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History Center Unveils New Airport Figure to Join Franco and George
-In celebration of National Women's History Month, a lifelike figure of Nellie Bly will be installed later this month at Pittsburgh International Airport-

PITTSBURGH, March 4, 2020 – As the nation celebrates National Women's History Month and the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, the Senator John Heinz History Center is partnering with the Allegheny County Airport Authority to install a new lifelike figure at Pittsburgh International Airport.

Nellie Bly will become the third iconic figure on display in the terminal, joining Pittsburgh Steelers legend Franco Harris and Founding Father George Washington.

"Pittsburgher Nellie Bly was the world's greatest traveler who made history as an innovative journalist and staunch advocate for women's rights," said Senator John Heinz History Center President and CEO Andy Masich. "It's fitting that we'll honor her legacy with a new lifelike figure where millions of travelers can learn her story."

"We're pleased to recognize Nellie Bly's important historical accomplishments, particularly during Women's History Month, as part of our arts and culture program at Pittsburgh International Airport," said Airport Authority CEO Christina Cassotis. "Sense of place is important and we're looking forward to our latest addition next to Franco and George from our partners at the Heinz History Center."

Born as Elizabeth Jane Cochran near present-day Burrell Township in Armstrong County, she began a career in journalism as a teenager. While a reporter for the Pittsburgh Dispatch, she took "Nellie Bly" as her pen name.

Bly rose to fame as a reporter for the New York World, when she went undercover as a patient at the Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum and pioneered a new era of investigative journalism. A series of stories, which later became a book, documented her shocking experience in the asylum.

Arguably, her most popular piece came in 1889, when she decided to travel the world faster than novelist Jules Verne's character Phileas Fogg in "Around the World in Eighty Days." The world rejoiced as Bly successfully returned from her journey on Jan. 25, 1890 – 72 days, six hours, 11 minutes, and 14 seconds after her departure – beating the fictional record by more than a week.

Bly temporarily retired from journalism in 1895 but returned during World War I to become one of America's first female war correspondents.

Bly's figure is expected to be installed in the airport's Airside Terminal later in March.

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Women Forging the Way

In conjunction with the new Nellie Bly figure, the History Center recently launched “Women Forging the Way” – an initiative focused on highlighting women’s history in 2020 and beyond. The History Center will honor history-making women through public programs, museum displays, digital storytelling, and more throughout the year, including:

- **March 5: Sophie: The Incomparable Mayor Masloff**
To kick off Women’s History Month, join the Rauh Jewish History Program & Archives to celebrate Dr. Barbara S. Burstin’s recently released biography, “Sophie: The Incomparable Mayor Masloff.” The evening will feature selections from the book and rarely seen materials from Masloff’s archive.
- **March 8: Trailblazers of the Suffrage Movement – Celebrating 100 Years Presented in partnership with Women in Film and Media Pittsburgh**
On International Women’s Day, experience the premiere of a new documentary honoring the 100th anniversary of the suffragist movement.
- **March 19: Breaking Barriers: “Women of Steel” Discussion and Screening Presented in partnership with the Women’s Press Club of Pittsburgh**
Explore the changing role of women in the workforce and the power of video storytelling through excerpts from “Women of Steel,” a locally-produced 1985 documentary. Local filmmakers, historians, and women in skilled trades will discuss memories of largely male-dominated industries and how things compare 35 years later.
- **May 7: Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence**
Marking the centenary of the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920, this program will explore the history and complexity of the national suffrage movement with Dr. Lisa Tetrault, associate professor of history at Carnegie Mellon University, and Dr. Allison Lange, assistant professor of history at the Wentworth Institute of Technology.

For more information on **Women Forging the Way** programs, please visit heinzhistorycenter.org/forgingtheway.

The Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum is a museum within a museum, comprehensively presenting the region’s remarkable sports story through hundreds of artifacts and interactive experiences for visitors of all ages. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city’s Strip District and are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center’s museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.



A new lifelike figure of groundbreaking journalist Nellie Bly was unveiled on Tuesday morning during the Allegheny County Airport Authority's "State of the Airport" event at the Heinz History Center. (Pictured: History Center CEO Andy Masich, Airport Authority CEO Christina Cassotis, and County Executive Rich Fitzgerald with the Nellie Bly figure).



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