



A TIMELINE OF THE WOMEN
WHO CHANGED AMERICA



January 2021 Her Story ENewsletter 2020 National Women's Hall of Fame Inductees

In last month's ENewsletter we told you about Mary Church Terrell and Toni Morrison, who were among the six outstanding women inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in December. In this month's issue, we profile two more inductees: Aretha Franklin and Barbara Hillary.



Aretha Franklin grew up singing gospel in her father's church. In 1961 she went under contract with Columbia Records, but it was after she went with Atlantic Records in 1967 that her many hits and nationwide fame occurred. By the end of the decade of the 1960s, she was referred to as the "Queen of Soul." The most charted female artist in history, Franklin won 20 Grammy awards including a Lifetime Achievement and the Legend Award. Franklin was also the first female inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. She is listed by *Rolling Stone* magazine as one of the 100 Greatest Artists of all Time and the #1 Greatest Singer of All Time (out of their 100). She sold more than 75 million records worldwide.

Franklin was also involved in the civil rights and the women's rights movements. She helped financially support groups advocating for these rights and she performed at benefits and protests. In 2019, the Pulitzer Prize organization gave her a posthumous citation saying "for her indelible contribution to American music and culture for more than five decades." Franklin was the first individual woman to receive such a citation. Her many other honors include honorary degrees and honorary doctorates in music, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Kennedy Center Honors and the National Medal of Arts.



Adventurer **Barbara Hillary** went to both the North and South Poles. The double cancer survivor (both lung and breast cancer) and retired gerontology nurse made it her mission to reach the North Pole, after becoming aware that no African American woman had yet done so. After retirement, she took up snowmobiling and dog sledding. Training in New York City presented it challenges, all of which she overcame. The first African American woman and the oldest woman to accomplish these achievements, Hillary reached the South Pole at age 75 (in 2007) and the North Pole (in 2011) at age 79.

Hillary was inspired to pursue adventure after reading *Robinson Crusoe* in her youth. She was a big reader saying "there was no such thing as mental poverty in our home." Hillary was able to pursue that wanderlust after her retirement. Recipient of the Woman of Courage Award from the National Organization for Women, Hillary served as an inspirational speaker after her

Polar exploits; in her speaking she also identifies as an activist on the topic of climate change. She also pursued additional travel by going to the Mongolian steppe in 2019.

Aretha Franklin and Barbara Hillary 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 all. Continue to help us tell women's stories!

Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen

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