



Declaration follows Declaration

MY FIRST six months as High Sheriff have been as full and busy as they have been rewarding and inspiring. Since my Declaration before the Honourable Mr Justice Moor, and attending those of neighbouring High Sheriffs, I visited early the three vital umbrella organisations supporting the voluntary sector in Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf – which comprise the shrieval county of Mid Glamorgan – and laid the groundwork for future engagement with them.

After memorable visits to the Old Bailey, the Inner Temple and HM The Queen's garden party, it was back to Wales and the privilege of reading the declaration of the result of the parliamentary election at Cynon Valley (I had six constituencies for which I was returning officer and from which to choose one to read the result).

The three Glamorgan High Sheriffs and our Gwent colleague had the pleasure of entertaining the Court of Appeal Judges at the Mansion House, Cardiff, in June as well as visiting the Civil Justice Centre there. Later, I would sit in my home court at Merthyr Tydfil with the Honourable Mr Justice Lavender and carry out the ancient duty and pleasure of entertaining him at home.

A rare and privileged opportunity arose in July to attend the enthronement of the new Bishop of Llandaff, the Right Reverend June Osborne. That month also saw the unveiling by the Lord-Lieutenant of a memorial stone at RAF Stormy Down which had trained thousands of air personnel during World War Two. HRH The Prince of Wales also visited The Royal Mint, where he stamped the first commemorative coin marking the retirement from public duties of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

Above: Under Sheriff Philip Evans, outgoing High Sheriff Gwyn George, Lord-Lieutenant of Mid Glamorgan Kathrin Thomas CVO JP, incoming High Sheriff David Davies JP and Clerk to the Lieutenancy Mary Squire MVO

Right: Inspecting the Welsh Guards at their Freedom Parade in Pontypridd



Monday 31 July saw a visit by the Welsh Guards to Pontypridd War Memorial to mark the centenary of the Victoria Cross awarded to Sgt Robert Bye for his heroic deeds at Passchendaele. They would return to Pontypridd in September for their Freedom Parade, where I had the honour of inspecting them, before our troops – of whom we are so rightly proud – return to Afghanistan in 2018.

There has been, of course, so much more besides. To attend civic services for the county's mayors and to get to know and support and engage with them, their colleagues and officers has been such a productive pleasure and a joy.

In this part of the world, there is too often a poignant opportunity to remember an anniversary of our past, in this case the Parc Slip colliery at Aberkenfig when 112 men and boys lost their lives in a mining disaster in 1892.

On a lighter note, there has been the pleasure of opening and supporting my village carnival, speaking at scouts' and schools' presentation evenings, and attending some wonderful musical performances (as you'd expect in Wales). Being actively involved in the volunteering awards is equally a wonderful opportunity to recognise the great things being done by the third sector in our communities. Somehow, I even managed to organise a successful fundraising evening for my own chosen charity Llamau, the leading Welsh charity supporting young homeless people and vulnerable women.

It has been a breathtaking and memorable time in equal measure. My diary tells me there is much more of the same to come.

◆◆ **David Davies JP**

High Sheriff of Mid Glamorgan 2017-18

