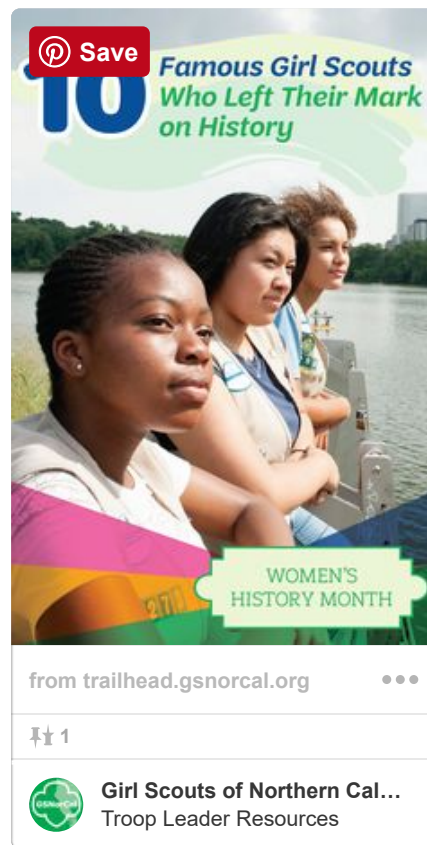


Women's History Month: 9 Famous Girl Scouts Who Left Their Mark on History

by Marlene Smith | Mar 21, 2017 | G.I.R.L. Power | 9 comments



Women's History Month is always an exciting and important time for us Girl Scouts to reflect on the incredible achievements of the women who've come before us. More importantly, it's the perfect time to share the stories of these trailblazing women with the girls in our lives!



A Brief History of Women's History Month

You may have heard of Women's History Month, but what I bet you *didn't* know that it grew out of a week-long celebration of women's contributions at a school district in Sonoma, California in 1978! Within a few years, that Sonoma School district's idea caught on with other communities, school districts, and organizations across the country.

Today, National Women's History is a month-long event celebrated every year, where we recognize the amazing accomplishments of remarkable women, past and present.

Girl Scouts Take The Lead

Girl Scouts has a long history (105 years to be exact!) of empowering girls to be G.I.R.L.s – go-getters, risk-takers, innovators, and leaders who make the world a better place. That's why it's no surprise that many historic female athletes, political leaders, and entertainers have green blood! In fact, approximately 64% of today's women leaders in the United States (civic, corporate, political, etc.) were once Girl Scouts. Every female Secretary of State in U.S. history is a former Girl Scout and 58% of women in the U.S. Congress are Girl Scout alumnae (via [GSUSA](#)). Talk about #girlpower!

The list of Girl Scout alumnae includes many successful women across an impressive list of fields and industries, but here are a few of my favorite famous formers who have made a name for themselves over the course of history:

Marian Anderson (born 1897 – died 1993)



Marian Anderson was an American [contralto](#) and one of the most celebrated opera singers of the twentieth century. She became the first African American woman to perform at the [Metropolitan Opera](#) in New York City on January 7, 1955.

Lucille Désirée Ball (born 1911 – died 1989)

Lucille Ball was an American actress and comedian. She was best known as the star of the shows [I Love Lucy](#), [The Lucy Show](#), and [Here's Lucy](#). In 1962, Ball became the first woman executive to run a major television studio, [Desilu Productions](#), which produced many television series, including [Mission: Impossible](#) and [Star Trek](#).

Sandra Day O'Connor (born 1930)

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is a retired associate justice of the [Supreme Court of the United States](#), serving from her appointment in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan until her retirement in 2006. She was the first woman ever to serve as a Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Mae Jemison (born 1956)



Mae Jemison became the first African American woman to travel in space in 1992. She was also a Stanford engineering graduate, trained medical doctor, Peace Corps officer, and ballet dancer!

Jackie Joyner-Kersey (born 1962)

Jacqueline “Jackie” Joyner-Kersey is a retired American athlete, ranked among the all-time greatest athletes in the women’s heptathlon as well as in the women’s long jump. She won three gold, one silver, and two bronze Olympic medals, in those four different events. Sports Illustrated for Women magazine voted Joyner-Kersey the Greatest Female Athlete of the 20th century!

Green Bloods Who Gave Back

There are plenty of other famous alumnae rounding out the Girl Scout honor roll who have not only gone public with their positive experiences from their membership, but also continued to support the organization long after they outgrew their uniforms:

Debbie Reynolds (born 1932 – died 2016)



Debbie Reynolds was an American stage, screen and television actress as well as a singer. Throughout her career, she earned five Golden Globe nominations, two Academy Award nominations, two Emmy Award nominations and the Screen Actors Guild Life Time Achievement award. Film credits included *Singin' in the Rain*, *How the West Was Won*, *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, *The Singing Nun* and *Charlotte's Web*.

Ms. Reynolds reported that she earned more than 42 badges as a Girl Scout. At the height of her stardom in the 1960s, she negotiated her contracts so that she would not have to work at the studio on Friday afternoons – all so that she could lead troop meetings for her 13-year-old daughter [Carrie Fisher](#). Debbie also participated in the [Girl Scout Piper Project](#), a three-year program launched at the National Council meeting to encourage more girls to participate in Girl Scouts.

Dolores Huerta (born 1930)



Dolores Huerta is an American labor leader and civil rights activist who was the co-founder of the [National Farmworkers Association](#), which later became the [United Farm Workers](#) (UFW).

Ms. Huerta has received numerous awards for her community service and advocacy for workers', immigrants', and women's rights,

Ms. Huerta was a member of Girl Scout Troop 8, in Stockton, California through the end of high school! "Being a Girl Scout from the time I was eight to eighteen taught me many things," Ms. Huerta said. "It helped build my self-confidence, and taught me not to be shy about speaking in public. I learned to be proud of the things I did in earning Girl Scout badges. As Girl Scouts, many of us were given opportunities that we would not have had otherwise, such as camping. Being together, we learned about each other's cultures. These were good lessons as a life experience. We would never have learned about diversity otherwise."

Martha Stewart (born 1941)

Martha Stewart is an American businesswoman, writer, and television personality. She has gained success through publishing, broadcasting, merchandising, and selling books that focus on home entertaining, decorating and cooking.

Ms. Stewart was a Girl Scout in her home town of Nutley, New Jersey. She was quoted on her experiences as saying "Girl Scout camp at South Mountain Retreat (Orange, New Jersey) taught me the real love of the outdoors, camaraderie and friendship."

Sally Ride (born 1951 – died 2012)



Dr. Ride was an American physicist and astronaut. She joined [NASA](#) in 1978. In 1983, she became the first American woman in space as a crew member on board the [space shuttle Challenger](#) for [STS-7](#).

After she retired from NASA in 1987, Dr. Ride became the President and CEO of [Sally Ride Science](#), a non-profit she co-founded in 2001 that promotes STEM literacy and inspires elementary and middle school students in STEM subjects. She also co-founded the [Girl Scouts' Camp CEO](#) where accomplished, executive women mentor high school Girl Scouts and share life lessons to show girls how their dreams, passions, and skills can transform them into successful adults.

With 105 years of Girl Scouts, it's no surprise we have such a remarkable list of famous formers! From politicians and activists to artists and inventors, Girl Scouts have proved they can do anything. Encourage your girls to work hard and make history, so one day they can be famous formers, too!

[Bring Women's History Month to your Troop Meeting](#)

Discover together the exciting contributions women have made to this country and help your Girl Scouts see how their “achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love” can also influence America's history:

- [Quick Ideas for Women's History Month](#): plan a celebration of women's history at your next meeting
- [Women's History Month](#) facts, quizzes, and crosswords
- [Women's History Month: 6 Lesson Plan Resources for Teachers](#) from the George Lucas Educational Foundation

Looking for ways to celebrate Women's History Month in Northern California? Check out some of these local events:

[California's Remarkable Women Signature Exhibit](#)

California Museum: 1020 "O" Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

This ongoing exhibit honors women's significant roles and achievements in our state, drawing from past and present achievements of approximately 200 remarkable California women.

[Rosie the Riveter WWII/Homefront National Historic Park](#)

Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Park – Visitor Education Center: 1414 Harbour Way South, Suite #3000 (Oil House) Richmond, CA.

This national park preserves and interprets the legacy of the United States home front during World War II. Ongoing exhibits also detail the significance of the Kaiser Richmond Shipyards, and include the museum ship SS *Red Oak Victory*. The park was created to honor the "[Rosies](#)", women who made up much of the workforce at the shipyards and supported America's entry into World War II.



Marlene Smith—Marlene is the troop leader with Girl Scout Troop 30760 in Walnut Creek and has been a Girl Scout Volunteer for ten years. She is proud to say that Troop 30760 boasts many Journey awards and some girl members who have been with the troop for 10 years (yahoo!). Marlene was a Girl Scout herself whose greatest claim to fame was earning her "My Camera" badge. Most importantly, Marlene's favorite

Girl Scout Cookie flavor is Thin Mint.

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