



# WORCESTER WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

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



WWHP VOLUME 12, NO. 2

FALL 2012

## President's Message

*I am always busy, which is perhaps the chief reason why I am always well.* -Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Every October we celebrate the spirit of the first National Woman's Rights Convention (1850) when women from across the nation came together in Worcester to organize in pursuit of the right to vote. We are able to celebrate the achievement of their dream for "equality before the law, without distinction of sex or color" due to the hard work of many women from then through to women's gaining the vote seventy years later.

I think Abby would agree that it's important for people to get out and discuss the issues, and to make use of the hard-earned right to vote. Toward that end, we're involved in a few upcoming events related to getting out the vote. First we've been working with the Worcester League of Women Voters to train poll observers for the November election. **We will be marching in the October 7 Columbus Day Parade**, raising the visibility of the organization while we're also reminding people to vote.

Please get in touch if you want to participate in any of these events — on our Facebook page or at [wwhp.office@gmail.com](mailto:wwhp.office@gmail.com). This **October 13, we'll be hosting our annual meeting** at the Worcester Historical Museum, featuring a presentation about the Oread Institute by

Jan Parent from Preservation Worcester. We hope you'll join us, get to know some of the steering committee members a bit better, and maybe decide this is the year you'll become more actively involved on a working group. Perhaps you have talents that could advance our mission by helping with one of a variety of activities from event planning to poster design. Maybe you have time to write a story for our next newsletter, or take photos at an event. There are so many ways to contribute.

We'd love to get to know you better, so get involved! As Abby Kelley Foster said during her 1851 speech at the second national convention, "**Oh, how truly does Webster say, Action, action, is eloquence! Let us, then, when we go home, go not to complain, but to work.**" There is plenty of work to be done, documenting the lives and stories of today's Worcester women through our Oral History Project, sharing the words of Abby and the convention through the interpretive work of Lynne McKenney Lydick, and bringing together a community of women who value and want to take time to celebrate the accomplishments of Worcester's women past and present. Thank you for being a part of that community. Enjoy the newsletter!

Sincerely,

*Heather-Lyn Haley*  
President, WWHP

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

**NOTICE**  
**OF**  
**17th ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Saturday, October 13, 2012**  
**2:00 p.m.**  
**Worcester Historical Museum**  
**Followed by**  
**A Presentation**  
**on the**  
**Oread Institute**  
**by**  
**Jan Parent of**  
**Preservation Worcester**  
  
**All Welcome**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

News	2
Commemoration	3
WWHP	4
Circles of Influence	5
Annual Bus Trip	6
WOMEN IN PRINT 2012	7
In the Spotlight	8
Liberty Farm	9
Member Support	10
A Tempest in New England	11
Calendar	12

## WORCESTER WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

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

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

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

## News Notes



Thank you to Jeana Edmonds for donating six boxes of books on women to our future lending library. This is in addition to about 50 books already in the library.



A wonderful meeting of a delegation of ten women and men from Belarus was arranged by Royce Anderson of the International Center of Worcester with a few WWHP steering committee members on August 16. Former president Fran Langille spoke about WWHP and Barbara Kohin, about the City. The delegation was on a Community Connections program on "Sustainable Regional Economic Development" August 1-22 and wanted to hear about our work and about the City of Worcester.



"Mary Cassatt: Thoroughly Modern Woman" was held at the Worcester Art Museum, Sat., September 22, with a talk by former WWHP VP Linda Miller and tour with her and Vicki Aberhart called "Woman as Artist, Woman as Subject." Both are Worcester Art Museum docents.



Emily Boosahda, whose painting of Liberty Farm is featured on the WWHP notecards, passed away on February 12, 2012. Her obituary says, "I strive to use my work to express my dreams for harmony and love for all peoples ... the beauty of our environment, intertwined with our daily lives. They serve as vehicles for my expressions on canvas." Emily was an art teacher in the West Boylston Public School system for over 20 years.



A fund has been started to replace the costume Lynne McKenney Lydick wears as Abby Kelley Foster in the play *Yours for Humanity—Abby*. She has worn it for many, many performances since its premiere in January 2004. The cost is \$600. If you would like to donate towards a new dress for Abby, you may mail a check payable to WWHP to 30 Elm St., Worcester MA 01609.



PayPal is now setup on our website on the membership page <http://www.wwhp.org/support-wwhp> — You may find it convenient for renewing your membership in the future or giving a gift membership.



17th Annual Meeting is Saturday, October 13, 2012, at 2:00pm, at the Worcester Historical Museum. All are welcome to attend.



The first National Woman's Rights Convention was held in 1850 at Brinley Hall (now 340 Main Street, Worcester). There is a commemoration plaque on the front of the building.



Thank you! to contributors to this newsletter: Jeana Edmonds, Doreen Velnich, Maureen Ryan Doyle, Charlene Martin, Karen Board Moran, Janet Davis, Kara Wilson, Marjorie Cohen, Edna P. Spencer, Judy Fask, Dianne Bruce, Lynne McKenney Lydick, Barbara Kohin, Nancy Avila, Heather-Lyn Haley



**Commemoration of Induction of Abby Kelley Foster at National Abolition Hall of Fame**

Lynne McKenney Lydick and Carolyn Howe will run the symposium and participate in the panel discussion at the Commemoration of the Induction of Abby Kelley Foster

**October 19-20, 2012 at Colgate University Hamilton, New York**

If you would like to attend, call 508-767-1852 or email [wwhp.office@gmail.com](mailto:wwhp.office@gmail.com). Don't miss the honor of witnessing the unveiling of Abby's banner in the National Abolition Hall of Fame. Lynne will also be performing all 32 minutes of the play "Yours for Humanity—Abby" written by Carolyn Howe and Karen Board Moran.

**RE-ENACTORS**

*By Doreen Velnich*

Scott Fair is a mover and a shaker. He is a filmmaker (Fairfax Films) and software engineer from California who grew up in Worcester and has returned recently to bring a special event to our city on October 13 and 14. It will be a Civil War Re-enactment weekend, that besides encampments and battle scenes will feature a pavilion with re-enactors of Clara Barton, Dorothea Dix, Abby Kelley Foster, Lucy Stone and others. These names are the women whose portraits are on the walls in Mechanics Hall thanks to WWHP. Mr. Fair had been inspired to contact WWHP by seeing Lynne McKenney Lydick's portrayal of Abby Kelley Foster. He is working on a documentary-style film featuring the women of the Worcester area during Civil War times. Scott says that he wants his "daughters to know about these wonderful strong women" and what they stood for.

Check for the airing of a documentary about the Civil War re-enactors on PBS, and the future release from Fairfax films about the Blackstone Canal, the Vernon Hotel, and more. Congratulations to Scott Fair and a big thank you for coming to talk to WWHP at our steering committee meeting in May and, especially, for all that he is doing and planning to do to bring attention to Worcester's history and women's history.

**Civil War Reenactment Living History Weekend**

*By Doreen Velnich*

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of many events and battles of the Civil War, the City of Worcester, the Central Massachusetts Convention & Visitors Bureau, the "New England Brigade" and the "Liberty Grey's" announce a **Civil War Re-enactment & Living History Weekend** at Green Hill Park in Worcester on October 13-14, 2012. The history of Green Hill Park lends itself to this type of event—the Park was manned by militia and cannon during George Washington's march to Boston to lay siege to the British in 1775, and it was used also as a training, marching and bivouac area for Massachusetts units during the Civil War.

Events include a pavilion with portrayals of historic figures from that time: Abraham Lincoln, General R.E. Lee, General U.S. Grant, Clara Barton, Dorothea Dix, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman. Civil War artifacts will be on display from various collections around New England. A Civil War battle reenactment will highlight each afternoon with the Confederate and Union Armies marching out of their encampments. A sunset artillery salute will be held in the evening followed by soldier's stories told around the camp fires.

This event is endorsed by the Governor's Commission of the 150th Commemoration of the Civil War. Reenactor Units from all over New England are helping to develop this into one of the largest Civil War events in New England. This event will be filmed by FAIRFAX Films History Productions and the footage will be used in next year's 2013 release of "Civil War Re-enactors of New England" 'Living American History Series'!



Dave Gallagher, Civil War re-enactor, Lynne McKenney Lydick dressed as Abby Kelley Foster, her daughter Maddie as Alla, Judy Fask of Liberty Farm, and Scott Fair of Fairfax Films History Productions

## Voices from Vietnam Tuesday, December 11, 2012

By Maureen Ryan Doyle, WWHP Steering Committee member and  
Co-Chair of Oral History Project (with Charlene Martin)



Dr. Karen Turner, film maker, writer, and College of the Holy Cross professor, will be the principal speaker at a lecture hosted by the Worcester Women's Oral History Project at the Worcester Public Library. Dr. Turner will introduce her documentary, *Hidden Warriors: Women on the Ho Chi Minh Trail*. This film focuses on the vast number of Vietnamese women who went to war, a piece of history that is often overlooked. When the United States intensified its air war after 1965, thousands of young women left their homes in North Vietnam to lend support to the regular army. The film, 46 minutes in length, contains archival footage from Hanoi. It documents the daily lives and struggles of these women who defended the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

The film is based on Dr. Turner's book, *Even the Women Must Fight: Memories of War from North Vietnam*, which she co-authored with Phan Thanh Hao, a Vietnamese journalist. By using oral histories, private letters, and diaries, the authors delve into the important role North Vietnamese women played during the war. The documentary, produced by Dr. Turner and Phan Thanh Hao, is the first collaborative effort of its kind by American and Vietnamese colleagues.

Dr. Turner has been a faculty member at the College of the Holy Cross since 1987. She is a trained scholar of classical Chinese law, and has written about law in China. She is now working with a team at Stanford University to compare the Chinese and Roman empires. Dr. Turner's contributions have been essential in the development of the Asian Studies program at Holy Cross. She has been the recipient of several academic awards and honors, including the Rev. John E. Brooks, S.J., Professor of Humanities, from 2002-2005.

**The program on December 11 will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Square. It is free of charge and is open to the public.** At the conclusion of the film, Dr. Turner will answer questions from the audience.

## Oral History Community Workshop 2012

By Maureen Ryan Doyle

As part of WWHP's ongoing commitment to the Worcester community, the Worcester Women's Oral History Project (WWOHP) held a community workshop on May 9 at the Worcester Public Library. Topics included a brief history of Worcester as the site for the 1850 national call to action for the Women's Movement, the beginnings of WWHP, and the formation of WWOHP. Discussions on how to create a family history using memories of relatives, how to start a community oral history project, and how to use oral history in the classroom took place. In addition, the importance of listening, types of recording equipment to use for an oral history, and transcription tips were discussed.

The workshop concluded with Charlene L. Martin and Maureen Ryan Doyle, Co-Chairs of the Worcester Women's Oral History Project, reading excerpts from their book, *Voices of Worcester Women: 160 Years after the First National Woman's Rights Convention*.



## Oral Histories of Latina Women Preserved

By Maureen Ryan Doyle

Students from **Dr. Maryanne Leone's Spanish V-Conversation and Grammar Review class at Assumption College** had the privilege and challenge of interviewing several local Latina women in their native language. The students conducted, recorded, and transcribed interviews completely in Spanish for their course requirement, and turned these files over to the Worcester Women's Oral History Project (WWOHP) at the conclusion of the semester. **Dr. Esteban Loustaunau**, Associate Professor of Spanish at Assumption, then assigned his students the assignment of translating the Spanish transcripts into English. WWOHP is the grateful recipient of these transcripts.

While this is certainly a welcome addition to the 250 oral histories that WWOHP has already collected, it is clear that the students were grateful for this experience also. One student-interviewer commented, "This project helped me to put my study of Spanish into a 'real-world' setting... It definitely helped my listening and comprehension skills, having to transcribe line by line... to determine each word... When interviewing our Latina woman, it was very interesting to hear her story, and it broke any stereotypes that I had previously about immigrants." Another student said, "I benefitted from learning that perseverance really does pay off in the end. Even the most unexpected of people can find great success in life."

Those interviewed include **Dr. Matilde Castiel**, Physician at UMass Hospital and Medical School. Dr. Castiel directs and provides care at medical clinics at "Worcester Housing", Centro las Americas, and Casa de Hector Reyes; **Olga Lopez-Hill**, Coordinator of General Operations for the Resource and Referral Center of the Worcester Community Action Council; **Hilda Ramirez**, Executive Director of the Worcester Youth Guidance Center; **Gladys Rodriguez-Parker**, Director of Community and Intergovernmental Relations for U.S. Representative James P. McGovern; **Dolly Vasquez**, Director of the Institute of Latino Art and Culture; and **Isabel Gonzalez-Webster**, Chief of Staff for Mayor Joseph O'Brien.

In her interview Ms. Gonzalez-Webster said, "I think that as a Latin woman, a person of color, I see that there is a difference in the way that I am treated. The services provided to me, and my community, and my family (should be the same) provided to the white people, to people with more money. So, since the beginning I saw the difference. But instead of saying, 'Well, that's the way things are,' I've always had the energy to want to change things. I've always wanted justice. And I will die wanting social justice."



## Circles of Influence

By Karen Board Moran

**Note:** Karen Board Moran first “encountered” Lucy Stone at the Schlesinger Library twenty years ago. Their “paths” crossed not only in Worcester Woman’s History Project activities, but in LaCrosse and Viroqua, Wisconsin, where Moran had attended college and had done her student teaching. Amazingly, upon retirement to Tucson, their circles of influence once more coincided. This article brings Stone and Moran full circle as Moran continues to reenact Lucy and those she influenced. Contact Karen at [kboardmoran@comcast.net](mailto:kboardmoran@comcast.net) for data base of 1913 female voters.

At the 1850 first National Woman’s Rights Convention held in Worcester, Massachusetts, Lucy Stone and others called for “...Equality before the law, without distinction of sex or color.” She dedicated her life to that end and inspired women like Susan B. Anthony to join the effort. Following the Civil War, Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton favored Constitutional universal suffrage while Stone and other Abolitionists gained Black males the vote and formed the American Woman Suffrage Association to continue a state by state effort. After many years of divisiveness, reconciliation was achieved with the help of Stone’s daughter, Alice Stone Blackwell, with the 1890 formation of National American Woman Suffrage Association.

Meanwhile in Arizona Territory, pioneer women struggled for those same rights Stone had advocated forty years earlier. Pima County women had been gathering in parlors on Main Street, at Woman’s Christian Temperance Union meetings, on the newly opened University of Arizona campus and in the library above the city hall to discuss a stronger role for women. Two years before her death, Stone sent Laura Johns of Kansas to work with Tucsonan Josephine Brawly Hughes to help form the Arizona Territory Equal Suffrage Association (1891).

Their challenge was to change the traditional role of women in society. Many agreed with the 1883 *AZ Weekly Democrat* that “The women of the territory don’t want to wear the breeches. Leave the ladies to their tea parties and home work.”

Strong liquor and anti-Mormon interests blocked the Suffrage Bill in the Arizona State Constitution of 1912. In addition an English language requirement effectively decreased input from the Hispanic majority of Pima County (part of 1853 Gadsden Purchase from Mexico).

On 5 November 1912 Arizona suffragists were finally victorious in a initiative referendum effort becoming the ninth state where women were equal citizens. Four months later the state legislature finally agreed to not require one’s exact age be given and voter registration opened to women March 15 to May 1.

Tucsonan Clara Fish Roberts was first to register followed by almost 600 Pima County women (about 1/6 of those eligible). A concerted effort by different women’s groups rallied women to enter the strange world of politics. The Collegiate Club (today’s American Association of University Women), founded by Roberts, held educational lectures about the process and responsibilities. Housewives and teachers led the way. Amazingly five Black and about ten Hispanic women joined Anglo women in taking this first bold step.

The fears of liquor interests became a reality as Arizona Prohibition took effect New Year’s Day 1915. Suffragist leaders were elected such as State Senator Frances Munds and State Legislator Rachel Berry to represent the interests of women and children.

The U. S. Constitutional Suffrage Amendment passed on 26 August 1920, a year after passage of the Prohibition Amendment without females’ ballots.

How will YOU continue to use this hard won right and help fulfill the 1850 Woman’s Rights Convention vision? Encourage and educate all eligible voters to register and cast your ballot to honor Lucy Stone and your foremothers.



For database of 1913 female voters, contact Karen at [kboardmoran@comcast.net](mailto:kboardmoran@comcast.net). See her new website: <http://windowonyourpast.com/site/research/arizona-suffrage/>

### Need Marchers for Columbus Day Parade

At the Steering Committee meeting in August, we decided that it would be fun to walk in the Columbus Day Parade this year under a WWHP banner and we would absolutely love it if all members of WWHP would join us for this festive event. The parade will start at 12:30 PM on October 7 and will proceed down Shrewsbury Street from the Route 9/Plantation Street end of the street to Washington Square where Union Station is located. Details will be posted on our FaceBook.

For more information about the parade itself, go to [www.columbusdayparade.homestead.com/homepage.html](http://www.columbusdayparade.homestead.com/homepage.html) and/or contact me asap if you can march with us: Regina Edmonds at [reginaedmonds@gmail.com](mailto:reginaedmonds@gmail.com).

We also thought it would be fun to dress in costume for the parade and the idea of wearing flapper outfits to honor the 1920 acceptance of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, finally granting women the right to vote in all states, seemed to generate the most enthusiasm. Knowing that Worcester women played a significant role in the 70-year fight for equal rights for women, including the right to vote, and that the city itself served as the location for the first National Woman's Rights Convention in 1850 are always wonderful to celebrate!

## Quincy, here we come!

By Janet Davis

**The WWHP's annual 2012 bus trip was held on Saturday, June 9**, and was attended by twenty-nine women. The weather was pleasant and partly sunny, with temperatures in the mid-70s. With driver Franco at the helm, we headed for the Adams National Historical Park in Quincy. On the way, member Holly Nylander told us a story of John Adams' time as a teacher in Worcester, between 1754 and 1757. He was not well liked by the students, who threw mush-mellon in his face! Upon arrival in Quincy, we drove past the burial place of the Adams family and a statue of Abigail Adams in front of the United First Parish, Unitarian, which was the place of worship for the Adams family. Our first stop was the National Park Visitor's Center. There is a wonderful display of the Adams Family timeline, a large selection of books for purchase, and a room for viewing the PBS documentary "John & Abigail Adams: Meet the Original Power Couple" (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/adams/>). From the visitor's center, we boarded the bus to head to the birthplaces of John Adams and John Quincy Adams.

The John Adams and John Quincy Adams birth places became part of **Adams National Historical Park** in 1979. The two saltbox-style homes are adjacent to each other, and were built in 1681 and 1683. The summer kitchen of John's childhood home was used as an all-purpose town meeting place, including the trial of Lemuel Bryant. Bryant was on trial for advocating the interpretation of the Bible for oneself. This trial had a lasting impression on John, and although he went to Harvard at age 16, he chose not to become a minister, but decided to become a schoolmaster in Worcester. After three years, John decided to become an attorney. **In 1764 John and Abigail got married and moved to the beige house**, adjacent to his birth home, in which John had a law office. John Quincy was born in this home, and this home was also the place where Abigail made bullets out of tin plates to aid in the Revolutionary War. The home boasts the innovations of the kettle crane and a separate bread oven, to help prevent women from being burned while cooking, and copies of portraits by Benjamin Blythe.

The next destination on the tour was John and Abigail's second residence, *Peacefield*, in Quincy. ***Peacefield*, also known as The Old House, was built in 1731 and was purchased by John and Abigail in 1787 while they were still living in Europe.** The original home had 7 rooms and was situated on 80 acres. Wishing the home to have a more European style, Abigail commissioned an addition, bringing the home up to 21 rooms, and called for the lowering of the floor so that the ceilings would be higher, yet the façade would remain the same. While four generations of the Adams family resided in the home, John and Abigail were the only ones to reside year-round, with the rest using it as a summer residence. Brooks Adams was the last occupant and from 1927 to 1946 the home was maintained as a museum by the family. In 1946 the National Park Service took over running the property with the family stipulation that nothing can be changed without their permission.

Each room boasts pieces from the time periods of all four generations, rather than being set up as separate period rooms, including John and Abigail's original furnishings as well as pieces belonging to John Quincy's wife, Louisa Katherine. The grounds of *Peacefield* are maintained as an English-style garden, with the Lancaster and York roses planted by Abigail still blooming.

Perhaps even more stunning than the residence is the stone library built in 1873 by John Quincy's son Charles Francis. The separate building was designed to be fireproof, using **20 tons** of crushed granite for the foundation, granite and brick inner and outer walls, and an oak middle wall, yet Charles also added a fireplace. **The library houses 14,000 books** belonging to both John Adams and John Quincy Adams, with the shelves 2-3 books deep. The library also contains John's presidential desk, a portrait of the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the Amistad Bible, and an original copy of *Don Quixote*. The floor is made of Italian tile in an Ohio Star quilt pattern. Anyone who has an appreciation of books would definitely enjoy this building. The Adams National Historical Park is staffed by knowledgeable tour guides and is well worth the visit.



Next, the group enjoyed **a pleasant lunch at Cap'n Fishbones in the heart of Marina Bay in Quincy**. The meal options included swordfish, chicken, or portobello mushroom burgers. Many enjoyed a scenic walk along the waterfront deck before returning to the bus for our next destination, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

**The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum is an elegant modern structure**, with the entrance foyer overlooking a grand two-story, glass-encased space. The tour of the Museum begins with the viewing of an informational film on the life of JFK in the theater off the main entryway. After the film, patrons exit the theater and descend into the library exhibits. The exhibits are arranged in chronological order, beginning with the 1960 Democratic National Convention. Each "room" of the exhibit is adorned with original materials, artifacts and photographs, as well as period replicas, highlighting the 1960 campaign trail, the Kennedy-Nixon debate, the Peace Corps, Space programs, Robert F. Kennedy's time as Attorney General, the Oval Office, and the Kennedy family. Of course, of special interest to our group was the exhibit ***In Her Voice: Jacqueline Kennedy, the White House Years***. The exhibit features the audio commentary of Jacqueline Kennedy, as recorded by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. in 1964, alongside the personal effects of the Kennedy family during their time in the White House. This oral history was released in 2011, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Kennedy Presidency, by daughter Caroline Kennedy. Hearing the words of the former First Lady, in relationship to the clothing, letters, photographs, etc., was quite poignant. A full and rewarding day was had by all on this 2012 annual bus trip. As members reflected on the day during the drive home, many expressed anticipation towards next year's trip. They also had suggestions!

## Women in Print 2012: A Review by Kara Wilson

Nearly 60 people attended the ninth annual Women in Print, held at the Worcester Public Library on March 7, 2012. The event was organized by the Worcester Women's History Project's Events Committee, chaired by Dianne Bruce. Ms. Bruce began the evening by talking a bit about WWHP and announcing many events taking place later in the spring. She then introduced each of the three authors in alphabetical order, starting with Thea Aschkenase.

**Thea Aschkenase** is a holocaust survivor and a Worcester State University graduate who has recently written her memoirs. Part of Ms. Aschkenase's story is told through her oral history, collected for the book *Voices of Worcester Women*, but we were able to hear more of her story at WOMEN IN PRINT. Ms. Aschkenase was born in Munich in the 1920s and had an ideal childhood, but life quickly changed with the Third Reich. After this point, she and her brother were shunned for being Jewish by the other children in their neighborhood. In 1938, her family were told they must leave Germany or be sent to a concentration camp. They tried to obtain visas to several countries and finally Italy let them in, "The only country in the world who cared." However, the next year Italy formed an alliance with Germany and Ms. Aschkenase's family were sent to an Italian concentration camp. They were treated well at this camp, but a few years later were sent to Auschwitz. Upon arriving at Auschwitz, Ms. Aschkenase was to be put into a separate group from the rest of her family but grabbed her mother at the last minute to stay with her. This action wound up saving her mother's life, as she was one of only two family members from the older generation who survived the war. Her mother went on to live with Ms. Aschkenase, her husband, and children for 30 years.

More than 60 years after surviving Auschwitz, Ms. Aschkenase decided to go back to school. She went to Worcester State, where she met Dr. Maureen Power, Director of Urban Studies. Ms. Aschkenase became involved in volunteer work, including a project on food stamps and a program for public school students to receive universal free breakfast, regardless of income. Ms. Aschkenase received her Bachelor's degree in Urban Studies in 2007, alongside seven other senior citizens. She closed her remarks by saying, "It took us a long time to achieve our goal, but we did it!"

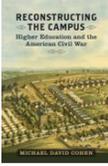
**The second author of the evening was Dr. Kristin B. Waters**, Professor of Philosophy at Worcester State University. She began by thanking WWHP and saying, "I feel honored to be here; it's like a family." Dr. Waters recalled organizing a panel on Black Women's Activism at WOMEN 2000. She also thanked the other two authors and her co-editor, Carol Conaway. Dr. Waters mentioned that she feels fortunate to have grown up during the second wave of feminism, "...to make sure previously obscure women wouldn't fade into obscurity." She also became interested in Black activism. Her first book was called *Black Women's Intellectual Traditions*, for which she and Carol Conaway won an award in 2007.



Thea Aschkenase, Dr. Kristin B. Waters, Dr. Kristen P. Williams

She then showed a PowerPoint presentation about this book and the African American women included. Dr. Waters called these women "19th Century Theorists." These women were writers and activists who, sadly, most people are not familiar with. One woman highlighted in the PowerPoint was Maria W. Stewart, who lived in Boston and was involved in the African Meeting House, which just reopened in January 2012 and is home to the Museum of African American History. Maria W. Stewart was the first woman to speak out in public in the United States. She delivered a speech at the African Meeting House in 1831 on the topic of the hypocrisy of White Americans and how the hypocrisy of White Christianity was being used to shore up a slave society. Dr. Waters also mentioned that she is currently working on a second book, which is about women abolitionists.

**The third author to speak was Dr. Kristen P. Williams**, Professor of Political Science at Clark University. She began by mentioning that International Relations is her specialty. Her first book, co-authored with Joyce Kaufman, is titled *Women, the State, and War*, which looks at case studies of war's effects on women, marriage, and citizenship. However, after the first book, Dr. Williams still had questions about women's activism during times of conflict, particularly since women historically haven't had a voice in the political process. This led Dr. Williams to co-author a second book with Joyce Kaufman, entitled *Women and War*. This book was the subject of her talk at WOMEN IN PRINT. The central question of the book is: "What happened to the women during conflict?" According to Dr. Williams, women are always involved in war, regardless of whether they have a voice in the political process. They both support and oppose war in the role of mothers, by fighting in wars, by being involved in the peace process, and coming across the lines to help women living in a war zone. Women can be "both agents and victims of war." Dr. Williams is currently working on a third book, entitled *Challenging Gender Norms*, due to be published in 2013. She also contributed to an edited volume: *Beyond Great Powers*. Following Dr. Williams' talk, Dianne Bruce returned to the podium to invite the audience to ask questions. At this time, I was reflecting upon the fact that all three authors are committed through their writing to giving a voice to the marginalized: European Jewish people during the holocaust, African American women, and women during war. Ms. Bruce closed by thanking the three authors by giving each one a WWHP membership and a copy of *Voices of Worcester Women*. The evening finished with an opportunity to enjoy refreshments provided by the Events Committee and to talk with the three authors. As always, WOMEN IN PRINT proved to be enjoyable and informative.



**WWHP member Marjorie Cohen's son, Michael David Cohen**, will be presenting his book, *Reconstructing the Campus: Higher Education and the American Civil War (A Nation Divided: Studies in the Civil War Era)* on **Thursday, November 15, at 10:00am, at Worcester State University**. [Room location is not available at time of printing.] Michael Cohen's book discusses higher education for women and men during and after the Civil War years. Michael grew up in Worcester and attended Worcester schools. He received his undergraduate degree at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, and his PHD from Harvard University in American History. He is the Assistant Research Professor of History and Assistant Editor of the Correspondence of James K. Polk at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.



...is an historical account of **WWHP member Edna P. Spencer's family from Tennessee to Worcester**. Edna Paralee Thompson was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee. She spent her early childhood on her great grandfather's farm in Oakridge, TN. Edna's family migrated to Worcester during the late 1930s and early '40s. She married Cornelius Boyd Spencer and they had one daughter, who died in 2006. Edna earned degrees from Quinsigamond Community College and Clark University and holds a master's degree in Liberal Arts from Clark University. Edna is the first black woman to serve as chairman of the trustee board of Quinsigamond Community College and the first black woman to serve as president of the YWCA of Central Massachusetts. She has served on the Trustee Board of the United Way and several other city and agency committees. She is the recipient of The National Conference of Christians and Jews Brotherhood Award, The Martin Luther King, Jr. Good Citizen Award, The YWCA of Central Massachusetts Katherine F. Erskine Award, and The Clark University Outstanding Alumni Award. Edna was also given a key to the City of Worcester.

**WWHP member Linda A. Cavaioli (Executive Director of the YWCA of Central Massachusetts)** will be awarded the annual **Father Michael Bafaro Humanitarian Award on October 18, 2012**. The award, in its second year, is given to a person who, chosen through a community process of nomination, is recognized for their service to humanity. Linda Cavaioli has served as Executive Director of the YWCA of Central Massachusetts since 1992. In this position, Linda reports to a 30-member board of directors and oversees the daily operations of a \$6 million non-profit organization dedicated to the elimination of racism and the empowerment of women.



T&amp;G photo

She is active in the community and serves as a member on the Coordinating Committee and Co-Chair of Membership for the United Way of Central Massachusetts Women's Initiative. She is, also, a member of the Community Board of DCF Worcester West Area Office, a Commissioner on the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women and a member of the Board of Directors of Quinsigamond Community College. In addition, she serves on the Martin Luther King Community Breakfast Committee, City Manager's Task Force on Bias and Hate, and United Service Executives.

Furthermore, she served as regional chair of the YWCAs of New England Council, and she is a member of the National Association of YWCA Executives. Currently, Linda is the Chair of the YWCA USA Regional Leadership Committee. Before joining the YWCA, Linda was the Senior Vice President of Marketing and Resource Development at the United Way of Central Massachusetts.

Linda's outlook on life: "Each person can make a difference, but when a group of committed people comes together, anything is possible."

For information on the event, contact [Joseph@wccatv.com](mailto:Joseph@wccatv.com).

## Katharine Forbes Erskine Awards

May 8, 2012



T&amp;G photo

**Arts and Culture Award:** Through her portrayal of Abby Kelley Foster in the one woman play, *Yours for Humanity-Abby*, Lynne McKenney Lydick has found a unique way to combine her own passion for the performing arts with her deep commitment to human rights and equality.

Considered the face of the Worcester Women's History Project, she allows Foster's message to be passed on the next generation as part of the This is MYCity! after school program.

In 2010 she brought her act to the State House for the Massachusetts Women's Legislative Caucus after an invitation from State Senator Harriette L. Chandler.

In October 2011, Lynne proudly accepted Abby Kelley Foster's nomination into the National Women's Hall of Fame and National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum in New York.

Since 2004, Lynne has been involved with the Jane Fund and currently serves as its president. For her professional achievements, contributions to the community, and her commitment to eliminating racism and empowering women, the YWCA of Central Massachusetts is proud to present the Katharine Forbes Erskine Award in Arts and Culture to Lynne McKenney Lydick. See *Lynne's acceptance speech on p9*.

**Medicine and Science Award:** WWHP member Dr. Phyllis Pollack at the ceremony praised her teams of supporters, who have enabled her to pursue a career in pediatric cardiology, teach and serve many nonprofits, including the YWCA's Daybreak.

Cont'd from p8

## Lynne's Acceptance Speech

Thank you for this Award.



I am very fortunate to know and work with so many dedicated and dynamic volunteers who expend their energies each and every day to make a difference in the lives of people in our community, especially women and girls. The League of

Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The Jane Fund of Central Massachusetts empowers women to self-direct their reproductive lives.

Abby Kelley Foster House (Abby's House) provides homeless women and children with a safe place to stay, to regroup, and to rebuild.

And the WWHP, under whose auspices I have performed *Yours for Humanity—Abby* for the last 8 years, is dedicated “to celebrating and documenting women’s contributions to the history, social fabric and culture of Worcester and beyond.”

I thank Carolyn Howe and Karen Board Moran, the co-playwrights for this inspirational and educational play which allows me to take Abby's words and actions into classrooms and organizations throughout the city. It is a privilege and a responsibility.

Abby dedicated her life to the same principles of which the Y is dedicated:

- *eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.*

So as I stand here under her beautiful portrait, I dedicate this award to her memory and legacy...

and I quote her...

“Tis great joy to see the world grow better in anything—indeed, I think endeavors to improve mankind is the only object worth living for.”

Thank you.

## Meet Abby Kelley Foster's Family at Liberty Farm

By Barbara Kohin

May 19th was a beautiful day, and a large crowd helped to celebrate Alla Foster's 165th birthday at Liberty Farm, Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster's home on Mower Street. Lynne McKenney Lydick and her husband and daughter appeared as the Fosters, and several WWHP Board members wore 19th century costumes.

Park Ranger Chuck Arning set the stage with a fine talk about the Underground Railroad, and "Mum Bett," a female slave from Western Massachusetts, told how she won her freedom. The quilling project attracted many people, and there were also opportunities to write with a quill pen, stitch a quilt square and play with 19th century toys.

Thanks to the family of Judy Freedman Fask, the current owners of the farm, tours of the house were available and many took advantage of the opportunity.

The Liberty Farm festival was postponed twice because of bad weather. It was definitely worth waiting for!

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### A note from Judy Fask, of Liberty Farm...

*Liberty Farm is an extraordinary place - I love living here - feeling the spirit of Abby - it strengthens my passion for justice and compassion for humanity. I was truly honored to share my home with the members of the Worcester Community for the WWHP event and have Abby, Mum Bett and Ranger Chuck here too!*

*I believe that when something great happens or if you have something special, there is a feeling of joy when it is shared with others. Thank you and all those involved in coordinating such a fantastic program and giving me so much joy!*

warmly

Judy Freedman Fask

## Thank You to our members and supporters ~

Victoria Aberhart  
 Hildegard Armstrong  
 Joanne Arello  
 Thea Aschkenase  
 Anita J. Aspen *in*  
*Memory of Constance L. Riley*  
 Nancy Avila  
 Linda Barringer  
 Thomas J. Biggins *in*  
*Memory of Deirdre Morrissey Barrett*  
 Patricia Bizzell  
 Paulette Bluemel  
 Elizabeth Boosahda  
 Marilyn Borst  
 Sheila Botti  
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 Jane Dewey  
 Maureen Ryan Doyle  
 Elizabeth Dunn  
 Susan Durham  
 Regina M. Edmonds  
 Phyllis Estus  
 Judy Freedman Fask *in*  
*Memory of my loving Mom,*  
*Rebecca Freedman*  
 Judy Finkel  
 Mary & Warner Fletcher  
 Patricia Fletcher  
 Rachel Gibson  
 Hayley L. Gleason  
 Louise Gleason  
 Dorista Goldsberry  
 Yvonne P. Goldsberry  
 & Cherie A. Holmes  
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 Marjorie Hastings O'Connell  
 Kayla Haveles

Honee Hess  
 Katherine Hessel  
 Betty Hoskins  
 Carolyn Howe  
 Jayne M. Hughes  
 Barbara Combes Ingrassia *in*  
*Memory of Irma Belle Lincoln Combes*  
*(my maternal grandmother)*  
 Wendy Howard Innis  
 Lynda Johnson  
 Mary E. Johnson  
 Nancy A. Johnson  
 Anne Jones  
 Peggy Kocoras  
 Barbara Kohin  
 Elise Kreiger  
 Arleen Kulin  
 Frances Langille  
 Nancy A. Lemerise  
 Lynne McKenney Lydick  
 Charlene Martin  
 Cynthia Maybeck  
 Linda Maykel *in*  
*Memory of my Friend*  
 Theresa McBride  
 Donna L. McDaniel  
 Helen P. McLaughlin  
 Laura G. McNaughton  
 Barbara Mercier  
 Linda Antoun Miller  
 Diane Mirick  
 Karen Board Moran  
 Ellen More  
 Dolores S. Neely  
 Michelle Nelsen  
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 Kristen P. Williams  
 Kara Wilson  
 Sheila Wilson  
 Susan Wobst  
 Jean Wood  
 Stephanie Yuhl  
 Charlotte Zax

*This list is as of September 15, 2012.*

Welcome



*new members!*

Joanne Arello, Thea Aschkenase  
 Ruth Ann Brien, Viola Capistrone  
 Kimberly Coulombe, Janet Davis  
 Nancy Lemerise, Gale Nigrosh  
 Mary Oroszko, Kristin Waters  
 Margaret Watson  
 Kristen Williams  
 Susan Wobst

## **“A Tempest in New England” A Talk by Dr. Erik J. Chaput**

*Review by Kara Wilson*

Dr. Erik J. Chaput, who recently received his doctorate in early American History from Syracuse University, gave a very interesting talk on May 24, 2012, at the Worcester Historical Museum on the little-known topic of the 1842 Dorr Rebellion in Rhode Island. This event was the result of a collaboration between WWHP, the League of Women Voters, and the Worcester Historical Museum. Introductory remarks were made by William Wallace, Executive Director of WHM, Lee Bona, President of the League of Women Voters, and Heather-Lyn Haley, President of WWHP, who introduced Dr. Chaput.

Dr. Chaput began by thanking Lynne McKenney Lydick, stating, “Her enthusiasm for Abby Kelley Foster matches my enthusiasm for Thomas Wilson Dorr.” He then launched into “the drama” - a newspaper article about the Dorr Rebellion, entitled “A Horrible Plot”. Thomas Wilson Dorr, who claimed to be the unofficial governor of Rhode Island (although the actual governor was Samuel Ward King), was plotting a raid on an arsenal in Providence. Dorr devoted himself to public service. He was concerned that the United States was still operating under a colonial charter in the 1840s. Many prominent people in Providence thought that Dorr was dangerous, particularly after May 17, 1842, when Dorr tried to capture the arsenal. People feared that he next would try to take over nearby Brown University and that Dorr’s actions wouldn’t lead to reform, but rather to violence and social chaos. Despite pleas from his family, Dorr refused to compromise with government officials—“I will not compromise the people’s rights.”

According to Dr. Chaput, origins of this sort of military stand-off went back a long way in Rhode Island, as exemplified through the state charter, which wouldn’t let Irish immigrants own land or serve in government. Ironically, Dorr was born to the wealthiest family in Rhode Island, so it’s interesting that he later became the champion of working class, disenfranchised immigrants. Dorr received the finest education (enrolling in Harvard at age 13) and then becoming a lawyer, which led him to visit the American south, both to get a better understanding of slavery and to try to find a cure for his stomach ailments and rheumatism. In 1833, Dorr returned to Providence, where he became the prosecutor in the controversial trial of Dr. Francis Leach.

Even though Dorr lost the trial, he skyrocketed to fame and got involved in politics, which led to educational reform, bank reform, suffrage, abolitionism, and prison reform. Dorr unsuccessfully ran for Congress in 1837 and 1839, representing the Whig Party, and ended up staying in RI, where he got involved in suffrage for white male immigrants, as well as getting rid of the colonial charter and writing a new constitution for RI. The presidential election of 1840 led to Dorr’s decision to work for voting rights for white male immigrants because only 40% of RI’s population was allowed to vote. Dorr was a strong abolitionist and agreed to bring a petition to the People’s Convention, which is what he called the RI Constitutional Convention. This petition was signed by 5 prominent members of the black community, insisting on freedom and equality. Dorr tried to champion black rights in the RI Constitution, but ultimately failed, which caused abolitionists to descend upon Rhode Island after an appeal by Lydia Maria Child. Some of these abolitionists included Abby Kelley Foster, Stephen Foster, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Frederick Douglass. Abby Kelley Foster was furious that the People’s Convention was not open to African Americans, which caused her to write letters and make speeches against the People’s Convention. Ultimately, the abolitionists failed and the People’s Constitution was passed. Refusing to give up, Dorr tried to get support of a constitution that championed black rights by visiting President Tyler in Washington, DC. However, Tyler was a slave owner and did not support Dorr, fearing a slave revolt. By 1842, even those involved in national politics who sympathized with Dorr would not support him because they wanted the southern vote. This set the stage for the desperation which caused Dorr to plot his attack on the arsenal in Providence on May 17, 1842. Immediately following the raid, Dorr fled RI but eventually returned and was the first man to be convicted of treason, resulting in imprisonment for one year. His only consistent supporters during this time were women, for whom Dorr painted hand fans while he was in prison. After his release, Dorr’s already fragile health was ruined, and he lived at his parents’ home for the rest of his life. He wrote many letters in support of NH Governor Franklin Pierce and was influential in getting Pierce elected President. Dorr died of severe rheumatism at age 54.

Dr. Chaput’s talk was both informative and engaging. It is clear how passionate he is about the topic of Thomas Wilson Dorr and the 1842 Dorr Rebellion. Dr. Chaput’s dissertation of the Dorr Rebellion was the first full-scale history of this topic in nearly four decades and he is currently expanding the dissertation into a book.



# Recap of This Fall with WWHP

**Sunday, October 7, COLUMBUS DAY PARADE. See p5.**

**Email Regina Edmonds at [reginaedmonds@gmail.com](mailto:reginaedmonds@gmail.com).**

**Saturday, October 13, 2:00pm, 17TH ANNUAL MEETING at Worcester Historical Museum. See p1.**

**Tuesday, December 11, 5:30pm, VOICES FROM VIETNAM (See p4) by Worcester Women's Oral History Project at Worcester Public Library.**



WWHP hosts Belarus delegation Aug 16



Annual Steering Committee Cookout in August



Meet the Fosters at Liberty Farm



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



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