, but in this case its position is the more reprehensible if we consider how much it owes to those who are struggling for freedom. Who fills the churches, so far as they are filled? Who does Sunday school work? Who raises church funds? Who visit the poor and the sick? The men? Nay, verily!

In 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, she enlisted as a nurse at Caird Hospital in Dundee and in 1916, she joined the Women’s Police Service in London as a constable. By 1918 she had reached the rank of sub-Inspector but she left the force at the end of the war.

May Grant then became a lecturer, focusing on politics and social issues, and then a liberal politician, standing for election in Leeds, Pontefract and Salford. By the 1930s, May became a Christian Scientist and worked as a practitioner and healer. She died in 1957 in Tunbridge Wells.

Sikh Story



Princess Sophia Duleep Singh

Background

Princess Sophia Duleep Singh, daughter of Maharaja Duleep Singh, was born on 8th August 1876. She was the fifth of eight children and was born into royalty. Her father, Maharaja Duleep Singh was heir to the Kingdom of the Sikhs at the time of British rule in India. He was the first Sikh settler in Scotland known locally as the Black Prince of Perthshire. Maharaja Duleep Singh was five when he became ruler of the Sikh Kingdom, but some six years later, in 1849, his Sikh armies were defeated and his lands confiscated by the British. A Scot from Orkney, Dr John Logan, was appointed governor of the capital of the Sikh Kingdom and guardian of the young Maharaja. He was separated from his mother and brought to Scotland and kept in Castle Menzies in Perthshire.

Princess Sophia grew up at Elveden Hall, Suffolk with her family until the loss of both parents. It was in 1894 that the shy teenager and her sisters moved to apartments on the grounds of Hampton Court at the request of her Godmother, Queen Victoria.

She became somewhat of a fascination due to her beauty and attended balls with the aristocrats of British Society.

Historical Context

Princess Sophia became disillusioned with life within the aristocratic circle. It was on her trips to India during the early 1900's that she discovered her family

roots, the Kingdom they had lost. She came to learn of her family history in depth and realized how extraordinary her grandfather, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was, while travelling and experiencing life in India. She saw first-hand, the poverty and unhappiness in India under British rule and it was this that ignited the spark in her to change her purpose in life. She changed from Princess Sophia the darling of the aristocracy to a pioneer of women's rights.

Women's Suffrage

In 1909 Princess Sophia became an active member of the Women's Social and Political Union as the need for women to have a voice in politics resonated with her. On 18th November 1910, she played an important role in the first deputation to Parliament alongside Emmeline Pankhurst, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and other prominent female figures. This day became known as Black Friday due to the number of protestors brutally beaten and detained by the police.

Her dedication to the suffragette cause knew no bounds ranging from being extremely active in publicity campaigns, an enthusiastic fund-raiser, a regular seller of the 'The Suffragette', the WSPU newspaper as well as speaking at, and chairing WSPU meetings in Richmond and the Kingston and District branches.

In 1911, on the day of the King's speech to parliament, Princess Sophia leapt in front of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith's car holding a poster that read, "Votes for Women". She was held for this political stunt but was released without charge to avoid embarrassment to the Establishment.

Later, Sophia became a supporter of the Tax Resistance League and in 1913, was summoned to court for refusing to pay taxes. On several occasions, bailiffs impounded her most valuable possessions due to the refusal to pay taxes. She explained her decision by saying, *"When the women of England are enfranchised I shall pay my taxes willingly. If I am not a fit person for the purposes of representation, why should I be a fit person for taxation?"*

When war broke out, Princess Sophia became a nurse to wounded Indian soldiers, demonstrating her compassion for her fellow human beings.

In 1918, The Representation of the People's Act allowed women over the age of 30 to vote. It was after this that Sophia joined the Suffragette Fellowship and became president of the Committee of the Suffragette Fellowship in 1928 following the death of founder Emmeline Pankhurst (Anand, 2015). It was during her term as president that women over the age of 21 were given the vote under the Equal Franchise Act.

It was in 1948 that Princess Sophia Duleep Singh died with her final wish being fulfilled as her ashes were scattered in India, as is custom in the Sikh Faith. If women today are to take one lesson from Princess Sophia, it is to never give up fighting for what you believe in.

Jewish Story



A women's suffrage meeting attended by Jewish women in 1910

The Jewish League for Woman Suffrage (JLWS)

The Jewish League for Woman Suffrage (JLWS) was the only Jewish women's organisation in England—and the world—devoted exclusively to obtaining both national and Jewish suffrage for women.

It was founded in 1912 by a group of distinguished female and male communal leaders, and its twin goals were:

"to demand the Parliamentary Franchise for women on the same line as it is, or may be, granted to men, and to unite Jewish Suffragists of all shades of opinion for religious and educational activities ... [It will also] strive to further the improvement of the status of women in the [Jewish] Community and the State."

Linking feminist goals with Jewish loyalties, the League members equated their campaigns with Anglo-Jewry's efforts to obtain: political emancipation for Jews; to overcome continuing social discrimination; and to fight repression against Jews worldwide. The League redefined the concept of Anglo-Jewish womanhood to include secular, religious and communal feminist goals. Indeed, the League's strong feminist commitment became quite clear as its members joined secular national and international suffrage organisations.

The existence of the League was rooted in upper-class social status, family networks and the distinction of its leadership — factors which gave the women involved the self-confidence that enabled them to face the intense antagonism generated by their suffrage activities. At the same time, their elite social status made the League women acceptable to the Christian-dominated suffragist movement. Its executive council featured a bastion of upper-middle-class Anglo-Jewish women and social reform activists, including male supporters, beginning with the founders who were Sir Leonard Franklin OBE, a barrister, banker and Liberal Party politician, and his wife Laura. Leonard's uncle was another banker and Liberal Party politician, Samuel Montagu, who became the 1st Baron Swaythling. The Franklins' closest advisers in the League were Leonard's cousins, the pioneer educator Henrietta Franklin, nee Montagu, and her sister Lily Montagu. Henrietta was a leading advocate for advanced education for women. She supported the rise of women in professional life and became president of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies from 1916 to 1917.

Lily, meanwhile, became a vice-president of the League in 1913 and provided spiritual inspiration for the League's campaign - she often led the League in prayer before its meetings and public assemblies. She was a social worker, a magistrate in the London juvenile courts, a writer, religious organiser, and spiritual leader who in 1911 founded, and long remained the driving force behind, the Liberal Jewish movement in England. Her involvement with progressive Judaism caused an irrevocable split with her strictly orthodox observant father, the Baron Swaythling, but for Lily, her conviction that orthodoxy offered her, and other women, little room for religious self-expression, would not let her conform to the restrictions of orthodoxy.

The League did not actually think of itself as being ostensibly radical, but its members were clearly visible, marching and demonstrating for votes for women in England and it did have radical militant members - they disrupted Sabbath worship services in several synagogues in London from early 1913 until the outbreak of World War I, demanding religious as well as political suffrage for women. These women were forcibly removed from synagogues for disrupting services and castigated in the Anglo-Jewish press as "blackguards in bonnets." (*Jewish Chronicle*, January 25, 2018, "How Jewish women helped win the vote") Several League members became "martyrs" for the cause when they were arrested, imprisoned and force-fed in English prisons for taking part in violent demonstrations.

Other women who decided that a more militant approach was needed were Edith Zangwill, a writer, and her stepmother, the eminent scientist Hertha Ayrton (born Phoebe Sarah Marks, who, in 1902, was the first woman to be proposed for the fellowship of the Royal Society). Initially, they became active members of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies but frustrated by the lack of progress in achieving the vote they decided to join the more militant Women's Social & Political Union in 1907. Hertha's daughter Barbara became organiser for the Women's Social and Political Union and in 1912 she was imprisoned in Holloway for smashing windows. In 1914 Hertha gave £100 to help form the United Suffragists, which included both men and women - Hertha was a vice-president and her daughter Barbara the honorary secretary.

The majority of the Anglo-Jewish community were appalled and terrified by these actions, fearing that Jewish suffragists heralded the breakdown of the home, a rise in anti-semitism in England and an end to Jewry's social acceptance in England. The controversy filled the Jewish press for two years. Anglo-Jewish men of all classes feared the spectre of government by "irrational" and "emotional" women while Jewish working men feared that suffrage would give women more power to impose middle-class reformist controls on their lives. This fear made it difficult to recruit working-class Jewish women into the suffrage campaign.

It was absolutely significant that the Jewish woman's movement was involved in every aspect of women's public activities between the 1880s and 1930s. Winning votes for women gave Anglo-Jewish women their first taste of real political power in national, religious and communal life. They hoped to win acceptance in wider society and suffrage became a vital symbol of their social acceptance as Englishwomen as well as of their political, religious and communal emancipation - but they were always aware of the need to avoid inviting anti-semitism - the fear of anti-semitic rejection by non-Jewish feminists was always present. Thus, their actions were at times cautious, especially so in class conscious England - and they did experience tensions on several levels. The well-known division between the established German-Jews of the UK and those flooding in from the Russian Empire between 1880 and 1914 was pronounced, as German-Jewish feminists sought to aid in the acculturation of the newcomers. Tension, too, sprang from engaging in non-traditional activities which were viewed as threatening to the male hierarchy of Jewish institutions and which symbolised the conflict between Judaism and feminism. Nevertheless Jewish women played a vital and important role in the fight for the vote for women.

Baha'i Story

Jane Whyte

1857 – 1944

'And let it be known once more that until woman and man recognize and realize equality, social and political progress here or anywhere will not be possible' Abdul-Baha

Miss Jane Elizabeth Barbour was born in Bonskeid, Scotland in 1857. In 1881 she married The Reverend Dr Alexander Whyte and after a few years living together in 52 Melville Street, Edinburgh they moved into the house where they would together make history through their spiritual, social and political works, Number 7 Charlotte Square. Today the family home that housed the Whytes and their eight children from 1889 until 1927 is a beautifully preserved National Trust property in the New Town in Edinburgh.

Jane Whyte and her home are perhaps best known for their association with Abdu'l-Bahá' whom she first met in a prison in Palestine in 1906 when she was travelling with a companion. He was a leading figure of the Bahá'í faith and so inspired Whyte that she spent years after their initial meeting giving formal talks and writing articles about both him and his faith. Indeed, she was so moved by her encounter in Akka..... that she is often credited with bringing the Bahá'í faith to Scotland and being one of the first Scottish Bahá'ís.

Although religion was no stranger to the Whyte household. Her husband, Alexander, was the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. Described as "a celebrated clergyman and well known throughout this part of the world", he encouraged his wife's support and promotion of the Bahá'í faith.

As a strong feminist and devoted to promoting cross religious and cultural understanding, Jane Whyte single-handedly brought together many conflicting organisations and united them under a common goal. It is no wonder then, when World War I began in 1914 that she felt the need to act to stop it. A promoter of unity, peace and understanding her entire life, she was a natural candidate to be chosen to travel to The Hague in 1915 to attend the International Women's Congress. However, despite being in possession of a passport and a passion to share her message, Mrs. Whyte was not amongst the few women to attend the conference. Of the many who applied to attend only a small handful in the end were given permission.

As far as records show, there is no evidence to suggest that she attended the later Congresses in 1919 or 1926. One can imagine that her inability to go and speak on behalf of not just the women of Britain, but all of those who felt the injustice and futility of war was especially poignant for her as she lost her son, Robert Barbour, a Second Lieutenant in Black Watch (Royal Highlanders) later that same year.

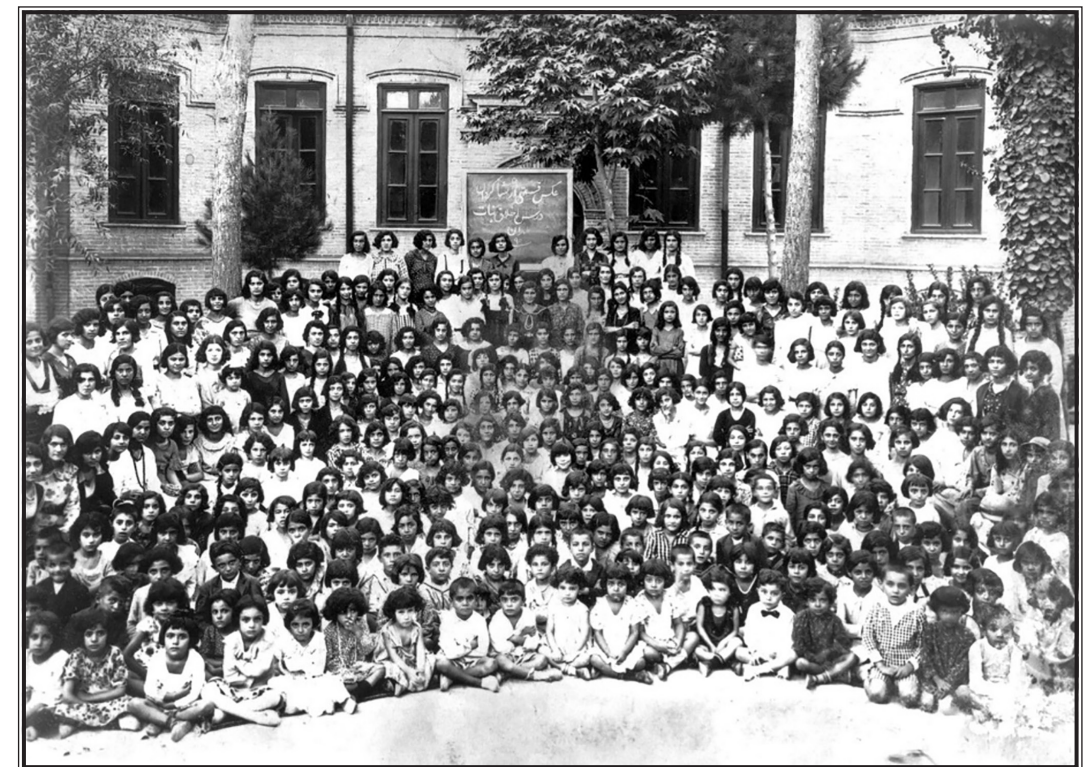
Despite being unable to attend the conference with her sisters, Whyte's activism continued until her death in 1944. Her home during the early 1900s was the meeting place of many women's rights groups. She bravely brought together suffragists, suffragettes and anti-suffragists to hear a talk from her esteemed friend Abdu'l-Bahá, who preached to them the importance of unity and spirituality. But he also addressed the role of women more specifically, forewarning in a speech in 1913 that women should endeavour to study and train in every kind of science and art and social service; "Fit yourselves for responsibility", he said, adding with sad emphasis, "you will inevitably have it thrust upon you."

Jane Whyte was a remarkable woman. Promoting unity and knowledge amongst the many groups she either headed, brought together or merely worked tirelessly for..... This was a legacy she would also pass on to her children; one of her daughters, Janet Chance was a pioneer of women's rights. Jane herself went on to become an active member in the Peace Movement of the 20's and 30s, remaining an influential figure with friends and guests such as Gandhi, with whom she frequently corresponded.

Mrs Whyte was many things to many people, her obituary summarises her life as a series of remarkable achievements:

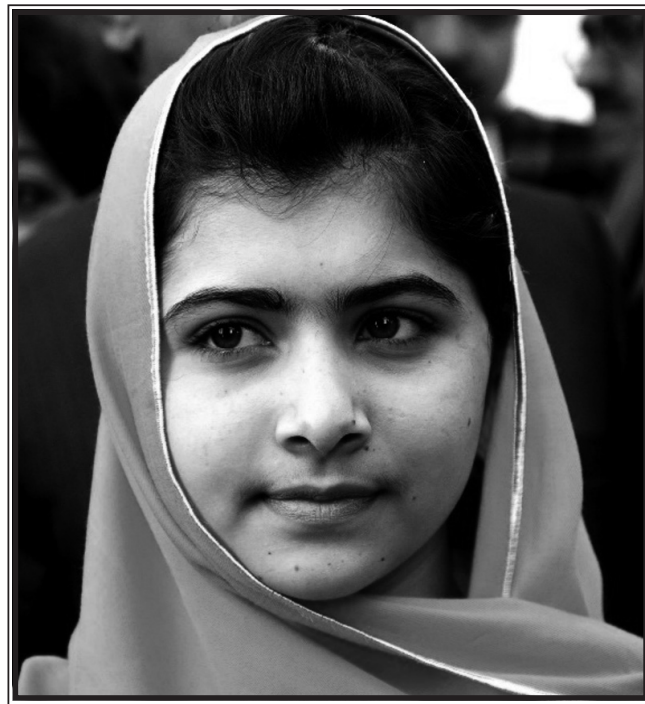
"Mrs Alexander Whyte, who died recently, for a full half century took an active part in many of the most forward looking movements of her day...They included the provision of nursing services in the Hebrides long before any official body had realised their need, the interlinking of art and especially craftsmanship with the life of the church, the provision of coeducational residential schools, the carrying out of a survey in the depressed part of Edinburgh'.

(Excerpted from Vicky Deary, WILPF and The Clapham Film Unit: These Dangerous Women A Heritage Lottery Funded project)



Baha'i School for girls, Iran, 1933

Muslim Story



Malala Yousafzai

“I tell my story not because it is unique, but because it is the story of many girls.”

Born in Mingora, Pakistan on July 12, 1997, Malala’s father was determined that his baby girl was given every opportunity that her male counterpart would have. He was a teacher who ran a school for girls in their village. With a keen interest in all things academic, Malala thrived in the school environment. However, this all changed when the Taliban took control and banned girls from attending school. Unable to keep quiet about the situation, Malala spoke publicly in 2012 on behalf of girls and their right to learn. This effectively put a target on her back and in October of that year, she was shot in the head on her way home from school.

After a number of months in surgery and rehabilitation, Malala joined her family in her new home in the UK. She decided that the quiet life was not for her and therefore continued her fight for every girl to go to school. It was this dedication that led to the establishment of the Malala fund – a charity giving every girl an opportunity to achieve the future of her choice. In December 2014, Malala received the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming the youngest person to ever gain this prestigious award.

Forward to 2018, Malala was accepted into the University of Oxford to study Philosophy, Politics and Economics. She still continues her work of fighting for all girls to receive at least 12 years of free, safe and quality education.

She travels extensively to meeting girls who are fighting poverty, wars, child marriage and gender discrimination to name but a few, in order to attend school. She also attends government and international conferences to hold leaders accountable for their promises to girls.

Malala’s passion shows us all the importance of fighting for women and girls’ human rights and standing up for what we believe in.

Below is a transcription of the speech that Malala Yousafzai gave to the United Nations on 12 July 2013, the date of her 16th birthday.

.....Today, it is an honour for me to be speaking again after a long time. Being here with such honourable people is a great moment in my life.

I don’t know where to begin my speech. I don’t know what people would be expecting me to say. But first of all, thank you to God for whom we all are equal and thank you to every person who has prayed for my fast recovery and a new life. I cannot believe how much love people have shown me. I have received thousands of good wish cards and gifts from all over the world. Thank you to all of them. Thank you to the children whose innocent words encouraged me. Thank you to my elders whose prayers strengthened me.

I would like to thank my nurses, doctors and all of the staff of the hospitals in Pakistan and the UK and the UAE government who have helped me get better and recover my strength. I fully support Mr Ban Ki-moon the Secretary-General in his Global Education First Initiative and the work of the UN Special Envoy Mr Gordon Brown. And I thank them both for the leadership they continue to give. They continue to inspire all of us to action.

There are hundreds of Human rights activists and social workers who are not only speaking for human rights, but who are struggling to achieve their goals of education, peace and equality. Thousands of people have been killed by the terrorists and millions have been injured. I am just one of them.

So here I stand... one girl among many.

I speak – not for myself, but for all girls and boys.

I raise up my voice – not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard.

Those who have fought for their rights:

- ***Their right to live in peace.***
- ***Their right to be treated with dignity.***
- ***Their right to equality of opportunity.***
- ***Their right to be educated.***

Dear Friends, on the 9th of October 2012, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They shot my friends too. They thought that the bullets would silence us. But they failed. And then, out of that silence came, thousands of voices. The terrorists thought that they would change our aims and stop our ambitions but nothing changed in my life except this: Weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage was born. I am the same Malala. My ambitions are the same. My hopes are the same. My dreams are the same.

Dear sisters and brothers, I am not against anyone. Neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban or any other terrorists group. I am here to speak up for the right of education of every child. I want education for the sons and the daughters of all the extremists especially the Taliban.

I do not even hate the Talib who shot me. Even if there is a gun in my hand and he stands in front of me. I would not shoot him. This is the compassion that I have learnt from Muhammad-the prophet of mercy, Jesus Christ and Lord Buddha. This is the legacy of change that I have inherited from Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This is the philosophy of non-violence that I have learnt from

Gandhi Jee, Bacha Khan and Mother Teresa. And this is the forgiveness that I have learnt from my mother and father. This is what my soul is telling me, be peaceful and love everyone.

Dear sisters and brothers, we realise the importance of light when we see darkness. We realise the importance of our voice when we are silenced. In the same way, when we were in Swat, the north of Pakistan, we realised the importance of pens and books when we saw the guns.

The wise saying, "The pen is mightier than sword" was true. The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them. They are afraid of women. The power of the voice of women frightens them. And that is why they killed 14 innocent medical students in the recent attack in Quetta. And that is why they killed many female teachers and polio workers in Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa and FATA.

That is why they are blasting schools every day. Because they were and they are afraid of change, afraid of the equality that we will bring into our society.

I remember that there was a boy in our school who was asked by a journalist, "Why are the Taliban against education?" He answered very simply. By pointing to his book he said, "A Talib doesn't know what is written inside this book." They think that God is a tiny, little conservative being who would send girls to hell just because of going to school. The terrorists are misusing the name of Islam and Pashtun society for their own personal benefits. Pakistan is peace-loving democratic country. Pashtuns want education for their daughters and sons. And Islam is a religion of peace, humanity and brotherhood. Islam says that it is not only each child's right to get education, rather it is their duty and responsibility.

Honourable Secretary General, peace is necessary for education. In many parts of the world especially Pakistan and Afghanistan; terrorism, wars and conflicts stop children to go to their schools. We are really tired of these wars. Women and children are suffering in many parts of the world in many ways. In India, innocent and poor children are victims of child labour. Many schools have been destroyed in Nigeria. People in Afghanistan have been affected by the hurdles of extremism for decades. Young girls have to do domestic child labour and are forced to get married at early age. Poverty, ignorance, injustice, racism and the deprivation of basic rights are the main problems faced by both men and women.

Dear brothers and sisters, we want schools and education for every child's bright future. We will continue our journey to our destination of peace and education for everyone. No one can stop us. We will speak for our rights and we will bring change through our voice. We must believe in the power and the strength of our words. Our words can change the world. Because we are all together, united for the cause of education. And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty, injustice and ignorance. We must not forget that millions of children are out of schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright peaceful future. So let us wage a global struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism and let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons.

***One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can
change the world; Education is the only solution;
Education First***

Hindu Story



Ela Gandhi

Hon. Ela Gandhi is the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi. She was born in 1940 in the Phoenix Settlement in the KwaZulu Natal region of South Africa. An anti-apartheid activist from an early age, she was banned from political activism in 1973 and placed under house arrest for nine long years. She was a member of the Transitional Executive Council and gained a seat as a member of the African National Congress (ANC) in the South African Parliament.

Initially her parents educated her at home. *"I saw my neighbour's children were all going to school. I was a little child and I said, No, I have to go to school now. I was eight or nine years old".* Her parents agreed to send her to a school about two kilometres away from home. *"This was my first rebellion".* Ela first became aware of racial oppression, *"from the time I went to school. My mother started a non-racial school at Gandhi's House for about 200 children. An inspector said; you can't teach, there is a law against private schools, and in particular you being an Indian cannot teach African children".*

At that time the only university in KwaZulu Natal, only catered for White students. They held after hours' sessions for Black students at Sastri College, which began at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. The White lecturers would come after they had finished lecturing to White students. She enrolled for a B.A. degree with law subjects then switched to a Social Sciences degree. After University in 1965 she began work at Child Welfare.

Because of her work for justice and human rights Ela received a banning order. Ela's first banning order lasted was from 1975 until 1980. It was a banning and

house arrest order. There were three parts to this restriction. Firstly she was prevented from going to meetings. She was banned and contained to a particular area. She was also under house arrest for a certain number of hours. This meant that she could not leave her home over weekends and holidays and was confined to her house from 7pm to 7am.For the eight and a half years that Ela was banned, she worked underground. She was subjected to harassment from the state and her house was constantly watched. She still broke her banning order and house arrest many times, being careful to “cover our backs” so that they would not be caught.

“I think activism is working at grassroots. It also trains you in democracy to consult, to value opinions of people, not to have a judgement, not to make up your mind in a drawing room or something. To go out in the community and experience what the community is experiencing and work with them and listen to what they are saying, rather than saying that they are having a bad time - we need to do something about it”.

Her goal as an activist was to “bring about awareness among people”. As a social worker Ela worked with Indian children as well as African children in Amouti. When Indians were moved from Springfield Flats to Phoenix, she was the first social worker to work in the area. *“We used to run camps, discuss various issues, the Black Consciousness movement, the Freedom Charter, the education system etc.; we helped people in the neighbouring community to re-build their homes after a flood”.*

Passive Resistance

“I read Gandhi’s work on passive resistance, the history of the Congress Movement in India. Gandhi never threw out those who were involved in the armed struggle.... He maintained that they had a different perspective..... We are on the same side, so there is no contradiction. Our enemy was Pretoria, and that perspective had to be maintained all along”.

The most important defining moment in Ela’s life was the formation of the NIC.

“Think Black, not Indian, inspired me a lot. It made me think what was practical. Whilst in principle we agreed to organise on a non-racial basis, practically it was very difficult to organise on a non-racial basis....That was why, when I was in Child Welfare, I wasn’t satisfied just working within the Indian community”.

For Ela another defining moment for South Africa was the United Democratic Front (UDF), which brought all the communities together.

For me the defining moment was the UDF – when all the religions came together. I came from a home where we respected ourselves as Hindus but we didn’t observe Hinduism as going to the temple. We prayed at home, we did the Hindu prayer and the Christian prayer and the Parsee prayer and the Muslim prayer. The UDF brought all the religions civics, all the races together in one united front”.

“The one way that can really make a difference is to empower communities, and I am certainly going to put my energies there, to go into the community, empower them, and educate them’.

“Not enough recognition has been given to the support groups that were formed by the different religious communities, people who did a lot of work quietly, not

politically, but as individuals. There were also a lot of young White people who went to prison and they have not been recorded in history. They have virtually been forgotten. Some of these people served terms in prison because they refused to be conscripted into the apartheid army”.

In recognition of her work to promote Mahatma Gandhi’s legacy in South Africa, Hon. Ela Gandhi was awarded the prestigious Padma Bushan award by the Indian Government in 2002. She received the Community of Christ International Peace Award in 2007. In 2014, she was awarded the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman – the highest honor for overseas conferred by the President of India and was also honored as a veteran of the Umkhonto we Sizwe.

APPENDICES

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a milestone document in the history of human rights. Drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. It set out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected and has been translated into over 500 languages.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence. (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits. (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society. (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Discussion and Activities

Women’s Suffrage, Peace and Human Rights

It is hoped that this resource will be informative and enjoyable to read. It is also hoped that those who have taken the time to read the stories shared in the resource will also take the time to engage in dialogue with others about what they have read. We anticipate that diverse schools, faith communities, interfaith groups, women’s organisations and individuals will be able to make use of this resource.

In preparing for this we were able to host three dialogue events; the first focussed on women’s suffrage; the second on women as peace makers and the third on women as educators within the human rights and other social movements. At the events we encouraged dialogue and we would like to share the questions offered for discussion. Please feel free to create others, these are simple offered to assist those who wish to take things further.

Activity and Dialogue (1): Women, Suffragettes and the Right to Vote

A number of the stories in this resource are about the right to vote. In small groups please do the following;

1. Choose either a Christian, Jewish or Sikh story and read it out loud in your group
2. What did you find most challenging about the story (discuss)
3. What did you find most inspiring about the story (discuss)
4. Do you know of any current imbalances of gender in our systems in Scotland; what are they and how could they be challenged?
5. How important do you think the right to vote is? Discuss the reason for your answer

Activity and Dialogue (2): Women as Peacemakers

In October 2012 a UN Document ‘women’s participation in peace negotiations: it was noted that just 2 per cent of chief mediators and 9 percent of negotiators in peace processes were women. However the Geneva Graduate Institute’s Broadening Participation project demonstrated that when women’s groups were able to effectively influence a peace process, a peace agreement was almost always reached and the agreement was more likely to be implemented (evidence from 40 peace and transition processes)

A number of the stories in this resource highlight the role of women as peace makers. In your group please reader either the Baha’i, Muslim or Hindu story and then discuss the following;

1. What are the barriers to women fully participating in the life of society, including being peace mediators?
2. Why do you think peace processes are more effective when women participate?
3. Is there a link between women using their right to vote and creating more peaceful societies

Activity and Dialogue (3): Women, Human Rights and Education

Article 26

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

The story of Malala focusses on the right of everyone to receive an education. Please read Malala's story and article 26 (above) and discuss the following:

1. Why is the education of girls so important?
2. Does our current education system promote 'understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups'?
3. Is there a link between women having the right to vote and also having full access to education? (discuss)

Activity (4) Quiz based on the resource

1. When did the Suffragette movement start?
2. What was the WSPU?
3. Who were the main Suffragette leaders?
4. What was Dorothea Chalmers profession?
5. Did the church support the right for women to vote?
6. Where is Dorothea commemorated?
7. Why was May Pollock Grant arrested in 1912?
8. Did the Dundee Advertiser Newspaper support the vote for women?
9. What did May Pollock Grant write in her letter to the Dundee Advertiser?
10. Why was it important to give women the right to vote?
11. Who was Princess Sophia's father?
12. How was she connected to Queen Victoria?
13. Why did she decide to join the Suffragette Movement?
14. Why did she not pay her taxes? Do you think that is right?
15. Why should people pay tax?
16. What year were women over 21 given the vote?
17. What were the names of the leaders of the Jewish League for Woman Suffrage?
18. Why did Jewish women ask for religious as well as political votes.
19. What did Anglo-Jewish men fear?
20. Which religion was Jane Whyte?
21. Who did she meet in 1902?
22. Why did she become a Baha'i?
23. How do you think changing her religion affected her family/community?
24. Why did she fight for peace?
27. Where was Malala Yousafzi born?
28. Why could she not do in her country?
29. Why is it important to educate girls?
30. Which human right do you think is the most important?
32. Where did Ela Gandhi grow up?

33. Who was her Grandfather?
34. How did she help other communities?
35. What is passive resistance?
36. What actions can you take to make your neighbourhood better?

Additional Activity (5)

As a group watch the You Tube Video 'These Dangerous Women' (a documentary about women of faith who were against the First World War) and discuss what was learnt from the video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0a2xYvXwGiw>

Sample Stamps: Women's Suffrage



VOTES FOR WOMEN

Royal Mail First Day Cover

Royal Mail Talents House 21 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PB

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Religions for Peace

United Kingdom Women of Faith Network

www.religionsforpeace.org.uk/about/uk-women-of-faith-network/



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