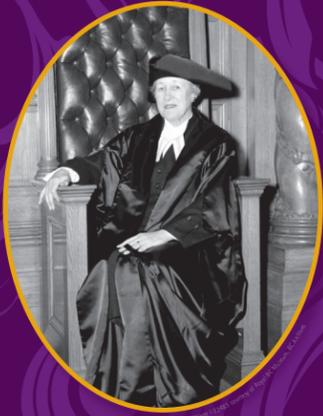


Women's History Month

www.leg.bc.ca



Nancy Hodges

1950 – First female Speaker in the Commonwealth

Nancy Hodges was born in London, England in 1888. She attended King's College at the University of London and, in 1912, immigrated to Canada with her husband, Harry Percival Hodges.

In 1916, Nancy Hodges became the editor of women's content at the *Victoria Times* newspaper, a position she held for over 20 years before gaining further recognition as a daily columnist.

In 1937, the Victoria Liberal Association asked Nancy Hodges to run as a candidate in the provincial general election. Defeated in her first attempt, she ran successfully in 1941, joining the Liberal-Conservative coalition government. She was re-elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1945, 1949 and 1952.

In the Legislative Assembly, Nancy Hodges gained a reputation as a skilled debater and supporter of women's rights. She opposed the layoff of single women following the end of World War II, advocated for the extension of benefits to women under the then-*Workmen's Compensation Act*, and argued for the protection of married women's property rights.

On February 14, 1950, Nancy Hodges was appointed Speaker of the B.C. Legislative Assembly, becoming the first woman in the Commonwealth to hold this position. Following her defeat in the 1953 provincial election, Nancy Hodges made history once again. On November 5, 1953, she was the first woman from British Columbia to be appointed to the Senate of Canada, where she served until 1965.



Tilly Jean Rolston

1952 – First female cabinet minister with portfolio in Canada

Tilly Jean Rolston was born in Vancouver, British Columbia in 1887.

Tilly Rolston was elected to B.C.'s Legislative Assembly in 1941 as the Conservative member for the riding of Vancouver-Point Grey. She was re-elected in 1945 and 1949 as a Liberal-Conservative coalition member, and in 1952 as a member of the first Social Credit government.

Tilly Rolston served for several years as Chair of the Select Standing Committee on Social Welfare. At the House's direction, the Committee studied and made recommendations on such topics as unemployment, drug addiction, and old age and mothers' pensions.

Following her re-election in 1952, Tilly Rolston was appointed Minister of Education, becoming the first female cabinet minister in Canada to be given a portfolio. During her tenure as Minister of Education, she introduced a new school funding formula that transferred some of the financial burden from the municipal to the provincial level.

Tilly Rolston died of cancer in 1953. She was the first woman in British Columbia to be given a state funeral.

1929

Following a ruling from the British Privy Council (then Canada's highest Court of Appeal), Canadian women are declared "persons" under the *British North America Act* and eligible to be appointed to the Senate of Canada

1947

The provincial franchise is extended to Chinese and South Asian women and men in B.C.

1949

The provincial franchise is extended to Aboriginal and Japanese women and men in B.C.

1950

Nancy Hodges, a Member of B.C.'s Legislative Assembly, is appointed the first female Speaker in the Commonwealth, and in 1953, is the first woman from B.C. appointed to serve in the Senate of Canada

1952

Tilly Jean Rolston becomes B.C.'s Minister of Education, the first female cabinet minister with portfolio in Canada