

**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH**

*Condolence Motion*

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier)** [2.01 pm] — without notice: I move —

That the house records its regret at the death of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and tenders its sympathy to Her Majesty the Queen and his family.

His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, lived a very large life. He left a legacy of duty and service to his country and the commonwealth. He was a figure of admiration and interest for many Australians and a man whose life matched many of the contours and turmoil of the twentieth century. He really led a remarkable life.

Philip was the youngest of five and the only son of Princess Alice of Battenberg and Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark. Born on the island of Corfu, Greece, his young life was quickly in upheaval. His father, Prince Andrew, was summonsed to Athens to give evidence in a trial of Greek military officials. Those officials were held responsible for a defeat that led to the catastrophe of Smyrna, a fire that killed up to an estimated 100 000 people and destroyed much of the Turkish port city. However, his father was taken into custody and ultimately exiled. The next year, when the King of Greece, King Constantine I, was forced to abdicate, Philip and his mother fled the nation on a British warship. Quite famously, on that warship he had a makeshift cot in an orange fruit crate. He was born with the title of Prince of Greece and Denmark in an era that was strange for royalty across the world. Philip had ties all across Europe. His mother and father met at the funeral of Queen Victoria. His grandfather was the King of Greece; his great-aunt Ella was murdered, along with the Russian Tsar, by the Bolsheviks; and his mother was a great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria.

His Royal Highness had an interesting upbringing. He was raised across Europe with relatives and in boarding schools, especially after his mother was institutionalised. Once again, notably, Sigmund Freud consulted on her case. His life would take him into the military, attending Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, Devon. It was, interestingly enough, where he had a notable encounter with his future wife, a then 13-year-old Princess Elizabeth. The story goes that although it was not their first encounter, it was the first time that he made an impression on the then princess. Essentially, he was excused from training to escort the princess and her sister, Margaret, when their parents were touring Dartmouth and the reason, funnily enough, was quarantine. The college was going through outbreaks of both chickenpox and mumps, and the young sisters needed to be kept away. Philip spent eight months in training at Dartmouth, earning the Eardley Howard Crocket prize for the best cadet of his entry.

Prince Philip would have a successful military career in his time in the Navy during the Second World War. He served on numerous ships, including the battleship HMS *Ramillies* in the Indian Ocean escorting troops from Australia to Egypt, as well as HMS *Kent* and *Shropshire* in the Asia-Pacific region. At the close of 1940, he joined HMS *Valiant* in the Mediterranean theatre, notably at Cape Matapan in March 1941, where, in dispatches after the victory, he was mentioned for bravery and enterprise in controlling the battleship's searchlights in a night-time battle. He was later awarded the Greek War Cross of Valour. In 1942, he was involved in escorting convoys off the east coast of the United Kingdom on HMS *Wallace*, before the ship was deployed to the Mediterranean to take part in the invasion of Sicily, where it was used to help cover the Canadian landings on the island. To quote the Royal Navy website —

Contemporary reports from his commanding officers praise Prince Philip's practical seamanship skills, high intellect, good judgement, strong character, zeal, and great charm. He was described as an "officer of unusual promise" and it was predicted he would "make his mark in the Service".

He was then promoted to first lieutenant on a new destroyer, HMS *Whelp*, whereby, in addition to escort work, he was present in Tokyo Bay in September 1945 for the surrender of Japan. That was not the end of his service, however, as he assisted with the repatriation of Allied servicemen, spent time onshore, trained new sailors and completed additional studies, and, of course, very notably, there was his marriage to Elizabeth and the birth of their son Charles. Notably, prior to the marriage, he renounced his rights to the Greek throne and became a British subject.

Philip would once again return to sea, on HMS *Chequers* in the Mediterranean, with him and Elizabeth residing in Malta. He was promoted to lieutenant commander in 1950 and given his first seagoing command on the anti-submarine frigate HMS *Magpie*. However, Prince Philip's active naval career came to an end with the death of King George VI and the coronation of Elizabeth.

I should mention that he was promoted to honorary Admiral of the Fleet, Captain General of the Royal Marines, Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps, Colonel-in-Chief of the Army Cadet Force and Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Air Training Corps, and remained involved with the armed services for the rest of his life.

Some still find it surprising that the Duke of Edinburgh played an essential role in modernising the institution of the Royal Family. He was instrumental in ensuring that Elizabeth's coronation was televised and was the first member of the Royal Family to be interviewed on television, albeit about the Commonwealth Technical Training Week, appearing on *Panorama* on the BBC in 1961.

The Duke carved out a life in public affairs for himself across the twentieth century. The BBC reported that at the time of his retirement from royal duties, he was patron, president or a member of over 780 organisations and had taken on 22 190 solo engagements. He took up the cause of technological advancement, as well as physical capability and conservation. Most Australians would be familiar with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which encourages people aged 14 to 15 years to take part in volunteer work, learning physical activities or undertaking expeditions. In 2016, it was said that almost 1.3 million people were taking part in over 130 nations worldwide, and 775 000 people have taken part in Western Australia since its creation.

The Governor tells a story of a wreath-laying the Duke attended in Kings Park. Guns were discharged as part of a salute, which shocked one guest, who exclaimed, "What was that?" The Duke replied, "All I know was that it didn't get me."

I think we can all agree that Prince Philip had a remarkable and long life—from the "boy in the orange crate" and the "boy with no surname", to a notable military career, and, finally, to being the longest-serving British consort.

His Royal Highness devoted his life to service, but, more than that, he devoted himself entirely to the love of his life, Her Majesty the Queen. Walking two steps behind her for so many years was a simple and clear statement of his love, support and respect for his Queen.

As a Parliament, we offer our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family.

Vale His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition)** [2.10 pm]: I rise on behalf of the Nationals WA to express our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family on the passing of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Since his passing, much has been written about His Royal Highness Prince Philip's life. It can be characterised as one of commitment to both his Queen and public service. Prince Philip demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth and its people. He stood down from official royal duties only three years ago, at 96 years old—a clear testament to his enduring loyalty and support for the work of the Royal Family and the many people it worked for.

Over 57 years, he visited Australia some 20 times, with and without the Queen by his side. His first visit to Australia was in 1954 with the young Queen. The trip was eight weeks long and encompassed 70 cities and towns, with about 75 per cent of the population turning out to see the young Queen and the Duke.

Prince Philip had many causes that he was passionate about, such as preserving the world's forests and fish stocks, as well as the welfare of young people. In 1956, he developed the highly successful Duke of Edinburgh's Award, a youth achievement program designed to promote teamwork, resourcefulness and a respect for nature. The award has stood the test of time and is still a program highly regarded and pursued by the youth of today.

In addition to his long and enduring loyalty to the Queen, Prince Philip was a father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He has been a mainstay of the Royal Family for nearly 100 years. His loss will no doubt be felt keenly by those who were nearest to him.

On behalf of the Nationals WA, I pay tribute to His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and once again extend our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family.

May he rest in peace.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [2.12 pm]: I also rise to speak to this condolence motion for His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, has been a constant for a generation—someone whom I and every person in this chamber has known about for our entire lives.

Prince Philip has been a friend of Australia, visiting our nation 22 times over 71 years, either with the Queen or separately. Notably, he opened the Commonwealth Games in Perth in 1962, a visit during which, against protocol, he drove his own official car. Prince Philip appreciated the relative informality of Australia and made it clear that his affection for us would have continued had we chosen to become a republic in 1999. His very last visit with Her Majesty in 2011 concluded here in Perth, four months after his ninetieth birthday.

Although some in the mainstream media liked to portray Prince Philip as an extremely conservative person, I think that in many ways he was very much a modern man, well ahead of his time in forgoing his own career to support his wife's career.

Prince Philip was born into the Greek Royal Family, but he did not have an easy life. He lost meaningful contact with both his parents from the age of nine when they separated. At the age of 16, one of his sisters and her young family were killed in an air crash. His saying that, "I had to get on with it", sums up the attitude of many of his generation.

Prince Philip made his first visit to Australia in early 1940 as an 18-year-old midshipman on a Royal Navy battleship. He saw action alongside Australian warships in 1941 at the Battle of Cape Matapan. He also served as a first

lieutenant on a destroyer in the 1943 invasion of Sicily, during which his initiative in launching a smoking decoy raft saved his ship from a potentially fatal aerial attack. When he was forced to take indefinite leave from the Royal Navy in July 1951, he was a lieutenant commander captaining a frigate. It is clear that he would have had an exceptional military career but for the ill-health and premature death of his father-in-law, King George VI, in February 1952.

Following his marriage to Princess Elizabeth in 1947, Prince Philip dedicated his life to not only her but also the institution of the monarchy, of which he was to say 30 years later —

People still respond more easily to symbolism than to reason. The idea of chieftainship in its representative rather than its governing function is still just as clearly and even instinctively understood. From the point of view of national identity, this function is perhaps more important than ever.

Prince Philip was a thoughtful moderniser, ensuring that the 1953 coronation was televised and that the Queen was soon mixing with a wider range of people. His constant support gave an initially shy and conservative young monarch the confidence to proceed with evolutionary change.

Prince Philip was passionate about the environment and the rounded education of youth. The World Wildlife Fund was launched by Prince Philip in 1961, when the conservation movement was not well established. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has enriched many lives. He founded this program in 1956 with input from the pioneering educationist Kurt Hahn, and through its affiliates it now extends to 144 nations. The award commenced in Australia in 1959 and was established in all states by 1962. The award has been completed by 775 000 young Australians, with an estimated 45 000 competing for the award each year.

According to the historian Simon Heffer —

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme was highly appropriate to him: not just because he was a man of action, but because of its psychological effect on those who took part in it. It bred character, and character had been central to his own success and the respect in which he was held. Character—a moral strength, absence of self-pity, values founded in decency, a wish to serve others and the country—was, again, central to his generation.

It was about setting an example, and not searching continually for what could benefit oneself.

Prince Philip gives us the example of a natural born leader who accepted and embraced the role of consort, dedicating himself to the job of assisting his wife fulfil her destined role, and without ever seeking to exert political influence. When he retired from royal duties in 2017, it is estimated that he had attended over 22 000 solo events.

To conclude with the words of historian Robert Tombs —

He was of that generation, now almost gone, that surmounted the dangers of a war for survival. We admire their virtues, even as we fail to practise them. We know deep down that they merit the respect of all of us who have since lived safe and prosperous lives.

Vale His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

**The SPEAKER:** If there are no further speakers, I request all members to rise for one minute's silence in order to carry the motion.

Question passed; members and officers standing as a mark of respect.