

Music and independence

- Julia Lee Niebergall was able to support herself as a professional musician and teacher – she was described as “a great example of what a determined person can accomplish”
- taught music at the local high school
- played piano for movies at the local theatre until recorded soundtracks took over
- Performed at social events, many of which were covered by the *Indianapolis Star* newspaper
- best known as a musical monologist, her piano playing interspersed with comic sketches and stories (think of the Danish entertainer Victor Borge)
- played for ballet and gym classes
- also an active entertainer during the war, raising funds for soldiers overseas
- she was successful: able to maintain her own home and was one of the first women in Indianapolis to own and drive her own car



Julia Lee Niebergall (1886-1968)

- ❖ born in Indianapolis, Indiana, to a musical family
- ❖ friend of composer May Aufderheide
- ❖ talented classical pianist, Julia published her first composition with ragtime rhythms in 1905
- ❖ supported herself as a high school music teacher and professional musician
- ❖ worked as a musical monologist
- ❖ only wrote three more piano rags

