

The Queen Mother, Princess Margaret, Prince Charles and Princess Anne were first of the Royal Family to arrive at the Horse Guards Parade for this summer's ceremony of Trooping the Colour. And a bright and golden day it was for her official birthday, as Queen Elizabeth left the Palace. In her hat, Her Majesty wore the white plume of the Grenadiers, whose tercentenary is celebrated this year. The Queen was mounted, ~~on~~ as usual, on the police horse, Winston. /////

Now --- watched by her family at the window --- the Queen carried out the inspection. On parade were Grenadiers, Coldstream and Scots Guards and Household Cavalry. /////

Inspection completed, the massed bands of the Guards marched and countermarched. /////

The Duke of Edinburgh, who wore the uniform of Colonel of the Welsh Guards, watched beside the Queen as the Colour was handed over to the Ensign for the Trooping Ceremony. /////

This year the Escort to the Colour was provided by the Grenadiers' Guards' 3rd Battalion. /////

Now --- the March Past in slow time. /////

Then --- in quick time. And here there were anxious moments for the Ensign; for the Colour he carried was caught by the wind and impaled on a bayonet in the escort; fortunately it was blown free again later without drama. /////

Now came the Trot Past of the Household Cavalry --- Life Guards and Royal Horse Guards. /////

The ceremony over, the Queen Mother returned to the Palace; and from the Parade Ground, Queen Elizabeth rode at the head of her Guards along the Majestic Mall. /////

To end a morning of traditional ~~xxxxx~~ pageantry on a modern note, ~~the~~ Royal Air Force planes flew over Buckingham Palace in a royal salute. /////