

there was very little dust during this performance!

Border Challenges

Travelling in Europe poses interesting changes in travel routines compared to a Ride tour in Canada. The numerous border crossings are a good example of this, and perhaps none better than when entering Switzerland. Permission was required for Ride members to enter Switzerland in uniform, and later, when leaving Switzerland for West Germany. While in Lausanne, Switzerland, the Ride performed at the *Concours International de Dressage*. Canadian Ambassador Jacques Dupuis attended, and watched the Musical Ride, representing Canada, escorting winners to the winner's circle.

Duerne, Netherlands, provided the next setting for a five-day stay by the Ride, which shared billing with the main event, a four-in-hand horse and coach competition.

The Hague followed Duerne, and it was there that the Ride began to attract really large crowds. The centre of The Hague was converted into a massive show ring, and over four performances, the Ride performed for audiences totalling 270,000. As you might imagine, the influx of this many people during a short period of time posed numerous crowd control problems for police.

During its stay in the Netherlands, the Ride gave a royal command performance for Queen Beatrix at Apeldoorn. Large crowds also attended this performance — no doubt an indication of the close relationship between the people of the Netherlands and Canada, and between the Dutch Royal Family and Canadians. Princess Margriet, Queen Beatrix's sister, was born in Ottawa, Ontario. The tulip festival in Ottawa each year is a reminder

of the warm relationship which still exists.

Paris, France, was described as "quite an experience", by Ride members, who performed as close as is legally possible to the Eiffel Tower. The sheer magnetism of the Ride's colourful presence at this world renowned monument drew 6,000 spectators for the performance.

Later, at the famous Longchamp Racetrack, the Musical Ride was given exactly 22 minutes to perform its spectacle. The Ride was equal to this challenge — brought about by the television industry so satellite coverage of an American horse race could be provided — and horses and riders completed the performance in exactly 22 minutes. That's show biz, folks!

One of the world's most prestigious horse shows is held at Aachen, West Germany, and the 1988 Musical Ride was privileged to perform there, from June 27-July 3. The show site is magnificent, and 35,000-50,000 people attended each show in which the Ride participated. It was there that the Ride was introduced to a local custom of audiences waving white handkerchiefs as a farewell gesture to competitors. It is quite an emotional experience that is shared by competitors and spectators. The Ride created its own response to this custom, by flying reversed pennons — white over red instead of red over white — on their lances. Audiences at Aachen appeared to be extremely knowledgeable in cavalry traditions, and this new Musical Ride tradition heightened emotions. These are the moments when each Ride member has that adrenalin-induced "rush" of pride, and sits just a little taller in the saddle. Those who participated in this moment will likely never forget it.

The final stop was Zurich, Switzerland, at a show somewhat comparable to the one at Aachen. There, the Ride performed