

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE: MARCH 17, 2020

**SUBJECT:** MERCY OTIS WARREN CAPE COD WOMAN OF THE YEAR COMMITTEE LAUNCHES 2020 CAMPAIGN FOR NOMINATIONS FOR 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL AWARD

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The Mercy Otis Warren Woman of the Year committee is seeking nominations for the Cape Cod woman who has made significant contributions in the arts, business, education, community involvement and/or volunteerism. Nomination forms can be obtained now online at the Barnstable County and Tales of Cape Cod websites. Unfortunately, due to the closures necessitated by COVID-19, these online websites are the only available resources for nomination forms at this time. Information can also be obtained by email. Nomination application forms can also be mailed if requested.

The nomination must be no more than one typed page in length and should endeavor to include as much multifaceted information about the nominees as possible. **NOMINATIONS ARE DUE PATRIOT'S DAY April 20, 2020.**

***About the Mercy Otis Warren Woman of the Year Award:*** The Award was first awarded to historian Marion Vuilleumier in 2002. Past recipients have included: Jean Gardner (2003), Eugenia Fortes (2004), Felicia Penn (2005), Bonnie Snow (2006), Lynne Poyant (2007), Josephine Ives (2008), Mary LeClair (2009), Gloria Rudman (2010), Susan French (2011), Judy Walden Scarafile (2012), Dorothy Savarese (2013), Mary Lou Petitt (2014), Michelle DeSilva (2015), Ann Williams (2016), Dolores DeLuz in 2017, Nancy Viall Shoemaker in 2018 and Juliet Bernstein in 2019.

At this point, the plan is to present the Award on **Wednesday, June 3rd at 7 pm** at the Olde Colonial Courthouse (home of Tales of Cape Cod) in Barnstable Village during History Along 6A Week. This is subject to change as events warrant. The recipient receives a statuette of Mercy Otis Warren by sculptor David Lewis. The public is welcome! Admission is free (but donations welcomed)

***Sponsors:*** The Mercy Otis Warren Cape Cod Woman of the Year Award Selection Committee would like to thank the following generous sponsors: Cape Cod 5 Savings Bank, Barnstable County, Tales of Cape Cod, Barnstable Village Association, West Barnstable Civic Association, Cape Cod Writer's Association, Cape Cod Times and the Barnstable Patriot.

***About Mercy Otis Warren:*** Mercy Otis Warren was born in the village of West Barnstable in 1728. Mercy was the third of thirteen children and first daughter born to James and Mary Allyne Otis. While her older brother James ("The Patriot") was recognized as one of Sons of Liberty in the 1760s, Mercy Otis Warren has been called "The First Lady of the American Revolution".

In an era when it was unusual for women to obtain any schooling beyond reading and writing, Mercy's father Judge James Otis, Sr. allowed her to study with the West Parish Reverend Jonathan Russell while he tutored her brothers in preparation for Harvard College.

When Mercy Otis Warren married James Warren in 1754, she became increasingly active in his political life and their home became the focal point of local politics. Encouraged by her husband who fondly called her "The Scribbler", Mercy published poems, plays, and pamphlets which challenged British royal authority and urged colonial resistance. Later, during the debate over the United States Constitution, she advocated for the inclusion of a Bill of Rights. Mercy also emphasized the importance of women in politics and society.

Mercy Otis Warren is still recognized as one of the most influential women in history. In 1943, a Liberty Ship SS Mercy Warren was launched in her honor and on October 5, 2002, she was posthumously inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York. Mercy Otis Warren was more than a woman ahead of her time, she was a beacon of light that would have illuminated any era.