THE SARATOGIAN THE RECORD





# FAMOUS WOMEN OF NY

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## About Famous New Yorkers

Women who were either born here or proudly claim New York state as their home have made a tremendous difference in our state, across the nation and the world in a variety of fields over the years. This installment of Famous New Yorkers provides a sampling of women who have had an impact on civil rights and social justice, sports, entertainment, politics, industry, literature, religion and more. Their profiles were written by Kevin Gilbert for the New York News Publishers Association's Newspaper In Education (NIE) program. Any teacher wishing to obtain the teaching guides that correspond with these profiles, or if you'd like to know more about NIE, contact Mary Miller at mmiller@nynpa.com or call 518-449-1667, Ext. 701.

## Credits


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# Lady Liberty

Perhaps New York's most famous resident, the Statue of Liberty was born of proudly mixed American and French parentage. Standing on an island in New York Harbor "Lady Liberty" represents not just the United States but freedom and opportunity for everyone on Earth.

Lady Liberty's full name is "Liberty Enlightening the World." She traces her ancestry to an 1865 French dinner party, where Edouard Rene Lefebvre de Laboulaye, a historian of the United States, first proposed a statue of liberty. Laboulaye admired American civil liberties and was proud of France's support for the American Revolution. He suggested that France present America with a colossal statue honoring the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery. He also wanted the statue to call attention to the lack of civil liberties in France under Emperor Louis Napoleon.

Another guest at the party, the sculptor Frederic-August Bartholdi, was inspired by Laboulaye's idea to create the liberty statue. Visiting the U.S. in 1871, Bartholdi chose the government-owned Bedloe's Island in New York Harbor as the ideal home for the statue.

After Louis Napoleon fell from power in 1870, Frenchmen openly embraced the statue idea. Laboulaye established the Franco-American Union in 1874, and formally announced the statue project the following year. By then, Bartholdi had already started work. He exhibited Lady Liberty's torchbearing arm at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. Two years later, he exhibited her head at the Paris World's Fair.

When Bartholdi's original engineer died, Auguste-Gustave Eiffel – later of Eiffel Tower fame – joined the project. He designed an innovative interior truss tower to support the statue's copper-sheet skin. Attaching each sheet loosely on an armature would allow the statue to sway slightly in strong winds without cracking. Using this method, Bartholdi finished the statue in 1884. Sadly, Laboulaye had died the year before.

For months, Lady Liberty loomed over Paris, while the Americans built a pedestal for her on Bedloe's Island. In 1881, the New York branch of the Franco-American Union had commissioned the French-trained architect Richard Morris Hunt to design the pedestal in imposing, classically-influenced style. Construction began in 1883, at the site of an old army fort.

By 1884 the project was nearly out of money. New York governor Grover Cleveland vetoed a bill to raise $50,000 for the pedestal, while Congress rejected a $100,000 appropriation. Ordinary Americans eventually saved the project. Publisher Joseph Pulitzer's New York World newspaper's fundraising campaign inspired people of all ages to give more than $100,000, most of it individual donations of less than one dollar.

Once Hunt's pedestal was completed in April 1886, final assembly began for the statue, which Bartholdi had disassembled and shipped across the Atlantic. On October 28, Former Governor Cleveland, now President of the United States, proudly presided over the statue's unveiling and official dedication.

Ever since, Lady Liberty has stood for freedom and opportunity, lifting her lamp, in the poet Emma Lazarus's famous words, beside the "golden door" to America. A national monument since 1924, she's had her share of check-ups and procedures over time, but remains an unchanging image of hope and optimism for friends of liberty around the world.

# Susan B. Anthony

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division
[reproduction number, LC-USZ62-85580]

Susan B. Anthony was impatient with the pace of change in 19th century America. She demanded sweeping reforms in American society, and helped make them possible, while others challenged her right to make demands at all.

Susan Brownell Anthony was born on Feb. 15, 1820. In 1826, her Quaker family left Massachusetts to start a cotton mill in Battenville, New York. Susan went to local schools, and taught at her father's own school before enrolling at a Friends' Seminary in Philadelphia.

An economic depression in the late 1830s forced Susan to support her family by teaching full-time. She rose to become headmistress of the Canajoharie Academy in 1846, but when her father started a new business in 1849, Anthony quit to run the family farm near Rochester.

The Anthony family's aversion to political participation in a society corrupted by militarism and slavery made Susan reluctant to join the new movement for women's voting rights. She did join a growing anti-liquor movement but was barred from addressing a convention because some men opposed women speaking in public. Since Quaker women were free to speak in meetings, Anthony rejected limits on her role in reform and started a temperance society where the sexes were equal.

By the end of the Civil War, Anthony had decided that women needed to vote to have a moral influence on government. With slavery abolished, she hoped that Americans of both sexes and all races would be allowed to vote. She became the American Equal Rights Association's corresponding secretary to advance her agenda, but criticized the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution in her newspaper, The Revolution, for guaranteeing men's voting rights only. Anthony believed that educated women had at least as much right to vote as black men, but supporters of the amendments criticized her for demanding too much at once.

Despite her disappointment, Anthony noticed that the Constitution didn't forbid women from voting. As a leader of the National Women's Suffrage Association, she decided to test her rights. With 15 other Rochester women, she registered and voted in the 1872 presidential election. Weeks passed before she was arrested. While awaiting trial, Anthony voted in the Rochester city elections. A hostile judge wouldn't let a jury decide the case and fined Anthony $100. She never paid the fine.

For the rest of the century, Anthony advocated women's suffrage as part of a larger agenda that included easier divorce laws, workers' rights, racial equality, and world peace. Although some women were suspicious of Anthony's other concerns, her organizational skills and tireless activism earned her worldwide recognition as a movement leader during her presidency of the National American Women's Suffrage Association from 1892 to 1900.

Susan B. Anthony continued her work until she died on March 13, 1906. Shortly before, she had predicted that "failure is impossible" for the women's movement. Fourteen years later, American women voted legally in a presidential election. Later yet, the country honored Anthony by placing her face on dollar coins, making her equal to presidents in national esteem.

For more information about Susan B. Anthony and for a virtual visit to her home in Rochester go to www.susanbanthonyhouse.org.

# Eugenie Besserer

Eugenie Besserer with Al Jolson in The Jazz Singer, 1927

Eugenie Besserer's name might be forgotten if she hadn't played the hero's mother in *The Jazz Singer*. By the time she made Hollywood's first hit talking picture, Besserer had made history herself as one of Hollywood's first movie stars.

After becoming a star, Besserer claimed that she was born in Paris. She was actually born in Watertown, Jefferson County, on Christmas Day, 1868. Her family moved to Canada, but Eugenie was soon orphaned. By her own account, she ran away from her guardians at age 12 and traveled to New York City, where she lived with an uncle.

Eugenie attended the National Conservatory of Music. Founded in 1885 by Jeannette Thurber, the Conservatory taught musical and dramatic skills to aspiring opera singers. Surprisingly, Eugenie was most successful at fencing. Trained by the former fencing master of the French army, she claimed the ladies' fencing championship and dueled with men in public exhibitions.

Besserer became an actor instead of an opera star. She wrote plays to showcase her skills, but mostly took supporting roles in other people's plays. When she wasn't acting, she taught fencing at the National Conservatory and the Berkeley Ladies Athletic Club in Manhattan. The Berkeley club was a pioneer physical fitness center for women. Reputedly the only female fencing instructor in the U.S., Besserer was a perfect fit.

Acting took Eugenie Besserer across the country and around the world. By age forty she was a respected character actor but not a star in her own right. That changed in 1910, when she visited a sick relative in California. She visited the Selig Polyscope studio in Edendale, the first motion-picture studio to operate full-time in California. Many stage actors still looked down on silent movies, but Besserer "became interested as a professional in the artistic possibilities of the motion picture," as she wrote later. She signed a contract with Selig, starting with the role of Aunt Em in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Due to her stage experience, she instantly became the company's highest-paid actress.

During her eight years at Selig, Eugenie Besserer became one of the first generation of movie stars. Until the 1910s, movie actors were rarely identified on screen. Eventually, early movie fans wanted to know the names of their favorite performers. Studios found they could make more money by promoting their star performers. Movie magazines told fans more about Besserer and her peers, even if not everything written about "the French emotional actress" was true.

Besserer paid a price for her new fame. To meet a grueling production schedule, Besserer had to shuttle between studios in Edendale and Chicago. Still proud of her athletic ability, she did her own stunts but broke a leg when a horse threw her. "A majority of the artists say that motion picture acting is the hardest kind of work," she wrote, but "I never deemed it so," despite her injuries.

After leaving Selig in 1918, Besserer worked regularly for other studios until her death on May 28, 1934. *The Jazz Singer* was just one of six films she made in 1927. Most of her movies were lost before the age of film preservation. People may remember her as tongue-tied by Al Jolson's improvised lines, but Eugenie Besserer was a much more versatile and interesting performer than one film clip can suggest.

# Louise Blanchard Bethune

Courtesy of The Buffalo News

Louise Blanchard Bethune didn't think there was anything special about a woman being an architect. In her case, however, history makes an exception, because she was the first successful female architect in the United States.

Jennie Louise Blanchard was born on July 21, 1856, in Waterloo. She was home schooled for much of her childhood, but her father, the local high school principal, held her to a high standard. She responded by excelling at math, both at home and at Buffalo High School, where she graduated in 1874.

Blanchard wanted to study architecture at Cornell University. She prepared for college with two years of teaching and independent study. In 1876, however, she decided to learn architecture the practical way, by going to work for Richard A. Waite. During her apprenticeship, she learned draftsmanship, design, and the other fundamentals, as well as the practical side of architecture.

By 1881, Louise Blanchard was ready to start her own architectural firm. Recognizing the historical significance of her move, she announced the opening at the Buffalo convention of the Association for the Advancement of Women that October.

Blanchard began her career as the partner of another Buffalo apprentice, Robert A. Bethune. In December 1881, Blanchard and Bethune married and renamed their company R. A. & L. Bethune. While Robert's initials came first, Louise was an equal partner, both creatively and on the business side.

The Bethunes soon won commissions throughout the Buffalo area. Louise designed everything from residential houses to factories, churches, and ballpark grandstands. Her most common projects were schools, but she refused to be labeled as a specialist in one type of building. She wanted to prove that women architects could handle as many different projects as men could.
Louise Blanchard Bethune played an active role in developing the architectural profession. She joined the Western Association of Architects in 1885, and helped organize the Buffalo Society of Architects in 1886. In 1888, she was selected as the first female member of the American Institute of Architects. Throughout her career, she supported measures to improve professional standards for architects of both sexes. In the 1890s, the organizers of the Chicago World's Fair invited Bethune to compete with other women architects for the right to design a Women's Building. They offered $1,000 to the winner, but offered male architects $10,000 to design other exhibits. Believing that the sexes should get equal pay for equal work, Bethune refused to participate.

One decade later, Buffalo hosted the Pan-American Exposition. Anticipating many tourists, businessmen commissioned the Bethunes to design a luxury hotel. This time, Louise approved the terms, but financial problems delayed construction until after the fair. The 225-room Lafayette Hotel, which opened in 1904, became her most prestigious building.

Louise Blanchard Bethune looked forward to a time when women architects would be regarded as architects first, and women second. Her career helped make that vision a reality. Louise died on Dec. 18, 1913, however many of her buildings still stand and her historic legacy will outlast them all.

To view images of the Lafayette Hotel go to http://buffalobrewerydistrict.com/lafayette/about.

# Jane Bolin

Library of Congress,
Prints and Photographs Division
[reproduction number LC-USF344-007933-ZB]

By modern standards Jane Bolin had a privileged life as a lawyer's daughter and an Ivy League student. But in an era of racial and sexual discrimination, Bolin defied the odds and became an American pioneer.

Jane Matilda Bolin was born in Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, on April 11, 1908. While she was of mixed racial ancestry – her mother was white, her father half black and half Native American – she identified as black all her life. Her father was a successful lawyer who eventually became president of the Dutchess County Bar Association. Jane wanted to be a lawyer, too. Despite early misgivings, her father sent her to the best schools, where her race and gender often left her isolated.

At Wellesley, an elite female college, Bolin was one of only two black students. She graduated with honors in the top twenty of her class. At Yale Law School, she was one of three women and the only black student. She became the first black woman to earn a law degree from Yale in 1931 and was admitted to the bar the following year.

With career opportunities limited during the Great Depression, especially for black women lawyers, Bolin worked for her father's firm. After marrying Ralph Mizelle in 1932, she moved to New York City and became Mizelle's law partner. Bolin sought a career in the public sector and became active in the Republican party of Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. In 1936, the GOP nominated her for a seat representing Harlem in the New York State Assembly. She lost badly to a popular Democratic incumbent, but the Republicans remembered her service to the party.

Bolin applied for a job in the office of the corporation counsel, who represented New York City in court. She was rebuffed by an office bureaucrat, but the counsel himself decided to hire her as an assistant counsel. Mayor La Guardia and the city's liberal Republicans hoped to regain black support by showing their commitment to black advancement. On July 22, 1939, La Guardia summoned Bolin to the New York World's Fair grounds. When she arrived, the mayor surprised her by swearing her in as a judge in the city's Domestic Relations Court, and the first black woman judge in the United States.

Judge Jane Bolin remained on the bench for the next 40 years, reconfirmed every 10 years by Republican and Democratic mayors. As a Domestic Relations judge, she presided over juvenile delinquency cases and saw how the legal system discriminated against black and Hispanic youth. During her tenure, she strove to secure equal treatment for juvenile offenders of all races and religions. Away from the bench, she was a vice president of the NAACP. Sometimes more radical than the leadership, she resigned from the NAACP in 1950 to protest anti-communist hysteria within the organization.

Judge Bolin reluctantly accepted mandatory retirement from the bench in 1979. She remained active as a member of the New York State Board of Regents and a volunteer reading instructor in New York public schools. In later life, she admitted feeling embarrassed by having long been the first and only black woman judge. By the time she died on Jan. 8, 2007, the many black women who followed in her footsteps remembered her with pride.

To read Jane Bolin's New York Times obituary go to http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/10/obituaries/10bolin.html?_r=0.

# Fanny Brice

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [reproduction number, LC-DIG-ggbain-34089]

In the 1960s, Barbra Streisand became a star by playing the part of Fanny Brice in a play and a movie. That was a sure way to success, because Brice was one of the most beloved musical-comedy stars of the 20th century.

"Fanny Brice" was the stage name of Fania Borach, who was born on the Lower East Side of Manhattan on Oct. 29, 1891. Her parents owned several saloons in Newark, where little "Fannie" sometimes sang and danced on bars and tabletops. She didn't lose the urge to perform even after her parents broke up and her mother took her to Brooklyn.

Fannie dropped out of school when she was 14 years old, after winning her first amateur night competition at Keeney's Theater. Amateur nights stopped being amateur for her once she started winning up to $30 a week in contests all over town. Encouraged by success, Fannie tried out for professional stage parts. Unfortunately, by the beauty standards of the time, she was too tall to be a chorus girl.

Taking the Brice name from a family friend, Fanny found work in touring burlesque shows. She learned that she could win applause by emphasizing her apparent awkwardness for comic effect. Singing the song "Sadie Salome" with a Yiddish accent in an ill-fitting sailor suit, she scored her first hit in a 1910 show, The College Girls.

Brice's performance got the attention of Florenz Ziegfeld, the impresario behind the spectacular "Ziegfeld Follies" variety shows. He made her a Ziegfeld star in seven Follies shows between 1910 and 1923. She flourished as a mimic and physical comedienne, parodying new dance styles and movie celebrities. At the same time, she scored hits as a serious singer with torch-song ballads like "My Man."

Besides performing for Ziegfeld, Fanny Brice was also a vaudeville headliner and a star of numerous shows apart from Ziegfeld. When sound film arrived, movie studios hoped to take advantage of her comedic and musical talents, but Brice never felt comfortable on movie soundstages. She missed live audiences and was distracted by technicians working all around her. Nevertheless, she recorded some of her Ziegfeld skits for posterity in the films The Great Ziegfeld (1936) and Ziegfeld Follies (1946).

As Fanny Brice grew older, she became younger – much younger – in the American imagination. She achieved her greatest popularity as a radio star, reviving a character she had created in 1912. "Baby Snooks" was supposed to be a precocious, nosy little girl. It was absurd on purpose when Brice played Baby Snooks on stage, but on radio it suddenly seemed believable. She introduced Snooks to a new audience on The Ziegfeld Follies of the Air, and made her a regular character on weekly variety shows. In 1944 Brice became the star of her own Baby Snooks show.

Fanny Brice was still playing Baby Snooks when she died in Los Angeles on May 29, 1951. The success of Funny Girl as a play and movie proved that her fans wanted more, and preserved her place in American popular culture. For more info about Fanny Brice and Broadway musicals you might want to explore, http://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/stars/fanny-brice/.

# Bessie Buchanan

Bessie Buchanan in 1962
Source: New York State Archives

As an entertainer, Bessie Allison Buchanan didn't become as famous as some of her peers in 1920s Harlem, but as a community leader she made history in a more important way.

Bessie Allison was born in New York City on March 7, 1902. She grew up in the city's theatrical district and came of age at a time of new opportunities for black entertainers. At age 19, she performed in *Shuffle Along*, one of the first all-black musicals to become a Broadway hit. As white jazz fans flocked to Harlem, she became a chorus dancer at the legendary Cotton Club. A talented singer as well, she made recordings for Black Swan records.

In 1925 she performed in the *Plantation Review* and shared a dressing room with the future international superstar Josephine Baker. After Baker made her name in France, Bessie followed her across the Atlantic in 1927 to perform at the famous Moulin Rouge theater. While Baker stayed in Europe, Bessie eventually returned to New York. In 1929 she married Charles Buchanan, one of Harlem's most successful businessmen, who managed the Savoy Ballroom nightclub.

The Savoy became a center of the swing band movement of the 1930s, while Bessie Buchanan became part of Harlem's social elite. Ranked among Harlem's best-dressed women, she strove to improve medical services in Harlem and wrote a regular column for her husband's weekly newspaper, *The People's Voice*.

Even one of Harlem's elite could still be humiliated by racial discrimination. In October 1951 Buchanan took Josephine Baker to dinner at the stylish Stork Club, but the white staff refused to serve them. The snub sparked a protest campaign and raised Buchanan's profile as a champion of equal rights.

Powerful New Yorkers saw Buchanan as a potential political leader. In the 1950s, the Democratic party in New York City gave voters more voice in choosing candidates for office. In Harlem, Democrats noticed that more women than men were registered to vote. Party leaders set a goal of electing the first black woman to the State Assembly in 1954.

Bessie Buchanan seemed ideally suited for this historic role. She was a celebrity in Harlem and could finance a campaign with her husband's money. The Democratic leadership endorsed her in the primary for the 12th Assembly District against a Democratic incumbent. Buchanan won the nomination, 3,832 votes to 2,586. Whoever won the general election would make history, since the Republican party also nominated a woman, Lucille Pickett. Buchanan won in a landslide.

Assemblywoman Buchanan served four terms in Albany, earning respect as an advocate for equal rights. She might have become the first black woman elected to Congress, but her husband's friendship with the powerful incumbent in her district, Rep. Adam Clayton Powell, kept her from challenging him.

In 1960 Governor Nelson Rockefeller, a Republican, made Buchanan a delegate to a White House conference on aging. In 1962, after deciding not to seek a fifth term, Buchanan surprised Democrats by endorsing Rockefeller for reelection. He rewarded her with an appointment to the state Human Rights Commission. She combated discrimination as a commissioner until her retirement in 1967. Bessie Allison Buchanan died on September 7, 1980, still revered as a symbol of Harlem's cultural vitality and political activism.

# Maria Callas


Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [reproduction number, LC-USZ62-113267]

When Maria Callas sang at the Metropolitan Opera in October 1956, it marked the arrival of an international celebrity and one of the greatest opera singers of her era. It also marked the homecoming of a New York native. In August 1923 the Kalogeropoulos family arrived in New York from Greece. Maria Cecilia Sophia Anna, their newest daughter, was born on Dec. 2. By then, Maria's father had changed the family name to Kalos; he soon changed it to Callas.

Maria's father owned a pharmacy in Greece, but worked as a lab assistant in New York while he learned English. He finally opened a drug store, but lost it during the Great Depression. As he worked as a traveling salesman and chemist, his family relocated seven times, while Maria, or Mary, attended six different public schools.

Mary's mother loved opera and encouraged her daughter to learn music. Despite the Depression, Mary took piano and voice lessons. She sang in school plays, and won second prize in an amateur talent contest broadcast nationwide on radio in 1934.

In 1937, her mother decided that Mary should continue her musical training in Greece. After many auditions, Mary got a scholarship at the National Conservatory in Athens. She made her concert debut as Marianna Kalogeropoulou in 1938, and first sang opera publicly a year later. During World War II, while Greece was occupied by the Axis, she graduated to starring roles.

After the war, Marianna's career stalled as some Greeks accused her of collaborating with the enemy. In 1945 she returned to the U. S. and auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera. After she was rejected, colleagues encouraged her to go to Italy and gain more experience. Starting in Verona, then moving on to Venice, Maria Callas took on increasingly difficult roles. She developed greatly as an actress as well a singer, combining technical mastery of her voice with remarkable emotional intensity. She also lost more than 70 pounds, replacing the stereotype of opera singers with a glamorous image that increased her stardom.

In 1950, Callas sang at Italy's most prestigious opera house, La Scala in Milan. She became an international star with performances in Mexico, Argentina, and Great Britain, while even more people heard her on records and radio broadcasts. She made her American debut with the Lyric Theater of Chicago in 1954, and became a box office sensation.

At the time of her Met debut, Callas was featured on the cover of TIME magazine and performed on Ed Sullivan's TV show. She had reached the peak of her opera career, and was now as much a pure celebrity as a masterful singer. To an extent, gossip about her romances with other celebrities and conflicts with opera companies overshadowed the rest of her career.

Always a perfectionist, and considered a difficult diva by many, Maria Callas retired from the opera stage in 1965. She continued to give concerts, conduct master classes, and make recordings until her death on Sept. 16, 1977. No female opera singer since then has equaled her fame.

For more information about Maria Callas look in the library for books about her life. For an excerpt from one biography go to www.serendipity.li/callas/gal01.html.

# Shirley Chisholm

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [reproduction number, LC-U9-25383-33]

In 1968, Shirley Chisholm became the first black woman elected to the U. S. House of Representatives. For her, that was just one victory in a lifelong struggle for racial and gender equality.

Chisholm's parents were immigrants from Barbados. She was born Shirley Anita St. Hill in Brooklyn on Nov. 30, 1924. When she was 3, her parents sent Shirley and her siblings to her grandmother's home in Barbados until they could earn enough money to raise their children in America.

In Barbados, Shirley received a strict British-style education in a one-room schoolhouse where seven classes met at once. Shirley was a quick learner, but when her parents finally brought her home, she was set back three grades because she hadn't been taught American history or geography. With a tutor's help she caught up in less than two years.

After graduating from Girls' High School, Shirley turned down a scholarship at Vassar, a prestigious women's college, because she couldn't afford the housing costs. At Brooklyn College, she won prizes for debating, joined the Harriet Tubman Society for black students, and campaigned unsuccessfully to elect women to the student council.

Shirley took graduate classes at Columbia and married fellow student Conrad Chisholm while working as a teacher and administrator. Her concern for children's and working people's needs led her to become active in local politics.

In her neighborhood, the 17th Assembly District, blacks were a majority, but whites dominated the Democratic Party. Chisholm became a dedicated fundraiser for the Democratic Club, but grew convinced that party leaders were more interested in keeping power than in helping the community.

In 1953, Chisholm joined other black Democrats in challenging the leadership's white candidate for judge. Their success led to the formation of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Political League. Despite Chisholm's hard work for the League, her male colleagues were reluctant to accept a female leader and finally forced her out.

In 1960, Chisholm helped form the Unity Democratic Club in the 17th District. In 1962, their candidate won an Assembly seat. When he became a judge two years later, Chisholm finally got a chance to run for office and won the open seat easily.

In Albany, Chisholm's legislation made college more accessible to poor New Yorkers, expanded unemployment coverage, and ended discrimination against pregnant teachers. Despite her successes, Chisholm believed that changes were necessary at the national level to improve her community.

In 1968, Chisholm campaigned to represent the 12th Congressional District, where women voters outnumbered males by a large margin. Despite surgery for a benign tumor, she defeated black rivals in the Democratic primary before beating the Republican candidate, a prominent civil rights leader, by more than 20,000 votes. She prevailed because voters trusted her to remain independent of party bosses and put community interests first.

14 years in Congress, and as a Presidential candidate in 1972, Shirley Chisholm continued to defy the establishment. When she died on Jan. 1, 2005, she was remembered for breaking down barriers, and as a role model for challenging any barrier to American achievement.

For more information about Shirley Chisholm and other accomplished women go to https://www.womenofthehall.org/.

# Sara Jane Clarke

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [reproduction number LC-USZ62-125488]

Sara Jane Clarke made a name for herself in the mid-19th century as the popular writer "Grace Greenwood" but risked her name and career by taking a stand against slavery.

The youngest of eleven children, Sara Jane Clarke was born in Pompey, Onondaga County, on Sept. 23, 1823. When her family moved to New Brighton, Pennsylvania, she enrolled in the Greenwood Institute. The school most likely inspired her choice of "Grace Greenwood" as a pen name.

Sara Jane began publishing articles and poems in local newspapers, under her own name or pseudonyms, before she moved to Pennsylvania. She emerged from Greenwood more determined to make a living for herself as a writer. While writers often used pen names to protect their privacy, Clarke became "Grace Greenwood" in her social life as well as in print.

Grace Greenwood had a national following by the end of the 1840s. Her work was published in many of the period's leading magazines. Behind the scenes, she became an assistant to pioneer female editor Sarah J. Hale at Godey's Lady's Book, the most popular women's magazine of the era. Greenwood herself edited a companion publication, Godey's Dollar Newspaper.

Greenwood started a controversy when she began writing for The National Era, a weekly paper dedicated to the abolition of slavery. Her new role offended some southern readers of the Godey magazines. Publisher Louis A. Godey hoped to keep a nationwide audience by keeping his journals and their personnel neutral on slavery. He fired Greenwood, but advertised her reinstatement after protests from northern readers. Greenwood refused to return.

Cutting ties to Godey emboldened Grace Greenwood to take a stronger stand against slavery and focus more on politics in her writing. On assignment for the National Era, she became the second female reporter to cover the House of Representatives. On the editorial side, she helped prepare Harriet Beecher Stowe's landmark antislavery novel Uncle Tom's Cabin for publication. She soon broadened her scope further as a European correspondent and first female reporter for the New York Times.

Grace Greenwood was many things to many audiences. For radical thinkers, she was an opponent of slavery and a champion of women's rights. For readers seeking entertainment she was an author of sentimental poetry and prose and an accomplished travel writer. For children, starting in 1853, she was the editor of The Little Pilgrim, a magazine published by her new husband, Leander Lippincott.

Throughout her career, Grace Greenwood affirmed that women had the right to speak for themselves in politics and the arts. She believed that women could stand on their own as writers, artists and thinkers. She proved it before she married, and again after Lippincott abandoned her to avoid arrest for financial misconduct. For the rest of the 19th century, Greenwood worked steadily as an author and lecturer to support her family. She published numerous works of poetry and prose, including a biography of Queen Victoria, while writing regularly for the Times and the Saturday Evening Post.

Grace Greenwood did not write any literary masterpieces and was forgotten by all but historians after her death on April 20, 1904, but Sara Jane Clarke's diverse career as an author and journalist blazed a trail for generations of talented women to follow.

To access digital copies of Grace Greenwood's writing go to The Gutenburg Project at www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/2057.

# Lucille Clifton

Photo courtesy of Ms. Clifton's sister, Elaine Phillip.

Many American children have grown up reading the stories of Lucille Clifton. As they grow up, many rediscover Clifton as a great American poet.

Thelma Lucille Sayles was born on June 27, 1936 in Depew, Erie County. Lucille was a precocious learner with an artistic bent. She enrolled in Howard University at age 16 as a drama major. She later transferred to Fredonia State Teacher's College before marrying University of Buffalo philosophy professor Fred Clifton in 1958.

As a professor's wife, Lucille Clifton lived in a fertile intellectual climate as part of an active black arts community in 1950s Buffalo. In 1968, the Cliftons moved to Baltimore, and Lucille took a job in the Washington, D.C. office of education. While working and raising six children she was writing poetry, as she'd been doing since age 10. She thought her poems were good enough for publication, but wasn't sure how to get them published.

Lucille's friend Ishmael Reed sent some of her poems to the country's best-known black poet, Langston Hughes, who selected some of them for the 1970 collection The Poetry of the Negro. By then, Clifton had sent poems to Robert Hayden, whose poetry she'd read in Negro Digest magazine. Impressed, Hayden sent them to the poet Carolyn Kiser, who brought them to the YM-YWHA Poetry Center. In 1969 Clifton won the Center's Discovery Award. At the award ceremony, she met a representative of the Random House publishing company. Later that year, Random House published Good Times, Clifton's first book of poetry. The New York Times named Good Times one of the Notable Books of 1969.

Lucille Clifton's career as a poet was off to a sensational start. In 1970 she began another career as an author of children's books. Some of the Days of Everett Anderson was the first of a series about a boy growing up in the inner city. Clifton also wrote for children's television. She shared an Emmy award as a co-writer of the TV special Free to Be You and Me in 1974 and wrote for the Vegetable Soup TV series, produced by the New York State Department of Education from 1975 to 1978.

Clifton was popular with academic critics as well as young readers. Her poetry was minimalist, featuring short, uncapitalized and unrhymed lines. It was powerful without being ornate, expressing in spare, direct language her life experiences and her imagination of history, mythology and politics. She could write poems about God and Lucifer, Indians and Africans, her parents and children, her body and her illnesses, all with the same concise intensity.

Clifton was a professor or poet in residence at Coppin State College, the University of California at Santa Cruz, Columbia University, George Washington University, Duke University and St. Mary's College in Maryland. She was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in 1980 and 1988, and won the National Book Award in 2000. She was the Poet Laureate of Maryland from 1979 to 1985, and the Chancellor of the American Academy of Poets in 1999.

Lucille Clifton died on February 23, 2010, shortly before she was to receive the Frost Medal from the Poetry Society of America for her lifetime of achievement in American culture.

# Marie Maynard Daly

Photo by Ted Burrows, courtesy of Albert Einstein College of Medicine, D. Samuel Gottesman Library Archives

Marie Maynard Daly inherited her father's dream of being a chemist. She inspired dreams for future generations as the first African-American woman to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry, and as a researcher whose work has influenced everyone's life.

Marie's father was an immigrant from the British West Indies. He won a scholarship to study chemistry at Cornell University, but room and board were too expensive for him. He dropped out after one semester and eventually moved to the Corona neighborhood in Queens, where Marie was born on April 16, 1921.

Marie was fascinated by her father's science books. Her grades allowed her to attend the all-female Hunter College High School, where teachers encouraged her interest in chemistry. After graduation she enrolled in Queens College, part of the City College of New York system. Not only was the tuition free, but the school was close enough to home that Marie could commute to classes. She could thus afford to earn a Bachelor's degree in 1942.

During World War II opportunities opened up for women seeking careers in science while their male counterparts went to war. Marie Daly earned a Master's degree from New York University while working as a lab assistant at Queens College. She moved on to the Ph.D. program at Columbia University. Mentored by Dr. Mary Letitia Caldwell, who overcame physical disability to become the school's first female assistant professor, Daly earned her doctorate in 1948 with a dissertation on a pancreatic enzyme's effect on digestion.

Dr. Daly took a teaching job at Howard University, one of the nation's most prestigious black colleges. She soon earned an American Cancer Society research grant that allowed her to work at the elite Rockefeller Institute. The only black scientist at the Institute, Daly was at the forefront of research during a golden age in the field of biochemistry. She studied cellular metabolism and the building blocks of the nucleus at the same time that James Watson and Francis Crick discovered the structure of DNA. Watson acknowledged Daly's work when he and Crick won the Nobel Prize for their discovery.

Daly returned to Columbia as a biochemistry instructor at the school's College of Physicians and Surgeons. At the same time, she became a researcher at Goldwater Memorial Hospital, where she did her most influential work. Researching the causes of heart disease in rats, she identified cholesterol as an important factor in high blood pressure and the clogging of arteries. Americans haven't looked at food the same way since.

The chemistry of aging and heart disease became Daly's specialty. Moving to the Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University, she organized research on the effects of diet and smoking on heart health. She remained at Einstein College until her retirement in 1986.

As a researcher and professor, Marie Maynard Daly became a mentor for the next generation of scientists. She became a leader in the recruitment of minority students in fields beyond her own. Among her protégés was Francine Eissen, the first African-American woman to earn a Ph.D. in biology. Daly died on Oct. 23, 2003 but a scholarship fund she created in 1988 keeps her father's dream alive by creating opportunities for future black scientists.

# Marian de Forest

Photo from National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls

Marian de Forest was a successful playwright during the early 20th century, but her most successful creation, still running today, spotlights businesswomen instead of actors.

De Forest was born in Buffalo on February 27, 1864. After suffering an eye injury Marian received private tutoring for a time, and learned to memorize her lessons. After becoming the youngest person to graduate from the Buffalo Seminary, she became a journalist. Buffalo's many newspapers offered many opportunities for aspiring writers. De Forest eventually established herself as the drama critic and women's editor for the Buffalo Express. She joined the Scribblers, a Buffalo club for women writers. She encountered a wide variety of women's clubs from across the country as the executive secretary of the Board of Women Managers at Buffalo's ambitious 1901 Pan-American Exposition. Ideas for a club of her own were probably already stirring.

As a local drama critic, de Forest also promoted the arts scene in Buffalo, helping bring many performers to the city. In 1911, the drama critic became a dramatist when Jesse Bonstelle, a Buffalo actress and theater manager, invited De Forest to write the first-ever stage adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's beloved novel Little Women. Many people thought it would be impossible to adapt the sentimental novel for the stage. De Forest proved them wrong when her play became a Broadway hit in 1912.

De Forest continued to write plays and reviews for the Express, but her most ambitious and successful project had nothing to do with the theater. She saw a need for a club similar to the all-male Rotary Club, where women in business professions could join together to support each other. In 1919, she called a meeting at the Statler Hotel in Buffalo to form such a club. Using a Lakota word meaning "honest" and "trustworthy," she named it the Zonta Club of Buffalo.

Zonta was designed to represent as many different vocations as possible. Membership was limited to one woman for each category of business. Members were expected to spend at least 50% of their time in business at an executive level. Zonta's object was to encourage friendship and dedication to the advancement of women in all professions.

The Zonta idea spread rapidly. By 1923, Zonta clubs had opened in New York City, Washington D.C. and other large cities. They joined forces to raise money for international charities, and by 1930, Zonta itself was international in scope, with clubs in Canada and Europe. In that year an international Confederation of Zonta Clubs dedicated its efforts to community service and further progress for women.

While Zonta expanded, Marian de Forest continued to play an important role in Buffalo's cultural life. In 1922, she became president of a community theater group, the Buffalo Players. In 1924, she became a co-founder of the Buffalo Music Foundation, which brought a wider range of classical music to the city. During the Great Depression, she organized pop concerts to give work to unemployed musicians and was a driving force behind the creation of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in 1934. De Forest died soon afterward, on February 17, 1935, but her legacy thrives in Buffalo and in Zonta Clubs around the world.

For more about Marian de Forest and other remarkable inductees to the National Women's Hall of Fame go to www.womenofthehall.org/women-of-the-hall/. For more about Zonta International visit www.zonta.org.

# Agnes de Mille

Photo by Beryl Tobin, provided courtesy of agnesdemilledances.com

Do American images and themes belong in ballet? Does ballet belong on the Broadway stage? Agnes de Mille answered both questions with a resounding yes and earned a place in the nation's cultural history.

Agnes George de Mille was born in Manhattan, New York City on September 18, 1905. Her father was William C. de Mille, a successful playwright. In 1914 the de Milles moved to Los Angeles, where William's brother Cecil B. De Mille had established himself as a movie director. William started writing and directing movies while Agnes was captivated by the early movie stars.

Agnes dreamed of being an actress, but after watching the classical ballerina Anna Pavlova and the modern-dance pioneer Ruth St. Denis perform in California, she wanted to become a dancer. Her father disapproved, and experts claimed that she lacked a "dancer's body." With her mother's encouragement, Agnes pursued dance training in New York and London after graduating from UCLA, learning classical and modern techniques as a dancer and choreographer.

Agnes made her solo dance debut in 1927. In the 1930s, she began choreographing dances for plays in London and New York. Throughout her career, she sought a synthesis of classical and modern style. Perfect classical technique was less important for her than expressing personality and emotion through dance. But while modern dance often had an abstract quality, de Mille infused dance with American folk culture.

After choreographing Broadway shows (and occasional movies) for several years, de Mille's breakthrough to fame came when she choreographed Rodeo for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1942. Rodeo wasn't the first ballet set in the American West, but de Mille's choreography, combined with music by Aaron Copland, created a sensation.

Rodeo led directly to another major breakthrough when it inspired the producers of Rodgers & Hammerstein's musical Oklahoma! to hire de Mille. Musicals often included dance or ballet interludes, but de Mille's choreography for Oklahoma! raised dance to a new level of importance. While ballet sequences previously had little relation to a show's story, Oklahoma!'s dances contributed to character development and advanced its plot in a way that seemed unprecedented in 1943. Oklahoma! made Agnes de Mille a star choreographer on Broadway. She went on to design dances for many of the era's most memorable musicals, including Carousel (1945), Brigadoon (1947) and Paint Your Wagon (1951). She also directed entire musicals, including Rodgers & Hammerstein's Allegro in 1947. In the early years of television, she introduced viewers to "The Art of Ballet" and "Art of Choreography" in episodes of the Omnibus series. In the 1960s, she promoted dance as one of the first members of the National Council for the Arts. In 1965 she became the first president of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers – and the only woman to lead a labor union at the time.

In 1975 de Mille suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. She recovered to write a memoir and resume her career as a choreographer until her death on October 7, 1993. Honored by the Theater Hall of Fame and the National Medal of the Arts, Agnes de Mille merged classical and popular culture to help shape America's cultural heritage.

For more information about Agnes de Mille and dance read one of her books including Early Doors: My Life in the American Theater.

# Gertrude Belle Elion

Image courtesy of Wellcome Library, London

Gertrude Belle Elion received the Nobel Prize in Medicine without ever becoming a doctor. She didn't need a doctorate to make some of the 20th century's most important contributions to medicine.

The daughter of a dentist, Gertrude Belle Elion was born in New York City on January 23, 1918. Shortly before she enrolled at Hunter College, her grandfather died of cancer. The loss inspired her to find a cure for cancer by learning organic chemistry.

Elion received her bachelor's degree in 1937. At the time there were few job opportunities for women in her chosen field. She worked as a schoolteacher and part-time lab assistant before earning a master's degree from New York University in 1941.

Like women in many professions, Elion saw job opportunities open up as men enlisted to fight in World War II. Wellcome Research Laboratories, a pharmaceutical company, hired her in 1944 as a biochemist assisting Dr. George H. Hitchings. Like Elion, Hitchings dedicated himself to medical research after the death of a close relative. Educated in a racially-integrated high school, he welcomed women as colleagues.

Elion found intellectual fulfillment working with Hitchings, but felt that the lack of a Ph.D. still handicapped her. She resumed graduate studies at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute while working at Wellcome, but the school eventually refused to let her study part-time. Forced to choose between her doctorate and her job, she stayed at Wellcome.

Hitchings's research team sought to fight cancer and other diseases at the cellular level. Elion and Hitchings made a crucial observation: if cancer cells develop differently from normal cells, through different chemical processes, you could figure out how to block their growth without interfering with the growth of normal cells. The next challenge was finding a substance that would have the desired effect. Scientists could test millions of natural substances for that effect, but why not create something to do exactly what you want?

Before DNA was officially discovered, Elion studied its building blocks to learn how cancer cells grew. Her pioneer work in rational drug design led to the creation of a synthetic antimetabolite – a compound that blocked the growth of leukemia cells. Her drug, called 6-mercaptopurine, put leukemia patients into temporary remission. Elion continued her research, looking for a permanent cure. Using 6-mercaptopurine with other drugs for childhood leukemia had the best long-term results.

Some of the antimetabolites developed by Elion and Hitchings had the side effect of weakening the immune system. That made patients more vulnerable to other diseases, but Elion realized that the same drugs could save lives if used to prevent the immune system from rejecting transplanted organs.

Rational drug design led to treatments for a growing number of specific diseases, from malaria to meningitis. Elion's methods made possible the development of drugs to combat herpes and the HIV virus. As later researchers built on her work, Elion was promoted to head Glaxo Wellcome's department of experimental therapy.

The Nobel Prize Elion shared with Hitchings in 1988 for "discovering important principles for drug treatment" was one of many honors she received. Brooklyn Polytechnic, now known as Polytechnic Institute of New York, awarded her an honorary doctorate, as did Harvard. She remained active as a researcher and mentor to scientists until her death on February 21, 1999. No one questions her credentials as a trailblazer whose work improved countless lives.

# Geraldine Ferraro

Image courtesy of the University of Arkansas

Geraldine Ferraro didn't quite achieve everything she wanted to in life. She never became Vice President of the United States, but she made history trying.

The daughter of Italian immigrants, Geraldine Ferraro was born in Newburgh on August 26, 1935. The family moved to a South Bronx apartment after Geraldine's father died. Her mother worked hard and made many sacrifices, so Geraldine wouldn't be stigmatized as poor while attending parochial school. Geraldine earned a scholarship to Marymount Manhattan College but worked multiple jobs to meet personal expenses. She had once wanted to become a doctor, but the typical occupation for a female college graduate in 1956 was teaching school. While teaching in Astoria, Queens, she attended night classes at Fordham Law School, earned her law degree in 1960 and was admitted to the bar in 1961.

Ferraro worked as a lawyer for her husband's real estate business and did pro bono work for poor clients in Family Court. In 1970 she was elected president of the Queens County Women's Bar Association. Socializing with lawyers drew her into politics. She first worked on her cousin Nicholas Ferraro's campaign for State Senate. When Nicholas became District Attorney for Queens County, he named her an assistant prosecutor. In 1977 she took over the county's Special Victims Bureau.

As a tough but compassionate crime fighter, Ferraro clearly had a future in politics. When her Congressman retired, friends urged her to represent New York's 9th District in the House of Representatives. Spurned at first by party leaders, Ferraro secured thousands of signatures to make the Democratic primary ballot. After winning the nomination and the general election, she was offered a spot on the powerful Ways and Means Committee but chose committee assignments that enabled her to benefit her district.

Reelected in 1980 and 1982, Ferraro rose within the Democratic party. She was deputy chairman of President Jimmy Carter's reelection campaign in 1980, secretary of the House Democratic Caucus in 1981 and chairman of the platform committee for the 1984 Democratic National Convention. Her success in a district that voted for Republican Ronald Reagan over Carter in 1980 convinced many Democrats that she could challenge Reagan nationwide. Starting in the summer of 1983, she was mentioned frequently as a possible Vice Presidential candidate. At the 1984 convention Democratic, presidential nominee Walter Mondale chose Ferraro as his running mate. She was the first woman to run on the national ticket of one of the nation's major political parties.

Mondale and Ferraro opposed President Reagan and Vice President George H.W. Bush. While Mondale hoped voters would make history by choosing Ferraro, Republicans questioned her experience in foreign policy and her financial ties to her husband's business. She and Mondale suffered a historic defeat, winning only Mondale's home state of Minnesota and the District of Columbia. Since she hadn't run for Congress again, her defeat left her without a job – but the campaign had made her a celebrity. She prospered by giving speeches, appearing in commercials and publishing a best-selling autobiography.

Geraldine Ferraro failed twice, in 1992 and 1998, to win a Democratic nomination for U.S. Senate. In 1993, President Bill Clinton appointed her ambassador to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Until her death on March 26, 2011, she remained a prominent Democratic spokesperson and served as an inspirational figure during a long struggle with cancer. She had won her place in history just by trying.

# Ella Fitzgerald

Photo courtesy of LegendsArchive.com

A case of stage fright led to the start of Ella Fitzgerald's singing career. By the end of her career, she was praised worldwide as "the First Lady of American Song."

Shortly after she was born in Newport News, Va., on April 25, 1917, Ella Fitzgerald's parents separated. Ella's mother moved to Yonkers, where she worked as a cook and a laundry manager. For recreation, she listened to popular music on the radio while Ella sang and danced along.

Ella sang in her high school glee club, but actually wanted to be a dancer. Her first ambition was to perform in the amateur night contest at Harlem's famous Apollo Theater. When she got her chance, she froze on stage. Fearing to move a muscle, she chose to sing instead. To her surprise, she won the contest.

After more amateur night triumphs, professional musicians began to notice Ella Fitzgerald. She was offered a contract to sing on the radio, but when her mother died, the contract was withdrawn because the orphaned Ella was still a minor.

In 1935, Fitzgerald sang professionally for the first time at the Harlem Opera House. Soon afterward, Chick Webb, the leader of a popular "big band," hired her to perform as his regular vocalist at the Savoy Ballroom. He also became Ella's legal guardian until she came of age.

As Ella Fitzgerald sang on live radio broadcasts and records with his orchestra, Webb encouraged her creativity. In 1938, they co-wrote a song based on a childhood game Ella remembered. "A-Tisket, A-Tasket" became her first hit record and made her a star.

By 1939, when Chick Webb died, Ella Fitzgerald was famous and respected enough to take his place as bandleader. She toured the country until the band broke up during World War II, while continuing her recording career. Instead of being pigeonholed as a singer of novelty songs like "A-Tisket, A-Tasket," Fitzgerald studied the experimental sounds coming from younger jazz musicians. She redefined herself as an innovative "scat" singer in a vocal equivalent of the new "bebop" style. In doing so, she earned new respect from fans and music critics alike.

After World War II, Ella Fitzgerald toured the world as an ambassador of American music with the Jazz at the Philharmonic troupe. In the 1950s, she redefined herself once more with a series of "Songbook" albums. The "Songbooks" established Fitzgerald as the ideal interpreter of George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, and other great 20th century American songwriters. After years of improvising and experimenting, her singing now took on a timeless quality that remains popular today.

Ella Fitzgerald continued to tour the world and try new musical styles until illness and age slowed her down in the 1980s. She earned twelve Grammy awards during her recording career. The Society of Singers gave her their first lifetime achievement award, and named it the "Ella" in her honor. Beyond her death on June 15, 1996, Ella Fitzgerald is still identified with the highest standards of American popular song.

For more information about Ella Fitzgerald and her amazing career go to www.ellafitzgerald.com or www.ellafitzgeraldfoundation.org.

# Sarah Loguen Fraser

Painting by Susan Keeter, 2000. Collection of Syracuse Medical Alumni Association/SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, NY

Sarah Loguen Fraser was more than a famous New Yorker. She wasn't just one of the first black women doctors in America, but was a pioneer for her profession in two countries.

Fraser's father was a famous New Yorker in his own right. The Rev. Jermain Wesley Loguen escaped from slavery to become the main conductor of the Underground Railroad in Syracuse, as well as a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. His fifth child, Sarah Marinda Loguen was born into a relatively privileged position for black children on Jan. 29, 1850. As a young girl Sarah helped care for the fugitive slaves that passed through her family home.

Sarah was inspired to become a doctor by her feeling of helplessness at an accident scene. With tutoring from her family doctor, she enrolled in the Syracuse University College of Medicine (now SUNY Upstate Medical University), vowing that she'd never again be unable to help a human being in need. Sarah was one of fifteen graduates, including four women, in the class of 1876.

Her degree made Sarah Loguen the fourth black woman doctor in American history, but it was only the beginning of her career. She took an internship at the Women's Hospital of Philadelphia, an institution created to give young women doctors practical experience.

If she'd been relatively privileged before, Dr. Loguen now knew privation. The Women's Hospital clinic was understaffed and underfunded. Sarah was constantly on call, doing the work of two people. She would often walk long distances from calls, spending her money on food instead of streetcar fare. Throughout her internship, she assured her family that she could stand the pressure, and she won the affection of patients who called her "Miss Doc."

In 1878, Dr. Loguen moved to the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston. In 1882, she became the first black woman to set up a private medical practice in Washington D.C. The nation's most prominent black leader, Frederick Douglass, personally hung her shingle for her.

Related to the Loguens by marriage, Douglass now played matchmaker by introducing Sarah Loguen to Dr. Charles Fraser, a pharmacist who practiced in Santo Domingo (now known as the Dominican Republic). Loguen married Fraser later in 1882, and after learning Spanish moved to Santo Domingo to work in his pharmacy. Sarah passed the University of Santo Domingo's medical exam in spanish thus becoming the first woman doctor of any race in that country.

When Charles Fraser died in 1894, Sarah kept his pharmacy running for several more years before returning to the United States. She held several positions, including a residency at the Blue Plains Industrial School, but was often treated more like a servant than a doctor due to her race. She continued practicing medicine into retirement age ending her medical career back in Washington at the city's Women's Clinic.

Dr. Fraser's death on April 9, 1933 was recognized by a large article in Syracuse newspaper entitled "Woman Physician, Daughter of Negro Bishop." In Santo Domingo, flags were lowered to half-mast in her honor. In later years, Americans also recognized her place in medical history. A street on her old Syracuse campus, and a medical scholarship bear her name, and an annual Sarah Loguen Fraser Day celebrates her pioneering achievements at home and abroad.

To learn more about general health and fitness go to the Body and Mind, a family friendly website by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.bam.gov.

# Annette Joanne Funicello

Publicity photo of American entertainer Annette Funicello (circa 1975) holding a photograph of herself as a child star on The Mickey Mouse Club

Annette Funicello was an icon for the Baby Boom generation. On TV in the 1950s and in movies during the 1960s, she embodied youthful beauty and innocence as no one would again.

Annette Joanne Funicello was born in Utica on October 22, 1942. When Annette was four the Funicellos moved to Encino, California, where her father ran a garage. Annette began taking dance classes at age six and won a child beauty contest at age nine.

In May 1955 Walt Disney saw Annette perform in a "Ballet vs. Jazz" show in Burbank. The creator of Mickey Mouse had just started out in television and was planning a new children's program. Disney's show would be different from most children's shows, where adults were the stars and kids were only seen in the audience. Children would star on *The Mickey Mouse Club* – including Annette. After three auditions, Walt Disney personally hired the twelve-year-old to fill the last spot in the cast.

*The Mickey Mouse Club* was an instant hit that fall. Annette, known only by her first name, became the most popular Mouseketeer. After fans surprised Walt Disney by requesting records of a song she sang, he signed Annette to a recording contract. Many of her records were hits and she remained popular after *The Mickey Mouse Club* stopped production. She starred in Disney feature films and episodes of the studio's Wonderful World of Color show, but still had time to graduate from high school in 1960.

As a teenager, Funicello sometimes felt that Disney had too much control over her career. In 1959 she sued to have her long-term contract revoked, but lost her case in court. As Annette matured, Walt Disney was unsure of how to promote a young woman he still saw as an innocent child. She rarely worked outside the studio until 1963, when Disney allowed her to star in the American-International Pictures production *Beach Party* – as long as she didn't wear a bikini.

*Beach Party* was a zany slapstick comedy inspired by the popularity of surfing and "surf" music. Its success inspired more "beach" movies teaming Funicello with singer Frankie Avalon. Teenagers who grew up watching Annette on TV flocked to drive-in theaters to see her sing in a one-piece swimsuit. Frankie and Annette symbolized a last moment of American innocence before the social and cultural upheaval of the Vietnam era.

After the beach movie series ended, Annette Funicello concentrated on being a wife and mother. While the young Annette still appeared in reruns of the beach movies and *The Mickey Mouse Club*, the adult Funicello's main show business activity in the 1970s was peanut butter commercials. Nostalgia for the early Sixties eventually reunited Annette with Frankie Avalon for a TV special, the 1987 movie *Back to the Beach*, and a concert tour.

In the 1990s, Funicello revealed that she was suffering from multiple sclerosis, a neurological disease that eventually left her unable to walk or talk. The news shocked and saddened generations of fans who had grown up with her, while her struggle with the disease inspired them. Annette Funicello passed away on April 8, 2013, but Americans will always remember her as a youthful entertainer.

# Matilda Joslyn Gage

For women in 19th century America, the struggle for voting rights was the cause of a lifetime. For Matilda Joslyn Gage, it was just part of a lifelong struggle for equality and social justice.

Matilda Joslyn was born in Cicero, Onondaga County, on March 24, 1826. Her father, Dr. Hezekiah Joslyn, was an abolitionist – an advocate for an immediate end to slavery. Joslyn was a founder of the abolitionist Liberty Party and personally assisted escapees from slavery as they fled through New York State. Matilda followed her father's example after marrying Henry Hill Gage in 1845. In Fayetteville, where Henry ran a dry-goods store, the Gages' home became a station on the Underground Railroad for fugitive slaves. By aiding fugitives from slavery, both Gages risked prosecution in federal courts and a large fine. They believed the cause was worth the risk.

While she took part in the struggle for black freedom, Matilda Joslyn Gage keenly felt her own lack of liberty as a woman. She could not vote and had few rights over her property. Society assumed women to be dependent on men, but participation in the anti-slavery movement proved them capable of moral leadership. Gage believed women capable of further leadership if given more opportunities for self-reliance. That included the moral and intellectual self-reliance that came with the right to vote. Gage first addressed a women's-rights convention in 1852. After the Civil War, she became a national leader in the women's-rights movement.

In 1871 Gage tried to vote in a local election and was arrested. She hoped that the resulting trial would expose the injustice of denying votes to women. While involved in civil disobedience she took a greater role in organizing the women's movement. She was elected president of the National Women's Suffrage Association in 1875. In 1878 she became the owner and publisher of the National Citizen & Ballot Box newspaper. Her lobbying and propaganda paid off when New York State passed a law in 1880 allowing women to vote in local school-board elections. Further progress was slow in coming. Gage claimed the right to vote for the statewide office of school commissioner on the basis of an 1892 law, but an appeals court rejected her claim in January 1894.

Gage was considered a radical among early feminists. While some women demanded the vote because they considered themselves more intelligent than poor, minority or immigrant men, Gage believed in racial equality. She was dedicated not only to securing rights for blacks but also to defending the rights and recognizing the sovereignty of Native Americans, whose cultures were often more fair to women than white culture. While some women sought the vote to enforce traditional moral codes, Gage challenged organized religion's influence over marriage rights and family law. She founded the Woman's National Liberal Union in 1890 in part to oppose what she saw as many churches' support for gender inequality.

Matilda Joslyn Gage was recognized as a widely-published, sometimes controversial author and activist when she died on March 18, 1898. Her books ranged from a survey of women inventors to a massive critique of Christianity's attitudes toward women. Her vision of a better world influenced by women influenced another author: her son-in-law L. Frank Baum, the author of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. But the ratifi cation of the Nineteenth Amendment recognizing women's right to vote proved that Gage's legacy would be more than just a fantasy.

# Kate Gleason

When William Gleason's son died in 1877, the future of his family's machine-tool business was in jeopardy. Gleason turned for help in an unexpected direction and started his daughter KateGleason's career as a pioneering American businesswoman.

Kate Gleason was born in Rochester, Monroe County, on November 25, 1865. Her parents were Irish immigrants with progressive political ideas. Supporters of women's right to vote, they were friends of the suffragist Susan B. Anthony. It did not seem unusual for the Gleasons to employ their daughter for what many considered men's work. Kate Gleason showed a natural aptitude for every aspect of running a factory. Before graduating high school, she became a bookkeeper for the Gleason Works, where her father built machines to make intersecting beveled gears. She hoped to continue her engineering training at Cornell, where she was the first woman ever admitted to the university's Mechanical Arts program. She never graduated, but only because her family needed her too urgently at the factory. Even studies closer to home at the Mechanics Institute (the present-day Rochester Institute of Technology) were cut short by business needs.

At the Gleason Works, Kate became a sales representative as well as a bookkeeper and technician. While making further improvements on her father's designs, she traveled across the country and abroad to build markets for her products. Kate was so determined to downplay her gender that Susan B. Anthony had to persuade her to dress in more feminine fashion on sales calls. However she dressed, Kate Gleason built her company's global reputation just as the development of the automobile increased worldwide demand for Gleason's products. Auto industry pioneer Henry Ford credited Kate herself with "the most remarkable machine work ever done by a woman."

Although she never earned a college degree, Kate Gleason earned the highest respect from her peers in the engineering and business communities. She became the first woman to be elected to full membership in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in 1914. In the same year, she became one of the first American women to be appointed to a receivership for a bankrupt business. Within three years, she restored Ingle Machining to solvency and profitability.

In Rochester, Gleason was recognized as a local business leader. When the president of the First National Bank of East Rochester enlisted to fight in World War I, the bank chose Gleason to take his place for the duration of the war. Kate Gleason was the first American woman to be elected president of a bank.

Gleason's interests and expertise diversified later in life. As a philanthropist and entrepreneur, she made low-cost housing more accessible by developing a new concrete-pouring method that earned her membership in the American Concrete Institute. She divided her time after the war between Rochester and the devastated French village of Septmont, which she dedicated herself to rebuilding. She also established an exchange of turkey-raising know-how between Septmont and the model farm community of Beaufort, South Carolina.

Kate Gleason was mourned after her death on January 9, 1933, as one of Rochester's leading citizens. Today, the Rochester school she attended all too briefly hosts the Kate Gleason College of Engineering in her honor.

# Katharine Graham

Courtesy of The Washington Post Company

At first, Katharine Graham didn't think herself capable of taking over the family business, but when tragedy put her in charge, she turned the Washington Post into one of the nation's most prestigious and powerful newspapers.

Katharine Meyer was born on June 16, 1917 at her family's home on 5th Avenue in New York City. Her father, Eugene Meyer, was a wealthy financier who provided Katharine with an elite education at the Madeira School in Virginia, at Vassar College, and the University of Chicago.

Among Eugene Meyer's acquisitions was a struggling newspaper in the nation's capital, the Post. Katharine shared her father's interest in newspapers. After graduating from college, she took a modest job as a reporter on the San Francisco News in 1938. Soon afterward, her father asked her to come to Washington and edit the Post's page of letters to the editor.

While working at the Post, Katharine fell in love with Philip Graham, an ambitious lawyer who was working as a Supreme Court clerk. They married in 1940. As Eugene Meyer prepared to retire, he chose to put Philip, not Katharine, in charge of the Post. Katharine didn't object; while she enjoyed journalism, she felt that she knew nothing about the actual business of newspaper publishing.

Philip Graham continued Eugene Meyer's effort to build the Post into a major paper. He acquired Newsweek magazine and new TV stations for the Washington Post company. On Aug. 3, 1963, he committed suicide after years of mental illness. One month later, Katharine Graham was elected president of the Washington Post Company.

Although Katharine Graham served as chairman of the board from 1973 through 1991, she didn't become the official publisher of the Post until 1979. From 1963 on, however, she effectively ran the newspaper, learning the publishing and mass media business as she went with the help of loyal executives. She made all the most important decisions, two of which secured the Post's place in American history.

In 1971, the Post became the second newspaper to publish excerpts from the so-called Pentagon Papers. Graham authorized publication of the secret government documents about the Vietnam War after the White House blocked the New York Times from continuing publication. She resisted threats of legal action against the Post and was vindicated by a Supreme Court decision in favor of the newspapers.

One year later, she supported Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein's investigative reporting of the break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate Hotel. Her reporters eventually exposed President Richard Nixon's role in the incident. Again defying White House Pressure, the Post's revelations helped pressure Nixon into resigning in 1974.

Katharine Graham also made history as the first woman to head a Fortune 500 company and serve as a director of the Associated Press and the American Newspaper Publishers Association. As a writer, she earned a Pulitzer Prize for her autobiography, Personal History, in 1997. Upon her death on July 17, 2001, Katharine Graham was recognized once more for her important role in American history.

For more information about Katharine Graham read her autobiography, Personal History. For information about the Washington Post go to www.washpost.com.

# Elizabeth Jennings Graham

Elizabeth Jennings Graham, circa 1895.

A century before Rosa Parks challenged racial segregation on a Southern bus, Elizabeth Jennings challenged segregation on a New York City streetcar.

Elizabeth's father, Thomas L. Jennings, was born a free man. He became the first black man to win a U.S. patent when he invented a new dry-cleaning process. Jennings used his earnings to buy his wife's freedom rather than wait for New York State law to liberate her. Throughout his life he was an activist against slavery and fought for equal rights for black Americans.

Elizabeth Jennings was born sometime between 1826 and 1830. Learning the value of education from her parents, Elizabeth became an educator herself. She taught in New York's public school system and for the Society for the Promotion of Education Among Colored Children. Little else is known about her until Sunday, July 16, 1854.

Jennings was in a hurry to get to her church, where she was the organist. As usual on Sunday, she boarded a horse-driven Third Avenue Railroad streetcar, along with her friend Sarah E. Adams. On this day, however, the conductor claimed that the car was full, despite plenty of open seats, and told them to wait for a properly labeled car that permitted black passengers. He said his white passengers objected to sharing the car with black women, although none of them said so. On the street, both whites and blacks protested when Jennings and Adams were thrown off the car.

Jennings' church demanded an end to streetcar segregation. Her father encouraged her to sue the Third Avenue Railroad and prove that her rights had been violated. A white law firm, Culver, Parker and Arthur, took her case and assigned it to junior partner Chester A. Arthur.

The case went to trial on Washington's Birthday, Feb. 22, 1855. Jennings asked for $500 in damages. Arthur showed that the company, as a "common carrier," was legally responsible for any employee's misconduct. A sympathetic judge instructed jurors that common carriers could not refuse "respectable" passengers, regardless of race. No conductor could deny service to "sober, well-behaved" blacks. The only real issue for the jury was how much money Jennings deserved. A majority believed she deserved the full $500, but some jurors' "peculiar notions as to colored people's rights," as one reporter wrote, forced a compromise award of $225 – a year's salary for Jennings. The judge added another 10 percent to the award, plus legal expenses.

Jennings' struggle inspired her father to help found the Legal Rights Association, an organization that helped more people sue businesses for discrimination. A succession of lawsuits finally persuaded New York streetcar companies to end segregation in 1865. Her lawyer went on to become president of the United States in 1881.

Jennings continued teaching, married Charles Graham in 1860, and started a family. Her one-year old son died during the July 1863 riots against the Civil War military draft. After dodging racist mobs to bury their boy, the Grahams left New York. Elizabeth Jennings Graham couldn't give up on her city for good, however. After her husband died, she resumed her teaching career and opened New York's first kindergarten for black children. She died on June 5, 1901. In 2007, thanks to a group of New York City third and fourth grade students, the corner of Park Row and Spruce Street in Lower Manhattan became Elizabeth Jennings Place.

# Marietta Holley

Courtesy of the Watertown Daily Times

According to one estimate from one hundred years ago, a writer known as "Josiah Allen's Wife" was once just as popular as Mark Twain. Like Mark Twain, Josiah Allen's Wife was a pen name. The real author was an unmarried New Yorker, Marietta Holley, who used her disguise to satirize American society for 40 years.

Marietta Holley was born on a Jefferson County farm near Lake Ontario on July 16, 1836. She started writing at an early age, while she attended the local district school. She wanted to become a poet, but was teased so much for writing sentimental verses that she became very shy about reading them in public.

Even though Marietta had to leave school at age 14 to help support her family, she continued to write, and began publishing her poems in the local newspaper. Like many writers, she used a pen-name, her first being "Jemyma." At first, however, she made more money as a piano teacher.

Starting in 1867, Holley's work began to be published in respected national magazines, but she achieved real success when she began writing prose. In 1871, she created three characters for a series of comic stories: Josiah Allen, a simple-minded farmer; his wife Samantha, twice his size and at least twice as smart; and Samantha's friend, Betsey Bobbet, who was constantly looking for a man to marry.

Holley had Samantha narrate the stories. Like many humorists of her time, she misspelled words on purpose and used deliberately bad grammar to recreate the sound of Samantha's rustic accent. As with many rural characters, Samantha's clumsy-sounding dialect disguised a practical, common-sense mentality that saw through other people's pretensions.

Samantha Allen was a hard-working woman who rejected the double standards that kept women in a second-class position. When Josiah told her that women were too "delicate" to go out and vote on Election Day, Samantha replied, "If I am too fragile to handle a paper vote . . . I am too fragile to lift 100 and 50 pounds of milk." Since Samantha lifted such weights with ease, readers could draw their own conclusions.

In 1873, Marietta Holley submitted her first book as "Josiah Allen's Wife," "My Opinions" and "Betsey Bobbet's", to the same publisher who printed Mark Twain's early novels. Sold across the country by subscription, the book's rapid success created a demand for sequels. Stage adaptations followed, as did more books. Between 1873 and 1914, Holley published 21 books about Samantha's adventures on the farm and around the world.

Marietta Holley was soon recognized as a powerful spokesperson for women's rights and social reform. She was invited to read or speak before many groups of admiring readers. Remembering her early humiliations, however, she never made public appearances.

By the time Marietta Holley died on March 1, 1926, her career was already being forgotten. Her dialect style of writing had gone out of fashion, but perhaps more importantly, once women had the right to vote, the injustice that Holley had so cleverly satirized had gone out of fashion too.

For more information about Marietta Holley go to https://www.watertown-ny.gov/index.asp?NID=451.

# Lena Horne

For Lena Horne's family, show business was a step down socially. For Americans as a whole, nearly every step she took in show business was a milestone of racialprogress.

Lena Calhoun Horne was born on June 30, 1917, in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. Her paternal grandparents were middle-class homeowners, among the "First Families" of Brooklyn's black community. Lena's grandmother was a civil-rights activist who enrolled Lena in the NAACP at age two. Lena's father, however, was involved in illegal gambling, while her mother strove desperately to become an actress.

Both of Lena's parents neglected her. Her mother occasionally took her on the road, but often left Lena in foster homes while she sought theatrical work. Despite the hardships, Lena herself became entranced by show business.

Lena's schooling was sporadic. Back in New York, she dropped out of Girls' High School to become a chorus line dancer at the Cotton Club, a major showcase for black entertainers. Slightly bowlegged, Lena realized she'd have to succeed as a singer. After making a brief Broadway debut in the 1934 show *Dance With Your Gods*, she became an increasingly successful cabaret and big-band singer. She returned to Broadway to sing in the revue *Blackbirds of 1939* before touring the country with white bandleader Charlie Barnet.

Horne had already made one movie, the all-black *The Duke is Tops*, and had been featured on radio by the time Hollywood executives discovered her at the Little Trocadero nightclub. Impressed by her voice and her looks, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer signed her to a seven-year contract. Very few black performers had ever signed such contracts, and Horne was by the far the most famous of them thanks to recordings, radio appearances and USO tours. She was one of the most popular pinup models for black soldiers during World War II, when she insisted on performing only for racially integrated military audiences.

Lena Horne's movie career proved frustrating. Apart from a handful of all-black films, M-G-M used her as a specialty act in musicals, designing her scenes so they could be cut by racist theater owners without hurting the story. While her performances made an indelible impression on those who saw them, Horne eventually tired of her limited acting opportunities. After her contract expired, she suffered a partial blacklist from movies due to her friendship with Communist performers and civil rights activists.

In the 1950s Horne returned to New York, where she appeared frequently on television while resuming her performing and recording career. She starred in the Broadway musical *Jamaica*, while a 1957 live album was a top-ten hit. She also honored her grandmother's activist heritage as a participant in the 1963 March on Washington. As America achieved greater racial integration, Horne became an American cultural institution, setting a record for a onewoman show and winning a special Tony award for 1981's *The Lady and Her Music*.

Lena Horne continued recording music through the end of the 20th century. By the time of her death on May 9, 2010, no one disputed her place as a musical legend and a true star of the golden age of Hollywood.

# Charlotte Pruyn Hyde

When Charlotte Pruyn Hyde built a home for her family, she knew that she was also building a legacy. Designed to house her art collection, Hyde House was destined to be shared with the world.

Born in 1867, Charlotte Pruyn was the eldest daughter of Samuel Pruyn of Glens Falls. As the owner of extensive logging interests and a co-founder of the Finch, Pruyn & Co. paper mill, Pruyn could afford to give his children a highly cultured education. Art appreciation was an important part of Charlotte's finishing-school education in Boston, where she met the Harvard law student Louis Fiske Hyde. After a long courtship, Charlotte married Louis in 1901.

In 1907, Samuel Pruyn invited Louis to join Finch, Pruyn & Co. as its vice president. Louis accepted the offer, moving his family to Glens Falls and reuniting Charlottewith her father and sisters.

Over the next five years, Charlotte and Louis planned the construction of their new home. Hyde House was envisioned as part of a complex overlooking the paper mill and including the homes of Charlotte's sisters. The architect Henry Forbes Bigelow designed Hyde House in the American Renaissance style, emulating an Italian villa. The Hydes paid special attention to the house's lighting schemes. Windows and skylights were designed, and mirrors and chandeliers installed, to put each piece of the growing art collection in the best possible light.

Upon completing Hyde House, Charlotte and Louis increased the pace of their collecting. Leading art historians advised the Hydes on their important purchases by Italian Renaissance masters, by Rembrandt and others in the Dutch tradition, and from an expanding range of periods and cultures.

From the beginning, the Hydes envisioned their collection as a cultural legacy to share with the public. During Louis Hyde's lifetime, the family held exhibitions from their collection at the Crandall Public Library. After Louis's death on September 25, 1934, Charlotte Pruyn Hyde began to transform Hyde House into a public art showcase.

While spending much of her time in New York City, Charlotte opened Hyde House to art tours starting in 1937. One year later, she formally created The Hyde Collection and began expanding the collection to include more American and 20th century art. She also hosted art classes at Hyde House, often observing the students at work.

In 1952 Charlotte dedicated Hyde House to the public as an educational and cultural resource through The Hyde Collection Trust. The Trust guaranteed that Hyde House would endure after her death as a center for the study and enjoyment of fine art.

Charlotte Pruyn Hyde died on August 28, 1963. Before the end of the year, Hyde House was opened to the general public as the home of The Hyde Collection. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. Today, The Hyde Collection serves the public as a museum and a living memorial of Charlotte Pruyn Hyde's contributions to art history and the history of her community.

# Rosalie Jones

"General Jones" pictured at right, leading supporters on a march.

When Rosalie Jones died in 1978, most of her old Long Island neighbors knew her only as an eccentric woman who raised goats on her family estate. Few knew that, nearly 70 years earlier, Jones had been a flamboyant "General" of the women's suffrage movement.

Born in 1883 to a wealthy family in the Laurel Hollow district of Oyster Bay, Long Island, Rosalie Gardiner Jones aspired to a law career. She graduated from Adelphi College and the Brooklyn Law School before joining the struggle for women's right to vote.

Rosalie may have been rebelling against her mother, who belonged to the New York State Anti-Suffrage Association. Like many suffragettes, Rosalie didn't want the general public to lose interest in women's suffrage. Along with Harriet Stanton Blatch, the daughter of founding suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Elisabeth Freeman, a British activist, she believed in staging high-profile events to demonstrate the continued strength and determination of the women's movement.

In 1911, Rosalie Jones joined Harriet Blatch in a women's-rights demonstration on Wall Street. Hecklers pelted them with eggs and tomatoes. Undeterred, Jones became the president of the Nassau County branch of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1912, and embarked with Elisabeth Freeman on a horse-and-wagon tour of Suffolk County.

Jones and Freeman chose a wagon over an automobile because the slower pace gave them more time to talk to people along the way. They toured Ohio in similar fashion later in 1912. Newspapers began to portray Jones, who had supposedly done little but play tennis before, as a leading American suffragette. She acknowledged her new role by calling herself "General" Jones.

The "General" gained national attention in December 1912 by leading a "Pilgrim Army" on a 13-day march from the Bronx to Albany to deliver pro-suffrage petitions to the state legislature. In February 1913 she led a march from Newark to Washington, D.C. to join a major women's-suffrage parade. Cartoonists compared her to George Washington crossing the Delaware. Her mother scoffed at it all, but never tried to stop her.

Traveling hundreds of miles by foot or wagon generated plenty of publicity for the movement. So did trying newer modes of travel. On May 30, 1913, Jones flew in a biplane over Staten Island, dropping leaflets to the people below during an air show.

The dramatic events staged by Rosalie Jones and other suffragettes heightened the nation's awareness of the women's movement in the decade before the Nineteenth Amendment granted all American women the right to vote. By 1920, Jones had resumed her legal studies. She moved to Washington D.C., graduated from the Washington College of Law and Georgetown University, and became one of the first women to pass the local bar exam. She married U. S. Senator Clarence Dill from Washington and became President of the Congressional Wives' Club in the 1930s.

Rosalie Jones lived a mostly private life on Long Island after divorcing her husband. She lived long enough to be nearly forgotten, but historians have begun to restore "General" Jones's place in America's long struggle for equal rights.

To learn about Rosalie Jones and the Woman Suffrage Parade of 1913 go to http://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9803/suffrage.html .

# Mary Edmonia Lewis

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian

Many 19th century Americans were surprised to discover that one of their country's best sculptors was a woman of color. Even in the 21st century, Mary Edmonia Lewis's success at overcoming obstacles continues to surprise us.

Sources disagree over where and when Mary was born. Most say she was born on July 4, in either 1844 or 1845, in Greenbush, the present-day town of Rensselaer. Her father was a free black man while her mother was Native American, either full-blooded Ojibway or of mixed ancestry. Orphaned by age 4, she was raised by her mother's family. Her older brother Samuel went west and made enough money as a gold prospector to pay for Edmonia's education at New York Central College in McGrawville and Oberlin College in Ohio.

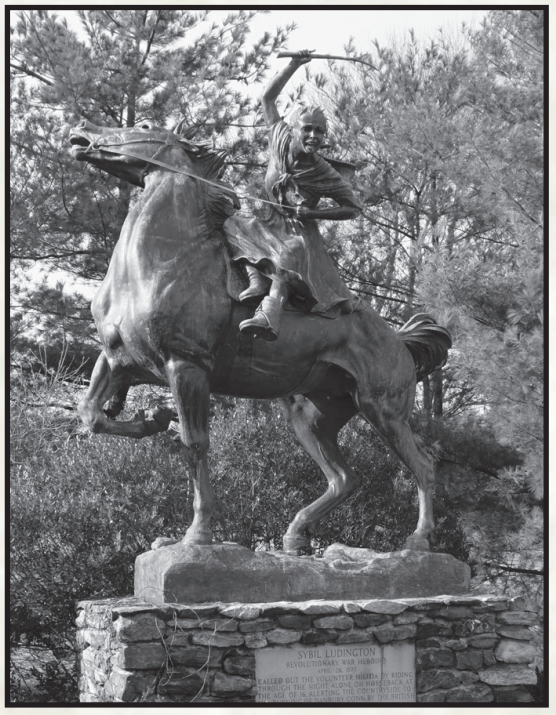
Oberlin was a progressive school for its time, where women studied alongside men of all races. Despite the tolerant environment, Lewis faced persecution when people blamed her for the poisoning of two white classmates. The case was dismissed for lack of evidence, but Lewis was later accused of stealing art supplies and was forced to leave Oberlin. She moved to Boston, where she claimed that a statue of Benjamin Franklin inspired her to become a sculptor. She studied under a local artist but was largely self-taught. Encouraged by Boston's anti-slavery community, Lewis began to make money by sculpting subjects popular with her patrons. She created a medallion honoring the anti-slavery fighter John Brown and busts of Robert Gould Shaw who commanded the first black combat unit of the Civil War. The earnings from these works enabled her to continue her training in Europe.

In Italy, Lewis joined a colony of American women sculptors and other artists. She was still exceptional as a black woman but didn't feel singled out for her color as she did in the U.S. Europeans were more willing to judge her simply as an artist rather than as a black artist. But as she perfected her craft, her work became popular in both Europe and America.

As Edmonia Lewis matured as a sculptor, her interests moved beyond the anti-slavery and patriotic subject matter popular with American patrons. Her later neo-classical style was inspired by the sculpture of ancient Greece and Rome, and she chose ancient subjects for her most ambitious works. She reached the peak of her international fame when she exhibited a massive neo-classical piece, The Death of Cleopatra, at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876. President Ulysses S. Grant was so impressed by her talent that he commissioned her to sculpt his portrait. In Europe and America, she earned thousands of dollars from commissions ranging from portrait busts to altarpieces and tombstone sculptures.

Lewis's fortunes changed with changing tastes in art. As modern art moved away from realism and classical influences, Lewis' work fell out of fashion. Lewis herself fell into such obscurity that scholars could not verify when she died until more than a century after her passing on September 7, 1907. By the time researchers found her grave in London, Mary Edmonia Lewis had already been rediscovered as a pioneer black female artist. She and her work have been restored to their rightful places in the history of American art.

# Sybil Ludington




From the archives of the
Seneca Falls Historical Society

Many acts of heroism by ordinary Americans during the Revolutionary War have been forgotten over time. In some cases, a deed long forgotten has been rediscovered and a hero reborn. Sybil Ludington is a once-forgotten hero who has become a role model for young American women.

Born on April 5, 1761, Sybil was the eldest child of Henry Ludington, who operated a mill in Kent, then part of Dutchess County, and served in the colonial army. When she was 15, in 1776, her father joined the revolutionary Dutchess County militia as Colonel of the Seventh Regiment. According to family history, Col. Ludington often met at his home in Fredericksburgh with American spies from British-occupied parts of New York. Sybil and her younger sister Rebecca took an active part in their father's cause as armed sentries guarding against raids from forces loyal to Britain.

Col. Ludington knew he could depend on Sybil when he received news on April 26, 1777, that a large British force had landed at Compo Beach, Connecticut to seize nearby Danbury. He was ordered to summon his troops at once to help retake the town, but his men were at their homes throughout the region. He needed someone to ride through the region that night to alert them. Sybil accepted the mission. She rode more than 40 miles at top speed in dangerous conditions to rouse troops from Fredericksburgh south to Carmel and Mahopac, then north to Stormville. Ludington's 400 men soon joined the pursuit of the British forces that had left Danbury and fought the Americans at Ridgefield. Reinforced by Ludington and other militia troops, the Americans drove the British back to their boats.

Later, Sybil and Rebecca would take on perilous patrol duties on their father's newly-acquired lands in eastern Dutchess County. After the American victory, Sybil settled into the life of a young colonial woman. She married Edmond Ogden in 1784 and moved with him to Catskill. After Ogden died in 1799, she raised their son, who became a lawyer and a state assemblyman, and eventually moved in with his family in Unadilla, Otsego County.

In 1838, Sybil applied for a federal pension newly available to widows of Revolutionary War veterans. She was turned down because she lacked proper documentation of her marriage. She died on February 26, 1839, and was buried under her maiden name, with her first name spelled "Sibbell." For the next forty years, she vanished from history.

Martha J. Lamb, the editor of the Magazine of American History, rediscovered Sybil Ludington in the 1870s. She described Sybil's ride and her sentry duty for her father, possibly for the first time in print, in the multivolume History of the City of New York, published between 1877 and 1881. Lamb's account was cited by other writers for years to come. It was retold more dramatically in William Fletcher Johnson's 1907 biography of Col. Ludington. While some questioned the truth of the story, Sybil became more widely known as a "female Paul Revere," and her story became part of Hudson Valley's heritage.

A statue was built in Sybil's honor in the 1930s, and stories about her appeared in magazines and newspapers as the 200th anniversary of the American Revolution approached. In 1975 the U.S. Postal Service included her in a series of postage stamps honoring little-known "Contributors to the Cause." By now, Sybil Ludington is one of the best-known female heroes of the American Revolution. She represents untold numbers of women who aided the fight for American independence.

For more information about the American Revolution in New York state visit NYS Parks online at http://bit.ly/w93W9j.

# Anna Caroline Maxwell

Courtesy of Columbia University School of Nursing

"When you came here, we did not know what to do with you," a military commander once told Anna Caroline Maxwell, "Now we do not know what we would have done without you." His comment acknowledged Maxwell's service to her country in transforming the nursing profession.

Anna Caroline Maxwell was born in Bristol on March 14, 1851. Her father, a college-educated Baptist minister, soon moved the family to Canada, where he enhanced Anna's boarding school education by tutoring her at home. Anna returned to America in 1874 to become the assistant matron of the New England Hospital for Women & Children in Boston. Four years later, she entered Boston City Hospital's Training School for Nurses.

When Maxwell started her career, nurses were considered more like servants than skilled professionals. Beside treating patients and assisting doctors, they had to perform menial housekeeping chores. Hospitals gave them allowances to attend training schools, but the schools rarely had enough money to hire the best instructors. Her learning experience in Boston made Maxwell think hard about how she could improve nurses' training.

After she graduated in 1880, Maxwell started a nurses' training program in Montreal. One year later, she became superintendent of the Massachusetts General Hospital Training School for Nurses, where she established a library and nursing residence while freeing trainees from housekeeping work. She moved to New York City in 1890 to become superintendent of nurses at St. Luke's Hospital, but moved to Presbyterian Hospital two years later to head its nurses' training school.

In 30 years at Presbyterian, Anna Caroline Maxwell revolutionized the nurses' training system. She expanded a two-year program into a five-year program that earned graduates a Bachelor of Science degree from Columbia University. She expanded the curriculum and put the school on a tuition basis in order to hire superior instructors. She put her ideas in print as a co-founder of the American Journal of Nursing and the co-author of Practical Nursing (1907), which became the profession's standard textbook.

When America declared war on Spain in 1898, Maxwell volunteered her services to the military. When her graduate nursing staff arrived at the Sternberg Field Hospital in Georgia, their knowledge and techniques led to a sharp drop in deaths from typhoid fever, winning the commander's gratitude and helping to inspire the creation of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901.

When the country entered World War I in 1917, Maxwell was considered too old to serve as a military nurse. Nevertheless, she crossed the Atlantic to inspect Allied field hospitals. She lobbied to win military rank for nurses, and even designed their uniforms. The French government decorated her for her efforts for all Allied troops.

After her retirement, Maxwell helped raise funds for Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center's new nursing residence, which was named Anna C. Maxwell Hall. In failing health, she was the first patient in the hospital's Harkness Pavilion, where she died on Jan. 2, 1929. The U.S. government recognized her pioneering career by burying Anna Caroline Maxwell in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

For more information about Anna Maxwell and the Columbia University School of Nursing which she founded go to http://tinyurl.com/annamaxwell.

# Nancy Davis Reagan

Official White House Portrait, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division
[reproduction number LC-USZ62-94021]

Nancy Davis dreamed of stardom as an actor but achieved far greater celebrity as Nancy Reagan, first lady of the United States during the 1980s.

Nancy was born Anne Francis Robbins in Manhattan on July 6, 1921. Her mother was an aspiring actress and her godmother was the famous actress Alia Nazimova. When Nancy's parents divorced in 1928, she lived with an aunt in Maryland until her mother married a rich doctor, Loyal Davis in 1929. Nancy Davis moved to Chicago and lived a more privileged life. She attended the Girls' Latin School and graduated from Smith College in Massachusetts with a degree in dramatic arts in 1943.

A college degree didn't guarantee an acting career. Nancy Davis worked in a department store until she won a small non-speaking role in a play that eventually made it to Broadway. As her career advanced, her mother arranged with an old friend, the movie actor Spencer Tracy, to get Nancy a screen test at the Metro-Goldwyn Mayer studio in Hollywood. The test earned Nancy a seven-year contract, starting in 1949.

Nancy Davis's name soon threatened to get her in trouble. In the early years of the Cold War, movie studios maintained a "blacklist" of talent suspected of communist ties or sympathies. People on the blacklist could not get work in the movies. Davis feared that she would be confused with another Nancy Davis, an alleged leftist, and blacklisted by mistake. She reportedly sought help from the president of the Screen Actors' Guild, Ronald Reagan. After Davis was elected to the SAG Board in 1950, she and Reagan began going steady. They married in 1952, but Davis continued to act under her maiden name.

Ronald Reagan soon became a TV spokesman for General Electric, while Nancy acted only occasionally after their marriage. In the 1960s, the Reagans joined a new grassroots political movement opposed to high taxes and excessive government regulation of the economy. After a well-received speech at the 1964 Republican National Convention, Reagan was encouraged to run for political office. He was elected governor of California in 1966 and 1970.

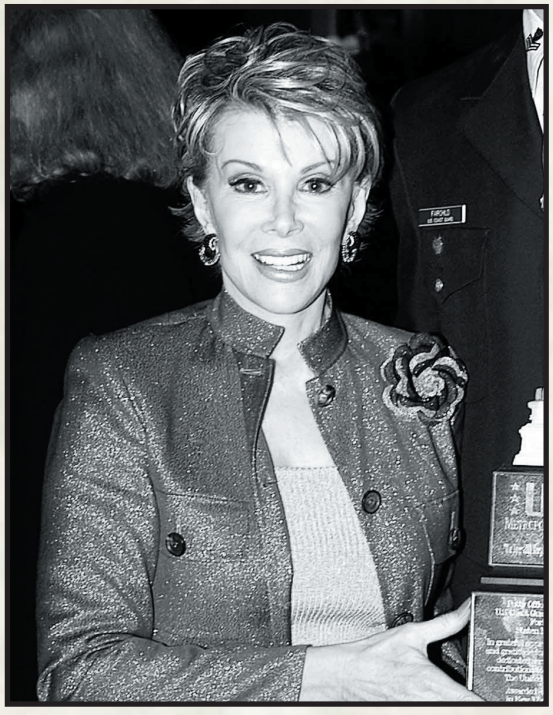
As first lady of California, Nancy Reagan served on the state arts commission and as a supporter of the Foster Grandparents Program. She became first lady of the United States after Reagan was elected President in 1980. Reagan's victory began an era of increasingly bitter partisanship in American politics. Nancy was widely disliked by her husband's political opponents, but remained one of the country's most admired women throughout the Reagan administration.

Nancy Reagan became best known for her "Just Say No" publicity campaign against drug abuse by young people. She brought her anti-drug message to the United Nations general assembly, becoming the initial first lady to address that body. While she represented conservative values to many people, she played a progressive part in the evolution of the first lady into a more influential voice in public policy.

Once the Reagans retired, partisan feeling against Nancy faded. After Ronald Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 1994, Nancy earned sympathy nationwide. After he died in 2004, she planned his state funeral. Until her own passing on March 6, 2016, Nancy Reagan remained a model of class and dignity for women in public life.

To learn more about Nancy Reagan and other first ladies of the U.S. go to The National First Lady Museum at www.firstladies.org.

# Joan Rivers



Joan posing for a photo at USO Woman of the Year event in 2001
Source: US Coast Guard

In stand-up comedy, you "kill" the audience or you "die." In a seven-decade career, Joan Rivers "died" many times but kept coming back to "kill" again until she became a comedy legend.

Joan Alexandra Molinsky was born in Brooklyn to Russian immigrant parents on June 8, 1933. The family moved to Larchmont, Westchester County, when Joan was nine. She attended Connecticut College before earning a Bachelor's degree in English from Barnard College in 1954.

Joan worked in New York department stores while hoping for a break on Broadway as an actress or writer. When the break didn't come, she tried stand-up comedy. In the late 1950s female comedians were still rare and often unwelcome by their male counterparts.

Joan started at the bottom, working at a Boston burlesque club as "Pepper January." She later renamed herself after a talent agent, Tony Rivers. Despite hostile audiences and disapproving parents she made it onto Jack Paar's popular NBC TV program The Tonight Show in 1960, but failed to make an impression.

Joining the Second City comedy troupe, Rivers began to improvise comedy based on her own experiences and brought new self-mocking humor to her stand-up act. Slim and attractive, she joked about how fat and ugly she used to be. In 1965, after perfecting her act in small nightclubs, she returned to Tonight, now hosted by Johnny Carson. A highly-amused Carson scheduled her frequently thereafter.

Rivers still craved success beyond stand-up. She hosted her own daytime talk show briefly in 1968. In the 1970s she co-wrote and starred in a Broadway play, Fun City, that flopped. She directed and co-wrote a movie, Rabbit Test, that also flopped. But her stand-up act grew more popular as she started making fun of celebrities. Audiences often were shocked into laughter by her frankness about herself and others. Her confiding words, "Can we talk?" became a national catchphrase in the 1980s.

By 1986 Rivers seemed near the peak of success, hosting Tonight several weeks a year during Carson's vacations. Despite her strong ratings, Carson doubted whether his audience would accept Rivers as the full-time host after he retired. Seeing no future for herself at NBC, Rivers accepted the new Fox TV network's offer of her own late-night talk show.

The Late Show with Joan Rivers premiered in October 1986. It was the biggest disaster of her career. Ratings were poor because Fox reached relatively few homes, while some potential guests feared that Carson would ban them from Tonight. In the spring of 1987 Fox fired Rivers. Later that year her husband Edgar Rosenberg committed suicide.

Rivers never gave up. She came back with an Emmy-winning morning talk show. She continued to write books and plays while touring with her stand-up act. She tried everything that could earn money, including designing jewelry. In the 21st century she gained new fans by selling her designs on the QVC cable channel and mocking new generations of celebrities on her show, Fashion Police. Only her shocking death on Sept. 4, 2014, following a botched surgery, stopped her.

Joan Rivers remained controversial to the end of her career, which meant people never stopped talking about her. Whatever people thought of her, everyone agreed that she had been the queen of American comedy.

For more about Joan Rivers read one of her books or visit her website at www.joanrivers.com.

# Isabel Sandford

Courtesy of Lemack & Company Management and Joyce Brock Photography

The popular TV series *The Jeffersons* celebrated the success of hard-working black families. Louise Jefferson's rise to wealth on the show mirrored the long climb to success of the woman who played her, Isabel Sanford.

Eloise Gwendolyn Sanford was born in Harlem on August 29, 1917. She was the only child in the family to survive infancy. While attending high school she wanted to become an actress. She performed in secret because her mother considered show business immoral. Her mother's death forced her to take her mother's place as a cleaning woman to make ends meet. Eventually, calling herself Isabel, she found work with the American Negro Theater and other acting companies while working daytime jobs to support three children born in an unhappy marriage. In 1960 with $700 in savings she left her husband and moved with her children to California. She saw the move as her last chance to succeed as an actress.

The move eventually paid off. In 1963 the veteran actress Tallulah Bankhead cast Sanford as Gertrude, a maid, for her national tour in George Oppenheimer's comedy *Here Today*. The role was small and stereotyped but gave her important exposure across the country. A bigger opportunity came when actor-director Frank Silvera cast her in James Baldwin's *The Amen Corner*. As the ambitious Sister Moore, Sanford made her Broadway debut on April 15, 1965. Among those who saw her was Stanley Kramer, the director of hit films from the serious *Inherit the Wind* to the comic *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World*. He cast Sanford in the 1967 movie *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?* The comedy about an interracial romance starred Sidney Poitier, Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. Sanford played Tillie, a maid who disliked the idea of interracial marriage. The film's popularity meant that more people than ever before saw Isabel Sanford.

Sanford made her TV debut in 1968 and began appearing frequently. Her biggest break came when producer Norman Lear cast her as Archie Bunker's new neighbor on his TV comedy *All in the Family*. She made her debut as Louise Jefferson in the show's eighth episode, first broadcast on March 2, 1971. More than two years later, the actor Sherman Hensley first appeared as Louise's husband, George Jefferson.

In 1974 Lear decided that the Jefferson characters deserved their own show. Thanks to their dry-cleaning business, George and Louise moved from Archie Bunker's working-class Queens neighborhood to a "deluxe apartment in the sky." In keeping with a long situation comedy tradition, "Weezy" was the level-headed wife who defused crises created by her husband's temper. Isabel Sanford and Sherman Hensley became two of TV's most popular stars once *The Jeffersons* premiered on January 18, 1975. The show quickly became more popular than *All in the Family*. At its peak, in 1980, it was the third highest rated program on television. The next year, Sanford became the first black woman to win the Emmy award for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series.

Until her death on July 9, 2004, Isabel Sanford continued to play Louise Jefferson in commercials, stage plays and guest spots on other programs. She never found another role to match "Weezy," but that was enough to secure her spot in television history.

# Blanche Stuart Scott

In the early 20th century, Blanche Stuart Scott wanted fame and adventure. An automobile manufacturer and an airplane manufacturer wanted publicity. Everyone got what they wanted – and Scott made history as a technological pioneer for women.

The daughter of a successful Rochester hoof-paste manufacturer, Blanche Stuart Scott was born on April 8, 1885. She grew up a "tomboy," excited by technological breakthroughs in transportation. She learned to drive an automobile in her teens, and her enrollment in a genteel finishing school didn't suppress her need for speed. As a young adult, she spent much of her time in New York mingling with celebrities, and hoped to become one herself.

After reading about a man driving an automobile across the country, Scott was convinced that a woman could do the same thing. She convinced the Willys-Overland company to let her drive one of their vehicles from New York City to San Francisco. Scott would prove that a woman could drive and maintain a car as well as a man, while Willys-Overland would prove the durability of their cars.

With one traveling companion, Scott set out in the "Lady Overland" on May 16, 1910. She reached San Francisco on July 23. Newspapers across the country reported on her progress and celebrated her success. By the time she wrote a book about the trip for Willys-Overland, she was seeking new adventures in the air.

Historians don't know whether Scott was the first woman to fly an airplane. She may have been inspired by a Wright brothers flying exhibition in her honor when the Lady Overland stopped in Dayton, Ohio. Sometime late in the summer of 1910, while taking lessons on the ground from airplane pioneer Glenn Curtiss, her plane briefly took off. In October Curtiss added her to his promotional flying team. Scott quit after getting married in January 1911, but soon returned to the air as an exhibition flier and test pilot. While another woman, Harriet Quimby, was first to get a pilot's license, Scott was hailed as the "first American woman who can really fly" and "the Tomboy of the Air."

Early aviation was extremely dangerous. Scott was flying in an air show outside Boston on July 1, 1912, when she saw Quimby die in a crash. Afterward, the mayor of Boston told her that flying was too risky for women. Scott told a reporter, "All aviators get it, sooner or later," and consciously risked death in specialty "death dives" that thrilled audiences. But by the age of 30 she had grown sick of people expecting her to crash and quit stunt flying.

Blanche Stuart Scott started a new career in the entertainment industry. She worked on movie and radio scripts in Hollywood, then became a popular radio personality on the "Rambling With Roberta" show back in Rochester. For the rest of her life she cultivated her place in transportation history as a museum consultant and a regular subject for media interviews. A decade after her death on January 12, 1970, she was honored on a U.S. postage stamp as a woman who rode over barriers to achievement and adventure.

# Annie Edson Taylor


Photo courtesy of The Niagara Falls (Ontario) Public Library

In the early twentieth century, American women strove to prove their equality to men. By going over Niagara Falls in a barrel, Annie Edson Taylor proved that women were just as willing as men to risk their lives for fame.

The daughter of an Auburn flour mill owner, Annie Edson was born on October 24, 1838. She attended the Collegiate Institute in Charlottesville, then resumed her education at the State Normal School for teachers in Albany after her husband, David Taylor, died in the Civil War. She became an instructor in dancing and "physical culture." Teaching across the country supplemented an inheritance, and for a time Annie lived comfortably. As her inheritance gradually ran out, Annie Taylor worried about supporting herself in her old age.

In 1900, at age 62, Taylor opened a dance school in Bay City, Michigan. When that failed, she taught music in Sault St. Marie. Soon she was almost out of options and money. Determined not to become a cleaning woman, she saw an alternative in a newspaper story about the big crowds visiting Niagara Falls

For generations, American daredevils sought fame by risking their lives at Niagara Falls. Some used barrels to cross the treacherous Whirlpool Rapids. The first barrel crossing took place in 1886; the first by a woman, sharing a barrel with a man, happened that same year. After those firsts, interest subsided until the Falls became a major attraction for visitors to the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. On September 6, Martha Wagenfuhrer became the first woman to cross the rapids solo. One day later, Maud Willard died of suffocation attempting the same feat. Local authorities now discouraged barrel stunts, but a Bay City newspaper soon announced that a woman would top Wagenfuhrer by becoming the first person of either sex to ride a barrel over the Horseshoe Falls itself. Taylor's identity was kept secret until October, when her manager, Frank M. Russell introduced her as a veteran explorer and mountain climber.

Taylor's barrel was made of Kentucky oak and weighted at the bottom by a 200-pound anvil, so it wouldn't be swept off course. Twice over Russell postponed Taylor's attempt due to high winds. He tested the barrel by sending a cat safely over the falls. On October 24, her 63rd birthday, Annie finally got her turn. After it was filled with air and sealed, her barrel made its way down the falls as thousands watched. When the barrel was brought to shore 35 minutes later, Taylor had a slight cut on her scalp but walked away under her own power. She had conquered Niagara Falls.

Taylor's stunt thrilled many and scandalized others, but fame didn't result in fortune for Annie Taylor. One of her managers stole her barrel and passed off a younger, prettier woman as Taylor. Taylor herself posed for pictures alongside a replica barrel at a souvenir stand and made a silent movie about her feat but made little money from her ventures. She died in a county infirmary for the poor on April 29, 1921. Annie Edson Taylor's story showed that celebrity didn't guarantee financial success, but her place in the history of American daredevils can never be taken away.

# St. Kateri Tekakwitha

Photo provided by Shrine of Our Lady of Martyrs, Auriesville

Kateri Tekakwitha was a pioneer figure among Native Americans. While other pioneers are recognized for milestone achievements in life, Tekakwitha has been a pioneer in the afterlife and an inspiration for Roman Catholics of all races.

Tekakwitha – her original name means "she moves things" or "she who pushes all before her"-was born in 1656 in the fortified Mohawk village of Ossernenon on the south bank of the Mohawk River, near present-day Auriesville, Montgomery County. Her father was a Mohawk chief, while her mother was an Algonquin woman taken captive in war. Tekakwitha's mother was a Roman Catholic, while her father followed his people's traditional religion.

When Tekakwitha was four years old, a smallpox epidemic swept through Ossernenon. Smallpox was one of several diseases which crossed the Atlantic with European settlers and decimated Native American populations. Tekakwitha survived the disease, but suffered impaired vision and facial scarring. Both of her parents died.

Tekakwitha was adopted by her uncle. His prestige made her a promising match for ambitious young men despite her disfigurement. As she grew up, she felt that suitors didn't value her for herself. She grew determined never to marry, and would prove receptive to a religious message that encouraged female spirituality and chastity.

In 1666, military forces from the New France colony burned Ossernenon. After a peace treaty was signed in 1667, French missionaries visited the tribe's new settlement on the north shore of the Mohawk, near present-day Fonda. While guests of Tekakwitha's uncle, they taught the girl about her mother's faith. She responded with enthusiasm, despite opposition from her extended family.

On Easter Sunday, 1676, Tekakwitha was baptized as a Roman Catholic. At that time she named herself Kateri after St. Catherine of Siena. She took her first communion on Christmas Day, 1677. In 1679, she took a vow of perpetual chastity. By that time, she had left her village to escape hostility toward her religious practices. She moved to the Kahnawake Christian community on the St. Lawrence River in Quebec. At Kahnawake she lived a spiritual life of work, prayer and care for the sick and elderly.

Kateri Tekakwitha's devotion to her faith earned her a reputation as a holy woman. It also took a toll on her health. She was only 24 years old when she died on April 17, 1680. A legend soon spread that her smallpox scars had disappeared at her death, leaving her a beautiful young woman. Kateri's posthumous spiritual career had begun.

More than 200 years later, the Roman Catholic Church began the formal process of investigating Kateri Tekakwitha's credentials for sainthood. In 1943, Pope Pius XII declared her Venerable. In 1943, Pope Pius XII declared her Venerable. In 1980, Pope John Paul II declared her Blessed. She was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on October 21, 2012 , making her the first Native American to be declared a Saint.

St. Kateri is now recognized as a patroness of the ecology and environment. Before her canonization, she was widely regarded as the patron saint of Native Americans. Her feast day is celebrated on July 14. Even before she attained sainthood, her place in American history was already secure.

For more information on Kateri Tekakwitha consider visiting the National Shrine of Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, Auriesville.

# Dorothy Thompson

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division [reproduction number LC-DIG-hec-26561]

As a young activist Dorothy Thompson helped give women more influence over government with the right to vote. She then made herself one of the most influential people in the country as a reporter and media star.

Dorothy Thompson was born in Lancaster, Erie County, on July 9, 1893. When her widowed father remarried, Dorothy quarreled with her new stepmother. In 1908 Dorothy was sent to live with an aunt in Chicago. After attending the Lewis Institute she enrolled at co-ed Syracuse University as a junior. Dorothy graduated in 1914 but didn't qualify to become a schoolteacher. She had to find other work.

At first, Dorothy's work for the women's suffrage movement in New York State was just a job stuffing envelopes in Buffalo. The campaign for voting rights inspired her to become an organizer and aggressive public speaker for suffrage. The efforts of many suffragists paid off when New York granted women the vote in 1917. Now Dorothy had to find work again.

Dorothy Thompson was fascinated by international politics. After World War I she went to Europe to become a freelance reporter. Competing with ambitious young writers of both sexes, she sought out every possible lead for a story. Her report on a conference of Jewish leaders earned her work as a stringer with the International News Service. She wrote stories "on spec" while the INS had the option to buy them or not.

Sometimes Thompson was in the right place at the right time. Sometimes her tenacity earned her "scoops" no one else could get. She soon found regular work as the Vienna correspondent and European Service chief of the Philadelphia Public Ledger. In 1927 she became the New York Post's chief correspondent in Berlin. Now an expert on German politics, she was one of the very first American reporters to interview Adolf Hitler.

In 1931, Thompson didn't think an obnoxious "little man" like Hitler could gain power. Once he did, she quickly recognized the threat he posed. The new dictator resented the unflattering portrait in Thompson's book I Saw Hitler! and expelled her from Germany in 1934. The incident made an American celebrity of Thompson, who now became a leading anti-Nazi writer. Her marriage to the novelist Sinclair Lewis, the first American to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, only magnified her new fame.

Back in the U.S., Thompson became a columnist for the prestigious New York Herald Tribune. "On the Record" ran three times a week in hundreds of newspapers across the country. Her weekly radio broadcasts for NBC by the same name reached millions of listeners. She was the first woman invited to address conventions of powerful organizations like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. In 1939, Time magazine named her the second-most influential woman in the country, after the President's wife.

Dorothy Thompson's fame endured through World War II. Although her influence declined in the postwar years, she continued her column until 1958. She was working on an autobiography when she died on Jan. 30, 1961. While she made history as a trailblazer for female columnists and commentators, her place in public consciousness was inevitably filled by new generations of opinionated and influential women.

For more information about female war correspondents, including Thompson, go to http://nojobforawoman.com.

# Julia Gardiner Tyler

Oil portrait of Julia Gardiner Tyler by Francesco Anelli, White House Collection

Julia Gardiner Tyler's life was part romance and part tragedy. Her courting by a president was marred by death and disaster, and, during the Civil War, she turned against the country she served as first lady.

Gardiner's Island, where Julia was born on May 4, 1820, was owned by her wealthy family, who settled it in 1639. Gardiner was taught to be a proper, cultured young woman at Madame Chagary's Institute for Young Ladies. Despite her education, she shocked high society in 1839 by posing as "the Rose of Long Island" for a dry-goods store advertisement. Her embarrassed parents sent her on a European tour while the scandal died down.

After returning, Gardiner spent the winter of 1841-2 with her family in Washington D.C. At a White House reception she met President John Tyler. The 51-year-old Virginian, who became president following William Henry Harrison's death in 1841, was already married. His first lady had been crippled by a stroke, however, and after she died later in 1842, Tyler actively courted Gardiner.

On Feb. 28, 1844, the Gardiners joined President Tyler for an inspection of the warship, USS Princeton. Her father was one of seven people killed when one of the Princeton's guns exploded. Four months later, on June 26, she married the president in a private ceremony in New York City.

Julia Gardiner Tyler embraced the role of first lady, although she preferred the title "Lady Presidentress." She saw her role as hostess for well-publicized White House balls and receptions. Her most lasting contribution to the presidency was to establish "Hail to the Chief" as the music played when the president arrived at official functions.

After President Tyler finished his term, his family retired to the "Sherwood Forest" plantation near Richmond, where Julia would bear seven children. She now had charge of dozens of slaves. Slavery had been abolished in New York when Tayler was a child, but she saw nothing criminal about it. In a rare public statement, written in 1853, she defended slavery from criticism by an English duchess. She believed that Great Britain opposed slavery only to divide and weaken the U.S. She also claimed that most slaves lived better than poor whites who toiled for heartless employers in industrial cities.

The Tylers supported Virginia's secession from the Union in 1861. A former president joined an enemy government when John Tyler was elected to the Confederate Congress. Nevertheless, after Tyler died in 1862, the Union army posted guards near Sherwood Forest to prevent looting, out of respect for the former first lady. Later that year, she moved to the safety of New York, but did so indirectly, via Bermuda, rather than swear allegiance to the Union.

In New York, Tyler openly expressed support for the Confederacy. She protested in the New York Post when Union troops finally overran Sherwood Forest in 1864. In 1865, her Staten Island home was ransacked amid rumors that she had flown the Confederate flag.

Tyler reclaimed Sherwood Forest after the war. Struggling financially in later life, she petitioned Congress for a federal pension. The pension helped ensure that the years before her death on July 10, 1889 were comfortable. Despite her controversial life, the nation recognized her place in history as a first lady.

For more information about Julia Gardiner Tyler and other first ladies, visit the National First Ladies' Library online at www.firstladies.org.

# Mary Edwards Walker

Dr. Mary Walker, ca. 1860 - ca. 1865, National Archives

During the 19th century, American women like Mary Edwards Walker struggled for both equal rights and individual freedom. While Walker's individual interests were sometimes controversial, her struggle for recognition made her an American hero in more ways than one.

Mary Walker was born to a farm family in Oswego Town on November 26, 1832. She received her early education in her family's common school and attended the Falley Seminary in Fulton. Mary took advantage of new career opportunities for women and graduated from Syracuse Medical College in 1855. Her early practice took her from Columbus, Ohio, to Rome, New York, where she worked alongside her husband, another medical student.

As a progressive young woman, Walker embraced new ideas about women's public role and their public appearance. She became a "Bloomer Girl," adopting the skirt-and-pantaloon costume popularized by Amelia Bloomer. Mary herself wrote articles supporting the Bloomer costume, and encouraged more comfortable, practical clothing for women throughout her life.

Walker also struggled with the many remaining limits on women's rights. In 1860 she was expelled from an Iowa college for trying to join an all-male debating society. One year earlier, she had separated from her husband, but because the law defined very limited grounds for divorce, it took her a decade to be legally free from him.

When the Civil War broke out, Walker went to Washington, D. C. to organize aid societies for soldiers' families. She really wanted to serve her country as an army surgeon. She did volunteer work in field hospitals near the Virginia battle lines while lobbying the government to give her an official commission. She finally received one in 1863, and was assigned as assistant surgeon to the 52nd Ohio Regiment in Tennessee.

Besides tending to Union soldiers, Walker often crossed enemy lines to treat sick civilians. On one such trip in 1864, Confederate soldiers arrested her as a suspected spy. She was confined in Richmond, the Confederate capital, until a prisoner exchange freed her. She ran a hospital in Louisville and an orphanage in Clarksville, Tennessee, before the war ended.

Mary Walker wanted to continue serving her country, but was denied a permanent commission. To honor her accomplishments, however, the government awarded her the Congressional Medal of Honor for meritorious service. She is the only woman to receive this military award.

In peacetime, Walker worked as an inventor, a journalist, and a women's rights activist. She continued to advocate more practical women's clothing, serving as president of the National Dress Reform Association and risking arrest for wearing men's clothes in public. She went to trial on one occasion to win women the right to wear pants in New York City, but her individual crusade made her a fringe figure in the women's rights movement.

As her health and fortunes declined, Walker was stripped of her highest honor when the government retroactively revised the standard for Medal of Honor winners in 1917. She died two years later, but in 1977 a reappraisal of her pioneering work led to the restoration of full honors to Mary Edwards Walker as an American hero.

For more information about Mary Edwards Walker and the history of other women in military service go to www.history.army.mil/news/2016/160200a_maryEdwardsWalker.html .

# Edith Wharton

Edward Harrison May, Edith Jones, 1881. Collection of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, NYC.

The people of Edith Wharton's social class in 19th century New York considered it undignified to write novels. Yet by becoming one of America's greatest novelists, Wharton ensured that readers would know how her society lived.

Edith Newbold Jones was born in a wealthy home on West 23rd Street in New York City on Jan. 24, 1862. Her parents came from prosperous landowning families. When their income decreased later in the decade, they economized by moving to Europe until 1872.

Edith never received any formal schooling, but her father taught her to read from a private library of hundreds of volumes. She also learned to read French and German as part of the upbringing of a refined young lady. She enjoyed making up stories about her family and friends, but her mother wouldn't let Edith read modern novels because she found them vulgar.

Mrs. Jones did give Edith money to print a book of poetry in 1879. The prestigious Atlantic Monthly published one of her poems later that year. Edith didn't resume writing in earnest, however, until after she married Edward Robbins Wharton in 1885.

The Whartons divided their time between homes in New York and Newport and sojourns in Europe. Edith began to write again and had a short story published in 1890. Most of her attention went into furnishing her houses, and her first full-length book was an influential guide to "The Decoration of Homes" (1897).

When Edith Wharton felt restless, writing was a productive outlet for her nervous energy. She wrote mostly about her own New York social circle, which had grown old-fashioned with the rise of new wealth. Her main characters often tried to defy the oppressive customs of their class while struggling to overcome the old habits in their own hearts.

Beginning with a short story collection in 1899, Edith Wharton established herself as a popular author whom critics also admired. Novels like "The House of Mirth" (1905) and "The Age Of Innocence" (1921) are considered classics of American literature. Wharton could also write powerful stories about other places and times, setting "Ethan Frome" (1911) in rural New England, and "The Valley of Decision" (1902) in 18th century Italy.

Divorced in 1913, Edith Wharton spent most of her remaining years in France. During World War I, she spent a fortune on charity work for orphans and refugees. The French government rewarded Wharton by appointing her to the Legion of Honor. She also worked as a war correspondent, and wrote novels set during the conflict.

With "The Age of Innocence", her most famous book, Wharton became the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. She received an honorary doctorate in humane letters from Yale, and a gold medal from the American Academy of Letters for special distinction in literature. Revenues from stage and movie versions of her stories kept her wealthy until her death on Aug. 14, 1937. Movies continue to be made from her novels, ensuring that the society she chronicled will be remembered as the world of Edith Wharton.

For more information about Edith Wharton and her books visit the library. If you're exploring online, go to www.edithwharton.org.

# Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney

Library of Congress,
Prints and Photographs Division
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Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney could afford to do anything she wanted. She became a respected artist, but with wealth to spare, she used her resources to help many more artists realize their dreams.

Gertrude Vanderbilt was born in New York City on January 9, 1875. The Vanderbilts were one of America's richest families. Gertrude enjoyed expensive private tutoring and attended the prestigious Brearley School before marrying Harry Payne Whitney, a wealthy polo player, in 1896.

Gertrude grew up amid many beautiful paintings and sculptures collected by her father. She painted watercolors as a child, but as an adult, she decided to become a sculptor. Besides attending classes at the Art Students League, she took private lessons from leading artists in New York and in France.

Gertrude didn't want her art to be praised just because she was rich. When she began to exhibit her sculptures in public, she used an alias in the hope that her work would be judged on its merit alone. Thousands of people saw her sculptures at the Buffalo Exposition of 1901 and the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904.

In 1908, her sculpture, "Pan" won an award from the New York Architectural League. When "Paganism Immortal" was honored by the National Academy of Design in 1910, she finally took credit under her own name.

Whitney herself had been impressed by the artists she met when she opened a studio in Greenwich Village. While she worked in a classical, realistic style, others were taking art in new, challenging directions. They struggled to create a modern style while often struggling simply to survive. Many of the same experts who praised Whitney looked down on these artists, but she used her wealth to buy their paintings and give them gallery space to exhibit their works.

Her own work evolved into a dramatic, monumental style. She created a memorial to the Titanic, and created powerful monuments to the soldiers of World War I after performing volunteer hospital work in France in 1914. She designed a victory arch in New York and the award-winning Washington Heights Memorial in 1922, as well as a memorial at the spot where American troops first landed in France in 1917.

As Whitney's career flourished, her art collection grew. She continued to support artists with contributions to the Friends of Young Artists and the Society of Independent Artists. She built the Whitney Studio Galleries in 1928 to house modern art, but needed even more space to display her own collection.

Whitney offered to give her collection for free to the prestigious Metropolitan Museum of Art and pay for a new wing to house it, but the museum's directors weren't interested in modern American art. She answered that rejection by building her own museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, which opened in 1931.

Today, two of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's sculptures are on exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum. Meanwhile, the Whitney Museum has continued to grow since her death on April 18, 1942. It serves as a monument to Whitney's enduring commitment to American artists.

For more information about the Whitney Museum of American Art go to www.whitney.org.

# Helen Munson Williams

Portrait of Helen Munson Williams, circa 1855
Courtesy of Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Museum of Art, Utica

Nothing remains of the memorial Helen Munson Williams originally planned for her family. While her most ambitious project is long gone, a more lasting memorial remains in the form of her own home.

Born on Aug. 28, 1824, Helen Elizabeth Munson was the daughter of Alfred Munson, one of Utica's most successful early manufacturers. She was educated at the Utica Female Academy before marrying James Watson Williams, a prominent lawyer, in 1846.

As James's career flourished, including a term as mayor, Helen Munson Williams earned a reputation for modesty in spite of her wealth. When she spent money, it wasn't to lavish fine clothes or jewelry on herself, but to furnish Fountain Elms, the home she and James built on Genesee Street in the 1850s.

Fountain Elms was an Italian-style mansion designed by William Woolett Jr., an Albany architect. The Williamses furnished it with the handiwork of leading New York craftsmen, favoring neat and practical pieces to the more elaborately designed items that decorated many other homes.

After her husband's death in 1873, Helen Munson Williams shrewdly managed both his estate and business interests inherited from her father. As she expanded the family fortune, she increased her charitable contributions to local churches, hospitals and orphanages. She often surprised workmen on the projects she sponsored with her knowledge of building materials and interior design.

At the same time, Mrs. Williams expanded the arts and crafts collections of Fountain Elms. She renovated the mansion in 1876, and stocked it with items purchased during a two-year European tour with her daughters in 1888.

In later life, Helen Munson Williams wanted to leave behind a permanent public tribute to her father and husband. She commissioned the construction of a Munson-Williams Memorial building to house the Oneida Historical Society, but didn't live to see it finished. She died on March 13, 1894, two years before the memorial opened its doors.

After deteriorating during the 1950s, the Munson-Williams Memorial was demolished in July 1966. While Helen Munson Williams's tribute to her family was gone, the Munson and Williams names had not been forgotten.

Helen's daughters, Rachel and Maria, married half-brothers, hotel owner Thomas R. Proctor and businessman Frederick P. Proctor. They continued to build the family's collections, adding modern art and eclectic inventories of elegant timepieces to the Munson-Williams holdings. In 1919, they resolved to create a public legacy honoring all three branches of the family. They drafted a charter forming the Munson-Williams-Proctor Art Institute, which opened to the public in 1936.

Fountain Elms formed an integral part of the Institute, serving as a house museum that displayed arts and crafts from the family collection. While the Munson-Williams Memorial fell into disrepair, Fountain Elms was restored and reopened as part of a vastly expanded Institute in 1960.

The Munson-Williams-Proctor Art Institute combines one of the nation's leading museums of 19th century decorative arts with a diverse fine art collection and acclaimed instructional programs. Fountain Elms is an enduring memorial to Helen Munson Williams's role as a philanthropist patron of the American arts.

For more information about the Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute go to www.mwpai.org.