

## New Zealand's National Anthems

2007 marked 30 years since God Defend New Zealand became the national anthem of New Zealand, putting the country in the rare position of having two national anthems. In 1977, God Save The Queen was the country's national anthem and was also commonly used in public celebrations. A petition to give God Defend New Zealand equal status on 21 November 2007

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God Defend New Zealand is now generally the preferred anthem of Kiwis both at home and on the international stage. God Save The Queen tends to be reserved for formal ceremonies involving the Queen, the Governor-General or the Royal family or when referring to the Queen's role as New Zealand's head of state.

God of Nations at Thy feet, In the bonds of love we meet,  
Hear our voices, we entreat, God defend our free land.  
Guard Pacific's triple star, From the shafts of strife and war,  
Make her praises heard afar, God Defend New Zealand.

The words to God Defend New Zealand, five verses by Thomas Bracken, were first published in 1876 as part of a competition to compose a national air (tune or song) for New Zealand. The winning composer was Otago teacher John Joseph Woods.

One of the earliest recordings of the national anthem was made in 1928 by tenor Ernest McKinley at Columbia Records in Sydney. Listen to the recording <[http://digital1.natlib.govt.nz/20020604/cd48track21\\_00002345\\_df.mp3](http://digital1.natlib.govt.nz/20020604/cd48track21_00002345_df.mp3)> and you'll hear the verse repeated in te reo Māori, less common at the time than it is today. McKinley was popular in both Australia and New Zealand during the late 1920s and 1930s.

God Save the Queen/King has been in continuous use since 1745 when it was first performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in London in support of King George II. The lyrics were a response to the defeat of the King's army by that of the 'Young Pretender' to the British Throne, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, at Prestonpans, near Edinburgh. Read the words to God Save the Queen <<http://www.mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/national-anthems/god-save-queen>> and listen to the anthem <[http://www.royalmarinesbands.co.uk/audio/national\\_anthem.mp3](http://www.royalmarinesbands.co.uk/audio/national_anthem.mp3)> played by the Royal Marines Band of the Royal Navy.

### Sources

- Audio clip of Ernest McKinley singing God Defend New Zealand <[http://digital1.natlib.govt.nz/20020604/cd48track21\\_00002345\\_df.mp3](http://digital1.natlib.govt.nz/20020604/cd48track21_00002345_df.mp3)> is on the Discover web site <<http://discover.natlib.govt.nz/>> of the Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Te Puna Matauranga o Aotearoa.
- An audio clip of Royal Marines Band <[http://www.royalmarinesbands.co.uk/audio/national\\_anthem.mp3](http://www.royalmarinesbands.co.uk/audio/national_anthem.mp3)> is located on the web site of the Royal Marines Bands <<http://www.royalmarinesbands.co.uk/pages/index1.htm>>.
- The Ministry for Culture & Heritage <<http://www.mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/national-anthems>> has information about both anthems including the protocols for using them, words to both (and God Defend New Zealand in te reo Māori). For God Defend New Zealand there is also a selection of sound files that you can listen to, historical information about the anthem, the author and the composer, and the musical score.

