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**PHILLY HONORS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS IN 2020**  
*19th Amendment Centennial Brings Major Art & Cultural Exhibits;  
Spotlights Historic Sites & Leaders*

**PHILADELPHIA, March 12, 2019** – Philadelphia is famous for the *Declaration of Independence* and the *U.S. Constitution*, but America's birthplace also played a leading role in the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment, which granted the first group of American women the right to vote. For centuries, Philadelphia was an incubator of suffrage thought, home to many suffrage leaders — and a testing ground for some of the most famous demonstrations.

In 2020, Philadelphia honors the centennial of women's voting rights — and the future of the women's rights movement — not only by renaming itself the City of Sisterly Love, but also by hosting many special exhibitions and events. These include **Women 100**, a citywide program featuring live and fine arts, a road rally and a massive public toast to the suffragettes. There will be history-centric exhibitions at the **Brandywine River Museum of Art**, **National Constitution Center** and **Museum of the American Revolution**, and art-centric ones at the **Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts** and **Philadelphia Museum of Art**. What's more, summer 2020 will see the grand opening of Philadelphia's **Guild House Hotel**, a boutique operation in a National Historic Landmark building that belonged to — and will honor — a 19th-century working women's advocacy and support group.

**Exploring The History Of Women's Suffrage: Exhibitions & Events:**

- **WomenNOW Concert Series** – Women composers, conductors, instrumentalists and vocalists star throughout the Philadelphia Orchestra's season at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. **Through May 31, 2020.** 300 S. Broad Street, (215) 893-1999, [philorch.org](http://philorch.org)
- **Women 100** – Vision2020 is Drexel University's national women's equality initiative, organizing several citywide events to honor the centennial of the 19th Amendment to the *U.S. Constitution*. [women100.org](http://women100.org). These include:
  - ***Seat at the Table*** – A free, seven-day-a-week, interactive art exhibition by Dome Collective invites the public to experience women's representation in places of power — seats at tables — through 3D infographic furniture, while a wall of interactive screens introduces gender barrier-breakers throughout women's history. **March 1–September 30, 2020.** Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, 300 S. Broad Street, (215) 893-1999, [domecollective.com](http://domecollective.com)

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- **SHE Leads Road Rally** – Racecar drivers pull an all-night, round-trip road trip from East Falls (Drexel University College of Medicine) in Philadelphia to Seneca Falls, New York, site of the first Women’s Rights Convention. (Buses also available.) **June 19 & 20, 2020.** 2900 W. Queen Lane, Philadelphia, [women100.org](http://women100.org)
- **Toast to Tenacity™** – Independence Mall honors the 100th anniversary of voting rights for women — Women’s Equality Day — with midday speakers, live music and glasses raised to suffragists. Independence National Historical Park is co-hosting this event. **August 26, 2020.** 599 Market Street, [phlvisitorcenter.com](http://phlvisitorcenter.com)
- **Celebrating Women** – At the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, this 2,500-person celebration of American women begins with a ceremony featuring music, performance segments and a salute to 100 women who have blazed trails for others to follow in a multitude of fields. **September 16, 2020.** 300 S. Broad Street, (215) 893-1999, [women100.org](http://women100.org), [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org)
- **Votes for Women: A Visual History** – The Brandywine River Museum of Art displays and explains century-old political cartoons, plays, posters, parades and fashion that formed the visual culture of the U.S. women’s suffrage movement. Drawings, illustrations, photographs of marches and rallies, clothing and accessories — especially sashes — re-create and contextualize this time of tangible art and physical action, long before social media or television. Activating the exhibition are curator talks and live performances. **February 1–September 27, 2020.** 1 Hoffman’s Mill Road, Chadds Ford, (610) 388-2700, [brandywine.org](http://brandywine.org)
- **Betsy Ross House** – The wee Old City home of the legendary flagmaker hosts women’s history makers from the past century on **Suffragette Saturdays with Dora Lewis**, Philadelphia suffragette, and **Women’s Story Telling Sundays**, both during Women’s History Month (**March 2020**). On **Rebel Thursdays in June through August**, Ross will be joined by a 19th-century suffragette who will be stitching stars on the ratification flag. 239 Arch Street, (215) 686-1252, [historicphiladelphia.org](http://historicphiladelphia.org)
- **Once Upon a Nation** – Spring through summer, storytellers and History Makers wearing 18th- and 19th-century period dress (including Ona Judge and Harriet Forten Purvis) fill the Historic District, offering live perspectives on the early days of the United States. This summer, actors will portray activists Lucretia Coffin Mott, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and Alice Paul, while the story for women’s struggle for suffrage will be told at a designated storytelling bench. Three times per day (noon, 1 and 2 p.m.) on Wednesdays through Sundays, **June 17–September 27**, all four individuals (the History Makers and the storyteller) will gather behind Independence Hall to read the *Declaration of Sentiments*, Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s 1848 rewriting of the *Declaration of Independence*, to include equality for women. Free. **May 23–September 7, 2020.** [historicphiladelphia.org](http://historicphiladelphia.org)
- **19th Amendment** – The National Constitution Center expands on its permanent exhibit, *Civil War and Reconstruction: The Battle for Freedom and Equality*, with an exhibit about the movement for women’s voting rights. The new addition explores constitutional arguments for and against women’s rights and offers fascinating historical context, spotlighting multiple generations of advocates and exploring the complex debates surrounding voting rights for African Americans versus rights for white women, including a one-actor theatrical performance based on the words of anti-slavery and pro-suffrage activist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. Notable artifacts include Lucretia Mott’s diary, a rare printing of the Declaration of Sentiments and a 19th-century ballot box used to collect women’s votes. **Opens summer, date TBA, 2020.** 525 Arch Street, (215) 409-6700, [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org)

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- ***When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776-1807*** – The Museum of the American Revolution’s special exhibition features the stories of New Jersey women who legally voted in elections shortly after the *Declaration of Independence* was released. Though the loophole in the law was eventually closed, the impact of their votes and their fight to maintain their suffrage echoed through generations. **August 22, 2020–March 28, 2021.** 101 S. 3rd Street, (215) 253-6731, [amrevmuseum.org](http://amrevmuseum.org)

**Empowering Women: Exhibitions & Events:**

- **The Unfinished Revolution: African American Women & the Struggle for the Vote** – A National Park Service ranger presents the history of how African American women faced adversity before and after the passage of the 19th Amendment. **March 14 & 29, 2020.** Second Bank of the United States, 420 Chestnut Street, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Born for Liberty: Women in the War for Independence** – An hour-long presentation describes how the Revolutionary War led, in part, to the movement for women’s suffrage. **March 21, 2020.** Second Bank of the United States, 420 Chestnut Street, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Our Sons Are What We Make Them: The Anti-Suffrage Movement in the United States** – An hour-long presentation lays out the conflict and differences between the suffrage and anti-suffrage movements, which, in Philadelphia, existed across the street with one another. **March 21, 2020.** Second Bank of the United States, 420 Chestnut Street, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Philadelphia Women and the Fight to Vote** – History making women from 1920 (as portrayed by costumed actors) describe the race to ratification of the 19th Amendment and issues that affected women of the day. **March 21, 2020.** Benjamin Franklin Museum, 317 Chestnut Street, (267) 514-1522, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Raising Their Voices for Women’s Suffrage** – The East Wing of Independence Hall hosts an interactive, comprehensible-for-kids exhibit on the women’s history makers — Susan B. Anthony, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Alice Paul — who used Independence Square to make their voices heard. **March 21–September 30, 2020.** 520 Chestnut Street, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Women of Change, Women of Protest** – The Liberty Bell Center offers a Philadelphia-focused exhibit on stories and images of women’s suffrage movement, with a focus on history makers Lucretia Mott, Harriet Forten Purvis and the Justice Bell, a 1915 replica of the Liberty Bell that travelled the country to promote women’s suffrage. **April 25–September 30, 2020.** 526 Market Street, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Women’s Suffrage Trail** – An all-ages scavenger hunt throughout Independence National Historical Park leads to one-of-a-kind LEGO® mini-figure suffragettes — and reveals the real suffragettes’ stories and missions. **May 2–September 30, 2020.** Maps available at ranger desk at Independence Visitor Center, 599 Market Street, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)
- **Women’s Rights and Roles in Early America** – **May 23–September 30, 2020.** Temporary exhibit delves into the roles and rights of women before, during and right after the Revolutionary War, and explores how the war inspired the women’s suffrage movement. Benjamin Franklin Museum, 317 Chestnut Street, (267) 514-1522, [nps.gov/inde](http://nps.gov/inde)

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- **Justice Bell** – In 1915, the Justice Bell, aka “The Women’s Liberty Bell,” a near-precise replica of the Liberty Bell, traveled all 67 counties of Pennsylvania to promote women’s suffrage. Emblazoned with the message “Liberty throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof,” it rang for the first time in Independence Square on September 25, 1920 to celebrate the signing of the 19th Amendment. The Bell returns to Independence Square on **August 26** for the Toast to Tenacity and will remain on display through **September 25**, when a re-enactment of the famous release of its clapper will allow it to ring again to mark the amendment’s centennial. **August 26–September 25, 2020.** Independence Mall, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](https://nps.gov/inde)
- ***Taking Space: Contemporary Women Artists and The Politics of Scale*** – The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) presents impressive, political, space-claiming large-scale artwork from its own collection by women artists. Massive painting, drawings, sculpture, installation and mixed media, including major pieces by Betye Saar and Njideka Akunyili Crosby, examine the historic, present and future roles of women in art — and the world. **July 16–December 6, 2020.** 128 N. Broad Street, (215) 972-7600, [pafa.org](https://pafa.org)
- ***Fresh & Fierce: Women Artists Networks (1891-1929)*** – PAFA shines a light on the work of William Merritt Chase, an artist and instructor who, at a time when women were largely left out, taught and created a community out of more than 500 women artists at PAFA. The exhibition will show Chase’s work alongside works by some of his students: Georgia O’Keeffe, Alice Kent Stoddard, Laura Wheeler Waring and others. **October 31, 2020–March 28, 2021.** 118 N. Broad Street, (215) 972-7600, [pafa.org](https://pafa.org)

#### **Sites Where Women Made History:**

- **Arch Street Meeting House** – Human rights activists and social reformers Lucretia Mott and sisters Sarah and Angelina Grimke were members of this 18th-century Quaker meeting house in Old City, a site also essential to the 18th-century Pennsylvania Abolition Society and the 20th-century LGBTQ rights group, the Philadelphia Conference. Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day, visitors can learn more about the role of the meeting house at Historic Philadelphia Inc.’s free Once Upon a Nation storytelling bench stationed outside. 320 Arch Street, (215) 413-1804, [historicismh.org](https://historicismh.org)
- **Chester County Historical Society (CCHS)** – A small collection of women’s suffrage materials is housed in their library documenting pieces of local chapters of the Pennsylvania Women’s Rights Association. CCHS’s Horticultural Hall was the site of the Pennsylvania Women’s Rights Convention in 1852, called to order by Lucretia Mott. 225 N. High Street, West Chester, (610) 692-4800, [chestercohistorical.org](https://chestercohistorical.org)
- **Historical Society of Pennsylvania** – Among the 21 million printed and graphic items in this vast library are two remarkable archival suffrage collections: the Papers of Caroline Katzenstein and Dora Kelly Lewis, both of whom played important roles in the local and national suffrage movement. One notable letter in the Lewis Collection is a letter written from Occoquan Prison, where she was jailed and force-fed after picketing at the White House. 1300 Locust Street, (215) 732-6200, [hsp.org](https://hsp.org)
- **Independence National Historical Park (INHP)** – Independence Mall has long been a site for protest and celebration. It’s where Susan B. Anthony boldly interrupted an official ceremony to orate and distribute copies of the *Declaration of Rights of the Women of the United States* on July 4, 1876, and the Justice Bell rang jubilantly for the signing of the 19th Amendment on September 25, 1920. Beginning this spring, INHP will commemorate the centennial of women’s suffrage

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with special presentations, exhibits and activations (mentioned above). More information available at the ranger desk at Independence Visitor Center, 599 Market Street, (215) 597-7077, [nps.gov/inde](https://nps.gov/inde)

- **Valley Forge National Historical Park** – The Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge is home to the Justice Bell, commissioned in 1915 and silenced until women won the right to vote in 1920. It rang for the first time outside Independence Hall in September 1920 and was deeded to the Washington Memorial Chapel by its commissioner, Katherine Wentworth Ruschenberger, in 1943. The bell will ring again when it returns to Independence Mall in August (see above). 1400 N. Outer Line Drive, King of Prussia, (610) 783-1000, [nps.gov/vafo](https://nps.gov/vafo)

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On Greater Philadelphia's official visitor website and blog, [visitphilly.com](https://visitphilly.com) and [uwishunu.com](https://uwishunu.com), visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the sites effective trip-planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets.

*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](https://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).*