



**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STATES OF THE**

**ISLAND OF ALDERNEY**

**HANSARD**

**The Court House, Alderney, Tuesday, 13th April 2021**

*All published Official Reports can be found on the  
official States of Alderney website [www.alderney.gov.gg](http://www.alderney.gov.gg)*

**Volume 9, No. 4**

**Present:**

**Mr William Tate, President**

**Members**

Mr Bill Abel

Ms Annie Burgess

Mr Ian Carter

Mr Kevin Gentle

Mr Christian Harris

Mr Rhys Jenkins

Mr Boyd Kelly

Mr Graham McKinley, OBE

Mr Steve Roberts

Mr Alexander Snowdon

**The Greffier of the Court**

Mr David Knight

**Business transacted**

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## States of Alderney

*The States met at 2.30 p.m. in the presence of  
Lieutenant G T Workman RN (Rtd), a representative of  
His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the Bailiwick of Guernsey*

[THE PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

### PRAYERS

*The Greffier*

### ROLL CALL

*The Greffier*

## Billet d'État for Wednesday, 13th April 2021

**The Greffier:** Sir, they are quorate and properly convened.

The States of Alderney Billet d'État Tuesday 13th April 2021, tribute to the late His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

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**The President:** May I invite everybody to stand whilst we observe a minute's silence.

*Members stood in silence.*

**The Greffier:** Mr President, Members of the States, thank you.

### Convener's Report of the People's Meeting held on 13th April 2021

**The President:** Now, Mr McKinley, you were the convener of the People's Meeting this afternoon. Do you have the details of the people who attended that meeting?

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**Mr McKinley:** I do, sir. There were nine States Members, including myself, there were seven members of the public, and that is all. The comments: there were no comments, other than a possible book of condolence to be signed by Alderney residents and sent to the Palace, sir.

That is all, sir.

15

**The President:** Thank you.

20 Well, I can just deal with that matter very briefly at this stage. I had intended to open a book of condolence which would have been available in the Island Hall. However, the advice that we have received from Government House, which they have in turn received from London, is that at the present time, it is inappropriate to have a physical book of condolence, and therefore they are inviting people to record their sentiments on the Royal website. It may be that that situation changes because of our unique situation on the Island, but as I said yesterday in a media release, I will let the community know as soon as I have any further information.

**Rules of Procedure suspended to take the sitting**

25 **The President:** Now, this Meeting has been convened this afternoon at short notice. We were asked to have, at a meeting of the States, a tribute made to the late Prince, and I felt – and Mr Abel also agreed with this – that to wait until the next Meeting of our States, which is next Wednesday, would be inappropriate. Therefore, we felt that to mark this occasion it was entirely appropriate that we have a meeting just to deal with this one matter.

30 Now, there are some procedural issues around our ability to be able to do that, and we can now deal with those, because I understand, Mr Abel, you have an application to make.

**Mr Abel:** Yes, Mr President, I do.

35 Mr President, in terms of paragraph 24 of the Rules of Procedure, I would like to move that sections 2 and 3 of the Rules of Procedure be suspended to allow this meeting of the States of Alderney to pay their respects to His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, who passed away on 9th April this year, 2021.

Thank you.

40 **The President:** Thank you very much indeed.  
Mr Carter, I understand you are going to formally support this.

**Mr Carter:** Yes, formally second it.

45 **The President:** Thank you.  
Just for the benefit of the people who are either in the Meeting or listening on the radio, the Rules require that certain periods of notice are complied with before a States Meeting can take place. So Rule 2 is in relation to the amount of notice that Members of the States should get and Rule 3 provides certain circumstances in which I can determine that a matter is of such importance that the period can be reduced to four days, but of course what we needed to do  
50 today was to ensure that this meeting could go ahead.

So in order to be able to do that, Mr Abel has asked, as he is entitled to do under the Rules of Procedure, for those two provisions to be suspended. That has been seconded by Mr Abel; I suspect it would also be supported by the other Members. In which event, I think, Mr Greffier, we can say that that passes.

55 **The Greffier:** It is carried, yes, sir. Thank you.

**Tribute to the late HRH The Prince Philip,  
Duke of Edinburgh KG, KT, OM, GCVO, GBE,  
Royal Victorian Chain, AC, QSO, PC**

**The President:** So we are gathered this afternoon to pay tribute to a remarkable human being. He is remarkable in so many different ways, but in addition, he has been, for most of us, in our lives all our lives. So it is fitting now that we pay this tribute to him and his legacy. I am  
60 sure that there are others who feel similarly humbled, as I do, that I did not know more about him as a man. The more that one reads and the more that one watches the television, the more remarkable this life clearly was.

I spent a long time over the weekend considering how best to make this tribute, because he was a man who would not necessarily have welcomed a great deal of praise for the role in which  
65 he played, but that has to be balanced with our need to feel that we have recognised his contribution. So when I was thinking about what to say and looking at some background, I came across a very helpful suggestion from the Prince himself. What he said was, 'what the backside cannot endure, the brain cannot absorb'. So I think that is fairly sage advice and advice that I will take on board this afternoon. So a good deal of what I would have gone on to say has found  
70 itself on the cutting room floor, if I can put it in that way.

So what sort of man was he and what were the qualities that we admired so much in him? The adjectives are countless. We have all, no doubt, heard over the weekend repeatedly talk about his commitment to public service, his sacrifice to public service, his loyalty to the country, his decency as a human being and his integrity. And that does not really scratch the surface,  
75 because there was clearly so much more about him which we can now look at and consider.

His other achievement, or one of his many achievements, it is alleged, was that he coined the phrase 'Dontopedalogy', which may be, as it was to me, a new expression. But his definition of it was this: a talent for putting one's foot in one's mouth. I think that was something that we all loved about him, because he was prepared, on occasions, as we all, who find ourselves in roles  
80 where we engage with others, sometimes to try and put someone at their ease, to try and break the ice, we make the mistake of perhaps being a little injudicious in our language, and then we subsequently realise what we have said. But what was clear, and the examples are legend, and I do not intend to rehearse them this afternoon, but what was very clear, that there was never any malice in this. It was purely and simply to allow him to engage with the people he was  
85 meeting to make them feel comfortable, at least most of the time.

So when I was looking at how best I could find a way of describing him, I came across, again, and forgive me for this, because I have lifted this, but I think it is important, and when you look at his qualities, this is what was said: 'He could sail a yacht, he could fly a yet, he could drive a carriage, command a ship, paint a picture, shoot a stag and play polo, yet he was also a  
90 philosopher, an innovator and a champion of the young.' Now, we might be forgiven for thinking that that was a job description for James Bond, because all those sorts of qualities are all the sorts of qualities that are exemplified in that particular role.

So that is a very brief description of him which I think really sets the scene for what I would now like to go on briefly to talk about, which was his incredible background, because as we  
95 know, he was born Prince Philip on the Greek island of Corfu on 10th June 1921. He was the only son of Prince Andrew of Greece, who was the younger brother of King Constantine I of Greece.

Now, the political situation in Greece in the early 1920s was unstable to say the least, and the King of Greece, Constantine I, was forced to abdicate the throne. King George V ordered that a Royal Navy ship should evacuate the family from Corfu and Prince Philip was carried to safety;  
100 and the Royal legend is, I understand, that he was carried in a cot made from an orange box. He was just 18 months old. So I suspect anybody looking at those circumstances might have been suspected that here we are going to be dealing with an exceptional character, and so it turned out to be.

105 So having attended schools in France, England and Germany, excelling in his academic work,  
he went to the newly opened Gordonstoun School, which all his three sons subsequently  
attended. He became head of the school, captain of hockey and captain of cricket. So an all-  
rounder who was excelling and demonstrating those leadership skills very early in his life.

110 He went on to have an incredibly distinguished career in the Royal Navy, from joining at  
Dartmouth College, swiftly rising through the ranks to serve as first lieutenant during the Second  
World War. He became second-in-command of the destroyer *HMS Wallace* at the incredibly  
young age of 21. So again, even then he was demonstrating just what an incredible person he  
was. He continued with distinction, being promoted to commander in 1952. He had served, as I  
say, with great distinction during the Second World War. He was mentioned in dispatches, he  
was present at the surrender of the Japanese government, and he was at the cutting edge of all  
115 of that. So again, we are building a picture here of somebody who has had a very special life.

120 It would have been, I suspect, his intention to continue his career in the Royal Navy, and  
there are those who I suspect speculate correctly that he would have risen even higher through  
the ranks and attained a level of the highest order. But events were to overtake him, because in  
1934 he met Princess Elizabeth, who was subsequently to become our Queen. They  
corresponded together from 1939, and he had occasion to chaperone the Queen and Princess  
Margaret when they attended with their father an event at Dartmouth College, and it is noted  
that he amused the Queen at Dartmouth by jumping over tennis nets. So demonstrating again a  
sportsman, and a bit of a show off. But it had such an impression upon the young Princess  
Elizabeth that they maintained that friendship, and that friendship blossomed and bloomed, and  
125 they were engaged in July 1947. Their marriage took place on 20th November of that year.

130 So there were a couple and their life would seem to have been fairly clear at that stage, until  
events took a turn on 6th February 1952, when Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh, as  
he was to become, were on a Commonwealth tour in Kenya, when they received the news that  
the King had died. She was 25 years of age at that stage, and overnight it became apparent that  
their lives would change forever. One can only imagine the emotions of that moment. The  
realisation that the mantle of responsibility that fallen fairly and squarely on their shoulders, and  
he did not pause in committing himself to the task ahead. And so it was that they returned,  
Princess Elizabeth having left the country, and the new Queen returning. Their life, as I say, was  
forever changed.

135 His portfolio of work aside, the Duke of Edinburgh always maintained from that day forth  
that it was his duty to support the Queen in her programme of public engagements and  
ceremonial duties when visiting local charities. He accompanied her around the Commonwealth.  
He made many visits on his own. But throughout all of that, there was a commitment by both to  
the country and to the Commonwealth and to the world that they would do their duty and they  
would make sure they did it well.  
140

145 And so it has gone on, and they have continued in that work. But one should perhaps just  
pause for a moment and reflect the work that he did himself, because he carved out his own  
role within the Royal Family; and he was an innovator, and he appreciated that in order to  
continue to be relevant, the monarchy needed to evolve. He very gently pursued that objective  
so that now we have a monarchy which is relevant to the 21st century.

He will be remembered, I suspect, best by the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, of which  
so many thousands of young people have benefited over the years, and he has therefore left a  
legacy which will provide that continued support to young people around the world.

150 I am going to conclude now by just reading two final pieces. The first is a quote from the Lord  
Chancellor:

It is, I fear, inevitable that the life of the Sovereign must be in some sense a lonely life. We must be thankful that  
she has by her side her Consort, the Duke of Edinburgh, who has so completely identified himself with the people  
of this country and with their way of life, and who has won for himself such respect and affection from all those  
many people who have been privileged to meet him.

Now, we might suspect that that had been said over the course of the weekend. It was in fact said in 1952 by Earl Jowitt, the then Lord Chancellor addressing the House of Lords. So that again simply demonstrates the length and commitment of service.

155 I am going to, if I may, leave the final words to Her Majesty the Queen, and these were words and sentiments she expressed at her golden wedding:

... 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.

And I think those are the sentiments of us all. Thank you.

Mr Abel.

**Mr Abel:** Thank you, Mr President.

160 Fellow States Members, ladies and gentlemen. It was with great sadness that Alderney's community heard that His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh had passed away last Friday. His Royal Highness Prince Philip visited Alderney on a number of occasions, and will be remembered with deep affection by us all here.

165 His Royal Highness's initial visit in 1949, together with Princess Elizabeth, did much for the morale of the Island in those difficult post-war days. From the film of the Royal visit in 1989, Christian Harris's grandmother, Eileen Sykes, former States Member and Vice-President of the States of Alderney, praised Prince Philip and the Queen for their understanding of the difficulties that the Island faced in those dark years after World War II, and for the continued interest of His Royal Highness and the Queen that they showed during subsequent visits. There are still a  
170 number of Islanders who will remember this initial and subsequent Royal visits to the Island and will recall the interest and concern His Royal Highness showed to everyone he met here.

I, as one of many, will remember His Royal Highness for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, which has shaped and inspired the lives of countless young people. The Duke, through this scheme, fostered the hopes of thousands and encouraged their ambitions.

175 We remember the Duke for many things, but above all for his steadfast support for Her Majesty the Queen. It is to Her Majesty and her family that our thoughts must turn today. Boris Johnson said of Prince Philip, he made this country a better place. His Royal Highness will be sorely missed by everyone who knew and met him, and even more by the Queen, his companion for many years.

180 We give thanks, as a community, for the extraordinary life and work of His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip.

Thank you, Mr President.

**The President:** Thank you, Mr Abel.

185 I think, then, Mr Greffier, we can close the meeting.

**PRAYERS**

*The Greffier*

*The Assembly adjourned at 2.57 p.m.*