



Malcolm, Norman and Roger Douglas



Bill Anderton



Police Constable George Douglas

94 year old Jennie Douglas holds the possibly unique distinction in New Zealand politics of having been the daughter, wife and mother of four Members of Parliament.

Despite a barrage of criticism and a subsequent rejection of the decision by the Court of Appeal, Malcolm was out after six months as MP for Hunua and Winston was in - and on his way up the political ladder.

footsteps – their maternal grandfather William (Bill) Anderton was the first MP in the family, serving as Labour MP for Mt Eden from 1935 to 1960 and as Minister of Internal Affairs in the Nordmeyer government. He was an herbalist, establishing the Red Seal label as a family business. Their father Norman was Labour MP for Central Auckland from 1960-1975. Norman Douglas left school to become a cabinetmaker, but the loss of an arm in a hunting accident prompted him to seek retraining. He returned to Pukekohe High School and read widely, becoming president of the Labour Party and a Member of Parliament – the way he overcame the early setback in his life stood as an inspiration to his sons. Roger cites his father’s courageous example as the reason he decided to enter politics. “My father’s family came to New Zealand in the 1860s,” Roger says. “Pushing a wooden cart which carried their belongings, they walked from Auckland to Pokeno, where they settled. That spirit of independence and adventure shown by our parents and grandparents is still prevalent, but people need a way forward, a plan that sweeps away barriers to their endeavours and rewards them for their efforts. I’m proud to be standing in this

electorate and would love to represent it.” Paternal grandfather George Douglas was not a politician, but he supported law and order in the frontline - he was a police constable stationed at Mercer and often worked in Pukekohe and the surrounding district. Central to the family in the political frontline was Jennie Douglas, now aged 94. Jennie holds the possibly unique distinction in New Zealand politics of having, at various times, been the daughter, wife and mother of four Members of Parliament. Jennie’s health was the reason the Anderton family emigrated to New Zealand from Lancashire, a move that must have suited this energetic woman. At a time when MPs and party presidents had no secretaries, she acted as administrator for her father Bill and also helped him make herbal tablets for their business. Jennie met Norman at a Labour Party youth meeting – she was secretary and he was president. Although she would have called herself “just a traditional wife and mother,” while raising their four children healthily on produce from the family’s organic gardens, Jennie’s secretarial skills formed an invaluable support for Norman’s role as a politician. □