

# THE BLACK ROD



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Black Rod is a ceremonial staff created in 2012 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada. Based on a 600-year-old Westminster parliamentary tradition, the Black Rod is used on formal occasions when the monarch or her provincial representative, the Lieutenant Governor, is present in the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia.



**DESIGN AND SIGNIFICANCE** The shaft of the Black Rod is made of wood from seven trees indigenous to British Columbia. Located inside the shaft is a copper capsule containing messages written by senior legislative and government officials in 2012. The capsule will be opened and the messages read after 60 years have passed.

The Black Rod features a silver replica of St. Edward's Crown adorned with a Canadian diamond. The use of St. Edward's Crown symbolizes the authority of the reigning monarch. The upper end is engraved with the Pacific Dogwood, the provincial flower.

The mid-section of the Black Rod features a carving in jade, British Columbia's official gemstone, by Tsimshian elder Clifford Bolton (*Soo-Natx*). The carving depicts a man, woman and child. The man and woman are joined together by two eagle feathers, sacred symbols of power. The child symbolizes hope for the future. A carved cedar rope signifies unity and the intertwining of the diverse cultures of British Columbia.



Today, there are four silver rings near the base of the Black Rod. The first three rings date to 2012 and are inscribed with the motto of the Order of the Garter, the national motto of Canada and the provincial motto of British Columbia.

The fourth and final ring—the Ring of Reconciliation—was affixed to the Black Rod by His Royal Highness The Duke of Cambridge in the presence of First Nations leaders, the Governor General, The Lieutenant Governor, the Premier and other dignitaries in a ceremony at Government House on September 26, 2016.

The Ring of Reconciliation embodies the historic relationship between the monarch and Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia and symbolizes a step toward reconciliation. The ring is inscribed with a motto in the Halq'eméylem language: *Lets'e Mot*, meaning "One mind". Two eagle feathers separate the words from an etching of the canoe *Shxw'titostel*, a gift from former Lieutenant Governor Steven Point to British Columbia.

The base of the Black Rod is completed by a silver-plated ferrule. The top of the ferrule is decorated with a scrolled band while the lower portion is encircled with 13 Canadian maple leaves representing our 10 provinces and 3 territories.

Embedded in the Black Rod is a gold sovereign coin from 1871, the year that British Columbia joined Canada as its sixth province. The coin was a gift to British Columbia from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee.



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