

Mary Helen Shepard Light

Mary Helen Shepard Light, who lived on a farmstead near where Oak Hill Country Club is today, was the first President of the Pittsford Political Equality Club. Notes from the Club's meeting on November 4, 1902, paint a picture of her energy and enthusiasm for suffrage:

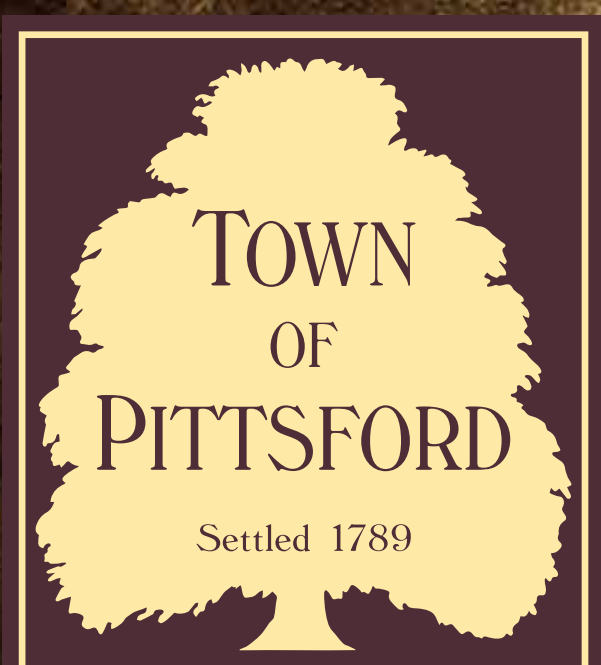
"The president, Mrs. Light, presided. She was in her brightest mood. Eager to be doing something. Very desirous of arranging for a course of lectures. Mrs. Light and Mr. and Mrs. Charles True attended the state convention at Buffalo. Both ladies were extremely enthusiastic over the exercises, addresses, &c."

Mrs. Light's leadership was cut short by her death only a few days later. She was found dead in the buggy in front of her son's home in Brighton. The obituary described her as "one of the most known and highly respected women in Monroe County; a woman of unusual mental ability and of a most social nature."

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"Having a voice in society, especially through our vote, is a foundation of freedom and the driver of change in the United States. Changing the status quo is hard. It's often unpopular to champion a long process, and can sometimes even be dangerous. With the renewed emphasis today on social justice, I'm particularly proud to know my great-great-grandmother braved those challenges and played a prominent leadership role in addressing the key social issues of her time, including the right for women citizens to vote."

—Douglas C. Light, Jr.



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