



Indiana Historical Bureau Division of the Indiana State Library

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NEWS

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“Elizebeth Smith Friedman” State Historical Marker Will Be Dedicated in Huntington, Indiana

A public dedication ceremony for an Indiana state historical marker commemorating pioneering cryptanalyst and Huntington native Elizebeth Smith Friedman is scheduled for Thursday, August 26. The marker will be unveiled at 4 p.m. in Memorial Park, located at 1200 W. Park Drive in Huntington. Parking is available on site.

The text follows for the state marker entitled “Elizebeth Smith Friedman, 1892-1980”:

Pioneering cryptanalyst Elizebeth Friedman was born in Huntington. She developed her skill in codebreaking while searching for supposed hidden messages in Shakespeare’s plays at Riverbank Laboratories in Illinois in the 1910s. There, she and her husband William invented new techniques for modern cryptology and taught U.S. military officers how to break codes in WWI. During the 1920s-1930s, Friedman destroyed crime rings by breaking the codes of Prohibition rum runners and international drug smugglers. She led and trained the U.S. Coast Guard’s cryptanalytic unit, vital to the U.S. Navy and FBI. In WWII, she decrypted Nazi radio messages sent to their spies in South America, helping capture the agents and weaken the Axis alliance.

The public is invited to attend the dedication ceremony for this historical marker that commemorates Friedman’s long career in codebreaking, which spanned World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II.

Speaking on her accomplishments, Huntington Mayor Richard Strick said, “Friedman’s work in codebreaking and her significant accomplishments throughout her career cannot be overstated. Her achievements, particularly toward the outcome of the second World War, give all of us an example of how our personal passions can be translated into public good.”

In April 2019, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution honoring her contributions in the field. Those interested in attending the marker dedication examining Friedman’s pioneering work in cryptology are asked to RSVP here:

<https://universityevents.iu.edu/rsvp-event-forms/2021-event-forms/08-18-21-friedman-historical-marker.html>

This marker is the thirteenth state historical marker to be installed in Huntington County. For a listing of other markers in the county, see: <https://www.in.gov/history/state-historical-markers/find-a-marker/find-historical-markers-by-county/indiana-historical-markers-by-county/#huntington>.

State historical markers commemorate significant individuals, organizations, places, and events in Indiana history. These markers help communities throughout the state promote, preserve, and present their history for the education and enjoyment of residents and tourists of all ages. For over 100 years the Indiana Historical Bureau, a division of the Indiana State Library, has been marking Indiana history. Since 1946, the marker format has been the large roadside marker, which has the familiar dark blue background with gold lettering and the outline of the state of Indiana at the top. More than 700

of these markers have been installed over the years.

For more information about the Indiana Historical Marker Program and other resources about Indiana, visit the Indiana Historical Bureau's website at <http://www.IN.gov/history> or call (317) 232-2535. For more information on the marker dedication ceremony commemorating Elizebeth Smith Friedman, contact Indiana University Event Manager Lynn Waugh at (812) 855-3413 or lrwaugh@iu.edu.