

# Annie Dodge Wauneka

1910-1997



## Who Was She?

At eight years old, Annie Doge Wauneka was attending a government-run school on a Navajo reservation when an influenza epidemic struck and killed thousands of Navajos and their children. This tragic event inspired Wauneka to become a public health advocate.

Wauneka joined the Navajo Tribal Council and served for almost 30 years. During her time on the council, she enhanced care for pregnant women and babies; she made eye and ear exams the norm; and she improved treatment for alcoholism. Annie also created an English-Navajo dictionary to help define health care practices for non English-speaking Navajos.

## Fast Facts

- Annie was the first Native American to receive the presidential medal of freedom in 1963.
- In 1984, the Navajo Tribal Council named her “The Legendary Mother of the Navajo Nation.”

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Buffalo Calf Road Woman

Unknown-1879



## Who Was She?

Buffalo Calf Road Woman, a Northern Cheyenne Warrior, is famous for going on the battlefield to save her brother, who was shot during the Battle of the Rosebud. This selfless and brave act motivated the rest of the warriors to rally and win the battle.

This, however, is not the only battle in which Buffalo Calf Road Woman showed her bravery in. In 1876, the U.S. government tried to force Sioux tribes onto reservations and take some of their land in Montana. In defense of their land, the Lakota Sioux, Northern Cheyenne, and the Arapaho battled U.S. troops and Lieutenant Colonel George Custer and eventually defeated them in the Battle of Little Big Horn. Buffalo Calf Road Woman is said to be the one who delivered the final blow to Custer.

## Fast Facts

- Among the Cheyenne, the Battle of the Rosebud became known as the “Battle Where The Girl Saved Her Brother,” thanks to her valiant efforts.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Deb Haaland

## 1960-Present



### Who Is She?

Deb Haaland is the U.S. Cabinet Secretary of the Interior Department, and she is the first Native American to serve in this position.

Haaland is a member of the Pueblo of Laguna and is a 35th generation New Mexican. Haaland grew up in a military family; her father was a combat Marine and her mother is a Navy veteran who also served as a federal employee at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Before she became U.S. Cabinet Secretary, Haaland ran her own small business producing and canning Pueblo Salsa, served as a tribal administrator at San Felipe Pueblo, *and* was the first woman on the Laguna Development Corporation Board of Directors.

### Fast Facts

- Haaland was the first Native American woman to be elected to lead a State Party, and one of the first to serve in Congress.
- In Congress, Haaland focused on environmental justice, climate change, missing and murdered Indigenous women, and family-friendly policies.

### References

Secretary Deb Haaland. U.S. Department of the Interior. (2022, February 9). Retrieved March 2, 2022, from <https://www.doi.gov/secretary-deb-haaland>

# Elizabeth Wanamaker Peratrovich

1911-1958



## Who Was She?

Elizabeth Wanamaker Peratrovich was a Tligit Native Alaskan and grew up in Alaska.

Peratrovich experienced and witnessed a great deal of discrimination toward Native peoples. This propelled Peratrovich to reach out to Alaska Governor Ernest Gruening, and petitioned him to introduce the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945. Prohibiting discrimination in public places, this was the first law of its kind, and Peratrovich played a major role in its passage by providing a powerful testimony in front of the State Senate.

## Fast Facts

- In Alaska, February 16th is celebrated and known as “Elizabeth Peratrovich Day”
- Peratrovich's face is depicted on the 2020 Native American dollar coin

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Eliza “Lyda” Burton Conley

1869-1946



## Who Was She?

Lyda Burton Conley was one of the first female attorneys in the U.S. and graduated from Kansas City School of Law. She was admitted to the Missouri Bar in 1902 and the Kansas Bar in 1910.

As a member of the Wyandot Nation, Conley was incredibly upset by the approval to sell the sacred Huron Cemetery to the U.S. federal government in 1906. Conley and her sister guarded the cemetery and their ancestors' graves in order to prevent the sale. Conley stood her ground for years and eventually she became only the third woman, and the first American Indian woman, to argue a case in front of the Supreme Court. Lyda lost in court; however, she never stopped fighting for the protection of the Huron Cemetery. In 1913, Kansas State Senator Charles Curtis introduced a bill - which passed and was signed into law - to protect the cemetery from future development.

## Fast Facts

- In 1971, the Huron Indian Cemetery was added to the National Register of Historic Places.
- In 2017, the cemetery was declared a National Historic Landmark, which prevents any development on the site.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). *10 native women you should have learned about in history class.* HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://helloworldgiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

Rothberg, E. (n.d.). *Lyda Conley.* National Women's History Museum. Retrieved March 1, 2022, from <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/lyda-conley>

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# Maria Tallchief

1925-2013



## Who Was She?

Maria Tallchief was born on the Osage reservation in Oklahoma, and eventually became a professional ballerina.

As a professional ballerina, Maria Tallchief faced a great deal of discrimination, even to the point of individuals urging her to change her name because it gave away her Native American identity. However, Tallchief refused and persevered and became America's first major Prima Ballerina.

Tallchief performed in some of the most well-known ballets like Firebird and The Nutcracker. She was also the first American ballerina to dance with the Paris Opera Ballet and the first American to perform at Bolshoi Theater in Moscow!

## Fast Facts

- Tallchief is the sole Native American Prima Ballerina
- In 1996, Tallchief received a Kennedy Center Honor for lifetime achievements *and* was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

## References

Pratt, S. (2019, March 28). 10 native women you should have learned about in history class. HelloGiggles. Retrieved February 28, 2022, from <https://hellogiggles.com/lifestyle/native-women-learned-history-class/>

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# Mary Golda Ross

1908-2008



## Who Was She?

Mary Golda Ross was born and raised in Oklahoma and was the granddaughter of Cherokee Chief John Ross. Ross worked as a statistician for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and eventually went on to receive her masters degree in astronomy.

Ross worked as an aerospace engineer and was the very first Native American female engineer. Ross was one of only 40, and the only female, chosen to join Lockheed Martin's new Missiles Systems Division, aka Skunk Works. Here, they paved the way for space travel and much of Ross's work is still classified.

## Fast Facts

- Ross helped write NASA's Planetary Flight Handbook where you can read about space travel
- When she passed away in 2008, Ross left over \$40,000 to Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian in D.C. to support the telling of Native American people's stories.

## References

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