

# Know Your Mace

The Mace of the Québec National Assembly was made in 1867 by jeweller Charles O. Zollikoffer. It is decorated with acanthus and lotus leaves. Its cup is surmounted by a crown decorated with a cross and the letters "ER" for "Elizabeth Regina".

Originally saved from the Parliament Building fire in 1883, some of its decorative elements were unfortunately later removed following rudimentary repairs. The crown was modified and the initials "ER" were added to it after 1952.

Considered anachronistic, the Mace almost disappeared from the House during the parliamentary reforms of the 1960s. The presence of symbols linked to British tradition in the Québec Parliament was called into question at the time. The Mace was then stolen by students in 1967: pulling daring pranks of the sort was a tradition at that time, especially during the Québec Carnival. Today, it is stored in a secure location in the office of the Sergeant-at-Arms or that of his Deputy.

Beyond the work of art, the Mace is a powerful symbol of deep-rooted parliamentarism. It reflects a secular tradition shared by many British-style parliaments all over the world that it unites in a common experience.

Frédéric Lemieux,  
National Assembly of Quebec

