



ALBERTA'S CENTENNIAL 2005

History and Politics

Alberta in 1905

- Alberta was part of the Northwest Territories before it became the eighth province to join Confederation along with Saskatchewan in 1905.
- Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier introduced the *Alberta Act* in the House of Commons on February 1, 1905. This act, which created the province of Alberta, became law on July 20, 1905.
- Alexander Rutherford, an Ontario-born lawyer, was appointed Premier of Alberta on September 2, 1905 by Alberta's first Lieutenant Governor, George H.V. Bulyea.
- Rutherford served as Premier for five years from 1905 to 1910.
- In the first election, Rutherford's Liberals won 23 out of 25 seats in the Legislature.
- Rutherford and his government's priorities were setting up a civil service, basic legislation and infrastructure. This included road and railway expansion and the building of public structures to serve the young province.
- Rutherford established the University of Alberta in 1908. His on-campus residence, Rutherford House, is a provincial historic site and is open to the public for dining and special events.
- Edmonton was named the capital city in 1906. Calgary, Red Deer and Banff were also considered as potential capital cities.
- The first session of the first Legislature opened at Edmonton's Thistle Curling Rink. Sessions were subsequently held at McKay Avenue School until 1907.
- Between 1901 and 1905, approximately 40,000 homesteads were granted to future Albertans. A homestead was approximately a quarter section or 160 acres of developed or undeveloped land.
- Alberta was named after Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, the fourth daughter of Queen Victoria.
- Women were not entitled to vote in the 1905 provincial election. Women received the franchise in 1916 and voted in the 1917 election in which two women, Louise McKinney and Roberta MacAdams, were elected.
- Alberta's first Aboriginal Lieutenant Governor, Ralph G. Steinhauer, was born on June 8, 1905.

Signposts of Alberta History

- 1905: Alberta becomes a province; life expectancy for Albertans is about 53 years.
- 1906: Edmonton is officially named the capital city; Alberta's population is 185,412; the provincial speed limit is 10 miles per hour in town, 20 mph in the country.
- 1908: The University of Alberta is established.
- 1912: Legislature Building opens; first Calgary Stampede is held.
- 1913: Alberta Farmers Co-operative Elevator Company is formed; end of Alberta's pre-war building boom.
- 1914: Canada enters the Great War; Alberta's population is 470,000, two-thirds are farmers.
- 1916: Alberta women receive the vote.
- 1917: Alberta women vote in the provincial election.
- 1921: Herbert Greenfield of the United Farmers of Alberta is elected Premier; life expectancy is 59 years for men, 61 for women.
- 1929: Persons Case recognizes women as persons and grants complete political equality to women due to efforts of Alberta's Famous Five; stock market crash starts the Great Depression.
- 1930: Alberta gains jurisdiction over its natural resources.
- 1935: Social Credit Party leader William Aberhart is elected Premier.
- 1938: *Metis Population Betterment Act* establishes Alberta's first Metis settlements.
- 1939: Canada enters World War II.
- 1947: Leduc Number One starts production and helps diversify Alberta's energy boom.
- 1950: Canada enters the Korean conflict under United Nations command.
- 1951: Life expectancy is 68 years for men, 72 years for women.
- 1955: Alberta celebrates its Golden Jubilee.
- 1961: Alberta's population is 1,332,000; Alberta's First Nations get the right to vote.
- 1971: Conservative leader Peter Lougheed is elected Premier.
- 1979: Alberta's Joe Clark becomes Prime Minister.
- 1980: Alberta celebrates its 75th birthday.
- 1992: Conservative leader Ralph Klein is elected Premier.
- 1999: Life expectancy is 76.6 years for men, 81.9 for women.
- 2002: Alberta's population is 3,113,600, four out of five Albertans live in urban locations.