



MEDIA ADVISORY—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sandy Spring Museum to Receive Suffrage Marker on the National Votes for Women Trail

Sandy Spring, MD — A significant moment in American history is to be recognized in Sandy Spring, Maryland with a Suffrage Marker on the National Votes for Women Trail. The marker has been awarded to Sandy Spring Museum through William G. Pomeroy Foundation, a private grant-making foundation based in Syracuse, NY, through its National Women's Suffrage Marker Grant Program. The marker will read, "Caroline Hallowell Miller and Mary Bentley Thomas led Sandy Spring and Maryland Campaigns for Women's Right to Vote from 1883-1915."

The Maryland Women's Heritage Center facilitated the application process as part of its suffrage marker initiative in partnership with the National Collaborative of Women's History sites. Other markers have been awarded to Goucher College, Harford Co. and in front of Augusta Chissell and Margaret Gregory Hawkins homes in Druid Hill area of Baltimore. Additional marker sites across the state are in the application process. These markers recognize historically significant people, places, or things across the United States, instrumental to women gaining the right to vote.

Caroline Hallowell Miller (August 20, 1831 – September 2, 1905)

In 1889 Caroline Hallowell Miller organized her neighbors in the Sandy Spring Quaker community into a woman's suffrage association. In 1892, Caroline merged the Sandy Spring group with the

Baltimore City Suffrage Club to form a stronger, larger Maryland Woman Suffrage Association. Because of her advancing age, she served as its president for only one year. The Maryland Woman Suffrage Association became a chapter of the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA), which in 1902 and 1906 held its national conventions in Baltimore.

Mary Bentley Thomas (December 13, 1845 – February 11, 1923)

From 1894 to 1904, Mary Bentley Thomas served as the first president of a Maryland Woman Suffrage Association, the Maryland branch of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). As the Maryland president, Thomas spoke at the NAWSA convention in Washington D.C. in 1900, as well as the subsequent conference in Minneapolis. For NAWSA's 38th convention, held in Baltimore in 1906, Thomas served as chair of the press committee, putting advertisements in newspapers such as the *Baltimore County Union*. In one advertisement she wrote, "If you are indifferent, come and be convinced. What we ask is not revolutionary or untried, but the reasonable and just demand of every living being under a democratic form of government."

Mary Bentley Thomas also contributed to the Maryland section of the fourth volume of the *History of Woman Suffrage*, written by Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper. In February 1906, Mary Bentley Thomas spoke before both the United States Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage and the United States House Judiciary Committee in favor of enfranchising American women through the sixteenth amendment.

"The award of the suffrage marker, one of only 250 markers placed on the Trail throughout the country, represents a major honor for Sandy Spring. This is one of 15 markers that will be included throughout the state," said Diana Bailey, executive director of the Maryland Women's Heritage Center. "Shining a spotlight on the unrelenting dedication of Maryland suffragists is an important and relevant piece of our state's history, especially during the centennial of the 19th amendment."

The marker will be installed on the grounds of Sandy Spring Museum at a future date. Staff and volunteers from the Museum, the Montgomery County Commission for Women, Suffrage 2020

and the Daughters of the American Revolution are working collaboratively to plan proper ceremonies in a responsible timeframe given the current social distancing measures.

About the Maryland Women's Heritage Center

The Maryland Women's Heritage Center (MWHC), a 501(c) (3) non-profit, non-partisan organization, was established to preserve the past, understand the present, and shape the future by recognizing, respecting, and transmitting the experiences and contributions of Maryland women of diverse backgrounds and from all regions of the state. The Center is an outgrowth of the Maryland Women's History Project that began in 1980 as a collaborative venture between the Maryland Commission for Women and the Maryland State Department of Education. Please visit www.mdwomensheritagecenter.org

About the Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution

Authorized in July 2013, the Commission on the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution seeks to: develop a plan for commemorating the events that occurred in Maryland connected to women's suffrage and the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; assemble an inventory of sites in Maryland that are significant to the suffrage movement; develop a strategy to encourage tourism related to the commemoration; and foster collaboration between federal, state, county and municipal organizations with regard to commemorative programming. Visit <https://msa.maryland.gov/mdvotesforwomen>

About NCWHS

The National Collaborative for Women's History Sites is a non-profit organization established to support and promote the preservation and interpretation of sites and locales that bear witness to women's participation in American history. NCWHS is dedicated to making women's contributions to history visible so all women's experiences and potential are fully valued. Visit www.ncwhs.org

About the Pomeroy Foundation

The William G. Pomeroy Foundation is a private foundation established in 2005. The Foundation is committed to supporting the celebration and preservation of community history; and to raising awareness, supporting research and improving the quality of care for patients and their families who are facing a blood cancer diagnosis. To date, the Foundation has awarded nearly 800 grants for historic signage in New York State and beyond. Visit www.wgpfoundation.org

Sandy Spring Museum supports community-driven cultural arts and educational programs. The Museum also serves as a repository for the community's history, from early Quaker innovation to Black entrepreneurship to the multicultural community of today . For more information, [visit www.sandyspringmuseum.org](http://www.sandyspringmuseum.org).

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