

Planning underway for Duke of York visit

By Brock Weir

Community celebrations with a Royal flavour are now in the works to honour the long-standing service of Aurora's regiment, the Queen's York Rangers.

Plans are currently being finalized by the Regiment for a series of events in Aurora and Toronto in June in the presence of the Regiment's Colonel-in-Chief, Prince Andrew, Duke of York.

The Queen's son is the Queen's York Rangers' first Colonel-in-Chief, having been appointed to the position in 1999.

The centrepiece of the celebrations will commemorate the awarding of four new Battle Honours for the Regiment. This spring's events will be the latest in a long string of public celebrations of the Queen's York Rangers, and its members, who so recently came back from the theatre of war in Afghanistan.

The Auroran understands the Aurora leg of the Duke of York's visit will take place on Thursday, June 5.

Further details regarding the visit will be released closer to the date.

2013 was dominated by a themed series of fundraisers based on 'The Day in the Life of a Soldier' including a tribute breakfast in March, a public lunch and day of family fun in May, and culminating in a celebratory dinner in the style of a Regimental Mess in November.

The Queen's York Rangers received battle honours for the Battle of Queenston Heights in 2012 to commemorate the bicentennial of the War of 1812.

The bicentennial honours were awarded to currently serving regiments that have their roots in early Canadian regiments that helped defend what is now Canada during the battle between British and American forces.

Other contemporary regiments sharing the Queenston honour included the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry and the Lincoln and Welland Regiment, which received their honours in September, 2012 from the Earl and Countess of Wessex, their respective Colonels-in-Chief, as well as the 56th Field Artillery Regiment.

The Queen's York Rangers participated in a military muster to commemorate the bicentennial at their Toronto base, Fort York, in front of the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall. Further bicentennial celebrations participated in by the Queen's York Rangers included a parade in Toronto to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of York, one year ago this week, presided over by the Duke of Edinburgh.