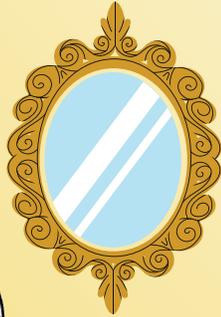


Free Shows!



Through the Looking Glass **Image or Truth?**

Hear their stories in their own words!

Interactive Theater

CHAUTAUQUA FESTIVAL
JUNE 7-18



Presented by:

Greenville Chautauqua Society
 Greenville SC

Spartanburg County Public Libraries
 Spartanburg SC

Friends of Transylvania County Library
 Brevard NC



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Through the Looking Glass Image or Truth?

By Larry Bounds

We live in an age when it is increasingly difficult to discern rumor from fact and story from history. With the recent advent of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, we can duplicate anyone's voice or image to falsely create "proof" of words and deeds with realistic recordings. But this problem is not at all a new one. Time and again it has been shown that history is written by the victors who may suppress or "lose" stories or alter them for the benefit of the teller.

This year we will visit figures from history who will share their personal light of truth about themselves and the world they inhabited. They challenge us to compare the image we hold of their lives and their times with the reality of the lives they actually experienced.

We began with Pablo Picasso at our Winter Chautauqua. His bold and experimental art spoke a truth that some still find difficult to view. His painting *Guernica* so vividly demonstrated the horrors of war that when it was displayed outside the Security Council chambers at the United Nations in 2003, authorities ordered it covered up when a speaker stood in front of it and defended the Second Persian Gulf War. The lasting truth of Picasso's art was too much for the moment's temporary "truth."

This summer we continue our journey through America's history with Charles Dickens. This great British novelist visited America around the time of the Civil War. Just as he told the whole truth, warts and all, about his own Victorian society, he did the same in his fiction and nonfiction writings and lectures about our country.

Our exploration continues with the American cowboy, the iconic image of the American West of yesteryear. That image has sold novels, movies and cigarettes for more than 100 years. But what was the world of the cowboy really like? We get to hear the answer firsthand from El Vaquero, "the cowboy."

Among those in a commanding position to share the inside story of America in the late 19th century was "Stagecoach Mary" Fields. She was an enslaved woman who after emancipation worked on a riverboat and served in a convent and an Indian school before becoming a private carrier for the US Postal Service. She battled outlaws and became a Western legend!

The award winning film *The Sound of Music* introduced the world to the musical von Trapp family and its matriarch Maria. Now we hear from Maria herself who sets the story straight about her family's escape from the Nazis and into the hearts of the American public.

Finally we travel to the swinging '60s and '70s and visit with one of the most iconic voices of the pop music movement - Cass Elliot. She won a Grammy with her group, The Mamas & the Papas, and also released five solo albums. The Age of Aquarius has been much glorified; now one of its most glorious performers will tell us what it was really like from the inside.

So join us this summer as we remember the images of America that we have grown up with and discover which of those images truly stand the test of time and which do not. Perhaps we will find fact can be even better than fiction.

Chautauqua is Interactive Theater.

Our performances take you on an astonishing journey into the past — to laugh with Mark Twain — to dream with Martin Luther King, Jr. — to walk the Trail of Tears with the Cherokee — to wonder with Rachel Carson. You become an "eyewitness" to History.

Chautauqua performers are part scholar and part actor. Fascinated by their characters for years, they can answer your questions in the character's own words. Our programs reflect America's diversity and feature compelling discussion. And it's not a Chautauqua performance without audience participation. Prepare to meet some incredible people. Keep the questions coming and the conversation going!

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE JUNE 7-18

GREENVILLE COUNTY, SC

- FRI 6/7 7:30p Charles Dickens**
Greenville Tech, bring lawn seating
- SAT 6/8 2:00p Cass Elliot**
Hartness Performing Arts Center, CCES
- 7:30p **Maria von Trapp**
Greenville Tech, bring lawn seating
- SUN 6/9 2:00p El Vaquero**
Hartness Performing Arts Center, CCES
- 7:30p **"Stagecoach Mary" Fields**
Greenville Tech, bring lawn seating
- MON 6/10 10:00a *DISCUSSION: Cass Elliot**
Senior Action, 3715 E North St
- 7:30p **Maria von Trapp**
Mauldin Cultural Center, bring lawn seating
- TUE 6/11 10:00a *DISCUSSION: El Vaquero**
Senior Action, 3715 E North St
- 11:30a **Charles Dickens**
Centre Stage, 501 River St
- 7:30p **Cass Elliot**
Mauldin Cultural Center, bring lawn seating
- WED 6/12 10:00a *DISCUSSION: Charles Dickens**
Senior Action, 3715 E North St
- 7:30p **"Stagecoach Mary" Fields**
Mauldin Cultural Center, bring lawn seating
- THU 6/13 10:00a *DISCUSSION: Maria von Trapp**
Senior Action, 3715 E North St
- 7:30p **El Vaquero**
Mauldin Cultural Center, bring lawn seating
- FRI 6/14 10:00a *DISCUSSION: "Stagecoach Mary" Fields**
Senior Action, 3715 E North St
- 7:30p **Cass Elliot**
Greenville Tech, bring lawn seating
- SAT 6/15 2:00p Maria von Trapp**
Hartness Performing Arts Center, CCES
- 7:30p **El Vaquero**
Greenville Tech, bring lawn seating
- SUN 6/16 2:00p "Stagecoach Mary" Fields**
Hartness Performing Arts Center, CCES
- 7:30p **Charles Dickens**
Greenville Tech, bring lawn seating

**DISCUSSION:* During the June Festival, we gather together to pick the brains of the historical performers. No costumes, no script, just a chance to have some personal time and dialog with the performers – and get to know them and what they think about their characters.

SPARTANBURG, SC

Spartanburg County Public Libraries —
Headquarters Library
151 South Church St, Spartanburg, SC 29306

- MON 6/10 3:00p El Vaquero*** 
7:00p **El Vaquero***
- TUE 6/11 3:00p "Stagecoach Mary" Fields*** 
7:00p **"Stagecoach Mary" Fields***
- WED 6/12 3:00p Cass Elliot*** 
7:00p **Cass Elliot***
- THU 6/13 3:00p Charles Dickens*** 
7:00p **Charles Dickens***
- FRI 6/14 3:00p Maria von Trapp*** 
7:00p **Maria von Trapp***

**registration required at all Spartanburg shows
Go to: <https://www.spartanburglibraries.org/Events>*

 ASL Interpreted shows

BREVARD, NC

Rogow Room, Transylvania County Library
212 S Gaston St, Brevard, NC 28712

- SAT 6/8 7:00p El Vaquero**
- TUE 6/11 7:00p Maria von Trapp**
- THU 6/13 7:00p Cass Elliot**
- SAT 6/15 7:00p "Stagecoach Mary" Fields**
- TUE 6/18 7:00p Charles Dickens**

GREENVILLE VENUES

Senior Action

3715 E. North St, Greenville, SC 29615

Centre Stage

501 River St, Greenville, SC 29601
No on site parking.

Greenville Tech Barton Campus

Outdoors, 506 S Pleasantburg Dr, Greenville, SC 29607
Use 800 E. Faris Rd parking lot entrance.

Hartness Performing Arts Center (CCES),
245 Cavalier Dr, Greenville, SC 29607

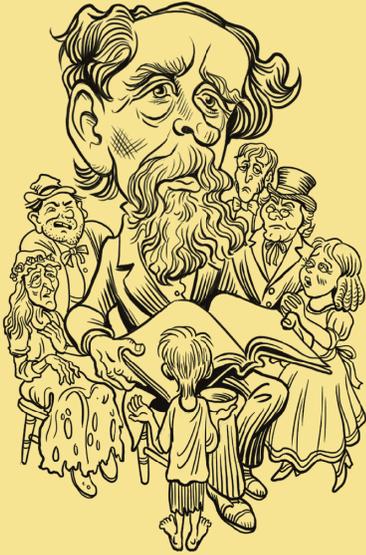
Mauldin Cultural Center Outdoor Amphitheater,
101 East Butler Rd, Mauldin, SC 29662



This program is funded in part by the Metropolitan Arts Council which receives support from the City of Greenville, BMW Manufacturing Company, SEW Eurodrive and the South Carolina Arts Commission.



This project is funded in part by the South Carolina Arts Commission which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Charles Dickens (1812–1870)

- 1812** — Born in Portsmouth, England
- 1815** — Family moved to London
- 1824** — Father in debtors prison, Charles works in factory
- 1827** — Became attorney's clerk
- 1833** — Published 1st of 33 shorter works
- 1836** — Married & published 1st novel
- 1837** — First of 10 children born
- 1842** — Traveled to America
- 1853** — First public reading performance
- 1865** — Hero in Staplehurst train wreck
- 1867** — Second trip to America
- 1870** — Died of stroke after 15th novel published



"Happiness is a gift and the trick is not to expect it, but to delight in it when it comes."

—Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens

by Larry Bounds

The name Charles Dickens summons up the sights and sounds of a sneering Ebenezer Scrooge saying, "Bah, humbug!" and of a timid, hungry, little Oliver Twist asking, "May I have more?" and of a sublimely transcendent Sydney Carton in the shadow of the guillotine stating, "It is a far, far better thing I do than I have ever done."



Larry Bounds as Charles Dickens

Ever since Dickens published his first novel in 1836, his readers have enjoyed his vivid characters, exciting plots, and his enthralling views of Victorian British life that celebrated the era's romantic nostalgia while brutally exposing the filthy underbelly of society across all levels of class and income.

Dickens grew up poor. He knew hunger and the uncertainty of a family struggling while his father was imprisoned in the poor house. He sweated as a child laborer in a blacking factory, but he overcame it all to rise in society, to rub shoulders with the rich and famous, to become the darling of the English-speaking masses around the world.

In 1842 he traveled to the United States with his wife and her companion. It was a journey that Dickens had excitedly anticipated. He envisioned America as an ideal society without class restrictions, with freedom and democracy, and with the promise of opportunity for all its citizens.

His journey took him by steamship, by horse, and by carriage, across the North, into the South, and finally, into the West and back.

When he returned to England he published a very different account of his journey than he had anticipated. Just as he had done so often with his insights into British society, he integrated his new understanding of America into his novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

As Dickens wrote in his preface to *Chuzzlewit*: "*The American portion of this story is in no other respect a caricature than as it is an exhibition, for the most part ... of a ludicrous side, only, of the American character—of that side which was, four-and-twenty years ago, from its nature, the most obtrusive, and the most likely to be seen by such travellers as Young Martin and Mark Tapley. As I had never, in writing fiction, had any disposition to soften what is ridiculous or wrong at home, so I then hoped that the good-humored people of the United States would not be generally disposed to quarrel with me for carrying the same usage abroad. I am happy to believe that my confidence in that great nation was not misplaced.*"

As is often the case when one is confronted with an unflattering image in the mirror, the American public did not respond well to seeing itself portrayed as others see them with all their imperfections. In fear of losing a valued readership, Dickens would eventually offer an apology saying he had

"I never could have done what I have done without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one subject at a time."

— Charles Dickens

no intention to insult, though he never stated that what he wrote was in error.

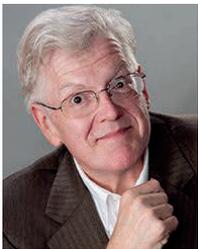
American Notes for General Circulation (October, 1842) was Dickens' travelogue text about his journeys in America. One of his first stops to investigate the education of America's blind and deaf had profound long term effects. The parents of Helen Keller would read his account. It inspired them to pursue the possibility of their daughter's education, leading Helen to become one of the most significant figures of the twentieth century.

Dickens visited hospitals, prisons, the American prairie, and the Great Lakes. He also took a look at American slavery, a practice then outlawed in Britain.

His return trip to America in 1867, a quarter century later, was in some ways an apology tour. His critics in America had not appreciated his descriptions of many of his American characters or their apparent lack of character. On this second tour of America he mostly traveled back and forth from Boston to New York. Principally presenting well-attended readings of his works to delighted and well-paying audiences, he stayed for six months before slipping away to London just in time to avoid the U.S. taxman in April.

It would only be another two years until his early death from a stroke at age 58. An epitaph circulated at his funeral read, "He was a sympathizer with the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed; and by his death, one of England's greatest writers is lost to the world."

It is intriguing that the very problems he observed so long ago remain as issues of cultural argument today. Is our America truly "the land of the brave and the home of the free" where "all men are created equal?" Perhaps Dickens' observations of our country and its people, when revisited, can give us a clearer perspective of who we have been, who we are now, and who we may yet choose to become.



Larry Bounds has been a Chautauqua performer for more than twenty years and has presented an assortment of historical figures including Churchill, Einstein, Cronkite, and Disney for festivals from Florida to Colorado. He retired as a nationally certified teacher after 35 years in the classroom in 2019, but he still regularly performs as a professional magician as he has since 1973. While training with the Clarence Brown Theatre Company he earned a B.A. in theatre and later an M.S. in education from The University of Tennessee. He now lives in Greer, South Carolina with his wife Carole and serves on several community boards.

GOOD READS

American Notes for General Circulation

by Charles Dickens (1842)

Dickens' humorous and sometimes critical observations of his first tour of North America in 1842. Provided inspiration for his novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

Martin Chuzzlewit

by Charles Dickens (2000)

First published in 1843, a searing, yet humorous, satire about life in the United States with tales of greed, hypocrisy, selfishness and redemption.

Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph

by Edgar Johnson (1977)

An intimate look into a life equally as fascinating as the stories he wrote. Based upon a large collection of correspondence that had never been published.

Charles Dickens

by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara (2021)

Engaging illustrations in an introduction to the author for young readers.



Charles Dickens c1860

Unattributed, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

El Vaquero

11th century — Spanish ranching originates on the Spanish peninsula.

1493 — On his second voyage to the New World, Columbus brings the hardy Andalusian “black cattle” to the Caribbean Island he called Española, today the Dominican Republic and Haiti. This was the introduction of cattle and Spanish ranching practices to the New World.

1519 — Hernán Cortéz arrives in Mexico and brings 16 Andalusian horses, 11 stallions and 5 mares, thereby re-introducing the horse to the New World.

1521 — Gregorio de Villalobos transports calves from the Caribbean islands to mainland Mexico.

1598 — Spanish settlers, led by Juan de Oñate, move north, establishing ranches and introducing cattle to the El Paso area and north of the Rio Grande.

1600s — Cattle graze and multiply north of the Rio Grande.

Early 1700s — Vaqueros migrate from Mexico with Spanish missionaries to California and Texas.

1721 — Marqués de Aguayo opens the South Texas cattle industry.

1748 — José de Escandón develops the cradle of the western cattle industry by establishing ranchos in the huge expanse of land called the Nueces Strip, from the Rio Grande to the Nueces River.

1769 — Franciscan monk Junípero Serra begins establishing missions from San Diego to San Francisco. Native Indians working on the missions become California’s first vaqueros.

Late 1700s-Early 1800s — Vaqueros drive cattle from East Texas to Louisiana and Mexico.

Early 1800s — Anglos begin to arrive in what will become Texas and find Spanish-Mexican ranching traditions well-established. Texas vaqueros teach the Anglo settlers the skills and craft of handling horses and cattle on the open range.

1821 — Mexico declares its independence from Spain.

1820s-1830s — Slaves and freemen learn horse and cattle skills from the vaquero—roping, riding, and branding.

El Vaquero, America’s First Cowboy

by Angel Vigil

Here was the original native-son vaquero of our United States, another of those picturesque types that mushroomed to glory, did their bit in the building of our history, and then were properly labeled and stored away in the museum cabinet of our glorious Western Americana.

— *Californicos, The Saga of the Hard-riding Vaqueros, America’s First Cowboy*

El Vaquero, the Spanish colonial cowboy, is a true American hero. He was the first cowboy to ride the open ranges and sleep under the stars. He was the first cowboy to tame the wild horses of the plains and deliver vast herds of cattle across great distances. He was the first master of

the basic and eternal cowboy skills: riding and roping. He was the repository of highly practical and effective Spanish wisdom and experience in the ways of horses and cattle, developed over generations on the open plains of European Spain and New Spain in the Americas. His language gave us the words we now accept as common cowboy lingo: rodeo, chaps, wrangler, lariat, hoosgow, lasso, mustang, corral, dally, buckaroo, bronco, stampede and ten-gallon hat, to name a few.

Without the Spanish vaquero there would be no John Wayne, no Gene Autry, no Roy Rogers, no Dale Evans, no Lone Ranger, no Annie Oakley, no Cisco Kid, no Hopalong Cassidy, no John Wayne, no rodeos, no Stetson Cowboy hat, no cowboy boots, no horses, no cattle, no trail drives, no cowboys singing around the campfire, no country western music, no Hank Williams, no Willie Nelson, no “Black Hat” modern country western singers, no Grand Old Opry in Nashville, no “Mama, Don’t Let Your Babies Grow up to Be Cowboys,” no Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Shows,



Angel Vigil as El Vaquero

1848 — Mexico loses over half its northern frontier to the United States. This land becomes the states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, Colorado and California. Spanish-Mexican vaqueros continue to work in their new country, the United States.

1867-1887 — The primary era of the great cattle drives. Anglo cowboys utilize the cattle practices learned from the vaqueros to drive hundreds of thousands of cattle across great distances. Vaqueros, along with Black

cowboys, make up approximately one-third of the cowboys working the cattle drives. It is during this period that American cowboy culture developed based upon the centuries-old skills and practices of the Spanish-Mexican vaquero.

1887 — The era of the great cattle drive ends.

1880s — William Cody produces the Wild West Shows, beginning the myth of the American cowboy. Vaqueros perform in the Wild West Show, amazing audiences with their roping and riding skills.

no National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, no mythos of the cowboy at the heart of America's self-identity believed at home and exported worldwide. There would be almost no Western ranch, rodeo and cowboy culture at all. El Vaquero is a seminal figure in the creation of Western arts and culture. His story is the story of the creation of the American West.

From his humble beginnings as a Spanish mission Indian tending to the mission's cattle herds to his glory days before the legendary American trail drives, El Vaquero was the primary character in the story of the establishment of cowboy and ranching culture in the American West. His story begins with the introduction of horses and cattle to the New World by the Spanish and continues uninterrupted to his critical tutelage of American cattle men as they began to establish the great cattle industry of the 19th century.

El Vaquero is a composite character based upon traditional vaquero stories and histories. His story is the living history of the origins and development of traditional cowboy practices in the American West. As El Vaquero talks about his clothing, tools and lifeways, a clear picture emerges identifying his traditional Spanish practices as the source of the daily activities of today's ranch worker. As living history, his stories illuminate the contrasts between the romanticized Hollywood depiction of the cowboy with the realities of the real working cowboy. With stories as diverse as the tedious, dust-filled miles on the trail, to the lonely beauty of a star-lit night riding herd as he sings to slumbering cattle, to the stark, death-filled panic of a stampede, El Vaquero gives a first hand account of what it was like to make both myth and history.

The stories of El Vaquero explain the origins of the most powerful and enduring American myth: the cowboy on his horse, riding tall in the saddle, his self-reliant, independent spirit representing all that is good in the American character. The stories of El Vaquero are the stories of America. His story is the story of the American West.



Angel Vigil is Retired Chairman of the Fine and Performing Arts Department and Director of Drama at Colorado Academy in Denver. He is an award-winning author, performer, stage director and teacher and a Colorado Heritage Artist storyteller who has performed throughout the nation at festivals, schools and art centers. He has been a featured storyteller at the National Storytelling Festival in

Jonesborough, Tennessee among several others. His specialty is the oral traditions of the Hispanic Southwest.

Angel is the author of six award-winning books on Hispanic and Western culture and arts. His book *The Corn Woman and Other Stories and Legends from the Hispanic Southwest* won the prestigious New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age National Award.

Angel is also a member of the Colorado Endowment for the Humanities Chautauqua program for whom he has created five historical characters: El Vaquero, El Conquistador, Tezcatlipoca, Manuel de Lisa and Mariano Medina.

GOOD READS

The Cowboy Handbook: A Guide to Your Cowboy Heritage

by Bruce Dillman (1994)

In-depth but easy reading reference book on all things cowboy.

Cowboy Culture, A Saga of Five Centuries

by David Dary (1989)

Cowboy life and legend from 15th century Mexico to the 20th century American West.

Californicos, The Saga of the Hard-riding Vaqueros, America's First Cowboy

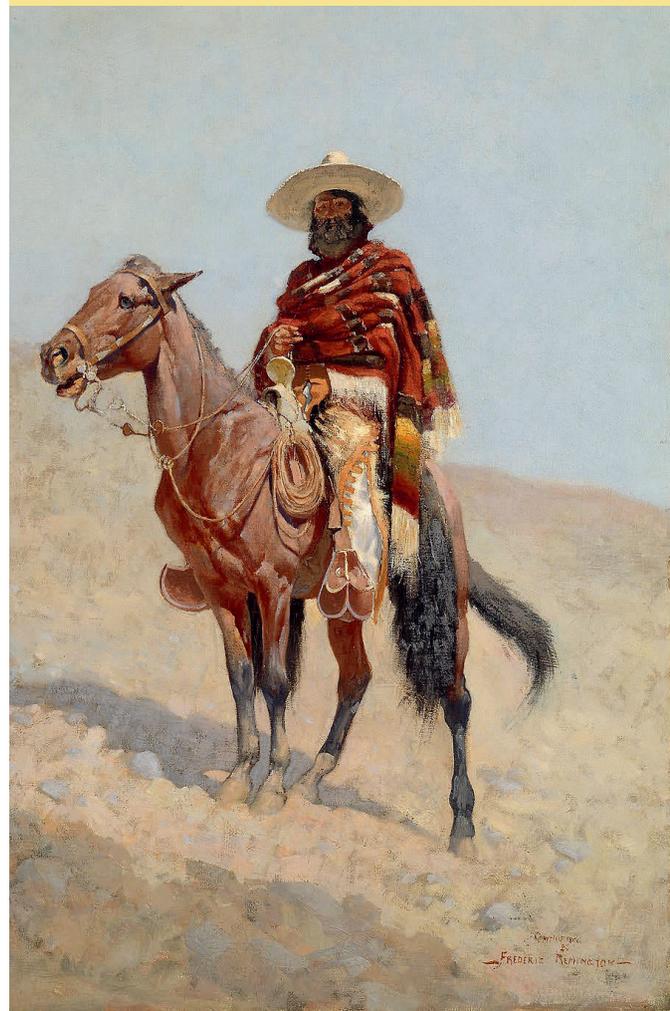
by Jo Mora (1949)

Portrait of the California vaqueros paying tribute to the original American cowboy's skill and bravery.

Enduring Cowboys: Life in the New Mexico Saddle

by Arnold Vigil, ed. (1999)

Exploration of the advent of the vaquero in 16th century New Mexico through to the authentic working cowboy of today.





“Stagecoach Mary” Fields (1830-1832?-1914)

- 1830-1832?** — Born enslaved in Hickman County, Tennessee, SW of Nashville
- 1865** — Freed
- 1870** — Follows Sarah Dunne (Sister Mary Amadeus) to the Ursuline Catholic Convent and School for girls in Toledo, OH.
- 1885** — Moves from Toledo to the Birdtail Prairie, Montana Territory, following Mother Amadeus to St. Peter’s Mission
- 1885 to 1895** — Works at Ursuline School for Girls at St Peter’s Mission outside of Cascade, MT.
- 1894** — Opens “Mary’s Café” in Cascade. It fails in ten months because she feeds too many for free.
- 1895-1903** — Works as the first African-American woman Star Route carrier
- 1903** — Starts her laundry business
- 1912** — Registers to vote. House burned in retaliation?
- 1913** — Votes in local election
- 1914** — Attends the Montana State fair Parade for Suffrage Sept. 25th in Helena, MT
- 1914** — December 5th dies in Great Falls Columbus Hospital in Great Falls, MT. Buried in Cascade

“Stagecoach Mary” Fields

by Becky Stone

America’s westward expansion has become iconic. When we think of the Wild West, we see images of covered-wagons and railroad trains. We envision conflicts between settlers and Indians, farmers and ranchers and cowboys and townfolk. There are gunfights, saloons, bandits and bounty hunters. Rarely do we see women. Still more rarely do we see women of color. Women were there; people of color were there. Americans of Mexican, Indian, Asian and African heritage carved out communities alongside white European settlers. It is time we acknowledge that we do not know the whole truth of our own history. Our popular stories do not include the non-white people who lived there. Their stories have been dropped from the narrative. But their stories are remarkable, often fun and definitely worth knowing. We can take pride in them.

Mary Fields’s story is one of those remarkable stories. Fields was born an enslaved person in Hickman County, Tennessee. As is true of most enslaved people, Fields did not know her exact birth date. Researchers are not sure where she spent her enslaved years. She is rumored to have been owned by the Warners in Arkansas. Somehow through them she made a connection with the Dunne family. Then came freedom. Fields picked up odd jobs on her journey to a new life. She worked as a domestic in homes and on riverboats until she reached Ohio. By then her life had become entwined with Sarah Dunne, a woman fourteen years her junior. It’s likely Fields served Dunne’s family as a domestic. Sarah and Mary were fast friends before Sarah joined the order of the Ursuline nuns in Toledo, Ohio. Sarah became Sister Mary Amadeus. Mary worked for the convent cleaning, cooking, washing laundry and managing the grounds. She reluctantly remained at the convent when Sister Amadeus was called to serve at the St. Peter’s Mission in Montana. However, when word reached Mary that her beloved Sister Mary Amadeus had pneumonia, she left for Montana to nurse her friend back to health. Mary Fields lived in Montana until she died.

There is no record of how Mary learned the skills she had mastered. She was literate, and that alone set her apart from most Americans at that time. She was as tall and strong as any man. She could build and repair structures at St. Peter’s Mission. Mary was a crack shot with a rifle. She could wrangle, train and drive horses. She could garden well enough to grow food for the people at the mission, and she grew many herbs for healing. She also cultivated flowers to give as gifts and to celebrate special occasions. All of these were skills needed to survive in the West.

Yes, she smoked cigars and played cards with the men in the saloon. Yes, she had a temper. But she also had patience with children and was a trusted babysitter for many families in Cascade.

And yes, she had many nicknames, the most notable being Stagecoach Mary.

Stagecoach Mary was a legend in her own lifetime. But alas, she never drove a stagecoach. The US Postal Service contracted with private carriers to serve remote and sparsely populated areas along what they called Star Routes. The private carriers had to provide their own mode of transportation, be it horses, wagons, dogsleds, boats or, later, motor vehicles. Star Route carriers were expected to deliver the mail with “celerity (speed), certainty, and

security." The contracts were awarded to the lowest bidder. Mary won the contract. She had no stagecoach to offer, but she did have a buckboard wagon and a horse and a lot of experience picking up and delivering supplies to the mission. Mary was about 62 years old when she started delivering the mail and about 70 when she retired.

So, Stagecoach Mary was not an accurate appellation. However, I imagine she preferred it over "Black Mary" or "[n-word] Mary". Mary's closest friends honored her request to simply be called by her given name, with no descriptors. Nonetheless, Mary did embrace White Crow, the nickname given to her by her Blackfoot friends. Crows, mystical birds to the Blackfoot, are black and are clever, brave, loyal and like to joke. The Blackfoot had never seen a person of Mary's color. She had the qualities of the crow and yet knew the white person's world. So they called her White Crow.

The Blackfoot accepted Mary. Many white people accepted her. Yet there were many whites who could not accept her because of the color of her skin. Those who thought the color of her skin negated all of her good qualities never ceased in their efforts to oust her. They even attempted to kill her one night by burning down her home. Mary triumphed over their prejudices. Her story would have been lost if her neighbors had not loved her so. Here was a former enslaved person who had become a trusted neighbor. She ran a successful laundry business. She was the only woman allowed to frequent the saloon. Her birthday was celebrated by the town's children with an annual party at the schoolhouse. She was given the role of mascot of the Cascade baseball team. Cascade held a huge funeral for her. They buried her at Hillside Cemetery, the halfway point between Cascade and St. Peter's Mission. (Was that because they would not bury her next to white settlers?) Eventually, the unmarked tin cross that headed Mary's grave was replaced with a granite tombstone. The donor was a man who had been among the many children of Cascade who loved her. That headstone is inscribed just as Mary would have wished – no nicknames or embellishments. It reads simply: Mary Fields 1832-1914. And that, my friends, is the truth.



Becky Stone as "Stagecoach Mary" Fields



Becky Stone grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania before going to Vassar College and earning a degree in Drama. After obtaining her M.A. in Elementary Educational Counseling from Villanova University, Becky worked seven years as an elementary and middle school counselor in the Philadelphia School System. In North Carolina, she taught drama for 10 years at a Christian classical school. Her performance experience includes acting professionally in regional theater companies and storytelling at schools, universities, museums, festivals, camps and libraries. She presented her first Chautauqua character, Pauli Murray, in 2003 for the Greenville [SC] Chautauqua. Becky has since developed Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman, Maya Angelou, Josephine Baker and Mary Fields (Stagecoach Mary).

GOOD READS

Deliverance: Mary Fields: First African American Woman Star Route Mail Carrier in the United States: a Montana History

by Miantae Metcalf McConnell (2016)

A fictional, yet well researched narrative of Fields' life. Influential in having her recognized as the nation's first African American woman to be a Star Route Carrier.

African American Women of the Old West

by Tricia Martineau Wagner (2007)

An exciting collection of stories about the brave African American women who pioneered the American West. Includes one chapter on Mary Fields.



Upon arriving by train at the convent, Mary was asked if she needed anything. "Yes. A good cigar and a drink."

"Mary was gentle and loving. She held me in her lap and sang to me with a deep voice. She was a second mother to all us kids."

— Earl Monroe

Monroe placed the granite headstone on her grave to replace an unmarked tin cross.



Elsa Wolff as Maria von Trapp

Maria von Trapp (1905-1987)

- 1905** — Maria Augusta Kutschera born in Vienna on January 26th
- 1907** — Maria's mother, Augusta Kutschera, dies
- 1914** — Maria's father, Karl Kutschera, dies
- 1924** — Maria becomes a candidate at Nonnberg Benedictine Convent
- 1926** — Maria chosen to tutor young Maria von Trapp; goes to live at the villa with the Baron and his seven children
- 1927** — Georg and Maria wed on November 26th
- 1929** — Rosmarie, Maria and the Baron's first child, is born
- 1931** — Daughter Eleonore born. Family loses money in bankruptcy
- 1936** — The Von Trapps win amateur contest at Salzburg Music Festival.
- 1938** — "Anschluss" Annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany; The Von Trapps flee Austria.
- 1939** — Maria's only son, Johannes von Trapp, is born. Due to visa issue, family has to leave America, returning later that year
- 1942** — The Trapp Family purchases farm in Stowe, Vermont
- 1944** — Trapp Music Camp opens
- 1945** — September – end of WWII. Trapp family raise money for "Austrian Relief Fund"
- 1947** — Baron Georg von Trapp dies at 67 years old
- 1949** — Maria writes and publishes

Maria von Trapp

by Elsa Wolff

One cannot talk about Maria von Trapp outside of the context of *The Sound of Music*. The 1959 Broadway musical was a hit with over 1,400 performances. However, the success of the musical paled in comparison to the popularity of the 1965 Oscar winning movie starring Julie Andrews. Maria von Trapp wrote her and her family's story in her 1949 book, *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers*. The liberties the film producers took with her story are interesting to discover.

Who is Maria and was she really a problem? Maria was a woman of passionate faith and uncompromising determination. Woven throughout Maria's life is a repeating theme of music, faith and courage. Maria's life was defined and impacted by music; it had power to give joy and meaning and helped her give renewed life and purpose to the family she joined. It is important to realize that the beloved movie is *loosely* based on only a small portion of Maria's real-life story that takes her from orphan to Baroness, from novice at Nonnberg Abbey to mother of 10 children, from refugee fleeing Nazi-controlled Austria to leading an internationally known singing group. More than once, she was called a "problem" but, more importantly, she shows us how she managed to overcome problems!

Born aboard a train to Vienna on January 26, 1905, Maria Kutschera was impatient and impulsive from the very start. Orphaned early on, Maria grew up enduring harsh conditions and an abusive uncle. She ran away from home as soon as she was old enough to put herself through college. At the age of 19, she decided to become a nun and went to Nonnberg Abbey in Salzburg. Two years later, in 1926, Maria was sent to be a tutor (not a governess) at the estate where Captain Georg von Trapp was raising his seven children, ages 4 to 14, alone. Their mother, Agathe von Trapp, had died of scarlet fever four years earlier.

A year later, Maria, now 22, married the Baron, who was 25 years her senior. Unfortunately, it is not the romantic story that we saw on the silver screen. She confessed: *"I really and truly was not in love. I liked him but didn't love him. However, I loved the children, so in a way I really married the children."*¹

Life radically changed for the family in 1931 when the Baron lost all his wealth in the worldwide financial collapse. It was at this time that Father Wasner, a Catholic priest with great musical knowledge, entered their lives. With his help, the family began performing together. The film makes no mention of this key figure in the lives of the Trapp Family but rather replaces him with a fictional figure, Max Detweiler.

Another of *The Sound of Music's* significant deviations from reality concerns how the family escaped from Austria. Though we all love the song "Climb Every Mountain," the family did not secretly hike over the Alps to Switzerland. Their escape from Nazi-controlled Austria began in 1938, eleven years after their marriage and the birth of two additional children. The Baron made it clear that he did not support the Nazi regime and refused a commission with the German Navy. When the popular family choir refused an invitation to sing at Hitler's birthday party, Maria knew it was time to quickly leave. The family, known for their singing and hiking expeditions,

The Story of the Trapp Family Singers.

- 1956** — Final Trapp Family Singers concert in the United States. *Die Trapp Familie* movie comes out in Germany
- 1959** — *The Sound of Music* musical opens on Broadway

1965 — *The Sound of Music* movie premieres in America

1968 — Son Johannes von Trapp, oversees opening of the Cross Country Ski Center, the first of its kind in the U.S.

1987 — On March 28, Maria dies at 82 years old

simply boarded a train to Italy. From Italy they continued on to America. Maria was pregnant at the time and their tenth child was born in America. When they left Austria, they were accompanied by Father Wasner, who continued to act as their conductor for 20 years.

America did not offer immediate success as the family contended with serious setbacks. They faced issues with their visas, prejudice, financial strain and initially had difficulty connecting with American audiences. Maria continued to be the strong, determined leader, taking her large family through all hardships. She found not only success but established a lasting legacy.

The von Trapps established a homestead in Vermont, started a Singing Camp and continued performing. In 1943 Georg's sons Rupert and Werner gladly joined America's forces and served in the 10th Mountain Division. When the war was over, the Trapp family founded an organization called The Austrian Relief Inc. and were able to send donations of food and clothing to a needy Austria.

Maria wrote *The Story of The Trapp Family Singers* in 1949. In 1955, a German film company purchased Maria's story and convinced her to sell her story, including all rights, royalties and control, for \$9,000. Her impatience was a problem that cost the family untold millions.

Upon seeing the Broadway musical and later the film, *The Sound of Music*, the family was not entirely pleased. The children felt the film both fictionalized and simplified them and their story. They were especially distressed at the portrayal of the Baron as detached and disapproving, not the man they all knew as a loving, gentle and affectionate father. As Maria's son Johannes said in a 1998 *New York Times* interview, "it's not what my family was about... [We were] about good taste, culture, all these wonderful upper-class standards that people make fun of in movies like 'Titanic.' We're about environmental sensitivity, artistic sensitivity. 'Sound of Music' simplifies everything. I think perhaps reality is at the same time less glamorous but more interesting than the myth."² Agathe, Maria's eldest daughter, put it this way: "It's a very nice story but it's not our story. If they hadn't used our name I probably would have enjoyed it."³

Maria and the children became American citizens 10 years after entering the country. At that time, they dropped "von" from their name. In all, The Trapp Family Singers performed for 20 years, singing more than 2,000 concerts throughout America and around the world.

Maria von Trapp passed away on March 28, 1987 and lies next to her husband in the family cemetery at the Trapp Family Lodge in Vermont. Only three of the ten children survive - Rosmarie, Eleonore and Johannes. The Lodge in Stowe, Vermont is still a popular resort and the family name is still associated with singing. May the music never end!

¹ *The Story of The Trapp Family Singers*. 1949.

² Gearin, Joan. "Movie vs. Reality: The Real Story of the Von Trapp Family". National Archives-Prologue Magazine, Vol. 37, No. 4, 2005. [<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2005/winter/von-trapps.html>]

³ *Memories Before & After The Sound of Music*. 2003.



Elsa Wolff as Maria von Trapp

GOOD READS

The Story of the Trapp Family Singers

by Maria Augusta Trapp (1949)

The true story of the Trapp Family Singers, the inspiration for the beloved musical, *The Sound of Music*.

A Family on Wheels: Further Adventures of the Trapp Family Singers

by Maria Augusta Trapp (1959)

Stories of the family's adventures after their arrival in America until their final performance in 1955.

Around the Year with the Trapp Family

by Maria Augusta Trapp (1955)

A charming look into the von Trapp family's holiday traditions and religious observations, including personal recipes, stories, games and tips for replicating their year-round Christian observations.

Maria: My Own Story

by Maria Augusta Trapp (1972)

In her own words, Maria Augusta Trapp chronicles the story of her eventful life.

Maria von Trapp: Beyond the Sound of Music

by Candice F. Ransom (2002)

Perfect for young readers, this book reaches beyond *The Sound of Music* and offers an insightful look into the life of Maria von Trapp.



Elsa Wolff, entertainer and educator, has been performing, teaching, singing and storytelling since 1997. Elsa, "The Guitar Lady," performs for young children as well as senior citizens in the Denver area. In 2008, she added Living History by portraying Amelia Earhart, followed by Minnie Pearl, Maria von Trapp and Annie Oakley. Elsa also became involved in Colorado Humanities' Young Chautauqua Program and enjoys coaching students of all ages. Because of her love of music and the German language (her major at Willamette University including study abroad), Maria is one of Elsa's favorite characters to bring to life! Elsa is the mother of 4 children and lives in her native Colorado.

Cass Elliot (1941-1974)

- September 19, 1941** — Born Ellen Naomi Cohen
- 1960** — Drops out of school in her senior year to go to New York to pursue Broadway. Starts singing folk music and later, joins band The Big Three.
- 1963** — Group travels on Hootenanny tour, records two albums, and appears on TV.
- 1964** — Big Three breaks up, and Cass joins Mugwumps. Denny Doherty joins the New Journeymen with John and Michelle Phillips.
- 1965-66** — Goes to the Virgin Islands to meet up with Denny Doherty and the others but later go their separate ways. By chance, they meet again in LA and form The Mamas and The Papas with a record contract from Dunhill Record. *California Dreamin'* is released in December .
- 1966-early 1967** — Michelle and Denny's affair is revealed. John kicks Michelle out of group. *Mamas and Papas* and later *Mamas and Papas Deliver* released.
- April, 1967** — Cass gives birth to Owen Vanessa.
- Later 1967** — Monterey Pop Festival, Carnegie Hall concert, and tour in England at which Cass is arrested.
- 1968** — Album *Young Girls are Coming to the Canyon* is released and then *Dream a Little Dream of Me* as a solo. October concert in Las Vegas is a disaster.
- 1970-74** — Her music changes direction. She releases five solo albums and stars in a glitzy Vegas-style show called *Don't Call Me Mama Anymore* which receives glowing reviews.
- July 27, 1974** — Two week run at the London Palladium closes. She calls Michelle Phillips and writes to her daughter overjoyed at her success. She celebrates her success at Mick Jagger's birthday party.
- July 29, 1974** — Found dead in her bedroom due to heart attack, not by choking on a ham sandwich, the rumor that the attending doctor spread. Cause of death was fatty myocardial degeneration due to obesity. She weighed 224 at her death; autopsy showed no drugs or alcohol.

Cass Elliot Larger Than Life

by Karen Vuranch

Let's get one thing straight right away. Cass Elliot died of a heart attack. She did NOT die from choking on a ham sandwich.

When you consider the difference between image and truth, this urban legend is not only false but also reinforces negative connotations. Yes, she was overweight. She also possessed one of the most influential voices of the 1960's. As Lexi Pandell, author of a podcast *Make Me Over: Fat Shaming in Rock and Pop*, states: "She stood out because of her charisma, her powerful and unique voice. . . . As a fat woman in an image obsessed industry, she paved the way for a new kind of celebrity. She broke barriers despite how she looked. Then she became famous because of it."

Her weight plagued her all her life. According to her biographer, Eddie Fiegal, her mother despaired and started her on diet pills, initiating the pattern of drug use that would follow Cass through her life. Throughout her career she had to tolerate endless criticism and teasing. In 1972, she appeared on Russell Harty Plus, a British talk show. Harty begins the interview with, "Now here is a big lady. Bigger in the United States than she is here." What must Cass have felt backstage listening to that introduction, then having to enter with a smile? Pandell states that, often, after smiling her way through the embarrassment, she would go backstage and cry.

It was her weight that kept her from immediate acceptance into The Mamas and the Papas. John Phillips, the controlling leader of the group, didn't want her because of how she looked. Eventually, of course, she did become a part of the iconic group. But Phillips never stopped insulting her with cruel barbs about her weight, both in the studio and on stage.

And, ultimately, it was her weight that made romantic love elusive. She had several boyfriends and lovers but none that would stay for long. Most just used her for her money. Specifically, it was Papa Denny Doherty that she loved. According to Fiegal, those around them stated that they acted like married people, holding each other close and finishing each other's sentences. But Denny could never get past the way Cass looked. In fact, he ultimately fell in love with the winsome Michelle, and their brief affair contributed to breaking up the group. The image of the group was that of happy, hippie togetherness. But the reality was far different. The cruel taunts of John Phillips and heart-breaking deception of Michelle and Denny were the reality that Cass endured.

But Cass Elliot was indomitable. She may not have had the love of her life, but she was loved by friends. The Beatles, David Crosby, Graham Nash, and Joni Mitchell were regulars at her home. When The Hollies toured America, they all slept on the floor of Cass's house even though they had perfectly nice hotel rooms. The parties were just too hard to leave. David Crosby said that Cass was universally loved by all who knew her.

But the person whom Cass loved the most was her daughter Owen. When she gave birth to a baby girl in 1967, she wasn't married and never revealed the father. Owen had a galvanizing effect on Cass. She was determined to give the child a loving home. Cass cleaned up her life, curbed her alcohol and drug use and focused on her daughter and her music.

In 1968, the Mamas and the Papas finally split after the tension and in-fighting took its toll. Cass went on to a brilliant solo career. For the next six years, her stunning contralto voice was a fixture on talk shows and TV shows; she had her own

television special and regularly appeared in Las Vegas. The pinnacle of her career was to play to sold out performances and standing ovations at the London Palladium. This success led to talk of her own television series and movie roles.

She was euphoric after closing the shows at the Palladium. She called Michelle Phillips that night, ecstatic at her success. And that joy makes her death the following day even more heartbreaking.

Now we're back to the ham sandwich myth...

That night she went to several parties including a star-studded birthday party for Mick Jagger. When she returned to the flat where she was staying, her assistant brought a ham sandwich and a coke and set it next to her bed. The next day, her entourage thought she was sleeping in, but found her dead and the food untouched. Dr. Anthony Greenberg, the London physician who examined her at the scene, is responsible for the myth of her choking on the ham sandwich. He saw the sandwich and jumped to a conclusion. The autopsy later showed no food in her stomach or throat and that she died from a heart attack brought on by obesity, long-term drug use and years of yo-yo dieting.

The jokes about a fat woman and a ham sandwich have continued to this day. It is truly a shame that the myth overshadows the truth. Cass's physical size had nothing to do with her gigantic talent. By sheer force of will she built a career, overcoming the stigma of being fat. In fact, Lexi Pandell says that she paved the way for artists to come such as Adele and hip-hop artist Lizzo.

Pandell says that Cass redefined the concept of beauty and built a career on her phenomenal stage presence and powerful voice. She quoted New York Magazine as saying, "She has broken the strongest barrier for an aspiring star. In America, the most weight conscious nation in the world, she has become a glamour girl. She is a star not despite her weight, or because of it, but beyond it."



Karen Vuranch as Cass Elliot

GOOD READS

Everybody Had an Ocean: Music and Mayhem in 1960's Los Angeles

by William McKeen (2017)

Explores Los Angeles' music scene during the 1950s and 1960s and gives insight into the darker side of the rock 'n' roll industry that produced some of the greatest music of all time.

California Dreamin': The True Story of the Mamas and Papas

by Michelle Phillips (1986)

Written by former band member Michelle Phillips, the story of her life, including her time with The Mamas and the Papas.

California Dreamin': Cass Elliot Before the Mamas and the Papas

by Penelope Bagieu (2015)

A young adult graphic novel exploring Cass Elliot's early life before she rocketed into stardom.

Dream a Little Dream of Me: The Life of "Mama" Cass Elliot.

by Eddie Fiegel (2015)

Considered the best biography of Cass Elliot.



Karen Vuranch weaves together a love of history, a passion for stories and a sense of community. Karen has toured throughout the US with her traditional storytelling and living history performances. She

has toured Wales and England with *Coal Camp Memories*, a play she wrote from oral history collected in the West Virginia coalfields. She also toured China in a storytelling exchange. In 1994, Karen and her husband Gene Worthington performed together at the Ellipse Theatre at the White House.

Karen brings history to life with historical interpretations of women from America's past. Her characters include Pearl Buck, Mother Jones, Mary Draper Ingles, Clara Barton, Grace O'Malley, Belle Starr, Julia Child, Louella Parsons, Edith Wharton, Gertrude Bell, "Mama" Cass Elliot and Jackie Cochran.

Karen graduated from Ashland University with majors in Sociology and Theatre and earned a M.A. in humanities from Marshall University. Karen recently retired as faculty member and Theatre Department director from Concord University. Karen has been honored by many organizations, receiving the Tamarack Artisan Fellowship for Lifetime Achievement in the Arts, the Robert C. Byrd Community Service Award, and awards from several other West Virginia groups.



From the very start of our Greenville Chautauqua Festival, we have striven to address the important humanities issues in our past that have remained important to us today. We have shared the views of a wide variety of significant figures from throughout our history. Their voices remind us of the ideas that have shaped our shared culture and give us a perspective on our past that can, hopefully, result in a clearer vision for our future. Here is a quick reminder of the history of our festival.

1999 American Humorists

Mark Twain, Will Rogers, Langston Hughes, James Thurber, Dorothy Parker

2000 Southern Writers

Zora Neale Hurston, Katherine Anne Porter, Mark Twain, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe

2001 American Renaissance

Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Louisa May Alcott, Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass, Henry David Thoreau

2002 Conceived in Liberty

Thomas Jefferson, Elizabeth Freeman, Alexander Hamilton, Henry Laurens, John and Abigail Adams

2003 American Autobiography

Benjamin Franklin, Henry Adams, Andrew Carnegie, Pauli Murray, Mark Twain, Eleanor Roosevelt

2004 American Visions

Martin Luther King, Jr, Eugene V. Debs, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Thomas Paine, John Winthrop, {Winter: Pauli Murray}

2005 The Civil War

Ambrose Bierce, Mary Chesnut, John C. Calhoun, Sam Watkins, Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln
{Winter: Bierce and Watkins}

2006 Great American Journeys

William Clark, Sequoyah, Herman Melville, Harriet Tubman, {Winter: Mary Ingles}

2007 The American Stage

Houdini, Paul Robeson, Lillian Hellman, Will Rogers, Mark Twain, {Winter: P.T. Barnum}

2008 America: The Land

John J. Audubon, Teddy Roosevelt, James Beckworth, Rachel Carson, Black Elk, {Winter: Hudson River School Painters}

2009 America in Crisis

George Washington, Rosa Parks, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, {Winter: Wade Hampton/Robert E. Lee}

2010 American Imagination

Ben Franklin, Thomas Edison, Emily Dickinson, Dr. Seuss, Langston Hughes, {Winter: Thomas Jefferson}

2011 Ideas that Changed America

John Muir, Frances Perkins, Albert Einstein, Mark Twain, W.E.B. Du Bois
{Winter: Jefferson/ Madison}

2012 They Came to America

Winston Churchill, Golda Meir, Carl Jung, Denmark Vesey, {Winter: Lafayette}

2013 American Legends

Davy Crockett, Susan B Anthony, Herman Melville, Malcolm X
{Winter: Benedict Arnold}

2014 Rising to the Occasion

Clara Barton, Patrick Henry, Robert Smalls, Harry Truman, {Winter: Marie Curie}

2015 America at the Movies

Walt Disney, Gordon Parks, Mary Pickford, Orson Welles, {Winter: Bette Davis}

2016 American Adventures

Amelia Earhart, Mark Twain, Matthew Henson, Wernher von Braun
{Winter: Meriwether Lewis}

2017 Power of Words

Abraham Lincoln, Walter Cronkite, Maya Angelou, Cesar Chavez. Rachel Carson, {Winter: Eleanor Roosevelt}

2018 Courage

Winston Churchill, Alice Paul, Francis Marion, Harriet Tubman, Clara Barton
{Winter: George Washington}

2019 It's Revolutionary!

Alexander Hamilton, Andrew Jackson, Jackie Kennedy, Malcolm X, Hamilton's Women,
{Winter: Napoleon}

2021 Reinventing America

Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, Nikola Tesla, Rosa Parks, Hedy Lamarr,
{Winter: Teddy Roosevelt}

2022 Challenge Accepted!

General Eisenhower, Robert Kennedy, Houdini, Georgia O'Keeffe, Pauli Murray,
{Winter: Julia Child}

2023 Secrets Revealed

James Armistead Lafayette, Mary Shelley, Nellie Bly, Robert Ripley, Steve Jobs,
{Winter: Mark Twain}



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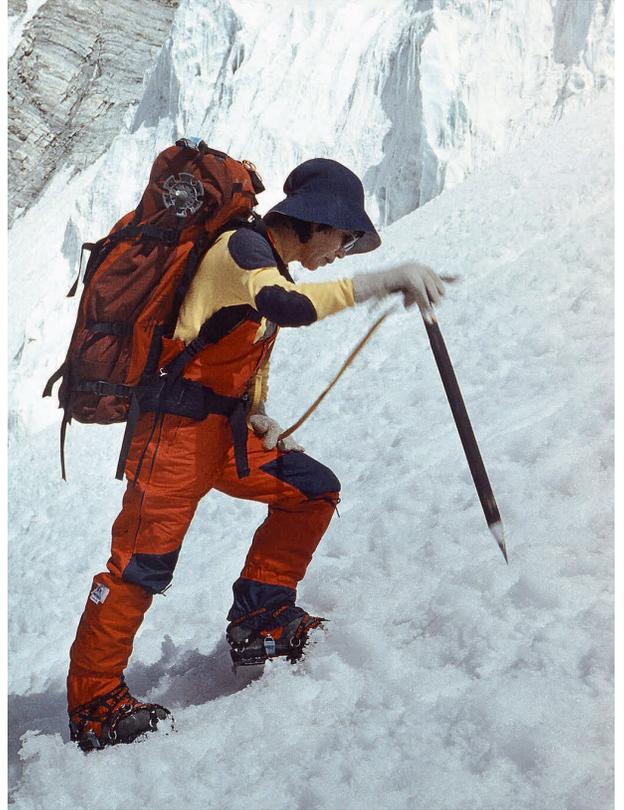
Junko Tabei Portrayed by Bowen Lee

Thursday, October 17, 2024

7:00-8:30 pm

Virtual Performance

Junko Tabei was the first woman to climb to the top of Mt Everest and the Seven Summits, the highest peaks on all seven continents. She has come to address American audiences about her work with the Fukushima Earthquake and Tsunami Relief Programs, particularly her Mt Fuji for the High School Students of Tohoku Project. She will recount her life as a child growing up in Fukushima and the early years of becoming a world class mountain climber, leading to her successful ascent to the summit of Mt Everest. In 1975, it was a daunting challenge for a woman to get to the top of Everest. However, this ordinary Japanese housewife learned long ago: "You can get there if you go step by step." You are invited to join her on this journey.



*Junko Tabei in 1985 at Communism Peak
(now known as Ismoil Somoni Peak).*

Jaan Künnap, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons; photo unaltered



Since 2020, Bowen has become an exciting new storyteller, performing for virtual national storytelling events like the National Storytelling Network (NSN) Earth Up Conference, The NSN Connected Annual Conference, Six Feet Apart Productions and Better Said Than Done. She has told for the Storytelling Association of California for Story Bridge and Special Event Concerts as a featured artist. Locally she has given library performances, such as the Menlo Park Library Story Fest and a natural and cultural history performance at the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History commemorating her Chinese American fishing community family in Monterey, CA. She has won numerous national story slams and been an NSN Grand Slam winner.



❖ **Save the date!** ❖

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February 6-9, 2025

History Comes Alive Festival

June 6-15, 2025

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Through the Looking Glass **Image or Truth?**

Save the Date for Chautauqua
JUNE 7-18, 2024

What to **expect** at a Chautauqua show

One character — minimal set - and the audience is the supporting cast! First, a nationally acclaimed historical interpreter transports you back in time to tell a famous person's stories. Then, the audience gets to join in to quiz the historical figure. Finally, the performer steps out of character and answers audience questions the subject couldn't answer — or wouldn't answer truthfully.

Indoor Shows

Only Spartanburg events require advance reservations. The other indoor events have limited seating. Come early to get a seat. First come, first served. Doors open one hour before show time.

Outdoor Shows

Bring lawn seating.

