

# "BUZZ IN THE BURG" - GPBPW NEWSLETTER

GREATER PITTSBURGH BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

January 2021

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## Biographical Notes of Outstanding Women Dr. James Barry (1792 or 1795-1865)



We are used to going to women doctors as our PCPs and specialists, but this is a relatively recent development in medicine. There was a time when women could not go to medical school, much less practice medicine. This drove a young Irish woman in the early 1800s to masquerade as a man to get a medical school education and practice medicine in the army of Great Britain. That woman was Margaret Ann Bulkley, aka James Barry.

Margaret was educated as a governess to help her struggling family financially but dreamed of becoming a doctor. When her uncle James Barry, a distinguished artist of that time, died, he left the Bulkley family an inheritance. The money enabled Margaret to attend medical school, not as a woman but as a man. She received help from her uncle's friends who supported the cause of women's rights to get into medical school, because medical schools of that day did not admit women. She took the name James Barry during her medical school and professional career.

Dr. Barry was a distinguished surgeon in the military who performed ground-breaking surgical procedures, promoted sanitation, and humane practices in barracks, prisons, and asylums. She eventually became an Inspector General of military hospitals for the British Army which is the equivalent rank of Brigadier General.

After her distinguished career in the military, Dr. Barry died of dysentery in 1865. The woman who laid out her body discovered that she was a woman and went to the papers with the story, shocking Victorian England. The Army was embarrassed by the scandal and suppressed all information about her record for 100 years.

We now take for granted that women can be doctors. That was not the case in Dr. Barry's time. With her pioneer work as a military surgeon, Dr. Barry proved that a woman could practice medicine with distinction.

Article submitted by Shirley Duffy

Sources:  
Robert Hume THE ANATOMY OF A LIE – The Irish Woman who lived as a man to practice medicine. IRISH EXAMINER. August 1, 2014  
The History Channel. The Extraordinary Secret Life of Dr. James Barry. [secret-life-of-dr-james-barry](https://www.history.com/shows/the-extraordinary-secret-life-of-dr-james-barry)  
Science Museum. Brought to Life: Exploring the History of Medicine. [www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/people/jamesbarry](https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/people/jamesbarry)

## Ten Reasons to Join GPBPW:

- E**ducational Benefits
- M**entoring
- P**olitical Advocacy
- O**pportunity
- W**omen Helping Women
- E**quality for Women
- R**eform
- I**mpact
- N**etworking
- G**uidance



Celebrating Our Female Doctors Today

## OUR CONNIE PORTIS IN COVID-19 VACCINE TRIALS



"I am one of the participants in the Johnson and Johnson trial for the one-shot vaccine. In early November I signed up to be part of a COVID vaccine study. I regretted not participating in earlier studies and feared that it may be too late for me to contribute to being part of the COVID vaccine solution. I shared my desire to volunteer in a trial with the few family and friends who would not try to talk me out of it but give me their opinions and cheer me on. I was motivated by a nagging feeling that I should do something more than just wait for the shot.

I teased my nieces that when the time came for healthcare workers to be vaccinated, I was going to grab one of their nurse's uniforms and stand with them in line! From the onset, I had no fear of being vaccinated.

A few days after Thanksgiving I received a call from the University of Pittsburgh vaccine research team for the Johnson and Johnson trials. I could hardly contain my excitement. I did not want there to be an excuse for not being able to monitor the vaccine's effectiveness for black people. The experts, including Dr. Fauci, stated that while black and brown people are more likely to die and have serious effects from contracting COVID, there were not enough of us at the time participating in studies. Like most in my community we know that seeing higher statistics of COVID deaths for 'our people' causes conspiracies to fester, makes us suspicious of participating in trials and seeking treatment and will likely keep us from getting the shot once proven it works.

In the beginning of the pandemic, I knew of no one in my community contracting COVID. It is a stark contrast from today when I receive frequent calls and see new Facebook posts about close friends and acquaintances - my people - dying or losing loved ones. The day a CNN commentator stated that "every 30 seconds someone dies from COVID", I wondered, which 30 seconds was named for my neighbor who suffered for weeks and had just passed away from the disease? I thought, can we name every 30 seconds for lost loved ones like people name stars in tribute to their loved ones? Seems unfair that the dead will become nameless statistics to be counted in spreadsheets with defining cell headings, "black" "female" "65-75" etc. The next day after learning of my friend's death, I got the call to participate in the study.

The prequalifying phone interview with the physician was pretty routine and ended with an appointment date for the next week. On the day of the shot there were more health questions, taking my vitals, weight, height, blood pressure, heartbeat, oxygen, temperature, drawing blood samples and an explanation of the study. The most uncomfortable part was exposing my growing stomach! At the end of an hour and a half, I got the shot. Simple, quick, nothing out of the ordinary - like a flu shot. I rolled my sleeve down and waited for 15 minutes and then left. Since, I've had no side effects, nothing unusual.

I am obligated to report any health change by using the phone app that records my comments and communicates to the research staff. Some people in the study got the vaccine, others got the placebo. I do not know which I received but I am proud to be that kind of study statistic, "black" "female" "70-80". There are thousands of people of color from around the world participating in these trials helping to confirm the vaccine's effectiveness for millions of black people so that going forward our family members will not have to wonder which 30 seconds will bear our name from the death of COVID.

I know that we all must 'go' someday. I believe that the miracles of medicine offer us the opportunity to shape the quality of life we have left to live. That is why I volunteered. If proven effective, the study I am in is a one-shot dose and will afford many people of all races years of a better quality of both physical and mental health. For those apprehensive about participating in trials and getting the vaccine, we get you...! When time comes and a Covid 19 vaccine is available for you...please, get the shot.

Article submitted by Connie Portis

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### Test Your Knowledge: What do you know about our Courts?

1. Which of the 50 states has the oldest Supreme Court?
2. Name the three Pennsylvania appellate (appeals) courts.
3. How many Justices sit on the PA Supreme Court?
4. Are judges elected in odd years or even years?
5. Does every state elect appellate court judges?
6. For a judicial candidate to campaign in every PA county, how many counties must the candidate visit?
7. In PA, a judge is elected for how many years?
8. In PA, must you be an attorney to serve on the appellate courts?
9. Who is President Judge of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas?
10. Name the mandatory retirement age for judges in Pennsylvania

Questions submitted by Legislative Chair, Bonnie DiCarlo  
(Answers on next page)



## GPBPW Members Support Twilight Wish



### Black Women for Positive Change

GPBPW Member, Diane Powell



Black Women for Positive Change Pittsburgh has been on the scene since 2012. They are a national, volunteer network comprised mostly of African American women, but includes members of other ethnicities, and cultures, and men they call "Our Good Brothers." Founded by Dr. Stephanie Myers of Washington DC, and the Honorable Daun Hester, Treasurer of the city of Norfolk Virginia, the organization works, to improve conditions for working-middle class families thru education, advocacy for improved health care, housing, pay equity and increased access to opportunities for new careers.

Secondly, the group works to "Change the Culture of Violence in America by sponsoring Annual Weeks of Non-Violence. During the year 2020, members of the Pittsburgh Chapter, were busy with several initiatives. Some of the highlights included: Hosting a donation drive, and providing toiletries, diapers, ear buds, slippers and other personal care items to mothers and children in the Women's Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh.

More recently, they collaborated with the Homewood Ministries, Blessed Be Educators and Project Destiny to organize three workshop series geared towards single moms titled: "You Can't Afford Not to Care About Violence". The sessions featured experts who work with individuals and families who are most at risk of violence and trauma and set the stage for violence intervention. The kick-off session was held in October. Additional sessions are scheduled on Jan 9th and Feb 13th, respectively. Sessions are free and open to the public. Registration is required: Contact Mary Ann at 412-807-1611 and leave a voicemail message.

October 10- 18th was the 9th Annual Week of Non-Violence in Pittsburgh and across the county, emphasizing the rising threat of white supremacy and the role of the faith community. Workshops also featured the voices and role of young people in violence prevention initiatives particularly those who are currently in court supervised probation. Our partners, Moms Demand Action organized an insightful panel discussion on Police Reform, and the Northside Partnership Project hosted a workshop in support of our initiatives. Organizations and groups who are interested in collaborating with Black Women for Positive Change to host workshops for our 10th Anniversary Week of Non-Violence are asked to email us at [pittbw4pc@gmail.com](mailto:pittbw4pc@gmail.com).

Black Women for Positive Change also continues to work with Congresswoman Gwen Moore from Wisconsin to push for national legislation to be approved - the National DeEscalation and Community Safety Training Act 2019, which would mandate de-escalation training for all individuals who work with the public including but not limited to police, EMT, elected officials, teachers.

During 2020, there has been a rise in shootings, hate crimes and threats against public officials. Hateful rhetoric has incited violence around the nation. To make positive changes, decrease violence, and provide opportunities for everyone, there must be paradigm shifts at every level of society. Please join us in our effort to make a "positive change" in our country. Volunteers can sign up to participate on our website: [www.blackwomenforpositivechange.org](http://www.blackwomenforpositivechange.org) or contact Diane Powell, Pittsburgh Chairperson at: [pittbw4pc@gmail.com](mailto:pittbw4pc@gmail.com)

Article submitted by Diane Powell

### US Women's Highlights

- January 3, 1949** Margaret Chase Smith (R-Maine) starts her tenure in the Senate, where she stays in office until 1973, Becoming the first woman to serve in both the House and Senate as she previously served in the House (1940-49)
- January 5, 1925** Nellie Tayloe Ross is inaugurated as the first woman Governor in U.S. history (Governor of Wyoming)
- January 7, 1896** Fanny Farmer's first cookbook is published in which she standardized cooking measurements
- January 7, 1955** Marian Anderson is the first African American woman to sing at the Metropolitan Opera
- January 8, 1977** Pauli Murray is ordained as the first female African American Episcopal priest
- January 11, 1935** Amelia Earhart makes the first solo flight from Hawaii to North America
- January 12, 1932** Hattie Wyatt Caraway (D-Arkansas) is the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate, becomes the first woman to chair a Senate Committee and the first to serve as the Senate's presiding officer
- January 20, 2021** Vice President-Elect Kamala Harris will be sworn in as the 1<sup>st</sup> woman of color to become Vice President of the United States
- January 25, 1980** Mary Decker became the first woman to run a mile under 4 1/2 minutes, running it at 4:17.55
- January 29, 1926** Violette Neatly Anderson is the first black woman to practice law before the U.S. Supreme Court

Answers to Bonnie's Questions: (1) Pennsylvania (2) Supreme Court, Superior Court, and Commonwealth Court (3) Seven (4) Odd years (5) No (6) 67 counties (7) Ten years (8) Yes (9) Judge Kim Berkeley Clark (10) 75 years of age

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(Executive Board Members are Highlighted)

**“Welcome our newest member, Monique Gillespie, Franchise Owner of Fetch! Pet Care”**

**GPBPW COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Scholarship:	Norma Caquatto, Chair	<a href="mailto:normpghpa@hotmail.com">normpghpa@hotmail.com</a>
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**President Maurita Bryant’s theme; “Make Equity a Reality, not a Dream”**

[www.gpbpw.org](http://www.gpbpw.org)



**GPBPW dues are \$35.00 per year. Enclose a check or money order made out to GPBPW with your membership application**

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