The Passing of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh

09 April 2021

We were deeply saddened by today’s announcement of the passing of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh at the age of 99.

Prince Philip is remembered by Canadians as loyal and devoted - a war hero, and a man of great service to others. He was Queen Elizabeth’s husband for 73 years. Prince Philip maintained a special relationship with Canada’s Armed Forces as he served as Colonel-in-Chief of six Canadian units, Honorary General of the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Air Force, and Honorary Admiral of the Royal Canadian Navy. Prince Philip was the Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Royal Canadian Air Cadets.

In 1956 Prince Philip founded The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, a youth self-development awards programme, in the United Kingdom. Today, the programme is offered in 144 countries. In Canada, the first Duke of Edinburgh Award Ceremony was held in 1964 and since that time there have been more than 500,000 Canadian recipients – including some of our very own 608 Cadets.

On a more personal note, Prince Philip held special significance to all Cadets and Staff of 608 Air Cadet Squadron in Belleville, Ontario. Our identity as a unit is inextricably linked to him. Although the history of Air Cadets in Belleville dates back to WWII, it wasn’t until 1973 that 608 received its official appellation. It was at that time that our sponsor, Army, Navy, and Air Force Veterans in Canada, Duke of Edinburgh, Unit 201, petitioned HRH Prince Philip for permission to use the Duke of Edinburgh appellation as part of our squadron name. The Prince granted permission. And so, it has been since that time, 608 Duke of Edinburgh Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron. Our squadron crest bears the Duke of Edinburgh emblem and it has been a source of pride and identity for almost 50 years.

