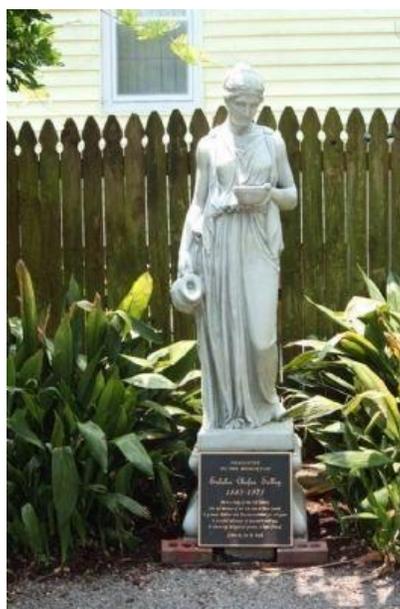


# Meet The Suffragists

A Presentation by the 2018-2020 GFWC-SC Ad Hoc Committee to Celebrate the Centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment



## Meet the Suffragists

### **Susan B. Anthony**

Champion of temperance, abolition, the rights of labor, and equal pay for equal work, Susan Brownell Anthony became one of the most visible leaders of the women's suffrage movement. Born on February 15, 1820 in Adams, Massachusetts, Susan was inspired by the Quaker belief that everyone was equal under God. That idea guided her throughout her life. She had seven brothers and sisters, many of whom became activists for justice and emancipation of slaves. In 1851, Anthony met Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The two women became good friends and worked together for over 50 years fighting for women's rights. They traveled the country and Anthony gave speeches demanding that women be given the right to vote. In 1872, Anthony was arrested for voting. She was tried and fined \$100 for her crime. This made many people angry and brought national attention to the suffrage movement. In 1876, she led a protest at the 1876 Centennial of our nation's independence. She gave a speech—"Declaration of Rights"—written by Stanton and another suffragist, Matilda Joslyn Gage. Anthony died in 1906, 14 years before women were given the right to vote with the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920.

*Submitted by Janet Watkins*

### **Carrie Chapman**

Carrie Chapman Catt was born January 9, 1859 in Ripon, Wisconsin. She attended Iowa State University. She was married to Leo Chapman (1885-1886); George Catt (1890-1905); partner Mary Garret Hay. Catt began her suffragist movement work when she volunteered with Iowa Woman Suffrage Association (1890 – 1892). Catt served as the Iowa association's state organization recording secretary. While volunteering with this group, Catt started her national work with the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). She was elected president of NAWSA twice (1900-1904) and (1915-1920). Catt helped found the International Woman Suffrage Alliance in 1902. Catt was a member of GFWC, and in an address to clubwomen during the 1914 Biennial in Chicago, she professed that woman had a moral and patriotic duty to vote. While serving as President of the NAWSA (1915-1920), she campaigned for the Nineteenth Amendment to the United State Constitution giving women the right to vote which passed August 26, 1920. Once the 19th Amendment passed, Catt resigned from the NAWSA. Catt founded the League of Women Voters. The final event Catt organized was the Women's Centennial Congress in New York in 1940. Catt passed away March 9, 1947 at age 88 in New Rochelle, New York. Some of Catt's recognitions were to be featured in Time Magazine (1926) and she received the Pictorial Review Award (1930). Most notable was to receive the Chi Omega award (1941) from her dear friend Eleanor Roosevelt.

*Submitted by Kristin Fields*

### **Charlotte Epstein**

Known as the “Mother of Women’s Swimming in America”, Charlotte Epstein was born in 1884 in New York City. She worked as a stenographer until she started the National Women’s Life Saving League and founded the Women’s Swimming Association (WSA). The WSA became famous for promoting the health benefits of swimming as exercise. This was at a time when women were not viewed as athletic, and exercise was not considered beneficial to female health. Female swimming pioneers are sometimes called “swimming suffragists,” since their presence in the pool was analogous to their presence at the polls. Epstein battled for women’s suffrage, staging “suffrage swim races” with her teammates, as well as battling for emancipation in women’s sports by campaigning for bathing suit reform, distance swims, and other competitive events. In 1917 Epstein organized a “suffrage rescue race”, whereby the swimmers were to race to rescue a dummy named “Aunty Anti-Suffrage”. Mrs. Anti-Suffrage, as the papers called her, wore a cumbersome outfit—a white dress, white shoes, stockings, silk gloves, white cap, and a red sash that read “Anti-Suffrage.” The New York Times described her as “an old-fashioned woman who does not believe it is ladylike to swim.” The swimmers, her would-be rescuers, wore yellow sashes with their own message: “Votes for Women.” These actions were part of a trend of advocating for voting rights through physical feats. Epstein went on to She managed and chaperoned the US women’s Olympic team in 1920, 1924, and 1932, and helped produce swimming stars like Claire Galligan, Ethelda Bliedtrey, Gertrude Ederle, Eleanor Holm, and Martha Norelius.

*Submitted by Juliet Casper*

### **Susan Frost**

Susan Pringle Frost was inducted into the South Carolina Hall of Fame in 2015. Frost was born into a once prominent and wealthy family in Charleston, S.C. in 1873 and died in 1960. She is buried in Magnolia Cemetery. Her lifelong profession was a Preservationist and Suffragist. She studied for two years at Saint Mary’s Episcopal boarding school in Raleigh, N.C. When her family’s fortune dwindled she got a job as a stenographer with architect Bradford Lee Gilbert in Charleston where she discovered she had a taste for historic architecture. Later as a U.S. District Court stenographer, she became interested in the women’s suffrage movement. She was the first president of the Charleston Equal Suffrage League. She was considered to be one of the most controversial feminist of S.C. in the time. Her family had lived in S.C. for eight generations and her activism was unexpected from someone of her social stature. In addition to her public advocacy, she began a career in real estate. With this financial support she bought historic properties, restored them, and resold them. She focused on improving properties on Tradd St., Bedon’s Alley, and East Bay. Her idea to paint the former mercantile properties pastel colors along East Bay became known as “Rainbow Row”. Her historic preservation initiatives helped to transform the streets of Charleston and make it a national tourist destination.

*Submitted by Brenda Tarkenton*

### **Julia Ward Howe**

Born in New York City in 1819, Julia Ward Howe became one of the 19th century's most influential women. A writer, abolitionist, suffragist, lecturer, and clubwoman, Julia Ward Howe surrounded herself with notable writers and creators from a young age. In 1862, Howe's poem "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was published for the first time in *Atlantic Monthly*. Battle Hymn is still considered the Civil War anthem of the Union and is Howe's best-known publication. After the war, Howe helped to establish and lead major women's organizations, including GFWC. Other groups Howe helped to establish include the New England Suffrage Association, the Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association, and the National Woman Suffrage Association.

*Submitted by Norma England*

### **Alice Paul**

A vocal leader of the twentieth century women's suffrage movement, Alice Paul was born on January 11, 1885, in Mount Laurel, New Jersey. Her parents were Quakers and embraced gender equality, education for women and working to improve society. Paul attended Swarthmore College, a Quaker school cofounded by her grandfather, graduating with a biology degree in 1905. She attended the New York School of Philanthropy (now Columbia University) and received a Master of Arts degree in sociology in 1907. She then went to England to study social work, and after returning, earned a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1910. While in England, Paul met American Lucy Burns, another suffragist, and the two learned protest tactics such as picketing and hunger strikes. Paul founded the National Woman's Party, and began organizing parades and pickets in support of suffrage. Her first parade—and the largest—was in Washington, DC, on March 3, 1913, the day before President-elect Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. Approximately eight thousand women marched with banners and floats down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House, while a half million spectators watched, supported and harassed the marchers. Beginning in January 1917, Paul and over 1,000 Silent Sentinels began picketing the White House. Many women were arrested, including Paul who was sentenced to jail for seven months. She went on hunger strike, was force fed and threatened with a commitment to the insane asylum.

*Submitted by Juliet Casper*

### **Anna Pennybaker**

Anna Pennybacker was an accomplished suffragist, educator, author, peace activist, and clubwoman. Born in Virginia, Pennybacker moved to Texas at an early age where she had an indelible impact on Texas history and education. Pennybacker worked as a teacher in Texas and published *A New History of Texas* in 1888. The textbook was used in state curriculums for over forty years. In 1894, Pennybacker established the Tyler Woman's Club, one of Texas's first clubs. From 1901–1903 Anna led the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, and from 1912–1916 she served as President of GFWC. GFWC President Anna Pennybacker was personally in favor of suffrage, saying that "the highest type of women must be interested in politics and all the vital questions of the day in order to fulfill her mission as a wife and mother." At the 1914

convention in Chicago, Pennybacker lectured extensively throughout Texas to promote women's education and suffrage. From 1919–1920 Pennybacker also served as an associate member of the Democratic National Committee, where she formed an influential and lifelong friendship with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

*Submitted by Carrie Zimmerman*

### **Anita Pollitzer**

Anita Pollitzer was born and raised in Charleston, graduating from Memminger High School in 1913. While there she met Arthur Stieglitz and began of a lifelong friendship with Georgia O'Keefe. She showed Stieglitz drawings by O'Keefe, sparking O'Keefe's successful career. Anita wrote a book published posthumously, "A Woman on Paper: Georgia O'Keefe". She graduated from Columbia University in 1916. In 1917 Anita was arrested in front of the White House marching for Suffrage. She obtained a master's degree in international law from Columbia University in 1933. She was a member of the National Women's Party ratification committee and in August 1920, she dined with Harry Burn in Nashville the night before the Tennessee vote on the 19th Amendment. She is credited with helping him decide to cast that deciding vote. Anita served on the National Woman's Party's Executive Committee in 1920, as national secretary (1921-26), congressional committee vice-chair and national vice-chair (1927-38) and national chairman (1945-49). Pollitzer was honorary chairman of the National Women's Party until her death. She seconded the proposal of the Equal Rights Amendment in Seneca Falls in 1923. Anita wrote for Equal Rights and testified repeatedly before congress to bring the ERA successfully to the Senate Calendar in 1938. That same year, she was influential in the passage of the National Fair Labor Standards Act and co-founded the World Women's Party. She was a delegate to the San Francisco conference of the United Nations in 1945 and that year succeeded Alice Paul as chairman. Upon her death in 1975, in spite of spending most of her adult life outside her home state, her obituary in the New York Times stated she "lived in Charleston, SC." A plaque now marks the Pollitzer House on Pitt Street, where she grew up.

*Submitted by Suzanne Carswell*

### **Eulalie Sally**

Suffragist, realtor, Eulalie Salley was born in Augusta, Georgia, on December 11, 1883. Her economic status and social class insured schooling by governesses, private tutors, and a year each at Mary Baldwin College in Virginia and at Converse College in Spartanburg, South Carolina. In 1906 she married the prominent lawyer Julian Booth Salley, then mayor of Aiken. Claiming that it was "the best dollar I ever spent," she responded to a newspaper advertisement to join the South Carolina Equal Suffrage League (SCESL). Salley then got five women together around 1912 and organized the Aiken County Equal Suffrage League, serving as its first president. To fund her suffrage work, Salley applied for and received a real estate license in 1915, becoming the first woman realtor in the state and launching a career that

helped put Aiken on the map and made her something of a legend. In July 1969, the legislature of the state of South Carolina finally approved the bill ratifying the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. Mrs. Eulalie Salley (85 years old) was there to witness this historic event and was credited with being the lady most responsible for the legislation passed that day in Columbia. It was a symbolic signing, as the amendment became the law of the land in 1920 when it was ratified by Tennessee, the 36<sup>th</sup> state to do so. When she got up to speak to a packed gallery about the historic signing, she said “*Shame on you! Why did it take you so long?*” You see, even though she had been voting since the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment was ratified in 1920, she had never given up on getting this signed into law in South Carolina. As she left the chamber, she was given a standing ovation. Her crusade was finally over.

*Submitted by Kaye Jones*

**Lena May Jones Wade Springs** (Lena Springs) was the first woman to receive the nomination for Vice President of the United States through a major party at the 1924 Democratic National Convention. The New York Times headline read, "To Present Woman for Vice President". She was Chairman of the Credentials Committee for the 1924 Democratic National Convention. Lena had been a suffragist since World War I. She was Chairman of the English Department at Queen's College in Charlotte, North Carolina when she married Mr. Springs. In 1917, she was Vice President of the South Carolina Equal Suffrage League. Lena was District Director of the South Carolina League of Women Voters from 1920-1925 and was 1st Vice President of their 7th Convention in 1920. She first voted in 1920 and cast her vote for the Nominee of the Democratic Party. From 1922 to 1928 Lena was a Democratic National Committeewoman. She was the organizer of the Lancaster Red Cross. This exceptional woman was President of the South Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs (now GFWC-SC) from 1918-1919 which was before she could vote. What a legacy for our state organization!

*Submitted by Ellen Mayes*

**Frances Willard**

*Submitted by Tina Winkler*

**Virginia Durant Young**

*Submitted by Allison McGee*