

BANQUETS

See Symposia.

**BARNES, DJUNA
(1892–1981)**

American novelist, playwright, and journalist. She was born in Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY, the daughter of a cultivated Englishwoman and an unsuccessful artist. In her twenties she worked in New York City as a journalist and illustrator. With her tall, dashing figure, she was able to obtain colorful interviews that sold to major papers, her earnings contributing to the support of her impecunious family. The bohemian life of Greenwich Village was then at its height, and Barnes had entree into the salon of Mabel Dodge, the "den mother" of the avant-garde. She also became friends with the homosexual artist Marsden Hartley; throughout her life, Barnes was to have important gay-male friends.

In New York's milieu of feminist assertion her literary horizons widened, and at the end of World War I she went to Paris, where she became friends with James Joyce. Supporting herself with her journalism, she blended with the lesbian and homosexual life of what later came to be called the "Lost Generation" in the French capital. With Thelma Wood, a sculptress from Missouri, Barnes began a stormy affair that lasted until 1931. She also published her first serious work, a collection of poems, stories, plays, and drawings, entitled simply *A Book*, in 1923. Five years later her *Ryder*, a bawdy retelling of the history of the Barnes family, appeared briefly on the bestseller lists, the only approach to popularity she was to enjoy in her lifetime. Published anonymously, her lesbian *Ladies Almanack* (1928) was hawked on the streets of Paris by Barnes and others.

By the early thirties her drinking and nervous breakdowns had become serious, and she sought refuge first in Tangiers and then at the home of Peggy Guggenheim in England. The security that she

finally found under Guggenheim's protection enabled Barnes to complete her masterpiece, *Nightwood*, which was published with an introduction by T.S. Eliot in London in 1936. This novel, which focuses around the bizarre figure of the homosexual Dr. O'Connor, stands in a class of its own: an incomparable evocation of one writer's view of Paris and Berlin during the interwar years.

Barely escaping from Paris at the start of World War II, Barnes returned to New York, where she found a tiny apartment in Patchin Place in Greenwich Village. Here she was to live in increasing seclusion for forty years, supported mainly by a tiny allowance from Guggenheim. Although she wrote less and less, Barnes did manage to publish a second major work, the bitter play *Antiphon*, in 1958. In her last years a few determined lesbian activists and scholars managed to penetrate her isolation, while the sale of her papers to the University of Maryland gave her a financial security that had long eluded her.

A link between the avant-garde of Paris and New York, as well as the worlds of male and female homosexuality, Barnes had a literary voice all her own that will guarantee her a place in the annals of twentieth-century sensibility.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. Andrew Field, *Djuna: The Life and Times of Djuna Barnes*, New York: Putnam, 1983.

Evelyn Gettone

**BARNEY, NATALIE
CLIFFORD (1876–1972)**

American writer and patron of the arts. Born into a wealthy family of Dayton, Ohio, Barney had been to Europe several times, before she settled in Paris in 1902 at the height of the belle époque. Living a public life, she made her home in the Rue Jacob a prominent literary salon for over a half a century. While this salon attracted many famous men of letters, it was also outstanding as a focus for the