

Know Your Mace

The history of the mace in Newfoundland and Labrador begins with the hand painted wooden mace. This is believed to be the original mace, given by the British authorities to the newly elected House of Assembly in 1833.

In the early days of the House of Assembly, meetings were held in Mary Travers' tavern in downtown St. John's. Alas, rent was not paid to Ms. Travers for some months, and her petitions to the House for payment remained unanswered. She therefore took matters into her own hands, ejected the Members, took possession of the mace as well as other furnishings, and put the items up for auction. Soon after, Ms. Travers was paid in full and the items were returned to the House.

The current mace was given to Newfoundland and Labrador in 1950 by British Columbia to honor the province's 1949 Confederation with Canada. The mace is made of gold-plated sterling silver, and includes many symbols that showcase connectivity across Canada, including maple leaves, images of the fishery, various Coats of Arms, and BC's provincial emblems of the dogwood flower and the thunderbird.

The wooden mace is displayed in the public gallery of the House of Assembly, and the gift from British Columbia is used daily in the House of Assembly proceedings.

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