

## **Baronet's Diary February 2024**

It was a pleasure to attend the official opening of the renovation completed by the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust (DHBT) of South Wingfield station. The Conservation work to save the world's oldest rural railway station is complete. From last December members of the public will be able to see the station returned close to its former glory as it was when officially opened in 1840. The DHBT has managed the £1.7 million repair process over the last two years and has been inviting visitors to see the results of the conservation work in a series of public events since the grand re-opening that was attended by civic dignitaries and the High Sheriff of Derbyshire Theresa Peltier. Thanks to funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, the building's original fabric has been carefully replicated by the DHBT and this has included a meticulous process of reprinting original wallpaper and replicating paintwork back to the original. The event was a jolly occasion and do visit the site if you are in the Wingfield area. It is not far from the Church but beware of the Inter-City trains travelling close to the platform.

It is not often that we face the result of fly-tipping in our scenic village. But imagine my surprise when the gamekeeper reported an encampment in one of our woods off the Tissington Trail in the wet and cold of mid-December. On further examination we realised that a few hardy souls had erected a makeshift bivouac in the woods using sheeting and copious rolls of cellophane. Although we could see no signs of a fire (and there was plenty of kindling nearby) there were plenty of provisions such as cans of spaghetti hoops and chocolate. In addition, we found several anti-perspirant cans which did seem rather incongruous in the circumstances. Only accessible by tractor we quickly cleared the site and returned it to nature but the more perplexing thought is who would be insane enough to bother to transport all the paraphernalia to site considering a car could only get as close as one mile away. Perhaps we shall never know?

Storm Pia hit the UK at the end of December just before Christmas and it left in its wake flooding and damage that mounted to millions of pounds all over the country. Tissington was not exempt from its throes of destruction and it is sad to report that we lost several trees and numerous branches across the Estate. One of the most upsetting casualties was the loss of one of the lime trees on the main avenue as you enter the Village from the A515. The trees were planted by my Uncle Sir John in 1970 to succeed the avenue planted in 1880 by our predecessors. The 'new' avenue is a great credit to my Uncle's vision and it is sad to see his 70-year-old 'sapling' now turned to firewood. We also lost a tree as part of the other avenue that I had planted in 2000 for the Millennium. A total of three beech trees have now been lost from that planting. I must start re-stocking again.

It is now twenty years since I was given the honour of turning up the ball at the Royal Shrovetide Ashbourne Football Game in 2004. In those days the great lunch was in a cluster of rooms at the Green Man Hotel in the centre of town but that has since moved to the Leisure Centre where over 400 people gather for a three-course special and to hear the speeches from the dignitaries and the Turner-Up of the day. This year the two selected for this prestigious honour are John Tomlinson and Dave Calladine, both stalwarts of the game. In 2004 there was no score in the eight hours of play and so I was given the ball which now, repainted, hangs resplendently outside the dining room at Tissington Hall. I suspect that both the Turner-uppers

this year will wish for their ball to be scored as it makes for an entertaining and imbibing afternoon! Good luck to both the Uppards and the Downards on Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday.

I am at war with ivy. One of my presents at Christmas was a pruning saw that my daughter gave me. I take it out on all my walks with the dogs and do my best to cut the ivy that grows madly up the trees. I am told that the massing of ivy that surrounds the stem affects trees in the wind and so several trees are downed before their time if the ivy is not trimmed. I am doing a pretty good job but the task seems never-ending and I get through about half a dozen saws per annum. I think it will be a regular Christmas present from now on.

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Photo Fallen Lime Tree on the Avenue leading to Tissington