

WBNI BICENTENNIAL AUDIO PORTRAIT

Edith Hamilton

As the community celebrates Fort Wayne's Bicentennial year, WBNI remembers the contributions of many of the talented men and women who have called Fort Wayne their home.

It was all Greek to Fort Wayne native Edith Hamilton, world-renowned Greek scholar and author. Her contributions to the field of classical history and lore are among the most significant since the eighteenth century work, Bullfinch's *Mythology*.

Born in 1867, the descendant of Allen County's first sheriff and fur trader Allen Hamilton and the daughter of a Fort Wayne minister, Hamilton demonstrated a precocious talent for languages. As a young girl, she dressed with a Greek book propped up on her bureau. In this way, she taught herself Greek by the age of seven and had learned Latin by the age of nine. To prepare for a teaching career in an era when opportunities for women were limited, she enrolled at the University of Munich, the first woman ever to be admitted. She was appointed headmistress of Bryn Mawr in 1896.

But not until after she retired in 1922 that she embarked on the career for which she became famous. Her first book, *The Greek Way*, was published in 1930 and was hailed as an authentic masterpiece in Greek culture and history. It was followed by *Echoes of Greece* and *The Roman Way*. In 1957, she was awarded honorary Athenian citizenship in recognition of her achievements. Edith Hamilton died in 1963 at the age of ninety-six. Her final work, *Hamilton's Mythology*, remains a standard in classrooms today.

We hope you have enjoyed this brief capsule of the life of Greek scholar Edith Hamilton. Listen each week for another in WBNI's series of Bicentennial Audio Portraits.