Sandy Miller Donation to NWHP

In December, Sandy Miller, our outgoing Nevada First Lady, delivered several boxes filled with her personal papers to the NWHP state office in Reno. These included files of organizations and activities that didn’t deal with state business during the ten years she lived in the Governor’s Mansion.

On hand to receive the material were Carrie Townley Porter, NWHP state coordinator; Fritz Ericson, CEO and president of the Nevada Women’s Fund (the sponsoring agency of NWHP); Kathleen Noneman, NWHP state chair; and NWHP members Lisa-Marie Lightfoot, Susan Roberts, Patt Quinn-Davis, and Kay Sanders.

A traveling moose named Violet, part of the Moose on the Loose project that has been used in Nevada’s public schools to teach about our state, arrived in a special carrier. The project was Sandy’s favorite and involved a traveling entourage of six moose, each with a name beginning with the letters of the state’s name: Nellie, Edgar, Violet, Andy, Dandy, and Austin.

Schools would request a certain moose, complete with passport, geography lesson, scrapbook filled with moose memories and the interests of each one, teacher handbook, and recipe for chocolate mousse.

Mrs. Miller indicated that she will continue to work on teaching programs in Las Vegas where her family will reside.

— Kay Sanders

Sandy was reassured that Violet would be well cared for and would like her new home with NWHP.

Women on the Trail: From the 49ers to the 99ers—
Second Biennial Nevada Women’s History Conference
February 26, 27 and 28, 1999
The Sands Regency Hotel, Reno
See page 3 for details!
Editor's Note:

A chance encounter in Tahiti last year with a returned Peace Corps volunteer led to a recurring joke between my husband and I whenever we had a bad day: "Boy, the Peace Corps looked real good today." In August Cork said, "If we are going to joke around about it, you ought to call them and look into it." Notice how often it's assumed the woman in the family will do all the paperwork?

The Peace Corps commitment is 3 months training in the host country plus 2 years service. There's no age limit! They teach you the language, pay 100% medical and dental coverage, travel out and back, and a monthly allowance for living expenses. At the end of service there is a $6,000 "re-adjustment" payment—they don’t just dump you back onto the streets of America broke and unemployed.

It takes from 6 months to a year to place a couple. We have been nominated for a community service program in central or south America or the eastern Caribbean, and await our "invitation" to our host country, which may not come until six weeks prior to our departure.

Unfortunately, to make way for new adventures, one must let other things go. I've enjoyed serving as your editor, learned a lot about the contributions women have made in the history of Nevada, and made many new friends. Thank you all for your many good wishes and keep up the good work!

Pursuing Jean's Dream

The NWHP will continue to follow the course which Jean set for us. Many of our members attended small group meetings last spring and gave us the benefit of their ideas and suggestions and committed themselves to support this organization.

Our group will continue to pursue Jean's dream that members would research the history of Nevada women, establish a center where members could have access to those research materials, and ensure that information about Nevada women would be disseminated to the schools and to the general public through projects, programs, conferences, and tours.

Our members have made and are keeping their commitments to ensure that the NWHP continues as part of the Jean Ford Legacy. I thank the other members of the board grateful for your continued help and support.

-Kathleen Noneman, chair

State Board Meeting Report

Changes, new directions, and decisions on many important items made for a busy day when the state board members met in Las Vegas on January 9 at the home of Rose Irwin.

Attending were: Kathleen Noneman, state board chair; Rose Irwin, state board vice-chair; Beverly Hubbard, state treasurer; Eva Stowers, southern region treasurer; Mitsu Johnson, southern region representative; Holly Van Valkenburgh, northern region representative; and Kay Sanders, state board recording secretary.

After a brain-storming session that lasted most of the morning, the members broke for lunch and regrouped for an afternoon meeting devoted to official NWHP business.

Motions passed included:
- Permission to borrow $3,500 seed money for our February conference from the northern account.
- Directions on cleaning up our mailing list.
- Recommendations for bylaw change that would allow for uniform distribution of membership dues ($15 to state/$10 to region) and an annual regional or state fund-raiser planned to offset any state budget shortfall.
- State budget of $4,000 approval.
- Acceptance of request for continued on page 4
Women on the Trail: From the 49ers to the 99ers –

Second Biennial Nevada Women's History Conference
February 26, 27 and 28
The Sands Regency Hotel, Reno

The history of Nevada's past and the explanation of its present have been shaped by the women who arrived at their destination via a trail, whether it be a physical journey following an ox cart or a mental journey, such as composing music or poetry.

Answers to questions concerning the past, present and future of contributions made by Nevada's women may be found at this conference. Those seeking to learn skills necessary to further information on the history of families, neighbors or historical figures will find assistance in workshops. Those of us seeking inspiration from the past to face the future will also be served.

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Friday, February 26

The Conference begins at 5 p.m. with registration and exhibits at The Sands Regency.

A Chuckwagon Dinner will be followed by entertainment by Linda Hussa, Joyce Vetter, Sophie Sheppard, Linda Duferrena, and Carolyn Duferrena, five artists who are living off the land, retaining the family unit. They have come together to share what they have with "city people" as they express their feelings about their part of the world.

Photographer Linda Duferrena will describe how she got started in photography, building her own darkroom to develop and print her pictures. She'll include slides of her work in Nevada.

Carolyn Duferrena, a geologist turned fifth-grade teacher who came to explore Nevada and remained, will explain the geology of the area.

Filmmaker Gwen Clancy will talk about the dream, fantasies, challenges and amusing vignettes that took place when she and a friend came to Nevada to be "buckaroos", and will show excerpts from A Cowhand's Song and Cowgirls.

Saturday, February 27

Morning keynote speaker will be Barbara Van Cleve, author of Hard Twist: Western Ranch Women. The western expression, "Hard Twist", refers to the oldtime manilla-hemp twisted lariat rope, hard twisted.

The term also refers to a small, compact, physically strong person with resilience, rather like rawhide, which expands and stretches when wet or shrinks and tightens when dry but almost never breaks. Ms. Van Cleve will speak of these women and their lives, especially of two Nevada women, Molly Knoedtse and Sandy Rosenlund, who are included in her book.

The Luncheon Program
Angie Taylor will speak on UNR Women's Athletics.


The Saturday Night Social Hour will be followed by a Concert by the Reno Pops Orchestra featuring a composition by Jeanine Mooers, composer of "The Principal Man Suite." Mooers has been blind since birth and has the unique musical ability to hear full orchestrations in her head.

We will also have a presentation by "Sisters of the Sage: Carson City Women in Living History", portraying strong women who were very individualistic and ahead of their times (1860 - 1900). Hannah Clapp, Annie H. Martin, Nellie Mighels Davis, Mrs. Roberts and Eilley Orem Bowers didn't follow proscribed behavior for women of those days.

Sunday Breakfast, February 28

Jean Ford will be memorialized in an inspirational service led by Buffy Martin. Carrie Townley Porter will induct Jean into the Hall of Fame.

Anita Watson's "Nevada Women Emerging into Public Life" will conclude the formal program. Those wishing to do so may participate in a "Walk on the Oxbow Nature Trail" following the Conference.

Continuing Education credit for school personnel will be available for a special $80 Conference fee. CEU applicants will also attend pre- and post-sessions.

Registration
for the full Conference will be $90 for NWHP members, postmarked by 2/15/99. Registration for individual sessions and meals will be available.
Isabel Espinoza

Isabel Espinoza, a three-year member in the NWHP, participates regularly in various programs. Born in Black Lake, N.M., Isabel moved to Nevada from Southern California in 1963 and to Carson City in 1980. She has been retail coordinator for Nevada Magazine since 1986 and, as a card-carrying Democrat, works tirelessly during most campaigns to elect Democrats to office.

In a history class on Nevada women at UNR, Isabel was introduced to the NWHP. Teacher Jean Ford distributed to the students the NWHP newsletter, discussed project activities and what various research members were doing. With Isabel's long-time interest in Nevada women's history and in women's history topics, Jean Ford had another advocate.

Isabel became a volunteer reader and evaluator of books being categorized for school libraries across the state. "That was so great," Isabel says, "I read books I never would have read otherwise."

She worked on the organizing committee for the first NWHP convention in Reno two years ago. She dovetailed that commitment with one to coordinate the lecture series regarding Nevada women's history in Carson City. Previously, the series was in a round table format, held in private homes. Isabel felt that if the lectures were presented in a public place and in a format to attract a diverse audience, everyone would benefit. She renamed the series "Hannah Clapp Lecture Series" to more clearly identify the presentations with history of Nevada women.

Isabel approached the Nevada State Library and Archives, which welcomed the series enthusiastically. "The possibilities for presenters at the lecture series are endless," Isabel said. In addition to members of NWHP, Isabel has brought to the series writers of history, researchers, and those involved in reenacting famous and not-so-famous Nevada historical figures. One unique feature of the series is introductions of the speaker by someone in the audience who has some connection with the speaker.

Recently, Isabel asked NWHP member Peggy Tvedt, attorney, to introduce that month's presenter, NWHP President Kathleen Noneman, also an attorney. Not only did the two connect through their shared backgrounds, they discovered that their respective husbands both had long, respected backgrounds as pilots.

Isabel's term as lecture coordinator ends in May. But she is also involved in this year's Reno conference. Clearly Isabel's activities with NWHP will continue with her typical commitment and enthusiasm.

State Board Meeting Report
continued from page 3

sponsorship of "Wednesday's Woman" (in celebration of National Women's History Month) made by the Clark County Library.

• Approval of co-sponsorship of the Historic Preservation Weekend Celebration in Virginia City, Women on the Comstock entry.

• Deed of gift and agreement for disposition of archival material between NWHP and UNR and UNLV Women's History Archives undertaken by Carrie Townley Porter.

• Clarify use of photos for which NWHP has received written permission to use (letter to be sent).

• Permission for use of historical woman logo to represent NWHP until 2,000.

• Nevada Women's Fund contract renewal approval (including rent agreement).

Carrie Porter will remain state coordinator but on a volunteer basis since the funds for her position have been depleted. The current state board members have agreed to remain in their positions until June 30, 1999.

A nominating committee will be selected to obtain candidates for offices beginning July 1, 1999 and Kathy Noneman agreed to help on this committee.

A new bylaw committee was formed consisting of Mitsi Johnson, Rose Irwin, and Holly Van Valkenburgh. They agreed to meet prior to April 1st.

Due to the fact that the northern region executive committee uses the state office for purposes of meetings, it was agreed that the north will pay $200 per month with the state picking up the remaining $100 rental fee.

Recommendations were voiced but not voted on for creating the positions of state membership chair and state finance chair, putting the newsletter on our website, and developing a new NWHP logo.

The dual position of regional chair as well as state chair was thought to be an overload and the board will investigate the possibility of separating those positions as well as increasing board membership.

The offices of first and second vice-president might be created to facilitate continuity of leadership. The first vice-president could be in charge of membership; second vice-president in charge of hospitality and meetings.

Voting to select state board members by all NWHP membership, possibly by mail ballot, was another suggestion.

These and other suggestions will be considered by the board at their next meeting in late February during the conference.

– Kay Sanders
Nevada Women's History Forum Presents: "Startle Yourself" Part II
led by Katharine Hale

Autobiographical memoirs (mind aerobics)

Part One was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. A happy success by all measures of the day. Enthusiasm energized each of us as we shared and began to ignite each other's memories, reminding us that we all have stories.

One highlight from the workshop was when Kay Sanders' mother, Alice Downer, shared memories of her life, including 64 years of marriage. She shared her philosophies that sustained her and her husband for all those years.

We added to one another's thoughts, expanding, clarifying, mirroring our worlds and each other. We speak from environmental differences, cultural seasons, and tongues rooted deep in separate but common wells of fortune; a blanket woven of many challenges and dreams stretching over the twentieth century.

Some of us, including myself, had a short marriage followed by a very long divorce that helped create new laws in Nevada. We discovered how multi-faceted, complex, and diverse in experience we each are, with common threads and bonds, much like our skin and bones.

Please join us March 20 for Part II of "Startle Yourself". Katharine Hale will lead us through exercises in the morning, up to, and through lunch if needed. Then there will be free writing time for memories, stories, letters, etc.

-Susan Roberts

Carrie's Corner
by Carrie Townley Porter, state coordinator

The Nevada Women's History Project didn't make any New Year's resolutions this year. However, if it had, I like to think it was that we will continue to be as effective in 1999 as we were in 1998.

This is the last issue produced by our editor, Carolyn Hamilton Proctor. We wish her and her husband, Cork, an exciting experience in their new Peace Corps venture. She will make a difference just as she has in publishing our newsletter. Our best wishes go with you, Carolyn.

As I write this, we are looking forward to our Second Biennial Conference to be held in Reno the last weekend of this month. Holly Van Valkenburgh and her committee have planned a great program, which promises to be fun as well as entertaining. The committee has put in many hours to make this event happen. Sometimes I am mind-boggled at the amount of work it takes to make an event come off successfully, while appearing so effortless. The NWHP has become known for having successful events, yet I know they don't, "just happen" - they happen because of hours and hours of work by dedicated volunteers.

As each of you works at whatever task you have agreed to perform, please remember that it's very important to keep track of the hours you put in and report them to your regional officers or to our office. This can be done by e-mail or jot it on a piece of paper and give it or send it to one of our board members.

I've just completed writing a grant for NWHP, and it was important that I had a number of volunteer hours to use in writing it. Whether you do a lot, or just a tiny part, of a project, it adds up and the result is one more successful project or event. Keep up the good work!

March will be an interesting month. We have Nevada History Day contests happening. This year the NWHP has offered prizes for entries in both categories - junior and senior - in each region. The total prize amount available this year is $700. (Read more on page 7)

We are also joining with the Clark County Library to celebrate March as National Women's History Month by presenting a program called "Wednesday's Woman."

We have settled into our new area in the Nevada Women's Fund offices and feel very comfortable. We also enjoy the presence of our new member, Violet, the large stuffed moose in Former First Lady Sandy Miller's successful program, "Moose On the Loose." Violet was part of Sandy Miller's donations of her papers to NWHP. Violet has her own scrapbook, a visa and a Nevada immunization record. I hope to take Violet to some of the grade school classes in March for some short programs. Violet has been retired, and is now "A Part Of History."

Like many of our members, though, just because she is retired doesn't mean she can't be valuable to documenting the history of Nevada's women!

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**When:** Saturday, March 20, 1999, 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
**Where:** YWCA, room 2, 1301 Valley Road, Reno, NV.
**Why:** Fun
**What to bring:** pen, pencil writing paper, bag lunch, $2 donation or 12 treats to share

Questions, concerns, input/help, call Susan Roberts (775) 677-2423

Dates, places and times for future work/ play shops will be determined March 20. Material from this workshop will be aired on SNCT and used for next year's conference 2000.
As an active Mormon, Martha Cragun Cox gave her time as a temple worker, a genealogist, scriptionian, and counselor. In her later years, she wrote *Face Toward Zion*, a two-volume autobiography of her pioneer reminiscences. In addition to her other accomplishments, Martha Cox was a talented weaver.

Martha Cox came from goodly people. She was the daughter of James and Elenor Lane Cragun. Her father’s families were the Craguns from Fayette, Indiana. Her mother’s family was the Lanes from Virginia. They were a courageous people.

Mormon missionaries challenged her family’s religious philosophy. Her parents joined the Mormon church and made the trek across the United States as part of the Trail of Hope, the great Mormon overland migration to the West. They arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on October 22, 1849.

Martha was born March 3, 1852 in Salt Lake country in a little adobe cabin that stood on the banks of Mill Creek. As a little girl, she loved hearing stories about her family’s adventures. They were a source of inspiration and faith to her.

The child loved to study, but did not care for home-making. Even before school age, she went to school as a visitor with her older brothers and sisters. She learned the whole alphabet in one day and her parents allowed her to attend school from that time on.

In 1868, at just sixteen years of age, she decided to become a schoolteacher, and never wavered in her choice of career.

She was eighteen years old and preparing for her teaching certificate when she married Isaiah Cox, son of Jehu and Sarah Pyle Cox, in November, 1869.

Despite her family’s vehement objections she prayed fervently and felt it was God’s will that she enter into plural marriage. She felt the Lord’s hand in this decision and that therefore she must follow His directive. She knew Isaiah’s was a hard trip for her after the loss of her baby, and they arrived one day late for the examination.

Dr. Alexander refused to allow Martha to take the test. As she was leaving, a Mr. O’Dougherty said that if she could answer an oral interview, she would receive her certificate.

She passed with flying colors and went home with her teaching certificate for Nevada, a new job, and a new future to look forward to on the Muddy.

At the same time, her trusty, greeted her and informed her that it would not be ready for three weeks. She told him that school need not wait a day. With such beautiful weather, she could begin class the next morning. The students would simply join her under the cottonwood trees by the side of the lovely stream.

They could have no better place for learning. Desks and chairs were borrowed, bonnets and hats were hung on trees and her converted breadboard became the blackboard.

On September 1, 1881, Martha registered nine pupils. Her duties extended beyond the classroom, as she was also required to work in the fields, then help with the harvesting and canning. For this she was given room and board in a small adobe cagin. Her days were extremely long and hard.

Mr. Cox passed away in 1896, after fathering 29 children. The following year, Martha Cox opened the first school in Mesquite, Nevada. The accommodations were nothing but a 16’ by 16’ tent with a dirt floor, no windows, no heat and a few log benches to sit on.

Four years later, after the school was well established, Martha went on to teach in the Mexican Colonies until 1905, when she returned to teach at Beaver Dam and Cave Spring.

As the years passed, Martha taught in Richfield and Gunlock, Utah. She took pride in the fact that she was able to teach many
New Resource For Women’s History

The UNR library’s Special Collections department is proud to announce the publication of “Nevada Women’s History: A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in Nevada Repositories.”

The guide was compiled by Jean Ford, project surveyor for the Nevada Women’s Archives Project, and edited by Susan Searcy and Bob Blesse of the special collections department.

The department initiated the Nevada Women’s Archives Project in 1992 to build its collections of women’s primary source material and to increase awareness of similar collections in public repositories throughout the state of Nevada, northeastern California and western Utah.

Key to that effort was the enthusiasm and knowledge of project surveyor Ford, who combed the state looking for collections of diaries, letters, business and organizational records, and photographs.

One hundred and 95 archives, libraries, museums, historical societies, military bases, state and national parks, LDS Family History Centers, and miscellaneous other institutions were surveyed. Nevada women’s primary sources were located in 110 of those facilities.

The guide lists, by county, individual institutions having primary source materials by and about women. Types of materials are listed as are names of women about whom there are materials.

Appendices include lists of indexes of Nevada newspapers and locations of those indexes, glossary of archival terms, and a list of repositories that were surveyed but not included in the guide. A name and subject index is included.

The Nevada Women’s Archives Project was made possible by gifts of many service organizations and individuals and grants from the University’s Sponsored Projects Administration, John Ben Snow Foundation, the Nevada State Library and Archives-Library Services and Construction Act, and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

Copies of the guide may be obtained from the Special Collections department of the UNR Library. Call Susan Searcy at 775-784-6500, ext. 327, or e-mail to: searcy@unr.edu for more information. ❖

-Nevada News, University of Nevada, Reno

Native American children over the years. Her teaching career ended in the early 1920s.

Martha focussed the remainder of her life on family, scriptural studies and temple work. She never lost her desire to learn and stayed abreast of world and local events, recording her reactions to these daily events in her journals.

She remained close to her extended family and her sister-wives until the time of her death in November, 1932.

In 1997, the Encampment Mall Monument at Dixie College in St. George, Utah, included the name of Martha Cragun Cox among those honored for their contributions to education and the development of the Mormon communities of the Southwest. ❖

-Charlene Cox Cruze co-edited by Jane Elsworth Olive and Frankie Williams

Sources: Interviews with Charlene Cox Cruze; History of Clark County School District, Harvey Dondoro; 100 Years On the Muddy, Anabel Lee Hafner; Face Toward Zion, Martha Cragun Cox; “The Desert Echo”, June 4, 1992, page 7.

Nevada History Day

The NWHP is participating in Nevada History Day, sponsored by the Nevada Humanities Committee.

The theme this year for entries will be “Science, Technology and Innovations.” Entrants whose projects also deal with Nevada women, or an individual Nevada woman, will be eligible for the prizes offered by the Nevada Women’s History Project.

The competition will be held in Las Vegas on Saturday, March 20, and in Carson City on March 27, 1999. For each area there are junior and senior categories. NWHP is offering a total of $700 in prizes, if there are entries which qualify. There is a first prize of $100 for each junior and senior first place in both regions, $50 for second place, and $25 for third place.

NWHP and the Nevada Humanities Committee presented three hour-long workshops to introduce Nevada teachers to the Nevada History Day project. The sessions included a slide show introduction to the program and examples of student work, including a documentary film and video of a powerful performance dealing with Indian boarding schools. The presenters of these sessions were Sally Wilkins and Barbara Ferguson, teachers and members of NWHP; Joseph Galata, Job Corps instructor/videographer and History Day teacher; and Steve Davis of the Nevada Humanities Committee.

For further information and entry requirements and forms, please contact the offices of the Nevada Humanities Committee in Las Vegas at (702) 895-1878 or in Reno at (775) 784-6587. ❖

Ed. Note: Martha Cragun Cox was the great-grandmother of Charlene Cox Cruze.

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Nellie Verrill Mighels Davis

Nellie Verrill was born September 10, 1844 in Crestwood, Maine. Her father was a school teacher in his younger days and later conducted a general merchandise business. There were four brothers and two sisters.

When she was sixteen, Nellie’s parents died within a few months of each other, leaving her to make a home and care for the younger brothers and sisters. Prepared to enter Vassar at about the time of her mother’s death, Nellie was unable to do so.

Henry Rust Mighels, born in Norway, Maine, was twenty-nine when he met sixteen-year-old Nellie. He served in the Civil War and was wounded when his horse was shot from under him. He later moved to Carson City.

The year they met, Henry proposed to Nellie and she accepted, but the wedding took place four years later when Nellie was twenty.

To join Henry, Nellie traveled to the Isthmus of Panama from New York, crossing the Isthmus on narrow gauge railroad, and then traveled by steamer to San Francisco where she was met by her fiancé. The two were married in San Francisco.

Henry was already a successful newspaperman, the owner and editor of the Carson City Morning Appeal, and he promised to hire his bride as associate editor.

Immediately following their marriage, the Mighels traveled by boat to Sacramento, then by stage to Carson City via Placerville, Kingsbury Grade and Genoa.

For part of the trip, Nellie rode up in front with the driver, Hank Monk, a daring and dangerous feat for a woman in those days.

Arriving in Carson City, Nellie noted the rusticity of the mining town; horses and cows roamed freely in the streets, and pigs wallowed in the open irrigation ditches.

In preparation for their arrive in Carson City, Henry had rented a cottage. Later they had a house built and five children were born to them, three boys and two girls.

Nellie was the first woman to cover the legislature, reporting in 1877 and 1879. Henry had taught her how to report by taking her to church and having her write down the sermons. To the delight of churchgoers and ministers, the sermons were reported in the Appeal.

“We couldn’t afford to pay a reporter $25 a month, so I did it myself,” Nellie recalled. “It wasn’t so hard—my husband had taught me to write down high spots of a speech. By the time the speaker had quit orating and had come to another high spot, I would be through writing the first high spot. By that method I managed to give an accurate account of the proceedings.”

When Henry became ill in 1879, Nellie moved the typesetting to their home so she could work and take care of him. Henry died in the spring, and Nellie, at thirty-five, found herself a widow and the proprietor of the Carson paper.

She continued to publish, hiring Samuel Post Davis as editor. On July 4, 1880, Nellie and Sam married. They bought a ranch, raised Holstein cattle and had two little girls. Sam ran the paper; Nellie ran the ranch.

In 1897 while her husband was out of town, Nellie took his place as reporter at the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight held in Carson City and became the first woman to report a prize fight. A Chicago newspaper paid Nellie $50 for the story.

“I was for Fitzsimmons and I had a bet on with Mr. Woodburn,” Nellie recounted.

Nevada was the only state in the Union where prize fighting was legal. Not only was Nellie the only woman reporter there, she was one of only a few women—mostly prostitutes—in the entire audience. She used her maiden name on her fight story to avoid “disgracing” herself and her friends by her acknowledgment of being present at the fight.

During the Spanish-American War, Nellie organized the Red Cross in Nevada and in 1899 became its first state president. She was involved in the Leisure Hour Club of Carson City in the early 1900s, and became its president for the first
Nellie Verrill Michels Davis

Born: September 10, 1844
Died: June 24, 1945
Maiden name: Verrill
Race/nationality/ethnic background: Caucasian
Married: Henry Rust Mighels, Sam P. Davis
Children: five Michels children, two Davis children
Primary city and county of residence and work: Carson City (Ormsby)
Major fields of work: journalism (newspaper reporter, publisher)
Other role identities: wife, mother, civic worker

Time in 1906. Instrumental in the building of a club house for the Leisure Hour Club, she was affectionately called, “The Mother of the Leisure Hour Club House.” After seven years of planning, the building’s cornerstone was laid in 1913.

Nellie was president of the Leisure Hour Club again in 1909, followed by her two daughters, Lucy Crowell in 1925 and Ethel Waite in 1953. Her granddaughter-in-law (H.R. Mighels’ wife Barbara) served in 1927 and 1952. Family members attended and were supporters of the club for over fifty years.

In 1908 the Twentieth Century Club issued a call for a convention of the state’s women’s clubs for the purpose of forming a State Federation.

Since clubs with male members weren’t allowed to join, there was a fight over whether the Leisure Hour Club would be allowed in, since its membership included men.

A compromise was struck; the Leisure Hour Club would be allowed to join, but the men would have no vote in federation activities.

With Nellie as elected president, the State Federation helped pass a state legislative bill giving equal rights to mothers as well as fathers in the care and custody of a child, as well as another bill establishing a home for delinquent children at Elko.

The federation raised $100 toward the General Fund Endowment and continued to raise approximately $1,000 for a loan fund to assist girls with education.

Nellie became a widow again in 1919 when Sam Davis passed away. She continued her interest in Carson City and the political welfare of the state of Nevada.

At ninety she said, “Why do I feel young at ninety? Goodness knows. Because I am interested in everything that’s going on. I have no recipe for youth. I eat whatever I like and plenty of it. I have never used cosmetics. When I was a girl, we did not use rouge or lipstick. Nice girls didn’t.”

Nellie Davis celebrated her 100th birthday before her death on June 24, 1945.

Biographical sketch by Sally Wilkins from an unpublished report by Susan J. Ballew; corrections and additional information given by Sylvia Crowell Stoddard to Kay Sanders, Fall 1998.

Sylvia Crowell Stoddard, the granddaughter of Nellie Davis, called last fall to inform us that the article about her grandmother on our website was incorrect. Kay Sanders met with her and made corrections to the biography which are included in this newsletter. Corrections to the website version will be incorporated later this month. We encourage our members and friends to read the biographies currently included in our website and let us know if any errors are found. Our new website URL is: http://www.unr.edu/wrc/nwhp.

Sources:

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Davis, Sam Post, papers, 1865-1960 and microfilm, Special Collections, University of Nevada, Reno
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Gardner, Paul K., History of the Leisure Hour Club, 1896-1969, manuscript, Carson City, Nevada
Historical Society Papers, 1917-1920, Reno, A. Carlisle, 1920
Letters from Henry R. Mighels to Nellie Verrill (Mighels) 1863-1879, Special Collections, University of Nevada, Reno.
Michels, Henry Rust III, Reflections of Carson City, oral interview with Barbara K. Zernickow.
The Northern Nevada Region of the Nevada Women’s History Project will be hosting the

**Second Annual Soiree & Fundraiser**

Saturday, March 27, 1999
Location to be determined

No-Host Social Hour followed by Dinner

There will be lots of FUN-filled Activities during the Evening highlighted by an Auction and Raffle following dinner

Invitations will follow with all pertinent details.

If you are interested in working on the Soiree Committee, please contact Kathleen Clemence at 849-3665.

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**CALENDAR**

**NORTHERN REGION MEETING DATES**

Executive Board Meetings, NWHP, 201 West Liberty, Suite 201, Reno:

- March 15, 1999
- April 12, 1999
- May 10, 1999
- June 14, 1999

Conference -
Nevada Women on the Trail: From the 49ers to the 99ers 2/26-28/99 at the Sands Regency

Annual Soiree
March 27, 1999

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers
June 7, 1999

Hannah Clapp Lecture Series
March 3, 1999 Dr. Anita Watson – a pioneer Mormon midwife
April 7, 1999 Carrie Townley Porter as Helen Stewart, first lady of Las Vegas
May, 1999 Date to be determined, rock hunting outing, contact Isabel Espinoza in Carson City at 775-883-9035.

Nevada Women’s History Forum
March 20, 1999 Bimonthly Writing Group “Startle Yourself, Part 2” with Katherine Hale
YWCA room 2, contact Susan Roberts in Reno at 775-677-2423

Wednesday’s Woman
Every Wednesday evening beginning March 3, 1999.
Call Carrie Townley Porter in Reno at 775-857-2050 for time and location or Rose Irwin in Las Vegas at 702-457-4577

**SOUTHERN REGION MEETING DATES**

March 6, 1999
April 3, 1999
May 1, 1999
Executive Committee Meetings, 4 p.m., at the Frontier Girl Scouts, 2530 Stewart Avenue, Las Vegas

Annual Business Meeting
June 5, 1999

The Annual business meeting of the southern membership will be held on June 5, 1999, where members will be adopting new and revised bylaws, policies and procedures, and a yearly budget. The place, time and program is yet to be announced.

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**NWHP Leadership 1998-1999**

Carrie Townley Porter, State Coordinator

State Board:
- Kathleen Noneman, Chair
- Rose Irwin, Vice-chair
- Beverly Hubbard, Treasurer
- Eva Stowers, Southern Treasurer
- Mary Johnson
- Holly VonVolkenburgh
- Kay Sanders

Northern Region:
- Kathleen Noneman, Chair
- Holly VonVolkenburgh, Vice-chair
- Helen Oster, Secretary

Southern Region:
- Rose Irwin, Chair
- Mary Johnson, Vice-chair
- Frankie Williams, Secretary
- Eva Stowers, Treasurer
- Carolyn Hamilton Proctor
- Joan LeMere
- Pat McNutt

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**DEADLINE**

FOR ARTICLES FOR THE SPRING ISSUE OF NWHP NEWS IS APRIL 9, 1999
Jean Ford’s Baskets Donated to the Washoe County Library’s Fund Raiser

Every year the Friends of Washoe County Library host a silent auction fund-raiser called “A Tisket, A Tasket, A Literary Basket.” Volunteers use donated baskets to create themes, filling them with books and other donated items. The seventh annual “A Tisket, A Tasket, A Literary Basket” has special significance for members of the Nevada Women’s History Project.

This year, the auction included several baskets donated by Jean Ford. Each of her baskets was tagged identifying her as the donor, and her donation was mentioned on the event’s printed program.

“A Tisket, A Tasket” was held Saturday, November 7, 1998, from 6:30 -9 p.m., in the garden at the Downtown Reno Library. The event included live music and refreshments.

-Betty Glass

POTPOURRI

Wanted

- Participants interested in a “How to” Biography Workshop. This will be offered by Dr. Joanne Goodwin at UNLV. Please call Mitsi in Las Vegas at 385-3677, extension 225 days or 456-3218 evenings if you are interested. We’ll schedule the date with the participants.
- NWHP dreamers, creators and participants

The NWHP’s mission is to “Provide visibility and support for the gathering and dissemination of history about the roles and contributions of Nevada Women of every race, class and ethnic background.” Do you have NWHP ideas? Would you like to participate in a pending project? Please join us in the illumination and glorification of Nevada women in history by calling Lisa-Marie Lightfoot, project chairman in Reno at 775-849-2050.

Thanks

- Rose Irwin for hosting the January 9 state board meeting at her home in Las Vegas. Not only did she serve brunch and lunch, she picked up from the airport the four members who flew down from Reno and delivered them back for their return flight. Her outstanding hospitality was much appreciated.
- Conference committee members for all their hours of hard work putting the program and multitude of details together for our February conference. These dedicated workers include Holly Van Valkenburgh, chair, Billie Brinkman, Sarah Brit, Beverly Hubbard, Sally Kinsey, Kathy Noneman, Patt Quinn-Davis, Carrie Townley Porter, Kay Sanders, Susan Roberts, Anita Watson, and Janet White.
- Our outstanding newsletter editor, Carolyn Hamilton Proctor, who will be leaving the country with her husband, Cork, for a two year stint with the Peace Corps. Her dedication, hard work and exceptional journalistic skills resulted in NWHP newsletters of highest quality. The project members extend their thanks and best wishes to both for a successful, rewarding experience in their new country and safe return to Nevada.

Congratulations

- Mary Lee Fulkerson, renowned Nevada basketmaker, who was asked to submit ornaments for the White House Christmas tree in 1998. She was featured, along with artists Jill Atkins and Jimmie Benedict, in the December 1998 issue of Reno Air’s inflight magazine. Her works are represented by the Silver State Gallery in Reno.

Thanks to donors in Jean’s memory to date –

- Agnes Howell & John Pacciastra
- Dr. Sally Zanjani
- Patricia Scott
- Elaine Enerson
- B.J. Carter
- Ellen Nelson
- Patti Cafferele
- Assemblyman and Mrs. Joe Dini
- Diane Nassir & Peter Bandurraga
- Maie and Myrl Nygren
- Sue McDowell
- Virginia Stout
- Meredith Strohm
- Women’s Studies Program, UNR

Research Registry


Frankie Williams, Las Vegas: Seeking orphan train riders and their descendants. 59 children were left in Nevada. Telephone (702) 876-3586.

Frankie Williams, Las Vegas: POINTers (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together) Telephone (702) 876-3586.

Hazel Hohn, Reno: Nevada women who have been pilots in the military. She found 60 and has been able to contact or get information for about 30 of them. Telephone (702) 323-4374.

Janet E. White, Reno: interested in women who lived in Humboldt County prior to 1925. Also working on the Humboldt County DeLong women; also Mable May Floyd who married William DeLong; Elizabeth Ellen Hendra who was mother of Mable May, and Mary Lou Kershner who married John DeLong. Telephone (775) 826-3352.

We welcome anyone doing research on Nevada women to share that topic or focus with us. If you would like your research topic shared with others, please call 775-786-2335 in Reno, or write us at NWHP PO Box 50428, Reno, NV 89513. To hear and discuss, in an informal setting, the research underway, join the Nevada Women’s History Forums.

Annual Dues

Annual dues for the 1999 NWHP membership year were due and payable on January 1st, 1999. The price remains the same: $25.00 per year. Anyone who has joined NWHP from September 1st to the end of 1998 need not pay for renewal.
Membership Application

Individual Membership • Dues $25/Year

Name__________________________
Mailing Address__________________________ Zip__________
Work Phone______________________ Home Phone______________________
E-Mail__________________________ Voice Mail______________________

Organizational Membership • Active Dues $50/Year
Corporate Sponsor • $250/Year

Organization______________________
President or Director______________________
Mailing Address__________________________ Zip__________
Phone (Day)__________________________ (Eve)__________________________
E-Mail__________________________ Voice Mail______________________
Name of Representative to NWHP__________________________

Welcome, New Members!

New Individual Members

Mary Ancho Davis
Maria T. Edwards
Sandy Hawkins
Heather Hawkins
Barbara Kurek
Jeanne Larson
Mary-Margaret Pehrson
Katherine Rankin
Susan Tegano

Any NWHP member may receive the full membership list by sending $5 to NWHP, PO Box 50428 Reno, Nevada 89513. The southern membership chair of the NWHP may be reached at PO Box 28206, Las Vegas, NV 89102.

GIVE the
PERFECT GIFT—
A NWHP
Membership!