

WELCOME TO BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

The Parliament Buildings are where the elected representatives – called Members of the Legislative Assembly or MLAs – meet to shape the future of the province by debating and passing the laws that govern British Columbia.

This 12 ½ acre property has served as a site of government in British Columbia since 1864. The original structures on this site, known as the Birdcages, were built to house the elected assembly for the Colony of Vancouver Island. They continued to be used by the Legislative Assembly after British Columbia became a Province of Canada in 1871.

Construction of the current Parliament Buildings started in 1893 and they were officially opened on February 10, 1898. The architect, Francis Rattenbury, was just 25 years old when he won the competition to design the new buildings.

Visiting the Legislative Assembly

WE WELCOME VISITORS. Free tours of British Columbia's Parliament Buildings are available Monday through Friday throughout the year, and seven days a week in the summer months.

To see MLAs in action, visitors are welcome in the public galleries of the Legislative Chamber whenever the House is sitting. Please note that the galleries are often full during Question Period – the 30-minute period every afternoon from Monday to Thursday when MLAs ask questions about government activities.

For further details, visit www.leg.bc.ca or contact:

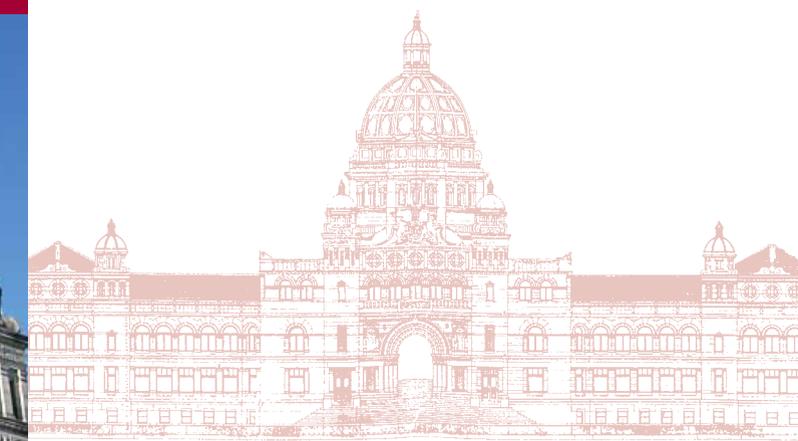
Public Education & Outreach
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To visit the Parliament Buildings, go to www.leg.bc.ca/tours or contact:

Legislative Tour Office
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THE STYLE

The style of the Parliament Buildings has been described as 'free classical' and 'Romanesque.' Raw materials from throughout British Columbia were used for the construction of the buildings, including andesite from Haddington Island for the 500-foot long façade and granite from Nelson Island for the foundation and front stairs. The roof is capped by 33 copper domes of different sizes. On top of the central dome, stands a gold plated, two-metre tall statue of Captain George Vancouver. Each night, the buildings are illuminated by more than 3500 energy-efficient light bulbs.

In addition to the magnificent Parliament Buildings, the Legislative precinct is home to numerous landmarks of historical importance and many beautiful fountains, trees, and gardens. Please use this booklet to learn more about the property and enjoy your self-guided walking tour!

Outdoor Self-Guided Walking Tour



1. Cenotaph: The bronze War Memorial to the Unknown Soldier designed by English sculptors Vernon and Sidney March was unveiled by Lieutenant Governor W.C. Nichol on July 12th, 1925. There are three plaques remembering Canadians lost in World War I, World War II, the Korean War and peacekeeping missions. The Cenotaph is made of Nelson Island granite; the same stone as the base of the Parliament Buildings.



2. Chinese Empress Tree: This tree was planted in 1995 in honour of the Honourable David C. Lam, the first Chinese Canadian to be appointed Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. In China, a *Paulownia* is traditionally planted when a daughter is born, and on her marriage the wood is used to make her a gift. The Empress Tree originated in Asia and has bluish-purple trumpet-shaped blooms in the spring and summer.

3. Queen Victoria Statue: Premier Richard McBride commissioned this 4 metre (13 ft) bronze statue of Queen Victoria in 1912. British artist Allen Bruce-Joy completed the statue in 1914, but shipping was delayed until after World War I. It was unveiled in 1921 by Canada's Governor General, the Duke of Devonshire.

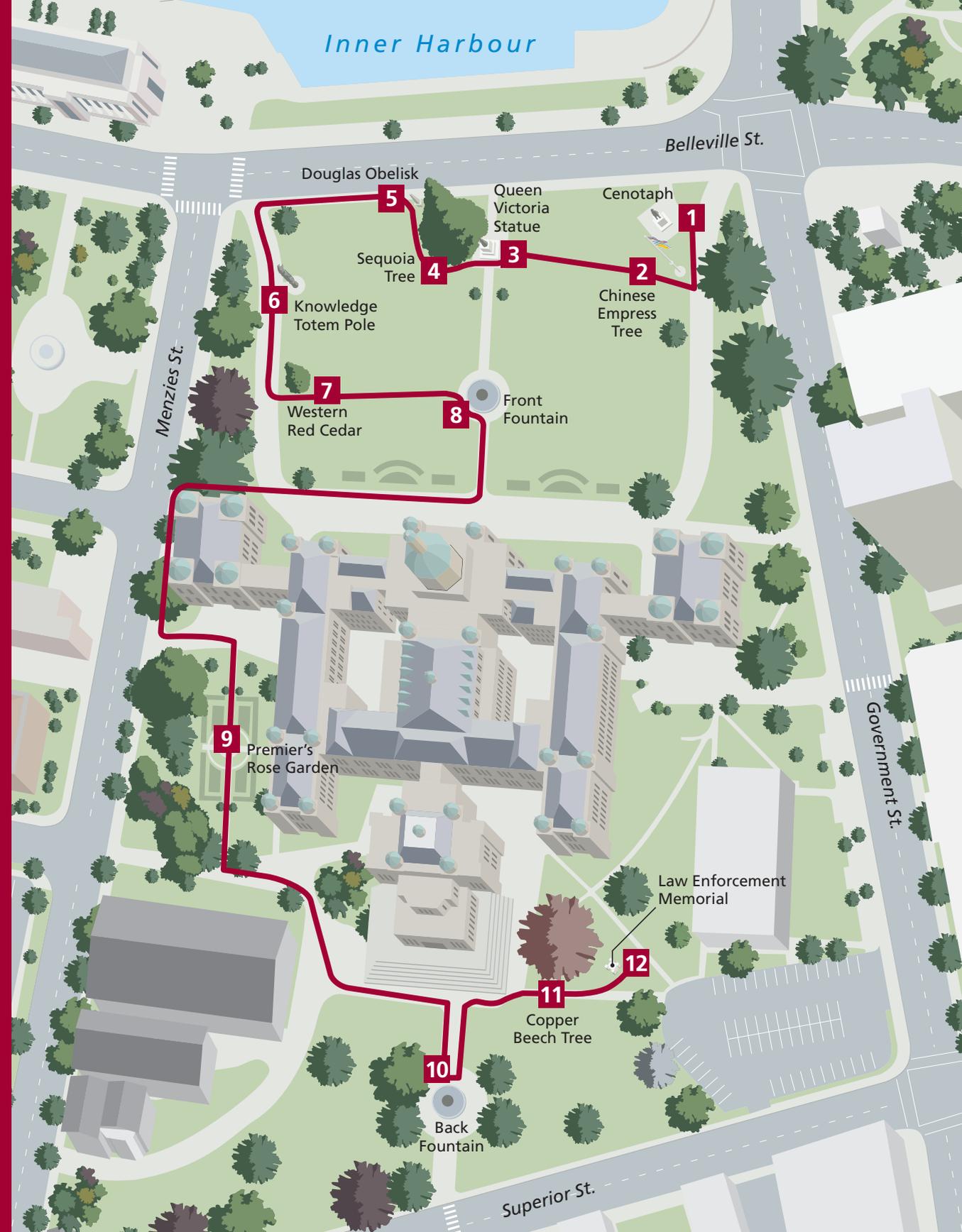


4. Sequoia Tree: This tree was planted sometime during the 1860's and is now over 30 metres (100 ft) tall. In early December, the *Sequoia* becomes the province's official Christmas tree decorated with thousands of energy-efficient bulbs.

5. Douglas Obelisk: In gratitude for his public service, this 8 metre (27 ft) obelisk was erected in 1881 to honour Sir James Douglas, Governor from 1851-1864, who is considered the "Father of British Columbia". The obelisk was created by Mortimer & Reid using native B.C. marble from Beaver Cove on the northeast coast of Vancouver Island.



6. Knowledge Totem Pole: Erected to welcome visitors to the 1994 Commonwealth Games, this totem was carved by Coast Salish artist Cicero August and refers to the oral traditions of the Aboriginal people of the northwest coast. At the top is the loon - teacher and interpreter; fisherman - traditional way of life; bone player - game played by people who do not share the same language; and the frog which comes from an old mountain story. Together they represent lessons of the past and hope for the future.



7. Western Red Cedar: On the 75th anniversary of the B.C. Forest Service, this tree was planted to commemorate its adoption as the official tree of British Columbia in 1988. Not only is it valuable commercially, but all parts of the western red cedar have been used by the northwest coast Aboriginal people for canoes, clothing, housing and other essential objects for thousands of years.

8. Front Fountain: This fountain was designed in Victoria by Hooper & Watkins and manufactured in New York by Joseph W. Fiske in 1905. It originally had 4 basins and stood over 5.5 metres (18 ft) tall, but today it consists of only the single large basin.



9. Premier's Rose Garden: This rose garden was designed by Henry Whittaker and constructed in 1935-36 as a relief project during the Great Depression. It is built in the foundation of one of the old government buildings known as the "Birdcages". In 1986, this garden was dedicated to Premier Bill Bennett and renamed the Premier's Rose Garden.



10. Back Fountain: Designed by Robert Savery in 1962, the Centennial Fountain celebrates the union of the four colonies and territories that joined to form British Columbia. The bronze animals are symbols of B.C.'s geography and history: gull, sea otter, eagle, raven, bear and wolf.



11. Copper Beech Tree: This tree was planted by Premier John Oliver on April 7, 1919 in memory of E.O.S Scholefield, the Provincial Government Librarian from 1889-1919. Bulldozers were about to destroy the tree in 1970 when two members of the Parliamentary Press Galley intervened. James Nesbitt

guarded the tree until Bruce McKelvie brought the Minister of Public Works to halt the machine.

12. Law Enforcement Memorial: This 60,000 pound granite bastion monument was unveiled on September 26, 2004 by the Solicitor General. The four-sided memorial has separate panels representing different aspects of the Peace Officer community throughout B.C. Eight "Fallen Hero panels" are on the exterior corners of the monument, with names appearing in random order.

