

# Multum in parvo – the proud motto of Rutland



With 'Queen Edith' Photo: Richard Adams

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High Sheriff of Rutland 2023-2024

During my year I chose to celebrate volunteers – to encourage and share with people of good heart, determined not to be served, but to serve in various ways. So I held three receptions in three different areas of the county and with three different foci – food, wellbeing, and youth and the young – and I met so very many. Modest but skilled and enthusiastic, the volunteers identify needs in their immediate communities and more widely, and address them with energy and skill, thereby developing community cohesion and sustainability. I found volunteers at the heart of village hall coffee and lunch groups, dementia, bereavement and carer support groups, the youth uniformed movements, sports teams, gathering 'use by' dated supermarket foods for Community Fridge, running regular bereavement support groups and so much more....

By linking a fundraising concert to each reception, I raised funds to distribute among some of Rutland's volunteer-lead groups, nascent and established, formal and informal. The many local and largely volunteer musicians of Uppingham Jazz and Soul Band, the British Wind Ensemble, Rutland Sinfonia, and Rutland and Oakham choral societies played and sang to full houses, giving their talents and time generously and



With JPs and a school governor for the mock trials in Oakham Castle

sharing delight and enjoyment liberally.

The primary school at which I am a governor sang at my Declaration in Oakham Castle a year ago, and it has been my pleasure to watch the developing accomplishments of the young at inter-school sports events, speech days, concerts and plays. Working with MICE (Magistrates In Community Education), I hosted four groups of Rutland secondary school students for mock trials in Oakham Castle (considered the oldest Assize Court in the country). Using the modified script of a case heard in the Magistrates' Court and prompted by two excellent JPs, the students played each role and afterwards the JPs led thorough and thought-provoking discussions. The students learned much; however, they were not at all impressed to find out that justices of the peace are volunteers and receive expenses only for their immensely responsible work!

During a recent celebration weekend to commemorate Queen Edith who owned much of the land of Rutland and died 1,000 years ago, I was called upon as Shire Reeve to judge the medieval case of Edwin and the Stolen Pig. Again a script, this time imagined, was used by a class of nine-year-old primary school pupils dressed as Anglo Saxons. Despite the evident wishes of the children enacting the trial and the very great anticipation of my sword bearer, I found Edwin, their class teacher, not guilty and therefore all set for school lessons on Monday!

I have enjoyed the support of previous High Sheriffs of Rutland throughout my year and also that of my regional High Sheriff colleagues. To cultivate the latter, I invited them with their partners to lunch before we took on our roles and we have been able to encourage and support each other since through our WhatsApp



Young and old were awarded at the bi-annual Ride And Stride, which raises funds to support historic churches throughout the county Photo: Peter Lawson



With my police cadet

group. We too are all volunteers and it has been good to share ideas and practices and to support each other at events including our respective Legal Services.

My year has brought me new friends, new learning and new interests to pursue which I shall enjoy, and immense pleasure which I shall always remember... but perhaps a holiday first!

Finally, at the conclusion of my year I reflect on the role of High Sheriff as I perceive it. You are there for others, for the pomp and the circumstance, for encouragement and support, for highlighting excellence and prompting and celebrating successes, so I close with four tips that I have realised over the year:

- Walk slowly
- Listen attentively
- Thank generously
- Smile continually