



Timeline

1816

A **Mission school** for 33 Māori boys and girls was established at Rangihoua, Bay of Islands.



Treaty of Waitangi signatories
ATL G-821-2

1840

13 Māori women were signatories to the **Treaty of Waitangi** including: Anna Hamu, widow of Te Koki, the original patron of the Paihia Mission; Kahe Te Rau o te Rangi (Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Toa, Te Ati Awa; Rangi Ropeora, Rangatira of Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Toa; Rere O Maki, a woman of rank from Wanganui; and Erenora, a high-born wife of Nopera, Chief of Te Rarawa. There is evidence that some Pākehā men did not allow Māori women to sign, because they presumed Māori women had as few rights as Pākehā women.

1852

The **Constitution Act** gave the vote to men who individually owned land, which excluded women and most Māori.

1853-71

12,000 young single European women arrived in New Zealand as government assisted passengers. Eligible females needed to be aged between 12 and 35, sober, industrious, of good moral character and free from any bodily or mental defect.



Women Immigrants
ATL E-079-005

1860

Married Women's Property Protection Act allowed deserted women to keep their earnings and own property.

1864

Heni Pore, the daughter of a high born Arawa woman and an Irish sea Captain, physically fought for the King movement and distinguished herself at Gate Pa, and later became the Secretary to the Māori Women's Christian Temperance Union. She became known as an expert on Māori land title.

1867

The **Municipal Corporations Act** enabled "every person of full age of twenty-one years in occupation or ownership" of rateable property the right to vote or share voting in accordance with property values, this enabled women to vote but not to stand for election.

The **Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act**, allowed for divorce on the grounds of adultery by the wife, or adultery by the husband if there were aggravating circumstances. This allowed an escape for women should their unfaithful husbands fail to support them.

1871

The **Otago Girls' High School** was established

1873

The **Employment of Females Act**, regulated the working conditions for women in workrooms and factories, forbidding night work, limiting work to eight hours a day and provided holidays and weekends.

1874

Census 1874: – 45,470 Māori and 256,393 Pākehā; twice as many Pākehā men than women in the 21-65 age group; only 15% of women aged over 20 were single, and 5% of those over 30; only 20% of women worked outside the home (c.f. 45% in England).

1877

The **Education Act** provided for a national system of free, secular, compulsory education for boys and girls 7-13 years old.

1878

The **Young Women's Christian Association** (YWCA) established in Dunedin, the first in the southern hemisphere. An international organisation dedicated to women's holistic growth and leadership.

1884

The **Married Women's Property Act** enabled married women to own property in their own right.

1885

Women won the **right to vote for hospital and charitable boards**, licensing and school committees and local body elections.

1886

The **New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union** was established promoting control, and sometimes prohibition, of liquor, votes for women, charity work, social reform and supporting family cohesion.

1889

The first kindergarten was opened in Dunedin by **Lavinia Kelsey** in response to inadequate Pākehā child care networks and the need for paid work during the depression.

1893

The Electoral Act allowing **women's suffrage**. Pākehā and Māori women won the right to vote in general elections, the first in a self-governing country.

Elizabeth Yates became New Zealand's **first woman mayor** in the British Empire, when she won the mayoralty for Onehunga.

The **age of sexual consent for girls was raised** from 12 to 14 years, and then increased to 16 years in 1896.

The **Society for the Protection of Women and Children** was set up to press for legislative change to protect women and children, particularly from domestic violence. In 1955 it was renamed the Society for the Protection of Home and Family, then the Home and Family Society.



Electoral Act
ATL PUBL-0126-1894-01



Elizabeth Yates
ATL C16118



Hockey Club
ATL 1/1-008098

1894

The **Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act** allowed the formation of trade unions and gave women the right to negotiate legally enforceable awards and agreements. Despite this, many awards and agreements had lower rates of pay for females than for males, for the same work.

1895

The **first women's hockey club** was established.

Minnie Dean, hanged for the murder of a child in her care, was the first and only New Zealand woman to hang.



Kate Sheppard
ATL PUBL-0089-1914-001

1896

The **National Council of Women** of New Zealand was set up following the campaign for women's enfranchisement, with Kate Sheppard as president. It was a political but non-party organisation, interested in social reform and the status and conditions of women.

Emily Siedeberg became the **first woman doctor** to graduate.

Mary Ann Bacon became the country's **first woman stockbroker**.



Ethel Benjamin
Hocken Library c/n F420/14

1897

Ethel Benjamin became the **first woman law graduate**.

The Te Kotahitanga failed to gain self determination for Māori and to have the Legislature recognise the Māori Parliament.

1898

The **Divorce Act** 1898 was the first major reform of the original Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act 1867 and made the grounds for dissolution of marriage virtually equal for women and men. Previously, it was more difficult for a woman to divorce her husband than vice versa.



Nurses Act
ATL 1/4-015698

1901

The **New Zealand Women Teachers' Association** was formed.

The **Nurses Registration Act**, provided three years training and registration.

1902

The **Ladies Rifle Corps**, also known as the Wellington Amazons, and members of the Wellington Militia.



Rifle Corp
ATL 1/2-020186

1904

The **Midwives Registration Act** was passed.

1905

A poster, by Henry Wright, recommended women to go home, to look after the children, cook their husband's dinners, empty the slops, and generally attend to the domestic affairs for which nature designed them. It read 'Notice to epicene women. **Electioneering women** are requested not to call here'.

1907

The **Royal New Zealand Plunket Society** was formed. Specially trained nurses provided free education for mothers in the care and feeding of babies.

Miss J A McKegg became the first woman to gain a certificate as **engineer of a restricted-limit ship**.

1908

The **Domestic Workers Union** was registered. Established as early as 1897 to demand a 68 hour week, it was excluded from the Arbitration Act because domestic workers were not employed for monetary gain.

Akenehi Hei became the **first Māori nurse** to graduate.

1909

The **Misses Basten** became associate members of the New Zealand Society of Accountants.

1911

A means-tested **Widows Pension** was introduced, with benefits for dependent children.

1913

Housewives' unions were formed in all the main centres, concerned with family and community, and international peace. In 1939, the unions and the housewives' associations formed the New Zealand Housewives' Association, which lasted, under various names, until the 1970s

Ellen Melville was elected the **first woman city councillor**. She sat on the Auckland City Council for 33 years, its longest serving member.



Ellen Melville
ATL F1181381/2

1914

The Public Servants Association Conference demanded **equal pay and privileges for women employees**.

1914-19

During the First World War Ettie Rout initiated the **New Zealand Volunteer Sisters Nursing Service** in New Zealand and Cairo, promoting the use of contraceptives amongst Australasian soldiers to prevent the spread of venereal disease.

Women led Māori **opposition to conscription**, especially in the Waikato.

1917

The **National Council of Women** was revived, after being in recess since 1906.

Alice Cossey became secretary of the **Auckland Tailoresses' Union**, which she held for 28 years. She was one of New Zealand's first professional female unionists.



Entanglement
ATL PUBL-0058-3-07



Alice Cossey
ATL PAColl-6203-47

1919

Women won the right to stand for the general elections when the **Women's Parliamentary Rights Act** was passed. None of the four women who stood in the 1919 election was elected.

1920

Swimmer Violet Waldron was the **first New Zealand woman to compete at the Olympics**.



Country Women's
Institute
ATL MNZ-0957-1/4

1921

The New Zealand Federation of **Country Women's Institutes** (CWI) was established, with a group of Māori Women's Institutes within it which focused on Māori culture as well as home and family. The CWI claims to have the largest membership of any women's organisation in New Zealand and aims to improve community life in rural areas by bringing women together for discussion and activities.

The **New Zealand Medical Women's Association** was founded.

1922

The **New Zealand Federation of University Women** was established to provide a contact network for women graduates, encourage ongoing education with discussion groups and lectures, and support research through grants to female students. It was also involved in activities such as lobbying for equal pay and later became known as the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women.

1925

The **Women's Division of Federated Farmers** (now called Rural Women New Zealand) grew from a perceived need for contact among isolated rural women. An early priority was providing home help following childbirth or during illness. The organisation also fundraises for community facilities and educational activities, and undertakes research to benefit women's lives.

Mrs G Sanford became the **first New Zealand woman pilot**.

1926

The **League of Mothers and Homemakers** was established to provide support and contact for isolated women at home. Today, it focuses on the low status of mothers who stay at home to care for their families. Māori membership was encouraged, with a Māori branch set up in Wairoa in 1929.

Bessie Te Wenerau Grace, thought to have been the **first Māori woman to receive a degree** from a New Zealand university, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts.

Women were permitted to become **Justices of the Peace**.

1927

Dr Nina Catherine Muir, the **first woman house surgeon**, became president of the Medical Association of New Zealand.

1932

The **New Zealand Women's Weekly** was launched.

The **New Women Writers' Society** was formed.

1933

It became illegal to marry before the age of 16 years. Previously there was no legal minimum age.

The **first woman MP**, Elizabeth McCombs, was elected in the by-election for Lyttelton.



Elizabeth McCombs
ATL 1/2-150372

1934

The law changed to allow **married women to retain their own nationality**. Previously, they had to forego their New Zealand nationality if they married a man of another nationality.

The first edition of **Working Woman**, edited by Elsie Freeman, was issued: "The issues of the moment are stark: food, housing, keeping families together".

The first **National Working Women's Conference** was held.

1935

The **Sex Hygiene and Birth Regulation Society** was established as a voluntary organisation by women committed to improving access to birth control. The name was changed to the New Zealand Family Planning Association in 1939.

1936

Jean Batten set the **solo single-engined flight record** from England to Australia.

1937

The **Māori Women's Health League** was formed by Arawa women to improve the health and welfare of Māori throughout the Bay of Plenty and Tairāwhiti (East Coast) regions. It gave guidance in the care of children, food values, hygiene and disease prevention, care of home and gardens, and encouraged an interest in Māori arts and crafts.

1938

The Labour Government granted the **equivalent of the widows benefit** to women who had been deserted by their husbands.

Women were allowed to join the **Police Force**, but not allowed outside duties until 1947.

1939

The **New Zealand Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs** was established to encourage business and professional women to enter public life and community affairs, and work to improve employment conditions and opportunities for women.

1941

Women gained the right to sit in the **Legislative Council**, the nominated upper house of Parliament.

The **Play Centre Movement** began.

1942

The **Women Jurors Act** enabled women aged between 25 and 60 to have their names included on the Jury list if they so desired. This was amended in 1963 to include all women on the list with absolute right to withdraw, and later amended to make Jury conditions and responsibilities the same for men and women between 20 and 65.



Jean Batten
ATL 1/2-046051



Police Women
ATL 1/2-152893

1944

The **Public Service Women's Committee** was formed to campaign for equal pay.

Approximately 1,400 **war brides** left for the United States.



Mary Dreaver
ATL F201491/4

1946

The **Universal Family Benefit** was introduced with mothers receiving the benefit for each dependent child, irrespective of family income or property. In 1979, it doubled to \$6 per week and in 1991 it was abolished.

Mary Dreaver and Mary Anderson became the **first women appointed to the Legislative Council**. Both served until the council's abolition in 1950.



Mabel Howard
ATL 1/2-065969

1947

Labour MP Mabel Howard became New Zealand's **First Woman Cabinet Minister**. She served as Minister of Health and Minister in Charge of Child Welfare until Labour's defeat in 1949, then as Minister of Social Security in the 1957-60 Labour government.

1948

The **Apprentices Act** was passed, specifically excluding women. The ban was not lifted until 1972.



Iriaka Ratana
ATL F551261/2

1949

Labour's Iriaka Ratana became the **first Māori woman MP**, succeeding her deceased husband, Matiu, in the Western Māori seat.

1950

The **Joint Family Homes Act** made it less costly for house titles to be transferred to wives after their husband's death, by exempting them from gift duty.

1951

The government-sponsored **Māori Women's Welfare League** was established by Māori women, to address the social problems arising from the increasing urbanisation of Māori.



Yvette Williams
ATL 1/2-046728

1952

Long jumper Yvette Williams **won gold at the Olympics**.

1953

The **First Family Planning Clinic** opened in Auckland, moving into school and community education programmes in the 1970s.

1955

An all woman protest against the closure of the Nelson railway line, failed after a week long sit-in. **Sonja Davies** was one of the protesters.

1957

Samoan Fanaafi Ma'ai'i was the **first Pacific woman in New Zealand to gain a Bachelor of Arts**, at Auckland University.

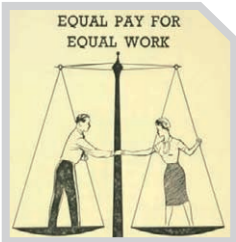
The **Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity** comprising women's organisations, trade unions and employer organisations was established.



Phyllis Guthardt
ATL F153091/2

1959

Phyllis Guthardt was the **first woman ordained** in New Zealand on an equal status with men, in the Methodist Church. In 1965, Margaret Reid became the country's first woman Presbyterian minister and in 1976 the Anglican General Synod admitted women to the priesthood. Four women were ordained in 1977. Penny Jamieson, Anglican Bishop of Dunedin, was ordained the first woman Anglican Bishop in the world.



Equal Pay Act
ATL Eph-A-women-1961-01

1960

The **Oral Contraceptive Pill** was introduced. New Zealand women are among the highest users of this form of contraception in the world. Alongside other methods, the pill gave most women control over their fertility, allowing them more choice of lifestyle and independence.

The **Government Service Equal Pay Act** was introduced giving women the right to equal pay in the public service, and covering about one-fifth of all women in paid employment. It was expected to flow on to the private sector.

Extramural studies at university level first became available through a branch college of Victoria University, located at Palmerston North. The college combined with Massey Agricultural College in 1964 to form Massey University. Extramural university study allowed women to pursue a tertiary qualification from home, while engaged in childcare or paid work.

1963

The **Matrimonial Proceedings Act** 1963 allowed separation agreements to qualify as grounds for divorce. A 1968 amendment reduced the qualifying periods for divorce on the grounds of formal separation and informally living apart.

The **New Zealand Childcare Association** was established to improve conditions, quality of care and provide staff training for childcare workers. It helped achieve major reforms in funding and administration and training programmes.

The **Matrimonial Property Act** first recognised non-monetary contributions to a marriage, but allowed courts broad discretion as to how property should be divided between spouses.

1966

Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu was elected **Arikinui** (paramount leader) of Te Kingitanga. Te Kingitanga – the King Movement – began in the 1850s to establish a Māori king to protect Māori land from alienation and to end internal strife and establish a spirit unity. Dame Te Atairangikaahu is also known as the Māori Queen.

The **Society for Research on Women** was founded to undertake voluntary social research. Its studies have included topics such as childcare, professional women, maternity services, doctor-patient relationships, immigrant women, sole mothers, older mothers, family violence and women in unusual jobs.



Dame Te Atairangikaahu
ATL 2363

1967

The National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (**NACEW**) was set up and involved itself with employment-related legislation: the Equal Pay Act 1972, Human Rights Commission Act 1977 and Maternity Leave Protection Act 1980.

1968

The **Domestic Proceedings Act** was introduced requiring fathers of ex-nuptial children to pay some maintenance towards the mothers, as well as the children.

The **Guardianship Act** allowed mothers sole guardianship of their children if she was not married to or living with the father of children at the time of the child's birth.

1969

The **Status of Children Act** gave equal status to all children, regardless of their parents' marital status, thus reducing the social stigma attached to unmarried mothers.

1971

The **Abortion Law Reform** Association of New Zealand (ALRANZ) was formed, followed in 1973 by the Women's National Abortion Action Campaign (WONAAC). Both lobbied for women to have a choice over abortion.

1972

The **Equal Pay Act** phased in equal pay in annual steps to 1977. It aimed to remove discrimination based on employees' sex and extended legislation to the private sector which had previously applied only to the public sector.

The first national **Women's Liberation Conference** was held in Wellington.

Gay Liberation was set up by a lesbian woman. In the following years, more specifically lesbian organisations (such as the Sisterhood for Homophile Equality in Christchurch) were established.

Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, Labour MP for Southern Māori, became the **first Māori woman Cabinet Minister**, serving as Associate Minister for Social Welfare (1972-74), Minister of Tourism (1972-75), and Minister for the Environment (1974-75).

Broadsheet, the country's feminist magazine, first appeared.

1973

The **Domestic Purposes Benefit** was introduced for all parents (mainly women) caring for dependent children without the support of a partner. Previously, from 1968, there existed a family maintenance allowance which was a discretionary benefit.

The **Accident Compensation Amendment Act** extended compensation to non-earners, benefiting women who do full-time unpaid work in the home, in particular.

A **Select Committee on Women's Rights** was set up. Its report, in 1975, found that the main cause of sexual inequality in New Zealand was the acceptance of different traditional roles for women and men. Measures were recommended to advance women's opportunities in employment, education, the home and public life.

The **Council for the Single Mother and Her Child** was set up as a political advocacy body for sole mothers.

The **first United Women's Convention** was held to raise the status and confidence of women and to get more women working on women's issues, with 1,500 women attending.



Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan
ATL 4641

1974

The **first National Lesbian Conference** was held at Victoria University.

The **first women's studies courses** were established at Waikato and Victoria universities. In 1976, a national Women's Studies Association was formed. Most New Zealand universities now offer courses or degrees in women's studies.

The **Working Women's Alliance** was formed in Wellington to educate women about trade union issues. Its areas of interest grew to include childcare, health and cost of living.

The **Committee on Women administered by Treasury** was established to focus on the advancement of the status of women, succeeded by the Advisory Committee on Women's Affairs and subsequently became the Ministry of Women's Affairs.



Dame Whina Cooper
Archives New Zealand, Te Rua Mahara
o te Kāwanatanga ATL F401761/2(AAQT
6401 A31014).

1975

The **Women's Electoral Lobby of New Zealand (WEL(NZ))** a non-party organisation, was established to encourage women to enter political life, act as a united political force and promote women's issues in the political arena.

Dame Whina Cooper led a **Land March** from Northland to Wellington to oppose further alienation of Māori land.

1976

The **Matrimonial Property Act 1976** was introduced to provide for the equitable division of matrimonial property, particularly of the matrimonial home and chattels, when marriage ends.

The **Domicile Act** legislated that a woman does not have to live with her husband.

PACIFICA Inc (Pacific Women's Council), a non-party political organisation of Pacific women, was incorporated in Wellington, with Elelino Paddy Walker their founding president.

Dame Augusta Wallace was the **first woman Judge appointed to the District Court**.

1977

The **Human Rights Commission Act** legislated against, and provided remedies for, discrimination against women, with some limitations. The grounds were extended in an amendment in 1993.

After a two year struggle, women won the **right to become professional jockeys**. One of the last western countries to allow women jockeys, by 1993 New Zealand had the highest number of female apprentice jockeys in the world.

The introduction of **National Superannuation** entitled women to this retirement benefit from 60 years of age, improving financial independence for older women. Previously, the pension had been assessed and paid on the basis of the marital unit.

The **Citizenship Act** extended to women the same nationality rights as men, enabling them to pass on their nationality to their children or husband.

1978

The **New Zealand Home Birth Association** was established in response to increased demand for home births during the 1970s, a reaction to the medicalisation of childbirth.

The **Working Women's Charter** – a bill of rights for working women – was promoted by the Working Women's Council within the Labour Party and union movement, and the Wellington Trades Council Women's Sub-Committee was formed to educate unions about the charter. Demands included provision of childcare and paid parental leave. The Federation of Labour accepted the charter and set up a Women's Advisory Committee.

The **first New Zealand woman ambassador** was appointed – Barbara Angus, to the Philippines.

Naomi James was the first woman to sail single handed around the world, cutting two days off Sir Francis Chichester's record time.



Naomi James

Rotorua Museum of Art and History, Te Whare Taonga O Te Arawa, Rotorua, New Zealand.

1979

A **National Advisory Committee on Women and Education** was set up.

The **Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund** was established in Dunedin to provide positive support for lesbian mothers faced with losing custody of their children.

The **Women's Appointment File** (The Nominations Service from 1992) was set up to increase women's representation on statutory boards and committees through a database of names and curricula vitae of women available to be nominated. It is currently administered by the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

Jean Herbison was the **first woman appointed Chancellor of a New Zealand university**, at Canterbury.

1980

The **Family Proceedings Act 1980** made irreconcilable differences, proven by living apart for two years, the only ground for marriage dissolution, shifting from an adversarial approach to one of conflict resolution and making dissolution quicker, simpler and cheaper.

The **Evidence Amendment Act** restricted evidence relating to a victim's sexual history, reducing the trauma for those involved in court hearings.

The **Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act** allowed women to take leave for up to 26 weeks during pregnancy or after the birth of a child, and prohibited dismissal due to pregnancy, pregnancy-related sickness or maternity leave.

The Health Alternatives for Women (**THAW**) set up in Christchurch as a health resource, information and referral centre for women, became New Zealand's longest established women's health centre.

1981

An **amendment to the Factories and Commercial Premises Act** repealed the prohibition of women's employment on night-shift in factories.

With the introduction of the **Liable Parent Contribution Scheme** as part of the Family Proceeding Act 1980, the Department of Social Welfare took over the role of securing maintenance for the children of beneficiaries. Women applying for benefit support no longer needed to take court action to secure maintenance from the non-custodial parent.



Dame Kiri Te Kanawa
ATL EP-1990-0355-35

The **National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges** was established, although refuges had begun in the early 1970s. It provides safe houses, counselling, referral and advocacy for battered women and their children, and organises community education programmes to change attitudes. The collective received government funding for the first time in 1984. The Women's Refuge Foundation was established in 1986 to raise funds to support refuge work. In 1988, the collective's constitution added an agreement between Māori women and women of other cultures enabling each to develop culturally appropriate and complementary services.

The **first women qualified for full-time operational work as fire-fighters**, after a long campaign.

Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, New Zealand's internationally renowned opera singer, sang at Prince Charles and Lady Diana's wedding.

1982

The **Domestic Protection Act** was introduced, to lessen the effects of domestic violence by providing for non-molestation orders, non-violence orders, and emergency occupation and tenancy orders.

Te kohanga reo (preschool Māori language nests) were formed, followed by kura kaupapa Māori (primary schools with curriculum based on Māori culture, taught in Māori), and have been a fundamental source of empowerment for Māori women. Through their involvement in the establishment and running of te kohanga reo, Māori women developed their organisational and administrative skills. For many Māori women, their own links with whanau, hapu and iwi were re-established.

Elsbeth Kennedy became the first woman member of the **New Zealand Stock Exchange**.

1983

New Zealand ratified the International Labour Organisation (ILO) **Equal Pay Convention** adopted by the organisation in 1951. The Convention covers equal pay for work of equal value.

The **Minimum Wage Act** was introduced entitling women over 20 years to the same minimum wage as men.

An **Equal Employment Opportunities** programme (EEO) was introduced in the public service with four target groups; women, Māori, ethnic groups and people with disabilities.

Women Against Pornography formed to try to change public attitudes and laws regarding pornography, which some see as being linked to violence against women.

Sonja Davies was elected the **first woman vice-president of the Federation of Labour**.



Sonja Davies
ATL 2023

1984

Cabinet approved the establishment of the **Ministry of Women's Affairs** as a separate department of state to advise government of the differential impact of policies on women, to initiate and support legislation to promote equality for women and to nominate suitable women for appointment to statutory bodies.

CEDAW ratification: New Zealand ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Te Kakano o te Whanau was established nationwide to provide services for Māori women who are victims of incest, rape, sexual abuse and related violence.

Fertility Action was set up, initially to publicise the danger of the Dalkon Shield contraceptive, evolving into a women's health consumer advocacy group. It exposed the 'Unfortunate Experiment' at National Women's Hospital where treatment was withheld from women with abnormal cervical smears, and was involved in the subsequent inquiry report. In 1993 it became Women's Health Action to reflect its wider scope.

Margaret Wilson became the **first woman president of the Labour Party**.

Diana Shand was appointed **Human Rights Commissioner**, with special responsibility for women's affairs.

1985

Secretary of Women's Affairs Mary O'Regan, was the **first woman to head a government department**, with Ann Hercus the first Minister of Women's Affairs.

The **Crimes Amendment Act** (No 3) made rape of a spouse a criminal offence.

The **Adult Adoption Information Act** allowed adult adoptees and their birth parents access to records relating to the birth. Among both adoptees and birth parents, mainly women have sought information.

Keri Hulme's book *The Bone People* won the **Booker Prize**.

1986

The **Ministry of Women's Affairs** was officially opened on the 6th May.

The **National Collective of Rape Crisis** was formed, although earlier groups began in the early 1970s. Support is provided for women and child survivors of rape and sexual abuse, as well as community education and prevention programmes.

The **Unemployment Benefit** was split between partners in cases where it was received at the married rate. Previously, the full payment had been made to the male partner.

1987

The **Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act** superseded the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act 1980, extending to fathers the right to take leave after their child's birth. The combined leave time of both parents could be up to 52 weeks.

The **Māori Women's Welfare League** began administering the Māori Women's Development Fund, to help Māori women establish their own businesses.

A professional association for sex workers, the **New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective**, was established. It has played a major role in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS among sex industry workers, and in the decriminalisation of sex workers as well as advocating on such issues as discrimination and better working conditions.

Nadja Tollemache was appointed New Zealand's **first woman Ombudsman**.

A repeal of the **Miners Act** removed barriers against women working underground in mines.

The **first Māori Women's Refuge** was established.

1987-88

The **Cervical Cancer Inquiry** into allegations about the treatment of cervical cancer at National Women's Hospital and related ethical concerns was chaired by Judge Silvia Cartwright. The inquiry's recommendations in 1988 had major implications for the health sector about informed consent to treatment and research, and the proposed national cervical screening programme.

1988

The report of the **Women's Advisory Committee on Education**, "A National Policy on the Education of Girls and Women in New Zealand", was published and its findings and recommendations used in administration reforms in the education sector.

The **State Sector Act** required the sector to put equal employment opportunities in place.

1989

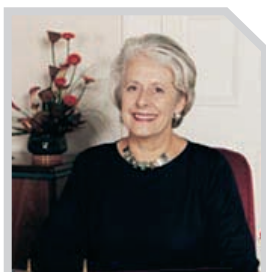
The government-appointed **Committee of Inquiry into Pornography** presented its report which resulted in legislation in 1993 to tighten controls on materials containing violence and sexual violence against women and children.

Helen Clark became **first female Deputy Prime Minister**, the highest political office held by a woman in New Zealand.

The Minister of Health set up a **Women's Health Advisory Committee** to advise on women's health issues from a community/consumer perspective.

The **first Pacific Women's Refuge** was established.

Dame Silvia Cartwright became **first female Chief Justice of the District Court** and the first woman in the High Court in 1993.



Judge Silvia Cartwright

1990

The **Employment Equity Act** established a mechanism to assess the comparative worth of jobs. However, later in the year, the incoming government repealed the legislation.

Dame Catherine Tizard was appointed New Zealand's **first woman Governor-General**.

Wahine Pakari, a programme encouraging Māori women into self-employment, was established by Te Ohu Whakatupu (the Māori Women's Policy Unit of the Ministry of Women's Affairs).

The **Bill of Rights Act 1990** set out basic rights, including freedom from discrimination on the grounds of sex and marital status.

The **Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Amendment Act** gave people under 16 years access to information on contraception and to supplies of contraceptives.

The **Nurses Amendment Act** gave midwives autonomy to take full responsibility for a woman throughout pregnancy and childbirth.

Ruth Richardson became the **first woman Minister of Finance**.

The new National Government repealed the Labour Government's Employment Equity Act and established a Working Party on Equity in Employment. On its recommendation, the **Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Trust** was established in 1991 to promote the business benefits of equal employment opportunities to all employers.

Penny Jamieson, Anglican Bishop of Dunedin, was ordained the **first Anglican Bishop in the world**.



Dame Catherine Tizard



Ruth Richardson
ATL 4495

1991

Amendments to the **Crimes and Summary Proceedings Acts** made it more difficult for violent offenders to get bail, reducing the trauma for women involved in court action against them.

1992

Through the **Child Support Act 1991**, the Inland Revenue Department took over assessing the maintenance payable by a non-custodial parent and enforcing payment. Custodial parents who were not beneficiaries were also covered by the Act, and no longer had to go to court to secure maintenance.

1993

The **Human Rights Commission Act** was amended to extend the grounds under which discrimination in employment matters, provision of goods and services, and access to places, vehicles and facilities is illegal in New Zealand. The grounds now cover sex, pregnancy, childbirth, sexual orientation, marital status (including living in a relationship in the nature of a marriage), family status (including having or not having responsibility for care of children or other dependants), and disability.

The **Films, Videos and Publications Classification Act** was passed, combining three separate censorship bodies to give greater consistency. It set up structures under which classifications could be reviewed and made possession of all banned material illegal. The Act is seen as a positive step towards recognising that violence and sexual violence against women and children is not acceptable.

Dame Silvia Cartwright was appointed **New Zealand's first High Court Judge**.

Sandra Lee was elected MP for Auckland Central, making her the **first Māori woman** to be elected in a general seat and the first woman MP for a third party.



Sandra Lee

The centennial of women's suffrage in New Zealand raised the profile of women with a number of celebrations throughout the year. Numerous projects were completed and books produced with the aid of grants from the Suffrage Centennial Year Trust Whakatu Wahine.

Helen Clark became the **first woman leader of the Labour Party**, making her the first woman to lead a major political party in New Zealand and the first woman leader of the opposition.



Helen Clark

Wilma Smith took up the role of New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) **Concertmaster**, making NZSO history by being the first woman appointed to a traditionally male role.

Anna Paquin was the **first New Zealand female to win an Oscar** for Best Supporting Actress for her role in Jane Campion's film *The Piano*. Paquin was the second-youngest winner in Oscar history, aged 11 years.

The Government released "**Status of Women in New Zealand 1994**", the second report on New Zealand's progress in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

1995

The **Domestic Violence Act 1995** was aimed at reducing and preventing violence in domestic relationships by recognising that domestic violence is unacceptable behaviour; and ensuring that there is effective legal protection for its victims.



Pansy Wong



Jenny Shipley
ATL EP_1993_11-04-15



Jeanette Fitzsimons



Luamanuvao Winnie
Laban



Dame Sian Elias

1996

The first General Election was held under the Mixed Member Proportional Representation Electoral System. Parliament increased to 120 MPs, with 36 women MPs elected, making up 30 percent.

Pansy Wong became the **first Asian woman MP** in the New Zealand Parliament.

Deborah Morris, aged 26, became the **youngest woman Cabinet Minister**, appointed Minister of Youth Affairs and Associate Minister of ACC, Women's Affairs and Environment.

1997

The Shakti **Asian Women's Refuge** was established in Auckland, serving the Asian migrant and refugee communities in New Zealand.

Jenny Shipley became the country's **first woman Prime Minister** when she succeeded Jim Bolger as leader of the National Party.

1998

The Government released "**Status of Women in New Zealand 1998**" combining the third and fourth reports on New Zealand's progress in implementing the CEDAW.

The national women's rugby team, the **Black Ferns**, became world champions at the Rugby World Cup.

Jeanette Fitzsimons became **Co-leader of the Green Party** when it left the Alliance to be an independent political party. Fitzsimons was the third woman to lead a party in Parliament, out of seven parliamentary political parties.

1999

Theresa Gattung became New Zealand's **first woman chief executive** of a major company, appointed CEO of Telecom at age 37. In 2005 she was identified as New Zealand's highest paid chief executive at \$2.91 million a year.

Margaret Wilson became the **first woman Attorney General**.

The country's **first national survey on time use** was funded by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and conducted by Statistics New Zealand.

Luamanuvao Winnie Laban became the **first Pacific woman elected to Parliament**, as List MP for Labour. She became electorate MP when she won Mana in 2002.

Helen Clark became New Zealand's **first elected woman Prime Minister**.

Georgina Beyer became the **world's first transsexual MP** when she won Carterton for Labour.

Dame Sian Elias was sworn in as **Chief Justice of the New Zealand Court of Appeal**, the first woman to hold that position in New Zealand. She became the first Woman member of the Supreme Court when it was established in 2004.

2001

The **Property (Relationships) Amendment Act 2001** extended the rules covering the division of property after relationship breakdown to include de facto couples.

2002

The **Parental Leave and Employment Protection (Paid Parental Leave) Act 2002** established 12 weeks' paid parental leave for women.

The Government released "**Status of Women in New Zealand 2002**", the fifth report on New Zealand's progress in implementing CEDAW.

2003

The **Equal Opportunities Unit** was established in the New Zealand Human Rights Commission with its first Commissioner Dr Judy McGregor.

Professor Judith Kinnear became the **first woman Vice Chancellor** with her appointment at Massey University.

The **Prostitution Reform Act** decriminalised prostitution and prohibited anyone less than 18 years from working as a prostitute.

The Government appointed a taskforce to produce a five year action plan to reduce a gender pay gap of approximately 17 percent among public servants.

2004

The Government launched an **Action Plan for New Zealand Women** focused on three key areas: improving the economic independence of women; achieving greater work-life balance for families; and improving the well-being and quality of life of New Zealand women.

The **Civil Union Act**, passed by conscience vote, established civil unions for different and same sex couples.

The **Women's Electoral Lobby** received a special award from the New Zealand Electoral Commission to mark its contribution to democracy, winding up its national organisation after 27 years.

Dr Helena Catt became the **first woman CEO of the New Zealand Electoral Commission**.

2005

Margaret Wilson became New Zealand's **first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives**.

The **New Zealand Women's Convention**: "Looking Back, Moving Forward – Titiro Whakamuri Haere Whakamua", marking the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention of International Year of Women was held on Queens Birthday weekend in Wellington.



Judith Kinnear



Margaret Wilson

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Photographs:

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