



Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low

*“The work of today is the history
of tomorrow, and we are its
makers.”*

1860-1927



Early Life

- Juliette “Daisy” Gordon was born in Savannah, Georgia during the Civil War, and went to the Virginia Female Institute at age 13.
 - Her schooling included arts and etiquette, and she also had a love for animals. However, Daisy tended to have interests that were considered “Tomboy” interests at the time, such as running and climbing, and did not enjoy lessons on becoming a lady.
 - Daisy later went onto another boarding school in Virginia, eventually concluding her education at a finishing school in New York. She then returned to Georgia as a young woman ready to enter Savannah society.



Exploring the World



- After finishing her education, Daisy embarked on a trip to Europe. While traveling, Daisy continued to mingle with the elite who populated her life up to this point and met William Mackay Low. Low was a rich shipping magnate's son, and was also from Savannah.
 - Just before Daisy married William she suffered a painful ear infection that led to hearing loss in most of her left ear. It was exacerbated by a grain of rice that lodged into her right ear during the traditional rice throwing at the end of a wedding ceremony. Sadly, this random incident led to full hearing loss in the ear as well, leaving her almost completely Deaf for the remainder of her life.



A Dark Side

- Even as Daisy continued to live the high-class lifestyle in England, Scotland and Savannah, her life had a dark side that others may not have noticed.
 - Daisy's husband William was a drinker who treated her unkindly. Eventually it got bad enough to warrant divorce proceedings, but before it was finalized she became a widow when William died from ailments associated with his drinking.



A New Decade



- In 1911 Daisy was 10 years into widowhood and met Sir Robert Baden-Powell at a social gathering in London.
 - Although she had studied sculptures in Paris and could have become an artist, when she met Sir Robert. They both shared an interest in sculptures, but Sir Robert had started a new organization called the Boy Scouts, and Daisy learned through Sir Robert that girls were interested in joining his group.
 - This intrigued Daisy, and she teamed with Sir Robert's sister Agnes to start the *Girl Guides*, which spread to across Great Britain. Daisy was interested in bringing it to the United States, and while she was in America she contacted her cousin Nina who was the headmistress of a girl's school.
 - With Nina's help, the group was started in the United States as well.
 - By 1912, in a year, the U.S. Girl Scout patrol were registered.

Building the Girl Scouts



- Daisy used her public relations and fundraising skills to insure that the Girl Scouts remained strong, and she even used her own fundings to keep it afloat at times.
 - Although she never had children, it could be seen that she had millions. Today the Girl Scouts can boast membership of at least 2.6 million.
 - The skills learned included first aid, cooking, camping, sports and more, and the girls were treated with interest and respect.
 - One of the best parts of Daisy's leadership was her insistence that "*... We mustn't lose sight of the girls. The girls must always come first!*" Whenever decisions were being made, Daisy always suggested that people "*... Ask the girls!*"

Daisy's Legacy



- After fighting breast cancer for four years, Juliette died at age 66 in 1927.
- As you may notice in many of these images, Daisy is almost always shown in uniforms. Daisy wore the Girl Scout uniform with pride, including a knife, whistle and tin drinking cup hanging from the belt wherever she went. Daisy was laid to rest in her uniform.
- Daisy's birthplace is now a National Historic Landmark, and she was inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The Juliette Low World Friendship Fund was also started, which some of her friends helped to create.



Recourses

Girl Scouts Website: <https://www.girlscouts.org/>

Great Deaf Americans (2nd Ed.) by Matthew Moore and Robert Panara, Deaf Life Press, 1996.

Juliette Gordon Low: Founder of the Girl Scouts of America by Deborah Kent, Child's World, 2004.

National Women's History Museum Web site:
<https://www.womenshistory.org/>