

Marker celebrates suffragist movement

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The Copper Queen Library has been added to the National Votes for Women Trail, which recognizes and celebrates the enormous diversity of people and groups across the country that were active in the struggle for women's suffrage. Copper Queen Library Manager Jason Macoviak and Assistant Coordinator Alison Williams stand in front of a newly place plaque on Main Street honoring women's suffrage stalwart Laura G. Cannon
Mark Levy/Herald/Review

BISBEE — As you walk past the Copper Queen Library (CQL) it is hard to miss a new marker placed on the side of the building commemorating the struggle for women's' voting rights.

The CQL was recognized and added to the National Votes for Women Trail map which notes all the places across the U.S. where women fought for the right to vote, stated Alison Williams, CQL library program coordinator, in a press release.

“The trail recognizes and celebrates the enormous diversity of people and groups across the country that were active in the struggle for women's' suffrage,” she added.

Suffragist Laura Cannon spoke to a crowd of working men in Bisbee on Sept. 26, 1912 and Arizona women won the right to vote in November of that year. Arizona made history by becoming one of only a few states to pass a women's' suffrage amendment to the state constitution.

“It has been a banner week for the suffragists in ‘dear old Cochise,’” Cannon said. She credits the event, which exceeded expectations, with getting the ball rolling for women's' voting rights in the county.

A permit was secured, and a platform was erected in front of the post office. For more than an hour, Cannon spoke to a crowd of mostly men who supported the movement and donated to the campaign.

An Oct. 5, 1912 article in the Arizona Republic reported: “The rights of the United States to vote and hold office shall not be denied or abridged by the state, or any political division or municipality thereof, on account of sex, and the right to register, to vote and to hold office under any law now in effect, or which may hereafter be enacted, is hereby extended to, and conferred upon males and females alike.”

Williams explained, “This new amendment not only gave women the right to vote but also allowed them the run for public office. A short time later, women across the United States were give the right to right to vote with the passage and subsequent ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment on August 18, 1920. It was through the efforts of Laura G. Cannon and many others that helped make the dream of women gaining the right to vote a reality.”

There is a digital map and database with over 1,100 sites from all over the country that tell the untold story of suffrage for all women, of all ethnicities, that extends well past the passage of the 19th amendment, she continued.

The National Collaborative for Women's' History Sites stated, “As we remember all those who struggled for the right to vote, we also recognize that racism pervaded much of the European American suffrage movement. Before and after 1920, many methods (including legal restrictions, intimidation, and murder) were used to exclude both women and men — especially African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos and Latinas and Asian Americans — from voting.”

“In 2020, one hundred years after passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, one hundred and fifty years after the Fifteenth Amendment, and despite interim victories such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and its extensions to end discrimination against language minorities in 1975 and people with disabilities in 1982, we continue to face challenges to the right of all adult citizens to vote.”

The markers were funded by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation and the federal Women's' Suffrage Centennial Commission.