

AAP history mystery: Help identify 3 women at first annual meeting

November 1, 2022

Alyson Sulaski Wyckoff, Associate Editor

Article type: [Did you know?](#)

A [poster](#) on display at the 2022 AAP National Conference & Exhibition beckoned visitors to uncover the identities of the only three female pediatricians known to have attended the first AAP annual meeting June 12-13, 1931, in Atlantic City, N.J.



It was a year after the AAP's founding. Of 304 total members, about 93 attended the conference and posed for this historic portrait. The three mystery women stand together in the last row.

Early pioneers in the field, the female attendees are thought to be three of the following: Drs. Margaret I. Handy, Amy Richter, Maud Loeber, Emily P. Bacon and/or Louise Taylor Jones. Their various roles included heading a pediatrics department, serving as a tenured professor, organizing a children's ward and running a pediatric hospital for the Red Cross during World War I.

Three of the five graduated from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. One was the first pediatrician in her state.

All were among the first women to be certified in pediatrics. The mystery photo is below. To view the whole poster, visit <https://downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/FAAPSsmall.pdf>.



The panoramic photograph of the first Annual Meeting in 1931 is iconic at the AAP, but have you noticed the three women standing in the back row?

In the official history of the American Academy of Pediatrics published in 1952, historian Marshall Pease identified them as

- 32. Margaret I. Handy
- 33. Amy Richter /or/
Maude Loeber
- 34. Emily P. Bacon

Researchers at the AAP Archives have set out to celebrate these early leaders and discover the true identity of meeting attendee #33. Can you help?

AAP archivist Allison Seagram, M.L.I.S., C.A., of the Gartner Pediatric History Center researched the female pediatricians for the poster display. If you have insight into their identities, email her at aseagram@aap.org.