Florence Nightingale

<u>Who was she?</u>

- Born in 1820 on the 12th of May, in Florence, Italy
- She grew up in a wealthy family who owned multiple homes
- She was home-schooled by her father who expected her to marry into a wealthy family
- She insisted she had a calling from God and needed to help the poor and sick and convinced her father to follow this path instead
- She studied in Germany and in France before returning to England and became the superintendent and manager of a hospital for "gentlewomen" in London before going to help with the Crimean War in what is now known as Ukraine
- She passed away on August 13th in 1910 at the age of 90

<u>What did she do?</u>

- She campaigned for safer and cleaner practices in hospitals
- She led 38 nurses to help soldiers in the Crimean war, despite the initial refusal from doctors who didn't want help from women. Because of these nurses, the death rate went from 40% to 2%. She was nicknamed "the Lady with the Lamp" because she would go around the soldiers at night to check in on them. She and the nurses made sure that the military hospital was clean and sanitary.
- Upon her return, she improved conditions of hospitals in England and even presented data to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert which resulted in the Royal Commission which improves the health of the British Army.
- She was elected as the first woman member of the Royal Statistical Society in 1858 as a result of her skill with data and numbers, argued to be the first person to use a pie chart
- She published a help book called *Notes of Nursing: What it is, and what it is Not* to provide advice on good patient care as well as safe hospital environments
- A training school was set up in St Thomas' Hospital in her name in 1860 where she was able to coach and train nurses.
- She became bedridden with an illness but continued her plight from her bed until her death.

<u>Why should she be remembered forever?</u>

- If it wasn't for her determination and drive then not only would it have taken much longer for hospitals to became the safe and clean place that they are now, but this would have resulted in a much higher fatality rate for inpatients. She changed the landscape of safe hospital practices forever.
- She saved the lives of many soldiers in the Crimean War for not leaving at the behest of the doctors. She went above and beyond during this time, taking time throughout the day and night to check on her patients, in a warzone nonetheless
- She dedicated the majority of her life to training and coaching medical professionals in the importance of cleanliness and sanitary conditions, even when illness got the better of her she continued her fight
- In 1912, the International Committee of the Red Cross created the Florence Nightingale Medal that they award to excellent nurses every two years. As well as this, International Nurses Day has been celebrated on her birthday since 1965. St Thomas' Hospital opened the Florence Nightingale Museum in May 2010 in her honour.