

A Royal visit 50 years on

By David Kiltie

DO you remember 1956? Outside of Maybole there were a few things happening. There was the Suez crisis, when President Nasser seized the Canal in July; Japan joined the United Nations; there was discontent in Poland and a revolt in Hungary which led to national tragedy as the West stood helplessly by; the first nuclear power station in Britain was opened by the Queen in October; Peter Twiss became the first man to take the world air speed record beyond 1,000 m.p.h.— 1,132 m.p.h. in a Fairey Delta 2; compulsory tests on road worthiness of road vehicles were introduced; Malenkov, a member of the Russian government, visited Burns Cottage; Bulganin and Khrushchev visited Britain; Premium Bonds were introduced in the Budget by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (they were described by someone called Harold Wilson as a “squalid raffle”); Joe Grimond became leader of the Liberal Party; Sir Anthony Eden was Prime Minister and Dwight D. Eisenhower was re-elected as President of the U.S.A.

But in Maybole 1956 was the year that the Queen and Prince Philip came to town. Carrick’s ancient capital had made an all out effort to show its pleasure at the Royal visit. Flags, bunting, banners and flowers were everywhere. The centre of activity was a dais erected outside the Town Hall, where there was a beautiful setting of flowers and potted plants. The sun shone, crowds thronged the streets and Maybole Magistrates were wearing their new robes for the first time. The Royal visitors made their way to the Town Hall via Ladyland Road, Miller Street and Whitehall. In the Town Hall the Queen signed the visitors’ book with an

18-carat gold fountain pen while the Duke of Edinburgh used his own pen. The couple then autographed two portraits of themselves. When all the ceremonies were past they returned to their car and left the town by way of High Street and Cassillis Road to the accompaniment of Maybole Pipe Band. The previous occasion on which a Royal signature was entered in the visitors’ book was in 1926 when Prince Charles’ predecessor as Earl of Carrick and Prince of Wales, the late Duke of Windsor, visited the town. The magistrates’ new robes had been bought by money raised from the sale of burgh band instruments, a decision which is still talked about in Maybole. The Rev. A.M. Douglas described the failure of his congregation to decide which of the two churches, Cargill or Kincaig, should be retained as “a great disappointment.” 1956 was also Mr. Douglas’s Silver Jubilee and he was presented with a television set and a cheque to mark his 25 years service in Maybole. The Rev. Jack Murray, the first missionary from Maybole Baptist Church to carry out evangelical work in the foreign field, had returned, for a short stay, to the town after an absence of 10 years. Ex-Provost T. Hicks retired from the Town Council and it was agreed that one of the streets in the first housing scheme to be erected should be named after him. Little use was being made of the radio set in the library, so the Town Council agreed not to renew the licence. Twelve houses at Ballony were to be demolished. Dancers at the Saturday evening dances were not admitted unless they were “properly dressed”.

Maybole’s Road Safety Quiz Team brought renown to the Burgh, although they did not win the top prize of a visit to Roy Rogers’ ranch in

California. The team was Jean Corbett (Captain); Janie Nimmo; Andrew Eccles and Sandy Nicholson, reserves were Jim Douglas and Evelyn Shaw.

Calcutta Avenue had its name changed to St. John’s Lane.

Damage was being done to shrubs in the open space behind Cairn School, apparently through children playing marbles.

There was no election in Maybole for the first time since May, 1949. Councillors re-elected unopposed were Mrs. Mary McLean; Mrs. Sarah Dunn; Mr. W. Cuthbert and Mr. J. McDowall. Local stationmaster Mr. W. Greggan took the fifth seat to replace Ex-Provost Hicks.

64th Ayrshire (Maybole) Detachment of the Red Cross was presented with the Winton Cup.

Winners in Maybole’s gardens competition were:—

All round Garden: 1. J. Fergusson, 17 Whitefaulds Quadrant; 2. Robert Paul, 15 Whitefaulds Quadrant; 3. Wm. G. Robertson, 4 Kirkmichael Road.

Flower Garden: 1. John Kenny, 38 Whitefaulds Avenue; 2. John Ferguson, 28 Queens Terrace; 3. Robert McCulloch, 11 Crosshill Road.

Novice Section: 1. Thomas Faulds, 12 Kincaig Crescent; 2. Wm. Mcreadie, 11 Kincaig Crescent
Garden Plots: 1. Wm. Hunter, 52 Kirkoswald Road; 2. John Kennedy, 11 Wellington Street; 3. Charles Mundell, 14 Whitehall.

Maybole Pipe Band was trying to raise funds to buy new tunics for its 22 members. The tunics cost £10-£12 each.

Elizabeth Gill, 58 Whitefaulds Avenue, left for a year’s linguistic study in Lisbon as part of her



TOWN Clerk David Briggs, left, looks on as Prince Philip signs the town’s visitors book and Queen Elizabeth examines the Town Mace.

preparations for missionary work in Portuguese West Africa.

The Co-op’s Boot and Shoe Department, High Street, won first prize in the S.C.W.S. window display competition.

Miss “CARRIE-KAKADEMY” made her debut in a marionette and glove puppet show presented by secondary 111A in the Kincaig Church Hall.

Dogs in Maybole lost their voices.

Apparently an outbreak of laryngitis affected at least 30 dogs.

The Women’s Branch of the Maybole British Legion had their “Parcels for the Soldiers” scheme in operation. Organised annually since 1951, Christmas parcels were sent to Maybole servicemen as far apart as Germany, Middle East and Far East.

And Ayr United, under manager Neil McBain, were promoted to the top division in Scottish Football.



THE Queen waves to Maybole residents as she leaves the Town Hall.

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