

Cake and Cockhorse

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The visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on Thursday, 27th November 2008 was a most appropriate finale to Charter Year 400 in Banbury. As well as signing the visitors' book the royal couple were shown the 1608 James I charter. Her Majesty unveiled a plaque to mark the 400 year period of time since the town was granted the right among other things to appoint its first mayor.

At the Town Hall the Queen and Duke were greeted by Councillor Ann Bonner (the current Mayor) along with other councillors, dignitaries and 150 specially invited guests, representing a wide spectrum of town life, especially charities. Before this display of loyalty, the Queen as Patron visited and officially opened the new Leonard Cheshire Disability Agnes Court development in the Warwick Road, whilst the Duke was given a tour of the Prodrive motor sports works.

Speaking at the conclusion of the visit Councillor Ann Bonner summed up the feelings of so many people when she said 'this has been a lovely day for Banbury and I'm sure the school children must have been thrilled to see the Queen. In all of the economic gloom it is fantastic to have had this wonderful ray of sunshine'. Maurice Humphris (Deputy Lieutenant for Oxfordshire) has added that the occasion 'gave to us, the people of Banbury, a chance to demonstrate our loyalty and love for this remarkable lady, whose seemingly effortless charm and interest in all those she met was a heart warming and never to be forgotten experience'. **B.L.**

Cover: Watched by the Duke of Edinburgh and the Mayor (Cllr. Ann Bonner), Her Majesty signs the Visitors' Book. (Photo courtesy *Banbury Guardian*)