

St Valéry tribute takes place all across Scotland

Pipe Major Richard Grisdale, Piper to Her Majesty The Queen, led more than 500 pipers across the world in a stunning tribute to commemorate the 80th anniversary of St Valéry today.

The largely forgotten Second World War battle led to 10,000 mainly Scottish soldiers from the 51st Highland Division being captured at St Valéry-en-Caux.

They had continued the fight on the continent in support of the French after the Dunkirk evacuations had been completed.



Also taking part in the commemorations was His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, who took the salute from a piper at Birkhall to mark the anniversary this morning.

In a message of support for the commemorations, His Royal Highness, who is known as the Duke of Rothesay when in Scotland, said: "On 12th June 1940, after a gallant stand, the 51st Highland Division with supporting arms and services, including elements from English regiments, was forced to surrender to the German army at St Valéry-en-Caux on the Normandy coast of France.

"At 10am this morning, on this year's 80th anniversary, pipers throughout Scotland and further afield were on their doorsteps playing the celebrated march, the *Heroes of St Valéry*, in honour of the fallen and to remember a battle in which those of the Division displayed the greatest courage and tenacity. We remember all who served and who sacrificed so much."

The piping performance at Birkhall was echoed all over Scotland and throughout the world, with around 500 pipers taking part in today's poignant occasion. It is thought the level of participants is a record for the greatest number of pipers playing simultaneously.

Pipers from as far afield as Peru and Kathmandu performed the *Heroes of St Valéry*, which was composed by Donald MacLean after his capture at St Valéry in June 1940. He spent the next four years as a prisoner of war.

Today's events were developed by three leading Scottish Armed Forces charities: Poppyscotland; Legion Scotland; and RCET: Scotland's Armed Forces Children's Charity. All of the broadcasts can be viewed live from the charities' Facebook pages, and also from Poppyscotland's YouTube channel.

The public is being asked to support the St Valéry tribute through a fundraising campaign which will support the work of

the three charities. To donate £5, please text **PIPER** to **70007**. Standard network rates may apply but the charities will receive the full donation amount.

