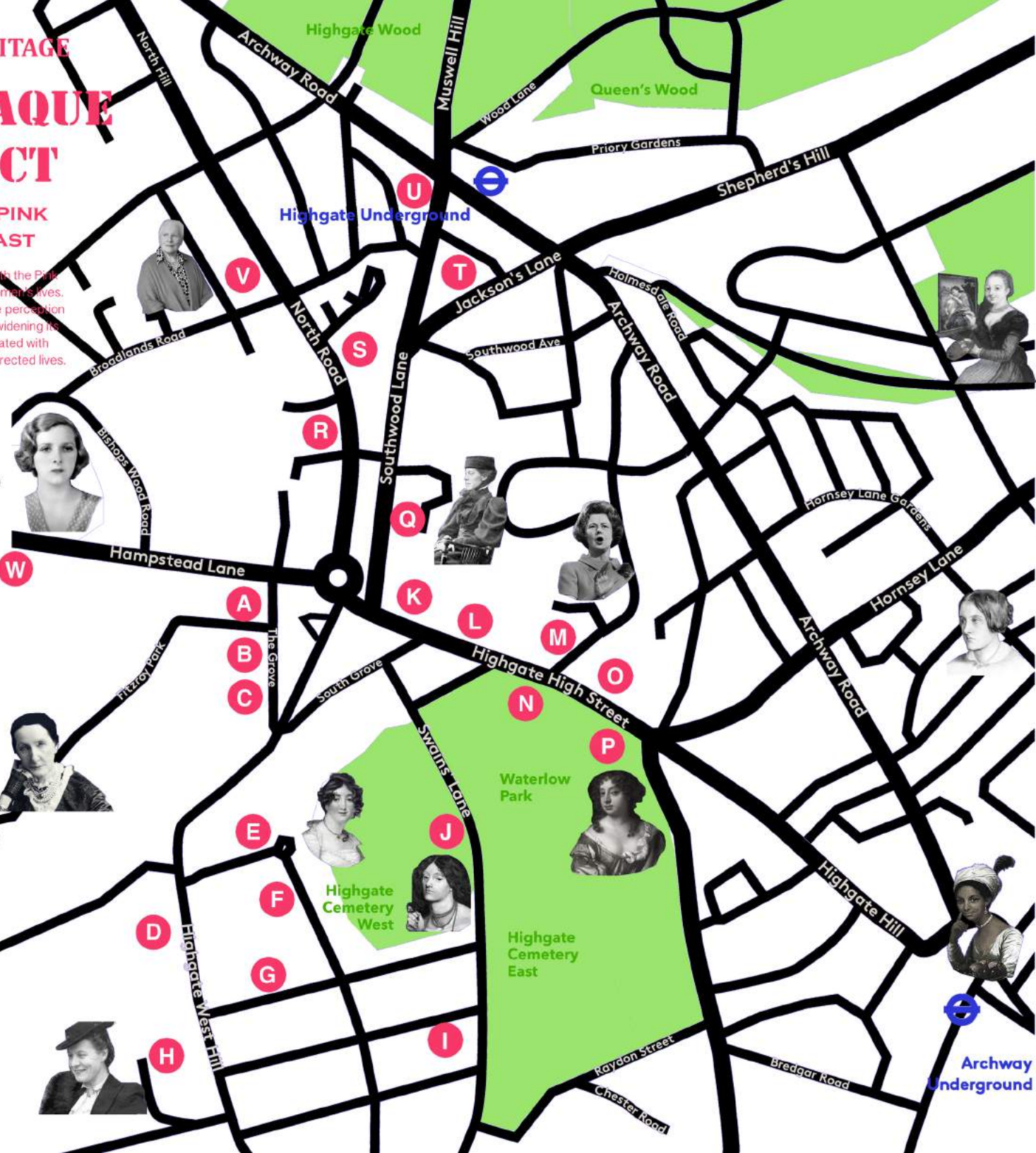


# HIGHGATE HERITAGE PINK PLAQUE PROJECT

## RECLAIMING PINK AND THE PAST

We are raising awareness with the Pink Plaque Project celebrating women's lives. We would like to challenge the perception and reclaim the colour pink, widening its appeal, so it can be associated with women who had active, self directed lives.

- A Victoria Wood  
1953 - 2016  
Highgate West Hill, N6 6DA
- B Dame Gladys Constance Cooper, 1888 - 1971  
2 The Grove, N6 6JU
- C Rumer Godden  
1907 - 1998  
2 The Old Hall, N6 6BP
- D Florence Nightingale  
1820 - 1910  
37 Highgate West Hill, N6 6LS
- E Harriot Mellon  
1777 - 1837  
Holly Lodge Gardens N6 6AA
- F Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts  
1814 - 1906  
Holly Lodge, N6 6AA
- G Stella Dorothea Gibbons  
1902 - 1989  
19 Oakshott Ave, N6 6NT
- H Baroness Summerskill of Kenwood, 1901 - 1980  
30 Milfield Lane, N6 6JD
- I Felicity Sparrow  
1950 -  
Makepeace Mansions, N6 6ES
- J Elizabeth Siddal  
1829 - 1862  
Highgate Cemetery Swain's Lane, N6 6PJ



- K Isla Merry  
1909 - 1975  
88 Highgate High Street, N6 5HX
- L Phyllis Harper  
76 Highgate High Street, N6 5HX
- M Barbara Castle  
1910 - 2002  
Chomeley Lodge N6 5EN
- N Matilda and Emily Sharpe  
1842 - 1928  
Channing School, The Bank, N6 5HF
- O Catherine Da Costa  
1678 - 1756  
Crowell House  
104 Highgate High Hill, N6 5HE
- P Nell Gwynn  
1650 - 1687  
Lauderdale House, N6 5HG
- Q Mary Kinglsey  
1862 - 1900  
22 Southwood Lane, N6 5EF
- R Joan Schwitzer  
1925 - 2009  
12 Priory Gardens, N6 5QS  
St. Michael's Primary School N6 4GB
- S Christina Rossetti  
1830 - 1894  
2 North Hill, N6 4PU
- T Gretel Hinrichsen  
1919-  
Hillside Gardens, N6 5SU
- U Celia Mitchell  
1933-  
Ripping Yarns  
355 Archway Road, N6 4EJ
- V Diana Athill  
1917 - 2019  
107 North Hill, Highgate, N6 4DP
- W Dido Elisabeth Belle  
1761 - 1804  
Kenwood House, NW3 7JR

The idea developed from the Remarkable Women of Highgate project, coordinated by Catherine Wells of the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution (HLSI) Archives and Alicia Pivaro, chair of the Highgate Neighbourhood Forum and curator of last year's 'Women Only' art project and local artist and architect Maria Kramer.  
[www.highgatefestival.org/pink-plaque](http://www.highgatefestival.org/pink-plaque)

## HIGHGATE HERITAGE

# PINK PLAQUE PROJECT

## RECLAIMING PINK AND THE PAST

### DISCOVER THE LIVES OF SOME OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN FROM HIGHGATE. UNEARTH INFORMATION ABOUT FEMALE MOVERS AND SHAKERS FROM OUR AREA'S PAST AND PRESENT.

#### **I** Felicity Sparrow 1950 -

After a row about the lack of female representation in an Arts Council exhibition on experimental film, an all-female group co-founded the feminist film and video network Circles to promote and distribute work by contemporary women artists and those from the past.

#### **J** Elisabeth Siddal, 1829 - 1862

Artist, poet and muse, her relationship with Dante Gabriel Rossetti has been the subject of several television dramas, notably *Dante's Inferno* (1967), by Ken Russell, in which she was played by Judith Paris and Rossetti by Oliver Reed.

#### **K** Isla Merry 1909 - 1975

A founding member and first women chair of the Highgate Society. She donated the Merry Mug for the fiercely-contested annual quiz between the Highgate Society and the HLSI.

#### **L** Phyllis Harper 1948 -

Running our High Street butcher shop, originally with her husband and now with her son Lee, Phyllis is a local celebrity. Asked by the Ham and High what her epitaph would say, she replied "She told it as it was".

#### **M** Barbara Castle 1910 - 2002

Baroness Castle of Blackburn, PC was a leading Labour politician. As Transport Minister she oversaw the introduction of speed limits, breathalysers and seat belts. As Employment Secretary she introduced the Equal Pay Act in 1970.

#### **N** Matilda and Emily Sharpe 1842 - 1928

Author, teacher and painter, Matilda and sister Emily established Channing House School on Highgate Hill. She published an anthology of poetry, *Old Favourites from the Elder Poets*, in which she included nine women poets.

#### **O** Catherine da Costa 1678 - 1756

English Jewish Miniature Painter, she went to the operas and oratorios of contemporary George Frederick Handel and read the Enlightenment philosophers Locke and Hume. Her *Self Portrait* (1720) shows the well-dressed artist busy working at her easel.

#### **P** Nell Gwynn 1650 - 1687

Prostitute, orange seller and celebrity actress was also a long-time mistress of King Charles II. She dangled one of their children out of a window of Lauderdale House and threatened to drop him unless he was granted a peerage.

#### **Q** Mary Kingsley 1862 - 1900

Explorer and ethnographer with little formal schooling, but access to her father's library, she read widely about science and exploration. After her parents died in 1892, she was free to travel solo in Africa, living with local people, collecting many specimens (now at the Natural History Museum).

#### **R** Joan Schwitzer 1925 - 2009

Prolific local historian, she led the campaign to refurbish the Old Schoolhouse in Tottenham Lane into the centre for the Hornsey Historical Society containing amazing archives of our local history. She wrote numerous books about the heritage of our area.

#### **S** Christina Georgina Rossetti 1830 - 1894

Joan Schwitzer noted: "She spent several weeks of each year in the 1860s staying in Park House (refuge for fallen women) dressed in the nun-like black habit of a sister with hanging sleeves, a muslin cap with lace edging and a veil."

#### **T** Gretel Hinrichsen 1919 -

Gretel and her husband Klaus, a friend of Kurt Schwitters with whom he was interred in the war, bought their house off-plan in 1958 after crawling through a hole in the wall of the site of Southwood House which had burned down in 1953.

#### **U** Celia Mitchell 1933 -

Celia (Hewitt) Mitchell, actor and activist married poet Adrian Mitchell. His most famous love poem, *Celia, Celia*, is much quoted: "When I am sad and weary / When I think all hope has gone / When I walk along High Holborn / I think of you with nothing on."

#### **V** Diana Athill 1917 - 2019

Editor and then author in her own right. After winning a competition she said "Bury me, dear friends, with a copy of the Observer folded under my head, for it was the Observer's prize that woke me up to the fact that I could write and had become happy."

#### **W** Dido Elisabeth Belle 1761-1804

Born the daughter of Maria Belle, an enslaved African woman in the British West Indies and Sir John Lindsay, a naval officer stationed there. Her life from slavery to heiress was fictionalised in the film *Belle* (2013).

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#### **A** Victoria Wood 1953 - 2016

Much-loved comedian whose work was grounded in everyday life and included references to activities, attitudes and things that exemplified Britain. She was noted for her skills in observing culture and in satirising aspects of social class.

#### **B** Gladys Constance Cooper DBE (Lady Pearson) 1888 - 1971

After appearing in Edwardian musical comedy and pantomime, she starred in dramatic roles and silent films before WW1. In the 1930s, she appeared in the West End and on Broadway, moving to Hollywood in 1940. She lived at The Grove as Lady Pearson.

#### **C** Margaret Rumer Godden OBE 1907 -1998

An author of more than 60 works of fiction and non-fiction for adults and children under the name of Rumer Godden. During her life she lived in Bangladesh, America and India where she ran a dance school for 20 years.

#### **D** Florence Nightingale 1820 - 1910

Founder of modern nursing, archives show that she spent time with The Howitts at 37 Highgate West Hill recovering after the Crimean war in 1839. She noted that the Highgate Infirmary was "by far the best of any work-house infirmary we have."

#### **E** Harriot Mellon 1777 - 1837

A famous actress and beauty, she leased Holly Lodge in 1809 before marrying the wealthy banker Thomas Coutts in 1815. She inherited his fortune on his death in 1822, bought Holly Lodge, then married the Duke of St Albans in 1827.

#### **F** Baroness Angela Georgina Burdett-Coutts 1814 - 1906

1st Baroness Burdett-Coutts of Highgate and Brookfield become one of the wealthiest women in England. A pioneering and prolific philanthropist, she helped set up what became the NSPCC and the RSPCA. Aged 67, she forfeited over half of her fortune to marry her American-born secretary, aged 29.

#### **G** Stella Dorothea Gibbons 1902 - 1989

Author and poet, her first novel *Cold Comfort Farm* won the Prix Etranger category of the Prix Femina in 1933. From the mid 1930s until her death in 1989, she lived on Oakshott Avenue on the Holly Lodge estate. A Fellow of the RSL, she also wrote for Punch.

#### **H** Edith Clara Summerskill, CH PC 1901 - 1980

During her first speech in Parliament, the new Labour MP for Warrington said: "There is a saying that women are no good at figures; but I am reminded that throughout this country in thousands of homes, the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a woman."