



## Shropshire 2013-14

My shrieval year has been both rewarding and fascinating in equal measure. I focussed particularly on the voluntary sector, on support of museums and galleries as well as on young people and education. In addition, of course, I supported the forces of law and order and the military. However, I would like to highlight here a few things that were especially interesting and successful.

Counties have borders of course, and High Sheriffs naturally concentrate on their own bailiwicks. However, it was particularly rewarding to combine forces with my neighbouring High Sheriffs at awards ceremonies such as the West Mercia Police Awards for Outstanding Young Citizens and the Probation Service Awards.

In addition, my counterpart in Clwyd, Celia Jenkins, and I realised that a major hospital on the borders of our counties was served by significant numbers of volunteers from each county. We decided therefore to hold a celebration party to recognise these wonderful people who for years have generously given time to help at the Robert Jones



The High Sheriff with the Lord-Lieutenant, Sir Algernon Heber-Percy, on a visit to Shrewsbury HQ of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services.

and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital at Oswestry. This event was much appreciated by the 130 or so guests, and was held at a lovely country house, Halston Hall, near Oswestry. This was also an example of how High Sheriffs need not incur huge entertaining expenses. Celia and I were proud to

entertain everyone with help from close family, making our own canapés and serving sparkling wine all at minimal cost.

I also arranged the High Sheriff's party with a difference, wrapping up several themes in one by holding it in the largest museum in the county at Ironbridge Gorge. This successfully brought the Museum to Shropshire and Shropshire to the Museum as our guests were offered tours of some of the collections before the party.

Ironbridge Gorge Museum is located at one of the earliest World Heritage Sites, and illustrates the history of the Industrial Revolution which really started with the building of the first iron bridge in the world in 1777. The museum reflects both science and art and this inspired the decision to invite a speaker to give a lecture before the party. We were delighted when the Shropshire-born Astronomer Royal, Lord Rees of Ludlow, agreed to come over from Cambridge for the evening to speak on 'The Challenges faced by Science in the 21st Century'.



Shropshire Legal Service: the Hon Mr Justice Barling, the Hon Mr Justice Holman, Mr Charles Flint QC (High Sheriff's husband), the High Sheriff, the Rt Hon Lord Justice Floyd, the Hon Mr Justice Richards.



# News from and about Members

Lord Rees, truly one of the world's foremost scientists, is a wonderful communicator who enthralled the audience, who I believe really enjoyed this extra dimension to a High Sheriff's party. We invited heads and principals from many Shropshire schools, and those who were able to come were invited to bring with them their top performing science pupils who were so thrilled to listen and speak to this eminent scientist in person. One enterprising student charmingly asked Lord Rees how he could get the script of the lecture. Lord Rees reached into his pocket and gave it to him – what a wonderful gesture!

These two events, together with a successful Legal Service held at Ellesmere College, were really the

entertaining highlights of the year. They were interspersed with very many other interesting visits to Shropshire-based charities, cadet training events, schools and numerous other enterprises. These included pressing the button to set in motion the last edition print run of the day at the Shropshire Star; inspecting the factory producing the only handmade, jointed teddy bears in England at the Merrythought Works in Ironbridge; going out with the police on Saturday evening in Shrewsbury and on New Year's Eve in Telford; sitting with the Coroner; visiting several prisons in and out of the county and then writing up all of this and adding numerous photographs to the illustrated diary pages of [www.highsheriffofshropshire.co.uk](http://www.highsheriffofshropshire.co.uk) – all this has filled 365 days of the year with

fascinating and most privileged experiences. □

***Diana Flint DL***

*High Sheriff of Shropshire 2013-14*

