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# Governor of New South Wales

## Learning Resource 1 - The Australian Colonies

Colonial Life of our First Governors, their Families and Guests

### Stage 3 History

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These learning experiences support studies on **The Australian Colonies**. The focus is on students using primary sources to investigate continuities and changes between the past and present in the life of the Governor of New South Wales. Teachers may wish to incorporate these activities into their class program.

### Key Inquiry Questions

- What do we know about the lives of people in Australia's colonial past and how do we know?
- What were the significant events and who were the significant people that shaped Australian colonies?



Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AO QC and Mr Dennis Wilson

### Current Role of the Governor of New South Wales

The Governor is appointed by the Sovereign and is her representative in New South Wales. The formal head of state in New South Wales, the role of Governor has changed greatly over the years.

- Students use information and photographs sourced from the Governor of New South Wales website to create an annotated visual text explaining the three current roles of the Governor of New South Wales: Constitutional, Ceremonial and Community.
- In the context of the Governor's Constitutional role, discuss the three levels of government in Australia: local, state and federal.

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## A New Government House for Sydney

Government House Sydney was completed in 1845 and the 9th Governor of New South Wales, Sir George Gipps, his wife Elizabeth and their staff moved into the House. Prominent on the foreshore, it was the most lavish building of the time.

- Students examine Sources 1 to 5 showing and describing Government House between 1841 and 1853. They answer the questions on p.3 to guide their analysis.



Source 1 – Government House, Macquarie St North, 1842, by John Rae

From the collections of the State Library of NSW

<http://acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=447097>



Source 2 – Botanical Gardens, Sydney, ca.1845, oil painting

From the collections of the State Library of NSW

<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=431537>



Source 3 – New Government House, 1841, by Conrad Martens

From the collections of the State Library of NSW  
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=825839>



Source 4 – Sydney NSW from Garden Island, Government House on left, 1846, by GE Peacock

From the collections of the State Library of NSW  
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=421109>

### Government House, Sydney

*Illustrated Sydney News, Saturday 22 October 1853*

Government House is erected on an elevated position, between the cove and the Government Gardens, and commands an extensive view of the harbour. " Altogether," says Fowles, in his illustrated work, ' Sydney in 1848,' " it is one of the most imposing buildings we have, and, whether viewed from the adjacent Domain, the Harbour, or the City, its tall chimnies [sic] of elaborately carved stone, white turrets, and numerous windows, render it a conspicuous object to our metropolis."

Source 5 – Extract of article published in the Illustrated Sydney News, Saturday 22 October 1853

From Trove

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/63613594?searchTerm=government%20house%20sydney&searchLimits=l-australian=y%23pstart5407960>

### Source analysis

- **Observe** – Look at where Government House is sited. Are there other buildings in the images? Are there people in the images? What are they doing? What aspects of people's everyday lives can you see?
- **Interpret** – Write a list of words to describe Government House. If you sailed into Sydney Harbour, what would you think as Government House came into view? What do you think was the intent of the architecture and siting of the building? What do you think the building symbolised and represented in the young colony?
- **Question** – What do you want to know more about after viewing these sources?
- **Explain** – Imagine it is 1842, you are one of the people living in the terrace houses on Macquarie Street, shown in the watercolour by John Rae (Source 1). You have watched the construction of Government House since 1836 with tradesmen and materials carted past your door for the past six years. What do you think of it and what do you think it represents? Script or enact a conversation about Government House between yourself and your neighbour. Include aspects of daily life in your conversation.

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## Government House Today

Government House is located in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney.

- Students use online maps to locate Government House Sydney. View the map, satellite image, photographs and street views to explore current features of the building, gardens and the surrounding area.
- Students compare the past and present images. What has changed and what has remained the same?

## Colonial Governors

The Office of Governor of New South Wales is the oldest public office in Australia, dating from 1786 when Captain Arthur Phillip was issued a Commission appointing him Governor of the then colony of New South Wales.

- Students use an historical inquiry process to research a New South Wales colonial Governor (1788-1900). The list of former Governors is available on the Governor of New South Wales website.
- Using a range of sources, students research the contributions the Governor made to the shaping of the colony.

Image - Governor Sir Charles Augustus FitzRoy, ca.1855, by Henry Robinson Smith

From the collections of the State Library of NSW  
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/item/DetailPaged.cgi?itemID=423928>



## Terminology

The Governor of NSW has an important constitutional and ceremonial role in the state as well as being closely involved in the activities of community organisations and events.

- In understanding the current and former roles of the Governors of New South Wales, students will need to be familiar with the following terminology:

ceremonial  
constitution  
constitutional monarchy  
'courtesy calls'  
democracy  
diplomatic

Executive Council  
government  
investiture  
Legislative Assembly  
monarch  
Order of Australia

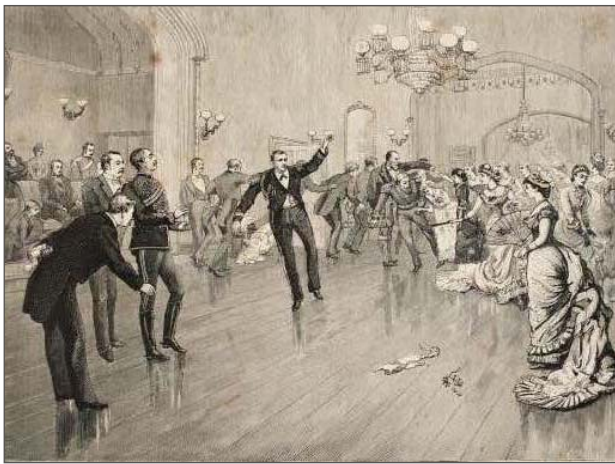
parliament  
patron  
receptions  
Sovereign  
'The Honourable'  
Vice-Regal

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## Recreate a Colonial Government House Function

Since the Queen's Birthday Ball in 1843, Government House Sydney has been used by the Governor for official Vice Regal ceremonies, receptions, luncheons and dinners. It is the residence of the Governor of New South Wales as well as a centre for a diverse program of cultural and community events.

- Students examine Sources 6 to 9 showing and describing aspects of colonial life at Government House and answer the questions on p.6 to guide their analysis.



Source 6 - 'An Old Dance in a New Country; "Sir Roger de Coverley" danced at Government House during the Exhibition festivities', *The Graphic*, 4 February 1880, Government House Collection



Source 7 - Governor Lord Belmore in his buggy, Government House Sydney, 1868-1872, by Freeman's, late Dalton's

From the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW  
<http://www.acmssearch.sl.nsw.gov.au/search/itemDetailPaged.cgi?itemID=919143>

### GOVERNMENT HOUSE. THE GARDEN PARTY.

*Evening News, Sydney, Thursday 18 December, 1895*

His Excellency the Governor and Lady Hampden gave their first garden party yesterday at Government House. No less than 3200 invitations had been issued for the occasion...

Fortunately real 'Queen's weather' enabled the guests to wander through the grounds. ... At about a quarter to 4 the Artillery Band struck up 'God Save the Queen,' and Lord and Lady Hampden appeared on the balcony, and mingled with the guests on the lawn, followed by their daughters.

Lady Hampden wore grey silk with narrow black lines; her daughters wore pretty toilettes of pale blue, pale pink, and heliotrope respectively.

Refreshments were spread on the balcony and in two marquees on the lawn, and a selection of livery music was played by the Artillery and Naval Bands alternately, while the blue waters of the harbor [sic], dotted with white sails, sparkled in the summer sunshine.

Source 8 - Extract of article published in the Evening News, Sydney, Thursday 18 December 1895

From Trove

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/108075983?searchTerm=queen%20garden%20party%20government%20house%20sydney&searchLimits=l-australian=v>

Dinner du 24 Mai -  
 "To Celebrate Her Majesty's Birthday"

Captain Wilfrid Smith  
 A.D.C.

The Chaplain to His Excellency  
 (Rev. W. J. Carr-Smith)  
 Deputy Master of the Mint  
 (Mr. von Arnheim)  
 M. le Consul - Général de France  
 Doyen du Corps.  
 Pres<sup>t</sup> of the Royal Agricultural Soc<sup>y</sup>  
 (Sir John See M.L.A.)  
 The Postmaster General  
 (Hon. V. Parkes)  
 The Sec<sup>y</sup> for Public Works  
 (Hon. J. Young)  
 H.E. The Cardinal Archbishop  
 (Cardinal Moran)  
 His Excellency  
 The Chief Justice  
 (Sir F. Darley)  
 The Secretary for Lands  
 (Hon. J. Carruthers)  
 The Secretary for Mines  
 (Hon. J. Cook)  
 Mr Justice Owen  
 G.O.C. Military Forces  
 (Lieut. Genl. French)  
 Inspector General of Police  
 (Mr. Fosbery)

**Menu.**  
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**Potages**  
 Consommé au Tomate.  
 Crème d'Orge.  
**Poisson**  
 Saumon, sauce Hollandaise.  
**Entrées**  
 Boudins de Volaille à la Richelieu  
 Mousse de Foie gras aux Truffes  
**Rélevé**  
 Filet de Bœuf piqué.  
**Rôt**  
 Oxtolans rôtis.  
**Entrées**  
 Pouding Mousseline  
 Bombe glacée à la Valenciennaise  
 Tartelletes à l'Espagnol.

Mr. Victor Corbran

Lieut.-Col. Airey, D.S.O.  
 Hon. A.D.C. to H.E.  
 Chief Commissioner of Railways  
 (Mr. Ormerod)  
 Moderator of the Presbyterian Ass<sup>y</sup>  
 (Right Hon. Sir Macpherson)  
 The Mayor  
 (Mr. Harris)  
 The Speaker  
 (Sir J. Abbott K.C.M.G.)  
 Minister of Public Instruction  
 (Hon. J. Hague)  
 H.G. The Archbishop  
 (W. Sumner Smith)  
 The Prime Minister  
 (Sir John Forrest)  
 The Vice-President of the Executive  
 Council  
 (Hon. J. Hughes)  
 The Minister of Justice  
 (Hon. Charles Croke)  
 Mr Justice Stephen  
 Chancellor of the University  
 (Hon. H. MacLaurin)  
 The Principal Under Secretary  
 (Mr. Critchett Walker C.M.G.)  
 Pres<sup>t</sup> of the Chamber of Commerce  
 (Mr. Brunton)

Decorations Roses -

Services Silver on the table. Gold & Silver on the sideboards.

Also invited,

President of the Legislative Council - Sir John Lackey K.C.M.G.  
 The Chief Secretary - Hon. James Brunker.  
 The Admiral - Rear-Admiral H. L. Pearson  
 The Flag-Captain - Captain C. G. Dicken  
 The Flag-Lieutenant - Lieutenant A. C. Stewart  
 A.D.C. to His Excellency - Captain Hon. R. Lindsay

Dinner at Beauchamp Oct 1930

Source 9 - Dinner du 24 Mai 'To Celebrate Her Majesty's Birthday', dinner menu, Government House Sydney, 1899

From the Beauchamp Collection, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

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## Source analysis

- **Observe** – What are the people wearing? Look for interesting details, eg colours and accessories. What form of transport was used? What are some of the occupations and positions of the guests at the dinner?
- **Interpret** – What level of society were the colonial Governors and their guests? Why do you think that? Do you think this was how the majority of people dressed and were entertained in colonial Sydney? Compare colonial functions to current functions at Government House.
- **Question** – What do you want to know more about after viewing these sources?
- **Explain** – Imagine you are currently working in the event management team at Government House. Your task is to organise a colonial-style afternoon garden party for 1000 guests. The guests are staff and volunteers working in various charitable organisations. Students work collaboratively to plan, research and budget for the event. Planning could include decorations, menus, entertainment and invitations.
- **Perspectives** – Write an article describing a colonial function at Government House from the point of view of either a passer-by looking in, a guest attending the function or a staff member serving the guests.



Functions hosted by former governor General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) and Mrs Hurley at Government House, Sydney

Left – International Youth Day, 14 August 2014, by Rob Tuckwell

Right – Morning tea for students of the Garlambirla Youth Theatre, 14 May 2015

## Resource Links

Governor of New South Wales

<http://www.governor.nsw.gov.au>

Role of the Governor of New South Wales

<http://www.governor.nsw.gov.au/governor/role-of-the-governor/>

Former Governors of New South Wales

<http://www.governor.nsw.gov.au/governor/former-governors/>

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## Syllabus Links

### History K-10

#### Stage 3 Outcomes

HT3-1 describes and explains the significance of people, groups, places and events to the development of Australia.

HT3-2 describes and explains different experiences of people living in Australia over time.

HT3-5 applies a variety of skills of historical inquiry and communication.

#### Historical concepts

Continuity and change; cause and effect; perspectives; empathetic understanding; significance.

#### Historical skills

Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts; analysis and use of sources; perspectives and interpretations; research; explanation and communication.

#### Stage 3 Content

The nature of convict or colonial presence, including the factors that influenced patterns of development, aspects of the daily life of inhabitants (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples ) and how the environment changed (ACHHK094).

Students:

- investigate the everyday life of a variety of men and women in post-1800 colonial settlements using a range of sources and explain their different experiences.

The role that a significant individual or group played in shaping a colony; for example, explorers, farmers, entrepreneurs, artists, writers, humanitarians, religious and political leaders, and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples (ACHHK097).

Students:

- use a range of sources to investigate the role of a particular man, woman or group and the contributions each made to the shaping of the colony.

#### Learning Across the Curriculum - Civics and Citizenship

Students:

- explore how their own society has organised itself
- examine how the ideals and practices of their own democratic society have evolved over time
- examine political and social life in the past and the present.