

Contributing to Cultural Life

Nottingham has produced many who have become notable in the city's artistic life. Nottingham Art School was established in 1843 to improve the quality of design in industry, and later to provide education in art, architecture and technical drawing.

In 1860 Nottingham High School employed a drawing teacher, Mr Henry Seymour, and in 1868 a writing master, Mr William Jackson. A large Drawing and Writing Room was included in the plans for the new school buildings. By the 1890s Government grants were available to study art at school and many went from Nottingham High School to Nottingham Art School to pursue careers in both art and design. Two of the most distinguished, Harold Knight RA and Sir John Alfred Arnesby Brown RA, won a number of national awards while at school and their work hangs in the Castle Museum and National Collections to this day.



Nottingham High School staff, c.1889. Mr Henry Seymour (left) and Mr William Jackson (right)



Dr James Gow, Headmaster at Nottingham High School, 1885-1901
Portrait by Harold Knight RA, 1912

A sound scholar, a gifted teacher and one of the best Headmasters of his own or any other time, Dr Gow was responsible for the regeneration of the School from a floundering, failing school into one of the best-known Public Schools in the country

Music instruction started formally at the School with Mrs Bowman-Hart in 1883 and the post of Director of Music was created in 1902. Many boys have gone on to make careers in classical and jazz music and some have become internationally recognised conductors, soloists and performers. Amongst the most well-known are the conductors Christopher Hogwood, harpsichordist and founder of the Academy of Ancient Music, Nicholas McGegan, director of San Francisco's Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Andrew Massey, the Resident Conductor of The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra.



Nottingham High School Big Band performing in Birmingham, July 2011

D.H. Lawrence a major figure in literature, and Geoffrey Trease, successful children's author in the mid- twentieth century were both well-known Nottingham men. Contemporary writers, such as Robert MacFarlane and Neil Arksey, and journalists Aleem Maqbool, David Leigh and Jonathan Charles distinguish themselves in the media on key issues of today: ecology, economics, investigative journalism and international politics.



Fiction and non-fiction, contemporary and historical; the school has a varied stable of published authors



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Old Nottinghamian Nicholas McGegan OBE

ON 1958–1969

Nic attended Nottingham High School during a period influenced musically by the energy and enthusiasm of teachers like Austin Scott and Kendrick Partington. He went on to study at both Cambridge and Oxford and to teach at the Royal College of Music, London. Nic is Director of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco.