



Pearl A. Wanamaker

Quick Facts

Birth: January 18, 1899
Camano Island

Death: December 4, 1984
Seattle, Washington

Occupation: Teacher

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Years served: 1929-31, 1933-37 (H)
1937-40 (S)
1940-57 (SPI)

Office: Representative; Senator;
Superintendent of Public Instruction

District: 50 (Island County) 1929
38 (Island, Snohomish Counties) 1933

Personal:

- **Born Pearl Anderson**
- Began teaching in a one room school house on Camano Island in 1917
- Her father, Nils Anderson, served as a State Representative in 1923.
- Married Lemuel A. Wanamaker in 1927
- Residence: Coupeville, Whidbey Island

Education:

- Western Washington College of Education, graduate
- University of Washington, B.A.
- Honorary degrees: Miami University, Oxford Ohio, Doctor of Laws, 1953; Columbia University, New York City, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1954; Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, Doctor of Humane Letters, 1956; Mills College, Oakland, California, Honorary Doctorate

Community Service:

- "Some years ago, it seems a certain school construction yard in the State of Washington was the victim of nightly raids by a mysterious band of lumber thieves. No one knew how to cope with the situation—until the matter came to the attention of the state's new school superintendent, a doughty housewife named Pearl Wanamaker. Pearl simply took out her shotgun, parked herself in the yard for two nights running. The raids ceased, the lumber was saved. Pearl once again emerged as public education's Fighting Lady Number One."
--"Fighting Lady"
- Pioneered movement to teach handicapped children with other "average" children
- Pearl A. Wanamaker Library and Instructional Resource Center opened at Tacoma Community College in 1966

Affiliations:

- Administrative Women in Education
- American Association of School Administrators

- American Association of University Women, Seattle
- American Council on Education
- Business and Professional Women's Club, Olympia
- China Club of Seattle, honorary member
- Delta Kappa Gamma, Delta Chapter, national honorary member
- Eastern Star
- Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Human Education, honorary member
- National Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Education Association, life member
- Soroptimist International of Olympia, honorary member
- Washington Congress of Parents and Teachers, life member
- Washington Education Association

Awards:

- Distinguished Service Award, Altrusa International, 1945-47 biennium
- Matrix Table, 1946
- American Education Award, National Education Association, 1950
- Club Achievement Award, Women's National Press, 1950
- Woman of Achievement Award, Zonta Club of Seattle, 1951
- Outstanding Service to Education Medallion, Michigan State University, 1955
- Woman of the Year, Seattle B'nai B'rith, 1955

Legislative & State Service:

- She was influential in the push for construction of a bridge over Deception Pass that would connect Whidbey Island to the mainland. On July 31, 1935 the bridge was officially dedicated with Pearl Wanamaker cutting the ribbon.
- Appointed to serve L.E. Tewksbury's unexpired term in the Senate, 1937
- Legislative Commission of the National Education Association, advisory committee
- In 1954 Tacoma elementary school counselor Margaret Jean Schuddakopf was questioned before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in Seattle about her relationship with the Communist Party. She decided to plead the Fifth Amendment and did not answer their questions. This caused the Tacoma School District to fire her. But Pearl, as Superintendent of Public Instruction, researched the same issue in schools around the country. And after careful consideration she decided Margaret Jean had the right to protection under the Fifth Amendment, and Pearl had her re-instated as a teacher.

Committees: (1929) Claims and Auditing; Education; Parks and Playgrounds; State Library; Unemployment Relief **(1933)** Education; Parks and Playgrounds; Roads and Bridges; Rules and Order; Unemployment Relief **(1935)** Education, chair; Parks and Playgrounds; Revenue and Taxation; Roads and Bridges; Unemployment Relief and Public Welfare **(1937)** Labor and Labor Statistics, chair; Education; Fisheries; Forestry and Logged-Off Lands; Harbors and Waterways; Parks and Playgrounds; Revenue and Taxation; Roads and bridges; Social Security; State Charitable Institutions **(1939)** Labor and Labor Statistics, chair; Education; Elections and Privileges; Forestry and Logged-Off Lands; Harbors and Waterways; Parks and Playgrounds; Revenue and Taxation; Roads and Bridges; Social Security

House Bills sponsored:

(1929 session)

65-Making appropriations for the construction and maintenance of highways in counties composed entirely of islands

Passed by the House and Senate

85-Relating to state parks, authorizing the state parks committees to grant franchises for roads and bridges therein

Approved by the Governor

144-Relating to counties, providing for the election

Went to third reading

274-Creating liens for surveying real property

Not passed

397-Relating to sale of capitol building lands and materials thereon

Not passed

434-Making an appropriation for the office of the state highways engineer for making certain surveys

Not passed

437-Providing for change in the method of taxing growing timber

Not passed

(1933 session)

200-Appropriation for relief of C.M. Reardon
Reported out of committee and died
225-Relating to construction and maintenance of highways in counties composed entirely
of islands
Approved by the Governor
226- Relating to construction and maintenance of highways in counties composed entirely
of islands
Approved by the Governor
231-Investment of certain state, county and school funds
Went to third reading, died in the Senate
327-Appropriation for survey of certain tide lands
Went to third reading
332-Providing for protection and development of forests
Approved by the Governor
364-Relating to motor carriers
Went to first reading
389-Relating to bonds and construction of unit of capitol buildings
Went to third reading
421-Relating to sale of securities
Vetoed by the governor
437-Relating to reapportionment of legislative districts
Reported out of committee and died

(1935 session)

345-Relating to first class school districts' funds
Reported out of committee and died
505-Relating to the extension of boundaries of school districts which contain an
incorporated city
Reported out of committee and died
553-Relating to teachers' retirement, providing for teachers' retirement system
Went to first reading

House Joint Memorial sponsored:

(1935 session)

5-Relating to entry of the United States into the World Court
Went to third reading

Senate Bills sponsored:

(1937 session)

63-Relating to railroad and highway crossings
Approved by the Governor
64-Relating to the change of names of state educational institutions
Approved by the Governor
85-Relating to Anacortes Marblehead unit of the Cascade Wagon Road
Went to first reading
153-Relating to the creation of a child development and research service
Approved by the Governor, partially vetoed
158-Relating to teachers' retirement fund
Went to first reading
159-Relating to primary State Highway No. 1
Went to first reading
160-Relating to establishment of a primary state highway as a branch of State Highway
No.1
Went to first reading
161-Relating to establishment of a primary state highway
Went to first reading
169-Relating to education, school equalization fund
Went to first reading
182-Relating to creation of a Washington State Progress Commission
Passed by the House and Senate
183-Relating to office of county superintendent of schools
Went to third reading
189-Relating to supervision of holding companies
Went to first reading
219-Relating to trespass of cattle and livestock on lands owned by the state

Reported out of committee
232-Relating to board of county commissioners
Vetoed by the Governor
234-Relating to county TB hospitals
Vetoed by the Governor
289-Relating and regulation the practice of the profession of engineering and land
surveying
Reported out of committee and died
290-Relating to and regulating the practice of architecture
Went to third reading
351-Relating to examination of witnesses and evidence
Went to first reading
364-Relating to gambling devices
Went to third reading

(1939 session)

27-Providing for the construction of a city street on an approach to the property of the
University of Washington
Reported out committee and died
43-Relating to the use and furnishing of stamps, coupons tickets, certification, cards and
other similar devices
Approved by the Governor
71-Relating to the issuances of marriage licenses
Passed by the House and Senate
76-Establishing a State Board of Vocational Education and defining its powers and duties
Passed by the House and Senate
78-Relating to health, welfare and care of children in attendance at public schools
Passed by the House and Senate
93-Relating to food and shellfish, defining the powers of the Director of Fisheries in relation
to there
Went to third reading
95-Relating to slot or pinball machines, defining crimes, prescribing penalties for violations
thereof
Went to first reading
136-Relating to examination of witnesses and evidence
Reported out of committee and died
155-Appropriating the sum of \$1,400,000 from the general fund to the state school
equalization fund; providing distributing of same.
Went to first reading
156-Relating to education
Went to first reading
177-Providing the state elective and appointive officers shall select employees, with certain
exceptions, from a classified list prepared by a new state department.
Went to first reading
188-Relating to the operation of the state teachers' retirement system
Passed by the House and Senate
189-Relating to public highways, providing for secondary state highways as branches of
primary State Highway No. 1
Went to first reading
212-Relating to unemployment compensation
Reported out of committee and died
214-Relating to hours of service of drivers or operators of motor vehicles transporting
passengers for hire
Went to first reading
249-Relating to aid for dependent children providing for appeals from decisions of the
director of social security
Went to first reading
253-Relating to operation for ferries, providing for the acquisition of ferries and ferry
services by gift purchase and condemnation; relating to powers and duties of the
Washington Toll Bridge Authority
Went to third reading
297-Making an appropriation for the state Institute of Child Development Research and
Service
Reported out of committee and died
317-Relating to the issuance of permits for the installation of electric wiring and charging of

inspection fees therefore
 Went to first reading
 323-Providing for the distribution and expenditure of monies received from forest preserves
 Reported out of committee and died
 372-Relating to group life insurance and repealing chapter 300 of Laws of 1927, etc.
 Passed by the House and Senate
 438-Relating to public health and providing for the preparation of county budgets for county public health work
 Passed by the House and Senate
 467-Relating to unemployment and providing for the relief of unemployed persons by making available funds for the sponsorship for public works and work relief projects on the part of the state and political subdivisions
 Passed by the House and Senate
 473-Relating to public highways, creating, establishing and designating primary State Highway No. 1 and secondary state highways as branches thereof
 Went to first reading
 474-Relating to public roads and streets, making motor vehicle fund a permanent fund, providing appropriations from the motor vehicle fund for supervision, location, right of way, improvement, construction, maintenance, outlay for primary state highways and for payment of interest and bond on state owned bridges, etc.
 Went to first reading

Leadership, Positions & Appointments:

- Superintendent of Island County Schools

State:

- American Cancer Society, Washington Division, board of trustees
- Keep Washington Green Association, board of trustees
- National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, state committee, 1947
- Washington State Advisory Council on Hospital Survey and Planning
- Washington State Board of Education, president
- Washington State Board of Vocational Education, chairman
- Washington State Forestry Conference, trustee
- Washington State Historical Society, board of curators
- Washington State Library Commission, chair, 1941-57
- Washington Tuberculosis Association, honorary vice-president

National:

- Ran unsuccessfully for the United States Senate in 1936
 - Educational Politics Commission, 1943-48, 1951-55
 - National Advisory Committee on Girl Scouting, 1944-53
 - United States Commission for UNESCO member, and was advisor to the United States delegation to UNESCO at its first conference held in Paris in 1946
 - National Education Association, president, 1946-47
 - National Commission on Children and youth, executive committee, 1946-49
 - American Association for University Women, National Committee on Education, 1947-51
 - American Council on Education, second vice-chairman, 1948
 - National Council of Chief State School Officers, president, 1950-51
 - Women in the Services, defense advisory committee, 1951-54
 - American Association of School Administrators, vice-president, 1952
 - American Red Cross, board of governors, 1952-55
 - Member of the post-war educational mission to Japan to study the educational system
 - Appointed by President Dwight Eisenhower to a White House Conference on education
-
- American Council on Education, pacific coast committee
 - American Youth for World Youth, director
 - Joint American-Canadian Commission on Education, member
 - Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, advisory educational group
 - National Association of Manufacturers Education, advisory council
 - National Citizens Council for Better Schools Educators, advisory panel
 - National Advisory Committee on Civil Defense Training and Education

- National Policy Advisory Committee for Vocational Education
- *The Education Digest*, editorial advisory board
- U.S. Armed Forces Institute, advisory committee
- Yeshiva University Medical Center, educational advisory committee
- Young Workers to the United States Department of Labor, advisory committee

Sources:

- "Fighting Lady," *Time*, 6 February 1956, p. 60.
- "Ladies' Chapeaux Tasteful Addition to Political Ring," *Spokesman-Review*, 12 October 1958.
- Rosenberg, Marie Catherine Barovic. *Peal Anderson Wanamaker, Politician*. M.A. Thesis, University of Washington, 1964.
- Whitney, Marci. *Notable Women*. Tacoma, WA: Tacoma News Tribune, 1977.
- Ensberg, David Norman. *Pearl A. Wanamaker: Washington Education's Gallant Lady*. PhD Dissertation, Seattle University, 1984.
- Burton, Joan, "The Great Deception," *Northwest Living*, November/December 1988, p. 42.
- James-Wilson, Jennifer and Brenda Owings-Klimek. [*Making a Difference, A Centennial Celebration of Washington Women. Olympia, WA*](#); State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1992.
- Nicholson, Nicole and Jason Kaye. Tacoma Community College. *What's in a name?* Retrieved October 19, 2005, from <http://www.tacomacc.edu/library/wanamaker/a1400002.htm> .
- *Ray Moore: An Oral History*, interviewed by Sharon Boswell, Washington State Oral History Program, Office of the Secretary of State, 1999