

SANDY COOK APTHORP

FLORIDA PARK SERVICE

By high school, Sandy Cook Apthorp had begun her career in the Florida Park System (FPS). During her tenure with the FPS, she moved all over the state, “including Stephen Foster in White Springs, Bahia Honda in the Florida Keys, and Anastasia in St. Augustine, among others.” She served at Wakulla Springs for 17 years.

Was she ever afraid out in the water, in the forests? Sandy reflected, “A reporter asked if I was afraid of animals or being alone in the woods. I said no, but I was afraid of being around a lot of people in big cities.”

As one of the first women working for the park service, Sandy was a pioneer for those women who followed. She explains, “When I started my career, there were not many women in the FPS. I was doing what I enjoyed since I grew up with four brothers and was a tomboy. I’m proud to see so many women in the FPS today.”

JUDITH BIRTMAN

ARTIST, TEACHER

When she’s working in her studio, Judith Birtman moves constantly — throwing a set of cups on a potter’s wheel; then pressing patterns into a tall cylinder before it is too dry, or scraping, paddling, and perfecting the surface of a sculpture. That restless forward motion has defined her life.

A prolific artist, a dedicated teacher, and a world traveler — she defied the narrow expectations of her strict, conservative family to create a life of accomplishment and service. From parenting her two now-grown children, Stephen and Karlin, to helping other clay artists develop their talents, to cooking gourmet meals for friends — every minute is filled with purposeful activity.

During a trip to China in 2005, she was honored as a master teacher. She is most proud of having a teapot in the Yixing Clay Teapot Museum in China.

JOY BOWEN

EDUCATOR, SCHOOL BOARD

Grace. Inspiration. Beauty. These words manifest in the person who served for two and a half decades as a member of the Leon County School Board. She's just been honored with a named street — a corridor of Tharpe Street is now also the Georgia "Joy" Bowen Roadway, awarded by the Leon County Board of County Commissioners.

As an employee of Florida State University, Division of Student Affairs, at various times, Joy served as Director of the Student Assistance Center, Associate Dean of Students, and Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Among her many accolades, she received the Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Service Award for her outstanding scholarly excellence and strong commitment to Dr. King's ideals, an NAACP Award, and A Gallery of Distinction Award as an Alumna of FAMU. She also is a former president of the Tallahassee Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

DOROTHY ANDERSON BRICKLER

PARASITOLOGIST, LIFE MASTER OF DUPLICATE BRIDGE

This Pittsburgh-born, Howard University graduate was fierce in her life. When her father and husband moved the family to Tallahassee, she adjusted and went to Florida State University for a Masters Degree in Parasitology.

According to daughter, Celeste Hart, Dorothy could walk into a pond with snakes hanging on a nearby branch and still do her observational work.

Dorothy considers her biggest accomplishment to be earning Sapphire Life Master status (3500 points) in Duplicate Bridge.

She and her husband, Dr. Alexander D. Brickler, traveled extensively and shared music and dancing. She also kept the books for the Anderson-Brickler Clinic, as well as managing their home.

ANN CAMP

INTERIOR DESIGNER

Ann Camp's thriving business, Seven Hills Interior Design, influenced the trends in residential and commercial style in Tallahassee for over 30 years in the late 20th century.

Being born at home with a doctor on hand was common in Tallahassee 93 years ago when Ann Bannerman (Camp) came into the world. She was born into a pioneer Leon County family and traces her local ancestry back to 1830.

Ann received her BA at Florida State University, had five children, and then went back, in her 40s, for an MA in Interior Design.

Her daughter, Carden Camp Alexandre, says. "She's always given of herself, and helped those less fortunate as well as volunteering for church, school, the environment."

Now, she's working with her longtime friend, David Campbell, toward completing her memoir, titled All I Have Seen (a nod to Ralph Waldo Emerson).

NORINE CARDEA

THERAPIST, ARTIST, ACTIVIST

Norine came to Tallahassee in 1969 to attend FSU. Upon graduation, she became one of the original members of the Miccosukee Land Co-op, an intentional community east of town. There she and her husband slowly built their home and started a family.

Eventually, they shaped their own traditions, joining art, ritual, and trust. She braided together this community building, attention to the needs of children, art and ritual, conflict resolution, and mediation to form the foundation of her decades-long counseling practice.

In 2001, she and friends created a regional organization, Heart of the Earth. Over 15 years, they gathered hundreds together to learn about our bioregion and fight climate change.

"I live by the knowledge that our choices, large and small, shape this world."

SUSAN CERULEAN

NATURALIST WRITER

Sue Cerulean says, “I was born to love the Earth. It wasn’t taught to me in words.”

She attended Eckerd College, on the Gulf coast of Florida, for a BS degree in Biology, and earned her MS degree in Horticulture at the University of Florida.

Sue thinks about what she calls her soul work — “What’s mine to do,” she explained. “I try to see the sacred in the wild Earth.” She believes that we are taught by the Earth herself. She said, “I am happiest at the edge of civilization.”

Sue has ten books with her name on the cover. Some are her poetic narratives, some are anthologies, and others co-written about the natural world and our place in it.

“Look, a swallow-tailed kite!” she said — a favorite bird that inspired her to write *Tracking Desire: A Journey after Swallow-tailed Kites* (2006). It won the Sierra Club Indigo Award.

TERRY GALLOWAY

PERFORMER, WRITER

Terry Galloway, a deaf, queer, writer, performer, and activist, was born in Stuttgart, Germany on a stormy Halloween. After attending the University of Texas, she moved to New York City, studying by day at Columbia University — writing and performing by night.

Back in Austin, Terry met Donna Marie Nudd and together they moved to Tallahassee. A year later, they co-founded the Mickee Faust Club, a community theatre for Tallahassee’s weird community — an ever-changing group of people of all colors, every sexual orientation, and array of disabilities.

Her memoir, *Mean Little Deaf Queer* (Beacon Press, 2009), was a Golden Crown Award winner.

Recent cochlear implants allowed her to hear her mother’s voice for the first time since she was nine. This piqued an interest in music. Her solo show, *Lardo Weeping*, was recently adapted into an opera, debuting in Austin.

BARBARA HAMBY

POET, EDUCATOR

“I went to FSU for eight years and had nine majors,” said Barbara Hamby.

She’s taught at FSU for 15 years. and is admired as a whip-smart teacher and a wondrous poet, who is generous with her encouragement. She enjoys teaching all students, and particularly loves mentoring young women.

Her home reflects her lush poetry. The walls are covered with splendid and varied art, from folk artists like Mary Proctor, to local artists like Linda Hall, and recently deceased Stuart Riordan.

Barbara’s front yard has a patriarch oak, as does the back yard. It’s serene and healthy as a greenhouse full of north Florida’s subtropical plants and flowers.

Of her work and her published output, she said. “I’m surprised. I never expected this life. I’ve published nine books and have four in the hopper.”

QUINCIE HAMBY

ARTIST, ANTHROPOLOGIST

Quincie Hamby, part of a military family, moved around, including France and later Hawai’i. She majored in Anthropology at the University of Central Florida, and received her Master’s degree at Arizona State University.

Quincie supported herself in college and always was an archaeologist: “I became interested in seeing people as their culture. That is, in the adornment of people — what they wore.”

Her son pursued Permaculture and gardening, which is why she has 40 citrus trees and food gardens in her front yard.

Referring to the farm and jewelry-making work, she joked, saying, “I can spin a lot of plates.”

She surrounds herself with bold colors and shapes and works from two home studios: one stores thousands of colorful beads; the other, a cottage where she crafts several lines of fine metal jewelry.

CELESTE HART

ENDOCRINOLOGIST, GALLERY OWNER

Born in Tallahassee at the old FAMU hospital, Celeste contributes much in health and culture for our community's betterment.

She went to Cobb, Leon and Florida High schools, then attended Princeton University. There, she was a member of the first fully co-ed class and majored in Mathematics. She undertook Medical School at Howard University, and advanced to become an Endocrinology Fellow at the National Institutes of Health. She's also mentored many prospective physicians and participates in a range of health outreach initiatives.

In 2017, she created the Anderson Brickler Gallery, which mounts diverse cultural exhibits, including Gullah Geechee and Frenchtown art, a history of local black neighborhoods, and renowned local artists, like Eluster Richardson, Ken Falana, and Marina Brown.

MYRA HURT

MEDICAL EDUCATOR, ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. Hurt was involved in medical education for many years, first at the University of Tennessee Memphis, and later at the Baylor College of Medicine. While at FSU, she initiated many programs aimed at helping students succeed.

Affectionately known as the mother of the FSU College of Medicine (FSU-COM), Hurt played a crucial role in helping establish the College, which was founded in 2000. She also served as acting dean during the school's formative stages.

She worked tirelessly to secure accreditation for the FSU-COM, calling it a pitched battle, which she would not abandon.

She retired in 2020 after 33 years of service at FSU. She received numerous awards, including FSU's prestigious Westcott medal. FSUCOM Dean Fogarty said, "She is rarely satisfied with the way things are. She's constantly asking what we can do better."

KAMILA KAVKA

LAB CHEMIST, ART LOVER

A native of Prague in Europe, her career was in science. Kamila surrounds herself with books and art, the sign of a true Renaissance person. She is one who listens well, and meets life with a quiet courage.

In 1968, the Prague Spring, a period of political liberation and mass protest in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, ended with a Soviet Union invasion. Kamila was working at a lab in Paris, France, while her husband and daughter were in the CSR. To get them out, she sent a telegram saying she was horribly ill, and they must come.

“There was so much loss,” Kamila said. “We all had only suitcases for one week.

“She is that person at the party who will sit quietly, but delights in the glory of herself and others,” said her son, Martin.

He believes his mother has much in common with women in the South — that quiet strength.

JANE A. MARKS

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR

Jane Marks has worked for 54 years in counseling, watching people take a positive turn in their thinking. The wife of former Mayor of Tallahassee, John Marks, she has forged her own legacy, including being “one of the first Black students to graduate from Florida State University with a BA and MA in Counseling. She always knew she wanted to be a therapist.

She is the daughter of an African-American father, who was stationed in the Philippines during World War II. He married her mother, a Filipina, and brought her back to the States. In the early 1950s, her father took a position at Florida A&M. Remembering her mother’s difficult adjustment in Tallahassee, Jane said. “I want women to be seen.”

Now, she teaches skills “to help keep you young. Women are powerful. We are responsible for the bench (the next generation).”

MARY PROCTOR

ARTIST

Mary Proctor was born in Jefferson County, Florida in the tiny town of Lloyd, where she was raised by her grandparents. After some troubling times, Mary married Tyrone Proctor, a future fireman, and worked in nursing and day care.

Then she opened Noah's Ark Flea Market. She collected glass, dishes, jewelry, buttons, beads, and furniture. But then she heard a light over her spirit that said, "Get a door and paint." So, she began painting and writing on the doors.

She started selling the doors and other items she painted. Eventually, this outsider or folk artist got to New York City and her work took off. Since her Soho exhibit, she's been featured in the American Visionary Museum, Raw Vision magazine, and the Smithsonian Anacostia Museum.

In 2016, she won a Folk Art Society Award of Distinction. Mary Proctor is an artist who turned hardship into beauty.

MARY JANE RYALS

WRITER, EDUCATOR

Her father said that Mary Jane started talking to strangers when she was four — curious and trusting. Whether she is researching a mystery novel, writing an essay, or watching the sun go down across the bay, the conversation is easy and engaged. In the past, she has written for newspapers and received her PhD in English/Creative Writing from FSU. She taught writing and speaking to students at FSU for two decades.

She has nourished the Big Bend writing community with her own books of poetry and fiction over the years, but also by offering workshops, retreats, and serving as Poet Laureate of the Big Bend, Poetry editor of the Apalachee Quarterly and later, as Fiction editor of the Apalachee Review.

She is a child of the North Florida woods and is sustained by the natural landscape. Her writing, narrative and lyrical, reflects her love of nature and worldwide travel.

NALINI VINAYAK

PERFORMER, COMPOSER, PASSIONATE TEACHER

“Music is the breath of my life,” said this Global-Music-Awards winning sitar and tabla player who lives and teaches in Tallahassee. Nalini moved here from India in 1993. She became the Director of Indian Classical Music at Florida State University. Her ensemble presentations at FSU were so crowded that the fire marshals were called.

Her popularity is the result of discipline and a long-time commitment to the sitar — a nine-pound, four-foot-long instrument, with a pear-shaped gourd body and 20 arched movable frets. It is popular in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. She comes from the Carnatic classical and Hindustani schools. She is a fusion musician.

The Indian Express, a national daily United Kingdom newspaper called her “an innovative artist ... Spans of melody and harmony had the intangible quality of an irresistible fragrance ...”

RUTH WHARTON

COMMUNITY PLANNER, BUSINESSWOMAN

Ruth moved to Tallahassee in 1965 to attend Florida State University and became involved in education and artistic endeavors. She was part of many behind-the-scenes efforts to shepherd the cultural life of southside Tallahassee.

In the 1970s, Ruth was a founder of Grassroots Free School. She did accounting and fundraising for the school for years.

During the 1980s, Ruth managed the Railroad Square Arts District. She was instrumental in creating 621 Art Gallery and First Fridays, an art crawl with food trucks and music events.

In 2003, Ruth was named Chairwoman of the Gaines Street Vitalization Committee. The city eventually approved her committee’s plan to revitalize Gaines Street and build FAMU Way. Now retired, she joins her husband, musician Bill Wharton, on national tours.

MARJORIE D. WILLIAMS

EDUCATOR

Marjorie grew up on a farm outside of Jakin, Georgia. After high school, she attended Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College (now FAMU). With the support of Eddie Williams, a young man she met at FAMC, she earned her BA. They married in 1952, and had three children.

She started teaching at Concord Elementary before the school was integrated in 1967. She taught grades K-5 until she became a guidance counselor at Lincoln High School in 1980. She retired in 1996.

Her hopeful attitude as a nonagenarian (aged 90-99) includes her outside-the-box thinking: “I learned from students more than anything,” she said. “The best ideas come from children.”

She joined Fountain Chapel A.M.E. over 70 years ago, and has served in many capacities. Soon, she will be made a Deaconess, an honor reserved for widows with many years of service.

ROSANNE WOOD

EDUCATOR, SCHOOL BOARD

Rosanne Wood, education guru for Leon County, grew up on the southeast shore of Lake Okeechobee in Belle Glade, Florida. When she moved to Tallahassee to attend Florida State University, she studied psychology and educational psychology.

She began the Alternative Learning Center in 1975, the precursor to SAIL High School. With around 400 students, SAIL’s student-teacher ratio is about 18:1.

As the principal of SAIL, Rosanne had “a thousand different decisions to make ... to guide parents, students and teachers ... (to) listen, to stay flexible, and to be strong.”

In her work as a school board member, she uses her institutional knowledge to guide her decisions. She is working toward a society that is just and open.

“The world is much bigger than we think,” she said.