

EXPLORER

2014 ROYAL TOUR ♦ SPECIAL FEATURE ♦ MAY 18-21, 2014

The Royal Tour - On a Personal Note

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As a little girl I remember being fascinated with the beautiful young Princess who was crowned Queen of England and became Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I, too, wanted to grow up, wear a pretty crown and marry a handsome Prince.

When I finally found my Prince Charming, sure enough, he lived in the country where my beautiful Queen was Sovereign. To propose, he wrote a Royal Fairy Tale entitled, "The Magic Prince". I said "I Do!", and, as they say, the rest is history. I packed up my U-Haul, said goodbye to my world and embarked on a journey of a lifetime. Even my new town was Annapolis "Royal". I knew it was my destiny.

Eager to embrace my new life, I studied to become a Canadian citizen and wanted to know everything about my new home. I soon realized that I was, indeed, very blessed, in more ways than one. My handsome "Magic Prince" was everything of which I had ever dreamed, and much more. My new land was steeped in rich history, which I love. The more I learned, the more I wanted to know. I was determined and proud to become a true Annapolitan and productive Canadian.

On August 6, 1996, another dream came true. I took my oath of citizenship to my beloved new country. The first thing I did after being sworn in was become a member of the Monarchist League. On the same day, one of my first photos as a proud new Canadian was taken on the steps of the Grand Parade in Halifax with the Town Clock behind me. The clock had been built by orders of the Duke of Kent in 1801, the same man who built the Officers' Quarters at Fort Anne NHS in 1797 where I met my husband. It just so happened that the Duke was the great-great-great-grandfather of my beautiful Queen Elizabeth II. Yes, Her Majesty was now, officially, mine. Two years earlier, in 1994, Her Majesty stitched on the Fort Anne Heritage Tapestry, and no Annapolitan was more proud than I. She stitched on her ancestor, Queen Victoria, the Duke of Kent's daughter. Earlier, I had stitched on the American flag.

As years passed, I enjoyed wonderful opportunities to host two Lieutenant Governors in Annapolis Royal on behalf of The Historical Association of Annapolis Royal of which I have been honoured to serve as President. The Lieutenant Governor resides in Government House and is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Official Representative in Nova Scotia. I again saw my beloved Annapolis Royal entwined in the "Royal" story. The first Lieutenant Governor just happened to have lived in Annapolis Royal in the de Gannes-Cosby House (c.1708), Canada's oldest wooden house.

On two occasions I have had cause to correspond with Buckingham Palace. One of the greatest thrills of my life was to receive an invitation to attend the Official Reception for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2010 when she visited Halifax with her husband, Prince Philip The Duke of Edinburgh. Two years later, I was delighted to coordinate our area's Diamond Jubilee events to celebrate the 60th Year of her reign. The Diamond Jubilee of her great-great grandmother, Queen Victoria, had been celebrated at Fort Anne, where my husband had just retired as Heritage Interpretation Supervisor. Later that year, I was humbled to have been selected to receive one of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medals for service to Canada.

So you can see, my coverage for the Explorer of the 2014 Royal Tour by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall was a bit personal for me. I found myself back on those same steps, where I took my prized citizenship picture, preparing to cover the 2014 Royal Tour of my beautiful Queen's son, Prince Charles, and his "darling wife", Camilla. My heart was filled with emotion and gratitude. No words could ever fully express the happiness and pride I felt when talking to both of them about my beautiful Annapolis Royal and our many ties to The Royal Family. They were extremely warm and friendly and seemed genuinely interested in our conversations. My husband and I had previously sent Their Royal Highnesses a packet and invitation to visit Annapolis Royal. He apologized that he didn't have more time on this trip. Prince Charles said he often wore his Canadian pin and was very interested in his mother's stitches on the tapestry. I told him that I hoped to have an opportunity to show them Annapolis Royal in person one day. His smile indicated he would like that. Camilla joked and wanted me to make sure to order up some good weather.

Who knows what the future will bring? After all, my story in Annapolis "Royal" began with "The Magic Prince".

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