



# WORCESTER WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

*We remember our past . . . to better shape our future.*

WWHP VOLUME 16, NO. 1

SPRING 2016

## *Letter from the President*

Dear Members of WWHP,

As the organization begins its third decade of existence, we thought a little review of our origins and purpose was in order.

So, one afternoon in January, under the leadership of vice-president (and former president) Heather-Lyn Haley, new and veteran members of the Steering Committee met for an orientation to examine the history, the mission, and the structure of WWHP. That agenda was soon covered, and we found that the open discussion following sparked new ideas and new visions.

The real work of the organization lies at the subcommittee level — Events, Speakers Bureau, Oral History, and so forth. As we reviewed the projects handled by individual subcommittees, — Women in Print, Oral History, Spring Day Trip, etc. — we realized that there were still a lot of areas that are worthy of development — education, research, grant-writing, strategic planning, etc. [See p10 for a complete list of subcommittees and their work.] And that led to brainstorming on proposals on specific activities — leadership workshops for women of all ages, review of by-laws, active efforts at diversification of general membership and Steering Committee.

As the year goes on, the Steering Committee will be developing plans for transforming these visions into reality. Inclusion is the key to success, and we want to hear from a broad spectrum of the membership. The current WWHP members are the best agents of recruitment — talk up among your friends why you value your membership, and urge others to join. Be mindful that at the present time the Steering Committee and the general membership do not reflect the true demographics of the community. Diversity is an objective. We shall be working to strengthen our ties with other groups in the community *(Cont'd on p6)*



**MARCH  
IS  
WWHP  
MEMBERSHIP  
MONTH**

It's time to  
renew/join/support  
the work of  
WWHP

## BECAUSE WE DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS ALL NEED A SHOT IN THE ARM!

*By Bonnie Hurd Smith*

Several months ago, I was invited to give the keynote address for the Worcester Women's History Project's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Thursday evening, October 22, 2015.

I've been a fan of this volunteer organization for many years, and I've been impressed with their relentless dedication. We reconnected a few years ago when their annual bus trip brought them to Salem, Massachusetts, and they asked me to show them some women's history sites. We had a marvelous time together. Memorable, even, because we were all committed to the same thing. We all loved to learn about and share women's history. *(Cont'd on p6)*

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## WORCESTER WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

30 Elm Street • Worcester, MA 01609  
Telephone: 508-767-1852  
Website: wwhp.org • Email: info@wwhp.org

### STEERING COMMITTEE

Pamela Bobay  
Kathleen Comer  
Micki Davis  
Louise Gleason  
Heather-Lyn Haley  
Barbara Ingrassia  
Nancy A. Johnson  
Barbara Kohin  
Elise Kreiger  
Barbara Mercier  
Holly Nylander  
Mary E. Oroszko  
Ann Marie Shea  
Margaret Watson

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ann Marie Shea, President  
Heather-Lyn Haley, Vice President  
Barbara Ingrassia, Clerk  
Elise Kreiger, Treasurer

**Executive Assistant:** Nancy Avila  
wwhp.office@gmail.com

### Newsletter Committee

Kara Wilson Yuen, Margaret Watson,  
Mary Plummer, Nancy Avila

WWHP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable and educational organization incorporated in 1995 with a vision "to celebrate and document women's contributions to the history, social fabric, and culture of Worcester and beyond." Its mission is to

- raise awareness of the rich history of women in the Worcester area
- create national recognition of Worcester's role in the history of the women's rights movement
- advance the ideals put forth in the 1850 convention that there should be "equality before the law, without distinction of sex or color," or ethnicity.

## Snippets

The Maine Democratic Party's fundraiser held last December was named in honor of former Maine Sen. George Mitchell and **Labor Secretary Frances Perkins**. Senator Mitchell and **Tomlin Perkins Coggeshall**, the grandson of Frances Perkins, attended. The new name was voted on by more than 500 people.

The **WWHP Lending Library** has recently received many great books from the Estate of Betty Hoskins, who was a WWHP Charter Member. Email info@wwhp.org.

**Sent:** Sunday, January 17, 2016 12:43 PM

**To:** Lynne McKenney Lydick

**Subject:** Re: New performance flyer

*This is wonderful. You are such an eloquent speaker and do such justice to Abby in your research and knowledge of her. You had me spell bound in this piece as well as last night in your after speech...things that I didn't know of her.*

*You are an important element in many ways today with our world troubles and in keeping Abby's heart felt truths alive and in the forefront. Bravo to you!*

*Fondly,*



PayPal is set up on our website.

<http://www.wwhp.org/support-wwhp> —

You may find it convenient for renewing your membership or giving a gift membership or purchasing books.



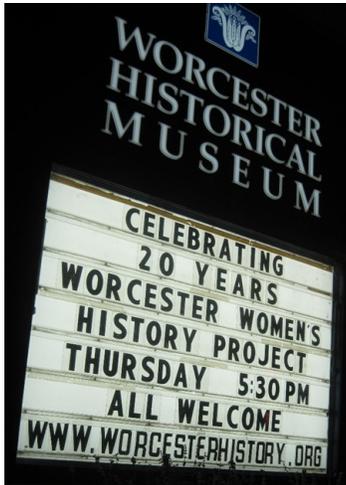
"Like" us on Facebook!

Get updates about upcoming events and women's history news.

This newsletter is published semi-annually in March and October, March being National Women's History Month and October 23 and 24 being the anniversary of the first National Woman's Rights Convention which was held in 1850 in Worcester.



**Thank you!** to contributors and proofreaders for this newsletter: Ann Marie Shea, Charlene L. Martin, Edith Morgan, Heather-Lyn Haley, Kara Wilson Yuen, Lynne McKenney Lydick, Margaret Watson, Mary Plummer, Maureen Ryan Doyle, Nancy Avila, Pamela Bobay



Ann Marie Shea, Mayor Joseph Petty

## The other half

By Edith Morgan

Published on October 9, 2015, InCity Voices.

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What do the Perkins Branch Library, Abby's House, and the Abby Kelley Charter School have in common? They are just three different organizations named after two groundbreaking women from our area whose contributions are memorialized in these institutions.

We women comprise more than half the world's human population. But from reading the media one would get the impression that men greatly outnumber women in all areas, from creativity, to wealth, to productivity. A closer look at the reality paints very different picture; Women have always made great contributions to all walks of life, in addition to their unique function as mothers and caregivers.

We are approaching a presidential election in 2016, and much has been said about the possibility of the Democrats electing a woman = for the first time in our history – this time. For the U.S. it may be a first, but certainly not in the rest of the world, where women have ruled over nations great and small ( remember Queen Elizabeth, Cleopatra, Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir, Benazir Bhutto, to name but a few that some of our readers may recognize, but in no particular order).It would seem that our publicity agents are not as aggressive s those of our male counterparts, or maybe it si that generally women's egos do not need the constant public recognition so often bestowed on men, (mostly by other men).

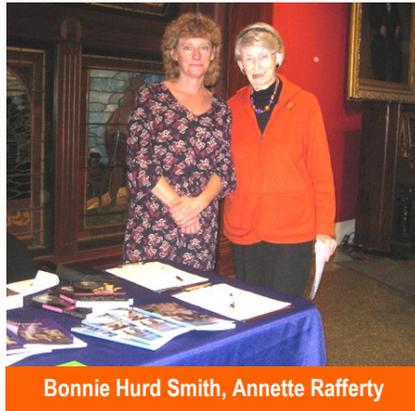
So, here is an update on a local project, recognizing some women's contributions in the Worcester area. I refer to WWHP – the Worcester Women's History Project, celebrating its twentieth year on Thursday, October 22nd, 2015, with an Annual Meeting starting at 5:30 p.m., at the Worcester Historical Museum. The meeting will be followed by a 20th Anniversary Celebration, and a presentation of the first WWHP presentation of the group's Women Making History Award, right after the Annual meeting, followed by a lecture and book signing by Author Bonnie Hurd Smith.

This year's award goes to a woman many of us know well, Linda Cavaoli: 23 years at the Worcester YWCA, where she has been a "leader in the elimination of racism, and the empowerment of women." She was one of the founders of WWHP, and has fought for the rights of women in all areas, and for their personal and economic advancement. She is also active as a volunteer and/or board member of numerous Worcester organizations, as well as being a member of the City Manager' Task Force on Bias and Hate.

Come and participate in this celebration, on Thursday, October 22, at the Worcester Historical Museum, starting with the business meeting (where you will find out all that this group has been doing),at 5:30. (Cont'd on p4)



Linda Cavaoli, Pres. Ann Marie Shea



Bonnie Hurd Smith, Annette Rafferty



Ann Marie Shea, C.J. Posk, Lynne McKenney Lydick, Kaitlyn Murphy

The 20th annual meeting honored Linda Cavaoli\* with the first Women Making History Award. Mayor Petty proclaimed October 22, 2015, as Worcester Women's History Project Day. Annual reports were given and the election of officers and Steering Committee members was done (See p2 for the current roster.). A Memorial Circle for charter member Betty Hoskins was held before a program presented by Bonnie Hurd Smith (See p1 for her talk.). Smith signed copies of her book. Refreshments were enjoyed. \*Cavaoli has been Executive Director of the YWCA of Central Massachusetts for over two decades.

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Carolyn Howe viewing 20-year exhibit



Fran Langille & Heather-Lyn Haley interviewed on Hank Stolz Show about 20th Anniversary

## New Book, *In Her Shoes*, Is Launched and WWOHP Celebrates Tenth Anniversary

By Maureen Ryan Doyle

An overflow crowd of 140 people spilled out of the Saxe Room of the Worcester Public library on December 1 to hear readings from the new book, *In Her Shoes: A Compilation of Inspiring Stories from the First Decade of the Worcester Women's Oral History Project*. Co-authors and Co-Chairpersons of the Project, Charlene L. Martin and Maureen Ryan Doyle, read three selections from each of the book's chapters, answered questions from the audience, and signed books for those in attendance.

*In Her Shoes* contains the stories of women from different generations, ethnicities, religions and socioeconomic backgrounds who participated in the first decade of the Worcester Women's Oral History Project. The book focuses on the universal themes of striving for work-life balance, commitment to a personal cause, and finding one's own path in life despite obstacles big and small. It is the belief of WWOHP that is through the sharing of women's stories that we come to appreciate, that despite our differences, often there are common threads that unite all women. Whether reading about the life of a young baker, an actress, a mother, an entrepreneur, or a funeral director, we come to respect each woman's experiences and the choices she has made. And, perhaps, we achieve a better understanding of life in her shoes.

Co-authors Charlene L. Martin and Maureen Ryan Doyle are available for appearances and interviews and may be contacted at [chmartin@townisp.com](mailto:chmartin@townisp.com) and [Mryandoyle@aol.com](mailto:Mryandoyle@aol.com). You may also visit <http://voicesofworcestertwomen.blogspot.com>. For information on how to purchase *In Her Shoes* or their first book, *Voices of Worcester Women: 160 Years after the First Woman's Rights Convention* published in 2011, please go to <http://www.wwhp.org/support-wwhp>.

### The other half (Cont'd from p3)

Then stay for the Anniversary Celebration, to begin at 6:30 p.m., featuring the book signing and lecture, followed by refreshments.

The mission of this organization is to raise awareness of the rich history of women in the Worcester area, create national recognition of Worcester's role in the history of the women's rights movement, and advance the ideals put forth in the 1850 convention that there should be "equality before the law, without distinction of sex or color", or ethnicity. [Note: This is a reprint of article.]

### About the Authors of

#### *In Her Shoes: A Compilation of Inspiring Stories from the First Decade of the Worcester Women's Oral History Project*



**Maureen Ryan Doyle** has worked as a freelance writer for many years and is also the owner of a small property management company in Central Massachusetts. She was the winner of *Good Housekeeping Magazine's* New Traditionalist writing competition.

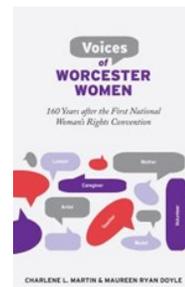
Maureen earned her BA degree in history from Assumption College where she was a member of the first undergraduate class of women. She received the Outstanding Alumnus/Alumna Award from Assumption in 2013. She has pursued graduate study at Emerson College in Boston and Oglethorpe University in Atlanta. She and her husband, Francis X. Doyle, reside in Holden, MA. Their family includes their daughter, Maryssa, and son and daughter-in-law Colin and Dani Doyle.

**Charlene L. Martin, EdD** has thirty-five years of experience in higher education. She is the former dean of Continuing Education at Assumption College and the founding director of the Worcester Institute for Senior Education known as WISE.



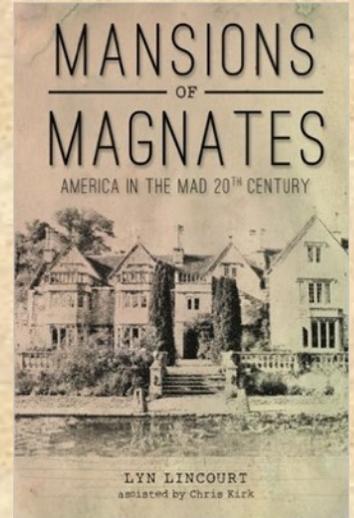
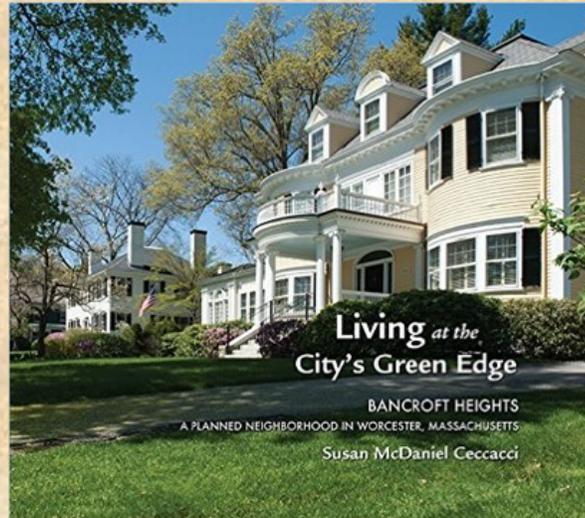
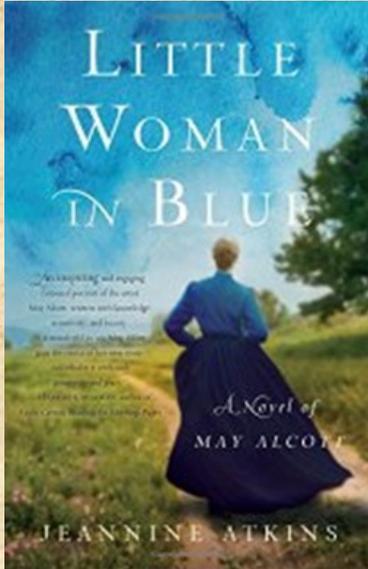
She earned her BA and MA from Assumption College and a doctorate in educational policy, research, and administration with a specialty in higher education from the University of Massachusetts/Amherst. She was an adjunct professor teaching higher education on the doctoral level and her research and publications focus on educational opportunities for older adults in retirement. She and her husband, Jim Martin, live in Shrewsbury, MA.

Both Maureen and Charlene have served on the Steering Committee of the Worcester Women's History Project and have co-chaired the Worcester Women's Oral History Project since 2008. They also co-authored *Voices of Worcester Women: 160 Years after the First Woman's Rights Convention* published in 2011.



13<sup>th</sup> Annual

# WOMEN IN PRINT 2016



## Join us for an evening with three local authors!

**Jeannine Atkins** writes about *May Alcott*, who spends her days sewing blue shirts for Union soldiers, but she dreams of painting a masterpiece—which many say is impossible for a woman—and of finding love, too.

**Susan McDaniel Ceccacci** has provided a history of an exemplary phase of Worcester's physical development, which also tells the tale of key players in the city's cultural and economic life.

**Lyn Lincourt** shares in her book her life in world-changing cultures, industries, and the Internet, which became a new way of life.

**Wed., March 30, 2016**

**5:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Worcester Public Library**

Saxe Room  
3 Salem Square  
Worcester, MA 01608

**Free & Open to the Public**  
**Refreshments**  
**Book Signings**



WORCESTER WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

*We remember our past ... to better shape our future*

30 Elm St. Worcester, 508-767-1852, [info@wwhp.org](mailto:info@wwhp.org)

[www.wwhp.org](http://www.wwhp.org)

*Letter from the President* (Cont'd from p1)

whose work overlaps our mission — education, history, women's welfare. We urge the entire membership to keep eyes and ears open for interesting potential presenters and programs. We shall soon be posting at the WWHP website, a form that any member can fill out, proposing an activity or program in keeping with the mission of the organization.

In the spirit of women's history in Worcester, we want to see the energy of the group generated from the membership, with the Steering Committee executing the will of the members. All members are invited to sit in on monthly Steering Committee meetings (fourth Thursday each month), to learn how these sessions operate . . . and perhaps to eventually offer to join a subcommittee or even to run for a seat at the table.

Stay in touch between our semi-annual newsletters, by checking the website regularly — [www.wwhp.org](http://www.wwhp.org). You can always reach us at [info@wwhp.org](mailto:info@wwhp.org).

Looking forward to seeing you all at our next public event, *Women in Print*, at the Worcester Public Library, Salem Square, on March 30, at 5:30pm, if not before.

At your service,

*Ann Marie Shea, Ph. D.*

**Because we dedicated volunteers...** (Cont'd from p1)

And so when they called me a few months ago with their invitation to speak, I was incredibly honored. I thought and thought about what they wanted to hear, and what I thought they needed to hear.

I've been in their shoes for many years, giving my time to history projects I cared very much about whether or not financial compensation was involved — usually not!

I know what it's like to feel wrung out and tired and wondering, Why am I doing this?

I KNOW that some of you reading this know exactly what I mean!

I thought these smart, hard working, dedicated women needed a shot in the arm from someone who truly "gets it."

The result is below [in the next column], and I hope you enjoy it!

*"Give the help of your best thought to separate the light from the darkness" —*

**An appreciation of Women's History and Worcester**

*By Bonnie Hurd Smith*

Worcester Women's History Project 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

Worcester Historical Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts

Thursday, October 22, 2015

Good evening!!! I am VERY honored to be here tonight to celebrate your rewarding and important work — and to celebrate all of you.

I have been impressed with this organization for a long time. Our paths have crossed for quite a number of years.

And so it is good to be among friends — among my tribe, as they say — where I don't have to defend myself to you, and you don't have to explain yourself to me.

"Why do we do it?" I am often asked.

Why do I — why do we — care so much about women's history that we are willing to give HOURS, days, and years of our time and attention to studying and sharing the stories of women from our past?

As the descendant of some old Boston and North Shore families, I remember being asked by a neighbor from Texas one winter, "Why do you live here?"

"I don't understand the question," I said. (I really didn't.) "This is where we live."

Well, women's history is where WE live, all of us in this room.

No one had to tell you to do women's history.

No one had to convince you.

You knew twenty years ago, and you know tonight, that this is what we do.

**Among friends**

I said how delighted I was to be among friends, and frankly that's how I feel when I hang out with the women I study — and I know you do too!

I like the women I study, very much, which is where we start with history being personal.

It reminds me of something David McCullough said when his biography of John Adams came out. He told me that he had initially wanted to write a biography of Adams AND Jefferson, but that the more he studied Thomas Jefferson the less he liked him — and he didn't want to spend his time with someone he didn't like!

(Cont'd on p7)

*“Give the help of your best thought...”* (Cont’d from p6)

As someone who has spent about 25 years with Judith Sargent Murray one way or another, I understood this!

I LOVE this woman, and anyone who has heard me speak about her knows that!

She is very real to me, very inspiring, and she was a champion for women’s rights at the defining moments of our nation — a story most people don’t know because she didn’t marry a president. And so I am driven to keep telling her story!

Another example of why making our women “real” matters happened a few years ago during Margaret Fuller’s Bicentennial. I wrote and designed a display about her life, and I also wrote a sermon about her, which I gave at several Unitarian Universalist churches in the Boston area.

My sermon was about life purpose, and the fact that through her faith, courage, and actions Margaret had indeed lived hers — despite drowning in a shipwreck at age 40.

At the end of my talk, I said, “I HOPE that in the twelve hours it took for the ship to go down — TWELVE hours — that she said to herself, ‘I knew my purpose,’ and I did it.”

I could never get through that last part without choking up (like right now), and one man came up to me afterward, hugged me, with tears in his eyes, and said, “Thank you for making her so real. I was expecting a boring history lecture, but I will never forget her and what she did for us.”

The point is, Margaret Fuller IS real, and Judith Sargent Murray IS real, and so are Abby Kelley Foster, Paulina Wright Davis, Lucretia Mott, Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Harriet Tubman, and ALL of the women whose stories YOU bring forth.

I like to use the term “A Vast Army of Women” when I think about the women who have gotten us here — always at our side in our imagination, always encouraging us on. We stand on their shoulders.

**We are connected to them** — through time, through the generations, by blood, by studying, and by teaching; through our friendships and networks, like this organization.

Their shared interest in women’s rights connected our women to each other, despite great distances. Women are born communicators, and we have always found a way to connect.

In fact, as you know, the 1850 Convention opened with a moment of silence in honor of Margaret Fuller, who had just died. Her articles, her “Conversations” classes in Boston, and her landmark book *Woman in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* had deeply influenced the Convention’s organizers.

### **And speaking of the Convention...**

I used Paulina Wright Davis’s words in the title of my talk, but let’s hear some more from her opening remarks. She said then, and could just as easily say today:

*The reformation which we purpose, in its utmost scope, is radical and universal. It is not the mere perfecting of a progress already in motion, a detail of some established plan, but it is an epochal movement—the emancipation of a class, the redemption of half the world, and a conforming re-organization of all social, political, and industrial interests and institutions.*

*Moreover, it is a movement without example among the enterprises of associated reformations, for it has no purpose of arming the oppressed against the oppressor, or of separating the parties, or of setting up independence, or of severing the relations of either.*

*It is pitiable ignorance and arrogance for either man or woman now to prescribe and limit the sphere of woman. It remains for the greatest women whom appropriate culture, and happiest influences shall yet develop, to declare and to prove what are woman’s capacities and relations in the world.*

*I will not accept the concession of any equality which means identity or resemblance of faculty and function. I do not base her claims upon any such parallelism of constitution or attainment.*

*I ask only freedom for the natural unfolding of her powers, the conditions most favorable for her possibilities of growth, and the full play of all those incentives which have made man her master, and then, with all her natural impulses and the whole heaven of hope to invite, I ask that she shall fill the place that she can attain to, without settling any unmeaning questions of sex and sphere, which people gossip about for want of principles of truth, or the faculty to reason upon them.*

### **And so.... We need to keep doing what we do. But I don’t have to tell you that.**

Because we are speaking for women who are no longer with us, but whose lives made a difference.

In fact, when you look critically at the lives of high-achieving historical women, and you ask, “How did she do what she did despite all those obstacles?”

You find the common denominators of: having healthy self-esteem and a solid support system (even if it took a

(Cont’d on p11)

## THE FIGHT FOR THE WOMEN'S FRANCHISE IN ENGLAND

By Margaret Watson

The nineteenth century brought forward many activists in America who fought for equal rights, including the franchise, for women. At the same time, our sisters in England were similarly engaged in the struggle for equality.

One of the leaders for the suffrage in England, Emmeline Goulden Pankhurst, founded the Women's Franchise League, which advocated voting rights for both married and unmarried women. Her members were called "suffragettes" in 1906, a term coined by a journalist who wished to distinguish Pankhurst's movement from others who were called "suffragists."

The demonstrations of the members of the WFL soon turned violent. The suffragettes broke windows, assaulted police officers, and then began to set fires. Some support for the cause then faded away, but the suffragettes persisted. Women were incarcerated and treated roughly by police. Mrs. Pankhurst herself was imprisoned and reported on the wretched conditions she suffered during the confinement.

Incarcerated women went on hunger strikes and then were forcibly fed through tubes. Steel gags forced the mouth open. After a time, the government permitted the women to be released if their health was in jeopardy, but after their release, the police were allowed to hunt them down in a cat-and-mouse game and arrest them again.

After 1910 and 1911 when Conciliation Bills, which included women's suffrage, failed to pass the English Parliament, actions escalated into more violence. Arson became more frequent. Gunpowder was placed into mailboxes and then lit. In 1913 an incendiary device went off in a house being built for David Lloyd-George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The British film "Suffragette," which was released in the United States in October, 2015, describes accurately the struggle for women's right to vote in England. While the leading role of Maud Watts is fictional, the film depicts realistically the experiences of the suffragettes, most of them working women, underpaid, harassed, and socially stigmatized.

*(Cont'd next column)*

As in the case of Mrs. Watts, marriages were destroyed as husbands disowned their wives because of their activities and refused them visits to their children. Assaults from police officers and the horrors of incarceration are clearly depicted. The film is not easy to watch.

The role of Emily Davison is real. This young woman was killed when she stepped onto a race track and was trampled to death by the king's horse in 1913. While the action was once determined to be suicide, later newsreels indicate that she was attempting to tie a scarf with the caption "Votes for Women" onto the horse's bridle.

In 1918 the bill "Representation for the People" granted voting rights to women over thirty years if they were members of the Local Government Register or married to a man who was a member of the LGR or was a property owner. The franchise would not be granted to all women twenty-one years and older until 1928. The film ends essentially with the death and funeral of Emily Davison, indicating that much work had yet to be done.

Emmeline Pankhurst has now been recognized for her work. In 1999 TIME magazine acknowledged her as one of the most important persons of the century. Memorials and statues have been erected in her honor. Pankhurst, as portrayed by Meryl Streep, does not appear frequently in the film, but her influence is significant; she is clearly the leader, but she did suffer more in real life than the film indicates.

The fight for women's equality still goes on, but many women all over the world have participated in this magnificent struggle. The film "Suffragette" accurately documents what women endured to achieve the right to vote. Our rights, then, should be exercised faithfully, and our younger generation should come to know the sacrifices made to gain the franchise. This film helps us to remember.

*The author of this article, Margaret Watson, is a member of the WWHP Steering Committee and chair of the Speakers' Bureau.*

### How National Women's History Month came into being

The public celebration of women's history in this country began in 1978 as "Women's History Week" in Sonoma County, California. The week including March 8, International Women's Day, was chosen. In 1981, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Rep. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) co-sponsored a joint Congressional resolution proclaiming a national Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress expanded the celebration to a month, and March was declared Women's History Month. [www.infoplease.com/spot/womensintro1.html](http://www.infoplease.com/spot/womensintro1.html)



Abby Kelley Foster (Lynne McKenney Lydick) fielding questions at the service at First Unitarian Church on October 25 with Rev. Sarah Stewart looking on. Rev. Stewart's sermon was on Worcester women and the 1850 first National Woman's Rights Convention which was held in Worcester.

***Yours For Humanity — Abby***  
 by Carolyn Howe & Karen Board Moran was performed at the observance of the birth date of Abby Kelley Foster on January 16, 2016, at the Worcester Public Library. Abby is portrayed by Lynne McKenney Lydick.



**Thanks**

The Worcester Arts Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, has funded two performances of *Yours For Humanity — Abby*. One will take place at Union Hill Elementary School and one at South High School. We thank the Arts Council for their continued support.

**Just a short note to say hello.**

Forty honors students came to hear/see Abby Kelley Foster. Abby lived in the mid 1800's, and she was a forceful and courageous abolitionist. It is now accepted that she began the woman's rights movement. Abby was portrayed by actor Lynne McKenney Lydick who was sensational — with her own powerful and precise elocution abilities. Food to snack on. The one-person, 35 minute play, followed by question and answer was held in the "Gallery" of the Allen House on South Campus. — Jim Canning, UMass Lowell Honors College

**Did you see Lynne McKenney Lydick at Liberty Farm** on C-Span in December? The 10-minute segment was part of its Cities Tour. <http://www.c-span.org/video/?328962-1/abby-kelley-foster>

Shrewsbury Cultural Council and the Oak Bluffs Cultural Council, each a local agency, which are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, are funding performances this year. We thank them for their support.

**Foster and Perkins speakers at Mayor's Civic Academy**

The Mayor's Civic Academy provides young Worcester leaders a unique opportunity to learn about Worcester history and demographics, government, politics and elections, and innovation and entrepreneurship. The first in the program series "History/Empowerment/Civic Engagement" was held at Worcester Historical Museum on February 1. Invited speakers were Abby Kelley Foster (portrayed by Lynne McKenney Lydick) and Frances Perkins (portrayed by Ann Marie Shea).

Young leaders (between the ages of 18 and 35) were nominated for acceptance into the 2016 Mayor's Civic Academy.



Carolyn Howe, co-author of YFH-A with WWHP Pres. Ann Marie Shea



Nancy Johnson, WWHP Steering Committee member



Artist Charlotte Wharton, who painted Abby Kelley Foster's portrait for Mechanics Hall, with actress Lynne McKenney Lydick



Tracy Trombley, Lynne McKenney Lydick, Jeanne Davies & Carolyn Howe



**Have you wondered how WWHP works?** There is a Mission Statement (part of which is on p2). There is a Steering Committee and the officers of which are the Executive Committee. And, there are these subcommittees.

**All Things Abby** provides assistance in the marketing of the Worcester Women's History Project's program – *Yours for Humanity—Abby*. The Committee identifies and contacts potential venues for performances of the one-woman play or provides the specific contact information to the actor who then follows up on the lead. The ultimate goal is to book performances -- and in so doing, it promotes the Project itself. The Committee acts as a liaison between the Steering Committee and the actor.

**Events** organizes, plans and assists in the presentation of women-related events. Two annual events are Women in Print which is held in March and a women's history bus trip usually held in June. This year brings new ideas for events and adds more community exposure and service. Much of our work is done through polling members for recommendations, researching them, and then building the event through contact and phone calls. We work closely with the Publicity committee to get it promoted.

**Lending Library** is responsible for the WWHP library located in the office of the Project in the Worcester Historical Museum. Books are added to the collection from time to time and a system for checking them out is in place.

**Membership** creates and implements recruitment and retention programs to increase and maintain membership. It is responsible for mailing the membership letter and the newsletter. It also maintains the Membership/Information table at all WWHP events and participates in other assignments necessary for the achievement of WWHP's goals.

**YOU ARE WANTED:** The Membership chair will be vacated in October. I am reaching out to the Worcester Women's History Project membership for one of you to consider taking on this position. The functions of the Membership subcommittee are to ensure the membership letters and the newsletter are mailed and the Membership/Information table is maintained at all WWHP events. Most of my work was done through emails and phone calls. In the end, the truly wonderful benefits of this subcommittee are that you receive a greater knowledge of the functions and goals of WWHP and that you have an opportunity to influence the direction of the Project. But above all, you would be working with a phenomenally-dedicated group of women. Please give this position consideration. You can contact me, Louise Gleason, through the WWHP office [wwhp.office@gmail.com](mailto:wwhp.office@gmail.com) or 508-767-1852 or 508-755-3301.

**Publicity** furthers the work of the organization by increasing community awareness of WWHP's mission, initiatives and events. It coordinates outreach to media outlets, manages the website and Facebook page, and acts as a sounding board to the executive assistant in preparation of the newsletter. New volunteers are welcome to help us best communicate with the membership and the community through social and traditional media.

The **Speakers' Bureau** was formed in 2014 in response to a number of requests from local groups requesting speakers on subjects relating to contributions by women. A flyer was developed and distributed in various public sites, including libraries. A contract form with the WWHP was developed stating terms and conditions for the host, the speaker, and the WWHP. Initial contact is made through the WWHP office with the speaker determining the amount of the honorarium and negotiating the date with the host group. Fifteen percent of the honorarium is given to the WWHP who works as the agent. The flyer currently lists thirteen topics available for presentation. If anyone wishes to make a presentation and have it listed in the flyer for next year, let us know. If anyone has suggestions concerning possible venues for these presentations, please let us know that too.

**Worcester Women's Oral History Project** was founded in 2005 for the purpose of building community by sharing experiences through women's stories. We aim to collect, preserve, and share the personal and historical memories of women throughout the greater Worcester community. Since its inception, WWOHP has collected over 300 interviews. The permanent repository for all the project's written transcripts and audio recordings is the Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America at the Radcliffe Institute of Harvard University. The subcommittee members assist in the collection, editing, and preservation of the oral histories; the maintenance of the OHP section of the website; and the planning of community workshops and annual programs.

**For questions about any of the subcommittees, contact [wwhp.office@gmail.com](mailto:wwhp.office@gmail.com) or call 508-767-1852. Volunteers are most welcome!**

*“Give the help of your best thought...” (Cont’d from p7)*

while for them to get there), having faith in oneself and one’s gifts, hanging out and networking with the right people, being able to make good decisions and recover from poor ones, having courage and taking action.

**The women we share with the world have answers that we need today.**

We are also speaking for women whose names and stories we may never know. Think of your own “Rediscovered voices” section on your website.

**What we are doing matters.**

It matters because we must balance our collective story. It matters to the mother of a young girl in Framingham, who came up to me with her daughter after a talk I gave on Framingham women during the Civil War, and said: “Thank you! You have just given my daughter at least a dozen outstanding role models. She gets NO women’s history in school.”

It matters to the 8<sup>th</sup>-grade boy in Gloucester who said publicly, in a speech, “Judith Sargent Murray is my role model.” Imagine! A boy saying that about a girl in front of his fellow students, teachers, parents, and community! “Why?” I asked him. “Because society told her she couldn’t do things, and she did them anyway.” 8<sup>th</sup> grade!

What we do matters to the Dads who come on my walking tours with their daughters because they want them to be anything they want to be — and they want their daughters to hear our stories.

It matters to teachers who can’t always teach what they would like to.

It matters to adults engaged in lifelong learning who only remember “history” as a boring classroom experience, memorizing dates, wars, and presidents. After my talks, I ALWAYS hear, “Why have I never heard of this person before???”

And finally, it matters to our local communities, where we must not lose our local history as people continue to move in and out of town.

**And so.... Why Worcester?** *(As a Bostonian, I asked that question too, because, as you know, West of Concord or Brookline, we don’t know and don’t care. But I have since come ‘round!!!)*

When I think about Worcester, I think about women working together — organizing, strategizing, planning, and taking action — a coming-together in 1850 of female power from all of the New England states, New York,

Pennsylvania, and Ohio that consolidated individual efforts and sparked so much on behalf of women’s rights that changed the world for the better.

I also think about the men who joined them in their work in Worcester, and who were deeply committed to the inseparable issues of justice for women, for African Americans, and Native Americans. And so as much as history is personal, it is also political, and it is important to connect the dots between past and present.

Look no further than the treatment of our two women candidates for president. Different standard? That didn’t come from nowhere!

**Why Worcester? Why not Worcester? Why not every city and town — taking their lead from Worcester?**

You have a lot to celebrate, and a lot more rewarding and important work ahead.

This work calls all of us to our higher selves.

We have the privilege of being of service to the past, present, and future. We have our gifts for a reason, and we are using them.

It doesn’t get better than that.

I commend you for all that you have accomplished, and I look forward to your 25<sup>th</sup>, your 50<sup>th</sup>, and your 100<sup>th</sup>!

Paulina Wright Davis would tell you: *“Give the help of your best thought to separate the light from the darkness.”*

**THANK YOU so much for letting me share this very milestone event with you — and keep going!**

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**Where is the WWHP bus going this spring?**

Plans for our 13th annual tour to a significant site relating to women’s history are being developed and will be announced soon.



## CALENDAR

### March is National Women's History Month

#### WWHP event:

**March 30**, 13th Annual **WOMEN IN PRINT**, 5:30pm at Worcester Public Library—See p5.

#### OTHERS:

**March 6 – International Women's Day**, 12:00pm at YWCA of Central MA, Salem Square, Worcester. The United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day on March 8 during International Women's Year 1975. The 2016 theme for International Women's Day is "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality." <http://www.ywcacentralmass.org/>

**March 24 – Young Woman of Consequence Award**, 5:30-7:00pm, Levi Lincoln Chambers, City Hall, sponsored by City Manager's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women. The award honors a Worcester high school junior or senior who has excelled in academics, has shown promising leadership skills, and has demonstrated a commitment to public service.

**And, on April 14 - 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Worcester Women's Leadership Conference**, 8:30am-4:00pm, DCU Center. The Worcester Women's Leadership Conference inspires women to achieve their full potential by offering a mix of inspirational keynotes, workshops on leadership and professional development, and networking. [info@worcesterchamber.org](mailto:info@worcesterchamber.org); 508.753.2924



Glen Harris at Start on the Street 9.20.15

2009 to 2016 issues of the WWHP newsletter are on the website in .pdf. Go to [www.wwhp.org](http://www.wwhp.org) and click on the tab NEWS & EVENTS.

To keep up to date, check us out on 

[www.wwhp.org](http://www.wwhp.org)



## WORCESTER WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

30 ELM STREET - WORCESTER MA 01609

**MARCH** is ...

**NATIONAL  
WOMEN'S HISTORY  
MONTH**

And

**WWHP  
MEMBERSHIP  
MONTH**

WWHP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Gifts are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. No goods or services are provided in exchange for donations.

[www.wwhp.org](http://www.wwhp.org)

**WWHP phone:**  
508-767-1852

**WWHP emails:**  
[info@wwhp.org](mailto:info@wwhp.org)  
[wwhp.office@gmail.com](mailto:wwhp.office@gmail.com)

MEMBERSHIP YEAR IS MARCH TO MARCH.

To renew or join WWHP, you may use PayPal online with the form at <http://www.wwhp.org/support-wwhp>, or use this form.

#### Support Level

- Abby Kelleyite \$500     Reformer \$100-\$499     Activist \$50     Supporter \$35  
 Family membership \$50

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to

Worcester Women's History Project  
30 Elm Street, Worcester, MA 01609.

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My employer will match my gift.

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Please make my donation in memory of

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