

The “Working” Princess: Saskatchewan Welcomes The Princess Royal

by Michael Jackson

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The royal work ethic was never more apparent than in the three-day tour of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to Saskatchewan in June 2004. The Province of Saskatchewan has enjoyed three so-called “working” visits of members of the Royal Family: Prince Edward in 1994, his return as the Earl of Wessex in 2003, and now the Princess Royal. Of course the term is a misnomer: all members of Canada’s Royal Family work hard for Canadians when accepting invitations to our country. It simply distinguishes visits arranged by several partners such as volunteer organizations, regiments and provincial governments from “official” visits to Canada coordinated by the federal government.

Whatever the semantics, Princess Anne, daughter of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, Princess Royal since 1987, amply demonstrated her reputation as the busiest member of the Royal Family. As Premier Lorne Calvert said in his welcoming speech, “Your Royal Highness, when you so graciously accepted our invitation to visit Saskatchewan, you asked us to keep you busy. Well, Ma’am, this was an offer we could not refuse – and we have indeed taken you at your word!”

The Princess Royal carried out a veritable whirlwind of engagements, fulfilling her goal of meeting as many Saskatchewan people as possible during her time in the province, June 3-7, 2004. The prime purpose of the visit, as both Her Royal Highness and the Premier made clear, was the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy in the Second World War – June 6, 1944. Why Saskatchewan, when other members of the Royal Family were joining other world leaders in France? Simply because the Princess is Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Regina Rifles which was, as the Regina Rifle Regiment, one of the first Allied units to land on D-Day and pushed farther inland than most others. The Princess became Colonel-in-Chief on her last visit



A formal occasion: the Princess Royal addresses the Premier’s dinner guests about D-Day and Canada’s role in the Second World War.

to Saskatchewan, in 1982, when Her Majesty The Queen conferred the designation “royal” on the army reserve regiment in recognition of its distinguished service to Canada.

So it was fitting that the first event on the Princess Royal’s itinerary, arriving in Regina on June 4 from Toronto on a small Saskatchewan government aircraft after the commercial flight from London, was a regimental one. Honorary Colonel Bob Cade, who was commanding officer of the Royal Regina Rifles when the Princess became Colonel-in-Chief in 1982, and current commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Colin King presented Her Royal Highness with a brooch in the form of the regimental badge. The Princess prominently wore the brooch on her stylish broad-brimmed hat the next morning, June 5, at the regiment’s D-Day parade.

The Colonel-in-Chief meets her Regiment

The parade, in the spacious grounds of the Legislative Building, was in the best traditions of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Forces. Weeks of rain gave way to beautiful prairie spring weather as the Princess Royal arrived in the historic provincial horse-drawn landau with the Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Lynda Haverstock, and her husband Harley Olsen, to be greeted by Premier Lorne Calvert and Mrs. Betty Calvert, the

Minister responsible for royal visits, Provincial Secretary Joan Beatty, and the Mayor of Regina, Pat Fiacco, and his wife Angie.

After the Lieutenant Governor received her royal salute from the regiment on parade – symbolizing her status as the Queen’s direct representative in the province – it was the turn of the Princess for military honours and inspection of her regiment. On parade were serving soldiers of the Royal Regina Rifles, veterans, including a number who had landed on Juno Beach on D-Day, and young cadets, the future of the regiment. Providing music was the regimental band of a sister regiment, the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, which also landed on Juno Beach. Part of the ceremony was the change of command of the regiment, when Lieutenant-Colonel Murray Allan accepted from the Colonel-in-Chief the ceremonial sword relinquished to Her Royal Highness by his predecessor.

The Princess spoke eloquently about the role of her regiment on D-Day, and Canada’s part in the Second World War.

For its population at the time, Canada played an extraordinary role in D-Day – entirely responsible for one of the five beaches in the landings along with the United States and the United Kingdom. The 1st Battalion of the Regina Rifle Regiment spearheaded the assault on Juno Beach; it achieved its objectives and advanced farther inland than other units. As a tribute to the bravery and tenacity of the soldiers on that day, the regiment proudly wears “Normandy Landing” as a battle honour on its cap badge. Soldiers from this regiment have continued to distinguish themselves since the Second World War, serving the cause of peace in Germany, Norway, Cyprus, the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East and Africa. You do so in the best tradition of Canada’s citizen soldiers in the Army Reserve. Your country, your province and the city after which you are named can be proud of you.

Following the parade, the Princess carried on the Second World War theme by unveiling a plaque to the Saskatchewan war brides, most of them British women who married Canadian soldiers and emigrated with them to Canada after the war. Then it was into the Legislative Building to meet with members of the Royal Regina Rifles, war veterans and other guests at a tea given by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Myron



The Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Regina Rifles, wearing the regimental brooch on her hat, addresses her regiment on parade.

Kowalsky. The Princess had a long conversation with D-Day veterans Roy Armstrong of Saskatoon, Jack Read of London, Ontario, and Joseph Harvey from Alameda, Saskatchewan, before mingling with the other guests.

Favourite Causes

The next engagement was for one of the Princess Royal’s favourite causes: therapeutic riding for the mentally and physically disabled. Her Royal Highness was guest of honour at a fund-raising luncheon for the Regina Therapeutic Riding Association and gave a speech, both humorous and moving, encouraging the guests to support the work of the association. Then the Princess was off to the therapeutic riding facility east of Regina, where she met riders, family and volunteers at their annual picnic and observed riding demonstrations arranged by instructor Catherine Sneath and her mother Marguerite, who had taken the Princess riding in the Qu’Appelle Valley in 1982

The “whirlwind” continued as the Princess returned to the city to tour the life sciences and First Nations galleries of



At the University of Regina convocation the Princess Royal and former president Lloyd Barber unveil a plaque naming the university green after Dr. Barber.



Lieutenant Governor Lynda Haverstock shows the Princess Royal a work-in-progress: the centennial addition to Government House, Regina, as Provincial Secretary Joan Beatty looks on. The Princess Royal dedicated the cornerstone for the new building, to be opened next year by The Queen.



A favourite cause: therapeutic riding. The Princess Royal observes 7-year-old Skylar Derin riding “Joey”.

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the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and meet with another of her charities: Wildlife Preservation Trust Canada, which has a burrowing owl recovery program in Saskatchewan. The star of their presentation was undoubtedly Piper, a burrowing owl perched snugly on the hand of her keeper, Marika Godwin.

D-Day Remembered

The day concluded with a D-Day formal dinner given by the Premier and Mrs. Calvert for 500 guests, including the members of the Royal Regina Rifles and many veterans of the Second World War. The occasion was historic, not only for the 60th anniversary of D-Day, but because for the first time representatives of all the Princess Royal's Canadian branches and regiments were gathered together: the 1st battalion (St. John's) and 2nd Battalion (Corner Brook) of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment; the 8th Canadian Hussars (Princess Louise's), based in Moncton, New Brunswick; the Grey and Simcoe Foresters from Barrie and Owen Sound, Ontario; the Canadian Forces Communications and Electronics Branch; the Canadian Forces Medical Branch; and, of course, the Royal Regina Rifles. Music by the regimental band of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles featured tunes from the big band era of the 1940s. A special guest was Mr. Justice William Matheson of the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench, whose father, Lieutenant-Colonel Foster Matheson, commanded the Regina Rifles on their assault on Juno Beach.

The Premier in his address spoke not only of the historic D-Day anniversary but also of the Princess Royal's personal commitment to her many charities around the world.

We are so proud that the daughter of our Queen has chosen to spend the 60th

Pictures courtesy of Government of Saskatchewan, Office of Protocol



Pet-lovers meet: Brooke Powers presents home-made dog treats to the Princess Royal at the Regina Humane Society.



The Princess Royal at the cenotaph in North Battleford with Legion branch president Ray Hickson.



A royal first: the Princess Royal presents the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal to RCMP Sergeant Dale Schroh, as Lieutenant Governor Lynda Haverstock looks on.

anniversary of D-Day with us in Saskatchewan. We are deeply honoured, Your Royal Highness, that you have come here to be with your Saskatchewan regiment, The Royal Regina Rifles... As I look on the faces of the veterans here tonight, and on those of the present soldiers, some young, some not so young, of your Canadian regiments, and indeed everyone assembled with us, I know this is an anniversary we shall never forget...

Your tireless efforts as President of the Save the Children for over thirty years have spurred on countless others to better the life and future of the most vulnerable in society. And that is only one example from among the more than 220 organizations in which you are involved.

The Premier concluded by presenting Her Royal Highness with a cheque for \$5,000 from the Province of Saskatchewan as a donation to the Princess Anne Trust, which benefits her international charitable work. The Princess responded:

I am particularly impressed with the way Saskatchewan decided to mark the 60th anniversary of D-Day... in Saskatchewan you do not forget the legacy and lessons of the past. We are right to honour the D-Day veterans in this way. But our remembrance goes well beyond – to the role Canada played throughout the Second World War: in the Royal Canadian Navy and the Merchant Marine, the Royal Canadian Air Force, and all branches and units of the Canadian Army... Think of how Canadian soldiers liberated Holland in 1945 – something the Dutch people have never forgotten...

I am so pleased that Save the Children, Therapeutic Riding and Wildlife Preservation Trust Canada are active in Saskatchewan. This is typical of the community, cooperative spirit of your province, which, I know, has the highest rate of voluntarism in Canada.

Over the next two days I look forward to meeting as many Saskatchewan people

as possible. I take particular pleasure in meeting the Aboriginal peoples, whose links with the Queen and the Canadian Crown are so historic and meaningful.

The Princess Royal becomes "Doctor"

Sunday, June 6, was another action-packed day, beginning with a D-Day church service at St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral, regimental church of the Royal Regina Rifles, where the Princess had worshipped on her 1982 visit. Dean James Merrett and Bishop Duncan Wallace (who had been Dean at that time) presided. The Wing Commander of 15 Wing Moose Jaw, Colonel Alain Boyer, read a lesson in French, the Princess read the epistle, and Captain Greg Lutz, Lutheran chaplain of the regiment, read the gospel. The service was followed by a reception given by Veterans Affairs Canada, where Ralph Goodale, the federal Minister of Finance, invited the Princess to unveil the D-Day poster and postage stamp and presented her with D-Day coins from the Royal Canadian Mint.

Next on the agenda was another historic event: the conferring of an honorary doctorate on the Princess Royal by the University of Regina – the first honorary degree Her Royal Highness had received in Canada and the first to be given to a member of the Royal Family by a Saskatchewan university. At a colourful special convocation, university president David Barnard presented the Princess to Chancellor Arthur Wakabayashi:

Second child and only daughter of The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, The Princess Royal is a noted humanitarian. A 'working Royal' since the age of 18, she is President or Patron of over 220 organizations and is actively engaged with each of them. The Princess Royal's long-term commitment to The Save the Children Fund is just one of many examples of her serious dedication to helping others, particularly children in the world's most impoverished



Principal Colin Sutherland of Sakewew secondary school in North Battleford presents First Nations student dancers to Her Royal Highness.

communities.

The Princess Royal is also an accomplished Olympic equestrienne and has turned her personal passion for riding into a charitable endeavour through her association with therapeutic riding. The Princess Royal is a distinguished member of the Royal Family, and the University of Regina is proud to have her here today to join our community as an honorary alumna.

The Princess responded with a thoughtful, substantive speech where she spoke of the importance of volunteers, and the sense of community they exemplify, in dealing with the world's problems and challenges. She then joined former university president Dr. Lloyd Barber in unveiling a plaque naming the Lloyd Barber University Green.

True to form, as soon as the Princess had doffed her new hood and gown, she sped off to Regina's Pasqua Hospital for a visit to the palliative care unit, where she talked with patients and had tea with their families. Then to Government House Heritage Property – museum, hospitality facility and office of the Lieutenant Governor – where Her Honour invited Her Royal Highness to dedicate the cornerstone of the centennial addition, to be officially opened by the Queen in 2005, the province's centennial year.

From Government House the Princess drove to the Regina Humane Society, where she toured the refurbished facility and took part in the society's 40th anniversary picnic – and received an unusual gift from one of the families: home-made dog treats for her own dogs!

The day concluded with a dinner given by the Lieutenant Governor at Government House. Dr. Haverstock lauded the Princess Royal's charitable efforts, just recognized by the University of Regina, and her personal contribution to the Canadian Crown. The Princess gave another thoughtful speech, ranging from her volunteer causes to reminiscences of previous royal visits and concluding with a message of good wishes from the Queen, who was looking forward to her visit next year for the provincial centennial.

Featuring the First Nations

The third and last day of the Saskatchewan visit featured the province's Aboriginal peoples, whose loyalty and affection for the Royal Family are linked to a fundamental constitutional reality: the treaties signed by the First Nations with the Sovereign.

The Princess Royal flew first to Saskatoon, to King George School, an inner-city elementary school, half of whose students are Aboriginal. There, the presence

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The Princess Royal inspects veterans on parade with the Royal Regina Rifles at the D-Day parade in Regina on June 5.

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continued from the previous page of school staff, students and invited guests she presented the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal to twenty-five recipients from the RCMP and municipal police, fire services, federal and provincial corrections, customs officers, Canadian Forces, and provincial highway transport compliance and environment personnel. The medal was created in 2003 to recognize 25 years of exemplary service by protective personnel in Saskatchewan. As Premier Calvert pointed out in his remarks, this was the first time ever that a member of the Royal Family had presented a provincial honour in Canada. The Princess herself noted the context of the event:

May I say how pleased I am to be here in a school named after my great-grandfather, King George V. I am glad to see that you still remember him through the pictures and artefacts on display in your entrance hall. Many of your students have another connection with my family: the historic treaties signed between the First Nations and my great-great-great grandmother, Queen Victoria.



A Princess becomes a doctor: president David Barnard congratulates Her Royal Highness on receiving a degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa from the University of Regina.



Battleford centennial: the Princess dedicates Centennial Park as Mayor Gail Sack (right) looks on.

Saskatchewan's relationship with the Sovereign continues to be rich and diverse. For example, you have chosen to recognize your citizens through honours of the provincial Crown, including the Saskatchewan Protective Services Medal which I have just presented. It provides a unique opportunity to show our gratitude for the men and women who devote their careers to ensuring our well-being – people who sometimes put their own safety and even their lives at risk to protect us all.

From Saskatoon it was another short flight to the last stops on the royal itinerary in The Battlefords. The Princess Royal first came to Sakewew School, a unique secondary school for Aboriginal students in North Battleford, jointly funded by the federal government, province and local school boards. After a short lunch break featuring bannock and pemmican, Principal Colin Sutherland presented a number of First Nations leaders to her Royal Highness, among them Grand Chief Alphonse Bird of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and renowned Cree artist Allen Sapp. Then he escorted her into the school gymnasium for a performance of traditional First Nations dances, including the spectacular hoop dance, by student dancers. The final call was next door on the Pe-Ta-Pun Head Start Program for Aboriginal pre-school children, where tiny tots performed their own version of some of the dances.

The historic relationship between the

First Nations and the Royal Family is alive and well, judging from the response of the Aboriginal people to the Princess Royal – not only leaders and veterans but also youth and students. Young Aboriginals interviewed on television commented how much the visit meant to them and how easy it was to talk to the Princess.

Reliving History

The D-Day theme returned as the Princess Royal toured St. Paul's Anglican Church in North Battleford where the rector, the Rev. Ron Baerg, showed her the memorial window and furnishings donated by members of the Royal Air Force in 1944 in memory of those lost in training with the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. In adjoining McPhail Park, at a brief ceremony arranged by the local branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, the Princess Royal laid a wreath at the cenotaph and lingered to talk with many veterans of the Second World War, despite the unseasonable frigid temperatures.

The final engagement in Saskatchewan was across the North Saskatchewan River in historic Battleford, founded in 1875 as a fur-trading post and one of the first North West Mounted Police posts. Celebrating its centennial as a town in 2004, Battleford was capital of the Northwest Territories from 1876 to 1883 (when the capital moved to Regina) and played a significant role in the Northwest Rebel-



Federal Minister Ralph Goodale and the Princess Royal unveil the D-Day 60th anniversary poster for Veterans Affairs Canada.



Premier Lorne Calvert escorts the Princess Royal into the Province of Saskatchewan's D-Day dinner.

lion of 1885. The Princess Royal unveiled a plaque naming Centennial Park in the town centre, then braved the cold wind to do a walkabout among hundreds of area citizens and local schoolchildren.

Finally, at North Battleford's small airport, the Lieutenant Governor and local MLAs bid farewell to Her Royal Highness and the little Saskatchewan government aircraft took off on the four-hour flight to Toronto. The "whirlwind", at least in Saskatchewan, was over!

In Conclusion

Some final thoughts, returning to my opening remarks about the "working" Princess. It became more apparent than ever before to Saskatchewan people in June that members of the Royal Family, to use a current expression, offer tremendous "value-added" to the people of Canada, neatly complementing the work done for the Canadian Crown year-round by the Governor General and the Lieutenant Governors. The Princess Royal devoted intense energy to all of her multiple engagements during those three hectic days in Saskatchewan.

Her Royal Highness displays an amazing capacity to meet hundreds of people, holding meaningful conversations with each one. She has an uncanny ability to absorb briefing material, sort out the essentials and bring them to bear on the local situation. She is a masterful public speaker, communicating substantive key messages with a subtle blend of humour, personal conviction and the voice of experience. Those messages, ranging from the importance of voluntarism and charitable efforts world-wide to the vital role of the individual within community, came through loud and clear. Canadians need to hear them. Members of the family of Canada's Queen see this as their *raison d'être* and the prime purpose of their visits – something Saskatchewan people understand and deeply appreciate.



As Dean James Merrett and Bishop Duncan Wallace look on, the Princess signs the guest book of St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Regina after the D-Day service on June 6.



Premier Lorne Calvert introduces Provincial Secretary Joan Beatty to the Princess Royal in the Saskatchewan Legislative Building.



Principal Rosalind Hardy of King George School in Saskatoon shows the Princess Royal a photo of her great-grandfather, King George V.



Her Royal Highness tours the life sciences gallery of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum with director David Baron.