



# OUR PARLIAMENTARY STORY

1952 TO 2019

The first general elections, under adult suffrage, took place on February 20, 1952. This resulted in Montserrat's first democratic parliament, with William H Bramble as its leader. Along with W.H. Bramble, Robert W. Griffith, Theodore Edgecombe, Michael Walkinshaw, and Brunel W Edwards were elected to serve as Legislators. These Parliamentarians are shown in the photos below.

At that time, there were only four constituencies, and five persons could be elected to office for a period of three years. Those who were successful in the 1952 General Elections were all members of the Montserrat Labour Party. They contested the general elections under a multi-party democracy and parliamentary system.

It was not until 1961 that members were referred to by their constituencies, for example, Member for Windward or Member for Southern. Prior to that time, although they ran the affairs of the island and were elected to the Legislative Council they were only referred to as members of the Legislative Council. However, in 1961 the new constitution made arrangements for them to be referred to in this manner.

## *ELECTORAL YEAR*



*1952  
TO  
1955*



William Bramble



Robert Griffith



Michael Walkinshaw



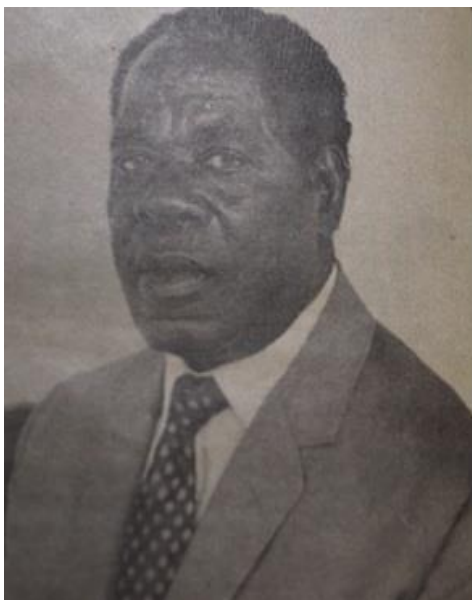
Theodore Edgecombe



Brunel Edwards

The 1955 General Elections were held in accordance with the Constitution and Elections Ordinance 1952. This meant that the legislators did not have ministerial appointments, and their terms of office was still three years. As well, the provision for one nominated member to be a part of the Parliament remained intact. William H. Bramble, Robert W. Griffith, Theodore Edgecombe, Michael Walkinshaw, and John C Wall were elected.

During this electoral year, Theodore Edgecombe died in office. This resulted in Montserrat's first bi-election in October of 1956.



William Bramble

## *ELECTORAL YEAR*



*1955  
TO  
1958*



Robert Griffith



Michael Walkinshaw



Theodore Edgecombe



James C L Wall



Herman Lee

The year 1958 was a dynamic one for both the electorate and politicians. The number of members that could hold office in Parliament increased from five to seven, and for the first time, a female was elected to Parliament. William H. Bramble, Michael Walkinshaw, Brunel W. Edwards, Herman H. Lee, Margaret R. Kelsick, Michael Dyer, and James C. Wall were all elected to serve in Parliament.

During this term of office, William H. Bramble was elected to hold a seat in the newly formed and constituted West Indies Federation. The Leeward Island Federation had not long been abolished, and on March 25, 1958, William H. Bramble became eligible to participate in the Federation. Mr. James N. Edwards was elected to serve as an alternate member for the Federal elections. Although the West Indies Federation collapsed in January of 1962, it was a credit to Montserrat that William H. Bramble was elected to serve in the Federation.



William Bramble

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1958  
TO  
1961



Robert Griffith



Michael Walkinshaw



Brunel Edwards



Margaret Kelsick



Herman Lee



Michael Dyer



The fourth Democratic Parliament was elected in 1961. Members of parliament were now able to hold ministerial portfolios and therefore William H. Bramble was officially appointed as the first Chief Minister of Montserrat; although he had carried out the role for many years. Another change that took place was that there was an increase in the number of years that Parliamentarians could hold office. Instead of the three (3) years, which previous Parliaments had served before fresh elections took place; the Parliament could now serve for five (5) years.

As part of the changes which took place, three new constituencies were added. These were the North-western, Plymouth, and Eastern constituencies. They were added to the Northern, Central, Southern, and Windward constituencies, thus bringing the total to seven. These seven constituencies continued until 2001. William H. Bramble, Michael Walkinshaw, Brunel W. Edwards, Herman H. Lee, Margaret R. Kelsick, and Michael Dyer were returned to office, while Christopher Fenton and James W. Allen were elected for the first time.

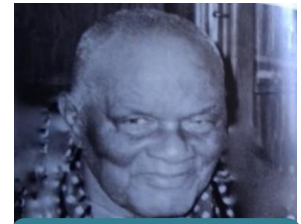


William Bramble

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1961  
TO  
1966



David Fenton



Michael Walkinshaw



Brunel Edwards



Margaret Kelsick



James Allen



Michael Dyer

In the General Elections of 1966, the Montserrat Labour Party continued to be the predominant party thus achieving their fifth consecutive win. William H. Bramble, Brunel W. Edwards, and Michael Dyer were re-elected. While Eustace A. Dyer, John A. Osborne, P. Austin Bramble, and James J. Howe were elected for the first time.

It is also notable that in 1966 Montserrat reverted to crown status after the collapse of the West Indies Federation.



William Bramble

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1966  
TO  
1970



Brunel Edwards



Eustace Dyer



James Howe



P Austin Bramble



Michael Dyer



John Osborne

In 1970, after six terms of holding Parliamentary office and political dominance, the Montserrat Labour Party was ousted by the newly formed Progressive Democratic Party. Interestingly, the leader of this party was the son of the island's First Chief Minister, who had also been a part of the previous Parliament. P. Austin Bramble was sworn in as the second Chief Minister of Montserrat. Along with him Eustace A. Dyer, Mary Rose Tuitt, John S. Dublin, John A. Osborne, and William H. Ryan were elected. Due to various issues, a snap election was called in 1973; three years after they were elected.



P Austin Bramble

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1970  
TO  
1973



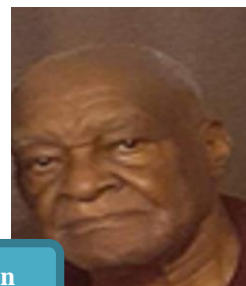
Mary Tuitt



Eustace Dyer



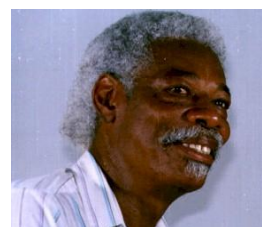
John Weekes



William Ryan



John Osborne



John Dublin



After the 1973 General Elections, the Progressive Democratic Party successfully regained its parliamentary authority. P. Austin Bramble, Eustace A. Dyer, Mary Rose Tuitt, John A. Osborne, William H. Ryan were re-elected while Joshua Weekes and Richard G Joseph were elected for the first time.

Several other noteworthy things happened during that electoral year:

- (1) On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1973, Montserrat signed on to the Treaty of Chaguaramas which is now referred to as CARICOM.
- (2) The post of President, which was previously held by the Administrator (1952-1971) and Governor (1971), was abolished.
- (3) The nomenclature changed from President to Speaker, and Sir Howard Fergus was appointed as the first Speaker of the Parliament in 1975.



P Austin Bramble

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1973  
TO  
1978



Mary Tuitt



Eustace Dyer



Joshua Weekes



William Ryan



John Osborne



Richard Joseph



In 1978, the third Chief Minister of Montserrat was elected in the person of John A. Osborne. His party, the People's Liberation Movement, won with its full slate of candidates. Joseph A. Taylor, Joseph B. Chalmers, Franklin L. Margetson, John S. Dublin, Thomas Meade, and Nowell Tuitt were the other candidates who were elected.

In 1979, Joseph A. Taylor, who represented the Southern Constituency, died whilst in office. This led to the second bi-election in Montserrat. The seat was contested by PLM candidate Margaret Dyer and she successfully won the seat.

On June 18, 1983, Mr. Franklin L. Margetson travelled to St Kitt's as Montserrat's representative to sign the Treaty of Basseterre now referred to as OECS.



John Osborne



Margaret Dyer-Howe

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1978  
TO  
1983



Joseph Chalmers



Nowell Tuitt



Franklin Margetson



John Dublin



Thomas Meade



Joseph Taylor

The People's Liberation Party recorded its second victory in the General Elections of 1983. John A. Osborne, Eustace A. Dyer, Joseph B. Chalmers, Margaret Dyer-Howe, David S. Brandt, P. Austin Bramble, and Nowell Tuitt were elected. All of these persons had scored prior victories at the poll, though not necessarily with the same party.



John Osborne

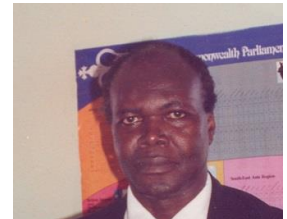
## *ELECTORAL YEAR*



*1983  
TO  
1987*



Joseph Chalmers



Nowell Tuitt



Margaret Dyer-Howe



David Brandt



Eustace Dyer



P Austin Bramble

In the General Elections of 1987, the People's Liberation Movement was returned to office for the third time. John A. Osborne, Joseph B. Chalmers, David S. Brandt, and Noel Tuitt were re-elected. Also elected were Bertrand B. Osborne and Vernon A. Jeffers.

Offshore banking issues and the devastation of Hurricane Hugo in 1989 are notable occurrences, which took place during this period.



John Osborne

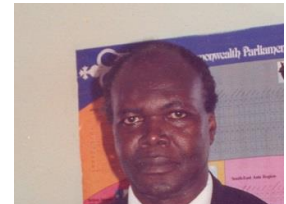
## *ELECTORAL YEAR*



*1987  
TO  
1991*



Joseph Chalmers



Nowell Tuitt



Vernon Jeffers



David Brandt



Eustace Dyer



Bertrand Osborne

Headed by Rueben T. Meade, the newly formed National Progressive Party won the General Elections of 1991. It was Mr. Meade's first foray into politics and he became the island's fourth Chief Minister. Along with him, David S. Brandt, Charles T. Kirnon, and Lazelle G. Howes formed the Government. Bertrand B. Osborne, Nowell Tuitt, and Ruby Wade-Bramble formed the Opposition. Ruby Wade-Bramble, Charles T Kirnon, and Lazelle Howes were elected for the first time. In addition to the elected members, there were two nominated Members namely: D.R.V. Edwards and Kenneth Allen.

It is worth noting that in 1995, the Soufriere Hills volcano roared to life bringing with it much upheaval, economic and other distress, which had a tremendous impact on Montserrat in the ensuing years.



Rueben Meade

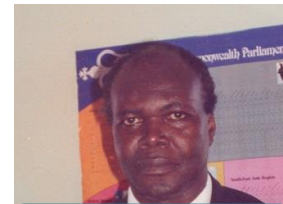
## *ELECTORAL YEAR*



*1991  
TO  
1996*



Bertrand Osborne



Nowell Tuitt



David Brandt



Lazelle Howes



Charles Kirnon



Ruby Wade-Bramble



The 1996 General Elections took place in the midst of ongoing volcanic activity. After the poll was taken, there was no clear winner in terms of a party and so Montserrat had its first hung Parliament. As a result, a coalition Government was formed, and Bertrand B. Osborne became the island's fifth Chief Minister. The other members of the Government were Adelina E. Tuitt, Rupert L. Weekes, and Reuben T. Meade. John A. Osborne, Brunel Meade, and David S. Brandt formed the Opposition.

In addition to the elected members, there were two nominated members namely: D.R.V. Edwards and Kenneth Allen.

Bertrand B. Osborne resigned as Chief Minister on August 21, 1997, but he remained a Member of Parliament. His resignation made way for the sixth Chief Minister to be sworn in, David S. Brandt.



Bertrand Osborne

## ELECTORAL YEAR



1996  
TO  
2001



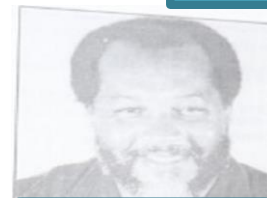
David Brandt



Adelina Tuitt



Rueben Meade



Brunelle Meade



Rupert Weekes



John Osborne

There were several changes in the electoral system for the 2001 General Elections. The single membership, multi-constituency (first past the post) electoral system was replaced with a single constituency under a modified first past the post system. This, therefore, caused the electorate to be able to cast their votes for up to at least nine persons whether by independent candidates or full party. This was referred to as the voting at large system.

A single constituency system was introduced, instead of the multi-constituency system, which was in place prior to that time. Additionally, the number of seats in Parliament increased from seven to nine. Nominated members were no longer a part of Parliament. Previously, the Governor and the Chief Minister were each able to nominate one person to Parliament but this was abolished. Instead of nominated membership, there was now room for two ex-officio members namely, the Attorney General and the Financial Secretary.

Nine candidates were elected. John A. Osborne, Lowell L. Lewis, Margaret Dyer-Howe, Idabelle Meade, John E. Wilson, Chedmond Browne, and Claude E. S. Hogan were elected from the New People's Liberation Movement (NPLM). Roselyn Cassell-Sealy and Reuben T. Meade were elected from the National Progressive Party (NPP).

## ELECTORAL YEAR



2001  
TO  
2006



Rueben Meade



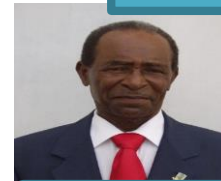
Margaret Dyer-Howe



Lowell Lewis



Claude Hogan



John Osborne



John Wilson



Roselyn Cassell-Sealy



Chedmond Browne



Idabelle Meade

The General Elections of 2006 resulted in a hung Parliament, for the second time in the history of Montserrat. The balance shifted when Dr. Lowell Lewis who was the candidate elected from the Montserrat Democratic Party (MDP), joined the New People's Liberation Movement (NPLM) thus giving them the majority. He became the seventh Chief Minister of Montserrat. This term of office could have lasted until 2011; however, a snap election was called in early 2009. This was the second snap General Election in Montserrat.

The other persons who formed the Parliament were: John A. Osborne, Reuben T. Meade, Margaret Dyer-Howe, Idabelle Meade, Roselyn Cassell-Sealy, Joseph E. Farrell, and Charles T. Kirnon from the Movement for Change and Prosperity (MCAP). David S. Brandt an Independent candidate was also elected. Joseph E. Farrell was elected for the first time in this electoral year.



Lowell Lewis

## ELECTORAL YEAR



2006  
TO  
2009



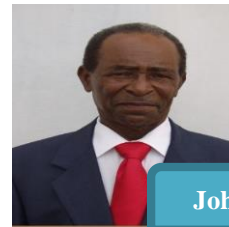
Rueben Meade



Margaret Dyer-Howe



Joseph Farrell



John Osborne



Roselyn Cassell-Sealy



David Brandt



Charles Kirnon



Idabelle Meade

The 2009 General Elections resulted in a victory for Reuben T. Meade and his party, Movement for Change and Prosperity (MCAP). Along with him, Colin Riley, David Osborne, Jermaine J. Wade, Joseph E. Farrell, and Charles T. Kirnon, were elected. Donaldson Romeo, Lowell L. Lewis, and Victor James were also elected.

This Parliament saw the introduction of the Montserrat Constitution Order 2010, which came into force in September of 2011. The new Constitution introduced a name change for the position of Chief Minister of Montserrat. Thus, Mr. Reuben T. Meade became the only person in Montserrat who would transition from Chief Minister to Premier of Montserrat. The new Constitution also provided for a Deputy Premier and Charles T. Kirnon became the first Deputy Premier of Montserrat.

The Parliamentary Secretary was also introduced and Mr. Jermaine J. Wade and David Osborne became the first parliamentarians to hold the office of Parliamentary Secretaries. Mr. Victor James had been the de facto leader of the Opposition, but with the change of Constitution, Donaldson Romeo became the first official Leader of the Opposition.

## ELECTORAL YEAR



2009  
TO  
2014



Charles Kirnon



Donaldson Romeo



Lowell Lewis



Rueben Meade



Colin Riley



Victor James (SNR)



David Osborne



Jermaine Wade



Donaldson Romeo became the second Premier of Montserrat in 2014 when the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) defeated the Movement for Change and Prosperity. Along with him, David Osborne, Delmaude C. Ryan, Paul Lewis, Gregory Willock, Ingrid Buffonge, and Claude E. S. Hogan were elected. Joseph E. Farrell and Reuben T. Meade were also elected from MCAP.

The Leader of the Opposition, Reuben T. Meade, resigned from active politics in October of 2016. This led to Montserrat's third bi-election in 2017. Dr. Samuel Joseph was elected in his place and joined the Opposition. Joseph E. Farrell, the senior member, became the Leader of the Opposition.



Donaldson Romeo



Delmaude Rvan

## ELECTORAL YEAR



2014  
TO  
2019



Joseph Farrell



Rueben Meade



Samuel Joseph



David Osborne



Claude Hogan



Ingrid Buffonge



Gregory Willock



Paul Lewis

In the November 2019 General Elections, the Movement for Change and Prosperity Party emerged victorious with five of the possible nine seats. Joseph E. Farrell and Dr. Samuel Joseph who had been in the previous Parliament were re-elected. Joseph E. Farrell became the third Premier of Montserrat. Charles T. Kirnon was also re-elected after a five years break. Veronica Dorsette-Hector and Crenston Buffonge were elected for the first time.

Paul Lewis, David Osborne, and Claude E. S. Hogan were elected from PDM and Donaldson Romeo was elected as an Independent Candidate.



Joseph Farrell

## *ELECTORAL YEAR*



## *2019 TO PRESENT*



David Osborne



Charles Kirnon



Claude Hogan



Donaldson Romeo



Paul Lewis



Samuel Joseph



Crenston Buffonge



Veronica  
Dorsette-Hector



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