

For Immediate Release

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The Amazing Women of Titanic
19 visionary women who made a difference, including
fashion icon, Lady Duff Gordon, honored through new
exhibit at Titanic Museum Attractions

Exhibit showcases the largest collection of Lady Duff Gordon's
fashion designs to ever be on display.
Dress collection is over 100 years old.

June, 2018 - Titanic Museum Attractions are proud to present, “The Amazing Women of Titanic.” The exhibit honors 19 women who were aboard the *RMS Titanic* and, most importantly, through their personal and professional lives, found their own identity at a time when a woman’s place was in the home, not in the working world.

According to Mary Kellogg, Titanic Museum Attractions’ President/COO and co-owner, while all women aboard were amazing, these 19 women in particular broke glass-ceilings, stepped on toes and opened restricted doors all to make a name for themselves and to also help women after them succeed in a man’s world.



“These women were visionaries, spearheading cultural revolution,” said Kellogg. “In 1912, if a woman spoke her mind in public, she was considered rebellious, but speak up they did, and the world heard them roar. These amazing women’s personal and professional stories are riveting and intimately revealing.”

Kellogg explains the highlight of this exhibit is the rare “Lucile Collection,” which features iconic fashion pieces that were worn daily by high society women. As **Lucy, Lady Duff Gordon** was the leading designer of the time, each piece reflects opulence and well-to-do life in the early 1900s. Among these displayed pieces are gowns, dresses and other fashion pieces on loan from either the prestigious Randy Bryan Bigham Collection or additional contributors.

“Titanic Museum Attraction is thankful to Randy Bryan Bigham, a noted Lady Duff Gordon historian and author of *Lucile, Her Life By Design*, for the contribution of his own collection and his assistance with other contributors in making this display possible,” said Kellogg.

According to Bigham, Lady Duff Gordon’s designs were among the most coveted and fashion forward at the time and her clientele speaks for itself. She designed a wedding gown for Mary Stevens Chapin, who was the third great-granddaughter of Martha Washington. Additionally, a taffeta jacket (only on display at Titanic Museum Attraction in Branson, Mo.) from Lady Duff Gordon’s spring 1912 collection was once worn by Margaret Preston Draper, one of the wealthiest heiresses in America who later married into Italian royalty.

“The artifacts on display at Titanic Museum Attractions comprise the most extensive collection of Lady Duff Gordon-associated garments in private hands in America,” said Bigham.

“Until now, the collection had never been seen in its entirety by the public. Also included in the displayed collection are pieces from the world-renowned Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM) Museum in Los Angeles and the Fashion History Museum in Cambridge, Ontario. Their appearance at Titanic Museum Attractions is the first time they’ve ever been publicly exhibited.”

Kellogg says that along with her clientele and groundbreaking designs, Lady Duff Gordon was a visionary for the fashion industry and accomplished several great feats throughout her career. In addition to Lady Duff Gordon being the first woman to break into haute couture and have a successful fashion line, she also tore down tradition by presenting her flirtatious hemlines and never-before-seen style during the first-ever runway fashion show. Her designs became more accessible to all women as she became the first fashion designer to create a collaboration with retail giant, Sears Roebuck & Co. Her models gained fame from walking in her shows and she went on to design several costumes for several stage and screen stars.

“Titanic Museum Attractions are honored to have the Lucile Collection on loan from Randy Bryan Bigham and the additional contributors,” said Kellogg. “Our visitors will be in awe of this fine collection, the largest collection of her fashion pieces to ever be on display.”

According to Kellogg, along with the display honoring Lady Duff Gordon, the Amazing Women exhibit also memorializes 18 other women who broke glass ceilings and accomplished many feats that truly made them amazing. They include the following:

Edith Chibnall:

In the year 1912, women's rights were at the forefront of social change both in the United States and Europe. While having equal rights was important to all 19 of these women, some made it their life's work. Edith Chibnall was a champion for women's rights in England. Instrumental to many activities led by the Women's Suffrage Propaganda League, one of the most memorable events she was a part of was Britain's "Black Friday," in which nearly 300 women marched on Parliament where violence ensued, and more than 100 arrests resulted.

Elsie Bowerman:

Elsie Bowerman became a self-sufficient woman by becoming one of the first women lawyers in Britain. Some of her additional positions included British Broadcasting Corporation's Liaison Officer for North America and Secretary of the UN's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Much like Bowerman, the UN's CSW was dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Mary Wick and Ida Straus:

While the fight for women's rights was well-fought in Britain, the fight was also waging in the United States. Both Mary Wick and Ida Straus were well-known for making a change for others. Wick served as the president of several women's organizations, including the Free Kindergarten Association, Presbyterian Women's Workers Society and the renowned, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

Sharing Wick's passion for making a difference in women's lives and serving in major leadership roles, Straus served as the President of the Recreation Houses for Working Girls, which were establishments for Jewish immigrant girls and women to gather outside work or school to protect women from negative social influences. Straus campaigned for low-income housing, civil rights and public health.

Eva Hart:

The fight for justice was even championed by some of *Titanic's* youngest passengers. While only seven years old while she was aboard *Titanic*, Eva Hart later became a "lay" magistrate judge at Stratford Court, one of the largest benches in Great Britain. She also worked as a social welfare officer for 35 years and started a branch of the Women's Junior Air Corps during WWII.

Irene Harris:

Lady Duff Gordon was not alone in revolutionizing the entertainment industry. Irene Harris was also the first woman to produce Broadway plays and musicals. She created and managed more than 200 shows throughout her career. While she was undoubtedly successful with stage performances, she also studied law in New York City and served as a stenographer in the office of Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee when she was only 19 years old.

Dorothy Gibson:

Dorothy Gibson shared the same passion for the performing arts. Gibson was the highest paid silent film actress at the time, as well as a singer and dancer in several Broadway musicals. Her every move made news and she gained national attention for being considered a media super model. After the *RMS Titanic's* ill-fated voyage, she starred as herself in a true-life movie titled, *Saved From the Titanic*.

Marjorie Newell:

Marjorie Newell was a founding member of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and was well-known for teaching both piano and violin for several years. Newell gained additional fame from being the last remaining survivor of *Titanic's* first-class passengers.

Helen Candee:

Helen Candee was a bestselling author of eight books, including *How Women May Earn a Living* and was published in periodicals including *National Geographic* and *Harper's Bazaar*. In addition, she was the first professional female interior designer and was friends with multiple U.S. Presidents. Candee was an active member of the Washington Chapter of the National Woman Suffrage Association and served as an American Red Cross nurse in Milan, Italy, during World War I where she nursed Ernest Hemingway back to health.

Lily Potter:

Much like Helen Candee, many women aboard *Titanic* felt the calling during World War I to serve with the American Red Cross. Lily Potter aided those fighting in the war when she helped found the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Red Cross and headed Volunteer Corps during both World Wars. The Volunteer Corps membership exceeded 70,000 and Potter received the 1939 Gimbel Award which honored her as Philadelphia's most outstanding woman.

Violet Jessop:

Violet Jessop served as a member of the WWI Red Cross on *Brittanic*, His Majesty's Hospital Ship. During the sinking of *Titanic*, she exuded heroic behavior, convincing women and children to board lifeboats, and is the only *Titanic* crew member included in the *Amazing Women* exhibit.

Edith Rosenbaum:

Edith Rosenbaum was one of the first female war correspondents and reported from the trenches in WWI. She helped raise money for soldiers who lost their eyesight during the war and was later honored for her work by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Susan Ryerson:

Susan Ryerson was also among the women that dedicated her time and service to wartime efforts. Ryerson was a bacteriologist at a French field hospital during the start of WWI. When the hospital came under German fire, she worked tirelessly to evacuate wounded patients. She would later receive the *Croix de Guerre*, which was awarded by the French government to those who distinguished themselves by acts of heroism involving combat with the enemy during war.

Emily Borie Ryerson:

Susan Ryerson's mother, Emily Borie Ryerson, with whom she was traveling, was best known for her work during WWI with future U.S. President Herbert Hoover, and was also awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French government. She later traveled with Hoover after he became President on his Goodwill Tour of South America.

Annie Funk:

Goodwill was a common theme for many other women aboard *Titanic* and Annie Funk was the first, single female Mennonite overseas missionary. She founded the first school for girls in Janjgir, India, and learned to speak Hindi. Her work in the United States included working with African-American and immigrant communities in Tennessee, and she was a secretary for the YWCA in Patterson, NJ. She is only one of two women featured in the Amazing Women exhibit who lost her life during the sinking of the *Titanic*.

Sylvia Caldwell:

Sharing the love of mission work with Funk was Sylvia Caldwell, a missionary teacher in Bangkok, Thailand. She was able to develop Christian College for Boys with her husband and was granted an extended contract with the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. She ultimately served two years in Thailand and was returning home due to illness when she traveled aboard the *Titanic*.

Eleanor Widener:

Eleanor Widener donated \$2 million and a rare book collection to Harvard University to dedicate a library in her son's memory. She also donated historic silver plates once belonging to Nell Gwyn, companion of King Charles II, to the London Museum and funded improvements to St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to honor her husband. On the evening of *Titanic's* collision with the iceberg, she was hosting a dinner party for *Titanic's* Captain.

Margaret Brown:

Widener was in the company of many other generous givers, one being Margaret Brown. Famously known as The Unsinkable Molly Brown, Brown not only raised money to build the Cathedral of Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph's Hospital in Denver, but she also helped establish the first Juvenile Court in Denver, was one of the first women in the U.S. to run for Senate and co-organized an international women's rights conference attended by human rights activists from around the world. She went on to receive the French Legion of Honor for "Overall Good Citizenship."

“The Amazing Women of Titanic” exhibit is open now through November 2018. Titanic Museum Attraction in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., opens daily at 9 a.m. Reservations are recommended and can be made online at www.titanicpigeonforge.com or by phone at 800-381-7670.

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Titanic Museum Attraction: Cedar Bay Entertainment, LLC owns and operates the Titanic Museum Attractions in Branson, MO and Pigeon Forge, TN. A privately owned and operated entertainment and development company, Cedar Bay is headquartered in Branson, MO, the site of its first Titanic Museum Attraction.

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