

An unforgettable evening

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It was a warm and clear evening when I attended one of my events as High Sheriff that would leave a lasting impression on me. The occasion was orchestrated with precision, thanks to the meticulous organisational efforts of Under Sheriff Andrew Meech. The highlight of the evening was the presence of High Court judge, the Honourable Mr Justice Mostyn, a distinguished figure in the legal world.

The plan was simple yet elegant: Sir Nicholas Mostyn, accompanied by his two clerks Safia and Tony, would be picked up from his lodgings at 18:30. The destination? The Beach House, a renowned restaurant perched on the edge of the lapping waters of Oxwich Bay on the idyllic Gower Peninsular.

The Beach House, under the culinary guidance of Head Chef Hywel Griffith, had risen to prominence since its inception in 2016. It has garnered numerous accolades, including 3 AA Rosettes and a coveted Michelin Star. The setting was nothing short of spectacular, with the rhythmic sound of waves providing a soothing backdrop as we enjoyed our dinner.

The evening was marked by laughter and camaraderie around the table. Sir Nicholas, who had recently turned 66 and is bravely facing a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease, regaled us with stories from his illustrious career. One particular highlight was his involvement in the 'Movers and Shakers' podcast, where he, along with five others living with Parkinson's, including Jeremy Paxman, aimed to raise awareness about the condition. The podcast's success in highlighting Parkinson's is truly commendable.

Sir Nicholas bade farewell to the bench in July 2023, but his legacy in family law will endure for years to come. It was evident that he is not just a legal luminary but also a man of culture. During our dinner conversation, he revealed his admiration for the works of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas.

Inspired by this revelation, I arranged a visit to Dylan Thomas's family home at number 5 Cwmdonkin Drive, Swansea, so my guest could fulfil a lifetime ambition. With the help of a friendly guide, we explored the house and gained



Waiting to greet Sir Nicholas Mostyn and his dog Bilbo

to Sir Nicholas's farewell soiree at the judge's lodgings. It turned out we were both celebrating birthdays that very same day. The event was a delightful and relaxed affair. I had the honour of meeting the Honourable Mrs Justice Morgan DBE, who would be taking over from Sir Nicholas as the Family Liaison Judge for Wales.

This High Sheriff's meeting was undeniably one of the most memorable events I have had the privilege to attend. It was a night that celebrated not only the legal legacy of Sir Nicholas Mostyn but also the important

invaluable insights into the life of the great writer. It was a poetic journey through time, connecting us with one of Wales's most cherished literary figures.

A few days later, I received an invitation

element of the role of being a High Sheriff and the long tradition of entertaining visiting judges. It was a night that left an indelible mark on my memory, reminding me of the power of human connection.



Scene from a bygone era inside the birthplace and heritage home of Dylan Thomas