

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**Mrs. Lyndon Baines Johnson  
(Claudia Alta Taylor)**

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 two 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.

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. 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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January 1997



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

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



OTHER AWARDS TO MRS. JOHNSON (Cont.)

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



## 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