

## DAKOTA IMAGES

An early advocate for the study of American Indian cultures, Rosebud Yellow Robe used her writings, lectures, and day camps to teach thousands about the lives of Plains Indians.

Yellow Robe was born in Rapid City, South Dakota, on 26 February 1907 to Chauncey and Lily Yellow Robe, descendants of the Lakota Sioux leaders Iron Plume and Sitting Bull. Her father, one of the first students to attend Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania, spent his lifetime as an educator who sought to bridge Indian and non-Indian cultures.

Rosebud Yellow Robe began her education in a one-room schoolhouse and in the 1920s became one of the first American Indian students to attend the University of South Dakota. In college, she impressed her classmates and others with her performances of traditional Indian dances for the annual student stage production. She received national attention, including an invitation to star in a Cecile B. De Mille film production, when she placed a head-dress on President Calvin Coolidge during a ceremony inducting him into the Sioux tribe in 1927. Later that year, she left South Dakota to pursue a theatrical career in New York City. There she met and married a theatrical manager, Arthur de Cinq Mars, known professionally as Arthur Seymour, and they had a daughter, Rosebud Tachcawin.

Beginning in the late 1930s, Yellow Robe became director of the Indian Village, a children's educational and recreational day camp at Jones Beach on Long Island. For twenty years she taught schoolchildren about the realities of Plains Indian life through traditional stories, crafts, games, and songs. She reached people outside the New York area through her books, *Album of the American Indian* and *Tonweya and the Eagles and Other Lakota Indian Tales*, her original scripts delivered on CBS National Radio, and her regular appearances on an NBC-TV children's show and the *Bob Montgomery Presents* series.

In 1951, following the death of her first husband, she married Alfred A. Frantz, a former classmate at the University of South Dakota. She remained active in American Indian causes throughout her life and was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from the University of South Dakota in May 1989. Rosebud Yellow Robe died 5 October 1992.

—Katherine J. Mehrer



Rosebud Yellow Robe

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