



## Quickly on the start line

AS I write this article, we are in the midst of the period of national mourning – a time of great sadness. I served Her Majesty for almost 45 years as a soldier and was fortunate to meet her on several occasions. This included my investiture and subsequently my son's investiture at Windsor Castle as well as at several regimental celebrations when we were joined by our Captain General.

My enduring memory is of a lady who radiated charm, had an eye for detail the envy of any regimental Sergeant Major, and of someone who was dedicated to the service of others. As I have watched the dignity and precision of the arrangements of the military and the outpouring of emotion from the public, I have been immensely proud. We have been so fortunate to have served her; we will all be equally proud to serve our new King.

Reading the Proclamation was a task I had hoped not to have to undertake but it is a job I am immensely proud to have done. On the steps of City Hall in Sheffield with the great and the good of our county together with members of the



Celebrating Armed Forces Day with the Royal Horse Artillery

public as far as the eye could see, there was a fanfare; the crowd fell silent, the town hall clock struck and, after a short introduction by the Lord-Lieutenant, I read the Proclamation. Immediately afterwards, the mayors of Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster returned to read the Proclamation one hour later at their own town hall while I took the opportunity to speak to members of the public. Then, and at other times, I have been struck by the palpable sadness and mourning in our communities at the loss of our Sovereign Lady, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

A year ago, I was planning for my tenure as High Sheriff in 2023-24. This changed when the High Sheriff in nomination, Professor Dame Hilary Chapman, was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of South Yorkshire. I had to step up and make some changes to my working life to accommodate my now rapidly approaching appointment. This was not difficult and, with the support of an excellent Under Sheriff and the new Lord-Lieutenant, I was quickly on the start line of the Declaration in April in very good order. Since then, it has been a



With Chaplain, Padre Albert Jackson

roller coaster of events. I recognised that the focus needed to be support of the judiciary and was made most welcome by the Recorder of Sheffield, His Honour Judge Jeremy Richardson KC, and all the judges and staff in Sheffield. I have found the experience of seeing the workings of the judicial system at close quarters fascinating. It has also been a real pleasure to meet socially on several occasions.

The Jubilee Weekend was a great opportunity to reach out to so many of our communities and support their many and varied activities for this never-to-be-repeated celebration of service. The happiness and warmth we felt towards our sovereign of 70 years were evident.

This year, we have seen the great joy of the Jubilee celebrations and the sadness of Queen Elizabeth's death. High Sheriffs 2022-23 have served both The Queen and The King, a historic moment and probably unique in our lifetimes.

God Save The King.

◆ Lt Col Robert McPherson MBE  
*High Sheriff of South Yorkshire 2022-23*



A 'confusion' of Yorkshire High Sheriffs at the Great Yorkshire Show L-R: James Lambert (North Yorkshire), Mrs Sue Baker (West Riding) and Lt Col Mac McPherson (South Yorkshire)