

NORTH YORKSHIRE

News from and about members



On the beat at 140 mph

AS WELL as providing numerous exciting excursions – including time spent in a nuclear bunker or in a tunnel 10 miles out under the North Sea – my year in the shrievalty highlighted the enormous amount of good work the people of North Yorkshire do in support of charities. The High Sheriff's Awards allowed me to recognise a few, from local independent charities such as Take Heart Support Group Teesside, to international efforts such as the RNLI.

I was particularly impressed to meet Ken Horner, 84, from Follifoot near Harrogate who has been volunteering for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance for over 15 years. The retired joiner and wheelwright has now raised in excess of £50,000 since he started fundraising in the early 2000s. It was an honour to recognise his dedication with an award presented in conjunction with the Yorkshire Air Ambulance Charity at a presentation at the YAA's Northern Airbase at Topcliffe near Thirsk. The majority of the funds he has raised have come from the hand-made



Top: With the team at Redcar lifeboat station Above: With the Sheriff Hutton Jumblies



walking sticks and shepherds crooks he carves himself using materials he collects. The Yorkshire Air Ambulance is operational seven days a week, all year round.

Another charity which was of particular interest to me was the Redcar Sea Cadets as my family were shipbuilders in Hartlepool. The core purpose of the charity is to celebrate Britain's maritime heritage and contribute to its future development by supporting young people. It is an essential part of the community of Redcar and Cleveland. Unfortunately, a recent break-in meant that a lot of essential equipment has been stolen. I want to commend the local community for its efforts to come together and raise funds to replace it.

I presented other High Sheriff's Awards to deserving causes: the Sheriff Hutton Jumbles started in 1986 and have raised over £250,000, many of their jumble sales making over £2,000; Kirkbymoorside Town Brass Band celebrated its bi-centenary last year and now has over 120 players across five bands. As the town band they are an integral part of the community, and play for events such as the Christmas carolling and Armistice parade; Applefields School is a community, co-educational, special day school near York for secondary aged children with moderate, severe and profound learning difficulties; Friends of York Cemetery was established in 1988 to provide for the public benefit the preservation, care and improvement of York Cemetery as a burial ground and as a place of historic interest and beauty; York Against Cancer is a small, independent, local charity and has raised more than £14 million to make a difference to the lives of local people affected by cancer; FirstLight Trust (Redcar) is a charity for armed forces with a difference. They help the 'hard to reach' veterans and provide them with whatever it takes to make that tiny difference between life and suicide.

It wasn't all visiting local charities of course. I fulfilled a life-long ambition of getting up to 140mph on the A1. Luckily this wasn't because my wife Grania was rushing home to feed the horses, but because I was 'on the beat' with the North Yorkshire Police who do a fantastic job. I have visited many businesses in North Yorkshire from Wensleydale cheese to the Nestlé chocolate factory and PD Ports. I also had the pleasure of reading alongside the Archbishop of York, at York Minister's wonderful Christmas carol concert.

♣️ **John Furness**

High Sheriff of North Yorkshire 2016-17