



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Susan Lendroth
slendroth@lapl.org

**Mary Foy, First Female City Librarian, Honored with Plaque
in Central Library and Program, “Mary Foy: Librarian, Educator and
Suffragist,” to be Live-streamed on August 18, 12 noon**

***Commemoration Coincides with 100th Anniversary of
the 19th Amendment Ratification***

LOS ANGELES (Aug. 17, 2020)—On August 18, the Los Angeles Public Library will honor Mary Foy, the city’s first female city librarian and a tireless advocate for women’s suffrage, with a plaque in the Central Library’s Rotunda and a program, “Mary Foy: Librarian, Educator, Suffragist,” live-streamed at 12:00 p.m. on the library’s Facebook and YouTube accounts. That day, August 18, is the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which finally gave women the right to vote across the United States.

The live-streamed program will feature historian Victoria Bernal, who will give an introduction to Mary Foy and other women who championed suffrage in Los Angeles. A video about Mary Foy and the plaque is available to view here:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/gCWmh4hqt14VUHf9>

“We are proud to honor Mary Foy on the Centennial of Women’s Suffrage,” said John F. Szabo, City Librarian for Los Angeles Public Library. “She was a tremendous advocate for libraries in Los Angeles and a pioneer among women in librarianship. Now more than ever, we know that the power of voting cannot be underestimated, and we celebrate that right today and every day.”

Foy was appointed to the job of city librarian in 1880. Because she was just 18 years old, her father escorted her to and from work each day. She was the first to set up a cataloging system for the library, and her duties included collecting fines and subscription fees—this at a time when the library required paid membership. She also served as hostess in the Ladies Reading Room and sometimes answered questions to settle bets from men in the saloon that was housed on the floor below the library.

(more)

Peter Persic, Public Relations & Marketing Director

After four years as city librarian, Foy left the library to teach, serve as the principal of Los Angeles High School and to help manage her family's property, in addition to her work on behalf of women's suffrage and women's rights in general.

A recipient of the nation's highest honor for library service—the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse urban population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, collection of more than 6 million books, state-of-the-art technology accessible at lapl.org, and more than 25,000 programs a year provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for lifelong learning.

###

Find video assets for the Mary Foy plaque and Women's Suffrage Centennial:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wVU5-fAbElcfVVac-l48qqF435clOZNR?usp=sharing>