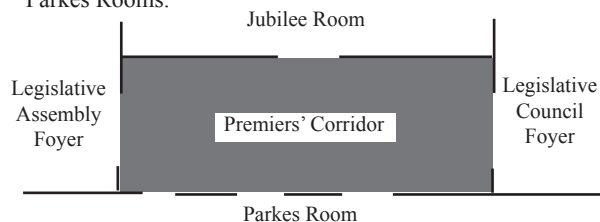


The Premiers' Corridor

Established in 1984, this corridor, containing photographs of all the past Premiers of New South Wales, follows the line of the original back verandah of the 1816 Surgeon's Wing of the Rum Hospital, linking the foyers of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly and opening onto the Jubilee and Parkes Rooms.



The Premier is, by convention, a member of the Legislative Assembly who can command enough support amongst members of Parliament to form a government. The role of Premier did not emerge until responsible government was established in New South Wales in 1856. As the modern party system did not begin to develop here until the late 1880s, it was often difficult for a nineteenth century Premier to maintain majority support. Leaders had their supporting factions but most MPs saw themselves as liberal independents who would support or not support a leader according to the issue at hand. The result was that Premiers and governments changed on average every 18 months, and until George Reid did so in 1898, no Premier had ever won two elections in a row. In all there were 13 different Premiers and 29 changes of government between 1856 and 1900.

By 1890 the Labor Party had begun to form and most other MPs were forming into two groupings divided over the issue of import duties to protect local industry – “Free Traders” versus “Protectionists”. The party system, which dominated twentieth century politics, was emerging.

Before 1889, Members of the Legislative Assembly were not paid so MPs had to have independent incomes. Most Premiers before 1900 were pastoralists, landowners or merchants.

After Federation in 1901, the Free Trade v. Protection issue was no longer a matter for state parliaments and the non-Labor parties began evolving into the Liberal Party (formed in 1944) and the Country (now National) Party (formed in 1925). Leadership of a united party with a majority in the Legislative Assembly ensured greater stability and since 1900 Premiers have averaged about 4 years in office. Their parties have tended to stay in government even longer – between 1933 and 2011 there were only 5 changes of government in NSW.

Some Premiers: 19th, 20th and 21st Century

Sir Stuart Donaldson (1812-67). Previously a member of the Legislative Council, Donaldson won a seat in the newly formed elected Legislative Assembly and was appointed NSW's first Premier in 1856 by Governor Denison. He tried to reconcile different interests but was constantly frustrated by opposing factions in the Legislative Assembly and his government lasted just over 11 weeks.

Sir Charles Cowper (1807-75). Cowper, succeeded Donaldson as the second Premier of NSW in 1856 for 5 weeks but was subsequently Premier on four more occasions totalling about 7 years. His achievements included the 1858 Electoral Act that introduced the secret ballot and gave the vote to most adult males; Torrens Title legislation; abolition of state aid to the churches; and, with later Premier, Robertson, land reform.

Sir Henry Parkes (1815-96). Henry Parkes was Premier five times between 1872 and 1891. He advocated for democratic reform, free trade, public works and public education – the Public Instruction Act of 1880 being one of his greatest achievements. Late in his career he began to promote the cause of federation and, although he did not live to see the colonies of Australia united as a nation, he is regarded as “the Father of Federation”.

Sir George Reid (1845-1918). The only person to be both Premier of NSW (1894-99) and Prime Minister of Australia (1904-5), Reid later also became a member of the British House of Commons (1916-18). As Premier he played a major role in steering Federation through, although his doubts about the final constitution earned him the nickname of “Yes-No Reid”.

William Holman (1871-1934). Holman became the new Labor Party's second NSW Premier in 1913 but was expelled from the Party over the 1916 conscription debate that also split the Federal Labor Government. Like his Federal counterpart, Billy Hughes, he continued in office for some years by forming a Nationalist coalition with former opposition and some ex-Labor members.

J. T. (Jack) Lang (1876-1975). The most controversial Premier of NSW, and the only one to be dismissed from office, Lang was twice Premier and was known as an outspoken individualist. His innovations included many social services, the 40 hour week, public works projects and state

lotteries. However, his attempt during the 1930s depression to refuse to pay interest on loans led to a crisis with the Federal Government and to his dismissal by Sir Philip Game, the Governor of NSW.

Sir Bertram Stevens (1889-1973). Lang's replacement in 1932 was in almost every way his opposite. Stevens' appointment was an ironic conclusion to a clash which began in 1925 when he resigned as Director of Finance at the NSW Treasury after refusing to have his authority diminished by the then new Premier and Treasurer, Lang. He lost the leadership of his party after a then record 7 years as Premier.

Sir Robert (Robin) Askin (1909-81). A former bank clerk, Askin ended almost a quarter century of Labor Government when he took the Liberal-National Coalition to victory in 1965, beginning a term of almost 10 years as Premier. A shrewd, conservative, and subsequently controversial, politician, he vigorously supported state rights, opposing what he saw as increasing Federal attempts to control state finances and authority.

Neville Wran (1926 - 2014). A barrister and QC, Wran led Labor from 1976 through a series of election victories, achieving the longest unbroken Premiership by the time of his resignation in 1986. His term of Government saw considerable but generally moderate reform in constitutional, electoral and legal areas, in the public service, civil liberties, environmental and consumer protection.

Robert John (Bob) Carr (b.1947). The longest continuously serving NSW Premier, Carr became Labor leader in 1988 and was Premier of NSW from April 1995 to August 2005. Listed amongst the achievements of the Carr Government are the proclamations of new National Parks and Wilderness areas; the successful 2000 Sydney Olympics; the establishment of a Police Integrity Commission; support for Aboriginal reconciliation; and changes to education including reform of the Higher School Certificate and introduction of Year 10 examinations for History, Geography; Civics and Citizenship.

Kristina Keneally (b. 1968). Elected as the member for the New South Wales Legislative Assembly seat of Heffron in 2003 and again in 2007, Kristina Keneally held the portfolios for Ageing and Disability Services and also for Planning. In 2009, after the resignation of Premier Rees, Keneally became the State's first female Premier. She led the Labor Party to the March 2011 election but her Government was defeated at the polls. She won the seat of Heffron at that election but resigned as leader of the Labor Party.

Premiers of NSW since 1856

Premier	Term of Service
DONALDSON, Stuart	6.6.1856 - 25.8.1856
COWPER, Charles	26.8.1856 - 2.10.1856
PARKER, Henry	3.10.1856 - 7.9.1857
COWPER, Charles	7.9.1857 - 26.10.1859
FORSTER, William	27.10.1859 - 8.3.1860
ROBERTSON, John	9.3.1860 - 9.1.1861
COWPER, Charles	10.1.1861 - 15.10.1863
MARTIN, James	16.10.1863 - 2.2.1865
COWPER, Charles	3.2.1865 - 21.1.1866
MARTIN, James	22.1.1866 - 2.10.1868
ROBERTSON, John	27.10.1868 - 12.1.1870
COWPER, Charles	13.1.1870 - 15.12.1870
MARTIN, James	16.12.1870 - 13.5.1872
PARKES, Henry	14.5.1872 - 8.2.1875
ROBERTSON, John	9.2.1875 - 21.3.1877
PARKES, Henry	22.3.1877 - 16.8.1877
ROBERTSON, John	17.8.1877 - 17.12.1877
FARNELL, James	18.12.1877 - 20.12.1878
PARKES, Henry	21.12.1878 - 4.1.1883
STUART, Alexander	5.1.1883 - 6.10.1885
DIBBS, George	7.10.1885 - 21.12.1885
ROBERTSON, John	22.12.1885 - 25.2.1886
JENNINGS, Patrick	26.2.1886 - 19.1.1887
PARKES, Henry	20.1.1887 - 16.1.1889
DIBBS, George	17.1.1889 - 7.3.1889
PARKES, Henry	8.3.1889 - 22.10.1891
DIBBS, George	23.10.1891 - 2.8.1894
REID, George	3.8.1894-9 - 13.9.1899
LYNE, William	14.9.1899 - 27.3.1901
SEE, John	28.3.1901 - 14.6.1904
WADDELL, Thomas	15.6.1904 - 29.8.1904
CARRUTHERS, Joseph	30.8.1904 - 1.10.1907
WADE, Charles	2. 10.1907 - 20.10.1910
McGOWEN, James	21.10.1910 - 29.6.1913
HOLMAN, William	30.6.1913 - 12.4.1920
STOREY, John	13.4.1920 - 10.10.1921
DOOLEY, James	10.10.1921 - 20.12.1921
FULLER, George	20.12.1921
DOOLEY, James	20.12.1921 - 13.4.1922

FULLER, George	13.4.1922 - 17.6.1925
LANG, John Thomas	17.6.1925 - 18.10.1927
BAVIN, Thomas	18.10.1927 - 3.11.1930
LANG, John	4.11.1930 - 13.5.1932
STEVENS, Bertram	16.5.1932 - 5.8.1939
MAIR, Alexander	5.8.1939 - 16.5.1941
McKELL, William	16.5.1941 - 6.2.1947
McGIRR, James	6.2.1947 - 2.4.1952
CAHILL, John Joseph	3.4.1952 - 22.10.1959
HEFFRON, Robert	28.10.1959 - 30.4.1964
RENSHAW, John	30.4.1964 - 13.5.1965
ASKIN, Robert	13.5.1965 - 3.1.1975
LEWIS, Thomas	3.1.1975 - 23.1.1976
WILLIS, Eric	23.1.1976 - 14.5.1976
WRAN, Neville	14.5.1976 - 4.7.1986
UNSWORTH, Barrie	4.7.1986 - 25.3.1988
GREINER, Nicholas	25.3.1988 - 24.6.1992
FAHEY, John	24.6.1992 - 4.4.1995
CARR, Robert	4.4.1995 - 3.8.2005
IEMMA, Morris	3.8.2005 - 5.9.2008
REES, Nathan	5.9.2008 - 4.12.2009
KENEALLY, Kristina	4.12.2009 - 26.3.2011
O'FARRELL, Barry	26.3.2011- 17.4.2014
BAIRD, Michael	17.4.2014 - 23.2.2017
BEREJKLIAN Gladys	23.1.2017 to date

The Longest and the Shortest

The **longest** serving Premier of NSW to date has been Sir Henry Parkes whose five terms totalled nearly 13 years. The longest continuous Premiership was that of Bob Carr at 10 years and 17 weeks. The longest period a single political party has held power in NSW was the 24 years between 1941 and 1965 when Labor held Government under 5 different Premiers.

The **shortest** Premiership was Sir George Fuller's 7 hours on December 20, 1921. On this day of three Governments, James Dooley's Labor Cabinet resigned in the morning, after having lost a vote in the Legislative Assembly a week earlier. The Governor, Sir Walter Davidson, asked the Leader of the Opposition, Fuller, to form a Government, which was duly sworn in. However, as Fuller did not have a majority in the Legislative Assembly he immediately met a deadlock. Fuller asked the Governor to call an election but as Dooley still had a majority in the House, the Governor declined. Fuller resigned and Dooley's Ministry was sworn in again.



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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6

The Premiers Corridor and Premiers of New South Wales



Some Nineteenth Century Premiers:
Top L-R: Sir Stuart Donaldson; Sir Charles
Cowper; Sir John Robertson;
Bottom L-R: Sir James Martin; Sir Henry
Parkes; Sir George Reid