

*Legislative Library of British Columbia*

***Leaders of the Official Opposition  
of British Columbia***



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## Leaders of the Official Opposition of British Columbia

Traditionally the party that wins the second-largest number of seats becomes the Official Opposition, and takes the lead in holding the Government accountable for its policies and actions. In order to become a Leader of the Official Opposition, its party leader must hold a seat in the Legislature.

The first provincial election fought along party lines in British Columbia was the 10<sup>th</sup> general election of 1903. Leaders of the Opposition existed in the BC Legislature prior to the introduction of party government, but their position was based on loose alliances and not always clear-cut. See [\*Electoral History of British Columbia 1871-1986\*](#), page 6, for more information. The following is a list of Leaders of the Official Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia from 1903 to the present Parliament.

	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PARTY</b>	<b>PARLIAMENT</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
1.	James Alexander Macdonald	BC Liberal	10 <sup>th</sup> Parliament to 11 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1903-1909)	
2.	John Oliver	BC Liberal	--	Did not sit in the Legislature as Leader of the Official Opposition
3.	James Hurst Hawthornthwaite	Socialist	12 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (1910)	Assumed the functions of Leader of the Official Opposition
4.	Harlan Carey Brewster	BC Liberal	12 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session (1911-1912)	
5.	Parker Williams	Socialist	13 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session (1913-1915)	
Repeat	Harlan Carey Brewster	BC Liberal	13 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 4 <sup>th</sup> Session (1916)	
6.	William John Bowser	Conservative	14 <sup>th</sup> Parliament to 15 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1917-1923)	
7.	Robert Henry Pooley	Conservative	16 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1924-1928)	
8.	Thomas Dufferin Pattullo	BC Liberal	17 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1929-1933)	
9.	Robert Connell	CCF	18 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session (1934-1936)	
Repeat	Robert Connell	Social Constructive	18 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 4 <sup>th</sup> Session (1936)	
10.	Frank Porter Patterson	Conservative	19 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (1937)	
11.	Royal Lethington Maitland	Conservative	19 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Session (1938-1940)	
12.	Harold Winch	CCF	20 <sup>th</sup> Parliament to 22 <sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session (1941-1951)	
13.	Herbert Anscomb	Progressive Conservative	22 <sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 4 <sup>th</sup> Session (1952)	
Repeat	Harold Winch	CCF	23 <sup>rd</sup> Parliament (1953)	
14.	Arnold Webster	CCF	24 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1953-1956)	
15.	Robert Strachan	BC NDP-CCF	25 <sup>th</sup> Parliament to 28 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1957-1969)	
16.	Thomas Berger	BC NDP	--	Did not sit in the Legislature as Leader of the Official Opposition
17.	David Barrett	BC NDP	29 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1970-1972)	
18.	William Andrew Cecil Bennett	Social Credit	30 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session (1972-1973)	
19.	Francis Xavier Richter	Social Credit	30 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session (1973)	Interim Leader of the Official Opposition

20.	William Richards Bennett	Social Credit	30 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 4 <sup>th</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Session, (1974-1975)	
21.	William Stewart King	BC NDP	31 <sup>st</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (1976)	Interim Leader of the Official Opposition
Repeat	David Barrett	BC NDP	31 <sup>st</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session to 33 <sup>rd</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session (1976-1984)	
22.	Robert Skelly	BC NDP	33 <sup>rd</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session to 34 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (1984-1987)	
23.	Michael Harcourt	BC NDP	34 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1987-1991)	From April 12, 1987
24.	Gordon Wilson	BC Liberal	35 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (1992-1993)	
25.	Fred Gingell	BC Liberal	35 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session (1993-1994)	Interim Leader of the Official Opposition from February 19, 1993
26.	Gordon Campbell	BC Liberal	35 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session to 36 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (1994-2001)	From March 9, 1994
27.	Joy MacPhail	BC NDP	37 <sup>th</sup> Parliament (2001-2005)	Assumed the functions of Leader of the Official Opposition
28.	Carole James	BC NDP	38 <sup>th</sup> Parliament to 39 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session (2005-2011)	
29.	Dawn Black	BC NDP	39 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session (2011)	Interim Leader of the Official Opposition from January 20, 2011
30.	Adrian Dix	BC NDP	39 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Session to 40 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session (2011-2014)	From April 17, 2011
31.	John Horgan	BC NDP	40 <sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session to 41 <sup>st</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (2014-2017)	From May 2, 2014
32.	Christy Clark	BC Liberal	41 <sup>st</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session (2017)	From July 18, 2017
33.	Rich Coleman	BC Liberal	41 <sup>st</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Session (2017-2018)	Interim Leader of the Official Opposition from August 4, 2017
34.	Andrew Wilkinson	BC Liberal	41 <sup>st</sup> Parliament, 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Session (2018-2020)	From February 3, 2018

35.	Shirley Bond	BC Liberal	42 <sup>nd</sup> Parliament, 1 <sup>st</sup> Session to Present (2020-Present)	Interim Leader of the Official Opposition from November 23, 2020
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