

## Florida's Carolyn Beatrice Parker and the Manhattan Project

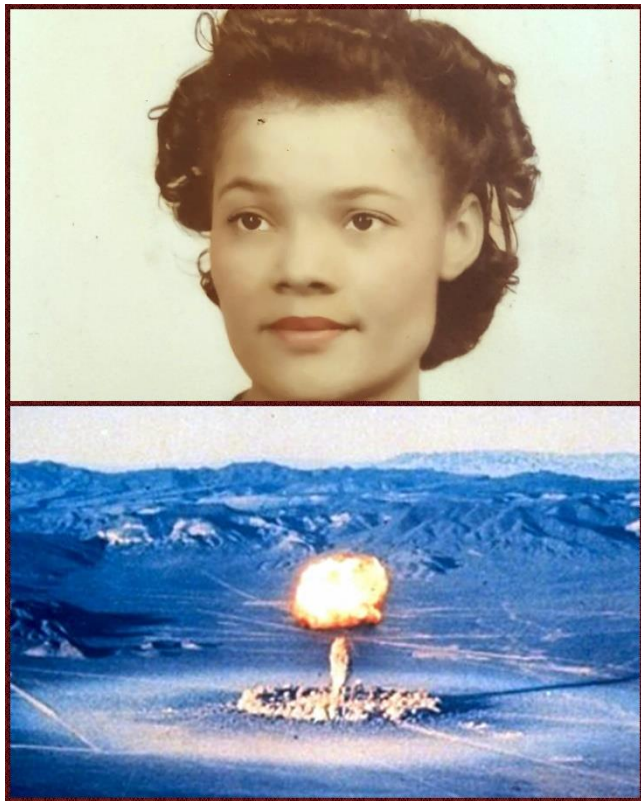
**Date/Time:** Saturday, September 28, 2024 @ 10:00 am

**Place:** Anderson-Price Building, 42 North Beach Street, Ormond Beach, FL 32174

**Presented By:** Peggy Macdonald, Ph.D.

**Event Type:** In-Person

**Free Admission:** (Open to the Public)



One of Florida's own "hidden figures," Carolyn Beatrice Parker was born in Gainesville in 1917, during the Jim Crow era. Parker's father, Dr. Julius A. Parker was one of Gainesville's first Black physicians. A product of Florida's segregated education system, in 1938 Carolyn Parker graduated magna cum laude from Fisk University with a bachelor's degree in physics. In 1941, she completed a master's degree in physics at the University of Michigan, becoming the first known Black woman to receive a graduate degree in physics. During World War II, she worked as a research physicist with the Dayton Project, a division of the Manhattan Project. Parker's team worked with the highly radioactive material Polonium (Po-210), which was used as the initiator for atomic bombs. Likely due to this hazardous work, she died of leukemia at age 48, before she could complete her doctorate in physics at MIT. An elementary school in Gainesville was recently renamed in her honor.

**Peggy Macdonald, Ph.D.** is a public historian and adjunct professor. She has taught at Stetson University, Indian River State College and Southern New Hampshire University. A native Floridian, Dr. Macdonald has written about local and Florida history for *FORUM Magazine*, *Gainesville Magazine*, *Our Town Magazine*, and *Senior Times*. In 2014, the University Press of Florida published her first book, *Marjorie Harris Carr: Defender of Florida's Environment*. Dr. Macdonald is an alumna of the University of Florida, where she received a Ph.D. in American history.

*Funding for this program was provided through a grant from the Florida Humanities with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the Florida Humanities or the National Endowment for the Humanities.*



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