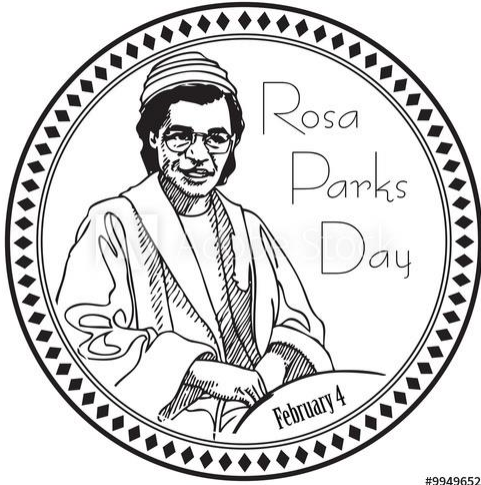


Rosa Parks



#99496528

Rosa Parks worked as a seamstress in Alabama in 1955. One day after work, she got on the crowded bus to ride home. It had been another long and hard day. She was tired, and her feet hurt. All she wanted to do was sit in a seat on the ride home. Yet, the law in her town said she might not be able to do that. Since Rosa Parks was African American, she had to move to the back of the bus if her seat was needed for a white passenger.

Why was there a law such as this? Ms. Parks lived in a time of segregation. Segregation meant that there were laws that separated people of different races. As a result, schools and restaurants were segregated. People who were black were not allowed to use the same water fountains or public restrooms as people who were white. White people were allowed to take a seat in the front of the bus—even if the seat was already occupied by an African-American person. Ms. Parks knew the law, but she was tired of being treated differently just because she was not white. She took a seat near the front of the bus. And she stayed there.





Segregated water fountains

When more white passengers stepped onto the crowded bus, the bus driver demanded that Ms. Parks and a few other black passengers give up their seats. When the bus driver told Ms. Parks to move, she refused. She felt that she had as much of a right as anyone to that seat on the bus. The bus driver became very angry, and he stopped the bus. The bus driver had Ms. Parks arrested. She went to jail.



People everywhere were angry about the way Ms. Parks was treated. Many people got together and planned a bus boycott. They refused to ride the buses until the laws were changed. Boycotting caused problems for many people. A bus was the major form of transportation for people who did not own cars. They needed to find other ways to get to town or to work. Everyone shared rides, and people helped others so that no one would have to take the bus. During the boycott, the buses were not profitable because hardly anyone was riding on them.



The bus Rosa Parks sat in was restored for the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's *I Have a Dream* speech.

The boycott lasted for almost a year. As a direct result of the boycott, the laws were changed so that all people who rode the bus were free to sit where they pleased. It was a big step forward for the Civil Rights Movement, which was a fight for equal justice for all people, regardless of their skin color. Ms. Parks demanded her rights as a citizen and refused to be treated differently than anyone else. She became a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement.



The Life of Rosa Parks

1913: born

1933: receives her high school diploma

1943: becomes actively involved in civil rights issues by joining the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Parks becomes the organization's secretary, a position she holds until 1957

1955: (December 1st) arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus to a white passenger

1955: (December 4th) Plans for the Montgomery Bus Boycott are announced, a direct result of Parks' arrest.

1955: (December 5th) Parks is tried and found guilty of breaking the local segregation laws. Parks is fined \$10 for breaking the laws.

1956: The end of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the end of the bus segregation laws

1957: Hired as the secretary for John Conyers, an African-American U.S. Representative—a position Parks holds until 1988

1980: Establishes the Rosa L. Parks Scholarship Foundation for high school seniors

1988: Establishes the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development to help young people learn about their communities and efforts leading to the Civil Rights Movement

1992: Publishes her autobiography

1996: Is awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, one of many awards given to her for her noteworthy work

2005: Dies at the age of 92