
**WE WILL
WALK
IN HER
STEPS**



**THE WEST ROXBURY
WOMEN'S
HERITAGE TRAIL**

**Developed by
Grade 2**

Kilmer Elementary School
Thomas E. Byrne, Jr., Principal
Vera Johnson, Teacher

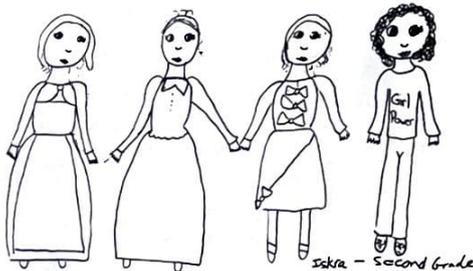
WE WILL WALK IN HER STEPS

THE WEST ROXBURY WOMEN'S HERITAGE TRAIL

The West Roxbury Women's Heritage Trail honors women whose contributions have enhanced the community and quality of life in West Roxbury.

The trail was developed to teach Second Grade students

Community Service Learning through the biographies of women residents. The students also learned about how children and women lived "then and now."



Evelyn Shakir Beethoven Elementary School 5125 Washington Street

Evelyn Shakir, a longtime resident of West Roxbury, attended the Beethoven School and Girls' Latin School, and received her undergraduate degree from Wellesley and post-graduate degrees from Harvard and Boston University. Evelyn has been a news writer and reader on "The Arabic



Beethoven School

Hour" television program, has written many articles on Arab American literature, and has published a book, *Bint Arab: Arab and Arab American Women in the United States*. In this book—the story of women from the Arab world, their daughters, and granddaughters during the past century—Evelyn talks about her own experience growing up in a Lebanese American family and community. Evelyn currently is a professor at Bentley College. She shares the following wisdom with young people: "Learn as much as you can about the world, read, travel, listen to others, but don't let anyone else do your thinking for you."



Hour" television program, has written many articles on Arab



Sophia Willard Dana Ripley (1803-1861)

**Brook Farm Co-Founder
670 Baker Street**

In 1841, Sophia Willard Dana Ripley, along with her husband George Ripley, a Unitarian minister, founded Brook Farm, a utopian community of writers, thinkers and farmers. Sophia wrote letters about her life at Brook Farm and also taught the children who lived there. After Brook Farm closed in 1846, she continued to do charity work



Brook Farm

and write books. There once was a Boston Public School named after her on Temple Street in West Roxbury.

Margaret Fuller (1810-1850)

Brook Farm

Margaret Fuller sometimes came to stay at Brook Farm. She was one of the most famous writers and thinkers of her time. She frequently spoke out for equal rights and opportunities for women. She was the first editor of the journal, *The Dial*, from 1840-1842.



Alice Hennessey The Menino Project Millennium Park VFW Parkway

Alice Hennessey, a resident of West Roxbury for more than 45 years, has been involved with the schools, the Friends of the West Roxbury Library, the playgrounds, the Girl Scouts, her church, the West Roxbury Historical Society, the Democratic Ward Committee and many other ventures. She is also the founder of the West Roxbury Friends of Rosie's Place. Presently, Alice is director of the Menino Project, which developed a new use for the former Gardner Street landfill: the new Millennium Park opened on the site on November 18, 2000. Alice believes: "Women initiate ideas and carry out projects that involve the entire community and give them a pride of ownership."



Millennium Park

**4 Senator Marian Walsh
Bellevue Hill Tower**

Senator Marian Walsh serves the Norfolk and Suffolk District. Senator Walsh protected Bellevue Hill from development by the cellular communication industry and succeeded in obtaining funding for the preservation and restoration of Bellevue Hill Tower. Senator Walsh, a longtime resident of West Roxbury, has demonstrated leadership in various issues such as law enforcement, the environment, mental health care, education, and business development. For this service she has received many honors, including Legislator of the Year, from groups such as the Environmental League of Massachusetts and the State Police Association. In her words, "I am strongly encouraged to see so many women taking leadership roles in our community and throughout the state."



Bellevue Hill

for this service she has received many honors, including Legislator of the Year, from groups such as the Environmental League of Massachusetts and the State Police Association. In her words, "I am strongly encouraged to see so many women taking leadership roles in our community and throughout the state."

**5 Pamela Seigle
Billings Field**

LaGrange and Centre Streets
Pamela Seigle is a former classroom teacher, school psychologist, and staff developer.



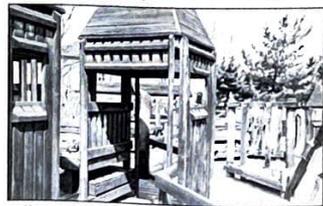
She helped develop the Open Circle Curriculum, a character-building program. Presently, Pamela is the founder and executive director of the Reach Out to Schools Social Competency Program and a community activist in Boston. She is president of the Community Playground Project, Inc.

**6 Ellen McGill
Billings Field**

Ellen McGill, an artist and activist and West Roxbury resident, has worked on many community art projects. In 1996, Ellen organized local children to paint the Billings Field House mural, one of the centerpiece of a well-loved and well-used community space. Formerly an art teacher in the Boston Public Schools, Ellen continues to show her work at the West Roxbury Library and local galleries. In 1986, she began her business of wedding flowers, Flowers and Finery. In the 1990s, Ellen began teaching art to children in small classes in her studio and annually offers a full scholarship to a student at West Roxbury's R. G. Shaw School. In 1999 she painted a mural with children at the Stonehedge Nursing Home. With other parents, Ellen organized the first major landscaping of a Boston Public schoolyard at the Lewenberg School in Mattapan. She is an active volunteer for the AIDS Action Committee and a literacy volunteer in the Boston Public Schools.



Ellen McGill and the Billings Field House mural



Billings Field

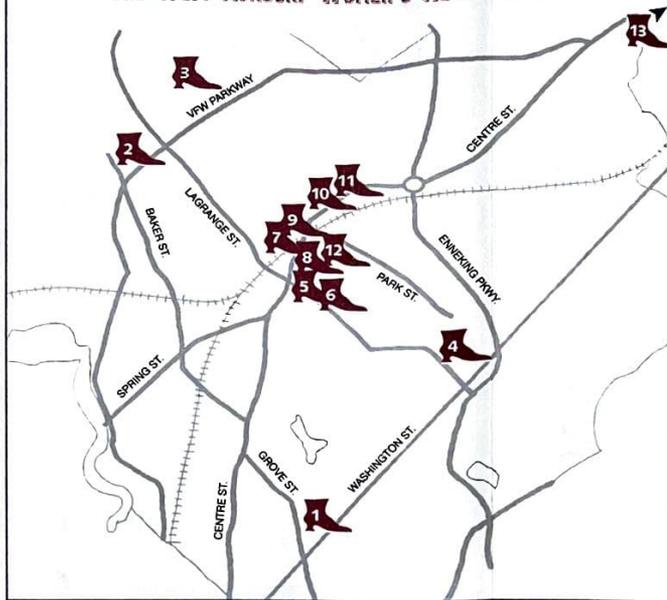
ship to a student at West Roxbury's R. G. Shaw School. In 1999 she painted a mural with children at the Stonehedge Nursing Home. With other parents, Ellen organized the first major landscaping of a Boston Public schoolyard at the Lewenberg School in Mattapan. She is an active volunteer for the AIDS Action Committee and a literacy volunteer in the Boston Public Schools.

**7 Westerly Burial Grounds
2009 Centre Street**

The Westerly Burial Grounds were laid out in 1685. Many of West Roxbury's early residents, including members of the Draper family, are buried here.



**WE WILL WALK IN HER STEPS
THE WEST ROXBURY WOMEN'S HERITAGE TRAIL**



Barbara Henry & Ruby Bridges

Barbara Henry
Barbara Henry grew up in West Roxbury and attended Girls' Latin School. In high school, she met students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. After she graduated from college, Barbara taught the children of Air Force personnel for two years in Europe. These life experiences prepared her for her role in an historic event. In 1960, shortly after Barbara relocated with her husband to New Orleans, she was asked to teach six-year-old Ruby Bridges. Ruby was the first African American child to attend Frantz Elementary School. Some people did not want Ruby at the school. However, Barbara saw Ruby's potential to learn, and decided to teach her. Barbara and Ruby are still in contact with one another. Barbara's message to young people is, "Live your life truthfully and positively. Consciously think of living your life the right way. A positive attitude makes it easier for you to do something when crises come." You can read more about Barbara and Ruby in two books at the library: *Ruby Bridges* by Robert Cole and *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges.

Mary Draper (1719-1810)

A member of the prominent Draper family, Mary helped run the family's tavern near the present-day Dedham town line.

During the Revolutionary War (1775-1783), Mary helped the soldiers of the Continental Army. She used her linens to make clothes for them, and she melted down her pewter to make bullets. Mary also fed all the soldiers who came to her home. In 1904, the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a memorial to her in the garden of the West Roxbury Library. Draper Pool and Park, 5279 Washington Street, are named after her.



The Old Draper House - destroyed by fire about 1870

**8 Hannah Davis Richards
(1804-1863)**

**West Roxbury Post Office
1970 Centre Street**

The Richards family owned a tavern located at this site. Several decades before Hannah was born, George Washington stopped by the tavern for food and drink. Her grandfather built the first schoolhouse in West Roxbury, the Baker Street School, a one-room K to 5 school, and Hannah taught there. Hannah kept a diary which is now an important source of information about West Roxbury in the early 19th century.



The Richards Tavern

**9 West Roxbury Branch Library
1961 Centre Street**

The West Roxbury Branch Library is one of the busiest libraries in Boston. It is also the home of the West Roxbury Historical Society. The Society has many artifacts and information about the history of West Roxbury. The first schoolhouse was built on this site in 1767. It was the only schoolhouse in West Roxbury for many years. Alice Hennessey and Pamela Seigle energetically worked on the committee to build an addition to the library, and Ellen McGill volunteers here.



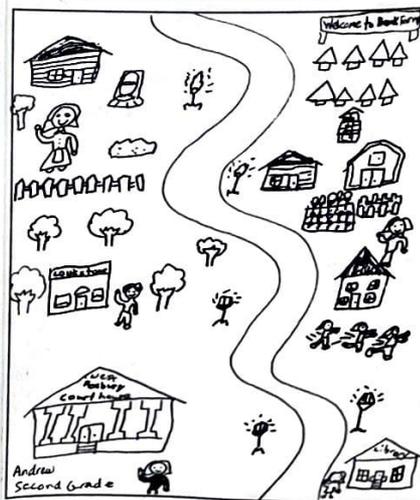
West Roxbury Branch Library

**10 Helen Arnold (1885-1974)
Theodore Parker Church
1859 Centre Street**

Helen Arnold, wife of Rev. Harold C. Arnold, pastor of this church from 1913-1948, resided in West Roxbury for over 60 years. She was a literary enthusiast and a horticulturalist, especially noted for her work at the Arnold Arboretum. Helen was the U. S. representative to the Bronte Society for 22 years and editor of the *Emily Dickinson Yearbook*. She was active in the Lend A Hand Society of Boston and a lifelong friend of Helen Keller. In 1952, she and her husband received a bronze medal from the Mass. Horticultural Society for the restoration of their garden on Emmonsdale Road, current site of St. George Orthodox Church.



The Theodore Parker Unitarian Church



Andrew Second Grade

11 **Betsey Draper (1784-1871)**
1721 Centre Street

A well-known member of the Draper family, Betsey ran the local dry goods store at this site. When the town's collection of books grew beyond one hundred volumes, Mrs. Elizabeth Corey gave the collection to Betsey to house in her store. Residents of West Roxbury would go to Betsey's store to read the books and socialize. Many people think of Betsey as the first librarian of West Roxbury.

12 **Louise Washington**
Lou's Tailor Shop
115 Park Street

Louise "Lou" Washington was born and raised in Mississippi. She started to sew when she was five years old by making doll clothes. Over the years, Lou worked for many tailors until she gained the confidence to work for herself. She used her talent to start her business in 1968 in West Roxbury, where she is still located. Lou decided to live in West Roxbury so she could walk to work. Lou encourages herself and others with the following words: "Anything is possible. If someone else can do it, so can I."



13 **Judge Kathleen Coffey**
West Roxbury District Court
445 Arborway

Judge Kathleen Coffey is the first woman Chief Justice of the West Roxbury District Court. She graduated from Boston College Law School and has been a judge since 1991. Judge Coffey has worked with youth sports groups and has a long record of civic activity. In 1998, the Patriot's Trail Girl Scouts honored her. The West Roxbury District Court, located in Jamaica Plain on the Arborway, handles cases from West Roxbury, Roslindale, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury. All of



these areas were once part of Roxbury. Judge Coffey advises young people: "Always do your best. Take positive risks. If someone tells you it has never been done before, let that be a challenge to you to make it happen. With God's help, everything is possible."

WE WILL WALK IN HER STEPS
THE WEST ROXBURY
WOMEN'S HERITAGE TRAIL

Developed by Grade 2
Kilmer Elementary School
Thomas E. Byrne, Jr., Principal
Vera Johnson, Teacher

Support provided by
The Blossom Fund
IMPACT II Teacher Network
AT&T

Special thanks to:
Susan Donlan
Margaret Flagg
Jean Gibran
Reverend Robert Haney
Barbara Locurto
Sylvia McDowell
Ellen McGill
Gretchen O'Neill
and
Boston Women's Heritage Trail
Mary Smoyer, President
West Roxbury Historical Society
Bob Murphy, President

Research provided by:
West Roxbury Historical Society
Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute

Photographs by Ellen McGill

Historic photo credits:
The Old Draper House and Richards Tavern
courtesy West Roxbury Historical Society
Sophia Ripley courtesy of the Sisters
of the Good Shepherd
Margaret Fuller courtesy of The Schlesinger
Library, Radcliffe Institute

Spring 2001

WE WILL
WALK
IN HER
STEPS



THE WEST ROXBURY
WOMEN'S
HERITAGE TRAIL

Developed by
Grade 2
Kilmer Elementary School
Thomas E. Byrne, Jr., Principal
Vera Johnson, Teacher