



## Shropshire 2012-13

The second half of my year proved just as busy as the first, with visits to courts, a thought-provoking day sitting with the coroner, and joining the High Sheriffs from Herefordshire and Worcestershire to present the annual Young Good Citizen's Awards at West Mercia Police Headquarters. In October we were honoured by two more royal visits when HRH The Earl of Wessex officially opened the new Abraham Darby Academy building at Telford, and when HRH The Princess Royal opened new halls of residence at Harper Adams University College at Newport, the leading agricultural college which achieved full university status in December.

November brought several invitations to attend Remembrance Day events around the county. I attended the parade, church service and wreath laying in Shrewsbury, our county town, while my wife Chris represented me in our home town of Oswestry, and laid a shrieval wreath at its war memorial. To round off a very busy day, we met up later in the afternoon to travel to the other side of the county for the Telford & Wrekin Festival of Remembrance in



The Shropshire Legal Service Guard of Honour – The High Sheriff with Oswestry Cadets and The Loyal Newport Volunteers.

the evening – indeed a day to remember!

I was delighted to be asked to present annual awards to Scout leaders, ambulance service staff and volunteers, and police officers and special constables – all ideal opportunities to

recognise and thank all those who devote their time and talents to serving the statutory and voluntary organisations.

In early December Chris and I joined the High Sheriff of Staffordshire and her husband at a spectacular candlelit Advent carol service in Lichfield Cathedral, a fitting start to the festive season. Several carol services and Christmas lunches later, I had an amazing tour of the county by helicopter, by courtesy of the Defence Helicopter Flying School at RAF Shawbury.

Engagements early in the New Year included invitations from several organisations to speak at their annual dinners about the history and role of the High Sheriff, a chance to increase awareness of the relevance of our ancient Office today in supporting charities and local volunteering. Chris and I spent a Saturday night patrolling outside the busy pubs and night clubs of Shrewsbury with the Street Pastors, to see at first hand the amazing work of these volunteers who offer a helping



The High Sheriff's Young Citizenship Awards 2013 – the overall winners from the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Colleges.



# News from and about Members



The new High Sheriff, Diana Flint, receiving a copy of her Declaration from the immediate past High Sheriff, John Abram, on 5 April 2013.

hand to the late-night revellers – many having put themselves and others at risk on the streets from too much drink.

In March my Legal Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's Peace and our Heritage was held in the parish church of St Oswald's in Oswestry, with a large congregation including many members of the statutory and voluntary

organisations of the county, and our family and friends who had supported us during the year. We were honoured by the presence of the Lord-Lieutenant and his wife, the Bishop of Lichfield, who gave the sermon, the Bishop of Ludlow, visiting High Sheriffs from surrounding counties, and senior members of the armed forces.

During the service the Lord-Lieutenant presented long-service certificates to magistrates. This was an appropriate introduction to the heart of the service when the Bishops of Lichfield and Ludlow led the Rededication, when judges and magistrates pledged to serve the county and its people faithfully in the year ahead.

I just had time to present two college students with their very well-deserved High Sheriff's Young Citizenship Awards, before my year ended after exactly 12 months to the day, when I handed over to my successor, Diana Flint, at her Declaration ceremony at Shrewsbury Castle.

I am grateful to my Under Sheriff, Peter Stewart, for his helpful assistance throughout the year, and to my Chaplain, the Revd David Cassidy for taking a significant part in my Legal Service despite illness early in the New Year. It has been a privilege and honour to serve as High Sheriff of Shropshire, but I could not have done it without the wonderful support and encouragement of my wife Chris. □

**John Abram MBE TD JP**  
*High Sheriff of Shropshire 2012-13*