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## *Bills, Bells and Ballots update*

Against a backdrop of antique tractors and farm machinery in the Warracknabeal Agricultural Museum, *Bills, Bells and Ballots – 150 years of Victoria's Parliament* attracted more than 500 visitors last month. The only Wimmera town to host the exhibition, Warracknabeal was the fifth stop on a journey that since November last year has already covered more than 1200 kilometres.

*Bills, Bells and Ballots* opened in Shepparton on Saturday 20 May where it will stay at the Art Gallery until Sunday 11 June. Located across two floors of exhibition space in Shepparton's Eastbank Centre, the Art Gallery is home to permanent exhibitions of Australian ceramics, Australian painting and works on paper. Parliament's travelling



exhibition will take its temporary place alongside a diverse range of Australian art during its time at the Gallery.

Shepparton Art Gallery, 10am—4pm from 20 May to 11 June, admission is free.

## OUR LEADERS

### Thomas Tuke Hollway

Premier 1947 - 1950

Thomas Hollway was one of several significant parliamentary members to be born in Ballarat. Before entering politics Hollway was a member of the Royal Australian Air Force and served as an intelligence officer in New Guinea.



Following the resignation of John Cain Snr in 1947 Hollway, of the Electoral Reform League, was sworn in as the first Liberal premier since 1935. The 27 Liberal members of his party joined Sir John Gladstone Black McDonald's 20 Country Party members to form Victoria's sole post-war composite ministry.

After that government's collapse in 1948, Hollway assumed leadership of a minority government. In 1949 Hollway was responsible for the introduction of overtime payment to members of the parliamentary doorkeeping staff. However, parliamentary instability continued and after a vote of no-confidence in June 1950, McDonald was sworn in as Victoria's third premier in as many years.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In 1854 it was proposed that the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council be called the House of Representatives (Assembly) and the Senate (Council). However, because this sounded too American, the suggestion was dropped.

Twenty of the current members were born overseas.

The oldest serving member was William Edgar, MLC, who served until his death in 1948 at the age of 90. In his lifetime he was employed in a warehouse and as a draper, an estate agent, a company president, an honorary treasurer, a justice of the peace, a founder of the Malvern Horticultural Society, a lay preacher, a councillor and a mayor!

The state prisoner of March 1876 who 'made his mark' was member of the Legislative Assembly, James McKean. In 1876 he was arrested by the Serjeant-at-Arms and spent eight days confined in a room in Parliament House. During his confinement he inscribed his name on the underside of the Speaker's chair of 1834, donated to the Parliament in 1873. Today you can still see the markings on the chair now located in Queen's Hall, Parliament House.



## Launch of the RE-MEMBER database on 31 May 2006



In its 150th year, the Parliament of Victoria is pleased to announce that a database containing biographical information of the 1602 men and women who have served in the Victorian Parliament since 1851 will be available online from 31 May 2006.

*Re-Member* is a free online resource that aims to help private, professional and school research projects. The database was developed to help answer the many inquiries received by Parliament about former MPs from genealogists, researchers, journalists and family members. It will be an excellent way for anyone to obtain information, photographs and memorabilia about Parliament and its Members.

The database brings together all important information about Victorian MPs including the electorate and party they served, as well as details about their education, career, family and key dates. Biographical information for the database has been sourced from the two published biographical registers of the Victorian Parliament along with data from various editions of the Parliamentary Handbook. Access to the Re-Member database is from Parliament's public website, with the database available under the links for "Members of Parliament" and "Our democratic history".

Make sure to visit:  
[www.parliament.vic.gov.au](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au) after  
Wednesday 31 May 2006.

## Naked Democracy: Governing Victoria, 1856–2006

This free exhibition celebrates the 150th anniversary of self-government in Victoria, revisiting the highs and lows of Victorian government, politics and democracy. It spans the 1856 introduction of the secret ballot (a world first), parliamentary deadlocks, the mystery of the missing mace, women's struggle for voting rights, the emergence of political parties, the 1923 police strike, the Bolte years and the constitutional reforms of 2006.

Drawn from the collections of the State Library of Victoria and loans from other institutions, the exhibits range from John Pascoe Fawcner's 1835 draft constitution to a 1972 caricature of Premier Henry Bolte by cartoonist Les Tanner, in the form of a coffee mug!

There are unique documents, memorabilia and photographs; political cartoons from *Melbourne Punch*; historic maps; protest badges and banners; antique top hats and Parliamentary hat-stands; petitions from the women's suffrage movement; early 'how to vote' cards; political pamphlets and more.

The exhibition visits the 'Parliament of the

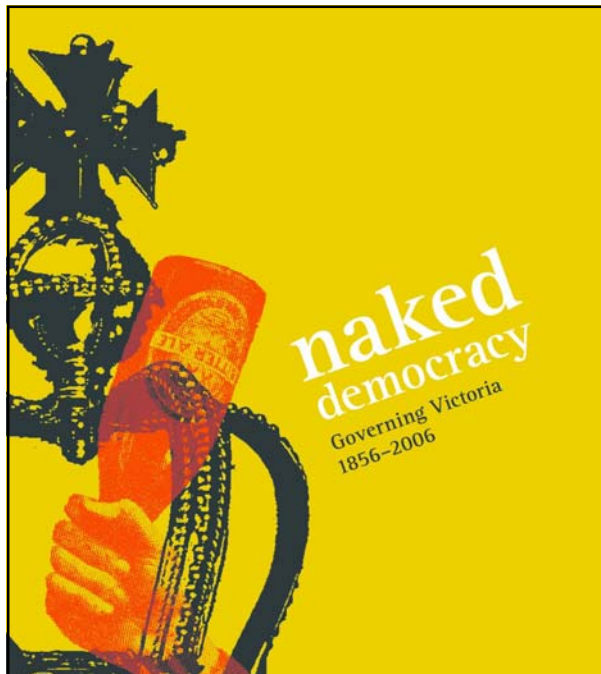
street' – showing how Victorians have had their say, not just at the polling-booth, but by taking to the streets and making themselves heard, from the Yarra banks

of the post-war decades, and the 24/7 shopping culture of today.

The exhibition traces the changing *idea* of democracy since 1856, when Victoria's first Premier feared the outbreak of 'a naked democracy' if non-property-owners were allowed to vote. It follows 150 years of achievements and reforms – right up to the constitutional amendments which, in 2006, will see the Upper House dissolved for the first time in 150 years.

What is unique about Victoria's way of governing? How did it take shape? And does it work?

*Naked Democracy* looks at things that Victorians take for granted – the right to vote, the right to shop, the idea that democracy is good for us – and asks, 'Was it always this way?'



to the steps of Parliament House.

The 150th anniversary of the Eight-Hour Day movement is also featured, with a focus on shop-trading hours in Victoria – from the long struggle by 19th-century shop assistants to finish work before midnight, to the restrictive opening hours

2 June – 1 October 2006

Keith Murdoch Gallery  
State Library of Victoria  
Entry 1, 328 Swanston Street

Open 10am–5pm daily

Free entry

# Snapshot: 1940s and 1950s



The Black Rod, symbol of the office of the Usher of the Black Rod

The post-war parliaments of the late 1940s and early 1950s in Victoria were characterised by uncertainty and unsettlement.

Throughout the late 1940s, Government concern surrounding the State's economic situation was coupled with union militancy and frustration regarding wages and employment conditions. The 1947 Commonwealth Government proposal to introduce legislation that would nationalise all private trading banks caused much controversy and was reflective of this turbulent era.

Amidst this upheaval a number of structural parliamentary changes were introduced, primarily relating to Legislative Council reforms and electoral redistribution. A crucial reform occurred in 1950, when all Victorians were granted the right to vote in the Legislative Council – 93 years after the introduction of universal adult franchise had been conferred upon Legislative Assembly electors.

The Black Rod was incorporated into Legislative Council proceedings in 1951, following the decision to adopt the House of Lords tradition. This became the symbol of office of the Usher of the Black Rod, the executive officer of the President of the Legislative Council.

The coalition between the Liberal Party and the Country Party ended acrimoniously in December 1948 and there was not to be another coalition government in Victoria until 1992.

It was also the end of an era for several key political figures. The year 1948 marked the death of Victoria's oldest MP William Edgar, MLC for East Yarra, and former Governor-General Sir Isaac Isaacs. Former Premier Sir Albert Dunstan died in 1950. This period saw the departure of Wilfred Kent-Hughes from federal politics, and in 1955, Jack Lemmon (MLA for Williamstown) retired after 51 years of unbroken parliamentary service – a record

still held today.

Outside the political sphere, in 1948 Sir Donald Bradman returned to cricket at almost forty years of age to lead 'The Invincibles', who remained undefeated throughout the tour – an achievement that has since been unmatched.



William Edgar

## Australia's first native-born Governor-General

**Sir Isaac Isaacs**  
(1855–1948)



Member of the Legislative Assembly, 1892–1901, Member of the House of Representatives, 1901–06, High Court Justice, 1906–30, Chief Justice of the High Court, 1930 and Governor-General, 1931–36.

A barrister and opposed to land-booming politicians (Isaacs coined the memorable phrase 'an aristocracy of criminals'), Isaacs enjoyed a distinguished political and legal career before eventually becoming Australia's first native-born Governor-General.

## Date for your diary:

PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
**OPEN DAY 2006**

11am - 4pm

**Sunday 25 June**

### Attractions:

- 150th travelling exhibition - *Bills, Bells and Ballots*
- Displays from all Parliamentary departments
- Chambers of the Assembly and Council
- Victorian Premier's portrait collection
- Vestibule mosaic
- Parliamentary Library
- Committees of Investigation
- Hansard
- Devonshire teas and light refreshments
- BBQ lunches available in the Parliamentary gardens

[www.parliament.vic.gov.au/150th](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/150th)