

May 2022 Edition

My only previous visits to Chesterfield FC had been to the wonderful dinners of the Derbyshire Society of Golf Captains of which I am fortunate to be Patron. At the dinner this year in the raffle I won two tickets to the ground to watch the much awaited encounter between the Spirerites and visiting Grimsby Town. Shawn of my companion at the last minute due to Covid I decided to go on my own and having negotiated the A61 found myself perched at the half way line just above the visiting dugout. I was part of an attendance of over 7000 for the match in the National League and although three of the visiting fans were ejected before the game had kicked off and even though Chesterfield took an early lead it was all one way traffic as Grimsby came out victors 4-1. I had enjoyed my day and will return for as one of the exiting supporters sagely commented as we left the ground "we didn't win but we certainly were entertained".

It took a full two years for me to succumb to Covid. On the second anniversary of Premier Boris's lockdown instructions of 2020 I felt weary and resorted to the Covid testing pack. Seconds later I was positive and re-arranging my accommodation and my diary. Isolating in our house is not a hardship as there are plenty of rooms to escape to and avoid interaction but the dates that I sadly had to swerve were a great shame. First the opening of the tourism season at Chatsworth, a further local business seminar at Thornbridge Hall near Bakewell and a trip to the sunny climes of Warsop. During my full ten days of isolation I was still able to work to a certain extent although an overriding tiredness did loom. I suspect, although all Government restrictions are now lifted, that this is not the last we shall hear from this pandemic.

As a result of the pandemic Tissington will be hosting 54 marriages this season. Although we have 'executed' most of the postponed Covid betrothals we still have a handful that, for various reasons, have been brought over to the summer of 2022. We started early this season in March and soon afterwards held the actual registrar-led marriage outside on the West Side of the Hall overlooking the rose gardens. Regulations for al fresco weddings have been lifted during the pandemic and ceremonies can now take place anywhere on the premises rather than under a 'permanent structure'. The income into the local economy is much welcomed and I think I will be buying shares in local taxi firms (and possibly training as a driver) such is the demand.

Recently we have installed a 'state of the art' fire alarm system at the Hall as part of the overall management plan of the property. The system is very sensitive and can be set off (quite rightly so) at the slightest sign of smoke. Already we have had it triggered due to a steamed-up bathroom, vaping and spider ingress. The latest incident which caused Ashbourne Fire Service to attend was due to myself lighting the fire in the billiard room as I gave it a spring clean and airing. Having lit the fire I happily went to other parts of the House but, ten minutes later, the alarms went off due to a blow back into the room so causing great consternation about the Hall. Fortunately, there was no cause for concern but the system alerted the Fire Service and they duly arrived to investigate. Coincidentally it was the last day (before retirement) of station officer Paul Holmes after 40 years' service! I do hope that we were his last 'shout' after all the great work he has given to our community after all those years.

In March the planning committee of Derbyshire Dales District Council gave consent for two great additions to the outdoor tourism market in our area. First the plans for Willersley Castle at Cromford were ratified to turn the former home of Sir Richard Arkwright into an outdoor pursuits

attraction for visiting school and scout groups . Well established company Manor Adventure will use the Castle as a centre for various activities for residents such as abseiling, climbing and kayaking bringing a much-loved local landmark back to life. Secondly Rapid Horizons gained consent for a store shed for their canoes and kayaks at Darley Bridge. This company offer canoeing experiences on the Cromford Canal and excursions tackling the rapids on the River Derwent at Matlock Bath. Two great tourism businesses for the Dales!

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