

Old Courthouse and Gateway Arch to Host Women's History Month Events

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As the United States celebrates Women's History Month this March, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in downtown St. Louis will present a variety of programs, an exhibit and films highlighting the invaluable contributions of women to society throughout history.

During March, guests of the Arch Visitor Center can view the special "Do you know any women like these?" lobby exhibit. Designed to spark discussion among those viewing it, the photo display highlights the professions of a variety of famous historical women and asks visitors if they personally know a woman who currently does a similar job. While in the Arch Visitor Center, guests are also encouraged to stop by the information desk and pick up a free scavenger hunt handout. The worksheet contains numerous questions about women from history, and visitors can participate in the scavenger hunt by walking through the Museum of Westward Expansion to find answers to the questions posed. On Saturdays and Sundays during March, a ranger-led discussion highlighting "Women of the West" will also be presented in the Museum of Westward Expansion at 11:15 a.m. and 3:15 p.m.

In addition, throughout March, the Gateway Arch Museum of Westward Expansion will host a film series saluting great female historical figures and moments in women's history. From March 1-8, members of the public can view the film "Dreams of Equality," which presents an overview of the first public women's rights convention to occur in the U.S. During the week of March 9-15, visitors can see "Eleanor Roosevelt, Close to Home," an orientation film highlighting the life and work of Eleanor Roosevelt and the many issues she addressed. From March 16-22, the film "The Maggie Lena Walker Story," which tells the story of the prominent civic leader, financier and business woman, will be presented. The film series will wrap up March 23-31 with "Home Front Heroes," a new National Park Service film depicting the lives of the women and

minorities who took on traditionally white, male jobs to help manufacture warships during World War II. The films will run from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. continuously each day of the week.

With the Old Courthouse as the location of Virginia Minor's case for a woman's right to vote in the 1870s, members of the public will also have the chance to participate in a mock trial highlighting the historic Virginia Minor vs. Happersett case. On Saturdays and Sundays throughout March at 3 p.m., visitors can read scripts, argue facts and decide a verdict in a historic courtroom. Mock trials of the Virginia Minor case will alternate with the Williams vs. Bellefontaine case, which dealt with segregation laws in the 1880s. A minimum of six visitors are required for mock trial sessions to take place. If there are less than six participants on hand, a ranger-led discussion will replace the scheduled mock trial opportunity. While at the Old Courthouse, guests can also catch a viewing of the film "Dreams of Equality," which will be shown daily, throughout March, on the half-hour from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

"At the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, we salute the many female historical figures whose contributions helped shape our nation," said Ann Honious, Chief, Museum Services and Interpretation, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. "That's why we're so excited to present this lineup of programs, an exhibit and films. We encourage area residents to celebrate Women's History Month with us and take advantage of all the Arch and Old Courthouse has to offer during March."

The Gateway Arch and the Old Courthouse are part of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, located on the riverfront in downtown St. Louis. The Old Courthouse is open daily from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. During the winter months, the Arch's Museum of Westward Expansion is open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. The Gateway Arch partners include the National Park Service; its cooperating association, Jefferson National Parks Association; and Metro Business Enterprises, who work together with their downtown neighbors to make the visitor experience even better.