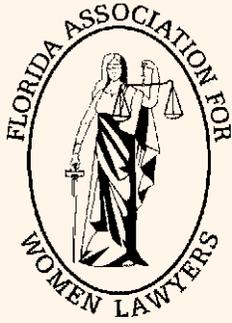




150
*Celebrating Florida's
First 150 Women Lawyers*





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Florida's
First 150
Women Lawyers*

Compiled & Edited by Wendy S. Loquasto

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*Dedicated to Florida's
First 150 Women Lawyers*

We honor them for their strength, commitment and service to the legal profession and their communities.

It is our wish that the story of their lives will inspire future generations to protect the advances they made for women and continue their efforts to improve the status of women in the legal profession.

As Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the League of Women Voters, once said:

“What could be more appropriate than that women should do for coming generations what those of a preceding period did for them.”



~ Acknowledgments ~

Gathering and compiling the information contained in the biographies that appear in this book was an enormous task that could not have been accomplished without the assistance of the 86 researchers who have worked on this project. A debt of gratitude is also owed to the numerous members of The Florida Bar who responded to inquiries printed in *The Florida Bar News* and *The Florida Bar Journal*, cherished senior members of The Florida Bar who recalled memories of earlier times, and laypersons who learned of the project and volunteered information.

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The First 150 Women Lawyers Project is greatly indebted to Judge Mattie Belle Davis, who has worked tirelessly compiling the history of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL). She has been assisted in this enormous endeavor by long-time friend and lawyer Henrietta S. Biscoe (1961), as well as by Rebecca Bowles Hawkins (1935). Judge Davis graciously shared her historical text concerning many of Florida's early women lawyers. Without the information Judge Davis provided, this book would have been incomplete. Her contribution to this celebration is immeasurable, and it is with much gratitude that The Florida Bar and FAWL acknowledge her efforts in documenting the history of Florida's women lawyers. Thank you, Judge Mattie Belle Davis!

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My thanks would not be complete without mentioning the First 150 Women Lawyers Committee, chaired by Edith G. Osman, and made up of Nina Ashenafi, Mary Ellen Clark, Beth Demme, Mary Jo Francis, Amy E. Furness, Judge Gill S. Freeman, Katherine A. Giddings, Sheila M. Gonzales, Rosana E. Hernandez, Allison Doliner Hockman, Lori J. Ketchledge, Judge Shelley J. Kravitz, Kathy J. Maus, Rebecca J. Mercier, Kelly A. O'Keefe, Michelle A. Pivar, Janeen L. Rivers, Lida Rodriguez-Taseff, K. Renee Schimkat, Jacqueline Hogan Scola, Christi H. Sherouse, Lea Souza-Rasile, Lori K. Weems, and Jodi L. Wilkof. This group of dynamic, dedicated, and seemingly tireless women have worked extraordinarily hard to plan, organize, and obtain underwriting for the May 25 dinner and June 14 supreme court ceremony which will honor Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers. These women have also been a never-ending source of support to me during the production of this book. Thank you, ladies, and congratulations on jobs well done.

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Awakening: A Celebration of The Florida Bar's 50th Anniversary and of Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers

By Edith G. Osman



When people ask me why busy lawyers devoted well over a year to make this day a reality, I tell them about Belva Lockwood. In 1873, Lockwood became the first woman in America to complete law school. After male students threat-

ened to boycott graduation, the administration withheld her diploma until she wrote to the President of the University -- Ulysses S. Grant. After three years in practice, Lockwood applied to be admitted to the Bar of the United States Supreme Court. That Court refused her application writing, "[N]one but men are admitted to practice before it as lawyers and counselors ... and the Court does not feel called upon to make a change until such a change is required by statute, or a more extended practice in the highest courts of the States." Lockwood knew a challenge when she saw one. She successfully lobbied Congress to pass "an Act to Relieve Certain Legal Disabilities of Women." Weeks later, she became the first woman admitted to practice before the Court.

Lockwood advocated for causes including women's rights and prison reform until she was 84. Shortly before her death at 87, Lockwood looked back on her extraordinary life and commented, "I have not raised the dead but I have awakened the living." We honor the first 150 women lawyers in Florida today, not only because they "awakened

the living" when they became lawyers, but because their stories must be told to awaken women -- and men -- in the years to come.

When we began this project several young women suggested that we should not honor "women lawyers" because we have "made it" and there is no reason to "set us apart." As the insightful piece by Doris Weatherford makes clear, we may be well on our way, but we surely have not arrived; instead, if we are to fulfill the dreams of our future, we must truly appreciate our past. This project has been an important step in that process.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of The Florida Bar, a unified bar which includes over 66,000 attorneys admitted to practice in Florida. Although women now number 16,588 and constitute 27.4 percent of the Bar, less than 40 years ago, in 1966, there were only 175 women lawyers in the entire state, and 25 years ago saw only 684 women lawyers in the state, which was only 3.3 percent of the Bar. These statistics beg the question of what was the status of women in the law prior to the Bar's existence. Consequently, as part of our 50th anniversary celebration, I asked the Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL) to take a careful look at the history of Florida's early women lawyers. They did — and found not a single book devoted to the subject. We were determined to preserve the history of the trailblazers that preceded us to history — and the First 150 Women Project was born.

At least four other Bar Associations around the country have also explored the unique history of women in the profession. In 1998 Florida's

own Martha Barnett, now the President-Elect of the American Bar Association, was the keynote speaker at the State Bar of Wisconsin's "Pioneers in the Law, the First 150 Women" celebration. That same year, United States Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was a featured guest at the Delaware State Bar Association's program and later, Roberta Cooper, the first women President of the American Bar Association spoke at similar programs in Chicago and Utah. We are thrilled to have Attorney General Janet Reno -- Florida's most famous woman lawyer -- address our celebration.

It would be impossible to adequately thank Wendy Loquasto and her research team for the endless hours of meticulous research that made this project possible. As her fascinating article explains, what seemed like a relatively simple undertaking proved to be a journey that took her research committee around the state to libraries, law schools, local newspapers, and the home of many of our honorees. Initially, the project began as "the first 50 women lawyers" but it soon grew to the "first 100." Miami's own Judge Dixie L. Herlong Chastain, long a heroine to all of us in Dade County, remains the only living honoree of that group. The final list begins in 1898 with the admission of Louise Rebecca Pinnell, extends to 1943, and actually includes 154 women. Fourteen of these courageous women are still with us: Caroline Adams, Daisy Richards Bisz, Grace Williams Burwell, Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter, Judge Dixie L. Herlong Chastain, Reba Engler Epstein Daner, Judge Mattie Belle Davis, Judge Anne E'del Deacon, Mary Frances Dewell, Lucille Cairns George, Lois Ellen Thacker Graessle, Rebecca Bowles Hawkins, Jeannette Edythe TeSelle Plump, and Ethel Dorothea "Dodie" Clarson Watson.

As our research progressed, we found that the first 150 women did not include a single African American -- a shameful and revealing fact. We wanted to recognize the pioneering African-American women lawyers and have proudly made them part of this project. The first African-American woman lawyer to join the Bar,

Bernice Gaines Dorn, graduated from Florida A&M University School of Law and was admitted to The Florida Bar in 1958. It was another seven years before the second and third African-American women were admitted to practice; Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry and Ruby Burrows McZier became members of The Florida Bar in 1965. C. Bette Wimbish and Arthenia L. Joyner followed in 1968 and 1969. I urge you to read their inspiring biographies.

We also found that Hispanic women were under-represented in our group of honorees. Happily, the first 150 Women Lawyers Project does include two Hispanic trailblazers -- Marian Borros of Ormond Beach, admitted in 1926, and Elva Victoria Diaz of Tampa, admitted in 1933.

I am proud of the work that FAWL has done on this project and am indebted to the committee that worked tirelessly to make today a reality. I urge you to read the biographies of each and every one of the pioneers featured in this book and share them with young women -- and men -- entering this great profession. As women make strides in the law, complacency threatens to erode the progress we have made. We must never forget that these courageous women made our careers possible. They are our legacy and our lesson. We hope these stories will continue to "wake the living" and inspire women lawyers for years to come.

Edith G. Osman is president of The Florida Bar and is only the second woman to hold that prestigious position. This project was brought to us through her vision. She is a past president of FAWL in both Dade County and statewide, and past president of the Council of Voluntary Bar Presidents. She is the recipient of FAWL's Inaugural Outstanding Achievement Award; the Council of Bar Presidents' Outstanding Past Voluntary Bar Presidents Award; the Bar President's Outstanding Past President's Award; Florida Women of Achievement Award, Dade County; Dade County's In The Company of Women Award; and the Ziff Museum's Breaking the Glass Ceiling Award. She is a partner in the law firm of Carlton Fields in Miami.



The Quest for Professional Equality

by Jeanmarie Whalen



The Florida Association for Women Lawyers is proud to join with The Florida Bar in celebrating Florida's first 150 Women Lawyers. We who practice law within Florida today are forever indebted to these pioneering women. The significance of the struggles and challenges which these women faced and of the battles which they were forced to wage, merely to practice within their chosen profession, cannot be overstated.

Although more than one hundred years have passed since the admission of Louise Rebecca Pinnell, Florida's first woman lawyer, the struggle for gender equality within the profession continues. Despite the fact that nearly fifty percent of the students entering law school today are female, equality within the legal profession is far from a reality. In fact, the latest ABA Study on Women in the Profession concludes that gender bias continues to remain entrenched in the profession resulting in steep inequities of pay, promotion and opportunity.

The numbers show us that although today the playing field appears more level at the entry points into the profession, the lag comes later with respect to partnership, firm management and governance. Women are over-represented among associates at older ages and severely under-represented in the highest echelons of government and private sector positions. With respect to women in the judiciary, women still lag behind in numerical parity in every court in the country. Additionally, every study of earnings comparison to date documents continuing gender inequities. Within a decade from entry into the practice of law, women's earnings lag behind those of men.

While we celebrate the great accomplishments of Florida's first 150 women lawyers and honor the personal sacrifices and struggles of each of them in the quest for professional equality, the Florida Association for Women Lawyers asks you to renew your commitment to achieving true equality for all under the law. Your profession, your practice and your community will be better for it and history will thank you for it.



Jeanmarie Whalen is president of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and former two-term president of the Palm Beach County FAWL Chapter. She is a partner in the law firm Slawson Cunningham Whalen & Stewart, P.L., in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

A History of America's First Women Lawyers

By Doris Weatherford



I would like to begin by extending my hearty congratulations to the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and The Florida Bar Association for your extraordinary commitment to recovering women's history! It is, unfortunately, quite uncommon to see a project such as this actually move beyond the talking stage, and I offer my warm thanks

everyone involved.

Your action is even more exceptional because most Floridians have personal roots in other states. You have created a superlative model for others -- including professional historians, who have done less to research difficult topics like this than should be the case. Indeed, a truly good, thoroughly documented book on the history of American women in the law has yet to be written: what follows below is the state of my research when I published *Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History* in 1995. Because bar admission is an area that must be tracked state-by-tedious-state, I must say that I cannot guarantee that it has no errors, particularly of omission -- and I hope that Florida's project will inspire others to begin correcting the neglect of this and other aspects of women's history.

When Louise Pinnell was admitted to the Florida bar in 1898, women had been practicing law in other states for almost three decades. Florida was still very much a Deep South state, for Confederate conservatism prevailed long after the Civil War's end. The war developed activist skills in many women, however, and in 1868, three years after its end, former Civil War nurse Myra Bradwell joined her attorney husband in publishing *Chicago Legal News*, a nationally circulated weekly. She passed the bar exam the next year, but the Illinois Supreme Court refused to admit her.

The justices acknowledged that "of the qualifications of the applicant we have no doubt" and conceded that she had "earnestly and ably maintained" her argument in her written appeal, but they saw the fact that Bradwell was married as an

insurmountable handicap. As in most states at the time, married women in Illinois could not even sign a contract: how, the court asked, could someone so lacking in civil liberties for herself expect to enforce them for others?

Iowa meanwhile quietly set the precedent and was the first state to admit a woman to the bar. Arabella Mansfield passed her exam and was admitted on June 15, 1869, but Mansfield was a college professor who never intended to practice: she made the effort primarily to please a feminist friend, a male judge who wanted to demonstrate that women were capable. Even though Iowa is next door to Illinois and even though Mansfield also was married, the marital issue seemed unimportant to Iowa's judiciary -- again showing how dependent women's rights were (and are) on the whim of a state line.

In 1868, the same year that Bradwell began her struggle, progressive men associated with Washington University in St. Louis recruited two young women who became the nation's first female law school students. They were Phoebe Couzins, whose father was a St. Louis law enforcement official, and Lemma Barkaloo, who came from Brooklyn, New York, where such opportunities long would continue to be denied to women. Barkaloo was admitted to the Missouri bar in 1870, but died a few months later. Couzins' 1871 graduation drew national attention, and she was admitted to the bars of not only Missouri, but also Arkansas, Kansas, Utah, and the Dakota Territory.

That western and midwestern jurisdictions eagerly admitted her indicates the greater egalitarianism of the frontier. The same willingness to accept new ideas was responsible for the first full voting rights of women anywhere in the world, which the territorial legislature of Wyoming enacted late in 1869; Utah followed early in 1870. Moreover, Wyoming women served on juries in 1870 -- to the delight of cartoonists back East, who found the notion hilarious. It was a Wyoming woman, Esther Morris, who was the first female law enforcement official: the governor appointed her justice of the peace for South Pass City, a gold mining boom town that was the largest in the territory. Morris handled at least 70 documented cases in this epitome of the Wild West, none of which were reversed by higher courts.

Back in Illinois, feminists supporting Myra Bradwell lobbied a bill through the legislature that struck “male” from the statutes on lawyers, and Alta Hulett, an unmarried woman, was admitted to its bar in 1872. In the same year, the first eastern admission occurred -- and amazingly enough, it was an African-American woman. Charlotte Ray graduated from the law school of Howard University (founded by Congress in 1867 primarily for ex-slaves) and was admitted to the bar in Washington, D.C., without any particular attention. Ray’s struggle to support herself was much more difficult; before the decade ended, she had to give up her practice and return to teaching.

Despite these precedents in several states -- including Illinois -- when the U.S. Supreme Court finally heard Bradwell’s appeal in 1873, it came down firmly on the side of Illinois. Not only were states free to exclude women from the practice of law because of women’s “natural timidity and delicacy,” the court added that any constitutional right to equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment was overruled “by the law of the Creator.” The justices seemed to believe that gender itself was as great a stricture on a woman as her marital status.

Midwestern states nonetheless continued their liberalization. Wisconsin admitted Lavinia Goodall, an unmarried woman, after she moved from New York to Janesville in 1874. When one of her cases went to the state supreme court, however, the justices did not allow her to argue it, declaring female lawyers to be “departures from the order of nature.” Once again, legislators proved more enlightened, and Wisconsin amended its statutes to force its courts to accept women. Unfortunately, Goodall died in 1880, just six years after beginning her practice; Illinois’ Hulett died five years after beginning hers; and when Missouri’s Barkaloo is added, three of the first ten female attorneys died prematurely -- a rate that caused even sympathetic people to wonder if women were indeed physically capable of being attorneys.

It is ironic that all of those who died were unmarried and young, while older, presumably less delicate women continued to be barred from practicing. Like Myra Bradwell, Belva Lockwood had a long struggle to become an attorney. When she began seeking admission to law school, Lockwood already had been an elected school superintendent in central New York; had established her own school in Washington, D.C., after moving there as a widow with a child; and even had voted in caucuses to choose Washington’s representative to Congress. Howard University nonetheless rejected her application; she finally found acceptance at National University Law School (now the law school of George Washington

University), a new institution in need of students.

When Lockwood finished in 1873, however, the school refused to award her diploma; she got it after appealing to President Ulysses S. Grant, who was a school trustee and who understood the value of activist women from his wartime experience. Her problems were not over, however: although the District’s bar had indifferently admitted Charlotte Ray the previous year, Lockwood was rejected. She appealed to the Supreme Court, which backed the local court. For the next four years, Lockwood lobbied Congress for a bill to require the federal courts to allow women to practice -- and finally began to use her degree in 1879, almost a decade after she began her quest.

Myra Bradwell continued to publish *Chicago Legal News* for two decades, and in 1890 -- four years before her death -- the Illinois Supreme Court, acting on its own initiative, reconsidered its 1869 rejection and admitted her to the bar. Bradwell’s daughter became a lawyer without the struggle her mother had known, and late in that same decade, Florida had its first with Louise Pinnell.

Female attorneys in Florida, however, would face all-male juries for another half-century. Mary Lou Baker, a Pinellas attorney who in 1942 became the second woman elected to the legislature, repeatedly saw defeat of her bill to allow women to serve on juries. Not until 1947, after Baker lost her reelection bid, did the legislature finally pass the bill -- and then women were automatically exempted from jury duty unless they actively volunteered to serve. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld that as late as 1961; not until 1975 were female attorneys finally freed from the burden of arguing to juries that were likely to be composed entirely of men.

Thus, Florida women practicing law in the 1990s have just a twenty-year history that approaches equality. As the new century begins, let us pause to recognize the painful progress made for us by women whose likely reward was public disapproval. Let us remember that no important social change occurs by itself: it takes activists who see that the future can be better than the past; it takes people who care more about principle than about personal gain. Let us be forever grateful to them.

Doris Weatherford is the author of six books on the history of American women, including History of the American Suffragist Movement, which features an introduction by Geraldine Ferraro and was named a 1998 Honor Book by the International Society of School Librarians. Her most recent work is Women’s Almanac 2000.



Suffrage in 1900

Women Lawyers at the Start of the Twentieth Century

By Cynthia L. Cooper

In 1900, when the calendars flip from the nineteenth century to the twentieth, Lutie A. Lytle is already at the podium in a law school, the first woman law professor to teach male, as well as female, students. In a photograph that captured the scene, Lytle's eyes gaze outward to a world in front of her. She bears a slight smile, the quintessential "Portia," as woman lawyers of the times were universally called. She teaches evidence, criminal procedure, and domestic relations and serves as the law librarian at Central Tennessee Law School, the African-American academy in Nashville from which she graduated in 1897.

At a time when offices are outfitted with additions like telephones and typewriters, law offices are beginning to employ the occasional woman stenographer. Within a few years, a generation of idealistic women lawyers bursts onto the scene with ambition, notions of equal rights, and plans for careers.

By 1900, there are already 1,010 women lawyers in the United States, according to the census, up from a mere 208 only 10 years earlier. Yet, they are still less than 1 percent of total lawyers. Thirty-three of the 45 states in the Union admit women to law practice. Three women judges have wielded the gavel—in Wyoming, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. Forward-thinking law schools are admitting women, including the University of Buffalo, Howard University, the University of Michigan, New York University, Oregon's Willamette College of Law, and the all-female Washington College of Law in D.C. The Women's Lawyer's Club is up and running, and women are working to make the National Association of Women Lawyers, founded in 1899, a success. The most famous woman lawyer of all, Belva A. Lockwood—who signs her letters "Attorney and Solicitor"—has already twice run for president on the National Equal Rights ticket, in 1884 and 1888.

Earlier pioneers of the late 1800s had fashioned doors where there had been none. By 1900 a breed of individualistic women is stepping through the

threshold. "You had to be a rebel to be a lawyer [in those days], to be a rebel against the stereotype of society," says J. Clay Smith, Jr., editor of *Rebels in Law*, an historical collection about black women lawyers. Lytle, the first black woman admitted to the bar in Nebraska and Tennessee, reports to a newspaper that Illinois is a good place for a woman lawyer to practice. "Chicago ought to furnish an opening for a female lawyer if she has lots of energy," she writes.

Almost up to the end of the century, women were still being turned away from the bar in Illinois. But that changed. The state finally admitted once-denied Myra Bradwell in 1890. Like many other women lawyers, including Lockwood, Bradwell even had legal heirs—her daughter, Bessie, graduated as valedictorian from Northwestern Law School in 1882.

Others also set the stage. Charlotte E. Ray, the daughter of an eminent abolitionist preacher, becomes the first black woman to practice law in 1872. Clara Shortridge Foltz, the first woman lawyer in California, is already a mid-career role model by 1900. She tells the *New York Tribune* in 1898, "Women Lawyers . . . shrink from the tendency of their brothers-at-law to regard them as freaks, rather than their mental equals. . . . I advise every woman who has academic training, a strong analytical mind and a natural bent for the law, to study and practice it."

Suffrage is on the minds of virtually all of the women who enter the legal profession. Women lawyers are on the cutting edge, convinced that the franchise is essential to securing women's role in society. "Women believed once they could change the laws, they could change the system," says Karen Berger Morello, author of *The Invisible Bar*. "They thought, 'If we can just show we're competent, all the doors will open.'"

Doors to established law offices are opening by the 1900s. "There is this great optimism among young women," says Virginia Drachman, author of *Sisters in Law* and currently professor of history at Tufts University. At first, however, many



female law graduates team up with their husbands rather than seeking independent employment. Among these dual partners is Antoinette Jackowska-Peterson, a Polish immigrant and former hatmaker who sets up a law practice with her husband in Milwaukee after her graduation from the University of Wisconsin in 1901.

Others join their fathers' practices. Alice Henrietta Day, a graduate of the University of Buffalo, becomes one-half of Day & Day in the rural town of Batavia, New York, around 1901. When Alice Day marries a farmer named F. Grant Gardner, father and daughter call themselves Day & Gardner. Gardner continues to practice until the mid-1950s, writing wills for farmers, contracts for small businesses, and handling real estate matters for struggling Italian immigrants. Her grandson, Buffalo attorney William Gardner, recalls the family stories. "She would brag that she would come home and have babies and be back in the office in a week."

Urban lawyers are aiming for social reform, joining settlement houses and burgeoning movements dealing with the dismal conditions faced by laborers, the poor, and immigrants. A doctor's wife, Mrs. Leonard Weber, has been doing service work with impoverished women. "To my amazement, I found that most mental suffering resulted from wrongs which needed legal advice," she says. She helps found a nondegree law program for women in New York, noting that black women already had intimate knowledge of the cruelty of law through experiences with slavery. Smith writes: "The legal profession may have been ignorant of black women, but the law was no mystery to them."

But, in some cases, working for social reform is motivated by shoddy treatment by members of the male bar who, at the beginning of the century, are rapidly forming themselves into corporate law firms with diversified specialities. Alice Dillingham, the top graduate of N.Y.U. Law School in 1905, finds that no big firm will hire her; she takes a job for one-quarter of a man's pay, with Legal Aid.

Others, particularly in the frontier environments of the West, see business possibilities. "Many women believed [law] was a great field of

opportunity. It was a profession where they could make their way as an individual," says Drachman. "But it could be lonely for women unless they had connections," she adds.

Inside the doors women are opening during the next decades, they find more doors. Women lawyers are relegated to office work, or limited to trusts and estates. They are rejected for jobs by men who say they want to hire only men, kept from courtroom work, or mocked when they are in court. Morello quotes the male bar leader Theron Strong, who wrote, in 1914, "It is now more than thirty years since Mrs. Lockwood was admitted . . . and I think it may be safely asserted that there is no prospect that women will be seen except as a *rara avis* in the ranks of the legal fraternity."

Women eventually do get the vote; they are admitted to law schools and to the bar. But at the end of her career, according to Stanford law professor and biographer Barbara Babcock, even the formidable Foltz describes "marshes of ignorance and prejudice" that she encountered.

The lives of the women lawyers at the turn of the century, says Morello, remained difficult, uncomfortable, and often humiliating. "They faced ridicule and outright hostility on a daily basis in court," she says. "I wouldn't have been brave enough to do it."

But they don't stop. One notable signal comes from Alice Paul, who, after acting as one of the premiere strategists in the fight for the ballot, decides to attend law school. She graduates in 1922 and promptly writes the first draft of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Cynthia L. Cooper is an award-winning journalist and a lawyer who writes extensively on women's issues and the law. The author of four books, including The Insider's Guide to the Top 15 Law Schools and Mockery of Justice, she also headed the editorial team for Know Your Rights. She served as the Court Information Officer for the Minnesota Supreme Court and as an investigative reporter/producer for an ABC affiliate. She won an APEX award for Excellence in Publishing in 1999.



~ ~

Researching Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers

**By Wendy S. Loquasto,
Co-Chair of the First 150 Research Committee**



Problems In Determining Who Was Admitted, When They Were Admitted, and Whether They Were Women

At first blush, compiling the list of the first 150 women lawyers seems like an easy task. Just call The Florida Bar. The difficulty of the task becomes apparent when one realizes the first

woman lawyer was admitted in 1898, yet The Florida Bar did not exist until 1950. Prior to that time, the Florida State Bar Association existed, but it was a voluntary bar association, as opposed to today's unified bar. Thus, not all attorneys belonged to it and records are not available. Moreover, it was not until 1925 that the State Board of Law Examiners was created, and while one might assume that its records were inherited by today's Board of Bar Examiners, if those records exist, they are confidential. Thus, compiling the list was not easy, and it was further complicated by problems in determining who was admitted, when they were admitted, and whether they were even women.

Determining the first woman lawyer in Florida was not without some controversy. For instance, Stetson University College of Law and the family of Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt regarded her as Florida's first woman lawyer based on her 1908 admission. The family of Nell L. Cowan Bostwick had long believed that she was the first woman lawyer in Florida, having been admitted at the local level in 1905. A third woman, Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett, is said to be Florida's first woman lawyer based on a family history written by her sister-in-law, which states she was admit-

ted to the bar in 1898. The Hillsborough County Bar Association offers a fourth contender in its centennial history, which states that Mae Wood, "a cultured young lady from Nebraska," arrived in Tampa in 1896 to practice law, but it acknowledges there is no record of her admission or even that she stayed in Tampa for very long. Finally, the photographic composite of the Bench and Bar of Florida compiled in 1899 shows two women admitted to the bar: Louise Rebecca Pinnell and Alice Johnson.

Some of the discrepancy as to admission date may arise from the fact that attorneys could be admitted to practice law at the local level by taking an examination before the circuit court judges. This means of admission is illustrated in *Along This Way* (19--), the autobiography of James Weldon Johnson, the first African-American male to be admitted to practice by the Florida Supreme Court. Thus, it could be that Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett was admitted to practice by the circuit court in Leon County in 1898, thereby making her Florida's first woman lawyer. Certainly, Nell L. Cowan Bostwick was admitted in that manner, because the Florida Supreme Court minutes show that when she was admitted in 1921, it was based upon her status as a practicing attorney in the circuit courts of the state.

To resolve the matter for the purpose of this book, it was decided that the Florida Supreme Court's records would be the ultimate authority for the date of admission, with the minutes controlling over the book of attorneys admitted between 1895 and 1949 if there were discrepancies between the two. Only two exceptions have been made and they are the first two women on the list, Louise Rebecca Pinnell and Alice Johnson. Mysteriously, the supreme court's records omit any reference to either of these women, yet evidence of their admission exists in the form of the Bench and Bar of Florida 1899 photographic composite, as well as Ms. Pinnell's interview with *The Florida*





Times-Union wherein she recounted traveling from Bronson to Tallahassee to take an oral bar examination at the Florida Supreme Court in May 1898 and being admitted five months later in October 1898. For that reason, the exception was made for those two women, but all the other women included in the book appear in the order that the Florida Supreme Court admitted them to practice law.

Another controversial matter is the fact of admission. For instance, Mae Helm, born in 1888, was listed as a practicing attorney in Tampa with a date of admission of 1923 in *Martindale's American Law Dictionary* (1929 & 1930), yet the supreme court records do not mention her. She is therefore not included in the biographies. One must assume that she was admitted only at the local level and never sought admission by the Florida Supreme Court. The same can probably be said for Harriett Rothchild, who was listed as an attorney in Tampa in *The Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary* (1939), and Helen J. Binning of Miami Beach, who appeared in the August 1923 edition of the *Women's Law Journal*.

Additionally, there are several law school graduates who should have been admitted under the "diploma privilege," yet the supreme court records fail to include them. The "diploma privilege" refers to the fact that those who graduated from Stetson University College of Law, the University of Florida College of Law, and the University of Miami School of Law did not have to take the bar examination, because the supreme court had approved the legal curriculum at the schools. Thus, once they graduated, they needed only to take an oath to be admitted to practice law.

Three law school graduates who appear in alumni records but are not included in the biographies are Flora E. Lovell and Margaret Edwards Skipper, who are reported to have graduated from the University of Florida in 1932 and 1940, respectively, and Helen Mae Christian, who graduated from Stetson in 1937. If Flora E. Lovell was indeed a woman, that would make her the University of Florida's first female graduate and she would have been admitted under the diploma privilege, yet the supreme court records fail to contain any reference to anyone named Flora, and the University of Florida maintains that Clara Floyd Gehan (1933) was its first woman graduate. Delay in taking the oath, or perhaps clerical error, are the apparent

reasons for Ms. Skipper's exclusion, because the supreme court records show that she was not admitted until June 27, 1945, some five years after her graduation. As for Helen Mae Christian, the mystery of her omission from the supreme court records was solved when it was discovered that she died within a month of graduating.

The last area of controversy affecting the list is the most basic: gender. Sometimes the supreme court's records indicate "Miss" or "Mrs." associated with a name, but this was not a foolproof method of determining gender, as evidenced by the fact that entries known to be women had no such titles attached to their names.

The original list was therefore composed of all names that seemed feminine. The problem with this method is that some names, even today, can be utilized by either sex. Names such as Allison, Kelly, Laurie, Leigh, Leslie, Lynn and Marion fall into that category. Then consider that names which seem solely feminine today were given to males 100 years ago. Names such as Hope, Bonny, Pearl and Daisy fall into that category. To make matters more difficult, many of the entries were just initials. Although most of the questionable names were eventually confirmed as to gender, several persons were removed from the list as "likely males" even though their gender was never actually confirmed. Those entries include Hratchia Balikan of Bradenton (1926); Carol or Carroll Colley of Georgia and later Tampa (1925); Kelly Kash of Kentucky and later of Sebring (1925); Hollie Mason of Washington, D.C. (1925); and Hope D. Starke of Lake Wales (1922).

I have mentioned all of these people who were deleted from the official list in recognition of the fact that they practiced law, graduated from law school, and may have actually been women. It is my hope that the publication of this book will eventually lead to additional information regarding these people so that questions surrounding them will be answered.

How The Research Committee Found Information About Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers

How did the First 150 Research Committee, composed mostly of lawyers, law students, and writers, discover the information included in the biographies of the first 150 women lawyers? The answer: a crash course in researching, the sharing





of research tips with others, and a lot of luck. Add to that, dogged determination.

What appeared to be a fairly simple task to the researchers proved more complicated and frustrating than expected. The initial group of researchers were assigned five women to investigate, and most of them, after checking the Internet and various other obvious sources, reported little or no success as to any of those women at the second meeting. This should have been our first warning of the enormity of the project; instead we vowed to work harder and share successful research strategies as they were discovered. Thus, it was those first researchers who, through trial and error, developed the search methods we employed. We checked the books about distinguished Florida women found in libraries, such as *The Women of Florida* and *Florida Women of Distinction*; we found the Social Security Death Index on the Internet; and we discovered how facts were stored in the Florida death records. We pulled old city directories off library shelves. We read old copies of *Martindale's American Law Dictionary* and *The Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary*. We searched Westlaw. We obtained, through interlibrary loan, books on women lawyers, such as *The Digest of Women Lawyers and Judges* (1949), *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939), and *75 Year History, National Association of Women Lawyers, 1899-1974* (1975).

The above strategies worked well for those women who had achieved a level of prominence, but finding the less-than-famous required digging into local history, state and county public marriage and death records, law school alumni records, obituaries, local newspaper articles; contacting local libraries and historical societies; and locating relatives. When we knew where a woman had practiced law, we wrote to senior attorneys who lived in the same town. We contacted anyone in *The Florida Bar Journal* who had the same surname as one of the women. One researcher, Doris Sanders, even traveled to the towns where the women she was researching lived and visited their graves.

The research task was further complicated by the fact that the only information we had for some of the women was their name and date of admission. We did not even have a residence or

date of birth, so it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. Add to that the practice of women adopting their husband's surname upon marriage. Then consider the discrimination the women faced in the legal profession. Some simply practiced in their husbands' offices and never appeared in court. Others were unable to even find a job as an attorney and thus were relegated to the position of secretary or stenographer.

When research techniques failed, sometimes luck stepped in. For instance, the evening before the final research deadline saw me in my office late at night. As I was leaving the building, I mentioned the project to Jack Steele, the security guard, as a means of explaining why I had lingered at the office until almost 11:00 p.m. Jack said to me, "Wendy, I never told you that my aunt was a lawyer." As it turns out, his aunt, Ethel Jane Steele Brannon, was one of the women for which we had little information. However, Jack was able to provide me with the details of this interesting woman's life, which included working at the Nuremburg War Trials.

I am proud of what this group of amateur detectives and genealogists discovered about Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers. The biographies of these remarkable women are as complete as they can be given the time permitted for the research and the resources that were readily available. Most certainly, the publication of this book will result in individuals coming forward with additional information about these women. In the words of the authors of the State Bar of Wisconsin's book, *Pioneers in the Law: The First 150 Women*, "This booklet is merely a snapshot of these women. And, like a photograph, it is a reminder of the people we wish to remember, an historical record in and of itself, and an historical document that will tell future historians that we cared to remember."

Wendy S. Loquasto is an attorney employed with Judge Richard W. Ervin, III, at the First District Court of Appeal. She is a graduate of Stetson University and is a former president of Tallahassee Women Lawyers and former secretary of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers. She is co-chair of the First 150 Research Committee.




*Florida's Law Schools,
 the Florida Supreme Court, and
 the First 150 Women Lawyers*

Approximately 60 of Florida's first 150 women lawyers and first five African-American women lawyers graduated from Florida law schools. Several others attended the law schools, but were admitted to practice law without graduating. Consequently, a brief history of the law schools is appropriate.

Stetson University College of Law is Florida's first law school. It was founded in 1900 and was originally located in Flagler Hall on the DeLand campus of Stetson University, which was Florida's first private university founded in 1883. The first woman to graduate from a Florida law school was Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt, who graduated from Stetson in 1908. In 1954, the college of law was moved to St. Petersburg.



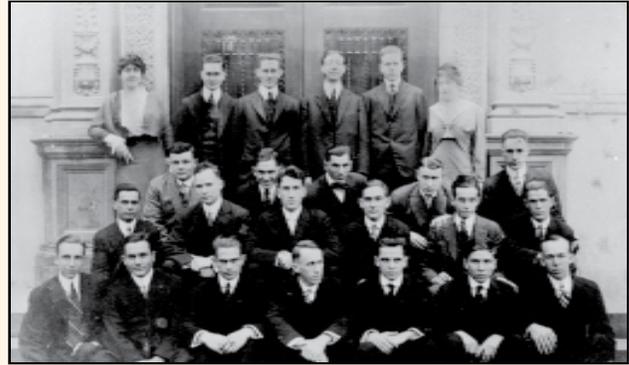
Flagler Hall, 1910



Above: Law school class with Annie Dorcas Broward Starrett and Elsie Young Douglass (1910)



Stetson Moot Court Room



Law school class with Annie Jo Law and Herberta Hathcock Leonardy (1915)



Stetson Law Library


The University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law, as it is currently known, was founded in 1909 on the Gainesville campus of the University of Florida, which is Florida's oldest public university, having been established originally as the



Bryant Hall at the University of Florida



East Florida Seminary in Ocala. The University of Florida was a men's school, and women were not permitted by law to enroll in its college of law until 1925. The first women to graduate from the University of Florida College of Law did so in 1933 -- Natalie Marion Weinstein Berger (LL.B.), Rose Ealine Friedlin (J.D./transfer student), and Clara B. Floyd Gehan (J.D.).



The University of Miami School of Law was established in 1928 as part of the University of Miami, which was chartered by a group of private citizens in 1925. Of the eighteen students in the law school's initial class, five were women and they constituted 28 percent of the class. Judge Dixie L. Herlong Chastain was the first woman to graduate from the University of Miami School of Law, and she did so in 1930.



The University of Miami's first law school class (1928)



Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU), as it is presently known, was founded in 1887 as the State Normal College for Colored Students. The FAMU School of Law was established in 1951 and it operated until 1968. To house the law school, the "Law Wing" was added to the Coleman Library, which is pictured below prior to the construction. The first woman to graduate from FAMU School of Law was Bernice Gaines Dorn, pictured below, who graduated in 1958.



Coleman Library-FAMU



The women who did not attend law school were required to take and pass a bar examination, which was administered by the Florida Supreme Court up until 1925 when the State Board of Law Examiners was created and assumed that duty. Up until 1925, the women would have traveled to the Supreme Court Building in Tallahassee, pictured below, to take the examination, which was administered over the course of 2-3 days.





The Biographies of

*Florida's First
150 Women Lawyers*





Abbreviations for Source Material

B&B (1899)	<i>Bench and Bar, State of Florida (1899) (photographic composite)</i>
B&B (1935)	<i>Bench and Bar of Florida (1935)</i>
MBD	Judge Mattie Belle Davis's Historical Text
DWL&J	<i>The Digest of Women Lawyers & Judges (1949)</i>
FSCBAA	Florida Supreme Court Book of Attorneys Admitted 1895-1949
FSCM	Florida Supreme Court Minutes
FSCM&BAA	Florida Supreme Court Minutes & Book of Attorneys Admitted 1895-1949
FTU	<i>The Florida Times-Union</i>
MALD	<i>Martindale's American Law Dictionary</i>
MHLD	<i>The Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary</i>
MH	<i>Miami Herald</i>
75NAWL	<i>75 Year History, National Association of Women Lawyers, 1899-1974</i>
SUCLAL&R	Stetson University College of Law Alumni List & Records
UFCLAL&R	University of Florida College of Law Alumni List & Records
UMSLAL&R	University of Miami School of Law Alumni List & Records



Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers

Listed by Year of Admission

1898		Helen E. Martin Crabtree.....	21
Louise Rebecca Pinnell	1		
1899		1923	
Alice Johnson.....	3	Esther Miriam Finney Sumner	21
		Abbie Elizabeth Lapham Gibbons.....	22
1908		1924	
Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt	3	Florence M. Hazard Mims	22
1909		Stella M. Biddle Fisher	23
Nell L. Cowan Bostwick.....	5	Emily S. Williams Ziegler	23
		Joanna Hamilton Vermilye.....	23
1911		1925	
Annie Dorcas Broward Starrett	7	Bernice J. Ayer.....	24
Elsie Young Douglass.....	7	Ruby B. Chalk Godwin.....	24
1912		Henriette E. Mednick.....	25
L. Booth Washington	8	Allie Richardson Barnes	25
1913		Mary J. Davey.....	25
Minnie E. Kehoe.....	8	Beverly C. Cobb	26
1914		Jean Gregory Cole.....	26
Marie Willard Anderson	9	Dorothy Dorman	26
1915		Clara C. Cain Gore	26
Annie Joe Law	9	Maurine Sharp	27
Hedwiga Walicki.....	10	Mattie W. Tompkins	27
1917		1926	
Cecile Eleanor Vaught Wysong.....	10	Lydia Douglass.....	28
Rose G. Baldwin	11	Anne Overman Gibbons.....	28
Julia A. Harding.....	12	Sue K. Hicks	28
Helen Hunt West.....	12	Winifred B. Judge.....	28
1918		Effie E. Knowles	29
L. H. Shoemaker	13	Opal Plaisted	29
Jane Tillie Wakefield.....	14	Herberta Ann Hathcock Leonardy	29
1919		Gertrude Leonore O'Kell Woods	32
Ella Cramer Kindred	15	Rose Shakewitz	32
Louise Pencke.....	15	Pauline G. Wallace	32
1920		Marian Borros	32
Lena Alfman	16	Arax M. Gulizian.....	33
Jane L. Phillips Armstrong.....	16	Anna Bray Lindsley	33
Caroline Marie Healy Uebele	17	Vivian Selter.....	34
Clarice M. Naumburg	17	1927	
1921		Madeline A. Jacobson Cox	35
Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett.....	17	Dorothy S. McDougall	35
1922		Anna A. Krivitsky	36
Mary Wooster Sutton	18	Ella Jo Stollberg.....	36
Edith Meserve Atkinson	19	Zephyr Lillian Thorpe	37
Lelia Russell Bryd.....	20	Susan E. Ervin	37
Marie Eleanor "Nell" Cooper	20	Laurine Leonore Goffin.....	37
		Mary V. Wakefield Houston	38
		Mary Anne Leddy.....	38
		Charlotte Inez Farrington Vogler	39
		Mollie M. Parker	40
		Mary L. Esarey	40
		Victoria Rountree	41
		Hilda M. Tilton	41

1928

Lenea I. Stromberg Adlehelm.....	41
Irena A. Lawrence.....	42
Ruby Fleming Barney.....	42
Susie H. Bell.....	42
Sidney S. Gober.....	42

1929

Augusta Beyer Colton.....	43
Mabel Claire Altman Hackney.....	43
Bessie Ethel Sims Williams.....	44

1930

Zorah B. Close.....	44
Dixie L. Herlong Chastain.....	45
Marjorie G. Howard.....	46
Mae T. Donovan.....	46
Frances Drury.....	47
Edith H. Horn.....	47
Edith E. House.....	48

1931

Margaret M. Collins.....	49
Mary Cinthya Vann Racey.....	49
Lorrain Gould Smith.....	50
Mary Gunn Campbell.....	50
Hariette E. R. Cotton.....	50
Carolina Byrd Ramsey.....	51
Ethel Jane Steele Brannon.....	51
Edith McIlvaine James.....	51

1932

Dorothy Douglas.....	52
Mada Burney Fraser Babcock McLendon.....	52
Carmen Ercelle Christian.....	53
Ethel Ernest Murrell.....	53
Mary Neff Reebel.....	54
Margaret M. Barrett.....	55
Marie C. Broetzman.....	55

1933

Elva Victoria Diaz.....	55
Emma Roesing.....	56
Marjorie M. Varner.....	56
Natalie Marion Weinstein Berger.....	57
Rose Ealine Friedlin.....	58
Clara B. Floyd Gehan.....	58
Esther A. Poppell.....	62
Ruth Alberta Clark.....	62
Wilhemina Hawkins.....	63
Mary A. Kennerly Buckles.....	63
Lois Rodgers.....	64
Mary Jo Williams Garris.....	64

1934

Edith G. Uman.....	65
Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter.....	66
Frances M. Lovelace.....	67

1935

Rebecca Bowles Hawkins.....	68
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Grace Williams Burwell.....	69
Ida Maud Hyman.....	70

1936

Anna Brenner Mankes Meyers.....	71
Kate L. Walton Engelken.....	72
Marjorie Marie Hammer DeShaw.....	73
Patricia LaVerne Pacetti Warren.....	73
Reba Engler Epstein Daner.....	74
Mattie Belle Davis.....	75

1937

Jeannette O. Mullens Smith.....	78
Daisy Richards Bisz.....	81
Diana D. Coopersmith.....	84
Rose Elizabeth Deeb Kitchen.....	84
Thelma H. Waybright.....	86
Pearl Annah Williams.....	86
Mildred Ernestein Wilson.....	86
Betty Speizman Lippmann.....	86

1938

Mary Lou Baker.....	87
Alma Oyama Carlton.....	88
Osie Buck Crump.....	89

1940

Lucille Cairns George.....	89
Jeannette Edythe TeSelle Plump.....	90
Dorothy Louise Schoessel Tessmer.....	91

1941

Carlotta Van Cortlandt Washburne Faircloth ..	91
Lois Ellen Thacker Graessle.....	92
Dorothea W. Broadbent Keck Montgomery.....	94
Letitia Norman.....	94

1942

Marvel Harriet Gallacher.....	95
Anne E'del Deacon.....	95
Caroline Adams.....	97
Laura Helen Hyde.....	98
Mary Frances Dewell.....	99
Ethel Dorothea Clarson Watson.....	100

1943

Mary Irene Schulman.....	101
Ila Adele Rountree Pridgen.....	103

1958

Bernice Gaines Dorn.....	106
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1965

Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry.....	107
Ruby Burrows McZier.....	108

1968

C. Bette Wimbish.....	109
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1969

Arthenia L. Joyner.....	110
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Louise Rebecca Pinnell

(1877 - 1966)

Date of Admission: 1898

Although she is not recorded in the Florida Supreme Court minutes or its book of attorneys admitted between 1895 and 1949, Louise Rebecca Pinnell was Florida's first woman lawyer, having been admitted by the Florida Supreme Court in October 1898.

Ms. Pinnell was born in Cuba, Missouri, on March 31, 1877, as one of five children of Ethan Allen and Frances Collier Pinnell. Her father was a practicing lawyer in Missouri and later a probate judge. Ms. Pinnell received her early education in the public schools of Crawford County, Missouri, and later graduated from Steelville College in that state. The family moved to Bronson, Levy County, Florida, in the 1890s and Ms. Pinnell studied law in her father's office for two years. She had to wait until she was 21 to take the oral bar examination at the Florida Supreme Court, which she did in May 1898. It was an unusually severe examination, the severity of which was probably occasioned by the fact that women were not encouraged to enter the legal profession.

Following the bar examination, Ms. Pinnell had to wait five months while the Florida Supreme Court decided her fate. "They just didn't know what to do with me," Ms. Pinnell said of the justices. Even though she passed the oral examination, the justices were still puzzled over the unique problem of admitting a woman to practice law in Florida. Finally, in October 1898, the Florida Supreme Court approved Ms. Pinnell's admission to the bar and she thus became Florida's first woman lawyer.

Unfortunately, research has not uncovered any legal work directly attributed to Ms. Pinnell, but much is known of her legal



career, which spanned over half a century. For the first three years, she practiced law with her father in Bronson. Judge Pinnell's representation of Florida Central & Peninsular Railroad Company appears to have led to Ms. Pinnell's next employment in the law office of Major Alexander St. Clair-Abrams, because he also represented that railroad.

In 1901 Ms. Pinnell began working with Major St. Clair-Abrams, a prominent attorney, seasoned politician, Civil War veteran, and founder of the town of Tavares in Lake County. He moved from Tavares to Jacksonville in 1895 and practiced corporate defense. Not surprisingly, a substantial portion of his practice was railroad litigation, which was a "hot" area in the law. The late 1800s saw the completion of Florida's first railroads, and by the turn of the century, the focus was on regulating the railroads. Major St. Clair-Abrams represented numerous railroad companies in various regulatory actions, from rate challenges to the establishment of stations. He also represented railroads in personal injury actions. Over the 19 years that Ms. Pinnell worked with Major St. Clair-Abrams, one must assume that she worked on many of these railway cases, because railroad law is the common thread in her career. This assumption is supported by the fact that Major St. Clair-Abrams appears to have been general counsel to Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway from 1909 to 1916, and the railway was Ms. Pinnell's next employer.

Ms. Pinnell began working for Florida East Coast Railway in October 1920 as an attorney in the law department and assistant secretary of the company. While working for Florida East Coast Railway,

Louise Rebecca Pinnell should ... be cited for bravery, for it took no small degree of courage to fly in the face of tradition in a conservative Southern society, and to open up a masculine field of activity to women, proving that women may be successful and useful in that sacrosanct profession of the law. To all such pioneers among women, honor and glory!



Women have made wonderful progress in this century. They have proved that they can go into almost any field and be successful if they work at it. Law practice is hard work and demands a lot of study, but it's a fine field for a woman and offers many rewards. If I could pass the bar examination studying in my father's office and reading his books, a woman today shouldn't have any trouble. She has the advantage of modern courses of study at fine schools. And there are more women in the field now to keep her professional company.



she was associated with its general counsel, William Alexander Blount, a prominent attorney who became Florida's first president of the American Bar Association. Ms. Pinnell also worked with Scott M. Loftin, who succeeded Blount as the railway's general counsel, and who was Florida's second American Bar Association president. The 1920s were a decade of tremendous expansion for the railroads in Florida. Consequently, one may assume that Ms. Pinnell's work during this time included land acquisition by Florida East Coast Railway.



Ms. Pinnell worked for the railway for 25 years, after which she worked in private practice until she retired.

In describing her work, Ms. Pinnell said: "Law is something you never really stop studying if you hope to be a credit to the profession. Until I retired . . . I studied constantly. You have to. Each case is different from every other one." Ms. Pinnell said she helped prepare many cases for criminal court, but she never argued one. "I always preferred real estate title work, it seemed more suited to me. That has seemed to be true of many women lawyers who just don't care to go into court. But they may find a special niche in the field that is perfect for their abilities."

Many of Ms. Pinnell's colleagues spoke warmly of her. For instance, in 1958, Harold Clark, then president of the Jacksonville Bar Association, said that he had heard of Ms. Pinnell's work in legal circles long before he began his practice in Jacksonville in 1942. "She has been referred to as the dean of women lawyers in Florida," he said. "She is well-known and recognized throughout the state for her legal abilities." J. Henry Blount, county attorney and past president of the Jacksonville Bar Association, stated in 1958: "I have known [Ms. Pinnell] since I was admitted to the bar in 1914. She is highly respected and well thought of both as a citizen and a fine lawyer." Ms. Pinnell was honored at the Jacksonville Bar Association's June 1958 meeting for having practiced 50 years or more in Florida. She was the only woman in a group of 12 who were honored, and she was the only one of two who had practiced 60 years.

Ms. Pinnell was also active in civic and legal organizations. During the First World War, she worked in the Red Cross office, as well as with the registration boards, which were involved in draft questionnaire work in Duval County. She was a charter member of the Jacksonville Y.W.C.A.; president of the Jacksonville Business and Professional Women's Club; member of the American Bar Association; Florida State Bar Association, which later became The Florida Bar; Jacksonville Bar Association; and the National Association of Women Lawyers, for which she served as state vice-president of the Florida council in 1934-35, 1935-38, and 1938-39.

Louise Rebecca Pinnell never married and lived in the Mandarin area of Jacksonville with her two sisters in a home they owned on the water. She was a woman in control of her life and her assets, and she firmly believed, as her mother had taught her, that it was ability, not gender, that determined the profession a person chose. Ms. Pinnell died, following a lengthy illness, at the age of 89 in Jacksonville on May 22, 1966.

During her 60-year career, Louise Rebecca Pinnell was a role model for other women lawyers. She felt that women would do well to consider the law as a profession. In 1958, she said: "Women have made wonderful progress in this century. They have proved that they can go into almost any field and be successful if they work at it. Law practice is hard work and demands a lot of study, but it's a fine field for a woman and offers many rewards. If I could pass the bar examination studying in my father's office and reading his books, a woman today shouldn't have any trouble. She has the advantage of modern courses of study at fine schools. And there are more women in the field now to keep her professional company."

Biographer Lucy Worthington Blackman aptly stated the tribute to be paid to this trailblazing woman: "Louise Rebecca Pinnell should . . . be cited for bravery, for it took no small degree of courage to fly in the face of tradition in a conservative Southern society, and to open up a mas-

culine field of activity to women, proving that women may be successful and useful in that sacrosanct profession of the law. To all such pioneers among women, honor and glory!"

Sources: B&B (1899) (photo); B&B (1935) (photo); Pleasant Daniel Gold, *History of Duval County Florida* 493-94 (1928); Lucy Worthington Blackman,

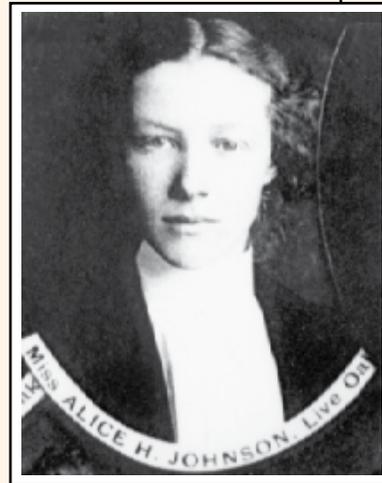
The Women of Florida 69 (1940); Pearl Adams, "Florida's First Woman Lawyer," FTU, Nov. 2, 1958, at 55; Charlton W. Tebeau, *A History of Florida* (1971); IV W.T. Cash, *The Story of Florida* 513 (1938); *The Florida Bar Journal* 500 (July 1966); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLD (1939, 1945 & 1949); 75NAWL; MBD.


Alice Johnson

Date of Admission: 1898 or 1899

Alice Johnson is the only other woman in this book not mentioned in either the Florida Supreme Court minutes or its book of attorneys admitted between 1895 and 1949. She is included as Florida's second woman lawyer because she is pictured in the *Bench & Bar, State of Florida* (1899). Ms. Johnson lived in Live Oak, Florida, and was admitted to practice law sometime between October 1898, when Louise Pinnell was admitted, and 1899, when the photographic composite was assembled. She appears in the composite above John B. Johnson, also of Live Oak, who may have been a relative with whom she studied law.

Source: B&B (1899) (photo).




*Mary Stewart
Howarth-Hewitt*

(1886 - 1976)

Date of Admission: 1908

Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt, born in DeLand in 1886, was the daughter of Judge Isaac A. Stewart and Katherine Brinly Stewart, a homemaker. Her grandfather, T.E.C. Brinly of Louisville, Kentucky, initially came to DeLand in 1875 and served on the first town council. Her father, a prominent attorney and eventually a criminal judge, was very enthusiastic and supportive of his daughter's decision to



pursue a legal career.

In 1906 Ms. Howarth-Hewitt obtained an A.B. degree from the University of Michigan. In 1907 she began attending John B. Stetson University College of Law and was the only woman in her law school class. Her daughter, Dr. Mary S. Howarth-Jacobs, explained that her mother was very determined and strong-willed and she told her daughter that she en-


Ms. Howarth-Hewitt's father, a prominent attorney and eventually a criminal judge, was very enthusiastic and supportive of his daughter's decision to pursue a legal career.



In 1908 Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was the first woman to graduate from Stetson College of Law. She was admitted to the bar on June 20, 1908, following an oral examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court, and thus became Florida's first woman lawyer recorded in the supreme court records.

countered no resistance at law school. In 1908 Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was the first woman to graduate from Stetson College of Law. She was admitted to the bar on June 20, 1908, following an oral examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court, and thus became Florida's first woman lawyer recorded in the supreme court records. Ms. Howarth-Hewitt practiced law with her father in DeLand.

On June 1, 1912, she married businessman and contractor Casper Howarth of Pennsylvania. The couple moved to Pennsylvania, and she was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar in 1914 and the United States District Court in 1915. While maintaining a legal practice in Pennsylvania, Ms. Howarth-Hewitt also raised three daughters, Catherine, Mary, and Sara, who were born 18 months apart, and she opened the first day care center in Chester County, Pennsylvania. She also found time for community service and was on numerous boards and committees. According to her grandson, John B. Carter, Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was very proud of the fact that she was a founding member and president for a number of years of the Chester, Pennsylvania, chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. In 1925 Mr. Howarth suffered a heart attack and the family returned to live in DeLand.

Once in DeLand, Ms. Howarth-Hewitt resumed her practice in her family's law firm, Stewart and Stewart, with her father and her brother, Tom B. Stewart, who graduated from Stetson in 1913. Her daughter, Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter, who graduated from Stetson in 1934, later joined the firm. From its beginning, Stewart & Stewart; then Stewart, Howarth & Carter; then Carter & Carter, did a great deal of real estate law, much of it involved with wills and trusts. The office was located in the Stewart Building. Ms. Howarth-Hewitt practiced law all of her life, although her practice was not extensive in later years. Her legal career led her to argue cases before the United States Supreme Court and to teach Constitutional Law at Stetson. She also maintained close friendships with other

early women lawyers, such as Mary Anne Leddy (1927), Mae Donovan (1930), and Edith Horn (1930).

Law was not Ms. Howarth-Hewitt's only business, however, because she and her husband organized the Surety Bank of DeLand. The bank's policy was to loan money only to people who lived within a 20-mile radius of DeLand. The bank was very successful and still exists today.

Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was also actively involved in the operation of the Stewart & Howarth family orange groves, which at one time consisted of more than 700 acres; several ferneries; and her husband's business, Robert Howarth & Sons, Roofing, Sheet Metal, and Structural Steel, in Chester, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Howarth became the first Republican county commissioner in DeLand and also served on the school board. He retired in 1933 and died that same year. He was 20 years his wife's senior. Their daughter Mary recalls the marriage as idyllic. Mr. Howarth had known Mary Stewart as a child. His business in Chester, Pennsylvania, was not far from the John B. Stetson Hat Company, and he was a very good friend of John B. Stetson. Mr. Stetson introduced him to Judge Isaac A. Stewart and his family on one of Mr. Howarth's trips to Florida. Mr. Howarth thus watched Mary Stewart grow to womanhood and was always in love with her. The couple never exchanged cross words or argued. Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was very family-oriented, and while she always practiced law, her children were her first priority. A nanny assisted with the child care. Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was proud of her children and was heard to say: "I'm going to have three daughters who are going to be doctors." She was not far off, because two of her daughters, Mary and Sara, went on to become surgeons and Catherine followed in her mother's footsteps by graduating from Stetson and becoming a lawyer.

Ms. Howarth-Hewitt was a widow from 1933 until 1948 or 1949, when she married Mr. Hewitt, a retired businessman from New Jersey. Unfortunately, Mr. Hewitt lived little more than a year.

Ms. Howarth-Hewitt later moved to Memphis, Tennessee, when daughters Mary and Sara began attending medical school. Although she initially thought of attending medical school with her daughters,



she eventually decided against it. She was admitted to the Tennessee bar in 1936.

Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt was a member of Chi Omega, Phi Delta Phi International Legal Fraternity, Women's Christian Temperance Union, and League of Women Voters. She was a Republican and a member of the Episcopal Church. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939), and *Florida Who's Who* (1953-54).

Grandson John B. Carter wrote of his grandmother: "I think grandmother was constitutionally incapable of sitting quietly and knitting, crocheting, or doing some "lady-like" activities. When she ate at our house, she would challenge us all to a game of Chinese checkers as soon as the meal was over. She wanted us to learn how to play Mah Jong, but we failed. Not infrequently, she would have to leave to go get somebody out of jail. In later years when I, and then my brothers and sister,

got driver's licenses, we were always chauffeuring her around somewhere to do some business here or there. We used to say grandmother had "Wheelitis" -- and the only cure was to feel wheels turning under her. Life with her was never dull."

Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt died in January 1976 at the age of 91 in DeLand, where she was living with her daughter, Dr. Mary Howarth-Jacobs.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLD (1939, 1945 & 1949); B&B (1935) (photo); Arthur E. Rancke, Jr., Alyce Hockaday Gillingham, & Maxine Carey Turner, *Volusia The West Side* (West Volusia Historical Society 1986); "Brinly - Stewart - Howarth - Carter Families," *Reflections - West Volusia County* (West Volusia Historical Society); MBD; conversation with Dr. Mary Howarth-Jacobs; e-mail and correspondence from John B. Carter (photos).

Nell L. Cowan Bostwick

(1883 - 1970)

Date of Admission: 1909

Nell L. Cowan Bostwick was born on August 18, 1883, in Sanford, Florida, to William Henry Cowan and Janice Powell Cowan. She graduated from high school in Sanford and later pursued her studies in Atlanta and New York. She taught school for two years in Orange County near Orlando and later moved to Tampa. She relocated to Jacksonville in 1907.



The Florida Supreme Court minutes reflect that "Nell L. Cowan" was admitted to practice law in that court on June 8, 1909, upon motion based upon her status as an attorney practicing law in the circuit courts of the state. At that time, attorneys could be admitted to practice law by a circuit court after having passed an examination given by judges. Ms. Bostwick obviously pursued

that avenue, because she is said to have been admitted to practice law on May 5, 1905, after reading the law in Hillsborough County. Thus, Ms. Bostwick may actually be Florida's third woman lawyer.

Throughout her legal career, Ms. Bostwick operated the "Nell L. Cowan Bostwick Legislative Bureau" in Tallahassee. She maintained a legislative bill information booth in the corridor between the Senate and House in the

Old Capitol. It was her function to publish briefs on pending legislation, which was mailed to her subscribers, most of whom were lobbyists. She thus became identified with political life at the Capitol.

It is interesting to note that Ms. Bostwick was not the first woman lawyer to operate a legislative reporting service.

Up through at least 1940, Ms. Cowan operated the "Nell L. Cowan Bostwick Legislative Bureau" in Tallahassee. She maintained a legislative bill information booth in the corridor between the Senate and House in the Old Capitol. It was her function to publish briefs on pending legislation, which she mailed to her subscribers, most of whom were lobbyists.



Mrs. Bostwick gave generously in service and effort for the upbuilding of the state and to all sorts of worthwhile community movements. For instance, she worked tirelessly in the fight against the citrus canker in 1913 and 1915, which threatened to destroy the citrus industry in Florida, and she assisted in the passage of the income and inheritance tax amendment to the state constitution.



Myra Bradwell, who unsuccessfully sought admission to the Illinois bar in 1868, and who was later denied admission by the United States Supreme Court because of her gender, operated the *Chicago Legal News*, which reported legislation in Illinois. The *Chicago Legal News* had a nationwide circulation, which raises the question whether Ms. Bostwick was inspired in her pursuit by Myra Bradwell. According to son Charles Bostwick, his mother also ran a similar legislative service in Georgia.

Charles Bostwick also explained that in 1905 the legislature only had one copy of each bill. So, if someone wanted to kill a bill, that person simply had to physically obtain the bill and then nothing could be done. It was after his mother's involvement that duplicates and triplicates of bills were made.

Ms. Bostwick also had a partnership in Duval County with attorney E. T. McIlvaine for some time.

Ms. Bostwick gave generously in service and effort for the upbuilding of the state and to all sorts of worthwhile community movements. For instance, she worked tirelessly in the fight against citrus canker in 1913 and 1915, which threatened to destroy the citrus industry in Florida, and she assisted in the passage of the income and inheritance tax amendment to the state constitution.

She was also active in the Parent-Teachers Association since 1933, having served as historian and membership chair of West Riverside School, as well as membership chair of John Gorrie, Jr. High School in Jacksonville. She was interested in the Boy Scouts, as well as other movements for the benefit of youth. During World War I, she assisted in making articles for the Red Cross to

send overseas to the soldiers and in sending packages to the soldiers. She was of the Episcopal faith.



Myra Bradwell

On October 26, 1926, Nell L. Cowan married William Moreau Bostwick, Jr., a prominent attorney in Jacksonville, Florida. Mr. Bostwick was an active member of the Jacksonville bar for almost 40 years; he devoted himself entirely to civil practice with special preference to banking. They had two children -- William Cowan Bostwick and Charles Warren Bostwick.

Attorney Charles F. Mills first met Ms. Bostwick when he lobbied for the County Commission of Dade County during the 1955 legislative session. Mr. Mills came to the information booth to check the progress of certain bills. He recalled that the first question Ms. Bostwick asked him, as she did with any person she met, was, "When were you born?" After Mr. Mills told her his birth date, she replied, "Well, you're a Leo. We'll get along fine." She was a strong believer in astrology.



Through his years of lobbying, Charles Mills came to know Ms. Bostwick and her family quite well. He shared an interest in boating with Ms. Bostwick and her son William, both of whom belonged to the Ponte Vedra Yacht Club. Mr. Mills described Ms. Bostwick as being interested in almost everything. She was a real high-achiever and very outgoing. Timidity was not something she knew. Rather, she spoke her mind and people always knew where they stood with Nell L.

Cowan Bostwick. Once you met her, you would never forget her.

Ms. Bostwick continued working until six months before her death in 1970.

Sources: FSCM; FTU, June 20, 1970, at B-11; conversations with Charles F. Mills, Barbara Bostwick Rogers, Mrs. William "Kitty" Bostwick, and Charles Bostwick.



"People always knew where they stood with Nell L. Cowan Bostwick. Once you met her, you would never forget her."

Annie Dorcas Broward Starrett

(1890 - 1923)

Date of Admission: 1911

Annie Dorcas Broward Starrett was the eldest daughter of Governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward (1905-09) and Annie Isabell Douglass Broward. She was born in Jacksonville in 1890, and in January 1892 her father's 30-foot yacht was christened the "Annie Dorcas." Dorcas, as she was known by her family, was involved in her father's political life as evidenced by the fact that she, her mother, and her oldest sisters sat in the legislature for the debate on the hotly contested Buckman Education Bill in 1905, which would reorganize Florida's higher education system.

According to family member Susan Sharpe, Ms. Starrett attended Florida State College for Women, the predecessor to Florida State University, while her father was governor, and she was a founder



of its Delta Delta Delta chapter. She and her aunt, Elsie Young Douglass (1911), entered Stetson University College of Law to obtain a legal education so that they could assist Napoleon Broward in the United States Senate. Unfortunately, Senator-elect Broward died in October 1910 prior to assuming office. Both women nevertheless graduated from Stetson in May 1911. Ms. Starrett was admitted to

the bar by virtue of the diploma privilege on June 11, 1911. According to Susan Sharpe, Ms. Starrett never practiced law. She married and sadly died in childbirth on June 23, 1923, in Jacksonville.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCAL&R (photo); Samuel Proctor, *Napoleon Bonaparte Broward: Florida's Fighting Democrat* (1950); MBD; conversations with Susan Sharpe.

Annie Dorcas ... was involved in her father's political life as evidenced by the fact that she, her mother, and her oldest sisters sat in the legislature for the debate on the hotly contested Buckman Education Bill in 1905, which would reorganize Florida's higher education system.

Elsie Young Douglass

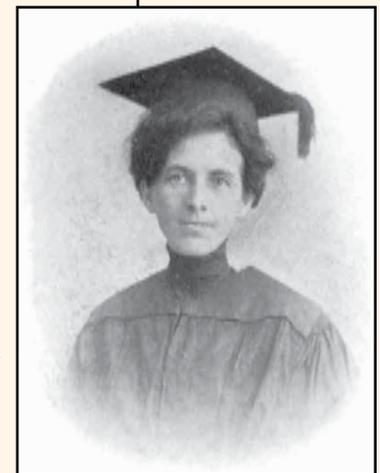
(1877 - 1964)

Date of Admission: 1911

Elsie Young Douglass was born on July 3, 1877, in Petersburg, New Jersey. She was one of at least three children born to Captain Alexander Douglass and Margaret Hutchinson Douglass, who resided in New York City. Later the Douglass family moved to St. Johns Bluff in Jacksonville, and her sister, Annie Isabell Douglass, married Napoleon Bonaparte Broward, who subsequently became governor of

Florida (1905-09). Because of the death of her parents, Ms. Douglass lived with the Browards.

Like the other Broward women, Elsie Young Douglass was involved in Governor Broward's political life while he was sheriff of Duval County, house representative, and governor. In fact, she and Mrs. Broward would sit in





In an interview for The Florida Times-Union, Ms. Douglass said that the only time she felt her gender interfered was when she worked at the Internal Revenue Office in Washington and her supervisor was away. He always avoided giving her command of the office, because "[h]e was afraid it would ruin my rapport with the men if they had to take orders from me."

the visitors' gallery of the Florida House of Representatives while Napoleon Broward sat in the Senate's gallery and the three would compare notes of the discussions so he would have a detailed report of legislative activity. When Napoleon Broward became governor in January 1905, Elsie Douglass became one of his personal secretaries. (Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett (1921) also served as one of Governor Broward's secretaries.) Ms. Douglass also served for a time as Governor Albert W. Gilchrist's (1909-13) secretary.

Her godchild, Susan Sharpe, related that Ms. Douglass, like Annie Dorcas Broward, the governor's eldest daughter, entered Stetson University College of Law to obtain a legal education so she could assist him when he went to the United States Senate. Although Senator-elect Broward died in October 1910 before he could assume office, Ms. Douglass continued her law school education and graduated from Stetson. She was admitted to the bar under the diploma privilege on October 17, 1911.

Ms. Douglass went to Washington with Senator Nathan Bryan, who took Broward's place in the United States Senate, first working as his secretary, then as an attorney during his six-year term. The Estate Tax Law was passed at that time, and Ms. Douglass joined the Internal

Revenue Service. She worked in that field until her retirement in 1947.

In an interview for *The Florida Times-Union*, Ms. Douglass said that the only time she felt that her gender interfered was when she worked at the Internal Revenue Office in Washington and her supervisor was away. He never gave her command of the office, because "[h]e was afraid it would ruin my rapport with the men if they had to take orders from me."

One of her great moments while in Washington was meeting Franklin D. Roosevelt while he was Assistant Secretary of the United States Navy under President Woodrow Wilson. She said, "His secretary and I were good friends, so he introduced me to Mr. Roosevelt. He is the only person I ever met who, though he differed with me, made me think he might be right." Ms. Douglass then said that one of her greatest virtues was tolerance, and stated her advice to others: "Don't be thin-skinned."

Ms. Douglass died in Jacksonville on October 15, 1964.

Sources: FSCM; SUCLAL&R (photo); Samuel Proctor, *Napoleon Bonaparte Broward: Florida's Fighting Democrat* (1950); "She Conquered a Man's World 50 Years Ago" and "Miss Elsie Douglass Dies," FTU, Oct. 4, 1962 & Oct. 16, 1964 (photo); conversations with Susan Sharpe.

L. Booth Washington

Date of Admission: 1912

L. Booth Washington, a practicing attorney in the state of New York, was admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court on May 12, 1912, based upon her status as a practicing attorney with more than five years of experience.

Source: FSCM.

Minnie E. Kehoe

Date of Admission: 1913

Minnie E. Kehoe was admitted to practice in Florida on January 17, 1913, after passing the bar examination administered

by the Florida Supreme Court. She was originally from Pensacola, but later moved to Miami, where many of her family were

and are members of the bar and the judiciary. In Miami she served many years as the official court reporter of the probate court. She later returned to Pensacola, where she died.

According to Richard W. Ervin, Retired Justice of the Florida Supreme Court, Ms. Kehoe may have been the daughter of Mr. Kehoe, who was a member of Congress for the East Coast District.

An article written by Ms. L. H. Shoe-

maker (1918), a Jacksonville attorney, reported that there were only 16 or 17 women attorneys as of 1923, one of whom was Minnie Kehoe. Ms. Shoemaker thought that Ms. Kehoe was "the only one who has done any great amount of actual courtroom work." She practiced with her father.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MBD; correspondence from Justice Richard W. Ervin; MALD (1929 & 1930); *Women Lawyers' Journal* (Aug. 1923).



Marie Willard Anderson

(1892 - 1983)

Date of Admission: 1914

Marie Willard Anderson was born on May 9, 1892, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of O. O. Willard and Lisette Barbour Willard, who later moved to Bartow. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1914 and was admitted to the bar under the diploma privilege on June 9, 1914. On November 8, 1914, she married Robert H. Anderson, who had graduated from Stetson the previous year. Mr. Anderson was a state representative, bar leader, and later a circuit court judge in Miami.

The couple had one daughter, Marie W. Anderson, who became a journalist and editor at the *Miami Herald*. It does not appear that Ms. Anderson ever practiced law. She indicated that she was a "housewife" when she completed Stetson alumni forms in 1949.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); MH, Jan. 28, 1964 (obituary of Robert H. Anderson) & July 2, 1996 (obituary of Marie Willard Anderson (daughter)).



Annie Joe Law

(1888 -)

Date of Admission: 1915



Annie Joe Law of Brooksville, Florida, graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1915 and was admitted to the bar under the diploma privilege on June 10, 1915. She practiced in Brooksville. In 1929 and 1930 she was employed in the Hernando County Attorney's Office. Her name appears in just one appellate opinion in the *Southern Reporter*, which shows that she represented a syndicate of landowners suing to enforce a trust in 1933.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R; B&B (1935); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLA (1939 & 1949); *Lockhart v. Mundon Hill Farms, Inc.*, 150 So. 233 (Fla. 1933).

Hedwiga M. Walicki

(1892 - 1970)

Date of Admission: 1915

Hedwiga Walicki was born on May 2, 1892. She took the bar examination at the Florida Supreme Court and was admitted to practice law on June 11, 1915.

A review of the *Tampa City Directory* shows that in 1917, Ms. Walicki was a stenographer for attorney Harry P. "Jessie" Baya at his office at 206 Curry Building, Tampa. In 1918 she was listed as an attorney in Mr. Baya's office. Her listing returned to "stenographer" in 1919 and continued as such into the 1920s. In 1942 Ms. Walicki was listed as a clerk for the United States Selective Service System Local Board. In 1944 she was listed as a lawyer at her own residence, and in 1946 she had a business address of 215

Madison, Tampa. Ms. Walicki returned to Mr. Baya's offices, as she was listed as an associate in the firm Baya and Baya in 1949. In the mid-1950s, she was once again listed as a lawyer with a business address of 215 Madison. In 1960 and 1961, she was listed as a secretary for Harry Baya Construction Co., Inc. In 1962 she was listed at her home address of 105 West Adalee, Tampa, at which time she was presumably retired as she would have been about 70 years of age.

Hedwiga M. Walicki died on November 28, 1970.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; *Tampa City Directory* (1917-62); MHLD (1939, 1945 & 1949).

Niece Susan Vaught Tygart recalls that there were no lawyers in her aunt's immediate family and offered that her aunt probably did not attend college, but rather read the law with a practicing attorney. Ms. Wysong was admitted to practice law on April 21, 1917, after passing an examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court.



Cecile Eleanor Vaught Wysong

(1892 - 1981)

Date of Admission: 1917

Cecile Eleanor Vaught Wysong was born in Solon, Indiana, on March 12, 1892, to Susan Emeline Higbie and Charles Larkin Vaught. She was one of five children to survive to adulthood. The children grew up on a farm and then the family moved to Miami and later to Jacksonville.

Niece Susan Vaught Tygart recalls that there were no lawyers in her aunt's immediate family and offered that her aunt probably did not attend college, but rather read the law with a practicing attorney. Ms. Wysong was admitted to practice law on April 21, 1917, after passing an examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court. She was a corporate attorney for Turpentine & Resin Fac-



tors, Inc., in Jacksonville.

Sometime after her admission to the bar, Cecile Eleanor Vaught married Mr. Wysong, but it does not appear that the marriage was of any great length and the couple had no children. Ms. Wysong was a member of a Unitarian Church. Like all the Vaughts, she was a Republican. In fact, niece Susan Tygart recalls that when she took her future

husband to meet her Aunt Cecile and Aunt Lois, he was in the Florida House of Representatives. She said if he had not been elected as a Republican, she would have had to lie, because a Democrat would not have gone over very well.

Susan Tygart remembers her aunt as a person who loved clothes, dressed

very well, and had lots of hats. All of the Vaughnts had red, red hair, freckles and blue eyes. Even when she was elderly, she kept her hair bright red. Ms. Wysong lived for many years in a garage apartment. When the expressway was built, her property was purchased to build a ramp, and she

moved into a house on East 18th Street in Springfield with her mother and sister. She died on June 10, 1981, in Jacksonville.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLA (1939, 1945 & 1949); FTU, June 1981; conversation with Susan Tygart (photo).

Rose G. Baldwin

(1890 - 1980)

Date of Admission: 1917

Rose Gillespy Baldwin was born on October 19, 1890, in Birmingham, Alabama, the daughter of Margaret Mortimer Jordan and James McAdory Gillespy. She graduated from Sophie Newcomb College with a major in fine arts. According to her son, Lorenzo Wilson Baldwin, Jr., her father was an attorney in Birmingham, Alabama, who practiced until his death in 1919.

In 1915 Rose Gillespy married Lorenzo Wilson Baldwin, a graduate of Bowdoin College in Bruns-



and studied under attorney Fred B. Noble in Jacksonville. One of her close friends, Helen Hunt West, was a member of the same class and both were admitted to practice law in Florida on October 19, 1917, after taking an examination at the Florida Supreme Court. Ms. Baldwin never practiced law in her own name, but she worked with her husband on many interesting cases. The two would often discuss cases at home. According to their son, Mr. Baldwin repre-

sented a black man in a case before Judge Gibbs in St. Augustine, which resulted in the first verdict in favor of a black man over a white man. Mr. Baldwin also represented Helen Hunt West in a suit against Stetson University. Additionally, he represented some of the heirs of English composer Frederick Delius.

Rose Baldwin had a lifelong interest in the arts, particularly weaving, pottery and the mountain crafts of North Carolina. She made marionettes and staged elaborate productions. During World War II, she was active in the Red Cross arts and crafts program at the Naval Hospital in Jacksonville. She also bred and trained wire-haired fox terriers and beagles. She was affectionately known as "Queen Bee" by her family and friends. Rose Gillespy Baldwin died in Jacksonville on March 20, 1980.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; biography written by Lorenzo Wilson Baldwin, Jr. (photos).



Ms. Baldwin had developed an early interest in the law

Ms. Baldwin never practiced law in her own name, but she worked with her husband on many interesting cases.

The two would often discuss cases at home.

According to their son, Mr. Baldwin represented a black man in a case before Judge Gibbs in St. Augustine, which resulted in the first verdict in favor of a black man over a white man.



Julia A. Harding

Date of Admission: 1917

Julia A. Harding obtained her undergraduate degree from North Carolina University Women's College in Greensboro, North Carolina. She took the bar examination given by the Florida Supreme Court and was admitted to practice on October 19, 1917. She resided in Jacksonville at the time of her admission. In 1929 Ms. Harding was an associate with the Jacksonville

law firm of Marks, Marks & Holt, which specialized in corporations, insurance and probate. She is not listed as a member of a law firm in 1930, but rather had her own office in the Graham Building, and later moved to the Burgiss Building.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHL D (1939 & 1945).

Ms. West graduated from Florida State College for Women in 1913 and studied law under attorney Fred B. Noble in Jacksonville with her friend Rose Gillespy Baldwin (1917). Before taking the bar examination in 1917, Ms. West admitted feeling the "weight of all the women of the world on [her] shoulders. [She] just knew that if [she] didn't make the grade, the headlines would read, "Woman Fails." Helen Hunt West scored the highest marks and was admitted to practice on October 19, 1917.



Helen Hunt West

(1892 - 1964)

Date of Admission: 1917

Helen Hunt West distinguished herself early in life mostly by her own volition. Born in 1892 in Oakland, Florida, Ms. West's family consisted of her parents, Aaron and Lillian Hunt, and her sister, Clyde. Her parents supported her decision at an early age to enter the legal profession. She attended school in St. Augustine, after which she enrolled at Stetson University.

In 1907, at the age of 15, Ms. West became embroiled in an incident that would result in two lawsuits against Stetson University and its president, Dr. Lincoln Hulley, and would almost impede her graduation from college. The incident arose out of an annual schoolgirl prank on April Fool's Day at the dormitories. In the first lawsuit in 1912, Helen Hunt West sued President Hulley for libel and slander based on statements he allegedly made to four people that imputed "fornication" on her part, and which threatened her reputation if she sued and he told all that he knew. Although a jury awarded Ms. West \$15,000, the Florida Supreme Court reversed the judgment, noting that during the trial two of the witnesses had retracted their statements and the third witness's credibility had been impeached. The court focused on the fourth witness's testimony and concluded that the alleged state-

ments made by President Hulley "clearly applie[d] to an infraction of the rules or the proprieties of this coeducational boarding school, and may not be contorted into an imputation of unchastity." Notably, that witness was encouraged and supported by Dr. Hulley to join the faculty at University of Florida's law school.

In 1922 Helen Hunt West filed a second suit against Stetson University and Dr. Hulley for malicious expulsion by a learning institution. Once again, although the jury awarded her \$25,000, the Florida Supreme Court reversed, concluding that Ms. West was not expelled, but suspended, and that the private institution, "standing in loco parentis" as to the "mental training, moral and physical discipline, and welfare of the pupils," had acted within its rights with no evidence of maliciousness.

In the interim, Ms. West graduated from Florida State College for Women in 1913 and studied law under attorney Fred B. Noble in Jacksonville with her friend Rose Gillespy Baldwin (1917). Before taking the bar examination in 1917, Ms. West admitted feeling the "weight of all the women of the world on [her] shoulders. [She] just knew that if [she] didn't make the grade, the headlines would read, "Woman Fails." Helen Hunt West scored the highest marks and was admitted to practice on October 19, 1917.



That same year, Helen Hunt West marched in front of the White House as a member of the militant National Woman's Party (NWP). She drew the attention and praise of the NWP's foremost leader, Alice Paul, who declared Helen Hunt "a born feminist." Ms. Hunt became the first woman to register to vote in Duval County in 1920 after the adoption of the 19th Amendment permitting women to vote.

Although Ms. West maintained a law practice, she was first and foremost a journalist and activist. She served as the society editor for *The Florida Times-Union* for 14 years, editor of the *Southern Club Woman* during the 1920s, and reporter for the *Pensacola Journal*. She lobbied the legislature at the state and national level, tackling inequities regarding women and illegitimate children and protective labor laws which potentially curtailed women's employment opportunities. As a charter member of the Junior League organized in 1923, she helped found the Panhellenic League of Jacksonville.

In 1927 she married the city editor of *The Florida Times-Union*, Byron McGonigal West. Ms. West would continue to make inroads as a women's suffragist and political activist. She made an unsuccessful bid for Congress in the Second Florida Congressional District. She campaigned for David Stoltz, who became governor in 1932. In 1935 she successfully lobbied the legislature to adopt a state election law, known as the "50-50," that guaranteed women's equal representation on a political party's executive committee. The following year, Helen Hunt West ran for the post of Democratic National Commit-

teewoman. She came in second, but since the other female candidate had also failed to acquire a majority vote, Secretary of State R. A. Gray refused to place either of their names on the second primary ballot. Ms. West filed a petition seeking a writ of certiorari from the Florida Supreme Court requesting that the run-off ballot reflect her name and that of the other candidate. The Florida Supreme Court denied the request. Coupled with the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment, for which she blamed Franklin D. Roosevelt for his lack of support, she ultimately switched to the Republican Party.

Throughout her life, Helen Hunt West remained very active in the National Woman's Party, particularly during the 1930s when she served as acting chair of its congressional committee (1935-38), lobbyist (1935-39), and editor of its national magazine, *Equal Rights* (1937-40).

On January 26, 1964, Helen Hunt West died after a brief illness. With a legacy already rich from her contributions as a political activist, journalist and lawyer, Helen Hunt West's contributions continued after death. Her extensive library collection was donated in her memory to Jacksonville University by the Panhellenic League of Jacksonville, which funded a scholarship in her name. Most of Helen Hunt West's papers now reside in the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe College in Massachusetts, the foremost library on the history of women in America.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; *Hunt v. Stetson University*, 57 So. 607 (Fla. 1912); *Hulley v. Hunt*, 102 So. 637 (Fla. 1924); correspondence from Lorenzo Wilson Baldwin, Jr.



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L. H. Shoemaker

(1889 - 1972)

Date of Admission: 1918

L. H. Shoemaker was born in Bluffton, Indiana, on February 7, 1889, and moved to Jacksonville in 1910. She was admitted to practice law on April 19, 1918, after having passed the examination given by the Florida Supreme Court. After her ad-

mission, she established an independent private practice in the Lynch Building, later known as the American Heritage Life Building, in Jacksonville.

Attorney Mike Dunay came to know Ms. Shoemaker when the two had offices on

Ms. Shoemaker maintained a "spartan" office with none of the modern conveniences. She had no secretary and did all her own typing on an old Smith (not Smith-Corona) typewriter. She took small cases of last resort that other attorneys would not take.



Jane Tillie Wakefield overcame the stigma often attached to immigrants. She was the daughter of John Tillie, who was born in Scotland, and Bertha Tillie, who was born in Germany and spoke German as her first language.

the same floor of the American Heritage Life Building from 1966 to 1972. According to him, Ms. Shoemaker maintained a "spartan" office with none of the modern conveniences. She had no secretary and did all her own typing on an old Smith (not Smith-Corona) typewriter. She took small cases of last resort that other attorneys would not take.

Like her office, Ms. Shoemaker was a "no frills" woman. She wore old-fashioned clothing and her steel-gray hair up in a bun. She was likeable and nice, but maintained her reserve. Mr. Dunay remarked that he and his wife had tea at Ms. Shoemaker's home twice, and while she trusted him, she never allowed a close friendship. In fact, he twice asked her what "L. H." stood for and she refused to say. Mr. Dunay recalled that Ms. Shoemaker never married.

Ms. Shoemaker was honored by The Florida Bar and Jacksonville Bar Association for "50 years or more of distinguished service to the public, the bench, and the bar of Florida."

She was a past president of the Florida Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs and was a Baptist.

Ms. Shoemaker wrote an article published in the *Women Lawyers' Journal* (Aug. 1923) on the status of Florida women

lawyers. She wrote:

"At the present time there are about sixteen or seventeen women who have successfully passed the state bar examination. At least half of these are from Jacksonville. In Pensacola there is a Miss Kehoe who has been practicing with her father for several years. Miss Kehoe is, I believe, the only one who has done any great amount of actual courtroom work. One or two in Jacksonville are doing a little court work. I believe there will be several women lawyers appearing before our judges in the actual prosecution and defense of cases this year.

"My personal experience and information is that the men do not feel the least resentment at having women for opponents. In fact, I think they are very considerate, never taking advantages and always ready to render any assistance. Of course, they resent certain women, just like they resent certain men, but I cannot consider these isolated cases indicative of their attitude toward women in general."

Ms. Shoemaker died in Jacksonville on July 29, 1972, after an extended illness.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MHL (1949); FTU, July 29, 1972, at p. D-2; *Florida Bar Directory*; conversation with Mike Dunay.



Jane Tillie Wakefield

(circa 1894-96 -)

Date of Admission: 1918

Jane Tillie Wakefield overcame many challenges on her path to obtaining a Florida license to practice law. She passed the bar examination given by the Florida Supreme Court and received her license on April 19, 1918. She also overcame the stigma often attached to immigrants. Jane Tillie Wakefield was the daughter of John Tillie, who was born in Scotland, and Bertha Tillie, who was born in Germany and spoke German as her first language.

Jane Tillie Wakefield was born in New York between 1894 and 1896. Her parents relocated to Bartow, Florida, and the family was residing there in 1910 when Ms. Wakefield's mother died. Ms. Wakefield's father was employed as a carpenter. She

married Emerson Harold Wakefield on April 5, 1923, in Bartow.

Ms. Wakefield practiced law in Bartow between 1918 and 1923. She may have continued to practice in Bartow until the early 1930s, although she was no longer a resident of Bartow in 1935. She was a sole practitioner, and her practice consisted of "general action" cases. Her location from 1930 forward is unknown. She died in a state other than Florida.

Sources: FSCM; Bartow newspapers (1910-30); 14th U.S. Census; Florida Death Index; *City of Bartow Street Guide & Directory of Householders* (1921-22); probate file of John Tillie; Polk County marriage records.


Ella Cramer Kindred

Date of Admission: 1919

Ella Cramer Kindred was born in Poughkeepsie, New York. She attended Lyndon Hall School in Poughkeepsie and received an A.B. degree from Vassar College.



In 1902 Ella Cramer married Dr. John Joseph Kindred, a medical doctor from New York City. Dr. Kindred was a member of the United States House of Representatives from 1911-13 and again from 1921-29, representing the 14th District in New York State. Ella Cramer Kindred and her husband had a winter home in DeLand, Florida. They attended John B. Stetson University College of Law and both graduated in 1919. Ms. Kindred was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on June 2, 1919, as was her husband. Ms. Kindred was also admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court.

Ms. Kindred and her husband divided their time between New York City, Wash-

ington, D.C., and DeLand. Ms. Kindred was active in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Colonel Arthur Erwin Chapter, based in DeLand. She was elected state vice-regent of the DAR in 1919 and became state regent later that year. She also served the DAR as state chairperson of historic spots and chairperson on legislation in the United States Congress.

Dr. Kindred was a professor of medical jurisprudence at Stetson University from 1933-37. His death in 1937, at the age of 73, was noted in *The Florida Bar Journal* and the *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1949*. The Kindreds had one child, John Cramer Kindred, who was a physician in New York City.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); 1 *History 1892-1933, Daughters of the American Revolution of Florida* (1933).


Louise Pencke

(- 1989)

Date of Admission: 1919

Louise Pencke of Tampa, Florida, took the bar examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court and was admitted to practice law on October 25, 1919. She is listed in the 1927 *Tampa City Directory* as having an office at 1101 Wallace S. Building. Ms. Pencke practiced law in Tampa until 1931, when she became executive secretary to Governor Doyle E. Carlton (1929-33).

She later moved to Miami and served as a court reporter for several years. In 1941 she became executive secretary of the Miami Board of Realtors, a position she held for 13 years. She was married to Mr. William L. Pencke and died in Miami in 1989.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); *Tampa City Directory* (1927); MBD.


Ella Cramer Kindred and her husband ... attended John B. Stetson University College of Law and both graduated in 1919. Ms. Kindred was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on June 2, 1919, as was her husband. Ms. Kindred was also admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court.

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Lena Alfman

(1890 -)

Date of Admission: 1920

Lena Alfman of Pensacola took the bar examination given by the Florida Supreme Court and was admitted to practice law on April 23, 1920. Ms. Alfman served as general master in Dade County Circuit Court and as a court reporter in Miami for many

years. She maintained offices in the Congress Building and at 27 N.E. 2nd Avenue in Miami. She later moved to Texas.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLA (1939, 1945 & 1949); MBD.

~ ~

Jane L. Phillips Armstrong

(1900 - 1961)

Date of Admission: 1920



Jane L. Phillips Armstrong was born on June 26, 1900, in Pinellas County, Florida. Ms. Armstrong was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Phillips of Pinellas County and was a descendant of Thomas McMullen, one of the seven brothers who settled the county in the 1840s. She attended school in Largo, Florida, and graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1920. She was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on May 28, 1920.

Although she never practiced law, Ms. Armstrong was admitted to the Florida bar as one of its youngest members, and was the first woman attorney to require removal of the disability of nonage. She

turned to journalism, however, and, after a stint on the *Largo Sentinel* and other county newspapers, she moved to Cuba in 1930 with her husband, Richard H. Armstrong, a long-time international news service correspondent in Cuba and Latin America.

Ms. Armstrong joined the U. S. Foreign Service in Havana, Cuba, in 1933 and held posts as foreign staff officer in Havana; Mombasa, British East Africa (now Kenya); Auckland, New Zealand; and Manila, Philippines. She retired in November 1961, after 12 years with the Department of State, and died on February 5, 1962, in Washington, D.C., at the age of 61.

Aside from many relatives in Pinellas County, Ms. Armstrong was survived by a daughter, Mrs. Phillis A. Danielson, of Washington, D.C., and three grandchildren.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); *Largo Sentinel*, Feb. 1962; August 5, 1955, letter from Federal Records Center of the General Services Administration.

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Although she never practiced law, Ms. Armstrong was admitted to the Florida bar as one of its youngest members, and was the first woman attorney to require removal of the disability of nonage.

Caroline Marie Healy Uebele

(1900 - 1991)

Date of Admission: 1920

Caroline Marie Healy Uebele was born on April 25, 1900, in Rochester, Wisconsin. Her father, William Healy, was an attorney in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1920 and was admitted to practice law in Florida on May 28, 1920. She also attended the University of Wisconsin Law School.

Ms. Uebele moved to Burlington, Wisconsin, where she practiced from 1923 to 1925 in the law office of Nettie Elizabeth Karcher, who was admitted to the Wisconsin bar in 1915. She was the 44th woman admitted to practice law in Wisconsin and is included in the State Bar of Wisconsin

publication, *Pioneers in the Law: The First 150 Women* (Oct. 28, 1998).

In 1925 she married Walter F. Uebele and gave up the practice of law to raise her family. She continued to be active in her community and was a member of the Burlington School Board and the Daughters of the American Revolution. She died on May 5, 1991.

Sources: FSCM & BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); State Bar of Wisconsin (photo).



Clarice M. Naumburg

Date of Admission: 1920

Clarice M. Naumburg took the bar examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court and was admitted to practice law on October 23, 1920. At the time of her admission, she resided in Jacksonville.

Source: FSCM&BAA.



Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett

(1874 - 1931)

Date of Admission: 1921

The daughter of Philip and Mary Cohen Dzialynski, Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett was born in Savannah, Georgia, on October 17, 1874. Raised principally at Fort Meade, Florida, Ms. Corbett graduated from the Summerlin Institute in Bartow in 1888. She attended the East Florida Seminary in Gainesville, beginning in January 1889, and completed business school courses in Tampa in the early

1890s. Ms. Corbett relocated to Tallahassee in the mid-1890s and studied law at night. Her uncle, Morris Dzialynski, had been mayor of Jacksonville in the 1880s and later served for years as a municipal judge there.

A discrepancy exists as to when Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett was admitted to practice law. The Florida Supreme Court minutes reflect that the court did

not admit her until April 23, 1921, following her successful completion of the bar examination administered by the Florida Supreme Court. According to a family history, however, Ms. Corbett was admitted to the bar as early as 1898, which might have made her Florida's first woman lawyer. Her sister-in-law, Bertha Zadek Dzialynski wrote:

"Gertrude wanted to take a business course and we invited her [about 1893-94] to stay with us in Tampa. When she completed her training she went to work in Tampa for an attorney, Mr. [Thomas M.] Shackelford [who would later serve as Florida Supreme Court Justice from 1902-17]. The next year she had a better offer from a law firm in Gainesville where she became a private secretary to Mr. Hampton. . . .

"Gertrude was a brilliant woman and ambitious. Not content to settle down to a mediocre job as stenographer, she secured a position in Tallahassee, studied law in night school, and in 1898 was admitted to the bar. She was among the first women to be accorded this privilege in Florida, if indeed she was not herself the first.

"She went to Jacksonville and opened an office but she was too far in advance of the times. Clients shied away from a woman lawyer and there was no alternative but to close the office. She then went to work for a law firm in Jacksonville. Later she became secretary to Senator-elect William J. Bryan and was to have gone to Washington in that capacity but he died before taking the seat. She then became secretary to Napoleon Bonaparte Broward in his campaign for governor and

was retained in that capacity during the four-year term he served [1905-09]."

The uncertainty regarding Ms. Corbett's date of admission may be explained by the fact that attorneys could be admitted at the local level after passing an examination given by circuit court judges. For the purpose of this book, the Florida Supreme Court's records are controlling; therefore, Ms. Corbett's date of admission is considered 1921.

As an attorney, Ms. Corbett associated with the Jacksonville firm of Cooper, Knight, Adair, Cooper & Osborne. In January 1914, she received an appointment as Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue for Florida with responsibilities for enforcement of the new federal income tax. She held that position for four years.

On September 15, 1915, Gertrude Dzialynski married John Archibald Corbett. Remaining active in business and Democratic Party affairs, Ms. Corbett held, at various times, the position of Democratic National Committeewoman from Florida; president of the Jacksonville Business and Professional Women's Club; president of the Martha Reid Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy; president of the Temple Sisterhood of Jacksonville's Congregation Ahavath Chesed; and president of the Duval County Chapter of the League of Democratic Women Voters. In April 1921, she helped found the Florida League of Women Voters.

Gertrude Dzialynski Corbett died in Jacksonville on January 24, 1931.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); Dzialynski family history compiled by Bertha Zadek Dzialynski; correspondence from E. Canter Brown, Jr.



"Gertrude was a brilliant woman and ambitious. Not content to settle down to a mediocre job as stenographer, she secured a position in Tallahassee, studied law in night school, and in 1898 was admitted to the bar."



Mary Wooster Sutton

(1866 -)

Date of Admission: 1922

Mary Wooster Sutton was first admitted to the New Jersey bar in 1913. She was subsequently admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court on May 5, 1922, based upon her status as a practicing attorney with at least five

years of experience. It does not appear that Ms. Sutton remained in Florida, however, because in 1930 she was living in Red Bank, Monmouth County, New Jersey.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1930).

Edith Meserve Atkinson

(1890 - 1983)

Date of Admission: 1922

The daughter of Freedom and Sarah Meserve, Judge Edith Meserve Atkinson was born on November 20, 1890, in Portland, Maine, where her family had resided for over 100 years. She was one of seven children, and her father passed away after an extended illness when she was only seven. She attended school in Maine, but her physician later cautioned her about her health and advised her to relocate to a warmer climate. Thus, Judge Atkinson moved to Miami with some friends in 1912.



Once in Miami, she became secretary to attorney Henry F. Atkinson, who wrote the first charter for the City of Miami. The two were wed in 1916. Judge Atkinson aspired to become a lawyer and practice with her husband. Through a 1918 newspaper article, she learned that Stetson University College of Law accepted women. She enrolled and graduated with an LL.B. degree in 1922. She was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on June 8, 1922. Her goal to practice law with her husband was never realized, however, because he was elected Circuit Court Judge of the 11th Circuit in Florida, a position he maintained until his death on December 12, 1939. Ms. Atkinson thus began the practice of law alone.

In 1921 the Florida Legislature created the Juvenile Court of Dade County and provided for the appointment of a judge for a four-year term. In January 1924, it was suggested to Edith Atkinson that she become a Democratic candidate in the June 1924 primary. She received 5,612 votes and thereby defeated two male lawyers. Prior to taking office, Judge Atkinson closed her practice and traveled throughout the country, visiting juvenile courts to learn as much as possible about the court system, particularly delinquency

prevention. Edith M. Atkinson became Dade County's first elected woman judge and continued to serve in that capacity until 1933. A portrait of Judge Atkinson hangs in the Dade County Courthouse.

After taking office, Judge Atkinson began the difficult task of organizing the juvenile court according to standards set by the Children's Bureau in Washington, D.C. She was invited to speak before civic organizations, Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) groups, and church groups to inform the public of the juvenile court's needs. She secured paid probation officers for the court and a detention home for children, thus becoming a pioneer in organizing the juvenile court system in Dade County.

As the presiding judge, she received support from the members of the Dade County Bar Association for the instigation of free legal services for the poor. This was the beginning of free legal aid in Miami. In keeping with her belief in delinquency prevention, and in an effort to keep children from being referred to court, Judge Atkinson became interested in the work of the Visiting Teachers' Association as a means of contact between the school and the home. She was also instrumental in organizing Miami's recreation department and the Boys' Clubs of Miami.

Judge Atkinson's concern about the limited activities for girls in Dade County led her to organize the first Girl Scouts Council in Dade County in May 1929, which was chartered by Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. in December 1929. During the Depression, her special attention to the council saved it from being disbanded. She became a board member of the Girl Scouts National Organization in the Southeastern District. In 1976 the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. published a book of hidden heroines

In 1921 the Florida Legislature created the Juvenile Court of Dade County and provided for the appointment of a judge for a four-year term. In January 1924, it was suggested to Edith Atkinson that she become a Democratic candidate in the June 1924 primary. She received 5,612 votes and thereby defeated two male lawyers.



Judge Atkinson aspired to become a lawyer and practice with her husband. Through a 1918 newspaper article, she learned that Stetson University College of Law accepted women. She enrolled and graduated with an LL.B. degree in 1922. She was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on June 8, 1922.

of this country and chose Judge Atkinson as one of the selected heroines.

Judge Atkinson was a life member of the American Bar Association, Florida State Bar Association, and Dade County Bar Association, for which she was the first woman secretary. She was also a life member of the Mercury Club of Miami, which provided eyeglasses for needy children. An honorary member of the Soroptimist Club of Coral Gables, she participated in their project to help cleft-palate children. Through her honorary membership in the United Daughters of the Confederacy, she supported a scholarship program for young Southern college girls. As a patron of the Women's Cancer Society of the University of Miami, she was a recipient of its Outstanding Service Award. She was also a member of Alpha Xi Delta, American Pen Women, and Phi Delta Delta Legal Fraternity. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

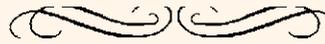
The Atkinsons were members of St.

Stephen's Episcopal Church, where he was warden for several years. A Bruns-designed window in the recreation hall of the church bears the Atkinson name as donor. In later life she attended First Presbyterian Church of Greater Miami.

She was an avid golfer, hiker and swimmer, and loved art, music and literature. She had an extensive library with many rare editions, traveled extensively, and attended operas in many of the European opera houses.

Edith Meserve Atkinson died on August 14, 1983, at 92. After a lifetime of dedicated service, and wishing to continue supporting the Girl Scouts and other community programs, she left the residual portion of her estate to the Dade Foundation in the "Judges Henry F. and Edith M. Atkinson Memorial Fund" so that her good works might be continued.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); MBD.



Lelia Russell Bryd

(1897 -)

Date of Admission: 1922

Lelia Russell Bryd of Miami graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1922 and was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 8, 1922. Of the 21 people in her class at Stetson, four others, Marie (Nell) Cooper, Edith M. Atkinson, and Helen E. Martin Crabtree, were women. Ms. Bryd practiced law in Miami for sev-

eral years, maintaining an office in the Seybold Building. She married Mr. D. L. Bryd.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MBD.



Marie Eleanor "Nell" Cooper

(1895 - 1978)

Date of Admission: 1922

Marie Eleanor "Nell" Cooper of Miami attended Florida State College for Women for four years. Then, after attending Stetson University College of Law for two years, she graduated with Lelia Russell Bryd, Edith

M. Atkinson, and Helen Martin Crabtree in 1922. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 8, 1922. Ms. Cooper was an associate in the law firm of Shutts & Bowen in Miami and practiced law in that

firm for many years. She was a member of Phi Delta Kappa, Kappa Delta; the Dade County Bar Association; and the American Legion Auxiliary. She was born in 1895 and

died in 1978 at the age of 82.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); B&B (1935); MALD (1929); MHL (1939 & 1945); MBD.

Ms. Crabtree has the distinction of being the first woman to practice law in Palm Beach County.

Helen E. Martin Crabtree

Date of Admission: 1922

Helen E. Martin Crabtree of West Palm Beach graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1922 and was admitted to the bar on June 8, 1922, along with her classmates Lelia Russell Bryd, Marie "Nell" Cooper, and Edith M. Atkinson. Shortly thereafter she married Mr. S. B. Crabtree and they had one son, Tom

Crabtree. She has the distinction of being the first woman to practice law in Palm Beach County. She died at the age of 76 from lung cancer.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); undated letter from Tom Crabtree to Stetson.



Esther Miriam Finney Sumner

(1901 -)

Date of Admission: 1923

Esther Miriam Finney Sumner was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on January 17, 1901, the daughter of Dr. A. Gordon Finney, D.D.S., and Dr. Josephine H. Finney, M.D. She attended the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, Maryland, and was a harpist for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for several years.

Ms. Sumner then studied law at the University of Maryland and later at Stetson University College of Law, from which she graduated in 1923. She was admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court on May 28, 1923. Ms. Sumner was an associate with Price, Price & Hancock in Miami. She practiced law in Miami from



1925 to 1940, and then served as a librarian in the Dade County Law Library for many years. She was a member of the Dade County Bar Association, Phi Delta Delta, and Sigma Phi Gamma, and is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939). She continued to be listed as a member of The Florida Bar in 1957.

Ms. Sumner married Reverend Harold Loy Sumner on November 26, 1947. She was a Democrat and Protestant by faith.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); DWL&J; *Florida Bar Journal* (Supp. July 1957); MBD.

Ms. Sumner was a harpist for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for several years. She then studied law at the University of Maryland and later at Stetson University College of Law, from which she graduated in 1923.

Abigail Elizabeth Lapham Gibbons

(1902 - 1951)

Date of Admission: 1923



Abbie Gibbons maintained an active intellectual life, was keenly interested in education and writing, and started book clubs to share her love of literature. She is remembered as an example of brilliance, compassion and humor.

Abigail (Abbie) Elizabeth Lapham Gibbons was born on July 9, 1902. She was the daughter of Arthur and Viva Lapham, pioneers in Cocoa, Florida. She distinguished herself academically, graduating from Cocoa High School in 1920 as the valedictorian of her class, and later joining Phi Beta Kappa at Stetson University. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1923 and was admitted to practice by the Florida Supreme Court on July 27, 1923.

Ms. Gibbons clerked briefly for a county judge in Titusville, Brevard County, following her graduation. Her greatest satisfaction, however, came in the role of partner and helpmate to her husband, Douglas Jerrold Gibbons, whom she met at Stetson. They were married

on December 11, 1923. Mr. Gibbons, who studied business and business law at Stetson, achieved prominence in the citrus industry. He was also involved in other ventures, including a mail-order business selling tropical jellies and preserves.

The couple had three children, Nannette (Mrs. Robert) Chumbley, Patricia (Mrs. Charles) Reed, and Douglas Gibbons, Jr.

Abbie Gibbons maintained an active intellectual life, was keenly interested in education and writing, and started book clubs to share her love of literature. She is remembered as an example of brilliance, compassion and humor. Ms. Gibbons is survived by her two daughters and several grandchildren.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); W.T. Cash, *The Story of Florida* 201-02 (1938); conversations with Nannette Chumbley; correspondence from Patricia Reed.



Florence M. Hazard Mims

Date of Admission: 1924

Florence M. Hazard Mims graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1924 and was admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court on March 28, 1924. She practiced in Tampa. The *Southern Reporter* shows her representing criminal defendants in two cases in 1928 and 1938.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); B&B (1935); MALD (1929 & 1930); *Cross v. State*, 119 So. 380 (Fla. 1928); *Benjamin v. State*, 187 So. 901 (Fla. 1938).



Stella M. Biddle Fisher

(1891 -)

Date of Admission: 1924

Stella M. Biddle Fisher was born in 1891 in DeFuniak Springs, Florida. She was an applicant to the University of Florida College of Law, but at the time she applied, women were not permitted by law to enroll at the college of law. Consequently, she was one of the petitioners who advocated a change in the law regarding women entering the University of Florida, and that law was changed in 1925 so as to permit women to enroll. Even without graduating from law school, Ms. Biddle was admitted to practice law on April 26, 1924, after passing the bar examination given by the Florida Supreme Court.

Ms. Fisher was recording secretary of the Florida State Senate in the regular

session of 1919, and assistant secretary to the secretary of the Senate in the extra session, June 6, 1925. After being admitted to the bar, she practiced law in Gainesville beginning in 1928. Ms. Fisher was active in the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association as secretary and treasurer from 1928 until at least 1935, and was a member of the Florida State Bar and American Bar Associations. She was secretary of the University of Florida College of Law Alumni Association. Ms. Fisher, who was married, was also a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; UFCLAL&R; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1930); Allen Morris, *Florida Handbook*.



Ms. Fisher was one of the petitioners who advocated a change in the law regarding women entering the University of Florida, and that law was changed in 1925



Emily S. Williams Ziegler

(- 1961)

Date of Admission: 1924

Emily S. Williams Ziegler was born in Tamaqua, Pennsylvania. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1924 and was admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court on May 24, 1924.

At the time of her death on or about November 5, 1961, Ms. Ziegler had been a resident of DeLand for 39 years and was a member of St. Peter's Catholic Church.

Her obituary stated she was a "retired attorney." She was survived by her husband, Morris W. Ziegler, of DeLand; a son, Morris W. Ziegler, Jr., of Tamaqua, Pennsylvania; a daughter, Mary Catherine Cates, of Pottsboro, Texas; and grandchildren.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); *DeLand Sun News*, Nov. 6, 1961.



Joanna Hamilton Vermilye

(1886 -)

Date of Admission: 1924

Joanna Hamilton Vermilye was born in Ironton, Ohio, on August 15, 1886, to Thomas and Adelaide Cooke Hamilton. She

attended Chicago Kent College of Law and was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1915. She practiced law in Chicago for five years.



Women were not allowed officially to enroll at University of Florida College of Law until 1925



According to the Florida Supreme Court minutes, Bernice J. Ayer and several other attorneys, including Rubye Chalk, from Lebanon, Tennessee, took the bar examination administered by the newly created State Board of Law Examiners and were admitted to practice law in Florida on May 5, 1925.



Ms. Vermilye was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 29, 1924. *The Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary* (1940) indicates that Ms. Vermilye attended the University of Florida at some point. Because women were not allowed to officially enroll at University of Florida College of Law until 1925, and because Ms. Vermilye was a licensed attorney in Illinois, one may reasonably assume that she attended classes at the law school to assist her in taking the bar examination at the Florida Supreme Court.



Ms. Vermilye practiced law in Miami for one year and then began practicing in West Palm Beach in 1925. Cases in the *Southern Reporter* and *Southern Reporter*

Second Edition indicate that she practiced in West Palm Beach from 1926 until at least 1952, handling primarily property law cases.

Ms. Vermilye was a member of the Palm Beach County and Florida State Bar Associations and the Women's League for Better Government, for which she served as correspondence secretary. She was Presbyterian and a Democrat. She was listed as "Mrs. Joanna Vermilye" in 1924 when she passed the bar examination and as "Mrs. George W. Krick" in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

Sources: FSCM&BAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD & MHLD (1929-40, 1945 & 1949).

Bernice J. Ayer

(1905 -)

Date of Admission: 1925

Bernice J. Ayer was born in 1905. She attended George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and studied law at the University of Florida and Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, from which she received her LL.B. The University of Florida College of Law, while allowing women to monitor classes, did not allow women to officially enroll as law students until 1925. Consequently, while Ms. Ayer might have studied at Florida, at the time she attended classes she probably could not officially enroll

or graduate. According to the Florida Supreme Court minutes, Bernice J. Ayer and several other attorneys, including Rubye Chalk, from Lebanon, Tennessee, took the bar examination administered by the newly created State Board of Law Examiners and were admitted to practice law in Florida on May 5, 1925. In 1939 Ms. Ayer was a partner in the firm Koegler & Ayer with William F. Koegler, and their offices were in the Olympia Building in Miami.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MHLD (1939).

*Rubye B. West
Chalk Godwin*

(1899 -)

Date of Admission: 1925

Rubye B. West Chalk Godwin was born on August 25, 1899, in Pelham, Georgia. Her parents were James Thomas West and

Virginia Adams West.

In 1925 she and several other attorneys from Lebanon, Tennessee, including

Bernice Ayer, took the bar examination administered by the newly created State Board of Law Examiners, and they were admitted to practice law in Florida on May 5, 1925. Lebanon is where Cumberland University is located and Bernice Ayer was a graduate of that school; therefore, one might reasonably assume that Ms. Chalk also attended Cumberland.

When she completed her social security application on November 24, 1936, she listed her name as "Ruby West Godwin," which suggests that she was married at least twice. Her employer at that time was Albany Loan and Finance Company in Albany, Georgia.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; social security application.



Henriette E. Mednick

Date of Admission: 1925

Henriette E. Mednick took the bar examination administered by the newly created State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law on May 5, 1925. At the time of her admission, she resided in Jacksonville.

Source: FSCM&BAA.



Allie Richardson Barnes

Date of Admission: 1925

Allie Richardson Barnes graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1925 and was admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court on June 3, 1925. Ms. Barnes practiced law in Lake Wales. According to attorney C. B. Myers, when he began practicing in Lake Wales in 1948, Ms. Barnes was elderly and she

died a few years later. According to Justice Richard W. Ervin, Ms. Barnes was married to Ben Barnes, a lawyer in Marianna or Chattahoochee.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLD (1939, 1945 & 1949); correspondence from C. B. Myers and Justice Richard W. Ervin.



Mary J. Davey

Date of Admission: 1925

Mary J. Davey of Ohio was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 10, 1925, based on her status as a practicing attorney in Ohio with five years of experience. Reviews of *Martindale's American Law Dictionary* (1929 & 1930) and *The Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary* (1939) fail to reveal her as practicing in either Ohio or Florida.

Sources: FSCM&BAA.



Mary J. Davey of Ohio was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 10, 1925, based on her status as a practicing attorney in Ohio with five years of experience.



Beverly C. Cobb

Date of Admission: 1925

Beverly C. Cobb of Clearwater took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1925.

Sources: FSCM&BAA.



Ms. Gore was a member of the National Association of Women Lawyers and served as the Florida delegate on its council of delegates from 1947 to 1949. She was also a member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, Professional Women's Club, and Kappa Beta Pi International Legal Sorority, and she chaired the Women's Forum, Miami Chamber of Commerce.



Jean Gregory Cole

Date of Admission: 1925

Jean Gregory Cole of St. Petersburg took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1925.

Source: FSCM.



Dorothy Dorman

Date of Admission: 1925

Dorothy Dorman of Winter Haven took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1925.

Sources: FSCM&BAA.



Clara C. Cain Gore

(1895 -)

Date of Admission: 1925

Clara C. Cain Gore was born in Alexander City, Alabama, on January 16, 1895. Her parents were James W. and Mary Duncan Cain. She received her LL.B. from George Washington University in the District of Columbia and was president of the law school senate during her senior year. Ms. Gore was admitted to practice in the District of Columbia in 1923. She was admitted to the Alabama bar in 1924. She then took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1925. At the time of her admission, she resided in Miami. She was also admitted to the Oklahoma bar in 1931 and to the United States Supreme Court in 1937.

Ms. Gore practiced law in Dade County

for many years with her husband, Dick "Dixie" F. Gore, in the law firm Gore & Gore. From 1938 to 1946, she was a member of the legal staff of the Railroad Retirement Board in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Gore was a member of the National Association of Women Lawyers and served as the Florida delegate on its council of delegates from 1947 to 1949. She was also a member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, Professional Women's Club, and Kappa Beta Pi International Legal Sorority, and she chaired the Women's Forum, Miami Chamber of Commerce. She was a Democrat. Her last known address was Fairfax, Virginia.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; MALD (1930); DWL&J; 75NAWL; Social Security Death Index; MBD.

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Maurine Sharp

(1901 -)

Date of Admission: 1925

Maurine Sharp was born in Williamsburg, Kentucky, on May 11, 1901. She was the daughter of Lucretia Sharp and J. N. Sharp, a former United States District Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky and Commonwealth Attorney for the 34th Judicial District. She received her LL.B. from the University of Kentucky and was admitted to the Kentucky bar in 1925. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1925, and in Tennessee in 1929.

In *The Digest of Women Lawyers & Judges* (1949), Ms. Sharp was listed as an attorney working for the Department of Revenue, Commonwealth of Kentucky, in Frankfort, Kentucky. Thus, she followed in her father's footsteps by devoting herself to public service.

She was a member of the American Bar Association and Association of Public Administrators. She spoke French and enjoyed sailing.

Source: FSCM&BAA.

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In The Digest of Women Lawyers & Judges (1949), Ms. Sharp was listed as an attorney working for the Department of Revenue, Commonwealth of Kentucky, in Frankfort, Kentucky. Thus, she followed in her father's footsteps by devoting herself to public service.

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Mattie W. Tompkins

(1888 -)

Date of Admission: 1925

Mattie W. Tompkins was born on May 11, 1888, in Arlington, Virginia, to Metellus W. and Mary Frances Louise Blaine Tompkins. She was educated in the public schools of Virginia and attended Washington College of Law from 1921 to 1924, when she graduated with an LL.B. Ms. Tompkins was admitted to the District of Columbia bar on February 10, 1925. She took the exam administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1925.

Ms. Tompkins practiced in Avon Park, Highlands County, Florida, as an associate with the firm S. C. Pardee and S. C. Pardee, Jr., and she maintained a general practice, specializing in real estate and probate work.

Ms. Tompkins was elected to the Avon Park City Council in September 1939 and served the City of Avon Park until October 1947, when she lost the election by five votes. During her tenure on the city council, she served on the parks, fi-

nance and utility committees. Some of the decisions she was involved with include the purchase of land for an airport, the establishment of a "serving room" where local women could work for the Works Progress Administration, the adoption of the first garbage control ordinance, and the establishment of the first telephone system in the city.

She was a member of the Highlands County Bar Association; Business and Professional Women's Club, for which she served as state chair of the legal committee and local president; and Kappa Beta Pi International Legal Sorority. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939). She was a Baptist and a Democrat.

Sources: FSCM&BAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLD (1939, 1945 & 1949); DWL&J; MBD.



Lydia Douglass

(1887 -)

Date of Admission: 1926

Lydia Douglass of Miami passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1926. She maintained an office in the Seybold Building in Miami.

Sources: FSCBAA; MALD (1929).



Anne Overman Gibbons

Date of Admission: 1926

Anne Overman Gibbons of Fort Lauderdale passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1926.

Source: FSCBAA.



*Sue K. Hicks
was a partner
with John Penny
in the law firm
Penny & Hicks,
with offices at
60 West Flagler
Street, Miami.*



Sue K. Hicks

Date of Admission: 1926

Sue K. Hicks of Miami passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1926. She was a partner with John Penny in the law firm Penny & Hicks, with offices at 60 West Flagler Street, Miami.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL (1939).



Winifred B. Judge

Date of Admission: 1926

Winifred B. Judge of Miami passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1926. She practiced in Miami for several years, maintaining offices in the Meyer-Kiser Bank Building and at 10 Halyon Avenue in Miami. She later moved to New York City.

Sources: FSCBAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); MBD.



Effie Knowles

(1892 - 1984)

Date of Admission: 1926

Effie Knowles was born on March 26, 1892, in Key West, Florida, into an old Bahamian family. While working for a lawyer, she acquired enough legal knowledge to pass the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, and she was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1926.

Ms. Knowles initially practiced in Miami, maintaining offices in the Seybold Building and Bank of Bay Biscayne Building. In 1934 she moved to Washington, D.C., to work for the Justice Department. She spent most of her legal career in the tax division.

In 1953 she left government work, returned to Miami, and reentered private practice. In 1955 she and attorney Roy L. Struble began a 21-year fight on behalf of the Seminole Indians, arguing that the government owed the Indian tribe for 32

million acres of land taken from them in the early 19th Century. They won the suit. The Indians received a settlement of more than \$12.5 million and Ms. Knowles was awarded a \$150,000 fee for her efforts.

Ms. Knowles's life later took a tragic turn. An October 11, 1983, article in the *Miami Herald* disclosed that Ms. Knowles had been declared incompetent in 1980, and it was eventually discovered that her attorney and a friend had squandered her sizeable fortune. Sadly, Ms. Knowles died at North Shore Medical Center in Miami on September 20, 1984, at the age of 92, just prior to a scheduled review of her competency case.

Sources: FSCBAA; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLA (1939, 1945 & 1949); "Fighting Lawyer' Loses Fortune in Old Age," *MH*, Oct. 11, 1983; MBD.



Opal Plaisted

Date of Admission: 1926

Opal Plaisted of Miami passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1926.

Source: FSCBAA.



Herberta Ann Hathcock Leonardy

(1893 - 1981)

Date of Admission: 1926

Parliamentarian extraordinaire, distinguished lawyer, dedicated teacher, and world traveler: each accurately describes Dr. Herberta Ann Hathcock Leonardy. This multifaceted woman, born in Atlanta on November 27, 1893, and raised in Plant

City, Florida, was one of four children born to Dr. W. C. and Janie Victoria Mobley Hathcock.

She came from a family of physicians, and was admitted to a women's medical school in Philadelphia after completing



In 1955 Ms. Knowles and attorney Roy L. Struble began a 21-year fight on behalf of the Seminole Indians, arguing that the government owed the Indian tribe for 32 million acres of land taken from them in the early 19th Century. They won the suit.





“My father and grandfather were really rather advanced for their era. But in those days it was hardly considered respectable for a woman to be a telephone operator, much less a doctor...”



“My father sent me to do graduate work, and I decided to study law. He had no idea what I was up to until he received the bill, and then it was too late to do anything about it.”
-- *Herberta Leonardy*



a Bachelor of Philosophy (Ph.B.) degree at Stetson University in 1916. Her family, however, thought that being a doctor was no job for a woman, and they refused to send her. “My father and grandfather were really rather advanced for their era. But in those days it was hardly considered respectable for a woman to be a telephone operator, much less a doctor,” she explained in an interview with *The Gainesville Sun*.

Dr. Leonardy managed to circumvent the family objections by registering at Stetson University College of Law without her father’s knowledge. “My father sent me to do graduate work, and I decided to study law. He had no idea what I was up to until he received the bill, and then it was too late to do anything about it,” she recalled with a hint of mischief gleaming in her eye. After the first year of law school, however, she had to drop out for several years to earn the money to complete her education. She married John Leonardy and taught first through eighth graders in two country schools, then returned to graduate from Stetson College of Law with an LL.B. in 1926. She was the only woman in her class. “I had an awfully good time,” she remembered. “My family was sure all that education would ruin my reputation, but it didn’t seem to hurt it at all.”

Dr. Leonardy was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 20, 1926, and to the United States District Court the same year. She vividly recalled the day in 1930 that she was admitted to the United States Supreme Court. “I had on the swankiest coat dress I could find,” she told *The Gainesville Sun*. “I thought I looked very elegant and conservative. However, the marshall didn’t seem to agree at all. He instructed me to take off my hat (of course my hair was a mess), and I also had to remove the orchid the state of Florida had sent me. He also wanted me to take off my coat. I told him I couldn’t because I didn’t have anything else on underneath it, so at that he finally desisted. When I at last appeared before those austere gentlemen, feeling terrifically impressed, I looked like something the rats had dragged in!”



She and John Leonardy set up a thriving law practice in Sanford, Leonardy & Leonardy, which lasted about 15 years. During that time, she practiced both civil and criminal law -- dissolving marriages, forming corporations, and specializing in insanity law. In the late 1930s, Dr. Leonardy was liaison officer for the Florida State Hospital in Chattahoochee, and she was in charge of matters concerning restoration of legal sanity, estates, and old age assistance.

Dr. Leonardy found the practice of law exciting and enjoyed the courtesies she was extended by all of the judges and lawyers. Yet to a reporter of *The Gainesville Sun*, she commented on one of the universal complaints facing most lawyers: “The trouble with practicing law is that you never have time to sit down and relax. If you win a case today, you may very well lose one tomorrow. You never can have that feeling that you and your client and everyone is in perfect harmony.”

She and John Leonardy separated in the mid-1930s, but they remained friendly following their divorce. Their son, John Leonardy, Jr., recalled that his father was a politician and an elected representative to the Florida State Legislature. He lost much of his wealth in the 1929 stock market crash. Neither Dr. Leonardy nor John Leonardy, Sr., remarried, and he was killed in an automobile accident in 1958 at the age of 87.

Dr. Leonardy and her son moved to Miami in 1939, where she worked one year as a librarian at the University of Miami School of Law and taught Parliamentary Law in its evening division. She also taught at Ponce de Leon Junior High and Coral Gables Senior High. “I’ve always had good rapport with my students. I don’t know why, we just share a special relationship,” she said in 1979. Her son John recalled, however, that his mother’s rapport with the school board was not as congenial. In a dispute with the Dade County School Board over salaries, Dr. Leonardy, who was then the very determined president of the Dade County Teachers’ Association, sued the school board on behalf of the teachers

and won. The school board tried to get Principal Harry Rath to fire her, but he decided that she was too valuable to his staff and resisted.

Her expertise in parliamentary law, which began in law school and developed during her years as a practicing attorney, led her to national recognition. She was the president of the National Association of Parliamentarians, founder of the Florida Association of Parliamentarians, and president of the Florida Registered Parliamentarians. A firm believer in parliamentary law, she wrote two successful books, *Leonardy's Parliamentary Law Chart* and *Elementary Course in Parliamentary Procedures*, and countless articles. Dr. Leonardy taught practically every registered parliamentarian in the state, and trained hundreds of local civic leaders and club members in parliamentary procedure. She served as parliamentarian for 15 national organizations. "It's the most useful thing," she said. "If you're going to run a good meeting, at least a fundamental knowledge of parliamentary law is very important. If the presiding officer follows correct procedure, the meeting will be eminently fair and impartial."

Throughout her distinguished career, Dr. Leonardy was in constant competition with men, yet she never felt discriminated against because of her sex. "To tell you the truth, I really don't think that I encountered any major roadblocks at all. Of course, men have always been competitive with me, but never obstructive. In fact, they all seemed glad to have me – I never heard any complaints at all," she said in an interview two years before her death.

Her son commented that she was a woman ahead of her time. He could only speculate what she might have accomplished had she lived today and not had to compete so vigorously in a world so markedly controlled by men. Yet, he felt she always moved toward her goals, no matter how much resistance she encountered. "She was a very determined woman," he said proudly. "If she couldn't go against them, she went around, but never retreated."

Dr. Leonardy did not consider herself a feminist, and felt that the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was unnecessary because women already had enough protection under existing laws. "I'm sure that

in some instances discrimination against women does exist, although I never experienced it personally, but I think ERA would work hardships on women in the lower brackets of society," she said.

Despite all the success she attained in her career, she regarded her son as her life's greatest accomplishment. John George Leonardy, Jr., became a doctor and practices internal and allergy medicine in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Leonardy was an enthusiastic traveler who visited almost every country in the world. She spent six summers doing graduate work at the National University of Colombia, South America, from 1947 to 1952. Two years before her death, at age 85, she made an exhausting but fascinating trip to China. When examining her personal belongings after her death, her son found six airline tickets for pending trips around the globe.

Dr. Leonardy was a member of the Florida State Bar and Seminole County Bar Associations, as well as the National Association of Women Lawyers and the Dade County Association of Women Lawyers. She was also a member of the Dade County Federation of Women's Clubs, American Association of University Women, Daughters of the American Revolution (state regent, honorary state regent, parliamentarian), League of Women Voters (state president), Cocoplum Women's Club, Florida Education Association (state retirement chairperson), Phi Delta Delta International Legal Fraternity, Delta Kappa Gamma, Dade County Classroom Teachers' Association (president), and Beta Sigma Phi Honorary Society. She was a member of the First Methodist Church of Coral Gables and was a Democrat.

Dr. Leonardy was the recipient of the medal as the Most Outstanding Citizen of Seminole County by the Federation of Women's Clubs and was named one of the ten outstanding women in Dade County by Theta Sigma Phi. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939) and *Florida Who's Who* (1953-54).

Herberta Ann Hathcock Leonardy died in her sleep of natural causes on June 3-4, 1981, at the age of 87 while visiting her son in Atlanta. "I've had an adventuresome sort of life, and a pleasant one. On the whole I can't complain, and if I had it all to do over, I believe I'd live it much the same."



"The trouble with practicing law is that you never have time to sit down and relax. If you win a case today, you may very well lose one tomorrow. You never can have that feeling that you and your client and everyone is in perfect harmony."



"Her son felt she always moved toward her goals, no matter how much resistance she encountered. She was a very determined woman," he said proudly. "If she couldn't go against them, she went around, but never retreated."



"[If] I had it all to do over, I believe I'd live it much the same."

--Herberta Leonardy



Ms. Borros was a remarkable woman. She attended law school classes at night, because she supported her divorced mother by working during the day.



Sources: FSCBAA; SUCAL&R (photo); MALD (1930); DWL&J; Joey Conner McCormick, "Dr. Leonardy Has Blazed Trails

For Women in Law," *The Gainesville Sun*, Apr. 15, 1979; conversation with Dr. John G. Leonardy, Jr.; MBD.



Gertrude Leonore O'Kell Woods

Date of Admission: 1926

Gertrude Leonore O'Kell Woods graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1926 and was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on June 20, 1926. She is listed in *Martindale's American Law Dictionary* (1929) in Miami under the listing

for George M. O'Kell, who was born in 1874 and admitted in 1916. Whether this was a spouse or relative is unknown. Stetson records show that she married Tom Woods.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCAL&R (photo).



Rose Shakewitz

Date of Admission: 1926

Rose Shakewitz of Fort Lauderdale passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 26, 1926.

Source: FSCBAA.



Pauline G. Wallace

Date of Admission: 1926

Pauline G. Wallace of Miami passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 26, 1926.

Source: FSCBAA.



Marian Borros

(circa 1891 - 1988)

Date of Admission: 1926

Marian Borros was born in Pagoda, New Jersey, around 1891. She graduated from Fordham Law School in New York. Ms. Borros passed the bar examination admin-

istered by the State Board of Law Examiners at Leon High School in Tallahassee in 1926, and was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 15, 1926.

Ms. Borros started her practice in Daytona Beach with referrals from a bank for probate, trust and estate cases.

According to her cousin and heir, Ann Henglein, who lives in Ms. Borros' home at 693 Buena Vista in Ormond Beach, Ms. Borros was a remarkable woman. She attended law school classes at night, because she supported her divorced mother by working during the day. In practice,

she represented clients "not for just the money." She also clerked for Judge Parkinson in Daytona Beach.

Her cousin reported that Ms. Borros loved sports, especially snow skiing. She died in her own home, financially secure, on April 29, 1988, at the approximate age of 97. She was "lots of fun."

Sources: FSCBAA; conversation with Ann Henglein.

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Arax M. Gulizian

Date of Admission: 1926

Arax M. Gulizian of Orlando passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 15, 1926.

Source: FSCBAA.

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Anna Bray Lindsley

(1895 - 1968)

Date of Admission: 1926

Anna Bray Lindsley was born on January 29, 1895, in New York City. She was one of four children of Philip Edward and Margaret Bray. She was of Irish background and the first in her family to receive a college degree.

In St. Petersburg, she met Howard Lindsley and they married on May 15, 1929. Their first son, Howard, was born in 1931. Her husband died in November 1932, however, just weeks before the birth of their second son, Philip. She never remarried.

Ms. Lindsley was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 15, 1926, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, and was admitted to the U.S. District Courts in 1927. She probably obtained her legal education from clerking experience and reading of the law. Prior to being admitted to the bar, she was a stenographer, secretary and law clerk with the U.S. Shipping Board Emergency Fleet Corporation from 1917 until 1925. Then she served as a secretary and legal clerk to Florida's attorney general from 1925 through 1929.

Her son, Philip Lindsley, recalls that she commented that being a liberal Northern Democrat made working in the attorney general's office in a conservative Southern environment an interesting experience.

After being admitted to the Florida Bar, Ms. Lindsley obtained her LL.B. from Washington College of Law, American University, in 1930. Thereafter, she worked as a junior attorney with the Farm Credit Administration (1932-37); as an assistant attorney with the Interstate Commerce Commission, where she drafted law; and then as an attorney and editor until her retirement from government service in 1953. According to her son's recollections, her employment there was stressful, partially due



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Ms. Lindsley commented that being a liberal Northern Democrat made working in the attorney general's office in a conservative Southern environment an interesting experience.

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Philip Lindsley recalls that his mother was very proud of being an attorney, enjoyed being around attorneys, and loved the law. According to him, she was a pioneer in her time, though she probably didn't think much about it. She was an independent woman, widowed with two very young sons, and working out of the home in a full-time professional position.



to a very tough female boss! He also recalls her being astonished that he would begin his government service at the same pay grade at which she had retired, a G-7.

During the Washington years, she joined the National League of American Pen Women. She was proud to belong to this organization, which promotes development of the creative talents of professional women in the arts. In addition, she was a Gray Lady A.R.C. from 1950 to 1953.

Following her retirement from the federal government, Ms. Lindsley moved to Coral Gables where she worked until 1958 with attorney Charles Battisti. Mr. Battisti has pleasant recollections of Ms. Lindsley. He remembers that she was about 5'8" tall and had a straight walk, almost military in style. She was a straightforward, wonderful person. Ms. Lindsley practiced probate and divorce law, carrying her own case load of clients. According to Mr. Battisti, there were about 25 lawyers in the Coral Gables bar at that time and they all knew each other. Philip Lindsley distinctly remembers the names of Anna Brenner Meyers (1936) and Dixie Chastain (1930) as other women attorneys

with whom his mother associated. After leaving Mr. Battisti's law office, Ms. Lindsley practiced out of her home.

Other organizations in which Ms. Lindsley held membership were Florida Association of Women Lawyers and American Federation of Senior Citizens. She also contributed to government publications and is listed in *Who's Who in American Women* (4th ed. 1966-67).

Philip Lindsley recalls that his mother was very proud of being an attorney, enjoyed being around attorneys, and loved the law. According to him, she was a pioneer in her time, though she probably didn't think much about it. She was an independent woman, widowed with two very young sons, and working out of the home in a full-time professional position.

Anna Bray Lindsley died on October 7, 1968, at the age of 73 and was buried with her husband in the Arlington National Cemetery.

Sources: FSCBAA; Social Security Death Index; MH (obituary); correspondence and conversations with Philip Lindsley (photo); conversation with Charles Battisti; MBD.



Vivian Selter

(1895 -)

Date of Admission: 1926.

Vivian Selter was born in Chicago, Illinois, on April 15, 1895, to Albert E. and Alice J. Mitchell Selter. She graduated from high school in Downers Grove, Illinois, in 1912, and received her B.S. from John B. Stetson University in 1916, her M.A. from Stetson in 1918, and her LL.B. in 1926 from La Salle Extension University. She passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 15, 1926. At the time of her admission, she resided in DeLand.

Ms. Selter established an office in St.



Petersburg and began practicing there beginning in 1927, specializing in probate, titles, chancery, and tax. She served as an attorney for the Times Publishing Company, and is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

Ms. Selter was a member of the Florida State Bar and St. Petersburg Bar Associations, Pilot Club, and West Coast Bird Club. She was a Christian Scientist and a Republican.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949).

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Madeline A. Jacobson Cox

(- 1990)

Date of Admission: 1927



Madeline A. Jacobson Cox was born in Brooklyn, New York, to Isaac W. Jacobson, who was an attorney, and Ernestine Aschner Jacobson. She received her LL.B. degree from Brooklyn Law School, St. Lawrence University, and was admitted to practice law in New York in 1920. Initially, she practiced in Brooklyn. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 19, 1927, and practiced in Tallahassee.

The April 11, 1927, edition of the *Tallahassee Daily Democrat* indicated that Ms. Cox was Tallahassee's second woman lawyer; Anna Bray Lindsley (1926) nominated her for admission. Ms. Lindsley was, in fact, secretary to the attorney general at the time, so Ms. Cox was the only woman practicing law in Tallahassee then. During 1927 Ms. Cox wrote a column for the *Tallahassee Daily Democrat* entitled "In and Around Tallahassee." In 1932 she authored "Law of Interest to Women."

Ms. Cox taught a law course in the evenings for those who wanted to "read the law." Grace Williams Burwell (1935) and Rose Deeb Kitchen (1937) studied under her, as did Dan D'Alemberte, father of Talbot "Sandy" D'Alemberte, Florida State University President.

On December 22, 1936, she married Herbert F. Cox, who was a justice of the peace. This was the first marriage in the Florida Supreme Court and was performed by Chief Justice J. B. Whitfield.

Ms. Cox served in the United States Navy as a Yeoman 1st Class during World War I and was honorably discharged. She was prominent in army and navy relief work.

She was a member of the Orange County Bar Association in New York; New York State Bar, Florida State Bar, and Tallahassee Bar Associations; Order of the Eastern Star; and American Legion in Tallahassee.

Ms. Cox is listed in *The Digest of Women Lawyers & Judges* (1949) as having a Montgomery, New York, address. She died on June 27, 1990. Her last known residence was in Westchester, Connecticut.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); "In and Around Town," *Tallahassee Daily Democrat*, Apr. 27, 1927 & May 14, 1927; Florida Supreme Court historical journal excerpts; MBD; Social Security Death Index; e-mail from Lauren Jorgensen and Deeno Kitchen.

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Ms. Cox was Tallahassee's second woman lawyer; Anna Bray Lindsley (1926) nominated her for admission. Ms. Lindsley was, in fact, secretary to the attorney general at the time, so Ms. Cox was the only woman practicing law in Tallahassee then.

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Dorothy S. McDougall

Date of Admission: 1927

Dorothy S. McDougall of Brunswick, Georgia, passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1927.

Source: FSCBAA.

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On December 22, 1936, she married Herbert F. Cox, who was a justice of the peace. This was the first marriage in the Florida Supreme Court and was performed by Chief Justice J. B. Whitfield.

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Anna A. Krivitsky

(1893 - 1973)

Date of Admission: 1927



Anna A. Krivitsky was born in Russia on August 16, 1893, to Ely and Alma Krivitsky. She graduated from Northfield Seminary in Massachusetts, and then obtained a Bachelor of Philosophy degree and J.D. from the University of Chicago in 1922 and 1925, respectively. She took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners in 1927 and was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 22, 1927. She practiced law in Tampa from 1927 until 1954, maintaining an office in the Stovall Professional Building on Morgan Street.

The Hillsborough County Bar Association's centennial history book includes an account of Ms. Krivitsky when she represented Walter Whitehead, a "confessed daylight burglar," in a trial before Criminal Court Judge W. Raleigh Pettaway in November 1927. She created quite a stir in the legal community when she sought to establish during the trial that the sheriff had given narcotics to the defendant in an attempt to obtain his confession.

According to attorney Edward Cutler of Tampa, most of Ms. Krivitsky's cases were family law and cases involving the disadvantaged, usually women. He recalled that she later moved to St. Petersburg, where she was very successful.

She was a member of the Tampa and Florida State Bar Associations, as well as the Professional and Business Women's Club. She was also a member of the Phi Delta Delta Legal Society, American Bar Association, International Federation of Women Lawyers, and National Association of Women Lawyers. Ms. Krivitsky is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

In 1954 Ms. Krivitsky semi-retired to Treasure Island in Pinellas County. She was director of the Gulf Beaches Bar Association and the St. Petersburg Bar Association, as well as the Ladies Auxiliary of the St. Petersburg Bar Association. She was also a member of the Sunshine Women's Club in Treasure Island.

Ms. Krivitsky was married to Howard E. Joseph. She was Jewish and a Democrat. She died in Treasure Island on June 6, 1973.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLD (1939); DWL&J; *St. Petersburg Times*, June 8, 1973, at 15-B; Hillsborough County Bar Association centennial history book; correspondence from Raymond T. Elligett, Jr.; e-mail from attorney Edward Cutler.

She created quite a stir in the legal community when she sought to establish during the trial that the sheriff had given narcotics to the defendant in an attempt to obtain his confession.

Ella Jo Stollberg

(1903 - 1967)

Date of Admission: 1927



Ella Jo Stollberg was born in 1903 in Atlanta, Georgia. She received her LL.B. degree from Atlanta Law School and was admitted to the Georgia bar in 1923. She passed the examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice in

Florida on March 22, 1927.

She maintained a general practice in Hollywood and Miami Beach for many years. Cases in *Southern Reporter* and *Southern Reporter Second Edition* show that she was active in the practice of law until 1966, primarily in property, zoning, and wills and trusts.

Ms. Stollberg was a member of the Na-

tional Business and Professional Women's Club and Broward County Bar Association. She headed the Fiesta Tropicale in Hollywood, which was created as an annual tourist celebration. Ms. Stollberg served as vice president of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce and was on the board of directors of the Children's Home Society of Broward County. She is included

in *Florida Women of Distinction* (1956).

Ms. Stollberg was married to Raymond A. Wilcox. She died in February 1967.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLA (1939); 1 Eloise N. Cozens, *Florida Women of Distinction* (1956); *Florida Bar Journal*, Vol. 41, p. 255; MBD.

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Zephyr Lillian Thorpe

Date of Admission: 1927

Zephyr Lillian Thorpe was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 13, 1927, under the diploma privilege after graduating from Stetson University College of Law. Other women in her law school class included Laurine L. Goffin, Mary V. Wakefield Houston, Mary Anne Leddy, Lenea Stromberg Adlehelm, and Charlotte F. Vogler. With only 26 graduates that year, the six women represented 23 percent of the class.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo).

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Susan E. Ervin

(1897 -)

Date of Admission: 1927

Susan E. Ervin of St. Petersburg passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 26, 1927. She was an associate in the St. Petersburg law firm of Spear, Viney, Skelton & Pearce. The law firm had a general civil practice in all courts and specialized in real estate, land title, and probate matters. It represented Alexander National Bank in liquidation and was the approved counsel for New York Title & Mortgage Co.

Sources: FSCBAA; MALD (1929 & 1930).

~ ~ ~

Laurine Lenore Goffin

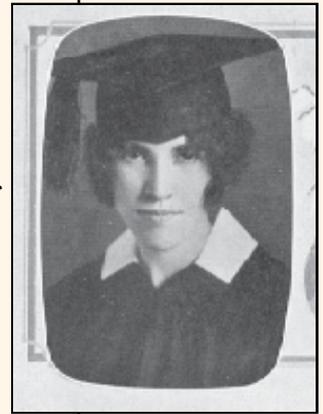
(- 1948)

Date of Admission: 1927

Laurine Lenore Goffin was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Goffin, who owned a packing company in Jacksonville. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1927 with classmates Mary V. Wakefield Houston, Mary Anne Leddy, Lenea Stromberg Adlehelm, Zephyr Thorpe, and Charlotte F. Vogler, and was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege through the State Board

of Law Examiners on July 26, 1927. She practiced in Jacksonville until her sudden death in 1948. Ms. Goffin served as state vice-president in the National Association of Women Lawyers in 1930-33.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); MALD (1930); 75NAWL; letter dated July 31, 1948, from Mr. & Mrs. Goffin to Stetson University.



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Ms. Goffin served as state vice-president in the National Association of Women Lawyers in 1930-33.

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Mary J. Wakefield Houston

Date of Admission: 1927

Mary J. Wakefield Houston of DeLand graduated from Stetson University College of Law in June 1927 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege through the State Board of Law Examiners on July 26, 1927. She and the five other women in her law school class, Laurine Goffin, Mary Anne Leddy, Lenea Stromberg Adlehelm, Zephyr Thorpe, and Charlotte Vogler, comprised 23 percent of the graduating class.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo).



Mary Anne Leddy

(1883 - 1964)

Date of Admission: 1927

Mary Anne Leddy was born in 1883 in New York City and was the daughter of Michael and Ellen (Donovan) Leddy. Prior to 1914, she performed stenography and secretarial work, was an office manager, and was an advertising manager at the Sheldon School in Chicago. She moved from Chicago to Miami in 1914 and worked as an office manager in a Miami law office until 1924. She graduated from Stetson University College of Law in June 1927 with classmates Laurine L. Goffin, Mary

V. Wakefield Houston, Lenea Stromberg Adlehelm, Zephyr Thorpe, and Charlotte F. Vogler, and was admitted under the diploma privilege through the State Board of Law Examiners on July 26, 1927.

Ms. Leddy maintained a private practice in Miami for many years, with offices in the Bank of Bay Biscayne Building and the Meyer-Kiser Bank Building. According to Dr. Mary Howarth-Jacobs, the daughter of Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt (1908), Ms. Leddy and her mother were good friends.

Ms. Leddy was a member of the Florida State Bar Association, Phi Delta Delta, and Alpha Xi Delta. She was a registered Democrat and a Catholic. She was listed in *Who's Who in American Women* (1958-59).

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R; MALD (1929 & 1930); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); MH, Apr. 8, 1964 (photo); conversation with Dr. Mary Howarth-Jacobs.



(L-R): Mary Anne Leddy, Mattie Belle Davis (1936), Daisy Richards Bisz (1937), and Henry K. Gibson. April 8, 1938.

Charlotte Inez Farrington Vogler

(1907 - 1990)

Date of Admission: 1927

The daughter of Charles E. Farrington and Inez Penn Farrington, Charlotte Inez Farrington Vogler was born on February 9, 1907, in Clayton, New Mexico, as one of four children. Her mother was educated as a teacher but never worked outside the home. Her father was an aspiring lawyer, and when he heard there was going to be a boom in Florida, he moved the family to Fort Lauderdale in the fall of 1913 and set up his practice there. Ms. Vogler graduated from high school in 1921 at the age of 14. She received her A.B. degree from Stetson University in 1924 and her law degree from Stetson College of Law in 1927, along with classmates Laurine L. Goffin, Mary V. Wakefield Houston, Mary Anne Leddy, Lenea Stromberg Adlehelm, and Zephyr Thorpe. She was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on July 26, 1927. Her two brothers, Otis and Cecil Farrington, also became lawyers.



Ms. Vogler worked alongside her father for a few years and then taught American History at Fort Lauderdale Central High School.

On September 17, 1933, Charlotte Inez Farrington wed Charles William Vogler from Frankfort, Kentucky. The couple moved to Kansas City, Missouri, so that Mr. Vogler could finish his degree in osteopathy. Ms. Vogler worked in a law office there to help her husband through medical school. Although the country was in a deep depression, Ms. Vogler often spoke of the "happy times" they spent during that period. The couple had two sons, Lewis Dickson Vogler and Jerrell Watson Vogler.

Dr. Vogler opened his practice in Delray Beach in 1937. Ms. Vogler chose to raise

her children and assist her husband in his medical practice in lieu of an active law practice of her own. She also became involved in community service. She was a signatory of the public library charter and its first volunteer librarian. She was a charter member of the League of Women Voters of South Palm Beach County, serving on its board for many years and as president for one term. She was a charter member of the First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach and chaired the board of the Church of the Palms when it was organized. Ms. Vogler was also a staunch supporter of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and served on the Palm Beach County Community Action Council, President Lyndon Johnson's Anti-Poverty Program. She was involved in causes ranging from Head Start to programs

for migrant children in the 1960s and 1970s.

Ms. Vogler was a charter member of the National Organization for Women (N.O.W.) and, as she was in her 60s, she became known as the "Grandmother" of N.O.W. in Palm Beach County. She was among the 100,000 who marched in Washington, D.C., in 1976 in support of the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Ms. Vogler made passage of the Women's Rights Amendment in Florida her top priority and lobbied in Tallahassee for many years for its passage. Ms. Vogler was quoted as saying, "God in His infinite wisdom gave the female as much brains as the male. There's no way you can keep the women of the world down now!"

Ms. Vogler was a charter member of the National Organization for Women (N.O.W.) and, as she was in her 60s, she became known as the "Grandmother" of N.O.W. in Palm Beach County. She was among the 100,000 who marched in Washington, D.C., in 1976 in support of the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. She was quoted as saying, "God in His infinite wisdom gave the female as much brains as the male. There's no way you can keep the women of the world down now!"

Ms. Vogler was always thinking ahead for the good of the community, state and country. She thoroughly researched each politician running for office and voiced her opinions on the candidates' qualifications. People considered her an expert on political issues and called her for advice on "who or what to vote for." Her opinions were frequently sought on a variety of is-

sues until the time of her death.

Tragically, Charlotte Inez Farrington Vogler died on September 27, 1990, at the age of 83 as the result of a house fire that totally destroyed her home.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); MBD; conversations with Cecil Farrington and niece Lisa Vogler (photo).

Mollie M. Parker

Date of Admission: 1927

Mollie M. Parker passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 27, 1927.

Source: FSCBAA.

Mary Logan Esarey

(1898 - 1980)

Date of Admission: 1927

Mary Logan Esarey was born in Tobinsport, Indiana, on April 15, 1898, to Logan and Laura Pearson Esarey. She received her B.A. in 1919 and her LL.B. in 1924 from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. She was a member of the Order of the Coif. She was admitted to the Indiana bar in 1924, and practiced in Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana, from 1924 to 1925.



did no trial work. Ms. Esarey was a recognized advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment.

Her memberships included the Florida State Bar, Palm Beach County Bar, and American Bar Associations; National Association of Women Lawyers; American Judicature Society; Business and Professional Women's Club of West Palm Beach; Order of the Eastern Star; National Federal Business and Professional

Women's Clubs; and Alpha Omicron Pi. She was listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

Ms. Esarey resided in Lake Worth and enjoyed yard work and gardening. She was a Methodist and died on February 21, 1980.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1929 & 1930); MHLD (1939, 1945 & 1949); DWL&J.

From 1927 to 1930, Ms. Esarey was an associate with Winters, Foskett & Wilcox in West Palm Beach, which specialized in real estate, probate and corporate matters. She then became a sole practitioner with an office ... in West Palm Beach.

Victoria Rountree

(1902 - 1986)

Date of Admission: 1927

Victoria Rountree was born on October 26, 1902. After passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, Ms. Rountree was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 5, 1927. She practiced in Tampa, maintaining an office in the Wallace S. Building. She later moved to California. Ms. Rountree died in October 1986.

Sources: FSCBAA; *Tampa City Directory* (1928); Social Security Death Index.



Hilda M. Tilton

(1888 - 1972)

Date of Admission: 1927

Hilda Meadows Tilton, the daughter of Susie Colbert and David Meadows, was born on October 17, 1888, in Danielsville, Madison County, Georgia. At the age of 39, she was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 5, 1927, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She died

in Athens, Clarke County, Georgia, right next to the county where she was born, on October 15, 1972, two days before her 84th birthday. At the time of her death, she was living with her relative Ada Tilton.

Sources: FSCBAA; Social Security Death Index; Georgia Death Index.



Lenea I. Stromberg Adlehelm

(1905 -)

Date of Admission: 1928

Lenea I. Stromberg Adlehelm graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1927 and was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege through the State Board of Law Examiners on January 21, 1928. She and her five classmates, Laurine L. Goffin, Mary V. Wakefield Houston, Mary Anne Leddy, Zephyr Thorpe, and Charlotte F. Vogler, comprised 23 percent of Stetson's graduating class in 1927. Ms.

Stromberg maintained a practice in West Palm Beach. She was a founding member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers on June 30, 1951. Ms. Adlehelm later moved to Indian Lake, New York, where she practiced law.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R; MALD (1929 & 1930); MBD; e-mail from Sharon Christenbury.



Ms. Adlehelm and her five classmates, Laurine L. Goffin, Mary V. Wakefield Houston, Mary Anne Leddy, Zephyr Thorpe, and Charlotte

F. Vogler, comprised 23 percent of Stetson's graduating class in 1927.

Ms. Stromberg maintained a practice in West Palm Beach.

She was a founding member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers on June 30, 1951.



Irena A. Lawrence

Date of Admission: 1928

Irena A. Lawrence was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 24, 1928, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.

Ruby Fleming Barney

(1889 - 1970)

Date of Admission: 1928

Ruby Fleming Barney was born on June 23, 1889, in Hickman, Kentucky. In 1910 she received her A.B. degree from the University of Kentucky in Lexington, and she studied law at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. She moved to Jacksonville in 1928 and was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 14, 1928, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. Barney was an associate at Fleming, Hamilton, Diver and Jones, which maintained an office in the Barnett National Bank Building in Jacksonville. The

firm specialized in general practice, banking, trusts, railroads, municipal securities, real estate, probate and corporation law.

She was a member of the Florida State Bar and American Bar Associations, as well as Phi Delta Delta. She was also a member of Riverside Baptist Church.

Ms. Barney died in Jacksonville on February 11, 1970, at the age of 80. She was survived by her husband, Walter V. Barney, and two sons, John Barney and Walter F. Barney.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); *Florida Bar Journal* (1965); FTU, Feb. 1970; MBD.

Susie H. Smith Bell

(1884 -)

Date of Admission: 1928

Susie H. Smith Bell was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 27, 1928, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. Florida Supreme Court records show her as "Mrs. A. H. Bell," and *The Martindale-Hubbell Law Dictionary* (1939) lists both A. H. Bell and Susie H. Bell as attorneys in Green Cove Springs, Florida.

Source: FSCBAA.

Sidney Sommerville Gober

(- 1990)

Date of Admission: 1928

Sidney Sommerville Gober was born in Oakland, Maryland. She received a law degree from Cumberland University and

was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 4, 1928, after passing the bar examination administered by the State

Ms. Barney was an associate at Fleming, Hamilton, Diver and Jones, which maintained an office in the Barnett National Bank Building in Jacksonville. The firm specialized in general practice, banking, trusts, railroads, municipal securities, real estate, probate and corporation law.

Board of Law Examiners. She moved to Jacksonville in 1941. Ms. Gober worked as an attorney in the trust department of Atlantic National Bank (First Union Trust) and in the law firm of Lewis Paul Isaac & Castillo, P.A. She was a member of Florida State Bar Association, South Carolina bar, and Georgia bar.

She was a past regent of the Katherine

Livingston Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and an active member in the Business and Professional Women's Club of Jacksonville.

Ms. Gober died on May 22, 1990, at the age of 82. She was preceded in death by her husband, William A. Gober.

Sources: FSCBAA; FTU, May 1990.

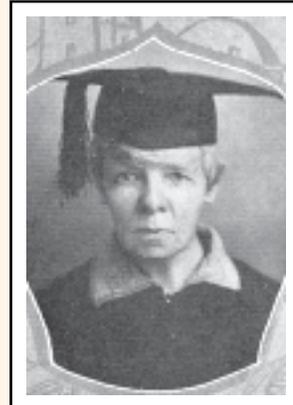


Augusta
Beyer Colton

Date of Admission: 1929

Augusta Beyer Colton graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1929 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on May 21, 1929.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo).



According to attorney Edward Cutler, he first met Ms. Hackney in 1929 when he arrived in Tampa to serve as assistant to Matthew H. McCloskey, Jr., President of McCloskey and Company, a shipbuilding company. Ms. Hackney was assigned to be Mr. Cutler's first secretary. He described her as quite knowledgeable about Florida law, which he was well versed in as an attorney working for the shipyard.

Mabel Claire Altman Hackney

(1903 - 1999)

Date of Admission: 1929

Mabel Claire Altman Hackney was born in 1903. She received her bachelor's degree from Florida State College for Women. It is unclear where or how Ms. Hackney obtained her legal education, but she was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 21, 1929, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

According to attorney Edward Cutler, he first met Ms. Hackney in 1929 when he arrived in Tampa to serve as assistant to Matthew H. McCloskey, Jr., President of McCloskey and Company, a

shipbuilding company. Ms. Hackney was assigned to be Mr. Cutler's first secretary. He described her as quite knowledgeable about Florida law, which he was well versed in as an attorney working for the shipyard. In 1939 Ms. Hackney maintained a law office in the Hinson Building in Tampa.

Mabel Claire Altman married James H. Hackney, a Tampa attorney. She died in 1999.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL D (1939 & 1945); e-mail from attorney Edward Cutler.



Bessie Ethel Sims Williams

(1898 -)

Date of Admission: 1929



Bessie Ethel Sims Williams was born in Palmetto, Florida, on May 17, 1898, to L. and Lola I. Sims. She attended Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. After passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, Ms. Williams was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 21, 1929.

Ms. Williams practiced in Palmetto in 1929 and then in Sarasota starting in 1930. She and her husband, Charles M. Williams, were partners in the firm Williams &

Williams. She also served as an assistant cashier for the Daytona Bank & Trust Company. Ms. Williams is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939) and *The Digest of Women Lawyers & Judges* (1949), the latter of which indicates that she was a housewife as well as an attorney.

Ms. Williams was a member of the Sarasota County and Florida State Bar Associations, Order of the Eastern Star, and Business and Professional Women's Club. She was a Democrat.

Ms. Williams and her husband had three children -- Joyce E. Williams; Charles M. Williams, Jr.; and Marilyn Williams.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); MBD.

Ms. Williams practiced in Palmetto in 1929 and then in Sarasota starting in 1930. She and her husband, Charles M. Williams, were partners in the firm Williams & Williams.



Zorah B. Close

(1898 - possibly 1963)

Date of Admission: 1930



Zorah B. Close was the first woman from Polk County to be admitted to the bar. She was the daughter of D. F. and Sue Close and was born in Thomas, West Virginia, in 1898 and moved to Lakeland, Florida, in August 1926. She worked for Judge H. E. Oxford and read the law in his Lakeland office. She took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners on February 17, 1930, and was admitted to practice on March 15, 1930. Judge H. C. Petteway administered the oath on March 28, 1930, at which time she intended to concentrate her practice in probate, estate and real

estate law.

Ms. Close was married to Mr. Owens at the time she began her career as a lawyer, but began practicing under her maiden name in an office in the Lakeland State Bank Building in 1930. During 1931 she worked at 104 South Florida Avenue in Lakeland, which may have been for the firm of Oxford and Cuts.

Ms. Close took a position in the state comptroller's office in Tallahassee in 1933. She had offices in both Lakeland and Tallahassee in 1935. That year, she also received a degree from Southern College in Lakeland, where she attended classes after becoming a lawyer. She was

Zorah B. Close was the first woman from Polk County to be admitted to the bar.

also a member of the Professional and Business Women's Club.

In 1936 Ms. Close was employed in Tallahassee in the state comptroller's office as a clerk. She lived at various addresses in Tallahassee during the years that followed, but by 1948 she was no longer listed in the city directory.

Ms. Close's father, D. F. Close, was listed as residing at 421 Wilson Avenue in Tallahassee in 1948; it is suspected that she cared for him during his later years and the residence was listed in his name, which was common at that time.

There is no record of death for Zorah B. Close in the Social Security Death Index. The Florida State Archives index indicates that a "Z. Owens" died in 1963, but the old record is not legible. As a consequence, her relatives have not been traceable.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); Lakeland Evening Ledger & Star Telegram, Mar. 28, 1930, at 9; Tallahassee & Lakeland City Directories; Social Security Death Index; death records in Florida State Archives; conversation with librarian for the City of Lakeland.

Dixie L. Herlong Chastain

(1909 -)

Date of Admission: 1930

Judge Dixie L. Herlong Chastain was born on May 15, 1909, to Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Herlong. Her father, who was a civil engineer, and mother, a housewife, always assumed that she would go to college. Judge Chastain reports that she got sick at the sight of blood, which ruled out becoming a doctor, so the alternative was to become a lawyer.

She attended John B. Stetson University as an undergraduate from 1925 to 1926, and then pursued her LL.B. and L.I. certificate at the University of Miami School of Law. While in law school, Judge Chastain was secretary-treasurer of the law school, secretary of Rho Beta Omicron, secretary-treasurer of Beta Chi, member of Zeta Phi, and assistant prosecuting attorney for the student association. She graduated magna cum laude in 1930, becoming the school's first woman graduate. She also pursued graduate studies in sociology and government at Duke University in 1930. Judge Chastain was admitted to practice law under the

diploma privilege through the State Board of Law Examiners on June 6, 1930. She was admitted to the United States District Courts the same year.



In 1930 Judge Chastain became employed with attorney Tom Ferguson. She had a general practice in Miami from 1930 to 1956. She twice ran for judge of county court, but lost. After 26 years in practice, Dixie Herlong Chastain "retired" in 1956, but she began work as an investigating attorney with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in Dade County. In 1957 she was a referee in delinquency and dependency cases.

On May 27, 1965, Judge Chastain was appointed by Governor Haydon Burns to fill a newly created third judgeship in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court of Dade County. Thus, Judge Chastain became Dade County's second woman judge in the juvenile court and the third woman judge overall in Dade County. (Edith Meserve Atkinson (1922) was elected in 1924 to be the first

Judge Chastain became Dade County's second woman judge in the juvenile court and the third woman judge overall in Dade County.

At the time of her judicial appointment, women constituted only two percent of The Florida Bar.



By revision of the Constitution of Florida, she became a circuit judge in 1973, and while on the circuit bench, she was appointed administrative judge for the juveniles judges in Dade County.

The county commissioners named the juvenile court building, which was being built during this time, the "Dixie Herlong Chastain Building."



woman judge in the juvenile court, and Mattie Belle Davis (1936) became judge of the metropolitan court in 1959.) At the time of her judicial appointment, women constituted only two percent of The Florida Bar. Of the 188 women lawyers in the state, 85 lived in Miami and 65 were members of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers.

By revision of the Constitution of Florida, she became a circuit judge in 1973, and while on the circuit bench, she was appointed administrative judge for the juvenile judges in Dade County. The county commissioners named the juvenile court building, which was being built during this time, the "Dixie Herlong Chastain Building." Judge Chastain served on the circuit bench until her retirement in December 1978 at the age of 70. By recall appointment in 1979, Senior Judge Chastain began serving part-time as acting circuit judge on the juvenile court bench into the mid-1990s.

Judge Chastain chaired an adoption committee and has been a member of the International Association of Juvenile Court Justices, National Council of Juve-

nile Court Judges, Florida Juvenile Officers Association, Juvenile Council of Dade County, World Peace Through Law, Dade County and American Bar Associations,

Phi Delta Delta Legal Fraternity, Chi Omega Sorority, Soroptimist International of Northeast Miami, and the Young Democratic Club of Dade County. She has been president of the University of Miami Law School Alumni Association. She is a member of Central Baptist Church of Miami and has also been active in many civic and welfare activities.

In 1935 she married Mr. R. B. Chastain, a businessman who also worked in law enforcement, and they had

three children -- R. Bryan Chastain, Jr.; Richard H. Chastain; and Dixie Chastain Lemons. Throughout her career, Judge Chastain balanced her legal practice with homemaking and family.

Judge Dixie Herlong Chastain currently resides in Miami.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photo); MH, Mar. 14, 1965; Florida Association for Women Lawyers program (June 18, 1995); MBD; conversations with Judge Chastain (photo).



Marjorie G. Howard

Date of Admission: 1930

Marjorie G. Howard was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 6, 1930. Although the supreme court's records indicate that Ms. Howard was admitted under the diploma privilege as a graduate of the University of Miami School of Law, the university's records do not support that fact.

Sources: FSCBAA; MBD.



Mae T. Donovan

(1886 - 1971)

Date of Admission: 1930

Mary "Mae" Thorn Donovan was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on December 1, 1886. On June 8, 1910,

she married Eugene Alcorn Donovan, also of Philadelphia. In 1921 Mr. Donovan became interested in the opportunities





in Florida and accepted a transfer from his employer, Prudential Life Insurance. The Donovans moved to Daytona Beach with their two children, William Paul and Jean Mae. Mr. Donovan later went into business for himself in real estate and general insurance. In addition, he held positions as the coroner, justice of the peace (1926-47), city clerk, and tax assessor.

Meanwhile, Ms. Donovan pursued a career in the law. She attended Stetson University College of Law in DeLand from 1927 to 1929 with her best friend Edith Horn. It does not appear that either woman graduated from law school, but they were both admitted to practice law in Florida on June 16, 1930, after passing the examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

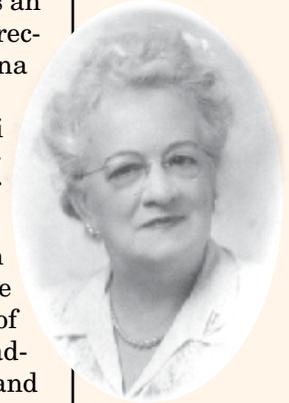
In 1930 Mae Donovan was employed as a legal secretary for Naji A. Akras in Daytona Beach. In the mid-1930s, the Donovans moved to 120 Broadway in

Daytona Beach, where she established a home law office. She was first listed as an attorney in the Daytona Beach City Directory in 1935. She practiced in Daytona Beach for the remainder of her life.

Ms. Donovan was a member of Phi Delta Delta and the Volusia County Bar Association. She was also a member of the Daytona First Church of Christian Scientists and the Order of the Eastern Star (O.E.S.). From 1931 to 1932, she served as the worthy grand matron of the O.E.S for the state of Florida. In addition, she held a paid position as grand secretary of the O.E.S. for many years.

Mae Donovan was widowed on July 2, 1948. She continued to live and practice law in Daytona Beach until her death. In 1971 Mae Donovan, who was then residing with her son, William Paul Donovan, died at the Clyatt Memorial Center on September 27 at the age of 84. She was survived by her son, four grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); Daytona Beach City Directory; Pleasant Daniel Gold, *History of Volusia County* (1927); Stetson University records of attendance; obituary; conversations with relatives Dorothy Donovan, Bonnie Dobosz, and Paul Donovan (photos).



Ms. Donovan pursued a career in the law. She attended Stetson University College of Law with her best friend Edith Horn.



Frances Drury

(1904-1964)

Date of Admission: 1930

Frances Drury was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 16, 1930, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.

Edith H. Horn

(1888 - 1954)

Date of Admission: 1930

Edith H. Horn was born in 1888. She married Harry A. Horn, an attorney in Daytona Beach, and the couple had two children, Beverly and Helen. Ms. Horn

returned to school in the 1920s and obtained her undergraduate degree from Stetson University. Ms. Horn then attended Stetson College of Law with





The U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida asked Ms. House to join his staff in 1929 in Jacksonville. She remained in this position for the next 34 years, handling everything from condemnation work and counterfeit money cases to moonshining and drug violations. In 1963 when the Middle District was created, Ms. House was named acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District....



her best friend, Mae T. Donovan, and was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 16, 1930. (It is unclear whether Ms. Horn actually graduated from law school, but she was admitted after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.)

Grandson Al Bushman recalls that Ms. Horn opened her own office in Daytona Beach after she graduated. His mother explained to him that those were Depression years, so money was scarce. Additionally, his grandmother was faced with the fact that people would simply not use a female

attorney. His grandmother did not have enough business to keep her office open and so she joined her husband and worked at his law firm, Horn & Ossinsky, on Main Street in Daytona Beach. Mr. Bushman recalls that his grandfather, Harry A. Horn, was a city attorney for Daytona Beach and that his grandmother did insurance work. She went to the office on a daily basis and worked until she died of a heart attack in 1954. Mr. Horn died in 1958.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); conversations with Al Bushman and daughter Beverly.



Edith E. House

(1903 - 1987)

Date of Admission: 1930

The daughter of Lucius and Lell House, Edith Elizabeth House was born on November 1, 1903, in Winder, Georgia. Her father was a bank president and her mother was a homemaker; she had two brothers. Edith would often accompany her father to his office. When interviewed in 1984 by *The Florida Times-Union*, she commented that "what he did was a lot more interesting than what my mother did all day." When she was 13, Edith's father told her that Georgia had finally passed legislation allowing women to practice law. Her goal was set.

Ms. House graduated from the University of Georgia College of Law as co-valedictorian in 1925, in the first graduating class to include women. She worked her way through law school by tutoring blind students, and later she became the first recipient of a private financial aid endowment grant at the law school. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 16, 1930, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. House was asked to work in St. Petersburg by the uncle of Senator Rich-



ard B. Russell (D-Ga.). The day Ms. House arrived in St. Petersburg, she received another offer from the Clearwater firm of Baskin and Jordan. She accepted the latter offer and spent the next four years in general practice, until W. Patrick Hughes, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, asked her to join his staff in 1929 in Jacksonville. She remained in this position for the next 34 years, handling everything from condemnation work and counterfeit money cases to moonshining and drug violations. When the Southern District of Florida was divided in 1963 and the Middle District created, Ms. House was named acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District by Judge David W. Dyer. She held that position in Miami for eight months and retired on December 14, 1963.

Upon retiring, Ms. House moved back to Jacksonville. In 1984 she told *The Florida Times-Union* how she had been spending her time. She said, "I kept up my Florida Bar membership, and I read the journals, keep house, play a little poker and grow a few tomatoes."

Since 1983, the Women Law Students'

Association at the University of Georgia Law School has sponsored "The Edith House Lecture Series," which brings outstanding women lawyers to the law school. Recent lecturers have included Anne Coughlin, University of Virginia law professor, and Sarah Weddington, who changed history when she successfully argued *Roe v. Wade* before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ms. House was further honored by her alma mater in April 1984 when her portrait, commissioned by the Women Law Students' Association, was placed in the

school courtroom. Hers was the 57th portrait placed there and the first female.

Ms. House died in Jacksonville on December 14, 1987, at the age of 84. She never married and had no children, but was survived by several cousins.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); FTU, 1984; University of Georgia, Women's Law Students' Association records; MBD; conversations with cousins Anne D. Burke, Peggy Harrell, Julia Harrison, Lucille McDonald, Marty Patrick Ogletree, and Clyde Patrick.



Margaret M. Collins

(1897 -)

Date of Admission: 1931

Margaret M. Collins was born on May 16, 1895, to E. H. and Harriet Hall McIlvaine. (There were several McIlvaines who were attorneys in Jacksonville at this time, but it is unknown whether she was related to them.) Ms. Collins was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 14, 1931, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She was an

associate of J. V. Walton, a prominent attorney in Palatka and father of Kate L. Walton Engelken (1936). Ms. Collins was widowed and had two children -- David N. Collins and Harriet H. Collins. She was Presbyterian and a Democrat, and is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL D (1939, 1945 & 1949).



Mary Cinthya Vann Racey

(1909 - 1973)

Date of Admission: 1931

Mary Cinthya Vann Racey Florida, to J. Frank Vann and Mary Augusta Vann. Ms. Racey pursued her undergraduate degree at Duke University and the University of Miami, which awarded her an A.B. degree, and she received her LL.B. from the University of Miami School of Law in 1931. She was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 5, 1931, and



was born in 1909 in Tampa, was subsequently admitted to the South Carolina bar in 1944.

Ms. Racey practiced in Miami for many years and maintained an office in the Ingraham Building. She also worked in the legal department of the City of Miami.

Ms. Racey was one of the first women to be commissioned in the Women's Army



Since 1983, the Women Law Students' Association at the University of Georgia Law School has sponsored "The Edith House Lecture Series," which brings outstanding women lawyers to the law school.





Ms. Racey was one of the first women to be commissioned in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) during World War II.

Corps (WAC) during World War II. She was discharged as a captain. In 1948 she moved to Tallahassee and did legal editing for the Municipal Code Corporation. She was a member of Chi Omega and Phi Delta Delta International Legal Fraternity

Mary Cinthya Vann Racey died in Atlanta, Georgia, on October 21, 1973, following a long illness.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photo); *Tallahassee Democrat* (Oct. 22, 1973); MBD.



Lorraine Gould Smith

Date of Admission: 1931

Lorraine Gould Smith received an LL.B. degree from the University of Miami School of Law in 1931 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 5, 1931.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R; MBD.



Mary Gunn Campbell

(1894 - 1958)

Date of Admission: 1931

Mary Gunn Campbell was born in Walton County, Florida, on March 20, 1894. She was the daughter of Bill Campbell of DeFuniak Springs, born during his first marriage, and she had two siblings, three half-sisters, and one half-brother. She received her education at Florida State Normal School and Palmer College and was admitted to practice law on June 15, 1931, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. Campbell practiced law in Marianna, Florida, as an associate with John H. Carter, Sr., and John H. Carter, Jr., and was a member of both the Jackson County and Florida State Bar Associations. Her primary practice focused on real estate, in-

cluding mortgages and title searches, and she also handled uncontested divorces. She practiced in Marianna until her death on July 10, 1958.

Mary Gunn Campbell was a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Marianna. She never married or learned to drive. Several nephews and nieces, their spouses and children survive her.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); conversations with relatives, Angus Andrews, Helen Asbell, Elizabeth Barnes, Herman Blackwell, Tom Blackwell, and Mayme Steele, and with Ruth Cox and Francis C. Jones; gravestone at Magnolia Cemetery in DeFuniak Springs.



Ms. Campbell practiced law in Marianna, Florida, as an associate with John H. Carter, Sr., and John H. Carter, Jr.... Her primary practice focused on real estate, including mortgages and title searches, and she also handled uncontested divorces. She practiced in Marianna until her death on July 10, 1958.



Hariette E. R. Cotton

Date of Admission: 1931

Hariette E. R. Cotton was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 15, 1931, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.



Carolina Byrd Ramsey

Date of Admission: 1931

Carolina Byrd Ramsey was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 27, 1931, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.



Ethel Jane Steele McMasters Brannon

(1904 - 1957)

Date of Admission: 1931

Ethel "Jane" Steele McMasters Brannon was born in 1904 in Roanoke, Virginia, as one of seven children in her family. Her father, John Steele, was a farmer, and her mother, Jenny Lee Doran Steele, was a nurse. Ms. Brannon received her undergraduate degree from Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio, and her law degree from Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 31, 1931, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.



According to her nephew, Jack Steele, Ms. Brannon worked at some point for the late Claude Pepper (1900-89), who served one term in the Florida Legislature in 1928, representing Taylor County, and numerous terms in both the United States Senate and House of Representatives. It was Senator Pepper who recommended Ms. Brannon for a civilian position in the United States

Army, which allowed her to travel overseas and participate in the Nuremberg War Trials in 1946. She then traveled to Trieste, Italy, where she was part of the post-war military government.

Upon her return from Europe, Ms. Brannon resided in Tampa, Florida, where she had practiced law before the war. She formed a partnership with George A. Gibbs in the firm Gibbs & Brannon, with offices in the Tampa Theatre Building. Her nephew recalls that she had a varied legal practice and handled many divorce cases. She was a loquacious woman, who told many amusing stories.

Ms. Brannon was twice married, once to Mr. McMasters, a navy doctor, from whom she was widowed, and then to Mr. Brannon. She died in Tampa in 1957.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); conversations with Jack Steele (photo).



Edith McIlwaine James

(1902 - 1970)

Date of Admission: 1931

Edith McIlwaine James was born on September 7, 1902. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 31,

1931, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She practiced law in Jack-



Senator Pepper ... recommended Ms. Brannon for a civilian position in the United States Army, which allowed her to travel overseas and participate in the Nuremberg War Trials in 1946. She then traveled to Trieste, Italy, where she was part of the post-war military government.



sonville for some years, then moved her practice to Miami. She was president of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers

in 1956-57. Edith McIlvaine James passed away in August 1970.

Sources: FSCBAA; MBD.



Dorothy Douglas

(1896 - 1995)

Date of Admission: 1932

Dorothy Douglas was born in Dunedin, Pinellas County, Florida, on August 31, 1896, into a family of seven children. The *Bench and Bar of Florida* (1935) indicates that Ms.

Douglas's legal education was obtained at Blackstone Institute, where she received an LL.B. in 1930. However, according to her sister, Ruth Douglas Webb, Ms. Douglas never attended law school. Rather, she worked as a secretary for Mr. Casler in Clearwater, and he encouraged Ms. Douglas to study law. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on March 12, 1932, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She maintained an office in Dunedin.

Ms. Douglas was very active in the First Presbyterian Church of Dunedin and in the

Dunedin community. She did a great deal of volunteer work, including making clothes for orphans, as well as for children of members of her church. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star and received the Past Worthy Matron Award for her charity work.

Ms. Douglas traveled extensively throughout the world, both with tour groups and alone, with the exception of China. Her sister saved 10,000 slides Ms. Douglas took while traveling.

Dorothy Douglas never married. She died on July 27, 1995.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); First Presbyterian Church of Dunedin records; MBD; conversations with relatives Ruth Douglas Webb and Donald Scott Douglas.



Mada Burney Fraser Babcock McLendon

(1909 - 1999)

Date of Admission: 1932

Judge Mada Burney Fraser Babcock McLendon was born on October 16, 1909, in Putnam County. She was a long-time resident of Lake Wales, moving there with her family when she was five. Her father was a section foreman for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company. Judge McLendon attended elementary school in Lake Wales in a one-room school. She enrolled in Stetson University in DeLand in September 1927. The Bachelor of Law degree was conferred upon her by Stetson in May

1932, and she was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on May 23, 1932. Because of the Great Depression, Judge McLendon was unable to practice law until June 1936.

She was elected municipal judge of Lake Wales for five consecutive terms from 1938 until 1948. During 1942, she was requested by the Selective Service Board for Polk County to assist citizens in filling out selective service questionnaires. This volunteer work led her to assisting the dependents of men in military service in the



preparation of applications for financial assistance.

Judge McLendon was a member of the Florida State Bar and American Bar Associations, American Association of University Women, Business and Professional Women's Association-International, Women's Club of Lake Wales, Florida Federation of Women's Clubs, Lake Wales Area Chamber of Commerce, Lake Wales Chapter 107, and the Order of the Eastern Star (O.E.S.). She was a member of Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Bartow.

Judge McLendon helped organize the Business and Professional Women's Club of Lake Wales, serving as its president. She also served as district director for all the clubs in Dade, Hillsborough, Pinellas and Polk Counties, and was voted Woman of the Year.

As a member of the first board of directors of Lake Wales Library Association, she assisted in the drive to raise money for construction of the present library. As a member of the O.E.S., she served in eight

offices and was worthy matron in 1955.

On March 4, 1989, at Stetson University's homecoming, Judge McLendon was presented with the Stetson Lawyers' Association annual "Ben C. Willard Memorial Award."

Judge McLendon closed her law office on December 31, 1979, but continued to attend legal seminars and remained a member in good standing of The Florida Bar. She was admitted as an attorney and counselor in the United States Supreme Court on November 16, 1981, at 72. She officially retired from the practice of law on October 1, 1993.

Judge McLendon was the widow of Bryant Milton McLendon and Caral Sanford Babcock. She died on March 3, 1999, at the age of 89, in Lake Wales.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); "Judge Mada Babcock McLendon, Lake Wales Municipal Judge, Dies," *Polk County Democrat*, Mar. 4, 1999; MBD; correspondence from Kingswood Sprott, Jr.; conversation with cousin Roger Hewitt.

Judge McLendon closed her law office on December 31, 1979, but continued to attend legal seminars and remained a member in good standing of The Florida Bar. She was admitted as an attorney and counselor in the United States Supreme Court on November 16, 1981, at 72.

Carmen Excelle Christian

Date of Admission: 1932

Carmen Excelle Christian graduated from the University of Miami School of Law with an LL.B. degree and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 1, 1932. She also attended the University of Miami for her undergraduate degree, and during those years she was a member of the Y.W.C.A. and women's athletic program. Although little is known of her legal career, records show that Ms. Christian was a practicing attorney in 1957 and 1958.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photo); MBD.



Ethel Ernest Murrell

(1905 - 1991)

Date of Admission: 1932



Ethel Ernest Murrell was born in Laramie, Wyoming, on May 12, 1905, to John W. and Ethel Connor Ernest. She was educated in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and was a graduate of

King-Smith of Washington, D.C, and the Sorbonne in Paris, France. She toured Europe and the Orient lecturing on women's rights before moving to Miami.

She married John Moore Murrell in 1931. The couple never had children of their own, but her husband had a son from his first marriage, John Moore Murrell, Jr.,

Ms. Murrell toured Europe and the Orient lecturing on women's rights before moving to Miami.

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During her campaign for women's rights, she wrote a daily column, "Law for the Ladies," which was carried in eight Florida newspapers, and she conducted a legal forum over radio station WKAT. As chair of a Florida State Bar Association committee, she drafted, sponsored, and through various organizations, worked for the passage of the Florida Married Women's Act in 1943, as well as for legislation permitting women to serve on grand and petit juries in Florida.

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who practiced law with his father at the business address of 707 Biscayne Building, Miami.

Ms. Murrell received her LL.B. from the University of Miami School of Law and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 1, 1932. She practiced law with her husband in Miami.

Ethel Ernest Murrell was a professional lecturer and leader in promoting women's equality. She promoted a three-point program to achieve women's equality under the law in the new state constitution. She started a ten-year campaign in 1933 to get the state legislature to pass an act endowing married women with the same property rights as men. During her campaign for women's rights, she wrote a daily column, "Law for the Ladies," which was carried in eight Florida newspapers, and she conducted a legal forum over radio station WKAT. As chair of a Florida State Bar Association committee, she drafted, sponsored, and through various organizations, worked for the passage of the Florida Married Women's Act in 1943, as well as for legislation permitting women to serve on grand and petit juries in Florida. Ms. Murrell tried to get the Equal Rights Amendment made a part of the Florida Constitution in



1946. She was elected chairperson of the National Woman's Party, a nonpolitical organization devoted to raising the status of women, in 1951.

In 1943 she was elected state vice-president for the National Association of Women Lawyers, and she was a national officer (fourth vice-president) in 1943-44. Ms. Murrell was also a member of the Florida State Bar, Dade County Bar, and American Bar Associations; Business and Professional Women's Club General Federation; Phi Delta Delta International Legal Fraternity; and Soroptimist Club, Inc., Miami (first president). She was secretary-treasurer of Conor Hotel Company in Laramie, Wyoming.

She engaged in writing and publishing poetry since 1933 and was a member of the Miami League of American Pen Women (president) and Vivian Yeiser Lamarmore Poetry Society. She wrote a college text entitled *Law for the Ladies, Practical Law*, and a book of verse, *Three Cornered Tune*. She also collected and sculpted masks.

Several years after Mr. Murrell's death in 1982, Ethel Ernest Murrell married Mr. Arthur Williams. She died in Miami on June 10, 1991, at the age of 88.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); 75NAWL (photo); DWL&J; MBD.

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Mary Neff Reebel

(1909 - 1981)

Date of Admission: 1932

Mary Neff Reebel was born on February 13, 1909. She graduated from the University of Miami School of Law in 1932 with an LL.B. degree and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 1, 1932. She was a member of Phi



Delta Delta Legal Fraternity and was in the student senate during law school.

She is reported to have served as librarian of the Dade County Law Library in 1941 and to have worked as a substitute teacher. She is also reported to have

acted as secretary to Ethel Ernest Murrell (1932) and assisted in writing *Law for the Ladies*.

Ms. Reeber tragically died in an automobile accident in November 1981. She

was survived by her son.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photos); MBD; conversation with Daisy Richards Bisz.



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## Margaret M. Barrett

**Date of Admission: 1932**

Margaret M. Barrett was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 16, 1932, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.

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Marie C. Broetzman

(1905 - 1993)

Date of Admission: 1932



Marie C. Broetzman was born in Coblenz, near Bonn, Germany, on September 16, 1905. She moved to Jacksonville with her family. She worked for the City of Jacksonville in its civil engineering department, went to night school, and then studied law. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 19, 1932, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. Broetzman conducted a private practice in her Jacksonville home, charging small fees to neighbors and parishioners from the Catholic Church. She helped

minorities and blacks and visited death row inmates. In addition to her will-drafting work, she helped prisoners with their cases. She was a member of the Jacksonville Bar Association and received a 50-year certificate from The Florida Bar.

She was a member of the Business and Professional Women's Club. A friend, Ms. Devol, described Ms. Broetzman as having known all the judges and being a wonderful, giving woman. She spoke German and English, and perhaps Spanish. She was also remembered for aiding Cuban refugees.

Marie C. Broetzman died on August 17, 1993. She was survived by her brother's daughter, Marie Broetzman, of Lynchburg, Virginia.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MBD; conversation with Ms. Devol.

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*Ms. Broetzman conducted a private practice in her Jacksonville home, charging small fees to neighbors and parishioners from the Catholic Church. She helped minorities and blacks and visited death row inmates.*

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Elva Victoria Diaz

(1908 -)

Date of Admission: 1932

Elva Victoria Diaz was born in 1908 and received her undergraduate degree from the Florida State College for Women. She earned her law degree from Stetson University College of Law and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 8, 1933. She practiced in Tampa.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935); MHL (1939).

Emma Roesing

(1894 - 1983)

Date of Admission: 1933



Emma Roesing was born in Chicago in 1894. She received an LL.B. from Chicago-Kent College of Law, Chicago, Illinois, in 1916, and also attended Columbia University. She moved to Florida in 1925 to become the office manager of the legal department at Florida Power and Light Company in Miami.

She then obtained an LL.B. from the University of Miami School of Law in 1933 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 8, 1933.

After her admission to the bar, Ms. Roesing served as an attorney in the legal department of Florida Power and Light Company and as an associate in the law firm of Hanks & Preston from 1939 until 1943. In 1943 she established her own practice. She was appointed and served ten years as an investigating attorney for the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court of Dade County (1943-53). After retiring from that position, she was in private practice in Miami's Congress Building with her associate, Henrietta S. Biscoe (1961), sharing office space with Mattie Belle Davis (1936) prior to Judge Davis's appointment to the bench.

Ms. Roesing was a dedicated member

of the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL), which she joined as soon as she was admitted to the bar in 1933. She served several terms as NAWL's state delegate from Florida (1939-42), then several terms as the southeastern regional director, in addition to serving on many committees. She was co-chair of the NAWL annual meetings held in Miami Beach in 1959 and 1965, and was responsible for many of the details that made those meetings successful. She attended most of the NAWL annual meetings and many joined the organization as a result of her invitation and urging. In 1965 Ms. Roesing received the NAWL Outstanding Service Award for her more than 30 years of service to the association. She was also a founding member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL) in June 1951, and she was active in the Miami Business and Professional Women's Club.

Emma Roesing died on September 18, 1983, at the age of 89. In her will, she made a bequest to her dear friend Judge Mattie Belle Davis, which will be used to publish Judge Davis's book on FAWL's history.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R; 75NAWL (photo); MH, at 3D, Sept. 20, 1983 (obituary); MBD.

Ms. Roesing attended most of the NAWL annual meetings and many joined the organization as a result of her invitation and urging. In 1965 she received the NAWL Outstanding Service Award for her more than 30 years of service to the association. She was also a founding member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers in June 1951.



Marjorie M. Varner

(1907 - 1993)

Date of Admission: 1933

Marjorie M. Varner was born in Phenix City, Alabama, on March 7, 1907. She was the daughter of John I. and Gertrude Davis Varner. She received both her A.B. and LL.B. from the University of Miami in 1931 and 1933, respectively. During law school she served on the student senate for two years and was a member of Beta Chi.

Ms. Varner was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 8, 1933.

Ms. Varner practiced law in Miami from 1933 until she retired in 1980. For many years she maintained an of-





office in the Biscayne Building. She was an associate with Fred Botts and N. R. Field of the firm Botts & Field. Attorney Daisy Richards Bisz recalls seeing Ms. Varner in probate court. Ms. Varner was a member of the Florida State Bar, Dade County Bar, and American Bar Associations, and the National Association of Women Lawyers, for which

she served as state vice-president in 1943-44. She was also a member of the National Woman's Party, Theosophical Society, and the Business and Professional Women's Club. She was a Democrat and Methodist. According to Ms. Bisz, Ms. Varner was a poet.

Ms. Varner died on August 18, 1993. She never married.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photos); MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); 75NAWL; MBD; conversation with Daisy Richards Bisz.



Natalie Marion Weinstein Berger

(1908 - 1999)

Date of Admission: 1933

Natalie Marion Weinstein Berger received her undergraduate degree in 1929 from Florida State College for Women. In 1932 she received an LL.B. degree from the University of Florida College of Law and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 10, 1933. She was the first of her family to go to law school.



Ms. Berger practiced law in Miami Beach for many years. In 1939 she and Diana Coopersmith (1937) were partners in the law firm Weinstein & Coopersmith. An article in the *Miami Herald* reported their representation of a criminal defendant, and stated that theirs was the first all-feminine firm in Florida.

Ms. Berger's siblings followed in her footsteps, and she later practiced with her sister, Doris Weinstein Sirkin, who was admitted in 1949, and her two brothers, Leonard and Julian Weinstein, under the firm name of Weinstein, Weinstein & Weinstein. Hers was a general practice.

One of Ms. Berger's clients, Philip Mann, succeeded in involving her in a non-sched-

uled airline business, Cloud Coach Airlines. Among her other businesses was Waves Motor Inn and Cottage in Old Orchard Beach, Maine, near Portland, which she operated for 50 years. She inherited her love for business from her parents, who operated a grocery supply business in St. Augustine during the winter and in Maine in the summer.

Ms. Berger was twice married, once to Dr. Nathan Cohen of New York, and then to Moe Berger of St. Augustine, both of whom are deceased. Most noteworthy are her many works with Jewish women's organizations and service leagues, such

as Hadassah.

Natalie Marion Weinstein Berger passed away in August 1999. Her sister and two brothers survive her.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R (photo); MHL (1939 & 1949); MBD; conversations with niece Sugar Firtel (photo) and Doris Sirkin.



Ms. Berger practiced law in Miami Beach for many years. In 1939 she and Diana Coopersmith (1937) were partners in the law firm Weinstein & Coopersmith. An article in the Miami Herald reported their representation of a criminal defendant, and stated that theirs was the first all-feminine firm in Florida.



Rose Ealine Friedlin

Date of Admission: 1933

Rose Ealine Friedlin earned an A.B. degree at Illinois and transferred her first year of law school credits to the University of Florida College of Law, from which she graduated with a J.D. degree in 1933. She was admitted to practice law in Florida

under the diploma privilege on June 10, 1933. Following her graduation, Ms. Friedlin moved to Washington, D.C., and served with the Securities and Exchange Commission for many years.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R; MBD.

Ms. Gehan spoke with Dean Harry R. Trusler about enrolling, because women, while legally allowed to attend the University of Florida College of Law since 1925, were not encouraged to do so.

Dean Trusler reportedly "stood up and bowed from the waist saying: 'My dear young lady may I persuade you to study law.'"

On her first day of law school, all the students (male) formed two lines through which she had to traverse in order to enter the law school building.

Clara Backus Floyd Gehan

(1909 - 1992)

Date of Admission: 1933

Clara Backus Floyd Gehan was born in Hawthorne, Alachua County, Florida, on September 10, 1909. Her parents were George M. Floyd, M.D., a local country doctor, and Clara M. Floyd, R.N., a nurse from Worcester, Massachusetts. A black midwife, "Aunt Myriah," also worked with her parents.

Ms. Gehan received her bachelor's degree from Brenau College in Gainesville, Georgia, in 1929 and then returned home to teach Latin in Gainesville High School. Her ambition to enter graduate school was thwarted initially, because the law prohibited women from attending the University of Florida if the selected courses were offered at Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee. In a chance conversation with Law Professor Clifford Crandall in the summer of 1930, she was urged to pursue her interest in law school. She spoke with Dean Harry R. Trusler about enrolling, because women, while legally allowed to attend the University of Florida College of Law since 1925, were not encouraged to do so. Dean Trusler reportedly "stood up and bowed from the waist saying: 'My



dear young lady may I persuade you to study law.'"

On her first day of law school, all the students (male) formed two lines through which she had to traverse in order to enter the law school building. Several faculty wives and a secretary audited law school classes before Ms. Gehan, but she was the first woman to matriculate. She graduated with honors in 1933 with a J.D. and received the Harrison Award for the highest overall

average. Commenting on her law school experience, she said: "I was the first young woman. It wasn't bad. You felt conspicuous; you stuck out like a sore thumb. But they (the male students) weren't rude. Some ignored me as a matter of principle. I still have some fine friends from law school."

Clara Floyd Gehan was admitted to practice in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 10, 1933, and was a member of The Florida Bar for more than 50 years. She worked for a short time in Jacksonville for no pay (this was the end of the Depression) and then for about \$15 per week. Returning to Gainesville, she worked in the Baxter & Clayton firm for

nearly 10 years.

In 1943 Clara Floyd married Frederick Gehan and accompanied him to Salt Lake City where he was stationed during the war. Ms. Gehan returned home in the fall of 1945 to give birth to her only daughter, Julia. Upon Mr. Gehan's return, he was hired by the University of Florida to teach humanities and English. (He had earned B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Florida.) Their daughter Julia graduated from Vassar College in 1967 and later from U.C.L.A. She also took graduate courses at the University of Florida. Sadly, both husband and daughter predeceased Ms. Gehan.

In May 1946 Ms. Gehan returned to practice law, first with Baxter & Clayton, then with Jenkins & Jenkins, and Bates & Lowery. In 1963 she set up her own practice, primarily in real property and probate law, but with a mission to assist the poor. Her first office was located on a second floor above a shoe store in downtown Gainesville, and her last one was on North East First Street.

Ms. Gehan became the role model for women who followed her in the practice. She freely gave advice and counsel to young women lawyers to aid in their acceptance by the legal community. While holding firmly to her views and positions, particularly on controversial issues, she was not overbearing or dominating but won over opposition by gentle persuasion and southern charm. She was respected and admired by lawyers in the community for her knowledge of the law, legal skills, high ethical standards, and her sensitivity to the needs of the less-fortunate.

Her competence, distinction as the first woman lawyer locally, and drive to help others led to her being drafted to serve the community on numerous committees, boards and organizations. She was president (1942-43) and director (1952-53) of the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, she served on the Legal Aid Committee of the local bar, and she chaired that committee from 1961 until 1963. She was actively involved in the establishment of the Storefront Legal Aid Service, which was the forerunner of Three Rivers Legal Services, Inc., and was instrumental in founding the Legal Aid and Defender Clinic at the law school in 1968.

An incident in 1963 involving four blacks who attempted to purchase movie tickets at the all-white Florida Theater led to her appointment by the mayor to a newly created Gainesville Advisory Bi-Racial Committee, which was to help the city integrate peacefully by desegregating public accommodations. The committee successfully persuaded local businesses to open their doors to blacks. By the time the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed, only one local restaurant had not complied. The mayor served as the first chair, but Ms. Gehan assumed the chairmanship soon thereafter and served until 1965 when the committee disbanded.

In a taped interview, Frank Orser recorded Clara Gehan's comments on the committee's activities. She stated that she accepted the appointment because she had her own practice, whereas if she were in a firm, she would have had to have approval of every partner in the firm before accepting an appointment to a committee dealing with a major controversial issue. On the top of every agenda distributed to the committee, she placed the words, "Keep calm, keep temper." The committee had no authority or power of any kind, but by bringing business people into the meetings or going out to persuade them, the committee successfully integrated the community in two years without any violence. Ms. Gehan recalled that at the time "no [N]egro could buy a movie ticket, or get a meal in a restaurant or snack bar, rent a motel or hotel room, attend white schools, sit in the front of a bus, sit in the main waiting room of doctors' offices, and in hospitals were confined to one floor where all patients from maternity to surgical were merged together." Even in an office where she worked at one time, the lawyers held a meeting to determine how to address Negro clients. They could not be called "Mr." or "Mrs." so it was decided to call them by the full first and last name, a practice that continued into the 1950s.

Clara Floyd Gehan concluded that serving on the committee was the most challenging and interesting work she had ever done. Not everyone agreed with the committee's objectives, but most of the businessmen they contacted could see the need to overcome segregation in the community. She cajoled them by asking them to be "good sports and cooperate!" She was



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Ms. Gehan's activities and honors include ... being appointed by Governor Ruebin Askew in the 1970s to two terms on the Judicial Nominating Committee for the Eighth Judicial Circuit, which she chaired; helping to form the local "Lady Lawyers" in the 1970s, which continue to meet as the Eighth Judicial Circuit Chapter of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers; serving on the University of Florida College of Law Alumni Council and its campaign committee, which raised funds to build Bruton-Geer Hall; and being nominated in 1986 for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame.



proud of giving time to a worthy cause and of what the committee peacefully accomplished. She said, "If you get people behind you, you can by gentle persuasion accomplish a great deal and do it with more grace."

Other activities and honors include being president of the Altrusa Club (1963-64); being appointed by Governor Reubin Askew in the 1970s to two terms on the Judicial Nominating Committee for the Eighth Judicial Circuit, which she chaired; helping to form the local "Lady Lawyers" in the 1970s, which continue to meet as the Eighth Judicial Circuit Chapter of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers; as 1933 class representative, soliciting classmates to contribute to the University of Florida College of Law for many years; serving on the University of Florida College of Law Alumni Council (1983-91) and its campaign committee, which raised funds to build Bruton-Geer Hall in 1981-82; and being nominated in 1986 for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. Additionally, she was a member of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Junior League of Gainesville, P.E.O. Sisterhood, Gainesville Women's Club, League of Women Voters, Phi Mu Sorority, Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity, Phi Kappa Phi Honorary Fraternity, and the Florida State Bar Association. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

In recognition of the outstanding contributions that Clara Floyd Gehan made to the legal profession, various organizations, and the community, she received the following awards: Gainesville Outstanding Woman Award from the Gainesville Business and Professional Women's Club (1971); the Headline Award from the Women in Communication (1976); Distinguished Alumna Award from the University of Florida (1979); The Florida Bar Pro Bono Award by the Supreme Court of Florida (1982); Distinguished Alumna Award from Brenau College (1982); and the Gainesville Woman of Distinction Award from the Santa Fe Community College (1987). In 1988 she was honored by the creation of an annual award in her name at the University of Florida College of Law by the Law Association for Women, a women students' organization. Ms. Gehan was once again honored in 1992, when the Eighth Judicial Circuit Chapter of the

Florida Association for Women Lawyers created the "Clara Floyd Gehan Award," which is presented annually. Her daughter Julia commented at Ms. Gehan's retirement in 1988, that her mother was "always rather bashful about accepting awards, but they mean a lot to her." Attorney Zelda Hawk also recalled her bashfulness about receiving awards, explaining that although she shared office space with Ms. Gehan, she did not learn Ms. Gehan had received the Distinguished Alumna Award from the University of Florida in 1979 until she read it in *The Gainesville Sun*.

Ms. Gehan was always finding ways to assist others. In 1987 the law school's Legal Information Center hosted a woman law professor and librarian from the University of Lagos in Nigeria for three months. When Ms. Gehan learned of Ms. Reme Jegade's visit and limited financial support, she invited her to attend legal and social meetings and events, and hosted her for meals and leisure hours at her home. Ms. Jegade was always very grateful for this special attention from a distinguished female attorney.

On August 3, 1992, after spending a lifetime of practicing law, aiding those in need, and devoting unselfishly of her time and talents to making a difference in the community, Clara Floyd Gehan died in Gainesville at age 82 of Alzheimer's disease. By way of her will, Ms. Gehan set up a Floyd-Gehan Scholarship fund at the University of Florida College of Law.

The following excerpt from the eulogy delivered by Zelda Hawk on August 6, 1992, at the memorial service honoring Clara Floyd Gehan, is particularly appropriate to the mission of the First 150 Women Lawyers Celebration:

"I first heard of Clara Gehan when I was in Law School, but I did not meet her until shortly after I was admitted to the Bar in 1974, when I was working with a local law firm and Clara had learned that I was "a new kid on the block" so to speak. She called me and said she thought it would be a good idea for the local women lawyers to meet for lunch and get acquainted. (There must have been approximately 10 women lawyers in the Circuit at that time.) She called the other lawyers and arranged for us to meet at the Winnjammer, a popular restaurant in Gainesville at that time. This was the beginning of what was later

referred to by Clara as the “Lady Lawyers Group.” We continued having these informal luncheons which Clara had initiated. They were usually held on a Friday of each month and they provided the opportunity for the women lawyers to discuss cases, the latest law, recent judicial decisions in the Circuit, and of course our personal lives. I can recall lingering at these lunches for 1½ to 2 hours when time permitted. Although Clara practiced primarily in the areas of real property, wills, and probate, she was keenly interested in all areas of the law. She thoroughly enjoyed all of the discussions at these lunches, whether it was Judith Brown’s criminal law practice, Jill White’s immigration law practice or Ella Soloman’s position as an assistant county attorney or various attorneys who practiced in the area of family law or other areas. On more than one occasion she expressed how much she enjoyed these gatherings.

“However, it is my opinion, that it was not Clara who was the main beneficiary of these meetings. Except for her, most of us were newcomers to the practice of law. We relied upon her wisdom and experience at times when we were confronted with problems in our law practices. Some of us also sought her advice and her suggestions concerning our personal lives.

“At these meetings Clara shared with us many of her memories of the practice of law in earlier days. Most of these memories that she recounted related to her satisfaction – indeed her love for her chosen profession. There were, of course a few sad memories. There were also many memories of amusing and humorous events.

“There was a particular incident which she told us that I would like to pass on. For all of you that have heard it, bear with me – it’s short. The local Bar Association had for many years enjoyed an annual Cedar Key dinner. From the beginning of this celebration, women were not permitted to attend this function. For several years none of the 7 or 8 women lawyers complained. Then in approximately 1969 or 1970, the men lawyers were planning their annual dinner celebration. And again, no women lawyers were allowed even though the whole affair was paid for

from dues of all members of the local Bar. However, this year there was apparently a slight feeling of guilt on the part of the men lawyers, or perhaps it was because the handful of women lawyers started making noises. At any rate, even though women lawyers were not invited to this dinner, the men found a solution to this potential problem.

“They informed the women lawyers that although they would not be permitted to attend this dinner, the women lawyers would have their own dinner at a separate restaurant of their choice and the Bar Association would pay the bill. These few women accepted this offer. They did indeed go to the restaurant of their choice, they each had what approximated a 7-course meal complete with dessert, champagne and a generous tip for their waiter. A few days later the bill was presented to the President of the Bar Association. He was aghast at the enormous bill. After taking this matter up with the Board of Directors, it was then decided that in the future women lawyers would be welcomed to the Annual Cedar Key Dinner. I do not remember if Clara was a participant in this “famous dinner,” but I do know that she told us this story with a smile of approval.”

In concluding the eulogy, Ms. Hawk stated, “We are indeed grateful for the life of Clara Gehan. She was our ‘First Lady’ of the Law School and our ‘First Lady’ of the legal profession.”

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R (photo); “Clara Gehan, First Lady of the Law School, Retires,” *Eighth Judicial Bar Newsletter* (Jan. 1989); Madeleine C. Brown, “Award for a Pioneer: First Woman to Graduate from Law School to be Honored,” *The Gainesville Sun*, June 6, 1979; e-mail from Frank Orser, Librarian, Smathers Library, University of Florida; e-mail from Judge Robert T. Benton; taped conversation of Ms. Gehan with Frank Orser on March 1, 1978; *Eighth Judicial Bar Newsletter* (Oct. 1992); *Florida Lawyer* (Fall 1992); “A Community Honors . . . Women of Distinction,” *The Gainesville Sun*, Mar. 1987; “Pioneer female UF law school graduate dies,” *The Gainesville Sun*, Aug. 4, 1992; MBD.



“She called me and said she thought it would be a good idea for the local women lawyers to meet for lunch and get acquainted.... This was the beginning of what was later referred to by Clara as the Lady Lawyers Group.”

Although Clara practiced primarily in the areas of real property, wills, and probate, she was keenly interested in all areas of the law. She thoroughly enjoyed all of the discussions at these lunches....”






Esther A. Poppell

(- 1990)

Date of Admission: 1933

Esther A. Poppell was born in Baltimore, Maryland. While working as a legal secretary and court reporter during the day, she studied law at night. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 15, 1933, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She practiced law in Miami beginning in 1933 as



an associate with Charles A. Morehead of Hawthorne & Morehead, later Morehead & Pallot. The firm, which was located in the Ingraham Building, maintained a general civil practice, specializing in real estate, corporation, banking and probate law. She became a partner in 1959 in the firm of Pallot, Marks, Lundeen, Poppell & Horwich. The firm, which eventually evolved to Pallott & Poppell, was a popular, well-known, well-respected Miami firm employing a staff of over 40 people. Over the years, a number of important members of the bar belonged to the firm, including Marwin Cassell, Robert Traurig, and The Honorable Moie J. L. Tendrich. Ms. Poppell continued to work at this firm until her retirement.

She was a founding director of Biscayne Federal Savings and Loan Association in Miami, serving as an officer for many years.

She was a member of the Dade County Bar Association and was a founding member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers, serving as its president in 1953-54. She also served as Florida's representative in the Council of Delegates for the National Association of Women Lawyers in 1951-53. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Ms. Poppell is said to have been married twice. Her first husband was David Walker. Richard Goodman, who practiced at the Pallot Poppell firm for 26 years, recalls that Ms. Poppell was the mother of a child who died in the 1926 hurricane. Esther Poppell died on June 23, 1990, in Miami.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); Dade County Bar Association, Bench & Bar of Dade County (1949); MHL D (1932-1964); Social Register of Greater Miami; 75NAWL; MH, Sept. 28, 1951 & May 26, 1971; Daughters of the American Revolution file in Miami Public Library; conversations with Daisy Richards Bisz, Richard Goodman, Richard Horwich, Robert Litman; Judge Victoria Platzter (photo), and The Honorable Moie Tendrich; MBD.

Ms. Poppell was a founding director of Biscayne Federal Savings and Loan Association in Miami, serving as an officer for many years.



She was a member of the Dade County Bar Association and was a founding member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers, serving at its president in 1953-54.


Ruth Alberta Clark

(1912 - 1992)

Date of Admission: 1933

Ruth Alberta Clark was born in 1912. She graduated from the University of Minneapolis and was subsequently admitted to practice law in Florida on July 15, 1933, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. Attorney Daisy Richards Bisz recalled that Ms. Rowe was a practicing

attorney in Miami Beach.

Ruth Alberta Clark married Paul Rowe, but she retained the use of her maiden name for career purposes. Her husband established the Rowe Motel on Miami Beach in 1940, which remained in operation until 1967. The couple had one daughter, Pauline Johnson, who currently lives in Tucson,

Arizona. Mr. Rowe predeceased his wife. Ms. Rowe was a member of La Gorce and Indian Creek Country Clubs and the Bal Harbour and Surf Clubs, and she was president of the Miami Beach Garden Club. Ruth Alberta Clark passed away at the

age of 80 on September 25, 1992. Sources: FSCBAA; MHL D (1945 & 1949); MH, Sept. 27, 1992; MBD; conversations with Daisy Richards Bisz and Pauline Johnson.



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Wilhemina Hawkins

(1905 - 1969)

Date of Admission: 1933

Wilhemina Hawkins was born in Plant City, Florida, on May 25, 1905. By 1928 she was working in Bartow, Florida, with the firm of Johnson, Bosarge and Allen as a stenographer. She “read the law” and was admitted to practice in Florida on July 15, 1933, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She then joined the Polk County Bar Association.

Ms. Hawkins moved her practice to Tampa between 1942 and 1945, after the firm of Bosarge and Johnson closed because Mr. Allen took a judicial position and the other two partners went to the war. She worked for many years for the Tampa firm of Fowler and White during World War II, handling title abstracts and attending closings, but was never offered a partnership in the firm. (Caroline Adams (1942) also worked for Fowler and White during the war years.) Ms. Hawkins continued to work for Fowler, White, Gillen, Yancey and Humkey, as it was then

called, until at least 1949, but was laid off after the veterans returned to the firm. She then accepted a position with the Cason firm in Tampa, handling mostly probate and title work, and was a partner in the firm Cason, Hawkins, McWhirter and Henderson at the time of her death.

Wilhemina Hawkins died from cancer in Hillsborough County, Florida, on August 17, 1969, at age 64. Her sole heir was her sister, Louise Lang, who resides in Bartow.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL D (1939, 1945 & 1949); *Bartow City Directory* (1928); B&B (1935) (photo); MBD; Hillsborough County probate file; Bartow death index; cemetery visit; conversation with and correspondence from Louise Lang (photos); e-mail from Edward Cutler.



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Mary Ames Kennerly Buckles

(1907 - 1970)

Date of Admission: 1933

Judge Mary Ames Kennerly Buckles was born on March 13, 1883, in Spearfish, South Dakota, and her family moved to West Virginia when she was three years old. Her father, Daniel E. Ames, was a Presbyterian minister. She was very close to her mother, who lived with her until she died. She taught school in West Vir-

ginia and she was with the departmental services in Washington, D.C., for several years.

Judge Buckles met her first husband, Clarence Kennerly, in law school at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. The couple moved to Palatka, Florida, after graduation in 1920. Judge Buckles



Ms. Buckles became Florida's second female judge.



worked in her husband's law office and as a public accountant, handling income tax work. In 1927 she served as the Clerk of the Court in Putnam County. Mr. Kennerly was appointed Putnam County Judge in 1928. When he moved to Washington State, the governor appointed Mary Kennerly Buckles Putnam County Judge in June 1931. She thus became Florida's second female judge. (Edith Meserve Atkinson (1922) was a judge in Dade County from 1924 until 1933.)

Judge Buckles did not run for the judgeship after her term expired in 1932; instead, she chose to practice law. It was not until July 15, 1933, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, that Judge Buckles was admitted to practice law by the Florida Supreme Court. Because she

was practicing law prior to this date, one must assume that she exercised the option of being admitted at the local level prior to taking the bar examination. She maintained an office in Palatka and was a member of the Putnam County Bar Association.

Judge Buckles, divorced from her first husband, married Mr. J. W. Buckles on March 2, 1935. She had no children. Mary A. Kennerly Buckles died in Palatka on December 7, 1970, at the age of 87.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); Putnam County marriage records; Putnam County archives provided a Palatka newspaper obituary; conversations with relatives Nancy Brown and Dorothy Kennerly; conversations with Justice Richard W. Ervin and Judge E. L. Eastmore.



Lois Rodgers

Date of Admission: 1933



Lois Rodgers was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in the early 1900s. She was listed as "Mrs. S. Lois Wilson" when she was admitted to practice law on July 15, 1933, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, but she appears to have retained her maiden

name for career purposes. According to the *Bench and Bar of Florida* (1935), she was the secretary to a circuit judge in the Fourth Judicial Circuit. Walter Arnold,

an attorney from Jacksonville who is still practicing at the age of 88, remembers Ms. Rodgers as a warm and kind lady who helped the young attorneys "learn the ropes." Mr. Arnold remembers that Ms. Rodgers was the secretary to Senior Circuit Judge Dewitt Gray, but that when he returned to Jacksonville after World War II, Judge Gray was no longer on the bench, and Ms. Rodgers was no longer working for the Fourth Judicial Circuit. Ms. Rodgers had one daughter.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); conversation with Walter Arnold.

Walter Arnold, an attorney from Jacksonville ... remembers Ms. Rodgers as a warm and kind lady who helped the young attorneys "learn the ropes."



Mary Jo Williams Garris

(1908 -)

Date of Admission: 1933

Mary Jo Williams Garris was born in Jasper, Florida, on April 27, 1908, and was the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. J. P. Williams.

She was admitted to practice law in Florida on November 4, 1933, after passing the bar examination administered by the State



Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. Garris practiced in Daytona Beach from at least 1933 to 1935, and was working as an assistant city attorney in 1939. Prior to 1939, she had served as lieutenant colonel on the staff of one of Florida's governors. She was a member of the Florida State Bar and Volusia County Bar Associations and is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

She had the distinction of being the first

woman elected to the State Democratic Executive Committee (1934). She was also on the board of commissioners of Halifax District Hospital.

Mary Jo Williams married Philip F. Garris and they had one daughter, Maribelle.

Sources: FSCBAA; B&B (1935) (photo); MALD (1939).



Edith G. Uman

(1910 - 1999)

Date of Admission: 1934

Edith G. Uman was born on May 15, 1910, to Joseph and Minnie Brown. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on January 8, 1934, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. Uman practiced with her husband, Morrice S. Uman, in the firm Uman & Uman. They were the first husband and wife legal team in Tampa. Mr. Uman arrived in Tampa in 1926 after graduating from Dickinson Law School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and he brought his bride to Tampa in 1932. Ms. Uman spent considerable time in her husband's law office in the Tampa Theatre Building and soon became interested in the law. After much reading of law books, an extension course by mail, and a refresher course from attorney R. J. Duff, she sat for the bar examination and was number one of the 43 who passed.

According to attorney Edward Cutler, the Uman firm had a varied practice and



did a considerable amount of probate work. The Hillsborough County Bar Association's centennial history states that Ms. Uman studied and prepared cases throughout her career, but left court appearances to her husband. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939), as having a general civil practice.

Ms. Uman was a member of the Florida State Bar, Hillsborough County, and Tampa Bar Associations, as well as the National Council of Jewish Women. She was a Democrat.

Ms. Uman and her husband had two sons, Dr. Martin A. Uman, who is a professor at the University of Florida, and Myron F. Uman. The family belonged to Temple Schaarai. Ms. Uman passed away on December 20, 1999.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHLA (1939, 1945 & 1949); correspondence and conversations with Dr. Martin A. Uman and grandson Jon Uman (photo).

Ms. Uman spent considerable time in her husband's law office in the Tampa Theatre Building and soon became interested in the law. After much reading of law books, an extension course by mail, and a refresher course from attorney R. J. Duff, she sat for the bar examination and was number one of the 43 who passed.

Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter

(1913 -)

Date of Admission: 1934



Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter was born in Chester, Pennsylvania, on September 30, 1913. She is one of three daughters born to Casper Howarth and Mary Stewart Howarth (1908). Her mother was the first woman to graduate from Stetson University College of Law. Her grandfather, Judge Isaac A. Stewart, was a prominent attorney and criminal judge in DeLand.

Ms. Carter received her Bachelor of Arts degree and Bachelor of Law degree from Stetson. Graduating from law school in May 1934 at the age of 20, she was the youngest attorney to receive her law degree from Stetson. Because the law required that attorneys be 21 years of age to practice in Florida, Ms. Carter filed a special petition to have her disqualifying age disability removed, which was granted, and Ms. Carter was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 20, 1934.

An article in the *DeLand Sun News* dated May 23, 1934, announced her admission to the Florida bar and outlined her achievements during undergraduate and law school. She was president of several academic sororities, and was voted the "most intellectual woman student." The article states her intention to further her education at George Washington University, and she did, in fact, receive an M.A. in International Law from that university.

Upon admission to the bar in 1934, Ms. Carter entered into private practice with her mother, Mary Stewart Howarth, and her uncle, Tom B. Stewart, who was a state representative from Volusia County. That law firm, Stewart & Stewart, was one of the oldest firms in continuous practice in Florida, having been established in 1882 by her grandfather and remaining continuously at the same location. In 1935 Catherine Howarth married J. Howard Carter, and the law firm was later renamed Stewart, Howarth and Carter. The family firm was eventually run by

Ms. Carter and her son Brinly S. Carter, a fourth-generation lawyer, in DeBary. They specialized in wills, trusts, probate and real estate, but Ms. Carter also did a lot of domestic relations law. Upon Brinly Carter's death, the law firm was sold.

Ms. Carter was a member of the Florida State Bar Association and served on its probate committee and constitution committee, the latter of which proposed a revision of the Florida Constitution. She was a bar representative during the 1945 and 1947 sessions of the Florida Legislature. She was also a member of the Volusia County Bar Association, Phi Delta Delta International Legal Fraternity, Pilot Club, and Zeta Tau Alpha, for which she served as the Stetson chapter's counselor and advisor for many years. The Florida Bar awarded her a silver plate in 1984 in honor of her 50 years of legal practice in the state.

In 1947 Ms. Carter's interest in real estate law led her to become a founding trustee of the Lawyers' Title Guaranty Fund. That company, which is now known as Attorneys' Title Insurance Fund, has been in existence for over 50 years and is presently the largest title insurance underwriter in Florida and sixth largest in the nation. Her son, John Carter, relates that his mother is very proud of her role in establishing Lawyers' Title Guaranty Fund.

In 1934, Ms. Carter entered into private practice with her mother, Mary Stewart Howarth, and her uncle, Tom B. Stewart, who was a state representative from Volusia County. That law firm, Stewart & Stewart, was one of the oldest firms in continuous practice in Florida, having been established in 1882 by her grandfather.



(L-R) Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter, Mary Stewart Howarth-Hewitt (1908), Mary S. Parker (1961 photo)





Ms. Carter is a Democrat and served as Congressional Committeewoman for the Fifth District of Florida. She also served as campaign manager for Millard F. Caldwell, Jr., in his successful

campaign to become governor in 1945.

In addition to her legal practice, Ms. Carter also had a marriage counseling practice from the mid-1960s until the mid-1980s.

The Carters had four children -- John Stewart Howarth Carter, Ph.D., who is a teacher, writer, professor and financial consultant; Mary Sara Carter Moreau, who is a teacher and artist; Brinly Stewart Carter (1940-90), who was an attorney; and Casper Howarth Carter, who is a teacher. Mr. and Ms. Carter divorced in the late 1940s, and Ms. Carter married Henry G. Lewia in April 1958. He died in the mid-1970s in Puerto Rico, where they

lived on and off for ten years.

Since 1946 Ms. Carter has summered in Vermont. She owned the DeLand Hotel with her mother and the Samoset Colony Club, a summer resort in Morrisville, Vermont. She speaks French and Spanish and enjoys reading, sewing, and antique jewelry. Catherine Stewart Howarth Carter currently lives in DeLand.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCAL&R (photo); B&B (1935) (photo); DWL&J; "Miss Howarth Is Youngest to Win A.B. and LL.B.," *The DeLand Sun*, May 23, 1934, at 3; Arthur E. Rancke, Jr., Alyce Hockaday Gillingham, & Maxine Carey Turner, *Volusia The West Side* (West Volusia Historical Society 1986); Brinly - Stewart - Howarth - Carter Families," *Reflections - West Volusia County*, (West Volusia Historical Society); e-mail and correspondence from John B. Carter (photos); MBD.



Frances M. Lovelace

(1913 - 1996)

Date of Admission: 1934

Frances M. Lovelace was born on January 1, 1913, to Homer B. and Edna Woodward Lovelace. Upon graduating from high school in St. Petersburg, Ms. Lovelace, at the age of 17, started working as a secretary for Ed W. Harris, a local attorney who was studying for the bar examination. At this time, Florida allowed attorneys to be admitted locally after passing an examination given by circuit court judges, but to be admitted by the Florida Supreme Court, they had to pass the bar examination. Mr. Harris hired Ms. Lovelace to assist him in the office while he studied. Mr. Harris did not pass the bar examination on his first attempt in 1933, so Ms. Lovelace made a bet with him to see who could pass the exam first, him or her. She won the bet and passed the bar examination administered

by the State Board of Law Examiners on her first attempt with only her high school education and some extension courses she had taken from the University of Florida and Florida State College for Women. She was 21 years old when she was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1934.

Ms. Lovelace became an associate in Mr. Harris's firm, focusing in civil practice, with specialities in probate, real property, and domestic relations.

Frances Lovelace married James T. Earle, who was also an attorney, and the two practiced law in St. Petersburg in the firm Lovelace and Earle.

Alan Sundberg, former Florida Supreme Court Justice, recalls that when he first started practicing law in 1958,



In 1947 Ms. Carter's interest in real estate law led her to become a founding trustee of the Lawyers' Title Guaranty Fund... now known as Attorneys' Title Insurance Fund, which has been in existence for over 50 years and is now the largest title insurance underwriter in Florida and sixth largest in the nation.



Ms. Lovelace ... passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners on her first attempt with only her high school education and some extension courses she had taken from the University of Florida and Florida State College for Women. She was 21 years old when she was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 5, 1934.

Ms. Lovelace was one of the few women lawyers in St. Petersburg. At that time, her practice was limited to family law. He also recalls that she practiced with Tom Collins, who had been on the circuit court bench and then returned to practice. Whether Ms. Lovelace was an associate of Collins or simply shared office space with him is not known.

Ms. Lovelace was a member of the Florida State Bar Association, and she chaired its committee on married women's rights and served as secretary of its junior bar section. As a member of The Florida Bar, she served on its public relations committee. She was also a member of the St. Petersburg Bar Association. Ms. Lovelace was an early member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and served as a director during the years 1954-56. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939).

She was Democratic State Committee-woman from Pinellas County, was vice-

chair of the Pinellas County Democratic Executive Committee, and belonged to the St. Petersburg Women's Democratic Club and Upper Pinellas County Women's Democratic Club. She unsuccessfully ran for the Florida House of Representatives in 1952.

Ms. Lovelace belonged to the Soroptmist International of St. Petersburg, serving as president and director; was on the executive board of Mound Park Hospital Women's Auxiliary as first vice-president; was secretary of the Mound Park Hospital Foundation, Inc.; and was a member of Phi Chapter, Phi Delta Delta. She is listed in *Florida Women of Distinction* (1956).

Frances Lovelace retired from private practice in the late 1970s. She died on September 7, 1996, and was survived by her daughter Bonnie Earle.

Sources: FSCBAA, 1 Eloise N. Cozens, *Florida Women of Distinction* (1956), MBD; conversations with Bonnie Earle and Alan Sundberg.



Rebecca Bowles Marks Hawkins

Date of Admission: 1935

Rebecca Bowles Marks Hawkins graduated from the University of Florida College of Law with an LL.B. degree in 1935 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on October 8, 1935. She was subsequently admitted to practice in Alabama in 1963.

Except for a two-year stint with a law firm in Bradenton, Florida, and four years of practice (1963-67) with her husband N. Hawthorne Hawkins, Jr., as Hawkins & Hawkins, in Birmingham, Alabama, and Fort Walton Beach, Florida, her legal career was in government service. Ms. Hawkins began working in the attorney general's office as a secretary, legal assis-

tant, and speech writer. After two years as a special assistant, she was appointed by Attorney General J. Tom Watson to be Assistant Attorney General of Florida on October 1, 1948. This appointment made Ms. Hawkins Florida's first woman assistant attorney general.

In 1953, when each Florida Supreme Court Justice was authorized to employ a full-time law clerk, Ms. Hawkins became the first female full-time research assistant to Justice B. K. Roberts, and she continued in that position until 1960. She spent a lot of time on criminal cases, which were appealed from the circuit courts directly to the supreme court because there were no intermediate appellate courts until 1957. In 1960 Rebecca Bowles Marks wed her second husband, N. Hawthorne Hawkins, Jr., an attorney, and she left government service to practice with him.



Upon her husband's death, Ms. Hawkins returned to the attorney general's office in 1967, and became head of the opinions division in 1969. She remained employed in the attorney general's office until her retirement in 1976.

Ms. Hawkins was also active in bar associations. She was a founding member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and served as its president in 1954-55. She was active in the National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) and served as Florida's delegate on the council of delegates in 1955-57, recording secretary in 1956-58, second vice-president in 1958-59, first vice-president in 1959-60, and president in 1960-61. As NAWL's delegate from 1961 to 1963, she was the only female in the American Bar Association's House of Delegates and was Florida's first woman to serve in the House of Delegates. She was also a member of the American Bar Association and the International Federation of Women Lawyers.

During her term as president of NAWL in 1960-61, Ms. Hawkins accomplished her objectives of initiating an "exchange program" of mutual service and assistance between members of the International Federation of Women Lawyers and NAWL members, of encouraging women lawyers to seek judicial posts and work actively in support of their candidacies, and of ensuring active participation by NAWL members in the observance of the newly recognized Law Day on May 1.

Ms. Hawkins was a charter member of

the Altrusa Club in Tallahassee, a member of the Music Guild, American Association of University Women, St. Andrew's Society, and Meals on Wheels. She also served on the board of trustees of Trinity Methodist Church in Tallahassee. Additionally, she was a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Delta Delta, Tallahassee Toastmistresses Club, Tallahassee Women's Golf Association, City Golf Board of Tallahassee, and the Tallahassee Chapter of the American Red Cross.

In 1987 Ms. Hawkins won the Brenau University Distinguished Student Award and the Professional Achievement Award from the University of Florida. In 1997 she won the Alumni Outstanding Achievement Award from the University of Florida. She is listed in *Florida Women of Distinction* (1956).

Ms. Hawkins and her first husband, Herbert Marks, to whom she was married from 1942 to 1946, had one child, Jonathan B. Marks. Ms. Hawkins currently resides with her son and his family in Washington, D.C. The family will have three generations of lawyers when granddaughter Natasha graduates from Harvard Law School, which is her father's alma mater. As she approaches her 90th birthday, she still enjoys playing bridge.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R; 75NAWL (photo); MBD; *Annual Reports of the Attorney General* (1976); Allen Morris, *Florida Handbook*; Women in Government; Eloise N. Cozens, *Florida Women of Distinction* (1956); conversations with Ms. Hawkins and Justice Richard W. Ervin;

As NAWL's delegate from 1961 to 1963, she was the only female in the American Bar Association's House of Delegates and was Florida's first woman to serve in the House of Delegates. She was also a member of the American Bar Association and the International Federation of Women Lawyers.

L. Grace Williams Burwell

(1904 -)

Date of Admission: 1935

L. Grace Williams Burwell was born in Decatur County, Georgia, on April 26, 1904. Her father owned a turpentine mill and her mother farmed the family's 200 acres of sugar cane and peanuts. She was the oldest girl of nine children and learned to cook for the family when she was "four

or five." As a child, Ms. Burwell helped her family on the farm and "dropped corn and peanuts" in the fields alongside her mother, brothers and sisters.

Ms. Burwell never attended college, but instead took law classes at night from a lawyer in Tallahassee, Madeline





Ms. Burwell never attended college, but instead took law classes at night from a lawyer in Tallahassee, Madeline Jacobson Cox, who had been admitted to the bar in 1927. She worked during the day ... while she studied law at night. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 2, 1935, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.



When asked recently if she had ever shot anything with that rifle, Ms. Burwell responded, "I killed a snake that very day."



Jacobson Cox, who had been admitted to the bar in 1927. She worked during the day as a secretary to the head of the State Banking Department while she studied law at night. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 2, 1935, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Ms. Burwell tried to find a job as a lawyer in Jacksonville, but was told she needed more experience. She worked for the law firm Milam, McIlvaine & Milam in Jacksonville, doing secretarial work and legal work. In 1937 she was a secretary to the State Temperance Committee in Tallahassee, earning the same salary as the legislators -- \$6 a day.

In 1940 Grace Williams married State Representative John S. Burwell from Ft. Lauderdale and worked with him during the 14 years he served in the Florida Legislature. She joined him as a broker in his commercial real estate business and continued to work for the business, John S. Burwell Realty, in Ft. Lauderdale until it closed in 1976. Her work encompassed real estate sales, specializing in commercial property and acreage, and included preparing legal documents for closings.

The Burwells were a glamorous couple

who were very active in Ft. Lauderdale society in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. Ms. Burwell was an active member and president of the Soroptimist Club in Fort Lauderdale, and was very active in politics with the Democratic Party. Though she was poised and refined in her social life, she never abandoned her love of the outdoors nor her rugged pioneer skills as a marksman, as evidenced by the photograph of her with



a .22 rifle taken in Quincy, Florida, in 1940. When asked recently if she had ever shot anything with that rifle, Ms. Burwell responded, "I killed a snake that very day."

Ms. Burwell's husband died in 1972. She continued to work until well into her 80s and is still alive and kicking at 95. "Sissy," as she is known to her family and friends, lives with her sister, Alice Gomis, and niece, Sandra Thompson,

in St. Cloud, Florida, where she graduated from high school. Although she never had children of her own, Ms. Burwell inspired and helped raise her great niece, Lauren Jorgensen, who graduated from Cornell Law School in 1986 and is an Assistant United States Attorney in Miami.

Sources: FSCBAA; conversation with Justice Richard W. Ervin; biography written by Lauren Jorgensen (photos).



Ida Maud Hyman

Date of Admission: 1935

Ida Maud Hyman was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 11, 1935, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.



Anna Brenner Mankes Meyers

(1896 - 1983)

Date of Admission: 1936

Anna Brenner Mankes Meyers was born on December 18, 1896, to Joseph and Edith Brenner in Lodz, Poland. She came to the United States and became a naturalized citizen in 1925. She was educated at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York City, and Brooklyn Law School, St. Lawrence University, in Brooklyn. Ms. Meyers was admitted to the bar of New York State on March 20, 1934. After moving to Miami, she worked as a legal secretary during the day and studied for the bar examination at night. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on January 9, 1936, and before the United States Supreme Court on May 12, 1941.

The law was not Ms. Meyers' first career. She was a registered nurse in New York, public school teacher, and rural social worker. After becoming a lawyer, she engaged in private practice in New York in 1934 and then practiced in Miami Beach from 1936 until her retirement in 1978. She was an associate with William I. Brenner.

Ms. Meyers was appointed by Governor Charley E. Johns to the Dade County School Board in 1953 and served on that board until December 1971. During this time, she worked for integration in the schools. As a member of the school board, she was instrumental in establishing Miami-Dade Community College, Baker Aviation School, and educational television in Dade County.

Ms. Meyers was the chief motivator and a founding member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, and she served as its first president in 1951-52. She was

also active in the National Association of Women Lawyers, serving as secretary in 1945-46, treasurer in 1945-46, Florida delegate on the council of delegates in 1949-51 and 1963-65, and assembly delegate in 1951-52. Ms. Meyers was also vice president and treasurer of the International Federation of Women Lawyers.

In addition, Ms. Meyers was a member of the Florida State Bar, Dade County Bar, American Bar, and New York Women's Bar Associations. She is listed in *Who's Who Among Women Lawyers* (1939). As one of Florida's most prominent attorneys, she was named "Outstanding Woman of 1957."

She was also a member of the National Federation and Miami Business and Professional Women's Clubs (board member of the latter), American Association of Social Workers, Hadassah, National Council of Jewish Women, Dade County Federation of Women's Clubs (legislative chair), Board of Greater Miami Jewish Federation and Welfare Fund, and the Social Service Bureau of Greater Miami (board member and president).

Ms. Meyers was widowed in 1939, and sometime between then and 1949 she married Benjamin Meyers. She died on November 8, 1983, at the age of 86.

Sources: FSCBAA; DWL&J; 75NAWL (photo); MBD; MH, Sept. 28, 1951 & Nov. 16, 1969.



Ms. Meyers was the chief motivator and a founding member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, and she served as its first president in 1951-52.



The law was not Ms. Meyers' first career. She was a registered nurse in New York, public school teacher, and rural social worker. After becoming a lawyer, she engaged in private practice in New York in 1934 and then practiced in Miami Beach from 1936 until her retirement in 1978.

Kate L. Walton Engelken

(1913 - 1985)

Date of Admission: 1936

Although shy at heart, Kate Walton was an aggressive advocate of her clients' interests in the courtroom. She was at her creative best when trying cases before the all-male juries of her time.



Kate Walton was an intensely private person, which was reflected in her representation of Zelma Cason in a suit against Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of The Yearling. The lawsuit marked the first time a disgruntled literary subject sued the author of an autobiographical work for invasion of privacy.

Kate L. Walton Engelken was born in Palatka, Florida, on February 5, 1913, the second of four daughters. Her father, J. V. Walton, was one of Florida's most prominent attorneys. Ms. Walton obtained her undergraduate degree from Randolph-Macon Women's College in Ashland, Virginia. In 1933 she enrolled in the University of Florida College of Law, from which she graduated in 1936. Interestingly, she received her best grades in such esoteric subjects as Roman law and admiralty, but received only average grades in areas in which



she would excel in her practice -- criminal law and trial practice. Ms. Walton was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on February 19, 1936. Nephew William Townsend recalled that his Aunt Kate graduated from law school in the morning and was working that afternoon in her father's well-established law practice. Thus, Kate Walton became one of Putnam County's first women lawyers. (By 1939, three of the 22 attorneys in Palatka were women: Kate Walton, Margaret Collins (1930), and Mary Kennerly Buckles (1933).)

Kate Walton was a dedicated and versatile lawyer and was not content to take a secondary position to others of her profession or remain tucked away in an office practice. She was primarily a litigator, with a large array of criminal and civil clients. Although shy at heart, Kate Walton was an aggressive advocate of her clients' interests in the courtroom. She was at her creative best when trying cases before the all-male juries of her time. She encountered sexual discrimination in those early days, but handled it with equanimity. She explained to her nephew William Townsend that "everyone operates under disabilities." She asked for no

favours because she was a woman and even had to prove herself to her father, who did not initially approve of women in the law.

Kate Walton was an intensely private person, which was reflected in her representation of Zelma Cason in a suit against Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Yearling*. The lawsuit marked the first time a disgruntled literary subject sued the author of an autobiographical work for invasion of privacy. The legal battle lasted more than four years and culmi-

nated in one of the most colorful trials in Florida history.

In 1952 Ms. Walton married Frederick Engelken, a retired director of the U.S. Mint who was 30 years her senior. The couple had no children, so she "adopted" the eleven children of her sisters. Two of her nephews, Robin Gibson of Lake Wales and William Townsend of Palatka, are lawyers. In fact, Mr. Townsend was his aunt's law partner, and Mr. Gibson clerked in her office for two summers. Mr. Gibson recalled that a lot of the legal work was done for the less fortunate without fee. Kate Walton had a standing policy that legal work done for any minister or church was pro bono. She helped many indigent clients, both at her office and at home, which led to her being described as a "one-woman legal aid society" in her obituary.

Kate Walton maintained her private practice for nearly 50 years until she was forced by illness to retire shortly before her death in 1985.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R; MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); Patricia Nassif Action, *Invasion of Privacy: The Cross Creek Trial of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings*; MBD; correspondence from Robin Gibson (photo).



Marjorie Marie Hammer DeShaw

(1916 - 1983)

Date of Admission: 1936



Marjorie Marie Hammer DeShaw was born in 1916 in DeLand, Florida, to Frank H. Hammer and August Bergh Hammer. Her father was an agent with the Standard Oil Company.

Ms. DeShaw graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1936 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 17, 1936. She practiced law with Neill Jackson, P.A., in DeLand.

On January 31, 1942, she married Dr.

Roy G. DeShaw, an osteopathic physician from the Northeast. The couple had two daughters, Linda Lee and Gayle. Ms. DeShaw stopped practicing in 1945 when her first child was born. Although she intended to return to the practice of law, she never did.

Ms. DeShaw was active in the Episcopal Church, Pi Beta Phi Sorority, the Camelia Circle of the DeLand Garden Club, and the Stetson University Alumni Association. She was a life-long resident of DeLand and died as the result of a massive heart attack on April 4, 1983, at the age of 69.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCAL&R (photo); MBD; conversation with Gayle Ray.



Patricia LaVerne Pacetti Warren

(1913 - 1982)

Date of Admission: 1936

Patricia LaVerne Pacetti Warren was born the middle child of three on June 30, 1913, in Jacksonville to Verot Pacetti and Elizabeth Masters Pacetti. Ms. Warren's niece, Inez Pacetti Halil, disclosed that their extended family was among the 1,400 immigrants who came to New Smyrna Beach, Florida, in 1768 from Greece, France, Italy, Spain and Minorca to work on the indigo plantation of the Briton, Dr. Andrew Turnbull. After 200 years of Spanish rule, "the Floridas" had been in the hands of the British since 1763.

After suffering for years under conditions bordering on slavery, these "Minorcans," as they were called because 80 percent of them were natives of the Balearic island of Minorca, eventually fled to sanctuary in St. Augustine, which was

75 miles to the north. They "became the core population" of that city, where they "still today exert tremendous political and social influence," according to anthropologist Patricia C. Griffin's book, *Mullet on the Beach: The Minorcans of Florida 1768 - 1788* (1991).

No one knows why Ms. Warren decided to study law. There were no lawyers in the family. Ms. Warren's father was a construction contractor and her mother was a homemaker. "However, Aunt Pat was brilliant," Ms. Hilal recounted. "She could have done anything she wanted to do."

Ms. Warren went to work after high school for Governor Fuller Warren, then an attorney practicing in Jacksonville. Ms. Warren attended no college or law school,



Ms. Warren went to work after high school for Governor Fuller Warren, then an attorney practicing in Jacksonville. Ms. Warren attended no college or law school, but learned her profession by reading the law books in Warren's office library. Her niece recounted "Aunt Pat was brilliant. She could have done anything she wanted to do."



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Building a law career and raising a family during the 1930s, Reba Daner was a pioneer of women today balancing career and family. "It's hard work," she said, "but if you love your children and your profession, it no longer becomes work -- it's a fulfilled opportunity."

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but learned her profession by reading the law books in Warren's office library. She took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners and was admitted to practice in Florida on August 1, 1936, at the age of 23.

In 1939 Patricia Pacetti married Fuller Warren. Ten years later, however, when Fuller Warren was elected as Florida's 30th governor (1949-53), the two had already been divorced for several years. Ms. Warren never married again. There were no children from the marriage, and the fact of the marriage is omitted from every biographical sketch found about Fuller Warren and Patricia Pacetti Warren. (Fuller Warren married Barbara Manning in June of 1949, six months after he became governor.)

In 1950 Patricia Warren moved to the Washington, D.C., area and was admitted to the Maryland bar that same year. She was a partner in the law firm of

Brick, Warren and Intrater, which was a general practice law firm located at 4709 Silver Hill Road, Suitland, Maryland. Ms. Warren's specialty was negligence. In 1956 Ms. Warren was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court. Ms. Halil remembers her Aunt Pat as a compulsive worker, who dressed lavishly and drove a convertible. During these years, Ms. Warren was women's club president and international parliamentarian in the Pilot Club.

According to her death notice in *The Florida Times-Union*, Patricia Pacetti Warren eventually retired to St. Petersburg, but returned to Jacksonville shortly before her death on June 15, 1982.

Sources: FSCBAA; Dorothy Thomas, *Women Lawyers in the United States*; marriage index of the Office of Vital Statistics, Florida Department of Health; conversation with Inez Pacetti Halil.

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Reba Engler Epstein Daner

Date of admission: 1936

Reba Engler Epstein Daner was born in Key West, Florida, the only child of immigrant parents. She was a member of the first full-time graduating class at the University of Miami School of Law in 1930, earning a Bachelor of Arts in political science and an LL.B. in 1936. She was the only woman to graduate from the University of Miami School of Law that year and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on August 5, 1936. During law school she became a member of Rho Beta Omicron, Beta Chi, Wing and Wig, and the debate team.

At the time Ms. Daner was attending law school, she was married to Leonard Epstein, an attorney specializing in taxation. While in school, Ms. Daner raised a family and was seven months pregnant when she graduated from law school. Ms. Daner explained that in those days girls were expected to get married. She did, but she also was de-

termined to get her degree. "Gender should not determine your future. It's fairer that girls as well as fellows have choices that we did not have many years ago," she said. Ms. Daner remembers "thinking of no other career besides law."

Upon graduation, she practiced with her husband, and upon Mr. Epstein's death in 1943, she took over his law practice. Despite the fact that she "always wanted to do trial work," she was limited to tax work in the established practice of her husband. Building a law career and raising a family during the 1930s, Reba Daner was a pioneer of women today balancing career and family. "It's hard work," she said, "but if you love your children and your profession, it no longer becomes work -- it's a fulfilled opportunity." In 1948 she married Jack L. Daner. She has two daughters, Lynette and Anna.

In addition to practicing law, Ms. Daner has been very active at the University of Miami and in the community. "UM has become a wonder. It was small and quite unknown when I had attended," said Ms.



Daner. In the late 1960s, she helped fund the new moot courtroom. "They didn't have moot court when I was in school. When I first went into a courtroom as a lawyer, I trembled. That's why the moot courtroom is so important," she said. In 1988 Ms. Daner committed \$2 million to build a new addition to the law library. Donating the funds for the library addition blended her two biggest interests, which are libraries and the law. She has been very active in local, state and national library associations, and has helped persuade Congress to pass laws to increase federal funds to libraries across the nation.

Ms. Daner is a former president of the Florida Library Trustee Association, and has been a member of the Greater Miami



Chapter of Hadassah and the Sisterhood, Temple Israel; Miami Beach Public Library (former chair) and Metropolitan Dade County Library Boards; and the American Library Trustee Association, of which she was a director. Finally, Ms. Daner is a member of the Iron Arrow honorary society, Omicron, Delta Kappa, the university's endowment committee, the George Merrick Society, and the Law Alumni Association's board of directors.

In 1989 she was awarded an honorary LL.B. degree by Muhlenburg College of Pennsylvania. Ms. Daner retired in 1989 and presently resides in Miami Beach.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photos); MBD; conversation with Ms. Daner (photo).

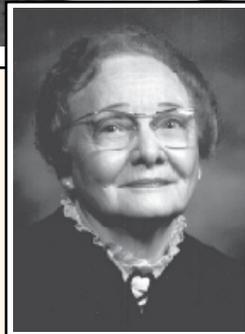
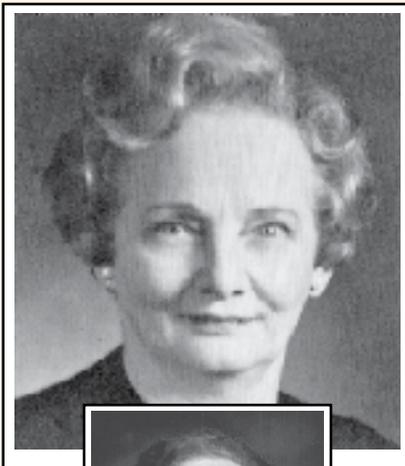


Mattie Belle Edwards Davis

(1910 -)

Date of Admission: 1936

Judge Mattie Belle Edwards Davis was born on February 28, 1910, in Ellabell, Bryan County, Georgia. Her great-grandfather, Thomas Alexander, had been a county judge in Georgia, and her grandfather, Thomas Morgan, had served as sheriff. Her father, Frank Edwards, was in the resin and turpentine business, and her mother, Eddie Morgan Edwards, was a homemaker. Judge Davis attended public schools in Georgia and graduated from Douglas High School in 1926 at the age of 16. At that time the turpentine business was depressed and Miami was a



boom town. So, on July 1, 1926, Judge Davis moved with her family to Miami, where she has resided since.

Once in Miami, Judge Davis attended Southern Business College and was employed as a legal secretary in the law office of Troy C. Davis in 1927. Unable to afford law school, she studied law under his tutorship and took the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners on October 19, 1936. On November 29, 1936, the results were announced on the front page of the *Miami Herald*: Mattie Belle Edwards was the only person from Mi-



She was one of the charter members of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers (FAWL) in 1951, and served as its president in 1957-58. At the time FAWL was organized, there were only 75 to 100 women lawyers in Florida, and 38 showed up for the first meeting.



ami and the only woman in Florida to pass the bar at that time. She was, in fact, admitted to practice law in Florida the day before, on November 28, 1936.

On June 6, 1937, she married Troy C. Davis, and they practiced law together in Miami until his death on August 1, 1948. As a widow and single parent of two stepdaughters, she managed to surmount the gender-biased attitudes of her generation, and she practiced law individually until 1959. Women lawyers were far and few between at the time, but through her commitment, determination and proficiency, Judge Davis passed muster. In so doing, she discredited the traditional sexist attitudes of the legal profession and opened doors for the women who followed.

Judge Davis also began to assume leadership roles in community, civic and professional organizations. In 1948 she organized the Haven School (now the Haven Center), a residential school for mentally retarded persons in Miami-Dade County. She was appointed to the Dade County Zoning Commission in February 1959. She joined Zonta Club of Greater Miami in 1955 and chaired various committees in Zonta International in the 1970s and 1980s.

She was one of the charter members of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers (FAWL) in 1951, and served as its president in 1957-58. At the time FAWL was organized, there were only 75 to 100 women lawyers in Florida, and 38 showed up for the first meeting. Today, the organization boasts over 400 members in Miami alone and over 2,000 statewide. Judge Davis has served for many years as FAWL's historian and is currently writing a book on FAWL's history.

Judge Davis is also active in the National Association for Women Lawyers (NAWL). She served as assembly delegate in 1954-55, Florida delegate on the council of delegates in 1957-61, business manager in 1960-61, treasurer in 1961-62, corresponding secretary in 1962-63, vice president in 1963-64, president-elect in 1964-65, and president in 1965-66. She was the NAWL delegate to the American Bar Association House of Del-

egates from 1967 until 1975 and again from 1977 until 1981. She was editor of the *Women Lawyers Journal* for NAWL in 1981-82.

Judge Davis also served as president of the Miami Business and Professional Women's Club from 1952-54; was district director of the Business and Professional Women's Club in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe Counties from 1956-57; was legislative chair of the Dade County Federation of Women's Clubs from 1954-78; was on the executive board of the Florida Lung Association (formerly Florida Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association) from 1960-66; and was president of the Dade-Monroe Lung Association for two years.

On July 14, 1959, Mattie Belle Davis was appointed as the first woman judge of the Metropolitan Court of Dade County. Dade County had not had a woman on the bench since Judge Edith Meserve Atkinson (1922) was defeated in 1933, and it would not see another woman on the bench until Judge Dixie Herlong Chastain (1930) was appointed to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in 1965. She thus became Dade County's second woman judge. She was the only woman judge with county-wide jurisdiction from 1959 until 1965. She was reelected to that position numerous times.

While on the bench of the metropolitan court, Judge Davis had jurisdiction of some misdemeanors and violations of county ordinances, but she handled mostly traffic cases, sometimes hearing as many as 200 a day. Judge Davis was particularly hard on drunk and careless drivers. An offender whose sentence was no more severe than being forced to spend a few weeks in a hospital emergency room watching the arrival of injured accident victims counted himself or herself lucky, indeed.

Through the traffic court program of the American Bar Association, Judge Davis became involved in traffic safety activities. She was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on March 16, 1967, to serve on the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee (1967-70). She was a member of the National Safety Council and served on its executive committee and board of directors (1965-80). While serving on the National Safety Council Women's Conference Executive Committee, a program for driver improvement was developed into



the council's defensive driving course. This program has been taken by millions of drivers. She was also a member of the Governor's Highway Safety Commission of Florida (1971-81), having been appointed by Governor Reubin Askew and reappointed by Governor Bob Graham. Judge Davis also served several years on the Florida Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders. As a member of these groups, she was instrumental in persuading the Dade County Citizens Safety Council to hold defensive driving classes for traffic offenders. Hundreds of thousands of traffic offenders, either voluntarily or by order of the court, have attended these classes.

On January 1, 1973, pursuant to the revision of the Florida Constitution, the Metropolitan Court of Dade County was merged into the County Court of Dade County. With the merger, Judge Davis's caseload broadened to include divorces, breach of contract suits, landlord-tenant cases, and a variety of other civil actions. Judge Davis was consistently reelected as county court judge until she retired on December 31, 1980, due to the age limitation in the Florida Constitution. From 1981 through June 1996, she continued to serve periodically for several months a year as acting county and circuit court judge in Miami-Dade County.

Judge Mattie Belle Davis's other affiliations, activities and honors are numerous, indeed. She was, of course, a member of the American Bar Association, and she was elected as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation in 1970. On February 14, 1987, she received the Fellows' 50-Year Award as a lawyer who, during more than 50 years of practice, had "adhered to the highest principles and traditions in the legal profession." She is the only woman to have received this award. She has been a member of the Dade County Bar Association, Conference of County Court Judges of Florida, and Kappa Beta Pi Legal Sorority International. As temporary

chairman, she presided at the founders conference of the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) on October 27, 1979, in Los Angeles, California, and she was elected as a life member of NAWJ in 1981.

She was selected by the *Miami Daily News* as one of ten of Dade's Outstanding Women of 1958; she was honored in 1960 by Theta Sigma Phi (now Women in Communications) as a Community Headliner; she received the Outstanding Service and Devotion to Sorority Award from Kappa Beta Pi Legal Sorority International in 1961; she received the Gavel Award for Meritorious Service from the National Association of Municipal Judges in 1962; and when she was installed as NAWL President on August 7, 1965, she was presented with a proclamation by the Board of County Commissioners of Metropolitan Dade County proclaiming that date as "Women Lawyers Day." Andrew College bestowed an honorary associates degree in humanities upon her in 1966 when she spoke at a commencement ceremony. Allstate Insurance Companies gave her the Allstate Safety Crusade Certificate of Commendation in 1967; Zonta International also recognized her contributions to safety with an award, as did the Dade County Citizens Safety Council in 1968. In 1981, Judge Davis received an award from the Conference of County Court Judges of Florida; she received the Trail Blazer Award from the Women's Committee of One Hundred of Dade County in 1982; and she was named FAWL's "Historian for Life" in 1986. In 1986 the Dade County FAWL chapter recognized Judge Davis as the "Finest Example of Jurist, Counselor and Mentor" and established the Mattie



Anna Meyers, Florence E. Allen, Judge Mattie Belle Davis and Judge Dixie Chastain.


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*In 1998
the Miami-
Dade County
Commission on the
Status of Women
nominated Judge
Davis to the
Florida Women's
Hall of Fame,
and she was
inducted into the
Hall of Fame
by Governor
Lawton Chiles in
November 1998.*

Belle Davis Award, which is presented annually to "honor the woman who has done the most to promote women and the administration of justice." March 3, 1987, was proclaimed "Judge Mattie Belle Davis Day" by the Board of County Commissioners of Metropolitan Dade County. She received an award from the National Conference of Special Court Judges of the American Bar Association that same year, and that same organization presented her with the Founders Award in 1992. On October 15, 1988, Judge Davis was presented with the National Safety Council's Distinguished Service to Safety Award. On March 3, 1994, she was honored by the Community Coalition for Women's History, Inc., as a "Woman of Impact of South Florida." By proclamation of Wilfredo Gort, Acting Mayor of the City of Miami, July 12, 1996, was proclaimed "Miami Centennial '96 Women's Hall of Fame Day" honoring 68 Miami pioneers, including Judge Davis as a "Pioneer Judge." In 1998 the Miami-Dade County Commission on the Status of Women nominated Judge Davis to the



Judge Mattie Belle Davis, President; Mary Louise McLeod, Pres.-Elect; Mary Zimmerman — standing in for Cr. Josephine Mary Brown, Vice-Pres.; Jettie Pierce Selvig, Treasurer; Ruth Gentry Talley, Rec. Sec'y; Grace D. Cox, Corr. Sec'y, and Catherine Anagnost, Delegate to House of Delegates, American Bar Association.

Florida Women's Hall of Fame, and she was inducted into the Hall of Fame by Governor Lawton Chiles in November 1998.

Judge Mattie Belle Davis presently resides in Coral Gables.

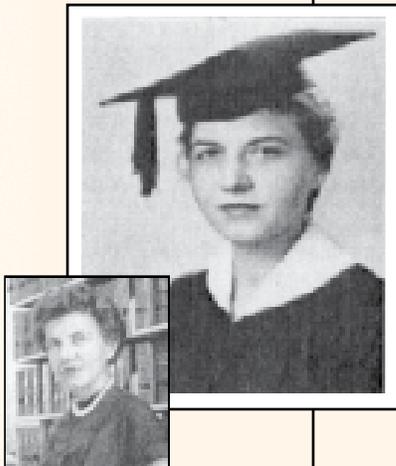
Sources: FSCBAA; MHL D (1939, 1945 & 1949); nomination packet prepared for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame; 75NAWL (photos); MH, July 15, 1979 & Feb. 1, 1987; historical text written by Judge Davis; conversations with Judge Davis (photo).



Jeannette O. Gifford Mullens Smith

(1910 - 1981)

Date of Admission: 1937



Professor Jeannette O. Gifford Mullens Smith was born in Kenosha, Wisconsin, on September 23, 1910. Her father, John Gifford, a world-renowned tropical botanist, moved the family to Miami, Florida, in 1919. She grew up in the Miami area under the watchful eye of her mother, who stayed at home to care for her children. After high school, Professor Smith moved to Detroit and graduated from the Harper School of Nursing, an affiliate of

Wayne State University, in 1931. Professor Smith returned to Miami to attend the University of Miami School of Law.

Professor Smith was not an ordinary student. According to a fellow colleague, she "really knew her stuff," so she was never "picked on" by her fellow students. It is speculated that "maybe even some professors were afraid of her because she had the strength and the will to fight back." Professor Smith graduated magna cum laude from the University of Miami School of Law with her LL.B. degree in

1937, and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 26, 1937. She noted that her “pre-law studies included mainly social sciences,” and believed she was “fortunate in attending the law school at a time when the Seminar System was possible.”

Immediately following graduation, she became the law librarian for Dade County and set up the Dade County Law Library at the Courthouse. Professor Smith described her work at the library as “essentially teaching.” She found that many lawyers had “only rudimentary ideas of looking up law. To these I taught legal bibliography.” She taught fellow attorneys how to use the library resources efficiently for legal research and frequently engaged in legal discourse on new facets of the law. She became acquainted with nearly all of the practicing attorneys who came to know and value her capabilities.

She often discussed questions of law with Circuit Court Judges Barns, Williams, Trammel and Gomez, and occasionally did legal research for them. She also did work for the Assistant County Solicitor Thomas H. Anderson, who did most of the appellate work for that office. She remained with the library for four years until the birth of her son. Then, in the summer of 1942, Professor Smith worked in Mr. Anderson’s law office.

When World War II broke out, Professor Smith earned some public teaching experience as a volunteer Red Cross instructor for nurses’ aides. She believed this experience “indicated [she had] platform presence and some aptitude for group teaching.” When the war ended, Professor Smith was ready to return to the law. In February 1949, she became an assistant professor of law at the University of Miami School of Law. Dean R. A. Rasco was impressed by Professor Smith’s work as Dade County law librarian, her law practice, and the “great deal of work she [had] done with the circuit judges for a number of years.”

Professor Smith was the wife of Thomas F. Smith, the Publicity and Convention Bureau Director for the City of Miami Beach. They had four children, two girls (Priscilla Lindgren and Mrs. Kipp Price) and two boys (Jay Reynolds and Todd Gifford). At the time she began as an assistant professor, the three eldest children were 2, 4 and 6.

As the ex-servicemen used the G.I.

bill to take them to school, they were confronted with a spectacular sight -- a woman professor with “a mind as sharp as a razor!” By the end of the war, the influx of servicemen into the law school was at its peak. These students, however, tended to be men and were often her own age, if not older! The attitude of the student body was very serious and respectful, and their acceptance of a woman law professor was a wonderful surprise. Professor Daniel Murray, a fellow colleague, recalled that “the reception of a woman in the legal field was better than it was in actual practice. UM Law School would take someone with a brain regardless of their sex.” He remembered with fondness Jeannette Smith, whom he described as “unassuming and modest, with an incredible ability to argue on any subject, and win!” It was Professor Smith’s character that helped her through her first years of teaching. “She was not soft,” Professor Murray explained, “but she was simpatico with her students.”

Jeannette Smith thought of herself politically as “nominally a Democrat . . . keenly aware of man’s responsibility to man.” She thought she could “impart some sense of social responsibility in (her) teaching.” She was interested in teaching many different areas of the law, but she at first taught Commercial Law, Constitutional Law, and Contracts. With the onslaught of the Uniform Sales Act, the Uniform Commercial Code, and several constitutional law changes, she was forced to specialize. She reluctantly gave up Commercial Law, becoming a specialist in Constitutional Law. She stated, “Most laymen and women don’t realize that, by law, the Court was intended to be a political body. To have the opportunity to get that idea across to lawyers who will be legislators and leaders in the community is wonderful. They, in turn, can carry this information to the public.”

As a professor, Jeannette Smith was a stickler for linguistic precision. In addition to her main interest in Constitutional Law, she also taught Contracts to first-year students. Crediting Professor Corbin and the first *Restatement of Contracts*, Professor Smith scrupulously studied the field of contracts and devoted herself to illuminating the field’s nuances. She demanded precision and clarity of her students – teaching was her passion.

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In 1959 she was promoted from assistant professor to associate professor. In 1969 she was promoted to full professor — the only woman among 22 men elevated to that rank within the university. There were two other women teaching at the law school at that time – M. Minnette Massey (currently a professor of law) and Soia Mentschikoff.

During the years Professor Smith taught at the law school, she co-authored the first edition of *Florida Constitutional Law* (1958), and she wrote several articles on contracts, published in the *University of Miami Law Review*. She was a member of the Wig and Robe and Phi Alpha Delta, for which she was faculty advisor. She was a participating member of The Florida Bar in efforts to rewrite the Florida Constitution, and she assisted the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Criminal Cases. She was interested in poverty law and was one of three law faculty members to develop a program in Law and the Poor, which received a Ford Foundation grant. In 1971 she was appointed to the board of directors of Legal Services of Greater Miami, a post she held until 1974.

Along with her many remarkable professional accomplishments, Professor Smith remained focused on the important balance of family and career. “Women who

want any kind of career and also want to be married are always going to feel they have a bear by the tail,” she said in a 1969 *Miami Herald* interview. “They know that both of these activities have to take preeminence in their lives and they both can’t. You end up constantly having guilt feelings.” But she encouraged women in the study of law, stating, “Women lawyers are in there as ‘natural leaders,’ too. All it takes is for them to show that they’re just as interested in the preservation of justice as their male counterparts.”

After 27 years of teaching, Professor Smith retired in May 1976 when Soia Mentschikoff was dean of the law school. Once retired, Professor Smith and her husband planned trips abroad to Scotland and France. Shortly after her retirement, however, Professor Smith learned she had cancer. On August 22, 1981, Professor Smith lost her struggle with cancer and died. Her legacy as one of the first 150 women lawyers in Florida and one of the pioneer women in legal education, remains.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photos); Louise McMurray, “Weekdays at the Waterways -- A Goodbye Visit with Jennie Smith,” *The Barrister*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, at 23 (Spring 1977); MH, Aug. 22, 1981; MBD; conversations with Dean Jeannette F. Hausler, Professor Richard Hausler, Professor Daniel Murray, and Dean Herma Hill Kay.

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Daisy Richards Bisz

(1909 -)

Date of Admission: 1937

IF YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY THE GAME, GET THE NAME

WOMEN ATTORNEYS: There are at least 25 women out of 700 attorneys in Miami licensed to practice law. Only a meager dozen, however, are following their chosen vocation, and still fewer are in business under their own firm names. Considering the fact that most of the women barristers received high marks when they took the state bar examination or graduated from accredited Universities, and a majority have ordinary good looks, a Whirligig fan asks why the Portias do not appear in court oftener. The answer is, Whirligig understands, too many are finding it easier to make a living in the less competitive field of stenographic or clerical work.

This small undated clipping was pasted into the scrapbook of a remarkable attorney, Daisy Richards Bisz, admitted to the bar in 1937. Ms. Bisz opened her own law office and practiced for many years. By any standard, the exceptional Daisy Bisz had a dramatic life and exceptional career.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1909, Daisy Lue Gammage is the daughter of the now deceased Reverend Doctor A. E. Gammage, first pastor of Riverside Baptist Church in Miami. Son of an illustrious British family, Dr. Gammage, at age nine, accompanied his family to the United States in 1872. In 1903 he married the



beautiful New Yorker, Edith Beniteau Anderson, a gifted speaker and musician as well as an ordained Baptist minister. They had eight children, five of whom still survive in the year 2000.

At 13 months of age, Ms. Bisz contracted polio and was temporarily paralyzed from the neck down. The fact that she was left with some disabling problems has in no way diminished her enthusiasm for the practice of law and other interests.

After graduating from high school in 1927, she wanted to become a stenographer and enroll in a five-month course at Pan American College of Commerce, but she lacked the \$90 tuition fee. A professor,

upon learning of her plight, suggested she apply to a poor-girls loan fund sponsored by the Citizens & Southern Bank of Atlanta. She applied and was approved for a loan. Three months into the curriculum she was teaching shorthand and spelling and had won the typing award.

Ms. Bisz was 18 years of age when she left the business college, which fulfilled its promise to assist her in obtaining employment. She arrived at the law office of W. Ross Burton, who was sharing offices in the Olympia Building with Inman Padgett, another attorney. One day Ms. Bisz's uncle,



Miami Daily News, April 8, 1938, (L-R): Mary Anne Leddy, Mattie Belle Davis, Daisy Richards Bisz, and Henry K. Gibson.





One day Ms. Bisz's uncle, Dr. Tom Gammage, came to the law office with a mortgage on downtown property to be foreclosed. Her uncle saw Mr. Burton put the mortgage instrument, note, and abstract on his niece's desk and heard him instruct her to draw a bill of complaint for foreclosure. Seeing his niece do the work of a lawyer, he made the remark, "Daisy, you've got the game, but not the name," and he offered to pay the tuition if she wanted to study law.



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Ms. Bisz's uncle knew a lawyer who taught law two nights a week in the South Florida College of Law. Ms. Bisz enrolled and attended classes for 15 months, at the end of which her uncle asked if she was ready to take the bar exam. Only four areas of law had been covered and the exam tested on 32 subjects. She decided to terminate her studies with the law college and proceeded to study entirely on her own. She studied every night after work and through the weekends. She haunted



Daisy Bisz with longtime friend and colleague, Inman Padgett

the libraries, made outlines, and wrote a special "pony" or a brief synopsis of every statute passed by the Florida Legislature up to that time. She passed the bar examination, which was given over the course of two days, and was duly admitted to practice law on August 5, 1937.

Esther Poppell (1933), who was working as a secretary for E. Albert Pallot, called Ms. Bisz to congratulate her on passing the bar exam, and said, "Now that you have your certificate, what are you going to do with it? Mine is on the floor under my desk." Ms. Bisz responded she was going to practice law. She then said, "Good Luck." (Ms. Poppell later became a partner with Mr. Pallot.)

Ms. Bisz immediately applied for oc-

cupational licenses, was admitted to practice in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, and worked for the law firm of Loftin, Stokes & Calkins as secretary to Senator Stokes while searching for office space. During that short interim, the owner of Dixie Tire Company, which serviced her automobile, asked her to draw a lease for his company. As this was her first client, Senator Stokes allowed her to draw the lease on firm time. She obtained office space with Henry K. Gibson, who needed a lawyer to assist him in his law practice, in February 1938. Ms. Bisz's first appearance in court was before Judge Heffernan of the Civil Court of Record. The hearing was to argue a demurrer in a case pending in that court. She won a dismissal.

When Ms. Bisz was invited to join a group of women lawyers, the members were composed of practicing lawyers and women who had degrees from other state universities, but who were not admitted to practice in Florida because they did not take the Florida bar exam, and thus were employed as secretaries. Ms. Bisz was already a very active member of the Dade County Bar Association. Moreover, she was also giving one day a week and more, if necessary, to the Selective Service System (1942-47), drawing wills free-of-charge to members of the armed forces, helping their dependent families with legal matters free-of-charge, playing the piano on Sunday at church, and taking care of her now busy law practice, all while being a wife and homemaker for her husband, John A. Richards. These numerous activities left her with no additional time to spend with the group.

Throughout her career, Ms. Bisz has always maintained that she was a lawyer and a lady but not a lady lawyer. She was an active member of the Dade County Bar Association, sat on its courts committee, was its secretary for three terms, and was elected unanimously by its directors on July 27, 1942, to fill the unexpired term of Director George Smathers when he went to serve in World War II. She was the first woman to hold such a prestigious position with the Dade County Bar Association.

In 1941 or 1942, Inman Padgett asked Ms. Bisz to become a member of his firm and offered her \$20,000 a year. She declined, as she wished to remain indepen-

dent, but she offered to help him in his practice in exchange for office space and a telephone. He accepted and she remained with Mr. Padgett until August 1955, when she opened her own office in the Ingraham Building.

On March 18, 1954, Ms. Bisz was seriously injured in an automobile accident. Her left hand was almost severed, her wrist completely crushed, and a deep cut in her head required 76 stitches to close. She was hospitalized for three months. The injury did not stop Ms. Bisz; in fact, she returned to her practice before all the graft work was complete. Federal District Court Judge Lenore Nesbitt (1958) remembers that Daisy Bisz wore beautiful and fashionable scarves, which matched her attire, to cover the grafted area. It was in this state that Ms. Bisz traveled to Washington, D.C., in October 1954 to be admitted to the Supreme Court of the United States and to the Court of Military Appeals, the country's two highest courts.

She was also permitted to practice before the Department of the Treasury and the Foreign Claims Commission, where she obtained five judgments against the Republic of Cuba for confiscation by Fidel Castro of real and personal property owned by American citizens.

Some of her more noted clients were Associated Grocers, Inc., with over 300 members and for whom Ms. Bisz was general counsel; Florida Retail Grocers, Inc.; and Boston Red Sox baseball legend Ted Williams, with whom she has shared a close friendship over the past 50 years. Prior to Fidel Castro's takeover, she made a number of trips to Cuba to see American clients employed by a major sugar company to assist them in their legal matters in the United States.

Ms. Bisz was offered a county court judgeship, but declined, choosing instead to remain in private practice. In her practice, she charged and was awarded the same fees as other successful lawyers.

At the age of 21, she married her first husband, John A. Richards, who died of a serious heart ailment in 1951 after 20 years of marriage. In 1954 Ms. Bisz

renewed her acquaintance with Leonard Bisz, with whom she had graduated from high school in 1927. When she again chanced to meet him, he was associated with Walter Harris in the Ingraham Building as an appraiser and was a member of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers, as well as a realtor. They were married on June 30, 1955, and shortly thereafter, Ms. Bisz left attorney Padgett's office to open her own office in the Ingraham Building. This was a continuation of a long and successful practice.

Daisy Richards Bisz was an attorney of record in a number of appellate cases. Although the majority of her work was in the probate court, she also handled sophisticated commercial litigation. In 1987, at the June bar convention in Orlando, she and 29 members of The Florida Bar who had practiced law for 50 years were honored and received their 50-year certificates. In 1990, due to her husband's illness, Ms. Bisz was required to spend more time at home. She gave up her office in the Coral Gables Federal Savings & Loan Association Building, which she had rented since 1978, and began sharing space with attorney John M. Thomson, because zoning would not permit practicing from a home.

In addition to her legal commitments, Ms. Bisz has also been a member of the University of Miami endowment committee since 1967; the advisory board of registrants for the U.S. Selective Service System (1940-47); the Reserve Officers Ladies Association, USAR School, University of Miami School Chapter, of which she was president; the Estate Planning Council of Greater Miami (director 1984-85); and the Society of University Founders, Grand Founder, University of Miami (1986). She has contributed to *American Jurisprudence Pleading & Practice Forms* and is listed




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Ms. Bisz, who is pictured fifth from right, represented Florida Retail Grocers.



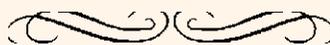
Daisy Richards Bisz opines to the young lawyer of today that the law is a jealous mistress, and you'd better love it or leave it. She still loves it after 63 years of practice.

in *Who's Who of American Women* (3d ed. 1963).

Daisy Richards Bisz opines to the young lawyer of today that the law is a jealous mistress, and you'd better love it or leave it. She still loves it after 63 years

of practice.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL (1939, 1945 & 1949); MBD; conversations with Daisy Richards Bisz and review of articles in her scrapbook (photos); collaboration by John M. Thomson; photo by Nancy Schleifer.



Diana Dorothea Coopersmith

(1915 - 1981)

Date of Admission: 1937

Diana Dorothea Coopersmith was admitted to practice law in Florida on August 5, 1937, after having passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She was a partner in the Miami firm Weinstein & Coopersmith with Natalie Weinstein (1933). An article in the *Miami Herald*, while reporting on their representation of a criminal defendant, stated that theirs was the first all-feminine law firm in the state. Ms. Coopersmith was a founding member of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers. She died on January 13, 1981.

Sources: FSCBAA; MBD; MHL (1939); MH (photo).



Rose Elizabeth Deeb Kitchen was born on March 17, 1909, in Tallahassee, Florida, and was the fifth of eleven children. Her parents were from Lebanon and immigrated to Tallahassee in 1905. She grew up in a very traditional Arab male-dominated environment.

In the Deeb family, it was traditional for children to be taken out of school in the third or fourth grade so that they could work in family businesses. Consis-



Rose Elizabeth Deeb Kitchen

(1909 - 1993)

Date of Admission: 1937



tent with this practice, Ms. Kitchen was removed from school and sent to work at an early age. This was very distressing to her. Her older brother, Charles Deeb, who was only 11 years old, stepped in and persuaded their father to deviate from tradition and allow her to continue her education.

She graduated from Leon High School in 1928 as the co-valedictorian of her class. She was accepted at Florida State College for Women, but her father removed her after one day. He

had heard that she intended to become a teacher, and he refused to allow his daughter to pursue this course of study.

Her brother Charles stepped in again and suggested that she join him in studying law. He was attending classes conducted by Madeline Jacobson (1927) in downtown Tallahassee. Brother and sister initially began the training together. While she became very excited about law, Charles decided to drop out. Ms. Kitchen begged her brother to continue because she knew her father would not permit her to be out of the house in the evening without one of her brothers.

When Charles dropped out of the program, her brother George and his wife Mary covered for her while she attended classes. Often she would study at night after the family had gone to bed. She kept her books under the sheets and would read by flashlight so that her father would not know what she was doing. Ms. Kitchen spent five years "reading the law" before attempting the bar examination. She passed the bar examination on her second attempt, and was admitted to practice law on August 5, 1937. She did not initially practice law. She was fascinated with and loved the law, but there were few, if any, female role models for her. Instead, she worked in various businesses in Tallahassee through World War II.

In 1941 she married and had three children -- E. C. Deeno Kitchen, Deeb Paul Kitchen, and Angie Kitchen Bouda. Shortly after the birth of her third child, Ms. Kitchen and her husband separated and ultimately divorced. She never remarried. Ms. Kitchen had been working as a clerk in the Florida Department of Agriculture and still was not practicing law. When she realized that she would not receive any child support from her ex-husband, she decided to use her law degree to support her family. In 1949 she began working as an assistant attorney general for Attorney General Richard W. Ervin, who later became a Florida Supreme Court Justice (1964-75). She worked in the statutory revision department and served as an assistant attorney general during the tenures of Justice Ervin, James W. Kynes, and Earl Faircloth.

In 1967 the statutory revision department was transferred to the Florida Legislature, and Ms. Kitchen's job shifted. While

she was working with the legislature, one of her responsibilities was to draft bills. When new legislators wanted to propose legislation, it was Ms. Kitchen's job to create the bill that would be debated in the House of Representatives and Senate. Over the years she met and helped many young legislators who subsequently became leaders in Florida politics. Her son Deeb recalled meeting Lawton Chiles shortly after he was elected to the United States Senate. When introduced, Senator Chiles immediately connected mother and son. He told Deeb that "Miss Rose" was one of the reasons he became a senator. Ms. Kitchen also helped Governor Reubin Askew in his early years with the legislature.

She retired in 1979 from legislative services, but did not leave public service. Upon retirement, she was appointed by Governor Askew to the Florida Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, on which she served as a consumer member until 1986.

Ms. Kitchen was active in several local bar associations. She became a member of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers shortly after it was formed in 1951, and was a founding member of the Tallahassee Women Lawyers in 1980. She was also a member of the Florida Government Bar Association, and she was one of the first senior directors in the Tallahassee Bar Association.

Ms. Kitchen died on April 9, 1993. During her lifetime, she constantly overcame barriers and difficulties. She obtained an education, raised her three children alone, and practiced law for 40 years in a field dominated by men. Her son, Deeb Kitchen, describes her as the prototype, when there were no others, of a woman who could balance work and family. She instilled in her children her love of public service. Her son Deeno Kitchen is a lawyer and her other two children, Deeb Kitchen and Angie Kitchen Bouda, work for public school systems. Her eldest granddaughter, Anne-Elizabeth Kitchen Williams, is a third-generation lawyer, and when she became a member of The Florida Bar in 1995, she chose to be sworn in at her grandmother's grave site.

Sources: FSCBAA; MBD; conversations with Deeb Kitchen, Deeno Kitchen, and Anne-Elizabeth Kitchen Williams (photo); *Tallahassee Democrat*, Apr. 11, 1993.



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In 1949 she began working as an assistant attorney general for Attorney General Richard W. Ervin, who later became a Florida Supreme Court Justice (1964-75).



Thelma H. Waybright

(1914 -)

Date of Admission: 1937

Thelma H. Waybright was admitted to practice law in Florida on August 5, 1937, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She was a partner in the Jacksonville firm Waybright & Waybright, which was founded between 1936 and 1939 by Edgar Waybright, Sr., and Edgar Waybright, Jr. By 1939 Ms.

Waybright was a partner in the firm with Edgar Waybright, Jr. Florida bar records show that she lived in North Miami in 1954 and in Oberlin, Ohio, in 1967. She retired in 1984 and her last known address is in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHLA (1939, 1945 & 1949); The Florida Bar Directory; MBD.



Betty Lippmann applied herself and graduated magna cum laude from the University of Miami School of Law in 1937. She was the third woman to graduate magna cum laude from Miami.



Pearl Annah Williams

Date of Admission: 1937

Pearl Annah Williams was admitted to practice law in Florida on August 5, 1937, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Source: FSCBAA.



Mildred Ernestine Wilson

Date of Admission: 1937

Mildred Ernestine Wilson was admitted to practice law in Florida on October 30, 1937. Although supreme court records indicate she was a Stetson graduate, the school's records do not reflect that fact.

Source: FSCBAA.



Betty Speizman Lippmann

(1908 - 1981)

Date of Admission: 1937

Betty Speizman Lippmann, who was born on June 28, 1908, in Paterson, New Jersey, was the oldest daughter in a family of six children. Her parents, David and Elka Bornstein Speizman, were Jewish immigrants from Lodz, Poland, where her father had been a weaver and her mother was the daughter of a wealthy merchant.

The Speizmans arrived in the United States in 1907 with their oldest child, Morris, and they settled first in Paterson, New Jersey, and later in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Mr. Speizman worked in a silk mill belonging to his brother-in-law and became manager. During World War I, the family moved to Ganonoque in the Thousand Islands, Quebec, Canada, but they later returned to Wilkes-Barre.



Elka Speizman could not read English, but she loved Shakespeare, so her daughter read her the complete works of Shakespeare out loud every night. When Elka Speizman died at the age of 44 of a stroke, leaving six children, Ms. Lippmann helped to raise her younger siblings. During the Great Depression, her father managed to make a living dealing in junk.

Ms. Lippmann graduated from high school and attended Syracuse University, where she studied liberal arts, especially political science. She was fascinated by biographies of legal figures such as Oliver Wendell Holmes and Clarence Darrow. When she heard of the new law school in Miami, she eagerly applied and was accepted. Although the classrooms were still under construction (some were still only scaffolding), Betty Lippmann applied herself and graduated magna cum laude from the University of Miami School of Law in 1937. She was the third woman to graduate magna cum laude from Miami; her friend, Jeannette Gifford (later known as Professor Smith), also graduated magna cum laude that same year. Ms. Lippman was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on December 2, 1937.

Ms. Lippmann began her law practice in Coral Gables and soon met Sydney Lippmann, an attorney and a graduate of St. John's Law School, whom she married in 1941. Mr. Lippmann was drafted and they moved to Philadelphia, near where he was stationed in the army. After World War II, the Lippmanns moved to Clermont, Florida, and later to Orlando. They had two children, Alice Marya and Stephen.

Once in Orlando, Ms. Lippmann practiced law with her husband. She was also active in community affairs and served at times as president of B'nai Brith and the League of Women Voters.

In 1951 the Lippmanns were divorced, and Ms. Lippmann was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. During the difficult time that followed, she managed to build up her own law practice, at first from home and then from an office downtown. She formed a professional alliance with the attorneys in Fishback, Williams, Davis and Dominic in Orlando and sometimes worked in cooperation with them. Most of her work, however, was solo. She worked primarily as a civil attorney, but on one or two occasions she was called upon to defend a criminal case. She was nominated for juvenile court judge, but declined due to poor health.

Ms. Lippmann was a member of Florida State Bar, American Bar, Pan American Bar, and International Bar Associations. She continued to practice until 1961, when she retired due to ill health. She spent the remainder of her years as an invalid in her home in Orlando. She died in 1981 of complications from Parkinson's disease. Despite her illness, Betty S. Lippmann always remained interested in politics and law.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photo); biography written by Marya Wolfman (photo); conversation and e-mail from niece Laura S. Kerben; MBD.



She formed a professional alliance with the attorneys in Fishback, Williams, Davis and Dominic in Orlando and sometimes worked in cooperation with them. Most of her work, however, was solo.

Mary Lou Baker

(1914 - 1965)

Date of Admission: 1938

Mary Lou Baker studied pre-law at Florida Southern College, graduated from Stetson University College of Law in 1938, and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on September 30, 1938. Her studies also included a course in journalism with Harris G. Sims, who was the editor of the Lakeland Ledger.

Mary Lou Baker practiced law in St.

Petersburg and later in Clearwater with her father, Lee L. Baker, in the firm of Baker and Baker. Ms. Baker also held government and political offices. In 1935 she served as an attache at the Florida State Legislature, and in 1941 she was chief of indexers of the Florida Statutes. Ms. Baker was also a political analyst.





In the 1942 election, she defeated Representative Stanley Marshall of St. Petersburg and was elected to represent Pinellas County in the House of Representatives. She was reelected in 1944. She had the distinction of being the first woman legislator ever elected by popular vote from Pinellas County, and the second in the state's history.

Mary Lou Baker was a crusader for women's rights. In 1940 she mobilized a crusade to revise the Florida laws affecting the property rights of married women and to break down what she called a "woman-enslavement" code. The legislation she advocated was a "Married Woman's Act," which would remove the legal disabilities of married women, and it was approved by the Florida State Bar Association. When the proposed bill was not enacted, a group of supporters rallied around Ms. Baker to elect her to the legislature.

In the 1942 election, she defeated Representative Stanley Marshall of St. Petersburg and was elected to represent Pinellas County in the House of Representatives. She was reelected in 1944. She had the distinction of being the first woman legislator ever elected by popular vote from Pinellas County, and the second in the state's history.

She was a visionary in politics. As early as 1942 she was concerned about gambling, which did not come into the limelight until the 1950s. While in the legislature, she sought to allow women "the responsibility of serving on juries." When

the bill was defeated, Ms. Baker stated in debate on the House floor, "I may go down in defeat, but my cause is destined to win, for women will not long tolerate the unjust discrimination against their sex." Referring to women serving on juries, she said at that time, "One can hardly overestimate the ignorance of the average juror in our juries composed of males."

Ms. Baker was married to Seale Harris Matthews, a U.S. Army major, and the couple had one son, Lee Harris Matthews. From 1946 to December 1947, Ms. Baker and her son visited her husband, who was then stationed in Okinawa. She sent back articles from other points in the Orient that appeared weekly in the Sunday *Tampa Tribune*. Her analysis of the political alignments in force at that time and her descriptions of the Japanese people displayed a sympathetic understanding and sound discernment. Upon her return, she lectured about her experiences in Okinawa.

Ms. Baker died in 1965.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); *Clearwater Sun*, (Oct. 31, 1954; *Tampa Daily Times*, June 23, 1949; MHL (1945 & 1949); MBD.



Alma Oyama Carlton

(- 1990)

Date of Admission: 1938

Alma Oyama Carlton had plenty of family support when she decided to attend Stetson University College of Law. She and her husband, Doyle I. Carlton, whom she married on September 11, 1934, and her brother-in-law, Vassar B. Carlton, all graduated from Stetson in 1937. Vassar Carlton, who went on to become a Florida Supreme Court Justice (1969-74), was admitted to practice law in 1937, and Mr. and Mrs. Carlton were both admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 7, 1938.

After graduation, the Carltons moved to Cocoa in Brevard County. Neither pursued legal careers, but the two shared work on church and civic projects stretching over

several decades while in Brevard County. According to attorney Joseph Moss, a long-time friend of the Carltons, Ms. Carlton was primarily involved in her husband's businesses, which included orange groves and real estate development. He also organized the First National Bank of Merritt Island and served as chairman of its board. The bank was eventually sold, but the Carltons remained shareholders. Mr. Moss described the Carltons as mainstays in the business community and First Baptist Church. They were very active in charitable organizations, and were particularly generous to students.

Mr. Carlton's cousin was Doyle E. Carlton, who became Governor of Florida in 1929. The Carltons managed his election campaign in Brevard County.

Alma Oyama Carlton died on December



8, 1990, in Merritt Island. She was survived by her husband, brother and sister.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCAL&R (photo); *Florida Baptist Witness*, Jan. 17, 1991;

Sentinel-Star, Oct. 9, 1974; MBD; e-mail from Senior Judge Clarence T. Johnson, Jr.; conversation with Joseph Moss and Mrs. Jack Crockett (sister) (photo).



Osie Buck Crump

(1885 - 1967)

Date of Admission: 1938

Osie Buck Crump was born on May 30, 1885, in Rural Retreat, Virginia, and was educated at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 7, 1938, after having passed the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners.

Attorney William Reece Smith, Jr., remembers Osie Crump when he started practicing in Tampa in 1949. Ms. Crump worked for Judge E. B. Drumright, whose office was located on the corner of Franklin Street and Lafayette Street (now Kennedy

Boulevard).

Ms. Crump passed away on or about May 14, 1967, in Tampa, at the age of 81. Her obituary indicated that Christian Science services were held; that she was survived by a brother, Mr. Edward H. Buck, of Tampa, Florida, and nieces and nephews; and that contributions were requested for the Girls Club, in lieu of flowers.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL (1945 & 1949); *Tampa Tribune*, May 15, 1967; conversations with William Reece Smith, Jr., and Senior Judge Morison Buck.

Lucille Cairns George

Date of Admission: 1940

Lucille Cairns George was born in Gainesville as a third-generation Gainesvillian. Her grandfather, George A. Cairns, graduated from Davidson in 1854 and taught one year at the East Florida State Seminary in Ocala, which was the forerunner of the University of Florida. Her father, George H. Cairns, graduated from "Ole Miss" in 1901, majoring in engineering. Mr. Cairns was the first Gainesville city civil engineer and Gainesville's first city manager. Her mother, Lucille Colclough, attended Agnes Scott Institute and Ward Belmont College. Ms. George is an only child.

Ms. George attended public schools in Gainesville and knew Clara Floyd Gehan (1933), who was teaching at Gainesville High School at that time. She gradu-

ated from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia, with an A.B. degree in 1937, and entered the University of Florida College of Law in 1937, graduating with a J.D. in 1940. She was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on May 28, 1940.

After graduation, Ms. George worked briefly in the trust department of the Atlantic National Bank of Jacksonville (1940-41), and as a clerk for Giles Patterson, a Jacksonville lawyer, in 1942. She was invited to clerk for Florida Supreme Court Justice H. L.

Sebring, but she declined because of her pending wedding. In 1942 she married Theodore S. George, who had graduated from Duke University with an M.S. and a Ph.D. She clerked for Circuit Court Judge John A. H. Murphree in Gainesville from



1943 to 1944.

Ms. George did not pursue a legal career, as her husband's military career required them to move out of the state for several years. Later, the couple returned to Gainesville, and Mr. George was appointed a professor at the University of Florida. The Georges had three children -- Courtney (Mrs. Kemper Hyers), earned a J.D. at the University of Florida, Beverly earned an M.S. in electrical engineering from the University of Florida, and Theodore obtained his J.D. from Emory University.



Lucille Cairns George is well-known in Gainesville for her community activities, serving on many boards and

in elected offices: Junior League of Gainesville (board member 1961-62); Junior League of Greater Sustainers (president 1971-72, vice president 1988-89); Spring Pilgrimage in Gainesville (chair 1985); University of Florida Women's Club (president 1963-64, board member 1959-65); University of Florida Newcomers Club

(board 1957-58); University of Florida Engineering Wives (Faculty) Club (board 1957-58, president 1958-59); Florida Museum of Natural History Associates (board 1985-89); University of Florida Art Gallery Guild (board 1980-84, officer 1987-88); Gainesville Garden Club (board 1987-90); Historic Gainesville, Inc. (board 1990-95); Thomas (Civic) Center Associates (board 1987-90, 1996-present); Thomas Center Gardens, City of Gainesville (advisory board 1989-95); Evergreen Cemetery, City of Gainesville (advisory board 1994-95); Evergreen Cemetery Association of Gainesville (board 1995-96, president 1998-99); First Presbyterian Church, Gainesville (session 1996-99, personnel committee 1991-96, property committee 1970-71, 1985-88); St. Michael's By-The-Sea Episcopal Church Women's Auxiliary, Cocoa Beach, Florida (officer 1954-55); and Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, Officer Wives Club (board member 1954-56).

Lucille Cairns George continues to reside in Gainesville, Florida, where she has many friends.

Sources: FSCBAA, UFCLAL&R, conversations with Lucille Cairns George (photo), corroboration by Theodore C. George.

Ms. George did not pursue a legal career, as her husband's military career required them to move out of the state for several years. Later, the couple returned to Gainesville, and Mr. George was appointed a professor at the University of Florida.

Jeannette Edythe TeSelle Plump

(1916 -)

Date of Admission: 1940

Jeannette Edythe TeSelle Plump was born in Antigo, Wisconsin, in 1916, the daughter of Mable Henshaw and Clarence J. TeSelle. Her father was a prosecuting attorney for six years and a circuit court commissioner in Wisconsin for nine years. In 1928 the family moved to Gainesville, Florida, where her father joined the faculty of the University of Florida College of Law. He was an outstanding teacher, very demanding, and expected superior performance from his students. Both Ms. Plump and her brother John followed him into the legal profession.

Jeannette TeSelle Plump graduated

from Duke University in 1936 with an A.B. degree. Upon returning home, she applied for admission to the University of Florida College of Law. However, because she was a woman and not yet 21 years of age, she was required to sit out a year before being permitted to enroll. Thus, she did not begin her legal studies until 1937 and received her LL.B. degree in 1940. She was admitted to practice law under the diploma privilege on May 28, 1940. Following graduation, she was an attorney with the law firm of Knight and Knight in Jacksonville, Florida, until the end of World War II. Thereafter, Ms. Plump

accepted occasional legal assignments, but has not otherwise engaged in the practice of law.

During World War II, Jeannette TeSelle married John H. Plump, a naval aviator and Duke University graduate. They raised four children -- two boys and twin girls. None of the children pursued a legal career, but a daughter-in-law is a practicing attorney. Ms. Plump's brother,

John TeSelle, followed in their father's footsteps, teaching law in Oklahoma for 23 years before becoming a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge.

To be near three of her four children, Ms. Plump currently resides in a retirement community in Prescott, Arizona.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R; conversations with and correspondence from Judge John TeSelle.

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Dorothy Louise Schoessel Tessmer

(- 1967)

Date of Admission: 1940

Dorothy Louise Schoessel graduated from the University of Miami School of Law and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 10, 1940. She passed away on September 14, 1967.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R.

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Carlotta Van Cortlandt Washburne Faircloth

(1917 - 1992)

Date of Admission: 1941

Carlotta Van Cortlandt Washburne Faircloth was born in New York State on November 21, 1917. She lost both parents before she was two years old; both deaths could have been prevented today with antibiotics. Although she lived with her grandparents after her parents died, Ms. Faircloth was legally considered an orphan and a ward of the state. She always said that having so many legal disadvantages in her early life contributed to her pursuing a legal education and career.

Ms. Faircloth attended Stetson University College of Law, where she met her future husband, James Neal Faircloth, who was in the class ahead of her. She graduated in 1941 and was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 2, 1941. Ms. Faircloth was a member

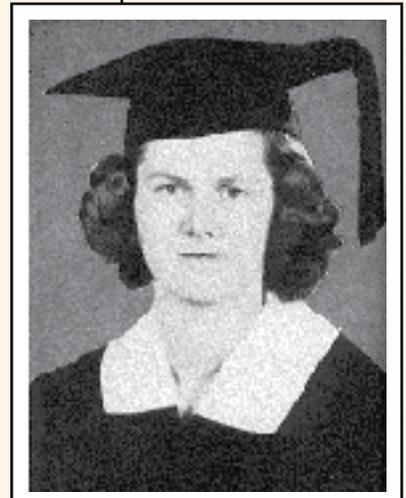
of Alpha Xi Delta Social Fraternity and Phi Delta Delta Legal Fraternity. After being admitted to the bar, Ms. Faircloth moved to Washington, D.C., where she worked for the United States Department of Justice. She renewed her acquaintance with Mr. Faircloth, who was then working for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the couple married in March 1942.

While employed by the Department of Justice, Ms. Faircloth worked on many appellate cases, the most famous of which was that of the seven Nazi saboteurs who came ashore on the East Coast in 1942 from German U-boats on a mission to destroy American power

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Ms. Plump applied for admission to the University of Florida College of Law. However, because she was a woman and not yet 21 years of age, she was required to sit out a year before being permitted to enroll.

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Ms. Faircloth worked on many appellate cases, the most famous of which was that of the seven Nazi saboteurs who came ashore on the East Coast in 1942 from German U-boats on a mission to destroy American power and industrial plants. The saboteurs were eventually arrested, convicted of spying and conspiracy, and six of them were executed.

and industrial plants. The saboteurs were eventually arrested, convicted of spying and conspiracy, and six of them were executed.

Shortly before the war ended, Mr. Faircloth requested a transfer to Panama City, Florida, and after the war, the Faircloths moved to Quincy, Florida, which was Mr. Faircloth's hometown. The couple had four children, Carlotta Faircloth Appleman, Leona Faircloth Strickland, Harold Faircloth, and James Neal Faircloth, Jr.

After settling in Quincy, Ms. Faircloth did not pursue a legal career. Rather, she returned to school, studying Spanish and obtaining a education certificate from Florida State University so she could teach while her children were at home. Daughter Leona Faircloth Strickland recalls that her mother was an excellent teacher and that Spanish lessons did not end at school as evidenced by the fact that Ms. Faircloth would even write grocery lists in Spanish.

Ms. Faircloth was very active in the First Baptist Church, teaching Sunday school, and with the Royal Ambassadors, boys and migrant workers that could basically only speak Spanish. She was a former regent

of the Caroline Brevard Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution; secretary of the founding committee of the Gadsden County Library; and member of the National Genealogical Society, New England Historic Genealogical Society, and Westchester County Historical Society in Ossining, New York. She was also a founder of an Ormond Beach Girl Scout Troop.

Ms. Faircloth's grandparents who raised her lived with the family until their deaths. Ms. Faircloth passed away in Quincy on February 23, 1992. Her husband and four children survive her. One of her grandchildren, Carlotta Appleman, has chosen the law as her profession. She graduated in December 1999 from law school at the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) and was sworn in to practice law in Florida on April 12, 2000.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); conversations with Judge James and Mrs. Betty Lou Joanos and Jim Appleman; conversations with and correspondence from Leona Strickland and Carlotta Faircloth Appleman.

Lois Ellen Thacker Graessle

(1916 -)

Date of Admission: 1941

Lois Ellen Thacker Graessle was born on December 26, 1916, in Ohio and moved to Kissimmee, Florida, with her parents, O.S. Thacker and Aillee Parrett Thacker, and two younger brothers when she was ten years old. Ms. Graessle grew up working in her father's solo legal practice, where she learned typing and shorthand. Her father was a tough taskmaster, who once had her transcribe an entire trial in shorthand. Mr. Thacker was enthusiastic and supportive of his daughter's decision to pursue a legal career. He assumed that she would return to Kissimmee and practice law with him after law school.

Ms. Graessle did her undergraduate work at Stetson University in DeLand, which was where she pledged Florida Alpha in 1936. She graduated from the University of Florida College of Law in May 1941 with an LL.B. She was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege on June 2, 1941.

Of the 3,300 students who attended the University of Florida, only 30 were women. Ms. Graessle was the only female in her law school class and one of only five women in the entire law school. In those days, no women were allowed to attend undergraduate classes at the University of Florida, and women could attend graduate classes in architecture, pharmacy, or law only if they signed an affidavit each semester verifying that they were female, over 21, and could not obtain the courses they needed at any other



state institution.

During Ms. Graessle's tenure at the University of Florida, one of the many lessons she had to learn was not to blush during the daily verbal assaults from the university's male population when she, an avid tennis player, would walk across campus in her tennis shorts, and throughout her initial year of law school, when her fellow students would shuffle their feet as she entered the classroom.

Ms. Graessle's plans to practice law with her father ended abruptly on her law school graduation day in 1941, when she became engaged to fellow law student Albert W. Graessle, Jr., of Jacksonville. They were married in July 1941; their wedding was hurried by the imminence of the Second World War.

Having no Jacksonville legal contacts and without the support of today's law school's referral or placement assistance services, Ms. Graessle was unable to find a job as an attorney. So while her male counterparts were finding employment in law firms, Ms. Graessle eventually went to work as a legal secretary for E. T. McIlvaine of Milam, McIlvaine & Milam. When she previously interviewed with Guy Botts for an attorney position, she was not hired because, when asked if she had a brief to write would she type it herself or dictate it, she gave what she thought was the "right" answer – she would dictate it like the male attorneys would, even though she knew she would probably do the typing herself as she had always done. As she was told later, no woman would take dictation from another woman.

By 1942 Ms. Graessle was pregnant with her first child, her husband was destined for the war in the Pacific, and she had to quit work at the Milam firm. Before she left, E. T. McIlvaine told her that after the war, she should talk to him about a "real" job. But by the war's end, Ms. Graessle had two children, with a third on the way. Eventually, Ms. Graessle and her husband would have five children -- three girls and two boys.

Ms. Graessle never did practice law but has used the skills she obtained from her legal training. Not only was she the supportive wife of a circuit judge, but Ms. Graessle also has performed countless hours of volunteer work and advocacy on behalf of women, children, the poor, and the terminally ill. She has won numerous local, state and national honors, including two Eve Awards. This award

was inaugurated in 1969 by Jacksonville's local paper, *The Florida Times-Union*, to honor outstanding women in Northeast Florida and South-east Georgia whose achievements have demonstrated their dedication and leadership in areas of education, volunteer service, and employment. She was also honored as the 1980s "Eve of the Decade" for the scope, consistency and quality of her life-long volunteer work in Jacksonville. For example, Ms. Graessle founded Hospice of Northeast Florida more than ten years ago and, as an early president of the organization, she lobbied the Florida Legislature long and hard to protect the option of home, as well as hospital, care for terminally ill persons. Further, she was chair of the Jacksonville Mayor's Child and Youth Care Study, which involved over 100 people, required numerous public appearances to encourage implementation of the study's findings, and resulted in the establishment of two Jacksonville emergency shelters for abused children. Ms. Graessle even lent a hand with the cleaning, painting, and decorating necessary to make the shelters habitable. Most recently, Ms. Graessle is chairing a blue ribbon citizens' group, the Special Committee on Building a Community System of Care for Children, which is responsible for examining the status of residential resources and services for foster children within the greater Jacksonville area.

In addition to her community service, as Ms. Graessle herself states, "I am a feminist. And I hope my work has made a better world not only for my daughters and daughters-in-law but for my sons and sons-in-law and my grandchildren of both sexes." From everything read and heard, Ms. Graessle's hope has been fulfilled for her family and for Florida.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R (photo); William Graessle, "Pioneering Women Lawyers: Chasing Moonshiners, Shooting Horses And Those Uncivilized Boys," *Jacksonville Bar Bulletin*, Dec. 1994; article written by Lois Ellen Graessle (daughter) and published in *The Arrow of Pi Beta Phi*, at p. 56; conversations with William S. Graessle (son), and Ms. Graessle (photo).



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Dorothea W. Broadbent Montgomery Keck

(1917 - 1984)

Date of Admission: 1941

She was one of the few women attorneys in the city and was a sole practitioner in the Riverside and Avondale sections of Jacksonville for approximately 30 years.

Judge Tyrie Boyer, Sr., ... remembers Ms.

Montgomery was a smartly dressed woman who practiced probate, some misdemeanor criminal law, and domestic relations from her home.

Dorothea W. Broadbent Keck Montgomery was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, on September 23, 1914. Her family moved to Ocala, Florida, where Ms. Montgomery graduated from high school. She studied at Williams Junior College in Berkeley, California, and at Stetson University in Deland. Ms. Montgomery earned her LL.B. from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, and was a member of Iota Tau Tau International Law Sorority. She was admitted to the Tennessee bar in July 1941. After passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners, she was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 8, 1941.

Ms. Montgomery returned to Ocala where her mother, Jean Broadbent, still lived after her father's death. Wallace Sturgis hired her as an associate. During the 1940s, Ms. Montgomery was married to Karl M. Keck, but by the 1950s, she had changed her name to Montgomery, presumably after a subsequent marriage. In 1949 Ms. Montgomery was temporarily unemployed and living in Delavan, Wisconsin.

In the 1950s, Ms. Montgomery moved to Jacksonville, Florida. She was one of the few women attorneys in the city and was a sole practitioner in the Riverside and Avondale sections of Jacksonville for approximately 30 years. Judge Tyrie Boyer, Sr., who practiced law in Jacksonville from 1954 until he became a judge

in 1961, remembers Ms. Montgomery was a smartly dressed woman who practiced probate, some misdemeanor criminal law, and domestic relations from her home.

Chief Justice Major Harding remembers Ms. Montgomery as practicing domestic violence law out of her home. He remembered few women in the Jacksonville bar in the 1960s; there were only one or two when he was hired as a prosecutor in 1962. Chief Justice Harding described Ms. Montgomery as a "delightful, pleasant person."

Ms. Montgomery was also an active advocate for animal rights. Her longtime secretary, Mary Beth Smith, recalled that Ms. Montgomery was frequently at City Hall, fighting dog ordinances she thought were bad. She wanted animals protected and opposed the use of tranquilizer guns, which she felt were inhumane. Ms. Montgomery raised and showed German Shepherds, but she loved all dogs.

Ms. Montgomery's office at 5024 Roselle Street was listed in the city directory and with The Florida Bar until her death. She died in a nursing home on March 15, 1984, after an illness. There were no survivors. Her hobbies in life included golf, winter sports, and gardening.

Sources: FSCBAA; DWL&J; *Jacksonville City Directory*; *Jacksonville Times-Union* (obituary); conversations with Chief Justice Major Harding, Senior Judge Tyrie Boyer, Sr., and Senior Judge Giles Lewis.



Letitia L. Norman

(1915 -)

Date of Admission: 1941

Letitia L. Norman was born in 1915. She attended the University of Miami School of Law but does not appear to have graduated with a degree. She was admitted to practice law in Florida on December 8, 1941, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She practiced in Miami Beach.

Sources: FSCBAA; UMSLAL&R (photo); MHLA (1945 & 1949).

Marvel Harriet Gallacher

(1902 - 1991)

Date of Admission: 1942

Marvel Harriet Gallacher was born in Belle Plaine, Indiana, on March 29, 1902, to Alexander and Mabel Edith Gallacher. She was in the Class of 1930 at Barnard College in New York City and received a B.A. degree in French. Her address, when not staying in the college dormitory, was Port Tampa City, Florida.



In 1935 Ms. Gallacher was employed as a stenographer by the law firm of Whitaker, Whitaker and Terrell in Tampa, Florida. Ms. Gallacher made the transition from law office stenographer to attorney after she graduated from the University of Florida College of Law in 1942. She was admitted to practice law in Florida under the diploma privilege

on April 3, 1942, and was admitted to the New York bar in 1946. By 1947 she was employed as an associate attorney with Senator Raymond Sheldon.

Although Ms. Gallacher may have lived for a short time in Charlotte, North Carolina, around 1949, she continued to maintain residences in the Port Tampa City and Tampa areas until at least

1984. In 1991, however, Ms. Gallacher was living in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Ms. Gallacher was a member of the Barnard College Alumnae Association. She passed away in 1991.

Sources: FSCBAA; DWL&J; correspondence from Donald Glassman, Barnard College Archivist.



Anne E'del Deacon

(1903 -)

Date of Admission: 1942

Anne E'del Deacon was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on October 2, 1903. Her father, Charles E'del, was employed at the Union League in Philadelphia, and her mother, Anna E'del, was a homemaker. Tempered by adversity at the earliest of ages, she saw only eight of her eleven siblings survive to adulthood. Judge Deacon attended Temple University in Philadelphia for college and law school and graduated in 1939. She was the only female in a class of 45 students.

While in law school, she



worked nights at the law office of Frank Mancill in order to financially assist her family and to cover the cost of her legal studies. Her schedule was grueling and, in an effort to ease the financial strain, she took a hiatus from her legal studies and accepted employment as the secretary and general assistant to the manager of the Boca Raton Hotel and Resort Club in Boca Raton, Florida.

While working at the resort, Judge Deacon's determination to earn the necessary funds to finish



While working at the Boca Raton Hotel & Resort, Judge Deacon's determination to earn the necessary funds to finish law school and support her family impressed resort guest Howard McCormick, who was the son-in-law of John D. Rockefeller. The McCormicks had established funds to support artists. Judge Deacon inspired Howard McCormick to establish a scholarship for legal studies. As the recipient of the McCormick legal studies scholarship, she returned to finish law school at Temple University.



Caroline Adams

(1919 -)

Date of Admission: 1942

Caroline Adams was born in North Carolina on July 28, 1919. At the time, her father was an architect working on an assignment in North Carolina, and the family ultimately returned to Tampa at the end of World War I. Ms. Adams received a scholarship to Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, where she studied journalism for two years. Then she switched to law and attended Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. She studied there for three years and graduated from law school in 1942. Ms. Adams was only one of two women in her law school class, and one of only three women in the entire law school.



Upon graduating from law school, Ms. Adams took the Florida bar exam. Because she had graduated from a law school outside of Florida, she was required to take the bar exam, unlike graduates from Florida schools who were admitted under the "diploma privilege," without taking the bar exam. When Ms. Adams took the bar exam, it was given in the House of Representatives in Tallahassee. Thirty-three applicants took the test, and she was one of the 11 who passed. Ms. Adams was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 11, 1942.

Once admitted to the bar, Ms. Adams went to work in the Law Offices of Cody Fowler, later known as Fowler and White. At the time, this was considered a big law firm in Tampa. She was one of four employees; there were two male attorneys and two female attorneys. (Wilhemina Hawkins (1933) was the other woman.) Ms. Adams believes that Mr. Fowler hired the two female attorneys because men

were being drafted into World War II. Ultimately, those male attorneys went to war. Ms. Adams herself joined the U.S. Navy.

She was stationed at the Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Base in North Carolina, where she was the personnel officer for the engineering maintenance and construction department. She was then transferred from North Carolina to the separation center in New York. The WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) and nurse separation center had been established to assist those leaving the military by advising them of their rights and helping them reorient into civilian life.

Once all former military personnel were reoriented into civilian life, the separation center was closed. Ms. Adams then accepted a position with Prentice Hall Publishing Company in New York. She was able to obtain this position because she had a law degree and was excited to begin working in the field of journalism. Ms. Adams started as an assistant editor for the union contract and collective bargaining division. She was ultimately promoted to editor of that division.

On the recommendation of a friend, Ms. Adams was then hired by the Continental Can Company in its industrial relations department. There, she edited a weekly management newsletter that addressed labor law issues and updates on corporate events, as well as miscellaneous information of interest to foremen in the can plants. As editor, she analyzed the union contracts for all the plants within this very large company.



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Ms. Adams and two friends decided to leave New York and travel to California in the hope of gaining employment. Ms. Adams secured a position at the Los Angeles branch of the Wage Stabilization Board. She obtained this position during the Korean War, when the federal government had put wage controls in place. There were to be no raises of salaries, and all applications for exemptions from this stabilization came through her office.

Ms. Adams ultimately returned to New York and secured a position as the assistant labor editor for *Business Week* magazine. This position combined her two loves -- journalism and law. Unfortunately, Ms.

Adams remained in this position for only about two years. She had hoped eventually to become a senior editor, but she was forced to return to Tampa upon the death of her mother in 1954.

Ms. Adams spent the following 13 years assisting her father and her invalid brother. Given the demands placed upon her, she never returned to the work place and is now the sole survivor of her family. She has never married and lives happily in Tampa, Florida.

Sources: FSCBAA; MHL D (1945 & 1949); Vanderbilt University records (photo); conversations with Tom Ellwanger and Ms. Adams.



The late Judge John Santora ... described Ms. Hyde as a good lawyer who tried a couple of criminal jury trials that year. Others described Laura Hyde as "one of the guys" who fit in and met with other local bar members, all males, for coffee in the mornings or drinks after hours.



Laura Helen Hyde

(1905 - 1952)

Date of Admission: 1942

Laura Helen Hyde was born in England on February 15, 1903, and was educated in private schools in England. She received her legal education in England and also had an accounting background. Ms. Hyde married an American during World War II and moved to Jacksonville but subsequently divorced.

She was admitted to practice law in Florida on July 11, 1942, after passing the bar examination administered by the State Board of Law Examiners. She established a solo practice with offices in the Professional Building in Jacksonville. In addition to keeping books for various clients, she also practiced in the areas of family law, trusts and estates, and criminal defense.

The late Judge John Santora related that office space in downtown Jacksonville was scarce in the early 1950s, and in January 1952, he was able to rent office space

from Ms. Hyde. He described Ms. Hyde as a good lawyer who tried a couple of criminal jury trials that year. Others described Laura Hyde as "one of the guys" who fit in and met with other local bar members, all males, for coffee in the mornings or drinks after hours.

Ms. Hyde was a member of the Florida State Bar and Jacksonville Bar Association and the Interstate Commerce Commission. She was also an officer of Heat & Cold Equipment Co., Inc.

She lived in Mandarin, then an isolated country town, and her hobbies were horses, fishing, hunting and gardening. Tragically, Ms. Hyde developed cancer and died by her own hand in the fall of 1952.

Sources: FSCBAA; William S. Graessle, "Pioneering Women Lawyers: Chasing Moonshiners, Shooting Horses And Those Uncivilized Boys," *Jacksonville Bar Bulletin*, Dec. 1994; DWL&J.





Mary Frances Dewell

(1917 -)

Date of Admission: 1942

Mary Frances Dewell was born in Jacksonville, Florida, to Robert T. and Mary Dewell on December 16, 1917. When she was seven, Ms. Dewell moved to Haines City, Florida. She attended Maryville College, graduating with an A.B. degree in 1938. At that time, women were not encouraged to enter professional schools, such as law and medicine. In fact, her father was instrumental in drafting legislation allowing women to attend the University of Florida professional schools. She enrolled in the University of Florida College of Law in 1939, one of only three women in the school. She graduated on May 24, 1942, and was admitted to practice in Florida under the diploma privilege on July 14, 1942.

Ms. Dewell began practicing law with her father in Haines City, which was a small town with a population in the vicinity of 6,000 to 7,000 people. Her father was city attorney for several years and later became Judge of the Criminal Court of Record. Theirs was a general, small-town practice consisting of mostly probate, divorce and real estate work.

Ms. Dewell's brother, John H. Dewell, was in law school at the same time as his sister, but he left for service in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1941. Upon his discharge, John Dewell returned to law school and graduated in 1946. He then joined his father and sister in the firm in Haines City. Ms. Dewell and her brother practiced in the family law firm until their father's death in 1952. Her brother subsequently became a circuit court judge.

Following her father's death, Mary Frances Dewell temporarily stopped practicing law and went to work in an abstract office in Winter Haven for five years. In 1957 she joined the law firm of Shackelford, Farrior, Stallings, Glos & Evans as an associate, practicing real estate

law. Although she was told by the firm that she would never become a partner, she practiced there from 1957 until 1968.

In 1968 she took a position with the Federal Land Bank of Columbia and moved to Columbia, South Carolina, with her mother. Her practice involved overseeing all of the bank's Florida offices. She remained at the bank until her retirement in 1982 at the age of 65, when she and her mother moved back to Polk County, Florida. Her mother died in 1983, and Ms. Dewell kept busy working part-time in a title office.

In 1992, after 50 years as a member of The Florida Bar, Ms. Dewell resigned her membership and moved to the Presbyterian Retirement Home in Lakeland, where she currently resides.

Mary Frances Dewell became a lawyer because "that's all she knew -- she never considered anything else." There were no law-related organizations to belong to when she was practicing. However, she noted that every so often, the women lawyers in Tampa would meet for lunch -- all 10 of them!

Ms. Dewell experienced no problems with the male judges in the circuit where she normally practiced. She remembered one incident, however, when she went to Volusia County to have an order signed in a mortgage foreclosure case. The judge asked her if she had a license to practice law and wanted to see it. She showed it to him and, then, knowing he played golf, started asking him about his golf game. Twenty minutes later, she says, the judge asked her if she had an order she wanted signed, then he gladly proceeded to sign it.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R; "Woman Modest About Legal Career," *Lakeland Ledger*, Apr. 21, 1997, at A1 (photo); conversations with Ms. Dewell.



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Ethel Dorothea Clarson Watson

(1920 -)

Date of Admission: 1942



Dorothea “Dodie” Clarson Watson was born in Jacksonville on June 21, 1920. She entered Stetson University in DeLand, where she met Tom Watson. The two took advantage of Stetson’s accelerated law school program, created during the Depression so students could complete college and law school in only five years. They planned to open a law firm together when they graduated from law school, but World War II intervened, and Mr. Watson became an army pilot.

Stetson’s law school was in Flagler Hall on the De-

Land campus at that time. Ms. Watson was the only woman in her class of 15, but she remembers two women in the class ahead of hers: Lois Thacker Graessle (1941) and Charlotte Washburne Faircloth (1941). Ms. Watson’s father, who had come to this country from Sweden in 1902, applauded her decision to go to law school. He was fascinated by the United States legal system and enjoyed his experience serving on a jury. Ms. Watson’s mother, a teacher, was less sanguine about her daughter’s decision. Ms. Watson herself did not know any lawyers, but she thought the law would be interesting and that she could help people.

She enjoyed law school and found the professors to be supportive and encouraging toward all male and female students. Although she particularly liked Constitutional Law and Real Property, she thought that the curriculum was not very practical. Because Ms. Watson graduated from a Florida law school, she did not have to take the bar exam; she was admitted to the Florida bar on September 16, 1942, after appearing before an admissions committee.

Five days after her graduation from law

school, she and Tom Watson were married. Then he went into the service, and she went to Tallahassee to clerk for the Florida Supreme Court. The court employed one graduate from each of Florida’s three law schools – the University of Florida, Stetson, and the University of Miami – and they clerked for all seven of the justices for one year. The old Supreme Court building was quite spartan and had spittoons placed at convenient locations throughout the building.

After her clerkship, Ms. Watson accompanied her husband to different military bases throughout the United States until he got out of the army. In 1947 they came to Orlando. There were only about 100 lawyers, none of them women, in Orange County when Dorothea and Tom Watson set up their law firm, Watson & Watson, above the drug store on Orange Avenue.

Dodie Watson has never had second thoughts about her decision to become a lawyer, which she says she did because she did not want to be a teacher, and she had no talent to do anything else. She talks about her life as a pioneering woman lawyer in Central Florida as if it were no big deal. She has spent so many hours working with the Orange County Bar Association’s Legal Aid Society since it was formed in the early 1960s that she was honored with its Judge “J.C.” Jake Stone Legal Aid Society 1994 Distinguished Service Award, as well as the Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award for the Ninth Judicial Circuit in 1995. At the time, she was 75 years old and still working at her law firm.

Ms. Watson specialized in trust and estates, family law, and residential real estate transactions. She went to court whenever it was necessary for her probate and domestic practice. On occasion, she argued criminal matters in court when her husband could not go, and was usually assumed to be her husband’s secretary. Asked if she suffered any discrimination

Ms. Watson herself did not know any lawyers, but she thought the law would be interesting and that she could help people.

by the local bar, she says she does not really think so. She concedes that it may have been easier for her than for a woman lawyer on her own, or with children to care for. She also remembers that several Orlando lawyers told her that women should not do jury work, but she knew they would see the day that would change.

On the whole, she thinks the fact she was a female lawyer was pretty much ignored during the 1940s, 50s and 60s. She never thought too much about it. A composite photograph of the Orange County Bar Association's members in 1968 shows only three women out of 386, Dorothea Watson, Sammie Francisco (1963), and Winifred Sharp (1964). For a long time, Ms. Watson was the only one.

Dorothea and Tom Watson built a house in the Conway area of Orlando in 1949. Mr. Watson died in 1993, but Ms. Watson still lives in the same house. In the old days, they raised bird dogs and quail, and she accompanied her husband when he went hunting for wild turkey. They had a ranch in Osteen and spent the summers in Blowing Rock and Boone, North Carolina.

The biggest change she has seen in the practice of law over the years has been the pressure of time. Things were slower in the old days; the technology was slower – they used manual typewriters and carbon paper, and analyzed thick title abstracts. And she thinks the lawyers themselves might not have felt as pressured as they do today. With no air conditioning, less competition for clients, and fewer specialized areas of law, people conducted themselves at a more relaxed pace.

There is one change in current practice that she is not happy to see. About a year

ago she went to court for a probate matter and saw, permanently affixed to counsel's table, the rules about civility. That, she said, did not use to be necessary.

Dodie Watson practiced for five years after her husband died in 1993. The office was a block south of the new Orange County Courthouse, and when Magnolia Avenue was reconfigured and her building sold in 1997, Ms. Watson closed the office, 50 years after it had opened. She has not, however, stopped working. Every week she teaches conversational English at the Downtown Baptist Church and she remains active in her church. She will be 80 this year. She recognizes that she is fortunate to be in good health, and spends time visiting her friends who are less fortunate.

During her years in practice she went to several meetings of women lawyers in the state, and she recognizes many of the names on the "First 150" list. She concludes that she has had a very satisfying, fulfilling legal career. She particularly enjoyed her many years of work with the Orange County Bar Association Legal Aid Society, where she handled hundreds of domestic cases, including divorces, custody disputes, and spouse and child abuse. Many of her clients, she says, were delightful.

Asked if she would encourage women to enter this profession, she said yes, but only if they want to spend the time necessary to become good lawyers.

Sources: FSCBAA; SUCLAL&R (photo); Ms. Watson's resume and nomination for the 1995 Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award; conversation with Ms. Watson (photo).

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Mary Irene Schulman

(1918 - 1990)

Date of Admission: 1943

Mary Irene Schulman was born in Lakeland, Florida, to R. L. and Crela Morgan Sandefur. In 1930 the family moved to Okeechobee. Ms. Schulman demonstrated an interest in law and government as early as her days in Okeechobee High School.

While still a student, she campaigned for Senator Charles O. Andrews and Governor Frederick P. Cone (1937-41). Alton Adams, future Justice of the Florida Supreme Court (1940-51), would pick up Ms. Schulman after school to



campaign. He also borrowed law books from the circuit judge so Ms. Schulman could begin to read the law.

After graduation in 1936, Ms. Schulman continued to read the law in the office of Judge Angus Summer of Fort Pierce, Florida. In 1938, she took a law course by correspondence from La Salle Extension University. She took and passed the bar exam in 1943 and was admitted to practice law in Florida on April 15, 1943. Regarding the bar exam, she said during an interview with the *St. Petersburg Times*, "I never will forget it. It took 25 hours, and I had the flu and the fever. It was during the war, and I couldn't even get a hotel room. I slept in the lobby of the Cherokee Hotel."

In 1938 Ms. Schulman was elected as the county prosecutor for Okeechobee County. She was the first woman to become a county prosecutor in Florida. Her sister, Mrs. Estelle Dickson, who was too young to remember the issues of the campaign, confirmed that her sister campaigned door-to-door by riding a bicycle around the county. Ms. Schulman was reelected without opposition in 1948. Juvenile delinquency was a major issue of concern for her, and she continued to work on this issue after she left her position as county prosecutor.

At some point, Ms. Schulman married and later was divorced.

In 1949 Richard W. Ervin, the incoming Attorney General and future Florida Supreme Court Justice (1964-75), invited Ms. Schulman to become an assistant attorney general. She accepted the assignment, and for two years worked in both Tallahassee and Okeechobee until she resigned from her position in Okeechobee. In the attorney general's office, Ms. Schulman worked

in the civil division and represented 25 state boards that regulated professions such as accountants, architects, chiropractors, engineers, funeral directors, and veterinarians, in addition to the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

During her career, Ms. Schulman received recognition for her work. In 1965 the Florida Senate unanimously passed her comprehensive revision of the Veterinary Practice Act. That same year, the veterinarians of Florida gave her their annual Distinguished Service Award.

Ms. Schulman remained an assistant attorney general until the early 1970s. Even among attorneys who did not work directly with her, she had a reputation for competence, integrity, and a generosity of spirit. Throughout her career, she was a member of civic and social organizations. Ms. Schulman is included in *Florida Women of Distinction*.

After retirement, Ms. Schulman remained in Tallahassee until her passing on June 19, 1990.

Sources: FSCBAA; 2 Eloise N. Cozens, *Florida Women of Distinction* (1957); *Sunday News-Democrat*, Tallahassee, Florida, Feb. 20, 1949; Ann Waldron, "It's Her Pet Bill: Veterinarians Get Legal Boost," *St. Petersburg Times*, May 3, 1965; conversations with Justice Richard W. Ervin (photos), Roger Foote, Rebecca Bowles Hawkins, Jerry Blair, and Estelle Dickson.



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Ila Adele Rountree Pridgen

(1891 - 1983)

Date of Admission: 1943

Ila Adele Rountree Pridgen, daughter of David and Annie Loftin Rountree, was born on February 2, 1891, in Wilmington, North Carolina. She received a certificate in pipe organ from Saint Mary's Junior College in Raleigh, North Carolina, in May 1910.

She married Dr. Claude Leonard Pridgen, a medical doctor, and moved to Alachua County upon his appointment as the county medical doctor. They had two children -- Claude Leonard Pridgen and Anne Pridgen Teller. Her husband was injured in World War I by mustard gas, and Ms. Pridgen had to earn a living after his injury and death.

Ms. Pridgen began her 26 years at the University of Florida College of Law when she was appointed assistant law librarian in 1929. In 1948 she became law librarian, a title she held until her retirement in 1955. Other positions she held concurrently at the law school included secretary to the dean from 1929 to 1939, executive secretary from 1939 to 1941, and administrative assistant from 1941 to 1946.

While working at the law school, Ms. Pridgen attended classes and earned an LL.B. with high honors on June 24, 1943. She was admitted to the bar under the diploma privilege on May 24, 1943, and to federal courts the same year.

During World War II, she was called upon to serve as a faculty member, teaching several courses, including Criminal Law, while other faculty were away in service to their country. She was highly respected and dearly loved by "the boys," many of whom lived in "Pridgen Hall," her rooming house that she operated exclusively for law students even while having full-time employment and raising two children.

Ms. Pridgen was faculty advisor to Phi Delta Delta, the women's international legal fraternity, an active organization for many years. Phi Delta Phi honored

her with membership in the legal fraternity during a period when women were not accepted as active members.

She was secretary to the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association and was active in the American Association of Law Libraries. For her continued interest in and concerns about law students, the John Marshall Bar Association bestowed many honors and awards upon her.

On April 31, 1955, Ms. Pridgen retired after 26 years of service to the University of Florida College of Law and immediately entered into real estate work. At homecoming in the fall of 1955, Ms. Pridgen was presented with a book of letters attesting to the esteem in which her many friends, alumni and colleagues held for her.

In 1958, when the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Residence Hall on the University of Florida campus was dedicated, the third floor was named in honor of "Ila Rountree Pridgen, law librarian and assistant professor of law, who devoted much of her life to the study of law and mothering of law students, retired 1955."

May 13, 1972, was declared "Ila Pridgen Day," honoring Ms. Pridgen for her contributions to the law school and law students. If asked who influenced them the most during their law school days, hundreds of Florida lawyers who studied at the University of Florida College of Law between 1929 and 1955 would probably name Ila Rountree Pridgen. At the law reunion banquet held that evening, a portrait of Ms. Pridgen was presented to the law school by Judge Charles B. Fulton and William Reece Smith, Jr., who were assisted by many well-known lawyers, judges, state and federal officials, and former "boys." It hangs in the Legal Information Center today. In addition, a fund was raised to add



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books to the library collection. Each one bears a book plate with an inscription recognizing her long service to the law school and symbolizing the love and affection felt for this distinguished lady by "her boys."

Later, Ms. Pridgen phased out her real estate work and moved to Lake Santa Fe outside of Gainesville where she enjoyed

her leisure time with children and grandchildren.

Ila Rountree Pridgen died in November 1983.

Sources: FSCBAA; UFCLAL&R (photo); conversation with William Reece Smith, Jr.; e-mail from Carla Luggiero.



Introduction to Florida's First Five African-American Women Lawyers

**By Evett L. Simmons
President-Elect, National Bar Association**



As we enter the twenty-first century, African-American women lawyers are still a scarce commodity, having to continue to fight the double jeopardy of racism and sexism exacerbated by a lack of economic empowerment.¹

Nationally, the first African-American woman admitted to practice law was Charlotte E. Ray in April 1872. A graduate of Howard University, she was born in 1850, the year the Fugitive Slave Act was passed. She and her family played an important role in the Underground Railroad.²

Another historically noteworthy African-American woman lawyer was Gertrude E. Rush of Iowa, who was the only African-American woman lawyer in 1918 west of the Mississippi. She was one of the twelve founders of the National Bar Association, an organization created in 1925 because African-Americans were denied admittance into the American Bar Association.³

Florida was slow to admit African-American women lawyers into The Florida Bar. As part of the segregated south, Florida did not significantly integrate its public schools until the late 1960s. In 1965, I became one of the first students to integrate the public schools in Florida. In light of this history, it is not surprising that only one African-American woman was admitted to The Florida Bar in 1958 and the next women were not admitted until 1965.

The African-American women lawyers discussed in the following pages are contemporary trailblazers and pioneers, overcoming many barriers to their great achievements. They are the reasons why we who are African-American women can reach even greater heights. That it took until 1958 for African-American women lawyers to gain access into the Florida legal community is a sad chapter in Florida's history, because certainly this important sector has since made significant contributions to the public and the state through the delivery of legal services.

It is also worthy to note that these women graduated from Howard University in Washington D.C., an outstanding historically black college built after the Civil War as a land grant college, and Florida A&M University, another excellent historically black college whose law school was created as Florida's response to "separate but equal" treatment of whites and blacks, but later lost its funding as Florida's answer to integration.

¹ Elmer C. Jackson, Jr., & Jacob V. Gordon, *A Search for Equal Justice by African-American Lawyers* 54 (1999).

² *Id.*; Edith J. Clay Smith, Jr., *Rebels in the Law, Voices in History of Black Women Lawyers* Appendix C (1988).

³ Elmer C. Jackson, Jr., & Jacob V. Gordon, *A Search for Equal Justice by African-American Lawyers* 54 (1999).

Evett L. Simmons, a graduate of Mercer University, is a partner in the law firm of Ruden, McClosky, Smith, Schuster & Russell, P.A., and is located in their Port St. Lucie office. She will be installed as President of the National Bar Association during its meeting in Washington, D.C., in August 2000. She is a former member of The Florida Bar Board of Governors and currently sits as the first woman appointee by The Florida Bar to the Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission.



Bernice Gaines Dorn

(1934 -)

Date of Admission: 1958

Ms. Dorn was admitted to FAMU's law school in September 1955. During her second year of law school, she was ranked first in her class. One of her classmates in law school was Leander Shaw, who later became a Florida Supreme Court Justice.

Bernice Gaines Dorn was born on December 8, 1934, in Tallahassee, Florida. At the age of seven, she and her family moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where she graduated from Stanton High School in 1951. Ms. Dorn commenced her studies at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University (FAMU) in September 1951. She graduated with honors in May 1955 with a B.A. in psychology.

One of her undergraduate classmates was Judge Joseph Hatchett, the first African American to serve on the Florida Supreme Court and later on the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. While attending college, Ms. Dorn's roommate and sorority sister was Norma Solomon White, the first woman to march with and direct FAMU's "Marching One Hundred" band.

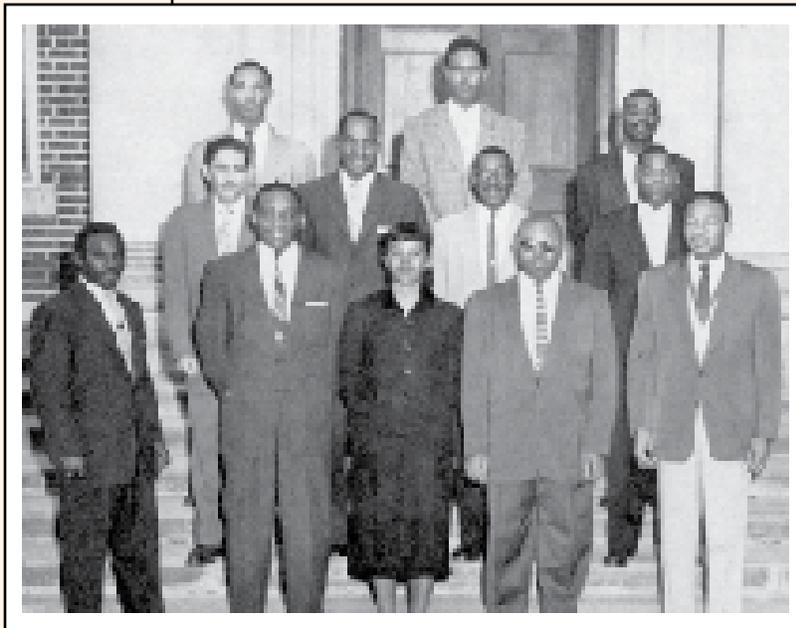
Florida A&M's Black Archives verify that Ms. Dorn was admitted to FAMU's law school in September 1955. During her second year of law school, she was ranked first in her class. One of her classmates in law school was Leander Shaw, who later became a Florida Supreme Court Justice (1983 - present). Ms. Dorn graduated from

FAMU's law school on June 2, 1958, and was admitted to practice law on November 6, 1958. Ms. Dorn thus became the first African-American woman licensed to practice law in the state of Florida.

Ms. Dorn started her career in private practice, working with Ernest Jackson in Jacksonville. After a year in private practice, she returned to FAMU and taught Contracts at the law school from 1959 to 1960. During her tenure as a law school professor, she married Mr. Stephen Dorn, Sr., and they soon moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

After marriage, Ms. Dorn dedicated her life to her family. She and her husband had four children -- Stephen, Jr. (deceased), Angela, Michael and Tracy. After two years in Philadelphia, the family moved to Evanston, Illinois, and then later to Glencoe, Illinois, where they resided until 1980. In 1980 they moved to St. Louis, Missouri, Mr. Dorn's hometown. They retired in 1995 and moved to Florida, where they currently reside in Satellite Beach. Mr. and Mrs. Dorn's daughter, Angela, is an attorney who is licensed to practice law in Illinois and New York.

Sources: The Florida Bar membership records; Black Archives, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida (photo); conversations with Bernice Gaines Dorn, Judge Joseph Hatchett, Norma Solomon White, and Arthenia Joyner.



Ms. Gaines Dorn (center) with FAMU Student Bar Association members Augustus Cane, William Lewis, Vernon Lee, James Matthews, George Grogan, Samuel Nesbitt, Cornelius Grant, Herman Walden, Justice Leander Shaw, Frank White and Ernest Hunter.

Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry

(1923 - 1979)

Date of Admission: 1965

Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry was born on August 27, 1923, in Miami, Florida, to William and Alberta Sawyer. Her mother owned and operated a hotel and her father was the first African-American doctor in Dade County. Representative Cherry began her early education in Miami, but her parents later sent her to school in Jamaica, New York. After graduating from high school, she enrolled at Florida A&M University (FAMU) in Tallahassee, Florida, where she studied chemistry and biology. She earned her degree in 1946. Four years later, she earned a master's degree in human relations from New York University.

Representative Cherry taught mathematics at Miami Northwestern Senior High School. After a 20-year teaching career, she applied to law school and became the first African American to attend the University of Miami School of Law. She later transferred to FAMU's law school and graduated at the top of her class in 1965. She was admitted to practice law on October 15, 1965, and thus became Dade County's first African-American woman lawyer.

For the next five years, Representative Cherry was a practicing attorney, and she joined the faculty at FAMU's law school as the second African-American law professor.

In 1970 she became the first African-American woman elected to the Florida House of Representatives. As a legislator, she introduced the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in the House in 1972, and she vigorously supported the ERA in the House, as well as by participating in marches. Other issues Representative Cherry supported were prison reform and children's rights. She chaired the state's committee for International Woman's Year in 1978 and co-authored *Portraits of Color*. Representative Cherry was a member of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, and was the mother of two children.

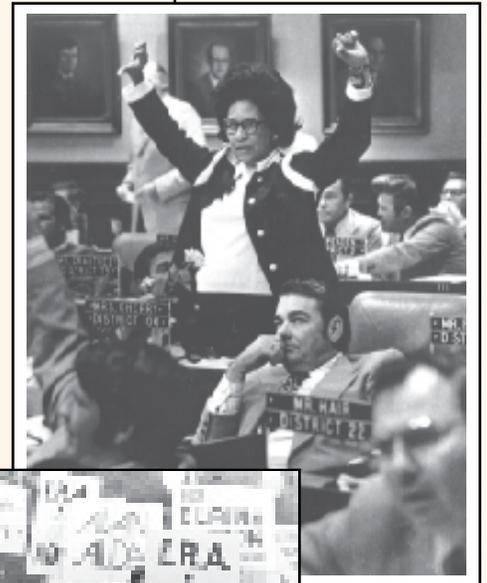
Because of her commitment to children's rights, the Department of Education's Child Development Center in Tallahassee was named in her honor in 1991. Additionally, a park named in her honor is listed in Dade County's Black Heritage Trail. She was nominated to the Florida Women's Heritage Trail and was nominated and inducted into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame in 1986.

Representative Cherry served in the state legislature until her untimely death resulting from an automobile accident in 1979. In his eulogy, Governor Bob Graham (1979-87) called Gwen Cherry "a champion for the rights of all people and a voice of reason and concern."

Sources: The Florida Bar's membership records; Maxine D. Jones & Kevin M. McCarthy, *African Americans in Florida* (1993); "People in Black History," *Miami Herald*; Florida Women's Hall of Fame; Florida State Archives (photos).



In 1970 she became the first African American woman elected to the Florida House of Representatives.



(Above) Representative Cherry expresses her disapproval of a bill in the Florida Legislature.



(Above) Rep. Cherry (second from left) joins in a march supporting the Equal Rights Amendment with Reps. Elaine Gordon and Gwen Margolis.

Ruby Burrows McZier

(1940 -)

Date of Admission: 1965



Ruby Burrows McZier was born in Belle Glade, Florida, on October 12, 1940. In 1960 she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama. For the next two years, Ms. McZier taught English and History to high school students in the migrant community of Lake Wales, Florida. She later enrolled in Howard University School of Law. She was the only female admitted to the Class of 1965 and graduated in the top ten percent of her class. Ms. McZier was admitted to The Florida Bar on October 15, 1965, the United States Supreme Court bar in 1969, and the District of Columbia bar in 1971.

She began her legal career as a legal advisor on migrant family issues on the staff of United States Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Thereafter, she served as the first contract compliance officer for the Office of Economic Opportunity, special assistant to the chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and special assistant at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a special assistant, she participated in the development of the Section 3 (1968 HUD Act) regulations for minority participation in HUD funded-business opportunities (a forerunner of the section 8(a) program of the U.S. Small Business Administration).

In 1971 Ms. McZier opened her law offices in Washington, D.C. Her primary focus was economic development issues faced by the minority community. She has represented such clients as Soul City, North Carolina, and the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Advisory Committee. She was the first woman to serve on the District of Columbia Zoning Commission (1976-84), and she served two years on the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (1989-91). Because of her efforts, the participation of minority firms was substantially increased in business concessions, engineering, construction and

architectural design.

Ms. McZier is a member of several professional and civic organizations including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Council of Negro Women, Washington Urban League, and the National Bar Association. She has been a trustee of the Democratic National Committee and has served on the board of directors of the United National Bank in Washington, D.C.; Bethune Cookman College; *Essence* magazine; District Cablevision, Inc.; Washington Urban League; The Doug Williams Foundation; and the Greater Washington Research Center. Ms. McZier is a founding member of the Museum for African-American Art in DeLand, Florida.

Her honors and special recognitions include the National Business League with its Eartha M. M. White Women's Achievement Award and the Gertrude E. Rush Award of the National Bar Association. In 1997 Ms. McZier was awarded one of the first Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards given by her alma mater, Talladega College. She is the founding chairperson of the tax section of the National Bar Association and was general counsel of the National Bar Association in 1984. In 1999 Ms. McZier was appointed to the board of directors and management committee of the AT&T subsidiary, District Cablevision, Inc., in Washington, D.C.

Ruby Burrows McZier currently resides in Washington, D.C., with her husband, Arthur McZier. They are the parents of Jennifer Rose McZier. Ms. McZier is general counsel of National Business Services Enterprises, Inc., a Washington-based diversified corporation which supports her many hours of community service and philanthropy.

Sources: The Florida Bar's membership records; *The Jurist*, Howard University School of Law (1991); conversation with & correspondence from Ms. McZier (photo).

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C. Bette Wimbish

(1924 -)

Date of Admission: 1968

C. Bette Wimbish was born on March 24, 1924, in Perry, Florida, to Ola Mae Howard and Tom Davis. Ms. Wimbish attended Florida A&M University (FAMU) in Tallahassee, where she received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1944. Upon graduation, she was an instructor in natural sciences at Florida Memorial College and a physical education teacher for the Hillsborough County Public School System. She returned to FAMU and earned her Juris Doctor in 1967 and was admitted to The Florida Bar on June 10, 1968.



From 1969 until 1973, Ms. Wimbish served as City Councilwoman for the City of St. Petersburg. She also served as Vice-Mayor for the City of St. Petersburg from 1971 through 1973.

Ms. Wimbish began her extensive career in the state government as an associate director of labor and later as director of labor in the Commerce Department. In these positions, Ms. Wimbish appointed judges of industrial claims (now known as judges of compensation claims), with approval of the governor. In a quasi-judicial capacity, she also heard and decided variances under the Workers' Compensation Law and conducted hearings on safety matters.

In 1974 Ms. Wimbish was the deputy secretary for the Florida Department of Commerce. As deputy secretary, Ms. Wimbish represented the department and governor at meetings and conferences with key governmental, political, business and labor leaders. She also participated in policy formulation and program development, and coordinated administrative activities of the Industrial Relations Commission, State Manpower Services Council, and Bicentennial Commission.

Four years later, she was appointed

chairperson of the Florida Crimes Compensation Commission. In this capacity, she was responsible for general administration in budgetary and programmatic areas of the Florida Crimes Compensation Act. The act provides, through quasi-judicial actions, compensation assistance to innocent victims of crimes who suffer personal bodily injury and who, without compensation from the commission, would experience serious financial hardship.

Ms. Wimbish worked in private practice until she accepted a position as senior attorney for the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services in St. Petersburg,

Florida. Ms. Wimbish worked in that position until her retirement in 1999.

Ms. Wimbish is a member of several professional and civic organizations including the National Bar, American Bar, and American Trial Lawyers Associations; National Urban League; American Arbitration Association; and NAACP. Additionally, she is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and served as the organization's legal advisor from 1972 to 1976.

Her honors and special recognitions include *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*, *Who's Who Among Black Americans*, *Florida Women of Distinction*, *Outstanding Women of Florida*, *Outstanding Woman in Government*, *National Bar Association Award*, *Pioneer Woman's Award*, and the *Delta Sigma Theta 1994 Award for Women Who Made a Difference*.

Ms. Wimbish is retired and currently resides in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Sources: The Florida Bar's membership records; conversation with & correspondence from Ms. Wimbish (photo).

Ms. Wimbish began her extensive career in the state government as an associate director of labor and later as director of labor in the Commerce Department. In these positions, Ms. Wimbish appointed judges of industrial claims (now known as judges of compensation claims), with approval of the governor. In a quasi-judicial capacity, she also heard and decided variances under the Workers' Compensation Law and conducted hearings on safety matters.

Arthenia L. Joyner

(1943 -)

Date of Admission: 1969



She was the first African American to be appointed to the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority. Additionally, she was appointed in 1992 by United States Senator Bob Graham to the Federal Judicial Nomination Commission for the State of Florida.

Arthenia L. Joyner was born in Lakeland, Florida, on February 3, 1943. As a teenager, Ms. Joyner actively participated in the civil rights movement. Because blacks were victims of blatant discrimination, she protested vehemently during her sophomore year at Florida A&M University (FAMU) and was arrested. She was again arrested in 1985 at the "Free South Africa" demonstrations in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Joyner received her Bachelor of Science degree from FAMU in 1964. Thereafter, she taught at Booker T. Washington, Jr. High School in Tampa, Florida. She later earned her law degree from FAMU's law school in 1968 and was admitted to practice law in Florida on June 20, 1969. Ms. Joyner became the first African-

American female attorney in Tampa. She has been in private practice for thirty years, longer than any other African-American woman in the state of Florida.

Ms. Joyner is the recipient of numerous awards including the Airport Minority Advisory Council Leadership Award in 1999; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives' 1993 Criminal Justice Person of the Year; The George Edgecomb Bar Association's 1993 Francisco Rodriguez Award; 1990 Executive Women of the Year; Governor's Distinguished Black Floridian Award; *Ebony* magazine's 100 Most Influential Black Americans (1985); and America's Top 100 Black Business and Professional Women by *Dollars and Sense* magazine (1985). Additionally, Ms. Joyner is listed in *Who's Who Among Black Americans*.

Her professional affiliations include the National Bar Association, of which she was elected the second female president in 1984; American Bar Association; Hillsborough Association of Women Lawyers, Florida Chapter of the National Bar Association; and The George Edgecomb Bar Association.

Her civic participation includes the National Council of Negro Women, University Community Hospital Board of Trustees, Athena Society, The Links, Inc., and the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. She holds life memberships in the NAACP, the Greater Tampa Urban League, and Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. She is also a devout member of Allen Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Ms. Joyner has been an active participant in politics all of her life. In Hillsborough County, she chaired the Shirley Chisholm presidential campaign in 1971 and the Jesse Jackson presidential campaigns in 1984 and 1988. She co-chaired the Lawton Chiles gubernatorial campaigns in 1990 and 1994, as well as the Clinton-Gore campaign in 1992.

She was the first African American to be appointed to the Hillsborough County Aviation Authority, where she served as chair and vice-chair. Governor Lawton Chiles appointed her again in 1995 to a second four-year term. Additionally, she was appointed in 1992 by United States Senator Bob Graham to the Federal Judicial Nomination Commission for the State of Florida and is the former chair of the Judicial Nomination Commission for the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. She was appointed by President Clinton to the U.S. Delegation to the International Conference of Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994 and to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, in 1995.

Ms. Joyner is the managing partner in the law firm of Stewart, Joyner & Jordan-Holmes, P.A. located in Tampa, Florida. Stewart, Joyner & Jordan-Holmes, P.A. has been certified as an African-American owned law firm. Ms. Joyner's practice areas include probate, guardianship and public finance.

Ms. Joyner is currently campaigning for a seat in the Florida House of Representatives, District 59.

Sources: The Florida Bar's membership records (photo); conversation with & correspondence from Ms. Joyner (photo).



The Research Committee

The initial research committee, composed entirely of members and friends of Tallahassee Women Lawyers, began working on the “First 150 Women Lawyers Project,” originally named the “First 50,” in January 1999. The project owes them a great debt of gratitude, because they developed the research techniques that others would follow. They found helpful Internet websites, shared ideas about how to find “missing heirs,” checked on possible resources, and discovered unknown sources. Thus, they were the real research trailblazers. Moreover, most of the initial committee took on the task of researching five women. (We were naive then.) This is not to say that the researchers from other areas of the state who joined the project later did not work hard, it is merely an acknowledgment of the extra effort that the initial group had to put into the project to get it off the ground. The fact that researchers found little information about a particular woman is not a reflection of less work, but is the result of the inability to locate the whereabouts of the woman. Additionally, it should be noted that some of the researchers worked on people who were ultimately eliminated from the final first 150 list, because they were determined to be men or were never admitted by the supreme court. The following is a list of all those who researched the First 150 Women Lawyers:

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Lori Weems
• *Marjorie Marie Hammer DeShaw*

Christina Yeager
• *Person eliminated from the list*

Shelley Zabel
• *Mary Neff Reebel*

First Five African-American Women Lawyers Researchers:

Janeen L. Rivers, Chair
• *Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry*
• *Ruby Burrows McZier*
• *C. Bette Wimbish*
• *Arthenia L. Joyner*

Barbara Twine Thomas
• *Bernice Gaines Dorn*

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Gail Grieb
• *Archivist, Stetson University duPont-Ball Library*

Dean Jeannette Hausler
• *Associate Dean & Dean of Students, University of Miami School of Law*

Rebecca Hoover
• *Assistant Director, Development, University of Florida College of Medicine (formerly Assistant Director, Development & Alumni Affairs, University of Florida Federic Levin College of Law)*

Gail E. Sasnett
• *Associate Dean for Students, University of Florida Federic Levin College of Law*

Cynthia Sikorski
• *Director of Alumni Relations, University of Miami*

Tony Smith
• *Librarian, Carlton Fields*

Tica Stanton
• *Collection Development Librarian, University of Miami School of Law Library*

Carol Wood
• *Person eliminated from the list*



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Underwriting Acknowledgments

Two events were held in connection with the First 150 Women Lawyers Celebration. A gala dinner celebration honoring the women was held on May 25, 2000, in the Grand Ballroom of the Sheraton Bal Harbour Beach Resort, and the Supreme Court of Florida held a ceremonial session to honor the women on June 14, 2000. The First 150 Women Lawyers Committees gratefully acknowledge the financial and in-kind contributions of the following underwriters, as well as those whose ads appear on the following pages:

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*In honor of
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One Hundred and Fifty
Women Lawyers
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*Thursday
May 25, 2000
Grand Ballroom
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9701 Collins Avenue
Bal Harbour, Florida*



*The Honorable Major B. Harding,
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Florida*

and

*Edith G. Osman, President,
The Florida Bar*

and

*Jeanmarie Whalen, President,
Florida Association for Women Lawyers*

cordially invite you to attend a

*Ceremonial Session of the
Supreme Court of Florida*

honoring

Florida's First 150 Women Lawyers

on Wednesday, June 14, 2000

at 10:00 a.m.

at the Florida Supreme Court

