



A race against time

Opposite page: South Wales Police Shrievalty Award presentation to PSCO Allan Blackburn with Martyn Jenkins (West Glamorgan), Assistant Chief Constable Richard Lewis, Liz Singer and David Jenkins (South Glamorgan)

NOW THE year has come to an end, I have time to reflect on what an extraordinary year it has been. Everyone said it would fly by and after Christmas it seemed like a race against time to fit everything in.

My interest continued in the work of Barnardo's; the charity works in conjunction with Parc Prison, Bridgend on the Invisible Walls Wales Project, helping children and families affected by parental imprisonment. I never once sat beside anyone at dinner without informing them of the work, and as a result I was able to introduce various agencies willing to help. The icing on the cake came on 9 February, when HRH The Princess Royal visited the project and talked to some of the prisoners and their children, as well as to the staff of HMP Parc and Barnardo's, showing great interest. The day after I handed over to my successor, I attended an awards ceremony at the prison, where the children of prisoners were presented with their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Awards and the fathers with their Leadership Awards. This has never happened anywhere before; it involved huge commitment from the staff and

it was wonderful to see prisoners and children showing pride in each other.

One of the duties of the three High Sheriffs of Mid, South and West Glamorgan is to sponsor a Community Shrievalty Award for South Wales Police. Nominations were put forward and with guidance from a senior officer we chose a winner. He was PSCO Allan Blackburn from the Rhondda Valley. He had recognised a lack of respect for the community in young people who complained of being bored and having nothing to do. He was a former professional boxer and decided to start a boxing club to instill discipline, a sense of purpose and respect for others. The club proved a massive success and resulted in a decrease in antisocial behaviour in the area. We presented the award in the Brangwyn Hall in Swansea. I subsequently visited the boxing club in Tonyrefail and saw the youngsters in action – what a difference it has made to the community. When it came to the end of my year and my High Sheriff's Community Awards, Allan Blackburn and the Tonyrefail Boxing Club were among my awardees.

In the New Year Honours list, Mary Squire, Clerk to Lord-Lieutenant of Mid Glamorgan Mrs Kate Thomas, was appointed a Member of the Royal

Below: Lunch to honour Mary Squire MVO
Back row: Anne Campbell, Morfudd Meredith, Heather Stevens, Ann Jenkins, Jayne James, Bethan Williams
Front row: Beverley Humphrey, Kate Thomas, Mary Squire MVO, Liz Singer, Barbara Wilding, Anne Morgan





Victorian Order by HM The Queen. Alongside her duties with the Lord-Lieutenant, Mary has helped High Sheriffs in nomination in Mid and South Glamorgan to organise their declaration ceremonies over several years. We have all found her knowledge and efficiency extremely valuable, and were so pleased that she had been honoured. I organised a lunch for Lady High Sheriffs, past, present and future, in the High Sheriff's room in the Crown Court in Cardiff. Our guest of honour sat down with the Lord-Lieutenant – herself a High Sheriff before Mary's involvement – and ten past, present and future High Sheriffs of the two counties.

I feel extremely honoured to have held the position of High Sheriff in my county. I think I was able to make a difference in some quarters, and I am so grateful to all the people I have met and who have made my year so special.

◆ Elizabeth Singer DL

Mid Glamorgan 2014-15

