

Duntroon's Colours

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and The Duke of Edinburgh visited Australia from 19 to 29 October 2011 with the Australian Defence Force involved in many aspects of the tour.

On the pomp and ceremony side, the Royal visit commenced with a Ceremonial Welcome at the RAAF's 34 Squadron, Fairbairn, on Wednesday 19 October, with Australia's Federation Guard providing a Royal Guard and 21-gun salute.

Next day, it was the turn of the Royal Australian Navy to take centre stage, with the Admiral's Barge ferrying the Royal couple from Government House to Canberra's famous Floriade flower festival.

Another major highlight of the Canberra leg of the visit was when Her Majesty presented new Queen's and Regimental Colours to the Royal Military College, Duntroon – even more significant occurring as it did in the college's centenary year.

Queen Elizabeth II and The Duke of Edinburgh also paid respects at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Australian War Memorial on Tuesday 25 October.

At the business end of the Queen's visit, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Perth saw more than 300 ADF members – including F/A-18 and Black Hawk crews, SAS, reserve soldiers and other members – involved in security operations.

But it was surely the staff and cadets at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, who felt the brightest limelight – and felt the most pressure, not only for all the practice and preparation that went into a spectacular parade, but also for the weight of responsibility Queen Elizabeth II placed upon their young shoulders.

In a brief, to-the-point speech, the Queen told the Corps of Staff Cadets that the presentation of colours was a special opportunity to recognise past achievements, to give thanks for commitment and loyalty today and to express confidence in the future.

"I entrust these colours to you today in the hope that you will guard and honour them through your conduct and example, upholding the values of leadership, duty and loyalty that are the very core of your military training."

