

## **Humble Addresses by the House of Commons and House of Lords**

On 20 March 2012, the House of Commons and the House of Lords presented Humble Addresses to Her Majesty the Queen at Westminster Hall to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee.

The ceremony is part of a tradition dating back nearly 500 years in which the Houses, either individually or together, present a Humble Address to which the Sovereign replies.

In the past, the content of the Humble Addresses was often political or even controversial. However, more recently their nature has become mainly ceremonial. Humble Addresses have been presented to mark the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935, to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 and her Golden Jubilee in 2002 to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Glorious Revolution in 1688 and the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II in 1995.

## **Loyal Addresses by Privileged Bodies**

On 27 March 2012, twenty seven Privileged Bodies presented Loyal Addresses to The Queen at Buckingham Palace to mark the Diamond Jubilee.

Privileged Bodies enjoy the historic right to present an Address to the Sovereign in person. These were originally called Humble Addresses, like those of Parliament, but over time have become known as Loyal Addresses.

There is a long history of publishing Humble and Loyal Addresses in the London Gazette since its inception in the late-17th century, as regional government and other organisations sought to demonstrate their dedication to the Crown. There were several hundred Privileged Bodies at that time, and the Addresses provided the opportunity to reassert their loyalty as well as drawing the Monarch's attention to particular issues. In an age of limited communications, it was a rare and valuable opportunity to directly address the monarch. It also gave the government of the time an idea of what concerned the country's citizens.

Today, as with Parliament's Humble Addresses, the privilege is more ceremonial than political, serving to emphasise and reaffirm the antiquity and importance of the Privileged Bodies on special Royal occasions. The Addresses given in this supplement represent the fifth time the Queen has received the Privileged Bodies during her reign. The previous occasions were her accession in 1952, her Silver Jubilee in 1977, the engagement of The Prince of Wales in 1981 and her Golden Jubilee in 2002. Records of these addresses can all be found in the London Gazette archives.

After the Humble or Loyal Addresses have been read, the Queen responds and is given a parchment copy of each Address.