

## **So before we unveil the plaque celebrating Margaret Glen-Bott's achievements, let me tell you a little about her**

Margaret was born in 1891, the youngest of six children – 2 boys and 4 girls. Her father, Alexander, was a clergyman. Her mother was Mina Stote Burn. The family home was the vicarage at St. Thomas Church, Halliwell, a residential area of Bolton. She was educated at St. Elphin's school in Darley Dale, Derbyshire, a school for the daughters of clergy where she excelled; in the 1907 Speech Day Report there was reference to her many awards.

Margaret always wanted to be a Doctor. This was no easy ambition in the early 20th century for a woman. Supported by her mother, she trained at the London School of Medicine for Women and qualified in 1915 with a Diploma in Medicine and Surgery. By 1917 women were able to gain degrees and Margaret was awarded a Degree in Medicine and Surgery.

She found it difficult to get a surgeon's role as many hospitals would not employ women. However, in 1916 she was appointed as House Surgeon at Nottingham General Hospital to assist with the influx of some 500+ injured WW1 soldiers. She lived in Nottingham from that date onwards and by 1918 is listed in General Hospital Annual Report as Senior Residential Medical Officer. In 1919 she set up her own practice in Nottingham and in September that year she also started working at the Women's Hospital in Castle Gate where she became Nottingham's **first** 'woman specialist in 'women's diseases'.

Providing a little flavour of what Margaret's life was like at that time she described travelling all over the City and County during the night to attend to emergency calls. And as she was young and poor, she went everywhere by bicycle.

By 1925 she was living here at 15 Regent Street where she remained for 25 years.

In 1937 she was appointed as a Magistrate and served until the 1950s. She was particularly interested in juvenile court work. In 1938 she was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in recognition of her senior gynaecological role. Again, to give a little flavour to this, peers recalled her as a tiny figure perched on a wooden stool, operating with great skill. She was also remembered with great affection and admiration by those who worked with her and were trained by her. A day in her working life – all neatly captured in her diaries – started at 8.45am at the Women's Hospital where she would operate until midday, before returning home to see patients at her surgery then heading out to an antenatal clinic in the County and to visit other women in maternity hospitals.

With the outbreak of WW2, Margaret's life got even busier. She was co-opted onto the City Council, a choice that was later confirmed at the first post-war election. She served as a City Councillor for Mapperley Ward from 1939–1958 and put her heart and soul into the work attending some 160 committee meetings

in 12 months. In 1956 she was made an Alderman and in 1961 she received an OBE for her political service to the city. Margaret was particularly interested in all aspects of education, and, fittingly, The Margaret Glen-Bott School – a secondary school in Wollaton Park – was named after her in 1955.

In addition to her roles as surgeon, obstetrician, gynaecologist, magistrate and councillor – as if that wasn't enough – she was on the Castle Museum Governing Committee from 1942 and its Chair from 1952–1958; she sat the University Council from 1945–1965 and on the Foundation Board tasked with raising funds to set up the then new Nottingham Playhouse. At the inception of the NHS in 1948 she was made a member of the Sheffield Regional Hospital Board which covered Nottinghamshire. She served on it for many years, and later was Chair of Nottingham No. 3 Hospital Management Committee.

Outside of this remarkable professional life Margaret had a keen interest in the arts, sport – she county-level badminton as well as recreational golf and tennis and country life. She particularly enjoyed fishing, and gardening. She had a country cottage near Norwich which she loved to visit with her dogs and indulge her passion for gardening.

Margaret, as you can tell, was extremely hardworking and organised, and devoted her life to public service. She was also very humble. Speaking in October 1951 she said: *“Nottingham has been so kind to me. It gave me my first chance and also the chance to set up in specialised work. I love the City and I think it is very beautiful.”*

She retired in 1968 and died the following year on this day 21st March 1969. Her funeral was held at St Peter's and was cremated at Wilford Hill Cemetery. We know that Margaret's niece Dr Mary Glen-Bott and great niece Christine Woods were there and today we are delighted to have members of her family, Malcolm and Bruce Glen-Bott with us to unveil the plaque in her honour.

People still remember Margaret here in Nottingham. When we launched the crowdfunding campaign for the plaque it very quickly reached its target. I want to finish today by quoting from three women who generously donated, two of whom who personally experienced her work.

Sylvia said: *“I am 93 years of age and know that MGB was very important to my mother, and know she would want this plaque”.*

Joan donated with gratitude *“for the help and kindness shown to me so many years ago by MGB”*

And finally Lindah's words which, I think, match perfectly what today's event is all about: *“A fine example of empathy, intellect and consummate medical skills. She made her mark. Now its time for her to be marked visually, a blue plaque in the city she served – Nottingham.”*