



SINCE 1841

WOODLAND

HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM



Above: *Leslie Carter as Zaza* by Frederick M. Spiegle. From 'The Actresses Series'; distributed by the American Tobacco Co. ca. 1900. Courtesy of the [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#).

Caroline Dudley AKA 'Mrs. Leslie Carter'

The following article was written by Rosalie Yoakam and originally published by *the Dayton Daily News* April 29, 2015.

The Lady With Red Hair

"Mrs. Leslie Carter grew up in Dayton and is buried in Woodland Cemetery. During her lifetime she traveled all over the world and experienced extreme highs and lows.



She was a vivacious red-headed, green-eyed beauty who became an actress. After her 1937 death a film loosely based on her life was produced in 1940 called "The Lady With Red Hair."

She was born Caroline Dudley in Lexington, Ky., on June 10, 1862, to parents Orson and Catherine Dudley. Since Dudley was a wealthy dry goods merchant, he gave his daughter most of the things she desired. She dreamed of a life on stage but understood it was not considered a proper job for a lady. Her father died when she was 8 years old.

After his death, the mother and daughter moved to Dayton. Caroline grew up in Dayton and was educated at the Cooper Seminary."

Above Photo: Sarony, Napoleon; 'Noted stage actress Mrs. Leslie Carter', 1907. Courtesy [J. Willis Sayre Collection of Theatrical Photographs](#).

Below: Illustrated portrait published by the Dayton Daily News, 12/27/1904 pg. 4

"In 1880 she married Leslie Carter, a lawyer and millionaire's son from Chicago. Thus, her name became Mrs. Leslie Carter. They had one son, Dudley Carter.

The marriage did not go well. She spent lavish sums of money and also spent much time away from her husband in Europe in classy hotels.

In 1887 she filed for divorce alleging assault and abandonment. Her claims were disproved.

Carter obtained the divorce two years later charging adultery with four different men. He had hired his brother, also, an attorney to monitor her movements. Carter was able to provide names and dates of misconduct. Some of these were actually innocent meetings.

The whole thing was front-page news in newspapers across the country and for months in the Chicago newspapers.

Mrs. Leslie Carter was embarrassed and broke. She had to make a living and chose the stage as her best bet. She was trained by David Belasco, a Broadway manager, in the emotional school of acting.

She decided to use Mrs. Leslie Carter as a stage name. She said she hated the name but wanted to see it in lights to spite her former husband.

As Mrs. Leslie Carter, she became an almost overnight international stage star. This was achieved in four plays, "The Heart of Maryland," "Zaza," "Du Barry" and "Adrea," performed from 1895 to 1905. She was called "The American Sarah Bernhardt."



"I am going to be known to the world. Electric lights over the theatre lobbies will carry the name of Leslie Carter in five-foot letters. I hate the name, consequently I will bear it to the end. Newspapers shall spread it forth, the streets shall hum with it! Mrs. Leslie Carter! It shall be borne upon him by the printed and the spoken word! He cannot escape. It shall hound him until his last day."
—Mrs. Leslie Carter



"In 1906 she married William Payne, an actor. They later adopted a daughter, Mary Carter Payne.

Her career declined as emotional acting lost popularity. Belasco was so upset at her remarriage that he never spoke to her again. She earned another title, "the queen of bankruptcies" due to a number of costly failed productions.

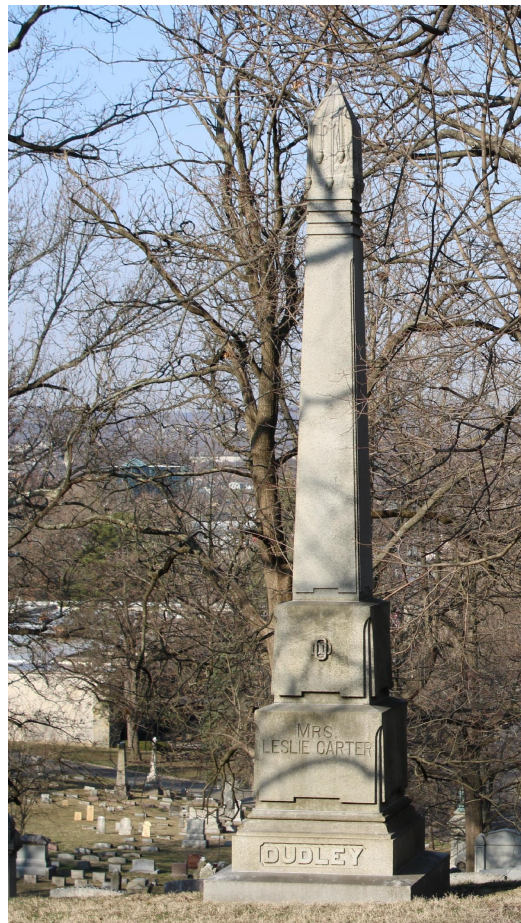
Mrs. Leslie Carter moved to California in the 1930s. There she starred in two silent films and two low-budget Western talkies.

She died in California in Nov. 13, 1937."

Caroline Dudley, better known to the world as Mrs. Leslie Carter, is buried in section 65, lot 32 at Woodland Cemetery.

Quote (above right): 'Fascinating Women: Mrs. Leslie Carter' by Evangeline Holland, 5/9/2010 for Edwardian Promenade.

Image (above left): "Charles Frohman's latest production, the new play Zaza"; color lithograph published by the [Metropolitan Printing Co.](#) (New York) ca. 1899



Woodland Centenarian Club:

Reba E. Gaston
5/29/1915 - 2/11/2017

A graduate of Steele High School & Howard University, Reba Gaston's careers spanned teaching at Dunbar High School and founding Gaston's Drugs with her husband, William "Bill" Gaston.

Reba Gaston served on the Boards of The American Red Cross, Children's Medical Center, The American Cancer Society, The Dayton Art Institute, and Good Samaritan Hospital's Foundation Board. She was a lifetime member of the NAACP, The Urban League, The Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and The Dayton Chapter of The Links, Inc. A member of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Reba Gaston served in many roles—she was a Sunday school teacher, Superintendent, and a member of the Episcopal Church Women.



In 1987 Reba Gaston received the Governor's Award from the Ohio Arts Council and was recognized among Distinguished Citizens for Art Education by the Western Ohio Arts Education Association. In 1992 Reba Gaston was included in Dayton's Top Ten Women, and in 2006 received the YWCA's "Women of Influence Award".

Reba Elizabeth Cox Gaston passed away in 2017 at the age of 101. She and her beloved husband Bill rest in section 307, lot S at Woodland Cemetery.

Photo: Reba & William Gaston, aunt and uncle of 60 Minutes correspondent Ed Bradley, surround themselves with memorabilia of their famous relative. By Bill Shepherd, published in *the Dayton Daily News*, 1/21/1990 pg. 25.

Symbols of the Season:

Broken Buds:

Flower buds and seedpods symbolize the fragile beginnings of life; all too often cut tragically short. Buds, especially broken ones, almost always indicate a child's grave. The buds can be any flower, but are most often depicted as rosebuds—a callback to a 17th century poem by Robert Herrick, which includes the verse "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may."





Upcoming Events!



Sports Legends Tour:

Everyone loves a good sports story
and we have plenty!
Learn about legendary local athletes
including:

Sprint Car racer—Johnny
Shackleford;

Inventor of the metal baseball bat—
William Shroyer;

Race car driver—Earl Kiser;
UD Basketball Coach—Tom
Blackburn;

Harlem Globetrotter—Albert Tucker
Sr.;

Rodeo Champion—Marguerite
Doane

Plus many more!

Upcoming Tours:

4/1 @ 6 pm

Click [here](#) to register!



Woof Walk:

Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum
and SICSA Pet Adoption and
Wellness Center invite you to one of
our most unique events: Woof Walk!

Dogs, you can take your human on a
guided tour through Woodland
Cemetery!

Tours will depart at 9:00 a.m. and
10:00 a.m. Bring your sociable dog to
the cemetery for a historic tour
through the beautiful grounds of
Woodland.

SICSA will be on site with
information about their organization,
how you can get involved and make
a difference in a pet's life!

Make a donation to SICSA (cash
only) and receive a raffle ticket for a
fabulous pet prize!

Annual Event:

4/26 @ 8:30 am

Click [here](#) to find out more &
register for this event!

2025 Adornment Removal Calendar

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Don't get caught by surprise!
Check this space for Woodland's
adornment removal calendar
each month to stay on schedule.

Key:

Dark Green = Weekly Clean Off
Orange = Do Not Clean Off
Soft Grey = At Woodland's
Discretion

Support Woodland:

Woodland is proud to remain an active part of the Dayton community as a popular place to walk, relax and enjoy.

We invite you to contribute to the Woodland Arboretum Foundation to ensure that what's meaningful to you today, continues tomorrow! Your gift makes an immediate impact on the horticulture, arboriculture, and restoration efforts needed to maintain one of Dayton's most historic and beautiful outdoor museums.

Thank you for your generous support of Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum.

[DONATE ONLINE!](#)

Come Visit Us!

Volunteer opportunities

Woodland is seeking volunteers to give presentations to community groups on subjects such as local history, notable biographies, and trees.

Not into public speaking? Consider getting involved with our horticulture team, or assisting with special events & research projects.

*If there is something you'd like to see here at Woodland please reach out to us



& suggest it!

Tours & More:

We welcome walkers, runners, and wanderers -- leashed dogs & school groups.

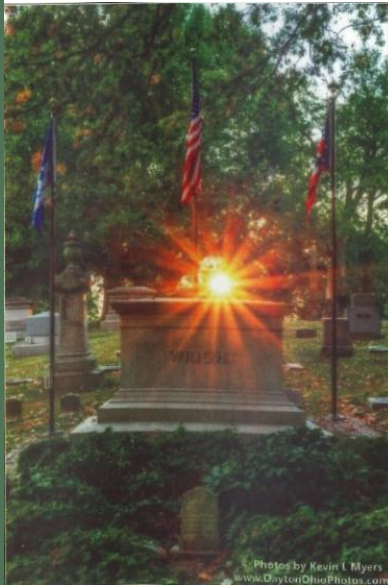
Register for a guided tour: visit the Woodland Cemetery website! Learn about fascinating Daytonians resting peacefully in one of America's oldest rural garden cemeteries!


Or check out our **virtual tours!** (if you really don't want to go outside)

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday
8am-5pm

If you need help finding where someone is buried, need directions to a particular area, or have questions about pre-planning or funeral services, Woodland's Staff is here to assist you!




 SINCE 1841
WOODLAND
 HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM

Committed to providing dignified and caring funeral services and burial options to families of all faiths since 1841.

Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum
 118 Woodland Ave.
 Dayton, OH 45409
 woodlandcemetery.org

Beautiful. Timeless. Still Available...



Discover the men and women who made it great in Dayton on a guided walking or bus tour. Self-guided tours are available on our mobile app.

For information call 937-228-3221 or e-mail info@woodlandcemetery.org

Woodland Cemetery & Arboretum | [Visit our website!](#)

Woodland Cemetery & Arboretum | 118 Woodland Ave. | Dayton, OH 45409 US

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