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NWWHA

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY ALLIANCE

250TH



celebrating democracy & women's contributions

Happy Birthday, America

THOUGH THE PROMISE OF EQUALITY STILL WAITS TO BE FULLY KEPT.

July 4, 1876: When Women Demanded Their Promise of Independence, Again

At the Centennial Celebration of 1876, nearly thirty years after the first women's rights convention, the women of America were still demanding what they demanded: the right to vote, freedom from taxation without representation, and the equal rights enshrined in the Declaration of Independence. On that sweltering July day in Philadelphia, in a deliberate act of civil disobedience, Susan B. Anthony and Matilda Joselyn Gage marched to the podium and presented their Declaration of Rights for Women: "We ask of our rulers... no special privileges... We ask justice, we ask equality, and that all the civil and political rights belonging to citizens of the United States be guaranteed to us and our daughters forever."

These "radical" women refused to remain invisible or silent. They argued that they "had greater cause for revolution than the men of 1776," and they backed those words with action — demonstrating, risking arrest, and refusing to pay taxes while petitioning for their rights as citizens of a republic. A decade later, in an act of political theater, radical women protested the unveiling of the Statue of Liberty, viewing it as a mockery of a freedom the Constitution did not yet guarantee them. For another generation, they kept the fight for equality and suffrage alive, passing the torch to the women who came after — and in doing so, they forged the legacy of nonviolent civil disobedience that women have carried forward ever since in the pursuit of justice.

One hundred fifty years later, their work remains unfinished. The promises of liberty, equality, and every woman's "absolute right to herself" still call us forward. Their courage reminds us that democracy advances only when ordinary citizens speak out, organize, and act.

As daughters — and sons — of their legacy, let us continue that work. Support the effort to affirm equal rights by signing the Equal Rights Amendment petition, and by encouraging others to do the same. Sign the petition: sign4era.org

*For a definitive treatment of this event and time period in Women's History, we are grateful for *A Time of Protest: Suffragists Challenge the Republic: 1870-1887* by the late Sally Roesch Wagner.*

Mary Katherine Goddard:

THE WOMAN WHO SIGNED HER NAME TO INDEPENDENCE



When the Declaration of Independence was first printed on July 4, 1776, it bore no signers' names. With war raging and the outcome uncertain, the Continental Congress understood that revealing those identities could jeopardize the cause—and that secrecy would let the document's message spread quickly.

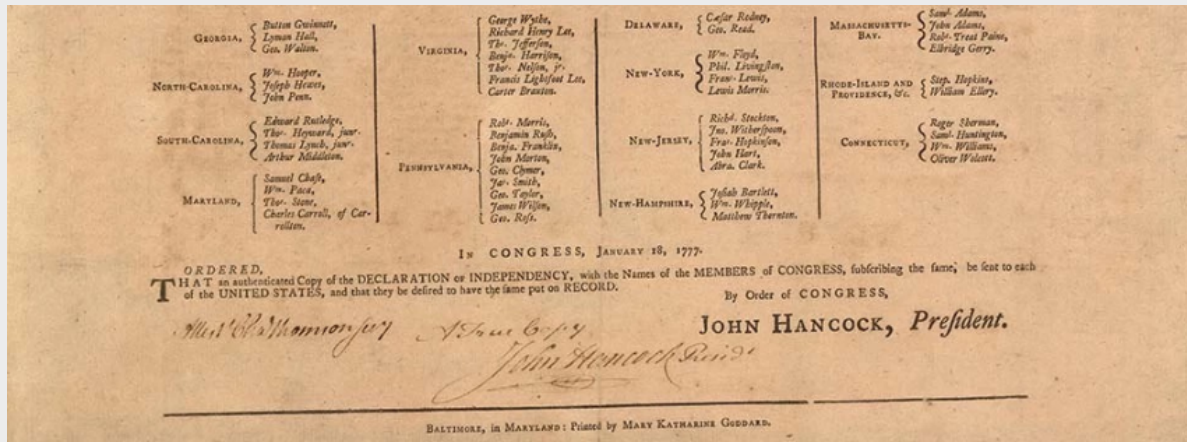
Yet the signers knew what they risked. In the Declaration's closing words, they pledged "our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

That pledge demanded more than words—it required standing publicly behind their act of rebellion. So the second printing revealed their names for the first time, handing the British Crown a list of those who could be arrested, tried for treason, imprisoned, or hanged.

The printer entrusted with this historic edition was a woman: **Mary Katherine Goddard**, one of the most accomplished printers in America. She published the *Maryland Journal*, printed Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, wrote editorials critical of British rule, and served as Baltimore's postmaster—remarkable achievements for a woman of her era.

On January 18, 1777, Goddard produced the first public version of the Declaration, listing all 56 signers, and her own name at the bottom: "Printed by Mary Katherine Goddard." That signature was no mere printer's mark—by attaching her name, Goddard publicly aligned herself with independence and accepted the same dangers the signers faced should the Revolution fail; it was sent to all states and read in public squares.

Today, the Goddard Broadside stands as a testament to her courage. History remembers the 56 men who signed the Declaration—but Mary Katherine Goddard, too, put her name, reputation, freedom, and future on the line for American independence.



America 250:

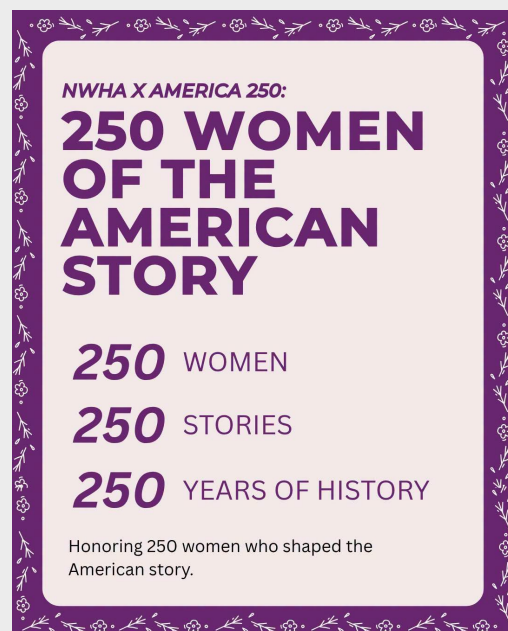
250 WOMEN OF THE AMERICAN STORY

As the United States commemorates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the National Women's History Alliance is proud to launch 250 Women of the American Story: a nationwide storytelling project celebrating the women whose leadership, innovation, courage, and determination helped shape our nation.

From now through July 4, we'll highlight 250 remarkable women, five from every state, sharing their stories through daily posts featuring historic photographs, brief biographies, and links to learn more.

Together, these women represent the rich and diverse history of America and the countless ways women have contributed to our democracy, communities, and culture. We invite you to follow the series, discover new stories, and share them with your friends, family, students, and colleagues.

Follow NWA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#) to celebrate all 250 women.



250 WOMEN OF THE AMERICAN STORY

Day 14: Maine & Tennessee



CALIFORNIA



MARIA GUADALUPE
EVANGELINA DE LOPEZ

MARIA GUADALUPE EVANGELINA DE LOPEZ

1881-1977

- Mexican-American educator and civic leader
- Translator supporting Spanish-speaking communities
- Early suffragist activist

LAURA DE FORCE GORDON

1838-1907

- Suffragist and women's rights advocate
- One of California's first female lawyers
- Founder of women's rights newspapers and reform campaigns



GERTRUDE ATHERTON

GERTRUDE ATHERTON

1857-1948

- Novelist critiquing gender roles
- Journalist promoting women's independence
- Advocate in women's rights debates



LAURA DE FORCE
GORDON

CONNECTICUT



EMMA WILLARD

EMMA WILLARD

1787-1870

- Early advocate for women's education who founded one of the first schools for higher learning for women
- Developed advanced curricula in math, science, and history at a time when women's education was limited
- Influential reformer whose work helped expand educational opportunities for women across the United States

ELLA T. GRASSO

1919-1981

- First woman in the United States elected governor in her own right, serving as Governor of Connecticut
- Rose through state politics as a strong legislative leader focused on public service and accountability
- Known for her firm leadership style and commitment to effective state government during economic and social change



ELLA T. GRASSO

2027 NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH THEME

Financial Literacy, Liberation & Leadership: Women in Business

The nationwide educational initiative will include a commemorative print magazine, a yearlong social media campaign, and a growing coalition expected to include more than 500 K-12 schools, universities, banks, professional associations, nonprofit organizations, and corporate sponsors.

Read more about partnership with NWH [HERE](#).

2027 NWH Theme

SAVE THE DATE:

MONDAY, JULY 27th

Webinar

Early American Women & the Fight for Religious Freedom

with Margaret Cotton

author | historian

"The Radiance of Grace"

NWHA
NATIONAL WOMEN'S
HISTORY ALLIANCE

07.27.26

4:00PM PT | 5:00PM CT | 7:00PM ET



Early American Women and the Fight for Religious Freedom
Monday, July 27 | 4:00 PM PT / 5:00 PM CT / 7:00 PM ET

Join historian Margaret Cotton, author of ***Radiance of Grace***, for an inspiring exploration of Anne Hutchinson, Mary Dyer, and the courageous women who challenged Puritan theocracy in colonial America.

Discover how their unwavering commitment to conscience, faith, and liberty helped shape the foundations of religious freedom in the United States.

[Register HERE](#)

TAKE ACTION AND JOIN NWA

Membership in the National Women's History Alliance (NWA) is an investment in preserving and advancing women's history. Whether you are an individual, educator, student, organization, company, or community partner, your membership helps ensure that the stories, achievements, and contributions of women remain an essential part of our nation's history.

JOIN OUR MOVE MENT.



Together, we honor the past, amplify women's voices, and inspire future generations to build a more informed and equitable future.

As communities across the country commemorate America's 250th Anniversary, the National Women's History Alliance invites you to help make women's history visible. Wear a Votes for Women sash or carry a **Votes for Women parasol** in parades,

Women's Equality Day celebrations, and other semiquincentennial events.

Many of our commemorative items are currently available at 50% off in the 250th Anniversary Sale section of our **ONLINE STORE**.

To deepen your understanding of the movement that transformed American democracy, we also invite you to read **Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the Woman Suffrage Movement**. Widely praised as "the Bible of the suffrage movement," this beautifully illustrated volume honors the determination, courage, and persistence of the women who fought to secure the right to vote. It is also available at 50% off during our anniversary sale. Learn more and order through our online store.

Celebrate. Educate. Advocate. Join the National Women's History Alliance as we honor the women who shaped our nation and ensure their stories continue to inspire future generations.



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National Women's History Alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit registered 501(c)(3) whose mission is dedicated to advancing women's history in education, fostering empowerment, championing equality, and promoting inclusion.

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*Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok land

We acknowledge that the land in Santa Rosa, CA, is the traditional, ancestral territory of the Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok peoples, who have stewarded it for thousands of years.

www.nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org



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