

PAM FOLLETT : PRINCESS ANNE

Princess Anne

Anne Elizabeth Alice Louise- only daughter of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip – 15th in line of succession to the throne – Princess Royal since 1987. She was educated initially by a governess then went to Benenden school for girls where she gained 6 O levels and 2 A levels.

She started doing royal duties at the age of 18, initially with her parents before carrying on solo.

She married Mark Philips in 1973. He was offered an Earldom but declined, therefore their two children Peter and Zara were born without titles. They divorced in April 1992 and in December of that year she married Sir Timothy Laurence (who was an equerry to the Queen).

Always a keen horsewoman, Anne won an individual title at The European Eventing championships at the age of 21. She was voted BBC Sports Personality of the year in 1971. She has ridden winners in horse racing, and competed in the British Eventing team for 5 years, She competed in the Olympic Games in 1976, in the Badminton Horse trials coming 6th, and in a charity horse race at Epsom Derby coming 4th. She won a gold and two silver medals at the European Championships. She was a worthy contestant on BBC Question of Sport.

She remains heavily involved with riding for the disabled. She was a member of the organising committee for the London Olympics.

She survived a kidnapping attempt in 1974 – her personal protection Officer, chauffeur and a nearby tabloid journalist were all shot by Ian Ball. They were all hospitalised and recovered from their wounds and were awarded medals by the Queen for their bravery. Ian Ball is still detained under the Mental health Act at Broadmoor Hospital.

The Princess Royal has carried out over 20,000 engagements since her 18th birthday- in December 2017 she undertook the most official engagements that year out of the whole royal family.

Her royal visits abroad include Norway, Jamaica, Germany, Austria, N Zealand and Australia, and in 1990 she was the first member of the royal family to visit the Soviet Union.

She is involved with over 200 charities and has been a patron for Save the Children for over 50 years. She does extensive work for St Johns Ambulance. Her public personality has been described as not suffering fools lightly, whilst maintaining a still impressive level of grace and courtesy – she never shakes hands on walkabouts!

Her list of honours and titles are impressive. 24 civic, 9 fellowships, 4 academic. 33 military (here and abroad).

In my opinion certainly a woman to be considered in A History of Women, both for her own sporting achievements and work with her charities, but also for her dedication, work ethic example, support and loyalty to the Queen.