



Take part in history and celebrate

Slide 2: In 2022 the word 'Jubilee' will be used a lot – it isn't a word we hear often! This year marks an extra special Jubilee, but before we explore what is happening this year, we need to find out what a Jubilee is!

A Jubilee is like a birthday for the reign of a King or Queen – it is the celebration of their life and reign. Unlike birthdays, Jubilees don't happen every year, making them all the more special; and to reflect how special these occasions are, each Jubilee is named after a precious stone or substance. After 25 years on the throne, a monarch celebrates their Silver Jubilee; after 40 years they celebrate their Ruby Jubilee; a Golden Jubilee marks 50 years; a Diamond Jubilee marks 60 years and a Sapphire Jubilee marks 65 years on the throne.

Slide 3: A Platinum Jubilee is for 70 years – that's 7 decades! – on the throne. In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British monarch ever to mark a Platinum Jubilee.

Slide 4: Although she is the first British monarch to reach her Platinum Jubilee, Queen Elizabeth is not the first monarch to celebrate the Jubilees of her reign. Previous British monarchs have celebrated Jubilees in a variety of different ways, including the Queen's great-great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, who became queen nearly 200 years ago, and celebrated both her Golden (50 years) and Diamond (60 years) Jubilees.

How do you think Queen Victoria might have celebrated these occasions? Let's find out ...!

Slide 5: The people of Britain wanted to see the Queen in her Jubilee year, and so part of the celebrations included a grand procession through London, with the Queen travelling in a horse-drawn carriage. There are many paintings and photographs of this procession – it was even filmed, by many different film-makers who all wanted to capture this historic moment. People lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the Queen in her carriage. In this photograph, you can see the arrival of a horse-drawn carriage carrying members of the Royal Family as it enters the Quadrangle of Buckingham Palace. Guards and horses stand inside the Quadrangle. Can you see something usual about this photograph? Take a closer look at the roof. There are crowds standing on the top of the East Front of the Palace to watch the procession – they must have had an excellent view!

Slide 6: Triumphant arches were put situated in various locations visited by the Queen, creating grand entrances and surroundings for the monarch. These arches were not permanent like buildings- they were temporary, often made out of cheap materials, and would be taken apart after the celebrations were over. On these arches (in Kensington, London, on the left, and at Balmoral, a royal residence in Royal Deeside in Scotland, on the right), you can see different materials have been used to create the arches. What details can you see? (flags, ribbons, letters, plants, letters and dates; 'God Save the Queen'; 'Victoria' ; 'V R'; 'Ever Welcome'; 1837–1887)

Slide 7: The Jubilee celebrations also included grand meals called banquets. This painting shows a grand banquet held in the Ball Supper Room at Buckingham Palace on 21 June 1887, where many important people from across the world were invited to join Queen Victoria, including monarchs of other nations. Queen Victoria sat with the King of Denmark on her right hand and Leopold II, King of the Belgians, on her left; can you see where Queen Victoria is sitting? She wore a dress embroidered with silver roses, thistles and shamrocks – do you know why? (National flowers of England, Scotland and Ireland).

Queen Victoria recorded in her journal, 'we dined in the Supper Room which looked splendid with the Buffet covered with the gold plate. The table was a large horseshoe one, with many lights on it.' The lights Queen Victoria refers to were not electric lights, but many candles. Together with mirrors, these candles were used to catch the gleam of the gilt plate, helping to make the room appear to sparkle and dazzle, which we can see in this watercolour. The evening ended with fireworks in the Palace gardens.

Slide 8: And the events were not all for adults! This photograph shows the fete given in Hyde Park for 20,000 children belonging to the London Board and Voluntary Schools, to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. Can you imagine attending a party as big as this?

Slide 9: The first royal Garden Party took place in 1887 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. She held a second Garden Party for her Diamond Jubilee in 1897, which can be seen in this oil painting. The artist was given permission to hold sittings with people who were at the party, so that he could produce an accurate picture of the figures in the crowd!

Slide 10: This drawing shows Queen Victoria at her second Garden Party, taking tea in her tent, with the Princess of Wales behind her and the Prince of Wales to her right. She wrote in her diary entry for that day that she 'drove about amongst my guests, to many of whom I spoke...[and then] had tea in the tent'.

Today, approximately 8,000 people attend the Garden Parties held at Buckingham Palace every year. Some 27,000 cups of tea, 20,000 sandwiches and 20,000 slices of cake are served at each event.

Slide 12: How do we know so much about Jubilees which have taken place in the past? Through the many records produced by people who lived through the events, whether capturing and recording in paintings, photographs, photograph albums (as in the one above right), or in newspapers and films. We also know through the words of people who witnessed the occasions: diaries, letters and so forth. Queen Victoria herself kept a diary throughout her life, from the age of 13, and for her Jubilee she created a special book to record signatures of people she met that year. For Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012, a time capsule was created to mark the year. The capsule included contributions by almost 40,000 people from 66 countries. Contained within it are stories of schooldays, of Independence Days and memories of The Queen's Coronation in 1952. The most popular day in the capsule's timeline, with 200 entries, was 29 April 2011 – the day of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's wedding.

Slide 13: How might you record this historic moment in time?

Slide 14: We've seen that, for past Jubilees, there have been lots of celebrations and parties! Street parties, banquets, fetes, parades, garden parties.

But it isn't just parties. To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee, the Royal Academy of Arts presented a gift of more than 100 works on paper to Her Majesty The Queen. With works from some of the most high-profile Academicians including Tracey Emin, David Hockney, Anish Kapoor, Cornelia Parker and Grayson Perry.

What would your Platinum Jubilee artwork look like?

