



PARLIAMENT OF NSW

Media Release

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THE STORY OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PARLIAMENT REVEALED IN COLLECTOR'S EDITION BOOK

A new book released this week tells the story of New South Wales Parliament House and its evolution from Sydney's first general hospital to a modern parliamentary precinct that has seen 200 years of political life.

Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly Jonathan O'Dea said that *Rum Hospital to Parliament: The Story of New South Wales Parliament House* records the history of Australia's oldest public building still in use to this day.

"We are proud to present the official history of our state's home of democracy. This book tells the story of those who founded our first Parliament and the centuries of change that it has witnessed and withstood," said Mr O'Dea.

"All of these challenges have given us an institution that is resilient, adaptable and well prepared for what the future might hold."

Built in convict times under Governor Macquarie in exchange for a monopoly on the colonial rum trade and initially condemned 'to ruin', New South Wales Parliament House began life as the Principal Surgeon's residence of the General Hospital.

President of the NSW Legislative Council Matthew Mason-Cox said the book uncovers 200 years of history, architecture, and art alongside historical plans for designs that 'might have been'.

"Our Parliament has had a long and storied journey, from 'Rum Hospital' to the Parliament House we know today," said Mr Mason-Cox.

"As we approach the Bicentenary of the NSW Legislative Council over 2023 and 2024, there has never been a better time to reflect on its history. This book provides the ideal companion to our celebration of two centuries of evolving democracy in Australia."

Rum Hospital to Parliament recounts the many reconstructions and additions of the past, with the last major renovation completed 40 years ago. The book also tells the story of the people who have worked in and visited the Parliament including members, parliamentary staff, and special guests.

From the end of 2022, NSW Parliament House will undergo a series of critical maintenance works to restore and preserve this important public institution.

Rum Hospital to Parliament: The Story of New South Wales Parliament House can be purchased through the NSW Parliament's online gift shop at <https://parliamentarycatering.com.au/shop>.

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