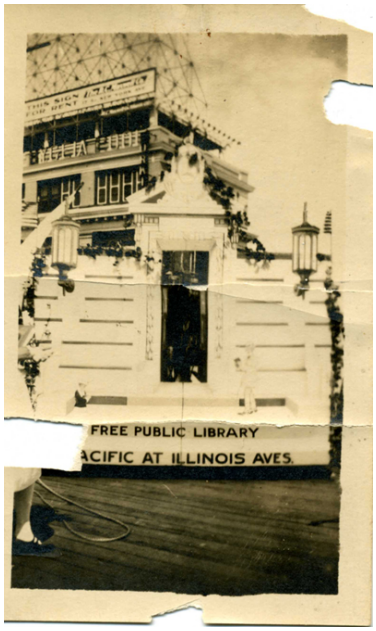
## History

As early as 1902, Atlantic City merchants promoted a Floral Parade of bathing beauties. In 1921, a

The Miss America Organization was incorporated and the contest officially became the Miss America Pa

The Miss America Pageant moved to Las Vegas, Nevada in January 2006. The last pageant held in Atla




*As part of the first Inner City Beauty Pageant in 1921, the Atlantic City Free Public Library participated*
(1901-1921 Miss America Pageant Library Card, ACFPL Historic Collection)
Learn more about the 1921 pageant on The Atlantic City Experience website

**Electronic Resources**

- The Official Site of the Miss America Organization
- PBS American Experience : Miss America
- Learn more about the Miss America Pageant with the Library's Online Research Library.

Search these online resources with your ACFPL Library Card :

- Academic Search Premier
- Biography Collection Complete
- Biography Reference Books
- History and Culture Reference Books

**Published Resources at the Atlantic City Free Public Library**

Bivans, Ann-Marie. Miss America: In Pursuit of the Crown . New York: MasterMedia Limited, 1991.
History of the pageant, its contestants and the process involved in the competition and selection of Miss America.

Deford, Frank. There She Is: the Life and Times of Miss America . New York: Viking, 1971.
Fifty-year history examines the local, state and national levels of the pageant.

Dworkin, Susan. Miss America 1945: Bess Meyerson's own story . New York: Newmarket Press, 1987.
A look at the pre-feminist nineteen-forties and how they influenced Ms. Myerson and her generation.

Goldman, William. Hype & Glory . New York: Villard Books, 1990.
An irreverent and humorous account of the author's experiences as a judge at both the Cannes Film Festival and the Miss America Pageant in 1988.

Gray, Daphne. Yes, You Can, Heather!: the Story of Heather Whitestone, Miss America 1995. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1995.
Mother's account of her hearing-impaired daughter's dream to become Miss America.

Martin, Nancie S. Miss America Through the Looking Glass : the Story Behind the Scenes. New York: Messner Books, 1985.
Written mainly for young adults, this history of the pageant outlines the contestants' involvement and the ways in which the pageant changed their lives.

The Miss America Organization. Official Yearbook of the Miss America Pageant .
Annual pageant program featuring photographs and biographical sketches of contestants. (The Library's Alfred M. Heston Collection has incomplete but extensive holdings of yearbooks dating from 1922 through the present.)

Osborne, Angela Saulino. Miss America, the Dream Lives On . Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing, 1995.
Commemorative book issued on the 75th anniversary of the pageant.

Preston, Jennifer. Queen Bess: An Unauthorized Biography of Bess Myerson . Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1990.

Riverol, A. R. Live From Atlantic City: the History of the Miss America Pageant Before, After and In Spite of Television . Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1992.
Historical study by a scholar and media critic presents opposing perspectives on the significance of the pageant. Extensive bibliography.

Watson, Ellwood. There She Is, Miss America: the Politics of Sex, Beauty and Race in America's Most Famous Pageant . Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

**Multimedia Resources**

PBS Home Video. Miss America. DVD Format approx. 96 min long, c2002.

Crowning Segments and highlight reels, 1944 - 1992. (Heston Collection; *multimedia collections require a special appointment for access)

**Archival and Special Collections**

The Alfred M. Heston Collection contains many resources related to the Miss America Pageant, including photographs, videos and film, books, and clippings files. Some of the resources are:

- Vibrina Coronado Miss America Research Collection (H065)
- Samuel Formicola Miss America Collection, 1957-1968 (H047)
- Miss America Organization, Pageant Contestant Photographs (1967-present)
- Miss America Organization, Pageant Winners Photographs (1927-1929, 1955-1995)

- Miss America Collection (H029) - memorabilia, videos, photographs, programs
- Atlantic City Free Public Library Collection of Atlantic City Photographs (H009) - photographs of parades, City officials with pageant participants

**Early Miss America Contestants (1921-1944)**

The Heston Collection staff has compiled a list of pageant contestants from the early years. The list is n
contact us if you have additional information to help complete the list.

Early Miss America Contestants (PDF)
(H009/394 Miss America Pageant in 1921 which included representatives from
*Atlantic City was home to the first Miss America Pageant in 1921 which included representatives from*

**Miss America Pageant Winners**

For more information on individual pageant winners, see the Miss America Organization webpage.

| Year | Miss America | From |
|---|---|---|
| 1921 | Margaret Gorman | Washington, D.C. |
| 1922 | Mary Campbell | Columbus, Ohio |
| 1923 | Mary Campbell | Columbus, Ohio |
| 1924 | Ruth Malcolmson | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania |
| 1925 | Fay Lanpier | Oakland, California |
| 1926 | Norma Smallwood | Tulsa, Oklahoma |
| 1927 | Lois Delaner | Joliet, Illinois |
| 1933 | Marion Bergeron | West Haven, Connecticut |
| 1935 | Henrietta Leaver | Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania |
| 1936 | Rose Coyle | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania |
| 1937 | Bette Cooper | Bertrand Island, New Jersey |
| 1938 | Marilyn Meseke | Marion, Ohio |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1939 | Patricia Donnelly | Detroit, Michigan |
| 1940 | Frances Marie Burke | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania |
| 1941 | Rosemary LePlanche | Los Angeles, California |
| 1942 | Jo-Carroll Dennison | Tyler, Texas |
| 1943 | Jean Bartel | Los Angeles, California |
| 1944 | Venus Ramey | Washington, D.C. |
| 1945 | Bess Myerson | New York, New York |
| 1946 | Marilyn Bufferd | Los Angeles, California |
| 1947 | Barbara Walker | Memphis, Tennessee |
| 1948 | BeBe Shopp | Hopkins, Minnesota |
| 1949 | Jacque Mercer | Litchfield, Arizona |
| 1951 | Yolande Betbeze | Mobile, Alabama |
| 1952 | Coleen Kay Hutchins | Salt Lake City, Utah |
| 1953 | Neva Jane Langley | Macon, Georgia |
| 1954 | Evelyn Margaret Ay | Ephrata, Pennsylvania |
| 1955 | Lee Meriwether | San Francisco, California |
| 1956 | Sharon Ritchie | Denver, Colorado |
| 1957 | Marian McKnight | Manning, South Carolina |
| 1958 | Marilyn Van Derbur | Denver, Colorado |
| 1959 | Mary Ann Mobley | Brandon, Mississippi |
| 1960 | Lynda Mee Mead | Natchez, Mississippi |
| 1961 | Nancy Fleming | Montague, Michigan |
| 1962 | Maria Fletcher | Asheville, North Carolina |
| 1963 | Jacquelyn Mayer | Sandusky, Ohio |
| 1964 | Donna Axum | El Dorado, Arkansas |
| 1965 | Vonda Kay Van Dyke | Phoenix, Arizona |
| 1966 | Deborah Irene Bryant | Overland Park, Kansas |
| 1967 | Jane Anne Jayree | Laverne, Oklahoma |
| 1968 | Debra Dene Barnes | Moran, Kansas |
| 1969 | Judith Anne Ford | Belvidere, Illinois |
| 1970 | Pamela Anne Eldred | Birmingham, Michigan |
| 1971 | Phyllis Ann George | Denton, Texas |
| 1972 | Laurie Lee Schaefer | Columbus, Ohio |
| 1973 | Terry Anne Meeuwson | De Pere, Wisconsin |
| 1974 | Rebecca Ann King | Denver, Colorado |
| 1975 | Shirley Cothran | Fort Worth, Texas |
| 1976 | Tawny Elaine Godin | Yonkers, New York |
| 1977 | Dorothy Kathleen Benham | Edina, Minnesota |
| 1978 | Susan Perkins | Columbus, Ohio |
| 1979 | Kylene Barker | Galax, Virginia |
| 1980 | Cheryl Prewitt | Ackerman, Mississippi |
| 1981 | Susan Powell | Elk City, Oklahoma |
| 1982 | Elizabeth Ward | Russellville, Arkansas |
| 1983 | Debra Maffett | Anaheim, California |
| 1984 | Vanessa Williams | Millwood, New York (resigned) |
| 1984 | Suzette Charles | Mays Landing, New Jersey |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1985 | Sharlene Wells | Salt Lake City, Utah |
| 1986 | Susan Akin | Meridian, Mississippi |
| 1987 | Kellye Cash | Memphis, Tennessee |
| 1988 | Kaye Lani Rae Rafko | Monroe, Michigan |
| 1989 | Gretchen Carlson | Anoka, Minnesota |
| 1990 | Debbye Turner | Mexico, Missouri |
| 1991 | Marjorie Judith Vincent | Oak Park, Illinois |
| 1992 | Carolyn Suzanne Sapp | Kona, Hawaii |
| 1993 | Leanza Cornett | Jacksonville, Florida |
| 1994 | Kimberly Clarice Aiken | Columbia, South Carolina |
| 1995 | Heather Whitestone | Birmingham, Alabama |
| 1996 | Shawntel Smith | Muldrow, Oklahoma |
| 1997 | Tara Dawn Holland | Overland Park, Kansas |
| 1998 | Katherine Shindle | Evanston, Illinois |
| 1999 | Nicole Johnson | Roanoke, Virginia |
| 2000 | Heather French | Maysville, Kentucky |
| 2001 | Angela Perez Baraquio | Honolulu, Hawaii |
| 2002 | Katie Harman | Gresham, Oregon |
| 2003 | Erika Harold | Urbana, Illinois |
| 2004 | Ericka Dunlap | Orlando, Florida |
| 2005 | Deidre Downs | Birmingham, Alabama |
| 2006 | Jennifer Berry | Tulsa, Oklahoma |
| 2007 | Lauren Nelson | Lawton, Oklahoma |
| 2008 | Kirsten Haglund | Farmington Hills, Michigan |
| 2009 | Katie Stam | Seymour, Indiana |
| 2010 | Caressa Cameron | Fredericksburg, Virginia |
| 2011 | Teresa Scanlan | Gerig, Nebraska |
| 2012 | Laura Kaeppeler | Kenosha, Wisconsin |
| 2013 | Mallory Hagan | Brooklyn, New York |