

# Fame

## State names claim their share of same

Michigan has its share of famous persons whose historical impact extends beyond the state boundaries.

Starting in the 17th century with Father Jacques Marquette to present day celebrities such as singer-actress Diana Ross, Michigan has been the birthplace or home of many renowned individuals. Marquette, the Jesuit missionary-explorer from St. Ignace, is one of the three clergymen on a list of famous persons chronicled by the Automobile Club of Michigan. He, along with Louis Joliet, explored the Mississippi River as far south as the Arkansas River during a 2,900 mile journey by canoe.

Another well-known Upper Peninsula priest was Frederic Baraga, who was known in the copper country as the "Snowshoe Priest." Baraga was appointed the U.P.'s first Roman Catholic bishop in 1853. A 35-foot tall sculpture was erected in his honor in L'Anse.

The most controversial of the trio was the Rev. Charles Coughlin, the nationally famed "radio priest" of the 1930s. Father Coughlin was pastor of Royal Oak's Shrine of the Little Flower from 1924-1956.

MICHIGAN WAS home to four well-known writers.

Edna Ferber, who won the 1925 Pulitzer Prize for "So Big," was born in Kalamazoo in 1887 but moved to Wisconsin soon after. Ring Lardner, one of America's foremost humorists, was born in Niles in 1885 and lived there until his high school graduation. Sports was his specialty and he traveled the country for many years as a baseball feature writer.

Ernest Hemingway, winner of the 1954 Nobel Prize for literature, spent his summers in the Petoskey area. His family's summer home on Walloon Lake is a national historical site.

Michigan's "pioneer poet," Will Carleton, was born in 1845 in a log cabin near Hudson which is now a landmark. The poet-lecturer is best remembered for his "Over the Hills to the Poorhouse."

TWO WORLD-FAMOUS inventors have Michigan roots. Thomas A. Edison moved with his family to Port Huron at the age of 7 and spent his childhood there. Automotive pioneer Henry Ford was born in 1863 in what later became the city of Dearborn, world headquarters of the Ford Motor Co.

Mackinac Island played a part in the lives of some of Michigan's greats. John Jacob Astor made his fortune there by founding the American Fur Co. The Astor fur post, built about 1817, is now a museum.

In 1820 Dr. William Beaumont began a five-year stint as the post surgeon at Fort Mackinac. Beaumont is remembered for his significant experiments on the digestive system.

In the 1920s, a young Eagle Scout named Gerald R. Ford spent a summer on Mackinac Island. He later became the first U.S. President from Michigan. Although Ford was born in Omaha, Neb., his family moved to Grand Rapids when he was 2.

Another prominent Republican, Thomas E. Dewey, was born in Owosso in 1902. He became governor of New York and was twice an unsuccessful presidential nominee.

Michigan residents have made their marks in the entertainment world, too. Comedian Jack Paar moved to Detroit from Jackson at an early age and spent much of his childhood there. Actor Charlton Heston calls 1,400 acres near St. Helen home although he was born in Illinois.

DETROITER Barry Gordy's Motown Records company was a springboard for many singing stars, including Diana Ross and Stevie Wonder.

Ms. Ross, a Detroit native, teamed with Mary Wilson and Florence Ballard in high school as the Primettes and sang background for many Motown stars before Gordy renamed them the Supremes. Stevie Wonder was born in Saginaw in 1950 but moved to Detroit several months later. The blind child prodigy has been a top Motown entertainer since the age of 12.

Other famous persons with Michigan backgrounds include Gen. George Armstrong Custer of "Last Stand" fame at Montana's Little Big Horn River. Custer lived in Monroe between the ages of 10 and 15 and married a Monroe woman.

Charles A. Lindbergh, the first man to fly the Atlantic Ocean solo in 1927, was born in Detroit. Another Detroit product is Joe Louis, the "Brown Bomber," who held the world heavyweight boxing title from 1937 to 1949.

Grand Rapids native John A. Hannah was president of Michigan State University from 1941 to 1969.

Sojourner Truth, who escaped slavery, was a leader in the abolitionist movement and was an advisor to President Abraham Lincoln on newly freed slaves. She spent her last years in Battle Creek and was buried in that city's Oak Hill Cemetery following her death in 1883.

Young Fanny Hooe disappeared one spring day in 1846 when she went down to a fake in the Upper Peninsula to do her washing.



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