



Friday 30th September 2022

# E-BULLETIN

A special commemorative edition in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.







## Remembering the Queen's Visit to QEGS in 1992

Standing at the end of the "official line up", before the scheduled arrival of HM the Queen at 11 am on Friday 27th March, 1992 - a blustery, chilly spring morning - I must admit that I experienced an extreme sense of nervousness and tension. After nearly two years of preparation and detailed planning, with help from so many, including distinguished Old Savilians Professor Sir Hans Kornberg and the then Bishop of London, Rt Reverend David Hope, the meetings with Buckingham Palace officials, both at the Palace and in Wakefield, the Lord Lieutenancy of West Yorkshire, the Security Services and West Yorkshire Police and not forgetting the huge input of many members of staff, notably Second Master David Burkinshaw and my own PA, Mrs Helen Smith - would it all work? The portrait was already hanging in pride of place, but an intensive visit of 3 ½ hours was a different matter.

All of a sudden, the Royal limousine was there, the fanfare had stopped, the Queen was out of the car and all was underway. Initially the proceedings seemed very formal but as soon as the Queen started to meet and talk with the boys, everything changed and became much more relaxed. We had been informed that her main wish was to meet as many of them as possible. She had been well briefed, she was interested in the boys, in what they were doing and what they could explain to her.

To the Queen, one of the highlights of the day seemed to be her meeting with members of the VIth Form in the old Sixth Form Centre over coffee - no school staff allowed! She came out full of laughter - the blunt, down to earth sense of humour of those she had met certainly appealed. It was a day that I'm certain will stay in the memory of all those present. Even the Mardling family dog, a young, over excitable Westie seemed to be in awe of our distinguished visitor as she received a Royal tickle behind the ears.

With lunch behind us and the formalities concluded, the Royal limousine was heading out of the gates as the Royal Standard was being lowered. We had overrun our allotted time- a good sign we were told. Her Majesty had two further engagements that day in Wakefield - and by this stage she was already at an age when most people have retired. As I reflect on the events of recent days and the devotion to service which she has personified throughout her life, I consider ourselves to have been both fortunate and honoured to have been able to welcome her to QEGS over thirty years ago. She was a quite remarkable lady!

Mr B Mardling  
QEGS Headmaster 1985 - 2001



I awoke very early on March 27th 1992, with my stomach churning. I was nervous but excited, wanting today to go well. As part of the 400th celebrations, The Queen was visiting QEGS.

Hearts racing, the boys performed as never before, top As included, standing within arm's reach of the Queen.

I had been at school the previous evening till 5pm, putting all the finishing touches to what I had to do the next day. As we were not allowed to take bags of any sort into school the following day, everything had to be ready - a spare set of clothes, my graduation gown, perfume, makeup, spare lenses. I was double and triple checking that the music was all ready and everything in position.

That evening before, all staff had to be off the premises by 5.30pm, as at that point everything had to be made secure - that included the drains which had to be fully checked for anything that shouldn't be there...including people! The grounds were secured with overnight guards.

Before the Queen arrived, the Junior School Choir had a rehearsal then performed a half hour programme for the Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire, Lord Ingrow, and other dignified guests - this helped warm us up and also took our mind off the forthcoming main part of our day!

The Junior School Choir had been asked to sing the Grace - a musical prayer which was specially composed for this day, by Edmund Marshall and Gareth Green - it is still used at school today on big occasions.

Unfortunately, the boys and their musical director didn't get to eat the lunch with the Queen - it was down to the dining Hall for us!

We waited in position in the wings of QE Hall stage, all smartened to within an inch of our lives - every hair on our head perfectly in place and every shoe polished!

Lord bless this food  
which your hand provides every day.  
For all your gifts,  
Around us spread,  
In gratitude we pray  
We thank you Lord, for this our school,  
In its four hundredth year:  
We greet our Monarch here today.  
Floreas Wakefieldia!

To say I was proud of the boys was an understatement. The Queen had a tour around Senior School which looked very different to how it is today. During the tour, she watched part of a Junior School inter house rugby match (won by Freeston) - this is when The Queen's Cup was presented for the first time.





She also had a gin and tonic in the boarding house – now demolished - and following lunch, she signed a portrait of herself.

Then the most important part of the day...she turned around and shook my hand (with her 'ungloved' hand!) thanking me for the boys' singing! My courtesy was as I had practised for the previous 6 weeks!

The Queen unveiled a plaque and we had 3 cheers for the Queen led by the Head Boy, Simon Plaut. There was one boy in the crowd, cheering like all the others, not knowing that he was starting a very special friendship with Her Majesty...Mike Tindall was there as a pupil experiencing his first of many meetings with the Queen.

Into the Royal car and off - with many flags waving and young boys cheering. Our Head Porter, Mick Bradley, had the very important job of lowering the Royal Standard flag the very second that the car was on Northgate. All over in the blink of an eye as these things are. Great memories for staff and boys alike!

Floreas Wakefeldia and God Bless Queen Elizabeth II.

Mrs K Cousins  
Former Director of Junior Section Music



## Queen Elizabeth II visits QEGS Wakefield - Through the Teachers' Eyes



Written by Mr H Graham



**O**n March 27th 1992, Queen Elizabeth II visited QEGS Wakefield to mark the school's 400 year anniversary...

We all know how frantic things can get when we prepare for a school Open Morning, or worse, an inspection, so imagine the preparation that was put in place for the arrival of Her Majesty The Queen.

There were many staff briefings to make sure everything was in order - this was a day where there were no second chances, the Queen was coming to our school. Royal officials would attend these briefings; showing us not only how to bow and curtsy, but how to interact with her. You would only speak if spoken to and you would address her as 'Your Majesty' or 'Ma'am' - pronounced as in 'ham' not 'maaam', as is commonly misunderstood.

The school had planned lots of different events for our Quarter Centennial year and we made lots of plans for it, which included playing an England Presidents XV at the end of the season. However, when we heard that the Queen might visit then everything all went up a gear.

As you would expect, the school had to be spotless - the day before her visit the school had gone into overdrive with the strong aroma of paint pervading across the whole site.

Flags were draped along the driveway.

Phil the Gardener had painted the grass green.

Everyone had to be off site by a certain time to allow the security team to lockdown the site.

Everything that was to happen on the day had been so well rehearsed that everyone knew their place in each event.

The school was ready.



There are not many of us at the school now who can say they were ever in the presence of Her Majesty, but there are a small few who actually worked at the school on the day! Mr Benn, Mr Binney and Mr Barker all taught at the school way back in 1992 and were part of this historic visit.

All the staff wore gowns, something that was not a normal event in those days. We were excited and the presence of preparation prevented the air of any panic creeping into the day.

As the Queen entered the school site, the whole atmosphere was electric but there was one thing in particular that seemed to capture people's attention. Whilst knowing she wasn't a tall lady, it was her height that caused some people the most surprise, and yet, she had such a presence!

A few boys who had completed impressive GCSE projects were selected to display and explain their work to the Queen. Her Majesty showed a keen interest and spent about fifteen minutes in all as she went from project to project.

This was something that pleased the staff on hand. Particular interest was shown to Jonathan Saville's Water Monitoring System for which he had won the Young Electronic Designer Award. The Queen was also amused when John Preston, former Head of Department, pointed out that the electronic curtain system, designed by one of the pupils, would be helpful on those occasions when she unveils plaques.

The day will also come as a fond memory to one particular Old Savilian, Chris Atkinson (nephew of Rowan Atkinson), as he received the Junior House cup from the Queen (pictured below). A photo you can see dotted around the school site.



Everything was going like clockwork. The planning was paying off. However, this was something that the Deputy Head at the time made sure of. He was a stickler for organisation and timing and none of the children or even staff would dare to misbehave!

It was a special day for all of us at the school.

It can't be remembered exactly, but after the event, the Headmaster was crowing at the fact that the Queen had spent 5 minutes longer at QEGS than she had at one of either Harrow or Rugby School earlier in the year for a similar anniversary.

The joke that did the rounds at the time was that this occurred because she was kept talking by Mr Binney's predecessor as Head of History, Mr Neal Rigby, who could talk and talk and talk!



The Queen's visit to the school will be something that will never be forgotten.

The QEGS community offers deep condolences to the Royal Family. For a lifetime of duty, love and service, we thank Her Majesty the Queen. The school's association with her name will live on, as will her legacy.

Rest in peace, Your Majesty.



After the passing of Her Royal Highness, we give thanks for The Queen's incredible life and reign of devoted service to our nation. Elizabeth II became a cornerstone for not only the United Kingdom but for countries across the world during her spectacular 70-year reign as our Monarch, remaining a constant presence in the lives of the people of the UK and Commonwealth.

The Queen's passing brought an opportunity for reflection at QEGS Wakefield. The day after her passing, the school paid tribute to her service to the nation, whilst also celebrating her association with the school after her historic visit in 1992. Students and staff joined together for a whole school assembly where the Headmaster, Dr. Brookes, delivered a eulogy to the Queen, crowning off with the National Anthem.

## Student and Staff Reflections on the life of Queen Elizabeth II

A few years ago, I was lucky enough to attend a Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards ceremony which was held in the gardens of Buckingham Palace. That day the Duke of Wessex was standing in for his father and we did not expect to see any other member of the Royal Family, but, as Mr McWilliam and I were minding our own business crossing the courtyard, two blacked out Range Rovers swept past, came to a menacing halt in front of us and out stepped a number of very frightening looking chaps bristling with armoury.



Shortly afterwards, another Range Rover arrived and we could not believe our eyes, when out trotted a couple of Corgis followed by Her Majesty, the Queen! It certainly made my day, and I'm sure that Mr M was also slightly awed (if just by the weaponry on display).

**Mrs C Palin - Freeston** 🇬🇧

For me, over the past (emotional) few days, I have found myself reflecting quite a bit on what I have learned from the Queen - more than I expected to. I remember as a young child being struck by how modest she was - never drawing attention to herself. She was a constant during some difficult times for me. She was also dedicated to serving her country. This was a word I just took for granted until this week. But it has made me realise - we need to choose what we serve, in all our lives. What are my values? What matters to me? What is the right thing to do? It has made me think that I need to spend more time 'serving' others, noticing them, giving them attention. It's not always all about 'me'!

**Dr C Winborn - Savile**

Over the past few days - when she was declared dead - I was feeling a mix of emotions: sad and surprised. We all need to be as loving and as honourable as the queen was. It has made me feel like we need to pay more attention to others and serve more people. I can respect and learn from the Queen by helping out my family and friends in any way possible: like Her Majesty did.

**Connor**

I think I have learned a lot from my 11 years with Elizabeth II as our Queen. Such bravery only comes from righteous people. During her reign, she dedicated her life to help others, thus showing commitment. She never bragged about her vital role, and showed her steadfast love for her kingdom by providing us with continuity.

**Esey**

With the Queen's passing I have tried to think about what lessons we all could learn from her. One of the things is to show dedication to what we are doing and to never draw attention to ourselves. Over her reign the Queen served the United Kingdom and all the other countries in the commonwealth for all her life with such dedication. I think this can help us all in different aspects in life and to be a better person.

**Adam**

After the very sorrowful passing of the queen, I have tried to reflect on all the things she did for us. She would always be modest of her great achievements and would never brag. She would always see the good in people and everything she did was for us, never for herself. Even though she was one of the most important people in our history and lives, she was far too modest to even let us know it.

**Barad**

Every single soul can learn at least one thing from our beloved Queen, these can vary from: kindness, love, respect and passion. As a society we can improve our ways and the Queen is a great role model to inspire. The death of the Queen definitely came as a huge shock to me as I thought she was sure to reach 100 years old. The modesty and service she has given as a monarch is incredible and I wish that many could be like her. She held many values as a queen and I think we can all agree on that, these include: duty, service and courage.

She has been the head of many countries in the commonwealth and I hope her reign will be remembered forever. She was crowned at such a young age and has been brilliant for 70 years on the throne and should be worshipped as a person. The incredible things she has done in her reign have improved our society and all humankind. May the Queen rest in peace and long live the King.

Will

## QEGS Book of Condolence

A Book of Condolence honouring Queen Elizabeth II has been set up in the reception area of the Senior Section. All members of our community are welcome to visit school to add their own personal message of condolence at any time during normal school working hours.

