



The Herstory Chronicles

Newsletter of the Women's History Project of Northwest Michigan

January 2014

Visit the History Center's exhibits

By Maddie Buteyn

The History Center has been busy! We said goodbye to executive board members Ralph Munch and Peter Zirnhelt, and welcomed new board members Stephen Siciliano and Dr. David Martin. Our monthly board meetings are open to the public, and we encourage you to attend.

November brought a new exhibit, *A Salute to World War II*, in honor of Veterans Day.

December events include the annual Festival of Trains, featuring pieces from the iconic and beloved *Clinch Park Miniature City*. The Festival of Trains runs from December 14–January 4. Please plan to see this fun display!

(See History Center on p 2)

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Annual Souper Sunday Escape

Sunday, February 2, 2–4 pm, History Center

Leave the TV behind and join us to hear Carrie Leureaux speak on the role of women as healers, spiritual leaders, and leaders in Anishinaabe life.

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.

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

Please join us!

Oral history changes

by Carolyn Micklatcher

In most areas of the country, the names and work of the men who settled and built that area are well documented, while the names of the women who worked alongside of them are lost.

Since the same was true of the Grand Traverse area, the Women's History Project was formed several years ago. One of our purposes was to record the stories of the women in this area before they were lost.

But after having recorded almost 60+ interviews, some changes in the oral interviewing process are required.

The biggest technological change is using a thumb drive for storing and transporting digital interview files. Other changes include updating the *Oral History Handbook* to cover newer equipment and re-evaluating the list of women to be interviewed.

Some of the women originally on this list are deceased or their names were given without a reason for their inclusion. These women must then be researched.

(See Changes on p. 4)

An active year is ahead

by Amy Barritt, president

Being on the board of the Women's History Project of Northwest Michigan had been such a rewarding experience, that I was easily suckered into a nomination for president, and I appreciate the faith the members-at-large and directors have shown in me. Let me begin my presidency with a hearty thanks to the members-at-large, to past directors, officers, and returning directors, for the continuing success of the WHP-NM. Finally, a welcome to new board members Maddie Buteyn and Shauna Quick, and a grateful "see-you-around" to Dotty French, whose service to the board for so many years (as well as her hilarious stories) will not be forgotten.



Past-President (and current board member) Kathi Houston, in her very last "President's Corner" article, said she was looking forward to an active year, and we have been struggling to lay a firm foundation to meet her expectations! With the unanimous support of the board, Oral History Committee Chair Carolyn Micklatcher has been leading the directors in evaluating our processes, and we are now on the verge of a new era in productivity for oral histories. Look forward to more news on that in the future!

Remember, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another." Your active involvement is welcome, and everyone's presence and input are a welcome addition at our board meetings.

The next board meeting is Monday, January 13, 2 pm, at the History Center. We'll see you at the book discussion on January 31 and "Souper Sunday" on February 2!

Calendar

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

January

13 Board Meeting. Mon., 2 PM.

31 Book Discussion. Fri., NOON.
The Kashmir Shawl by Rosie Thomas

February

2 Souper Sunday. 2 PM

10 Board Meeting. Mon., 2 PM

March

10 Board Meeting. Mon., 2 PM.

April

14 Board Meeting. Mon., 2 PM.

25 Book Discussion. Fri., NOON.
Crossing the Borders of Time: A True Story of War, Exile, and Love Reclaimed by Leslie Maitland

May

12 Board Meeting. Mon., 2 PM.

July

25 Book Discussion. Fri., NOON.
The Long-Shining Waters by Danielle Sosin

Data Entry volunteers needed

Women's History Project of Northwest Michigan and the History Center of Traverse are looking for people to enter information from the oral histories already collected into the History Center's searchable database.

In January 2014, Peg Siciliano, archivist, will be available to acquaint volunteers with procedures on equipment at the History Center, 322 Sixth Street in Traverse City.

Interest and enthusiasm are all that is required for this job.

Please call Peg, 995-0313 ext. 104, for more information.

History Center *continued from p. 1*

One of the History Center's most popular exhibits over the past two years, *Legends of Grand Traverse*, will return in January and runs through March. This installment will highlight historic Camp Roy-El and owners Roy and Ellen Brigman.

As the Father Fred Foundation celebrates 25 years, we also will honor Father Fred as a Legend, featuring his impact on our community. Stay tuned for *Legends* Speaker Programs and event notices.

As always, the History Center welcomes your questions and comments any time!

Feminism: The Unfinished Revolution

By Nancy Bordine

How has your life been impacted by the Women's Movement? and What do you feel remains to be done? were the questions posed by moderator, Karen Anderson, to panelists



Kay Boyne, Susan Odgers, and Betsy Coffia at our annual meeting on October 26. Boyne, Odgers, and Coffia represented three generations of women and were well qualified to share enlightening responses with the forty-five meeting attendees.

Kay Boyne remembers the days before her marriage ended in divorce, the days before the National Organization of Women (NOW) became the driving force in her life, the days when “women were given Valium by the carload.” “It’s discouraging that an extraneous part of one’s anatomy can determine if you’re able to reach your full potential. Marriage, though a wonderful thing to be a part of, is not a career. My divorce was the most severe crisis to happen in my life. The ‘consciousness raising groups’ of NOW got together

to discuss values; I began to realize that maybe it’s not me, maybe it’s bigger than me—I’m not alone. NOW asked, ‘Okay, you’ve recognized that women’s rights are the problem, what are you going to do about it?’”

Kay became an active crusader for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), marching with notables, including Michigan’s First Lady Helen Milliken. Kay reminded us all that “the ERA was the first time a constitutional amendment was ever given a time limit for ratification. We fell just three states short of ratification—and it still hasn’t been ratified.”

As both an educator and a



psychologist, Susan Odgers believes that education is still very important for feminism. The statistics Susan shared in regard to sexually transmitted diseases, sexual activity according to age groups, child bearing, choice, and violence against women, showed that the U.S. is far behind other developed countries in managing women’s issues. “We need to talk more about sex. We need to talk more with men.”

“What gives us hope,” said Odgers, “is that we all have the



innate right to live our lives to the fullest. We need to work together for equality. We need everyone’s gifts, everyone’s talents.”

Born in 1977, Betsy Coffia is eager to make a difference in politics today, and began doing so in her early teens. “At thirteen or fourteen, I wanted to listen and contribute to the ‘men’s conversations’ about politics at church socials. I have always been interested in politics.”

In 2012, Betsy ran for



Michigan’s House of Representatives. “Our state is at a twenty-year low in terms of female representation in lawmaking. We are ninety-fourth in the number of women in legislatures worldwide.”

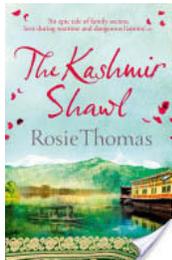
Coffia shared her concerns for the unfinished business of women’s issues. “So many of

(See Meeting on p. 8)

You are invited to our book discussions

By Ann Swaney, co-chair

The January selection is a good one. Please join us to read and discuss *The Kashmir Shawl*, a novel by Rosie Thomas.



It has all the makings of a memorable historical novel.

The author must have done quite a bit of research as the

history rings true. It was all really good, but the sections I feel are the most interesting are those that take place in India during the early years of World War II. So there is history along with a good complement of romance, intrigue, and humor.

Evidently the Romantic Novelists' Association felt the same way about this title, for in 2012 they awarded Rosie Thomas the Epic Romantic Novel Award for "her sweeping multi-generational tale, *The Kashmir Shawl*."

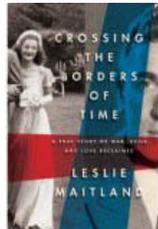
The discussion will take place at our usual spot—the Board Room of the History Center on Sixth Street—from noon to 1:30

on Friday, January 31. We'll furnish snacks and beverages. Bring a sack lunch if you wish.

Books are available at the Traverse Area District Library and Peninsula Library. Also Horizon Books has the paperback for sale with a discount for book group members.

Future 2014 discussions are—

- April 25: *Crossing the Borders of Time: A True Story of War,*

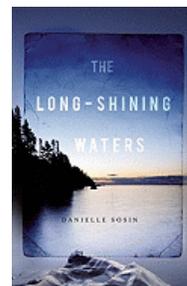


Exile, and Love Reclaimed by Leslie Maitland (2013). It's the story of how Maitland's German

Jewish mother, born Johanna Gunzburger in Freiburg, Germany, in 1923 managed to flee the Nazi killing machine in 1938, with her father, mother, sister and brother, landing first in Mulhouse, France, moving as the Germans defeated the French in June 1940, finally leaving on the last ship out of Marseille, France, in 1942 before the harbors were sealed. Barred from entering the U.S. due to an indifferent FDR administration and

an anti-Semitic State Department, the Gunzburger family spent more than a year in a Cuban detention camp before finally securing papers allowing them to move to Miami and later New York City.

- July 25: *The Long-Shining Waters* by Danielle Sosin (2012). It's a novel that intertwines the stories of three women living next to Lake Superior at different times in history.



Grey Rabbit is an Ojibwe woman struggling through a tough winter in 1622. Berit is living in a remote fishing cabin with her husband in 1902. Nora is a tough-as-nails bar-owner in the year 2000. Each faces challenges, which the lake's constant presence both helps and hinders.

Please call Ann at 223-7489 for further information.

Save The Dates

By Jane Purkis

The Benzie Area Women's History Project will be screening an international film on Saturday afternoon, March 8, at the Garden Theater in Frankfort in celebration of

International Women's Day.

And in conjunction with the Benzie Area Historical Society, the BAWHP will present a speaker on Thursday, April 10 at 4:00 with a meal to follow. Details will be available shortly on their website: www.bawhp.org.

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Lastly, Jane Purkis has agreed to join us as we look for ways to improve our interviewing process. Thank you, Jane.

Oral History: Betty Armstrong at her home in Omena

I will be celebrating my 84th birthday this year (2003). I was born here in Omena; a product, surely, of Leelanau because all my grandparents, including my great-grandparents on my father's side, settled in Leelanau County. My great-grandfather, George Craker, came here to be with his sister, Anne, who had married Jessie Morgan. Jessie was at the mission that Rev. Peter Dougherty had established at Old Mission with Chief Aghosa's band.

Out at Old Mission, the Indians were very productive under Rev. Dougherty and the government farmers. They had 350 acres under cultivation, raised a lot of wonderful crops, had an orchard, and made a lot of maple syrup and maple sugar. But time had run out for the five-year period the band was supposed to have stayed there.

The Indians took it for granted they could go on living there, but the government said they couldn't. White people were coming in looking for farming lands, especially there. So some of the band left for Canada. The government had in mind that they would relocate the rest of the band to West of the Mississippi. Well, the Indians weren't happy about that. So when land became available here in Michigan, Chief Aghosa decided to take his people over to Omena to buy land.

When the Mission was moved

to Omena in 1871, forty-eight families came along with him to establish Aghosatown. And it was a town itself, about one mile north of Omena on the bay. They built little houses all along the shore and up on the ridge, two rows of houses on the east side of what was the Indian trail, which today is M-22. They had access to the water because they went by boat and they fished a lot.

I remember Aghosatown but I don't remember any stores. They did have a blacksmith shop and they did have one very fine barn; I still see it sitting at the corner where Sunrise Landing Motel is. A boarding school was built up on Omena Heights (fifty Indian boys and girls and the teachers lived there).

The missionaries spent a lot of time teaching the Indians, helping them to get adjusted to the white man's ways, which they knew were going to come. The Indians were too used to freedom and just walking away. I think that's why the missionary felt the only way to keep them would be a boarding school. I think it was very successful.

The missionary's wife actually spent a lot of her time in Aghosatown homes teaching the women. She taught them all quilting, and her own style of cooking; and she stayed there and helped them, ate with them, and did a lot of things with those women.

When the missionary was sent away because funding did not

come for the school, my great-grandmother, Mary McConnell, came from Pennsylvania to teach at the mission school. It's where she met my great-grandfather, who was there with Rev.

Dougherty. My great-grandfather became very fluent in the Ojibwa language, and his son after him. Strangely, the missionary himself did not become very fluent. He always had an interpreter with him.

Ministers sent by the Foreign Board were few and far between. After he left, the Indians were at a low ebb, and they wanted so to go on with something. I think the church had come to mean more to them than anything else, because they would gather there two and three times a week just to sing together and to pray together. Eventually my grandfather started a church school; and that is what really saved the church.

The church school thrived. I think I learned more in that place than I've learned in many schools because they were so versed in everything. They studied hard and they knew everything. I think of it as a great teacher because anybody that went there with the Indians, and worshipped and worked together with them, probably had a far better understanding of what I call the "brotherhood of man." You don't get upset about somebody of a different race or color.

(See Oral history on p. 6)

Oral history *continued from p. 5*

I had always watched my grandfather; he would be carrying on a conversation with someone, and an Indian would come up to him. He would begin speaking in Ojibway for the Indian, never English, even for the ones who knew English. The Indians who did study and did really become fluent in English were the Aghosas.

I didn't know the Indian chief, but I did know two of his grandsons. Jacob Aghosa was a most impressive man; I'm very glad that his life touched mine. I watched him from the time I was a child until I was grown. He was the most faithful man. He helped his fellow man, white or Indian. He was an interpreter for the church. I remember when the Congregational Church started, he was there helping the pastor and the congregation. I always think of him as a peacemaker in that new world of the Indian and the white man, trying to make it together.

Norman C. Morgan was Anne's son; while she taught at the Indian School, he went to school with the Indians. So, he was, probably, the best friend the Indians ever had. He loved them from the beginning. He had a store in Northport, but later he did work for the government in Lansing, partially because he knew the Indian language so well. When he retired, they came back and lived down on the bay here, which was a part of Aghosatown. They ministered

to those Indians, most of whom were growing older. A lot of the younger Indians went off looking for work, especially during the Depression years.

Most of the Indians never really became the farmers here, though they knew their farming heritage. Later, when the government did allow them to buy forty acres, some of them did buy land, but most people felt they never, for some reason, it's hard to say, but they never had the same feeling about it. I think, when they worked together at Old Mission, they really produced; but life wasn't easy when the school closed. Even though it had to close because of finances, I think while it was there it did a tremendous amount of good.

The Indians who did have an education certainly did more in this area than those who didn't. But they also had to do menial things to supplement whatever income they had. When the resort industry became great, they did work for some of the resort people. Many of the resorters of Engles Bay and Omena Point remember Jacob Aghosa with great fondness. They just loved the man.

My grandfather was a marvelous person. He knew every tree and flower and bird in this area. He loved all of it. He worked as county administrator for what they called then "the county farm" at Maple City, looking after the indigent people. When he died, they had a special

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Sandra Seppala

meeting at the church because he had been the teacher there and also the superintendent of the church school. Jacob Aghosa became the superintendent of the church school that day, the only Indian to do that.

I remember Jacob's daughter, Emma, a nice Indian girl. At that time, the railroad had come in with an opportunity for people to go off to schools. Emma decided to become a nurse, and went down to Blodgett Hospital in Grand Rapids. She got tuberculosis, was sent to a sanitarium, and she died. She was almost ready to graduate. She would have become the first Indian nurse in the whole area. So, Jacob went through great sorrow, but he gave great service to everybody.

2014 National Women's History Month Theme and Honorees: Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment

This year's Honorees represent a wide-range of occupations and accomplishment.

- **Chipeta** (1843–1924) was a Ute Indian leader, diplomat, and peacemaker who used her influence with Chief Ouray (her husband) to avert a war between the Ute tribe and the White settlers. In 1880, she was included in a Ute delegation to negotiate a reservation resettlement treaty in Washington, D.C.
- **Anna Julia Cooper** (1858–1964) was an African-American author, educator, speaker, and among the leading intellectuals of her time. Born into enslavement, she wrote *A Voice from the South* (published in 1892), widely considered one of the first articulations of Black feminism.
- **Agatha Tiegel Hanson** (1873–1959) was a teacher, poet, and advocate for the deaf community. In 1893, she became the first woman to graduate from Gallaudet University. Her valedictorian speech argued for the recognition of the intellect of women, a cause she advocated throughout her career.
- **Katharine Ryan Gibbs** (1863–1934) founded the Gibbs Schools (1911), providing women with high-level secretarial training and the opportunity to earn their own incomes. Her schools quickly expanded, opening branches near many Ivy-league universities, and effectively establishing secretarial work as a desirable occupation.
- **Frances Oldham Kelsey** (1914) was a pharmacologist and public health activist, who, while working at the FDA, refused to authorize thalidomide for market (a drug that later proved to cause severe birth defects). She went on to help establish the rules for clinical trials and directed the surveillance of drug testing at the FDA.
- **Roxcy O'Neal Bolton** (1926–) is a lifetime advocate and activist for women's rights. She founded Florida's first battered women's shelter (1972) and the nation's first hospital-based Rape Treatment Center (1974). Her extensive work includes lobbying for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and convincing NOAA to name hurricanes after both women and men.
- **Arden Eversmeyer** (1931–) founded the Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project (1999), to ensure that the stories of lesbians born in the first part of the 20th century, who were labeled "mentally ill," fired from their jobs, rejected by their families, and even raped and murdered with impunity, are recorded in history.
- **Carmen Votaw** (1935–) is a leading advocate for girls and women's rights both nationally and internationally. She served on the International Women's Year Committee, worked with the first United Nations Conference on Women, and has significantly influenced the advancement of women in Latin America.
- **Ann Lewis** (1937–) is a leader of progressive political reform focusing on the importance of civic involvement, health-care reform, economic and work-family policies, and international and national women's rights. She served as a White House Communication Director and is a national commentator on public policy.
- **Jaida Im** (1961–) founded Freedom House (2010), the first residential shelter and aftercare program for adult female survivors of human trafficking in Northern California. In 2013, Freedom House opened a similar shelter for girls. The organization already has served hundreds of survivors, offering holistic case management, counseling, and educational and job-training resources.
- **Tammy Duckworth** (1968–) is an Iraq War veteran and U.S. Representative from Illinois. Recognized for her commitment to serving veterans with disabilities, she seeks mandatory government funding of veterans' healthcare and improvements in transition assistance. She is the first woman with a disability elected to the House of Representatives.
- **Lisa Taylor** (1974–) is a civil rights attorney for the Department of Justice where she has enforced the rights of HIV victims, autistic children, and educational opportunities for minority students. As a Naval Officer she challenged sexual harassment and aided in establishing her ship's first anti-harassment program.

Meeting *continued from p. 3*

my generation are not aware of those who fought for feminism before us. With all other factors equal, women in Michigan make only seventy-two cents on the dollar; that's below the national statistic of seventy-seven cents on the dollar. That's 'unfinished business'. Women are not 'at the table' nearly enough; bringing more women to the table could accomplish economic equality for women."

When asked how attendees could be effective in countering sexism, the panelists had no difficulty identifying actions.

Kay Boyne recommended Caitlin Moran's book, *How To Be a Woman*, for methods to "jump in on opportunities to show women's capabilities. Change one action in any cycle that we see as unfair."

Susan Odgers advised, "Form coalitions, with men and women, to address fears, peel back the onion to discover their fears,

stress 'fairness' in seeking resolutions."

Betsy Coffia held hope for 'male feminists,' "Encourage men to make an impact with other men, speak up against sexism, talk logically about the principles of 'all humans striving for equality.'"

The late Helen Milliken, to whom the program was dedicated, was "an absolute crusader for women's rights," said Karen Anderson. Helen would have proud of this program.

WHPNM Mission

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

Send articles and announcements for the newsletter to Sandy, sansep19@earthlink.net, or contact her at 421-3343. Next deadline, Sept. 15. 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!



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