

Famous Berkley Residents Past and Present

Auerbach, Patricia

Auerbach is an artist whose work in watercolor and oils has appeared in local galleries.

Armstrong, Curtis, 1953-

Armstrong is an actor and has appeared in movies and television and graduated from Berkley High School in 1972. Roles have included "Risky Business," "Ray," and "Moonlighting" Armstrong also appeared as the character "Booger" in the "Revenge of the Nerds" in 1984 and played the character "Snot" in American Dad. Armstrong currently provides the voice for Mr. Molequaco on the Disney Channel series "The Emperor's New School." Recent parts include Grey's Anatomy" and "That 70's Show."

Bazylewicz, Walt, 1923-

Bazylewicz was a Berkley resident who was inducted into the High School Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1986.

Bolger, Robert, 1844-1930

Immigrating to the US from Ireland with his parents when he was three, Bolger served in the Battle of Gettysburg and was elected to the state legislature in 1880. Bolger was appointed by former Detroit Mayor Hazen Pingree to develop "Hog Island." Hog Island is now known as Belle Isle. Bolger owned a farm in Berkley – Bolger Place.

Crenshaw, Marshall, 1954-

A popular singer and musician, best known for the songs "Someday, Someway," Crenshaw graduated from Berkley High School in 1971. IN the 1978 touring show "Beatlemania" Crenshaw played John Lennon. Crenshaw also played a high-school bandleader in "Peggy Sue Got Married," Buddy Holly in "La Bamba" and had a guest appearance on the Nickelodeon series "Pete and Pete." More recently Crenshaw has been playing guitar with the members of the MC5.

Fowler, Bessie

Third American woman, and first Michigan woman, to be asked to join the Lions Club; joined the ranks with the first woman – Helen Keller.

Gohl, Clarence, d. 2004

Gohl was a maker and restorer of violins and other stringed instruments. Gohl achieved international acclaim as a maker of stringed instruments particularly the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Owned Harrison's Violins which was located for many years on Coolidge Highway in Berkley.

Fred Goldsmith, d. 1939

One-time Berkley resident, Goldsmith was credited with inventing the curveball. Goldsmith gave the first publicly recorded demonstration of a curveball to legendary sportswriter-baseball historian (and Hall of Famer) Henry Chadwick on August 16, 1870 at the Capitoline Grounds in Brooklyn, New York. Goldsmith pitched professionally for the New Haven New Havens (1875), legendary London Tecumsehs (1876, before the Tecumsehs joined the International Association (1877-78), the Troy, New York Trojans of the National League (1879) the Chicago White Stockings of the National League (1880-1884) and the Baltimore Orioles.

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Hillert, Margaret

Hillert was a famous poet and author of beginning readers for children. A Berkley resident who lived at 4014 Phillips, Hillert was a first grade teacher at Royal Oak Whittier School. Her first book of poems "Further than Far" was a compilation of poems about the world as seen by a child.

Keeter, Russell, 1935-1991

Keeter was a painter whose work has appeared in local galleries

Koja, Kathe, 1960-

Koja is an author of adult and teen novels

LaFontaine, Pat

Berkley resident Pat LaFontaine was an ice hockey center in the National Hockey League. LaFontaine played his entire career for all three New York based teams: the New York Islanders, (1983-1991) the Buffalo Sabres (1991-1997) and New York Rangers (1997-1998). He worked for the Islanders as the senior advisor to the owner Charles Wange before resigning in 2006.

Lawton, J. Fred, 1893-1969

Lawton was a songwriter, best known for "The Victors," the University of Michigan fight song. Known as "Mr. Michigan" Lawton wrote the book about Yost the famous U of M Football Coach. Lawton lived on Wiltshire in Berkley.

Leone, Berta, 1913-2005

Leone was artist with Disney Studio in the 1930s, whose work has appeared in local galleries.

Leone, Leonard, 1914-2007

Director of Wayne State University's Theater from 1946-1985, Leone renovated and reopened the Bonstell Theater and created the Hillberry Theater. Leone received the Arts Gold Medal Award – first to go to anyone in the Theater.

Levin, Sander, 1931-

Levin is a current U. S. Congressman from Oakland County. Levin was appointed by Jimmy Carter to run the overseas aid Programs in Family Planning and Human Relief. Levin was the first Chairman of the Berkley Democratic Club and was instrumental in gaining assistance in building the Berkley Library. Levin formerly resided on Edgewood in Berkley.

Lindsey, Paul

Author Paul Lindsey wrote "The Big Scam" about FBI headquarters.

Marlett, Melba, 1909-

Marlett was an author of mysteries and general fiction and was popular in the 1940s and 50s. Marlett resided on Edgewood Boulevard.

Mercier, Barbara

Mercier is a painter and printmaker whose work has appeared in local galleries.

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Monte, Maureen Electa, 1959-

Monte is a photographer whose work has appeared in local galleries known for her black and white photography with color accents of children and dancers. Monte was an active member of our Berkley Chamber of Commerce and a force behind the Berkley Art Bash.

Pollina, Amber, 1977-

Amber Pollina is a winner of the Very Special Arts Young Playwrights Program for "Well into August."

Rubin, Katt Shea, 1958

Katt Shea Rubin is a screenwriter, director, actor, best known for "Patriot and Poison Ivy."

Seeley, Mabel, 1903-

Seeley was a mystery author, popular in the 1930s and 40s.

Seymour, Paul, 1950-

Football player Paul Seymour played for Buffalo Bills 1993-97.

Seymour, Jim

Seymour was a wide receiver for the Chicago Bears.

Starlin, Jim, 1949

Comic book artist, with Marvel and DC Comics, Starlin graduated in 1967 from BHS and joined the Navy in 68 until 1971. Starlin attended Oakland community College until he ran out of money. With \$45 in his pocket Starlin took off to New York and was hired by Marvel Comics where he worked for next 20 years. Starlin worked on the character Robin in the cartoon series of Batman and was instrumental in killing off the character in the series.

Tyner, Rob, 1945-1991

Vocalist with rock band MC5, Tyner came up with the famous saying "Kick out the Jams". Tyner encouraged students into the anti establishment mind set in the 1960's.

Yorgen, Elizabeth, 1914-

Yorgen is an artist, whose work has appeared in local galleries and museums. She donated one of her pieces of artwork to the City where it now hangs in City Hall.