



# A BARONET'S DIARY

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## 3,000 'GUESTS' AND LOCAL MP VISIT TISSINGTON HALL

During lockdown we welcomed 3,000 visitors but they were not particularly good at social distancing. The guests in question were in fact a swarm of honey bees. I had been aware of their presence as I walked in front of the Hall each evening and in the hot weeks of June the noise had got greater. With worries they might be a danger to the family, I sought help from Mansfield honey bee keepers Martyn and Andy to extract them. As usual with Tissington Hall this was no straightforward matter. First we 'unpeeled' the lead from the roof, then cut through the wooden structures to find my lodgers. Martyn and Andy attended one morning to lure them into a beekeeping basket as well as taking the honeycomb they had created in the crevice of the roof. In total, Martyn and Andy took away a total of 20 litres of 'Tissington' honey as well as our errant visitors. We kept some and it was delicious!

Following the 100 days of lockdown we were, however, visited by more welcome guests. The impact of Covid-19 has been immense. Of those we know, the individual most affected was our Derbyshire Dales MP



Sarah Dines, who contracted the disease in Westminster (as many parliamentarians did) and was confined to bed for two weeks before fighting hard to recover. We were delighted to welcome Sarah and her husband to promote our small village businesses, including the butcher, sweetshop, candle shop and Herbert's Tearooms. Let's hope for successful trading for the rest of the year.



### FAREWELL TO MUCH-LOVED BEAR

We are mourning the loss of our red fox Labrador, Bear. Bear came to Tissington after his owners relocated ten years ago and became a firm favourite. He was a good gun dog and often 'wiped the nose' of more experienced 'pickers ups' dogs. While he enjoyed his bed in the kitchen, his favourite berth was under my feet at my desk and he had a penchant for Desert Island Discs late at night. In recent years his eyesight gave up, meaning he often bumped into more than people. I miss his fur as my footstool.

### BEAUTIFUL DERBYSHIRE

Once again, I can only be amazed at the glorious scenery we have here in Derbyshire. Invited by local ornithologist and 'rambler extraordinaire' Simon James to join his Thursday morning group, an intrepid six of us met near The Old Dog pub in Thorpe at 8am to traverse

the footpaths through the village, over Coldwall Bridge along the banks of the Dove to Ilam and then back via The Stepping Stones and north of Thorpe Cloud. A brisk 6k and a wonderful two hours of chat, banter, laughter and, sadly, more litter! I wrote last month of the

hordes of people that had descended on our beauty spots during lockdown and that morning it was easy to see the mess they had made, but the saving grace of our great morning were the five different views of the colossus that is Thorpe Cloud.



### PRAISE FOR CHATSWORTH

In late June the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire announced that they had planted 6,750 eucalyptus trees on land on their 'East' estate with the objective of providing fuel to heat Chatsworth House, its greenhouses and visitor facilities on renewable energy with biomass boilers that burn 2,000 tons of wood every year. Eucalyptus was chosen as it grows extremely quickly — adding as much as 6ft to its height every year and, acre for acre, a eucalyptus plantation can produce ten times as much wood as one filled with oak, and twice as much as Scandinavian conifers. In Chatsworth terms, this is a relatively modest project considering their swathes of well managed and maintained forestry but it was picked up by the press as a potential fire hazard, considering the resin and oil in the bark is highly flammable as has been seen in recent Australian forest fires. To my mind we all have to look hard at our practices for the future of our planet and Chatsworth should be applauded on their forward-thinking initiative. Remember the family motto Cavendo Tutus (Safe through Caution)! How apt.