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Adams Free Library celebrates Susan B. Anthony's birthday

By Nicole Knapp, North Adams Transcript
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ADAMS -- Community members gathered at the Adams Free Library on Monday afternoon to celebrate the 193rd birthday with "Daggers," an event featuring a presentation, performance, and cake.

Mary Ann Sachse Brown, an author from Kansas and member of the Leavenworth County Historical Society, presented a slideshow on the "Anthony Family Tradition of Reform," which centered on Brown's discovery of the Anthony family in Leavenworth, Kansas.

Susan B. Anthony, a women's suffrage advocate who was born in Adams, had a connection to Kansas through her brother, Daniel Read Anthony, an abolitionist and journalist who lived in Leavenworth.

The presentation included the history of Daniel Read Anthony and his descendants in that area, as well as Susan B.'s frequent trips there.

"It was an excellent presentation," said Eric Anthony, a relative of Susan B. Anthony and a member of the Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum's board of directors. "Of course, I had particular interest in the speaker."

Diane Taraz, a singer-songwriter from Arlington, Mass., put on a performance called "A Silver Dagger: Exploring Women's History Through Folk Songs."

"One way we can know about women of the past is through folk songs," said Taraz, who performed songs a capella as well as with an acoustic guitar and a mountain dulcimer.

Taraz sang folk songs from 1500 to 1850, which detailed women



Diane Taraz dressed up in Quaker clothing during the celebration of Susan B. Anthony's Birthday, playing dulcimer and guitar to tell the story of women through folk songs. (Sarah Howard/North Adams Transcript)

of the past in maidenhood, marriage, and work, as well as in joy and sorrow.

"She has a beautiful voice and very unusual repertoire, very interesting," said Anthony, who is a classical guitarist and could relate to Taraz.

"This was very exciting," Taraz said, adding that the event was lively, the room was perfect for singing, and that the town of Adams, nestled in its little valley, is very cute.

According to Colleen Janz, executive director of the Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum, the birthday celebration is a tradition. Additionally, this year marks the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in Kansas.

Janz was introduced to Brown and Taraz through a series of events and thought they would be a perfect fit for the celebration.

"We had a great turnout," Janz said. "Everyone was very happy and enjoying their cake and good music and some education. I think it turned out wonderfully."

Janz said the museum is planning a Susan B. Anthony re-enactment for next year's event, but she is not sure what part of Anthony's life it will center on yet.

In the meantime, Janz said museum officials are looking forward to Susan B. Anthony Days in July.

The event was presented by The Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum and The Adams Historical Society.

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