

Timeline of Events in Securing Woman Suffrage in New York State

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February 2017

A. Some NYS Developments Prior to the July 1848 Seneca Falls Convention

- 1846 – NYS Constitutional Convention received petitions from at least 3 different counties calling for women’s right to vote
- 1846 – Samuel J. May, a Unitarian minister and radical abolitionist, vigorously supported woman’s suffrage in a sermon that was later widely circulated
- 1846 – Liberty League, an offshoot of the abolitionist Liberty Party, petitioned Congress to enfranchise women
- April 7, 1848 – New York’s Married Women’s Property Act
- May 1848 – Liberty Party convention in Rochester, NY approved a resolution calling for “universal suffrage in its broadest sense, including women as well as men”
- June 14-15, 1848 – national convention of the Liberty Party
 - Presidential nominee Gerrit Smith called for women’s suffrage
 - Lucretia Mott received 5 votes for vice-presidential nomination – the first time a woman had been proposed for federal executive office in the U.S.

B. the Seneca Falls Convention and some immediate events following

- Sunday, July 9, 1848 – the 5 ladies gathered at the home of Jane Master Hunt and decide to call a “convention to discuss the social, civil and religious condition and rights of woman”
- July 11 and 14, 1848 – official notices of the planned gathering appear in a local newspaper
- Sunday, July 16, 1848 – Elizabeth Cady Stanton goes to the M’Clintock family residence to review her drafts of the Declaration of Sentiments and 11 resolutions with Elizabeth and Mary Ann M’Clintock
- Wednesday and Thursday, July 19-20, 1848 – the actual Seneca Falls Convention
- Stanton and other ladies send petitions to the NYS Legislature
- August 2, 1848 – a woman’s rights convention is held in Rochester, NY
- October 1848 – Emily Collins of South Bristol, NY organized the Woman’s Equal Rights Union
- April 19-20, 1850 – a woman’s rights convention is held in Salem, Ohio
- May 12, 1851 – Amelia Jenks Bloomer introduced Susan B. Anthony to Elizabeth Cady Stanton on a street corner in Seneca Falls

C. Events 1850-1900

- October 23-24, 1850 – first national woman’s rights convention held in Worcester, MA (annual conventions will be held in various cities every year through 1861 when the Civil War causes a halt)
- Nov. 30-Dec. 1, 1853 – first annual New York State convention on women’s rights
- Nov. 1853 – Susan B. Anthony first took up seriously the cause of women’s rights when she began to speak out on behalf of securing additional property rights for women in NYS
- Feb. 18, 1860 – Elizabeth Cady Stanton is the first woman to occupy the Speaker’s desk to speak to the NYS Assembly
- March 21, 1860 – NYS Earning Bill secured to a married woman sole property rights, guaranteed joint guardian of children, wife’s earning assured as her own property
- May 14, 1863 – Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony and others founded the Woman’s Loyal National League during Civil War – considered the first national women’s political organization in the U.S.
- May 12, 1866 – American Equal Rights Association formed with Lucretia Mott as president and an executive committee that included Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Stone.
- May 15, 1869 – Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and others founded the National Woman Suffrage Association
- November 1869 – American Woman Suffrage Association founded by Lucy Stone, Henry Blackwell and Julia Ward Howe
- Dec. 10, 1869 – woman suffrage in Wyoming Territory—the first unit of government to guarantee full woman suffrage anywhere in the world
- 1871 – Anti-Suffrage Party founded by wives of prominent men, including Civil War generals
- November 1872 – Susan B. Anthony and other women voted in the presidential election (She will be put on trial in Canandaigua, at which the judge directed guilty verdict and fined her \$100 which she refused to pay.)
- 1875 – U.S. Supreme Court in *Minor v. Happersett* ruled that women could only receive the vote as a result of explicit legislation or constitutional amendment
- 1876 – a women’s committee formed to ask the NYS Legislature to amend the state constitution to provide for woman suffrage, but the judiciary committee reported adversely on the idea (Every year thereafter until 1894 there is a similar effort without success.)
- 1876 – Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Matilda Joslyn Gage started work on what became a 6 volume *History of Woman Suffrage*, published from 1881 to 1922 as volumes were completed.

- 1877 – both houses of NYS Legislature passed a bill authorizing the election of women to school offices, but the bill is vetoed by Governor Robinson
- 1878 – first woman suffrage amendment introduced in Congress by Senator Aaron A. Sargent of CA
- early 1880 – NYS law allowed women to vote in school elections
- Feb. 18, 1880 – in Syracuse, 13 women registered and voted – The first time since 1777 that women in New York State had legally voted.
- 1880 – The Colored Women’s Progressive Franchise Association founded by Mary Ann Shad Cary
- 1884 – special NYS law allowed women the right to vote at the charter elections in Union Springs and the right to vote for municipal officers in Dansville, Newport and several other towns
- 1885 – NWSA disavowed any connection with Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s *The Woman’s Bible*
- 1886-1890 – each year a general municipal woman suffrage bill failed to be passed by NYS Legislature
- Feb. 18, 1890 – merger of NWSA and AWSA to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association
- 1894 – women’s anti-suffrage movement in NYS arose over the choosing of delegates to the NYS constitutional convention of 1894
- 1894 – NYS Constitutional Convention defeated a provision for woman suffrage
- April 8, 1895 – New York State Association Opposed to Women Suffrage formed
- 1895 – National Federation of Afro-American Women founded by Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin
- 1896 – National Association of Colored Women founded by Harriet Tubman, Frances Harper, Ida Wells-Barnett, and Mary Church Terrell
- 1897 – NYS Legislature considered woman suffrage but did not pass such a provision (This will be true each year until 1915.)

D. Events 1900-1915

- 1900 – Friends’ Equal Rights Association formed
- 1907 – Harriot Eaton Stanton Blatch founded the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women to recruit working class women to the woman suffrage movement (The League will be renamed the Women’s Political Union)
- 1908 – The College Equal Suffrage League formed
- 1910 – National Men’s League for Woman Suffrage in the United States formed
- 1911 – National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage formed
- 1912 – all political parties in NYS declared for woman suffrage in their party platforms
- March 3, 1913 – Alice Paul’s planned Woman Suffrage Procession parade in D.C. – the day before Woodrow Wilson was to be inaugurated as POTUS
- 1913 – NYS law granted women the right to vote on tax propositions in towns and villages (but not in incorporated cities)
- 1913 – NYS Legislature passed a woman suffrage bill (It would have to be passed by 2 successive legislatures before it could go to the voters as a referendum to amend the NYS constitution.)
- 1913 – Congressional Union formed by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns

E. Events 1915- 1917 -- Final Steps to full Woman Suffrage in New York

- 1915 – National Woman’s Party formed by merger of Blatch’s Women’s Political Union and Alice Paul’s Congressional Union
- Oct. 23, 1915 – 40,000 march in woman suffrage parade in New York City in the largest parade in city history up to then
- Nov. 2, 1915 – proposed woman suffrage amendment to the NYS constitution is defeated by a margin of 194, 984 votes
- Dec. 2, 1916 – suffragists flew over President Wilson’s yacht and drop suffrage amendment petitions as his yacht is part of flotilla proceeding toward Statue of Liberty for its exterior lighting
- Jan. 1917 – Alice Paul’s National Woman’s Party began picketing Wilson’s White House
- Nov. 6, 1917 – proposed woman suffrage amendment to the NYS constitution is approved with nearly 54% in favor

F. Events 1918-1925

- Sept 30, 1918 – President Wilson publicly expressed his support for woman suffrage
- June 4, 1919 – Congress formally submitted a proposed 19th Amendment to the states
- June 10, 1919 – Governor Alfred E. Smith had called special session of NYS Legislature and on this date New York ratified the proposed 19th Amendment unanimously
- Aug. 18, 1920 – Tennessee is the 36th state to ratify the proposed 19th Amendment
- Aug. 26, 1920 – the 19th Amendment is officially part of the U.S. Constitution (In 1971 the date August 26 was designated annually to be “Women’s Equality Day.”)
- July 21, 1923 – As part of the 75th anniversary celebration of the Seneca Falls Convention, Alice Paul got the delegates of the National Woman’s Party gathered at the Presbyterian Church in Seneca Falls to call for an Equal Rights Amendment to be added to the U.S. Constitution