



OFFICIAL REPORT  
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

# Meeting of the Parliament (Hybrid)

Tuesday 20 September 2022

Session 6



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

Information on the Scottish Parliament's copyright policy can be found on the website - [www.parliament.scot](http://www.parliament.scot) or by contacting Public Information on 0131 348 5000

---

**Tuesday 20 September 2022**

**CONTENTS**

	<b>Col.</b>
<b>TIME FOR REFLECTION</b> .....	1
<b>OATH</b> .....	3
<b>TRIBUTES TO HER LATE MAJESTY THE QUEEN</b> .....	4
The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery (John Swinney).....	4
Jeremy Balfour (Lothian) (Con) .....	5
Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab).....	6
Sharon Dowey (South Scotland) (Con) .....	7
Fergus Ewing (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP) .....	8
Paul O’Kane (West Scotland) (Lab) .....	9
Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con).....	10
The Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (Angus Robertson) .....	12
Sue Webber (Lothian) (Con) .....	13
Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab) .....	14
Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con) .....	15
Willie Rennie (North East Fife) (LD) .....	17
Audrey Nicoll (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP) .....	18
Roz McCall (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con).....	19
Jackson Carlaw (Eastwood) (Con).....	20
Martin Whitfield (South Scotland) (Lab) .....	21
Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con) .....	23
The Minister for Just Transition, Employment and Fair Work (Richard Lochhead) .....	23
Alexander Burnett (Aberdeenshire West) (Con).....	25
Foyso! Choudhury (Lothian) (Lab).....	26
Pam Gosal (West Scotland) (Con) .....	27
Kaukab Stewart (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP) .....	28
Sandesh Gulhane (Glasgow) (Con) .....	29
Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Lab).....	30
Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Con).....	31
The Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine (Neil Gray) .....	32
Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Con) .....	34
Douglas Lumsden (North East Scotland) (Con) .....	34
Michael Marra (North East Scotland) (Lab).....	36
Russell Findlay (West Scotland) (Con).....	37
Karen Adam (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP) .....	38
Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Con) .....	39
Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab).....	40
Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Con) .....	41
Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP) .....	43
Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con).....	44
Paul Sweeney (Glasgow) (Lab).....	45
Finlay Carson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con) .....	46
Elena Whitham (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP).....	48
Craig Hoy (South Scotland) (Con).....	49
Maurice Golden (North East Scotland) (Con).....	50
Siobhian Brown (Ayr) (SNP).....	51
Jamie Halcro Johnston (Highlands and Islands) (Con).....	53
<b>PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU MOTION</b> .....	55
<i>Motion moved—[George Adam]—and agreed to.</i>	
<b>DECISION TIME</b> .....	57

---



# Scottish Parliament

*Tuesday 20 September 2022*

*[The Presiding Officer opened the meeting at 10:00]*

## Time for Reflection

### **The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone):**

The first item of business is time for reflection, and our time for reflection leader today is the Rev Neil Gardner, who is the minister of Canongate kirk.

**The Rev Neil Gardner (Minister, Canongate Kirk):** This ancient parish in which our respective places of work—yours and mine—are set traces its origins to the 12th century and the legendary encounter between King David I and an angry stag, in the forest that once stood where the wide open plains of Holyrood park now extend, just beyond the palace.

Just at the point when the stag was ready to attack King David, it is said that he had a vision of the cross of Jesus amongst the stag's sharp antlers and that the stag suddenly withdrew to the forest and left the King alone. As a result, and as a sign of his thankfulness, David vowed that he would build an abbey as close to the spot as possible, and so the story of the abbey of the holy rood—in old language, holy cross—began to take shape all those centuries ago.

To this day, the cross in the antlers is the striking emblem of Canongate kirk, but I have often wondered why the King's immediate reaction was to build an abbey in the first place and, indeed, why he went on to establish the great Borders abbeys of Dryburgh, Jedburgh, Kelso and Melrose, too.

I cannot help feeling that the answer must lie somewhere in his upbringing and in the influence and example that he found in his mother, Queen Margaret, in whose life the church played an important part. She was renowned for her capacity to express her Christian faith in practical ways—tending to the sick, feeding the hungry and showing special concern to the poorest and neediest of her people. Something of that instinct and influence must surely have passed from mother to son, from Queen to King.

As it was in those days, so it is in these days, for our late Queen was not just defender of the faith but a demonstrator of it in the way in which she tried to lead her life. By her own confession, she strove always to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, not just in the public sense of lifelong duty and service for which she was rightly renowned, but in the small acts of kindness and

thoughtfulness that characterised Her late Majesty's private dealings with people of every rank and station. All those centuries later, hers too is an influence and example that now passes from mother to son, from Queen to King.

God save the King.

**The Presiding Officer:** Thank you, Rev Gardner.

## Oath

10:04

**The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone):** The next item of business is the taking of an oath by our new member. I invite Roz McCall to take the oath.

**Roz McCall (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** I, Rosalind McCall, do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King Charles, his heirs and successors, according to law, so help me God. [*Applause.*]

## Tributes to Her Late Majesty the Queen

**The Presiding Officer (Alison Johnstone):** The next item of business is tributes to Her late Majesty the Queen. I would be grateful if members who wish to contribute were to press their request-to-speak buttons now.

10:07

**The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery (John Swinney):** I begin by extending a warm welcome to Roz McCall to Parliament today.

It is a great privilege to contribute to the debate and to recognise the unrivalled record of service by Her Majesty the Queen and her commitment to devoting her life to the service of her people. In fulfilling that commitment, Her Majesty visited communities the length and breadth of Scotland, the United Kingdom and many countries across the Commonwealth and the globe. On some of her visits, she brought solace and comfort to communities that were hurting; in most cases, she brought much joy. Indeed, on one of her visits to the city of Perth in my constituency, she brought very good news.

During her diamond jubilee in 2012, the Queen granted city status to the city of Perth. The city and royal burgh of Perth was the capital of Scotland from the 9th century until 1437, but city status was summarily removed on local government reorganisation in 1975. The restoration of city status was the culmination of a local campaign that was expertly led by my dear friend and former provost of Perth and Kinross, Dr John Hulbert. The awarding of city status took place on a beautiful day in July 2012 on the banks of the River Tay, when the Queen was presented with the keys to the city and the Duke of Edinburgh was awarded the freedom of the city of Perth. It seemed a pretty fair exchange for the great honour that had been bestowed on Perth.

That morning, I had been on the radio dealing with the prospect of job losses at the Hall's of Broxburn sausage factory. When I was introduced to the Queen, I thought that she might ask me something about local matters of interest in Perthshire. She rather wrong-footed me, however, by expressing her concerns about the possible loss of jobs at Hall's of Broxburn, and she wished me well in my efforts to avoid that happening. I never knew whether that was a product of impeccable briefing by royal staff or the reputed keen interest of the Queen in following the broadcast media, and now I shall never know the answer to that question of intrigue.

Although Her Majesty the Queen enjoyed a very long life, her death at Balmoral castle stunned us all. It also meant that all of the arrangements that had been carefully planned over many years to deal with such a situation were put into place. It has been widely recognised that, from the moment that Her Majesty's cortege left the gates of Balmoral castle to the moment that she left Scotland for the last time, our country paid due, respectful and appropriate tribute to Her Majesty and her deep association with Scotland. I place on record my deepest thanks to all the public servants in Scotland across many organisations and partners who worked with care, precision and commitment to ensure that all of that could be achieved.

Her Majesty the Queen clearly loved Scotland and, in the days after her death, the people of Scotland demonstrated that they reciprocated that love for the Queen.

10:10

**Jeremy Balfour (Lothian) (Con):** It is my honour to speak in this debate on behalf of my constituents in Lothian and myself. Her Majesty was no stranger to Edinburgh and her palace is our neighbour.

There have been many words spoken about Her late Majesty over the past days that show how much of an impact she had on the lives of the people of this nation. The profound sense of loss that has been felt around our islands, as well as further afield, has been intense, and I am sure that her life will be remembered by many generations to come.

There are many aspects of the late Queen's life that I could pay tribute to. In the short time that I have, I will talk briefly about her faith. Throughout her reign, Queen Elizabeth II was not forthcoming with her views and opinions on the political and cultural issues of the day. She was a professional, ensuring that, as head of state, she remained politically neutral. We knew nothing about her economic or social beliefs.

However, the one area of her life on which she chose to let the public in was her personal and abiding faith in Jesus, which was a constant theme in her Christmas addresses. It was the base on which her life was built and the measure against which she weighed all things. In her Christmas address in 2000, she said:

"To many of us our beliefs are of fundamental importance. For me the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to lead my life. I, like so many of you, have drawn great comfort in difficult times from Christ's words and example."

Queen Elizabeth II leaves behind a legacy of faith in Jesus. She exemplified the requirements, described in the book of Micah, of doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with her God. She was not perfect—none of us is—but she was an example of striving for godly virtue. I am certain that she has now swapped her earthly crown for another and has heard the words, "Welcome home, good and faithful servant."

I pray that King Charles knows the same love and comfort of Jesus as his mother.

We thank God for the Queen. God save the King.

10:13

**Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab):** It is perhaps difficult at the end of this 10-day period of national mourning to find new or fresh things to say, except to express that I am surprised by the deep sense of loss and reflection that I have had personally. Indeed, my teenage self would be almost horrified by it. As a teenage political geek, I spent much time thinking about constitution and reform, but not much time thinking about monarchy. If someone asked me about the royal family, I would instead refer them to my dear, departed aunt Mary, who was both a corgi breeder and the owner of probably the best collection of commemorative china in Edinburgh. I am not sure whether her corgis were directly related to those of the Queen or whether that was just heavily implied.

I think that that personal reaction has been shared across the nation—and across nations—because the Queen's was a remarkable life. For all of us who aspire to public service, she stands as a shining example.

Although the past few days have been an example of the state ceremony that always comes with a sense of shared experience and identity, what has been remarkable is how that has been expressed. There were cheers and applause as the Queen's coffin passed the crowds. I wondered at first whether that was an appropriate reaction, but it absolutely was. Although people were mourning, they were also giving thanks to a remarkable person who lived a remarkable life and for the job that she did.

Above all else, as has been said by John Swinney and Jeremy Balfour, hers was a job that she did for others. It was a job that she did not apply for or ask to do, but was a job that she knew that she needed to do on behalf of us all. The selfless sense of duty with which she performed for 70 years was truly remarkable—many people have reflected on that. That she managed to do that job for all those years without expressing her

personal opinions but simply reflecting those of the nation is her remarkable and outstanding legacy.

Above all else are the values and virtues that she embodied. She put others first. Her job was indistinguishable from her family life, which is a difficult balance. Although we are not all monarchs, we are all family members and friends. I think that we are truly giving thanks because of a sense that she put others first. She put our interests first and stands as an example of what we should do in putting others first.

On reflection, I would tell my teenage self that, although structures and institutions matter, it is our values and deeds and what we do that matter above all else. As monarchs or ministers, as shop workers or teachers, as parents, neighbours or friends, that is the outstanding example and legacy we have from Her Majesty the Queen.

God rest her soul and God save the King.

10:17

**Sharon Dowey (South Scotland) (Con):** Her Majesty the Queen has been an inspiration to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth for 70 years. No monarch in modern history has had such an impact on either their nation or the world. We owe her a debt for her leadership, her calm confidence in times of trouble and her unique ability to unite our nation and lift our spirits.

In the broadcast that she made on her 21st birthday, Her Majesty pledged:

“my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service”.

Rarely has such a promise been so well kept.

She had a sense of duty to which many of us can only aspire. Her Majesty pursued her duties with tireless dedication, diligently spending many hours reading the contents of the red boxes with which she was presented every day of her working life. She took an active approach to government, never letting anything slip by her, while always remaining politically neutral.

We cannot forget that that dedication to duty came at a personal cost, with months spent away from her children while she was on Commonwealth tours. That was one reason why she treasured her time at Balmoral so much: she could spend time with her family.

In the course of the Queen's reign, the Commonwealth developed from being a group of only seven nations to having 56 member states, representing more than a third of the world's population. Fifteen Prime Ministers, the first being Winston Churchill, served under her. All left Buckingham palace and Balmoral filled with admiration for her kindness, intelligence, wisdom

and wit, as did countless presidents, ambassadors, princes and leaders from all faiths.

I had the pleasure of being present when Her Majesty opened this session of Parliament last year. Even at the age of 95, her charm and intellect were undiminished, despite the loss of her dearly beloved husband Philip. To the very end, she continued her relentless schedule of public engagements and constitutional duties, adapting to the times as she had always done.

In the darkest days of the pandemic, she provided leadership and was a beacon of hope to millions. She led us through war, and through the good times and the bad. She has been a constant in our lives and an inspiration to millions. We have shared jubilee milestones along the way—we saw her jump from a helicopter with 007 and have afternoon tea with a very special bear, Paddington, when, finally, we found out what Her Majesty kept in her handbag.

We were so very lucky to have her. Thank you, ma'am. May you rest in peace, now back forever with your beloved Philip. Long live the King.

10:20

**Fergus Ewing (Inverness and Nairn) (SNP):** It is an honour and a privilege to have this opportunity to pay tribute to her late Majesty the Queen. Her long life was one of dedicated service. Over the 70 years of her reign, she performed her duties with both wisdom and diligence. Her commitment to that task, which was made by her upon her accession to the throne, was faithfully delivered over the next seven decades. It was delivered with a selfless devotion that was quite remarkable and, I submit, without precedent either here in Scotland, in the rest of the United Kingdom or possibly throughout the rest of the world over that period.

Whatever views people in Scotland and the UK may have about the monarchy, it is clear that almost everyone held the Queen in great respect and admiration. However, in addition to that respect, those people who had the good fortune to have met and spoken to the Queen also regarded her with affection, and no more so than in the Highlands of Scotland and, indeed, throughout rural Scotland.

Her home in Balmoral was regarded as her happy place and she spent much time there in the last precious years with her late husband. She was regarded by those in Braemar and Ballater, in particular, as a neighbour and a friend. I believe that she had a great rapport with those whose work is in the countryside, whether they be farmers, crofters, ghillies or keepers—the people who care for their livestock, produce our food, steward the land and manage the wildlife. She

understood them all. She also loved the music of the pipes, as her personal pipers have testified in recent days.

My experience as an MSP and when farming minister was that our farmers in Scotland are rarely given to overt displays of emotion or sentiment. Not for them the showing of affection in public—or maybe that was just their reaction to me when I was farming minister. At any rate, however, their respect and love for their Queen was clearly demonstrated in the now-famous tractor tribute by the local north-east farmers—a display that was captured so well in the aerial photographs that I am sure were seen throughout the world. Our farmers were devoted to her and they admired and loved her.

I was privileged to meet King Charles III in the Castle of Mey in Caithness when he was Prince of Wales, and I was left with no doubt that he has inherited his mother's love of Scotland and of the people of Scotland. Over the past sad days since his late mother's death, he has shown his own many qualities and his commitments—especially, perhaps, to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland—and I believe that he now carries with him a bank of good will and a feeling of confidence among the people that he will reign in as steadfast and selfless a manner as the Queen.

Her Majesty provided us with stability and comfort at difficult times. Her example to all of us, in public service of 70 years of selfless service to others, is, to me and many others, quite humbling. Queen Elizabeth was indeed the Queen of Scots, and King Charles III will be the King of Scots. It is with both humility and respect that I offer these brief words of tribute to her late Majesty and say in conclusion, God Save the King.

10:24

**Paul O’Kane (West Scotland) (Lab):** In the past few days, it has been hard not to be moved by the words written in the book of Ecclesiastes:

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted ...  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance”.

Even if we do not have faith, the poetry of that speaks to the collective experience of the past days, as people across our communities have sought to respond to the death of the longest-serving monarch in our nation's history, and as a family has mourned a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Across West Scotland, constituents have cried and laughed as they shared their memories of the Queen and her many visits in the cause of the

service to which she pledged herself at such a young age, and which she carried out faithfully until just 11 days ago. Whether she was launching ships on the Clyde at Port Glasgow, opening the Tannahill community centre in Paisley or visiting factories in Irvine, people remember where they were, each word of the conversation that they had and, of course, how they felt when they met her in their own towns and villages.

The Queen was the great constant in our ever-changing world, giving a sense of certainty in a world that is all too often uncertain, and enduring with people and places in good times and bad. I was struck, when listening to the service of thanksgiving from Belfast cathedral last week, when the Archbishop of Armagh, John McDowell, said that there were two people whose deaths we could never imagine: our own and the Queen's. That blend of constancy and touching of so many lives is why her loss has been so keenly felt, even by people who have no connection to, or belief in, a constitutional monarchy. There has been a real sense of an era ending.

In that Belfast service, we were also able to reflect on the Queen's commitment to peace and reconciliation. Her leadership in letting go of the past, no matter how painful, and in acknowledging difference and using symbols and language as a way of showing respect and understanding, have helped to make the unthinkable become reality. As someone who shares British and Irish citizenship, I thank her for that. We all still have much to learn about the power of rooting ourselves in forgiveness, patience and reconciliation.

Yesterday, many people felt as though a door closed. Who could help but feel that sense of finality, as the haunting pipes faded beyond the doors of the abbey or St George's chapel? Like King Solomon in Ecclesiastes, we know that there is a season and a time for everything.

Inspired by the Queen's sense of duty, her service to communities such as those in West Scotland, and her commitment to reconciliation, let us also sow seeds of good in our time.

Requiescat in pace.

10:27

**Murdo Fraser (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** My mother, who died last year, always kept on the mantelpiece in the living room the card that she and my father had received from Buckingham palace to mark their diamond wedding anniversary. My mother, who was very ill towards the end of her life and suffered from severe dementia, failed to recognise many faces, but the one face that she continued to recognise was that of Her Majesty the Queen, which appeared on the card from the palace. That is a small indication of

the huge impact that our longest-serving monarch had on people's lives. Her face had become recognisable not only to people in the United Kingdom but to people around the world.

My mother never had the opportunity to meet the Queen. I am sure that she would have loved to have done so and that, if they had met, they would have found that they had much in common, because they both grew up in the generation that suffered the privations of wartime when they were young.

I had the pleasure of meeting the Queen some years ago at a reception at Holyrood palace. I am sure that some other members who are present will also remember that occasion. We were all formally introduced to the Queen as we arrived and then stood around in groups in the great gallery making small talk, as people tend to do on such occasions. Suddenly, I realised that a small figure had appeared beside me. I looked down and found that it was the Queen. She had arrived with absolutely no fanfare or announcement; she had just slipped up on us.

At that point, there was an awkward silence, because nobody knew what to say. What do you say to the Queen? I had read somewhere that there was some royal protocol that we are, when in the presence of royalty, meant to wait for them to speak first, so we were all terrified to say something. I remembered that the Queen had been at the Royal Highland Show, and because I could not stand the silence any more, I piped up and asked her whether she had enjoyed her visit to it. Immediately, her face lit up, and she started to speak very animatedly about her trip to the show and all the cows that she had seen.

The extent of my knowledge of cows is of the fact that they have four legs and a tail, so it would have been a very short conversation, but, fortunately, in the group was my former colleague, John Scott—who, of course, knows a lot about cows. He was very able to join the conversation with the Queen and to discuss all the cows that she had witnessed, so the conversation proceeded apace.

However, I am still haunted by the fact that I broke royal protocol by initiating that conversation. The ability that the Queen displayed to put people at ease, which was so evident on that occasion, made her so suited to the role that she carried out so successfully over so many years.

The other significant element of the Queen's life was, as Jeremy Balfour reminded us, her deep and sincere Christian faith, which she was never ashamed to proclaim. Although she was a monarch and the symbolic head of the nation, she regarded herself as the servant queen: a servant to her Lord, Jesus Christ, and to her people.

For 70 years, we sang "God Save The Queen", but we need do that no more, because the Queen has been saved. As the Archbishop of Canterbury reminded us yesterday in his sermon in Westminster abbey, for the Christian, "death is the door to glory."

Instead, our prayers today are for King Charles, that he might follow her glorious example. Today we say, "God save the King," in the hope and expectation that he will do as his mother did: that he will be a leader and a servant to his people.

He and we should remember the famous lines of Robert Burns:

"But while we sing 'God save the King,'  
We'll ne'er forget The People!  
But while we sing 'God save the King,'  
We'll ne'er forget The People!"

10:32

**The Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (Angus Robertson):** It is an honour to take part in this tribute, which is quite different in circumstances from the last that I was involved in for Queen Elizabeth, which was to mark her 90th birthday, in April 2016. With the then Prime Minister and then leader of the UK Labour Party, I co-sponsored, as Westminster leader of the Scottish National Party, a House of Commons motion that marked her remarkable birthday and, at that stage, her long reign.

What I had not figured was that we were then to personally deliver our tributes to Buckingham palace, where the Queen received us. I had made mention in my tribute to the stories—we have heard some of them in the past 10 days—of her having been out and about in places such as Arthur's Seat, Aberdeenshire and elsewhere, unrecognised by the public. My neighbouring party leader in the line-up asked her whether that was actually true. With a twinkle in her eye, she replied, quick as a flash, that it must be.

Not long before her 90th birthday tributes, I was sworn in to the Privy Council by Her Majesty, which was a requirement and an honour, since the SNP had become the third party in the House of Commons in 2015 and I had taken on oversight responsibility for the security agencies. Similar to my previous experience, I had no idea what to expect at that particular ceremony. Clearly, none of the other privy counsellors there did, either.

After the formalities, the Queen turned to me, as the only Scot present, to ask about the Borders railway. Only a few months before then, she had opened the service and had travelled its length with Prince Philip and the First Minister. The Queen regaled everybody at the Privy Council meeting about the journey and the beauty of the

Borders. Incidentally, that was the very day on which she became the longest-reigning British monarch. In more recent years, the Queen became the longest-reigning monarch of a major European state, overtaking the 67 years of Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria and Hungary.

It was a genuine pleasure and an honour to meet Queen Elizabeth at a good number of state events, as it was to meet the now King Charles III.

Little did anybody know that the planning for the circumstances of her death in Scotland would sadly come to pass. Little did I know that I would represent here, in the Scottish Parliament, the heart of Edinburgh, where the first public commemorative event for Queen Elizabeth would take place.

It is nearly 500 years since the last Scottish monarch died in this country and funeral events took place here in the capital. The two monarchs were connected in recent weeks, with the crown of King James V lying on the coffin of Queen Elizabeth in St Giles cathedral. She had lain at rest the night before in the Palace of Holyroodhouse, only yards away from where James V lies buried in Holyrood abbey. Queen Elizabeth will forever be associated with Scotland, given her love for this country and its people—and, indeed, for this Parliament, at the heart of our national life.

I wish King Charles and his family all the best at this sad time, given their personal loss. They will be able to look back at the past week and more and, I hope, gain some comfort from the genuine affection in which Queen Elizabeth was held.

10:35

**Sue Webber (Lothian) (Con):** I am thankful that Parliament has set aside time today to allow us all to pay our respects to our longest-serving monarch. I do not think that anyone could have predicted the depth of emotion when the dreadful news came through that our Queen had died.

I “met” the Queen on several occasions throughout my life. Each occasion was quite different, but each left an indelible impression on me. In 1977, I watched the procession in Edinburgh for the Queen’s silver jubilee. I was young, but I recall seeing both her and the Duke of Edinburgh in the stunning Scottish stagecoach. It left a lasting impression on me. Why would it not? I was a young girl, watching a queen in a lovely coach.

On 5 July 1985, Her Majesty the Queen visited the Scottish Police College at Tulliallan, where my dad was an instructor. My recollection is of watching her plant a tree in the grounds. There are some things that we never forget, no matter how

small. After planting the tree, she went off to the skid pan area. I have no recollection, however, whether she was driving.

On 4 July 2017, at the Holyrood garden party, the Queen wore a bold floral dress in pink hues. It was absolutely stunning—breathtaking.

In September 2017, when the Queen was officially opening a roof garden at Aberdeen royal infirmary, she passed me and we waved. It was just me there, standing in the rain as the Queen entered Foresterhill.

In June 2019, as a City of Edinburgh councillor, I had the honour to be presented to Her Majesty at the ceremony of the keys at the palace of Holyroodhouse—a ceremony that the world is far more familiar with now, as it was beamed around the world last week when King Charles III accepted the same historic keys.

Last week, I was privileged to see Her Majesty return to Edinburgh one last time, when the city hosted the Queen for three days after her death. My constituents, my friends and family, and people from across Scotland showed our city in the very best light and paid the warmest tribute possible to the Queen.

On Friday, I attended a poignant memorial service at the Kirk of Calder in West Lothian.

It is testament to Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II’s dedication and commitment to our country during her 70-year reign that so many of us have our own memories and recollections—no matter how small—of meeting her. She served her country selflessly and I am humbled to pay tribute to her remarkable reign today.

Our new king, King Charles III, addressed Parliament last Monday, and it was a privilege to be present for that. Long live our noble King.

10:38

**Pauline McNeill (Glasgow) (Lab):** Today, we mark the life of that extraordinary woman, Queen Elizabeth II, who, born to privilege and status, was true to her word that she would serve the British public for the rest of her life. In doing so, she touched the lives of so many people. The knowledge that she gained from her audiences with world leaders and prime ministers gave her an astounding understanding of what was important in political and public life. The Queen visited Grenfell tower before any politician did. After 9/11, when the Muslim community felt under attack, she visited Muslim leaders in Bradford.

She had a strong relationship with this Parliament, which continued until her death. During the first Land Reform (Scotland) Bill, for which I chaired the lead committee, I recall that a

very animated Dennis Canavan had been extremely anxious about continuing access to Balmoral. The Queen wrote to the committee at the time and was clear that access to walkers and ramblers would remain on the Balmoral estate. There was no one more delighted than Dennis Canavan when he received the Queen's approval for his amendment at stage 2.

During the period of national mourning I learned more about Queen Elizabeth—as I think we all did—and I was impressed by stories of her feisty and forward-thinking behaviour. As Princess Elizabeth, she joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1945, becoming the first female member of the royal family to join the armed services as a full-time active member. In fact, she remains the only female member of the royal family to have joined the military. During her time there, the princess learned to drive and to maintain military vehicles. Her first military appointment was as colonel-in-chief to the Balaklava company, fifth battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland. The then Princess Elizabeth of York was appointed on her 21st birthday.

Perhaps due to her training in maintaining vehicles, the Queen was a car enthusiast. Here is the story that I liked most about that. In 2003, when Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia—later King Abdullah—visited Balmoral, the Queen offered him a tour of the castle. Apparently, when the Queen's Land Rover was brought round, the Crown Prince got into the front passenger seat and, to his surprise, the Queen climbed into the driver's seat and drove off. Of course, as we all know from other debates, women were not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia at that time, and that is still a thorny issue today. Crown Prince Abdullah was not used to being driven by a woman—that is for sure. His nervousness only increased as the Queen accelerated the Land Rover along the narrow Scottish estate roads—talking all the time, as she did. Through an interpreter, the Crown Prince begged the Queen to slow down and concentrate on the road. She was indeed feisty.

Long may the Queen be remembered for her incredible kindness to children, the sick and people who were in need. May we all apply her approach to our own lives.

It has been a privilege to make these remarks.

10:41

**Stephen Kerr (Central Scotland) (Con):** We all have our own memories of our late Queen. I first saw her when I was in first year at Forfar academy. I played the bagpipes and was part of the Forfar burgh pipe band, which, every year,

was invited to play at the Braemar gathering. The massed pipes and drums played the Queen into the arena. All the extra polishing of uniform buckles, buttons and badges was for her. Something told my boyish self that she was worth it, because she was my Queen.

In 1977, I was part of the Tayside schools choir, which sang for the Queen when she visited Dundee on her silver jubilee tour. We sang a chorus from Borodin's "Prince Igor" and the Old Hundredth psalm, "All People That on Earth Do Dwell", but it was singing "God Save the Queen" in front of her that touched my heart, because she was my Queen.

Queen Elizabeth was a Christian woman who saw her queenship as a sacred calling. She dedicated her life to serving God and serving people. Her Christmas messages—those most personal passages—were her testimony of Jesus as saviour and redeemer. In 2014, she said:

"For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate today, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none."

In 2000, the Queen said:

"For me the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to lead my life. I, like so many of you, have drawn great comfort in difficult times from Christ's words and example."

Yesterday, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said:

"People of loving service are rare in any walk of life. Leaders of loving service are still rarer."

He told how, in 1953,

"the Queen began her Coronation with silent prayer ... at the High Altar"

of Westminster abbey.

The archbishop said:

"Her allegiance to God was given before any person gave allegiance to her. Her service to so many people in this nation, the Commonwealth and the world had its foundation in her following Christ—God himself—who said that he 'came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many'."

We are all witnesses to Her late Majesty's commitment to strive to follow Christ's example of loving service to others—to the service that she gave to the people of Scotland, the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and the wider world. Queen Elizabeth was a true and faithful servant who kept her promise to God. She is Elizabeth the faithful.

We can only try to follow the Queen's example, and follow the role model that she followed: Jesus Christ. In truth, if we seek a way to remember and

honour Elizabeth the faithful, following her example in loving service is the only meaningful honour that is required.

10:46

**Willie Rennie (North East Fife) (LD):** We have heard many fine speeches this morning—there were very touching contributions from Murdo Fraser about his mother, from Fergus Ewing about the Queen’s connection with rural Scotland, and from Pauline McNeill about the Queen’s feistiness, which was very appropriate. However, one thing that I did not think that I would learn this morning was that Stephen Kerr was a choirboy.

I was sorry that I was not here last week—I was observing the Swedish elections. However, that gave me the opportunity to see from afar the impeccable and exceptional organisation for the tributes last weekend. John Swinney was right to pay tribute to all those people who worked so hard to ensure that lasting tribute to and legacy of the Queen. I thank them for their efforts.

For me, the choir and the piper were the two stand-out moments yesterday. The piper sent chills down my spine. The choir was quite extraordinary. Overall, throughout the United Kingdom and Scotland, we should be proud: just as the Queen gave great service to our country, we gave a great and fitting send-off to her.

As I watched the speeches last weekend, I was really inspired by the quality and heartfelt nature of the contributions, both in this chamber and from leaders from across the world. President Macron of France was quite extraordinary and so was Joe Biden. Gosh, I have to say, when King Charles went to Northern Ireland it showed how the world has moved on: both sides of the divide in Northern Ireland came together to show their agony and sensitivity, and to offer their heartfelt condolences to the King. That showed the mark that, in many ways, the Queen—though not alone—left on that part of the United Kingdom. She has left a lasting legacy in that part of the world, for which we should be thankful.

For those who have lost close relatives and have stood in the kirk as the funeral service ends, it is an agonising moment—it is difficult to hold in your emotions when you have lost someone so close. I cannot imagine what the King has felt like: from the very moment that his mother died, for the last hours, days and weeks, he has had to put on a public face; he has shown great professionalism. The turmoil in that man and the rest of the family must be extraordinary. We must think about the service that the King has already shown, just through those simple acts of professionalism, while his heart is whirling with turmoil.

Finally, I thank the hundreds of thousands of people who stood in line, in Edinburgh, down the M90, and all through London, in order to pay tribute to the Queen. It was right that so many people did so.

I also acknowledge those who, just like the Queen would have done, gave a quiet nod or word of appreciation for a contribution made over 70 years. That probably speaks with as much volume as the actions of those who stood in line, because appreciation of the Queen is almost universal, not just in this country but across the world—important and powerful, but understated. God save the King.

10:50

**Audrey Nicoll (Aberdeen South and North Kincardine) (SNP):** Over the past week or 10 days or so, in my constituency of Aberdeen South and North Kincardine, there have been flowers, flags, pictures, notices of closures on shop doors and a kind of quietness—all reflecting the sadness and shock felt on the occasion of the death of Her Majesty the Queen.

Across Scotland and beyond, we have seen a profound but truly fitting outpouring of sorrow, but also a celebration of a life given to others. That sorrow has been felt by many across the age span, and has been reflected in many cultures and communities, all paying tribute to the Queen and her dedication, commitment and unwavering public duty. People from all walks of life have been uniting to share a moment of reflection and sadness as they come to terms with the loss of their Queen.

For many people, the Queen was the only monarch that they have known in their lifetime; she was a steadying figure who led all who loved her through decades of change, conflict and the challenges of life. She was a reassuring constant in the lives of many people, steadying the ship in times of uncertainty.

Like many of us, the Queen experienced pain and loss: bereavement, family break-up, ill health and, of course, Covid. Alongside our sorrow, this is a time to celebrate the contribution that the Queen made to the lives of so many people through her experience and wisdom and, of course, that sense of humour, giving people she met lifelong memories of a joke shared or a conversation remembered.

My personal reflections of the Queen come from undertaking many security duties at her numerous public engagements in the north-east, and from observing her personal routine, including Sunday service at Crathie church on Deeside, which was a familiar but relaxed interlude from public duties for her, spent famong her family and friends. She also

had a willingness to embrace modern life while maintaining that all-important royal tradition.

I will share a final memory: the reflections of an artist who was featured in one of the many royal documentaries that were aired recently on TV and who painted one of the Queen's many portraits. On arrival for the Queen's first sitting, he was patiently waiting when she entered the room and kindly told him to tell her what he wanted her to do. He did so, to which she turned, looked at him quizzically and replied, "You can't make me do that," to which he politely responded, "Well, I'll try anyway." They both smiled, which made me smile, too.

**The Presiding Officer:** I call Roz McCall, to be followed by Jackson Carlaw. This is Ms McCall's first speech in the chamber.

10:53

**Roz McCall (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** Two weeks ago, when I was sat watching television, I could not have imagined that I would be standing here addressing the chamber, and I certainly could not have imagined that my first speech would be to voice my respect for Her Majesty the Queen after she had passed and to thank her for her tireless and selfless devotion to serving her people and this country—so many changes in such a short time.

I was privileged to sit up in the Presiding Officer's gallery last Monday to take part in the moving proceedings and hear the address from King Charles III. On the train back home, I started chatting to a woman who had been in Edinburgh all day to pay her respects. She told me that she felt a strong bond with Her Majesty, that she did not realise how deeply the Queen's passing would affect her, and that she just had to go to Edinburgh. That feeling was felt by many people who made their way here to our capital city. She told me that her father was born in the same year as the Queen, and although he had passed a few years ago, he, like the Queen, loved horse-racing—so much so that he never missed putting a bet on the Queen's horse. She left the train before I could find out whether that was particularly lucrative for him, but that lady hoped that they would be passing betting tips and talking horses in heaven. That is an example—if one were needed—of how familiar and approachable our Queen came across.

As I start in my new role as a member of the Scottish Parliament, I am reminded of the Queen's Christmas broadcast back in 1974, when many of the concerns that people faced were very similar to those of today, with a cost of living rise, extreme weather events, such as flooding, and uncertainty about our future. In that address, the Queen said:

"There are indeed real dangers and there are real fears and we will never overcome them if we turn against each other with angry accusations.

We may hold different points of view but it is in times of stress and difficulty that we most need to remember that we have much more in common than there is dividing us."

Thank you, Your Majesty, for your words of wisdom. I hope to work to your example. Rest in peace, ma'am, and God save the King. [Applause.]

10:55

**Jackson Carlaw (Eastwood) (Con):** It is a pleasure to follow Roz McCall, to welcome her to the chamber and to wish her every success in the years ahead.

As others have said, what is there left to say? What has not been expressed? What has not been said? What has not been demonstrated over the past two weeks? What was not represented in the majesty of yesterday's occasion—not just in the casket with the instruments of state, but in the magnificent floral tribute, which was so vibrant and full of colour, and so redolent of Her Majesty?

I reflected that, when Her Majesty came to the throne in 1952, there were just 2.5 billion people on the planet. Seven years later, when I was born, there were 3 billion people. Now, there are 8 billion people on the planet, and 96 per cent of them have, until now, known no sovereign or head of state in the United Kingdom other than Her Majesty the Queen. She was a point of reference—a point of continuity—for the whole world. I think that that is partly why so many people have been affected and have followed the events of the past week.

For me, it was about her quiet humour. I will give three examples, two of which I know to be true and one of which I hope to be true.

Those who were here in the 2007 to 2011 parliamentary session will recall that, when our late colleague Alex Fergusson, as Presiding Officer, introduced Her Majesty, he referred to the fact that his father had been privileged to deliver a sermon at Crathie kirk. Alex told how his father had written out the whole sermon very carefully and, when he turned over the first page in delivering it, all the other pages tumbled on to the floor in front of him and he was completely lost for words. In her response, Her Majesty said that she remembered his father and that she recalled saying to Prince Philip how commendably brief his sermon had been.

My second example, which I have always treasured, relates to Edward Heath. Many people may have seen this—it was in a documentary to mark the 40th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession. Edward Heath was a man who was

very full of himself—any of us who had dealings with him can testify to that. He was lambasting the American Secretary of State because, in long years out of office, he—Edward Health—had been to Iraq and had negotiated with Saddam Hussein, and he told the American Secretary of State that he really needed to be doing that, too. He was still saying that when the documentary came back to him after cutting away to some other bit. When Her Majesty wandered up to him, he said that he was explaining to the Secretary of State that he needed to get over to Iraq and negotiate, to which she responded, “Yes, but you’re expendable and he isn’t.” I have commended that advice to some of my regional colleagues when they have been a little bit uppity from time to time.

I do not know whether the final example is true, but I hope that it is. When Her Majesty was addressing a family gathering, she went to sit down, only to find that the footman had removed her chair. She tumbled on to the floor, and she and the whole family simply burst into hysterical laughter at the entire event.

That sums up what I think is true—that Her Majesty did not take herself seriously; she took her role seriously, and she brought dignity, duty, service, integrity and faith to that role. I think that, in the moment when she passed, there was a collective anxiety that perhaps those qualities were going to die with her. There was almost a reaching out of the public to embrace those qualities and ensure that they were not lost. Maybe, just for a moment, we all thought that we, too, should think about dignity, duty, service, integrity and faith, but then there was reassurance. Was it in the Earl and Countess of Wessex and their two children, Viscount Severn and Lady Louise Mountbatten-Windsor—the Queen’s youngest son and the Queen’s youngest grandchildren? Was it in the duty and dignity of the Princess Royal? Was it in the calm grace of the Duchess of Rothesay? Was it in the composure of her two children—Prince George and Princess Charlotte—or was it in the example over the past 10 days of the Duke of Rothesay and the King? Suddenly we felt that those qualities were safe. We felt safe, and life goes on.

God bless the Queen. God save the King.

11:00

**Martin Whitfield (South Scotland) (Lab):** I thank you, Presiding Officer, and members for the opportunity to speak on this day. It is, as always, a great pleasure to follow one of Jackson Carlaw’s free-form speeches. I take the opportunity to welcome to the chamber Roz McCall, given the work that I know that she will do in the future.

In the 11 days since the sad passing of Her Majesty the Queen, much has been written about her remarkable life and dedicated reign over the past 70 years. Her loss has been keenly felt by the whole country but most of all by the royal family, who have lost a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. All our hearts go out to her family, and my deepest condolences are with them.

Throughout her reign, the Queen was always a source of reassurance, compassion and unity, linking people and communities locally and at a national level in Scotland, throughout the UK and, indeed, across the Commonwealth. The huge sense of loss and outpouring of grief that is felt by so many millions across the UK and the rest of the world is testament to how well loved she was by so many.

Her Majesty’s great love of Scotland was well known. In my home, East Lothian, we were fortunate to welcome her to the county on a number of occasions over the years. That included her last visit in 2016, to Musselburgh racecourse, which speaks volumes about her personal life. I know from local people who met or saw her during those visits that they will cherish those memories for all time.

Queen Elizabeth had so many admirable qualities as a person and a leader, but for me what shone through above all else was her dedication to public service and to the nation. During her 70 years on the throne, as the world changed around her, she never faltered in that sense of duty. Her commitment was an inspiration to everyone involved in public service and to the many organisations of which she was patron.

I will spend just a moment likening that same public service to our role in the Parliament as elected politicians. We chose to stand for office, and we fought hard to achieve the right to stand in this Parliament and represent those who sent us here. It would be fitting, given that Her Majesty did not choose her position but still stands as the finest example of someone who dedicated herself to public service, that we remember that, and remember that we are here as public servants and leaders with a responsibility to those outside this place at a time of great trials ahead.

As Her late Majesty said in 1974,

“We may hold different points of view but it is in times of stress and difficulty that we most need to remember that we have much more in common than there is dividing us.”

Whatever challenges we face as a country in the years ahead, we will always be able to draw on the unique example that the Queen has left us. We can be assured that King Charles III will continue in the same vein and serve in the same dedicated manner as his mother. Long live the King.

11:03

**Liz Smith (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** Last week, in his address to the chamber, the King said this:

“Through all the years of her reign, the Queen, like so many generations of our family before her, found in the hills of this land and in the hearts of its people a haven and a home.”—[*Official Report*, 12 September 2022; c 10.]

That message is so much in tune with the wonderful photograph, taken by the Countess of Wessex, that the Queen released just prior to the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh. In it, she and the duke are sitting in the heather at the top of the Coyles of Muick, set against the wonderful backdrop of Lochnagar. Their smiles in that photograph radiate the peace and the happiness that they found in their beloved Scottish countryside: the rocks on which their marriage and their devoted service to our country were founded.

On the occasion of the 2007 opening of the Scottish Parliament, and the subsequent reception in Holyrood palace, I, along with colleagues, had the great privilege of being presented to Her Majesty. It was no more than 30 seconds, but in that time she ascertained my love of climbing Munros and asked whether I had ever climbed Lochnagar. When I told her that I had but had not been able to see much because it was so wet and misty, she said, with that wonderful twinkle in her eye, “Oh dear. We must do very much better next time.”

Her Majesty felt most at home in Balmoral, treasuring the richness of Scotland’s finest landscapes—in the hills, rivers, trees and gardens. Both she and the Duke of Edinburgh, through so many of their charities, believed that young people should be given every opportunity to share in that richness and in the wider understanding of the great outdoors and the environment. It is their inspiration that leads me to believe the same and to strive in this place to make that possible. God save the King.

11:05

**The Minister for Just Transition, Employment and Fair Work (Richard Lochhead):** I am grateful for the opportunity to mark the passing of Her Majesty the Queen and to pay tribute to her today. Like other members, I thank all officials and volunteers in Moray, and those across Scotland, for all their work these past days. I look forward to the service of remembrance at St Giles church in Elgin on Friday.

As someone who was elected to this place in 1999, I have sat, along with colleagues, at every opening session of Parliament listening to the Queen’s wise words and hearing about her love of Scotland. Therefore, it is appropriate that our

Scots Parliament reflects on the reign and long life of the Queen of Scots.

As National Records of Scotland reminds us in its tribute, the Queen was descended from the royal house of Stuart on both sides of her family. I have always found it fascinating to note that, in Westminster abbey, the tomb of England’s Elizabeth I sits opposite the tomb of Mary Queen of Scots. The Queen that we mourn today was a descendant of the latter, not the former.

I cannot claim to have known the Queen personally, having met her on only a couple of occasions. However, I recall her deep knowledge of areas that I represent and her ability to make easy connections. The Queen certainly had strong links to Moray. Both her late husband, Philip, and her sons, including the new King, were educated at Gordonstoun. The Queen last visited Moray in November 2014, along with her late husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, on their 67th wedding anniversary.

Our local paper, the *Northern Scot*, reproduced its coverage of the Queen’s many visits throughout her reign. On 19 August 1961, it was reported that she embarked on a

“120-mile long triumphal tour, through the fishing villages and towns of Banffshire; the fertile Laich of Moray; into the crisp, tangy air of Nairn; over the rugged, barren Dava Moor; the lovely valley of the Findhorn at Glenferness; to picturesque Grantown-on-Spey”.

The article goes on to say:

“Only once did the Queen use an umbrella”.

My constituent Marion Ingram from Hopeman was born six weeks after the Queen in 1926. Last week, she talked of her fond memories of the Queen’s many visits to the area. She said:

“I saw her whole reign and followed her through her entire reign, especially in war time when she went and helped out at the war.”

Many constituents like Marion are grieving because they have lost a much-loved monarch; others are grieving because her passing marks the end of an era and is of historical significance; and others are grieving because the Queen is a much-loved member of a large family and her passing prompts calm reflection following the loss of their own loved ones.

For most of us, for our whole lives, every stamp that we have stuck on an envelope, every coin that we have put in our purse and every banknote that we carry has had the Queen’s face on it. For many reasons, the Queen has been a constant in a fast-changing world. Her legacy as the longest-reigning monarch is a long life of duty and service, and her passing changes the world around us.

As we mark the Queen's passing, I am reminded of what Mary, who was one of her ancestors and another Queen of Scots, said:

"In my end is my beginning."

On behalf of my constituents, I say: rest in peace.

11:09

**Alexander Burnett (Aberdeenshire West) (Con):** Presiding Officer, "The dog bit me above the eye and the Queen came to tea," is probably not the holiday diary that my primary school teacher had expected. That was one of my earliest encounters with the Queen, which arose mainly through Her Majesty's great friendship of more than 80 years with my late grandmother. That was the first of many meetings that I was so honoured to enjoy and will forever treasure.

Young or old, Her Majesty touched many lives, including that of Mary Ingham in Huntly, who turned 100 a fortnight ago. Mary proudly received one of the last of those famous telegrams from the Queen. I know that, as I have, colleagues have been proudly shown such telegrams by constituents.

As Balmoral is in my constituency, I learned at first hand about Her Majesty's knowledge of detail. After being selected to stand for the Aberdeenshire West seat, and being by chance at a birthday celebration, I cheekily inquired whether Her Majesty wished to raise any local issues. However, my attempt at humour quickly backfired, as I received an extremely detailed critique of how a planning application for a cottage had fallen foul of local guidelines. Never have the words, "I'm afraid that's a council matter, ma'am," been so well used as I retreated.

Balmoral, royal Deeside and Aberdeenshire were Her Majesty's retreat. The procession eight days ago was a fitting tribute to her love of the area and how she championed the countryside. From the gamekeepers and ghillies who first carried her coffin to the farmers who turned out in their tractors, her love for all things rural was as clear as the water of the Gelder Burn.

The Queen was a firm supporter of rural workers and was generous in her support of the Gamekeepers Welfare Trust, which looks after country workers and supports those with mental health problems. With her unparalleled and unwavering selfless duty came a passion for the countryside and conservation.

The Queen was a great supporter of agriculture and was the patron of many organisations, including the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, the Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution, the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers, the National Federation of

Young Farmers Clubs, the Highland Cattle Society and, even more locally, the Royal Horticultural Society of Aberdeen, the Ballater Royal Horticultural Society, the Braemar Royal Highland Society and the Royal Northern Agricultural Society.

It was therefore fitting that the Deeside farming community came together at Crathes to show its respects with a guard of honour. Many of those patronages have been or will be passed on to other members of the royal family, but the greatest baton passes to the Queen's son, whose love of the countryside and of Scotland is already clear.

Wife, mother, grandmother, Queen—thank you, ma'am, for a lifetime of service. Long live the King.

11:11

**Foysoyl Choudhury (Lothian) (Lab):** First, I express my condolences to the royal family on the loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. She will be greatly missed.

I had the honour of meeting the Queen when I was a kid, when my sister and my cousin presented flowers to Her Majesty. She made us feel at ease. Such fond emotions resurfaced when I met the Queen again at a royal garden party with my wife and, after that, as a politician. I am very grateful for those memories.

Today, we celebrate not only the Queen's legacy in this country but her role in bringing our family of nations and their people ever closer together in friendship and peace. After reflecting over the past week on the loss of Her Majesty, I will focus particularly on her legacy of the Commonwealth.

I was an infant when the founding father of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, took a newly independent Bangladesh into the Commonwealth of Nations. It was the first international organisation that Bangladesh joined, such was the offer of partnership that it presented.

Queen Elizabeth oversaw the building of that partnership. In 1953, she defined the Commonwealth as

"an entirely new conception, built on ... qualities of friendship, loyalty and the desire for freedom and peace."

Her Majesty pledged to give her heart and soul to that new partnership of nations, every day of her life. I think that we can say that she did just that.

In her note of condolence, Bangladesh's Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, described Her late Majesty as a "motherly figure" and recalled her personal memories of the Queen. It is the loss of such personal connections that we mourn, as well as the loss of our Queen.

The dignity and grace with which the late Queen held herself have been a steadying hand across the Commonwealth for 70 years. We are thankful for her long life of service and we offer our prayers to her family and our new King.

11:14

**Pam Gosal (West Scotland) (Con):** It is a great honour to speak in the chamber today to pay tribute to the long reign and full life of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on behalf of my constituents in the West of Scotland and my community.

I express my condolences to His Majesty the King, the royal family and dear friends. I know all too well how it feels to lose a parent—you can never prepare yourself for that sort of pain and it is one that never leaves you. Therefore, I think that I speak for everyone when I say that the strength that His Majesty and the royal family displayed over this past week has been tremendous, and I thank them for working tirelessly during what is arguably one of the most difficult moments of their lives.

They have made it possible for the entire nation to mourn the loss of our Queen and witness pivotal moments of historic significance. On that note, the nation would not have been able to mourn in the way that it has without the hard work of civil servants, the armed forces, the Royal Navy, the King's Guard and many others, including all the volunteers. To them, we owe our thanks.

Her Majesty reset the boundaries for modern Britain and, indeed, for the modern woman. In a male-dominated world, the Queen's commitment to public service was unshakeable. At times of political uncertainty, her wisdom and wealth of experience were a shoulder to lean on for both political leaders and the nation. Her commitment to her family, to her role in public service and to her kingdom and the Commonwealth has inspired, and paved the way for, me and many other women.

In times such as these, hearing individuals share what the Queen meant to them is a source of great comfort. I have chuckled at the videos and stories that people shared, in which the Queen's sharp sense of humour and wit were clear to see. That was reflected throughout her reign. During our darker days, she consoled us and gave us hope and strength, and during our better days, she celebrated and laughed with us.

I give my thanks to Her Majesty for her eternal love for and ever-lasting loyalty to the British people. We shall now owe our unwavering loyalty to His Majesty King Charles III. God save the King.

11:17

**Kaukab Stewart (Glasgow Kelvin) (SNP):** At times of great loss, we are gifted an elusive opportunity to stop, take a moment and allow ourselves some space for introspection. The passing of Her Majesty the Queen has been deeply felt throughout the nation, and I join my colleagues across the chamber in expressing my sincere condolences to His Majesty the King and his family throughout this time of mourning.

When Jane Austen passed away in 1817, her brother James wrote her epitaph, which, carved in stone in Winchester cathedral, reads:

"Their grief is in proportion to their affection; they know their loss to be irreparable".

In the days following the announcement of Queen Elizabeth's death on 8 September, the genuine fondness felt by so many has been amplified by countless tributes, tales and warm anecdotes from people who had met her or who simply felt connected to her, as well as by more solemn moments of silence and reflection.

Although I never had the chance to meet Her Majesty, I know that we shared an appreciation for a much-cherished building in my constituency—Glasgow's Kelvingrove art gallery and museum. Housed in immense walls of ornate red sandstone that date from 1901 lies one of Europe's great art collections and an important landmark in the city that I call home. Following a three-year restoration project, the gallery was reopened in July 2006 by Queen Elizabeth II, who expressed her delight to be involved and her admiration for what she considered a great institution.

Today, we recognise a remarkable and historic moment and have bid farewell to the longest-reigning monarch the UK has ever seen. As I am sure that many of my colleagues do, too, I remember the Queen's silver jubilee in 1977. I was in primary school in England and my school organised a jubilee party with fancy dress. The theme was countries of the Commonwealth.

The bunting was out, the silver coins were to be given to each child and we all hurried excitedly to school in our costumes. My friend was dressed, confusingly, in what appeared to be some kind of Dutch ensemble. Eyebrows were certainly raised, given that the Netherlands was not part of the Commonwealth, but you try explaining that to a very enthusiastic nine-year-old. It was the only costume in the cupboard and she was not missing the opportunity to wear it.

The Queen was, indeed, a consistent presence for many decades, bringing comfort to many and dedicating her life to public service. I end with words from her Christmas broadcast in 2002. Addressing the nation, Her Majesty reminded us, in her stoic fashion:

“Our modern world places such heavy demands on our time and attention that the need to remember our responsibilities to others is greater than ever.”

11:21

**Sandesh Gulhane (Glasgow) (Con):** Lots of members have told a personal anecdote about Her Majesty, so I will tell you mine. On opening Parliament, Her Majesty was seated next to you, Presiding Officer, and I swear that our eyes locked for a brief second. That is the closest that I got to meeting her, but, as for millions across the globe, respecting her did not rest on meeting her.

So much has happened since our Queen died on September 8. The world was transfixed by satellite broadcasts and social media, which covered Her Majesty’s final journey from Balmoral to Edinburgh and on to London for yesterday’s state funeral. Scotland and this Parliament performed their duty with reverence and I thank the Presiding Officer and Parliament’s staff for all their work behind the scenes.

The outpouring from people’s hearts over the past 11 extraordinary days demonstrated that there is no sentimental difference between how people here in Scotland feel about our monarch and how others down south, in Wales or in Northern Ireland feel. During the toughest months of the pandemic and lockdown, who can forget the Queen’s calm and compassionate address to the nation? She said,

“I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge. And those who come after us will say that the Britons of this generation were as strong as any”,

and she ended by saying,

“better days will return: we will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again.”

How true her words were.

As for King Charles, he has been remarkable over the past 12 days—so dignified and so engaging, while all the time grieving for his beloved mother. For anyone listening who has had their grief for a lost loved one reignited and is struggling, Cruse Scotland bereavement support offers a free service to help.

I feel that it is important to remember that, during his time as Prince of Wales, our King was deeply concerned about the environment and the climate emergency. In fact, the then Prince Charles was raising his concerns long before climate change was even close to a mainstream political party, so I hope that our King will be a champion on environmental issues and for all the things that are important to our youth and young adults.

I close by saying thank you to Their Majesties. Thank you to our Queen for her lifetime of service and God save the King.

11:24

**Sarah Boyack (Lothian) (Lab):** In his tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, President Emmanuel Macron said:

“To you, she was ‘our Queen’. To us, she was ‘the Queen’.”

In that one line, he summed up the constant that Queen Elizabeth II was for all of us in Scotland, the UK and across the world. Most of us referred to Her late Majesty as “the Queen”, as she was the only monarch that we had known and she was a constant that we were all familiar with and used to.

In the tributes over the past few days and in the chamber today, it has been fascinating to hear the many references to the Queen’s love of Scotland. At the beginning of most summers, royal week saw the Queen carry out visits and, just next door in Holyrood palace, hold garden parties to congratulate people across Scotland on their achievements and endeavours in our communities.

Due to the Queen’s incredible strength, length of service and dedication, she was an inspiration to millions of women in the UK and around the globe. When I was growing up, there were very few female MPs and even fewer female Cabinet members, but the Queen was a constant and sometimes the sole female in the public eye. Before the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Equal Pay Act 1970, she showed that the glass ceiling could be smashed and that women could hold positions at the top and succeed. There was a lovely picture that I saw last week of the former Presiding Officer, Ken Macintosh, introducing the Queen to three of our then party leaders, Nicola Sturgeon, Ruth Davidson and Kezia Dugdale. The Queen’s connections with the Parliament have been really impactful.

We have all spent time during the past few days talking to friends and family about the impact of the Queen on our lives and about interconnections. For our family, that came from looking at the photo of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland, which the Queen visited during the silver jubilee. That was personal to me because my dad and my grandad, who were church elders at the time, were in the audience there. A further personal link is that the building in which they met is the same building that the Queen returned to in 1999 to open our Parliament.

It is worth recording that the Queen showed a great understanding of devolution. When she opened the Parliament, she talked about being

confident in the future of Scotland, and she made several further visits over the past 22 years.

As other members have talked about, the pace of change during what we will look back on as the Elizabethan era has been immense. As we transition to our new monarch—for those of us in this chamber, only the second head of state that we have known—it is important that we continue the bonds across the nations and regions of the UK. We must also, as other members have said, reflect on the Commonwealth. The Queen's support of the Commonwealth enabled it to transition over the past 70 years. Let us reflect on the importance of supporting our neighbours and families, whether here at home in Scotland or across the Commonwealth. Our shared history gives us huge opportunities but it also gives us responsibilities to work with our Commonwealth neighbours.

We will continue to face a number of challenges, not least the climate emergency and its impact on our environment, which King Charles III is well versed in. Our Parliament is now well established and has matured during the Elizabethan era. I hope that, under King Charles III, we continue to play a leading role in the UK and the Commonwealth.

As we celebrate the lifelong contribution of the Queen, I hope that the collective response to her passing is of some comfort to King Charles and his family. They have demonstrated a powerful work ethic, by not just visiting our Parliaments over the past few days but reaching out and talking to people in communities across the UK, just as the Queen used to do. I hope that they now take some time to grieve. We know that that work ethic is central to them all, but everybody needs space to grieve and think about the loss of a family member.

11:28

**Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Con):** As Alexander Burnett and Fergus Ewing stated in their excellent speeches, many people will have been deeply touched by the fitting tribute that was the cavalcade of tractors and horses and riders bordering the M90 at Glenfarg and A90 at Peterculter as the Queen made her final journey from Balmoral to the capital.

The Queen's lifelong love of horses and passion for horse-racing is well known. Her Majesty's first appearance at a Scottish racecourse was in Musselburgh as a child, while visiting friends in East Lothian. The young Princess Elizabeth was seen playing in the parade ring.

The Queen visited Hamilton Park racecourse in May 1947 with her father, sister and an unknown gentleman—one Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten.

More than 21,000 Scots flocked to see the Royal family that day.

Over the course of her life, the Queen entered racehorses in more than 3,400 races in the UK, with her horses winning 566 races. The Queen's last winner in Scotland—appropriately named First Love—was at Perth in May 2003. She had also bred that horse: it is well known that she was a dab hand at breeding great racehorses.

As Martin Whitfield said, the Queen's last visit to a Scottish racecourse was in July 2016, when Her Majesty helped Musselburgh racecourse, in my region, to celebrate its 200th anniversary. After that day's racing, the Queen dropped into the Sheep Heid pub in Duddingston for supper at a window seat in the public dining area.

Throughout her life, horse-racing gave the Queen a diversion from life as our monarch and, more importantly, a diversion from the sobering business of global and domestic affairs. Her trainer Richard Hannon said that when the Queen visited his stables she would say that it was nice to come to a place that did not smell of fresh paint. It was also well known that her advisers must ensure that a copy of the *Racing Post* newspaper was always tucked in with her daily correspondence.

The Queen inherited her love of horse-racing from the Queen Mother, as many do from their own parents. She often named her racehorses with a clear message, giving them names such as Duty Bound, Discretion, and Constitution. Jockey Frankie Dettori rode more than 50 winners for the Queen over 30 years. He stated that the sport has lost its greatest ambassador. I agree. The Queen and the Queen Mother redefined horse-racing from being the sport of kings, making it the sport of queens. The industry is grateful for her support for horse racing.

God save the King.

11:31

**The Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine (Neil Gray):** I am grateful for the opportunity to pay tribute, both personally and on behalf of my Airdrie and Shotts constituents, to Her Majesty the Queen.

Today's events are a culmination of the longest of goodbyes to our longest reigning monarch, a long goodbye that began here in Scotland. I join my colleagues in thanking all those in North Lanarkshire and across Scotland for their work during the period of mourning.

There have been 10 days of reflection. Just as we did in the period of mourning, so today we

have heard a mix of personal stories and touching rhetorical flourishes dedicated to the late Queen of Scots.

My parents have been staying with us this weekend. My dad is 78 and is probably among the youngest in our society to remember the death of King George VI and the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. He was eight, the same age as my eldest daughter Isla is now, when Elizabeth became Queen. It blows my mind to imagine Isla 70 years from now—to think of how much will change in her lifetime and how much change my dad and the Queen have seen in theirs. Above all else, I feel that it was her constancy and longevity that earned the Queen so much respect, despite our views on the monarchy.

She began her reign by allowing black-and-white television cameras into a coronation for the first time and ended it in the era of 24-hour news. My dad remembers TV sets selling out of local shops at the time of the coronation and families and neighbours sharing a living room, huddling together to watch the tiny picture. The Queen's life ended with her funeral becoming one of the most watched TV events in history.

The Queen meant so much to so many for so long. For many, she personified their ideas of national identity and of service and had an air of almost mythical authority that brought deference from some. She was significant not only in these isles but around the world. She was an astute politician and diplomat and was well respected by generations of political leaders.

She meant the most to her family, who have honoured her life and memory over the past two weeks, not least Princess Anne, who accompanied her mother for every minute of her journey from Balmoral to Buckingham palace.

Grief is always personal. It is unique and, as the late Queen herself put it, it is the price we pay for love. The royal family's grief is also public. Having lost all of my own grandparents, I cannot imagine having not only to go through my own grief but to lead others in theirs while leading all the ceremonials and protocols and experiencing all the travel linked with the transition of the monarchy. There must have been a conflict of emotions for the family between grief for their mother, grandmother and great-grandmother and a feeling of wanting to support the King—their husband, brother, father and grandfather—in his new role. It must have been all-consuming.

We have also been reflecting at home that we are unlikely to see another queen in our lifetimes. Queen Elizabeth did much for female empowerment, acting subtly but also strikingly because she often sat as the only woman in a room of heads of state.

Queen Elizabeth's was a life well lived in service and for that we give thanks. May she rest in peace.

11:35

**Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Con):** Before I start, I just want to say that I think that our Presiding Officer has done a fantastic job in representing this Parliament. [*Applause.*]

Yesterday, during the funeral, I opened the window and there was nothing: there was just silence. Not only was East Kilbride quiet, but everywhere was quiet. None of us who watched the funeral could have failed to be moved, just as many of us will have felt real emotion as the news of Her Majesty's death came through. Some of us were taking part in parliamentary business here in the chamber, expecting the worst. I did my bit here, but I was at home when the death was confirmed. Although I never met the Queen, I, like millions, was upset, and that feeling has remained. It has been a strange feeling, but I have felt comforted, too, that most of Britain has been in the same position.

Why? I think that the Archbishop of Canterbury summed it up very well at the funeral yesterday when he spoke of Her Majesty dedicating her life to serving the nation and the Commonwealth. He went on to say—Stephen Kerr mentioned this earlier—that

“People of loving service are rare in any walk of life. Leaders of loving service are still rarer. But in all cases those who serve will be loved and remembered when those who cling to power and privileges are ... forgotten.”

I think that the Archbishop got that right. One does not have to be an arch monarchist to recognise that, in the Queen, we had someone who gave her life to this country and all its people; who loved every part of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, especially Scotland; and who was, above all, a loving and caring person. We all knew that she was there for us all, and I think that that in some way explains the way that we all felt when she died.

All of us in the chamber enjoy some of the privileges that Justin Welby spoke of. We all got the chance to welcome the King to this Parliament last week and to see the Queen's coffin move up the Royal Mile. I will never forget that. We should all recognise that Scotland has lost a friend, but that, in the King, we still have one. Scotland and the United Kingdom are lucky to have him as our monarch. Long live the King.

11:38

**Douglas Lumsden (North East Scotland) (Con):** It is an honour to speak today. Last week, I listened to the First Minister describe the first time

that she caught a glimpse of the Queen. I must admit that the earliest memory that I have of seeing the Queen was in very similar circumstances. I was just five years old when she was touring the country as part of her silver jubilee celebrations in 1977. We stayed across from Woodhill house in Aberdeen, and the Queen was set to visit and officially open the home of the then Grampian Regional Council. I was allowed to go and watch the Queen come out of the building and drive off in her big car.

I was young and I did not understand much at that age, but I understood that this was special, and that the Queen was special. As a five-year-old, I took days like that for granted, but thinking back, I was lucky. Most people would never see the Queen, but as a wee five-year-old, I had seen her, and would go on to see her on a number of other occasions—the opening of the new rooftop garden at Aberdeen royal infirmary and the opening ceremony of the sixth session of this Parliament, among others. Each time, I was a little bit older, but Her Majesty seemed to be a constant—always smiling, always speaking to people, always showing compassion, always waving and always serving. It is that public service that is so remarkable. She spent 70 years as Queen, but she gave a lifetime of service that we should all respect.

As we have heard, the Queen spent much time at Balmoral and it was clear that she had a deep admiration for Scotland. I was so proud to see the crowds give Her Majesty one last send-off as she was driven from Balmoral, through the north-east of Scotland and down to Edinburgh.

Like millions of others, I was glued to the television yesterday as the nation said one final farewell to Her Majesty. One part of the ceremony struck me like no other. It was at St George's chapel, when the imperial crown, orb and sceptre were removed from the Queen for the last time in her 70-year reign. For me, that was special because my grandfather, Thomas Shaw, was on ceremonial duties when the Queen was crowned and given those items for the first time. We watched as they were taken from her one last time.

Queen Elizabeth's reign was a link to many people whom we have loved and lost through the years. She was the Queen not only for the 67 million population that we have in the UK at present and the many millions more across the Commonwealth, but for the millions of loved ones who have come and gone before us. She was my Queen—a constant and a servant to our United Kingdom. That connection has now gone, but the memories will remain.

Long live the King.

11:41

**Michael Marra (North East Scotland) (Lab):** I add my condolences to the family of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The real affection for the late monarch that was felt by my constituents in Aberdeenshire, where she was known as a neighbour and friend, has been noted extensively in the past week. That many thousands of people from across the north-east lined the route of the funeral cortège from Balmoral to Dundee last Sunday was testament to the goodwill, respect and loss that were felt by many. Those roads and streets were lined by ardent supporters of the monarchy, by lifelong republicans and by the vast majority who dwell somewhere in between. They all came to show their respect, to pay tribute to one woman's life lived in public service and to witness a moment of national history.

What has struck me most in the vast coverage of the past 11 days is the struggle to understand the space between the person and the performance, between Queen and crown, and between meaning and mourning—the private and the public. The best of empathy was in those first hours as we felt not just a jolt of history but the sad death of an elderly and kindly woman, which evoked all of our losses of grandmothers, aunts and mothers. The pandemic made much of that grief more immediate for many people who remembered those who were lost in care homes or in isolation.

The late Queen bore witness to that pandemic as a bookend to a storied reign. She sat alone and apart with the singular stillness of the watcher. She was witness to war, to privations and pains, and to justice and joy. That witness was a mirror to the nation. The Queen's reign reflected a visibly ageing country; a reign of singular longevity was afforded by living through a medical revolution that has greatly extended many lives in our country. As the 20th century became the 21st and birth rates declined, Scotland grew older and we have come to look more like the Queen. Our personal losses echo more clearly as a result.

Position, privilege and protection set her apart from the day to day. However, there was a real sense that she carried a full measure of the people's pain. When she famously shed tears for the war generation at the cenotaph, it was because, during those pivotal years in arms that rent families and on which our national fate turned, she had worn a uniform in the conflict. She recalled to us family members of that generation who toiled at home, who breached the bloody beaches of France and who, come the peace, stitched things back together as best they could.

Beyond the pomp, there were her values of hard work, fortitude, stability, faith and a longing for peace. At the heart of the astonishing scenes yesterday in London and Windsor, there were a coffin of wood, a grieving family and a fate equal to every living thing.

I give my condolences and those of my constituents to her loved ones.

May perpetual light shine upon her and may she rest in peace.

11:45

**Russell Findlay (West Scotland) (Con):** I was going to begin by welcoming my new colleague, Roz McCall, but it seems that she has had enough already.

It has been almost two weeks of sorrow and solemnity, pomp and ceremony, pipers and Paddington Bears, and world-record queues and the giving of respect. Countless words have been spoken and written about Her Majesty since her death 12 days ago. There have been intimate memories from friends and family, respectful recollections from world leaders and politicians, and affectionate anecdotes from journalists, biographers, the clergy and celebrities. Today, we learned that she popped in for tea with Alexander Burnett.

For me, the words that have landed most powerfully of all have been those of ordinary folk from across our United Kingdom. A young woman called Becky from Ayrshire took a night bus from Glasgow and arrived at London's Victoria station early last Thursday morning. She joined the five-mile queue for Her Majesty's lying in state at the palace of Westminster. Later that same night, having paid her respects, she got the bus back home to Scotland.

Hers was not an act of perfunctory public grieving; it was a sincere and important pilgrimage—one of personal remembrance. A BBC journalist happened to chance upon Becky among the tens of thousands standing in line. Her touching story would otherwise have remained unreported and unknown.

Becky told the BBC:

"I love the queen and I just wanted to come down. She's just like your gran, I suppose. Without knowing her you feel like you do know her. I'm so glad I came here."

The authenticity of her words and deeds moved me. If you happen to see this, Becky: thank you.

There are countless others like Becky, from all across the west of Scotland and all corners of the United Kingdom, whose private stories are untold. Her Majesty did not court or crave public approval. The love and respect for our late Queen was as

deep and as pure as the water of Scotland's lochs and as solid as the rock of our towering mountains.

May Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II rest in peace. God save the King.

11:47

**Karen Adam (Banffshire and Buchan Coast) (SNP):** The Friday evening tradition at my gran's house would be for my gran to don her camel-coloured Mac coat, put on her red lipstick and comb up her hair, ready for the big shop at the supermarket in Dyce. It was a weekly highlight and I would always ask for some lipstick too. My gran always took pride in her appearance and held self-respect in high esteem, and she would say in her accent—she grew up in Strathpeffer, so you will know that she spoke the perfect Queen's English—"Well you never know when you will meet the Queen."

On one such big-shop trip, a cavalcade of fancy cars was coming past us from the airport, and my gran excitedly thought that she might catch a glimpse of the royals on their way to Balmoral. Sure enough, she shouted, "It's Princess Diana"—although she shouted it a bit louder than I just did. I turned quickly to my window and caught the princess's unmistakable blonde hair, her head tilted against the window and her hand under her chin. That really was excitement for us. I will never forget that moment, but mostly because of my gran's reaction.

To my grandparents, the royal family—particularly the Queen, as she became—were an anchor during some traumatising events in history. I do not underestimate how powerful it was for many women such as my gran, who was holding the fort at home and doing her duty as a firewoman in wartime, to see Princess Elizabeth do the same back then, in the final year of the war, when she donned a uniform and joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service.

It meant something to my gran to have a woman go on to become the head of that royal family. She was not least a model of feminine strength and someone who then, and during her long service, was a figure of strength during a series of crises. My gran's generation took responsibility seriously and did what they said they would do. They knew that if they strayed even a tiny bit, it could have disastrous consequences for them and others. They were the "Keep calm and carry on" silent generation. The Queen emulated that, but she was quite clear that she did not want the distinction for herself. She always steered that to the Crown. She did not attribute the glory to herself, but to her purpose and, of course, her unwavering faith in it.

It is an incredible task to serve with such adoration, while diverting that to your cause and not absorbing it unto yourself or your ego. That is true integrity.

The Queen exemplified that humility while she served and she showed that that humility was as essential as the service itself.

A few historical interviews have been shown over the past few days. The most striking one for me was when the Queen was asked why she did it. She responded:

“Because I said I would.”

That is an example to us all, and it is especially poignant in our chamber, where trust is placed upon us. We know the importance of doing what we said we would do.

I will always remember the Queen, and those who followed her example, with the deepest of respect.

11:50

**Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Con):** I start by welcoming our newest member to the chamber but, in doing so, note the regrettable absence of others.

It is clear that words are so often the cause of so much division and disagreement, not just in politics but in the world outwith politics. It is, however, in silence that we are united. In silence, we stand shoulder to shoulder on armistice day as colleagues, not as political foes. We observe two minutes of solemn silence together out of respect to those who gave their lives in the service of others. We stand shoulder to shoulder in silence during many moments of national grief and national tragedy, because it is in silence that we are truly the same—that, and queuing.

Apparently there was a queue to see the queue. Even then, that was an offshoot of the actual queue. Legend has it that one woman from Edinburgh queued seven times. Perhaps she joined the end of the queue thinking that it was the beginning of another queue. I, too, joined that queue, and it is hard to articulate the moment in the deafening silence of St Giles cathedral: the quiet, respectful nods, and the head bows to one another as we all filed past with dignity. There was a real sense of gravity and sadness about it all, but also respect and order.

That queue sums us up as a people: willing and able to poke fun at ourselves when the moment merits, but equally entrenched in history and camaraderie—strangers befriending strangers. As we speak, my mother is sitting at the bedside of a dying 92-year-old woman in Inverclyde royal hospital. My mother does not know the woman.

She is sitting with her because she volunteers for the No-one Dies Alone charity. That might seem like a really stark contrast to being mourned by billions of people, but the principle is the same. We share grief and loss because those things are easier to do together than alone.

Her Majesty the Queen led an incredible life. In a man’s world, she was the original girl power. Perhaps our own sadness stems from our memories—memories of being young; memories of being elected and taking the oath; memories of the opening of Parliaments and shaking hands at receptions; and memories of the balcony waves or Christmas day speeches. Those memories are not just of the Queen but of our own, because the elderly and the frail have suffered the most at the hands of the events of the past few years—we know that only too well. Those of us here today will have lost grannies and parents. The passing of the Queen is a reminder of our own fragile mortality and that of those around us. It is an untimely reminder that time is not always with us. It is almost six months to the day since I last gave a speech about loss in this place.

In the case of Her Majesty, though, what a life well lived. It is my greatest regret that I never got to meet the Queen, but I close with her own sage advice, given to us in her 1991 Christmas broadcast. She said:

“There are any number of reasons to find fault with each other, with our Governments, and with other countries.

But let us not take ourselves too seriously. None of us has a monopoly of wisdom and we must always be ready to listen and respect other points of view.”

Such wise words, not least to us. So let that be her legacy to us, because, whoever you are and wherever you are, every day in the service of others is a humbling blessing.

Rest in peace, ma’am.

11:54

**Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):** As other members have done, I welcome Roz McCall to the chamber.

Presiding Officer, we have come to the close of the Elizabethan age—a time of great change, during which Queen Elizabeth remained a constant in our society. The past week has been incredibly tough for so many people: especially for those who followed the royal family as closely as their own extended family, but others who did not have also been deeply affected. The Queen’s passing has united people, regardless of whether they hold political beliefs or have none. Even those who would prefer to have an elected head of state have recognised her unparalleled commitment and service to our country.

As we look back over the Queen's reign, we can see that so much has changed. Her coronation was televised, but that involved cutting-edge technology at that time. Largely through her belief in the value of diverse nations coming together to celebrate humanity, the Queen played a leading role in creating the modern Commonwealth, which has seen 54 countries, across six continents, working together.

Scotland was special to the Queen, and she was special to Scotland. I was brought up on the west coast and remember seeing the royal yacht Britannia at close range as the royal family holidayed locally. Many people there have stories about bumping into the Queen—although none deliberately, as they believed in giving her the time, space and privacy that she needed with her family. On one occasion, a friend of mine saw some people walking around an old school building that was no longer used. My friend was a little concerned that they were trying to break in, so she went to investigate, only to see a woman disappear in through a window. Luckily, one of the party was outside and explained to my friend that it was in fact the Queen who was going through the window to have a better look. She had, of course, been invited to look inside the building but could not find the key. However, she had not let that stop her. My friend beat a hasty retreat rather than carry out a citizen's arrest.

So many people have warm memories of the Queen and have wished to pay tribute to her life of service, as we have seen over the past few days. Her example is being followed by the new King and the rest of her family. While grieving, they have carried out official duties to provide comfort and continuity to the nation. I hope that they will have time to deal with their own loss in private, and that it is a comfort to them to see the regard in which the Queen was held.

11:57

**Brian Whittle (South Scotland) (Con):** I am grateful and privileged to have the opportunity to add my few words to the many tributes to our late Queen Elizabeth. She was a quite remarkable lady, who dedicated her life to the service of our country and did so with a compassion and quiet dignity that all public servants should aspire to.

In remembering Princess Elizabeth's radio address during the second world war, when she was aged 14, in which she assured Britain's children that all would be okay, followed by her public declaration as a 21-year-old that her life—

“whether it be long or short”—

would be dedicated to the service of our country, and then a more recent address to the nation during the Covid pandemic, in which she assured

us that we would endure and that we would meet again, we acknowledge the decades during which she led our nation with a calm thoughtfulness through our most difficult times.

If ever we needed evidence of the global impact that the Queen made on behalf of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, we need only witness the number of world leaders in attendance at her funeral yesterday, and the global outpouring of sadness and good wishes. What struck me were not only the comments that we would have expected from those of us who are supporters of the royal family but the respect and compassion expressed by many of the staunchest of republicans in recognising the late Queen's ability to enter any arena and play a significant part in diplomacy and bridge building on behalf of our country. Here I remember the part that she played in the peace process in Northern Ireland. All sides involved in that process have recognised that in their own reflections, as I read this morning in parts of the Belfast media—some from individuals from whom we perhaps would not have expected that.

As the thousands upon thousands of people whom the Queen met will testify, she had a rare quality of making whoever she was speaking to the most important person in the room for those few moments.

On the passing of the Queen, my mother looked out an old scrapbook that had a press cutting with a picture of a young athlete meeting the Queen in 1986, when she visited the Commonwealth games village in Edinburgh. The picture shows me in full Scottish battledress, with a ridiculous mad crop of hair, shaking hands and bowing to the Queen. She already knew that it was my first major championships and, hearing my nervousness during our discussion, she told me how well I had done to get to the games and how much she was looking forward to watching me compete. It had such a huge impact on a young man: the Queen was coming to the stadium specifically to watch me compete—that is what I heard anyway. Four years later, towards the end of a lap of honour at the Auckland Commonwealth games, decked in a saltire, I bowed to the Queen who was sitting in the stadium—again, having come to watch me compete. I wonder whether she realised the incredible impact that she had on so many people.

For the late Queen's lifelong dedication to service of her country, I simply say, thank you, ma'am. I have never been so proud of my country: Scotland showed itself to the world, rose to the occasion and shone at such a difficult time.

We hope that King Charles and the royal family will have time to grieve for the loss of their mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. To the late

Queen I say, God bless you, ma'am. God save the King.

12:01

**Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP):** It is a great honour and privilege to speak in today's debate, at the end of a historic period in our country's history. As other members have done, I begin by passing on my heartfelt condolences to the royal family following the passing of Her Majesty.

The past week to 10 days has demonstrated the profound love that the people of Scotland have for the Queen and the love that she had for Scotland. Her devotion to public service throughout her 70-year reign—indeed her whole life—was unsurpassed in modern times and we really will never see her like again. In Scotland, she was respected by almost all—transcending all political differences, as we have witnessed here today and over the past week.

Descended from King James VI, Mary Queen of Scots and King Robert the Bruce, she really was Queen of Scots. The fact that she chose to spend her final days in Scotland and the way in which Scotland was presented to the world in the days after were very fitting indeed and a tribute to the relationship between the Queen and Scotland.

The Queen touched the hearts of many of my constituents in Coatbridge and Chryston, as she did the hearts of those elsewhere in the country. I understand that the Queen's last visit to my constituency was to Coatbridge in 1953, at the beginning of her reign and during a busy post-coronation tour. Obviously, I was not born then and neither were my parents, but I know that many of my constituents remember the occasion fondly. Thousands lined the streets of Coatbridge to catch a glimpse of the royal party as they walked through the adjoining centres of Airdrie—in my good friend and colleague Neil Gray's constituency—and Coatbridge. Thanks to the Lanarkshire Family History Society, I was able to find a copy of an article in my local newspaper, the *Airdrie & Coatbridge Advertiser*, that was published on 4 July 1953, which described the event as

"arousing scenes of enthusiasm unprecedented in the history of the two towns."

That is a lovely image. I am sure that many members will have similar stories.

Over the past couple of days, I have had contact with a constituent, Christine McCrone, who although only a young child at the time, has a specially made handkerchief that was passed on by her grandmother, who was there that day. She sent me a picture of the handkerchief, which has stayed in her family these past 70 years. Again,

that demonstrates just how much that event meant to many people locally.

I also managed to find some fantastic pictures that were taken in the village of Gartcosh in my constituency during the coronation—pipe bands played and parades and a cricket match took place to celebrate the event. That is another example of just how much the event was celebrated by local people.

May you rest in peace, Queen of Scots. I end with the words on the wee posters that my two sons have had printed out after talking about the events in school: farewell ma'am.

12:04

**Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con):** I am very grateful for the honour of being able to pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I was extremely saddened by the awful news of Her Majesty's passing. I possess a deep and enduring admiration for our longest-reigning monarch, not least due to her tireless work and service to the community and the Commonwealth.

The Queen had the ability to ensure strong bonds in our United Kingdom, and she played a crucial role in supporting international co-operation. She was instrumental in binding the diverse nations of the Commonwealth together. She had a deep love of Scotland and has often been quoted as saying that she found true happiness and tranquillity here. She cared deeply about the community on royal Deeside, as she did about all parts of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth.

I had the privilege and the pleasure of meeting Her Majesty on a number of occasions, the pinnacle being when I received my MBE at Holyrood palace in 2016. I shall never forget the brief but highly entertaining and amusing conversation that we had that morning.

It is astounding to think that she became Queen when she was only 25 years old. She had an enormous undertaking on her young shoulders, but she took it on and followed it through all her life. The loss of Her Majesty is immeasurable to our country and to the Commonwealth. The period of national mourning has given us all the opportunity to pay our respects to the late monarch. Scotland and Edinburgh played a pivotal role in showcasing Scotland to the world. It also gave us the opportunity to ensure that she received the send-off that she rightly deserved.

I had the opportunity to be in London over the past few days, where hundreds of thousands of people chose to pay their respects by waiting in line or by laying flowers for the late Queen. There was an outpouring of grief but also of the pride of

a nation. I pay tribute to the armed forces and everyone who was involved; they performed their duties impeccably and ensured that the state occasion was one to remember.

However, we must remember that the monarch was a much-loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. My thoughts and prayers are with the royal family at this emotional and solemn time. God save the King.

12:07

**Paul Sweeney (Glasgow) (Lab):** Fifty-five years ago today was a very proud occasion on Clydeside. Tens of thousands of people gathered at John Brown & Company's shipyard to watch the late Queen launch arguably the greatest engineering achievement in our country's history, the ocean liner Queen Elizabeth 2. It was a particularly proud occasion for my family, because my granddad helped build the ship on Clydeside, like many thousands of working people in the west of Scotland.

There was tension in the air because no one knew what the ship was going to be called. At that time, it had been cryptically named Q4, and it was also known as Contract 736. There was great expectation in the air, but only two people in the shipyard knew what the name was going to be: the shipyard director, and the owner of the Cunard line. They shared rather awkward glances, because they knew that the ship was meant to be called Queen Elizabeth 2—that is, named after the previous Queen Elizabeth, which had been launched in 1938 and had been named after the Queen's mother. While everybody else was celebrating as the Queen triumphantly announced that she named the ship Queen Elizabeth II, they realised that she had named the ship after herself, which was not the intention.

The Queen certainly struck the right note with the crowd, as she did throughout her reign, even if it was to the consternation of certain interests elsewhere. A similar occasion gave me one of my proudest memories. Before entering politics, I worked in the shipbuilding industry, and in 2014 I had a moment of great pride when I witnessed the late Queen smash a bottle of single malt whisky on the hull of the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, the largest ship ever built for the navy, as she christened it at Rosyth dockyard. I had helped to build the ship.

Many Glaswegians will have similarly personal recollections of the late Queen. She was a great friend of Glasgow, and her longevity and constant presence meant that she bore witness to some of the most remarkable events in our city's story and our country's story over the past century. That is why there has been a particularly visceral

outpouring of grief. It is not simply commemorating the passing of a monarch; it is commemorating the passing of a generation and one of the last filial bonds that everyone has with that era and that lived memory and experience.

Her introduction to Glasgow came at the age of just 12 as she joined her parents to tour the iconic empire exhibition at Bellahouston park in 1938 on the eve of the second world war. The exhibition was a gleaming white streamlined modern city within a soot-blackened sandstone city, which celebrated the plethora of world-leading industrial and commercial achievements of what was then the second city of the empire as it emerged from the great depression.

Indeed, the Queen would celebrate the tradition of launching ships on the Clyde on no fewer than six occasions. She celebrated with thousands of Glaswegians in recognition of their great industrial achievements. Everyone feels that, in building a ship, they have built it themselves. Having the Queen come along and share that recognition was a really powerful experience for many people.

To many, Queen Elizabeth was the ultimate embodiment of public service. Her selfless and unwavering commitment to her public duty was unrivalled and, regardless of what anyone thinks about the abstract debates about the institution of monarchy or the concept of hereditary succession, now is simply a time to pay sincere tribute to a kind woman and inspirational leader who dedicated her life to be a humble servant of our country and the people of the Commonwealth.

12:10

**Finlay Carson (Galloway and West Dumfries) (Con):** It is an honour and a privilege to be able to pay respect and tribute on behalf of the people of Galloway and West Dumfries. I confess that my piece will not be the well-crafted eulogy that other members have delivered today, but I hope that it will still paint a picture of how we hold our late Queen in our hearts.

It is said, rightly or wrongly, that every picture tells a story. Indeed, in some instances, a photograph is worth a thousand or 10,000 words, as it provides not only evidence but emotion and a sense of involvement, even if the person was not there at the time when it was taken. In the past few days, all of us will have viewed pictures of the most recognised face in the world—that of our Queen, Elizabeth II—and experienced a range of emotions, from sadness, loss, happiness and respect to love and a sense of pride. Perhaps members can therefore understand why, despite the obvious gloom and sadness that is being experienced across the nation, a sense of pride and happiness was expressed in my home town of

Kirkcudbright last week. There was a touching moment that briefly lifted the spirits in small communities such as Kirkcudbright and the neighbouring Castle Douglas, as they watched King Charles pay his own emotional tribute to the Queen—his mother, a grandmother and, of course, a great-grandmother.

As the new king gave his television address to the UK and beyond, expressing his sorrow, and thanking his mother for a life lived to the full, many might not have noticed the photograph that was placed on the desk in front of him. The picture was taken during a royal visit to my constituency in 2010, and the Queen was dressed in a powder blue coat and hat. Of all the millions of photographs taken during her 70-year reign, one of the Queen smiling broadly during her trip to my home town of Kirkcudbright was selected. That was a remarkable honour for my home town, given that Her Majesty covered more than a million miles and took in 117 countries out of a potential 195. That really takes some doing.

Most important for my constituency, that involved a number of royal visits to Dumfries and Galloway. We are blessed to have had numerous royal visits. The Princess Royal and our new King are no strangers. I am sure that Murdo Fraser will be pleased to hear that I can confirm without breaching any confidence that His Majesty, in light of my conversations with him, will follow in his mother's footsteps in having a great love of talking about cows.

The Queen's first visit to my region was three years after her coronation. She visited the Burns mausoleum to lay a wreath on the grave of Robert Burns. On that occasion, she was escorted by William Wallace, who happened to be the provost of the royal burgh of Dumfries at that time. Her Majesty visited again to open Dumfries and Galloway royal infirmary in 1975, and she visited later to open the new police headquarters in Cornwall Mount. However, perhaps the most memorable visit was in 2010, when she visited Walleys Marts in Castle Douglas before finishing off in Kirkcudbright. The royal couple enjoyed meeting the local community and sampling our wonderful seafood. They tried the west coast seafood delicacy aptly named queenie scallops.

Naturally, those royal visits have created many special memories for those fortunate enough to have met Her Majesty on those occasions. Sadly, I never met the Queen, but I saw her from the crowd as I waved a little flag, as my mother used to drag me miles—she often took me out of school—to cheer on the royal family across the region. My mum bore a close resemblance to the Queen, and my sister used to tease her about sounding like her when she put on her posh voice to read the lesson in church.

We all regularly hear about the remarkable ability that the Queen had in putting people at ease, as she learned about the special roles that individuals played in helping their communities. That was a gift that she had and which we have often heard about over the past few weeks.

For a generation, our Queen was hugely influential around the world, but many experienced a feeling of intense bereavement, as if she was a family member. She was held in people's hearts, much like a loved and respected auntie or granny.

In the past few days, she has been described as the "Queen of the world" and the "Queen of Scots", but she was also the Queen of Kirkcudbright and of many other communities. The Queen loved Scotland, and Scotland loved the Queen. She was not just the Queen—she was our Queen.

Your Majesty, God bless you and keep you.  
God save the King.

12:15

**Elena Whitham (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP):** My colleague Siobhian Brown and I heard the news that the Queen had passed away on our drive back to Ayrshire, and both of us were caught by surprise by the well of emotion that the radio announcement brought forth. Although I am by no means a natural monarchist, I still found myself dealing with unexpected feelings of loss.

Queen Elizabeth was the one constant in our collective consciousness for over 70 years. Like my beloved grandfather, who was one year her junior and who passed away just last year, she was part of that greatest of generations: those who lived through war and rationing and who lived life with a sense of duty and stoic strength.

As our elders in that generational cohort pass away, we feel the shifting of time keenly. I was bereft when my grandpa passed away. He was a man with strong values of social justice, which he bestowed on his children and grandchildren. For me, the death of the Queen is inextricably linked to the loss that we feel for the "Make do and mend" generation. I am sure that if my grandpa, who was an Ayrshire dairyman, and the Queen had ever met, they could have talked coos aw day.

When I emigrated to Canada as a wee six-year-old, the Queen was the one familiar thing in a new land where I was far away from everything, and almost everyone, that I knew and loved. Her face on the unfamiliar currency, and even the worldwide broadcast of the royal wedding the following year, helped me in my gradual acclimatisation as a new Canadian. When, as a family, we pledged our oath of Canadian

citizenship, we also pledged our oath to Her Majesty: the one great constant.

Although I may have donned a certain infamous T-shirt by a famous punk band in my teens, and—like Daniel Johnson—railed against the system, I can attest to the great work that was done by the now King at Dumfries house in Cumnock in my constituency. Saved from ruin by the then Prince, the country mansion and wonderful grounds are home to the Prince's Foundation. Dumfries house is also the site of the Queen's last visit to Ayrshire, where she was welcomed by thousands as she opened the beautiful walled garden that was named after her. I urge all members to visit, especially in the summertime, when more than 3,000 roses and row on row of delphiniums bloom spectacularly.

It was also at Dumfries house that I watched with great amusement as the now King Charles grabbed his wife and birlled her round the dance floor as an Elvis impersonator sang "Don't Be Cruel" at one of East Ayrshire Council's "vibrant communities" tea dances, which are held regularly to bring the community together to combat social isolation. Charles and Camilla gave everyone who was there that day an impromptu show to remember, and I will not forget the smiles on the faces. I sincerely hope that the King will be able to continue to enjoy his frequent sojourns to Ayrshire, and we thank him for the regeneration that he has imparted.

Finally, as a member of the scouting family, I thank the Queen for her duty and patronage over her 70-year reign. We can all live by the scout pledge that she embodied: to do our best and to help others.

À la reine Elizabeth: merci fortement pour votre service et reposez en paix.

12:18

**Craig Hoy (South Scotland) (Con):** The passing of Queen Elizabeth offers us an opportunity to pause, to remember, to reflect and to be thankful. We can be thankful for the life and work of Her late Majesty, and we can remember what she meant for the communities that we are in Parliament to represent.

Almost everyone felt that they knew the Queen—even those who had never met her. My late Granny Gregor, who was born around the same time as Her Majesty, said that she was the "sister she never met".

Others were privileged to meet or to work with the Queen. One was Pat Morris, from Gullane in East Lothian, who spent two hours with the Queen at Balmoral, photographing her dogs. She said last week:

"I completely forgot who I was talking to ... She was friendly, kind, amusing and very natural".

Another example is the late Bill Scott, who was a friend I got to know in London. A humble Glaswegian with a gentle wit and deep sense of faith, Father Bill first served as a curate in the Gorbals in Glasgow. He went on to become sub-dean of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal and then domestic chaplain to the Queen in Buckingham palace.

Bill Scott had no time for pretence—he described his role as being only

"a sort of 'vicar' in the ... palaces".

Indeed, like many who are associated with our monarchy, he rose to Kipling's challenge of being able to

"walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch".

The Queen was deeply connected to all our communities. Yes—her reign was regal, but it was never remote. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh—just as the King and the Queen Consort will now do—put themselves at the heart of our communities.

Visiting Haddington in 2007, the Queen met representatives of the Lamp of Lothian Trust, which brings together the community by restoring derelict buildings and making them available for community use.

The Queen also visited the Scottish Seabird Centre in North Berwick in 2009, where Her Majesty and Prince Philip joined my constituent Rear Admiral Neil Rankin to present volunteers with the Queen's awards for enterprise.

On the same day as she became Britain's longest-reigning monarch, the Queen took a train trip to Tweedbank, to formally open the Borders railway, including opening Newtongrange station in Midlothian.

When we look back at those visits, it is clear to see that the Queen had an innate capacity to bring our communities together.

The Queen brought her own sense of majesty to our monarchy. Through her death, just as she did in life, she brought unity to our nation.

11:21

**Maurice Golden (North East Scotland) (Con):** In the days since the death of Her Majesty the Queen, I have been struck by the number of people who have been able to recount their own experiences of meeting her. That she left such a lasting impression on so many is testament to her extraordinary reign and to her personal warmth, kindness and humour.

I never met the Queen, although I had the honour of being in her presence on several occasions—in this place, in Holyrood palace and at Buckingham palace.

My favourite anecdote is from former royal protection officer Richard Griffin. He and the Queen came across American hikers while walking around the grounds of Balmoral. They asked her where she lived, not realising who she was. She told them that she lived in London but that she had a holiday home just on the other side of the hills. When asked if she had ever met the Queen, she replied:

“Well I haven’t but Dick here meets her regularly.”

Her Majesty displayed that sense of fun, that delight in making others smile and that ability to retain a common touch throughout her reign.

This year—her platinum jubilee year—Her Majesty was presented with a loyal address that was written by local school children, which said:

“You have shown a caring manner, determination and dedication to help other people. We think you’re doing a great job! We are very lucky to have had you as our Queen for so long.”

The Queen responded:

“Most addresses are usually pompous—this is so much nicer.”

The abiding memory that Scots will have of our late Queen is of a dutiful, faithful and joyful monarch. Our Queen loved Scotland dearly. Scots returned that love, lining towns and villages. I had the honour of paying my respects here in Edinburgh, as well as in Brechin. People filled the streets and queued through the night to pay their respects. That respect was earned through a lifetime of service to her people, and her people are proud beyond measure to have had Elizabeth II as their Queen. We now honour her memory as we support her son, our new King. God save the King.

12:24

**Siobhian Brown (Ayr) (SNP):** The news broke of deep concern about the Queen’s health as we all sat in the chamber for First Minister’s question time on Thursday 8 September. Parliamentary business continued throughout the rest of the day, although there was a quiet and sombre atmosphere of concern as we watched journalists don black ties and as TV stations changed to rolling news.

I was driving home from Parliament on Thursday evening when the official sad news of the death of Her Majesty the Queen was announced at 6.30. That will be one of those times that people never forget where they were, who they were with and what they were doing. It was a

moment in history. The late Queen had always been a constant in our lives, and it was the end of an era.

It is right that we reflect on and celebrate the Queen’s exceptional public service over her reign of 70 years, not only in Scotland but around the world, where she touched many hearts. I will pay tribute, on behalf of my constituents, to times when the Queen visited my corner of the world—Ayr, Prestwick and Troon—and left lasting memories for many.

On 3 July 1956, the Queen arrived by train at Troon station. She visited many locations across Ayrshire and met dignitaries at the county buildings and on the Low Green in Ayr. On 27 March 1991, the Queen and Prince Philip attended an event that was hosted by Jackie Stewart at British Aerospace at Prestwick, when the Jetstream 41 was rolled out. It was the first plane to be designed and built in Scotland. As we know, that was the beginning of great things for Prestwick airport and its surrounding area, which is now a global leader in the aerospace industry and aerospace technology.

On 5 July 1995, the Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, visited Burns cottage in Alloway and opened the Tam o’ Shanter Experience, before inspecting a guard of honour by the Ayrshire yeomanry. The Queen then attended a civic lunch that was held at Ayr town hall.

The Queen’s love of horse-racing is renowned. Only months ago, as we celebrated the platinum jubilee, several trees were planted at Ayr racecourse to mark the event. As those trees grow, they will serve as a reminder and a symbol of the Queen’s legacy, which will continue way after her death.

The Queen had a deep and genuine affection for Scotland and her Scottish roots; in fact, her bloodline can be traced back to an Ayrshire woman of tremendous strength and determination—Marjorie, Countess of Carrick. She was the mother of Robert the Bruce, who held his Parliament in Ayr in 1315. The Queen’s deep love, affection and respect for Scotland have been evident in the major role that the Queen wanted Scotland to play in the mourning period, as we have seen in the past two weeks.

On her 21st birthday, Her Majesty vowed that her life would be dedicated to serving the nation and the Commonwealth, and she kept that promise to the very end. Hers was a life dedicated to public service over 70 years, showing unwavering strength, dignity, respect and grace at all times—qualities that we should all reflect on, and the likes of which we may never see again. May you now rest in peace.

12:27

**Jamie Halcro Johnston (Highlands and Islands) (Con):** The past two weeks have been a time of great emotion—a time of national and personal reflection for many. We mourn the loss of a Queen of 70 years—someone who was an ever-present and seemingly permanent fixture in all our lives.

Among the sadness, there has been the opportunity to remember and to celebrate the remarkable life of a remarkable woman, so much of whose story was written here in Scotland. While Her Majesty's funeral was a global event, with princes and presidents from around the world, yesterday we buried our Queen, who was born to a Scottish mother and for whom Scotland was such an important part of her life.

The royal family are ingrained in the Highlands and Islands, which I represent. The heir to the throne, who is now His Royal Highness Prince William, is both the Duke of Rothesay and the Lord of the Isles. The late Queen Mother chose the Castle of Mey in Caithness as the place where she spent much of her time in Scotland, and His Majesty King Charles has continued that association. Princess Anne continues to be a regular visitor to my region and was on Skye only days before her mother's death.

Visits by Queen Elizabeth are remembered fondly, particularly in my home, Orkney. In 1960, on her first visit to the islands, Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh sailed through Scapa Flow on board Britannia. My grandfather dipped the flag as the royal yacht sailed past our house. A very young then Prince Charles and his sister, Princess Anne, were put ashore to the small uninhabited island of Holm of Houton to have a picnic and a treasure hunt and avoid the rigours of the tour, while the Queen and Prince Philip visited Skara Brae and St Magnus cathedral, before heading north to the island of Westray. Her Majesty returned in 1978 to attend the Orkney county show, where she presented prizes to the winners, and again in 1987 to mark the 850th anniversary of St Magnus cathedral.

As other colleagues have highlighted, her love of the countryside and rural Scotland was clear. Her attendance at countless rural and farming events over her reign is testament to that love. Many will remember the wonderful clip of Her Majesty during her 90th birthday celebrations when, relatively unmoved by many of the acts that she had been forced to endure over a long time, she responded most excitedly to cows being paraded in front of her, pointing them out to Prince Philip with a massive smile on her face and uncontrolled glee.

That passion and knowledge were well recognised by the farming community of which I am proud to be a part. Martin Kennedy, the president of the National Farmers Union of Scotland said of Her Majesty:

“Here in Scotland, we fondly remember her long-standing enthusiasm and support for farming, rural life, and the countryside as well as her patronage and visits to the Royal Highland Show.”

On my behalf and that of my constituents, I thank Your Majesty for more than 70 years of service, for your calm and reassuring presence through the most difficult times, for bringing us together to face the challenges of recent years and for how you touched the lives of so many people and communities throughout our country and across the world.

God bless you, ma'am; may you rest in heavenly peace. God save the King.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** That concludes the tributes to Her late Majesty the Queen.

## Parliamentary Bureau Motion

12:31

**The Deputy Presiding Officer (Liam McArthur):** The next item of business—*[Interruption.]*—is consideration of motion S6M-05947, in the name of George Adam, on behalf of the Parliamentary Bureau, on changes to this week's business. Any member who wishes to speak against the motion should press their request-to-speak button now.

I call George Adam to move the motion.

**The Minister for Parliamentary Business (George Adam):** I think that Mr Ross was getting too excited at my two minutes, Presiding Officer.

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** Who would not be, Mr Adam?

*Motion moved,*

That the Parliament agrees to the following revisions to the programme of business for—

(a) Tuesday 20 September 2022—

delete

2.00 pm Time for Reflection

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

*followed by* Topical Questions (if selected)

*followed by* Scottish Government Business

*followed by* Committee Announcements

*followed by* Business Motions

*followed by* Parliamentary Bureau Motions

5.00 pm Decision Time

*followed by* Members' Business

(b) Wednesday 21 September 2022—

delete

2.00 pm Portfolio Questions:  
Covid Recovery and Parliamentary  
Business: Finance and Economy

*followed by* Scottish Conservative and Unionist  
Party Business

and insert

2.00 pm Topical Questions (if selected)

2.15 pm Portfolio Questions:  
Justice and Veterans;  
Finance and Economy

*followed by* Scottish Government Debate: Delivering  
Economic Transformation - Scotland's  
Inward Investment and Export Growth  
Plans

(c) Thursday 22 September 2022—

delete

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions:  
Net Zero, Energy and Transport

and insert

2.30 pm Portfolio Questions:  
Education and Skills

*followed by* Ministerial Statement: Independent  
Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape

and after

5.00 pm Decision Time

insert

*followed by* Members' Business

**The Deputy Presiding Officer:** No member has asked to speak against the motion.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Decision Time***Meeting closed at 12:32.*

12:32

**The Deputy Presiding Officer (Liam McArthur):** There are no questions to be put at decision time.



This is the final edition of the *Official Report* for this meeting. It is part of the Scottish Parliament *Official Report* archive and has been sent for legal deposit.

---

Published in Edinburgh by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

---

All documents are available on the Scottish Parliament website at:

[www.parliament.scot](http://www.parliament.scot)

Information on non-endorsed print suppliers is available here:

[www.parliament.scot/documents](http://www.parliament.scot/documents)

For information on the Scottish Parliament contact Public Information on:

Telephone: 0131 348 5000

Textphone: 0800 092 7100

Email: [sp.info@parliament.scot](mailto:sp.info@parliament.scot)

---



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba