



# From the serious to the hilarious

THERE IS no doubt that I and my wife Lorraine have just completed a hectic and fascinating year. No High Court Judges and no royal visits in Powys might have been marginally disappointing, but there have been so many serious and thought-provoking moments linked to church services, swearing-in ceremonies and the judiciary that there has been no time to dwell on what might have been. A morning in the Coroner's Court in Brecon was something I would not wish to repeat too often and has led me to great admiration for the grass roots of all aspects of our judiciary.

There have been lighter moments. In Knighton, a small town in Radnorshire,



Above: Primary school reserved seat card  
Below: Crickhowell High School, third in Category B, National Crimebeat Awards



Ann Tudor, now High Sheriff of Powys, receives a decanter from the High Sheriff on leaving the magistracy



I opened the World Open International Draughts Competition (no laughter please) which included teams from Barbados, Ukraine and Turkmenistan. In the same town, in full uniform, I hung their award-winning eco-flag which fell off the wall. Light refreshments were six bottles of wine for eight people... say no more!

We went to three primary schools where the children watch a professional play. A police initiative, the children do all the PR, hosting and announcements. In a line-up before the beginning, they give their orders. A boy in Llanfaes Primary shouted 'If you have a child and it cries, TAKE IT OUT.' We need a bit more of that, perhaps. Lorraine's reserved seat card has to be seen to be believed... see picture.

Twelve-year-old Jack, although not named in my half-year report – the one who said 'Don't you feel embarrassed walking around looking like that?' – reappeared in the second half on a similar 'problem boys' training exercise run by the Fire and Rescue Service. A little figure

appeared from a smoke-filled Portakabin and said 'Hello Sir, don't you remember me?' I did, and have no doubt that one day he will make a good fireman or policeman himself.

And finally, the quote of the year was at the Powys Young Farmers Club carol service in the Plough Chapel, Brecon. In an interesting version of the Annunciation, at the point where Mary expresses concern at the potential for alarm from Joseph due to an unexpected pregnancy, was reassured by Archangel Gabriel, 'Don't worry, Mary, I'll sort Joseph out.'

Among others, the police, fire service and YFC do impressive work for young people in Powys.

At the other extreme, but equally amazing, was an event in Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, for the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service Awards. Well organised with loud music, strobe lighting, glitz and pomp, it put a night at the Oscars to shame.

High points for Lorraine and I were endless, but I will never forget being the returning officer for Brecon and Radnorshire at the general election and the wonderful day out in London for the National Crimebeat awards in which Crickhowell High School, mentored by PC Pole and PCSO Dunne, came third in Category B.

What a year!

◆ Lt Colonel M H L Lewis DL

High Sheriff of Powys 2015-16