



Our Community celebrates the varied people, organizations, and institutions that make up the rich tapestry that is Tompkins County. These displays highlight the diversity of our people past and present, at work and play, and in service to each other.

**The League
of
Women Voters**

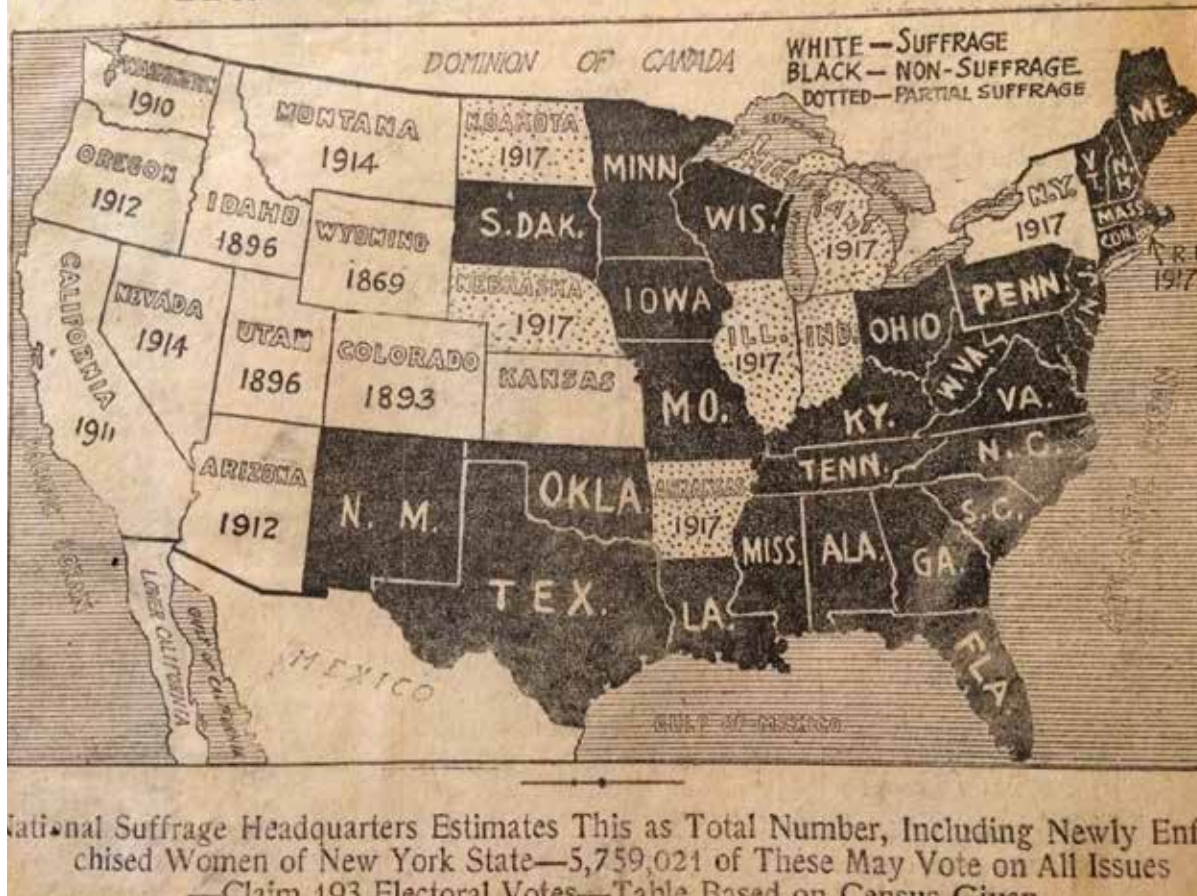


In New York State the struggle for women's suffrage was fought as early as the 1840s, and the New York State Women's Suffrage Association was active throughout the state. Interestingly, Tompkins County women came late to the cause, only forming suffrage groups in the 1890s. One woman in Ithaca who fought for suffrage was New Jersey native Louisa Riley (pictured left). Riley and her husband came to Ithaca in 1894 to be near her son who was attending Cornell. Disappointed that there wasn't a suffrage organization in town, she collaborated with the State Suffrage Association when they worked to hold their annual convention

here. She fostered the formation of the Ithaca Women's Club, which had a suffrage "section." Within a few years this splintered off to form its own group, the Political Study Club, and other local clubs formed in Newfield and Groton. From this modest start, Tompkins County women enthusiastically embraced the cause, and by 1915, when the state held a referendum to offer women the vote, few counties passed it. But in Tompkins it passed by 115 votes. Final success came across the state in 1917, and, in 1920, with the ratification of the 19th amendment to the Constitution, across the country.

Louisa Riley moved back to New Jersey in 1899 after her son finished at Cornell, but she remained honorary president of the Political Study Club until her death in 1917. Her legacy of activism and advocacy lives on in the work of the Tompkins County League of Women Voters.

10,121,931 Women in All United States Have Vote in Presidential Elections



The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920, the year women's suffrage was written into the Constitution. The Tompkins County League was established that same year and still exists today, welcoming both men and women as members. The League grew out of the National American Women Suffrage Association which spearheaded the initial movement to get women the right to vote.

Initially, the League took on teaching the 20 million recently enfranchised women the rights and responsibilities of good citizenship. League emphasis then, as now, focused on the

importance of individuals working together to achieve good government that was responsive to the needs of all citizens.



The activities of The League of Women Voters falls into three categories; Voter Service, Program, and Advocacy. Today, the League posts bulletins, holds meetings, and sponsors community informational events.

Louisa Riley moved back to New Jersey in 1899 after her son finished at Cornell, but she remained honorary president of the Political Study Club until her death in 1917. Her legacy of activism and advocacy lives on in the work of the Tompkins County League of Women Voters.

J. H. ...
ITHACA COLLEGE LIBRARY



key
to
ITHACA

GOVERNMENT

Published by the
League of Women Voters of Tompkins County
April, 1957

The League of Women Voters is very interested in educating the public on major political issues. In the past, the League produced and published several pamphlets and small books including; "How to Win Civic Campaigns," "Why Vote? The ABC's of Citizenship," "Know your County," and "The Role of Political Parties in the U.S.A." to name just a few. By educating the public, both men and women, the League of Women Voters influenced people to become involved in politics and excited to vote on different matters.

Photo: Booklet issued by The Tompkins County League of Women Voters.

League of Women Voters of Tompkins County
Ithaca, N. Y.

BULLETIN

Volume IV No. 6

December 1955

Editor: Edith Lack

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19 - 8 P.M. - ANABEL TAYLOR HALL - ROOM 0 14

Mrs. Robert L. Aronson, Chairman of our new study group on "What's Wrong with Our Courts" informs us that this meeting will be devoted to this fascinating subject. She was fortunate enough to secure that dynamic and well-informed personality, Mrs. Stanley Mayersohn who is State League Chairman of the Judicial Item and the State League's Representative at Albany, as guest speaker. Mrs. Mayersohn will discuss some of the more controversial issues in court reform, as well as give you some of the background of the Judicial Problem. This item is important enough to appear on the State Agenda this year. Come and listen, and you'll hear why! Husbands may be interested. Bring them, too.

STATE MEETINGS

GO IF YOU CAN! It's an all-around good deal for League Members. You'll be helping to influence legislation, you'll be getting a clearer picture of "how it's done", you'll meet your representatives...invaluable aids to your League work. (Those letters you wrote!) It's fun, too, to go with other congenial League members and spend the day with them.

The days are February 27 and 28. The place is Albany, N.Y. Contact Janet Eldridge at 4-0916 if you're interested in going and for more detailed information.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

WE'RE PLEASED AS PUNCH! Maybe they weren't technically perfect, but so interesting were our League Programs over WJOU that the station wants us back for another series of 13 programs! We've even had fan mail from a public other than League members. One listener sent a dollar bill "for our stamp box or whatever" with praise for a job well done!

So heartened is the Publicity Committee that they announce the first in the new series will be on SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, at 12:45 P.M. They're meeting the first week in January "to plan their attack", and would be glad to welcome anyone interested in this phase of League work. If your talents run to writing or bright ideas, call Mrs. Robert Jenkins, Ithaca 4-9497.

COMMITTEES

WELFARE - The next meetings will be held Tuesday, January 10, at Mrs. Albert Silverman's home at 134 Hawthorne place at 8 P.M. The committee will review and select material for the Unit Meetings and Radio Programs for February.

Mrs. John Harding, Chairman

EDUCATION-This group is now swinging into high gear. If you are concerned with problems -present and future - of our own schools (and who isn't!) come and join us. Call Ruth

The League program is comprised of issues selected by its membership for study, discussion and action. The Tompkins County League carries out its study of these issues in committees chaired by members who also serve on the Board of Directors. Committee membership is open to any interested League member. Meetings are arranged at the convenience of committee members, and often baby-sitting services were provided for the committee meetings. The League depends on volunteer woman power and committee chairs welcome all interested participants.

Photo: December bulletin distributed to the members of the The Tompkins County League of Women Voters.



HORSE AND BUGGY joined the League of Women Voters campaign for the proposed new city charter Thursday as league members handed out leaflets at the

Co-op Food Store. League members are (from left) Mrs. Paul Hartman, Mrs. John Humphreys and Mrs. Al Hoefer.

—Journal Staff Photo (Goldberg)

MAY 22 1959

“For them our sisters, and future generations must we labor.” Susan B. Anthony

The History Center in Tompkins County would like to give a special thank you to Florence B. Smith and Linda Duttweiler of the League of Women Voters in Tompkins County, for providing information and support for this exhibit. And a thank you to the rest of the members of the League for "Making Democracy Work."