

AMERICAN WOMEN WRITERS NATIONAL MUSEUM

50-state Women Honorees for February 2013

(Read About These Talented Women!)

www.americanwomenwritersnationalmuseum.org

(* Each month, AWWNM's 50-state Project features premier American women writers from four states)

ALABAMA

Helen Keller (1880-1968), deaf and blind at 18 months of age from meningitis, was an author and activist who overcame adversity and published a dozen books and several articles. At the age of 22, she published her autobiography, *The Story of My Life* (1903). Some of her other works include: *The World I Live In*, and *My Religion* (a spiritual autobiography). In the 1962 movie "The Miracle Worker," who could ever forget the dramatic scene at the water pump when teacher Anne Sullivan (Anne Bancroft) finally breaks through to Helen (Patty Duke) that the signing into her hand is the word for the water in her hand. Keller was born in Tuscumbia.



Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960) born in Notasulga, was a folklorist, anthropologist, and author. A prominent figure in the Harlem Renaissance, Hurston is best known for her 1937 novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. She published over 50 short stories, plays, and essays with titles such as: *Color Struck* (1925 play), *Dust Tracks on a Road* (1942 autobiography), and *Seraph on the Suwanee* (1948 novel). (One AWWNM membership level is named in her honor.)

Born in Monroeville in 1926, **Harper Lee**, author of what is probably America's best-known and loved book, is a literary icon worldwide. Her novel *To Kill A Mockingbird*, her sole book, depicts the unjust arrest, trial, conviction, and subsequent execution of a Black man for allegedly raping a young White woman in a small Alabama town during the Great Depression. She received the Pulitzer Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and numerous honorary degrees. Gregory Peck played Atticus Finch in the 1962 movie which won 3 Academy Awards. ("*Scout*" is depicted in a tire swing on the mural at the top of AWWNM's home page.)



Trudier Harris, (1948-) academic and author, born in Tuscaloosa, traveled to D.C. to be honored in a program co-sponsored by AWWNM and Alabama Center for the Book which can be viewed on the Events & Calendar Page.

ALASKA

Poet and short story writer **Nora Marks Dauenhauer** was born in 1927 in Yakutat. Her work has been published in several prestigious publications, and in 2008 she won the American Book Award for her book *Russians in Tlingit America: The Battles of Sitka, 1802 and 1804*.

Science-fiction and mystery writer, **Dana Stabenow** born in Alaska in 1952, published her first novel, *Second Star*, in 1990, followed by more than two-dozen novels. In 1993, Stabenow received the Edgar Award for Best Paperback Original for her mystery novel *A Cold Day for Murder*. Stabenow has also published several anthologies, essay volumes, and short stories.



Velma Wallis born in 1960 in Fort Yukon, is an Athabascan Indian and bestselling novelist. Though she has only published a few pieces, her work has been translated into 17 languages. In 2003, Wallis received the American Book Award for her book *Raising Ourselves: A Gwich'in Coming of Age Story from the Yukon River*. Her other works include: *Two Old Women: An Alaska Legend of Betrayal, Courage and Survival* (2004), and *Bird Girl and the Man Who Followed the Sun: An Athabascan Indian Legend from Alaska* (1996).

ARIZONA

Three-time Pulitzer winner journalist **Sari Horwitz** was born in Tucson. A reporter for the Washington Post, Horwitz received her first Pulitzer in 1999 for her investigation of D.C. police shootings. She won again in 2002 for her investigation of the death of children in the D.C. foster care system. Horwitz received her third Pulitzer as part of a team who covered the 2008 Virginia Tech shooting. She has also received the Selden Ring Award, and the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award.



Five-time Hugo Award nominee **Teresa Nielsen Hayden**, born in Mesa in 1956, is an editor, writer, and educator. Some of her works include: *Making Book* and *Izzard*. Hayden has also published essays in several science-fiction periodicals.

Even after her death, **Zenna Henderson** (1917-1983), remains a prominent figure in the science-fiction community. Henderson published half-a-dozen books most with the common themes of youth and being different. Her work includes: *The Anything Box* (1965), *The People: No Different Flesh* (1967), and *Holding Wonder* (1972). In 1959, she was nominated for the Hugo Award for her novelette *Captivity*.

ARKANSAS

In *Warriors Don't Cry* and *White is a State of Mind*, **Melba Pattillo Beals** chronicles her experience as a member of the Little Rock Nine (the first black students to attend Central High School in Little Rock in 1957). Currently, Beals, born in 1941 in Little Rock, works as a journalist and Professor at Dominican University of California.



Green Forest born 1922-2012 best-selling writer **Helen Gurley Brown** rose from secretary at an ad agency to become editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine and one of the most famous and controversial women of her cultural era in America. During her 32 years as editor-in-chief of *Cosmopolitan* she has published almost a dozen books. Her book *Sex and the Single Girl* (1962) was published in 28 countries and inspired a 1964 film.



Nancy A. Collins born in McGehee in 1959 is a writer of horror fiction and comic books. Collins is best known for her vampire novel series featuring the character Sonja Blue. Collins has also published over 40 short stories including: *The Dream Clown* (1983), *Raymond* (1991), and *The Ice Wedding* (2009). In 1990, she received the Bram Stoker Award for her novel *Sunglasses After Dark*.

