

Rosalie Jones (1883-1978)

Radical Suffragist

Rosalie Jones was involved in the woman's suffrage movement in America for only a few years, but she became nationally famous as "General Jones" for leading suffrage hikes or "pilgrimages" to Albany and Washington D.C. She was the daughter of Oliver and Mary Jones, both from old, prominent, and wealthy Long Island families. The Jones family lived in Cold Spring Harbor and owned extensive property in Huntington, Cold Spring Harbor, Eaton's Neck, and Lloyd Neck and other locations.

Rosalie Jones first participated in an outdoor suffrage demonstration in New York City in 1911. Such "open air" meetings were radical at the time and in contrast to the parlor meetings and conventions held by the mainstream suffrage movement. Jones was president of the Nassau County branch of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association from 1912-13. She toured Long Island in the spring of 1912 in a "Votes for Women" horse and wagon. In Huntington, she and English suffragist Elisabeth Freeman spoke on Main Street to a crowd of 200.

Jones organized a hike or pilgrimage from New York City to Albany in 1912 to present petitions for women's suffrage to the new governor and gain publicity for the cause. This is when she became "General" Jones. (Her mother was a member of the New York State Anti-Suffrage Association and said the hike was "ridiculous.") Starting from the end of the subway line in the Bronx at 242nd Street, on December 16, the hikers carried yellow knapsacks, staffs, and Votes for Women banners. Several hundred started on the march with the first stop in Yonkers for an open air meeting. Most of the hikers then returned to New York City, but other local suffragists joined for segments of the more than 140-mile trek. Four or five stalwarts, including General Jones, hiked in fog, rain, mud, and snow the entire distance. They distributed leaflets along the way and spoke outdoors.



Pilgrim hikers pause en route to Washington, 1913. Rosalie Jones is in the center of the front row with a staff in her hand. Photograph courtesy of the Suffolk County Historical Society.

degree (1922). She was active in the peace movement in the 1920s and married U.S. Senator Clarence A. Dill at St. John's Church in Cold Spring Harbor in 1927. After they were divorced in 1936, Rosalie Jones resumed her maiden name and returned to the family home in Laurel Hollow. She did some pro bono legal work, bred goats, and helped manage her family's real estate property. Jones spent her final years in Brooklyn where she died in 1978 at the age of 92.



Rosalie Jones, 1927. Photograph courtesy of the Suffolk County Historical Society.

General Jones followed up with a pilgrimage, walking from Newark, N.J. to Washington, D.C. They arrived on the eve of President Wilson's inauguration and participated in the famous suffrage parade in March 1913. Later, she organized an aviation suffrage meet in Mineola and toured upstate and in other states in a yellow suffrage automobile, though she usually worked independent of the suffrage organizations.

Rosalie Jones graduated from Adelphi College in Brooklyn and the Brooklyn Law School. She pursued her education in Washington, D.C., receiving degrees from Washington College of Law (LL.B., 1919), George Washington University (M.A., 1919), and American University where she received a Doctor of Civil Law

– Natalie A. Naylor