

# NWHP

NEVADA WOMEN'S HISTORY

## Project News

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### NWHP 2000 Conference Update

The Nevada Women's History Project Conference was held at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas on March 17th and was a huge success. We were very fortunate to have Congresswoman Shelley Berkley as our opening luncheon speaker. Shelley served as a State Re-

gent from 1990 to 1998 before she was elected to Congress in 1998. She discussed some of the women's issues she is presently involved with on a state and national level and shared with the attendees many of her

goals for the future. Shelley has a rich history in Nevada, having lived in Las Vegas for thirty-eight years, and has always given strong support to the NWHP.

The afternoon was filled with workshops. In keeping with the conference title, "Echoes from the Past," each one dealt with women, or a woman, who made a difference and carved their unique niche in Nevada's history. An insightful portrayal of the persona of Helen J. Stewart was

presented by Carrie Townley Porter. She brought this staunch pioneer of the Las Vegas Valley to life and gave the audience a chance to interact with her. Attorney Stacie Brown traced the history of women in the law profession in Nevada. She talked

presenters who traced the story of how one Sister's special recipe bread went from a single loaf to being marketed nationwide. Al Freeman, Public Relations Director for the Sands Hotel from its opening in 1952 until his death, was hospitalized in St. Rose during the

late 1950s. He was extremely ill and unable to eat anything. Sister Angelita brought him a loaf of her special recipe bread and fed it to him a bite at a time. He told her it was the bread of an angel and credited the



Rose Irwin, Southern Region President, Congresswoman Shelley Berkley, Keynote Speaker, Joyce Marshall, Conference Chair, all smiles at the NWHP 2000 Conference.

to us about the difficult road women had to travel to become lawyers and the even greater uphill battle to actually practice after they got their degrees.

In a session entitled "The Making of Angel Bread" the audience was treated to the story of Sister Angelita who was among the original group of Sisters sent to help establish St. Rose De Lima Hospital in Henderson during the 1950s. Joan McSweeney chaired an informal panel of

saving of his life to her. With the gratitude of Al Freeman, the Support of Jack Entratter, and the services of a local bakery, "Angel Bread" was born. The story was heartwarming, plus, it gave the listeners a glimpse into the history of the once small town of Henderson and the Sisters who helped establish the present St. Rose Dominican Hospital.

The latest project of the NWHP, a video entitled "First

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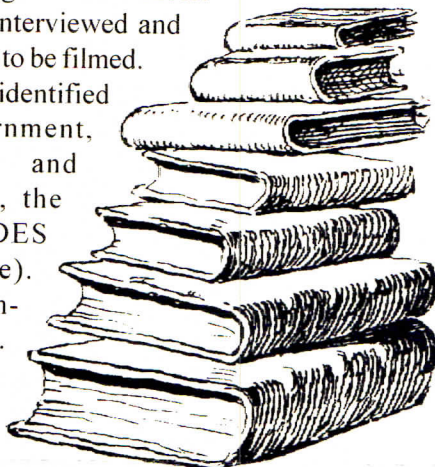


# Lovelock Soroptimists Start Research Project

As recently reported by Carol Clanton, the Lovelock Soroptimist Research Project has taken off. This project is divided into several categories: business, casinos, mining, railroad, government, agriculture, teachers, small business, and others. The ethnic groups identified are: Basque, Portuguese, Italian, Scottish, and Scandinavian. Religious groups include: Catholic, Protestant (Baptists, Lutherans, Episcopalian-Methodists) and LDS. Other categories include: crafts and arts, quilters, book clubs, museum, etc. Waitresses at Felix's Bank Club and the Big Meadow Hotel were scheduled to be interviewed and the inside of Felix's was to be filmed.

A teachers' group was identified as well as government, ranching, crafts and needlepoint, mining, the museum, and the IDES Festival (Portuguese). Carol welcomes comments and suggestions. You can contact her via email at:

CarolM4107@aol.com.



## NWHP Leadership

### NORTH STEERING COMMITTEE:

Carrie Townley Porter: Chair  
Holly Van Valkenburgh: Vice-Chair  
Beverly Hubbard: Treasurer  
Janice Gunderson: Secretary  
Kay Sanders: Communication Chair/Newsletter Editor  
Kathy Noneman: Membership Chair  
Mary Anne Convis & Lisa-Marie Lightfoot: Project Review Co-Chairs  
Dana Bennett: Program Chair  
Patt Quinn-Davis: Publicity Chair

### SOUTHERN REGION

Rose Irwin: President  
Mitsi Johnson: Vice President  
Joan LeMere: Second Vice President  
Alanna Noyes: Third Vice President  
Frankie Williams: Secretary  
Eva Stowers: Treasurer  
Joyce Marshall: Nominating Chair  
Kaye Gray: Corresponding Secretary

### NWHP STATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Joyce Marshall: Chair  
Rose Irwin: Vice-Chair and Southern Region President  
Eva Stowers: Treasurer and Southern Region Treasurer  
Kathleen Clemence: State Secretary  
Carrie Townley Porter: Northern Region Chair  
Beverly Hubbard: Northern Region Treasurer  
Mitsi Johnson: Southern Region Representative  
Holly Van Valkenburgh: Northern Region Representative

## Calendar

### NORTHERN NEVADA SCHEDULE

**MAY 8, 2000** - Steering Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m., NWHP Office.

**JUNE 7, 2000** - Hannah Clapp Lecture Series at the State Library and Archives in Carson City: Historical Portrayals by members of the "Carson Valley Young Chautauquans". Refreshments at 5:30 p.m.; Lecture at 5:45 p.m. Call Cherry Jones for information @ (775) 267-3410.

**JUNE 12, 2000** - Steering Committee Meeting, 6:00 p.m., NWHP Office.

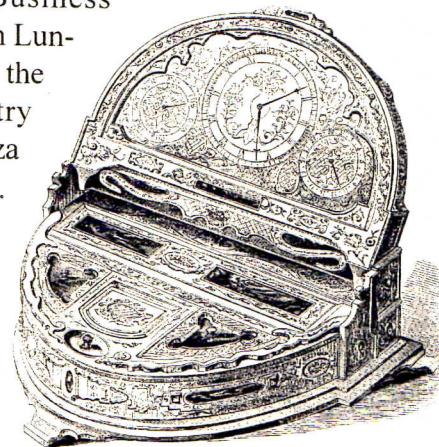
**JUNE 24, 2000** - Annual Meeting and Lunch - 11:00 a.m. at the Carson Valley Brewery on Airport Road between Highway 395 and the Minden Airport. Cost: \$15.50 per person. After meeting adjourn to Genoa to enjoy the Snowshoe Thompson Festival and the Carson Valley Young Chautauquans. Car pooling is available. Call Cherry Jones for details @ (775) 267-3410, or email her at cherry@pyramid.net. Deadline for reservations is June 19th.

**AUGUST 5, 2000** - Jean Ford Annual Wildflower Hike - Call Beverly Hubbard at (775) 829-1336 or Kay Sanders at (775) 747-1740 for information. Winnemucca Lake area has been selected and a botanist will lead us into this beautiful area.

### SOUTHERN NEVADA SCHEDULE

**MAY 13, 2000** - Executive Committee Meeting. TBA

**MAY 20, 2000** - Business Meeting - Installation Luncheon; 10:00 a.m., at the Desert Pines Country Club, 3415 E. Bonanza Road, Las Vegas. Guest Speaker, Nancy Becker, Clark County District Judge. Cost: \$15.00 per person. Deadline: May 15th.





## NWHP 2000 Conference Update

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"Ladies of Nevada," was the subject for another workshop. This project involved the interviewing of the last seven first ladies in our state, beginning with Betty Sawyer and ending with Dema Guinn. Joyce Marshall, who did the interviewing for the film narrated the session. She talked about the project from merely an idea to its completion and offered insight into the women who served alongside their husbands and contributed so much to our state.

Frankie Williams and Mary Gafford shared their extensive research with the participants in "The Era of the Moulin Rouge." Although only open for a short time, the Moulin Rouge left its mark on our city and on the people who were there to experience it. The hotel/casino was the first truly integrated facility in Las Vegas and drew huge crowds. Frankie and Mary found and interviewed many of the employees, dancers, and persons affiliated with the property. What actually led to its demise may never be known, but the era of the Moulin Rouge will be part of our history forever.

The day was crowned with a reception at the 'Top of the Riv'. In addition to hors d'oeuvres, a no host bar, and a breathtaking view of the city at night, everyone was visited by historic Nevada women. The Chautauqua presenters included: Eva Stowers as Edith Head, the famous Hollywood designer who actually lived in Searchlight; Kathleen Noneman, a present day attorney from Reno, as Bird Wilson, and early Nevada attorney; Frankie Williams as Fanny Soss, owner/operator of Fanny's, a dress shop that clothed the most discriminating women in Las Vegas; Marie Pellicioni as Olive Lake, daughter of an early Las Vegas Valley pioneer family; and Carrie Townley Porter as Helen J. Stewart.

One of the goals of the Nevada Women's History Project is to educate people regarding and to disseminate information about the history of women in Nevada. Our conferences target that objective and we are pleased that these goals are being met.

In conclusion, the hard work and long hours it takes to pull together a conference cannot be overlooked. Many people gave of their time and energy to ensure a successful day. However, a special thanks goes out to Rose Irwin, Chair for the Southern Region, who donated many of those long hours and worked tirelessly; and also, Mitzi Johnson who worked until the day of her major surgery and was back at the computer as soon as she could walk to it. The Girl Scout Office was, as always, wonderful. They are a very supportive ally of the NWHP and the Girl Scouts themselves were a huge help in folding and stuffing flyers and registration packets. It is only with the dedication of so many that our organization remains strong and our conferences so meaningful.

by Joyce Marshall



Carrie Porter (in costume as Helen J. Stewart) and Rose Irwin pose for the NWHP reporter.

## Betty Glass Named as "Woman of Achievement"



Betty Glass, co-author with Jean Ford and Martha Gould, of Women in Nevada History: An Annotated Bibliography of Published Sources has been selected for the 2000 Women of Achievement award sponsored by the Nevada Women's Fund in Reno. She will receive the award at a luncheon to be held May 24<sup>th</sup> in Reno.

Betty has been a member of the Nevada Women's History Project since 1996. She moved to Nevada in 1990 when she took a position as Instructional Services Librarian at the University of Nevada, Reno. She met Jean Ford and signed up for Jean's course, "Nevada Women on the Frontier" to learn more about her adopted state. After joining NWHP and becoming active as a member of the Steering Committee in the North, Betty was asked by Jean to help coordinate and co-edit the Bibliography.

Betty graduated magna cum laude from Carson-Newman College in Tennessee, majoring in English and philosophy. She obtained her master's degree in librarianship and information science from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. She is a past Chair of the Association of College and Research Libraries' Women's Studies Section and serves on the Jean Ford Scholarship Committee of the Women's

Studies Advisory Board at UNR. Her current position is as Associate Professor and Humanities Bibliographer for the University of Nevada, Reno Library System.

Betty is a member of the Sierra Club and can occasionally be spotted on a horse or hiking trail in the western Nevada region.

by Kay Sanders



## News from the North



As I write this, we are joining the Nevada Women's Fund in preparing to show off our new offices at an Open House to be held on Monday, May 1, 2000. This promises to be a red letter day as we will officially open the Jean Ford Research Center. If you missed the Open House and are in Reno, please come by anytime during regular office hours and see our new Center. Mary Anne Convis, our official decorator, has chosen wildflowers as a theme. Those

of you who knew Jean Ford will remember that wildflowers was one of her passions. Our coverlet of historic Nevada women has now become a wall hanging and it is beautifully showcased. Thank you, Mary Anne, for your work and donation of the coverlet. NWHP finally has a professional place for us to work on our many projects. We also thank the Nevada Women's Fund and Fritsi Ericson, CEO, for their part in making this happen.

The other exciting news is that copies of our newly published book, "Women In Nevada: An Annotated Bibliography of Published Sources" are sitting in our back room waiting to be delivered to all the libraries in the state. Just looking at those boxes and boxes of the results of the work of all our members since 1996, fills me with pride. I know Jean would be proud of the final result. It certainly is unique in the field of Nevada history. Way to go, NWHP members!

The brainstorming Saturday in March was not only fun, but most productive in determining what tasks lie ahead of us in the next year. Kathy Noneman was most gracious in hosting us, especially after just returning from a month in Italy!

Several of our members were delighted to attend the March 5 event when the Carson Valley Historical Society established their first annual Women's History Remembering Project in which they honored numerous women of the Carson Valley who contributed greatly to their community. The prepared bibliographies of these women will be available at the Jean Ford Research Center as a part of our numerous files of biographies of Nevada's women.

NWHP, Northern Region, awarded three prizes to our students who entered the Nevada Humanities History Day contest. Thanks go to Billie Brinkman, our official judge, and her helper, Isabel Espinoza, who served as judge last year.

Six of us traveled to Las Vegas to attend the NWHP and Nevada Women's Lobby Conference in March. The four of us who drove made a short side trip to Rhyolite to check on Jean Ford's teakettle.

Cherry Jones and her committee are hard at work planning our annual meeting in June. We hope to see ALL of you at what promises to be a fun event.

*by Carrie Townley Porter*

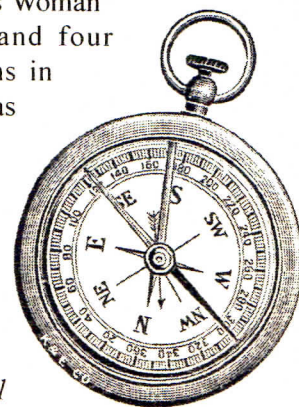
## Southern Region Year End Report

Providing 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 is the purpose of this organization. The credit for our achievements go to the loyal and faithful members of the Southern Region Executive Committee and its members. Space will not permit a detailed report but you may be confident that your generous support and contributions are providing services to our community, and our organization has an enviable record. Knowledge of our organization means progress, which in turn spells success, the ultimate in our organization here in the southern region.

Volunteers can find opportunity for friendships, mental stimulation, active participation in worthwhile projects, and training in many educational fields. We applaud our members, whether his or her part has been large or small, for his or her dedication of time and energy in keeping the wheels of progress continually moving forward. What we do, what we make of ourselves decides not only the quality of our own lives, but of those around us. May we continue to grow in mind, in heart, and in spirit.

The Southern Region of the NWHP can be proud to be a member of the Nevada Women's Fund, the parent organization. The NWHP is a growing organization since its inception in 1994. Our founder Jean Ford had a dream and we can help make that dream come true in ever so many ways. We hope that the surrounding areas will gather together and form new chapters. This would stimulate growth of our organization, broaden the committees already in place for researching and writing about our pioneer women and on the leaders of today. There is much to be done and we need the help of many to make this organization successful.

This President, had the pleasure of attending State Executive Committee Meetings, Regional Executive Meetings, Annual Regional Business Meetings in 1998 and 1999, the 1999 Woman's Conference in Reno and the Woman's Summit in Las Vegas on March 17-18, 2000. I participated in and attended four of the "Wednesday's Woman" programs in March of 1999 and four "Wednesday's Woman" programs in March of 2000 sponsored by the Las Vegas/Clark County Library District; attended several workshops on "How to Research and Write Autobiographies" for the upcoming biographical encyclopedia for the state of



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# Letters from Nevada's Daughters

From Holly Van Valkenburgh

The "Letters from Nevada's Daughters" project has moved into the 2000s. Starting with the November letter, replies are being put up on the website at [www.unr.edu.wrc.nwhp](http://www.unr.edu.wrc.nwhp) <<http://www.unr.edu.wrc.nwhp>>. At the "Echoes from the Past" conference in Las Vegas in March, three members volunteered to coordinate the project there: Michelle Lord, Phyllis Martin and Kathleen Hanselmann. They have brochures and are looking for places to distribute them. If you would like to have someone talk to a group about the project, call one of them or the NWHP office in Reno.

To date, 37 women have responded with the September "Letter from One of Nevada's Daughters". Six have provided the October letter, and a family of eight got together and compiled the letters through February. This was a "family project", with grandmother, daughters, daughters-in-law and grandchildren participating. The children enjoyed learning about their family and they had a good time with the questions in the letters with the various ages involved. It will be interesting to have updates from the young women after they have reached their later years in life. Will they still be in Nevada?

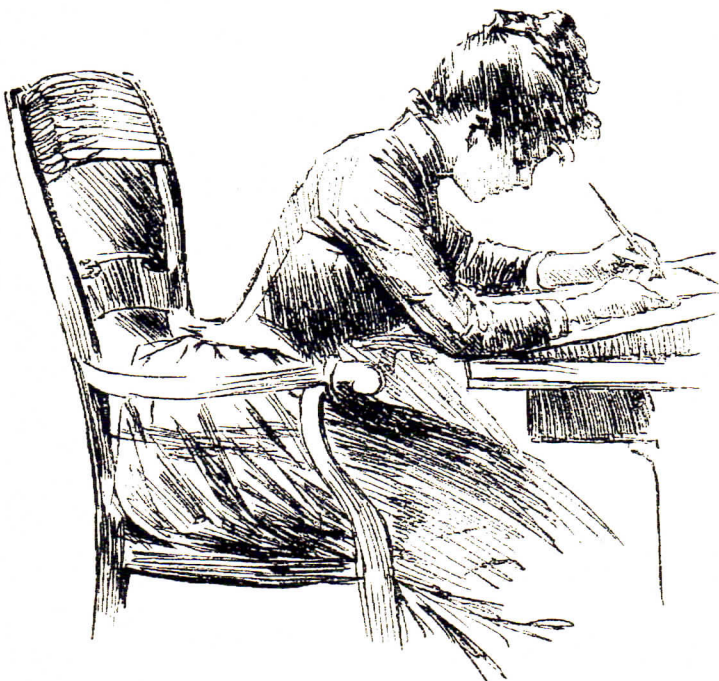
From that September letter, several interesting trends have emerged. For example, the most frequent source of naming was for an aunt (7). Next was great-grandmother (3) and mother (3). There were 13 born in Nevada and four each in New York and California. There is not yet a trend in age or year of arrival in Nevada, but Spanish and German are the "other" language spoken by five persons and French by four. Eight women had two children and each of seven had three or four. Five women had no children.

Which country of immigrant ancestor do you think more Nevadans claimed? England had 13 and Germany had 12, but the "winner" was Ireland, with 17 of us Nevada daughters having ancestors from that country. There were nine who could list the United States as their country of immigrant ancestors: our Native Americans.

If you have not yet contributed to the "Letters from Nevada's Daughters" project, it is not too late to start. We only require that you furnish a September letter before you contribute the later ones. These September letters will be used only for statistical purposes, and will go on file in the UNR Special Collections. The October letters will be used only for genealogical research in the future. Starting with the November letters, copies will be available in the Jean Ford Research Centers in Reno and Las Vegas.

It is hoped that with another hundred or so contributions, we can start to have a picture of an "average" Nevada Daughter emerge, if it can be said that there is or will ever be such a person.

Get your brochure with the September letter or get all of them to date on the website at [www.unr.edu/wrc/nwhp](http://www.unr.edu/wrc/nwhp).



## North Region Annual Meeting & Luncheon Planned

**When:** June 24, Saturday, 11:00 AM

**Where:** Carson Valley Brewery, on Airport Road between 395 and the Minden Airport.

**Cost:** \$15.50, which includes tax and tip

**Lunch:** Choice of: Turkey Sandwich, Prime Rib Sandwich, Chicken Caesar, or Salmon (all include coffee, tea or soft drink and dessert.)

After lunch we will adjourn to Genoa and the Snowshoe Thompson Festival to hear the Carson Valley Young Chautauquans perform.

The deadline for reservations is Monday, June 19th. Please call Cherry at (775) 267-3410 or email her at: [cherry@pyramid.net](mailto:cherry@pyramid.net).

Car pooling is available. Call Cherry for details.



# North Planning Meeting Generates Ideas and Enthusiasm

Several areas of interest were discussed at a North Planning Meeting held on March 4<sup>th</sup> at the home of Kathy Noneman. Attending the meeting were: Kathy Noneman, Carrie Porter, Holly Van Valkenburgh, Beverly Hubbard, Carleen Ernest, Patt Quinn-Davis, Kay Sanders, Cherry Jones, Billie Brinkman, and Alice Downer.

Decisions about our website were made regarding finding an editor for the biographies, generating funding to pay for a dedicated line in our office, and involving the Southern members in assisting with input, as the website is a state project.

Patt Quinn-Davis volunteered to do a fact sheet on the Annotated Bibliography. It will be distributed with the Bibliographies to public and school libraries as well as higher education institutions in our state. Patt is chair of the Sandy Miller project and is broadening the curriculum that she has been developing to include the history of the Governor's Mansion. The unit as written involves a two-week lesson plan for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students which could be modified for 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Funds for this project are available in our budget. Eventually this unit could be put on our and the Nevada State Library websites. We would distribute a hard copy to the colleges of Education at UNR and UNLV and to rural schools. The plan is to have the project completed by the end of this summer.

Joining our network of newspaper clipping volunteers, Cherry Jones agreed to represent Carson Valley and Billie Brinkman will collect for Carson City. As for future plans, NWHP members will go through the clippings and copy them. Volunteers will be available to go through material with researchers. We will need help organizing this material in our office.

A Speaker's Bureau has been a recognized need for a number of years. We will find a chair for this project this spring. Several members were mentioned as being logical candidates to be included on the list of NWHP speakers.

Cherry talked about the Hannah Clapp Lecture Series which has been hugely successful in the Carson City/Carson Valley area. Several members made plans to car pool to the May 3<sup>rd</sup> event in Genoa and have dinner afterwards.

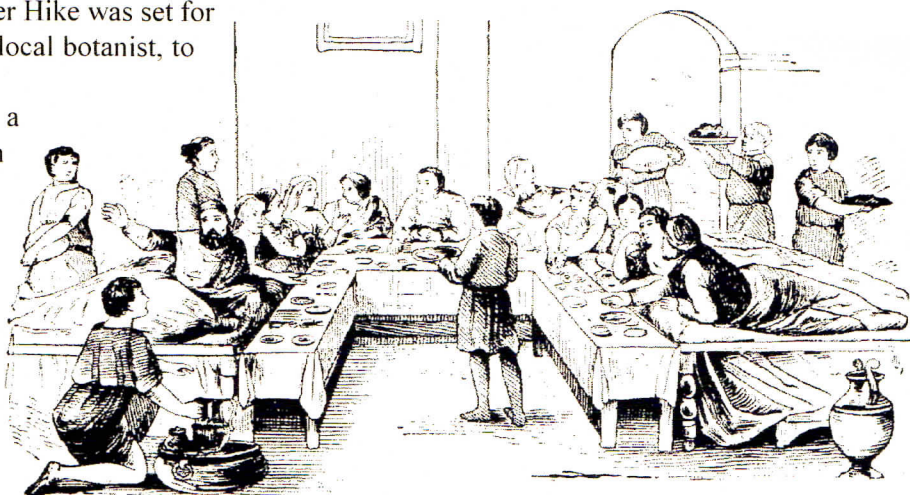
Tentative dates for the Third Annual Silver State Sampler Tour were set for October 13, 14, and 15, 2000. The Black Rock Desert and Old Roop County area in northern Nevada/California is being considered as a possible itinerary. A chair needs to be found to coordinate the planning of this event.

The Jean Ford Second Annual Wildflower Hike was set for August 5<sup>th</sup>. Beverly will ask Linda Nelson, local botanist, to lead a hike to Winnemucca Lake.

Another event tentatively agreed upon is a tour to the Whittell Estate at Lake Tahoe in September. Dates will be announced later.

All agreed that the retreat was highly successful. Several articles in this newsletter are offshoots of items discussed at this meeting. We plan to hold similar planning sessions on a regular basis.

by Kay Sanders



## Martha Gould Receives Presidential Appointment

NWHP member Martha Gould was named Chair of the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science by President Clinton on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. She has served on the Commission since 1993 and most recently was vice-chair. Gould said upon her appointment, "I will work very hard to continue the work she (Jeanne Hurley Simon, her predecessor) began. Her dedication to the promotion of literacy and to libraries will continue to serve as a model for all of us. During my tenure, I will work for all libraries and especially school libraries, public Internet accessibility, literacy, and information literacy."

Martha is co-author of Women in Nevada History: An Annotated Bibliography of Published Sources, a project of NWHP that was published in April 2000.





## YOUR BALLOT FOR STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE HAVE AGREED TO SERVE ON THE STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2000-2002. PLEASE EITHER VOTE FOR THIS SLATE OR WRITE IN THE CANDIDATE OF YOUR CHOICE.

ROSE IRWIN—PRESIDENT

CARRIE PORTER—FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

JOAN LEMERE—SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

HOLLY VAN VALKENBURGH—THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT

MITSI JOHNSON—TREASURER

EVA STOWERS—SECRETARY

JANE OLIVE—SOUTHERN CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVE

CARLEEN ERNEST—NORTHERN CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVE

FRITSI ERICSON—NEVADA WOMEN'S FUND REPRESENTATIVE

I ACCEPT THIS SLATE AS NOMINATED: \_\_\_\_\_

I PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE CANDIDATES: \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL COMPLETED BALLOTS BY JUNE 15, 2000 TO:  
KATHLEEN NONEMAN, NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR  
770 Smithridge Dr., Suite 300. Reno, NV 89502







# Alice Lucretia Smith

At a glance:

**Born:** November 4, 1902

**Died:** August 6, 1990

**Race:** African American

**Primary County and City of residence and work:** (Washoe) Reno

**Major field of work:** Community service; helped organize National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

**Other role identities:** Teacher, volunteer with American Red Cross, Church Women United, Washoe County Economic Opportunity Board and other community groups.

## Biography:

Alice Lucretia Smith was born in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi in 1902, the descendant of slaves. She attended Mississippi State Normal School in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, receiving a teachers' license. For three years she taught in rural communities of Waveland and Kiln, Mississippi, attended Alcorn College for one year, and helped raise her brothers and sisters after her mother died. After working in New Orleans, she moved to Oakland, California, where she married Alfred O. Smith in 1935.

Alice moved to Reno with Alfred on July 30, 1938. Alice worked as a maid, held several other jobs, and eventually owned several properties. While she and Alfred worked for the Joseph Magnin store in downtown Reno, they organized the Reno-Sparks Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The organizing meeting of the Branch took place in 1945 in their living room; Alfred was the first President and Alice the first Secretary. Alfred died in December, 1946. After his death she pledged to herself "to devote the rest of my life to help my fellow man without pay or thanks," and she did this in full measure. She was an active leader of the NAACP Branch for many years, serving as President from 1955 to 1957.

Mrs. Smith remembered that when she came to Reno many restaurants had signs in their windows stating: "No Negroes Allowed," "No Colored Trade Solicited" and "No Indians, dogs or Negroes Allowed." She struggled against such discrimination for many years but never let herself become bitter. In spite of the fact that her husband was initially denied admission to the Reno Veterans' Hospital during his final illness, she refused to dwell on injustices, telling a newspaper reporter that, "Instead

of wasting time with that foolishness, I can do something constructive."

In 1971 Alice Smith said that, "race relations and the attitudes about race relations have made wonderful strides." She believed in strong families, in placing high value on education and in "getting out into the community and assisting there, because I think it's going to take all of us to make the world go around."

A strongly religious person, Alice first joined the Bethel AME Church, the oldest continuously operating African American church in Nevada. In 1961 she joined the Sparks United Methodist Church and was a local leader of Church Women United for a number of years.

For 25 years she was a Red Cross volunteer, serving as a first aid instructor, a Motor Service Gray Lady and Board Director. She was also active in the League of Women Voters and the Washoe County Economic Opportunity Board, where she served as the chair of its Board of Directors. Inspired by her leadership, the Economic Opportunity Board (now the Community Services Agency) established the annual Alice Smith Award to honor board members for community service.

Mrs. Smith's leadership was recognized in many ways. Among others, she attended a United Nations conference in San Francisco, was appointed by



Photo permission by Special Collections, University of Nevada, Reno, Library.

Governor Mike O'Callaghan to the President's White House Conference on Aging in 1971 and served by gubernatorial appointment on the Nevada State Welfare Board and the State Advisory Committee to the Division of Aging Services. She volunteered for the Foster Grandparents program and in providing services to the blind.

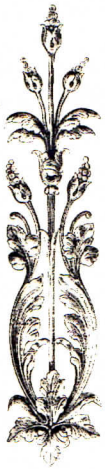
In 1989 an elementary school in Golden Valley was named after her -- the first in northern Nevada honoring an African American. At her death in 1990 she left a legacy of devoted service to other people and of steadfast but dignified protest against discrimination.

Sources of Information:

1. Voices of Black Nevada. Reno: Bureau of Governmental Research, University of Nevada, 1971: 87-94.
2. Who's Who Among Black Americans. Northbrook, Illinois, 1975-1976 ed.



## State Office Decorating on Track



I'm sure that you have heard of our new office. We share space with the Nevada Women's Fund. It's a wonderful room with freshly painted walls and lots of storage in a great location - not so far for those of us in Carson City.

I asked Carrie Porter if I could help decorate and she said, "Sure - no more sprung couches." Our first project was to buy bookcases - ones that matched - and since it's officially the "Jean Ford Research Center", I thought it would be great to use some of Jean's slides of wildflowers. We could have them enlarged and printed. Well, it was a great thought, but now we are trying to find those slides - CAN YOU HELP? We will have them framed and hung on the walls after they are located. Do come by for a visit or plan to do your research. We promise organized files and a quiet space for your work.

by Mary Anne Convis

### Northern Nevada NWHP Membership Report

As of April 15, 2000, the Northern Nevada Chapter has 108 individual members and 6 organizational members. Bob Stewart is our only new member for this period. Bob was one of our original members, but then took a year off. Welcome back, Bob. I send information packets to prospective members as part of our recruitment efforts. If you know of any people interested in our organization, please send me their names and addresses so I can send them information about NWHP.

Membership Chairman Northern Chapter  
Kathleen F. Noneman

## A Final Jingle From Joyce

In just a few short weeks, my term as State Chair of the NWHP will be over. I cannot believe how fast the time has flown by. My term has given me the opportunity to meet wonderful people and be involved in projects that I am passionate about. Women I have been fortunate enough to meet have become friends and the once thought of as unattainable goals have become reality. There are no adequate words to express how proud I am to have been a part of this organization from the very first meeting in Las Vegas until now and I look forward to participating for many years to come.

Now, if I've started to give you the idea that this experience has been a lot of fun and not that much hard work, sorry. There were times when I thought I would never catch up, but somehow we (emphasis on the "we") always made the deadline. The rewards of working with this organization far outweigh any work put in.

The Project is growing stronger with every day and our membership is increasing each month. We have so many dedicated workers all across the State who are committed to our mission of adding women into the history of Nevada. They have many fresh ideas and foresight so that the coming years can only yield exciting and productive results.

The success of any administration is the result of a strong and solid base. I was fortunate enough to have that. It would be a daunting task, however, for me to thank each of you individually who had a hand in making this last year such a success. There are so many of you. I would never want to take the chance of leaving anyone out. Suffice to say, you know who you are and I am forever grateful. I could not have asked for a

more wonderful group to work with. Thank you all for making my job easier than it should have been, working harder than you should have, and keeping a solid, forward vision.



by Joyce  
Marshall

## Research Roundtable Additions

**Irene Rostline:** Magnesium Maggies: women war workers at Basic Magnesium, Inc.: World War II; Women in Real Estate: community builders 1950-1975 (oral histories); Women in Telecommunications: 1940-1975 (oral histories, including a section on the first Western Union women workers and a chapter called "Satellite Cities" that explores the role of the women PBX operators as the hub of self-contained strip resorts of that period.)

**Vikki Ford:** Nevada mining, 1930s-1980s; Nevada's CCC projects, 1933-1942; women's diaries; oral histories and family histories.





# Special Presentation of "Clothes of an Era" in Las Vegas

The Nevada Women's History Project, here in Las Vegas assisted the Nevada State Museum and Historical Society in a very special presentation of Nevada's First Ladies Inaugural Ball Gowns, beginning with Ida Pittman's in 1945, Marjorie Russell's in 1951, Betty Sawyer's in 1959, Jackalyn Laxalt's in 1967, Carolyn O'Callaghan's in 1971, Cathy List's in 1979, Bonnie Bryan's in 1983, Sandy Miller's in 1989 and Dema Guinn's in 1998. The gowns were presented on nine raised, lighted platforms across the back of the beautiful Islands Ballroom at the Mandalay Bay Resort on April 8th.

Paula Francis of Channel 8 TV was delightful in her commentation of the accompanying fashion showing titled "Clothes of an Era" from the Marjorie Russell Clothing and Research Center which was created in 1992 to enhance awareness of fashion history and its correlation to society and culture, communicating the status of the wearer and variable ideals of beauty. The show has been presented in Northern Nevada but the Mandalay Bay Event marks the first time it has been presented here in the South. The Marjorie Russell Research Center is named for the First Lady of Governor Charles Hinton Russell who donated many of her personal and collectable items to begin the large collection. In combination with the Jessie Pope Costume Collection of the University of Nevada, Reno School of Home Economics the Collection reaches 10,000 artifacts!

Old clothing is so fragile and its preservation is so critical that reproductions are shown as a rule. Only two originals were modeled; much to the delight and relief of the hard working dressers back stage armed with safety pins to quickly and carefully anchor the tiny articles of clothing long enough for the model to meet her cue and get down the runway and back. Many of the garments were size one and two, adequate for smaller women in 1850 or 1860 who reduced their waists to 13 or 14 inches with corsets but hardly bearable for beautiful models today, who were chosen as much for their small stature as their grace and showmanship!

The coordinator for the fundraiser for the Museums, Library & Arts Foundation was Las Vegas' own Beverly Carlino Banta who made the show entertaining and educational. She called on Rose Irwin, President of the Nevada Women's History Project in Las Vegas, because we are closely connected to the mission of educational history. Bruce Steivel was in charge of staging and direction. Jim Sacca did the wonderful makeup and hairstyles. Jan Loverin, Curator of Clothing and Textiles, at the Marjorie Russell Research Center also traveled with the collection and participated in its presentation.

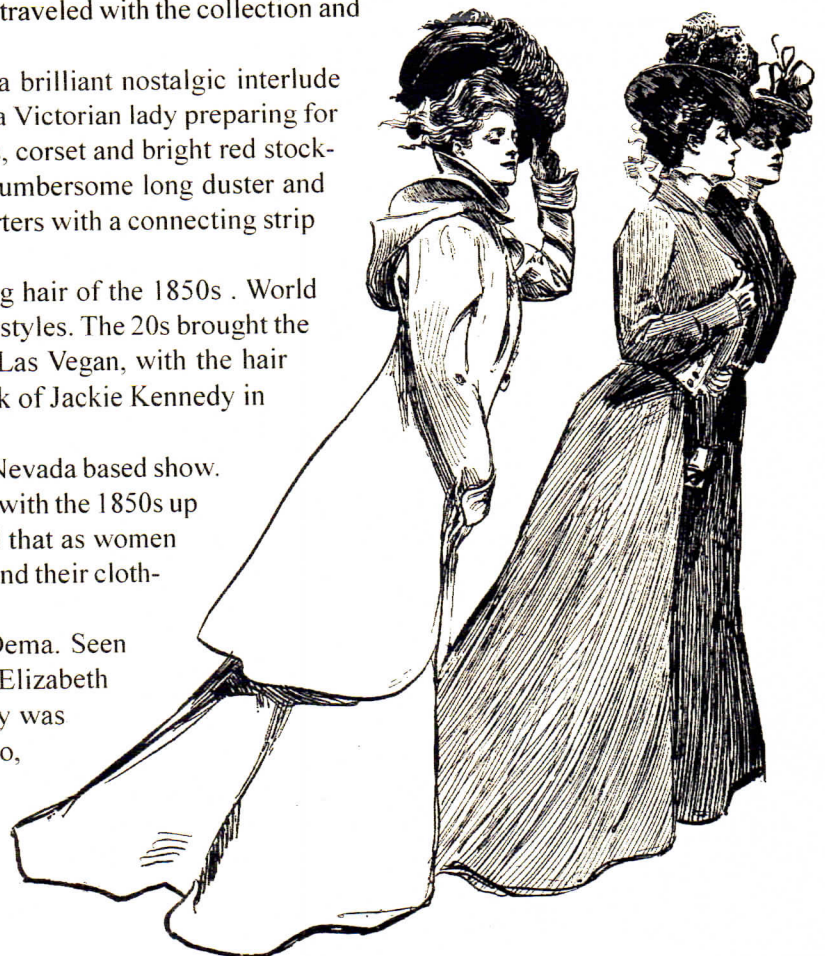
The show could not have been better but there was a brilliant nostalgic interlude about midway through the show with the reenactment of a Victorian lady preparing for bed, removing many layers of outerwear, slips, petticoats, corset and bright red stockings! There was a 20th Century motoring outfit with a cumbersome long duster and hobble skirted costume circa 1910 which covered two garters with a connecting strip of elastic to remind the wearer to take tiny, slow steps.

The hairstyles changed before our eyes from the long hair of the 1850s. World War I brought more freedom of dress and also shorter hairstyles. The 20s brought the flapper look. There was the Atomic hairstyle, uniquely Las Vegas, with the hair gathered into a mushroom on top of the head and the look of Jackie Kennedy in the early 60s and 70s.

Carlino-Banta said, "So, (the show is) not so much a Nevada based show. It's like a history of women's dress in this country, starting with the 1850s up to the 1970s, much of the show was universal." She said that as women relocated here they brought their traditions, their culture and their clothing.

Governor Kenny Guinn escorted his lovely wife, Dema. Seen sipping champagne and socializing were Society Editors Elizabeth Voit and Dorothy Huff. Representative Shelley Berkley was there, also Myrna Williams, Renee Diamond, Linda Favero, Mary Morgan, Rita Isom, Iown Gifford, Alice Denton, Nancy Allf, Lori Porter, Natalie Rittenhouse, Bernie Lenz and a lot of other beautifully dressed women.

by Frankie Williams





# *Nevada Women's History Project History Day Winners*

Four contestants in Northern Nevada and five in Southern Nevada were awarded cash prizes by the NWHP as part of the Nevada History Day contest which encourages student research pertaining to women in Nevada's history. The event is sponsored by the Nevada Humanities Committee.

In the North, Junior Division winners (a tie) were: Kayland King, Swope Middle School, paper on "History of Women's Basketball"; Kathrine Preston, Kathryn Orgill, Amanda Airrington, Schinthia Islam, Swope Middle School, group performance on "Nevada Women's Suffrage."

The Senior Division winner was Sara Walls, Pershing County High School, for her paper, "Equal Rights Amendment."

Billie Brinkman was the judge for NWHP and member Sally Wilkins presented the cash awards to the contestants during the awards ceremony in Carson City.

In the South, five 6<sup>th</sup> graders from Merryhill School won the group project award. Their presentation topic was "Sarah Winnemucca" about whom they performed a short play. The students were: Kate Gonzalez, Johathan Loh, Brian Fowler, Richard Ochoa, and Anthony Zimmermann.

Congratulations to all of these outstanding students on receiving our award.

## *From the Webmaster*

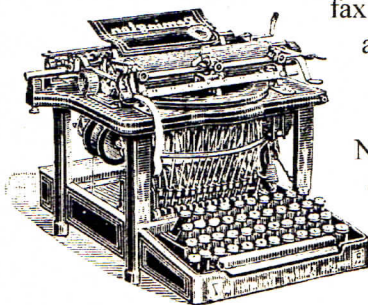
The NWHP web page is available and always improving. Please take time to check it out at: <http://www.unr.edu/wrc/nwhp> and give me your new ideas and feedback. If you're not familiar with surfing the web, call me, Lisa-Marie Lightfoot at 775-849-2050 and I will be glad to help you out. I am adding new biographies and new information.

If you have information about events from other organizations that would be of interest to our members, I would be glad to put it on the website calendar. The web calendar is the most up to date information available! If you know of or have a web site and would like NWHP to link up, call me 775-849-2050,

fax me 775-849-2129, or e-mail me at: [lightfoot@chipmunk.reno.nv.us](mailto:lightfoot@chipmunk.reno.nv.us)

Work with me to make the NWHP website a valuable tool on women's history for our members and the world.

*by Lisa-Marie Lightfoot*



# *NWHP State Board Meeting Summary*

On March 18<sup>th</sup> the State Board meeting was held at the home of Joan LeMere in Las Vegas. In attendance were: Joyce Marshall, Rose Irwin, Kathleen Clemence, Eva Stowers, Carrie Porter, Mitsi Johnson, Holly Van Valkenburgh, Carleen Ernest, Joan LeMere, Lisa-Marie Lightfoot, and Kathleen Noneman were guests. Joyce read a letter from the Nevada Women's Fund stating that they had reviewed the NWHP proposed State Policies and Procedures, but that NWF was developing standardized policies and procedures for all NWF programs. They should be distributed by April 1, 2000.

On the subject of labels for our Newsletter, Carrie provided Joan with the "My Mail List" software program that is being used in the North. Joan will update the State Membership List using this new program. It was also agreed that regional membership chairs will provide membership updates to the State Membership Chair no later than the first of each month. The State Membership Chair will provide an updated regional listing to the Regional Membership Chairs no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month beginning May 2000. The Regional Membership Chairs for the South and for the North will print labels for mailings to those members assigned to their regions.

Lisa-Marie Lightfoot was officially appointed NWHP Webmaster. She will serve at her convenience and as an advisor to the State Board.

Carrie was asked by Joyce to appoint an internal audit committee. Kathleen Clemence volunteered to be a member of the audit committee. The South Region Board will appoint an audit committee to review the financial records of the State Treasurer for the period July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000. This will happen once the State Treasurer records have been received by Eva Stowers.

The Board recommended that the Budget Committee include a category entitled, "State Meeting" which would include subcategories "Travel" and "Teleconference".

Kathy presented the proposed slate of officers for the term July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2002. The Chair of the Nominating Committee for the term July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2004 will be Joyce Marshall.

Rose presented the 2000 State Conference expenses report and a report on the activities of the Southern Region.





## In Appreciation:

- For helping ready the state office for the Open House event held on May 1<sup>st</sup>. In particular, Phyllis Cudek, Mary Anne Convis, Kay Sanders, and Carrie and Keith Porter spent many hours putting up shelves, cleaning, and decorating.

## Congratulations:

- To Ebony Houser who was selected by the Women's Studies Advisory Board Scholarship Committee at UNR to receive the first Jean Ford Women's Studies Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000. She hails from Alaska and is a Women's Studies major. Ebony has expressed an interest in pursuing graduate or professional training that will enable her to serve as an advocate for women who have not been as fortunate as she. Dr. Jennifer Ring, Chair of the Women's Studies Department at UNR, presented the award.
- Janet White for receiving her Master of Arts degree in English from the University of Nevada Reno, in May 2000. Janet has agreed to be the Biography Editor for our website beginning this month. She has been involved with our organization since 1995.
- Martha Gould for receiving a Presidential Appointment as Chair of the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. (See related article in this Newsletter.)
- All you hard-working members in the South for putting on a fantastic 2000 NWHP Conference. Your efforts are appreciated by all members of NWHP. We love you!
- The Carson Valley Women's Remembering Project for their successful event that honored 23 women for their contributions. About 120 guests were present as each honoree was presented with a certificate of appreciation and a long stemmed rose. Information about these dedicated women will eventually be housed at our Jean Ford Research Center in Reno.

## Wish List:

- Donations to help pay for a dedicated line in our state office for our website and internet/email connection.



## Southern Region Year End Report

continued from page 4

Nevada; Organized the first and second annual teas honoring our First ladies of Nevada; introduced the first video on seven living first ladies of Nevada and designed the first coverlet, which featured famous pioneer women of Nevada; attended several brunches where members gave outstanding programs on historical places and portrayed historical women of Nevada.



This President was privileged to attend a reception at the Nevada State Museum in Carson City where inaugural gowns and various memorabilia of our first ladies of Nevada were on display. This display was on exhibit for public viewing in Carson City and is now in Las Vegas until September 3rd of this year. The NWHP has also supported the Museum, Library and Arts Foundation on a major fundraiser that was held at the Mandalay Bay Resort on April 8, 2000.

It was with pride and joy that I represented the NWHP Southern Region wherever my travels took me. I deeply appreciated your support these past two years and offer my ever lasting gratitude for the devotion and constant service to the Executive Committee who are also my friends. This organization could not have exceeded the goals without the constant service of this Executive Committee. You, the members, chose well and I know that you will support the leadership and the goals in the next administration.

by Rose Irwin

## Some NWHP News Contacts

### Carrie Townley Porter

Fax: 775-857-4447 • Email: tpareno@ix.netcom.com

### Kay Sanders

Email: ksanders@scs.unr.edu • Fax: 775-747-1642

### Rose Irwin

702-457-4577 • Fax: 702-385-9278

### NWHP - State Office

770 Smithridge Dr., Suite 300 • Reno, Nevada 89502-0708

Tel: 775-786-2335 • Fax: 775-786-8152

South: P.O. Box 12184 • Las Vegas, NV 89112-0184

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Editor: Kay Sanders



Visit the Nevada Women's History Project Online at [www.unr.edu/wrc/nwhp/](http://www.unr.edu/wrc/nwhp/)

## Membership Application

Individual Membership • Dues \$25/Year

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Voice Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Organizational Membership • Active Dues \$50/Year

Corporate Sponsor • \$250/Year

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

President or Director \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_ (Eve) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Voice Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Representative to NWHP \_\_\_\_\_

*Welcome New  
Members!*

**NORTH:**  
Bob Stewart

**SOUTH:**  
Bob Price  
Kathryn Howell  
Barbara Cloud  
Stephanie Smith