

Mufty's Musings – September, 2022

My Lifelong Memories of the Royal Family

I grew up in a military family where we stood at attention in our living room when they played “God Save our Gracious King” during the King’s Christmas day broadcast. In fact, we couldn’t even open our presents until we had listened to the King.

Before WWII, the Royal family came to Montreal and my family stood in front of Eaton’s on St. Catherine Street to watch the King and Queen and the two princesses, Elizabeth and Margaret Rose. They were in an open car. I was six years old and devastated because the King wasn’t wearing his crown so I didn’t know who he was. Then my Daddy went off to war to fight for King and Country.

Then in 1952, I was a student at McGill University sitting in a classroom overlooking the rooftops of Montreal. We students watched as one-by-one the flags were lowered to half-mast to mark the death of King George VI.

Two years later I was working in London, England as a physiotherapist. One weekend a friend and I decided to go see Windsor castle. We were in luck as the Queen was in residence. When we approached the courtyard, we saw scouts and cubs waiting for Her Majesty. I stood quietly behind the cubs and snapped a picture.



Fast forward to Edmonton 1978 and the opening of the Commonwealth Games. I bought six tickets for the opening ceremonies and 20 rolls of Kodak slide film x 36 frames each. I photographed our daughter Wendy, a volunteer hostess in her blazing white blazer. I photographed our two sons, Bob and Doug in their volunteer shirts redolent with red, white and blue logos. I photographed the Queen as her car came into the stadium and as she spoke opening the games. I

clicked and clicked the shutter. I got to #37 and #38, pleased that I had gotten an extra couple of shots on that film. Then I got to #39 and #40. With a sinking feeling, I realized something was wrong. I carefully opened the back of the camera and saw that the film hadn't caught. I had 36 potentially fabulous pictures of my stunning children AND the Queen...that never happened.

Most recently, the Queen was in Edmonton in 2005. In the evening there was a state dinner at Government House, just three blocks from our house. My husband Bill and I wandered over, along with a small crowd of like-minded neighbours, hoping to catch a glimpse of Her Majesty. There were murmurs that she would come out on the east balcony. It was dusk. The light was terrible. I didn't have fast film. I got blurred dreadful pictures. BUT we saw the Queen, right near our house.

I went home happy to have seen her again in person, my *fourth* time. I thought all evening about what an amazing woman she is.

And Now: The Queen is Dead..... Long Live the King.