

New Zealand Royal Visit

By Dr Noel Cox

Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh have made their re-scheduled visit to New Zealand. The visit should have been last year to coincide with the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads, but had to be postponed due to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington.

In the capital the Duke of Edinburgh presented the Gold Awards of his Award Scheme, while the Queen visited the Cathedral of St Paul. The Royal Couple later attended a state dinner in the executive wing of Parliament Buildings, the Beehive.

In Auckland, Her Majesty and His Royal Highness attended a garden reception hosted by the Governor-General in the grounds of Government House, to mark the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty's accession. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Monarchist League were among the 1200 guests, on what proved to be a very sunny afternoon.

Her Majesty also visited the Liggins Institute of Medical Research, at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, The University of Auckland. The Queen was received by the Chancellor of the University of Auckland, Mr John Graham, and officially opened the Institute.

Her Majesty's visit to Team New Zealand's America's Cup headquarters, Viaduct Basin, Waitamata Harbour, Auckland, was rendered more poignant by the recent death in the Amazon of yachtsman Sir Peter Blake, KBE, who was responsible for the successful New Zealand challenge for the America's Cup.

The Duke of Edinburgh later visited Devonport Naval Base and laid a wreath at the Memorial Wall. His Royal Highness, Patron, Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, afterwards visited the Royal Akarana Yacht Club and presented The Duke of Edinburgh's Cup.

In Christchurch the royal couple visited the Ngai Tahu Rehua marae- or tribal meeting place, for a ceremony of welcome. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh also visited Burnham Military Camp, where The Queen met New Zealand Defence Force personnel training for duty in East Timor.

Although elements of the media were inclined to give undue weight to the tiny republican movement, public enthusiasm for the royal visit was obvious to all who had an opportunity to see the Queen. Coming at the beginning of Golden Jubilee year, this visit was a timely reminder of the great benefits of the system of constitutional monarchy for New Zealand, and of the exemplary example set by The Queen.