

Glasgow's inspiring women feature on playing cards designed for International Women's Day



By [Ann Fotheringham](#) [@FotheringhamHT](#) Senior features writer



Melanie Brickley

AN inspirational teenager helping vulnerable people during lockdown and a pioneering railway worker are among those featuring in a special set of playing cards released for International Women's Day today.

Marissa Roxburgh, who combines her studies at Glasgow University with volunteering roles in her community, and Helen Catto, described as the 'mother of Scottish soroptimism' appear alongside 50 other influential women.

The set, which comes with a booklet celebrating the lives of the women featured, were created by Melanie Brickley, a member of global women's organisation Soroptimist International, which marks its 100th anniversary this year.

"We were looking for ways to celebrate this important milestone, and I thought a pack of cards would be a great way to do that," says Melanie, who lives in Kirkintilloch. "I thought it would allow us to commemorate the lives of 52 women.

Enlisting the support of volunteers from across Glasgow and the surrounding areas, and the help of a local printer, Melanie came up with a list of names.



Helen Catto

“I was keen not to focus simply on famous or incredibly successful women,” she adds. “We know we stand on the shoulders of the women who came before us in everything we do and I wanted to celebrate those women.

“Helen Catto, for example, was the first president of any Scottish Soroptimist Club and the first National President from Scotland - a founding mother of Scottish Soroptimism. She was born in 1887 and in 1923 took up employment at Glasgow Central Station as a Lady Welfare Supervisor for the London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company in 1923. In 1943 she spoke to the Publicity Club of Glasgow, discussing the roles taken up by women in railway transport during the war, including signal operators, crane drivers and fitters’ assistants.”

In June of that year, Helen received an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours list. By this time she also held the post of Chief Welfare Superintendent for women for the LMS Railway Company.



Melissa Roxburgh

“Merissa Roxborough, our youngest member having joined at 17, is studying Community Development at Glasgow University,” adds Melanie. “She is a Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament and volunteers for Who Cares? Scotland and Include me 2, where she delivered meals to vulnerable people during the recent lockdown.”

The SI Scotland South Card Set is available from the society's website now.