



South Yorkshire 2013-14

Like all High Sheriffs before me I have been tasked with entertaining the judiciary and, on occasions, members of the police force during the course of my first five months in office.

‘Tasked’ makes it sound as if it has been a burden but in fact it has been a real pleasure. With the support of my hard-working team I have hosted a number of social events, dinners and lunches. The highlight so far was the reception at our home. Together with my husband, Sir Hugh Sykes, we entertained approximately 300 people.

The guests included distinguished Judges, members of the judiciary in South Yorkshire, High Sheriffs from neighbouring counties, Mayors and their consorts, the Chief Constable and his wife and senior representatives from other organisations as well as personal friends, some of whom travelled from much further afield, including one couple who travelled from the Canary Islands

It seemed to my guests that my husband was very busy during the course of the evening, managing to be in two places at the same time. The



PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS SEAMAN

From left to right, Richard Sykes, Sir Hugh Sykes, Lady Sykes, Jack and Josh Carlin.

puzzle was resolved by the revelation that he has a double – his identical twin brother, Richard. To add to the confusion, also at the reception were identical twin police cadets, 17-year-old Jack and Josh Carlin of Doncaster, part of the police presence at the event.

My second task has been to seek out the unsung heroes of South Yorkshire, of whom there are many working in community centres, and also in

volunteer and support organisations helping the homeless and vulnerable people of the area. This has been the most challenging aspect of my year so far – not because there are so few but because there are so many. I have been amazed and humbled by the time and dedication willingly given by men and women who are genuinely concerned for their fellow man.

I have made High Sheriff’s Awards to some organisations and to one or two individuals, but there will be many more to come during the course of the year.

One occasion which stands out for me was the morning I spent at the Cathedral Archer Project in Sheffield which offers support and hot meals to the homeless. Donning a white coat, I served breakfast before presenting my first High Sheriff’s Award to the project’s chief executive officer, Tim Renshaw. I was then invited to sit with a delightful group, who, despite their circumstances, were unfailingly cheerful – an example to us all, I think. □

Lady Sykes

High Sheriff of South Yorkshire 2013-14



PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS SEAMAN

Lady Sykes, the High Sheriff of South Yorkshire, at the Cathedral Archer Project.