



City of Bristol 2012-13

The year has flown by and we have enjoyed an active diary. The City of Bristol is the smallest county in England and Wales, which has made it easy to travel to all invitations and also enabled me to attend more than one event in a day.

The year started with my Declaration at the Bristol Crown Court, made in front of the presiding Western Circuit Judge, Mr Justice Jonathan Baker. The High Sheriff of Bristol also organises three main events; a fund-raising concert, Legal Sunday and a reception.

The annual fundraising High Sheriff's Concert was held at Bristol Cathedral in June in aid of the High Sheriff's charity, Bristol Youth Community Action (BYCA). We were delighted that Paul Potts, renowned tenor, returned home to Bristol to perform. It was completed by a standing ovation for Paul's encore of *Nessun Dorma*.

Legal Sunday is now a High Sheriff's event in Bristol, having been dropped by the Bristol City Council due to cost-cutting measures. The service, held at Bristol Cathedral, was attended by



Bristol Legal Sunday Service: The High Sheriff; The Queen's Remembrancer and his clerk; Mrs Mary Prior MBE JP (Lord-Lieutenant) and Presiding High Court Judge of the Western Circuit, Mr Justice Baker.

500 of the City's legal fraternity together with the Presiding High Court Judge, Mr Justice Baker and the Queen's Remembrancer, Master Steven Whitaker. Around 150 dignitaries processed, including our Lord-Lieutenant. The High Court Judge arrived with the Lord Mayor of Bristol

in the City's horse-drawn carriage. The Right Revd Graham Knowles, former Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, preached. A good number of law students from Bristol University and University of the West of England attended.

My reception was held at the Colston Hall with 200 guests, most of whom I met over the year and all of whom are doing great work in the city. We have entertained a number of Judges throughout the year, dining either at home or finding some entertainment in the city.

We also had the honour of receiving several royal visits, three from HRH The Princess Royal and one from HRH The Countess of Wessex, but the main event was in November when Her Majesty The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh made a surprise visit to the City as the final engagement of their Jubilee year. We were part of the welcoming party on Her Majesty's arrival from the royal train at Bristol Temple Meads Station. The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh spent the whole day in



Bristol Diamond Jubilee Downs Day – June 2012.



News from and about Members



Avon & Somerset Police awards ceremony: The High Sheriff with Chief Constable Colin Port and award recipients.

Bristol visiting four different locations, including lunch at our new exhibition venue, The M Shed. The weather was a truly dreary November day, but Her Majesty's smile shone for the full five hours she spent in the city.

Bristol celebrated the Royal Jubilee by holding a well-attended family fun day on the city's Downs. All cadet forces were represented together with a visit from the air ambulance. The evening culminated in the lighting of the Jubilee Beacon by the Lord-Lieutenant and me, broadcast on the local BBC news, in which I gave a short interview.

All monies raised by the High Sheriff during the year go towards the High Sheriff's charity BYCA. The purpose of BYCA is to provide positive holiday activities to young people in Bristol during the school holidays.

Bristol is a wonderful and diverse city but has some challenging problems. During my visits, it has been humbling to see the commitment of many people trying to change their community for the better, and succeeding. I have regularly thought it a role reversal whereby the High Sheriff has been invited to boost the morale of a particular community project, but in

fact I have come away impressed and uplifted seeing such positive work being carried out.

It has also been an honour to hand out awards during the year, some to young people who have gone through foster care. Bristol City Council has an agency which encourages these young persons, some vulnerable, to enter adulthood with a degree of support. Another award ceremony was to members of the public who had assisted the police with their work, remarkable accounts of how ordinary citizens had intervened, saved lives and prevented crimes.

The High Sheriff receives many privileges, including attending trials at Bristol Crown Court. It has been a fascinating insight into the legal process. I have learnt that it is not necessarily the high-profile cases that are the most interesting. I have spent several days out with the police, including a particularly interesting shift in a patrol car in a challenging area in Bristol.

Bristol is home to a number of military reservist organisations and it has been a pleasure to learn about their operations. Laying a wreath to remember the fallen on Bristol's Remembrance Day service, the largest outside London, on a beautiful sunny day, was a moving and memorable occasion. □

Andrew Nisbet

High Sheriff of the City of Bristol 2012-13