



# The Herstory Chronicles

Newsletter of the Women's History Project of Northwest Michigan

December 2012

## Welcome to our new board member

The board members of the Women's History Project of Northwest Michigan (WHPNM) are pleased to have **Amy Barrett** join us as our newest member.

Amy comes to us well prepared for the work of preserving women's voices of today for future study and research. She holds a degree in Master of Science in Information with an archive specialization from the University of Michigan.

Amy is a reference librarian at the Woodmere Branch of the Traverse Area District Library (TADL). In addition to her time spent serving the public at the reference desk she is responsible for the district-wide local history initiative. In this capacity she is charged with organizing and making collections held by local public libraries available and accessible to the general public.

Prior to joining the staff of the TADL in April 2011, Amy

(See Barrett on p. 2)



## Annual Souper Sunday Escape

**Sunday, February 3, 2-4 pm, History Center**

Not into football? Escape with us to Greenland!

Come and let Mary Murphy enthrall you with her tales of dogsleds instead of 'first downs' and icebergs instead of touchdowns.

*"Flying across the ice being pulled by 13 Greenland dogs; hunting seals with Inuit hunters; living on the ice for 12 days was the experience of a lifetime. The scenery of all white consisted of pack ice, glaciers, mountains, and magnificent icebergs. We were merged into the Inuit culture where they only travel by dogsled and kayak. It was going back 1,000 years in time. The temperatures were between -25F and +10 F. We visited the northern-most village where any of the Inuits lived, 48 of them. We went 600 miles north of the farthest northern point in Alaska. This adventure was psychologically challenging. There were great life lessons learned from the Inuits." —Mary Murphy on her recent trip to Greenland*

The public is invited to this annual tradition featuring a hearty lunch of soup, bread, and dessert.

*A donation of \$5 is suggested.*

Make a reservation so we don't run out of soup!  
Call or email Sandy: 421-3343; [sansep19@earthlink.net](mailto:sansep19@earthlink.net).

**You don't want to miss this mid-winter treat.**

**Please join us!**

**Grand Traverse History Center ▼ 322 Sixth Street ▼ Traverse City, Michigan 49684  
231.995.0313 ▼ [www.whpnm.org](http://www.whpnm.org) ▼ [admin@whpnm.org](mailto:admin@whpnm.org)**

## Celebrating women's accomplishments

by Kathi Houston, president

Starting with the inspirational “Souper” Sunday last February presented by local world traveler Mary Murphy, 2012 has been an eventful year for the Women’s History Project in a number of ways.

Mary’s talk and slideshow about her fabulous trip by small ship to Antarctica piqued people’s imaginations. Women often look to other women for inspiration and strength. We are all looking forward to having Mary join us again this year to share tales of her 2012 adventure in Greenland.

Continuing to honor our mission of recognizing and highlighting the accomplishments of women in the Grand Traverse area, we became involved in the Legends Project, which was developed by History Center archivist Peg Siciliano. Board member

Carolyn Micklatcher serves on the work group, who, with Peg, made the idea a reality.

As active partners in the History Center, several board members have learned basic archiving skills and are starting to make our collection of oral histories be more easily accessible to researchers. We also continue to update our list of potential interviewees and add to our collection.

The Northwestern Michigan College Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) program last spring still resonates by reminding us that our grandmothers, along with many other women, came before and paved our way.

Our final program of this year introduced us to three of the women who didn’t give up after more than 50 years of actively insisting that women should have the right to vote: Carrie Catt, Katherine McCormick, and Maud Park. In this intense

election year, recognizing that women were seen as a force for decision made many pause and remember times when our voices were barely heard.

As we begin our new year as a board, we welcome newly elected board member Amy Barritt, plus PTK representative, Marcela Anderson. Further, we welcome the assistance of current student and former PTK representative Shauna Quick, who already has helped us work with some of the digital technology that is new to many.

Looking ahead, the board has made the commitment to review our strategic plan and decide what our next steps may be.

Consider making an active contribution to this group by joining our conversations and giving input that will help determine our direction.

## Tax time is coming

By Etta Rajkovich

As we near the end of the calendar year, we begin to think about what can be deducted on our income taxes.

The Women’s History Project of NW Michigan is a 501(c)(3) organization. As such, your dues and contributions are deductible on your federal income taxes. Donations made at our various events may not be deductible. Consult with your tax advisor.

**Barritt** continued from p. 1

spent a year volunteering for AmeriCorps where she tutored students at a high school near Seattle, Washington. Amy resides in Kingsley where she grew up.

Amy has studied our bylaws, has been a regular reader of the WHPNM newsletter, *Herstory*, and is “looking forward to a productive term on the board and bringing fresh eyes and energy toward collecting and making



### WHPNM Mission

*To preserve and recognize the contributions of women to their families and communities in northwest lower Michigan.*

women’s voices available to the public.”

Amy is enthusiastic and uniquely prepared for a position on the WHPNM Board of Directors, all of whom are pleased with her appointment.

## Suffragists guests at annual meeting

By Jane Purkis

Three suffragists, who were instrumental in getting the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment passed, were our guests at the annual meeting on October 27. They were **Carrie Chapman Catt** (portrayed by board member Jane Purkis), **Maud Wood Park (Greta Bolger)** and **Catherine Dexter McCormick (Susanne Glynn)**. They really looked the part, dressed in period clothing by **Nancy Bordine**.

Catt, the chosen successor of Susan B. Anthony, was a tireless leader of the National Woman Suffrage Association. She believed in working with President Wilson and Congress rather than the militant approach of Alice Paul.

Park was an unrelenting lobbyist for the suffrage amendment.

McCormick, a Michigan native, also worked for suffrage on the national and state level.

The three women were colleagues and had great respect for each other. Incidentally, all three were college-educated and had family and financial backing



for their cause.

At the final "Victory" convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, Catt persuaded the delegates to reconvene as the League of Women Voters with the following goals: to take the lead in eliminating any remaining legal discrimination against and help to ensure that democracy was secure enough to provide for a secure world.

Catt was elected honorary president of the League for life but Park was the actual president off and on for several years. Catt spent the rest of her life working for women's suffrage and peace throughout the world.

Park continued to lobby Congress for women's rights legislation and devoted herself to

writing both books and plays.

McCormick, who was well acquainted with Margaret Sanger, devoted the rest of her life to providing safe birth control for women. She often traveled back and forth to Europe and on each trip she would purchase many new dresses and would have diaphragms sewn into the linings. Importing birth control devices was illegal but she was never caught. After her husband's death, she had the financial ability to single handedly finance the development of the first birth control pill, which didn't make it onto the market until 1960 when McCormick was 85.

These women were very proud of the role they played in winning the right to vote for all their sisters.

Following their presentation, **Donna Hornberger** (as herself), president of the Grand Traverse League of Women voters, updated everyone on the League's current activities.

### Driving for the vote

The following is from the *Record-Eagle* on October 29, 2012, in the "One Hundred Years Ago" column:

*Late last Thursday evening shortly after 7 o'clock, three automobiles might have been seen slipping quietly out of the city. They were filled with the members of the Equal Suffrage Association and their husbands intent on spreading the gospel of a square deal for all. The picturesque road to Long Lake was covered in a little over half an hour and the party found the town hall lighted and filled with a representative gathering.*



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## Oral History: An interview with Margaret Brinkman

*The interview was conducted on April 26, 2003, at her home at 402 East State Street.*

I was born on East Ninth Street. Then when I was five, I remember my dad put me on the handlebars of the bicycle and we rode to the new place on 122 East Fifteenth Street. And at that time, there were only two houses across the street and the rest of one section was full of sand burrs, which I ran through every day going to school. And the other section was, sort of, an open wooded area.

When I went to school, I wore shoes; but in the summer I was barefoot and we'd get these sand burrs in our feet. And there was a grocery store on Seventeenth Street. And my mother would send me there and, being barefooted, we would go under these trees that have thorns and I'd get the thorns in my feet. But I guess to save a lot of money they made us go barefooted in the summer.

When I was in the seventh grade, my dad bought a farm two and a half miles from downtown. It's large frame home, not insulated. And my sister and I slept upstairs and nearly froze to death.

We went to Sabin School, which was a one room. It had indoor plumbing, one for the boys and one for the girls; and we had a drinking fountain. We were pretty up to date. We would listen to the other students; and learned not only our own lessons but all the review lessons.

My recollection of going downtown with my mother is that most stores were sort of dark. The lighting wasn't good at all. That great big one across from the bank was the Hannah-Lay Building. On one end, they had an ice cream parlor; they had everything. They had all the departments: hardware, everything and it was more than one floor. It was fabulous. The hardware part burned. But they had firewalls in between them so it didn't burn the whole building.

Bennett Jewelry store was on that side, right about where that picture frame shop is. Outside they had a great big clock, a nice one. And that's where Moselle Bennett Sawyer's dad had his jewelry store. And that was a landmark.

Kyselka's was an old wooden building, big, and it ran from there clear to the alley. They had just about everything that you can think of. Everything else modernized and it stayed for quite a while. But if you'd go in there, it smelled like an old store, you know. That old Kyselka building had a lot of stuff in it. It was there 'til sixty or sixty-one years ago. Because I bought material for making diapers for my son who wasn't born yet, and he just had his sixtieth birthday in March 2003.

It was Depression time when we were first married and we were on a strict budget, so we

couldn't buy much. But we had time to walk around and look. Downtown was not lit up well like they are now.

And there was Pete's Café. The thing to do was to go to Pete's. It was fairly reasonable. But on Union Street there was another place called Whals; and there, for seven cents, you could get a soda, that big, that was really good. That was considered cheap even then.

The Masonic Hall was on the top floor on the corner. They had a beer garden in there and they had dancing; my husband and I went with another couple. I remember going up those long steps. When you look back on it, you think of the fire hazards. Now I'd be afraid.

There was one big fire on the corner of Sixth and Union. Right there by the river was a grist mill, a great big flour mill that had a picture of a turkey on it, 'Turkey Red Flour'. And that burned. I was still living in town, just a kid, and I think my dad went down to look at it, and we all went down to see where it had burned the next day. That was a great big thing right on the river.

We lived at Forest Lodge in the summer. Forest Lodge was a landmark on Long Lake, next to the Armour Estate. That lodge is huge. It's got a vaulted ceiling and it's all wood. And then it has a patio. One summer

*(See Brinkman on p. 5)*

## Women's History Book Group

By Ann Swaney

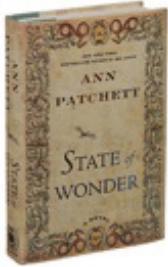
Please think about joining the Book Group this year. We meet at noon on the last Friday of January, April, July, and October.

Everyone is welcome. Please call me for more information at 995-1065.

The books we have selected to discuss this year with a short review follow.

- **(January 25) *State of Wonder: A Novel*, by Ann Patchett (384 pages).**

Pharmaceutical researcher Dr. Marina Singh sets off into the Amazon jungle to find the remains and effects of a colleague who recently died under somewhat mysterious circumstances. But first she must locate Dr. Anneck Swenson, a renowned gynecologist who has spent years looking at the reproductive habits of



a local tribe where women can conceive well into their middle ages and beyond... In finding her former mentor, Dr. Singh must face her own disappointments and regrets, along with the jungle's unforgiving humidity and insects, making *State of Wonder* a multi-layered atmospheric novel that is hard to put down. *State of Wonder* truly is a thing of beauty and mystery, much like the Amazon jungle itself.

—Jessica Schein

- **(April 26) *Are You Somebody? The Accidental Memoir of a Dublin Woman*, by Nuala O'Faolain, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2009 (240 pages).** One of nine children born into a penniless North Dublin family, Nuala O'Faolain was saved from a harrowing childhood by her

love of books and reading. Though she ultimately became one of Ireland's best-known columnists, her professional success did little to ease her loneliness and longing for a deep connection to the world.

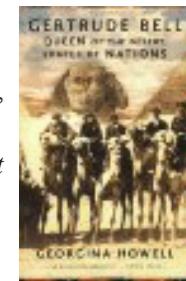
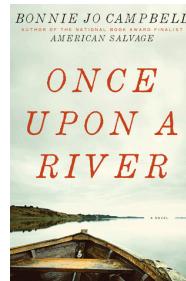
- **(July 26) *Once Upon A River: A Novel*, by Bonnie Jo Campbell, 2012 (352 pages).** This book is the story of Margo Crane, a young woman who lives near a river in a

rural area of Michigan in the 1970s. But Margo, who is about 15 when the story begins, is no ordinary teenager. She can shoot, hunt, skin an animal, and does not appear to be afraid of much. The backdrop of the river provides a rich canvas on which the author can place Margo and the various people she meets.

*Campbell grew up on a small Michigan farm in a house her grandfather built.*

- **(October 25) *Desert Queen: The Extraordinary Life of Gertrude Bell: Adventurer, Advisor to Kings, Ally of Lawrence of Arabia*, by Janet Wallach, 2005 (425 pages).**

*Desert Queen* is a biography of the woman who, indirectly, was the catalyst for many of today's issues in the Middle East. In 1918, Gertrude Bell drew the region's proposed boundaries on a piece of tracing paper. Her qualifications for doing so were her extensive travel, her fluency in both Persian and Arabic, and her relationships with sheiks and tribal and religious leaders.



### Brinkman, continued from p. 4

the snow was there on Mother's Day yet. We had hired someone to shovel the roof because the roof was tile, and it would have caved in. He shoveled it all off and that pile looked so big; it just didn't melt. We didn't have the refrigerator going yet, so we stuck the dish of Jell-O in the snow bank.

## Calendar

All meetings are held at the History Center unless designated otherwise.

### January

**14 Board Meeting.** Mon., 2 PM.

**25 Book Discussion.** Fri., NOON. *State of Wonder: A Novel*, by Ann Patchett

### February

**3 Souper Sunday Escape.** Sun., 2–4 PM

**11 Board Meeting.** Mon., 2 PM.

### March

**11 Board Meeting.** Mon., 2 PM.

## Board of Directors

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Sandra Seppala,  
*Newsletter Editor*

Send articles and announcements for the newsletter to Sandy, [sansep19@earthlink.net](mailto:sansep19@earthlink.net), or contact her at 421-3343. Those accepted are subject to editing for length and content.



### Join WHPNW

Women of Wisdom: \$10

Students: \$10

The Rest of Us: \$15

Business/Organization: \$25

Dues payable to WHPNM;  
send to address below.

Thank you for your support!



Women's History Project of Northwest Michigan  
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