


Attic

A NEW PLAY
ABOUT THE
SUFFRAGETTES



THE REBELLIOUS WOMEN OF WIMBLEDON

WIMBLEDON LIBRARY
AND TOUR
8-28 OCTOBER

BY BETH FLINTOFF

ATTICTHEATRECOMPANY.COM

Merton
SPACE



Department for Culture, Media and Sport
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Thank you for joining us for the world premiere of Beth Flintoff's **The Rebellious Women of Wimbledon**. Beth is an acclaimed historical playwright and we are delighted to be able to introduce her highly intelligent, generous and moving work to audiences in South West London.

This project has been a real community endeavour, and I would like to thank those local enthusiasts who have assisted our research and development of the project. In particular, the family of Rose Lamartine Yates, Sarah Gould, Heritage & Local Studies Manager for Merton Council, Alison Cousins and the John Innes Society, Pamela Greenwood of the Museum of Wimbledon and The Women's Library at the London School of Economics. In addition we are indebted to the support of Alexandra Hughes-Johnson who has supported our research, Julia Winwood, Paul McDermott, Laura Dow and Anthony Hopkins at Merton Libraries as well as all those who answered our requests for local stories following call outs on social media and in person.

To those of you who are new to us, **Attic** is a theatre company based in Merton. We commission and create new shows which play in non-traditional spaces. We believe that brilliant new theatre should be available to everyone. Towards this aim, we tour what we do to libraries, community centres, schools and theatres to put the widest possible audience in contact with great theatre.

As a small company we rely on the long term support of a number of key funders without whom our work would not be possible. These are Merton Council, Marcus Beale Architects and the Wimbledon Foundation. We are hugely grateful for the faith you place in our work.

In addition, this production is made possible by generous project grants from Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund and Unity Theatre Trust.

We would love to hear what you think of our work. If you could fill out the short feedback forms included we'd be incredibly grateful.

Jonathan Humphreys
Artistic Director

THE REBELLIOUS WOMEN OF WIMBLEDON

by Beth Flintoff

Rose Lamartine Yates Valerie Antwi

Bertha and other characters Ellen Attwell

Edith Begbie Emma Denly

Director Jonathan Humphreys

Designer Sarah Jane Booth

Sound Designer Jon McLeod

Fight Director Yarit Dor

Stage Manager Lucy Myers

General Manager for Attic Victoria Hibbs

Writer's Note **Beth Flintoff**

Any child that grew up watching *Mary Poppins* on an almost daily basis knows that, once upon a time, well to-do mothers wore sashes and sang songs in an enjoyably batty sort of way. But of course, the Suffragette movement was so much more than that. When I started researching this play, I knew already that there was darker side but hadn't fully grasped just how dark it was. These once-peaceful, law-abiding women were drawn into an increasingly subversive, dangerous world in which all existing structures, relationships, codes of conduct, ways in which men and women could coexist in any kind of way, had to be questioned. It must have felt like nothing would ever be the same again.

I became fascinated by the radicalisation of these young women. It's a shocking change in attitude for a conservative, conventional woman such as Edith to end up smashing a politician's window. I wanted to explore how it might be possible for someone as charismatic as Rose Lamartine Yates to draw others in, how they might bond together, urged on by faith, loyalty, friendship, and sisterly love. Once a suffragette had been imprisoned, they often were disowned by their families, so they had nobody else to turn to *except* the suffragettes. Society's disapproval did not make them change, it gave them no choice but to carry on.

This is a story about real people, but for the purposes of the drama I have condensed and juggled the timing of some of the events. For example, Rose Lamartine Yates did not go to the Common on the night of the Census, she was away with her family. And I have conflated Edith Begbie's two prison stays into one, to help speed the narrative along. Edith is, in fact, a compilation character – although there was an Edith Begbie who ran the WSPU shop, she did not have a husband called Gervase, and I have attributed some acts (such as vandalising the golf course) to Edith when in fact we don't know who did them, or they were done by others. But I have tried, as faithfully as I can, to capture the essence of these women and the spirit of positive radicalism that seems to have been aflame in Wimbledon.

In conversation with friends recently I have been asking the question: if you were alive at this time, would you have been a law-breaking suffragette, a law-abiding suffragist, or neither? Most think they would have become a suffragist; some think they would have been a full-on suffragette; nobody thinks they'd have done nothing. I like to think I'd have been terrifically brave, but I wonder. To defy the structures of a system into which you have been born takes a courage I'm not sure I possess, despite enjoying the benefits. My overwhelming feeling now is one of gratitude, to these women who trashed their own lives in order that someone like me can cast a vote – I am so grateful to them for doing it. They are heroines, all of them.



Valerie Antwi Rose

Valerie trained at Manchester School of Theatre. Theatre includes *Merchant of Venice* (Orange Tree Theatre), *Mary Stuart* (Duke of York's Theatre), *Nell Gwynn* (Bridewell Theatre), *Coriolanus* (Barbican Theatre), *Our Country's Good* (Theatre by the Lake, Keswick). Film includes *Sofia's Diary* (Sony Pictures)



Ellen Attwell Bertha and other characters

Ellen Attwell trained at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Theatre includes *The Same Deep Water as Me* (Guildhall's Milton Court Theatre), *The Crucible* (Guildhall's Milton Court Theatre), *Great Expectations* (Guildhall's Silk Street Theatre), *Balm in Gilead* (Guildhall's Silk Street Theatre), *King Lear* (The Television Workshop) *Bassett* (Cottesloe, National Theatre and Crucible, Sheffield). Television includes *Vanity Fair* (Mammoth for ITV/Amazon)



Emma Denly Edith

Emma trained at RADA. Theatre includes *The Rivals* (Watermill Theatre), *The Woman in the Moon* (Shakespeare's Globe), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Theatr Clwyd), *Sir Thomas More; Sapho and Phao; The Elder Brother, Fedele and Fortunio; The Scornful Lady and The Coxcomb* (all Read Not Dead at Shakespeare's Globe), *Very Nearly Totally F*cked* (RADA Festival), *Women Redressed* (Park Theatre), *Henry I* (RBL Theatre Co.), *Twelfth Night* (Pendley Shakespeare Festival) and *Uninvited* (New Diorama Theatre). Theatre during training includes *Macbeth* (Sam Wanamaker Festival), *The Beggar's Opera*, *Speaking in Tongues*, *Pains of Youth* and *The Country Wife*. Film includes *Golden Girl* (London Film School), *aftermath* (Succubus Productions) and *Christmas Hacks* (Baldy Productions). Radio includes a dramatisation of Beth Flintoff's play *Henry I* for BBC Radio.

Beth Flintoff **Writer**

Beth trained as an actress at Birmingham Conservatoire after studying English Literature at Durham University, and is now a freelance writer and director. She is an Associate Artist at Reading Between Lines Theatre Company, for whom she has written *Henry I of England*, *Oscar Wilde on Trial*, *Matilda the Empress* and *Henry II*. Other writing in 2018 includes *Polstead* for Eastern Angles, an adaptation of *The Rivals* for The Watermill, and developing *Finding Victoria*, a site specific theatre piece for Kensington Palace. Her play and theatre installation on Greenham Common, *Greenham: One Hundred Years of War and Peace* was watched by an audience of thousands across two days in 2017. She has collaborated twice as writer/director with physical theatre ensemble Rhum and Clay, on *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Hardboiled: The Fall of Sam Shadow* which toured with The Watermill before transferring to New Diorama in London (Off West End Award Nominee for Best Director 2016). Her play *The True History of Susanna Shakespeare* was awarded a Tenancy at Nuffield Theatre Southampton and longlisted for the Papatango Prize in 2017. As the former Outreach Director at The Watermill she worked on many productions as writer, director or both, including *David Copperfield*, *Life Lessons*, *Writers' Block*, *The Girl Who Never Forgot*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello* and *Doctor Faustus*.

Jonathan Humphreys **Director**

Jonathan is Artistic Director of Attic. He trained at Drama Centre London before working as an assistant director at the National Theatre and RSC. He was awarded the Regional Young Theatre Director bursary in 2010 to Sheffield Theatres where his work has received widespread critical acclaim and his production of Beckett's *Happy Days* won a TMA award. His productions includes: *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (Attic); *The Rivals* (The Watermill); *The Mighty Walzer* (Manchester Royal Exchange); *Romeo and Juliet*, *Boeing Boeing*, *The Village Bike* (Sheffield Theatres); *Oscar Wilde on Trial* (Reading Between the Lines/Reading Gaol); *The Hotel Plays* (Defibrillator/Langham Hotel); *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Spoonface Steinberg* (Hull Truck); *Mojo Mickybo* (Trafalgar Studios); *Moscow Live* (Hightide). His first short film, *The Send Off*, was commissioned by BBC and has played at festivals internationally. For the last two years he was Associate Director for National Theatre Connections, an annual youth theatre programme working with over 5000 young people. He is a regular visiting director at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, LAMDA and Drama Centre London.

Sarah Jane Booth Designer - Sarah studied Drama at the University of Exeter and trained on the Motley Theatre Design Course. She regularly collaborates with Wonderful Beast and Tete a Tete to create new operas. Theatre design credits include: *White Guy on the bus* (Finborough Theatre); *Dead & Breathing* (Liverpool Unity & The Albany); *The Mrs Mcmoon show* (The Egg, Bath); *A Tale of Two Cities* (Darlington Civic Theatre); *Caught* (Pleasance Theatre); *Grass* (Unicorn Theatre and national tour); *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (Park Theatre); *A World Elsewhere* (Theatre 503); *The Fosterling* (Ovalhouse); *The Poet's Manifesto* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *The Enchanted Story Trail* (Bad Physics for RHS Wisley); *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, & *Wind in the Willows* (Iris Theatre, St Pauls, Covent Garden). Sarah also designs for live events and photo shoots with previous clients including Zoella, Playstation, Ray Ban, Assassins Creed Syndicate, Bletchley Park, National Trust and Wellcome Trust.

Jon McLeod Sound Designer - Trained at Central School of Speech and Drama & Leeds College of Music. Recent theatre credits include *The Political History of Crack and Smack*, *Spine* (Soho Theatre) *Food*, *Just To Get Married*, *I'm Gonna Pray For You So Hard* (Finborough), *Ross & Rachael* (BAC), *Macbeth*, *Followers* (Southwark Playhouse), *Penguinpig*, *Zeraffa Giraffa* (Little Angel/Omnibus Theatre), *Carmen the Gypsy* (Arcola), *Arthur's World*, *The Rest Of Your Life* (The Bush), *Fair Field*, *Party Skills for the End of The World*, *66 Minutes in Damascus* (Shoreditch Town Hall), *Brutal Cessation*, *Dark Room*, *Screens* (Theatre 503), *If We Had Some More Cocaine I Could Show You How I Love You* (Old Red Lion), *Strangers In Between* (Trafalgar Studios), *Eyes Closed Ears Covered* (The Bunker), *Free Fall* (The Pleasance), *A Conversation*, *Stink Foot* (The Yard), *Heartbreak Hotel* (The Jetty).

Yarit Dor Fight Director - Yarit is a fight director, a movement director and an intimacy coach. Yarit trained as a dancer at Trinity Laban Conservatoire for Music and Dance, holds an MA in Theatre Practices (Directing) from Rose Bruford and graduated from LISPA (equivalent to Ecole Jacques Lecoq). Yarit is an Associate Tutor of RADA; a Shakespeare's Globe Education Practitioner; an associate artist of The Director's Cut Theatre Company; and a co-founder of Theatrical Intimacy. Recent credits include: *Hamlet*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Shakespeare's Globe); *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare in the Squares); *The Rise & Fall of Little Voice*, *Dark Tourism* (The Park Theatre); *Sisters* (Arrows & Traps Theatre Company); *One Man Two Guvnors* (Trinity Theatre); *Assata Taught Me*, *The Iphigenia Quartet* (The Gate); *Macbeth* (ImmerCity Theatre); *Disgraced* (English Theatre Frankfurt); and *Macbeth* (RIFT Theatre).

Lucy Myers Stage Manager - Lucy has been working as a Stage Manager for over seven years. She has worked throughout the UK and in the West End for the company European Arts, on *Christmas Carol* and *An Elegant of Madness*. She recently worked on premiere production of *Coconut* for the company, The Thelmas.

The Rebellious Women of Wimbledon

A Brief History

By Alexandra Hughes-Johnson

The Birth of the Wimbledon Suffrage Movement

The suffrage movement in Wimbledon dates back to the nineteenth century when Rhona Garrett, Ernestine Rose and a Miss Beeding held the first suffrage meeting in Wimbledon in March 1873.¹ This meeting was followed by further interest into the issue of women's suffrage in December 1883 when women's rights activist and theosophist, Henrietta Muller and Mrs Ashton Dilke addressed an audience of approximately 200 people, mainly women, at the Wimbledon Lecture Hall. By 1885 it appears that some women in Wimbledon wanted a Reform Bill for women, as Florence Fenwick Miller gave a lecture to the Wimbledon and Merton Radical Association stating this issue.²

Nevertheless, it was not until 1905 when Lady Frances Balfour visited Wimbledon to speak at a drawing room meeting, that was held at the home of a Mrs J.P Schwann, that the issue of women's suffrage really began to emerge within Wimbledon, as it is believed that the Wimbledon branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) was formed as a consequence of the meeting. Yet, Wimbledon's constitutional campaign for enfranchisement isn't recognised to have had a great deal of local impact until May 1907 when Bertrand Russell, godson of John Stuart Mill, stood as a women's suffrage candidate sponsored by Millicent Fawcett's NUWSS for the Parliamentary by-election. Although local Liberals and some radicals such as Mr Octaves Holmes Beatty and Mr George Lawrence Fox-Pitt backed Bertrand, he was defeated by Conservative candidate, Henry Chaplin. Throughout 1907 and 1908 the Wimbledon NUWSS, under the leadership of their organising secretary, Margaret Beatty, remained the only suffrage organisation in Wimbledon. They held a number of drawing-room meetings in the houses of their members and a small number of public meetings in Wimbledon's Lecture Hall.

The Emergence of the Militants: The Wimbledon Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and Rose Lamartine Yates

The first sign of any WSPU campaigning within Wimbledon occurred a few years after the Wimbledon NUWSS emerged, when Flora Drummond and Minnie Baldock (organisers for the WSPU) were reportedly 'ejected' from a political meeting in Wimbledon in 1907 for 'constantly interrupting' an assembly of MP's and their supporters.³ Nevertheless, it took a further year for the WSPU to emerge in Wimbledon as it wasn't until the 29th October 1908 that a meeting was organised by suffragette sympathisers in the locality. This initial 'at home' (as the suffragettes called these meetings) took place in the drawing room of Stina Bather, in Marryat Road, Wimbledon and was chaired by a Mrs Lorsignol.⁴ Evelyn Sharp and Louise Phillips were the speakers.⁵ This meeting is notably significant as it was at this point in 1908 that a Wimbledon WSPU committee was formed and the dynamics of the Wimbledon suffrage movement began to change dramatically.⁶

In February 1909, Rose Lamartine Yates became the first Wimbledon WSPU member to be imprisoned for the suffrage cause when she attended a deputation, led by Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, from Caxton Hall to the House of Commons, to present a petition under the Bill of Rights to the Prime Minister.⁷ However, Rose was seized by police officers when she attempted to deliver the petition and was subsequently arrested and charged with 'obstructing the police in the execution of their duty.'⁸ Despite her husband acting for her defence, she received one month's imprisonment in the 2nd division of Holloway Gaol in default of being 'bound over to keep the peace.'⁹ On her return to Wimbledon, Rose's house, *Dorset Hall*, had been decorated the purple, white and green colours



Rose Lamartine Yates and her son,
Paul at *Dorset Hall*. in
(Image courtesy of John Innes Society.)

of the WSPU to mark the occasion and at the end of April Rose was awarded the new illuminated addresses given to all WSPU members who had served at least one week's imprisonment and a Holloway Brooch.¹⁰

On her return from prison Rose continued as an active member and speaker for the Wimbledon WSPU and by the end of 1909 she had replaced Margaret Grant as the Wimbledon WSPU's organising secretary. In her capacity as honorary organising secretary, Rose essentially became an unpaid, full-time worker for the WSPU. She arranged the local meetings, oversaw the management of the local WSPU shop, enrolled



Women evading the census in 1911 on Wimbledon Common.
(Image courtesy of Daily Sketch)

new members, addressed local meetings every Wednesday and Sunday, organised local suffragette bazaars and garden fetes and contributed weekly reports to the local, national and suffrage press. Rose not only became the face of the Wimbledon suffrage campaign, she was also the driving force behind the local movement and was the key to its success.

Under Rose's leadership, the local WSPU campaign in Wimbledon was energetic, flamboyant and unapologetically visible. This became particularly apparent after November 1910 as it was at this point in time that the Wimbledon WSPU began to engage with the more violent forms of militancy. On the 18th November 1910 two Wimbledon suffragettes, Edith Begbie and Beatrice Martin, were among the 300 women who formed a deputation from Caxton Hall to the House of Commons in protest to the Government's shelving of the Conciliation Bill. This deputation resulted in the unprovoked assault and sexual violation of suffragettes and as a consequence of this, the day was named 'Black Friday'. In retaliation to the 'ghastly scenes' witnessed during Black Friday, Wimbledon suffragettes, Beatrice Martin and Edith Begbie, retaliated by throwing stones and smashing windows. Both women received two weeks imprisonment in Holloway Gaol for their actions.¹¹ Nevertheless, Beatrice Martin and Edith

Begbie were not the only members of the Wimbledon WSPU who took part in stone throwing and window smashing. For instance, in November 1911 Bertha Bacon, Beatrice Lee and Annie Thoy were three further Wimbledon WSPU members who were arrested for smashing three windows at the Westminster Palace Hotel.

By the beginning of 1912, there had certainly been a shift in the type of militant activity that the Wimbledon WSPU were embracing and this continued into 1913 when members of the Wimbledon WSPU raided the golf greens of Wimbledon Common and Raynes Park. Suffragettes used blunt instruments to damage the areas and left messages such as 'votes for women' and 'no surrender' as a reminder that the militant fight for equality would not end until women got the vote. Local suffragettes, however, didn't stop there and in the same year one local activist attempted to set fire to the All England Lawn Tennis Club. It was reported in the local newspapers that a 35-year-old Wimbledon suffragette, who refused all information concerning herself, was found on the grounds of the All England Lawn Tennis Club with a bag that contained paraffin oil, bundles of wood and a piece of paper with 'no peace until women get the vote' engraved upon it.¹² The unnamed suffragette pleaded not guilty to attempted arson during her court trial however due to the police evidence, she received two months in Holloway Gaol.

Although Wimbledon activists were clearly engaging in the more violent forms of militancy from 1910-1913, it is important to remember that activities such as window smashing, the raiding of golf courses and attempted arson



Rose Lamartine Yates Speaking on Wimbledon Common. Date estimated c1913
(Image courtesy of the John Innes Society)

attacks were tactics that existed among other, more mild, militant activities. Only a small number of Wimbledon suffragettes were ever imprisoned and most of them only ever took part in mild militancy which included acts such as; newspaper selling, working in the local WSPU shop, attending suffragette fairs, the boycott of the census in 1911 and advocating women's suffrage in public places.

Suffragette Opposition: Rose Lamartine Yates' Fight for Free Speech

The public's response to the WSPU in Wimbledon was relatively positive during the early years of the branch's existence. Members of the Wimbledon community would gather in their thousands on Wimbledon Common to hear suffragette speakers such as; Rose Lamartine Yates, Christabel Pankhurst and Emily Wilding Davison. Questions would be offered by the public and membership increased rapidly over the initial years of the Wimbledon WSPU's formation. Nevertheless, opposition from the public began when suffragettes started to take part in violent militancy. For instance at one Sunday meeting in March 1913, after the raid on golf courses and the attempted arson attack at the All England Lawn Tennis Club, Wimbledon suffragettes were heckled and later attacked by Wimbledon residents. The local newspaper, *The Wimbledon Boro' News*, recorded scenes of 'women [being] brutally assaulted' with men striking suffragettes and clutching at their hats. It also noted that the speaker's platform was 'rushed' resulting in several women crashing to the ground and 'in imminent danger of being trampled by the mob.' Fortunately the speakers, which included Rose Lamartine Yates and Nancy Lightman, escaped the attack and were left with only minor bruising.¹³

Following this event, it was decided by the Metropolitan Police to ban suffragette meetings in public places as the police felt that this was the only way to stop public disorders from taking place. However, Rose Lamartine Yates and the Wimbledon WSPU ignored this attempt to stop public meetings. They declared 'free speech vindicated' and defended women's right to free speech by continuing suffragette meetings on the common up until the First World War.¹⁴

For Rose Lamartine Yates, defending the right to free speech on the Wimbledon Common was what she described as her 'most valuable contribution to the suffrage campaign.'¹⁵ This statement is not at all surprising considering that the holding of public meetings on Wimbledon Common was the Wimbledon's WSPU's most prominent militant tactic and a sign of strength for the local movement. Ultimately, for Rose Lamartine Yates and many other suffrage activists without the power to speak freely in public places, the campaign for women's suffrage would not have reached the thousands of women that it did in the Edwardian period.

War and Women's Suffrage in Wimbledon



Wimbledon Suffragettes Outside of the Local WSPU Shop at 9
Victoria Crescent.
Date Unknown.
(Image courtesy of the John Innes Society)

When the First World War was declared in August 1914, WSPU members were told by the Pankhurst's to suspend all militant activity until the war was over. The Pankhurst leadership argued that to secure votes for women they needed a national victory. However, Rose Lamartine Yates and the Wimbledon WSPU didn't agree with this decision and in their

local 1914 Annual Report they recorded that 'the subject of women's enfranchisement was still a concern for many local women' and because of this, the Wimbledon branch chose to 'keep in touch with the only subject which unites all suffragists' by holding weekly meetings, readings and discussions at 3'oclock on Saturday afternoons. This continuance of suffragette meetings by the Wimbledon WSPU up until September 1916 is highly significant as they were the only local WSPU branch in Britain that is known to have defied instruction and continue their local meetings. Not only did they continue their meetings but in September 1914, Rose Lamartine Yates 'tried to minimise the suffering brought upon women and children in the locality by reason of the war' by persuading the WSPU committee to transform the bottom floor of their WSPU shop, at 9 Victoria Crescent into a cost-price restaurant. Many homes had lost their wage earner by the call to arms and the local suffragettes were 'anxious to extend a helping hand.'¹⁶ Throughout the war, the Wimbledon cost-price restaurant reportedly sold 40,000 meals per year.¹⁷

Life after the WSPU: Rose Lamartine Yates and the Suffragettes of the WSPU

Although the Wimbledon WSPU refused to accept that the war signalled the end to their suffrage activities, it was only a matter of time before Rose Lamartine Yates and the Wimbledon branch began to realise that they could no longer continue to meet and campaign for the vote under the auspices of the WSPU. Therefore in September 1916 the Wimbledon WSPU ceased their local campaign work and closed their accounts. Donating the remaining balance of ten pounds to Sylvia Pankhurst's Workers' Suffrage Federation (formally known as the East London Federation of Suffragettes).¹⁸ Nevertheless, the fight for the vote did not stop in 1916 for Rose Lamartine Yates. Following the leadership's suspension of the WSPU campaign in August 1914, a small number of women, including Rose Lamartine Yates, Mary Leigh and Anne Cobden Sanderson, were united in their disapproval of the WSPU leadership's decision to no longer use the Union's name and its platform, to campaign for the vote and as a consequence set up a protest meeting in October 1915 and a 'General Conference' in December 1915.

The 'General Conference' of the 5th December 1915 signalled the rebirth of the campaign for 'votes for women' as it was during this meeting that Rose Lamartine Yates and a number of other high profile WSPU women acted together to form the Suffragettes of the WSPU (SWSPU).

Rose Lamartine Yates and the SWSPU made a significant contribution to the wartime campaign for women's suffrage. They kept 'votes for women' in the public mind by publishing a monthly newspaper, organising weekly public meetings in Hyde Park and suffrage bazars. By the Autumn of 1916 Rose Lamartine Yates and the SWSPU were present at deputations to Parliament and pickets outside of the House of Commons in order to persuade the 'Speaker's Conference' (a conference of 32 MPs and Peers chosen in October 1916 to discuss electoral reform) to include some form of women's suffrage in their recommendations to Parliament.

The SWSPU ceased campaigning in the spring of 1917 after the Speaker's Conference recommended that some form of women's suffrage should be considered by Parliament. Following these recommendations and the continued campaign work of suffrage activists over the decades, on the 4th February 1918 the Representation of the People Act gave the vote to a number of British Women over the age of thirty and votes to all men over the age of 21. Ten years later, the Equal Franchise Act of 1928 saw equal voting rights granted to all women and men over the age of 21.

- 1 Elizabeth Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement, A Reference Guide, 1866-1928* (London: Routledge, 2001), 185.
- 2 The Wimbledon and Merton Radical Association was formed on 13th July 1884 by Thrustan Holland. As the branch was intended to cover Wimbledon, Tooting, and Merton the WMRA held their branch meetings at Bay Tree Assembly Room, Kingston Road, Wimbledon. For more information see: Gillian Hawtin, *Early Radical Wimbledon, 1880-1931*, (1993).
- 3 *The Wimbledon Boro' News*, "Suffragettes Ejected." January 12, 1907. From The British Library. Microfilm. Flora Drummond or 'The General', as she became known, joined the WSPU in 1905. She was a WSPU organiser and very close to the central leadership. Flora was in charge of all local Unions and arranged many of the WSPU pageants and demonstrations. Minnie (Lucy) Baldock is said to be one of the earliest supporters of the WSPU. Like Flora Drummond she was a WSPU organiser, however she only worked for the WSPU up until July 1911 when she became seriously ill with cancer and had to be operated upon. For more biographical information see; Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, 28, 75.
- 4 *The Wimbledon Boro' News*, "Women's Suffrage in Wimbledon", October 31, 1908. From The British Library. Microfilm
- 5 *Votes for Women*, "Programme of Events." May 14, 1908. From Senate House Library, SHL Special Collections. Evelyn Jane Sharp joined the WSPU in 1906, she was already a well-known journalist and had published various novels. She undertook several itinerant speaking engagements for the WSPU and worked in the WSPU headquarters. For more information see Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, 27.
- 6 By January 1909, The Wimbledon WSPU Committee consisted of; Rose Lamartine Yates, Stina Bather, Elizabeth Belmont, Miss Mcvinish, Mrs de Canole, Miss Field, Mrs Lorisgnol (as Hon. Treasurer), Margret Grant (as Hon. Secretary), Margaret Beatty (as Hon. Literature Secretary) and Dr Frances Bather (as representing associates)
- 7 Lamartine-Yates, Rose. *A Month in the Common Gaol for the Faith*. From The Women's Library at LSE, 7RLY.
- 8 Lamartine-Yates, Rose. *A Month in the Common Gaol for the Faith*. From The Women's Library at LSE, 7RLY.
- 9 Leigh, Mary, *Biography of Rose Lamartine-Yates*. From The Women's Library at LSE, 7ML.
- 10 Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement*, 763.
- 11 *The Wimbledon Boro' News*, "Suffragette Prisoners Welcome," December 10, 1910. From the British Library, Microfilm.
- 12 *The Suffragette*, "Attempted Fires: One Woman Arrested," London, England, March 7, 1913. From The British Library. Microfilm.
- 13 *The Wimbledon Boro' News* "Women Brutally Assaulted" Wimbledon, England, March 8, 1913. From The British Library. Microfilm
- 14 *The Wimbledon Boro' News* "Suffragette on the Common: Free Speech Vindicated" Wimbledon, England, April 26, 1913. From The British Library. Microfilm
- 15 Rose Lamartine-Yates to Edith How-Martyn, 1923. Letter. From The Suffragette Fellowship Collection, Group C Vol 3 (21) 57.113/12.
- 16 *The Wimbledon Boro News*, "Suffragettes to Relive Local Distress." Wimbledon, England, 19th September 1914, 1. From The British Library. Microfilm
- 17 Lamartine-Yates, Paul. *Paul Lamartine Yates' Autobiography*. Manuscript. From The John Innes Society, Rose Lamartine Yates Collection, 1875-1954.
- 18 *The Workers' Dreadnaught*, "The Wimbledon WSPU." September 9, 1916. From The British Newspaper Archive.

Get Involved

Alongside producing and touring shows we run a variety of participation workshops and projects. Our over 55s singing group, runs every Wednesday in Mitcham and Wimbledon, and is an excellent way to exercise the vocal chords and body, while learning new songs (and remembering some old favourites), having fun and making friends.

To find out more call our office on **020 8640 6800** or email **victoria@attictheatrecompany.com**

For more information about other opportunities and new productions visit **www.attictheatrecompany.com**

Attic