

LADY BIRD JOHNSON

Mrs. Lyndon Baines Johnson was born Claudia Alta Taylor in Karnack, Texas on December 22, 1912. Mrs. Johnson's father was Thomas Jefferson Taylor, owner of a general store who declared himself "dealer in everything." Her mother, Minnie Pattillo Taylor, died when the little girl was but five-years old. She had two older brothers, Tommy and Tony.

After her mother's death, Mrs. Johnson's Aunt Effie Pattillo moved to Karnack to look after her. At an early age, a nursemaid said she was "as purty as a lady bird" -- thereafter she became known to her family and friends as "Lady Bird." Mrs. Johnson grew up in the "Brick House" and attended a small rural elementary school in Harrison County, Texas. She graduated from Marshall High School in 1928, and attended Saint Mary's Episcopal School for Girls in Dallas from 1928 to 1930.

Mrs. Johnson entered the University of Texas in 1930 and received a bachelor of arts degree in 1933 with a major in history. She earned a journalism degree in 1934. Many colleges and universities have awarded Mrs. Johnson honorary degrees. She supports and continues to be very interested in the activities of the Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Museum and the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, both located on The University of Texas campus in Austin.

After a whirlwind courtship, Claudia Alta Taylor and Lyndon Baines Johnson were married on November 17, 1934 at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church in San Antonio, Texas. Two daughters were born to the Johnsons: Lynda Bird Johnson (1944) (Mrs. Charles S. Robb) resides in Virginia; and Luci Baines Johnson (1947) (married to Ian Turpin) lives in Austin, Texas. Mrs. Johnson has seven grandchildren -- one boy and six girls -- and ten great-grandchildren. President Johnson died at his beloved LBJ Ranch on January 22, 1973.

Mrs. Johnson is the author of *A White House Diary*, a record of her activities which she kept during the years her husband served as the 36th President of the United States. About writing *A White House Diary*, Mrs. Johnson has said, "I was keenly aware that I had a unique opportunity, a front row seat, on an unfolding story and nobody else was going to see it from quite the vantage point that I saw it." She also co-authored *Wildflowers Across America* with Carlton Lees.

During her White House years, Mrs. Johnson served as honorary chairman of the National Head Start Program, a program for underprivileged pre-school children which prepares them to take their places in the classroom on a par with their peers.

In 1977, President Gerald Ford presented Mrs. Johnson with this country's highest civilian award, the Medal of Freedom. Mrs. Johnson received the Congressional Gold Medal from President Ronald Reagan in 1988.

In January, 1971, Mrs. Johnson was appointed to a six-year term as a member of The University of Texas System Board of Regents. She is a life member of The University of Texas Ex-Student Association, and has been a member of the International Conference Steering Committee (1981-82) and The University of Texas Centennial Commission. For many years, Mrs. Johnson was a trustee of the National Geographic Society, and continues as a trustee emeritus. She also served as a member of the National Committee for the Bicentennial Era and as co-chairman of the Advisory Council of the American Freedom Train

Foundation. Mrs. Johnson was appointed to the Advisory Council to the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration by President Ford. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter appointed Mrs. Johnson to the President's Commission on White House Fellowships.

In 1966, Mrs. Johnson was presented the George Foster Peabody Award for the television program, "A Visit to Washington with Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson on Behalf of a More Beautiful America." She received the Eleanor Roosevelt Golden Candlestick Award from the Women's National Press Club in 1968.

First and foremost, Mrs. Johnson is an environmentalist, and she has been an active worker on innumerable projects. In Washington, she enlisted the aid of friends to plant thousands of tulips and daffodils which still delight visitors to our nation's Capital. The Highway Beautification Act of 1965 was the result of Mrs. Johnson's national campaign for beautification. In 1999, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt presented Mrs. Johnson with the Native Plant Conservation Initiative Lifetime Achievement Award. At that time he said, "Mrs. Johnson has been a 'shadow' Secretary of the Interior' for much of her life."

Mrs. Johnson was honorary chairman of the LBJ Memorial Grove on the Potomac in Washington, D. C. She also chaired the Town Lake Beautification Project, a community effort to create a hike and bike trail and to plant flowering trees along the Colorado River in Austin, Texas. She became a member of the National Park Service's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments in 1969 and served on the council for many years. In 1969 Mrs. Johnson founded the Texas Highway Beautification Awards, and for the next twenty years, she hosted the annual awards ceremonies and presented her personal checks to the winners. She is a trustee of the American Conservation Association.

On her 70th birthday in 1982, Mrs. Johnson founded the National Wildflower Research Center, a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to the preservation and re-establishment of native plants in natural and planned landscapes. She donated 60 acres of land and a sum of money to establish the Center which serves as a clearing house of information for people all over the country. She realized her long-held dream in 1995 when the Center moved into its new and larger facility. In December, 1997, the Center was renamed the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in honor of Mrs. Johnson's 85th birthday. Mrs. Johnson is chairman of the Wildflower Center's board of directors.

In honor of her 80th birthday and many contributions to the betterment of our environment, the Lady Bird Johnson Conservation Award was established in 1992 by the LBJ Foundation Board of Directors.

In December 1972, President and Mrs. Johnson gave the LBJ Ranch house and surrounding property to the people of the United States as a national historic site, retaining a life estate in the Ranch. Mrs. Johnson continues to live at the Ranch in Stonewall, Texas, and she also has a house in Austin. She is a member of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Fredericksburg, Texas.

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OTHER AWARDS PRESENTED TO MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON INCLUDE:

Togetherneess Award, Marge Champion, 1958

Humanitarian Award, B'nai B'rith, 1961

Businesswoman's Award, Business and Professional Women's Club, 1961

Theta Sigma Phi Citation, 1962

Distinguished Achievement Award, Washington Heart Association, 1962

Industry Citation, American Women in Radio & Television, 1963

Humanitarian Citation, Volunteers of America, 1963

Distinguished Alumni Award, The University of Texas Ex-Student Association, 1964

George Foster Peabody Award for the television program, "A Visit to Washington with Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson on Behalf of a More Beautiful America," 1966

Eleanor Roosevelt Golden Candlestick Award, Women's National Press Club, 1968

Damon Woods Memorial Award, The Industrial Designers' Society of America, 1972

Conservation Service Award, Department of the Interior, 1974

American Legion Distinguished Award, 1975

Ladies Home Journal "Woman of the Year" Award for Quality of Life, 1975

Abraham Lincoln Award, Southern Baptist Convention, 1976

Medal of Freedom, awarded by President Gerald Ford, 1977

Texas Women's Hall of Fame, 1984

National Achievement Award, American Horticultural Society, 1984

Texan of the Year Award, State of Texas, 1985

Lord & Taylor Rose Award, 1987

Congressional Gold Medal awarded by President Ronald Reagan, 1988

Gold Seal Award for Distinguished Service and Achievement, National Council of State Garden Clubs, 1990

Lone Star Lifestyle Visionary Award, J.C. Penney Company, 1990

Tom Dodd, Jr. Award of Excellence, 1990

Star in Our Crown, Victoria Magazine, 1993

Wildflowers Across America Award of the Year, Garden Writers Association, 1994

Charles Leonard Weddle Memorial Award, Native Plant Society, 1994

Lifetime Achievement Award, Nature Conservancy of Texas, 1994

Texas Federation of Women's Clubs Award, 1994

Motorola Earth Day Award, 1995

Golden Plate Award, American Academy of Achievement, 1995

National Building Museum Honor Award, 1995

Chairman's Award, National Geographic Society, 1995

Conservation Achievement Award, Southwest Regional Office of the National Park Service, 1995

Laurance Spelman Rockefeller Conservation Award for Distinguished Service, 1996

Caritas of Austin's Harvey Penick Award, 1996

Environmental Law Institute Award, 1996

Star of Texas Preservation Award, Gillespie County Historical Society, 1996

The Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) International Award of Excellence, 1997

The Heritage Society of Austin Sue and Frank McBee Visionary Award, 1997

The 39th Annual Freeman Award, 1998

The Edith Wharton Achievement Award for Landscape Preservation, 1998

Denver Botanic Gardens Medal for Eminent Contributions and Leadership, 1998

Lifetime Achievement Award, Native Plant Conservation Initiative, 1999

The Texas Audubon Society Centennial Award for Conservation, 1999

Cornerstone Award, Texas Society of Architects, 2000

Theodore Roosevelt National Park Medal of Honor, National Park Foundation, 2000

The Daughters of the American Revolution, Medal of Honor, 2003

Texas Intercollegiate Press Association Hall of Fame Award, 2004

Edwin P. Hubble Award, Edwin P. Hubble Society, 2004

History Making Texan Award, The Texas State History Museum Foundation, 2005

National Conservation Achievement Award for Conservationist of the Year, National Wildlife Federation, 2005

Lindy Boggs Award, Stennis Center for Public Service, 2005

Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal, Academy of Park and Recreation Administration and The National Park Foundation, 2005

Elizabeth Craig Weaver Proctor Medal, Garden Club of America, 2006

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HONORARY DEGREES PRESENTED TO MRS. LYNDON B. JOHNSON:

The University of Texas, Austin, Texas, Doctor of Letters, 1964

Texas Women's University, Denton, Texas, Doctor of Laws, 1964

Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, Doctor of Letters, 1967

Williams College, Massachusetts, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1967

Southwestern University, Georgetown, Texas, Doctor of Humanities, 1967

The University of Alabama, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1975

Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1983

Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1983

Weizmann Institute of Science, Honorary Fellow, 1985

George Washington University, Doctor of Public Service, 1986

Johns Hopkins University, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1990

State University of New York, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1990

Southern Methodist University, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1996

St. Edwards University, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1998

Boston University, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1998

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