

WOMEN - INGHAM COUNTY, MICH.

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Salute to  
**INGHAM  
COUNTY  
WOMEN**  
of accomplishment

Ingham County Women's Commission 1976

DR. L. ANNE BALLARD	1
ALICE BERNARD AND MRS. W.W. LEWIS	1
ELIZA POWELL BUSH	2
LUCY BARNES COOLEY	2
EVA DIANN CORYELL	3
GERTRUDE DART CAMPBELL O'SULLIVAN	4
BEN ISI QUIA-BIRD WOMAN	4
BERTHA RAY	5
ESTER LUZ ROBLES DE PEREIDA	6
ABIGAIL C. ROGERS	6
DORA HALL STOCKMAN	7
PARTHENA LEWIS STRICKLAND	8

## Dr. L. Anne Ballard

Advocate of the advancement of women in every aspect of society. Dr. Ballard, born in 1848, one of 10 children, attended Miss Roger's Female College in Lansing and taught school for two years. Before entering Women's Medical College of Chicago, she clerked in a DeWitt store and took preparatory studies in the Medical Department of Michigan University. Her M.D. was granted in 1878.

Returning to Lansing in 1879, she began her career as a physician and surgeon. With persistence, she attained and zealously maintained a position in the front ranks of this male-dominated profession.

Dr. Ballard was one of the organizers of the Lansing Medical Society in 1882. She served as director for seven years and president for one year.

Her other interests included the Lansing Industrial Aid Society, the Eastern Star, the Lansing Women's Club, and WCTU and the YWCA which she declared an ideal avenue for "work of heart and brain."

In 1887, Dr. Ballard led an effort encouraging the State Legislature to amend the law on "age of consent" and succeeded in getting the age raised from 10 to 14.

Dr. Ballard lived to be about 90 years old.

## Alice Bernard and Mrs. W. W. Lewis

Pioneer milliners. Among the businesses that flourished in Williamston in 1891 were those of Alice Bernard and Mrs. W.W. Lewis.

Miss Bernard opened her millinery shop in 1884, supplying her customers with the latest fashions from Paris and New York City. She spent considerable time in the study of her artistic millinery and thoroughly familiarized herself with every line pertaining to the trade.

Mrs. Lewis' shop opened in 1889. The current styles, shapes and fabrics, including the beautiful plumes, straws, chip and felt were handsomely displayed. An abundant line of ribbons, trims, buttons and fancy goods graced the shelves.

Both shops were able to succeed, as the millinery trade flourished in Williamston at that time.

## Eliza Powell Bush

Teacher of the first school in Lansing. The first school opened in 1847 with only ten pupils. Under Miss Powell's tutelage, the enrollment had reached 40 in three month's time.

The school house, located at Grand Avenue, east of Cedar, had one window and one door. Both had leather hinges and no glass and were propped open to permit light and air. It was truly a shed roof board shanty. The teacher's salary was \$2.00 per week, plus board.

A native of Oneida, New York, Eliza Powell attended Olivet College. She married John N. Bush, an alderman and 4th Ward supervisor. She claimed to have lived longer in Lansing than any other person.

## Lucy Barnes Cooley

Twice a pioneer. Lucy Cooley, her husband, Jacob, and two children first arrived in Leslie, on May 16, 1836, and built a shanty.

Early in 1837, after many hardships they returned to New York State. Jacob ventured out again alone in November, 1837, settling on the banks of the Grand River. Lucy, responding to the urging of her husband, commenced her return journey in the Spring of 1838. She and the

two boys, Jacob F. Jr. and Lansing J. arrived safely in Detroit where she employed a teamster to take her to Jackson. After the teamster fled, pursued by the sheriff, they proceeded to Jackson where the team was stolen from her. She continued on foot through the woods toward Eaton Rapids finally arriving in Lansing on June 15, 1838.

Adams pioneer history relates, "She and Cooley cleared off a piece of land and sowed it to wheat. They had no team, no dumb beast of any kind and, as they had no almanac, they kept time by marking each day on a board with a piece of coal."

While Jacob worked at his trade as a tailor in Jackson, Lucy fended for herself against the bears and wolves with the help of some friendly Indians. One squaw acted as physician at the birth of Nathan in January, 1840. Two girls later joined the Cooley family.

Lucy outlived her husband by five years; she died in 1870 at the age of 74.

## Eva Diann Coryell

First woman graduate of M.S.U. In June, 1879, Eva Diann Coryell, proudly accepted the diploma which made her the first woman graduate of Michigan Agriculture College, now M.S.U.

At a time when women college graduates were rare, this 23 year old walked three miles to classes daily to earn her degree.

Coming from a pioneer background, she recalled crouching in a wheatfield in Winona, Minnesota, to hide from Indians on the warpath. The family came to Williamston when Eva was a young child. She started her teaching career at the age of 15 in Williamston.

Entering Michigan Agriculture College in 1875 as a sophomore she graduated in 1879 from the engineering and agriculture divisions. While teaching in Grand Rapids, she met William McBain and married him in 1881.

Eva Coryell McBain always maintained an active interest in her work, her family of six children, her church and her alma mater. She attended many college reunions when visiting East Lansing, amazed at the changes of the campus since her co-ed days.

Mrs. McBain died in 1927 at the age of 70.

## Gertrude Dart Campbell O'Sullivan

Early exponent of the women's movement. Gertrude Dart, daughter of James R. Dart, moved to Webberville with her family when she was eight years old. She was born in Pennsylvania in 1886. The Dart family had extensive lumber interests in Webberville and Leroy Township.

Following formal schooling in the local public schools, Gertrude attended St. Mary Academy in South Bend, Indiana and Somerville College at St. Clair. She married Alexander B. Campbell M.D. of Mason in 1887, who died in 1892. Nonplussed Gertrude entered the Medical Department of University of Michigan graduating in 1896. After interning on the staff of the Women's Hospital in Detroit, Dr. Campbell returned to practice medicine in the office of her deceased husband.

Later she married the Rev. J.A. O'Sullivan, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Port Huron. Dr. Campbell served as Health Officer of the city of Port Huron. After the death of her husband, she returned to her medical practice in Mason. Dr. Campbell, affectionately known as "Dr. Gertie", practiced medicine for 42 years and was involved in many community activities.

Dr. Campbell had no children but the Dart name continues in the many business enterprises in Ingham County.

## Ben Isi Quia - Bird Woman

Native American. She was born in the area of Ingham County before it was a county, on the river called Cedar. Her parents were traveling with friends to join Chief Pontiac at Detroit. She was born into the Turtle Clan of the Odawa Nation.

As the years passed, she returned to the area where she was born. She lived many more years on a lake shore, near the Cedar River. Here she watched the white people start a town called Lansing.

As she grew older, she married a warrior who left his Otter Clan to join hers. They had two children and moved to various areas trying to keep life the same as it had been before. As was customary at the time, she and her family traveled all over the midwest hunting, trapping, and raising her family.

With age she began to gain wisdom and with wisdom more responsibility. She became eldest woman of her clan, and the representative when the tribe was gathered as a whole. These gatherings took place at the Council Tree near Cross Village. Here the eldest women of each clan would get together to choose the leaders of the nation.

As time passed she and her family left the Ingham County area and moved north to get away from all of the white settlers in the area. She passed into the other world at Cross Village and her body was buried there. She survived all of her family, living to be about 100 years old.

## Bertha Ray

Pioneer proponent of equal rights for women in the business and professional world. Bertha Ray was the first woman in Lansing to vote, the first woman to clerk for the Lansing City Council and the first woman to compile city ordinances and a city charter.

She was the second Lansing woman elected to office after women were franchised. In 1923, she was elected city clerk, a position she held for 27 years until her retirement. She served with six mayors.

Miss Ray wore a "Votes for Women" button when only those with courage dared. She was a charter member of the Business and Professional Women's Club.

Miss Ray's political ideals were straightforward. "I never have done much actual campaigning. I do it year around in making contact with many people." she said. On one election night she calmly attended a vaude-

ville show in a local theater and a few hours later found that she had easily won by defeating two hard campaigning male candidates.

Her successor, Millie Brown, described her as a true politician who campaigned 365 days per year by giving the finest service at all times.

Miss Ray lived at 154 S. Larch. She attended Lansing Central High School, worked in her father's print shop while in school and in H.R. Pattengill's office assisting the education editor of the Moderator. She died at 79.

## Ester Luz Robles De Pereida

One of Lansing's first Mexican migrants. Ester De Pereida came to Lansing from Mexico to hoe sugar beets and continued to live in the community until her death in 1973.

She was born in Parás, Cauhila Mexico in 1889. Mrs. DePereida was a member of the Mutual Society of Ignacio Zaragosa and Cristo Rey. She gave many hours of volunteer service. She also was a member of the Altar Society.

Mrs. DePereida and her husband were proud of their Spanish speaking heritage and encouraged their family to take pride in it also. They helped to organize the Latin American Club and other patriotic groups. On Mother's Day in 1972, Cristo Rey honored Mrs. DePereida as Mother Of The Year and recognized her as the oldest member of the organization.

The Pereida's had nine children.

## Abigail C. Rogers

Champion of higher education for women. In 1858, with a gift of 20 acres in the north part of Lansing and \$20,000, she opened the Michigan Female College on the present site of the Michigan School for the Blind. It existed for 14 years.

In cooperation with other teachers, her sister, Delia, and dedicated liberals, she worked for three years to open Michigan University (later the U of M) to women.

Miss Rogers accused the state of a great injustice in withholding the same advantages provided men from her women students whose only disqualification was that of sex. Michigan Female College held its initial sessions in the State Capitol.

Miss Rogers came to Lansing from Albion where she was preceptress of Ypsilanti State Normal School, after holding similar positions in Coburg, Canada, White Plains and Lima, N.Y. She was born in Avon, N.Y. in 1818.

In Mrs. Franc Adams' "Pioneer History of Ingham County" is the description: "She was a woman of sterling character, resolute will and an active progressive mind. If she were living today she would make a shining light in suffrage or any progressive movement."

At the time of her death, the Lansing Republican noted, "To her more than to any other woman of the state is due the present elevation of sentiment in regard to higher education for women and her work shall follow her through all the coming years."

## Dora Hall Stockman

Committed to the concerns of rural women. Grand View Farm in northwest Lansing at the corner of U.S. 16 and Delta River Drive was her home.

Although she taught at Hillsdale College, where she received her master's degree, Dora Stockman's interest in education was secondary to her involvement in "things rural."

Lecturing to Grange organizations led to her election in 1919, at the dawn of women's suffrage, to a six-year term on the Michigan Agricultural College Board. She mobilized farm women on behalf of a new

home economics building at MAC that won legislative approval. In 1935, she wrote the National Grange prize song, "The Grange Leads on to Victory."

Mrs. Stockman sponsored legislation creating the Michigan Hospital Service and served as a director. President Herbert Hoover selected her for membership in the White House Conference on Children. She was an advisory member of the U.S. Children's Bureau.

In 1937, she ran and was elected to the State House of Representatives from the second Ingham District. She served until 1944.

Dora Stockman was born in 1872 in Marilla, Manistee County. She moved to Grass Lake following her second marriage. She died there in 1948.

## Parthena Lewis Strickland

Organizer of the first nursery school in Lansing. During the 2nd World War, Parthena Lewis helped to establish nursery schools for working mothers. She also was the first teacher.

Mrs. Strickland was born in Kalamazoo in 1898, but spent most of her life in Lansing. She graduated from Central High School in 1918 and later from Kalamazoo College. History records a gift from R.E. Olds to establish a Women's Club House, with the stipulation that a nursery for children of employed women was included. It was this project in which Miss Lewis was involved and which probably was the forerunner of the present day nurseries symbolized by the agency now known as the Community Nursery in Lansing. She was interested in politics, played the organ in several Lansing churches, and served as advisor to a senior Girl Reserve Club.

A member of the prominent Lewis family of Lansing, her father W.T. Lewis was employed for many years in the Capitol building. She died in 1950.

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**GRAPHICS:** Ann Hutchens