

Claire McCardell Featured in *Two New Books*

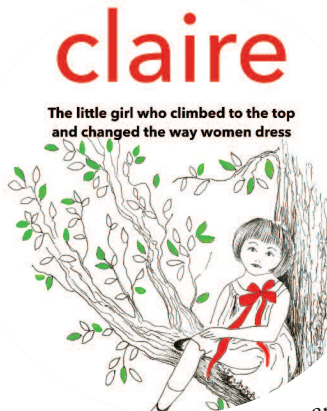
What do Frederick and Sayville, N.Y., have in common? They both have residents who are celebrating **Claire McCardell**, the Frederick-born designer who changed fashion forever for American women. McCardell, who graced the cover of *Time* magazine in 1955, ushered in modern

American women's sportswear with ballet flats, knit ski caps, hooded jerseys and—perhaps best of all—pockets.

On May 24, which would have been McCardell's 116th birthday, a picture book for children ages 6 through 10 will be available. *Claire: The Little Girl Who Climbed to the Top and Changed the Way Women Dress* is a pen-and-ink picture book that illuminates the fashion icon's story and empowers little girls.

Sayville's Debra Scala Giokas, a member of the Society of Children Book Writers and Illustrators, first came across McCardell's name in 2018 after reading about an exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. McCardell's casual style and the idea of mixing and matching separates have influenced modern day designers such as Donna Karan, Isaac Mizrahi and Geoffrey Beene. She found Claire's story inspiring and thought it should be told to girls.

She teamed up with illustrator Mary Ryan Reeves, of Frederick, an award-winning artist and retired art educator. Ryan Reeves is a member of the Frederick Art Club and a graduate of Hood College, where Claire attended for two years. The author and artist have added a companion coloring book called *Claire's Closet*.



Asked about her illustration process, Ryan Reeves says, "At all times I thought about Claire's dream of creating functionality in women's clothing. I started seeing spools as bed posts and nighttime became the New York City skyline. I also relied on the shapes and patterns she used in her designs to give me inspiration." Scala Giokas says, "This became a labor of love. Mary is the perfect illustrator to bring life to my words and to celebrate McCardell. This is to encourage little girls to dream big. Of course, it's for anyone who appreciates fashion."

Frederick Art Club president Marilyn Bagel says that in addition to the forthcoming book, "McCardell will be honored this year with a 7.5-foot bronze statue by award-winning sculptor Sarah Hempel Irani that will overlook Carroll Creek Linear Park. An accompanying wayside exhibit will tell the story of Claire's extraordinary career." The public art project, which will be unveiled in the fall, is sponsored by the Frederick Art Club. www.frederickartclub.com