

December 2021 Edition Baronet's Diary

The success that Callow Hall has been celebrated in not just the local press but the nationals. Recently crowned Top Country House Hotel in Britain in the Sunday Times, the establishment, based at Mapleton just north of Ashbourne, has 15 individually designed bedrooms in the main house and will have a total of 11 woodland hives based in the adjoining woodland. The light and airy garden room is a triumph and can host dinners of up to 80. Callow is the first Wildhive hotel and the group wish to garner several more similar establishments around the country offering that little bit extra with 'wellbeing experiences from cycling to spa treatments.' Fiona and I were fortunate to be guests at one of the first large dinners at the refurbished hotel for the undisclosed wedding anniversary of Desmond and Vicky Anley. Desmond, in his amusing speech, spoke fondly of his initial 'amorous entanglement' and the fun to be had in London in the 60s and 70s with Vicky and their host of friends. The glorious evening ended with a midnight golf buggy ride to the treehouses in the woods. Callow Hall is back on the map and well worth a visit.

November was a month of goodbyes. First Joanne Varro left Herbert's Tearooms after twenty years of service working tirelessly in the kitchen providing excellent healthy fare for our visitors. Then secondly Angela Dawson retired after ten years as Housekeeper not only looking after the Hall and all its foibles but Fiona and I and our menagerie of children and animals. As I stated in her farewell speech no more will she have to clear the detritus in the children's rooms or the pairs of boxer shorts that, somehow, inadvertently do not make it on their own to the washroom. Angela has shared the highs and lows of life at Tissington and throughout has shown compassion commitment and flawless fortitude. Both Fiona and I are indebted to her and we wish her and Ivan all the best in their Cruise-laden retirement. Thank you.

Covid 19 and the pandemic has changed our lives in many ways. One of its consequences is that the term 'cash is king' is now no longer relevant as more and more of all our transactions are taken remotely or directly by credit card. Donations to Churches have had to change as well and although one would expect Cathedrals such as Derby to have a credit card donate machine in the foyer I certainly did not expect such a contraption at St Anne's Baslow on a recent visit. After viewing the marvellous array of stained glass windows (mainly dedicated to St Anne) in the Church I proffered my donation (with Gift Aid) in seconds as I left the building. We are looking at our own Church in Tissington namely St Mary's attracting a similar machine in a bid to make 'giving' easier and more up to date rather than the envelope and safe in the wall. More soon after our investigations and our striving for better connectivity.

A new hospitality charter, designed to raise the profile of the hospitality industry and promote the sector as a career of choice, has been launched by business leaders in the Peak District & Derbyshire with support from our Local Tourist Board. As Chair of Visit Peak District & Derbyshire I was delighted to join the launch on the Chatsworth Estate at the Cavendish Hotel in Baslow. The Charter has been created to help dispel beliefs that those working in hospitality suffer 'long hours for little pay' and instead highlight the benefits of being part of such a vibrant industry. Over 30 businesses in the Peak District & Derbyshire have already pledged their support for the initiative, with businesses of all sizes across the county urged to sign up and form a collective voice for the sector. So far over 40 businesses have registered and we hope that many more will join to collectively blow the trumpet for our sector.

Finally may I send all my readers best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and I look forward to regaling you with more Derbyshire anecdotes in 2022.

NB new email sirrichard@tissingtonhall.co.uk