

ARMINE NUTTING GOSLING STATUE PROJECT NEWS

DECEMBER 2023



WE ARE GOING TO
#RAISEHER UP!

AN EXTRAORDINARILY
ORDINARY WOMAN

CASTING IN BRONZE -
AN INTERVIEW WITH
ARTIST SHEILA
COULTAS

Did you know that there are only **three** statues of named women in Newfoundland and Labrador? Shawnadithit in Boyd's Cove; Amelia Earhart in Harbour Grace; and the soon-to-be erected statue of Demasduit and her family in Botwood.

There are **none** in our capital city of St. John's - but now, PerSIStence Theatre is helping to change that!

Through a realized design by artist Sheila Coultas, women's suffrage leader **Armine Nutting Gosling** will be commemorated life-sized, in bronze, in Bannerman Park, St. John's as the **first** statue of a named woman in the capital's history. It will also be the first public statue in the province designed by a woman!

The statue is being cast over the winter and spring of 2024. Site preparation is scheduled for the summer of 2024 with the official unveiling scheduled for April 2025 - to coincide with the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in 1925.

Our hope is that sharing this "her story" of a woman of distinction will inspire many others to take bold steps in forging their own life trajectory. We believe that weaving the significant contributions of women back into our historical narrative is a critical step towards equality and balanced representation.

AN EXTRAORDINARY ORDINARY WOMAN

A leader with wide sympathies, **Armine Nutting Gosling** (1861-1942) campaigned for votes for women in Newfoundland, achieving first, in the city of St. John's in 1921, a limited franchise for those owning or leasing .

Describing this as a "stepping stone to greater things" she then led the island-wide Women's Franchise League to victory in 1925. Labradorians first voted in 1946.

Nutting Gosling also provided leadership to the Women's Patriotic Association in World War One, child welfare, maternal health and animal rights movements, and reforms in girl's education and women's sports.

"No class, or race, or sex can have its interests attended to...unless it is represented by direct suffrage." – Armine Nutting Gosling



"Armine Nutting Gosling led a transformative political and social movement - votes for women - confronting the immense prejudices of her time." - Dr. Margot Duley

Armine Nutting Gosling was born in Waterloo, Que., into a family with little financial support and an alcoholic father.

"It was her mother who held the family together," says well-known historian **Dr. Margot Duley**, who also serves as the Armine Nutting Gosling statue project chair.

Nutting Gosling came to Newfoundland in 1882 as a teacher. Here, she met and married Gilbert Gosling, with whom she had six children, two of whom died in infancy.

"Armine herself had a 'click' moment when she was in St. John's," Duley shares. Raising money to rebuild the Anglican Cathedral.

"She realized that ... she and other women had raised a tremendous amount of money and now they had no voice in the say of how it was going to be expended - not only in churches but civic organizations and government as well," Duley continues.

Duley says Nutting Gosling's vision wasn't simply to vote. It was to be an instrument of social change, including better wages, wider opportunities and legal reforms.

Nutting Gosling and other members of the **Women's Franchise League** galvanized 20,000 people from all over the island to sign a petition for women's right to vote.

It was the largest petition campaign in Newfoundland's history at the time, when women's work was not recognized.

Duley said that this statue will be a reminder of that movement.

"We want people to reflect on that. Social justice isn't won easily," she says.

"This is an important moment in the public history of St. John's and of the whole province," Duley continues.

"Statues affirm what we value and who we are."

"Armine Nutting Gosling led a transformative political and social movement – votes for women – confronting the immense prejudices of her time."

"This statue honours her neglected role and helps to rebalance how we understand our collective history."

"She was an extraordinarily ordinary woman," Duley concludes. "Ordinary people really can effect change."



At the provincial funding announcement April 2023.

(L-R: Elder Emma Reelis; project chair Dr. Margot Duley; Minister Pam Parsons; artist Sheila Coultas; PerSISTence chair Dr. Deatra Walsh; Minister John Abbott, Minister Bernard Davis; Mayor Danny Breen)

CASTING IN BRONZE

An Interview with Sheila Coultas

Recently, we sat down with artist **Sheila Coultas** at the Newfoundland Bronze Foundry to get an update on the progress of the statue, and learn about the process.

Coultas is an artist and welder who started her journey as a textile artist.

"I am passionate about work that gets me dirty and allows me to create," says Coultas. "I love to explore new mediums and enjoy the creative energy I experience in learning how to do something new."

Something new indeed! In 2021, PerSIStence approached Coultas to become the first woman to design a piece of public sculpture in the province and the first statue of a named woman in the City of St. John's - the Armine Nutting Gosling statue.

In 2022, at the project launch, we unveiled Coultas' maquette of the statue - essentially a smaller version, carved in clay, that served as a design guide for what the full statue in bronze might look like.

"We very much wanted this statue of Armine to be her "in action", so to speak," says PerSIStence producing artistic director **Jenn Deon**.

"We love that Sheila's design has Armine reaching out to ask you to sign her petition for votes for women!" continues Deon.



Sheila Coultas with the maquette

For Coultas, designing a figure sculpture involved a combination of historical research and the careful study of anatomy.

"The process was very enlightening," says Coultas. "And it's a lot of fun to figure out the musculature and shape."

Now that the design is finalized, Coultas has begun the process to make the full size statue of Armine that will be erected in Bannerman Park in April 2025 - the 100th anniversary of women achieving the right to vote throughout Newfoundland.

THE PROCESS OF CASTING IN BRONZE

- The statue is resculpted in **clay** in life size form.
- From this, the clay is partitioned with metal shims and drenched in **silicone** to capture all of the intricate details from the clay.
- The silicone mold is overlaid with an outer mold of **fiberglass and resin**.
- Then the statue is cast again, this time in **wax**. This wax copy is cut into pieces in order to create a plumbing system called 'screwing' that creates a channel for the bronze to flow through.
- The next step is to dip the wax pieces in **ceramic** to create a shell, then the wax is burnt out of the ceramic creating empty space for the statue to take its final shape.
- Finally comes the **bronze**, which is melted and poured into the ceramic shell. Once the bronze cools, then the statue can be welded together.

For Coultas, creating this statue has a special personal connection, as she grew up in a home where Armine Nutting Gosling was a hero.

Coultas' mother is **Frances Ennis**, a well-known feminist in our community who has walked a path very similar to Armine. Ennis has also dedicated her life to women's rights, and has worked tirelessly with related causes such as adult literacy and anti-violence against women, work for which Ennis has been awarded the Governor General's Award in honour of the Person's Case, and the Order of Newfoundland and Labrador.

"This project feels like a culmination of both my mother's work and my own," says Coultas. "It shows how these kind of things have a tendency to knit themselves together."



Sheila Coultas at work in the Newfoundland Bronze Foundry

INDIVIDUAL DONORS & DEDICATIONS (\$25-\$999)

Ellen Alcock

For Angela Earles

Margaret Allen

In memory of Kathleen K. (Fitz-Gerald) Earle

Bobbie Boland

Remembering Helen B. Murphy - she worked hard to raise women up, for equity, safety of women and children, and social justice; Lily Oldford Brown - a community builder, craftsperson, farmer, a woman of the island; Anita Hynes Boland, a humble, kind and generous woman who loved to laugh, loved her family and her faith; and Jean Boland, whose way of being in the world was to help others, to enjoy the natural world, friendships and children.

Patricia Boland-Baker

Kate Barrington

John Barrington

Olivia Barrington

Shevone Barrington

Diane Brenton

Jane Brown

In honour of Majorie Brown

Jenn Brown

For my mother, Philomena Brown, sisters, Bethina, Pamela and Ashley, and all of the strong woman leaders in our family.

Jim Butler

For our granddaughter Jane Amelia Overton

Roberta Buchanan

In memory of Dorothy Jeanate Buchanan

Bonnie Campbell

Dedicated to my mother, Edwina Suley, a lifelong educator, egalitarian, social justice campaigner, and heritage activist; and for my grandmothers: Lovetta Loder Suley and Blanche Squires Howell, with all my love and gratitude; and to the Waterford Valley High English Department!

Ruth Canning

In memory of Mary Jessica Canning; a strong, courageous woman.

Ane Christensen

For forward-looking women everywhere — inspired and inspiring.

Chip Clark

Julia Clarke

For my nanny Joan, my wonder woman

Sandra Clarke

Denise Cleary

Corina Coady-Walsh

Joan Coady

Maggie Coady

Stacey Coady

Lisa Cobb

Elizabeth Creelman

Linda Cullum

Judith Dearlove

In celebration of Margot Duley, Carol Haddad, and the Persistence Theatre Company

Erin Delaney

Jenn Deon & Dave Walsh

*In memory of Fran Deon, Janet Edmonds,
Michelle Jackson & Rita Walsh*

Mary Devine

Gerri Downey

Yvonne Earle

In honour of Wendy Williams, former city councillor (St. John's) and former leader of Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women; and in memory of Dorothy Carnell Earle; Joan Loveday Earle; and Joyce Hall - teacher extraordinaire and boundary pusher.

Carolyn Emerson

Ann Fagan

For my Mom, Kathleen (Bradley) Fagan 1924-2007, the strongest and bravest of women

Brenda Gagnon

Krista Galbraith

Kathy Hickman

For all the women who fought courageously to give women the right to vote.

Danika Hyatt

Lauren Hyatt

Sylina Jones

Joelene King

Yamuna Kutty

"In loving memory of Ravindran Nair, my little brother, Covid-19 victim"

Jeanette Lambermont-Morey

Ruth Lawrence

In memory of Frances "Fannie" Knowling McNeil (14 March 1869 - 23 February 1928)

Ruby Legge

In honour of Lorraine Crummey, Rebecca Crummey and Naomi Crummey

Lara Maynard

Joanne MacDonald

Leslie MacLeod

Debbie McGee

Juanita Mercer

For Victoria

Lorraine Michael

In honour of Ann Michael, Janet Michael, Sandra Michael Sorensen, and Lorraine Michael

Kathleen Morrissey

In honour of Elaine Sullivan

Elizabeth Murphy

Richard Murphy

In memory of Catherine Murphy

Geri Nichols

Caroline Nicholson

Patricia O'Brien

Shane & Marie O'Dea

In honour of Helena McGrath Frecker, the FIRST graduate of Memorial University College in 1926

Liz Ohle

Votes for Women!

Cher O'Keefe

To my daughter, Sarah Power and for Rebecca Pardy.

Sheilagh O'Leary

Elisabeth Pardy Hartling

For Sheila Marie Gushue (née Kelly): pioneer, matriarch, soulmate, endlessly supportive grandmother on her 90th birthday.

Joan Peck

In celebration of Margot Duley, Carol Haddad, and the Persistence Theatre Company

Joyce Penney

Tina Pomroy

Michelle Power

Dedicated to the resilient women of this province who have raised themselves up after heartbreaking loss of children and partners. They chose to thrive and contribute.

Mary Purchase

Evelyn Reid

For my grandmothers Beatrice Burton & Evelyn Reid; for my mother Joyce Burton; and my aunt Lillias Downey.

Doreen Riche

In honour of Frances Knickle

Rebecca Rose

Paul Rowe

For Bessie Rowe

Emily Samson Stares

In dedication to the Stares and Sampson women who lived, worked, and played here before us.

Margaret Stares

For Margaret Stares, who raised us up and set a fantastic example of being a strong woman. Thanks, Mom!

For Joanne Stares, the coolest sister of all time... and now that's cast in stone. Thanks for always being someone to look up to!

Dr. Annette and Dr. Michael Staveley

Lynn Sullivan

Christine Taylor-Fearing

Heidi Tiedemann

In Memory of Katharine Cantlie Robertson

Donna Walsh

For Theresa K.J. Walsh & Donna Walsh

Abra Whitney

In honour of the fiercely strong women in the Whitney, McGee, Forrester and Pelletier Families

Kate Wilson

For Millicent Fleming Moran, loving Gran to Jax, Charlie and Stewie, and Bonus Mama to me. We are so happy to have you in our lives!

Nancy Winsor

Christine Winters

Vannie Woodford

For Scarlett Li Yu Chen Durnford and Skye Dora Yu Han Durnford - May you both grow in strength, compassion, love, and wisdom like your wonderful Mama and the other great women in your lives.

In memory of my beloved grandmothers, Mary Frizzell and Joyce Woodford

Alison Woolridge

Élyse Young

Courtney Zwicker

In honour of Megan Norris.

LEADERSHIP DONORS & DEDICATIONS (\$1,000+)

Dr. Margot Duley

In memory of Florence Pitcher Duley, Eliza Vavasour Pitcher, Tryphena Soper Duley and Margaret Duley, all brave and accomplished women in very different ways; and for Heather MacLellan, a tireless advocate for historical preservation.

Shannie Duff

Roberta Edgecombe Robb

In honour of my parents Margery and Arthur Edgecombe and my Uncle John Butler, whose love and support in my formative years enabled me to walk a non-traditional career path - always mindful of the need to move women's rights forward. It is a great privilege to support this tribute to one of the many wonderful women - Armine Gosling- who walked this equity road with such success nearly one hundred years ago, and showed us all how to do it!

Deborah Fry

Carol Haddad

With thanks to Dr. Margot Duley, whose pioneering scholarship on the history of the Newfoundland Women's Suffrage movement brought Armine's story to us, and to Persistence Theatre for planning and promoting this statue.

Debbie Petite

Gina Pecore

BUSINESSES & COMMUNITY DONORS

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Coady's Fishing Company

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Five Island Rug Hooking Group

CORPORATE & FOUNDATION DONORS

Elinor Gill Ratcliffe, C.M., U.N.L., LLD (hc)



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Labrador

ST. JOHN'S

Through this initiative, we respond to the persistent and universal need for promoting, understanding and embracing the core beliefs of feminism.

Seeing the statue come to life will inspire modern women to be strong, persistent, and take Armine by the hand as we work together to uphold our belief in equality.

We are on a journey to achieve recognition for Armine and the Women's Suffrage Movement. It is not one person, but many that will #RaiseHerUp on metaphorical 'blocks' purchased by individuals like you.

Each 'block' is \$25 - you can buy one or more, as a one-time or broken up into convenient monthly donations.

Donors are listed online in perpetuity, linked through a QR code which will appear on the statue's permanent interpretive sign. Leadership donations of \$1,000+ will also be listed directly on the statue signage.

Custom dedications to the special women in your life are a popular option - in memoriam, for birthdays, or holiday presents - certificates suitable for printing are available for download on our website. Every donation receives a charitable tax receipt.

HOW TO DONATE

Scan the QR code or visit our website persistencetheatre.com.

We also accept e-transfers to info@persistencetheatre.com
(please include full contact information for the tax receipt)

If you prefer to pay by cheque, it may be made out to "Persistence Theatre Company" and mailed to Persistence Theatre Company, The Nest - 410 East White Hills Road, St. John's, NL A1A 5J7 Canada

Please feel free to contact us at 709-743-4274 or info@persistencetheatre.com with any questions or concerns.

