

History of Prince Edward Island Plebiscites

Source: Charlotte Stewart
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Note: the sources referenced are held in the collections of the
Public Archives and Records Office of P.E.I.

1878 Prohibition plebiscite

Proclamation dated 21 November 1878, printed in **Royal Gazette**, 30 November 1878, declaring 28 December 1878 as a date for an election of the electors of Prince County re petition received re the Canada Temperance Act 1878.

Proclamation dated 13 March 1879, printed in the **Royal Gazette**, 29 March 1879, declaring 24 April 1879 as a date for an election of the electors of the City of Charlottetown re petition received regarding the Canada Temperance Act 1878.

Proclamation dated 21 April 1879, printed in the **Royal Gazette**, 3 May 1879, declaring 29 May 1879 as a date for an election of the electors of Kings County re the petition received regarding the Canada Temperance Act 1878.

1893 Prohibition plebiscite

1893, Cap. IX, An act to enable the electors of Prince Edward Island to register their votes upon the advisability of the introduction of a law totally prohibiting the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage into or in the province of Prince Edward Island.

“At the next General Election for this province a vote by ballot shall be taken to ascertain the number of voters within the province who are in favor of or against the prohibition of the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor within this province.”

1893 Prohibition plebiscite - continued

The form of the ballot to be used shall be as follows:

FOR PROHIBITION

AGAINST PROHIBITION

Returns to be published in the Royal Gazette.

General election held 13 December 1893

Results: For Prohibition: 10585. Against Prohibition: 3331

Source:

Royal Gazette, 3 February 1894, p. 19

1898 National plebiscite on prohibition

29 September 1898

Yes 9,461

No 1,146

Source:

3466/HF78.131.717d “The Prohibition Plebiscite” printed pamphlet December 1898, Dominion Alliance Executive Committee.

1901 Prohibition

No references located.

1913 Automobile Plebiscite

Date: ?Summer of 1913

Question: ?

Results:

From *If you're stronghearted. Prince Edward Island in the twentieth century*. Edward MacDonald. (PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation, 2000): Held in the summer of 1913 at district school meetings. Government suppressed the results. The rural communities overwhelmingly rejected the automobile. Some estimates put the NO vote at 90%.

A.E. Arsenault fonds, Acc. 4135, File 14 “Story of automobiles in PEI” 1954 by A.E. Arsenault. References to 1912 Act re automobiles, and meeting of Legislative Council decided to hold a plebiscite. Public largely opposed to opening of roads to automobiles.

1913 Automobile Plebiscite continued:

See also Acc. 4289 *Deoradh. The Dewars: Storytellers and relic keepers. A history of the family Dewar of Perthshire, Scotland and PEI*, by Katherine Dewar, pp. 57-59.

1923 Plebiscite under the Scott Act (Canada Temperance Act)

Date 22 January 1923

Question: Shall the importation and bringing into this Province intoxicating liquors be forbidden?

9,685	In favour of Prohibition
3,576	Against Prohibition

1929 Prohibition plebiscite

Held 18 July 1929

An Act to provide for a plebiscite on questions relating to the control and suppression of traffic in alcoholic liquors, 1929, Cap. 15. "The Plebiscite Act, 1929"

1. Are you in favour of the Prohibition Act as now the law in this province?
2. Are you in favour of the sale of alcoholic liquors under a Government Control Act?

Results:	In favour of Prohibition	11,471
	In favour of Government Control	8,080
	Rejected	71

1940 Prohibition plebiscite

Held 25 June 1940

Questions:

1. Are you in favour of the sale of beer and light wine through Government Vendor Shops, under permit for beverage purposes?
2. Are you in favour of retaining the present provisions of the Prohibition Act requiring medical prescriptions for beer and wine, as well as for other alcoholic liquors?
1. Are you in favour or against Government Control?

1940 Prohibition plebiscite - continued

2. Are you in favour or against limiting the number of certificates or prescriptions available to each doctor at 50 per month?
1940 Prohibition plebiscite - continued

Results:

10,426	in favour of retaining existing Prohibition Act
8,861	in favour of relaxing the law
11,401	in favour of present system
8,207	in favour of government control
10,838	in favour of limiting doctors to 50 prescriptions per month
8,731	against limiting doctors to 50 prescriptions per month

1942 Conscription National plebiscite on manpower

Held 27 April 1942

PEI results

Yes 41,720

No 5,821

1948 The Temperance Act, Cap. 37.

Plebiscite held 28 June 1948 to ascertain the approval or otherwise of The Prohibition Act by a majority of persons qualified to vote. Conducted in manner of a general election.

Questions and results:

For the New Temperance Act? 20,019

For the Old Prohibition Act? 7,265

New Temperance Act proclaimed 18 July 1948.

1954 Potato plebiscite

The Federation of Agriculture in its annual presentation to the Provincial Legislature asked that the PEI Potato Marketing Board hold a plebiscite on the potato marketing scheme as soon as possible. The Federation's request was granted and a plebiscite date was set for May 1954. Mail in ballots - sent out on 24 May, to be returned by 29 May 1954.

1954 Potato plebiscite - continued

Question: "Are you in favour of the continued operation of the PEI Potato Marketing Board?"

3282 in favour
1845 opposed

6747 registered voters, 5140 cast ballots

1954 Potato Plebiscite

Held 10 November 1954.

An Act to provide for the taking of Plebiscites on Questions of Public Interest, the Plebiscite Act. Assented to 10 April 1954.

Premier A. W. Matheson called the 10 November 1954 plebiscite as a result of the controversy surrounding the Board's new policy. Questions were worded:

"Are you in favour of retaining the P.E. Island Potato Marketing Board?"

"Are you in favour of the Potato Marketing Board operating a compulsory one desk selling agency?"

Results: Question 1– 3958 In favour and 1977 Against
Question 2 – 2706 In favour and 2991 Against

RG 7 Provincial Secretary, Series 10 Elections, Subseries 21, Potato Plebiscite 1954: 2 file folders, for polls 14 and 15, 3rd Queens. PARO records.

1957 Plebiscite re amalgamation with Charlottetown.

27 November 1957

Village of Spring Park	Yes	305	No	50
Parkdale	Yes	159	No	300
Central Royalty	Yes	48	No	32

Patriot, 28 November 1957, p.1

1958 City wide (Charlottetown) plebiscite to determine status of Water and Sewerage Commission.

14 May 1958

Guardian, 19 April 1958

1988 Fixed Link Crossing Plebiscite, 18 January 1988

Question: “Are you in favor of the fixed link crossing between Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick?”

Eligible electors 86,042

22,472 voted NO, 33,229 voted YES, (183 ballots rejected)

Carried out under the Plebiscite Act, RSPEI 1974, Cap. P-8.

**1997 Video Lottery Terminal plebiscite in the City of Charlottetown.
November 3, 1997.**

“Do you wish to have the Provincial Government remove video lottery terminals from all establishments within the Province of Prince Edward Island?”

Eligible electors 21,466

3,007 voted NO, 10,953 voted YES, 216 ballots rejected

Held in conjunction with municipal election for the City of Charlottetown.

2001 Stratford residents plebiscite Plebiscites Act P-10.

Held on the 26 and 27 March 2001 for Town Council to gauge interest to help fund a capital region aquatic centre or a town rink and community centre or both.

Questions:

1. Would you be in favour of the multipurpose facility in Stratford?
(Gymnasium, multi-purpose room, walking track, library, Town and RCMP offices)
2. Would you be in favour of a rink in Stratford?
(200' X 85' ice surface, seating 800 people)
3. Would you be in favour of participating in the regional aquatic facility in Charlottetown?
(8 lane - 25 m pool, recreation pool, slide, hot tub and sauna)

Results:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Question No. 1	566	606
Question No. 2	570	589
Question No. 3	591	571

2005 Plebiscite for the Provincial Mixed Member Proportional System

28 November, 2005

Question: Should Prince Edward Island change to the Mixed Member Proportional System as presented by the Commission of PEI's Electoral Future?

Requirements to pass (Majority Thresholds):

- i) At least 60% of the valid votes cast province wide would need to approve the proposal; and
- ii) At least 50% of the valid votes cast in at least 60% (16) of the province's 27 electoral districts would need to approve the proposal.

Results:

District 1 Souris – Elmira

Eligible Electors 2682

NO - 785 YES – 194

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 19.82

NO Vote % 80.18

District 2 Morell – Fortune Bay

Eligible Electors – 2902

NO – 899 YES – 262

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 22.57

NO Vote % 77.43

District 3 Georgetown – Baldwin's Road

Eligible Electors – 2970

NO – 769 YES – 210

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 21.45

NO Vote % 78.55

District 4 Montague - Kilmuir

Eligible Electors – 2603

NO – 653 YES – 289

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 30.68

NO Vote % 69.32

District 5 Murray River - Gaspereaux

Eligible Electors – 2698

NO – 651 YES – 208

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 24.21

NO Vote % 75.79

District 6 Belfast - Pownal

Eligible Electors – 3045

NO – 786 YES – 384

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 32.82

NO Vote % 67.18

District 7 Glen Stewart – Bellevue Cove		
Eligible Electors – 4658		
NO – 1098 YES – 870		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	44.21
	NO Vote %	55.79
District 8 Tracadie – Fort Augustus		
Eligible Electors – 3472		
NO – 785 YES – 388		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	33.08
	NO Vote %	66.92
District 9 Stanhope – East Royalty		
Eligible Electors – 3998		
NO – 825 YES – 608		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	42.43
	NO Vote %	57.57
District 10 Sherwood - Hillsborough		
Eligible Electors – 3935		
NO – 706 YES – 549		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	43.75
	NO Vote %	56.25
District 11 Parkdale - Belvedere		
Eligible Electors – 3106		
NO – 833 YES – 751		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	47.41
	NO Vote %	52.59
District 12 Charlottetown – Kings Square		
Eligible Electors – 3531		
NO – 415 YES – 542		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	56.64
	NO Vote %	43.36
District 13 Charlottetown – Rochford Square		
Eligible Electors – 3649		
NO – 510 YES – 582		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	53.30
	NO Vote %	46.7
District 14 Charlottetown – Spring Park		
Eligible Electors – 3981		
NO – 884 YES – 708		
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote %	44.47
	NO Vote %	55.53

District 15 Winsloe – West Royalty	
Eligible Electors – 4976	
NO – 940 YES – 705	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 42.86
	NO Vote % 57.14
District 16 North River – Rice Point	
Eligible Electors – 4888	
NO – 918 YES – 629	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 40.66
	NO Vote % 59.34
District 17 Crapaud – Hazel Grove	
Eligible Electors – 4171	
NO – 899 YES – 636	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 41.43
	NO Vote % 58.57
District 18 Park Corner - Oyster Bed	
Eligible Electors – 4316	
NO – 926 YES – 672	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 42.05
	NO Vote % 57.95
District 19 Borden - Kinkora	
Eligible Electors – 3657	
NO – 714 YES – 359	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 33.46
	NO Vote % 66.54
District 20 Kensington – Malpeque	
Eligible Electors – 4520	
NO – 885 YES – 510	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 36.56
	NO Vote % 63.44
District 21 Wilmot - Summerside	
Eligible Electors – 4763	
NO – 630 YES – 490	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 43.75
	NO Vote % 56.25
District 22 St. Eleanors - Summerside	
Eligible Electors – 4179	
NO – 550 YES – 360	
Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%	YES Vote % 39.56
	NO Vote % 60.44

District 23 Cascumpec – Grand River

Eligible Electors – 3033

NO – 725 YES – 199

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 21.54

NO Vote % 78.46

District 24 Evangeline – Miscouche

Eligible Electors – 2980

NO – 484 YES – 316

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 39.5

NO Vote % 60.5

District 25 West Point – Bloomfield

Eligible Electors – 2584

NO – 821 YES – 108

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 11.63

NO Vote % 88.37

District 26 Alberton - Miminegash

Eligible Electors – 3043

NO – 680 YES – 125

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 15.53

NO Vote % 84.47

District 27 Tignish – DeBlois

Eligible Electors – 2840

NO – 744 YES – 96

Percent of YES vote required to pass 60%

YES Vote % 11.43

NO Vote % 88.57

2016 Plebiscite on Democratic Renewal

October 29 - November 7 2016

Based on the recommendations from the Standing Committee on Democratic Renewal, 5 electoral system options were to be ranked on a ballot using the Preferential Voting System. Islanders could rank their preferences for any of the five options, by ranking them 1 through 5 with 1 being their most preferred and 5 being their least preferred. Electoral System options included (First Past the Post, First Past the Post Plus Leaders, Mixed Member Proportional Representation, Dual Member Mixed Proportional, Preferential Voting). For this plebiscite, 16 and 17 year olds were entitled to be registered and vote.

The winning electoral system options must win by simple majority, having 50% +1 of the valid votes cast.

Question: Rank the following electoral system options in your order of preference, 1 through 5 (with “1st Choice” being your most preferred and “5th Choice” being your least preferred). You may choose as many, or as few, of the electoral system options as you want.

Results:

Eligible Electors – 102,464

Total Voter Turnout: 37,354 (36.5%)

Mixed Member Proportional Representation won in the 4th round of eliminations having 19,418 votes (51.98%).

* Note: This document may be incomplete as there may have been other plebiscite that Elections PEI was not able to track down.