

Title of program:

Eliza Scidmore, the Early AAUW Member Behind Washington's Cherry Blossoms

Branch Name:

Northern District (Leslie Tourigny poc)

Was the program:

- In-person in a meeting room

Short overview of the program: Briefly describe the content, including the name and title of any speakers.

The speaker was Diana Parsell, a member of the AAUW-VA McLean Area branch, who wrote a biography entitled "Eliza Scidmore: The Trailblazing Journalist Behind Washington's Cherry Blossom Trees." As Diana's book reveals, Scidmore was an extraordinary journalist and travel writer who got her start as a newspaper correspondent in Gilded Age Washington in the 1870s. She wrote authoritative books on Alaska, Japan, Java, China and India; was an activist in the burgeoning U.S. conservation movement, in association with major figures like John Muir; and was the most influential female at the early National Geographic, as the first woman elected to the board (in 1892) and to publish photographs in the magazine. In 1920, Scidmore became an AAUW member.

Please include any other information you deem important:

Diana's book is impeccably researched and won her an award for biographers. She brought copies of the book to sell. Her slide presentation was well-done and extremely interesting. The audience was very receptive to her presentation--and also bought her books.