

# Kingston Welcomes the Princess Royal on Summer Homecoming to Canada

by Marlene McCracken

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal came to Kingston late this summer to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Military Communications in Canada. In her capacity as Colonel-in-Chief of the Communications and Electronics Branch of HM's Canadian Forces, which is based at Kingston, the Princess attended a number of the festivities that had been planned for Celebrations 2003.

Princess Anne was greeted upon arriving in Kingston by retired Brigadier – General Donald Banks, Colonel Commandant of the Canadian Forces Communications and Electronics Branch on Fri., Aug. 29. Flowers were presented by nine year old Emily Spiers.

The next day found Her Royal Highness the reviewing officer for the C & E Branch Centennial Parade on the Vimy Parade Square at CFB Kingston. A centennial cairn unveiling took place at the Military Communications and Electronics Museum. That evening, The Princess attended a private dinner, and also visited a private dinner-dance on the base for serving and retired members of the branch.

Sunday brought a crowd of hundreds of veterans, dignitaries and spectators to joined The Princess Royal at a memorial service at CFB Kingston's Vimy Gate where HRH laid a wreath, followed by a Veteran's Parade and band concert, Vimy Parade Square, CFB Kingston, featuring the Royal Corps of Signals Band and the Toronto Signals Band.

Four year old Jacob Thibault and five year old Rachel Lackey, accompanied Kingston Mayor Isabel Turner in presenting The Princess Royal with flowers at the Freedom of the City Parade on Sun., Aug 31. The historical event gives the military – in this case the Communications and Electronics Branch of the Canadian Forces – the freedom to pass through the city with bayonets fixed, flags waving and drums beating.

Kingston wanted to honour its royal guest, and thanks to Monarchist League member Colin Kidd, the city's co-ordinator for the royal visit, a permanent exhibit called The Royal Way was created for HRH, The Princess Royal's tour of City Hall. The exhibit features signed prints and photographs that chronologically

trace the history of the Royal Family from Queen Victoria to our current monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. There are also included in The Royal Way pictures of Canada's Governors General and Ontario's Lieutenant Governors.

The Princess spoke to a large crowd of admirers as she visited City Hall to unveil Kingston's new Coat of Arms at a ceremony in Council Chambers hosted by Mayor Isabel Turner and members of Kingston City Council. HRH and Mayor Turner were piped down the hall for a reception in Memorial Hall. The day ended with a gala concert featuring The Royal Corps of Signals Band and the Communications and Electronics Garrison Military Band at the Grand Theatre.

Her Royal Highness concluded the Kingston portion of her Canadian Homecoming with a reception for anniversary organizers early on Monday, Sept. 1, followed by an airport farewell with Guard of Honour. *[Ed -Her Royal Highness then proceeded to Ottawa for a day's engagements]*



HRH Princess Royal at City Hall, Kingston

Credit: Paul T. Evoy, © City of Kingston



While in Ottawa, Princess Anne attended an inter-denominational service and wreath laying ceremony to commemorate Canadian Humanitarian Aid workers at Rockcliffe Falls Park

Credit: Brock Weir, Jr