



## December 2018 Her Story ENewsletter Women in Statuary Hall

National Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C., contains 100 statues - two from each state. Of that total, nine (9%) are women - Helen Keller (Alabama), Dr. Florence Sabin (Colorado), Frances Willard (Illinois), Maria Sanford (Minnesota), Jeannette Rankin (Montana), Sarah Winnemucca (Nevada), Sakakawea (North Dakota), Mother Joseph (Washington), and Esther Hobart Morris (Wyoming). In this month's ENewsletter, we feature two of these outstanding women - Sakakawea and Sarah Winnemucca, both of whom have been inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

Known to many of us as Sacagawea, Sakakawea was a Lemhi Shoshone woman who was the daughter of a Shoshone Chief. Born in what is today Idaho, as a teenager she was living with the Hidatsas in what is today North Dakota. Sakakawea was bilingual and a tremendous asset during the 1805-1806 Lewis & Clark expedition in which she participated as both a guide and interpreter. Most of us have seen images of her carrying her infant son on her back during the arduous trip.



### **Sacagawea**

She is also remembered for her cool-headedness when she rescued papers, that would later enshrine the history of the expedition, from a capsizing boat. In addition, her presence indicated to other Native Americans along the trail that the expedition was peaceful. Happily, one of the tribes they met along the way was headed by her brother who provided horses and guides, enabling Lewis & Clark and company to reach the "great waters" of the Pacific Ocean. Many sculptures exist honoring her memory as do a number of natural features including lakes and mountains, as well as parks and trails. Sakakawea's likeness appeared on a U.S. dollar coin in 2000.



**Sarah Winnemucca**

Northern Paiute Native American Sarah Winnemucca was born in Nevada, the daughter of a Paiute Chief; she was educated in California. In 1865, while she was away from the tribe, her mother and other family members were killed by the U.S. Cavalry. As a result, Winnemucca became an advocate for the rights of Native Americans, speaking across the country and lobbying the U.S. Congress. She was able to free her father and other tribesmen during the Bannock War of 1878 and subsequently she served as an Army scout against the Bannock tribe.

Her book, *Life Among the Paiutes: Their Wrongs and Claims*, published in 1883, is both a memoir and a history of her people. She gave many lectures around the U.S. after the book's publication. She was able to speak with President Hayes and the Secretary of the Interior about returning her people to their lands on the Malheur Reservation. Although legislation was passed enabling the return of Paiute land, it was never enacted. Winnemucca eventually returned to Nevada and started a school for Native American children.

Sakakawea and Sarah Winnemucca are among the more than 850 women profiled in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*. Women's accomplishments continue to inspire and encourage us. Continue to help us tell women's stories!

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