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opened  
the door to  
inspiration...

THE NATIONAL  
SUSAN B. ANTHONY  
MUSEUM & HOUSE™

**IMPACT REPORT: 2017**

The National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House interprets the legacy of the great reformer to inspire and challenge individuals to make a positive difference in their lives and communities. We preserve and share the National Historic Landmark that was her home and headquarters, collect and exhibit artifacts related to her life and work, and offer tours and interpretive programs to share her story with the world.

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FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF VOTETILLA



VoteTilla docked at Corn Hill Landing, July 2017

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Cover: photo, Walter Colley

# From the president & CEO

There has never been a year like 2017. That was certainly true in national and world events, and it was true at the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House on Madison Street.

We had been planning for New York's Suffrage Centennial for years, looking forward to a full calendar of events locally, regionally, and across the state. We had perhaps over-committed ourselves, just a bit.

Then the 2016 Election happened, and the world turned its cameras to a modest headstone in Mt. Hope Cemetery in Rochester, New York, where an estimated 10,000 women, men, and children gathered to place their "I Voted" sticker on Susan B. Anthony's grave. We were drawn into the drama of the historical and political landscape as CNN and the BBC reached out to us for context.

In January, *Saturday Night Live!* surprised us with a skit that was not particularly flattering or accurate about Susan B. Anthony's position on reproductive freedom. But what historic site wouldn't be thrilled to be on *SNL!*

We could never have anticipated that our on-site attendance would grow more than 30% in one year.

Throughout 2017, we persisted as we partnered and presented projects, exhibits, and events that had been in the works. We worked with long-standing partners: the Susan B. Anthony Center at the University of Rochester, the National Women's Rights Park and the National

Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, the AAUW, RIT, the League of Women Voters, and Ganondagan. Through VoteTilla, we partnered with cultural organizations: Akwaaba, GEVA, Bristol Valley, and Kingfisher Theaters. Our community partners in Seneca Falls, Geneva, Lyons, Clyde, Palmyra, Macedon, Fairport, Pittsford, Penfield, Newark, and Rochester exceeded our expectations. Businesses, historical societies, churches, and libraries were all contributing partners. We cannot name them all here, but we encourage you to visit our website, blog, and Facebook pages for more details.

VoteTilla will receive the Community Champion award from the Susan B. Anthony Center and the Engaging Communities award from the Museum Association of New York (MANY) in 2018. We share this honor with our amazing partners.

As you read this report, we hope that you will feel inspired by the ways in which we are continuing Susan B. Anthony's work. You make it possible through your memberships, gifts, and grants. We hope that you will continue to support us generously.

Deborah L. Hughes  
*President & CEO*

P.S. We are living in chaotic times, as did Susan B. Anthony. She witnessed humanity at its cruelest and most violent. She experienced progress and set-backs, triumph and betrayal, yet she maintained a clear hope and belief that there would come a time when men and women would work together "striving to make the world better for their having lived." **Her cause has never been more relevant to our future. Thank you for helping us share her story.**



Deborah L. Hughes in deep conversation with the McClure Twins, social media influencers at the age of four.

# From the board chair



On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I extend congratulations to President & CEO, Deborah L. Hughes, who celebrated ten years in her position with the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House on August 1, 2017. This past year she was also recognized as an

honoree for the “W” Award from the Rochester Women’s Network and as a “Woman of Distinction” by the Girl Scouts of Western New York. Under Deborah’s leadership the Museum has had tremendous growth while staying true to its mission and vision. The Trustees and I applaud Deborah for her achievements.

Susan B. Anthony once said, “How I love to receive in my own home and at my own table!”

At the Anthony Museum we continue her tradition of cordially inviting visitors to experience the place she called home, and to discover how liberty, equality, justice, and humanity formed and informed her life. Every day, the Anthony Museum connects with people who physically

make the journey and others who visit virtually. As many as 65,000 visit our website each month. At 17 Madison Street, we walk through the rooms where she entertained friends, discussed strategy on equal rights, and prepared her speech entitled, “Is it a crime for a United States citizen to vote?”

It is the only site in the world designated as a Susan B. Anthony National Historic Landmark. Over the course of time, Susan B. Anthony’s revolutionary ideals were transformed into evolutionary changes in American society.

Our knowledgeable and dedicated Board of Trustees, our staff, and volunteers all work to preserve this important American historical site and to foster civic engagement. “Inspiring others through Susan B. Anthony’s life and work is our purpose and passion.” The historic significance of her home and the work she did on behalf of women cannot be overestimated.

With your financial support, we can preserve her home for future generations and continue to share her authentic story. Why am I committed to the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House? ***Because Susan B. inspires me!***

Sharon Salluzzo  
*Chair of the Board of Trustees*



Deborah L. Hughes, Katherine Goble Moore, and Sharon Salluzzo at a luncheon hosted by Monroe Community College celebrating the inaugural Pioneer Award. This award was presented by the Anthony Museum to Katherine Johnson, NASA mathematician and civil rights activist. Katherine Moore accepted the award for her mother.

# Our small museum had a big story to share in this landmark year



Hélène Biandudi Hofer was emcee at the 2017 Birthday Luncheon.

Each year at the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House starts with excitement and energy—our Susan B. Anthony Birthday Luncheon. 2017 was no exception as we welcomed Ann D. Gordon, Research Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University, as our keynote speaker. Along with Gordon's in-depth speech, the luncheon was also our opportunity to unveil our new branding—a new logo, brand colors, and the dynamic tagline, *Susan B. Inspires Me.*

In spring we partnered with Monroe Community College for their Ninth Annual Scholars' Day, which featured Margot Lee Shetterley, author of *Hidden Figures*, as the keynote speaker. The Anthony Museum presented Shetterley with the inaugural Mary S. Anthony Award.

We also launched the 2020 Quilt Project, a collaborative piece of textile art which celebrates the centennial anniversary of the 19th Amendment. The Genesee Valley Quilt Club featured 96 blocks at their RIT QuiltFest. The project will accept quilt blocks through 2020. To learn more about how you can submit a quilt block, go to [2020Quilt.org](http://2020Quilt.org).



2020 Quilt Project blocks on display.

# VoteTilla



“History  
is present  
and  
personal.”

**LINDA LOPATA,**  
*Director of Interpretation  
& Visitor Services*

David Shakes as Frederick Douglass and  
Barbara Blaisdell as Susan B. Anthony,  
photo courtesy of Martha Tedrowe.

When a group of volunteers gathered together in November of 2015 with the seed of an idea to commemorate the upcoming 2017 centennial of woman suffrage in New York State with a trip along the Erie Canal, not one of them had any idea of how this amazing project would unfold.

At the heart of this group of volunteers were story-tellers, historians, and educators, all determined to share the story of these agitators for human rights, and to do it in a way that would bring history to life, represent the diversity

of the early reformers, and make it personal for all who participated.

VoteTilla took place from July 17 to 23, 2017—it started in Seneca Falls and followed the Erie Canal through villages and towns along the way to the city of Rochester, where the celebration spilled into the weekend. Our VoteTilla partners included University of Rochester Susan B. Anthony Center, the Women’s Rights National Historical Park in Seneca Falls, Bristol Valley Theater, and many others.



As the Narrator of the programs along the route reminded viewers at each stop, those boats traveling down the Erie Canal from Seneca Falls were also traveling through time. This symbolic journey started in a time when women could be punished for speaking to a crowd, when men and women were enslaved, when anyone who wanted to improve the country was taking their lives into their own hands. Through these performances, yesterday was bridged to today, and words originally penned over a century ago became present and personal.

At every stop along the way, VoteTilla was a vivid reminder of the tireless work and cooperation required to secure the vote for women and other human rights.

With the support of our sponsors, the dedication of our volunteers, and the inspired talent of our reenactors, VoteTilla commemorated and celebrated this centennial and brought the history of woman suffrage to life. For many listeners, it was their first experience hearing the words of Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Frederick Douglass, Mary Church Terrell, or Lucretia Mott—perhaps even the first time they heard these names. The response from the audiences along the way clearly showed us that those speeches, and their themes of human rights and universal suffrage, are still relevant today.

Hester Jeffrey's 1906 eulogy to Susan B. Anthony ends with these words: *... we who have heard thy voice: we who have known something of thy great life work—we pledge ourselves to devote our time and energies to the work thou hast left us to do.*

VoteTilla brought Susan B. Anthony and her colleagues to life and introduced their voices to a 21st Century audience. We hope that people left with an appreciation for the work and sacrifice of these historic figures, and a renewed zeal to devote time and energy to the work for social justice still left to be done.





VoteTilla continued in Rochester after we moved to dry land. Saturday, July 22 dawned with hundreds of people gathering at the corner of Exchange and Broad Streets to take part in the Suffragist City Parade.

A group of dedicated volunteers drove this event. Picking up on the City of Rochester's theme "Because of Women Like Her," marchers celebrated women who had inspired them or changed the world.

Led by a young brother and sister depicting Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony, and a reenactor depicting Inez Milholland on her white horse, the groups that marched were wide-ranging— from Brownies to artists, from N.O.W. to historic reenactors, from church groups to politicians—all celebrating the leadership of women.

A reviewing stand was constructed in front of 17 Madison Street, and from there Susan B. Anthony (as portrayed by Barbara Blaisdell) announced each group as it passed the historic home. The celebration continued with lectures, book signings, a reenactment of an historic women's baseball game, and a rousing performance by Old Songs of *Forward into Light*.

The busy week ended with two key events: the *Equal Right to Act: Remembering the Rochester Woman's Rights Convention of 1848*, presented at the First Unitarian Church, and the AAUW Suffrage Centennial Picnic, which featured music and historical reenactors.

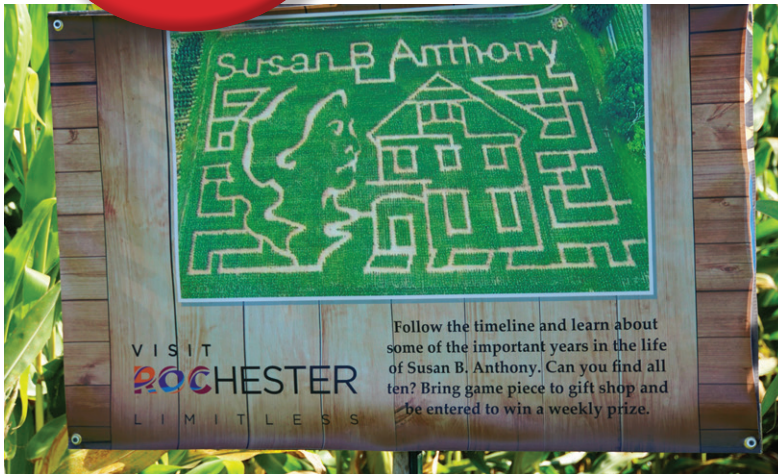
The week of VoteTilla activities came to an end, but the energy and enthusiasm generated by this celebration carried us through the rest of 2017, and has us looking forward to the 2020 centennial of the 19th Amendment.





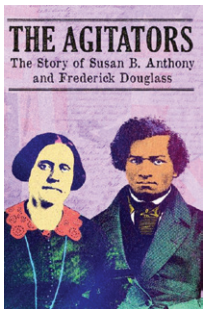


# From a corn field in Scottsville to a museum in Albany, Susan B. continues to inspire....



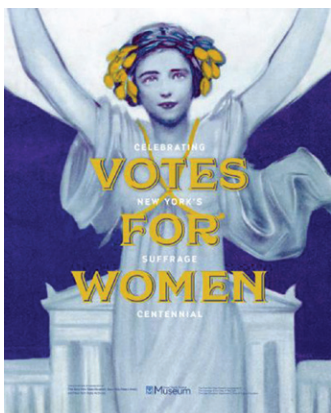
Stockoe Farms reached out to the Anthony Museum to see if we wanted to be featured in their corn maze in 2017—we replied with an enthusiastic, “YES!!” Throughout the harvest season, visitors to Stockoe Farms could navigate the maze and read about key moments of Susan B. Anthony’s life. The opening day celebration featured reenactors, speeches, and smiles all around as the story of this indomitable woman was shared with a wide audience.

Educational outreach takes many forms. The Museum was a partner with the Rochester Area Suffrage Centennial Alliance (RASCA), to present an exhibit at the Rundel Library, on display from July to mid-October. Rare artifacts and documents from the suffrage movement were on display, including (for a short time) Susan B. Anthony’s velvet cloak from the Museum’s collection.



*The Agitators*, an original play written by Mat Smart and commissioned by GEVA Theatre, brought the story of Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony to life for hundreds of theatergoers, and started many conversations about race, human rights, and artistic license versus historical accuracy.

Actors Madeleine Lambert and Cedric Mays from GEVA’s *The Agitators* made a special visit to the Museum.



The Museum shared artifacts—including Susan B. Anthony’s signature alligator purse—with the large-scale exhibition *Votes for Women: Celebrating New York’s Suffrage Centennial*, at the New York State Museum until May 2018.

In November we presented *The Raspberry* at ARTISANWorks, featuring a stirring performance of “Hear My Voice” by Rachel McClinton of Living Voices. We also had the opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes glimpse at the trial of Susan B. Anthony when Eugene VanVoorhis, a direct descendant of the lawyer who served as second counsel for Susan B. Anthony, shared his presentation “Some Lesser Known History in the Fight for Women’s Suffrage.” VanVoorhis also loaned items for a short-term exhibit.

Left, the cover of the New York State Museum’s catalogue; right, Rachel McClinton of Living Voices at the selfie booth during *The Raspberry*.

# Susan B. Anthony— still controversial after all these years

*“To find inspiration in an historical figure is a complex task. In a sense, we create a phantom person for our modern purposes out of the odd bits of her life that we value. We craft a memory that connects us across time to a person or events, trying to be true to both spheres—our world and hers. It’s an exercise that works best when our imaginations are informed by solid historical information.”*

ANN D. GORDON

Research Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University



Kate McKinnon of *Saturday Night Live!* portraying Susan B. Anthony.

One of the important roles of the Anthony Museum is to be a resource for those seeking historical information about Susan B. Anthony’s life and work. We received many inquiries about her position in regard to abortion when Anthony was featured in a skit on *Saturday Night Live!* Because the set of the NBC skit included a remarkable likeness of the front parlor of 17 Madison Street AND named the Susan B. Anthony House, audiences assumed that we had been consulted on the contents. Actually, we had no idea that this skit was in the works. (If you would like to read more about our interpretation of Susan B. Anthony on issues of reproductive freedom, we invite you to peruse our website.)

The morning after the 2016 Election, the *L.A. Times* published an article about the crowds that had gathered at Susan B. Anthony’s grave. The article introduced the question of racism

in the suffrage movement, asserting that Anthony’s movement “fought for the voting rights of white women, excluding African Americans.” To support their argument, they included a “quote” attributed to Anthony. Unfortunately, it is a misquote that is repeated all over the Internet and through social media.

Susan B. Anthony did say something similar, but the correct wording and the context are critically important to our understanding.

Before the U.S. Civil War, Anthony was an activist with the American Anti-Slavery Society. Like Frederick Douglass, Anthony believed in a union where all citizens must have the right to vote. During the war, she and others organized the Women’s Loyal National League, which was the first women’s political organization to advocate for eliminating slavery by an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. They gathered more than 300,000 signatures on petitions for an amendment—a detail that was left out of the recent movie, *Lincoln*.

Following emancipation, they anticipated taking up the cause of voting rights for all. They founded the American Equal Rights Association in 1866, whose purpose was “to secure Equal Rights to all American citizens, especially the right of suffrage, irrespective of race, color or sex.”

Imagine Anthony’s indignation when she and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were privately approached by Wendell Phillips and Theodore Tilton to suspend work for universal suffrage, to concentrate on getting the vote for men of color only. Anthony’s biographer, Ida Husted Harper reports that Anthony responded that

*“she would sooner cut off her right arm before she would ever work for or demand the ballot for the black man and not the woman.”* It was a betrayal to Susan B. Anthony to be asked to compromise on the issue of universal suffrage.

Shortly after this, Anthony and Frederick Douglass divided over the issue. Douglass believed that it was a matter of life and death to grant emancipated men the right to vote. Out of this disagreement has grown the perception that Anthony chose white women over all people of color, which is a misrepresentation. We only need to look at her words, *“It is not a question of precedence between women & black men. Neither has a claim to precedence upon an Equal Rights platform. But the business of this association is to demand for every man black or white, & for every woman, black or white, that they shall be this instant enfranchised & admitted into the body politic with equal rights & privileges.”*

There were certainly moments in the woman’s suffrage movement when the actions and words of the leaders betrayed their own racism and bigotry. At the Anthony Museum, we want to confront the ways in which Susan B. Anthony has been used to perpetuate racism, both in her time, and in ours. We want to recognize the ways in which the Anthony Museum might also be reinforcing bias and racism. We are energized by her challenge, *“I want a union in fact, not a sham.”*

Interpreting Susan B. Anthony’s life and work is as challenging as it has ever been, because Susan B. Anthony is as relevant today as she has ever been.

## From our membership director



For 20-plus years, I worked in the printing industry, where I went from an estimator to senior management. During those years, I also volunteered with not-for-profits whose missions were to improve the lives of individuals and to strive for human rights. It was five years ago when I realized it was time to consider a career that engaged my head *and* my heart, and to go down a career path that blended profession with passion and purpose. With the support of my mentors, friends, and family, I joined the team at the Anthony Museum.

Now each day I have the opportunity and honor to meet and work with individuals who are passionate about Susan B. Anthony and her work for human rights. And since the majority of the Anthony Museum's operating budget is built on membership, I take great satisfaction knowing that each new member is a partner, helping the Anthony Museum continue its work.

~ Lesia A. Telega

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## From our director of interpretation

People are looking for truth and for inspiration. That Susan B. Anthony's story is contextual, contested, and complicated does not detract from people's experience. It enhances it. Even the most stoic guests are visibly moved as they appreciate the magnitude of Susan B. Anthony's effort, against great odds, to literally change the world.

At the Anthony Museum, we interpret history in a way that invites people to make connections, to think critically, to empathize, and to have conversations. *What does the Woman's Suffrage Movement remind you of? Why did the Erie Canal matter? How do you think Susan B. Anthony felt? What inspired her? What inspires you?* We know what happens when people don't understand each other and our shared history. It is our mission to scaffold the learning, to invite the conversation, and to inspire.



~ Linda Lopata

***Each convention takes us farther on our road. By this means we educate the public to an extent they could not be educated otherwise; we reach more people than we could in any other way.*** ~Susan B. Anthony, Interview, 1887

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## From our volunteer coordinator



Here at the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House, opportunities abound for volunteers to contribute to the legacy of this famous Rochesterian and renowned reformer. Whatever strength they bring to the Anthony Museum, we have a place for them. Our docents learn the story of Susan B. Anthony's life and work, and through practice and study, they give inspiring and educational tours to visitors from around the world. Other museum volunteers greet guests or help during special events and functions.

As the nationwide centennial of the passage of the 19th Amendment approaches in 2020, we have work to do. Our mission includes inspiring visitors to create positive changes within their own community, something volunteers are able to do by spending a few shifts here a month.

~ Sara Meinhold

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The Board, staff and volunteers of the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House are guided by our Vision Statement—*Inspiring others through Susan B. Anthony's life and work is our purpose and passion.*

In 2017, Anthony Museum admissions were up 33% from the prior year. We hope that Susan B. Anthony's life and work continues to inspire generations to come, and to reach an ever-widening audience. Your financial gift will help us continue our work.

Visit [susanb.org](http://susanb.org) and click on the Donate button or call us at 585.279.7490 to discuss sponsorship options or legacy gifts.



Susan B. Anthony on the front steps of her home at 17 Madison Street, circa 1900.  
Below, 17 Madison Street as it looks today.