

# Votes for Women ! Centennial Edition 1920 -2020



*Dear Guests, Friends, Neighbors and Visitors;  
Please enjoy the Centennial of the 19th Amendment. The Hermitage Hotel welcomes you!  
Let's toast the past, appreciate the present, and make our tomorrows the best they can be.  
Sincerely, Dee Patel, Managing Director*



# Tennessee Celebrates Victory!

On August 18, 1920 the Tennessee House of Representatives successfully achieved the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the United States Constitution, as the 36<sup>th</sup> and final state. After 10 days of intense debate and pressure, the bill passed by a single vote – a shining example of the importance of each and every vote. The legislators who voted “Aye” are pictured below in this historic photo on the steps of the state capitol, courtesy of the National Woman’s Party. Harry T. Burn, who cast the tie-breaking vote, is on the bottom row facing to the side, fifth from right. The courageous Joe Hanover is on bottom row, third from left, wearing glasses. Banks Turner, who stood up to extreme peer pressure and made the final vote possible, is along second row, fourth in from left wearing the wide-brimmed white hat and narrow neck tie.

The ladies who filled the gallery and who had campaigned for years to achieved this victory, burst into cheers when the final suspenseful vote was called. Yellow petals and streamers floated to the House floor. The crowd broke into the song, “America.” “My Country ‘Tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty ...” filled the air. After surging to the governor’s office the procession led to The Hermitage Hotel, where the joy and celebration was unrestrained.





Suddenly 27 million American women had full voting power!

It was sweet victory at last for suffrage leader Carrie Chapman Catt. From her 3<sup>rd</sup> floor suite at The Hermitage Hotel she heard the cheers and joined the celebration. 30 years of brilliant leadership and hard fought campaigns had come to fruition.

Ms. Catt, who led the National American Woman Suffrage Association through its "state by state" strategy, had just recently formed the League of Women Voters, designed to help channel the amazing amount of talent of millions of women into public affairs as new doors were opened by the right to vote. Catt went on to champion world peace as her goal to improve the human condition.





## Trivia & Fun Facts ... Celebrating the Women!



Woman Spies Caught in Hotel.”

Sue Shelton White was caught eaves-dropping on the Anti-suffragists outside the “Jack Daniels suite” on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the Hermitage Hotel. The newspaper headlines on August 15, 1920 shouted, “Two



After ratification, suffragists worked to get Albert Roberts reelected as governor and they joined him for this photograph. Seated are Roberts and Kate Burch Warner, with Anne Dallas Dudley standing behind Warner. Republican women voters in East Tennessee would give the seat to Alfred Taylor. (Nashville Tennessean, September 5, 1920)

Josephine Pearson, Anti-suffragist leader, discarded her red roses towards the end of August. She later went on to advocate the Good Roads Movement in the region near her home in Monteagle, Tennessee.

Anne Dallas Dudley criss-crossed the state many times to form suffrage leagues. In fact 78 organizations across Tennessee were formed between 1912 and 1919. A fire engine was named for Dudley in 1919!

Governor Albert Roberts lost the election of November 1920, despite having championed the womens vote. Issues such as property taxes and the still-controversial matter of women voting set back his political career.

Harry T. Burn voted for 3 Amendments to the United States Constitution in his lifetime: the 18<sup>th</sup> (prohibition), the 19<sup>th</sup> (woman suffrage), and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment (Presidential term limits.) After casting the winning vote on August 18, 1920 he escaped from the state capitol after concealing himself in the library. He sprinted to The Hermitage Hotel and then calmly walked through the lobby with his hat pulled down low, and then out the side door. “I stood there watching them hunt for me, just like a pack of dogs chasing after a fox” he later said. His mother Febb was forever proud of Harry. Hurrah for Suffrage!

The Nashville telephone and telegram bills alone were \$8,000 for the women’s organization in the summer of 1920. The dollar value of bribes and favors offered to legislators by over 100 lobbyists will never be known.

The Hermitage Hotel provided a rent-free office to the Nashville Equal Suffrage League in 1915. It was put to excellent use until the ladies patriotically turned it over to become a navy recruiting station in 1917.

The Tennessee League of Women Voters was formed at meetings in the Veranda (loggia) of The Hermitage Hotel in May 1920 and at the state capitol.

Photo credits: Front page- “Tennessee Women’s Suffrage Memorial” by local sculptor Alan LeQuire, is a 7-foot tall bas relief prominently displayed in the state capitol. Page borders added using Hermitage Hotel reception desk marble- photographed by Jerry Atnip. Pages 2-3 “The Immortal Forty-nine” courtesy of National Woman’s Party, Washington, D.C. Carrie Chapman Catt sketch from New York Times. No newsletter or image reuse without written permission.

Do you have some special memories of The Hermitage Hotel ?

To share your own “news” please drop by and see Tom Vickstrom, telephone 615-345-7123 or e-mail archives@thehermitagehotel.com

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