



Janet Reuter

June 2020

The remarkable first lady doctors in Britain.

“When I felt rather overcome with my father’s opposition, I said as firmly as I could, that I must have this training or something else, that I could not live without some real work.”

Quote Elizabeth Garrett Anderson.



In the early 20th century, women were trained as physicians with the intended purpose of taking care of female patients and children specifically. However, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, MD, the first woman surgeon in England, her daughter Louisa Garrett Anderson MD, and Flora Murray, MD, sought to change this practice.

Dr. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was the first British woman to receive a medical degree in 1870 from the University of Paris as it was not allowed for her to study medicine in Britain. She founded the London School of Medicine in 1874 and from 1873 was the first and for the next 19 years the only female member of the British Medical Association. The London School of Medicine for Women was later renamed in her honour.

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson MD was dean of the London School of Medicine between 1883 and 1902, in which period it became a college of London University, and later as the Royal Free Hospital of Medicine, part of University College London. Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was a trail blazer in the medical profession. It was a very hard battle to prove that not only were women capable of studying and practicing medicine but they were as good at it as any male doctor. It is no wonder that also her daughter Louisa went on to achieve so much for the right for a women to work as a doctor in a male dominated profession!

Louisa Garrett Anderson MD, Elizabeth’s daughter was the first woman to qualify in medicine in 1900 at the London School of Medicine for Women (LSMW) the first British medical school to train women physicians. Louisa had already passed her examinations of the Society of Apothecaries earlier. They, however, subsequently closed their examinations to women to prevent others following in her example. In other words no more women welcome!

Louisa went on to practice as a doctor at the New Hospital for Women, in London. Although she followed in her mother’s footsteps it was still a hard battle for her to succeed and gain recognition.

Less is known about Dr. Flora Murray, who was four years older than Louisa Anderson. She began her medical studies at LSMW and completed her training in Durham, Scotland. Flora Murray returned to London in 1905 as a medical officer and anaesthetist.

Both Drs. Louisa Anderson and Flora Murray were ardent suffragettes and members of the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU), the leading militant organization campaigning for women’s suffrage in the pre-war U.K. In fact, Louisa Anderson was imprisoned for a month for breaking the window of an anti-suffrage minister’s home in Kensington.

In 1912, Drs. Louisa Anderson and Flora Murray co-founded the Women’s Hospital for Children in London. At that time, women physicians were barred from providing care for male patients. Their practices were limited to general practice and the inpatient care of women and children. The facility also cared for under aged youths, but otherwise was restricted from the treatment of adult men.

June 2020

First lady doctors in Britain (continued)



The outbreak of war in August 1914 gave Louisa and Flora the opportunity to take radical action to prove themselves. Together they organised the Women's Hospital Corps and set up a hospital in a luxury Paris hotel. There, amid the chandeliers and marble, they operated on wounds caused by shell fire, used primitive x-rays to locate bullets and shrapnel, and treated gas gangrene and trench foot. The taboo on female doctors treating men vanished overnight. Reports of the women's success reached the War Office, and in early 1915 Murray and Anderson were invited to establish a large new military hospital in central London.

Endell Street was the only British army hospital to be staffed and run entirely by women for the duration of the war. These years gave Murray and Anderson the toughness and organisational skills required to turn a crumbling former workhouse in Covent Garden into a 573-bed hospital, find an all-female team of doctors, trained nurses and orderlies, and run things with suffrage-minded efficiency. "Deeds Not Words" was Endell Street's motto, and all the wards were given names of female saints rather than military-style numbers, apart from the "Johnnie Walker ward" in the basement, where drunks were put to sober up.

Endell Street was unlike any other military hospital. Its wards were decorated with colourful quilts and fresh flowers, as part of the psychological techniques to heal men often "more wounded in their minds than in their bodies". There was a library of more than 5,000 books and a rolling programme of outings and entertainments. Convalescing soldiers were taught needlework, and curious visitors saw "burly butchers and miners working at their stitching frames with all the skills of Jane Austen characters". Murray welcomed press publicity as a way of promoting the hospital's feminist agenda, but was adamant that Endell Street should not be downplayed as "women's work", with all its unprofessional implications.

Throughout the war Endell Street admitted between 400 and 800 cases a month, and treated more than 24,000 patients. With the end of the war in sight, however, there was a cruel twist that has a chilling relevance today. The hospital team that had saved thousands from death and permanent disability during the war was helpless in the fight against the waves of Spanish flu that killed many of its younger staff. There have been many such deaths of medical staff throughout the world recently.

After the hospital closed in 1919, the UK's medical schools went back to barring female students, and female doctors were side lined once again into low-paid, low-status jobs. Winston Churchill, the new secretary of state for war, refused to give female army doctors equal military rank, "nor will their services be required beyond the present emergency". Quote Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

We have come a long way from the time of the suffragettes but how will our society still largely governed by men reward the women fighting to help us all get out of this crisis today? It is well known that often when it comes to fair and equal pay our leaders have very short memories!

ENGLISCH ohne Stress NEWSLETTER

June 2020

Now it is possible to visit an art gallery in Frankfurt with the correct distancing. Here are two exhibitions that might be of interest to you.



Trick Art Hero. 3D Museum, Zeil, Frankfurt

The Japanese artist Masashi Hattori is one of the best known 3D artist in Asia, where this very special form of illusionary painting is a popular art form. It is not at all well known here in Europe.

On a 400 square meter pop-up area you will find 22 mystical pictures of the artist Masashi Hattori, which only reveal their secret from a certain perspective and interact with the visitors. It's not just

looking at them, but creative interaction is also required. In concrete terms, this means that the visitors position themselves, sometimes supplemented by props, standing, sitting or lying down, according to their desire and creativity, either alone or with several people in or on the pictures, while one of them takes photos and videos from a specific point. The special optics create a fantastic 3D effect. A visitor can give their creativity absolutely free rein and can take home original, individual photo of themselves as part of the art work. Something very different !

The exhibition is open daily from 10.00 to 20.00



En Passant. Sculpture of the Impressionists. Städel Museum, Frankfurt.



This exhibition is mainly about the work of five artists: Edgar Degas (1834–1917), Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), Medardo Rosso (1858–1928), Paolo Troubetzkoy (1866–1938) and Rembrandt Bugatti (1884–1916).

The show unites outstanding sculptures by the five artists and juxtapose them with impressionist paintings, pastels, drawings, prints and photographs by Pierre Bonnard, Antoine Bourdelle, Mary Cassatt, Camille Claudel, Henri Matisse, Claude Monet, Auguste Renoir, Giovanni Segantini, John Singer Sargent and others.

There are altogether 160 works which show a comprehensive overview of the possibilities and challenges of impressionism in sculpture. The exhibits are on loan from many international art galleries and private collections.

The exhibition also features works from the Städel Museum's own impressionist art holdings.

Birthdays in June

Sigrid Planz
Dr. Barbara Hopp
Monika Rall

Happy Birthday, ladies

