

Famous Figures of Silver: **ISABELLA GREENWAY**

Born in Kentucky in 1886 and raised in the Dakota Territory, Isabella Dinsmore Selmes was a family friend to Teddy Roosevelt. She became close with Teddy's niece Eleanor, and was the bridesmaid at Eleanor's wedding to Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

In 1905 Isabella married Teddy's companion and fellow Rough Rider, Scot Robert Ferguson. They had two children.

When Robert developed tuberculosis, the family moved to Silver City and lived in a tent in Cat Canyon. In 1914 they moved into the Burro Mountain Lodge - today part of a recreational vehicle park west of Tyrone Mine.

The Fergusons entertained national and New Mexico dignitaries, including Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt when they were stranded in Deming by a sandstorm. Isabella founded and directed the Ladies' Land Army, which harvested crops while the men fought in World War I.

In 1921 Robert died. Isabella soon married Gen. John Greenway, a successful mining company operator. They had one son. Greenway died within four years, leaving Isabella a wealthy widow.

Isabella sold her mining stocks and invested in a ranch and an airline. Then she built the Arizona Inn in Tucson, based on the Burro Mountain Lodge.

She became the first female congressperson for Arizona. At the 1932 Democratic national convention she seconded the nomination of her friend Franklin.

By 1939 she had retired from politics and married industrialist Harry King.

Isabella Greenway died in 1953, at the Arizona Inn.



“All I have contributed is in the sincere belief that Franklin’s goal is justice, and that he has been ill advised in this human equation.”

~ Isabella Greenway to Eleanor Roosevelt
June 14, 1933



Sources:

Collected Telegrams of Isabella Greenway (King), 1933-1945; FDR Presidential Library

“Isabella Greenway,” Wikipedia