**People Who Achieved Extraordinary things by the Age of 30**

**An incomplete list**

**James Baldwin (1924 – 1987) Author and Civil Rights Activist**

**Mr. Baldwin published Go Tell it on the Mountain at age 29.**

**Carl Bernstein (1944 – ) Journalist, Author**

**In 1972, as a 28-year-old reporter for the Washington Post, Bernstein, along with Robert Woodward broke and relentlessly pursued the story of the break-in at the Watergate Complex and corruption in the administration of President Richard M. Nixon.**

**Nellie Bly (1864 – ) Journalist, Author, Novelist**

**In 1882, when she was 18, Elizabeth Jane Cochran, was forced to drop out of school due because she could not pay the tuition. Looking to break into journalism, she submitted a fiery response to a Pittsburgh Dispatch editorial that had claimed that a women’s place was in the home performing domestic chores. The editorial called the working woman “a monstrosity.” Elizabeth’s rebuttal captured the attention of the editor of the newspaper who offered her a position. She wrote articles for the paper under the pen-name Nellie Bly. A few years later “Nellie Bly” moved to New York but was unable to find work. Peniless, she volunteered to get herself admitted to New York’s Woman’s Lunatic Asylum. The result, “Ten Days in a Madhouse” exposed brutal conditions and the neglect of the patients. It caused a sensation and initiated the phenomenon of “stunt” journalism which was a precursor for investigative journalism. She was 23.**

**Lawrence Bragg (1890 – 1971) Scientist**

**At the age of 21, Mr. Bragg developed a theory, later called the Braggs law of X-ray diffraction, that allows for the determination of the structure of crystals. With his father, who built the apparatus to test the equation, Lawrence Bragg received the Nobel Prize for physics in 1915. He later had a distinguished career as a scientist and administrator of scientific laboratories.**

**Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 – 1821) General, Emperor of France**

**At the age of 27, Napoleon became a national hero in France after his first major military victory over the Austrians and Italians. By the time he was 30, he ruled France as First Consul. He crowned himself emperor five years later. He led the armies of France to conquer much of Europe.**

**Charles Dickens (1812 – 1870) Author**

**Charles Dickens published his first novel, The Pickwick Papers, at age 24.**

**Albert Einstein (1879-1955) Physicist**

**In 1905, when he was 26 years old, and a clerk in the Bern, Switzerland patent office, Albert Einstein published four ground-breaking papers that set out his special relativity theory, including the mass equivalence formula of E = mc2. Einstein, along with Sir Isaac Newton, are the two greatest modern theoretical physicists.**

**William Faulkner (1897 – 1962) Author**

**Mr. Faulkner’s first novel, Soldier’s Pay, was published when he was 29.**

**F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896 – 1940) Author**

**Mr. Fitzgerald published his first novel, This Side of Paradise, at age 24.**

**Yuri Gargarin (1934 to 1968) Cosmonaut**

**In 1960 Yuri Gagarin, a colonel in the Russian Air Force became the first man to go to leave the earth’s atmosphere spending 1 hour and 48 minutes in space aboard Vostok 1. He was 26 years old. (The first American in space was astronaut Alan B. Shephard, Jr., who was 38.)**

**Jane Goodall (1934 – ) Primatologist; Environmental Activist**

**In 1960, at the age of 26, Jane Goodall began her groundbreaking work observing chimpanzees at the Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania. She was the first to observe non-human animals using tools and that Chimpanzees were not strict vegetarians. In 1964 at the age of 30, she published her first scientific paper.**

**Alexander Hamilton (1757 – 1804) Soldier, Politician, and Founding Father of the U.S.**

**At age 20, Hamilton became aid de camp to George Washington, and, four years later, at the age of 24, he led an American column that captured a key British fortification in the Battle of Yorktown. In 1787, at the age of 30, he participated in drafting the Constitution and was one of the four authors of the Federalist papers.**

**Ernest Hemingway (1899 – 1961) Author, Journalist**

**Hemingway published his first literary effort, a collection of short stories, entitled In our Time when he was 26.**

**S.E. Hinton (1948 – ) Author**

**Wrote The Outsiders at age 16.**

**Cassidy Hutchinson (1997 -) Trump Whitehouse Staff; Witness before the January 6 Committee**

**Whether you like the January 6 Committee or not, this young lady’s courageous testimony on June 28, 2022, at the age of 26, contributed substantially to the political debate in the U.S.**

**Joan of Arc (1412 – 1431; she died at 19 years of age) French Patriot**

**At age 17 Joan of Arc led French armies to victories over the invading English in the Hundred Years War.**

**John Steinbeck (1902 -1968) Author**

**Mr. Steinbeck published his first novel, Cup of Gold, at age 27.**

**Steve Jobs (1955 – 2011) Entrepreneur**

**Steve Jobs was, at age 21, the co-founder, chairman, and CEO of Apple, Inc. and a pioneer of the personal computer revolution of the late 20th century.**

**Helen Keller (1880 – 1968) Author, Disability Rights Advocate, Political Activist, Lecturer**

**Overcoming the handicaps of being blind and deaf, Helen Keller wrote The Story of My Life at age 22.**

**John Lennon (1940 – 1980) Musician, Songwriter, Peace Activist**

**John Lennon, in his teens started writing and performing songs. With Paul McCartney he formed a song-writing partnership that changed the course of popular music in the 1960s and 1970s.**

**Martin Luther King (1929 – 1968) Civil Rights Leader, Minister**

**Dr. King led the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott when he was 26 years old.**

**Charles Lindbergh (1902 – 1974) Aviator, Businessman**

**Mr. Lindbergh was the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic. He was 25 years old.**

**Marquis de Lafayette (1757 – 1834) Soldier, French Politician, and Patriot**

**In 1777, at the age of 20, Lafayette became a member of the staff of General George Washington.**

**James Madison (1751 – 1836) Statesman, Founding Father of the U.S.**

**Madison became active in the American Revolution in 1775, at age 24.**

**Paul McCartney (1942 – ) Musician, Songwriter**

**With John Lennon, in his teens, he formed a song-writing partnership that changed the course of popular music in the 1960s and 1970s.**

**Michaelangelo (1475 – 1564) Sculptor, Painter, Architect, and Poet**

**Michelangelo began to work on his own at age 17.**

**Maria Mitchell (1818 – 1889) astronomer, librarian, Naturalist, Educator**

**Ms. Mitchel discovered “Miss Mitchel’s Comet” at the age of 29.**

**Isaac Newton (1642-1727) Scientist**

**Newton developed calculus in 1666 at the age of 24.**

**George Orwell (1903 - 1950) Author, Futurist**

**Mr. Orwell’s first novel, Down and out in London and Paris, was published when he was 29.**

**Galusha Pennypacker (1841 – 1916) General**

**Galusha Pennypacker was appointed a General in the Union Army at the age of 20.**

**William Pitt the Younger (1759 – 1806) Politician**

**Mr. Pitt was appointed British Prime Minister at age 24.**

**Sylvia Plath (1932 – 1963) Author**

**Ms. Plath published her novel The Bell Jar when she was 30.**

**William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616) Playwright, Poet**

**By about 1592 when Shakespeare was 28, his plays were being staged in London.**

**Mary Shelley (1797 – 1851) Author**

**Ms. Shelley wrote Frankenstein: or, the Modern Prometheus at the age of 19.**

**Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822) Poet**

**This poet died at age 29.**

**Frederick W. Smith (1944 – ) Entrepreneur**

**At the age of 26, Mr. Smith founded Federal Express.**

**Joseph Smith (1805 – 1844) Religious Leader**

**When he was 24, Mr. Smith published the Book of Mormon the basis for the Mormon religion.**

**Greta Thunberg (2003 – ) Environmental Activist**

**At age 15 Greta Thunberg began her protest in front of the Swedish Parliament.**

**Leo Tolstoy (1828 – 1910) Author, Christian Peace Activist, Vegetarian**

**Tolstoy published his first novel, Childhood, at age 23.**

**Ellie Wiesel (1928 - 2016) Author, Holocaust Investigator**

**Mr. Wiesel published Night at age 27.**

**George Washington (1732 – 1799) General, Statesman, and Founding Father of the U.S.**

**At the age of 21, Washington was appointed as an officer of the Virginia militia.**

**Orson Welles (1915 – 1985) Director, Actor, Screenwriter, and Producer**

**In his 20s Mr. Welles was a high-profile producer of stage plays.**

**Ida B. Wells (1862 – 1931) Journalist, Civil Rights Activist**

**Ms. Wells began teaching school at age 16. Later she became a journalist and activist protesting lynching and disparate treatment of Black Americans.**

**Phillis Wheatley (1753 – 1754) Poet**

**Born into slavery, Ms. Wheatley’s master promoted her work. Her first book of poetry, Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral by Phillis Wheatley, Negro Servant to Mr. John Wheatley, of Boston, in New England, was published in England when she was 20.**

**Eli Whitney (1765 – 1825) Inventor**

**At age 28, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin which reduced the costs of processing cotton into cloth and made slavery in the Southern U.S. much more productive. The unintended result of this invention was to strengthen the institution of slavery.**

**Brian Wilson (1942 - ) Musician, Songwriter**

**Brian Wilson, at age 19, began writing and performing with the Beach Boys. His beautiful and innovative compositions changed the course of popular music in the U.S.**

**Robert Woodward (1943 – ) Journalist, Author**

**In 1972, as a 29-year-old reporter for the Washington Post, Woodward, along with Carl Bernstein broke and relentlessly pursued the story of the break-in at the Watergate Complex and corruption in the administration of President Richard M. Nixon.**

**Steve Wozniak (1950 – ) Computer Engineer and Entrepreneur**

**At the age of 26, Mr. Wozniak Co-founded Apple, Inc. with Steve Jobs. He is considered a pioneer of the personal computer revolution.**

**Malala Yousafzai (1997 – ) Activist for female education**

**Since age 11, Malala Yousafzai has advocated for the rights of girls to be educated. In this, she followed in her father’s footsteps. She was shot in the head and seriously wounded by Islamist militants at age 15. She was taken to England for treatment. She was awarded the Nobel prize for peace in 2017. She is the youngest Nobel laureate.**

**Mark Zuckerberg (1984 – ) Internet Entrepreneur**

**Zuckerberg founded Facebook when he was 19 years old.**