



**Board of County Commissioners**

County of Hunterdon  
71 Main Street, Building #1  
PO Box 2900  
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE: March 16, 2022**

**Contact: Susan J. Soloway, Commissioner**

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## **Two Exceptional Hunterdon Women Honored By County Commissioners During Women's History Month**

The Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners, at the March 15<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, recognized March as Women's History Month, honoring the achievements of women the world over, while singling out Ruth S. Carpenter, of Lebanon Township, New Jersey's first woman Sheriff, and Helen Conkling, who served as Mayor of Glen Gardner for twelve years.

Commissioner Susan J. Soloway said, "Last year when our Board recognized women's history month, I made a point to call attention to the County Cultural and Heritage Commission's book entitled 'Notable Women Throughout the History of Hunterdon County,' and to recognize two of the 76 exceptional Hunterdon County women listed in the publication - Rose Z. Angell and Toshiko Takaazu.

For this year's commemoration of women's history, I wish to recognize two more exceptional Hunterdon County women Ruth S. Carpenter and Helen Conkling.

Soloway continued, "The late Ruth Carpenter served two terms as Hunterdon County Sheriff, from 1977 to 1983, the first woman Sheriff in New Jersey's history, a tremendous distinction for Sheriff Carpenter and Hunterdon County that should be appreciated.

When Sheriff Carpenter retired in 1983, she was one of only eight women Sheriffs in the entire nation and she had served in office the longest of all eight of her colleagues."

Commissioner Soloway stated, "The late Helen Conkling served as Mayor of Glen Gardner for twelve years from 1960 to 1972 and before entering public service, was a legal secretary for Anthony Hauck, Jr., who served as the county prosecutor during the famous Lindbergh baby kidnapping trial.

And while today the ranks of women public office holders continue to grow, for a woman to be elected to local office in 1960 and then maintain the post for 12 years is quite an achievement."

Soloway noted, "An interesting fact is that both women started their early careers as a legal secretary for Senator Wesley L. Lance, father of Congressman Leonard Lance."



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Congressman Lance was in attendance at the Board meeting and spoke about the exceptional qualities of both Sheriff Carpenter and Mayor Conkling, whom he knew personally while growing up in the County.

“Ruth S. Carpenter and Helen K. Conkling served our community in an exemplary fashion and with impeccable integrity. They furthered the advancement of women in this County, in this State, and throughout the Nation,” Congressman Lance said.

Commissioner Soloway concluded the commemoration of Women’s History Month by stating, “Providing education about women who have actively participated in government, healthcare, the military, education and other key roles, empowers young women today to make history with their own lives.”

The Hunterdon County Library is providing lectures, music, and programs all month long in honor of Women’s History Month. Click [here](#) for more information.