

# The MACE



The mace of the Northern Territory

The mace was a weapon of war, similar to a club and was used as far back as Roman times. In the 12th century maces were used by the Serjeant-at-Arms of the King's bodyguard. Originally one of the King's bodyguards was given to the Speaker and parliament for protection.

Today the Speaker is well respected and no longer needs protection. The mace is still carried by a Serjeant-at-Arms, but it is now a symbol of the authority of the Speaker and therefore the authority of parliament. At the beginning of a parliamentary meeting day, the Serjeant-at-Arms carries the mace into the Chamber ahead of the Speaker, and places it on the table with the crown pointing toward the government.



The NT's Serjeant-at-Arms carrying the mace.

Every parliament in Australia has its own unique mace. The Northern Territory's mace is made of silver and gold gilt and weighs approximately 5kg. It was made by Garrard, the Crown Jewellers in London. From the top the St George Cross sits on a crown which has French fleur-de-lis wrapped around its base. Below the crown the orb of the mace has the Northern Territory's Coat of Arms on one side and the cypher (a combination of letters, like a monogram) of Queen Elizabeth II on the other. Stylised wedge-tailed eagles connect the orb to the shaft. A Sturt's Desert Rose intertwined with a Tudor Rose twists around the shaft. Finally at the base is a spider conch shell which is found on the Northern Territory coast.

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A Serjeant-at-Arms carries the mace in a scene from an early British parliament.

The Northern Territory's Mace was a gift from the Commonwealth Parliament to acknowledge Self-Government. It was presented on 17 May 1979.

## An Interesting Mace Fact:

In Australia in 1891, the Parliament of Victoria's mace was stolen. Although many suspects were investigated, the case remains unsolved.

