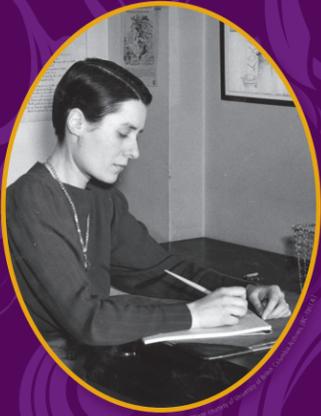


# Parliamentary Trailblazers in British Columbia

# October is V



## Grace MacInnis, OC, OBC

**1965** – First woman from B.C. elected to the Canadian House of Commons

**Grace MacInnis was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1905.** She attended the University of Manitoba and the Sorbonne before training as a teacher at the Ottawa Normal School.

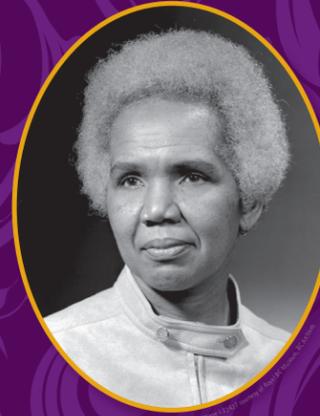
Grace MacInnis soon left teaching to act as secretary to her father, James Shaver Woodsworth, a Member of Parliament (MP) and the founder and leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a social democratic party that emerged during the 1930s in Canada. She was a charter member of the CCF – which would later become the New Democratic Party – and the president of its British Columbia branch.

In 1941, Grace MacInnis was elected to B.C.'s Legislative Assembly as the MLA for Vancouver-Burrard. Throughout

her three-year term, she championed medicare, pensions, adequate living conditions, consumer affairs and accessible birth control.

In 1965, Grace MacInnis was elected to the Canadian House of Commons as the New Democratic Party MP for Vancouver-Kingsway, the first time a woman who had served as a B.C. MLA had won a federal riding. In the House of Commons, Grace MacInnis was a forceful proponent of women's equality and advocated for the removal of abortion from the Criminal Code.

In 1975, Grace MacInnis was installed as an Officer of the Order of Canada. In 1990, she was awarded the Order of British Columbia.



## Rosemary Brown, OC, OBC

**1972** – First black woman elected to a legislature in Canada

**Rosemary Brown was born in Jamaica in 1930.** She moved to Canada in 1951 to attend McGill University and to British Columbia in 1955 where she completed a graduate degree in social work.

Rosemary Brown was employed as a social worker and university counsellor in the 1960s, a time when both women and Canadians of African and Caribbean ancestry were struggling for equality and better representation in public life.

In the 1972 provincial election, Rosemary Brown ran successfully as the New Democratic Party (NDP) candidate in the riding of Vancouver-Burrard, becoming the first black woman elected to a legislature in Canada. She was re-elected three times, serving until 1986.

In B.C.'s Legislative Assembly, Rosemary Brown championed measures to improve women's working and social conditions. She also called for improved services for the elderly, the disadvantaged, immigrants and people with disabilities.

In 1995, Rosemary Brown was awarded the Order of British Columbia. The following year, she was installed as an Officer of the Order of Canada.

1965

**Grace MacInnis** is the first woman from B.C. elected to the Canadian House of Commons

1972

**Rosemary Brown** is elected to the B.C. Legislative Assembly, the first black woman elected to a provincial legislature in Canada

1972

**Eileen Elizabeth Dailly** is the first woman in B.C. to serve as acting President of the Executive Council

1975

**Grace McCarthy** is the first female Deputy Premier in Canada