18. The Rt Hon Sir John McEwen GCMG CH

Artist
Sir William Alexander Dargie (1912–2003)

Born: 1900 **Died:** 1980

Term of Office: 19 December 1967 to 10 January 1968

Member for Echuca 1934 to 1937, Indi 1937 to 1949 and Murray 1949 to 1971, Victoria

Political Party: Country Party

John McEwen was caretaker Prime Minister after the disappearance of Harold Holt. After 23 days he was replaced when the Liberal Party elected John Gorton as their new leader. McEwen continued as Deputy Prime Minister until his retirement in 1971.

19. The Rt Hon Sir John Grey Gorton GCMG AC

Artist
June Mendoza (born 1927)

Born: 1911 **Died:** 2002

Term of Office: 10 January 1968 to 10 March 1971

Senator for Victoria 1949 to 1968, Member for Higgins 1968 to 1975, Victoria

Political Party: Liberal Party

Gorton became Prime Minister in 1968, winning the Liberal Party leadership ballot after the disappearance of Harold Holt Before becoming Member for Higgins, he served as a Senator for Victoria for 18 years. He established the Australian Council for the Arts and the National Film and Television Training School. Gorton lost office following a no-confidence vote in his leadership by his party.

20. The Rt Hon Sir William (Billy) McMahon GCMG CH

Artist
Sir Ivor Henry Hele (1912–1993)

Born: 1908 **Died:** 1988

Term of Office: 10 March 1971 to 5 December 1972

Member for Lowe 1949 to 1982, New South Wales

Political Party: Liberal Party

McMahon became Prime Minister after John Gorton, who resigned after a tied no-confidence vote by his party. He was the first Prime Minister to appoint a Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. He lost the 1972 election but remained in Parliament until his retirement in 1982.

21. The Hon Edward Gough Whitlam AC QC

Artist
Clifton Ernest Pugh (1924–1990)

Born: 1916 **Died:** 2014

Term of Office: 5 December 1972 to 11 November 1975

Member for Werriwa 1952 to 1978, New South Wales

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Under Whitlam Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War ended and free tertiary education and a national health scheme were introduced. He was also the first Australian Prime Minister to visit the People's Republic of China. Whitlam's government was dismissed by the Governor-General Sir John Kerr on 11 November 1975.

22. The Rt Hon John Malcolm Fraser AC CH

Artist
Sir Ivor Henry Hele (1912–1993)

Born: 1930 **Died:** 2015

Term of Office: 11 November 1975 to 11 March 1983

Member for Wannon 1955 to 1983, Victoria

Political Party: Liberal Party

Fraser became Prime Minister in a caretaker capacity after the dismissal of the Whitlam government and won the subsequent election. Fraser's government promoted multiculturalism, introduced family allowances, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, and committed to building a new Parliament House.

23. The Hon Robert (Bob) James Lee Hawke AC

Artist
William (Bill) Leak (1956-2017)

Born: 1929

Term of Office: 11 March 1983 to 20 December 1991

Member for Wills 1980 to 1992, Victoria

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Hawke won the 1983 election, and then became Australia's longest-serving Labor Prime Minister. His term focussed on globalisation, micro-economic reform and industrial relations which led to the floating of the Australian dollar and a reduction in tariffs. In 1991 Hawke was defeated in a leadership ballot by his Treasurer, Paul Keating.

24. The Hon Paul John Keating

Artist
Robert Lyall Hannaford (born 1944)

Born: 1944

Term of Office: 20 December 1991 to 11 March 1996

Member for Blaxland 1969 to 1996, New South Wales

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

After eight years as Treasurer in the Hawke government, Keating became Prime Minister in a leadership ballot. Keating continued economic reforms, introduced Indigenous land rights legislation and reformed vocational education and training.

25. The Hon John Winston Howard AC

Artist
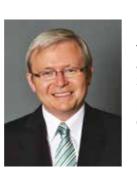Jiawei Shen (born 1948)

Born: 1939

Term of Office: 11 March 1996 to 3 December 2007

Member for Bennelong 1974 to 2007, New South Wales

Political Party: Liberal Party

Howard is Australia's second longest serving Prime Minister. His government introduced major taxation reform and the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Howard implemented strict gun control legislation after the Port Arthur massacre. His government was defeated in 2007 and Howard lost his seat— the first Prime Minister to do so since Bruce in 1929.

26. The Hon Kevin Michael Rudd

Born: 1957

Term of Office: 3 December 2007 to 24 June 2010; 27 June 2013 to 18 September 2013

Member for Griffith 1998 to 2013, Queensland

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Rudd became Prime Minister after Labor's 2007 election win. During his term he ratified the Kyoto Protocol and delivered the National Apology to the Stolen Generations. In 2010, Rudd resigned as Prime Minister following a leadership challenge by his deputy Prime Minister, Julia Gillard. He had a brief second term, winning a leadership ballot ahead of the 2013 election.

27. The Hon Julia Eileen Gillard AC

Artist
Vincent Fantauzzo (born 1977)

Born: 1961

Term of Office: 24 June 2010 to 27 June 2013

Member for Lalor 1998 to 2013, Victoria

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Gillard became Australia's first female Prime Minister in a leadership ballot, and went on to lead the first minority government since the 1940s following the 2010 election. As Prime Minister, she supported climate change action, education and established the National Disability Insurance Scheme. She was defeated in a leadership ballot before the 2013 election.

28. The Hon Anthony (Tony) John Abbott

Born: 1957

Term of Office: 18 September 2013 to 15 September 2015

Member for Warringah since 1994, New South Wales

Political Party: Liberal Party

Abbott became Prime Minister after winning the 2013 election, having served as Member for Warringah for 20 years. As Prime Minister, Abbott introduced a stronger focus on national security matters and implemented a number of free trade agreements. He was defeated in a leadership ballot by Malcolm Turnbull.

29. The Hon Malcolm Bligh Turnbull

Born: 1954

Term of Office: 15 September 2015 to 24 August 2018

Member for Wentworth 2004 to 2018, New South Wales

Political Party: Liberal Party

Turnbull became Prime Minister in a leadership ballot in 2015, and formed government after winning the 2016 election with a narrow majority. His term focussed on strengthening ties with business and science industries and supporting education. In 2017 Turnbull implemented marriage equality legislation after a national postal survey. He resigned from Parliament after being defeated in a leadership ballot in August 2018.

FAQ

Where are the portraits of the most recent Prime Ministers?

Portrait commissions are generally completed within three to five years of a Prime Minister leaving office. The length of time to complete a portrait varies considerably between commissions and depends on the availability of the artist and the sitter as well as the artist's working style.

Who selects the artist?

The subject selects their preferred artist. The National Portrait Gallery of Australia then provides the Parliament with advice on the suitability of the chosen artist to undertake the commission. All artists must be Australian although they do not need to reside in Australia.

When is a portrait commissioned?

Portraits of Prime Ministers are generally commissioned after they leave office.

Can a Prime Minister choose to be represented by a photograph instead of a painting?

At its very first meeting in 1911 the Historic Memorials Committee engaged in robust debate about whether or not a photograph might be commissioned instead of a painting. The Committee's resolution was to commission photographs of all parliamentarians and only commission paintings of its highest officeholders, something that it has continued to do for more than 100 years.

What happens if a Prime Minister doesn't like their portrait?

Prior to undertaking a portrait commission, each artist is commissioned to produce a 'study' which is a half-size version of the finished work. This study must then be approved by the subject and the advisor from the National Portrait Gallery of Australia before the commission can proceed. If the subject rejects the study then further changes may be negotiated between the subject and the artist or a new artist can be selected to undertake the commission.

Why are the portraits different sizes?

New portrait commissions for Prime Ministerial portraits specify a size limit to ensure that they can be hung within Members' Hall. Prior to 1988 and the opening of Parliament House, Prime Ministerial portraits were hung in Old Parliament House and many of the early large portraits reflect the grand architecture of King's Hall.

The prevailing economic conditions can also impact on portrait commissions, e.g. Prime Minister Joseph Cook opted for a more modest-sized portrait as the commission was undertaken in the midst of World War I in an atmosphere of financial hardship.

Early Prime Ministerial portraits were often large in scale and sombre in tone; however over time they have tended to become less formal and capture more of the personality of the sitter. Often they include artefacts of personal significance to the portrait subject.

www.aph.gov.au

PORTRAITS OF AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS

FROM THE HISTORIC MEMORIALS COLLECTION

AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT HOUSE

PORTRAITS OF AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTERS

From the Historic Memorials Collection

The Historic Memorials Collection is the longest-running art commissioning program in Australia. Founded by former Prime Minister Andrew Fisher in 1911, the collection is guided by the Historic Memorials Committee, a bipartisan committee chaired by the Prime Minister of the day and comprising a number of parliamentary officeholders. The Committee commissions official portraits of the Heads of State, Governors-General, Prime Ministers, Presidents of the Senate and Speakers of the House of Representatives.

Not all portraits are generated through a commissioning process and the Committee is able to purchase a portrait if one already exists. For example the portrait of former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam painted by his friend Clifton Pugh won the Archibald Prize in 1972 and was subsequently purchased by the Committee at the former Prime Minister's request.

1. The Rt Hon Sir Edmund (Toby) Barton GCMG KC

Born: 1849 **Died:** 1920

Term of Office: 1 January 1901 to 24 September 1903

Member for Hunter 1901 to 1903, New South Wales

Political Party: Protectionist Party

Edmund Barton was sworn in as leader of the new Commonwealth of Australia on 1 January 1901, after a distinguished career in the New South Wales Parliament. A leader of the Federation movement, he helped draft Australia's Constitution and later became a founding judge of the High Court of Australia.

Artist
Norman St Clair Carter
(1875–1963)

2. The Hon Alfred Deakin

Born: 1856 **Died:** 1919

Terms of Office: 24 September 1903 to 27 April 1904; 5 July 1905 to 13 November 1908; 2 June 1909 to 29 April 1910

Member for Ballaarat* 1901 to 1913, Victoria

Political Party: Protectionist Party

Deakin held the office of Prime Minister three times in the first decade of Federation. Deakin did much to build on Australia's constitutional foundations, and introduced legislation for the establishment of a site for a new national capital. As Attorney-General he established the High Court.

Artist
Frederick McCubbin
(1855–1917)

3. The Hon John Christian (Chris) Watson

Born: 1867 **Died:** 1941

Term of Office: 27 April 1904 to 17 August 1904

Member for Bland 1901 to 1906, South Sydney 1906 to 1910, New South Wales

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Chris Watson is considered the world's first national labour government leader. Appointed as Prime Minister at the age of 37, he remains Australia's youngest Prime Minister. His term ended after only four months.

Artist
Sir John Longstaff
(1861–1941)

4. The Rt Hon Sir George Houstoun Reid GCB GCMG

Born: 1845 **Died:** 1918

Term of Office: 18 August 1904 to 5 July 1905

Member for East Sydney 1901 to 1903, 1903 to 1909, New South Wales

Political Party: Free Trade Party

Before entering Parliament in 1901, Reid was Premier of New South Wales from 1894 to 1899. As leader of the Free Trade Party, he was the first federal Leader of the Opposition, holding this role for six of the first seven years of Parliament.

Artist
Sir John Longstaff
(1861–1941)

5. The Rt Hon Andrew Fisher

Born: 1862 **Died:** 1928

Terms of Office: 13 November 1908 to 2 June 1909; 29 April 1910 to 24 June 1913; 17 September 1914 to 27 October 1915

Member for Wide Bay 1901 to 1915, Queensland

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Along with Deakin, Fisher is one of only two Australian Prime Ministers to have held office on three separate occasions. Fisher was responsible for the establishment of the Commonwealth Bank, the founding of Canberra and the creation of the Royal Australian Navy.

Artist
Emmanuel Phillips Fox
(1865–1915)

* Renamed Ballarat in 1977

6. The Rt Hon Sir Joseph Cook GCMG

Born: 1860 **Died:** 1947

Term of Office: 24 June 1913 to 17 September 1914

Member for Parramatta 1901 to 1921, New South Wales

Political Party: Liberal Party

Cook was Australia's sixth Prime Minister. After provoking a double dissolution election, he was defeated by Andrew Fisher.

Artist
Norman St Clair Carter
(1875–1963)

7. The Rt Hon William Morris (Billy) Hughes CH KC

Born: 1862 **Died:** 1952

Term of Office: 27 October 1915 to 9 February 1923

Member for West Sydney 1901 to 1917, New South Wales; Bendigo 1917 to 1922, Victoria; North Sydney 1922 to 1949 and Bradfield 1949 to1952, New South Wales

Political Party: Australian Labor Party, Nationalist Party

Hughes holds the record for continuous service as a member of the House of Representatives—51 years and 7 months from 1901 to 1952. As Prime Minister during the hardest years of World War I, he earned the nickname the 'Little Digger'.

Artist
George Washington Lambert (1873–1930)

8. The Rt Hon Stanley Melbourne Bruce Viscount Bruce of Melbourne CH MC

Born: 1883 **Died:** 1967

Term of Office: 9 February 1923 to 22 October 1929

Member for Flinders 1918 to 1929, 1931 to 1933, Victoria

Political Party: Nationalist Party

During his term, the seat of government was transferred from Melbourne to the newly built capital Canberra. Bruce was the first Prime Minister to occupy the Prime Minister's official residence in Canberra, The Lodge, and to move into the Provisional Parliament House (Old Parliament House).

Artist
William Beckwith McInnes (1889–1939)

9. The Rt Hon James Henry Scullin

Born: 1876 **Died:** 1953

Term of Office: 22 October 1929 to 6 January 1932

Member for Corangamite 1910 to 1913, Yarra 1922 to 1949, Victoria

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

In the first week of Scullin's prime ministership the Wall Street Crash of 1929 occurred and his term was spent trying to manage the failing Australian economy. Scullin was responsible for the nomination of Sir Isaac Isaacs as the first Australian-born Governor-General.

Artist
William Beckwith McInnes (1889–1939)

10. The Rt Hon Joseph Aloysius Lyons CH

Born: 1879 **Died:** 1939

Term of Office: 6 January 1932 to 7 April 1939

Member for Wilmot 1929 to 1939, Tasmania

Political Party: United Australia Party

Joseph Lyons is the only Tasmanian to become Prime Minister and was elected to the Australian Parliament in 1929, having served as Premier of Tasmania. He established the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), and regulated the growing air travel industry. He was the first Prime Minister to die in office.

Artist
William Beckwith McInnes (1889–1939)

11. The Rt Hon Sir Earle Christmas Grafton Page GCMG CH

Born: 1880 **Died:** 1961

Term of Office: 7 to 26 April 1939

Member for Cowper 1919 to 1961, New South Wales

Political Party: Country Party

Earle Page served as Prime Minister for only 20 days in April 1939, after Joseph Lyons' death. However he was one of the longest serving parliamentarians, serving for 42 years. Page was a co-founder and leader of the Country Party.

Artist
William Beckwith McInnes (1889–1939)

12. The Rt Hon Sir Robert Gordon Menzies KT CH QC

Born: 1894 **Died:** 1978

Terms of office: 26 April 1939 to 29 August 1941; 19 December 1949 to 26 January 1966

Member for Kooyong 1934 to 1966, Victoria

Political Party: United Australia Party, Liberal Party

Robert Menzies is Australia's longest serving Prime Minister. His first term from 1939 to 1941 was as leader of the United Australia Party. In 1941 he resigned, having lost the support of his Cabinet. As leader of the Liberal Party, Menzies won the 1949 election, overseeing a long period of growth in immigration, social services, hospitals, schools and universities. He retired from Parliament in 1966.

Artist
Sir Ivor Henry Hele
(1912–1993)

13. The Rt Hon Sir Arthur William Fadden GCMG

Born: 1894 **Died:** 1973

Term of Office: 29 August to 7 October 1941

Member for Darling Downs 1936 to 1949, McPherson 1949 to 1958, Queensland

Political Party: Country Party

Arthur Fadden replaced Menzies after his resignation in 1941. He served only 40 days as Prime Minister. During his 22-year parliamentary career Fadden also served as Treasurer, overseeing 11 Budgets.

Artist
Sir William Alexander Dargie (1912–2003)

14. The Rt Hon John Joseph Ambrose Curtin

Born: 1885 **Died:** 1945

Term of Office: 7 October 1941 to 5 July 1945

Member for Fremantle 1928 to 1931 and 1934 to 1945, Western Australia

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

John Curtin is most remembered for his leadership of the nation during much of World War II. He died in office on 5 July 1945, only six weeks before the end of the war.

Artist
Anthony Dattilo-Rubbo
(1870–1955)

15. The Rt Hon Francis (Frank) Michael Forde

Born: 1890 **Died:** 1983

Term of Office: 6 to 13 July 1945

Member for Capricornia 1922 to 1946, Queensland

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Forde was Australia's shortest serving Prime Minister with a term of just eight days following John Curtin's death. The following week the Labor Party elected Ben Chifley as leader. Forde served as a deputy leader to James Scullin, John Curtin and Ben Chifley.

Artist
Joshua Smith
(1905–1995)

16. The Rt Hon Joseph Benedict (Ben) Chifley

Born: 1885 **Died:** 1951

Term of Office: 13 July 1945 to 19 December 1949

Member for Macquarie 1928 to 1931 and 1940 to 1951, New South Wales

Political Party: Australian Labor Party

Ben Chifley became Prime Minister after the death of John Curtin in 1945. Chifley started Australia's post-war reconstruction, with a large-scale immigration program, and created the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme. He also established the Australian National University.

Artist
Archibald Douglas Colquhoun (1894–1983)

17. The Rt Hon Harold Edward Holt CH

Born: 1908 **Died:** 1967

Term of Office: 26 January 1966 to 19 December 1967

Member for Fawkner 1935 to 1949, Higgins 1949 to 1967, Victoria

Political Party: Liberal Party

Holt became Prime Minister after the retirement of Robert Menzies in 1966. His government supported the 1967 referendum recognising Indigenous Australians, relaxed immigration laws and increased Australia's troop commitment to the Vietnam War. On 17 December 1967, Holt disappeared while swimming in Victoria and was officially pronounced dead two days later.

Artist
William Edwin Pidgeon
(1909–1981)