

Community invited to MPP's Coronation party for King and Queen



Residents of Aurora and Newmarket are encouraged to dust off their fascinators for Coronation Day as MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy hosts a community event in honour of King Charles III and Queen Camilla in the wee hours of Saturday, May 6.

Coinciding with the start of the Coronation procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, MPP Gallagher Murphy invites all community members to view the ceremony on the big screen starting at 6 a.m. at the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) with plenty of refreshments to go around.

'These events start very early because of the time difference,' she says. 'Growing up, my father always got us up at 4 a.m. (for royal events), we had to be downstairs and up for the big event to watch on TV and I thought to myself, 'We're going to do the same thing!' I do believe the real monarch-watchers will come out at 6 a.m.'

The idea to hold a community event for the Coronation of Canada's head of state, who succeeded to the throne on September 8, 2022 upon the death of Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-serving British monarch and the longest-serving Canadian monarch since Confederation, was actually inspired by one of the MPP's youth volunteers.

'They mentioned to me, 'It's been almost 70 years since we had our last Coronation,' and I thought, 'You're right ? why don't we have something for the community?' This tells me, we really need to think about the importance of the Monarchy in our country because if a 20-year-old is saying to me, 'Wow, it's been so long since we had a Coronation,' and he loves the Monarchy, I have to wonder if our youth is keeping up with the monarch and the traditions, versus not. I would have to say that they are.'

MPP Gallagher Murphy has been keeping up with the monarch of the day and the traditions that come with the office since she was a young girl. As an Anglican, she grew up with the late monarch, and now The King, as head of the Church of England.

Here at home, Canada's place in the Commonwealth is close to her heart.

A mere 10 weeks after first being elected to the Ontario legislature to represent the residents of Newmarket-Aurora and swearing allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II to do so, she was one of the first of the Progressive Conservative caucus to then swear allegiance to King Charles III.

'On the one hand, I was sad because I have known Queen Elizabeth my entire life, but there was also excitement to see what this

new Monarch will bring to the Commonwealth ? not just to England, but to all of us ? Canada, Australia, everybody in the Commonwealth. From what I've seen of King Charles, he's been a big proponent for [mitigating] climate change and what we should be doing for our environment to ensure that we have a place for generations to come here on Earth and I would like to see what he will be doing as King to carry that out, if at all. I know they try to stay away from political issues, but I do think it will be interesting to see if he will steer away from tradition and see what he can do to help ensure that we're all doing our share of ensuring this world is a better place in our environment.?

MPP Gallagher Murphy's event could be the only formal commemoration of the Coronation within the community. While hundreds of people came out to Town Park last June for a celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, complete with a concert from the Aurora Community Band, scones, and more, the Town's Communications Director, Daniel Bitonti, says Aurora is ?exploring ways to support the Legion's even? through ?promotional and logistical support.?

Although The King has not visited Aurora during his time as Prince of Wales or as King thus far, in 2008 Aurora received The Prince of Wales Prize from the National Trust for Canada, in recognition of the Town's efforts to preserve heritage architecture.

Personal hand-signed congratulations from the then-Prince of Wales have been on display at Town Hall since then. The official plaque, accepted by then-mayor Phyllis Morris, is displayed just outside the seat of local government.

The Award, according to the Trust, was created with the support of the now-Monarch ?to encourage and reward sound conservation policies and practices at the municipal level.?

?Despite unprecedented growth rates in recent decades, Aurora has, since the mid-1970s, adopted wide-ranging initiatives to protect its heritage buildings,? reads the Town's citation. ?Today, 95 per cent of the building stock that existed upon the passage of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1975 remains standing.?

By Brock WeirEditorLocal Journalism Initiative Reporter