

HISTORIC VIRGINIA HALL

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Bio of Dean Nina Bushnell

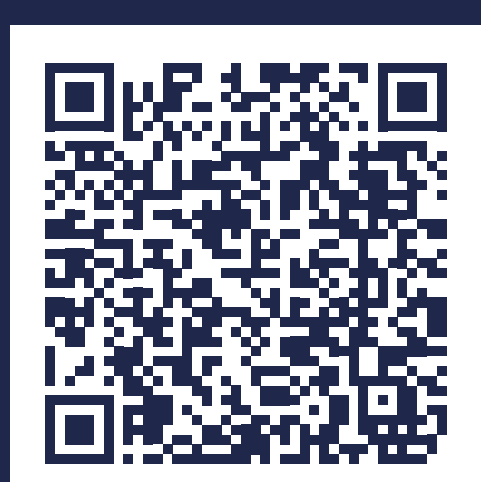
Nina Gookin Bushnell was born in Bristol, Tennessee in 1880. After graduating from the University of Tennessee in 1903, she held numerous positions, including teaching Latin at Reidsville High School in North Carolina where she met her husband, Charles Bushnell, a furniture merchant. They were only married two years when he died of typhoid fever in 1911. Widowhood allowed Nina Bushnell to travel widely for work, which included serving in France in WWI as part of the Y.W.C.A.

In 1921, Nina Bushnell became the Dean of Women at Mary Washington College. With an office and living quarters on the second floor of Virginia Hall, she was known as a strict yet approachable administrator. It was her job to enforce rules specified in the student handbook and to control access to the young women by vetting all male callers. She also supervised production of the Battlefield Yearbook and occasionally contributed her writing as well.

The state mandated her retirement in 1950, at the age of 70. After leaving Mary Washington, she served as Dean of Women at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania for another seven years before retiring to St. Petersburg, Florida. She passed away in 1970 at 90 years old. Bushnell Hall, located on Jefferson Square, is named in her honor.



Undated image of Dean of Women Nina Bushnell in her office in Virginia Hall. Image: UMW Special Collections



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