The Dot Experience
AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE

The AFB Helen Keller Archive at The Dot Experience

Helen Keller's Legacy of Advocacy, Innovation and Accessibility

Helen Keller's Story

DeafBlind author and advocate Helen Keller (188Ø–1968) is known around the world. Her discovery of language at the water pump with Anne Sullivan is one of the most familiar stories of her life. But it was only the beginning.

Keller went on to become a lifelong advocate for education, literacy, employment, accessibility and equal opportunity for people who are blind, DeafBlind and low vision. She wrote 14 books and countless articles and speeches. In 1924, she joined the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) in New York City. Founded just three years earlier, AFB became Keller's professional home for 44 years. She traveled nationally and internationally on AFB's behalf, advocating for people who are blind, DeafBlind or low vision.

AFB Helen Keller Archive

A large part of what we know about Keller and her life is drawn from the AFB Helen Keller Archive. In 2Ø2Ø, this collection was loaned to APH with a mandate to preserve her legacy and expand public access through research, education and exhibitions. In conjunction with APH's extensive collections, The Dot Experience will display the precious historical artifacts.

The Helen Keller Archive contains more than 8Ø,ØØØ items. These items are digitized and fully accessible to people who are blind, DeafBlind and hard-of-hearing.

Materials include: correspondence, manuscripts, photographs, scrapbooks, artifacts and audio and video recordings including Keller's voice. Together, these materials document Keller's life and the broader history of disability rights and accessibility.

Helen Keller at The Dot Experience

The Dot Experience showcases Keller's story to highlight two central ideas: that accessibility leads to opportunity and that action and engagement are essential to creating lasting change.

On exhibit are artifacts and tactile replicas of the documents, objects and photographs that illustrate the story of Keller's life — from her childhood in Alabama to earning a degree from Radcliffe College and from her civil rights advocacy to her travels as a global ambassador for people who are blind, DeafBlind and low vision.

> **Letters, manuscripts, books and photographs:** Explore the stories behind Keller's life and work through braille books, photographs, documents and other materials connected to her six decades as a writer, working woman and advocate. Visitors can discover more about Keller's work with the American Foundation for the Blind and her advocacy for education, literacy, employment, accessibility and equal opportunity as well as AFB's enduring connection to Keller's life and legacy.
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> **Artifacts:** Travel to Keller's Arcan Ridge home by visiting her original desk within a space that recreates her home office. Examine a scroll casket with intricate tactile inscriptions from the Blind Men's Association in Mumbai (then Bombay). Feel the whoosh of air from a replica water pump that recreates the moment Keller connected the sensation of water with language. Explore Keller's Academy Award (Oscar), as presented by the Academy Board of Governors. Use an authentic Hammond No. 2 Model Typewriter, identical to the one she used in college circa 19ØØ. Wear a reproduction of Helen's Radcliffe College graduation robe and explore artifacts from Keller's travels around the world.

Why It Matters

Helen Keller's life is more than a story of overcoming barriers — it is a story of advocacy and action. The Dot Experience invites visitors to explore her legacy and consider the important work that remains to create a more equitable world.