



Based in Lafayette, Indiana

Some of this and that for a Sunday morning...

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Monument to Helen Gougar, suffrage leader, gets repairs in a Lafayette cemetery



Crews from Stonehugger Cemetery Restoration on Saturday power wash the monument to suffragist Helen Gougar and her family at the Spring Vale Cemetery in Lafayette. (Photo: Dave Bangert)

PRESERVATION WORK ON HELEN GOUGAR MONUMENT BEGINS

Work began Saturday in Spring Vale Cemetery on a project aimed at cleaning and repairing a monument to Helen Gougar, a Lafayette teacher, attorney and leading light in the women's suffrage movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Crews from Stonehugger Cemetery Restoration, a Nashville, Indiana, firm, spent part of Saturday power washing the stone monument with plans to return later this week to repair and seal cracks and joints in the structure fitted with benches, an urn and adorned with large columns.

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“It’s needed this for some time,” Barb Knochel, Spring Vale Cemetery secretary-treasurer, said.

A “Save the Suffragist’s Monument” campaign raised more than \$1,000 toward what Knochel said would be closer to \$5,000 once it was done. Knochel said the cemetery has raised \$2,500 in all so far.

The family plot includes the graves of Helen Gougar and her husband, John, a Lafayette attorney.

Gougar, born in 1843, came to Lafayette in 1860 and became principal at Jenks Public School before marrying John Gougar in 1863. Gougar wrote a column in the Lafayette Daily Courier that touted women’s rights and temperance. When she attempted to vote in municipal elections – and was prevented from doing so – in 1894, Gougar sued the county’s election board. She was admitted to the Tippecanoe County Bar in 1895, putting her in position to argue her own case, which went to the Indiana Supreme Court. She lost both times. But she continued to travel the state and the country, lobbying the Indiana General Assembly and giving lectures on suffrage as a contemporary of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

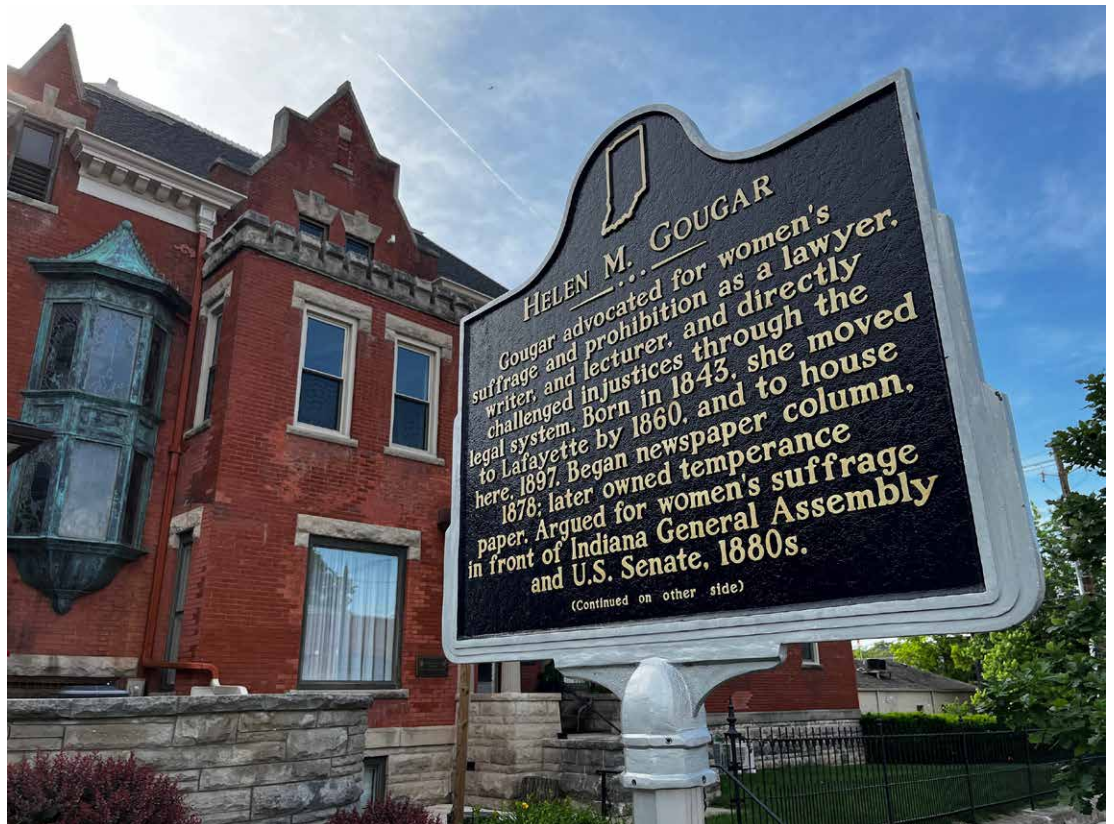
(Photo: Dave Bangert)



Gougar died in 1907, a dozen years before the 19th Amendment cleared the way for women to vote.

For more reading on the life and work of Helen Gougar:

- [The Tippecanoe County Historical Association has a history posted here.](#)
- Bob Kriebel, the late J&C editor and columnist who wrote a weekly history series called “Old Lafayette,” published [“Where the Saints Have Trod: The Life of Helen Gougar”](#) in 1985.
- The Indiana Historical Bureau [assembled a short biography in 2014](#), when it installed a marker in Lafayette honoring Gougar’s contributions. The marker is at 914 Columbia St., outside where the Fisher Funeral Home is now.



(Photo: Dave Bangert)

(The biographical information above came from those sources.)

Gougar’s monument is about a hundred yards into Spring Vale Cemetery after the entrance on Schuyler Avenue.

- TO DONATE: Contributions to the project are tax deductible by sending to: Spring Vale Cemetery, 2580 Schuyler Ave., Lafayette, IN 47905.