



1. Area IV Women's History Walk – 2.1 Mile



- 1.) Start at City Hall, walking east on Mass Ave. towards Central Square for .6 miles.
(Women's Historical Site A, Marjorie Pierce House, 355 Mass Ave., corner of Sidney St. and Mass Ave.)
(Women's Historical Site B, Ruth Jones, 4 Village St., corner of Village St. and Mass Ave.)
- 2.) After Cambridge Bicycle and Olive Tree Café, turn left onto Windsor St.
- 3.) Turn left onto Main St. and then quick right onto Cherry St. (Cherry St. is at the corner with Bertucci's)
- 4.) Walk down Cherry St. for .25 miles.
(Women's Historical Site C, Margaret Fuller House, 71 Cherry St.)
- 5.) At end, turn right into Harvard St. Walk down Harvard St. and turn left onto Moore St, after tennis court.
(Women's Historical Site D, Cambridge Neighborhood House - former site, corner of Harvard and Moore Sts.)
- 6.) Turn left onto Broadway
- 7.) Walk down Broadway for .25 miles and turn left onto Columbia St. at Lucky Corner Convenience Store.
- 8.) After two blocks, turn right onto Worcester St. at the Area IV Peace Mural.
(Women's Historical Site E, Suzanne Green, 9 Worcester St.)
(Women's Historical Site F, Dorothy Gatherwright, Worcester St., exact address unknown.)
- 9.) When Worcester St. ends, turn left onto Norfolk St.
- 10.) Turn right onto Bishop Allen Dr.
- 11.) After crossing Prospect St., turn left onto Temple St.
(Women's Historical Site G+H, YWCA and Center for New Words, 7 Temple St.)
- 12.) Turn right onto Mass Ave. and continue walking until you reach City Hall.

Memory Lane Walks created by the  CAMBRIDGE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

In Collaboration with:



Community Development
Department



Office of the Mayor

Please use crosswalks and use caution in construction areas.*

*May affect length of walk.

A more in-depth history of these women, including references, along with many other women's histories, can be found on the **Cambridge Women's Heritage Project Website** (<http://www.cambridgema.gov/cwhp/>)

A. Marjorie Pierce House

Ms. Pierce graduated from MIT in 1922 with an SB in architecture and received a master's degree in architecture from MIT the following year. In 1982, the Women's Independent Living Group residence at MIT was officially renamed the Marjorie Pierce House in her honor.

Ms. Pierce practiced architecture for more than 70 years. She was president of the MIT Women's Association from 1940-44 and was instrumental in raising the endowment for the Ellen Swallow Richards Professorship, named in honor of MIT's first woman student and faculty member

The oral history of her life was recorded by an MIT student as part of the AMITA/MacVicar Oral History Project. In the oral history, she talked about the home-made fudge she sold to put herself through school and the architectural prize she believed she was denied because she was a woman. When clients balked at hiring a woman architect, she would list the limitations of male architects. "They don't know how a house works. They don't know how a kitchen works. Why should they design it?" she recalled telling wary clients. "Here's a stove that men designed, and you have to reach across over the burners to reach the shutoffs."

B. Ruth Jones

Born in 1895, Ruth Jones was the grandniece of Frederick Douglass. Her father came to Cambridge via the Underground Railroad. Ruth Jones served as chaplain of the Episcopal Church women, was warden to the Election Commission (the first black person in this role) and also worked as a civil defense air raid warden.

C. Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House

The Margaret Fuller House was founded in 1902 and is the 11th oldest settlement house in the United States. As a Settlement House for over a century, it has provided critical information and services to immigrants to successfully assimilate into the American culture. The facility was built in 1807 and is a designated National Historic Landmark. Margaret Fuller, a famed author, feminist, transcendentalist, and social critic was born in the house. Today the MFNH provides services to over 1,500 children, youth, families and individuals each year.

With increased housing costs, there is a need for a supportive gathering place, where neighbors can meet, be comfortable and work together to solve neighborhood concerns. The MFNH, in its long tradition of helping immigrants and confronting community issues, continues to help Area IV residents address these challenges, and provides essential services that expand opportunities and build a stronger community.

D. Cambridge Neighborhood House (1878-1973)

In 1878, Pauline Agassiz Shaw (Mrs. Quincy Shaw), influenced by Elizabeth Peabody's kindergarten movement, realized that working mothers needed a safe space for their children during working hours. She rented and then bought a building at the corner of Harvard and Moore streets in which she established a day nursery and a kindergarten. In 1879 she opened a library and reading room and held sewing classes, and in 1883 she began a club for mothers, a playground, and dressmaking and woodworking classes for children. The kindergarten that was established was taken over in 1889 by the Cambridge Public Schools. By 1900, Shaw had established classes in music, drawing, and painting. In 1914, a Health Committee was organized. Eventually, the neighborhood house expanded to offer industrial training and economics classes. As a result of lectures on hygiene and health, the Mothers' Club was organized in 1896. The club was renamed in 1902 as the Neighborhood Women's Club.

The Cambridge Neighborhood House began to involve a broader group of women, catering to working class women of any ethnic background or religion. It served as an educational, social, and recreational center for nearly a hundred years. The house, which had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places to commemorate Shaw's work, burned in 1973 and had to be torn down. The activities of the organization were relocated to the Margaret Fuller House at 71 Cherry Street.

E. Suzanne Green - Teacher and local historian

Suzanne Revaleon Green, born in 1912 to James Albert Revaleon and Ruby Higginbotham, is a lifelong resident of Cambridge. She still lives on Worcester Street, in the house in which she grew up. A former teacher, she is known for her keen love for and knowledge of history.

She recalls that her maternal grandfather sold fruits and vegetables from his horse and wagon and ran a store in Cambridge, selling grains, beans, and flour. He gave her grandmother the house at 9 Worcester Street in the 1880s as a wedding present. She recalls being a member of the Cambridge Neighborhood House and the Margaret Fuller House, where she took piano lessons and then played. She attended the Fletcher school, graduating at the top of her class, but was at first blocked from speaking at the graduation because of her race. When her father objected strongly, a concession was made to allow her to speak. Her father was a man who did not believe in being blocked by racial prejudice, and when he was not welcomed in the white Masonic Lodges, he started a Masonic Lodge for young African Americans in 1937.

Suzanne continued her education at Cambridge High and Latin and then went on to Salem State Teacher's College, graduating in 1933. Although she and her "colored" classmates were encouraged to seek positions in the South, Suzanne stayed in Cambridge and was the seventh Black woman to be hired in the Cambridge Public schools since the time of Maria Baldwin. In 1937, she was appointed to the Houghton School.

Five years later, when she decided to get married, she was fired from her position along with two other recently married women, one Catholic and one Jewish. Her new husband, the attorney Robert H. Green, sued the city contending that the firing had been illegal. The battle dragged on, but it was resolved in their favor and all three women were reinstated and awarded their back pay. .

Devoted to her community, she is depicted in the top left-hand corner of the mural behind the Harvest Cooperative Supermarket in Central Square.

F. Dorothy Gatherwright - Pianist, organist

Dorothy A. (Wood) Gatherwright was born in Cambridge in 1903. Her family lived on Worcester Street. Dorothy learned to play the piano and became the accompanist to well-known contralto singer, Dorothy Richardson. Dorothy said, "We went to the different colored colleges. We went from Maine on down south. I guess I must have met Dorothy [Richardson] at church. I was a born member of the church. I was taking piano lessons from William Lawrence; he was the accompanist of Roland Hayes." (Roland Hayes was a famous African American singer.) Dorothy played what she called "regular music" -- Negro spirituals and songs by black composers. According to her niece, Leora Littleton, Dorothy taught piano to half the children in Cambridge. She took organ lessons and became the organist for the Massachusetts Avenue Baptist Church's Sunday school and director of the choir. In 1993, Mrs. Gatherwright celebrated her 90th birthday at the church where she was the oldest member. At her death, the City of Cambridge memorialized her passing.

G. YWCA

The YWCA of Cambridge (est. 1892) was established by women in the Cambridgeport branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. It was incorporated in February of 1892 to provide safe and inexpensive accommodations for working women and transients. During its first thirty years, it offered classes in music, dressmaking, cooking, Bible study, watercolors, German, hygiene, and physical culture. Over time, it included additional programs and services, including vocational guidance, an employment office, youth programs, day care, senior citizens' activities, recreational facilities, and study groups on public affairs. Currently, it is the largest residential facility for women in the city.

H. Center for New Words

New Words began as a bookstore that for twenty-eight years was one of the largest and oldest women's bookstores in the country. Founded by four Cambridge women, New Words opened in April 1974 at 419 Washington Street in Somerville and then moved to 186 Hampshire Street in Cambridge in 1976. They chose the store's name from a passage by noted feminist author Mary Daly: "Women are hearing ourselves and each other for the first time, and out of that creative hearing emerge new words." The bookstore carried a wide selection of books by and about women, children's books, music, posters, jewelry, bumper stickers, and buttons. At its heyday, the bookstore was a center of feminist activity in the Cambridge area, reaching out into the wider community. Throughout its history, New Words hosted readings and talks by significant women authors and served as an informal community center, offering workshops, bulletin boards, roommate listings and a place for like-minded women to meet and discuss a variety of issues. After serving the community for decades, the organizers began to search for a new model that would not depend on book sales. With a grant from the Ford Foundation to examine how New Words might serve as a pilot organization offering a model for other feminist organizations faced with financial and structural stresses. After 28 years in business, New Words Bookstore closed its doors on October 6, 2002 and moved its mission into the nonprofit Center for New Words located on the second floor of the YWCA at 7 Temple Street. It still provides intellectual and cultural support especially for the women's community and offers a wide variety of programs in a variety of locations.