

MWA – Home & Overseas – October 2016 – Exhibition about the Queen’s 90th birthday – “Fashioning a Reign”

In celebration of The Queen's 90th birthday this year, special exhibitions have been staged across the UK during 2016. “*Fashioning a Reign*” charts significant events in The Queen's life and the nation's history through a collection of dress and accessories, from childhood to the present day. Here are a few of the highlights:

Both Princess Elizabeth, aged 11, and her sister, Princess Margaret, aged 7, attended the Coronation of their parents at Westminster Abbey in 1937. They wore cream dresses with gold embellishment and purple trains. Their outfits were completed by silver-gilt coronets.



Ring ring!

There was an old fashioned rotary telephone, used by The Queen to make the first Subscriber Trunk Dialling call (STD) from Bristol to Edinburgh on 5 December 1958. This event marked the innovation that allowed calls to be made long distance in the United Kingdom without operator assistance.

First email

On 26 March 1976, The Queen visited the Royal Signals and Radar Establishment at Malvern, Worcestershire. During the visit Her Majesty sent her first ever email. The message was sent by the press of a button which transmitted a communication to users of the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network. I wonder if that ever caught on?

That parachute jump...

2012 marked the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty The Queen and it was also the year in which the United Kingdom hosted the Olympic Games. The memorable opening ceremony included a short film

'Happy and Glorious' in which the Queen seemingly abandoned protocol to jump out of a helicopter. Two versions of this dress were made in complete secrecy, one for Her Majesty and one for the stunt double. This is the dress worn by the Queen.



There couldn't be a stronger contrast between the formality of the outfits of 1937, which had to be approved by the Lord Chamberlain at the time, and the fun which the whole nation enjoyed in 2012, and all in one person's lifetime!

It was a really fascinating and interesting exhibition, and well worth going to see.

Naomi Hancock