

The Alki Suffrage Club

Katherine Smith and other "Female Freaks" Who Won the Vote

The Alki Suffrage Club got its start when Alki resident Katherine Smith went to lobby in Olympia in January 1909. She joined Emma Smith DeVoe and other suffragists to convince senators to place suffrage on the ballot. Katherine moved to Alki from Colorado where women

had the right to vote since 1893. She saw the positive impact it had on her community and was eager to make the same thing happen in Washington.

Seattle Woman Who Is Working for Suffrage



Mrs. George A. Smith

"Is it not rather an unfair advantage to take of defenseless legislators to keep sending fresh delegates of lobbyists to the capitol at intervals of a few days?" Mrs. Smith was asked.

"Well," she said, "it is a little like politics, isn't it?"

Their still-hunt lobbying efforts were a success. Suffragists had until November 1910 to convince the voting men of Washington to grant them voting rights. A few months later in June, the Alki Suffrage Club formed and placed Katherine in the President's role.

ALKI SUFFRAGE CLUB NAMES ITS DELEGATES

Members Lay Plans for Entertainment of National Officers on June 30.

The new Alki Suffrage Club developed great enthusiasm at the meeting yesterday, when delegates were chosen to the coming national convention. This club was founded only two weeks ago with thirty members, and has grown to a membership of forty-six in that short time, and promises great things for the future, the intention being to organize the whole of Alki Point within the next six months. A donation was voted towards convention expenses, the club undertaking to furnish the refreshments for the reception which is to be given to the officers of the national association at the Lincoln Hotel June 30.

Who was in the Alki Club?

Demographics

White

Average Age: 46

Few or no Children

Upper-Middle Class

Educated

Artists, Business Owners,
Wives, Divorcées, Society
Women, Mothers, Teachers,
Church-goers, Musicians,
Mountain-Climbers

Over 200 members, here
are just a few!

Lorena Hansen Smith



First schoolteacher
in Alpha Prairie, WA

Survived a shipwreck
off the coast of
Alaska. No one knew
how to operate the
lifeboats so she
organized the crew
to row in unison

Jessie Elliott



Artist known in
Seattle for her
paintings

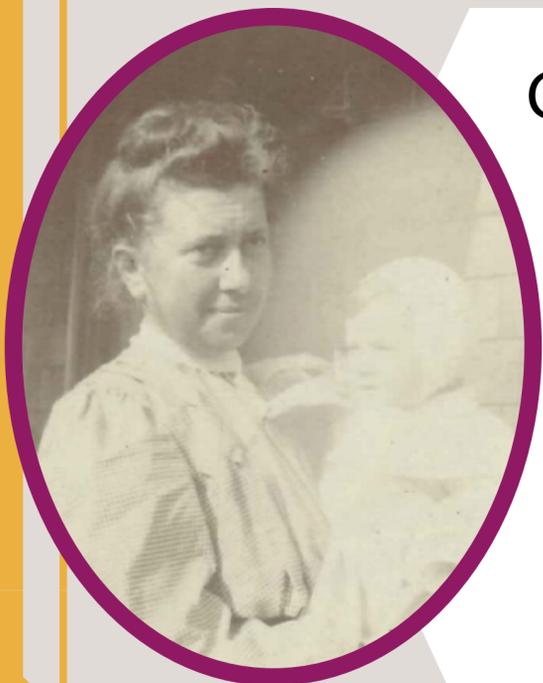
Traveled the world on steamships and
paid her way by painting for passengers

Divorced twice, although she told people
she was a widow

Carrie Day Baker

Graduate of the New
England Conservatory
of music

Co-founder of the Alki
Congregational Church



Club Activities

The Alki Club was one of the largest and most active clubs in Washington. Members wrote and distributed a pamphlet across all of southwest Seattle, including Georgetown, Youngstown, and South Park. Katherine also bought ad space in all the Seattle Theater pamphlets leading up to the election. While recovering from an illness in Hawaii, Katherine even managed to convince the mayor of Honolulu to support suffrage.

ALKI SUFFRAGE CLUB'S APPEAL TO VOTERS

WHAT WOMEN DO NOT WANT.

We don't want to be men, nor to usurp men's place in the world.

We don't want to "enter politics," become politicians, nor hold political office.

We don't want to deprive men of their rights, restrict their liberty, nor ruin their business.

We don't want to overthrow the government, nor break up the home.

WHAT WOMEN DO WANT.

We are perfectly satisfied that we are women, we are proud of our sphere, and we believe we occupy a very important position in the scheme of creation.

We love our homes, which in the aggregate make the government and we ask for the ballot that we may preserve and protect those homes and the government.

We ask that we be granted our inalienable right to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," for which our forefathers fought and died. To secure those rights they established this government, "deriving its JUST powers from the CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED."

WOMAN HE CALLS FREAK TURNS ON DR. MATTHEWS

Preacher's Talk to Queen Anne High School Denounced as Coarse



Rev. Matthews

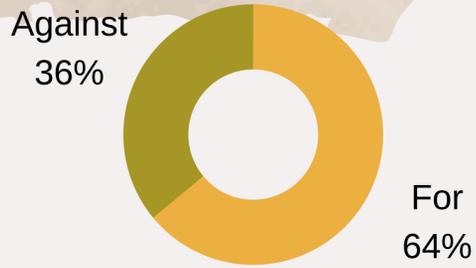
VS



Katherine

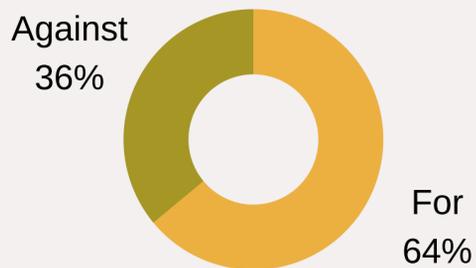
Katherine wasn't afraid to take on suffrage opponents. She penned a response to the popular fire-and-brimstone preacher Rev. Matthews, who called suffragists "female freaks." She criticized the Reverend and said his holier-than-thou attitude would be his undoing. Afterwards, the Seattle Star gave her a column in which she presented arguments for suffrage each week until the election.

Election



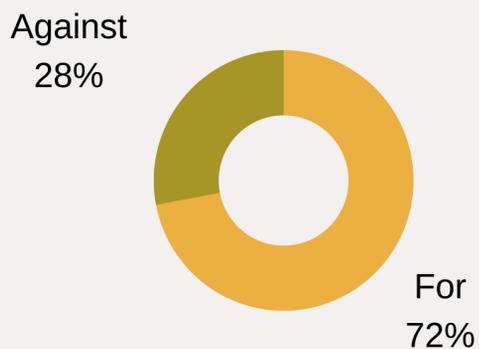
Washington

Victory: November 8th, 1910

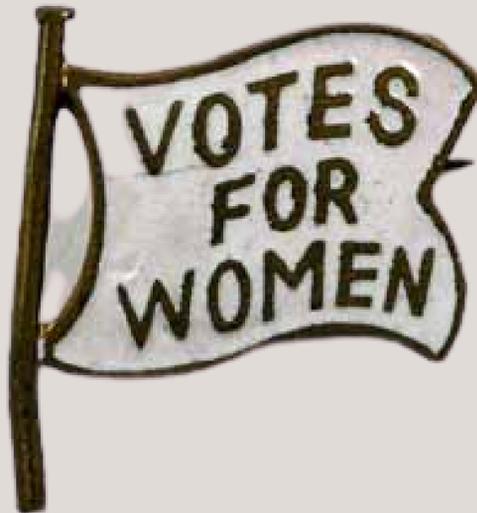


King County

A majority of Washington voters voted for suffrage. A higher percentage of voters on the Duwamish Peninsula voted to grant women the vote.



Duwamish Peninsula



SUFFRAGE WINS

By a vote of 2 to 1 the voters of Seattle favored the adoption of an amendment to the state constitution giving women the right to vote. The early returns show a strong vote for the amendment. All day long yesterday women stood in the rain at every precinct poll and canvassed conscientiously. From Tacoma, Spokane and other large cities, similar victories are reported.



Votes for Women magazine celebrated the victory with an illustration of Washington suffragist leaders on the cover. Front and center was Katherine, showing the pivotal role she played in the fight.

Conflict

Katherine was in the middle of the conflict between Emma Smith DeVoe and May Arkwright Hutton. While Katherine and Emma employed the Still-Hunt strategy to sway senators, May went another route. She was accused of bribing and using “vulgar language” with senators. Katherine wrote an irate letter to Emma stating that May had slandered her husband to a Senator.

Katherine and May later became allies against Emma. Although Katherine was a ladylike society woman and May was a boisterous character, they both were wealthy and didn't need to work. Emma was a paid political worker. Emma pressured suffrage clubs across the state to elect her as president of WESA. This secured her job and her power over the movement. Emma also started plagiarizing Votes for Women magazine, took out mentions of other suffrage clubs, and passed it off as a WESA publication. Katherine and May found this distasteful. They and 20 other clubs refused to support Emma. They were labeled as insurgents and kicked out of WESA.



DeVoe



Smith



Hutton

The conflict was set aside during the election, but in January 1911 it came to a head. WESA gathered for the last time to dissolve and rebrand as the National Council of Women Voters (NCWV) when, unexpectedly, Katherine showed up to the meeting. She asked to read a letter of grievances against Emma but was forbidden to speak and kicked out of the room. In response, Katherine and other leaders of the Washington suffrage movement wrote letters to political leaders across the county denouncing Emma's tactics.

**NEW WOMEN'S COUNCIL
WILL BE DISCREDITED**

Suffrage Leaders Take Steps
to Keep Gag Rule Methods
From Prevailing Among
Women Voters.

**TACOMA TROUBLE NOT
AT END, SAY LEADERS**

Governors of Five States Urged
to Not Recognize Faction
Which Mrs. Emma Smith De
Voe Dominates.

Legacy

The Alki Suffrage Club transformed into the Washington Suffrage League in 1911 to promote suffrage in other states. Katherine served as president.

The suffrage movement seems to have been an influential experience for members of the Alki Suffrage Club. Many members went on to become leaders in political causes, clubs, and in the workplace.

Katherine remained active in politics for the rest of her life. She campaigned for suffrage in California, worked to register female voters, supported female political candidates, and founded philanthropic clubs. She continued to speak her mind about politics in Seattle newspapers.

Mary Howe campaigned in New York for suffrage in 1915

Emma Morganroth became one of the country's first female executives at a shipping company during World War I

**EQUAL SUFFRAGISTS
WILL OPPOSE M. E. HAY
IN COMING CAMPAIGN.**

Mrs. George A. Smith, of Seattle, President of State Suffrage League, Says Feeling Is Strong Against Executive.

**Another
Mass Meeting
— FOR —
WOMEN**

Single Tax Amendments will be discussed this afternoon, at Arcade Hall, beginning at 2:30.

Mrs. George A. Smith will preside, and Charles H. Shields will be one of the speakers. This is your last chance.
COME!

**Suffrage Worker Who
Is Going to New York.**



—Photo by James & Bushnell.
Mrs. Mary E. Howe.



**Mrs. Morganroth,
Retired Shipping
Executive, Dies**

Honored Women

**This exhibit was generously funded
by contributions made in honor of
the following women:**

Erma M. Couden
Beverly Lansing
Edna Bergan
Maureen Paris
Alma Rasmussen Jones
Adah Cruzen
Jean Siers
Joan Stover
Amanda Gilbert
Cecile Hansen
Margaret Way
Geraldine Sorensen
Mary Kay Henry
Ruby Josephine Carr
Nancy Sibley McPhee
Doris Carnevali