

Aurora celebrates Jubilee at Platinum party at Town Park



The Queen's historic Platinum Jubilee was celebrated in style on Saturday as Aurora residents flocked to Town Park for a morning of music, tea, and togetherness.

Nearly 300 residents filled the lawns in front of the band shell, many wearing fascinators, to take in a performance from the Aurora Community Band and commemorate a once-in-a-lifetime event: the 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne.

'Today, we are here to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and that marks an amazing milestone,' said Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill MP Leah Taylor Roy, representing the Federal Government, which provided a grant to make the celebrations possible. 'It's the first time since Confederation we've been able to celebrate that and I appreciate the fact that [emcee John Green of the Aurora Historical Society opened] with a land recognition here because our country has seen so many phases and so many peoples and we're continually evolving' but the Queen's 70 years of service, since at the age of 25 [when] she ascended the throne has been a testament to incredible public service, dedication and loyalty.

'But this morning I also want to think about the Queen as a person who is now 96, her health is failing, and she has been a mother, a grandmother, a great-grandmother. She has seen her husband pass away and has seen through so many family tragedies and joyous moments like all of us' but has had to do it in the public eye. She has done it with great dignity and respect, and I think today we should not only honour the Platinum Jubilee and the position, but the woman because she is an amazing woman.

'It is good to remember the words of a young princess, before Queen Elizabeth II came to the throne, during the war she encouraged the children. What she said was, 'and when peace comes, remember it will be for us, the children of today, to make the world of tomorrow a better and happier place.' I hope we all remember her words and, in her honour, let us all make the world a better and happier place.'

While he was unable to attend the event, Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen sent a message paying tribute to the Queen's love for Canada.

'Queen Elizabeth II's reign as monarch has truly been one of remarkable love for Canada and for Canadians,' he said, in a message relayed by Mr. Green. 'Over the past seven decades, Queen Elizabeth II has been a constant presence in the lives of Canadians and has witnessed growth and significant change in Canadian society. The Queen has cultivated enduring ties with Canadians over years of connecting with our rich cultures and traditions. Throughout her reign, the Queen has made 22 official tours of Canada, more than

any other Commonwealth country. Her travels have brought [her to] the east, west, and north, to large cities, to small towns, and tiny hamlets. She has met countless Canadians and has been present for our most important milestones and celebrations. Her Majesty has said in multiple speeches that she always regards Canada as home and shares in the pride we take in our achievements.

?I join with each of you today in celebration of her remarkable life, with thanks for the love she has shown our nation.?

Before the Aurora Community Band, led by Gord Shepard, got the crowd up on their feet with their interpretation of many songs that have become part of the public's consciousness over the past 70 years, and before women in the crowd came together for a Best Fascinator contest, pomp and circumstance was offered by John Webster, Aurora's Official Town Crier.

?We are celebrating our glorious Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Elizabeth, the second of that name, our most beloved sovereign and head of The Commonwealth for 70 years, how apt that this should be the Platinum anniversary of her accession ? platinum, that most noble of metals, more precious even than gold. So, it is in honour of this unique occasion that beacons and events such as this, are being held throughout the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, and the UK territories, and in cities and towns in The Commonwealth such as here in Aurora. Let it be known that in proclaiming this tribute to Her Majesty the Queen on her Platinum Jubilee, that we are one nation and one Commonwealth.?

As Aurorans gathered in Town Park on Saturday morning, those who had travelled to the United Kingdom were gathering outside Buckingham Palace for the Platinum Party at the Palace, an all-star concert that was the highlight of the UK's four-day celebration.

Commemorations began Thursday with the Trooping the Colour, the Monarch's official British birthday, followed by the Queen's appearance on the iconic palace balcony.

A Thanksgiving Service took place at St. Paul's Cathedral the following day, missed by the Queen who was experiencing ?discomfort? from the day before. Following the concert, events culminated with a pageant celebrating the Queen's life and the Queen herself making one final Jubilee appearance on the balcony alongside her direct heirs: the Prince of Wales, accompanied by the Duchess of Cornwall, and Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and the Duchess of Cambridge, with their three children Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis.

Across Canada, commemorations included a light show on Parliament Hill, beacon lightings in Ottawa, Toronto, and in other major cities, and a Government of Ontario garden party held at Toronto's Aga Khan Museum.

?When it comes to mark 70 years as your Queen, there is no guidebook to follow,? said the Queen in a message issued after the UK celebrations wrapped. ?It really is a first. But I have been humbled and deeply touched that so many people have taken to the streets to celebrate my Platinum Jubilee. While I may not have attended every event in person, my heart has been with you all and I remain committed to serving you to the best of my ability, supported by my family.

I have been inspired by the kindness, joy and kinship that has been so evident in recent days, and I hope this renewed sense of togetherness will be felt for many years to come. I thank you most sincerely for your good wishes and for the part you have all played in these happy celebrations.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter