

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

*Condolence Motion*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [2.03 pm] — without notice: I move —

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

Madam President, for almost 70 years, His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, has been a respected household name across the Commonwealth. Popular with Australians, his natural personality often resonated with us. He certainly led a remarkable life. Born on the Greek island of Corfu in 1921, he was the youngest of five and the only son of Princess Alice of Battenberg and Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark. He had a tumultuous childhood: his family was exiled from Greece and escaped on a British warship, and he attended boarding schools across Europe. He joined the Royal Navy in 1929 and served with distinction throughout the Second World War. On the accession of his wife, Princess Elizabeth, to the throne in 1952, his active naval career ended.

Passing away just two months short of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, Prince Philip was a constant for my entire life and, indeed, the lives of everyone in this chamber. As Britain's longest-serving royal consort, he was known for his unwavering devotion to and support of the Queen, his dedication to duty and his decorated service in the military. For many, he represented stability, strength and service—to his country, to the Commonwealth and to the Queen and the Royal Family. He was also a husband, father and great-grandfather.

The prince was a patron of over 750 organisations, particularly focused on sport, education, the environment and industry. He is well known for the establishment of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which has now been in operation for over 65 years, with more than 775 000 young Australians having taken part. This leadership program was established when leadership programs were not the flavour of the month that they are now. It is an extraordinary organisation that makes a massive contribution in assisting, in particular, young people from, but not limited to, disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Duke of Edinburgh visited Australia 21 times over the years and his final visit included Perth, where he accompanied the Queen to a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

I am a republican, but that does not prevent me from recognising and admiring the longevity and breadth of public service the Duke of Edinburgh provided not only as Her Majesty's "strength and stay", as she described him, but also in the organisations and causes he championed. On behalf of the government and the Parliamentary Labor Party, I offer our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family.

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition)** [2.06 pm]: On behalf of the opposition alliance, I join the government in offering our condolences to the Queen and her family on the passing of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

The late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was a man of conspicuous character—a memorable description first applied to Sir Charles Court. A true representative of the wartime generation, he gave up his chosen career to dedicate seven decades of his life in the support of his beloved wife, Queen Elizabeth II, the monarchy and the Commonwealth. His public life is therefore part of our own Australian story.

Prince Philip was born into the Greek royal family, but his early life would be seen today as emotionally deprived. He lost meaningful contact with both his parents from the age of nine, when they separated. When at the age of 16 he learned that one of his sisters and her young family had been killed in an air crash, his headmaster said, "His sorrow was that of a man." Yet he would never criticise his parents or concede that his childhood was difficult. His terse saying, "I had to get on with it", sums up his determined approach to life.

As an 18-year-old midshipman on a Royal Navy battleship, Prince Philip made the first of 22 visits to Australia in early 1940. He saw action alongside Australian warships in 1941 at the Battle of Cape Matapan and served as first lieutenant on a destroyer in the 1943 invasion of Sicily, when 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. Prince Philip had the skill and application of his uncle Earl Mountbatten, but perhaps without his self-promotion and recklessness. Irrespective of his royal connections, this talent could well have taken him to supreme naval command. However, the ill health and premature death of his father-in-law, King George VI, in February 1952 put an end to his naval career.

He married Princess Elizabeth in 1947. Throughout their marriage 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.

Regarded at first with suspicion by ultraconservative royal servants, Prince Philip was a thoughtful moderniser. He ensured 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 had two notable initiatives of his own. He launched the World Wildlife Fund in 1961, when the importance of conservation was less well appreciated. His second initiative was the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, the challenges of which have enriched many lives. He founded this program in 1956 with input from pioneer educationist Kurt Hahn, and, through its affiliates, the award now extends to 144 nations. The award commenced in Australia in 1959 and was established throughout the country by 1962. The program has been completed by 775 000 young Australians, with an estimated 45 000 competing for the award each year.

According to 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.

Altogether, over 71 years, Prince Philip made 22 visits to Australia, either with the Queen or separately. Notably, he opened the Commonwealth Games in Perth in 1962, a visit during which he preferred to drive his own official car. Prince Philip was impatient with excessive deference and appreciated the relative informality of Australia. He made it clear that his affection for us would have continued had we chosen to become a republic in 1999. His very last long-haul overseas visit with Her Majesty in 2011 concluded here in Perth, four months after his ninetieth birthday.

The Prince's alleged gaffes were, in fact, generally icebreakers that were designed to put nervous people at their ease. On one typical occasion, at Government House in Perth, when Prince Philip was being introduced to the catering manager from the RAAF Base Pearce, he looked towards two rather large RAAF reserve officers and asked whether they were the manager's best customers, much to their great amusement.

At a time when there is much discussion about the behaviour of men towards women, Prince Philip gave 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 to 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, which were often less than exciting but nonetheless important to those involved.

I will 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.

Madam President, we obviously stand in support of Her Majesty the Queen, and long may she stay in that position.

**HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [2.12 pm]: I rise on behalf of our colleagues in the opposition alliance and the Nationals WA in expressing our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family on the passing of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Since his passing, much has been written about Prince Philip's life. It can be characterised as one of service to both his Queen and public life. He demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the United Kingdom and to the Commonwealth. I think the fact that he stood down from official duties only three years ago, at 96 years of age, is a clear testament of his enduring loyalty and support for the work of the Royal Family.

Over 57 years, Prince Philip visited Australia many, many times, with and without the Queen by his side. His first visit to Australia with the young Queen was in 1954. The trip was eight weeks long and encompassed 70 cities and towns, and about 77 per cent of the population turned out to see the young Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Prince Philip was passionate about many causes, such as preserving the world's forests and fish stocks, and 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. This award has stood the test of time and is still a highly regarded program that is 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 in the Royal Family for nearly 100 years. His loss will no doubt be keenly felt for some time by those who were nearest to him.

On behalf of the Nationals WA and the opposition alliance, I pay tribute to Prince Philip and once again extend our sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and the Royal Family. May he rest in peace.

**HON MARTIN ALDRIDGE (Agricultural)** [2.14 pm]: I rise to add some personal remarks and support to the motion of the Leader of the House on the passing of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. In doing so, I pass on my sincere condolences to Her Majesty the Queen and her family.

Prince Philip's service to Her Majesty the Queen, the monarchy and the Commonwealth was simply remarkable. Her Majesty the Queen's reign commenced before my birth—in fact, before the birth of my parents—so I have known no other queen or their consort.

In 1977, speaking at an event to celebrate her golden wedding anniversary, the Queen said —

All too often, I fear, Prince Philip has had to listen to me speaking. Frequently we have discussed my intended speech beforehand and, as you will imagine, his views have been expressed in a forthright manner ... he has, quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years, and I, and his whole family, and this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim, or we shall ever know.

In response to Her Majesty the Queen, Prince Philip said —

I think the main lesson we have learnt is that tolerance is the one essential ingredient in any happy marriage ... You can take it from me, the Queen has the quality of tolerance in abundance.

Madam President, the prince was renowned for his quick wit and good humour, which got him into trouble on occasion. In 1960, in remarks to the General Dental Council reported in *Time* magazine, Prince Philip said —

Dontopedalogy is the science of opening your mouth and putting your foot in it, a science which I have practised for a good many years.

Prince Philip had what can only be described as an extraordinary life. He was born with Greek heritage, the son of Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg. His family was exiled before he was two years of age. They were evacuated by the British Royal Family's ship HMS *Calypso* following the forced abdication of Prince Philip's grandfather, a military coup and a court order that banished his father from Greece for life.

Prince Philip held a genuine career in the military and gave service during wartime, when he achieved the rank of commander. He was a patron to more than 750 organisations and, of course, the founder of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. He was clearly committed to our young people and future generations. Since its introduction in 1959, in Australia alone, the award has touched more than 775 000 Australians.

I was not fortunate to have met Prince Philip. However, I was touched by a tribute penned by President Barack Obama on 10 April this year, the day after Prince Philip's passing, in which he said —

When we first met His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, he and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had already been on the world stage for more than half a century—welcoming leaders like Churchill and Kennedy; Mandela and Gorbachev. As two Americans unaccustomed to palaces and pomp, we didn't know what to expect.

We shouldn't have worried. The Queen and Prince Philip immediately put us at ease with their grace and generosity, turning a ceremonial occasion into something far more natural, even comfortable. Prince Philip in particular was kind and warm, with a sharp wit and unfailing good humor. It was our first introduction to the man behind the title, and in the years since, our admiration for him has only grown. We will miss him dearly.

Like the Queen, Prince Philip saw world wars and economic crises come and go. The radio gave way to the television, and the television to the internet. And through it all, he helped provide steady leadership and guiding wisdom. It has long been said that the United States and Great Britain have a special relationship—one that has been maintained and strengthened not just by presidents and prime ministers but by the Royal Family that has outlasted them all.

At the Queen's side or trailing the customary two steps behind, Prince Philip showed the world what it meant to be a supportive husband to a powerful woman. Yet he also found a way to lead without demanding the spotlight—serving in combat in World War II, commanding a frigate in the Royal Navy, and tirelessly touring the world to champion British industry and excellence. Through his extraordinary example, he proved that true partnership has room for both ambition and selflessness—all in service of something greater.

As the world mourns his loss, we send our warmest wishes and deepest sympathies to the Queen, their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; and everyone who knew and loved this remarkable man.

It is difficult to imagine that on Prince Philip's last visit to Perth in 2011 for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the farewell event before Her Majesty and the prince departed Perth for London was to attend Her Majesty's largest ever barbecue. Attended by tens of thousands of Western Australians, 120 000 sausages were cooked on more than 100 barbecues to farewell our sovereign and the prince. Contrast that with today, 10 years on, COVID-19 has separated many of us from our families, especially at times of grieving and mourning.

Prince Philip was, above all, a father to four children, a grandfather to eight grandchildren and a great-grandfather to 10 great-grandchildren. I can only express my sympathies to them at this time of mourning and in celebrating the very full life of Philip Mountbatten. I am certain that their family and our commonwealth is a better place for him being in it. May he rest in peace.

**THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust)** [2.20 pm]: I also rise to add my support for the motion moved by the Leader of the House expressing regret at the death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Many members have made comments about what a remarkable individual Prince Philip was. He lived a life of dedicated service to his country; to his wife, Queen Elizabeth II; to the Commonwealth; and to his family. It has already been referenced the significant number of times that he visited Australia, but I think we also need to note that out of those 22 occasions, 11 of them were specifically visits to Western Australia. The last visit was during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Perth in October 2011. I note that for a man of his age at that time, it would have been a significant activity to venture forth across the seas to visit us here in Western Australia. His first visit to Western Australia was during the Commonwealth Games in 1962—a significant year for many of us in this chamber.

Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, passed away at the age of 99 on 9 April 2021. Throughout his life, he repeatedly demonstrated his unfailing support and loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen, his wife of 73 years—a remarkable period of marriage in anyone's situation. He was a superb role model for men in our community. He was a man who put aside his own desires for a career, for a life of his own choosing, to stand in support of his wife in the work that she did on behalf of her country. In that regard, he was a man to be admired.

We have already heard about the extensive array of interests and activities that he engaged in to keep himself occupied, including the establishment of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. For many of us, as we went through high school in the 1970s, this was a fairly standard feature during our school time. I would say that a number of members in this chamber and in the other would have actively participated in that particular program.

His Royal Highness was obviously engaged in a variety of activities in the charity area. He demonstrated a long-term and ongoing passion for conservation. I understand that he was quite actively engaged in various parts of the world expressing his opinion about a number of things that should happen to preserve various parts of countries. Historically, there was some correspondence between himself and Gough Whitlam about what should happen in the Kakadu area, in the north of Australia, at that point in time. He continued his activities in that area until the late 1990s. He also had a strong and ongoing interest in the area of industry and set about establishing the Industrial Society, which is now known as the Work Foundation. There were a variety of other organisations that he was active in and remained active in until his retirement three years ago.

As well as those charity and work organisations, he was obviously a very passionate sportsman. Members in this chamber have already alluded to the no-nonsense approach that he took to life, and I suppose on some occasions his bluntness and suffering no fools. I was thinking that perhaps in the current age of wokeness he would never be accused of being PC and would probably stand out in the crowd in that regard!

Since his passing, having listened to the many stories since his birth and the family background of his life's journey, it is a fascinating story of challenge after challenge. In fact, one could only wonder how he survived and got to the point in his life that he did. It is a remarkable life story. Putting aside all of his formal responsibilities, at the end of the day he was a family man. I imagine that the greatest hole to be filled is the loss to his family. We extend our best wishes and our condolences to his family in dealing with that loss. He leaves a remarkable legacy. May his memory be a blessing.

I ask members to now rise and stand in their places to indicate their support for the motion and to observe one minute's silence in memory of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

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

**The PRESIDENT:** Members, I advise that in accordance with our custom and practice, a copy of today's *Hansard* on this occasion will be sent to His Excellency the Governor via a message.