

PAUL BURRELL



Over the course of 21 years, Paul Burrell rose from member of the Royal household staff to personal attendant to the Queen of England and then butler to the Prince and Princess of Wales. Ultimately, he became the trusted personal assistant and confidante to the late Diana, Princess of Wales. In 2003, he published his autobiography, *A Royal Duty*, which included his personal account of his Royal service and his close friendship with the late princess, who was arguably one of the world's most popular and beloved public figures. This book was a London and New York Times number 1 best seller and sold in excess of 3 million copies worldwide. His next book, *The Way We Were – Remembering Diana*, was also a best seller throughout the world.

In 21 years of service to the British Royal family, Paul Burrell worked closely in and around some of the most beautiful homes and palaces in England. In actuality, his travels included far more than Great Britain and Europe, as his years of service gave him first-hand experience of the most interesting houses in virtually every corner of the world. His exposure to fine homes, priceless art collections and furnishings has provided Burrell with all manner of expertise and he has become a taste arbiter and expert in food, wines, furnishings, flower arranging, etiquette and entertaining, especially in the English style.

“During my 21 years of service to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, and the Prince and Princess of Wales, I have been fortunate to witness the ultimate in stylish and elegant entertaining, from private and intimate family occasions at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Kensington Palace and the Royal Yacht Britannia to grand and lavish State Banquets for presidents, kings and queens. My memories of such events have led me to want to share my experiences,” Burrell says.

Paul Burrell's childhood was humble – what he calls “a far cry from the luxury of Buckingham Palace.” He was born, on June 6, 1958, into a working-class family and lived in a small terraced house in the village of Grassmoor, a coal-mining community in the north of England. He recalls his first visit to London with his family at the age of eight, watching the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace and turning to his parents saying, “One day I'm going to work here”. His childhood wish came true, and during his years of service, he rose to one of the most prestigious levels in the Royal Household and then trusted butler to the heir to the throne.

“After only a year, I began serving the Queen personally and soon began travelling with her and Prince Philip to almost every corner of the world,” Burrell says. “My experiences from Royal tours will remain with me for the rest of my life. From walking along the Great Wall of China with the Queen, to a visit to the remote South Pacific Island of Tuvalu aboard the Royal Yacht Britannia or a visit to the Tutankhamen exhibition in Cairo with the Princess of Wales and walking with her through the landmine fields of Angola and Bosnia – each tour was unique and holds very special memories. During my career with the Royal Households, I was given many opportunities to see the world and experience situations that I could otherwise only have imagined. I attended and participated in the organization of Her Majesty’s State Banquets and receptions for world leaders and heads of state, including the visits of President and Mrs. Reagan at Windsor Castle and the visit of his Holiness Pope John Paul II at Buckingham Palace.”

In 1987, Paul Burrell was asked by the Prince and Princess of Wales to join their household at Highgrove House in Gloucestershire. It was there that he became butler to the most famous couple in the world and responsible not only for their private entertaining at home and abroad but also on official and private visits. His children, Alexander and Nicholas, became close friends with Princes William and Harry and accompanied them on many family outings.

Five years later when the Royal couple separated, Princess Diana was asked to compile a list of everything she wanted to take from Highgrove to her apartment in Kensington Palace. “Some time later I learned that at the top of her wish list was my name,” Burrell adds. “For me, the Princess was the personification of style, but it was also a privilege to serve and to know such a unique and inspirational human being. One of the many things I learned from her is that simplicity is often the most tasteful and attractive approach to entertaining.”

As recognition of his service to the Royal Family, Paul Burrell was decorated by the Queen with the Royal Victorian Medal at an investiture at Buckingham Palace in November of 1997. “I will treasure this proud moment, which I shared with my family, for the rest of my life, in the knowledge that I am the only person to have been awarded the RVM for service to Diana, Princess of Wales.”

Today, Paul Burrell resides in Farndon, Cheshire where he runs his flower shop and in his leisure time, paints watercolours. As a unique witness to Royal history, he is regularly asked to participate in TV and film documentaries. Having known personally almost every member of the current British Royal family, his credible insight is much sought after. As a TV correspondent, Burrell has provided commentary for the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen and for the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

“I now watch with eager anticipation for the birth and upbringing of a new Prince or Princess of Wales, knowing that the dynastic line will be secure and continue long after this present golden Elizabethan age”.