

2017 VIRGINIA WOMEN IN HISTORY

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Richmond Times-Dispatch

Women have played an integral part in Virginia from its beginnings, yet their contributions have often been overlooked in the history books. Until well into the twentieth century, written histories tended to focus on the historically male-dominated fields of government and politics, the military, and large-scale property ownership to the virtual exclusion of all other venues of leadership or achievement. They ignored women's critical roles as educators, nurses, lay leaders and missionaries, farmers, artists, writers, reformers, pioneers, business leaders, laborers, civic activists, and community builders.

Today, we recognize and celebrate women's accomplishments in all walks of life, particularly in March, which Congress has designated as National Women's History Month. The Library of Virginia presents the 2017 Virginia Women in History project to honor eight women, past and present, who have made important contributions to Virginia, the nation, and the world. We encourage you to learn more about these extraordinary women who saw things differently from their contemporaries, developed new approaches to old problems, served their communities, advanced their professions, strove for excellence based on the courage of their convictions, and initiated changes in Virginia and the United States that continue to affect our lives today.

www.lva.virginia.gov/vawomen

Nora Houston

1883–1942 | RICHMOND
Artist and Social Reformer

Growing up in Richmond, Eleanora Clare Gibson Houston (June 24, 1883–February 20, 1942) began studying art at about age ten. She continued her studies in New York City with William Merritt Chase, Kenneth Hayes Miller, and Robert Henri. After further training in Paris, Nora Houston, as she was generally known, returned in 1909 to teach at the Art Club of Richmond. About 1916 she and artist Adèle Clark established a studio, and for the rest of her life she taught art and was a leader in Richmond's art community. Houston exhibited her work nationally as well as locally and, with Clark, was a founder of the Virginia League of Fine Arts and Handicrafts, a forerunner of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

An advocate for women's right to vote, Houston joined the Equal Suffrage League of Virginia, frequently spoke at its public meetings, and helped women register to vote after the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920. She was a founding member of the Virginia League of Women Voters and, as chair of its legislative committee, fought for laws to improve conditions for working women and children. She also worked to improve race relations in Richmond. In 1926 the National League of Women Voters named her one of twelve delegates to the International Woman Suffrage Alliance's conference in Paris. During the 1930s Houston was president of the Catholic Woman's Club in Richmond and supervised art production under the auspices of the Virginia Art Project of the federal Works Progress Administration.

NOMINATED BY JOHN T. TUCKER III, MECHANICSVILLE.

Louise Harrison McCraw

1893–1975 | BUCKINGHAM COUNTY
Author and Executive Secretary of the
Braille Circulating Library

Growing up in Buckingham County, Louise Harrison McCraw (February 1893–January 25, 1975) wanted to be a writer. By age eleven she had started sending stories to the children's page of Richmond's *Times Dispatch*, several of which appeared in print. After graduating from the Woman's College of Richmond in 1911, she taught school in Buckingham. During the 1920s she moved to Richmond and served as secretary of the Excelsior Band, an interdenominational group that ministered to prisoners.

Deeply committed to her faith, McCraw admired the work of Presbyterian writer James H. McConkey. After he spoke in Richmond she suggested that he publish his books in braille, the system of writing for blind people in which letters are represented by raised dots. In November 1925 they established the Braille Circulating Library with its first headquarters in a closet in McCraw's rented

room. Funded entirely by private donations, the library of evangelical Christian literature continued to expand and by 1951 McCraw was sending books without charge to almost 1,800 borrowers in the United States and eighteen other countries.

In 1936 McCraw published her first full-length novel, *Hearts That Understand*, which dealt with social problems in a southern city. More novels, all with Christian themes, followed during the next three decades, as well as a biography of McConkey. In 1969 McCraw was named executive secretary emerita after retiring from the Braille Circulating Library, which continues to circulate materials worldwide.

NOMINATED BY JOANNE L. YECK, KETTERING, OHIO.

Undine Anna Smith Moore

1904–1989 | ETTRICK
Educator and Composer

Born in Jarratt, Undine Smith Moore (August 25, 1904–February 6, 1989) grew up in Petersburg, where she began piano lessons at about age seven. Juilliard Graduate School recognized her talent, awarding her its first scholarship to complete her study of music at Fisk University, from which she graduated with honors in 1926. She taught music in public schools at Goldsboro, North Carolina, and in 1927 joined the faculty of Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (later Virginia State University), where she remained until retiring in 1972. Her many notable students included jazz pianist Billy Taylor, opera singer Camilla Williams, and songwriter Phil Medley. In 1931 Moore received a master's degree from Columbia University. Shortly before her retirement she cofounded and codirected Virginia State's Black Music Center, which brought leading African American composers and artists to the Ettrick campus.

Moore began composing while at Fisk University and is best known for her choral works, including *Scenes from the Life of a Martyr*, based on the life of Martin Luther King Jr., which was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

More than two dozen of her works were published and several have appeared in anthologies. Moore credited her family and the close-knit African American communities in Jarratt and Petersburg for nurturing her love of music. She received numerous awards throughout her career, including the National Association of Negro Musicians' Distinguished Achievement Award in 1975 and the Governor's Award for the Arts in Virginia in 1985. In 1977 Moore was named music laureate of Virginia.

Mary Virginia Jones

1940– | PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY
Mechanical Engineer

Only the third woman to study mechanical engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (also known as Virginia Tech), Mary Jones often tutored her male classmates before graduating with honors in 1962. The

first woman licensed as a professional engineer in Virginia, she went on to earn an M.S. in mechanical engineering at the George Washington University. She began her professional career as a structural engineer for Atlantic Research Corporation (later part of Aerojet Rocketdyne), which developed rocket propulsion systems. Jones was recognized as an expert in solid propellant rocket motor design and was ARC's chief design engineer overseeing development of motors for the MLRS (multiple launch rocket system), the Stinger Missile, and the Tomahawk Booster. She served as the executive director of Engineering for Aerojet.

In 1993 she was on the Aeronautics and Space Engineering Board Committee on Advanced Space Technology that reviewed NASA's technology development program for small spacecraft. An active supporter of Virginia Tech, Jones served on the board of visitors (1984–1988) and in 1992 was the first woman to be awarded its University Distinguished Achievement Award. She was a charter member of the advisory board for both its College of Engineering and the Mechanical Engineering Department. In 2004 the College of Engineering inducted her into its Academy of Engineering Excellence. The Society of Women Engineers honored her professional accomplishments with its Upward Mobility Award in 1993 and named her a Fellow in 1998 for her contributions in supporting women in engineering. Jones is a Fellow in the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Martha Dillard Franck Rollins

1943– | RICHMOND
Community Activist and Philanthropist

RECIPIENT OF THE VABPW FOUNDATION
BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD

Martha Rollins grew up in Martinsville and graduated from Duke University with degrees in religion and teaching. In 1963 she completed an internship at the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. After moving with her husband to Richmond, she joined other residents of the city's Carillon neighborhood to fight racially discriminatory real estate practices, thereby helping it become, and remain, a diverse neighborhood stabilized by a culture of friendship.

In 1975 she established Martha's Mixture, a popular antique shop that helped anchor the revitalization of Carytown, a local shopping district. Combining her passion for diverse communities, social justice, and economic development, she used her business skills and networks to establish Boaz & Ruth, a faith-based nonprofit located in an economically challenged neighborhood. Working with neighbors, Boaz & Ruth intertwined a second-chance reentry program with social enterprises, including two thrift stores, a café, and furniture refinishing, moving, and construction services, as well as restoring more than a dozen abandoned buildings in the area.

Her success has attracted national attention and in 2006 she was one of the recipients of the inaugural Purpose Prize, which recognizes individuals over age 60 who have developed innovative ways to address the country's biggest social problems. Before retiring from Boaz & Ruth in 2013, Martha Rollins, along with 100 nonprofit leaders, was honored at the White House by President Obama. She remains committed to social issues and cofounded a Richmond chapter of Coming to the Table, an organization dedicated to healing racial wounds resulting from the country's legacy of slavery.

Doris Anne Crouse-Mays

1958– | WYTHE COUNTY
Labor Leader

Born in Rural Retreat, Doris Crouse-Mays started her career as a telephone operator and quickly became involved in the labor movement as a shop steward. She joined the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and later worked as an organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (later UNITE/HERE). Winning accolades for increasing union membership, Crouse-Mays became the Virginia state field director for the national American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in 1997. She attracted new members and expanded the organization's political influence. In 2001 she served as the statewide coordinator for the AFL-CIO's political program and two years later was named political director of the Virginia AFL-CIO. A member of the Virginia Democratic Party Steering and Central Committee, she was elected to the Democratic National Committee in 2008 and was named to the transition committee for governor-elect Terry McAuliffe in 2013. She serves on the board of Emerge Virginia, which seeks to identify, encourage, and train women to run for political office.

In 2006 Crouse-Mays became the first woman to hold executive office in the Virginia AFL-CIO when she was elected to a four-year term as its secretary-treasurer. In August 2010 she was the first woman elected president of the Virginia AFL-CIO and was reelected to another four-year term in 2014. In leading the state AFL-CIO, Crouse-Mays has emphasized the importance of labor unions working with businesses to achieve fair wages, health care, job safety, and retirement security for Virginia's workforce.

Corazon Sandoval Foley

1950– | FAIRFAX COUNTY
Community Activist

A native of Manila, Philippines, Corazon Sandoval Foley earned a degree in economics at the University of the Philippines. She moved to the United States in 1970 to pursue an M.B.A. at the George Washington University and has lived with her family in

Fairfax since 1980. Like her husband, she joined the U.S. Department of State, first working overseas with the foreign service. She later transferred to the civil service as a senior economic analyst for the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, focusing on economic and commercial developments in East Asia and the Pacific region. She sponsored several Asian-American themed exhibitions at the State Department, including "Witness: Japanese American Soldiers of WWII who Helped Liberate Dachau" in 1999.

After retiring in 2007, Foley pursued her interest in documenting the history and contributions of Filipinos and other Asian immigrants who compose a significant minority of the population in Fairfax County. With the support of the county's board of supervisors she developed the Fairfax County Asian American History Project to research, record, and preserve the experiences of Asian Americans in the region. The first book containing oral histories was published in 2010 and a second focusing on Asian Americans serving in local law enforcement and the military was published in 2013. Foley has also reached hundreds of senior citizens in her community through the Burke/West Springfield Senior Center without Walls, which she spearheaded to provide supportive programs for aging in place.

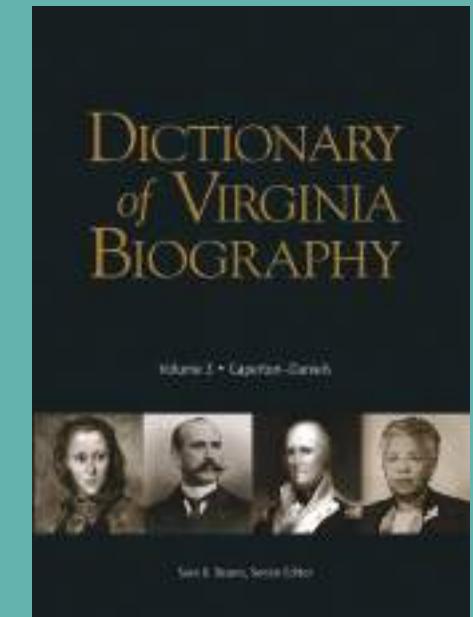
Cynthia Eppes Hudson

1959– | NOTTOWAY COUNTY
Chief Deputy Attorney General of Virginia

Growing up in rural Nottoway County, Cynthia E. Hudson learned the importance of hard work and education in her close-knit family. After graduating from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1981, she completed a law degree at the College of William and Mary's Marshall-Wythe School of Law in 1987. She joined the Richmond firm McGuire, Woods, Battle & Boothe (later McGuireWoods), but was drawn to public service and became deputy city attorney for Hampton in 1996. Hudson was appointed Hampton's city attorney in 2006.

In December 2013, Virginia's attorney general-elect, Mark R. Herring, selected Hudson as the state's chief deputy attorney general. When she took office in January 2014 she became the first African American woman to hold that post. Hudson manages the day-to-day operations of the attorney general's office in providing legal assistance to state agencies, boards, commissions, and universities. She is especially proud of the work the attorney general's office has done in the areas of marriage equality, affordable higher education, and Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts.

Hudson shares her knowledge of state and local government law with the next generation of attorneys as an adjunct faculty member at William and Mary and the University of Richmond. She was elected president of the Local Government Attorneys of Virginia in 2013. In 2012 *Virginia Lawyers Weekly* named her one of its Influential Women in Virginia and in 2015 the Virginia Law Foundation named her a fellow in recognition of her excellence in the law and public service.



Learn more about Virginia women in the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* (Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 1998–2006), *Changing History: Virginia Women through Four Centuries* (Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 2013), and on the Library of Virginia's websites, www.lva.virginia.gov and www.virginiamemory.com.

Instructional materials and nomination forms for the 2018 project are available at www.lva.virginia.gov/vawomen.



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

800 East Broad Street • Richmond VA 23219-8000
www.lva.virginia.gov



Nora Houston

1883–1942
RICHMOND

Artist and Social Reformer

Artist Nora Houston was a tireless advocate for woman suffrage and social reform.

Louise Harrison McCraw

1893–1975
BUCKINGHAM COUNTY

Author and Executive Secretary of the Braille Circulating Library

Author Louise Harrison McCraw cofounded the Braille Circulating Library to meet the needs of an underserved population.



Undine Anna Smith Moore

1904–1989 | ETTRICK
Educator and Composer

Undine Smith Moore described herself as "a teacher who composes," while educating her students about music theory as well as the contributions of African Americans to American music and culture.



Mary Virginia Jones

1940–
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

Mechanical Engineer

An expert in solid propellant rocket motor design, Mary Jones serves as a role model for women in the engineering profession.



Martha Dillard Franck Rollins

1943– | RICHMOND
Community Activist and Philanthropist

Community activist Martha Rollins fights racism, recidivism, and prejudice by bringing Richmond communities together across racial, social, and economic barriers.

Doris Anne Crouse-Mays

1958–
WYTHE COUNTY
Labor Leader

The first woman to direct the Virginia AFL-CIO, Doris Crouse-Mays is dedicated to improving the lives of workers in the state.



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Corazon Sandoval Foley

1950–
FAIRFAX COUNTY
Community Activist

Corazon Sandoval Foley is an advocate and leader for collecting stories of Asian American immigrants through oral history and research projects within her community.

Cynthia Eppes Hudson

1959–
NOTTOWAY COUNTY
Chief Deputy Attorney General of Virginia

The first African American woman appointed chief deputy attorney general of Virginia, Cynthia E. Hudson is dedicated to using the law to help all Virginians.



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