

Woman of Mackinac

If you open up a Mackinac Island history book, you will find that much of the history deals with the successes, failures, and accomplishments of many men. But what about women who also contributed to Mackinac's unique history? Here's a chance to find out.

To earn an Interest Project Patch, you must complete at least seven (7) activities as follows: 2 Skill Builders, 1 Technology, 1 Service, 1 Career Exploration, 2 Activities from any category. Your finish project should be complete and should reflect your best work. It will be returned to you if these standards are not met and you will be asked to revise and resubmit your badge work for consideration.

Skill Builders

1. The Biddle Women

Edward Biddle was one of the most prominent figures in Mackinac Island history. When you mention Biddle house, most people think of Edward Biddle. But what about his wife and daughters, who also have their own unique history to tell?

- A. Agatha Biddle-She was Edward Biddle's wife. She was also a full-blooded Indian. What kind of Indian was she?
- B. Sophia Biddle-Many history books describe Sophia as beautiful and charming. What is the story that is often told about her and a young soldier?
- C. Mary Biddle-Mary died tragically at the age of eight. She is buried in the Catholic cemetery. What is significant about her grave? Visit her grave. What is the verse on it?

2. Constance's Tablet

Anne's Tablet is a one acre memorial dedicated to Constance Fenimore Woolson, an author in the late 1800's. She expressed her love of Mackinac Island in her 1882 novel Anne.

- A. Who was Constance Fenimore Woolson's famous uncle? What book is he famous for writing?
- B. Visit Anne's Tablet and have your picture taken, if possible. What is the plant that covers the hills there?
- C. Read the book Anne. Did you enjoy it? Why or Why not?

3. The Chaplain's Lady.

Charlotte O'Brien was the wife of John O'Brien, chaplain of Fort Mackinac from 1842-1861. She grew up in England and came to America when she was 17. She met John O'Brien in Monroe, Michigan where they were married and had their first two sons. They moved to Mackinac Island in 1842 and two more sons soon followed. On Mackinac Island, John took up duties as the Chaplain of Fort Mackinac, as well as the village below.

- A. Where did the O'Briens live in Fort Mackinac?
- B. Where did they bury Charlotte when she died? Why? Visit her grave and name the son that is buried next to her.

4. Legendary Indian Women

Many of the island's legends center around the tragedies and triumphs of young Indian maidens.

- A. Name three such legends
- B. What is your favorite one? What virtues does the heroine display? Are they good virtues to have today? How do they affect the story?

5. Real Indian Woman

- A. Magdalaine La Framboise, an Ottawa Indian, was one of Mackinac Island's most famous citizens. She was a pious Catholic and devoted her life to helping others. List at least 3 of the extraordinary things she accomplished in her life to benefit others. Where is she buried?
- B. Elizabeth Mitchell, who was also an Ottawa Indian, was the center of Mackinac's social life in the early 1800's. Read about her life. What was unique about her husband? When he left Mackinac Island, Elizabeth managed his fur business and farm. What was she famous for doing as a pastime?

6. The Island's Girl Scouts

Did you know that the Girl Scouts asked to server on Mackinac Island as early as 1941?

- A. Write a brief summary on the history of Girl Scouts on Mackinac Island. Include where the first Girl Scout troops were from. Find out who the first woman Scout Coordinator was.
- B. Interview someone who has served for three or more years. Find out why she chooses to return. If she has served in Junior Leadership find out what she has learned by serving in a leadership position.

7. The soldier's wife

Research a soldier and his family. What were the responsibilities of the wives of soldiers stationed at Fort Mackinac?

8. The movie's of Mackinac

There have been two famous movies filmed on Mackinac Island. Name them and what years they were filmed. Who were the leading ladies in each of these films?

Technology

1. When Fort Mackinac was stationed there were not TV's or the Internet. What did the woman and children do as entertainment? Watch a children's tour and describe the games they play and compare them to games of today.
2. At the Biddle house there is a historical interpreter. They are usually cooking. Observe them and ask them about the differences in cooking back then verses cooking today.

Service

1. Volunteer to clean up Anne's tablet
2. Volunteer to help the SPL complete the mail run
3. Write a poem or song based on the woman of Mackinac Island and submit it for our poetry or song book

Career Exploration

1. Research a job you might be interested in for Mackinac State Parks or Mackinac Island where a woman holds the position such as a tour guide, historical house interpreter, carriage driver, ferry worker, Scout Coordinator etc. Write a paragraph about the job you have chosen.
2. Mayor of Mackinac Island
Did you know that the mayor of Mackinac Island is a woman? Who is she? How long has she been mayor? What kind of skills and experiences does this job require?