

MARCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

We had an amazing turnout of members and guests for our March chapter meeting held at the historic Pioneer Courthouse in St. George. It started out with a privately held tour of the courthouse (now operating as a museum) guided by volunteers from the Washington County Historical Society (WCHS). Member Jeanine Vander Bruggen, also a WCHS member, organized this special tour. She was also a featured program speaker.

The meeting was actually held in the section of the courthouse where court proceedings were once held back in the day. Chapter Regent Valerie King was excited to open and adjourn the meeting in the very spot where local judges of yesteryear sat utilizing the gavel they had used to render court decisions.



State Regent Kathryn Assay was an honored guest among a few others.

Additional highlights of this meeting are covered in the pages that follow in this newsletter.



HAPPY DAR ANNIVERSARY.....25 and 35 Year Celebrations



It was an honor and a privilege to recognize and present a framed DAR ANNIVERSARY certificate to the chapter members shown below at our March meeting.

Betty Herzfeld – 25 years
DAR Join Date: 02/03/1996

Judith Lehman – 35 years
DAR Join Date: 02/07/1986

Both were acknowledged and thanked for their amazing dedication and service to the DAR, and especially to our chapter!



PIONEER COURTHOUSE....A Private Tour for Chapter Members

As mentioned earlier, our March chapter meeting was held at the historic Pioneer Courthouse now operating as a museum. Members who attended were given a private tour of the museum arranged by member Jeanine Vander Bruggen and guided by a few volunteers representing the Washington County Historical Society. Some of the highlights of the tour are shown below in photos taken by Janet Call and Judy Lehman.

History of St George's Pioneer Courthouse:

St George was designated the seat of Washington County on Jan 14, 1863. The construction of a courthouse was approved in 1866 and work began in 1867. It took nearly 10 years to complete because the workmen were also building the St George Tabernacle and the St George Temple. It was completed in 1870.

The first floor served as offices for county government. The large room on the second floor was used as both a courtroom and a schoolroom. It was also used for public meetings, plays, dances, and a multitude of other activities. In the basement is the jail with 3 cells. Some interesting features of the building include the 18-inch thick walls that can be seen at windows and doorways, chandeliers, original paintings of Zion National Park and the Grand Canyon by Loren Isaac Covington, a large security vault with its back extending out beyond the exterior wall, extensive cornice work and a cupola which was designed for hangings. Fortunately, no hangings were performed at the courthouse. There is another safe in the hallway that has an interesting story.

The building was been used continuously as a courthouse until 1960. Washington County sought to tear it down in 1970 when the City of St. George came to its rescue to become the owner and caregiver of the building. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places on Sept 22, 1970. It was still empty until a major renovation project was completed in 1986. The St. George Chamber of Commerce became the occupant for 31 years. After its relocation to a larger space, the Dixie/Arizona Strip Interpretive Association opened for a short period followed by another vacancy of 18 months. Only the Historic St George Live tours were held here during the summer months, along with periodic visits by Road Scholars. Now that the building has reopened, there are displays to describe the work of several historical groups, tours are given, and special events are held.

The fact that the building is still standing and usable is a testament of the skill and care used in its construction even though, unlike later buildings which used lava stone for foundations, sandstone bricks were used for both the foundation and upper walls. It was discovered that sandstone used underground in this area tends to erode. Evidence of this can be seen in the basement jail cells. The Pioneer Courthouse, in cooperation with the City of St. George, is managed by the Washington County Historical Society, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Sons of Utah Pioneers and Arts to Zion.



WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH *observed in March*



Chapter member Jeanine Vander Bruggen was our featured program speaker for March. She helped us observe Women in American History Month by highlighting some of our local ladies of the past who made significant contributions to our community while managing households, tending to children and, in many cases, enduring monumental losses and great hardships. From healing the sick, fighting for women's rights, overseeing mail deliveries, serving in government to promoting the silk industry and writing books to preserve history, these ladies and their lives are forever etched within the pages of our local history. Thank you, Jeanine, for sharing their stories with us as our nation honors all

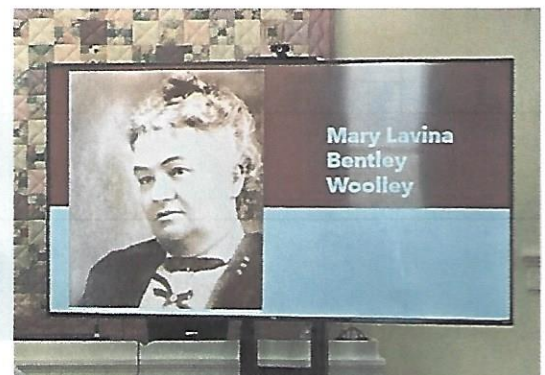
women in the month of March who, through their extraordinary selfless actions, made American history.

First Female Doctor in the U.S.



← **ELISABETH
BLACKWELL
and
MARY LAVINA
BENTLEY
WOOLLEY** →

President of St George's Women's Suffrage Assn



Postmistress of New Harmony, Washington County



← **MARY
ADELIA
CARBINE
TAYLOR
and
ELLEN SMITH
CARTER** →

1st Woman Elected to County Office in Washington County



Silk Commissioner of Washington County



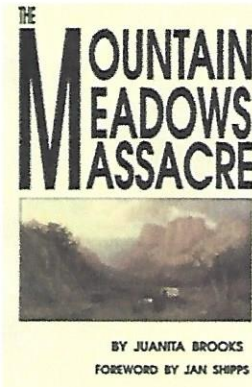
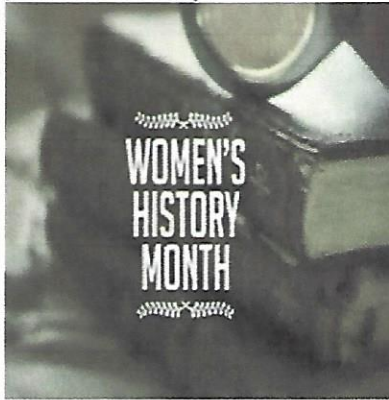
← **ANN
CANNON
WOODBURY
and
JUANITA
BROOKS** →

Educator, Historical Researcher and Book Author



DAR WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY AWARD PRESENTATION

Since March is officially and internationally recognized as "Women's History Month," our National Society greatly encourages all chapters to use this occasion to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of one or more a women within their community. At our March chapter meeting, we recognized and honored local educator, historian and famed author, Juanita Brooks, by presenting her with the DAR Women in American History award posthumously.



Below is a summary of why Juanita Brooks was selected by our chapter for this award (and included in the nomination documentation sent to NSDAR):

Juanita Brooks earned her bachelor's degree from BYU which led to a teaching and Dean of Women position at Dixie College in St George, Utah. She earned a master's degree from Columbia University in 1929 and served on the Utah Historical Society board for 24 years. She collected diaries & records of early Southern Utah settlers and organized a Utah library of Mormon history. Of the 15 books she historically researched and wrote, her most prominent works was "The Mountain Meadows Massacre". Honorary doctorates were received from Southern Utah University, Utah State University and University of Utah. Her life's work was displayed at the Pioneer Courthouse Museum in St George; and a statue of her will be unveiled sometime in 2021.



Accepting the award on Juanita Brooks' behalf were family members Willa Brooks Derrick (her daughter) and Dana Moody (her granddaughter). To learn more about Juanita Brooks and this award presentation, use this link to read the story covered by St George News: [DAR Recognizes Juanita Brooks Posthumously with Women in American History Award](#).