

**From:** "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

**To:** "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL" <CCDTMACDL@vancouver.ca>

"Park Board Commissioners - DL" <PBCDL@vancouver.ca>

**Date:** 4/13/2017 5:23:00 PM

**Subject:** INVITATION - Unveiling of the Helena Gutteridge Plaque at Vancouver City Hall

**Attachments:** INV - HSMBC Helena Gutteridge.pdf  
Helena Gutteridge backgrounder.doc

Dear Mayor and Council, and Park Board Commissioners,

In commemoration of Helena Gutteridge (1879-1960), *Parks Canada* invites you to a plaque unveiling in the **Town Hall, Vancouver City Hall on Friday, April 21, 2017 from 11:00 am - NOON**.

The official invitation is attached.

Helena Gutteridge was the first female elected to Vancouver City Council in 1937. Her leadership in Vancouver's labour and suffrage movements paved the way for better working conditions for women, including equal pay for equal work. She also brought together groups from all sides to campaign for federal funding for low-rental housing, laying the foundation for a social housing movement in Canada. The plaque will be installed on the grounds of City Hall at a later date, and will remain here to recognize the national historic significance of Helena Gutteridge's contribution and mark on Canada's history.

Best  
Sadhu

**Sadhu Afochs Johnston** | City Manager  
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Parks  
Canada

Parcs  
Canada



On behalf of the Honourable Catherine McKenna,  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
and  
Minister responsible for Parks Canada,

Joyce Murray,  
Parliamentary Secretary to the President of Treasury Board  
and Member of Parliament for Vancouver Quadra

and the

Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

invite you to the unveiling of a plaque  
commemorating the national historic significance of

**HELENA GUTTERIDGE (1879-1960)**

The event will take place on  
Friday, April 21, 2017 at 11:00 a.m.

in the

Town Hall Meeting Room  
Vancouver City Hall,  
453 W 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue,  
Vancouver, BC

RSVP by April 19:  
[laura.judson@pc.gc.ca](mailto:laura.judson@pc.gc.ca)  
250-654-4086

**Canada** 



Parcs  
Canada

Parks  
Canada



Au nom de l'honorable Catherine McKenna,  
ministre de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique  
et  
ministre responsable de Parcs Canada,

Joyce Murray,  
Secrétaire parlementaire du président du Conseil du Trésor  
et députée de Vancouver Quadra

et la

Commission des lieux et monuments historiques  
du Canada

vous invitent au dévoilement de la plaque commémorant  
l'importance historique nationale de

**HELENA GUTTERIDGE (1879-1960)**

L'événement aura lieu  
le vendredi 21 avril 2017 à 11 h

dans la

Salle de réunion « Town Hall »,  
Hôtel de ville de Vancouver,  
453 Ouest 12<sup>e</sup> avenue,  
Vancouver (Colombie-Britannique)

R.S.V.P. avant le 19 avril :  
[laura.judson@pc.gc.ca](mailto:laura.judson@pc.gc.ca)  
250-654-4086

**Canada**

## **HELENA GUTTERIDGE (1879-1960)**

Linking the Canadian suffrage movement with the Imperial Pankhurst “suffragettes,” Helena Gutteridge was unique in making a space for wage-earning women within the predominantly middle-class feminist movement. As an executive member of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council from 1913 to 1921, she represented female workers in the male-dominated trade union milieu, helped organize unions for women, and built bridges between feminist and labour organizations. Elected as the first female member of Vancouver City Council in 1937, she brought disparate groups together to campaign for a federally funded program of low-rental housing, laying the foundations for a social housing movement that would bear fruit in the post-Second World War era.

Helena Rose Gutteridge was born into a working class family in London, England. She trained as a cutter in the tailor’s trade, and studied at the Regent Street Polytechnic and at the Royal Sanitary Institute. Women’s issues sparked her concern, and she associated with militant suffragists Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters, from whom she learned techniques of activism and public speaking. In 1911, Gutteridge immigrated to Canada, settling in British Columbia, where she worked as a tailor and became active in Vancouver’s suffrage and labour movements. At the time of her arrival in Vancouver, women were a small part of the work force and earned 40 to 50 percent less than men. Women did not have the vote, and support for women’s issues in the labour movement was tepid. Determined to right these wrongs, Gutteridge joined various organisations aimed at promoting suffrage specifically, and at improving women’s conditions generally; these included the British Columbia Political Equality League, the Local Council of Women, and the Pioneer Political Equality League, at whose meetings she often spoke. She was the first woman on the council of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council (VTLC), an umbrella organisation for Vancouver’s labour movement.

Gutteridge worked tirelessly in the labour movement on feminist issues, and convinced the VTLC to support equal pay for equal work. She also testified before the Royal Commission on Conditions of Labour in BC, wrote a regular column for the *B.C. Federationist*, became the women’s correspondent for the federal Department of Labour’s *Labour Gazette*, and helped found the Women’s Employment League and the Carvell Hall Cooperative Settlement, which provided women with employment and shelter.