



Talking Tees Valley Activity Pack

Midwives

**Tees Valley
Museums**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**





Welcome to another edition of the Talking Tees Valley Activity Pack

Each month we use objects from some of our museums in the Tees Valley to take a closer look at the lives and stories from people in our area.

To celebrate International Nurses day on Wednesday 12th May we are looking at two Midwives who worked in the Tees Valley during the 1900s. They left their stories in our collections to share with future generations and maybe even brought some of them into this world!

Nurse Elsie Henwood

Nurse Elsie Henwood was a midwife in the 1920s and 30s. She worked at Municipal Maternity Hospital, Park Road North, Middlesbrough.

Originally only middle-class women could go into the nursing profession as it didn't pay that well, so they needed a private income and women had to be 'respectable'.

Florence Nightingale created the first nursing school in 1860 and would only accept girls from good families to train as nurses.

But charities like the St John's Ambulance changed that by giving free and low-cost medical training to the working classes. This meant Elsie could pursue nursing around her chores at home and school.



Nurse Elsie's cap and coat on display at the Dorman Museum. There is also a cabinet filled with equipment Elsie needed during her work, including forceps and a glass feeding bottle.



During the 1950s things started to change for mothers. The way they had children would shift dramatically, with more and more births happening in Maternity Homes and Hospitals, instead of the traditional home birth.

Fathers were not allowed to be present for the birth of their children, instead they had to wait outside, or some choose to wait in the pub! There wasn't much choice for medication to help with the pain either, with gas the best option to help mothers in labour.

In 1962 people started to question whether it would be more beneficial to have fathers in the room when their children were born. By the 1970's it was commonplace for men to be there.

One new mother in the 1960s said after she gave birth that –

“ Me and my baby were both brought to the postnatal ward. Where I was offered tea, toast and a light for my cigarette. ”

**Terry Nappies – which way did you fold them?
How often did you stick the nappy pin into yourself or the baby!**

**The steeping bucket, twin tub and boil wash!!
How did you keep them white?**



Sister Mary Isabel Young

Isabel Mary Young, who went by the name of Mary, was born in Thornaby in February 1919. She went into nursing at 18 and after passing her exams went on to train as a midwife.

During the Second World War Mary became Ward Sister in Leicester where she cared for injured service men.

Later she secured jobs as a Ward Sister at Darlington Memorial Hospital. She settled in the Stockton and Thornaby area in the 1970s retiring aged 65.



Did you know...

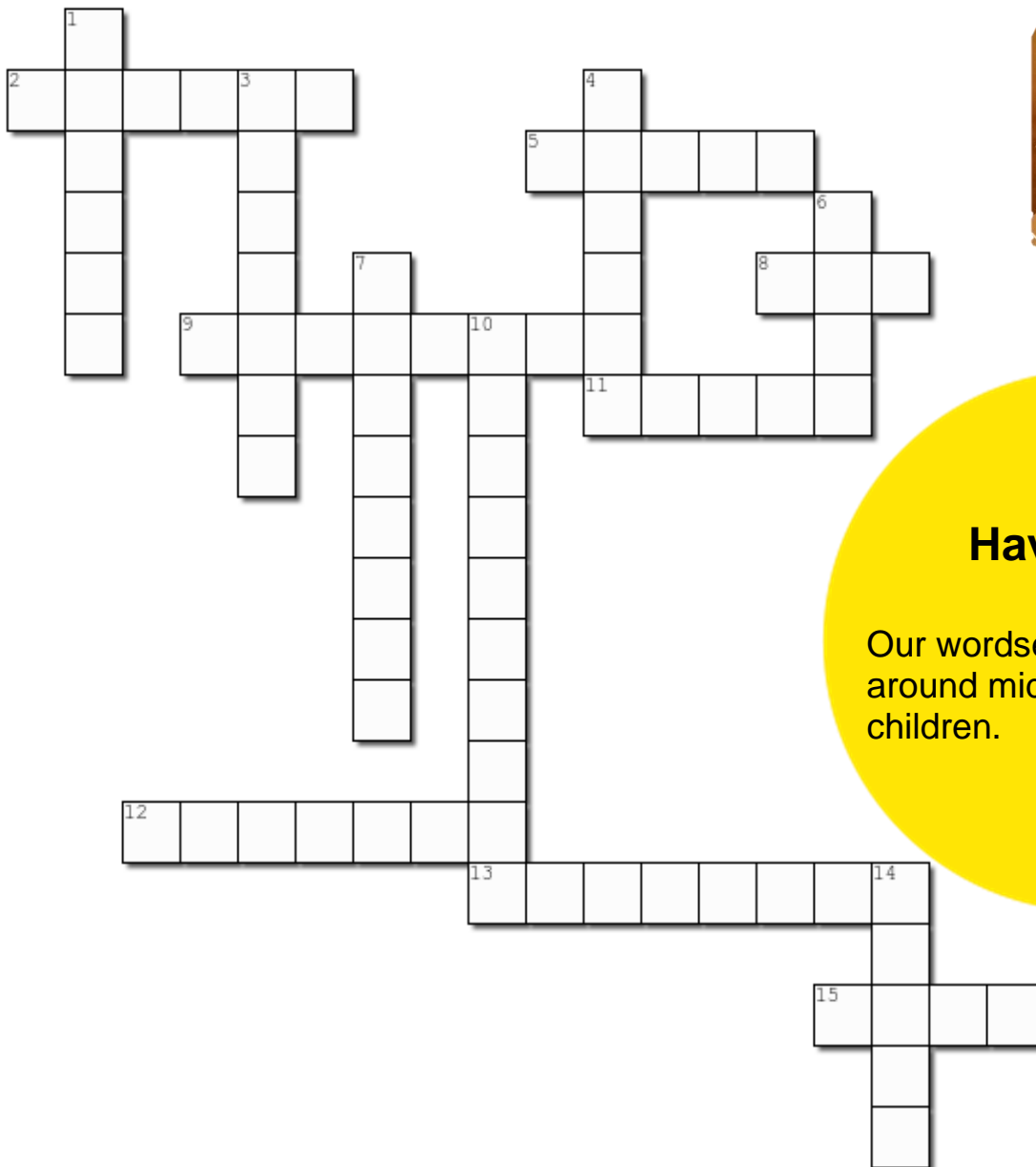
Mary's uniform is still so starched it can stand up on its own!



Darlington Memorial Hospital was opened in 1933 and was ultra-modern for its time, but it had no maternity facilities. Thankfully, Greenbank hospital wasn't that far away and was able to be converted into a dedicated maternity home.

Greenbank Maternity home was one of many around the Tees Valley dedicated to young children's care. Before the creation of the NHS in 1948 each cot in the hospital would have been sponsored, to cover the cost of the child's care. The doner would have their name hanging above the cot. As you can see, they even had a rocking horse on this ward in Greenbank.

The maternity hospital closed its doors for good in the 1980's and was demolished a decade later.



!

Have a go!

Our wordsearch is themed around midwives, nurses, and children.

Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

- 2. Term used to describe a woman about to give birth 'in ...' (6)
- 5. Last name of nurse born in Thornaby in 1919 (5)
- 8. The piece of equipment nurses keep and transport their medical tools in (3)
- 9. Where you stay when sick or in labour (8)
- 11. Nurse Henwood's first name (5)
- 12. Medical professional (usually, but not always, a woman) who guides and supports during labour (7)
- 13. Term for an unqualified woman who helped during births (8).
- 15. Baby carriage (4)

Down

- 1. Small humans (6)
- 3. Highly starched collection of items nurses wear to work (7)
- 4. Traditionally a glass item used to feed a baby (6)
- 6. To look after someone is 'to for them' (4)
- 7. Numbing medication given to women in labour to help with the pain (8)
- 10. An old form of nappy (10)
- 14. Person (traditionally a female role) who looks after the sick (5)

Can you finish this acrostic poem? Each line of the poem starts with the next letter of the word midwife.

M _____

I _____

D _____

W _____

I _____

F _____

E _____

Wordsearch answers

Across

2. Labour
5. Young
8. Bag
9. Hospital
11. Elsie
12. Midwife
13. Laywoman
15. Pram

Down

1. Babies
3. Uniform
4. Bottle
6. Care
7. Epidural
10. Terry Towel
14. Nurse



Please share your feedback with us at teesvalleymuseums@stockton.gov.uk
We would love to hear your poems!

Images in this newsletter courtesy of The Dorman Museum, Kirkleatham Museum and Grounds, Preston Park Museum and Grounds and Head of Steam – Darlington Railway Museum.