

# The Queen's Birthday Parade 2022

By Colin Dean

This year's birthday parade was different in a number of aspects, not least as it took place on a Thursday for the first time since it became a Saturday event in 1959.

The salute was taken by HRH The Prince of Wales (Colonel, Welsh Guards) who represented Her Majesty, hence he was accorded a Sovereign's Escort and the National Anthem was played in full for the Royal Salute (rather than the first six bars which would be played for Prince Charles in his personal capacity). There was precedent: since 1901 when the sovereign was first present at the parade, Princes of Wales took the salute in 1904 and 1930, HRH The Duke of Connaught in 1928, HRH The Duke of Gloucester in 1939 and HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh in 1951.

The Queen's Colour of 1st Battalion Irish Guards was trooped, with much of the music written by serving and former Micks. Many of the marches were based on songs from the Emerald Isle and included the pipes, although often with the melodies 'outwith the chanter' as I believe pipers would say.



*The Drums and Pipes of 1st Battalion Irish Guards, with the Pipe Major and four pipers from 1st Battalion Scots Guards*

The inspection music was *The Mists of the Shannon* by the Director of Music, Captain Neil Skipper, and *Ladysmith* by Dean Nixon who was the Micks' bandmaster for a few months last year. The Quick Troop was *The Platinum Jubilee March*, with a distinct Irish flavour, composed by Sergeant Chris Shelton, now a Grenadier but before that, a horn player with the Irish Guards Band.

Another Mick, Sergeant Adam Barras, gave us the slow march *Bob's Own* (an early regimental nickname when Field Marshal Lord Roberts was Colonel). This was in 3/4 time which meant a bit of a jolt as they changed to the regimental marches. He also produced a very spirited *Irish Saffron* for the march off parade.

The slow march *Long Live Elizabeth* (from Edward German's opera *Merrie England*) echoed the feelings of all present, while *Slattery's Mounted Fut* is a well-established firm favourite. The other quick march will have been new to many, *Rhythm of the Line* by Major George Willcocks MVO, MBE. He was Director of Music, Irish Guards, from 1938 to 1949, after which he became conductor of the Ford Motor Works Band, said to be the finest civilian military band of its era. His office in the plant at Dagenham was above the noisy tractor assembly line, hence the title of the march. His better-known classic march *Sarafand* was played for the march back, as was Lieutenant Colonel 'Mick' Lane's jaunty arrangement combining *Paddy McGinty's Goat* and *MacNamara's Band*.

*The Girl I Left Behind Me* by the drums and fifes replaced the usual *Hazelmere* as the Guards formed divisions, and the massed bands marched away from the saluting base to the pipes playing Pipe Major Jimmy Johnstone's *Memories of Field Marshal Alexander*, first played on the parade in 1980.



*The Corps of Drums playing The Girl I Left Behind Me.*

*The flute player nearest the camera wears the Cutlers' Sword, presented annually by the Cutlers' Company*

The Household Cavalry's Director of Music, Major Paul Collis-Smith, composed *Cavalry Guard* to be played as the Royal Procession rode onto Horse Guards Parade, then as the cavalry returned to rank past at the trot, *Cavalry's Return*. Two new drum horses were on the parade for the first time, still referred to by their stable names of Harry and Ed as they are yet to be given their classical names.



*Major Paul Collis-Smith, Director of Music  
Household Cavalry*



*Drum horses Harry (left) and Ed*

Since 1969 the *Preobrajensky March* has generally been played in alternate years when The Life Guards found the first two divisions of the escort, introduced due to its association with the regiment's colonel (1965-1979), Earl Mountbatten. It was the march of the bodyguard of Peter the Great so perhaps there were reservations about playing a Russian march under current circumstances. The replacement was, in any case, far more appropriate as *Men of Harlech* was the march of the 2nd Life Guards, whose band appeared on the parade for the last time one hundred years earlier, just prior to the regiment's amalgamation with the 1st Life Guards in 1922.

HM The Queen, accompanied by HRH The Duke of Kent (Colonel, Scots Guards) took the salute from the balcony of Buckingham Palace on the return, and for the first time since 1972 the Household Cavalry ranked past at the palace in traditional cavalry style with the mounted band leading. With Her Majesty's official birthday held on the anniversary of her coronation, this meant that a 'double' royal salute of 82 rounds was fired by The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery in Hyde Park after the parade.

The new senior drum major, Drum Major Gareth Chambers, Irish Guards, was in fine voice and, to his right, stood Drum Major Stuart Laing, Welsh Guards, a one-time cornet player in the regimental band. A very proud Welsh Guardsman (from Kent!), Stuart had sounded *Last Post* on a first world war bugle at a number of the centenary commemorations, including at the Cenotaph and high up in the Triforium of Westminster Abbey.



*Drum Major Stuart Laing, Welsh Guards, at The Major General's Review*

This was the final parade for Lieutenant Colonel Simon Haw MBE, Commanding Officer of the Household Division bands. We offer him our very best wishes for the future.

# Trooping the Colour 2022

Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Parade  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022

Colonel's Review – Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May  
Major General's Review – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May



Official Programme £5