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RARE 19TH CENTURY MUSIC GAME PATENTED IN EDINBURGH ON DISPLAY FOR FIRST TIME TO THE PUBLIC

- ***Musical Game*, on display to the public for the first time at Georgian House in Charlotte Square as part of a new exhibition *West End Girls***
- **Game created by Ann Young in Edinburgh in 1801 who was the only female recipient of a patent that year**
- **The National Trust for Scotland exhibition gives a glimpse into the realities of childhood in Edinburgh's New Town in the early 19th century**

A rare 19th century musical game, one of only three known to still be in existence, is going on display to the public for the first time at the Georgian House in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh as part of a new exhibition by the National Trust for Scotland.

Musical Game, designed by Ann Young in 1801 to teach and test children on musical theory, will feature as part of *West End Girls*, an intimate display curated by the conservation charity to shed a light on the stories and pastimes of children growing up in Edinburgh's New Town in the early 19th century.

The game invented by Ann, who lived in St James Square at the opposite end of George Street to Charlotte Square, was patented in the capital. She was the only woman to receive a patent that year and one of only 40 to receive a patent in a 200-year period from 1617 to 1816.

Sheonagh Martin, National Trust for Scotland Visitor Services Manager at the Georgian House, said: "We're delighted to welcome visitors to our new exhibition *West End Girls*, to see the rare *Musical Game*, by Ann Young, on display to the public for the first time at the Georgian House. The family friendly game offered different versions to play depending on ability and could've been enjoyed by the Lamont family who resided at No 7 Charlotte Square. The musical knowledge required to play, and the complexity of the game highlighted the importance of musical instruction amongst the wealthy elite during the 18th and 19th centuries, who regarded it as an indicator of social status."

Kit Baston, National Trust for Scotland Visitor Services Assistant at the Georgian House, who carried out research for *West End Girls*, said: "The exhibition celebrates the lives of three girls who spent their early years in or near Charlotte Square including Elizabeth Grant of Rothiemurchus, Catherine Sinclair, and Marjory Fleming. Elizabeth's candid memoirs, Catherine's lively tales, and Marjory's journals provide invaluable insights into childhood, especially female education, and their experiences challenge the idea that Georgian women lacked education. Georgian ladies learned skills that allowed them to express their talents and creativity as they learned how to be 'accomplished' members of polite society.

"Items illustrating the stories of these women are on display alongside objects and reproductions of original books from our collection at the Georgian House, to provide visitors a glimpse into the lives of children during this period. It's thanks to our members and supporters for their continued generosity that we're able to offer exhibitions like this to share and provide access to Scotland's cultural heritage for everyone to enjoy."

West End Girls at the Georgian House opens in June. For further information about the Georgian House or the National Trust for Scotland, please visit www.nts.org.uk.

Exhibitions like *West End Girls* support the National Trust for Scotland's vision to provide access to and enjoyment of Scotland's natural and cultural heritage, as outlined in its 10-year strategy, launched in 2022.

ENDS

Images: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/1fk8M003YE>

West End Girls

Elizabeth Grant of Rothiemurchus, born in 1797 at No. 5 Charlotte Square, vividly recounted her early life in *Memoirs of a Highland Lady*. Her memoirs, written for her children, not only explore the nuances of girls' education but also reveal the playful, rebellious spirit of her own youth.

Catherine Sinclair, born in 1800 at No. 9 Charlotte Square and later moving to No. 6, reshaped children's literature. She wrote playful yet moral tales for her nieces and nephews, featuring mischievous children who learned through experience. This exhibition highlights two of her key works, *Holiday House* (1839) and *Modern Accomplishments* (1836). Drawing on her own childhood and teenage years, Sinclair used fiction to explore faith, female education, and the evolving role of young women in late Georgian society.

Marjory Fleming, born in 1803 in Kirkcaldy, died just before her ninth birthday. From the age of five, she lived with her aunt and cousins at 1 North Charlotte Street. Her surviving journals offer an intimate portrait of a curious and creative child. Guided by her cousin Isabella, who encouraged her to read, write, and compose poetry, Marjory developed a sharp eye for detail. Her writing captures vivid observations of family life, daily routines, and the rhythms of childhood.

About the National Trust for Scotland

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares

for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

Scotland's largest membership organisation, the National Trust for Scotland relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit www.nts.org.uk.

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.