

History Resources

New Zealand Parliament, 2006b

Parliament timeline

Milestones in the history of New Zealand's Parliament.

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Parliament introduces universal male suffrage, which gives all men the right to vote. The parliamentary term reduces from 5 to 3 years.

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The number of members of the House of Representatives reduces from 95 to 74. The Legislative Council now has 39 members.



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Information

Date:
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The building for the General Assembly Library (now the Parliamentary Library) is constructed.

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The number of members of the House of Representatives rises from 74 to 80.

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A fire on 11 December destroys most of Parliament Buildings.

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Parliament lowers the voting age to 18.

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A royal commission on the electoral system recommends that New Zealand introduce mixed-member proportional representation (MMP).

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Parliament moves into Bowen House and a temporary debating chamber while Parliament Buildings are renovated.

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The number of members of Parliament reaches 99.

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Mixed-member proportional representation (MMP) replaces the first-past-the-post (FPP) electoral

2011 New Zealand Parliament - Parliament ...
system. There are now 120 members of Parliament. They return to the renovated Parliament House after 5 years in Bowen House.

1997

Jenny Shipley becomes the first female Prime Minister of New Zealand.

2005

Margaret Wilson becomes the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives.

A New Zealand Parliament timeline, biographies of politicians, and related websites with historical material on politicians and parliaments here and overseas.

Resources 1-3 of 3

Biographies

Links to the biographies of politicians from the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*.

- [Speakers](#)
- [Selected members of Parliament](#)
- [Māori members of Parliament](#)
- [Women members of Parliament](#)
- [Parliamentary librarians](#)
- [Link to other biographies](#)

Speakers

Algie, Ronald MacMillan 1888-1978

Professor of law, National MP 1943-66, Speaker of House of Representatives 1961-66, influential in constitutional and procedural matters.

Arthur, Basil Malcolm 1928-85

Labourer, trade unionist, Labour MP 1962-85, Speaker of House of Representatives 1984-85.

Barnard, William Edward 1886-1958

Lawyer, Labour MP 1928-43, Speaker of House of Representatives 1936-43.

Bell, Francis Dillon 1822-98

Public administrator, farmer, MP 1855-56 and 1859-75, member of Legislative Council 1854-56 and 1877-80, Speaker of House of Representatives 1871-75.

Clifford, Charles 1813-93

Farmer, businessman, MP 1853-60, first Speaker of House of Representatives 1854-60.

Fitzherbert, William 1810-91

Merchant, provincial superintendent, MP 1855-58 and 1858-79, Speaker of House of Representatives 1876-79 and of Legislative Council 1879-87.

Macfarlane, Robert Mafeking 1900-81

Driver, trade unionist, Labour MP 1939-69, Speaker of House of Representatives 1957-60.

Monro, David 1813-77

Doctor, MP 1853-55, 1858-71, and 1872-73, Speaker of House of Representatives 1861-70, developed procedures for the House.

Oram, Matthew Henry 1885-1969

Lawyer, aviation promoter, National MP 1943-57, Speaker of House of Representatives 1950-57.

O'Rorke, George Maurice 1830-1916

Lawyer, educationalist, MP 1861-90 and 1893-1902, member of Legislative Council 1904-16, Speaker of House of Representatives 1879-90 and 1894-1902, exercised firm control and made the role of Speaker impartial.

Statham, Charles Ernest 1875-1946

Lawyer, MP 1911–35, first New Zealand-born long-standing Speaker of House of Representatives 1923–35.

Selected members of Parliament

Carleton, Hugh Francis 1810–90

Trader, newspaper editor, educationalist, writer, MP 1853–70, long-standing Chairman of Committees and known as 'Father of the House' as first member elected in 1853.

Domett, Alfred 1811–87

Journalist, public servant, writer, MP 1855–66, Premier 1862–63, promoter of the Parliamentary Library.

Fox, William 1812?–93

Explorer, painter, social reformer, MP 1855–65, 1868–75, 1876–79, and 1880–81, Premier 1856, 1861–62, 1869–72, and 1873, excellent Opposition politician.

Fraser, Peter 1884–1950

Labourer, trade unionist, journalist, Labour MP 1918–50, Prime Minister 1940–49, renowned parliamentarian.

Grey, George 1812–98

Soldier, explorer, Governor, scholar, MP 1875–76, 1876–79, 1881–90, and 1891–95, Premier 1877–79, played a vital role in the emergence of representative government.

Holyoake, Keith Jacka 1904–83

Farmer, orchardist, National MP 1932–38 and 1943–77, Prime Minister 1957 and 1960–72, Governor-General 1977–80.

Lee, John Alfred Alexander 1891–1982

Criminal, soldier, hotel keeper, writer, bookseller, MP 1922–28 and 1931–43, charismatic politician who broke with the Labour Party.

McKenzie, John 1839–1901

Farmer, political reformer, Liberal MP 1881–1900.

Seddon, Richard John 1845–1906

MP 1879–1906, Premier 1893–1906, noted for asserting power of executive.

Sewell, Henry 1807–79

Lawyer, administrator, MP 1853–56, 1860, and 1865–66, member of Legislative Council 1861–65 and 1870–73, Premier 1856, produced fascinating record of the early sessions of Parliament.

Sheehan, John 1844–85

Lawyer, MP 1872–84 and 1885, first New Zealand-born MP, experienced a meteoric rise in popularity and an equally rapid fall.

Sidey, Thomas Kay 1863–1933

Lawyer, Liberal MP 1901–28, member of Legislative Council 1928–33, noted for his private member's bills.

Stafford, Edward William 1819–1901

Farmer, provincial superintendent, sportsman, MP 1855–68 and 1868–78, pragmatic politician and successful Premier 1856–61, 1865–69, and 1872.

Wakefield, Edward Gibbon 1796–1862

Political theorist, promoter of the colony, MP 1853–55, and key participant in the first session of Parliament, 1854.

Māori members of Parliament

Carroll, James 1857–1926

Ngāti Kahungunu iwi (tribe), farm worker, interpreter, Liberal MP 1887–1919, key figure in bridging Māori and Pākehā political worlds.

Ngata, Apirana Turupa 1874–1950

Ngāti Porou leader, land reformer, scholar, Liberal/United/National MP 1905–43, noted member of the Young Maori Party.

Pomare, Maui Wiremu Piti Naera 1875/76?–1930

Ngāti Mutunga and Ngāti Toa iwi (tribes), medical officer, Māori health reformer, Reform and Young Maori Party MP 1911–30.

Te Rangi Paetahi, Mete Kingi ?–1883

Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi leader, soldier, assessor, farmer, one of the first four Māori MPs 1868–70.

Tirikatene, Eruera Tihema Te Aika 1895–1967

Ngāi Tahu iwi (tribe), farmer, marine engineer, Ratana leader, Ratana/Labour MP 1932–67.

Women members of Parliament

Howard, Mabel Bowden 1894–1972

Trade unionist, community worker, notable and eccentric Labour MP 1943–69.

McCombs, Elizabeth Reid 1873–1935

Socialist, social worker, first woman MP 1933–35, elected for Labour.

Ratana, Iriaka Matiu 1905–81

Te Ati Haunui-a-Paparangi iwi (tribe), entertainer, farmer, Ratana leader, first Māori female MP 1949–69, elected for Labour.

Ross, Grace Hilda Cuthberta 1883–1959

Music teacher, welfare worker, community leader, National female MP 1945–59.

Parliamentary librarians

Scholefield, Guy Hardy 1877–1963

Parliamentary librarian 1926–48, historian, archivist, compiler of *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (1940).

Link to other biographies

Biographies of Premiers and Prime Ministers.

- [*Biographies of Speakers* \[PDF 231k\]](#)

Related websites

Links to related New Zealand historical websites — plus websites on the history of parliaments worldwide.

New Zealand

[History of the vote.](#)

[History of Parliament Buildings.](#)

[History of women and the vote.](#)

United Kingdom

[Children's guide to Parliament, including its history, with teaching resources.](#)

[Information on the House of Commons and a general series on historical topics](#) (under Parliamentary Publications and Archives/House of Commons Factsheets).

Australia

[History of the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia.](#)

[History of the New South Wales State Parliament](#) (under Sesquicentenary 1856–2006 Responsible Government in New South Wales, and under various history entries in the Site Index).

Brief history of the Queensland State Parliament.

History of the Tasmanian State Parliament.

Detailed history of the Victorian State Parliament, including biographies of members of Parliament.

Brief history of Parliament House in Melbourne, Victoria, including a virtual tour.

Canada

Links to Discover Your Legislature, which includes panoramas of the British Columbian Parliament and detailed historical information.

Virtual tour of Quebec's National Assembly, including historical descriptions and sound.

Tour of Alberta's Legislature Building, with historical photographs and text.

The 'rehabilitation' of Saskatchewan's Legislative Building, with images and historical background.

Worldwide

Links to all national parliaments, including statistics on women in parliaments in the twentieth century (www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm and www.ipu.org/wmn-e/history.htm).

Brief account of Iceland's historic Althingi assembly from around 1000 A.D.

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