

Cultural News



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Elizabeth Blackwell: The First American Woman Doctor

The first woman in America to receive a medical degree, Elizabeth Blackwell championed the participation of women in the medical profession and ultimately opened her own medical college for women.

Born near Bristol, England on February 3, 1821, Blackwell was the third of nine children of Hannah Lane and Samuel Blackwell, a sugar refiner, Quaker, and anti-slavery activist. Blackwell's famous relatives included brother Henry, a well-known abolitionist and women's suffrage supporter who married women's rights activist Lucy Stone; Emily Blackwell, who followed her sister into medicine; and sister-in-law Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the first ordained female minister in a mainstream Protestant denomination.

In 1832, the Blackwell family moved to America, settling in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1838, Samuel Blackwell died, leaving the family penniless during a national financial crisis. Elizabeth, her mother, and two older sisters worked in the predominantly female profession of teaching.

Blackwell was inspired to pursue medicine by a dying friend who said her ordeal would have been better had she had a female physician. Most male physicians trained as apprentices to experienced doctors; there were few medical colleges and none that accepted women, though a few women also apprenticed and became unlicensed physicians.

While teaching, Blackwell boarded with the families of two southern physicians who mentored her. In 1847, she returned to Philadelphia, hoping that Quaker friends could assist her entrance into medical school. Rejected everywhere she applied, she was ultimately admitted to Geneva College in rural New York, however, her

acceptance letter was intended as a practical joke.

Blackwell faced discrimination and obstacles in college: professors forced her to sit separately at lectures and often excluded her from labs; local townspeople shunned her as a "bad" woman for defying her gender role. Blackwell eventually earned the respect of professors and classmates, graduating first in her class in 1849. She continued her training at London and Paris hospitals, though doctors there relegated her to midwifery or nursing. She began to emphasize preventative care and personal hygiene, recognizing that male doctors often caused epidemics by failing to wash their hands between patients.

In 1851, Dr. Blackwell returned to New York City, where discrimination against female physicians meant few patients and difficulty practicing in hospitals and clinics. With help from Quaker friends, Blackwell opened a small clinic to treat poor women; in 1857, she opened the New York Infirmary for Women and Children with her sister Dr. Emily Blackwell and colleague Dr. Marie Zakrzewska. Its mission included providing positions for women physicians. During the Civil War, the Blackwell sisters trained nurses for Union hospitals.

In 1868, Blackwell opened a medical college in New York City. A year later, she placed her sister in charge and returned permanently to London, where in 1875, she became a professor of gynecology at the new London School of Medicine for Women. She also helped found the National Health Society and published several books, including an autobiography, *Pioneer Work in Opening the Medical Profession to Women* (1895).

Edited by Debra Michals, Ph.D.



AUGUST 2018 CALENDAR

AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

NATIONAL MINORITY DONOR AWARENESS MONTH

BLACK BUSINESS MONTH

- 1- Lammas (Christian)
- 2- Lughnassad - Imbolc (Wicca/Pagan)
- 3-5- Twin's Day (US)
- 4- Single Working Women's Day (US)
- 5- National Kids Day (US)
- 9-18- Elvis Week (US)
- 15- Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary (Catholic Christian)
- 16-26- Little League World Series (US)
- 19-25- National Chef's Appreciation Week (US)
- 21- Senior Citizen's Day (US)
- 22-25- Eid al Adha (Islam)
- 26- Women's Equality Day (US)
- 29- Raksha Bandham (Hindu)

Eid Al-Adha Festival



Eid al-Adha is an Islamic festival to commemorate the willingness of Ibrahim (also known as Abraham) to follow Allah's (God's) command to sacrifice his son. Muslims around the world observe this event.

What Do People Do?

At Eid al-Adha, many Muslims make a special effort to pray and listen to a sermon at a mosque. They also wear new clothes, visit family members and friends and may symbolically sacrifice an animal in an act known as qurbani. This represents the animal that Ibrahim sacrificed in the place of his son.

In some traditionally Muslim countries, families or groups of families may purchase an animal known as udhiya, usually a goat or sheep, to sacrifice, but this is not common or legal in many parts of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States or many other countries. In these countries, groups of people may purchase a whole carcass from a butcher or slaughterhouse and divide it amongst themselves or just buy generous portions of meat for a communal meal on Eid-al-Adha. People also

give money to enable poorer members of their local community and around the world to eat a meat-based meal.

In the period around Eid al-Adha, many Muslims travel to Mecca and the surrounding area in Saudi Arabia to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. Package holidays are organized from many countries. Muslims may plan and save for many years to enable them to take part in this event, which is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Public Life

Eid al-Adha is a public holiday in places such as the Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. It is not a nationwide public holiday in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom or the United States. However, some Islamic organizations may be closed or offer a reduced level of service and there may be some local congestion around mosques in countries where Eid al-Adha is not a public holiday.

Background

Ibrahim, known as Abraham in the Christian and Jewish traditions, was commanded by God to sacrifice his adult son. He obeyed and took Ishmael (Ismail or Ismael) to Mount Moriah. Just as he was to sacrifice his son, an angel stopped him and gave him a ram to sacrifice in place of his son. Some people dispute that the son of sacrifice was Isaac (Ishāq). Regardless, these events are remembered and celebrated at Eid al-Adha.

The Islamic calendar is based on observations of the Moon and the length of a particular month can vary between years. For this reason, predicted dates of Eid al-Adha may be corrected at the start of the month of Dhul Hijja. This is around 10 days before the start of the festival.

<https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/muslim/eid-al-adha>

National Kids Day (August)

August 5th is National Kids Day which was created by the children's crisis charity Kids Peace to give America an opportunity to celebrate childhood; to demonstrate our commitment to nurturing children; to inspiring our nation, our communities, and our families to love and appreciate children; and to prepare our children for a healthy, happy, successful future. Recognized by the US Congress, National Kids Day encourages adults to spend meaningful time with America's children. In this way, we can build a nation of strong, resilient, happy children who know that they are loved by caring adults and can enjoy just being kids. Children have asked their parents and guardians why we celebrate "Mother's Day" and "Father's Day" but not "Kid's Day". National Kids Day fills the gap and seeks to provide a reminder of children's year-round need for meaningful time and interactions with adults.

The goals of National Kids Day are: To create awareness of children's value and needs year-round by focusing on a yearly celebration on the national calendar, to change the way America looks at and treats its children, and to create a world where children can find safety, love, trust and the freedom to grow and be a child.

National Kids Day is a special holiday in which you are asked to spend time, not money. Kids Peace has developed a few ways to celebrate which include:

Family Scavenger Hunt: On National Kids Day morning, slip note cards under everyone's pillow to start the scavenger hunt. Direct them

where to go for a trail of treats and promises. Hide special goodies and notes around the house. Promise notes can be something simple such as "You can stay up late to watch a movie" or "You can decide where we eat tonight". Save them and redeem these promise coupons, spreading the togetherness.



Neighborhood Carnival: Get together with other families in the neighborhood to plan a National Kids Day carnival. Have the kids organize games and events such as: bucket toss, face painting, beanbag toss, crafts, etc. Play a friendly game of tug of war, wheelbarrow races, or egg-on-spoon race. Remember to partner grown-ups with children.

Down Memory Lane: Relax with the kids and enjoy looking through old childhood photographs of you growing up and the kids as they've grown up. Share your favorite memories and activities you enjoyed as a child. Take pictures on National Kids Day and start to organize a scrapbook with you children.

<https://www.augustahealth.com/community-outreach/national-kids-day-august>