

Royal visits to Bendigo

These resources are for the purposes of inspiration around experience development. For any image or content use please contact Bendigo Tourism to clarify copyright permissions.

1867 Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh (page 3 & 4)



Our first royal visitor to Bendigo was Queen Victoria’s 4th child – and the visit was a royal shambles. At least 4 children died during celebrations and the ballroom erected in his honour (situated next to the Town Hall) burnt to the ground.

Visited: Shamrock Hotel, Latham & Watson’s Mine, Koch’s Pioneer Crushing Works, Eaglehawk Town Hall, Catherine Reef United Company’s Mine, Sandhurst Town Hall

Ate & Drank: Champagne, red wine, cherries, hazelnuts, biscuits

The band played: Rule Britannia

Decorations: Flags, archways, flowers, evergreens, candles, gaslights, sunlights

1881 Prince Albert Victor & Prince George (page 5 & 6)



The Princes of Wales, Queen Victoria’s grandsons, opened the Queen Alexandra fountain – named for their mother. They had a trip down a mine and enjoyed a ball in their honour with a “stand up supper”.

Visited: Mitchell Street, Pall Mall, Bath Corner, Sandhurst Railway Goods Shed, Alexandra Fountain, New Chum Mine, Hotel Shamrock

The band played: God Save the Queen, God bless the Prince of Wales, A Good Old English Gentleman, For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow and Rule Britannia.

Decorations: Bunting, flags, a 60 foot streamer, evergreens, candles, magnificent shaped gaslights, sunlights, colourful Chinese lanterns

1920 Prince Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (page 7)



Prince Albert Edward would go on to become King Edward the VIII in 1936, before abdicating the throne in the same year. During his visit an eccentric minor caused mischief by throwing what looked like a large gold nugget into the gathered crowds and some inebriated royal fans tried to climb aboard the royal carriage before being fought off by the Royal Bodyguard.

Visited: Castlemaine, the Unity Mine in Ironbark, Pall Mall

Decorations: There were 14 decorative archways, some of which featured the city’s prettiest girls. Red and Gold arches with bush foliage lined Pall Mall.

1927 Duke and Duchess of York (page 8)



The Duke and Duchess of York, Queen Elizabeth's parents, visited Bendigo after World War I and spent time at the Memorial Hall.

Visited: Hargreaves Street, Pall Mall, Mitchell Street, St Paul's, Alexandra Fountain, View Street, Upper Reserve, Queen Victoria Statue, Memorial Hall

The band played: School children sang "Australia, Land of Ours."

Decorations: Flags, colourful light display, living arch of 3000 pigeons

1934 Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester (page 9)



The Duke of Gloucester spent most of his visit at the Upper Reserve walking amongst the children, and speaking with soldiers at the Memorial Hall.

Visited: Alexandra Fountain, View Street, Upper Reserve, Memorial Hall, Pall Mall, Mining Exposition in Golden Gully

Decorations: red flower in his button-hole, flags, illuminated buildings in Pall Mall (Alexandra Fountain Post Office, Law Courts, Queen Victoria statue, School of Mines tower)

1954 Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip (page 10 & 11)



The only reigning monarch to visit Bendigo, the Queen spent around 80 minutes in town, where she greeted over 9000 children in the Upper Reserve (renamed the Queen Elizabeth Oval after her visit). Reports mention that the crowds were so overcome with shock and awe that they forgot to cheer!

Visited: Railway Station, Williamson Street, Pall Mall

The band played: God Save the Queen

Decorations: Water-lilies, flags, a tram covered in red, white and blue lights

1974 Prince Charles | 1983 Charles & Diana (page 12 & 13)



Prince Charles drove a tram (and stalled it) in 1974. In 1983 Prince Charles and Princess Diana watched a performance of Sun Loong (his only performance for that year) from the Shamrock Hotel balcony.

Visited: Central Deborah gold mine, Birney Tram no.30, Joss House, Showgrounds, Town Hall, Pall Mall, Hotel Shamrock

Decorations: Flags, flowers, a swan of ranunculus

1867 - Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh



H.R.H. Prince Alfred, K.G., Duke of Edinburgh by HS Sadd, 1868. National Library of Australia

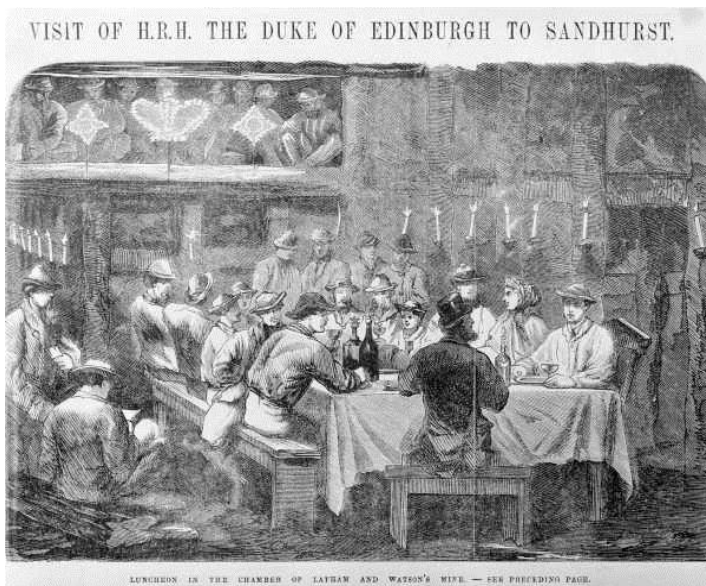
At a quarter past ten in the morning of Thursday the 19th of December 1867, the Duke of Edinburgh was cheered by a large crowd as he and his company left the **Shamrock Hotel** for their carriages and took off along **View St.**

The first stop was **Latham and Watson's Mine** where a pretty arch that had been decorated with flowers, evergreens and flags, and a band played "**Rule Britannia**".



Arch erected celebrating the arrival of H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh, 1867. State Library of Victoria.

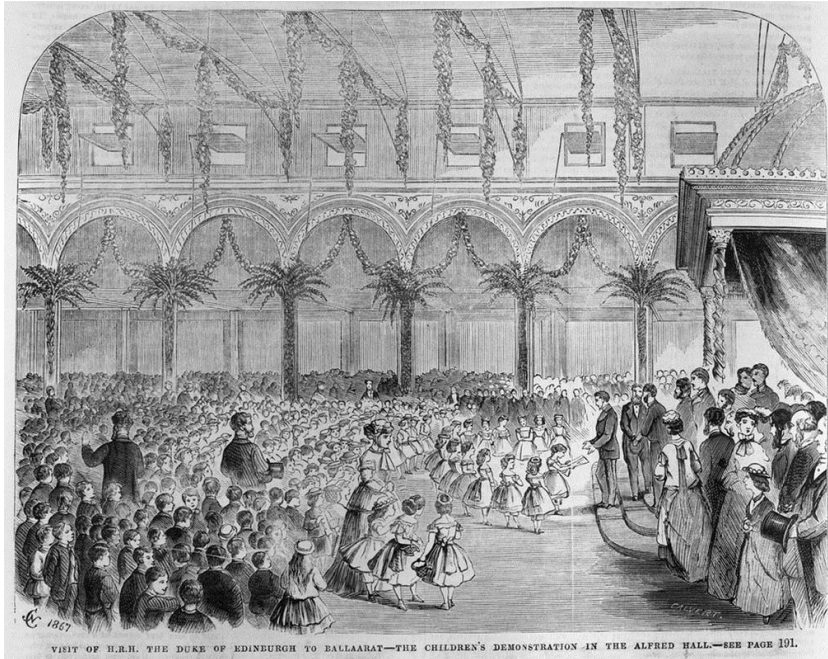
The Prince was shown the process of crushing rocks to extract gold, but took great interest in the amalgamation and retorting of cakes of gold. Next was lunch, in a room that had been decorated with 100 feet of candles, as well as gas lights in the shape of two stars on either side of a crown. On a table in the centre of the chamber stood a few bottles of champagne and other wine and glasses, and a plate or two of cherries and hazelnuts.



LUNCHEON IN THE CHAMBER OF LATHAM AND WATSON'S WIFE. — SEE PRECEDING PAGE.

Next the Prince and his party visited **KOCH'S PIONEER CRUSHING WORKS** where he drank a glass of wine, before heading to the **Eaglehawk Town Hall** where the Mayor of Eaglehawk toasted "Her Majesty the Queen,". At the same time, unbeknownst to the crowd, the Eaglehawk Children's Fete in the Prince's honour had resulted in the death of one child due to sun stroke.

The Prince and company next visited **CATHERINE REEF UNITED COMPANY'S MINE** where His Royal Highness was handed a fine new driving pick and enthusiastically set to work knocking down quartz. Afterwards, a reward for his efforts, the Prince had a glass of wine and a biscuit.



Children serenading Prince Alfred in the Prince Alfred Hall in Ballarat, which didn't burn down (1867). State Library of Victoria

Bendigo had planned an elegant ball for Prince Alfred, with a brand new ballroom built and named in the Prince's honour. Sadly, on the night of the ball, the Prince Alfred Ballroom burnt to the ground.

The Ballroom was situated beside the **Town Hall**, and described as "one of the most elegant ballrooms we have ever seen". In setting up for the ball, a worker lost control of his torch whilst trying to light one of the decorative "sunlights" in the roof. He missed his mark, and in an instant the roof was ablaze.

When the danger was over the Mayor called an emergency meeting, and the decision was made to move the ball to the Town Hall. He is quoted as saying "even the destruction of the Prince Alfred Ballroom should not prevent Bendigo giving the ball it had promised Prince Alfred."

When the danger was over the Mayor called an emergency

The Prince Alfred Ballroom burning down was not even the worst fire-related incident of the visit. The previous night a fireworks demonstration by the Volunteer Fire Brigade resulted in the death of three eight-year-old boys. The boys were dressed as sailors to accompany the model ship 'Galatea', which was laden with fireworks. As the ship went through the crowds, overexcited patrons threw lit fireworks on board, resulting in a fast fire.



Grand display of fireworks in the outer domain in honour of the visit of the H.R.R. Prince Alfred

When His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh heard the sad news he was deeply affected and at his special request, all the flags throughout the town were hoisted half-mast high.

Bendigo Advertiser (Fri 20 Dec 1867). Page 2. The Duke of Edinburgh's Visit to Bendigo [online] Available at: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/87956894> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2018].

Bendigo Advertiser (Fri 20 Dec 1867). Page 2. Burning of the Prince Alfred Hall [online] Available at: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/87956895/9114157> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2018].

Bendigo Advertiser (Fri 20 Dec 1867). Page 3. The Fatal Result of the Fire Brigade Demonstration [online] Available at: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/87956891> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2018].

The Duke was shot by Henry James O'Farrell in an assassination attempt while picnicking on the beach in the Sydney suburb of Clontarf, on 12 March 1868. The Duke recovered fully and continued on to New Zealand seven months later. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/87894672>

1881 – Prince Albert Victor & Prince George



Prince Victor Albert and Prince George of Great Britain during their visit to South Australia. (1881). State Library of South Australia

During their visit the Princes opened the new fountain in Charing Cross, and named it Alexandra after their mother. The fountain had been decorated for the occasion, and on the four sides of the central column were the words "Alexandra," in gold letters, on a red background. At that time Sandhurst boasted the finest and most substantial fountain in the southern hemisphere, which cost £1,300. (Roughly \$270,000 today)

Crowds gathered enthusiastically along Mitchell St and Pall Mall on the 5th of June 1881 for the arrival of the royal princes, climbing onto balconies, roofs and every two-storied building they could reach. The newspaper refers to "adventurous ladies" who braved dizzy heights on Bath Corner for a view on the street.

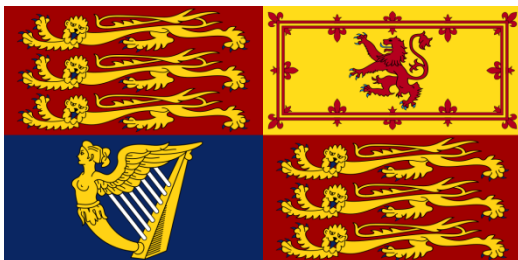
Almost every building in town was decorated with bunting showing the flags of different nations. A line of flags stretched from High Street, to the City Family Hotel, to the London Chartered Bank. Across the new fountain at Charing Cross was a 60 feet long streamer with a welcome for the Royal visitors.

The Princes arrived by Royal Train, and were greeted with an address by the Mayor. Afterwards they were driven across to the railway goods shed, which was decorated with evergreens. Two thousand children sang the National Anthem – which at that time was still "God Save the Queen".



Alexandra Fountain, Charing Cross (1881) State Library of Victoria

From here the Princes and their entourage were taken to a New Chum Mine owned by the Ellesmere Company, and were provided some overalls to put on. This resulted in lots of laughter and teasing, with the overalls making everyone look a bit silly. Prince Albert Victor ended up declining to go further into the mine, but Prince George was enthusiastic about the adventure and went for a thorough tour.

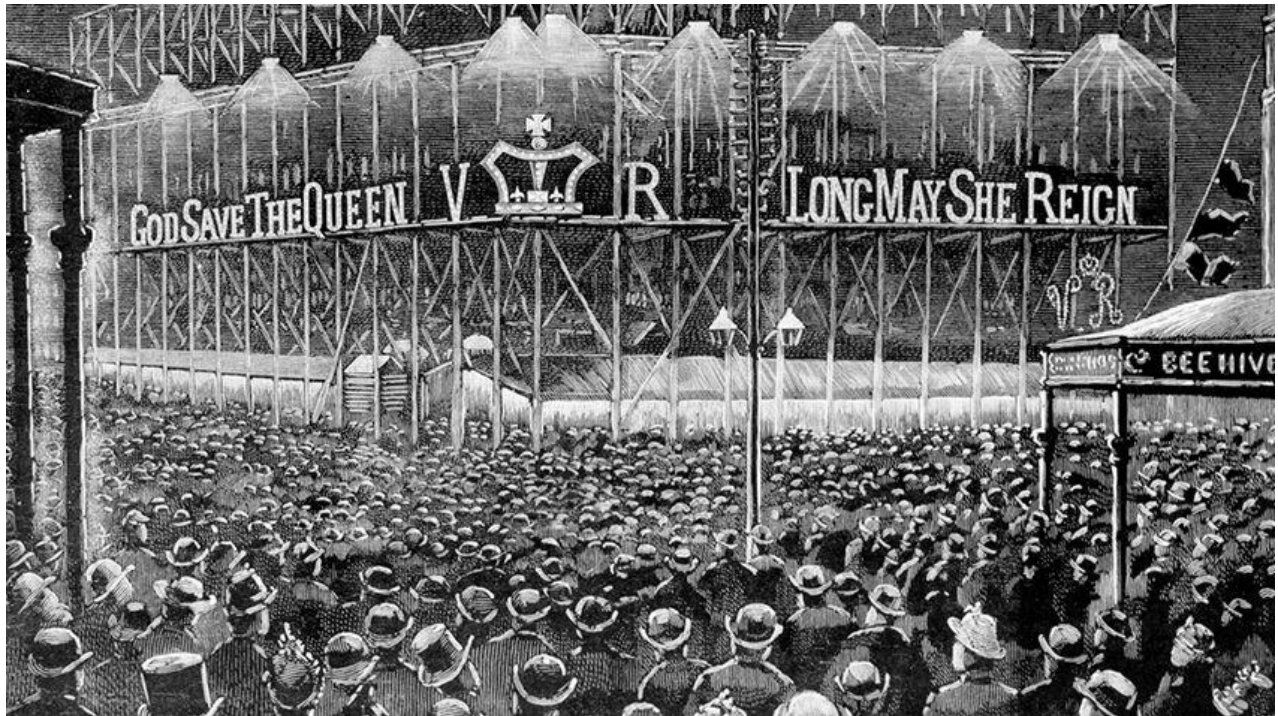


Royal Standards of the United Kingdom

An early dinner was put on at 5.30 at The Shamrock Hotel, which was gorgeously decorated with flags and over the main entrance was an enormous 20 feet square Royal Standard. In the dining room magnificent moulded "Prince of Wales feathers" trophies were supported by flags of various friendly nations, whilst the Royal Standard headed the room. A noticeable feature in the decoration of



the tables was the beautiful collection of green-house plants, hot-house plants, artificial grasses, and some magnificent bouquets. The Volunteer Band (stationed on the balcony) punctuated a long speech by the Mayor, playing "God Save the Queen", "God Bless the Prince of Wales", "A Good Old English Gentleman", "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and "Rule Britannia".



The illuminations of Melbourne – the General Post Office (1887)
State Library of Victoria

A ball was held in honour of the Princes' visit at the **Town Hall** (referred to as the Corn Exchange). A special train from Melbourne was arranged; a "stand up supper" was provided and there was dancing until after midnight.

The front entrance of the Town Hall had been traced with brilliant lines of gas jets, with the letters A & G on either side of a crown.

On the other side was an anchor and a coil of rope, with a dolphin on each side. The tower of the hall was capped with an array of coloured lanterns.

The Camp Hill School decorated the building with the words "Princes Welcome" and illuminated their windows. From the flag-pole on the hill in the reserve there were three rows of coloured lanterns.



Japanese Lanterns by Luther Emerson Van Gorder (1895) Tweed Museum of Art

Chinese lanterns illuminated Mr. Bush's stores on Williamson Street, Stewart's buildings, Pall Mall, Tucker's Hotel and Mitchell Street. Devices in gas were displayed at Messrs. Taylor Bros., Pall Mall; Mr. Van Damme's, Pall Mall; and other places."

Source: Bendigo Advertiser (Wed 6 Jun 1881). Pages 2 & 3. Visit of the Royal Princes [online] Available at: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/88635241> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2018].

1920 – Albert Edward, Prince of Wales



Prince Albert Edward (front right) on the steps of Bendigo Town Hall. (1920).
Annals of Bendigo 1910-1920

The Prince of Wales left Melbourne via train (having spent the night in the royal carriage) on the morning of the 4th of June, 1920 and stopped at Kyneton and Castlemaine on his way to Bendigo. In **Castlemaine** an eccentric miner decided to take advantage of the crowds and cause some mischief, throwing what appeared to be a large gold nugget on the platform. It was immediately fetched and turned out to be nothing more than a **gilded rock**.

The whole population of Bendigo and its surrounding districts seemed to be gathering around the **Town Hall** to see the arrival of the Prince. From the station, the Prince made a grand procession through the city, passing **under two very fine arches** in Hargreaves



Street decorations for the royal visit to Melbourne in 1901

Street. The Newspaper noted: “Bendigo, indeed, can take pride in the fact that Melbourne had no arches at all, while **Bendigo possessed 14, and, moreover, had adorned some of them with the prettiest, girls of the city...**”

Pall Mall was transformed into a series of **red and gold arches and bush foliage**. Outside the Town Hall the Prince was presented with an address of welcome by the Mayor, Cr. Curnow. The Prince and his party then got back into their carriages and headed for the **Unity mine at Ironbark**.



Prince of Wales' procession passing along George Street, Sydney (1920). Reserve Bank of Australia Museum

After His Royal Highness had turned into **Pall Mall** two men, said to be inebriated, tried to board one of the following cars. Members of the Royal bodyguard fought with them, and blows were exchanged, but when the men were forced from the car the procession proceeded without further incident.

At the **Unity mine** the Prince was convinced to go down to 12,500 feet below the surface. The party were below for about three-quarters of an hour, and the Prince showed the greatest interest in the work below the surface... On coming to the surface again the Prince said he had had a very pleasant

Sources: Sydney Morning Herald (Sat 5 Jun 1920). Page 13. The Royal Tour: [online] Available at: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/15892960> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2018].

Annals of Bendigo, 1920 – 1930 by George Mackay, pages 464 - 465.

1927 – Duke and Duchess of York



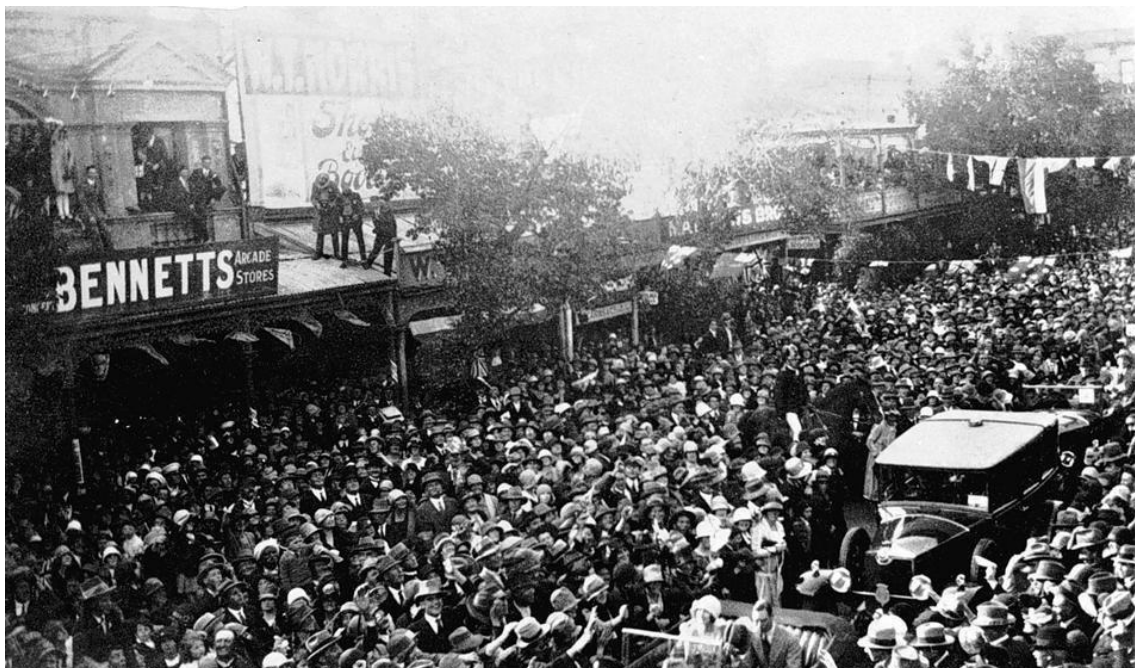
The Duchess of York in Bendigo taken by Mr P. Pinder (1927)

In the days before the Duke and Duchess arrived, Bendigo worked industriously in the rain to ensure the city looked its best. **Hargreaves Street and Pall Mall** were beautifully decorated with **pennants** (triangular flags) and the **Duke's colors** (a special military flag for the **Royal Navy**). The night before the visit **Hargreaves Street** was illuminated with a wonderful display of color, and hundreds of people were attracted by the magnificence of the spectacle.

On the 28th of April 1927 the royals arrived by Royal Train. The royal route took the pair along **Mitchell Street**, where **St Paul's** bells gave a special peal of welcome, **Alexandra Fountain**, where **The Marist Bros. Band** played a selection of patriotic airs, and up **View Street** to the **Upper Reserve** (now the **Queen Elizabeth Oval**).

At the arena Their Royal Highnesses passed through a guard of honor formed by Girl Guides and Boy Scouts, and were formally greeted by the Mayor. The school children of Northern Victoria sang the first and second verses of "**Australia, Land of Ours.**"

The Royal party then proceeded down **View Street**, into **Pall Mall**, past the **Queen Victoria Statue** to the **Memorial Hall** where they were met by Returned Soldiers League (Major G. V. Lansell). Their Royal Highnesses inspected the Guard of Honor provided by the 38th Battalion of Infantry, the Honor Roll, the Memorial Hall, and the Book of Remembrance. There was a parade of returned soldiers and imperial service men. After leaving the Memorial Hall the royals were taken back to the **railway station** via **Hargreaves St** where **3000 pigeons** were released from a "living arch."



Pall Mall packed with people out to see the Royal procession

Sources: Bendigo Advertiser (Thu 28 April 1927). Page 9. Duke and Duchess of York & Annals of Bendigo, Section 5, 1921 – 1935 by G. V. Lansell & W. J. Stephens, page 81.

1934 – Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester



Duke of Gloucester outside Memorial Hall in Bendigo

The Duke of Gloucester arrived by **Royal Train** in Bendigo on November 13, 1934. He wore a grey suit with a **red flower in his button-hole** and was greeted by the Mayor (Cr. A. Staples) and the town clerk (Mr. F. T. Amer). The Duke was taken via **Alexandra Fountain** and **View Street** to the **Upper Reserve**, where thousands of children were waiting to cheer, wave their **flags**, and sing "**Australia Land of Ours**". The Duke made a formal address to the crowds, then walked among the children to their great delight.

The Duke was taken to the **Memorial Hall**. Here in the

picturesque setting of the gardens facing **Pall Mall** the crowd was so thick that the lines of police on duty had difficulty in keeping the way clear. On the footpath in front of the hall, hundreds of returned soldiers were formed up in four lines. The president of the Bendigo sub-branch of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' League (Colonel G. V. Lansell, M.L.C.) and Mrs. Lansell had the honor of receiving the royal visitor. The Duke was also shown a mining exposition in **Golden Gully** and spoke with some miners about the process of finding gold.

The city "**blazed with light**" for the visit of the Duke, as **Pall Mall's** iconic landmarks were lit up in celebration.



Melbourne illuminated for Duke of Gloucester's visit in 1934



Duke of Gloucester visiting Bendigo by Arthur Hill (1934)

The **Memorial Hall** became a dramatic sight lit by **two powerful red-toned lights** hidden in the surrounding greenery. The **Alexandra Fountain** was **surrounded with four lights**, which caused a beautiful effect "water poured out like bands of glowing silver with every drop made sparkling."

Lights bathed the clock tower of the **Post Office**, the classic architecture of the **Law Courts**, the **Queen Victoria statue**, the **School of Mines tower** and some of the city stores. Crowds gathered in town to see the incredible sight long before the lights were switched on.

Sources: Bendigo Advertiser (Fri 5 Mar 1954). Page2. In 1934 Bendigo Blazed With Light &

Annals of Bendigo, Section 5, 1921 – 1935 by G. V. Lansell & W. J. Stephens, pages 179 - 180

1954 – Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh



Queen Elizabeth II arriving at Leura, NSW on board the Royal Train (1954) Wikimedia

On Friday, the 5th of March 1954 Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II arrived by **Royal Train** and spent a short but eventful 80 minutes in the city. The Queen is the only reigning monarch to have visited Bendigo.

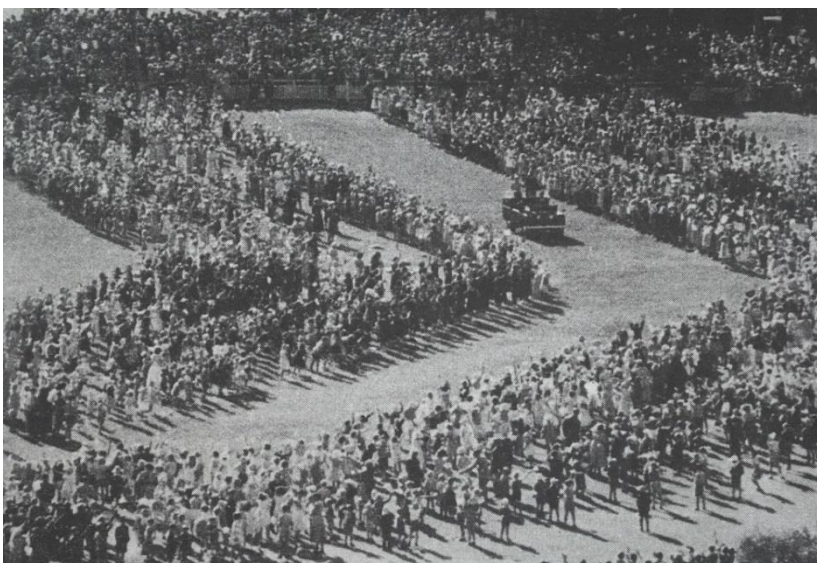
She and Prince Philip were taken by Land Rover observation car through the streets of Bendigo where a “tumultuous greeting followed her”. Many onlookers were so dumbfounded by the sight of the Queen that they forgot to cheer until she was past them. “It was the proudest, supremest moment this city has known.”



“Advertiser photo: Another wave for the cheering children as the Queen's and the Duke Land Rover passes among them at the Upper Reserve.”

When the Royal visitors reached the Upper Reserve there were 9000 children assembled to greet them with flag waving and loud cheers.

A Legacy girl, Jean Fraser, presented a bouquet of **water-lilies** to the Queen. Her Royal Highness was also presented with a **small casket of fiddle back Blackwood lined with royal blue satin** and containing two specimens of Bendigo gold.



The Queen and Prince Philip acknowledge the cheers of assembled school-children at the Upper Reserve (1954) Annals of Bendigo Volume 7 1951 - 1970

On the Queen’s drive back to the railway station the spectators along **Williamson St** and **Pall Mall** were quiet, only cheering after the royal car went past. When a reporter asked a young girl why she didn’t cheer, she replied “I just couldn’t”.

When the Queen arrived back at the **railway station** spectators finally snapped out of their reverie, running down through the **goods sheds** in order to have a final glimpse of the Royal couple waving goodbye at the platform of the observation car.

The Upper Reserve was formally renamed the Queen Elizabeth Oval after her visit.



Tramways 21 illuminated for Coronation (1937)
Courtesy of Bendigo Heritage Attractions

The brightest decoration around Bendigo for the Royal occasion was a tram with hundreds of red, white and blue lights on it! Every night for the week before the Queen arrived, the beautiful tram illuminated the streets of Bendigo with a “full house” of children in every trip.

The edition of the Bendigo Advertiser the week before the Queen’s visit was filled with ads from local businesses extending their welcome to the Queen and Prince Philip.



Ad in The Bendigo Advertiser from The Beehive welcoming the royals



Flinders St lit up with gas lights and crown for Queen's visit in 1954

Experience the time with this video of the Queen in Melbourne from 1954:

“Melbourne Greets Queen” Pathe News Clip (1954)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3V062bPAag>

Sources: Bendigo Advertiser (Sat 6 Mar 1954). Pages 1 & 2. A Dream Comes True, Loyal Crowds Hail the Queen & Bendigo Advertiser (Fri 5 Mar 1954). Pages 1 & 2. Bendigo Welcomes The Queen, In 1934 Bendigo Blazed With Light & Annals of Bendigo Volume 7, 1951 – 1970 by Frank Cusack, Cambridge Press, Bendigo (page 45)

1974 – Prince Charles, Prince of Wales

In October of 1974 a then single Prince Charles visited Bendigo. Receiving a warm welcome from the Mayor and gathered crowds on the steps of the **City Offices**, Charles said “It’s nice to see that we have managed to empty some of the pubs.”

Inside the civic offices he signed the Bendigo visitors book “Charles P.” then then went through to find signatures of other royal visitors.

The Prince was then escorted to the **Civic Centre** which was decorated with “long planter boxes filled with flowering orchids... a boat-shaped arrangement of carnations, roses, gladioli and Blue Ribbon Loops... in the ‘Royal’ colors of red, white and blue... white damask-clad [tables] centred with low bowls of vivid ranunculi in the patriotic colors... a ‘white swan of Avon’ filled with the ranunculi”



Prince Charles’s visit (1974) From Dennis O’Hoy’s private collection



Charles driving Tram with Learner Plate (1974) From Dennis O’Hoy’s private collection

For lunch: “a whole salmon ‘swam’ in a sea of aspic, complete turkey and leg hams were attractively decorated... a large seafood platter, arranged around the whole shells of lobsters, added color... the choice of chicken, roast pork and a splendid variety of salads. This was followed by chunky fruit salads, watermelon cubes set in carved melon baskets and Australia’s best-known sweet – light as air pavlovas topped with strawberries or passionfruit. Red and white wines were served during the meal.”



Prince Charles at the Joss House (1974) Courtesy of Bendigo Heritage Attractions

From lunch the Prince was taken to tour the **Central Deborah gold mine**, before he tried his hand at piloting **Birney tram no. 30** from the **Fountain** to the **Joss House**. According to legend, the Prince of Wales accidentally stalled the tram and uttered a surprised expletive.

Charles was then taken to the Bendigo Show, where he thoroughly enjoyed a grand parade and the horse events. **The Showgrounds** was renamed the Prince of Wales Showgrounds to commemorate his visit.

Sources: Bendigo Advertiser (Mon 28 Oct 1974). Pages 1-6. Prince Got Great Welcome To The City Bendigo Tramways Collections

1983 – Prince Charles and Princess Diana



Prince Charles and Princess Diana on the balcony of the Shamrock Hotel (1983) Unknown origin

A roaring mass of fans lined the Mall to see Prince and Princess, who were taken to the balcony of the Hotel Shamrock where they were entertained with a royal procession including a special performance from Sun Loong where the dragon performed nine royal ceremonial bows. A letter to the Chinese Association from the royals stated it "was as colourful as it was magnificent".

There were speeches, flags and excitement galore for tens of thousands of Bendigonians and visitors, many of whom got to meet and talk with the royal pair.

Source: Bendigo Advertiser (Fri 13 Apr 1983). Pages 1 & 2. Charles & Di – welcome

To see Prince Charles and Diana's visit to Bendigo check out this video "Prince and Princess of Wales Bendigo Easter Parade" (1983):

<http://bendigoeasterfairsociety.org.au/videos/prince-and-princess-of-wales-bendigo-easter-parade-1983/>

In 1983 all eyes were on the royal couple Charles and Diana, "one of the great romances of the century". There was a fever around the royal visit, with the celebrity of Princess Di, who was considered a breath of fresh air for the Royal family.

The Royal pair touched down by plane to the Bendigo Airport where they were greeted by crowds waving Australian flags, before being taken by royal Rolls Royce to Pall Mall. A band played "God Save the Queen" and Prince Charles gave a speech saying:

"Mr Mayor, ladies and gentlemen, while my wife and I were walking through the shopping mall just now we discovered that many of you had been waiting here since 10 or 11 o'clock this morning. And we're both enormously touched that you should have even considered doing so, particularly on a cold, and very blustery day. *But not quite as cold as Ballarat, where we've just come from.*" This remark elicited cheers from the crowd.



Front page of Bendigo Advertiser: Friday 13 April 1983