



Dancing for the Cathedral

Above: The High Sheriff competes in Herefordshire's Strictly Come Dancing with Joanna Cobb

THE PICTURES tell so much of the story. I danced for the Cathedral Perpetual Trust in April and I raced in a point-to-point at the end of my year to raise funds for the High Sheriff's Trust.

Both were exhilarating and outside my usual sphere of activities but both resonated in Herefordshire and brought publicity and recognition to the Shrievalty. In between times I was in a suit or my uniform doing many of the events which will be familiar to readers of this magazine. I found throughout the year that interest and respect for the office opened doors that may otherwise have been closed and shone a light into corners where the beneficial rays of publicity often do not reach.

In particular I ran a successful rural crime initiative with the Chief Constable of West Mercia

Police. We launched this with a reception for 300 rural businesses and followed it up with regional meetings around the county. These were well received and gave impetus to a 'Stop that Thief' campaign, extra rural patrolling and a reduction in rural crime in the county. A couple of significant arrests came from the campaign. We included in the partnership the NFU and the NFU Mutual insurance group and now have in place a system which has the blessing and funding of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable, a secretariat from the NFU and, hopefully, the legs to take it forwards.

Visiting local charities and special schools and colleges has been one of the most memorable parts of my year. The children in Barrs Court Special School showed so much pleasure at having a visitor in uniform – and they tried most of it on! Our



News from and about members



Royal National College for the Blind is doing such a special job for those whose sight is failing. There are so many minor charities in Herefordshire quietly doing good and asking no reward save the pleasure that helping others brings. To visit these and sometimes help them in small ways has been both humbling and a delight.

As the year drew to a close people often asked what had been my favourite part. Well I loved

it all but in Herefordshire I have really enjoyed involvement with the Cathedral; in part because of the magnificence and beauty of the services; but mainly because its quiet Christian influence, teaching and principles seem to pervade everything that is good in this county.

♣ **Major Patrick Darling DL MFH**
High Sheriff of Herefordshire 2014-15

Above left: 2013 High Sheriff Bob Tabor hands over to 2014 High Sheriff Patrick Darling

Above: The High Sheriff in the members' race in a local point-to-point with his daughter Dreda Darling taking the lead