CELEBRATING WOMEN:
THE CENTENNIAL OF WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE IN AMERICA

INSIDE:
BELLEFONTAINE CEMETERY’S LADIES OF THE LEAGUE
FIRST LADIES LEAVE LASTING MISSOURI LEGACIES | RACE, CLASS, GENDER, AND SUFFRAGE
Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors is a creative writing anthology of poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, and photography submissions by and about veterans from across the nation. It is an annual series first released in November 2012.

The anthology preserves and shares military service perspectives of our soldiers, veterans, and their families, spanning generations. Each submission is both a product of self-expression and a historical documentation of our nation's wartime experience.

Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors is published by Southeast Missouri State University Press in cooperation with Missouri Humanities. Submissions are reviewed by a panel of judges for inclusion in the anthology, with a $250 prize in each of the five categories listed above.

To submit your work or to learn more about this program: mohumanities.org/programs/veterans.
The Missouri Humanities Council (MHC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was created in 1971 under authorizing legislation from the U.S. Congress.
Bellefontaine Cemetery’s Ladies of the League

EDNA DIETERLE, LAUREN SCHOELLHORN, PAULA ZALAR, ANGELA WILDERMUTH, & TRACY CHRISTIANSON

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the passage and ratification of the 19th Amendment, it is essential that we, as Americans, remember and honor those who fought for voting rights. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony are names synonymous with the 70-year struggle for the passage of the 19th Amendment; however, four notable women from St. Louis also proved to be key players in the movement for equal voting rights. We honor Virginia Minor, Rebecca Hazard, Anna Clapp, and Edna Fischel Gellhorn for their efforts in the women’s suffrage movement and are proud these women chose Bellefontaine Cemetery as their final place of rest.

Virginia Minor, born in Virginia in 1824; Rebecca Hazard, born in Ohio in 1826; and Anna Clapp, born in New York in 1814, each moved to St. Louis as adults in the years prior to the Civil War. Living in St. Louis during this time shaped their views and beliefs, as Missouri was a hotly contested state, with both Union and Confederate sympathizers. Armies, generals, and supplies were sent to both Union and Confederate sides, and within the state, neighbor fought neighbor. Prior to the war, approximately 160,000 people were living in St. Louis.

While many of the residents immigrated from other countries, some the population moved from southern states and brought slaves with them. During this time,
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Virginia Minor, Anna Clapp, Rebecca Hazard, and Edna Fischel Gellhorn.
Minor, Clapp, and Hazard were active in community services. At the advent of the war, in 1861, Anna Clapp became president of the Ladies’ Union Aid Society, an organization that advocated for women to participate in war efforts. The Society was devoted to providing medical and spiritual care to injured soldiers as well as those whose injuries or illnesses were not the result of battle. Under her leadership, the Society provided quality bandages, bedding, and food for soldiers and provided shelter for refugees, regardless of color. Beginning in 1861, and lasting until the end of the war, Clapp and the Ladies’ Union Aid Society served the Union with unwavering loyalty, as well as Confederate prisoners of war. When the war was over, she continued her service to the community by helping to create homes for widows and orphans as President of the Western Female Guardian Home and as the Director of the St. Louis Protestant Orphan Asylum.

Rebecca Hazard felt the pull of social service while a wife and mother still in her twenties. In 1854, she became a founder and director of the Girls’ Industrial Home, a St. Louis shelter caring for homeless girls. The shelter taught young ladies the skills they needed to lead independent and productive lives. During the Civil War, Hazard also dedicated her time to the Ladies’ Union Aid Society. Additionally, she helped organize the area chapter of the Freedmen’s Aid Society, a national organization founded by the American Missionary Association, to support and supply teachers from the North in efforts to teach freedmen and their children in schools in the South.

Little is known of Virginia Minor’s activities during the war, other than that she was also a member of the same Ladies’ Union Aid Society to which Clapp and Hazard belonged. Their success in developing and directing these programs before, during, and after the war encouraged them to believe that they deserved political equality. Following the war, all three women shifted their focus to the right of women to vote in political elections.

In 1867, all three women were founding members of the Woman Suffrage Association of Missouri, the first organization in the world whose only focus was securing women’s right to vote. Minor was elected president at its first meeting on May 8, 1867. This organization was founded prior to both the National Woman Suffrage Association, founded by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the American Woman Suffrage Association founded by Lucy Stone in 1869.

In March 1867, Minor organized Missouri’s first women’s rights petition, signed by 355 women in St. Louis and delivered to the Missouri General Assembly. The petition stated in part:

“Gentlemen: The undersigned women of Missouri have observed among the proceedings of the legislature a proposition to amend the Constitution of our state by striking out the word ‘white,’ this extending the right of suffrage to persons of color. To this we make no objections, but it does not go far enough… As the law now stands, one half of the population of the state is deprived of all expression of opinion upon subjects most vital to their welfare and happiness. We therefore pray that an amendment may be proposed striking out the word ‘male,’ and extending to women the right of suffrage.”

Although the petition created commentary, the House of Representatives rejected it by a vote of 89 to 5.

The following year, on July 9, 1868, the 14th Amendment was ratified. Section One states in part that anyone born or naturalized in the United States is thereby a citizen of the United States and is entitled to all the benefits of citizenship. In 1872, Minor attempted to register to vote in St. Louis and was denied registration by election officials. Represented by her husband, attorney Francis Minor, she sued the state and lost at the Missouri Supreme Court and ultimately at the United States Supreme Court, which ruled in 1874 that women did not have the right to vote. The Court stated that the Constitution does not confer the right of suffrage upon anyone and that it was the right of the individual states to decide which citizens could vote within their borders. Although she may have
lost in court, Minor’s lawsuit did much for the advancement of suffrage and set the stage for a new strategy in the campaign. After this decision, suffragists focused more on state-by-state campaigns to change state constitutions to let women vote.

Virginia Minor died at age 70 in 1894. In September 2014, a bronze bust of Minor was placed in the hall of famous Missourians, recognizing her efforts as the mother of the suffragette movement and, therefore, as one of the state’s most noteworthy figures. In addition to Minor’s death in 1894, Anna Clapp died in 1889, and Rebecca Hazard died in 1912, each having died before the adoption of the 19th Amendment in August 1920. Although they did not live to vote, their work was carried on by other women, including Edna Fischel Gellhorn.

Edna Fischel Gellhorn was born in 1878 and came of age toward the end of the battle for women’s suffrage. She grew up in St. Louis in a well-to-do family. Her father was a physician, and her mother was an educator who was heavily involved in philanthropic and civic work. At 20 years of age, Gellhorn married her husband George, who, like her father, was a physician. Some of the first causes she stood behind included lobbying for cleaner drinking water regulations and ensuring better safety standards for milk. In 1910, Edna joined the St. Louis suffrage movement, where she held offices in both the St. Louis and Missouri Equal Suffrage Leagues. She is quoted as saying, “I was inspired by the message that women had something to contribute.”

One of the most notable things Gellhorn was involved in was the “Walkless Talkless Parade” held in 1916 during the Democratic National Convention held in St. Louis. This was a particularly important time in history because the Democrats were in St. Louis to nominate Woodrow Wilson for his second term as President. This “parade” wasn’t a parade. It was a gathering of thousands of women from around the region who, on the first day of the convention, lined both sides of Locust Street for ten blocks from the hotel to the convention center. The women wore white dresses and yellow sashes and carried yellow parasols and signs with messages. The delegates had to walk through this gauntlet of women to get from their hotel to the convention. The women and their message couldn’t be missed even though no words were spoken. The event brought great attention to the cause of women’s suffrage.

Four years later, in 1920, the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, and women were granted the right to vote. Of the four “Ladies of the League” buried at Bellefontain Cemetery, Edna Gellhorn was the only one born in St. Louis and the only one who lived to vote. In early 1920, Gellhorn became the first Vice President of the newly formed League of Women Voters. Soon after, she was elected as the first President of the Missouri League. In addition to holding significant roles on the national and state levels of the League of Women Voters, she served three terms as President of the St. Louis chapter. While she is most well known for her work as a suffragette, she was also a member of numerous associations and committees in St. Louis that helped care for orphans, enact laws for a minimum wage, eliminate child labor, advocate for equal rights for African Americans, and ensure better election laws. She helped found John Burroughs School and was elected as a “Woman of Achievement” by the St. Louis Globe-Democrat toward the end of her life.

Each of these four women are laid to rest at Bellefontain Cemetery and Arboretum in St. Louis. Bellefontaine, which began operations in 1849, is the oldest “rural” or garden cemetery west of the Mississippi. Across the beautiful 314 acres are 87,000 lives that are remembered by staff and a volunteer force who will complete over 300 events and tours in 2019.

On June 8, 2019, from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM, Bellefontaine’s Living History Fair will center on the Women’s Quest for the vote. The four ladies mentioned in this article, and many more, will be portrayed in first person telling their stories concerning the struggle for the right to vote.

To learn more about Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum, please review the website at bellefontainecemetery.org.

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For almost 200 years, First Ladies have impacted the state of Missouri, and each left a lasting legacy for future generations of women. Historically, to define the specific role or job description for a Missouri First Lady would be challenging and most likely inaccurate because each one experienced a multitude of different issues and events during their time “in office”—Civil War, Prohibition, the women’s suffrage movement, the Great Depression, World Wars I and II, Civil Rights, and more. As a result, priority projects and programs for the state and the Missouri Governor’s Mansion have differed greatly over time.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, “The first requisite of a politician’s wife is always to be able to manage anything.” If asked to define a First Lady’s occupation today, there is no doubt the word “manager” would be in the job description. As the wife and partner of the Missouri Governor and the current proprietor of the Missouri Governor’s Mansion, the First Lady manages staff, renovations, fund-raisers, and programs at the Mansion while welcoming over 50,000 visitors annually during public tours and special events. In addition, her managerial duties flow into personal philanthropic...
endeavors that include donating numerous hours to schools, organizations, and boards—not to mention the time and support the First Lady offers daily to the Missouri Governor’s work.

In former First Lady Jean Carnahan’s 1998 book, If Walls Could Talk, Kenneth H. Winn, Missouri State Archivist, said, “although the first lady’s role is not prescribed by law or by any other formal rule, we, nonetheless, have certain expectations of her. She is to be a good helpmate to her husband: supportive, decorative and gracious. She must engage in charitable works of a nonpartisan nature. She is to pretend a disinterest in politics and deny, however implausibly, that she influences or shares her political opinions with her husband. She must be, above all, a good hostess at the Governor’s Mansion.... Whether in the White House or the Statehouse, there is a tendency for a first lady to do what is expected of her. Her role is made all the more difficult because there is no script.... For the most part, she is left to rely on tradition and her own instincts.”

FIRST LADY
TERESA PARSON

Luckily for the state of Missouri, First Lady Teresa Parson has wholeheartedly embraced tradition and is following her own instincts to make a difference both in our great state and at the Missouri Governor’s Mansion. As the wife of Missouri’s 57th Governor, Mike Parson, she brings to her role as First Lady the experience of being a mother, grandmother, businesswoman, volunteer, and advocate. She immediately began calling the Mansion “The People’s House” because she wants to make it more accessible to the public through a variety of events and special occasions. Also, she created Mr. Buzzaround, the Mansion’s honeybee mascot, to encourage young Missourians to learn about the beauty, significance, and history of The People’s House.

First Lady Parson has a strong commitment to education. She and Governor Parson work with at-risk high schoolers as co-chairs of the Board of Directors for Jobs for America’s Graduates-Missouri, Inc. (JAG-Missouri). Together, they highlight the importance of education to the next generation of leaders, as well as financial literacy and money management. She is also a dedicated advocate for special needs children.

FIRST LADIES’ LEGACIES
AND STORIES
PRESERVED
FOR FUTURE GERMATIONS

Several books have been written to preserve the memories and legacies of former First Ladies. Women of the Mansion, by First Lady Eleanor Park; First Ladies of Missouri, by Jerena East Giffen; and If Walls Could Talk, by First Lady Jean Carnahan all provide rich histories of the work, homes, and families of former First Ladies and First Families over the past centuries. With information taken from all three sources, the following First Ladies from the late 19th and early 20th centuries indelibly left their marks during their years in the Missouri Governor’s Mansion and empowered their communities:

Marguerite de Reilhe McNair (1820–1824), the first First Lady, was both well educated and refined in manners and fashion. To help her less fortunate neighbors, Mrs. McNair, a Roman Catholic, established an interdenominational charitable society for ladies and held the meetings in her home. She is now recognized as starting the first organized charitable service group in St. Louis.
A memorial was dedicated to Mrs. McNair and her husband, Alexander McNair, in St. Louis a century later.

Sarah Louise “Lula” Winston Stone (1893–1897) was First Lady during the worst depression in American history. With her independent, calm demeanor, Mrs. Stone worked to conserve funds by tending to the daily management of the Mansion herself. She was outspoken about making the world better for women, improving education for children, and helping the poor in crowded cities. In 1894, in the second year of their administration, she reinstated the tradition of the New Year’s Day military reception to honor members of the Governor’s staff. Because of Mrs. Stone, this special event was continued for many years.

Margaret “Maggie” Nelson Stephens (1897–1901) left behind a diary that chronicled her life and time as First Lady, which she called a “joyous social whirl.” Determined to fix up the Missouri Governor’s Mansion, which she described as “scarcely habitable,” she packed up her own dishes for use until the legislature gave her seven thousand dollars for upkeep and renovations. Mrs. Stephens redecorated and opened up the Mansion, engaging the community and taking advantage of every opportunity to hold special events, such as masquerade balls and picnics. She is credited with starting the earliest documented group tours of the Mansion, and she became the first First Lady to have her portrait commissioned and hung in the Mansion.

The United States declared war just three months after Jeannette Vosburgh Gardner (1917–1921) became First Lady. She and Governor Frederick Gozier Gardner planted the first war garden in Missouri on Mansion grounds and raised chickens in the backyard for eggs. Following the war, the nation was focused on two issues: prohibition and women’s suffrage. Mrs. Garner accompanied her husband to a suffrage meeting in Sedalia, where she gave remarks following the Governor’s speech, confirming she shared the same views about suffrage as her husband. It was most likely the first time a Missouri Governor’s wife made a speech at a public meeting.

Eleanora Gabbert Park (1933–1937) worked to extend her role as First Lady beyond being a homemaker and hostess of the Mansion. To help Missouri’s 10,000 jobless females, she invited 300 representatives from numerous women’s organizations to Jefferson City to discuss the unemployment problems. The group worked to appoint a representative in each county to support the hiring of women. In addition, she was determined to capture the history of former First Ladies to help keep a record of Mansion life for future First Ladies, including accounts of its furnishings, traditions, and celebrations. Her 435-page book, called Women of the Mansion, helped to provide a history that would otherwise have been lost.

FIRST LADIES’ PRESERVATION OF THE MISSOURI GOVERNOR’S MANSION

One legacy left by the majority of Missouri First Ladies was their work in preserving an important historical landmark in the state of Missouri: the Missouri Governor’s Mansion. Because of efforts throughout their years of service to continuously improve and upkeep the executive residence, “The People’s House” today is one of the oldest in the nation and one of the only executive homes where the Governor and First Lady still reside. First Lady Carolyn Bond formally established the Friends of the Missouri Governor’s Mansion in 1974 to be a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to preserving the Mansion’s history through educational programs and stewardship of its interior, including its historical collections. Since then, every First Lady—and now First Lady Parson—has continued the legacy of ensuring the Mansion and its history will be accessible to current and future generations.
Barbara Gill was a dear friend and co-worker. Barbara worked at Missouri Humanities with her brother, Robert Walrond, who formally incorporated the organization as a nonprofit in 1975. I met Barbara over twenty years ago—she is the one who interviewed and hired me as a clerk. Through the opportunities she provided me, I am now the Director of Operations for Missouri Humanities (MH).

Barbara was a compassionate and hard worker, and she became my mentor over the years. I admired her dedication to helping others and the warm energy she put into bridging the gap between humanities scholars and the general public. Over the years, Barbara took on numerous duties for MH, including serving as Deputy Director from 1997 through 2003 and twice as acting Executive Director. However, her greatest joy came from running the Chautauqua and Speaker's Bureau programs. Barbara had a love for history, and both programs provided expert historians, storytellers, and authors to share special stories about Missouri’s culture, history, and people.

I will always remember Barbara for having a sweet soul and a caring heart. She was always willing to help in any way she could, and she touched the lives of so many people, both in and outside of her work with MH. Her community involvement was extensive, especially in her hometown of Brentwood: President of the Brentwood Historical Society, President of the Rotary Anns, first President of Mark Twain Elementary School Mother’s Club, member of the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce, Brentwood School Board Member, and an usher at St. Mary Magdalen Church for 25 years. In 1994, she was named Citizen of the Year by the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce and voted one of the “Best of Brentwood” by the Brentwood School District in 2004.

When Barbara retired from MH in 2005, State Senator Joan Bray and State Representative Margaret Donnelly presented resolutions commending her for her stellar leadership, long tenure of 25 years with MH, and for being an exemplary citizen in her community. However, Barbara’s love and commitment for the humanities could not keep her away for too long. Barbara returned in 2010 and worked part-time to run the Speaker’s Bureau before officially retiring for a second time in her 80s.

Barbara was a thoughtful and generous friend to me and this organization, and we are very grateful for her many contributions. We are saddened to lose such a loyal and committed friend, and we will remember her with the utmost respect and admiration. Her commitment to helping others and serving the community leaves behind a wonderful legacy. She will truly be missed, but never forgotten.

With deepest regards,
Clarice Britton
BONDED JUSTICE:
Race, Class, Gender, and Suffrage

APRIL LANGLEY, PH.D.
BLACK STUDIES CHAIR & ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AND BLACK STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI–COLUMBIA
In 1892, Anna Julia Cooper announced “Only the BLACK WOMAN can say ‘when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole Negro race enters with me.” Regrettably, in her lifetime, she never “entered” into a rightful place of prominence among the greatest thinkers and scholars. As we transition from the centennial of the first enslaved Africans who arrived in Jamestown in 1619 toward the centennial commemoration of the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote, it is important to consider how gender and race complicated the issue of women’s suffrage in the United States. While the 15th amendment gave formerly enslaved and free Black men the right to vote, the legal premise of full citizenship was undermined by tenets of white supremacy that were enforced through nearly every means possible—poll taxes, grandfather clauses, literacy tests, state-sanctioned violence, and economic coercion. Nineteenth-century poet, abolitionist, and Black suffragist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper’s dialect poem “Aunt Chloe’s Politics” sheds light on a tragically pervasive corruption of the voting practices of the time.

Published in her 1872 book Sketches of Southern Life, through the voice of a Black woman who has presumably lived through the eras of slavery and into the Reconstruction, Aunt Chloe challenges the hypocrisy of “enfranchisement” that is undermined by de jure and de facto political power:

“Of course, I don’t know very much
About these politics,
But I think that some who run ’em
Do mighty ugly tricks.”
(lines 1–4)

Clearly this uneducated woman, the speaker in Harper’s poem, knows enough about “these politics” to see the dangerous “tricks” that have denied or abridged the rights of black voters. She also realizes the corruption among black voters and politicians who have “sold [the] race” by embezzling school funds and created a loss for the most oppressed people—children. Ultimately, Aunt Chloe challenges the kind of voting that does more harm than good:

“Though I thinks
a heap of voting
I go for voting clean.”
(lines 19–20)

As a founding member of the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), Harper spoke and wrote, in a diverse range of genres (poetry, speech, prose), about gender inequality and women’s rights, as she noted in one of her most well-cited poems, “A Double Standard”:

“And what is wrong
in woman’s life
In man’s cannot be right.”
(lines 54–55)

Yet her desire to challenge universal inequality and injustices against all people, respective of their race, class, gender, or condition, did not prevent her from speaking truth to power when confronting racism within the women’s suffrage movement or oppression against black women from both white and black men.

In his essay, “‘The White Women All Go for Sex’: Frances Harper on Suffrage, Citizenship, and the Reconstruction South,” C. C. O’Brien observes “signs of disillusionment” in “Harper’s 1866 speech ‘We Are All Bound Up Together’ [which] declared: ‘if there is every any class of people who need to be lifted out of their airy nothings and selfishness, it is the white women of America’ ... [and]
the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) ... called the ‘great schism’ in the woman’s suffrage movement” when white women’s “suffrage clashed with the interest of black suffrage as ... animosity caused a split in racial and gender reform interest that left black women ... at the intersection of a divided community” (605). Not surprisingly, the house of women, divided as it was “against itself” as the adage goes, “fell.” Neither white nor black women gained suffrage, and there were only marginal citizenship rights for black men.

The views of early white women’s rights activists—exemplified in the speeches of such figures as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony—sought to capitalize on the gender divisions and inequities between black women and men, in order to secure their own political agenda (which included but was not limited to the vote). Not unlike earlier generations of whites who had manipulated black labor and military might to secure a nation, the suffragists clearly saw the advantages to working with blacks (in this case, women) to achieve their goals. To their credit, these women had earned a place in the hearts of black people due to their early struggles on behalf on antislavery (especially northern white women like Harriet Beecher Stowe), and it was for this reason that, early on, many black men and women supported them as well. Moreover, with regard to issues of violence against women (wife beating) and temperance, white and black women shared similar concerns and were held down by the same male arm of oppression. Regrettably, even such renowned advocates for women’s rights, such as Susan B. Anthony, were far from immune to the white supremacist values of their time.

In Women, Race, and Class, Angela Davis cites Anthony’s “letter to the editor of the New York Standard, dated December 26, 1865,” in which the latter observed that “it is better to be the slave of an educated white man, than of a degraded, ignorant black one” (70–71). The irony of such black misandry is that formerly enslaved men like abolitionist and black male suffragist Frederick Douglass were staunch proponents of rights for both black women and men, who fought for inclusion of both white and black women in the 15th Amendment. The 15th Amendment ultimately granted only black men the right to vote—due in part, it is argued, to the decision of leaders such as Douglass, who chose in the final analysis to support the vote for blacks, even if it meant only men—a vote in the black community was a vote for black men, women, and children.

Significantly, the women’s movement in America was an outgrowth of the antislavery movement, based on the fundamental equality and rights of all human beings, regardless of race or gender.

It has been 150 years since Congress passed the 15th Amendment, 100 years since Congress passed the 19th Amendment, and 400 years since the first enslaved Africans were forcibly immigrated to America. These watershed moments in our country’s history deserve to be remembered alongside one another, to be complicated even as they are celebrated, as profound lessons of both the promise of unity and peril of forgetting, in the words of Harper, “We Are All Bound Up Together.”
The Missouri Humanities Think-N-Drink series merges current event topics and issues we face as a society with public conversation. In honor of the centennial of women's suffrage in the United States, this three-part series will aim to promote, highlight, and encourage discussion around the struggles and success of women in today’s world.

MORE INFORMATION: MOHUMANITIES.ORG/THINK-N-DRINKS
Remembering the Ladies: 
A Brief Look at Missouri Women and the Path to Suffrage
“To me [suffrage] means the removal of a handicap upon women so that they might easier realize their own potentialities.”

war, and the public debate over freedom, had "roused people to fever heat, and they were ready to work with fervor for this other cause ... the emancipation for another class—that of women—from the conventions that kept them from self-development and participation in the government." In 1869, two suffrage organizations were formed—the American Woman Suffrage Association and the National Woman Suffrage Association. Both worked toward woman suffrage, but they disagreed on how to achieve that goal. The American Woman Suffrage Association was led by Henry Ward Beecher and Lucy Stone. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony organized the National Woman Suffrage Association largely because of their disappointment that leadership in the Equal Rights Association failed to support the addition of the term female, along with male, into the U.S. Constitution. These national efforts coincided with the early suffrage activities in Missouri.

Postwar suffrage activity worked under the logic that if citizenship and voting rights were granted to freedmen under the 14th and 15th Amendments, then women too should be granted the right to vote. Virginia Minor, a Missouri native, attempted to vote, and when she was not allowed to register in St. Louis, she took to the courts. Susan B. Anthony also went to court after casting a ballot in the 1872 election, but, unlike Anthony, Minor was able to take her case to the Supreme Court of the United States. Minor, represented by her husband, appealed her case, Minor v. Happersett, to the Supreme Court but did not win. Other women in Missouri would journey to the capital every year from 1870 forward to petition for suffrage. The women insisted on having their voices heard, and in March 1879, as Frodyce wrote in “Early Beginnings,” “ladies filled the lobby seats and men stood in the aisles.” Frodyce continued, stating that a woman explained to the legislators that women in the United States “taking in the breath of freedom from their cradles ... should desire to participate in the duties and privileges of their government ... and that they should be denied these privileges is a surprising paradox in the history of American history.” The legislators did not agree.

Despite the lack of legislative support advocates encountered, the movement continued to address and petition legislators, as well as host speakers who were leaders in the national movement. Much of the 1890s and early 1900s brought defeat and disappointment to the suffragists, but it did not deter them from their cause. The decade did usher in some victories for women, mostly in the West. By the end of the century, Wyoming (1890) and Colorado (1893) along with Utah and Idaho (1896) extended full suffrage to women. The decade also saw a reconciliation between the two suffrage organizations, which merged into the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1890. These victories would help their cause, but women would still need to push for suffrage in the coming century. It was not until the 1910s that Missouri women started to see a change in the public sentiment regarding suffrage.

As Althea Somerville Grossman points out in her essay, “The Part of the St. Louis Equal Suffrage League in the Campaign for Equal Suffrage” (also published in Missouri Historical Review XIV), suffrage leagues in Missouri convened in the spring of 1911 and formally organized the Missouri Equal Suffrage Association. Capitalizing on the fact that many women in the 19th century used clubs as a means to achieve political and social goals, clubs supporting suffrage multiplied and used all available resources to spread information about suffrage, seeing to it that, according to Grossman, “all the great speakers had been heard, and in St. Louis plays had been acted, teas and other functions had been given, and women old and young had made speeches in every public and private place where they could find admittance.” The experience that women gained in clubs also equipped them with the skills necessary to launch an effective and well-organized movement in the years leading up to the passage of the 19th Amendment. The St. Louis Suffrage Organization, which formed in 1910, grew large enough to have two groups.

In 1913, Missouri suffragists collected 14,000 signatures statewide on a petition requesting that the General Assembly pose to Missouri voters the question of
enfranchising women. They believed this would be more palatable than asking for a vote of the assembly directly on the political enfranchisement of women. They reached out to legislators to assure them that supporting the referendum would not be a pledge to support suffrage in the future. Their efforts were not successful, and they set out to gather more signatures the following year. Christine Frodyce asked the legislators, “Gentlemen, fifty years ago my grandmother came before the Missouri Legislature and asked for the enfranchisement of women; twenty-five years ago my mother came to make the same request; tonight I am asking for the ballot for women. Are you going to make it necessary for my daughter to appear in her turn?” Her question demonstrates the long struggle for woman’s rights, one taken up by generations.

Despite their efforts, Missouri had not fully come around to the idea of woman suffrage. As Virginia Jeans Laas recorded in Bridging Two Eras, Emily Newell Blair expressed, “We did not win the 1914 suffrage amendment. We never expected to. But we had changed the attitude of thousands.” When Jane Addams was scheduled to speak in Columbia in October 1914, “the prejudice was still so strong against suffrage that the University authorities were afraid to have Miss Addams speak in the University Auditorium and the town Opera House had to be hurriedly secured. There she spoke to an overflow house,” Mrs. Thomas McBride recounts in “The Part of the Kansas City Equal Suffrage League in the Campaign for Equal Suffrage,” published in Missouri Historical Review XIV. Her other speaking engagements in St. Louis and Cape Girardeau both drew large audiences. Emily Newell Blair later reflected on her experience meeting Addams at a Nashville convention, as documented by Laas in Bridging Two Eras: “If I could just convey what it means to this self-conscious, unimportant little woman from her small Missouri town to sit beside Jane Addams at a dinner?” Addams was only one of many nationally known individuals who supported suffrage and visited Missouri to help further the cause in the Midwest. Other national suffrage leaders who would address Missouri audiences included Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, Lucy Stone, and Julia Ward Howe (most known for the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”). These leaders inspired Missourians to take up the cause and made Missouri a site for national, as well as local, activism.

By 1917, wrote McBride, “the records showed a much larger proportion of men favoring suffrage in the lower [Missouri] House than in the Senate,” and in order to remedy this, organizers interviewed the senators to try and find people strong enough to wield some influence if needed. The House passed a liberal bill that would extend the franchise in municipal and presidential elections to women, but the Senate had worked its own bill through and the liberal bill did not pass, prompting the speaker, Drake Watson, to comment, “Boys, we can’t play politics with the Missouri women” (recalled by Helen Guthrie Miller in “Making Suffrage Sentiment in MO” in Missouri Historical Review XIV). In November 1917, Missouri suffrage advocates moved toward focusing on getting a federal amendment ratified in the state when Congress passed it.

McBride reported that the numbers of individuals supporting suffrage continued to grow in the state and membership in the League grew to 8,086 by 1918. Women remained active in the years leading up to the passage of the federal suffrage amendment. They contacted each candidate once he filed for the primaries and worked to make him pro-suffrage. The League took the next step and planned to work toward educating people to use the “franchise intelligently.” The League put out a guidebook, “An Aide to the Woman Voter in Missouri,” for women and men to be more knowledgeable voters. This was part of the League’s “doctrine of preparedness” and the League of Women Voters’ attempt to provide women with the needed tools to reach their political goals. In the spring of 1919, St. Louis became the convention site for the National American Woman Suffrage Association. The convention was held just months before the passage of a federal amendment. McBride recalled Catt commenting that it was “to be the best convention ever held anywhere.”
The 2018 Humanities Awards & Gala, held in October of this past year, was a terrific success. The evening honored three individuals and one organization for their work in and dedication to the humanities throughout the state of Missouri. Dr. Howard W. Marshall received the award for Distinguished Literary Achievement, Dr. Adrian Clifton received the award for Excellence in Education, Rev. Nicholas Inman received the award for Exemplary Community Achievement, and the Missouri Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association received the award for Partnership in the Humanities. The awards ceremony was followed by our keynote speaker, Jennifer Teege, author of the international bestseller My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me. A sincere thank you to all of our sponsors and individual donors! Missouri Humanities’ programming would not be possible without your steadfast support.

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TABLE HOSTS:
Dr. Bill Ambrose
Dan & Mary Bruntrager
If you were unable to attend the Humanities Awards & Gala and you wish to help us offer more programming throughout the state of Missouri, use the attached envelope to show your support today. Every dollar counts.

CALLING FOR 2019 HUMANITIES AWARD NOMINATIONS!
Do you know a Missouri-based resident or organization that should be recognized for their work in the humanities? Go to mohumanities.org/2019-humanities-awards to submit your nomination today.

INTERESTED IN SPONSORING THIS EVENT?
Go to mohumanities.org or call 1.800.357.0909.

ALL 2018 HUMANITIES AWARDS & GALA PHOTOS CAN BE FOUND AT mohumanities.org/2018awards.
Photographer: Micah Usher, Usher Imaging LLC
## GRANTS AWARDED  
*September 1, 2018 – March 1, 2019*

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The second installment of Gary Scharnhorst’s multi-volume biography of Mark Twain is arguably even more momentous than the first.” —Joseph Csicsila, Eastern Michigan University, author of Canons by Consensus: Critical Trends and American Literature

The second volume of Gary Scharnhorst’s three-volume biography chronicles the life of Samuel Langhorne Clemens between his move with his family from Buffalo to Elmira (and then Hartford) in spring 1871 and their departure from Hartford for Europe in mid-1891.

During this time he wrote and published some of his best-known works, including Roughing It, The Gilded Age, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, A Tramp Abroad, The Prince and the Pauper, Life on the Mississippi, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court.

“Scharnhorst’s thorough and careful research results in a scholarly biography that will undoubtedly be considered definitive.” —Publishers Weekly

Published with the generous support of the Missouri Humanities and The State Historical Society of Missouri

ORDERS: upress.missouri.edu • 800.621.2736
Ralph Steadman was the artistic yin to Hunter S. Thompson's literary yang. (Or maybe it was vice versa.) They were collaborators and friends for 30 years, Steadman providing famously outrageous illustrations that were perfectly suited to Thompson's gonzo writing.

Steadman's renown as an artist stems in part—but hardly in total—from that long creative relationship. A special exhibition at the Kansas City Public Library, *Ralph Steadman: A Retrospective*, explores the full range of his inimitable work, including illustrations for *Alice in Wonderland* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*; images of extinct, endangered, and imaginary birds created for the books *Extinct Boids* and *Critical Critters*; and of course, Steadman’s exquisitely grotesque artwork for *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* and other writings by Thompson.

Exclusive to the exhibition’s stay in Kansas City: more than a dozen of Steadman’s images from his coverage of the 1976 Republican Convention in Kansas City, where he worked with former White House counsel and key Watergate figure John Dean for *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Approximately 100 of Steadman’s original works are featured in the exhibition at the downtown Central Library, 14 W. 10th St. The Kansas City Public Library is one of a limited number of venues nationwide chosen to host the retrospective, which is sponsored by United Therapeutics, Flying Dog Brewery, and Audible.
Description
Back for its fourth year, the Missouri Summer Teachers Academy (MSTA) will take place June 11–13, 2019 in Columbia. Cosponsored by Missouri Humanities and the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy, the MSTA brings high school social studies teachers from across the state to the Mizzou campus for three days of thematically organized seminars led by MU faculty in History, Political Science, Law, and Education, as well as by other scholars from around the region. This year’s seminars and discussions will tackle the theme of “Revolutions.”

Theme
As the above image suggests, time will certainly be spent at this year’s Teachers Academy considering the origins and events of the American Revolution. But this will hardly be the lone revolution, or lone form of revolution, that will be explored. Attention will be paid, for example, to some of the other political revolutions—in Haiti or France—that occurred during the 18th century. Other seminars might focus on revolutionary inventions, ideas, or pedagogies, or to the very concept of ‘revolution’ itself.

How to Apply
To apply, teachers need only send an email to Kinder Institute Communications Associate and MSTA organizer Thomas Kane, KaneTC@missouri.edu, with the following information: the name of the school at which you teach; grade levels and courses taught; and a brief statement about why you’re interested in attending this year’s Missouri Summer Teachers Academy. Applications will officially open on February 20, 2019, and we will accept applications until all seats at the Academy, space which is limited, are filled. Teachers will be notified of their application status no later than April 15, 2019.

In addition to self-nominations, we accept nominations of teachers from high school principals and vice principals, department heads, and district social studies coordinators, as well as from Missouri state legislators.

Logistics
Thanks to a generous grant from Missouri Humanities, teachers’ participation is fully subsidized, with the MH providing housing for the duration of the conference at the Tiger Hotel; breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day; materials; and a small stipend to offset travel costs and other incidentals.
The Missouri Humanities’ family reading program encourages not only parents and caregivers, but also future and current early childhood educators and providers to read to the young children in their care. Read from the Start (RFTS) is a collaborative effort with local service organizations throughout the state. Host sites, including Head Starts, Parents as Teachers, local colleges, and libraries, promote and recruit workshop participants. RFTS provides a certified Discussion Leader to guide participants through literacy-based activities and conversation as they read and discuss a set of high-quality children books that they will then take home or to the classroom, free of charge.

“I learned that books have so many more learning experiences than just reading.”
—JCAC Student

Since 2007, the Jefferson City Academic Center (JCAC), an alternative, non-traditional high school in Jefferson City, has been hosting RFTS programs. The JCAC program strives to develop the whole child, working not only with academics but also on social and emotional development. In recognition for establishing best practices in the area of character education, JCAC has received several Promising Practice Awards through the National Character Education Partnership (Character.org) association in Washington, DC.

The JCAC includes RFTS in their Service curriculum and serves as additional training for their students. According to Debbie Cornell, educator and service worker for JCAC, “RFTS fits tightly into our program as it helps to develop the whole person.... Students read, discuss, create, and share in a non-judgmental and fun environment, and through RFTS, students have become more comfortable with reading in and out of the classroom. RFTS has helped our students to introduce books and activities to the younger children they serve during service learning partnerships with local elementary schools and daycares. It has allowed our students to gain confidence in their service abilities, all while developing young leaders.”

To learn more about Read from the Start and to host a program in your community, visit: readfromthestart.org.

JCAC deserves lots of thanks for their support, including raising ~$650 for the RFTS program through a pancake dinner in partnership with the Jefferson City Public School District’s Cardio Challenge!
GROWING READERS
THE MISSOURI HUMANITIES’ READ FROM THE START (RFTS)
FAMILY READING PROGRAM OFFERS FREE WORKSHOPS
SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR

FAMILIES  PARENTS/ CAREGIVERS  EDUCATORS

With the guidance of a certified Discussion Leader, participants read and discuss the same high-quality children’s books that they will take home or to their classroom. They leave RFTS workshops excited to share new reading techniques and activities that enhance and extend story time. MH partners with local organizations throughout the state to host the workshops. These partners all share a commitment to family reading and literacy. A sample of host sites includes: Head Starts, Parents as Teachers, libraries, community action agencies, schools, and shelters.

To learn how you can host or attend an RFTS program, please visit readfromthestart.org.

Read from the Start
Missouri Humanities Council Family Program
Proud to Be Provides Veterans an Outlet for Self-Expression

On November 12, 2018, Missouri Humanities and Southeast Missouri State University Press (SEMO Press) released Volume Seven of the Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors (PTB) creative writing anthology. Military personnel, past and present, find significant value in putting their thoughts and experiences on paper, and PTB offers our soldiers, veterans, and their families a creative outlet to share their written works. Since its first publication in 2012, PTB has featured hundreds of contributors from all walks of life—each contributing a unique military perspective and story.

With the release of each volume, both local and national contributors are invited to read their works in front of a live audience. This year’s book reception and reading took place on Saturday, December 8 at Saint Louis Public Radio and featured nine contributors, six of whom were women. One of those women, Ruth M. Hunt, a Master Sergeant...
in the U.S. Army, provided the following testimonial after the event:

“Proud to Be: Writing by American Warriors is important because of what I experienced from it—that is, the outlet. To put your stories out there, your experiences, things you’re holding onto—maybe inside—and haven’t put out there for anyone else to know. So to put it on paper gives your thoughts a voice, an outlet. It was therapeutic to write down the experiences of something I had gone through that nobody else knew about. And sharing that with others has connected me with people who have had similar experiences and may not have said anything if I had not written it down.”

It is this outlet, and this connection through writing expressed by Sergeant Hunt, that is echoed by many of our contributors and drives our mission to share these stories. Collectively, the writings and photographs in Proud to Be give contributors a voice and provide readers with invaluable insights into the lives of our military personnel.

RIGHT: Jocelyn Corbin (top) and Valerie Young (bottom) reading to the audience. Photos by Micah Usher of Usher Imaging.
Patriot Nations: Native Americans in Our Nation’s Armed Forces

COMING TO MISSOURI IN FALL 2019

LISA CARRICO
DIRECTOR OF FAMILY & VETERANS PROGRAMS

Missouri Humanities (MH) is pleased to announce a special Missouri tour of *Patriot Nations: Native Americans in Our Nation’s Armed Forces*, a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian. *Patriot Nations* explores the ways in which Native peoples have served America’s Armed Forces in every major military encounter, from the Revolutionary War to today’s conflicts in the Middle East. The exhibition consists of sixteen full-color, freestanding banners and engages audiences through a series of historic photographs and narratives. Visitors to the *Patriot Nations* exhibit will learn why and how Native-American servicemen and women serve to protect and defend the United States, and it raises awareness that in recent decades, American Indians serve at a higher rate in proportion to their population than any other ethnic group.

Our Director of Education Programs, Dr. Monique N. Johnston, chose the exhibit to provide Missourians an opportunity to learn about the courageous service of Native Americans on both a national and local level, all while pairing well with MH’s Veterans Programs and Native American Heritage Program. In August, MH put a call out for submissions and invited museums, public libraries, art centers, and other nonprofit cultural organizations across Missouri to apply. In addition to hosting the exhibit, MH offered $2,500 in funding support for host sites to offer at least two public humanities programs for adults, kids, and families and/or a local companion exhibit to complement *Patriot Nations* while it visits their communities.

This exhibit will travel throughout Missouri from September 2019 to March 2020. To learn more, visit mohumanities.org/patriot-nations.

Produced by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, the exhibition was made possible by the generous support of San Manuel Band of Mission Indians.
PATRIOT NATIONS
HOST SITE LOCATIONS
AND DATES

SEPTEMBER 4, 2019 –
OCTOBER 9, 2019
Vernon County
Historical Society
(Nevada, MO)

OCTOBER 14, 2019 –
NOVEMBER 18, 2019
Mineral Area College
(Park Hills, MO)

NOVEMBER 20, 2019 –
DECEMBER 27, 2019
Missouri’s American
Indian Cultural Center
at Van Meter State Park
(Miami, MO)

JANUARY 3, 2020 –
FEBRUARY 7, 2020
Crawford County
Library District
(Cuba, MO)

FEBRUARY 11, 2020 –
MARCH 17, 2020
Kansas City Public
Library, Plaza Branch
(Kansas City, MO)

IMAGES AT RIGHT:
TOP: Diné [Navajo] code talkers
Corporal Henry Bahe, Jr. and
Private First Class George H.
Kirk. Bougainville, South Pacific,
December 1943.
National Archives and Records
Administration 127-MN-69889-B.

MIDDLE: Marine Corps Women
Reservists, Camp Lejeune,
North Carolina, October 16,
1943. From left: Minnie Spotted
Wolf (Blackfoot), Celia Mix
(Potawatomi), and Viola Eastman
(Chippewa). National Archives and
Records Administration 535876.

BOTTOM: San Carlos Apache
scouts. Arizona, ca. 1885. Photo
by J. C. Burges. General Nelson
A. Miles Collection. Presented
by Maj. Sherman Miles and Mrs.
Samuel Reber. National Museum
of the American Indian P6963.
Join us as we learn about water conservation and water clean-up efforts along the Missouri River! We will travel by canoe down the river and learn alongside expert staff from the Missouri Department of Conservation. **Space is limited!** Registration required.

**PRE-FLOAT TRAINING SESSION IS REQUIRED!**

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<th><strong>PRE-FLOAT TRAINING</strong></th>
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<td><strong>SAT., JUNE 15TH</strong></td>
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<td>6:00 PM – 8:00 PM</td>
<td>7:00 PM – 10:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Starting Location:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Swope Park - Lake</td>
<td>Platte Landing Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>3999 Swope Pkwy &amp; E Meyer Blvd</td>
<td>300 S. Main St., Parkville, MO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td><strong>Ending Location:</strong></td>
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<td>Kaw Point Park</td>
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<td>1403 Fairfax Trafficway, KC, KS</td>
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**REGISTRATION AT:**
MOHUMANITIES.ORG/ENVIRONMENTAL-HUMANITIES
Missouri Humanities has formally partnered with organizations across the state to support literary projects that:

- Increase public knowledge and awareness about the life, legacy, and work of major literary figures who have made a lasting impact on the state of Missouri
- Support literary endeavors that encourage the development, visibility, and achievement of youth literary programs in Missouri
- Sustain teachers and educators through workshops that enhance classroom literary instruction throughout the state
- Develop and advance programs that offer the public opportunities for literary immersion and increase their appreciation of literature

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PARTNERS!
Tennessee Williams Festival  ST. LOUIS, MO
Archives Alive!  JEFFERSON CITY, MO
Belt Publishing, St. Louis Anthology  ST. LOUIS, MO
Mark Twain Boyhood Home  HANNIBAL, MO

mohumanities.org  |  31
CAITLIN YAGER  
DIRECTOR OF HERITAGE PROGRAMS,  
MISSOURI HUMANITIES

In January, Missouri Humanities awarded partnership funding to seventeen organizations in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Kansas City for Black History Month public programming. Awardees were chosen based on their program’s adherence to the mission of Missouri Humanities’ African-American Heritage Program: “to support partner organizations whose work increases our understanding of the African-American experience through public programming in the humanities.”

This partnership program was initiated as a way for MH to expand its African-American Heritage partnerships and programmatic reach. Missouri Humanities Executive Director Dr. Steve Belko made it a priority to implement heritage programming throughout the state when he first joined MH in 2015. Dr. Belko stated, “With our African-American Heritage program being one of our newest heritage initiatives, we felt it imperative to support and advance the efforts of organizations and scholars who already work tirelessly to explore the African-American experience in Missouri.”

BELOW: “Stand Down, Rise Up” by St. Louis Story Stitchers.
While 2019’s pilot program focused on St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Kansas City, MH plans to open up this opportunity to organizations statewide for year-round programming in 2020, pending funding. For more information, please contact Caitlin Yager at caitlin@mohumanities.org or 314.781.9660, or visit mohumanities.org/african-american-heritage.
MISSOURI HUMANITIES PRESENTS:

German Folk Arts at Luxenhaus Farm

Learn historic crafts of 19th-century Missouri Germans

Spring: April 20 & 27, May 4 & 11
Fall: September 21 & 28, October 5 & 12

Spring classes filling fast! For more information or to register for classes, visit mohumanities.org/german-heritage or contact Caitlin Yager at caitlin@mohumanities.org
DIGITIZING MISSOURI'S
German Heritage

DIGITIZE YOUR GERMAN ARTIFACTS
AUGUST 24
10 AM – 4 PM
PERRYVILLE, MO

PERRYVILLE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

REGISTRATION REQUIRED: mohumanities.org/german-heritage
QUESTIONS? caitlin@mohumanities.org | 314.781.9660
German Journey to Perry County: Baden, Bavaria, & Saxony

TRISH ERZFELD
DIRECTOR, PERRY COUNTY HERITAGE TOURISM

Ever wonder what it would be like to live in a Missouri German community during the 1800s? Opened in 1964, the Saxon Lutheran Memorial is an outdoor history museum that commemorates the German Lutheran migration of 1838–1839. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. Walk the 30-acre village of thirteen log structures—many originally built by the Saxons who settled this area. Hand-hewn log structures comprise houses, cabins, a barn, and more.
Since its organization in 1821, Perry County has welcomed German immigrants. Nearly two hundred years later, the cultural influence of those who traveled here seeking a new beginning is still very much alive today. German influences are found in our cooking, values, religion, and even language. Residents here identify with at least three different German dialects: High German, Low German, and Badisch. Now in their golden years, these cultural teachers learned English as their second language once they were old enough to attend school. Today, they still speak with distinct German accents from their distant ancestors and are captivating to listen to.

In the early 1820s, German Catholic immigrants from the Baden area were among the first to settle the Apple Creek. These immigrants left Europe from the nearest ports—Le Havre, France and Antwerp, Belgium—and arrived in Perry County through New Orleans. The settlement’s first Catholic church, named St. Joseph, was built in 1828. Between 1881 and 1884, a third church was constructed for the parish. Our Lady of St. Joseph shrine was built in 1857 and incorporates a natural cave spring with stonework and the via dolorosa walkway. More Baden immigrants came in the 1840s to Biehle Station, named after an early German immigrant, Maurus Biehle. They too constructed a church, cleared the land to build homes and businesses, and left their unique German traits behind with their descendants, found still today in their food, speech, writings, and way of life.

Friedenberg was founded in 1838 by Lutheran immigrants from Bavaria, Germany. These Bavarians came from the Upper Franconian region, some from the city of Langenstadt, near present-day Kulmbach. They worshiped in members’ homes until a log church was built in 1846 north of Cinque Hommes Creek. From 1852 until 1885, the congregation worshiped at their church on Frankenbogen, overlooking the Cinque Hommes Bottoms. In 1885 the congregation moved to its present site, named Friedenberg by the Bavarians, meaning “Hill of Peace,” and built a brick church, which serves today as a historical site documenting their journey, faith, and aspirations to start a new life in a new country.

In 1838, approximately 700 German Lutherans from the Saxony region left their homes, farms, businesses, and all that they knew to embark on a dangerous sea voyage to America. They traveled by steamboat from New Orleans to St. Louis, later claiming their settlements in Perry County named Paitzdorf, Seelitz, Dresden, Frohna, Johannisberg, Wittenberg, and Altenburg. Eventually, the leadership from these settlements joined to form the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod denomination. Several of these communities that were established in 1839 are still thriving today, providing rich cultural experiences that can be found by visiting the Lutheran Heritage Center Research Library & Museum in Altenburg, a German genealogy archive and home of the Log Cabin College, the first Concordia University site.

The Saxon Lutheran Memorial (SLM) is an outdoor history museum in the setting of a German log cabin village. Located in Frohna, the village encompasses the homestead on the 30-acre farm originally owned by brothers Adolf and Christian Bergt in 1840. Several buildings with connections to the descendants of the Saxons living in the area have been moved and preserved to the site, including the Fenwick Cabin, the Hamilton-Goehring Cabin, the Schuppan Haus, and the 1904 Confirmation Room.

SLM opened in 1964 as a historic site and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1980. Excellent examples of early pioneering and log structures are seen here in the log settlement homes, the timber-framed barn (which contains within it an earlier double-crib hewn-log barn), and two log outbuildings. The site also maintains an immigration museum containing original artifacts of the German travelers and an outdoor museum of early farm equipment used. The Saxon Fall Festival is an annual regional cultural event celebrating the history and traditions of early German immigrants to Missouri since 1979.
Countless German descendants in Missouri and beyond can trace their roots back to Perry County. To plan a visit to this authentic early Missouri region or for more information, see visitperrycounty.com.

LEFT: Cooking apple butter in Frohna has long been a seasonal tradition practiced by the Saxon Lutheran Germans who settled this area in 1839. Volunteers Denise Morris and Richard Moldenhauer demonstrate the process, taught to them by their ancestors, during the annual Saxon Fall Festival in its 39th year. They encourage both young and young-at-heart visitors to participate in the importance of constant stirring of the apples throughout the day. After hours of tending, when cooked, it is poured into jars, sealed, and sold to the festival visitors—many who helped make it.

BELOW, LEFT: Built in 1885 by immigrants from Bavaria, this settlement was named “Friedenberg,” which means “Hill of Peace” in German. The church was active until 1980. Now it serves as a historical site commemorating the Bavarian German culture in Perry County. Special services, some in German, are still held annually.

BELOW, RIGHT: Mark Petzoldt, a resident of Perry County, demonstrates early blacksmithing techniques used by the Saxon Germans who settled in the Frohna/Altenburg areas of Perry County in a time where fire and iron were a necessity in a village to survive.
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St. Louis, May 10, 1861: The Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi West erupts when federalized troops capture men of the Missouri State Militia, encamped on the present-day campus of St. Louis University. A company of German-American troops under the command of Franz Sigel, then superintendent of St. Louis public schools, fires into a group of captured militiamen. The resulting melee leaves 28 civilians dead, including an infant killed in a mother’s arms.

Two days later, a middle-aged man by the name of Friedrich Karl Franz Hecker leaves his home in Illinois, along with his eldest son. They row across the Mississippi River to serve in Sigel’s regiment. In the space of a few weeks, Private Friedrich Hecker is commissioned a Colonel and placed in command of his own regiment. In 1862, he raises another regiment in Chicago.

Friedrich Hecker’s service in the American Civil War is emblematic of one class of German émigrés in the 19th century, although it is a spectacular example indeed. Friedrich’s rise was not a product of his acumen as a soldier. In his native Germany, in his home region of Baden, Friedrich was a lawyer and a politician who was probably the most celebrated amateur soldier in Europe. In March 1848, Friedrich, with a small group of democratic reformists, helped import a popular revolt that first appeared in France, to the east bank of the Rhine. After the Baden government pushed back, Friedrich organized an erswhile army to march from Lake Constance to the capital of the state of Baden. He raised less than 1,200 men, who were quickly defeated at the so-called “Battle of Kandern” in the far southwest corner of current Germany. The general commanding the government troops at Kandern was killed, however. Friedrich went into exile in Switzerland and soon traveled to the United States to find support for the revolution he had started in Baden. By the time he returned to Germany in 1849, the anti-government forces had been solidly defeated. Friedrich then emigrated to America, settling on a farm he purchased near Belleville, Illinois. His fame, generated on both sides of the Atlantic by the march from Konstanz, did not fade by 1861.

Friedrich Hecker was in a class of university-educated, leftist intellectuals who found home in and around St. Louis by the time of our Civil War. There was nostalgia for their own lost cause in the 1848–1849 revolutions across Europe. There was also in this class fierce opposition to African slavery in America, perhaps unmatched except in the abolitionist community in New England.

Another case to consider: Christian Horstmann of Franklin County, Missouri. Born in 1838 in Nordhemmern, in North Germany, Christian immigrated to America with his parents in 1854. He was a farmer in a rural area outside of Washington, Missouri, before he and brother Heinrich enlisted in the Union Army in September 1861. They joined Company G of the 17th Missouri Volunteer Infantry, consisting nearly entirely of men of German ancestry. Christian and Heinrich served in the 17th Missouri with many Germans who had settled in and near Washington in the 1830s. These rural German families tended
to be less ideological than their city cousins but were nevertheless staunchly pro-Union.

In August 1863, Heinrich Horstmann died in the military hospital at Jefferson Barracks. A year later, Christian was captured by Confederate troops while he was foraging with a party outside of Atlanta when that city was under siege. He spent two weeks in the infamous prison at Andersonville, Georgia, then in a succession of prisoner of war camps before gaining his release in the waning days of the war. Christian was then booked to return home on the steamer *Sultana*, which left the port of Memphis on April 26, 1865 en route to Jefferson Barracks. Several hours into the journey, in the wee hours of April 27, three boilers on the overloaded ship exploded, catching the boat on fire and killing an estimated 1,800 passengers in the conflagration or in the water. Even counting the American/British disaster of the *Titanic*, the loss of the *Sultana* was and remains to this day the deadliest maritime disaster in American history. The sheer horror of the event was multiplied by the sad fact that many of the casualties had barely survived their incarcerations at Andersonville. The sadness of the Horstmann family, when notified that Christian perished in the *Sultana*, compounded the grief for the loss of Heinrich in 1863.

David Horstmann of Kirkwood, Missouri is the great grandson of Christian Horstmann, for Christian did survive the *Sultana*. David, whose uncles Rich and Gil served with Patton in Europe, is a combat veteran of Viet Nam. He reports that family lore is not conclusive on the question of how Christian survived, but lore leans toward the belief that a game of cards distracted him, causing him literally to “miss the boat.”

Lansing G. Hecker is the great-great grandson of Friedrich Hecker and a member of the St. Louis chapter of the far-flung Hecker clan. Lansing, a retired advertising executive who lives in Creve Coeur, served 12 years as the Honorary Consul for the Republic of Germany based in St. Louis (2004 to 2016). His grandfather (grandson of Friedrich) was a prominent attorney in St. Louis in the early decades of the 1900s. Lansing’s father, William Frederick Hecker, a 1940 graduate of MIT, achieved the rank of Major during his service in World War II. William the father, who landed on Omaha Beach, was a member of Eisenhower’s general staff and was a chief interrogator of senior German officers captured by the Allies. Lansing’s brother William F. Hecker Jr. retired from the U.S. Army in 2004 with the rank of Colonel. Lansing expresses his deep conviction that Friedrich Hecker’s service in the Civil War is what made the Heckers an American family, and also that the family’s service is payback for the refuge that the nation offered Friedrich Hecker in time of need.

In 2006, Army Major William F. Hecker III was killed in action near the city of An Najaf, Iraq. Major Hecker, an artilleryman, was a graduate of the United States Military Academy (class of 1991). A decorated soldier, Major Hecker was also a man of letters who earned a master’s degree in English in 2000. He was Assistant Professor of English at West Point from 2000 to 2003. His favorite authors were Mark Twain and Edgar Allen Poe.

Like many a Hecker before him, Major Hecker’s middle name was Frederick.
History on the Border: Exploring the Lives of Everyday Missourians

DIANE MUTTI BURKE, PH.D.
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My love of history began in primary school with my interest in children’s literature set in 19th-century America. I was never as fascinated by presidents and battles as I was by how everyday people—especially women and children—lived their daily lives. I wondered about what it was like to reside in a log cabin, the experience of civilians on the home front during the Civil War, or the life stories of famous people from my home state of Missouri. I was fortunate that I had adults in my life who encouraged my many historical investigations. Teachers allowed me to conduct research projects on the topics of my interest, and my parents indulged my requests to visit historic sites. I had no doubt that I would one day major in history in college, but as a young person, I did not understand that I could make a career out of doing this thing that I loved.

These many years later, it amazes me that I haven’t strayed far from what fascinated me as a seven-year-old child. I am still intrigued by the histories of everyday people, although how I think about their stories and the ways in which I use this knowledge have changed dramatically. I now recognize their experiences as not simply quaint stories, but instead as windows into understanding larger historical narratives. I view all individuals, no matter how obscure, as significant historical actors in their own right.

Their collective actions have shaped our communities and profoundly influenced our nation’s history. Living and working in the place where I have focused much of my research attention has also led me to a deeper understanding of the richness and the national significance of this region’s history. At the start of my career, I would not have imagined spending my life studying the history of Missouri. Now, it is hard to imagine researching any other place.

I began to explore Missouri’s history in my first book, *On Slavery’s Border: Missouri’s Small Slaveholding Households, 1815–1865*, which examines how the state’s border location and the small size of slaveholdings that existed here altered the experience of slavery from that in plantation regions. I focused my study on how small-scale slavery affected the families and communities of both the enslaved and enslavers, as well as the many ways their lives intersected. They were bound together by common gender and work experiences, but these intimate relations often exposed enslaved Missourians to slavery’s worst abuses. The demographics of small-scale slaveholdings also meant they often were denied daily access to crucial support systems, such as a resident nuclear family and a slave-quarter community. They compensated by forging family and community ties within the greater slave neighborhood—evidence of adaptability and agency in their lives. The many tensions of border slavery ultimately were exposed by the rapid disintegration of both the white community and the slavery system during the tumultuous years of the Civil War. White and black Missourians’ existence on the borders of slavery, both geographically and figuratively, exposes the diverse experiences of slavery found within the South.

In the years since the publication of the book, I have regularly spoken to public audiences on various aspects of this history.
I also have worked with cultural and historic agencies in the region to develop historically accurate programming to better interpret the history of slavery and to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War. As part of this initiative, I developed a National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks of American History and Culture K–12 teacher workshop called Crossroads of Conflict: Contested Visions of Freedom during the Kansas and Missouri Border Wars to promote the importance of the Missouri–Kansas border conflict to the larger national story. Five different summers, teachers from throughout the nation came for a six-day-long program that featured lectures from prominent Civil War historians and visits to local historic sites and museums.

My growing interest in the Border Wars ultimately took my scholarship in that direction as well. One of my major goals is to expand the historical scholarship on the Civil War history of the region, especially as it relates to the experiences of civilians. As part of this effort, historian Jonathan Earle and I organized a well-attended public symposium that was held at the Kansas City Public Library in 2011. The central role that issues of slavery and race played in the border conflict was at the core of this project. Bleeding Kansas, Bleeding Missouri: The Long Civil War on the Border, an anthology that includes original scholarship from 15 historians, was the product of this effort. The chronological scope of the project is vast: beginning in the years before the Civil War, with the Bleeding Kansas episode; addressing issues of military occupation, the impact of guerrilla warfare on civilians, and the end of slavery during the war; and ending with an examination of the aftermath of the war as the people of the region worked to rebuild their communities after years of political strife and violence. Many of the authors also produced articles for the KC Public Library’s multiple-award-winning website, Civil War on the Western Border.

I have continued this work with new research that focuses on the significant refugee crisis that emerged in the region during the war years. Missouri was the site of Union military occupation and vicious guerrilla warfare due to its politically divided population. Both black and white civilians lived under the threat of violence from their political enemies. Many were forcibly evicted from the region during the war, while others were forced to flee their homes in search of safer places. The response to the growing humanitarian crisis in the region was ultimately inadequate.

Although my work has primarily focused on the 19th century, my goal to generate new scholarship on the region has occasionally taken me out of my chronological comfort zone. A recent collaboration with the Kansas City Public Library resulted in a project that examines the political, social, and cultural history of Kansas City in the years between the two world wars. This project included a well-attended public conference at the KC Public Library, a website called The Pendergast Years: Kansas City in the Jazz Age & Great Depression, and a volume of new scholarship entitled Wide-Open Town: Kansas City in the Pendergast Years. Although it focuses on the 20th century, this project also examines the issues of race, class, and gender that have influenced my other scholarship.

Throughout my years of uncovering and telling the stories of the everyday people of this region, I have worked to reveal their connection to the larger story of American political and economic development, race relations, and cultural transformation. In the process, I hope to convince people that the stories of individual men, women, and children matter and that the history of this particular place holds greater significance. I appreciate that Missouri Humanities views these goals as worthy and has generously supported my many efforts.
Today, the most important thing for our cultural sites and museums to do is to simply tell their story. Sounds simple, right? We all know our stories, but how effectively are we able to share that information? The Perry County Heritage Tourism office in Perryville, Missouri is committed to educating and providing resources to its local and regional cultural sites and museums, expanding their knowledge and skills to enhance their sites and to strengthen their ability to promote what is truly unique and special about each one of them.

Missouri Humanities has created several opportunities for such areas of growth, and Perry County has been quick to take every advantage of these informational workshops, events, and cultural opportunities.

In August 2018, Perry County hosted a regional cultural heritage workshop with Missouri Humanities focusing on multiple topics that historical societies, museums, and cultural sites struggle with, such as social media, websites, grants, creative content, and writing strategies. The workshop drew attendees from a hundred-mile radius, and they came loaded with questions and examples for our experienced presenters. They learned not only from the presentations but from others in their fields, sharing tips and ideas and networking among their colleagues. The relationships that transpired that day among the attendees have helped strengthen our ability to promote ourselves and support our neighbors regionally.

Perry County is also working with Missouri Humanities to be named a German Heritage Corridor. From as early as the 1820s, German immigrants have settled in Perry County. From the Saxon Lutherans...
and Bavarians to the German Catholics of Baden, generations of Perry Countians have been passing down their German culture from fathers to sons and mothers to daughters. In a community where German influences are such a large part of our daily lives, what should be apparent sometimes eludes us. In our efforts to record our German attributes, we will be rediscovering places, people, and things that time has faded. Some are obvious, such as the communities of Altenburg and Frohna, which were named by immigrants settling here. It is said that this land reminded them of their homelands in Germany. The process of compiling this German inventory has brought about many conversations among long-time residents, area researchers, and local historians reengaging people once again in their family heritage.

This summer, Perryville will host another Missouri Humanities event: “Digitizing Missouri’s German Heritage.” This two-day open house event will allow Missouri Humanities to document and digitize original objects with local connections to German heritage. Perry County has such deep roots tying back to multiple German immigration groups that we anticipate a big turnout with some amazing artifacts to surface and catalog.

As we continue to document the history and share the cultural heritage of Perry County, we are grateful to Missouri Humanities for their partnership and support. The programs that Perry County Heritage Tourism has brought to our region through MH have opened and continue to open doors to other opportunities, other places, and other minds—both local and distant—bridging the not-so-distant-anymore gap between the people of Perry County and their native lands in Germany.
Translating Between Cultures

SUSANNE EVENS
MH BOARD TREASURER
& AWARDS CO-CHAIR

Growing up in a small German village, my lifestyle was focused around riding horses and learning about different countries and cultures. Studying English in school was part of the curriculum, which led me to watch old American shows on German TV, which were dubbed, but also AFN (American Forces Network), which helped me with my English skills. Studying British English in school and listening to American TV raised my interest in American culture.

That’s how I realized that the key to understanding other people and their culture is to study and speak their language. In school, we not only had English conversations, but we also had to translate different kind of texts, which I really enjoyed. When I was sixteen years old, just for fun and because it was free, I put an ad in the local newspaper, offering English-to-German translations. To my own surprise, I received a phone call from a local businessman who needed an official letter translated. He came to my parents’ house, I translated for him, and he was pleased with my work and even paid me! From that moment, my fate was sealed. Translating felt exactly like what I wanted to do for a living.

Fast-forward a few years, and I left my job as a translator at Hewlett-Packard Germany, sold everything I owned, and embarked on a journey around the U.S. for a year. During that trip, my English—classroom English, TV English—got richer because I gained something priceless: a real connection to actual people who grew up speaking it. My English got grounded. It was also getting richer every day by traveling through the many parts of the U.S. and learning new dialects. That’s what learning a foreign language is all about: a constant effort of improving and learning more.

Immersing in foreign languages (I also studied Italian, French, Spanish, and Russian, a totally new alphabet!) was probably the most exciting adventure of my life. It means so much more than just getting to know another system of signs, its words, and its grammar. It means getting to know different ways of thinking, since the language really does shape our minds.
That's why I always considered translation an important task and wanted to facilitate this understanding by translating for others. A good translation is about getting to the bottom of things. One is not merely translating or switching the words from one language to another, as many people think of a translator’s task. You’re translating the context and the culture. You need to know what the people’s world is to really know what they’re talking about. It’s also about the tone, the cadence of the sentences. There are so many things that can go wrong, especially in literary translation.

In 1994, I started German Language Communications, which later turned into AAA Translation, offering over 100 languages. We work only with experienced and certified in-country translators who know local culture inside and out, because translating between languages is translating between cultures.

Learning other languages and cultures is a crucial part of the humanities. In some way, humanities are equivalent to the translation: it’s all about seeking common ground and finding a connection between humans.

When I moved to St. Louis, I was surprised how European its architecture looked, and I fell in love with it. I studied St. Louis’s history and learned how much the Germans contributed to St. Louis’s growth, how many German newspapers were available into the twentieth century, and how many industries are still available today.

In the 1880s, one St. Louisan in four claimed some ethnicity; Germans accounted for slightly more than half. The Germans established their own neighborhoods, churches, schools, and businesses. I felt at home!

In order to get back to my roots, I got involved with St. Louis–Stuttgart Sister Cities, of which I have been the president since 2006. I love showcasing the St. Louis region to visitors from Stuttgart, and in turn, they keep coming back to explore it more and more, as they like it as much as I do.

As an active board member of the Missouri Humanities, I embrace learning even more about my ancestors and help promote Missouri’s rich cultural heritage.

If I had stayed in Germany, I’d probably be doing something equivalent there, connecting my local community with another one across the world. It really doesn’t matter if we speak different languages; deep down, we’re all the same.
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INDIAN REMOVAL AND THE BIRTH OF THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

STEVE BELKO, PH.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MH

So just when was that seminal moment that gave birth to a national women’s movement in the United States? Few could deny it was in 1848, at the Seneca Falls Convention in New York, widely accepted as the first women’s rights convention in our nation’s history, the first official push for women’s suffrage. Here, as the Age of Jackson came to a close, the august body adopted the Declaration of Sentiments, calling for female equality in all aspects of life, and especially for political equality—namely, the right to vote. This document became the rallying point for women in the decades following the convention, inspiring other women’s rights leaders, such as Susan B. Anthony, and earning praises from leading social rights figureheads of that era, from Horace Greeley to Frederick Douglass.

But would it shock the general public, then, to suggest that the birth of the women’s movement came not at the end of the Jacksonian Era (1815–1850), but at its onset—not in 1848 in New York, in the North, but in 1817 in Cherokee country, in the South? And what if that movement to gain denied political rights had nothing at all to do with suffrage, but rather with the very right of self-preservation, of self-determination, of the right to remain a people on one’s ancestral lands? Well, folks, just such an argument can be made.

To begin, then, let us bind together the theme of this particular issue—the advance of women’s rights—and a prevailing theme of past issues—the recognition of Native-American heritage. Here may be the real birth of the women’s movement in our history—that is, in women’s opposition to exchange Indian lands in the East for lands in the West, well beyond the Mississippi River. The opposition to Indian removal during the

Savannah, Mindy, Lyndsay, and AJ.
1820s, not the support of universal equality and political enfranchisement in the 1840s, gave rise to the first national women’s movement in American history. It was to save indigenous rights, not to promote women’s rights, that all should turn. And while the first suffragettes eventually achieved, albeit over a century’s time, nearly all of the objectives enumerated in the Declaration of Sentiments, those first reformers opposing Indian removal (and the consequent fears of eventual Native extermination) failed altogether. But most victories in life rarely succeed in the beginning, and here is a quintessential example.

As congressional legislation authorizing Indian removal became almost certain on the eve of 1830, women—who had until that point in American history been consigned in the public realm to activities mostly benevolent in nature—now had a political issue on which to rally. Women had long deemed the ill treatment of Native Americans as immoral, and they backed their words with money, as they funded the efforts of missionary societies—but the moral facet fell well within their domain. With the specter of Indian removal, which many women felt would be the end of the Indian, women now entered into the political arena. One of the nation’s more renowned educators, Catherine Beecher (sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe), took the lead, issuing a widely disseminated circular in 1829 calling on women across the country to petition Congress in the name of defeating legislation removing the Indians westward.

In reference to slavery, Thomas Jefferson had famously declared in 1781 that “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just.” Beecher reaffirmed this fear for her country in 1829, but in reference in this instance to the treatment of Native Americans. The “calamities now hanging over them” not only threatened their very existence, “but, if there is a Being who avenges the wrongs of the oppressed,” she admonished, then these “calamities” were “causes of alarm to our whole country.”

What had the Indian done to deserve such reprehensible treatment, queried Beecher. When our forefathers sought refuge on the shores of America from old-world oppression, had the Indians not supplied the necessities for survival and “ministered to their comfort”? Had the Indians not fought bravely “for their existences and their country” when Europeans aggressively and greedily encroached upon Native lands? And, yet, far too often, had the Indian “not shed his blood to protect and sustain our infant nation?” In the case of the Cherokee, had they not played by white rules and adopted white ways; that is, had they not instituted a government and formalized laws, accepted agricultural practices yielding flourishing fields, created a written language, and “by the printing press,” sent forward among their people “the principles of knowledge, and liberty, and religion”?

It behooved the federal government, therefore, to save what remained of this great race of man, and so Beecher implored federal officials to intervene on behalf of the Indians, for she recognized correctly that the “states which surround them are taking such measures as will speedily drive them from their country, and cause their final extinction.” Allow this expropriation to continue, Beecher predicted, and it would “become almost a certainty that these people are to have their lands torn from them, and to be driven into western wilds and to final annihilation, unless the feelings of a humane and Christian nation shall be aroused to prevent the unhallowed sacrifice.” Unfortunately for the cause of the Native American in the early 19th century, Beecher obviously
failed to recognize the prevailing political realities of the day: that Congress—and the executive branch as well—were little more than the creatures of powerful states composed of powerful private interests. Those puppet political bodies at the national level answered to their masters, and the masters demanded removal.

And so it behooved womankind to intervene on behalf of the Indians. “Have not the females of this country some duties devolving upon them in relation to this hapless race?” Beecher pleaded. “It may be, that female petitioners can lawfully be heard, even by the highest rulers of our land.” And with this call, Beecher stepped out of the traditional bounds of the prevalent “cult of domesticity” and into the political arena, considered the sole domain of men. But she did present a caveat—women were above the vices inherent to political operations. Women were protected somehow from the “blinding influence of party spirit” and the “asperities of political violence.” They had nothing to do with the incessant struggle for power. “To woman it is given to administer the sweet charities of life, and to sway the empire of affection.” Whether this was subterfuge, or camouflage, is debatable, but one thing is certain: Beecher had, wittingly or unwittingly, stepped into the political ring, asking women to undertake a political action by petitioning the government for a redress of grievances, and thus arguably launched the first women’s movement—and not for their own progress, but for the well-being of another race.

“This communication was written and sent abroad solely by the female hand. Let every woman who peruses it, exert that influence in society which falls within her lawful province, and endeavour be every suitable expedient to interest the feelings of her friends, relatives, and acquaintances, in behalf of this people, that are ready to perish. A few weeks must decide this interesting and important question, and after that time sympathy and regret will all be in vain.”

Catherine Beecher, Circular; Addressed to Benevolent Ladies of the U. States, December 25, 1829.

Beecher’s call met with great success, as women indeed heeded the call to petition Congress on behalf of Native rights. Their efforts failed, however, and Congress passed and the president signed into law the Indian Removal Act in May of 1830. The rest is history. Still, we must recognize women’s efforts to halt this tragedy as the birthplace of the movement to achieve political rights. “Opposition to Indian removal,” one eminent historian rightly asserted, “politically empowered women in the United States and provided them with a public voice despite their disenfranchisement.”

But women’s opposition to Indian removal—arguably the first national political movement by women—did not really commence with white women; it could arguably be assigned to those most affected by Indian removal, Native-American women. Indeed, Cherokee women spearheaded the first female resistance to the policy of removal—and they did so over a decade before Beecher disseminated her circular.

As a result of European contact, Native societies experienced a widening division between the traditional relationship of male and female, with a consequent and marked shift of political authority going to men by the end
of the 18th century. As in the dominant white society, “civilization” meant that Native women fell further from the realm of politics. Yet with the onset of the removal threat, Native women raised their voices. While Beecher and her disciples beseeched Congress to defeat removal in late 1829, a group of Cherokee women, led by their own Beecher, a War Woman known as Nancy Ward (her indigenous name, Nanyehi), petitioned the Cherokee National Council in opposition to removal—and they did so over a decade before Beecher, in 1817 and 1818, when the removal policy really began—under President Monroe, not President Jackson.

The Monroe Administration (1817–1825) believed that in order to save the Indian from certain annihilation, it was necessary to remove them out of the way of the white man, where, in lands they deemed isolated and far away from white influence, the gradual process of “civilization” could succeed. In his second inaugural address, Monroe contended that past policies concerning Native Americans had failed, and so he urged Congress to adopt a plan ensuring that the Indian’s “sovereignty over vast territories should cease.” In his last annual message to Congress, in December of 1824, Monroe again asked Congress to develop some well-designed plan to rescue what remained of Native America from the relentless expansion of white Americans. The president recommended that the land between the Rocky Mountains and the existing states and territories be divided into districts (with the agreement of tribes already living in that region), and that civil governments and schools be established in each. Finally, in a special message to Congress in January of 1825, Monroe recommended the removal of all the Indians east of the Mississippi River to a settlement west of the state of Missouri and the Arkansas Territory. The U.S. Senate responded accordingly and passed such legislation, but the Georgia delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives killed the bill. Legislation to implement Indian removal would have to wait another five years until the administration of Andrew Jackson.

But even before Monroe’s public pronouncements pushing for congressional legislation legitimizing the proposed policy of Indian removal during his second term in office, the president had already initiated an energetic removal policy in his first term. Starting in 1818, removal treaties had been negotiated with the Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole in the South, and the Chippewa and Ottawa in the North. With the specter of removal looming around them, Cherokee women, led by Nancy Ward, protested publicly to their male political leaders. In May 1817, the “Cherokee ladys” attended a meeting of the Cherokee council to address “their beloved chiefs and warriors.”

“We have raised all of you on the land which we now have, which God gave us to inhabit and raise provisions,” but that once extensive expanse of territory, through “repeated sales,” stood quite circumscribed. As such, “your mothers, your sisters ask and beg of you not to part with any more of our land,” demanded Ward. Our land, she emphasized, for “you are our descendants.” Keep our land for our “growing children.” Keep your hands off of paper talks” for it is “our own country.”

The following June, in 1818, Ward and her followers again convened “among ourselves to consult on the different points now before the council, relating to our national affairs.” The women petitioned “our beloved children, the head men & warriors” to hold out to the last “in support of our common rights,” as first settlers of the land, as first claimants of “the right of the soil.”
Cherokee women had entered the political arena, a field deemed the domain of men, and asserted their unanimity “to hold our country in common as hitherto.”

Ward was not just some concerned female from the common ranks. She carried some clout in Cherokee circles. Ward certainly had done her “womanly duties” assisting war parties in the past, such as cooking and carrying water, but she had also rallied warriors in battle following her husband’s death in 1755, and she supported the Patriots during the American Revolution in the cause of Independence. Now, in one of those tragic ironies, she was again fighting for the cause of independence—that of her people, the Cherokee. The political equality these Cherokee women exercised—in 1817 and 1818—intended to save their country, their way of life. Not to downplay or disparage Beecher and those that followed her in the first white women’s movement—whether in 1829 or in 1848—but seeking political equality at the ballot box, or in the courts, or in the household itself—that is, to alter an established way of life—pales in comparison to those women seeking to save their people, all of their people, altogether. Maybe there is a bit of irony in the fact that after women gained the right of suffrage in 1920, the American Indian gained the right of citizenship four years later?

For that matter, what irony it is that a community comprising not one, but two, of the Antebellum era’s discernible disenfranchised—women and Native American—made a major contribution to our country’s nascent women’s movement. Nancy Ward and her Cherokee followers sadly failed in their cause, while Catherine Beecher and her compatriots—Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton—are all well-recognized legends who go down in history as prominent political reformers, and who widely and justifiably receive accolades for their eventual achievements that occurred in the century after they passed (even gracing U.S. currency, Sacajawea aside). But Nancy Ward and her supporters seemingly remain in oblivion, and they paid the ultimate price. So where is their memorial to the women’s movement? How fitting that to the First Peoples we might attribute the onset of the first push for women’s rights in American history.

“We the females... believing that the present difficulties and embarrassments under which this nation is placed demands a full expression of the mind of every individual, on the subject of emigrating to Arkansas, would take upon ourselves to address you. Although it is not common for our sex to take part in public measures, we nevertheless feel justified in expressing our sentiments on any subject where our interest is as much at stake as any other part of the community. We believe the present plan of the General Government to effect our removal West of the Mississippi, and thus obtain our lands for the use of the State of Georgia, to be highly oppressive, cruel and unjust.”

Cherokee Women, Petition, October 17, 1831
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LEFT: Cover photo from Proud to Be, Volume 7: “Patrolling the Arghandab” by Breanne M. Pye.