

Lord Wallace pays tribute to Her Majesty The Queen

Former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Lord Jim Wallace, has paid tribute to Her Majesty The Queen in the House of Lords in a poignant speech, ahead of the service and ceremony on the arrival of The Queen's coffin in Westminster Hall at which he attended as a House of Lords representative today.

As a member of the Privy Council, Lord Wallace was also in attendance at the Accession Council last Saturday when King Charles III was formally proclaimed King. Signing an historic oath to uphold the Presbyterian system of Church governance in Scotland was His Royal Highness's first act.

Speaking last week, just a day after Her Majesty The Queen died at Balmoral, Lord Wallace addressed the House of Lords with his own personal memories of The Queen.

"My Lords, I was born two and a half years after Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth ascended the Throne," he said.

"Until yesterday, in common with the majority of people in this country, I had known only one monarch. For so many of us, the Queen alone represented what we think of as and understand

by the concept of monarchy. She was 'The Queen'. Her reign was one of exemplary, selfless and faithful service, sustained by a profound Christian faith – a life of service inspired by following the way of Jesus, the Servant King.

“However, it was not a slavish adherence to duty. Many people have commented on the late Queen’s pertinent comments on visits, her informed observations and the real interest she showed in people and communities. She engaged with these people and their communities on visits for 70 years and more, and invariably left them feeling much better for having met her. It is testimony to the gracious manner in which she fulfilled her role as our Queen.

“Comments have been made today and in many of the commentaries over the past 24 hours about the dramatic changes that have taken place in our country, across the world and in society since the Queen ascended the Throne in 1952 – things that almost certainly would have been unimaginable in that year.

“I recall reading somewhere that, at the age of 50, she was the first head of state ever to send what we now call an email. The Scottish Parliament was probably only a twinkle in the eye of some political activists, but the noble Lord, Lord McConnell, recalled her visit to the Scottish Parliament’s Sitting in Aberdeen on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee in 2002. She gave so much encouragement to those of us who had been in there from the beginning and had taken some brickbats from the press for what we were doing.

“I also recall that, when she opened the new Scottish Parliament on 1 July 1999, she referred to the ‘pragmatic balance between continuity and change’.

“Truly, it was her ability to achieve and maintain that pragmatic balance over seven decades, not least in political and constitutional relationships, that was one of the key hallmarks of her reign.

“I first met the Queen in Kirkwall in 1987 when she unveiled a new stained glass window in St Magnus Cathedral on the 850th anniversary of the cathedral’s foundation. When I last met her, less than three weeks ago, she referred to that visit.

“As a former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, a Church in which she always showed a keen interest, I had been asked to preach the sermon at the Sunday morning worship in Crathie Church.

“The Queen graciously invited me to spend two nights at Balmoral Castle on her beloved Deeside – but no barbeques. It was a privilege to have had such quality time talking to her. Her mind was sharp. She had a keen interest in what was going on. I experienced the warmth of her personality, which so many people have talked about. She so readily put me at my ease.

“It was also a privilege to engage with close members of her family over those two days, who also did so much to make me feel welcome. It is them – the family to whom the Queen was a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and mother-in-law – I have particularly been thinking about over the past 24 hours.

“As we give thanks for the life of the Queen – a remarkable life of humble leadership and service – I know that we will want to keep in our thoughts and prayers her close family, especially His Majesty King Charles, for whom her death is so very real and personal.

“May they know the comfort that Jesus promised to those who mourn.”

[You can watch Lord Wallace’s speech in full on the ParliamentLive.TV website](#)

