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National  
Women's  
History  
Museum

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A Different Point of View

## NWHM to Sponsor Event on Belva Lockwood

Members of the National Women's History Museum (NWHM) and their guests are invited to attend a discussion of the book *Belva Lockwood: The Woman Who Would Be President*, followed by a reception. Author Jill Norgren, Professor Emerita of Government, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the Graduate Center, at the City University of New York, will discuss her work with commentary provided by John Ferrer, Senior Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and Wendy W. Williams, Professor of Law at Georgetown University. This program will take place at the Woodrow Wilson Center on Thursday, March 22, 2007 from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Lockwood was a trailblazer in law and politics. In the 1870s at forty years old, Belva Lockwood fought to be admitted into law school. After being accepted at the National University of Law School (George Washington University), she then had to fight to have her diploma granted as her classmates objected to graduating with a woman.

Degree in hand, she then had to fight for the right to present cases before the Supreme Court as a woman. As a lawyer, she took on many cases that stood up for the civil rights of others. In 1884, Belva Lockwood accepted the nomination of the Equal Rights Party and ran for President, although she was not even able to vote for herself. Lockwood went on to have a successful practice in Washington D.C. and be an inspiration and mentor to other women lawyers of her time and beyond.



Belva Lockwood

The panel discussion will take place between 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 22, 2007, in the 5th floor Conference room at the Woodrow Wilson Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington DC. The reception will follow immediately after the formal program. You are requested to RSVP either to the Wilson Center (<http://www.wilsoncenter.org>) or NWHM at (703) 813-6209 or email us at [info@nwhm.org](mailto:info@nwhm.org). Directions are available on the Wilson Center website or by calling NWHM.

In addition to the NWHM, this event is co-sponsored by the Division of United States Studies at the Woodrow Wilson Center, the National Women's Law Center and the George Washington University Women's Studies Program.

### SAVE THE DATE!!!

On March 5, 2007, NWHM will sponsor an event to honor state and federal women legislators at the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum in Washington, DC. The National Foundation for Women Legislators and the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum will cosponsor the event. Visit the NWHM Web site ([www.nwhm.org](http://www.nwhm.org)) in the coming weeks for details.

## New Online Exhibit Launch Featuring Clandestine Women

The National Women's History Museum continues to add new exhibits to fill in the missing pieces of American history. Women have served effectively in the shadowy world of espionage as couriers, guides, code breakers, intelligence analysts, and as spies. NWHM's new online exhibit *Clandestine Women: Spies Throughout American History* highlights American women who made significant intelligence contributions during the American Revolution, Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Cold War.



Mary Elizabeth  
Bowser

During the American Revolution, women like Anna "Nancy" Smith Strong used laundry on her clothesline to send secret messages about the movement of British troops. Loyalists like Ann Bates provided detailed reports to the British concerning the equipment and strategic planning of rebel colonists. Other women such as Elizabeth Burgin and Nancy Ward successfully helped prisoners of war to escape.

During the Civil War, women such as Rose O'Neal Greenhow and Emeline Pigott used their social contacts to gather information from the enemy. Antonia Ford Willard, Elizabeth Van Lew, and others acted as couriers delivering intelligence. Women like Mary Elizabeth Bowser and Sarah Emma Edmonds went undercover to gather information: Bowser posed as a servant in the home of Confederacy President Jefferson Davis and Edmonds disguised herself as a man and enlisted as a soldier in the Confederate army. Women such as Harriet Tubman and Nancy Hart acted as scouts and spies, Tubman for the Union and Hart for the Confederacy.

In the short time that the U.S. fought during World War I, women worked as translators, telephone operators, drivers and cryptologists. Advancements in communication technology meant that .....

story continued inside

Celebrating Our Past  
Inspiring Our Future

Winter 2007

## CELEBRATE THESE WOMEN BORN IN WINTER

Rejected by 29 medical schools before Geneva Medical College accepted her in 1847, Dr. **Elizabeth Blackwell** (2/3/1821) was the first woman in America to graduate from medical school (and she did so at the top of her class).



Facing opposition to work within the New York City hospitals, she instead co-founded the New York Infirmary for Women and Children in 1857 with her sister Dr. Emily Blackwell, and their colleague Dr. Marie Zakrzewska. In 1868 she founded a Women's Medical College in New York City, which in turn affected the lives and careers of other female doctors. Her influence expanded beyond New York to London, where she founded the National Health Society and was the first woman to be placed on the British Medical Register.



**Hattie Wyatt Caraway** (2/1/1875) was the first woman elected to serve in the United States Senate. Born in Tennessee, she graduated from college in 1896,

where she met her husband. They moved to Arkansas, and her husband was elected to Congress in 1912 and the U.S. Senate in 1920. When he died suddenly in 1931, Hattie was appointed to serve in his place and a special election confirmed the appointment. She began to gain a reputation for supporting President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, particularly on matters affecting veterans and unions. She was re-elected once, and during her second term she co-sponsored the Equal Rights Amendment. She left the Senate in 1945 and continued her career in public service through appointments by Roosevelt to the U.S. Employees' Compensation Commission and later to the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board.



Raised by abolitionist family in a home on the Underground Railroad, **Matilda Joslyn Gage** (3/24/1826) grew up to be not only an abolitionist, but a suffragist.

Native American rights. She was adopted into the wolf clan of the Mohawk nation and argued for their non-gendered biased form of government. She was a part of the leading triumvirate of the National Woman Suffrage

Association (NWSA), along with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. In order to fight movements to unite church and state, she founded the Women's National Liberal Union in 1890 and published works outlining the issues. After a life of activism, her grave-stone aptly reads, "There is a word sweeter than Mother, Home or Heaven; that word is Liberty."

Born on an Indian reservation in Oklahoma, **Maria Tallchief** (1/24/1925) studied ballet as a child in Oklahoma and then in Los Angeles. After high school she joined the Ballet



Russe de Monte Carlo in New York City where she achieved soloist status. Married to George Balanchine, they collaborated in Paris and New York. Together, they founded the New York City Ballet. When their personal relationship ended, she continued to command roles at prestigious ballet companies. She retired in 1965 and began to teach as the artistic director of the Chicago Lyric Opera Ballet. She would go on to found the Chicago City Ballet, cementing her influence within the field of dance.

## Spies Exhibit (continued from front page)

radio, telephone, and telegraph networks were utilized to both pass along intelligence and to intercept the communications of the enemy. Women like Elizabeth S. Friedman, Ruth Wilson, and Agnes Meyer Driscoll were essential cryptographers.

Espionage efforts grew more elaborate during World War II. Women continued to work as cryptologists and as clerical and operational members of the Office of Secret Services (OSS). Women like Virginia Hall, Maria Gulovich, and Amy Elizabeth Thorpe went overseas and worked undercover to secure information, capture enemies, and rescue American prisoners. Some women worked in the Morale Operations division of the OSS and helped weaken the enemy's resolve. For example, Elizabeth P. McIntosh rewrote intercepted Japanese soldiers' postcards, to make it sound like the Japanese had no chance of succeeding.

Saving in administrative, support, technical, and operational roles, women intelligence professionals made innumerable contributions to the American cause during the Cold War. Women such as Genevieve Feinstein and Wilma Davis worked as cryptanalysts while linguists like Marie Meyer worked on intercepting and interpreting Russian correspondences. Some women were able to rise through the ranks of the intelligence organizations to hold important managerial roles, such as Juanita Moody who headed the National Security Agency's Signals Intelligence division. Since the end of the Cold War, others have broken the "glass ceiling," such as Nora Slatkin who became executive director of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1995.

The true contribution of women over the last fifty years remains mostly unknown as the information is classified. But just as in prior time periods in American history, in time their work to advance America's national security will be revealed. The exhibit can be accessed on the drop down menu of the NWHM homepage ([www.nwhm.org](http://www.nwhm.org)) under CyberMuseum, or can be accessed by going directly to this Web link: [www.nwhm.org/spies/1.htm](http://www.nwhm.org/spies/1.htm).

## Margaret E. Knight: 19th Century Inventor

Ask about the role of American women in the 19th century Industrial Revolution, and you may be told of women who worked in the New England textile mills. But the story does not end there. Fascinated by tools and machinery, **Margaret E. Knight (1838-1914)** applied her natural creative genius while working at various factories that improved productivity and saved lives. Knight was fortunate that her family allowed her to pursue these unconventional interests during her childhood in Maine. Knight received little schooling and never traveled out of northern New England, instead joining her brothers in factory work.

Before electricity, manufacturers built their facilities along rapidly flowing water, preferably waterfalls, which provided the energy to turn the waterwheels that powered the belts that turned the wheels inside the factory. In many times, mills expanded from producing lumber and processing grains to manufacturing many types of goods, such as fabric and shoes which families formerly made completely and tediously by hand. Knight's New England was soon was dotted with textile mills and shoe manufacturers.

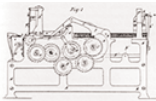
While it was water that powered factory machinery, it was women who ran those machines - almost all of them young. Scratching out a living from rocky soil in a cold climate always had been difficult, and countless families sent their teenage daughters to work in the new factories. Often these daughters earned more cash money than their fathers and brothers who remained on the farm.

While Knight was one of these factory girls, she was different from most with her keen eye and mind for inventions. She reportedly made her first invention at age twelve, when she saw a shuttle fly from a machine and injure a worker in Manchester, New Hampshire. These accidents were not uncommon, and young Knight solved the problem in that factory by creating a stop-motion device. She was too young and her family too uneducated, however, to patent the idea and make money from its resale.

That was in 1850; it was not until 1870 that Knight finally applied for her first patent - and then she had to fight for it. She was working during the late 1860s for a paper bag manufacturer in Springfield, Massachusetts. Her keen mechanical mind envisioned a machine that could do the necessary folding of square-bottom paper bags, the kind of bag that still is used today. Knight built a wooden model of her creative folding device and took it to Boston to be cast into iron. There a man, Charles Annan, saw her work and stole her idea: when, a few months later, she perfected the machine and applied for its patent, his was already on file. The Patent Office investigated the Knight vs. Annan dispute, and in a rare victory for women in that era, issued the patent to her.

Over her lifetime, she received at least twenty-seven patents; some sources claim that she held more than eighty. Most of her patents related to working with heavy machinery. She methodically thought out the problems of an industry and worked on solutions for several years: she devoted the first half of the 1890s, for example, engineering mechanical changes that improved shoe manufacturing. Although she was in her sixties when the automobile was introduced at the turn of the century, she nevertheless patented a series of rotary engine designs prior to her death in 1914.

Although Margaret Knight never became wealthy from her inventions, she appeared to enjoy her creative life -- and she certainly provided a positive role model for other girls.



Knight's paper bag machine



## Letter from our President

In this issue we profile NWHM's latest CyberExhibit that illustrates how women throughout American history have participated in activities that are traditionally attributed solely to men, like warfare and espionage.

This online exhibition is made possible largely through the collaboration of volunteers that enable NWHM to leverage its staff resources. Over the years, NWHM has enjoyed the services of student interns who develop CyberExhibits under the direction of mentors who provide guidance and have ultimate control over the quality of the final product. In the case of the Spies CyberExhibit, we are grateful for the guiding hand of Linda McCarthy, who curated the CIA's exhibition and has served as a consultant on various projects, including the International Spy Museum. Other mentors include NWHM Board Member Doris Weatherford, author of many books on women's history, and Edith Mayo, curator emerita of the Smithsonian Institution Museum of American History.

Working together, using the electronic medium of the Internet, NWHM can literally reach the world to propagate the message that women have always been a central force in building American society.

Best regards,

Susan B. Jollie  
President

## Honoring Elna Grahn

In her life, NWHM Charter Member Elna Jane Hillard Grahn from Moscow, Idaho, exemplified the varied kinds of contributions that women have made to America. Even in death, she continues this legacy through a generous bequest to the National Women's History Museum to support programs that will serve as an inspiration for generations to come.

Elna Jane Hillard was born on November 15, 1913 in Wisconsin. During WWII, she served in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) and later the Women's Army Corps (WAC). In the WAAC, she headed up a secret Army experiment to determine how women could be used as members of anti-aircraft batteries. She later learned that this experiment was proposed by General George Marshall. She was the first woman to serve on an Army General Court Martial, and commanded the 2525th WAC unit in Fort Myer, VA. She was later promoted to Major and awarded the Army Commendation Medal.

Her teaching career in mathematics after the end of WWII spanned nearly three decades and three different levels of education, culminating in a teaching position at the University of Idaho. She married a fellow faculty member, Edgar Grahn in 1950, and eventually retired Professor Emerita from the University of Idaho in 1969.

Upon her retirement from the University, Grahn published a book detailing her life during World War II entitled in the Company of WACs. Throughout her life, she was an active member of many organizations that advance women's causes, including the Idaho Commission of Women's Programs, the Moscow League of Women Voters of which she served as President, and the American Association of University Women. She has been a charter member of the National Women's History Museum since 2002.

Mrs. Grahn, who died on August 3, 2006, generously provided that NWHM would receive a share of her estate which amounted to \$95,500. Her generosity is an extension of a life that was devoted to teaching, community, and country. NWHM is committed to acknowledging the contributions of Grahn and the countless millions of women like her who have made our communities better because of their service.

## Make a Charitable Gift to the NWHM from Your IRA

Did you know that if you are over the age of 70 ½, you can make a tax-free withdrawal from your individual retirement account (IRA) through December 31, 2007, if the money is donated directly to a charity, such as the National Women's History Museum?

Under the Pension Portability Act of 2006, people over age 70 ½ can donate up to \$100,000 a year without being taxed. After the age of 70 ½, individuals must withdraw minimum amounts from their IRA each year and the withdrawal is subject to income tax.

To make an eligible gift, your IRA custodian has to make a transfer directly to your designated charity. We hope you will consider donating to the National Women's History Museum - our important work of recognizing the contributions of women throughout American history is dependent solely on donations.

## Other News:

**EVENTS:** Find women's history events in your area on the NWHM Web site at [http://www.nwhm.org/Calendar/events\\_calendar.html](http://www.nwhm.org/Calendar/events_calendar.html).

**NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SUMMER INTERNS!** Interested in women's history? Want to help establish a national women's history museum in the nation's capital? Go to the NWHM Web site ([www.nwhm.org](http://www.nwhm.org)), call 703-813-6209, or e-mail [info@nwhm.org](mailto:info@nwhm.org) to find out more about this wonderful opportunity or to submit your resume.

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATES:** If your name is misspelled or you receive multiple copies of the newsletter, please contact us at: P.O. Box 1296, Annandale, VA 22003. Or you can e-mail us at [staff@nwhm.org](mailto:staff@nwhm.org). Please type *Membership Update* in the subject line.