

Sir Keith show

Sir Keith Holyoake was one of New Zealand's most respected farmer politicians and senior statesmen. A display at the Nelson Provincial Museum, "Kiwi Keith, Portrait of a PM", has been compiled by local history writer Karen Stade and is sponsored by the National Party, whose conference is in Nelson this weekend. It will be opened by PM John Key on Friday.



Caught in bronze: History writer Karen Stade, curator of "Kiwi Keith, Portrait of a PM", with a bronze bust of Sir Keith Holyoake at Nelson Provincial Museum.

Photo: MARTIN DE RUYTER

Sir Keith was born in Pahiatua in 1904 but grew up around Riwaka when his parents returned to Nelson from the North Island in 1913. Having become involved in farmer politics, he entered Parliament as MP for Motueka in 1932.

However, he lost his seat in the 1938 election and moved his family to Dannevirke. There he won the safe National seat of Pahiatua in 1943, remaining its MP until his retirement. In 1946 he became deputy leader of the National Party and was appointed deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture.

Sir Keith was elected unopposed as prime minister when the incumbent, Sid Holland, resigned in 1957, but found himself heading the Opposition benches when Labour won the general election later the same year. However, Sir Keith was back in the prime minister's office when National returned in 1960 and

stayed there until he stepped down from the leadership in 1972.

Knighthood in 1970, he was controversially appointed governor-general for a three-year term upon his retirement from politics in 1977. He died in December 1983. Sir Keith's political career spanned great social and economic change and Kiwi Keith, Portrait of a PM explores various elements, including New Zealand's decreasing agricultural dependence on the United Kingdom, involvement in the Vietnam War and the development of an anti-nuclear policy.

The exhibition: Kiwi Keith, Portrait of a PM runs until November 3 at Nelson Provincial Museum, Trafalgar St.

'Fun, positive' protest

By ALISON GRANT

Protesters are planning to gather outside the hotel where Prime Minister John Key will address the annual National Party conference in Nelson on Saturday. But it will not be your average protest, says Nadine Connock, one of the organisers.

The Rally for Democracy at the Rutherford Hotel will be fun and positive, offering solutions to problems rather than just getting frustrated, says Nadine.

"People want something to hope for, and for change to happen in their communities," she says.

"They are disappointed and frustrated with the National government's failure to listen to them on such issues as the GCSB spy bill, charter schools and the undermining of local council decisions relating to GE-free principles."

The rally has no political affiliation, she says.

"I'm just a person that has a voice and would like to represent what a lot of people are thinking and feeling."

As well as the 11am rally this weekend, protesters were organising a series of events this week, including a "coffin procession".

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