



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada

NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

All The Queen's Horses: fourth RCMP steed crosses Atlantic to join Royal Mews **Official presentation at the May 16 finale of Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo (May 13 – 16)**

OTTAWA – May 3, 2009 – Police Service Horse (PSH) ‘George’, the fourth Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) horse destined for residency at the Royal Mews, has crossed the Atlantic, ready for presentation to Her Majesty The Queen at this month’s Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo.

Proudly bearing the name of The Queen’s grandfather, King George V, the eight-year-old gelding (standing 17 hands high and weighing 1,375lb) will take centre stage on Saturday, May 16: the final night of the Royal Tattoo, now in its second year and fast becoming a highlight of the International Tattoo calendar, staged in the private grounds of Windsor Castle.

“The RCMP is honoured to present Her Majesty with PSH George,” said RCMP Commissioner William Elliott. He added it was equally an honour for the 12-member RCMP Pipes and Drums Band to be invited to participate at the Royal Tattoo, a not for profit event in support of The Royal British Legion, bringing together all three services of the British Armed Forces.

“We value our relationship with The Queen and the Royal Family, which is reflected in The Queen’s role as Honorary Commissioner of the RCMP, and His Royal Highness, the Earl of Wessex’s role as Honorary Deputy Commissioner. Our relationship has been strengthened over the years through a mutual appreciation for equitation.”

PSH George departed Canada on April 21, the day of The Queen’s birthday (officially celebrated in June). Epitomising the iconic black horses of Canada’s national police force, PSH George will turn nine-years-old on May 18, two days after his official presentation to The Queen, in turn celebrating four decades since the first RCMP Police Service Horse, ‘Burmese’, crossed the Atlantic to join the Royal Mews in 1969.

Setting the bar high, PSH Burmese quickly became a favourite of The Queen’s horses. The mare was ridden by Her Majesty at The Queen’s Birthday Parade or Trooping the Colour, on her very first year, going on to feature in Trooping the Colour for 18 consecutive years. PSH Burmese was followed by PSH Centennial (sic), presented to The Queen in 1973 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the RCMP; and PSH Saint James, in 1998, to mark the RCMP’s 125th anniversary. In 2002, The Queen presented the RCMP with PSH Golden Jubilee in honour of her Golden Jubilee year. This mare has since given birth to a foal named Flycatcher after King George V’s favourite horse.

“Equitation is an important part of the RCMP’s culture and heritage, and is a passion of The Queen,” explained Superintendent Greg Peters, Director of the RCMP’s Strategic Partnerships and Heritage Branch. “The presentation of PSH George is the perfect way to celebrate our

relationship with the Royal Family as well as the historical ties between the United Kingdom, Canada and the RCMP.”

PSH George’s presentation to The Queen also coincides with the 75th anniversary of the RCMP Long Service Medal, approved by King George V in 1934; and the 70th anniversary of the RCMP’s horse breeding programme.

A special presentation ceremony will be held during the finale of the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo on May 16 at 22:00 (media can register online at www.windsortattoo.com). Participants in the official party from Canada include: The Honourable Peter Van Loan, Minister of Public Safety; RCMP Commissioner William J.S. Elliott; and Mr. James Wright, High Commissioner for Canada to the United Kingdom.

Celebrating the extraordinary endeavours of service men and women, past and present, the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo also casts a spotlight on the reality of modern-day soldiering through arena action displays. More than 350 musicians will take part in the event featuring performances from The King’s Troop Royal Horse Artillery and Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, as well as a special tribute to the famous Royal Navy Field Gun Race, last held at a Tattoo at the Royal Tournament a decade ago.

Royal Tattoo Event Director Simon Brooks-Ward said: “We are extremely proud to host this very special presentation of PSH George at the Royal Tattoo. It will no doubt be a memorable moment for The Queen and the audience and a fitting way to celebrate 40 years since Burmese’s introduction to Her Majesty.”

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For media enquiries, please contact:

Canadian High Commission: Shelley Thomas
0207 258 6557
07711 685 384
shelley.thomas@international.gc.ca

Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo: Kelly Smith
01753 847900
07515 864250
kellys@hpower.co.uk

Royal Canadian Mounted Police: Supt. Greg Peters
00 1 613 302 7101
Greg.J.Peters@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Media Relations
00 1 613 993 2999

Note to Editors:

All enquiries related to future use of PSH George directed to Buckingham Palace Press Office
Contact: Ailsa Anderson, Deputy Press Secretary to The Queen / Head of News

0207 024 4209

ailsa.anderson@royal.gsx.gov.uk

* Out of Office Hours Enquiries

Please contact 0207 839 1377 and ask to speak to Out of Hours Duty Press Secretary

Tickets for the Windsor Castle Royal Tattoo 2009 are on sale now priced at £15, £25, £35, £45 and £60. They can be purchased by telephoning the box office on 0871 230 5570, or booked online via the website at www.windsortattoo.com. Tickets can also be purchased through Windsor Information Centre with discounts available for Advantage Card Holders. Please contact the centre on 01753 743907 for full details.