

## DO-IT YOURSELF WOMEN'S HISTORY TOUR OF DUTCHESS COUNTY

by Joyce C. Ghee and Stephanie Mauri

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In a county named for a woman--Maria Beatrice D'Este, the Dutchess of York--women have been both makers and keepers of its history since the very beginning of its existence as a municipality. The tour described by the authors is by no means a complete examination of the historical accomplishments of Dutchess's women. Our only intent in the tour is to touch upon the variety of historical contributions women have made in fields as varying and encyclopedic as one can imagine.

We have been assisted in our choices with suggestions and help from local historians: J. Winthrop Aldrich, Ann Linden, Olive Doty, Willa Skinner, Joan Van Voorhis, Nick Mc Causland, Joan Miracco, Bernice Thomas, Barbara Bielenberg, Judy Carlson, John Quinn, Margaret Quinn and Patrick Higgins. We thank them for adding to the long list and to Nan Fogel for her editing.

Historical significance, like leavening in bread, theoretically needs time to rise. If the authors' decision to choose our tour heroines from those who are no longer with us appears arbitrary to some, we accept the blame. Some later tour will no doubt identify sites related to the accomplishments of representatives of current generations; among others: environmentalist Frances Reese, arts activist Julia Dunwell, religious leader Ruth Peale, political trailblazers like Lucille P. Pattison, Jean Murphy and Clara Lou Gould, jurists such as Jane Bolin and Judith Hilary, and women who served in the military of 20th c. Wars. Dutchess County women in public life, the arts, commerce, science, education, today are legion but the way was paved by their forebearers who balanced homemaking and child raising with community building and adventures into new fields of endeavor.

**Our list of both public and private acheivers is presented in the text in alphabetical order by last name. Citations are limited to basics: the municipality, era and one or two important facts.**

**Supplementary information found in DCHS library or yearbooks is in parentheses following each entry.**

Select your own route on the basis of your interests. If you want to know more about a site or historical figure we welcome researchers at the DCHS library in Clinton House.

## TOUR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY SITES IN DUTCHESS COUNTY

**Margaret Livingston Chanler Aldrich.** Red Hook /Barrytown/ Rokeby. Heiress, Spanish American War Nurse, feminist, activist. Late 19th-mid-20th c. One of the "Astor Orphans," she received a Congressional medal for her services caring for Spanish American War wounded and wrote her memoirs, *Family Vista*, in 1958. (Lately Thomas. *The Astor Orphans- a Pride of Lions*).

**Widow Elizabeth Allen.** Pleasant Valley/Beekman Patent. Patent settler, businesswoman. 18th c. Her connections by marriages to the Allen and Flagler families made early land deals the basis of family fortunes. (1979,'80 YB).

**Mary Lucy Ham Alley.** Beekman. Homemaker, educator, librarian. (b.1893-d.1988). Women like Mary Alley have been the glue binding communities together by building useful public institutions with and for their neighbors. (1999/'00 YB)

**Alida Livingston Armstrong.** Red Hook/ Rokeby. Heiress, Country Seat founder (b.1761-d.1822). Her marriage to Revolutionary War hero General John Armstrong joined Livingston Hudson River land holdings to national power. Together the Armstrongs made Rokeby estate a home and country seat.

**Jenny Barlow.** Union Vale. Teacher, public servant. (b.1864-d.1948). Her life of community service began as a teacher in one-room Waterbury School. As the first woman in Union Vale to be appointed to public office she served as Town Clerk from 1923 to 1947.

**Anne Beadle.** Pleasant Valley/Clinton. Homemaker. (b 1792-d.?). Her 1806 embroidered map of the world sampler done in a Pleasant Valley Quaker School at age 14 is the clue unlocking early 19th century women's education. (1994 YB).

**Virginia Berry.** Pleasant Valley. Historian, artist. 20th c. She and her husband served as the town's first official municipal historians, appointed in 1966. Her oils and watercolors in the Pleasant Valley Library record area historic structures and places.

**Sarah Gibson Blanding.** Poughkeepsie/Vassar. College administrator, educator. 20th c. At Dr. Mac Cracken's retirement Miss Blanding was named Vassar's first woman President. Her administration (1946-1964), while Vassar was still a women's college, saw the beginning of campus architectural changes introducing contemporary architecture into a traditional landscape.

**Lydia Booth.** Poughkeepsie, City. Women's education leader. 19th c. Her methods and scholarship as head of Cottage Hill Seminary for Girls were models for step-uncle, Matthew Vassar, as he established Vassar Female College. (Edmund Platt. *History of Poughkeepsie*).

**Irene Bower.** Pleasant Valley. Historian, writer. (1910-1965). As a member of the family that developed the town's early mill industry, her access to records and information and the scrap books that she kept have become a rare source of local history.

**Catharyna Rombout Brett.** Beacon. Businesswoman, patent settler. (b.1687-d.1764). Brett began constructing the county's oldest frame house ca. 1709 when she and husband Roger left New York City to claim her inheritance, a third of 85,000 acres in her father's 1685 Patent. Early widowhood and challenges raising sons in a wilderness urged diplomacy with local Indians, sub-dividing land-holdings to multiply neighbors and retaining the Brett mill/landing as cash/ supply line. Her strategy became a county development paradigm. (Henry Cassidy. *Catharyna Brett, Portrait of a Colonial Business Woman*. 1992 YB).

**Margaret DeMott Brown.** Poughkeepsie/Adriance/Vassar. Photographer, artist. 20th c. Her work for Vassar College and Helen Wilkinson

Reynolds capturing the landscape, architecture and history-makers of the era in Dutchess County illustrated many of the society's early publications. (HW Reynolds. *Poughkeepsie, the Origins and Meaning of the Name.*)

**Mary Flagler Cary.** Millbrook. Benefactor. 20th c. Her gifts of land and funding made at mid-20th century enriched and multiplied Dutchess County's landscape and educational resources. The Institute of Eco-Systems and Gifford House gardens are among visible clues to generosity spurred by a love of nature, gardening and concern for the environment.

**Lettie Carson.** Harlem Valley. Public transportation advocate/ activist. 20th c. As leader of the Harlem Valley Transportaion Association she led a 12-year effort to save public access to rail transport for Harlem Valley citizens. Her efforts impacted federal legislation re abandonment of rail lines.

**Nancy Cook.** Hyde Park/Val-Kill. Craftswoman, political activist. 20th c. Her friendship with Marion Dickerman and Eleanor Roosevelt launched Mrs. Roosevelt's political education and provided a knowledge of crafts leading to establishment of Val-Kill Industries in the 1920s. This social experiment was conceived as off-season work for farm youth. (*Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*).

**Dorothy Day.** Red Hook/Tivoli/ Rose Hill. Liberal writer, Socialist suffragette. (b.1897-d.1980). She brought her faith as a converted Catholic, her ardent Socialist/liberal leanings and a reporter's literal view to the establishment of the Catholic Worker publication (1933) and numerous social projects (such as the Catholic Worker Farm experiment) designed to make society attentive to the needs of others.

**Julia Dean.** Pleasant Valley. Theatre actress. 19th c. One of two popular thespians with the same name, this Julia was the daughter of parents whose Pleasant Valley business was managing national theater groups and company tours. Folklore purports that on a tour of the west ca. 1830, she captured the heart of Brigham Young and turned down his proposal of marriage. (1974 YB).

**Elsie DeReimer.** Poughkeepsie City/Glebe House/Sleight House, LaGrange. Daughter of Peter De Reimer, Glebe House occupant after

1796. 18th-19th c. The sober portrait of De Reimer's willful daughter, Elsie, in the house belies the character of a woman who at twenty-two is said to have defied tradition and her family by climbing out a window to elope with 46-year old Jacobus Sleight. (*The Glebe House* booklet DCHS).

**Maria Beatrice D'Este.** City of Poughkeepsie/ Courthouse/ Clinton House. Dutchess of York, Queen Mary of England. (b. 1658-d.1718). Marriage to James Stuart, Duke of York in 1673 during Charles II's reign, made an Italian Catholic Duchess of Modena the Dutchess of York. In 1683, when her husband and brother-in-law divided Stuart northeastern lands among friends and family into municipalities, she was given "the Dutchess's Countie"- now Dutchess and Putnam. With Charles' death she reigned briefly (1685-1688) as queen before Protestant forces regained power sending her into French exile. The courthouse symbolizes the center of municipal power since the 17th c.. Clinton House collections hold images of the beautiful Dutchess who never saw "her" county.

**Marion Dickerman.** Hyde Park/Val-Kill. Educator, political activist. (b. 1890-d.1983.) 1920s political work with Nancy Cook and Eleanor Roosevelt sealed friendships and business partnership in Val-Kill Industries. She was principal of the Todhunter School in New York City where Mrs. Roosevelt taught. FDR-built Stone Cottage was given to the three with life tenancy, as Cook/Dickerman's residence and ER's vacation home. They turned it to their own political and social agendas. (*Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*).

**Dr. Phebe Doughty.** Beacon Physician. 20th c. In 1904, she became the city's first woman doctor, following her father into his practice. She served the community for over 60 years.

**Deborah Dows.** Rhinebeck/Southlands Farms. Horsewoman, business woman, benefactor. 20th c. WPA artist Olin Dows' sister devoted her life to maintaining the characteristics of rural life that she valued. She turned a portion of the Dows family estate, "Foxhollow," into a successful, respected riding academy and horse farm. Her foundation now protects the rural nature of the area.

**Betty Blair Eggert.** Poughkeepsie/Glebe House/Red Hook/“Maizefield” Preservationist. 20th c. As founding Director of Dutchess County Landmarks Association, she led the first 1970s efforts in Dutchess County to survey and protect important historic architecture from her office in Glebe House. She coped with preservation issues daily on a very personal level as owner of “Maizefield,” a significant 18th c. Georgian style home.

**Marjorie Finger.** Northeast/original Kildonan School. Educator. 20th c.. As a teacher at Viewpoint School (now Kildonan) she saw a need for a curriculum and learning center for special needs children. With two friends she founded Maplebrook School devoted to these interests.

**Hallie Flanagan.** Poughkeepsie/Vassar. Theatrical producer, drama teacher. (1890-1969). As Vassar faculty, she founded and directed Vassar’s Experimental Theatre Project (1925-55). During a leave from 1935-39, she served as Director of the WPA Federal Theatre Project, bringing theatrical productions to audiences nation-wide.

**Gertrude Ford.** Poughkeepsie/Route 44. Businesswoman. 19th-20th c. For 56 years she served as head of the successful G. F. Tea Co. business she founded in 1907. At a time when women did not enter commerce she made a place and a name for her product that has seldom been equaled. (1991 YB).

**Charlotte Cunneen Hackett.** Hyde Park/“Hackett Hill”/ Poughkeepsie City/ Cunneen Hackett Cultural Center. Lawyer, benefactor. (b. 1888-d. 1971). Trained as a teacher, she then studied law. With admission to the bar at age 30, her legal skills were put to civic benefit: creation of the Cunneen-Hackett Charitable Trust in 1968 and the gift of “Hackett Hill” in 1969 to the Boy Scouts. Cunneen Hackett Cultural Center honors her. (1979 YB).

**Elsa Thorne Haight.** Millbrook/Harts Village. Journal keeper. (b. 1775 d. 1844). Her meticulous record of family births, deaths, and marriages provides an invaluable original source for historians. (1958 YB).

**Elisa Woolsey Howland.** Beacon. Community activist, nurse. 19th c. During the Civil War she and all the women in her family became part of the

Sanitary Commission, serving as nurses for the wounded. A military camp in Washington D.C. was named to honor their efforts.

**Mary Lou Jeanneney.** Poughkeepsie/ Vassar. Librarian, writer, historian, craftswoman. (b.1928-d.2000). Best known as Vassar's Special Collections Librarian and as editor of DCHS Yearbooks, she also designed jewelry and was co-author of *Dutchess County: a Pictorial History* in 1983. (1999/'00 YB).

**Dr. Grace Kimball.** Poughkeepsie/ YWCA. Physician, missionary, medical administrator, women's health advocate, community leader. (b.1855-d.1942). A long career in medicine and public health brought under its umbrella social and cultural issues concerning women's lives. She served as president of the YWCA for over 40 years. (1999/'00 YB).

**Gertrude Knievel.** Beacon/Knievel St. Writer. 20thc. Born in Beacon in 1891, she became a writer of popular mysteries; *The Diamond Rose* and six others. Kneivel Avenue, near her home, was named for her.

**Elise Kincaid.** Poughkeepsie/"Maple Grove". Estate owner, benefactor. 20th c. She owned the farm straddling the Poughkeepsie City/Town line where cows grazed on the front lawn of "Maple Grove," a National Register 19thc. home overlooking Poughkeepsie rural cemetery and the waterfall ("U-pu-ki-ipi-sing") naming the city.

**Helen LaPorte.** Rhinebeck/Chancellor Livingston DAR. Organization founder. 20th c. The founder of the Rhinebeck DAR chapter purchased the original modest frame home of General Montgomery and his wife Janet Livingston and gave it to the DAR as their headquarters.

**Mary Lasker.** Amenia. "Smithfield". Benefactor. 20thc. While she and her husband were best known as 20th c. benefactors supporting medical research, beautification efforts were an extension of her concern for a healthier world. They moved easily from her estate gardens at "Smithfield" to the surrounding community where dwarf fruit trees along Amenia's Route 22 and the village still testify to her beliefs. With Lady Bird Johnson she took the message across America.

**Catherine Flint Leigh.** Amenia. Smithfield Cemetery. Historian and genealogist. (b.1913-d.1990). Town historian from 1965-1990, she used local history celebrations as a way to reinforce community institutions.

**Margaret Beekman Livingston.** Tivoli, North of County line. Heiress, major landholder. (b.1724-d.1800) Chatelaine of Clermont, daughter of Col. Henry Beekman, this "Grande Dame" of the Livingston clan raised a family of national leaders while managing a vast landholdings, workers and leaseholders during the era of the American Revolution.

**Sybil Ludington.** Putnam Co. evolutionary War hero. (b.1761 d.1839). Col. Henry Ludington's young daughter made him proud on the night of April 26, 1777 with her courageous 40 mile night ride to warn the people and rally his troops after the British attack on Danbury. (1945, '83 YB).

**Jean Flagler Matthews.** Beekman/Flagler Cemetery, Frog Hollow Rd. Family historian, benefactor. 20th c. The youngest daughter of Harry Harkness Flagler and granddaughter of millionaire industrialist Henry H. Flagler made it her task to identify and gather together all family ancestors in Dutchess County. The Family Cemetery was dedicated in October 1976. (1979 YB).

**Mary Starr Miller.** Rhinebeck/Starr Institute Building. Country Seat owner, benefactor. 19th c. This 19th century great-granddaughter of Major General Philip Schuyler renovated and made her home on his estate, the Grove. She was a dedicated community benefactress, giving the Starr Institute building to the town for its first library.

**Maria Mitchell.** Poughkeepsie/Vassar College. Astronomer, educator (b.1818-d.1889). The brilliant self-taught daughter of a seafaring family was honored for her discovery of the comet bearing her name. She was recruited by Vassar to teach Astronomy and direct the Observatory in 1865. (1999/'00 YB).

**Susan Moore.** Moore's Mills/Lagrange. Quaker businesswoman. 19thc. This quiet Quaker lady turned Moore's Mills into a tourist destination. For over 50 years her home, Floral Home, was a popular vacation boarding house. (Joan Spence/Joyce Ghee. *Taconic Pathways*).

**Janet Livingston Montgomery.** Rhinebeck/“Grasmere”/Red Hook/“Montgomery Place”. (b.1743-d. 1828) Country Seat founder. As the wife of America’s first fallen hero, General Richard Montgomery, she was a public figure during the early years of the nation. Her greatest achievement was development of “Montgomery Place,” her home in Red Hook. (1930 YB).

**Sophia Wittenberg Mumford.** Amenia. Leedsville. Artist, writer. 20th c. As the wife of noted art historian Lewis Mumford the talents of artist and author Sophia Wittenberg have been obscured. She was a writer on the staff of “Dial” when they met and he wisely chose her to be his only proof-reader.

**Widow Catherine Beekman Rutsen Pawling.** Pawling/Rhinebeck. (b.1683-c.1753 ) As one of Henry Beekman’s daughters, she inherited “Back Lots” in the Beekman Patent. She oversaw the development of thousands of acres now encompassing four towns and personally rode into the wilderness to check out properties and collect rents. Pawling was named for her. (Dr.MacCracken. *Old Dutchess Forever*).

**Bessie Harden Payne.** City of Poughkeepsie. Educator, community and religious leader, missionary. 20th c. She combined work as a teacher-missionary in South Africa with the duties of a clergyman’s wife. Later she matched NAACP, Ebenezer Baptist Church and Catharine Street Community Center volunteerism with service as Principal of the Little Red School House, teaching special needs children. (1999/’00 YB).

**Mehitabel Wing Prendergast.** Pawling/Quaker Hill/Poughkeepsie/ Courthouse. Pre-Revolutionary rent wars heroine. 18th c. When husband William found himself imprisoned and sentenced to be hung for treason for leading Dutchess’s 1766 leaseholders “Rent Wars” revolt, his gentle Quaker wife rode to New York in quest of a Governor’s pardon. It succeeded, just in the nick of time. M. Kammen paper *Transformations of an American County*. (1944,’71 YBS)

**Sr. Helen Marie Proper (formerly Sister M. Scholastica).** Amenia/ Immaculate Conception School. (1921-1996). Religious educator Sister Helen was born in Amenia and devoted 54 years of her life to the work of the Dominican Sisters of Blauvelt. She served as principal of Immaculate Conception School for 15 years.

**Helen Wilkinson Reynolds.** Poughkeepsie, City/ Adriance/ Glebe House. Historian, writer, researcher, genealogist, editor, civic leader, preservationist (b.1875-d.1943). A charter member of DCHS, who forged its methodologies, Miss Reynolds edited the Yearbook for over 20 years. Her work as municipal historian, preservationist and civic leader, contributed more to Dutchess County's history reserves than any other scholar.(1968, '79, '83, '93)

**Sarah Delano Roosevelt.** Hyde Park/Library/"Springwood". Mother of a President, community benefactor. (b.1854 d.1941). As a Victorian woman of privilege she was well trained to assume the duties of a president's mother; a hostess who opened her home to royalty and heads of state. She also took local duties seriously, giving the hamlet its library in 1927 as a memorial to her husband.

**Ellen C. Roosevelt.** Hyde Park/ "Rosedale" Roosevelt heiress, sportswoman.(b.1868-d.1964). This first cousin of F.D.R., a proper Victorian lady in many respects, was a serious challenger on the tennis court who won the U.S. Women's Doubles championship in 1890. (1958 YB).

**Eleanor Roosevelt.**Hyde Park/ "Val-Kill"/ "Springwood"/ FDR Library. First Lady, a US delegate to the United Nations, world leader. (b. 1884-d. 1962). When she married a distant Roosevelt cousin in 1905, she began an ascent in history that brought fame, opportunity, tragedy, and finally world-wide political, social and cultural influence. She taught, wrote, spoke as a civic/national leader, Governor's and President's wife, businesswoman, journalist and at length a United States UN Delegate. Her story is told in hundreds of books but also is found at her wing of the FDR Library, the family home "Springwood" and her own home, now the first National Historic Site for a First Lady in U.S. History--"Val-Kill."

**Marguerite Bailey Rosenson.** Amenia. Publisher. (1900-1997). Fate took a hand in her career when her husband was injured during WWI and she was forced to take on the task of editing and publishing the *Harlem Valley Times*, the newspaper founded by Joel Benton in 1852 as the *Amenia Times*. As the first woman in that position she proved to be a complete success.

**Mrs. Mary Crooke Broome Livingston Ruggles.** Poughkeepsie. Wife of civic leaders/ government officials. (19th c.). Her “fairytale” rags to riches story of social success through marriage epitomizes the dependent status of 19th c. Victorian women. (1924 YB).

**Mary Landon Sague.** Poughkeepsie City/Barnard Ave./ Vassar. Educator, scientist, civic leader, collector. (b. 1885-d. 1971). A year after graduation from Vassar in 1907 she became part of the faculty where she served (1908-1952) as chemistry professor and department chairman. She was a civic leader in Community Chest, Vassar Hospital, and AAUW and began gathering a unique women’s period costume collection for her 50th class reunion. Exhibited locally, the clothing attracted scholarly attention and raised funds for charity before being given to Vassar.

**Lucy Maynard Salmon.** (Poughkeepsie/Vassar). Educator, historian. (19th- 20th c.) Vassar’s respected History Department began with the recruitment of Professor Salmon in 1887. Her research methodologies based upon original sources: documents, diaries, artifacts and material culture of the past as proof of historical theses became and remained a Vassar hallmark. As an early member of DCHS she impressed upon her colleagues the necessity of doing one’s own careful homework and not depending upon “authorities.”

**Belle Saltford.** Poughkeepsie. Physical Education Teacher, Civic Leader (1878-1969) She was active in many civic efforts: a founder of PTA in New York, Regent of Mahweniwahsigh Chapter DAR during its second effort to save Clinton House, worked with Eleanor Roosevelt to form a local League of Women Voters and ran for state office.

**Margaret Sanger (Slee).** Fishkill/ Willow Lake on VanWyck Rd./ Fishkill Rural Cemetery. Institution founder. (1883-1966) 20th c. Founder of the Birth Control movement in the U.S. Her work made her a global women’s leader. She became President of the International Planned Parenthood Federation in 1952.

**Amy Rotch Sargeant.** Beacon. Educator. (19th-20thc). She founded the respected Sargeant School for Girls (1893-1918), known for its innovative methods.

**Hannah Schenck.** Beacon/Mme. Brett House. Historic house owner. (18th c.). The granddaughter of Mme. Brett, wife and hostess for her husband, a Revolutionary War quartermaster, she entertained George Washington at Brett Homestead.

**Pauline Reichert Slater.** Poughkeepsie/Union St./Nativity Church. A fireman's wife. (b.1862-d.1943). Like her husband, she was the child of German immigrants building a new life, centered on family and a church community in a new country. Research and photographs show her mettle in making a home faced with endless hard work, modest means and her husband's dangerous profession. (99/'01 YB).

**Amy Spingarn.** Amenia/Troutbeck. Artist, writer, civil rights activist.(1883-1980). She was a leading figure in the fight for civil rights for women and African Americans, working with her husband, Columbia professor and literary critic, Joel Spingarn. As a painter, poet and photographer she made her own mark. Together they made Troutbeck a center for social and cultural thought and action.

**Lucy Staley.** Rhinebeck/Fair Grounds. Businesswoman, community activist. 20th c. Staley was a business woman and boarding house owner whose salesmanship and management skills addressed community service: coordinating civil defense, recruitment for the WACS and Air Force during WW II and after the war turned to the PTA and running County Fair Arts and Crafts and Flower Shows.

**Daisy Suckley.** Rhinebeck/"Wilderstein"/Hyde Park/"Top Cottage". Country Seat owner. 19th-20th c. Her home, "Wilderstein," is National Register Queen Anne Victorian. A Roosevelt cousin and FDR's friend and confidant, she gave him "Fala", his famous Scotty, and assisted his planning of "Top Cottage". (Geoffrey Ward. *Closest Companion*).

**Carolyn Atwater Swift.** Poughkeepsie/ Clinton House. Historian, genealogist, civic leader.(1857-1929.) She was the founder of the Mahweniwahsigh chapter of the DAR and the turn-of-the-century leader who energized the community to save Clinton House in 1900. (1999/'00 YB).

**Elizabeth Crannell Tappen.** Poughkeepsie, City/Glebe House. Housewife. Daughter of Tory lawyer Bartholomew Crannel. 18th c. An outspoken proponent of rebellion at a time when women had no rights, her publicly-aired Whig views clashed with those of family members; (*The Glebe House*, booklet DCHS).

**Dorthea Taylor.** (Poughkeepsie/Fairview/Children's Home/26 Forbus St.- Original Little Red School House). Teacher. 20th c. Her love of children carried her from raising her own family to caring for them in many settings: nursery school, the Children's Home and the original Little Red School House where she learned and taught herself how to deal with the obstacles to learning of deafness, mental retardation and autism. (1999-'00 YB.)

**Sarah Taylor.** Fishkill Village/100 Main St. Community leader, public servant. (1897-1983). Sarah "Sally" Taylor came to live in Fishkill in 1922, prepared to give it her "all" as a volunteer community leader in Girl Scouts, Mental Health Assoc., the library, as the first special education teacher in the Wappingers District, as a businesswoman, and in 1965 as the first woman mayor and only woman mayor in New York State. She came to be associated with the annual 4th of July reading of the Declaration of Independence in Fishkill. Her name was given to Sarah Taylor Park and Taylor Lane.

**Susannah Leisler Vaughton.** Staatsburgh. (17th-18th c.) Michael Vaughton's widow might have been one of our county's early patent holders, but for a 1695 colonial court decision overturning her husband's claim. It was nullified and her land subsumed into that of Henry Beekman's daughter. (1981 YB)

**Amy Pearce Ver Nooy.** Poughkeepsie/ Adriance/ Clinton House. Historian researcher, writer. (20th c.) Amy VerNooy followed in Helen W. Reynolds' footsteps as the Editor of the Yearbook and as a prolific writer/researcher of articles from the 1940s to the 1960s. She also served as DCHS's unsalaried Secretary, a euphemism for staff.

**Katherine Wolcott VerPlanck.** Beacon. Organizational leader. She was the owner of Roseneath, one of Beacon's most famous estates and the founder of the Melzingah Chapter of the DAR.

**Jean Webster.** Union Vale. Skidmore House. Writer. 20th c. (1876-1916) The niece of Mark Twain had writing in her blood. After graduating from Vassar in 1901 she settled in Union Vale to write *Daddy Long Legs*, *Dear Enemy* and the Patty books.

**Irene Wilcox.** Milan/ Town Hall/ Wilcox Park. Benefactor. (1894-1977). Mrs. Wilcox turned grief over the loss of her husband in 1942 and only son in 1950 into good works. Her generosity provided rural Milan with a Town Hall and community center and the County a park.

**Deborah Rogers Willets.** Millbrook Quaker Educator. (b.1789 d. 1880). Educational innovations in teaching both boys and girls (teaching methods, textbook development, and effective administration, shared with her husband, Jacob), made Nine Partners School one of the most prestigious schools in the country. (1935,'76 YBs).

**Annette Innis Young.** Poughkeepsie/ "Locust Grove" Benefactor. 20th c. (b.1885-d.1975) The owner of historic "Locust Grove," understood its significance as Livingston and S.F.B.Morse property. She provided an endowment that assisted its development as a public national historic site and park.