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## 100 Facts About Rosa Parks On Her 100th Birthday

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On February 4 we will celebrate the centennial birthday of Rosa Parks. In honor of her birthday here is a list of 100 facts about her life.

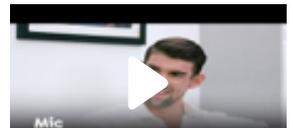
1. Rosa Parks was born on Feb 4, 1913 in Tuskegee, Alabama.

2. She was of African, Cherokee-Creek, and Scots-Irish ancestry.

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3. Her mother, Leona, was a teacher.

4. Her father, James McCauley, was a carpenter.

5. She was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal church.
6. She attended the Industrial School for Girls in Montgomery.
7. She attended the Alabama State Teachers College for Negroes for secondary education.
8. She completed high school in 1933 at the age of 20.
9. She married Raymond Parker, a barber in 1932.
10. Her husband Raymond joined the NAACP in 1932 and helped to raise funds for the Scottsboro boys.
11. She had no children.
12. She had one brother, Sylvester.
13. It took her three tries to register to vote in Jim Crow Alabama.
14. She began work as a secretary in the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP in 1943.
15. In 1944 she briefly worked at Maxwell Air Force Base, her first experience with integrated services.
16. One of her jobs within the NAACP was as an investigator and activist against sexual assaults on black women.
17. She also served as the Montgomery NAACP chapter youth leader.
18. In 1944, she investigated the case of Recy Taylor, a black woman who was raped by six white men.
19. She helped to form the "Alabama Committee for Equal Justice for Mrs. Recy

Taylor," which was described by the *Chicago Defender* as the "strongest campaign for equal justice to be seen in a decade."

20. In the summer of 1955 she attended the Highlander Folk School, an education center for activism in workers' rights and racial equality in Monteagle, Tennessee.

21. Rosa Parks also worked as a seamstress in a local department store.

22. On Dec 1, 1955, she refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. She was arrested and fined, leading to the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

23. Edgar "E.D." Nixon, president of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP and union organizer, along with her friend Clifford Durr bailed Parks out of jail the next evening.

24. Clifford Durr, a white lawyer, represented Parks. He and his wife Virginia, also were the couple that sponsored Parks' education at Highlander Folk School.

25. This was the second time Parks had encountered the bus driver, James Blake. In 1943, he ordered her to leave the bus and re-enter through the rear door, as was the law. When Parks exited the bus, Blake drove off and left her in the rain.

26. She was 42 when she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat.

27. She was fired from her seamstress job because of her arrest.

28. Contrary to popular lore, she was not tired. "People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. The only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

29. Her refusal to relinquish her seat came nine months after teenager Claudette Colvin was arrested for the very same thing.

30. Irene Morgan (1946) and Sarah Louise Keys (1955) preceded Parks in the civil rights effort to desegregate mass transit.

31. The Montgomery Bus Boycott led to the formation of a new organization, the Montgomery Improvement Association. The organization was led by the then-unknown Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

32. Contrary to popular belief, she did not get along well with Dr. King. They had a warm, professional relationship, but she disagreed with many of his decisions during her time in Montgomery. She never worked for Dr. King.

33. Parks' refusal to give up her seat was reminiscent of the stance Homer Plessey took when he refused to leave an all-white rail car in Louisiana in 1892. This led to the Supreme Court case, Plessey vs. Ferguson that upheld separate but equal laws in the U.S. Parks was technically sitting in the "colored section" when she refused to give up her seat.

34. Parks was charged with a violation of Chapter 6, Section 11 segregation law of the Montgomery City code.

35. Park's trial lasted 30 minutes. She was found guilty of disorderly conduct and violating a local ordinance and fined \$10, plus \$4 in court costs.

36. In 1957, economic sanctions and death threats resulting from her activism forced her and her husband to move to Hampton, Va.

37. She worked as a hostess in an inn at Hampton Institute.

38. Parks worked as a seamstress until 1965.

39. Parks worked as an aide, secretary, and receptionist to Michigan Congressman John Conyers, Jr. from 1966 until her retirement in 1988.

40. Bus No. 2857 on which Parks was riding is restored and on display in The Henry Ford history museum in Michigan.

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41. Parks is affectionately known as "The Mother of the Civil Rights Movement."

42. Parks' legal case did not establish that racial segregation of buses was unconstitutional. That case was Browder v. Gayle, was decided on June 4, 1956.

43. The U.S. District Court ruling in *Browder v. Gayle* was upheld by the Supreme Court on November 13, 1956.

44. The Parks case was tied up in the state court of appeals when *Browder v Gayle* was decided.

45. Super Bowl XL was dedicated to the memory of Parks and Coretta Scott King.

46. In 1976, Detroit renamed 12th Street "Rosa Parks Boulevard."

47. In 1979, the NAACP awarded her the Spingarn Medal, their highest honor.

48. In 1980, the NAACP awarded her the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award.

49. In 1980 she co-founded the Rosa L. Parks Scholarship Foundation for college-bound high school seniors.

50. In 1983, she was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame.

51. The Neville Brothers recorded a song about Parks called "Sister Rosa" on their 1989 album *Yellow Moon*. A music video for the song was also made.

52. Rosa Parks, along with Elaine Eason Steel, started the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in February of 1987. The Institute's main function is to run the "Pathways to Freedom" bus tours, which take young people around the country to visit historical sites along the Underground Railroad and to important locations of events in Civil Rights history.

53. In 1990, she had the honor of being part of the welcoming party for Nelson Mandela, who had been recently imprisoned in South Africa.

54. In September of 1992, she was awarded the Peace Abbey Courage of Conscience award for her years of community service and lifelong commitment to social change through non-violent means and civil rights.

55. In 1992 she self-published her autobiography, *Rosa Parks: My Story*.

56. *Quiet Strength* is a self-published memoir which describes her faith and how it helped her on her journey through life.

57. In 1994, the KKK sponsored a section of Interstate 55. The Missouri legislature named the section "Rosa Parks Highway."

58. In 1996, she was presented, by President Bill Clinton, with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This is the highest U.S. honor that can be bestowed upon a civilian.

59. In 1998, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center presented her with the International Freedom Conductor Award.
60. In 1999, she was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal.
61. In 1999, she was awarded the Detroit-Windsor International Freedom Festival Freedom Award.
62. In 1999, *TIME* Magazine named Rosa Parks as one of the 20 most powerful and influential figures of the century.
63. In 1999, she sued the rap group Outkast and the record company LaFace for defamation in the usage of her name for the hit song "Rosa Parks." Parks lost the lawsuit and Johnnie Cochran lost the appeal. However in 2005, Outkast and their producer and record labels paid Parks an undisclosed cash settlement and agreed to work with the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in creating educational programs about the life of Rosa Parks.
64. In 1999 Parks filmed a cameo appearance for the television series *Touched by an Angel*.
65. In 2000, Alabama awarded Rosa Parks the Governor's Medal of Honor for Extraordinary Courage.
66. In 2000, she received the Alabama Academy Award.
67. In 2003, Parks boycotted the NAACP Image Awards for their defense of the movie *Barbershop*. In the movie, Cedric the Entertainer played a character who questioned the role Parks played in the bus boycott. NAACP President Kweisi Mfume felt the entire controversy, led by Rev Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson, was overblown. Cedric was the host of the Image Awards show that year.

68. A statue of Parks sitting on a bus bench sits in front of the Rosa Parks Library and Museum located at Troy University.

69. She was an honorary member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority.

70. She was awarded two dozen honorary doctorates from universities worldwide

71. The Rosa Parks Library and Museum on the campus of Troy University in Montgomery is dedicated to her.

72. A portion of the Interstate 10 freeway in Los Angeles is named in her honor.

73. The documentary *Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks* (2001) received a 2002 nomination for Academy Award for Documentary Short Subject.

74. Rosa Parks was played by Angela Bassett in the 2002 TV movie *The Rosa Parks Story*.

75. Three days after her death in October of 2005, the House of Representative and the Senate approved a resolution to allow Rosa Parks' body to be viewed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda.

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76. Parks was the 31st person and the second private person (after the French planner Pierre L'Enfant) to lie in honor in the rotunda of the Capitol.

77. She was the first woman and the second black person to lie in state in the

Capitol.

78. An estimated 50,000 people viewed the casket.

79. Her funeral service was seven hours long and was held on November 2, 2005, at the Greater Grace Temple Church in Detroit.

80. Her fame was such that ESPN noted her death on the "Bottom Line," its on-screen sports ticker, on all of its networks.

81. Parks had funeral services in three different cities – Montgomery, Ala., Detroit, and Washington, D.C.

82. City officials in Montgomery and Detroit had the front seats of their city buses reserved with black ribbons in honor of Parks until her funeral.

83. The chapel at Detroit's Woodlawn Cemetery where she was interred was renamed Rosa L. Parks Freedom Chapel in her honor.

84. On the first anniversary of her death, President George W. Bush ordered a statue of Parks to be placed in the National Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. When signing this resolution, President Bush stated, "By placing her statue in the heart of the nation's capital, we commemorate her work for a more perfect union, and we commit ourselves to continue to struggle for justice for every American."

85. She was suffering from dementia when she passed on October 24, 2005.

86. In December 2005, more than a thousand students organized a march, "The Children's Walk" on the Alabama state capitol in honor of Parks.

87. In the Los Angeles County Metrorail system, the Imperial Highway/Wilmington station, where the Blue Line connects with the Green

Line, has been officially named the "Rosa Parks Station."

88. Nashville, Tennessee, renamed MetroCenter Boulevard (8th Avenue North) (US 41A and TN 12) in September 2007 as Rosa L. Parks Boulevard.

89. On July 14, 2009, the Rosa Parks Transit Center opened in Detroit at the corner of Michigan and Cass Avenue.

90. In Grand Rapids, Mich., a plaza in the heart of the city is named Rosa Parks Circle.

91. The American Public Transportation Association declared December 1, 2005, the 50th anniversary of her arrest, to be a "National Transit Tribute to Rosa Parks Day."

92. A street in West Valley City, Utah's second largest city, leading to the Utah Cultural Celebration Center is renamed Rosa Parks Drive.

93. Scholar Molefi Kete Asante listed Parks on his list of 100 Greatest African Americans.

94. Despite her fame, world-wide recognition and speaking engagements, she was never a wealthy woman.

95. In 2002 and 2004 she was faced with eviction, however through the kindness of the members of the Hartford Memorial Baptist Church and the ownership company she was able to live out her final years rent free.

96. Her husband, brother, and mother all died of cancer.

97. Parks served as a member of the Board of Advocates of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

98. A commemorative U.S. Postal Service stamp, called the Rosa Parks Forever

stamp and featuring a rendition of the famed activist, will debut on Feb 4, Parks' centennial birthday.

99. In May 2012, the Washington National Cathedral dedicated a new sculpture of Parks in their Human Rights Porch.

100. In January 2013, Senator Chuck Schumer, (D – N.Y.) announced that Parks will be the first black woman to earn a statue in the Capitol's Statutory Hall.

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