

For the Centennial of Women's Suffrage in Washington State in 2010, the Washington State Heritage Center produced a panel exhibit that highlighted the first women elected to major public offices following the granting of the vote to women in Washington in 1910. This successful exhibit was on display in the Office of the Secretary of State from January, 2010 through March, 2011. The exhibit was paid for with private funds raised specifically for this purpose.

The exhibit, *Moving Forward, Looking Back: Washington's First Women in Government*, is now ready to travel to museums and civic locations in the state.

The exhibit consists of 14 panels, 78" tall by 36" wide printed on ½" gator foam board. While in the Secretary of State's office, the panels were mounted with Velcro strips on the lobby walls (see Lobby pics above.) There is also a free standing introductory panel (30" x 78"). The panels can also be displayed on custom made stands that allow two panels to be arranged back to back (see example 1 and 2 above.) With the stands the exhibit on the floor would extend about 25' in a straight line, but could be displayed in whatever manner fits your space.

The panels feature the following women, each of whom was the first woman to hold the office indicated on the panel. The panels consist of a large photo at the top (see attached photos), some information about the women and a quote. PDFs of each panel are available by request.

- Frances Axtell, First State Representative, 1913-1915
- Nena Jolidan Croake, First State Representative, 1913-1915
- Josephine Preston, First Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1913-1929
- Reba Hurn, First State Senator, 1923-1931
- Bertha Knight Landes, First Mayor of a major U.S. City (Seattle), 1926-1928
- Belle Reeves, First Secretary of State, 1938-1948
- Catherine May Bedell, First U.S. Representative, 1959-1971
- Dixy Lee Ray, First Governor, 1977-1981
- Jeannette Hayner, First Senate Majority Leader, 1979-1992
- Carolyn Dimmick, First Supreme Court Justice, 1981-1985
- Jennifer Belcher, First Public Lands Commissioner, 1993-2001
- Deborah Senn, First Insurance Commissioner, 1993-2001
- Christine Gregoire, First Attorney General, 1993-2005
- Patty Murray, First U.S. Senator, 1993-Present

We also have a limited supply of bookmarks for each woman (except Christine Gregoire, those are all gone) that we can make available as takeaways from the exhibit.

There is no cost to rent the exhibit. You will need to pay for or provide transportation of the exhibit from Olympia to your venue and back. You will also need to provide a certificate of insurance for the value of the exhibit. Typically the exhibit will be available for 12 weeks at a time, but that is negotiable.

If you are interested in this exhibit, please contact Carleen Jackson, carleen.jackson@sos.wa.gov, 360-902-4126.

Note: The Washington State Heritage Center is a project of the Office of the Secretary of State. Part of our mission is to engage, educate and inspire citizens to make a difference through compelling stories of leaders from all walks of life and throughout our State's history.



THE CENTENNIAL OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

**MOVING FORWARD
LOOKING BACK:**

Washington's First Women in Government

- Once treated as second-class citizens and prohibited by the courts from casting a legal ballot, Washington women finally won the right to vote in 1910, after a long, emotionally charged battle.
- The milestone took place 10 years ahead of the national amendment and triggered a wave of political firsts that spanned eight decades.
- *First Women in Government* follows the lives of 14 pathfinders who soared to some of the most coveted offices in Washington politics never before held by women.

"To longer withhold political emancipation from women is a menace to progress and an injustice to the race."

THE WASHINGTON STATE HERITAGE CENTER

FRANCES AXFIELD

FIRST STATE REPRESENTATIVE
1913-1915

NINA J. GROVER

FIRST STATE REPRESENTATIVE
1913-1915

JOSEPHINE PERKINS

FIRST SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
1913-1915

BERTA KNIGHT

FIRST SENATOR
1913-1915

WALTER U.S. CITY

FIRST MAJOR OF A
1913-1915

SECRETARY OF STATE

1913-1915

BELLE REEVES

FIRST U.S. REPRESENTATIVE
1913-1915

CATHERINE MAY

FIRST U.S. REPRESENTATIVE
1913-1915

DIXY LEE RAY

FIRST GOVERNOR
1977-1981

CAROLYN DIMMICK

FIRST STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE
1981-1985

JEANNETTE HAYNER

FIRST SENATE MAJORITY LEADER
1981-1982

JENNIFER BELGER

FIRST COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS
1993-2001

DEBORA HENNER

FIRST INSURANCE COMMISSIONER
1993-2001

CHRISTINE GREGOIRE

FIRST ATTORNEY GENERAL
1993-2005

PATTY MURRAY

FIRST U.S. SENATOR
1993-PRESENT