



Parliament's historic symbols

THE Mace is a symbol of the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

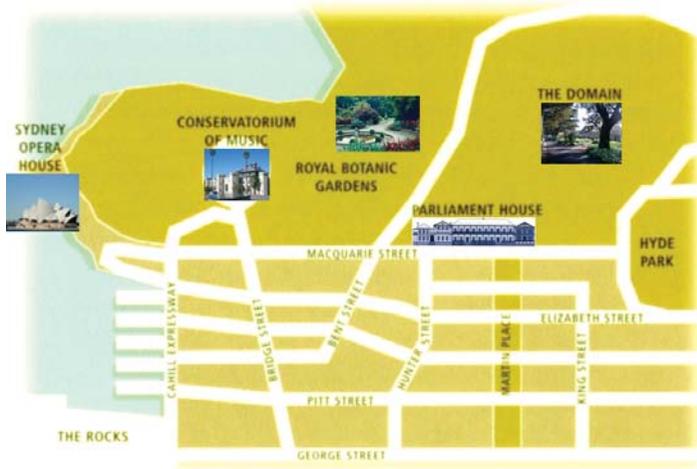
It is carried into the Chamber by the Serjeant-at-Arms and lies on the Table while the House is in session and the Speaker is in the Chair.

The Mace (below left) was a gift to the Parliament from Sydney's Jewish community in 1974.

Apart from running the State, Parliament has much pomp and ceremony, embedded in the long and rich history of the place.

One of the key ceremonial roles is fulfilled by the Usher of the Black Rod, whose staff of office is an ebony staff (below right) topped with a golden lion, which is the main symbol of the office's authority.

When the Legislative Council sits, the Black Rod is chamber officer and he also supervises attendants and visitors, oversees security, maintenance and protocol and receives official guests.



You're welcome to visit!

Parliament House, including displays and information, is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm. On days when Parliament is not sitting, regular Legislative Chambers tours are conducted. Group tours may be booked by phoning 9230 3444. On sitting days, visitors are welcome to view proceedings from the public galleries. Parliament House is well worth a visit ... and it's free. Local schools and community groups wishing to tour Parliament House may contact my office to arrange a visit. Visit the Parliament's Internet site to find out more about Parliament, its Members, its history, current Hansards and business papers. For additional information, contact the Parliamentary Education Section:

Mail: Parliament of NSW
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: 9230 2047

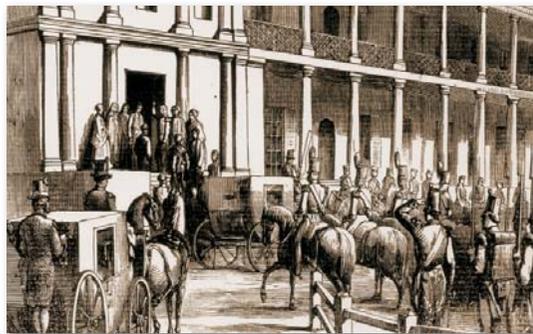
Facsimile: 9230 3033

E-mail: education@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au

AUSPICIOUS OCCASION:

Dignitaries gather and mounted troopers look on at the opening of the Legislative Council Chambers in 1843 by NSW Governor Sir Charles FitzRoy. From *The Illustrated Sydney News* of June 17, 1854.



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JUNE 2008



THE NEW SOUTH WALES PARLIAMENT



Brought to you by
THOMAS GEORGE MP
 Member for Lismore
 The Nationals' Whip
 Temporary Speaker of the Legislative Assembly



Parliament's two Houses

The NSW Parliament comprises two democratically elected Houses.

The Lower House, or Legislative Assembly, is the seat of government which is formed by the political party supported by the majority of the House's 93 Members.

Elections take place on the fourth Saturday in March every four years using an optional preference voting system.

Members each represent a single electorate.

The Premier and most Ministers are Assembly Members so most Bills and government business are introduced here.

The Upper House, or Legislative Council, has 42 Members, each serving eight-year terms.

Half stand for re-election every four years.

Members are elected on a state-wide basis in proportion to the total vote their party receives.

The Council is primarily a House of Review, taking a second look at, and often amending, Bills.

After their passage through both Houses, Bills go to the Governor of NSW for assent to become law.

Local State MPs who served our past



Sir Thomas Thomson Ewing 1894-1901



John William Coleman 1901-04



The Hon. George Nesbitt 1913-20



William Thomas Missingham 1927-33



William Frith 1933-53



Jack Stuart Easter 1953-59



Keith Clive Compton 1959-65



(Bruce) Robert Bruce Duncan 1965-88



(Bill) Barry William Rixon 1988-99

NOTE: Lismore became an electorate in the NSW Parliament with the end of multi-member districts in 1894, when it was split from Richmond. In 1904 Lismore was abolished with the reduction in the size of the Legislative Assembly after Federation. In 1913 Lismore was recreated, replacing Richmond. With the introduction of proportional representation in 1920, Lismore and Clarence were absorbed into Byron. With the end of proportional representation in 1927, Lismore and Clarence were recreated and both remain in the Parliament today.



LISMORE MPs: Current Member Thomas George (right) with the late Bill Rixon (left) and the late Bruce Duncan.

ELECTORATE OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:
55 Carrington Street (PO Box 52)
Lismore NSW 2480
Telephone: 6621 3624
Facsimile: 6622 1403
Murwillumbah: Telephone 6672 7577
E-mail: lismore@parliament.nsw.gov.au
www.thomasgeorge.com.au

Millicent was pioneer for female politicians



THE FIRST: Millicent Preston-Stanley (1883-1955), whose portrait hangs in the NSW Parliament.

THE trailblazer for women in the NSW Parliament was Millicent Preston-Stanley, the first female to be elected to the Lower House.

Preston-Stanley was Member for Eastern Suburbs in 1925-27.

During her time in the NSW Parliament, Miss Preston-Stanley campaigned on maternal mortality, reform in child welfare, amendments to the Health Act and better housing.

Catherine Elizabeth Green and Ellen Webster (ALP) were the first women MLCs in 1931.

Presently there are 26 women MLAs and 13 MLCs.

Our first MP a noteworthy figure

LISMORE'S first State MP, Thomas Ewing, was a fascinating individual who also played a significant role in the founding of Federal politics. He was born in 1856 which was, coincidentally, the year Responsible Government came to NSW.

The son of an Anglican clergyman, Thomas intended to study for the Bar but joined a surveyor's party at age 17 and became a licensed surveyor with the NSW Department of Lands in 1877.

In 1885 Ewing left the Lands Department to stand, successfully, for the NSW Legislative Assembly,



JUBILEE ROOM: The former Parliamentary Library is now the main Committee Room at Parliament.

representing the seat of Richmond.

He was a supporter of female suffrage and later in life became a leading author.

In 1894 he transferred to the new seat of Lismore and became known as an independently-minded member.

Ewing moved to Federal politics in 1901, entering the inaugural Australian House of Representatives as the Member for Richmond.

In the second administration of Alfred Deakin, he was Vice-President of the Executive Council (1905-06), Minister for Home Affairs (1906-07) and Minister for Defence (1907-08).

An amiable and well-liked politician, Ewing was often scornful of the "titled mediocrities" of parliament, Deakin knighted him as a Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George as a joke in 1908, and according to colleague Richard Crouch, Ewing took it as such.



Two of our best



SIR Daniel Cooper (1821-1902) served as both an MLA and MLC and was the first Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in 1856 when he was only 35 years old. The task of presiding over the Assembly was a difficult responsibility because the infant Parliament had yet to establish its own set of procedural traditions. Cooper provided much-needed direction in the early years of the Assembly both in terms of business brought before the House and the development of Parliamentary conventions.



SIR Henry Parkes (1815-96) also sat in both Houses. He truly was a remarkable figure and helped shape NSW politics, serving as an MLC from 1854-56 and then as an MLA from 1856-95, representing nine electorates over a period of 39 years, three months and 23 days.



Our first Premier

STUART Alexander Donaldson, the first Premier of New South Wales, was born in London on Boxing Day, 1815. Educated privately, he joined his father's firm at 15 and went to Mexico for business training from 1831-34.

Arriving in Sydney in 1840, he acted as an agent for Lloyd's of London and later took up runs in the New England district with 34,000 sheep on more than 100,000 hectares. The depression of the early 1840s hit him hard but by 1851 he had cleared debts and realised more than £30,000.

He acquired a tweed factory near Newcastle, was a shareholder in many companies and was a trustee of the NSW Savings Bank.

In 1856 he was elected for the constituency of Cumberland and was called upon to form the first Constitutional Ministry in the Colony. His Ministry of six was defeated the following August.



FIRST PREMIER: Stuart Donaldson

Premiers of New South Wales, 1856 to date

Premier	Birth-Death	Term of Premiership
DONALDSON, Stuart	(1812-67)	6.6.1856 - 25.8.1856
COWPER, Charles	(1807-75)	26.6.1856 - 2.10.1856
PARKER, Henry Watson	(1808-81)	3.10.1856 - 7.9.1857
COWPER, Charles	(1807-75)	7.9.1857 - 26.10.1859
FORSTER, William	(1818-82)	27.10.1859 - 8.3.1860
ROBERTSON, John	(1816-91)	9.3.1860 - 9.1.1861
COWPER, Charles	(1807-75)	10.1.1861 - 15.10.1863
MARTIN, James	(1820-86)	16.10.1863 - 2.2.1865
COWPER, Charles	(1807-75)	3.2.1865 - 21.1.1866
MARTIN, James	(1820-86)	22.1.1866 - 2.10.1868
ROBERTSON, John	(1816-91)	27.10.1868 - 12.1.1870
COWPER, Charles	(1807-75)	13.1.1870 - 15.12.1870
MARTIN, James	(1820-86)	16.12.1870 - 13.5.1872
PARKES, Henry	(1815-96)	14.5.1872 - 8.2.1875
ROBERTSON, John	(1816-91)	9.2.1875 - 21.3.1877
PARKES, Henry	(1815-96)	22.3.1877 - 16.8.1877
ROBERTSON, John	(1816-91)	17.8.1877 - 17.12.1877
FARNELL, James	(1825-88)	18.12.1877 - 20.12.1878
PARKES, Henry	(1815-96)	21.12.1878 - 4.1.1883
STUART, Alexander	(1824-86)	5.1.1883 - 6.10.1885
DIBBS, George	(1834-1904)	7.10.1885 - 21.12.1885
ROBERTSON, John	(1816-91)	22.12.1885 - 25.2.1886
JENNINGS, Patrick	(1831-97)	26.2.1886 - 19.1.1887
PARKES, Henry	(1815-96)	20.1.1887 - 16.1.1889
DIBBS, George	(1834-1904)	17.1.1889 - 7.3.1889
PARKES, Henry	(1815-96)	8.3.1889 - 22.10.1891
DIBBS, George	(1834-1904)	23.10.1891 - 2.8.1894
REID, George	(1845-1918)	3.8.1894-9 - 13.9.1899
LYNE, William	(1844-1913)	14.9.1899 - 27.3.1901
SEE, John	(1844-1907)	28.3.1901 - 14.6.1904
WADDELL, Thomas	(1854-1940)	15.6.1904 - 29.8.1904
CARRUTHERS, Joseph	(1857-1932)	30.8.1904 - 1.10.1907
WADE, Charles	(1863-1922)	2.10.1907 - 20.10.1910
McGOWEN, James	(1855-1922)	21.10.1910 - 29.6.1913
HOLMAN, William	(1871-1934)	30.6.1913 - 12.4.1920
STOREY, John	(1869-1921)	13.4.1920 - 10.10.1921
DOOLEY, James	(1877-1950)	10.10.1921 - 20.12.1921
FULLER, George	(1861-1940)	20.12.1921
DOOLEY, James	(1877-1950)	20.12.1921 - 13.4.1922
FULLER, George	(1861-1940)	13.4.1922 - 17.6.1925
LANG, John Thomas	(1876-1975)	17.6.1925 - 18.10.1927
BAVIN, Thomas	(1874-1941)	18.10.1927 - 3.11.1930
LANG, John Thomas	(1876-1975)	4.11.1930 - 13.5.1932
STEVENS, Bertram	(1889-1973)	16.5.1932 - 5.8.1939
MAIR, Alexander	(1889-1961)	5.8.1939 - 16.5.1941
McKELL, William	(1891-1985)	16.5.1941 - 2.2.1947
McGIRR, James	(1890-1957)	6.2.1947 - 2.4.1952
CAHILL, John Joseph	(1891-1959)	3.4.1952 - 22.10.1959
HEFFRON, Robert	(1890-1978)	28.10.1959 - 30.4.1964
RENSHAW, John	(1909-87)	30.4.1964 - 13.5.1965
ASKIN, Robin (Robert)	(1907-81)	13.5.1965 - 3.1.1975
LEWIS, Thomas	(1922-)	3.1.1975 - 23.1.1976
WILLIS, Eric	(1922-99)	23.1.1976 - 14.5.1976
WRAN, Neville	(1926-)	14.5.1976 - 4.7.1986
UNSWORTH, Barrie	(1934-)	4.7.1986 - 25.3.1988
GREINER, Nicholas	(1947-)	25.3.1988 - 24.6.1992
FAHEY, John	(1945-)	24.6.1992 - 4.4.1995
CARR, Robert	(1947-)	4.4.1995 - 3.8.2005
IEEMMA, Morris	(1961-)	3.8.2005 - to present

It takes all types

FORTY men have filled the role of Premier in 150 years.

They have been an interesting and varied lot, emanating from all manner of professions prior to entering politics: accountancy, farming, journalism, labouring, law, the military and pharmaceutical ... to name but a few occupations.

Henry Parkes, the Father of Federation, is the longest serving Premier, having spent 11 years, nine months and 14 days in the role during five terms of office between 1872 and '91.

Of the 13 Premiers to serve during the 19th Century, only three (James Farnell, George Dibbs and William Lyne) were born in Australia.

Indeed, only 21 of the 40 Premiers thus far are Australian-born.

Nick Greiner was born in the Hungarian capital, Budapest.

Perhaps the most interesting place of birth of all the Premiers was that of James McGowen, who first saw the light of day at sea on the ill-fated British ship *Western Bride* in 1855.

The busy role of an MP

A MEMBER of Parliament represents one of the 93 NSW electoral districts (electorates) in Parliament.

He/she is a Member of the Legislative Assembly, or Lower House.

In their electorate, MPs fulfil several functions. They:

- Receive requests for assistance and information from local people (constituents) in areas such as housing, transport, education, health, environment, taxes etc. They try to solve these problems or refer them to Ministers or other authorities;
- Meet with businesses, government departments, local organisations and media to find out their needs;
- Make representations to Ministers on behalf of individuals and local organisations;
- Support provision of facilities and local services from government funds;
- Are involved in local functions and meetings; and
- Whether members of a party



IN THE CHAIR: Member for Lismore Thomas George in his role as Temporary Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

- or otherwise, attend local supporters' meetings.
- In Parliament, all MPs:
- Form part of Government, Opposition or Cross-Bench;
 - Attend sittings of Parliament;
 - Consider proposed legislation (they may also propose Private Member's Bills);
 - Participate in debating and voting;
 - Participate in Parliamentary committees;
 - Liaise with other MPs, Parliamentary staff, community groups, media; and
 - Raise issues in Parliament on behalf of constituents through such means as Question Time, making Private Member's statements and presenting petitions.



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST: Local Member Thomas George.

Proud to represent the Lismore Electorate

AUSTRALIA is a representative democracy in which people elect representatives to speak in Parliament and make decisions on their behalf. New South Wales has a proud tradition of democracy, being Australia's first and oldest Parliament. Parliament is a very old word which originally meant a "talk". It is an honour and privilege to serve as your Local Member and to be your voice in the Legislative Assembly. This booklet has been produced as an educational resource to explain the functions of the State Parliament, the important part it plays in the life of the people of NSW and to describe the stately building which is, in essence, the cradle of democracy in this country. I hope you find it informative and interesting. If there is any State matter you feel I may be able to help you with, please contact my office and I will do my best to assist you.

Thomas George MP, Member for Lismore



In the beginning

There have been more than 2000 Members of Parliament since the first Legislative Council was constituted in NSW in 1824.

The establishment of Responsible Government in NSW 32 years later brought about a dramatic change in the political system of the colony from that landmark day – June 6, 1856.

The martial figure of the Governor disappeared, his place being occupied by men henceforth known as the responsible Ministers of the Crown. The old system of arbitrary rule resting on the military force was superseded by a Government in which the representatives of the people controlled the destinies of the colony.

The inaugural Ministry of six, led by Stuart Donaldson, lasted only two months and 19 days. Yet while its term was brief, it laid the foundations for a solid future.

Hospital became heart of NSW democracy



ORNATE: The elaborately decorated Legislative Assembly lobby creates a grand entrance to Parliament House.

PARLIAMENT House in Macquarie Street is the home of government in this State, its history a rich tapestry of the life of Sydney and New South Wales.

Sydney's first permanent hospital was completed in 1816. To fund it, Governor Lachlan Macquarie allowed the building contractors to import and sell 60,000 gallons of rum.

Two of the "Rum Hospital's" original three buildings remain standing to this day, one as part of

Parliament House.

Sydney was founded by the British in 1788 as a place to send convicts, but by 1824, with many free settlers in the colony, a small Legislative Council was established to assist the Governor in a first step towards democratic government in Australia.

In 1829 the enlarged Legislative Council began to meet in the Chief Surgeon's Quarters and from that time this site has remained the centre of the NSW Legislature.

The historic chambers, library, foyers and former surgeon's quarters were lovingly and painstakingly restored and remain today as a showpiece of colonial architecture and splendour.

The colours of the chambers follow the Westminster tradition of green for the Lower House and red for the Upper House.

The Legislative Council Chamber is a prefabricated cast-iron building manufactured in Scotland and originally intended to be a church in the Victorian goldfields.

It was erected at Parliament House in 1856 to accommodate the Council when the bicameral (two-House) Parliamentary system was created.

The Chamber was meticulously restored in the 1980s to its 1892 appearance.



DEMOCRATIC CORNERSTONE: The Legislative Assembly, or Lower House, is where 93 MPs, each representing a single electorate, meet to decide State policy – matters including education, health, law and order, public works and roads.



YESTERYEAR: Macquarie Street as it looked in October, 1931, with Parliament House at the right. In the distance the new Harbour Bridge nears completion.

In 1843 and again in 1856 legislative chambers were added to meet the needs of the increasingly democratic colony.

Plans for an entirely new building were always shelved due to cost.

In 1974 an assortment of buildings was replaced with a 12-storey block linked by the magnificent Fountain Court to the preserved Macquarie Street buildings.



UPPER HOUSE: The 42 Members of the Legislative Council occupy the plush red chamber which is a "House of Review", with a similar role to the Senate in Federal Parliament – its Members acting as a check and balance on the government of the day in the Lower House.