



# A BARONET'S DIARY

SIR RICHARD FITZHERBERT

## 'STAR OF WONDER'

One of the joys of running our 'Christmas at Tissington' extravaganzas is welcoming parties from local primary schools in a 10-mile radius of the Hall at 9.30 each morning before the rush of WI groups, history societies and retired NHS groups during the day. This Christmas we dressed the rooms around the house to the themes of well-known carols and the star of the show was the East Drawing Room dressed for 'Silent Night'. David Walker had put a four poster bed in the centre of the room complete with World War I memorabilia. Amongst the tin hats, dummy guns and original Union flags was barbed wire made out of leather for the stage version of *War Horse*. As you can imagine, it is difficult to interpret war to a class of eight year olds except in the context of 'war is bad' but I was surprised to learn from one school that they understood the concept of 'no man's land' as the opposing troops played football on Christmas Day 1914 after a stunning rendition of the carol. So not only did the scene make the adults think it made the children think as well.



Silent Night



Oliver and Fiona Stephenson meet Olaf

Interspersed in the Christmas themes, one room on the top floor captured the attention of every youngster, and indeed every adult, who visited. This was David's interpretation of *Frozen*, the blockbuster Disney movie, and the installation of the snowman Olaf who befriends the heroine Elsa in the tale. Pictured here are former High Sheriff Oliver Stephenson and his wife Fiona with the lovable snowman.



## FLYING THE FLAG FOR ASHBOURNE

I wrote in September about the struggles of Ashbourne's High Street with the closure of various stores. Better news is at hand. A public meeting with District Council leader Garry Purdy and shopholders has culminated in the formation of the 'Ashbourne Town Team', under the guidance of Anne Wright of Young Ideas. Already the group has involved district and county councillors and created a website [www.ashbournetownteam.co.uk](http://www.ashbournetownteam.co.uk). Watch this space as the project evolves.

## HOT TOPICS

Since 2012 we have installed six solar panel units on roofs around the Estate, which is not a bad start as we are in the planning regime of the Peak District National Park. In October the National Park hosted a 'Working towards a Zero Carbon National Park' summit where the talk was of everyone driving a 'zero emission car' by 2050. This is all laudable and I am the first to applaud this objective but it has to be supported by the planning regime, which should take a positive

approach to solar, wind, anaerobic digestion and methane extraction, to name but a few. It is of course, after Brexit, one of the hottest topics about and everyone should contribute to the discussion. One speaker talked of car-free holidays in Austria where holiday makers leave their cars at home and use public transport. This might be difficult here at present but we have to look at it for the future. Meanwhile my solar units keep producing electricity and we are certainly using it.



## VOTE FOR DALES' FOOD & DRINK

The result of the general election is not known as I write. When the Derbyshire Dales MP for the last 33 years, Sir Patrick McLoughlin, stood down, Sarah Dines was selected as Conservative candidate to fight the seat and I was fortunate to be able to show her round my Dovedale & Parwich District Ward. This included a visit to the Hartington Creamery at Pikehall ([hartingtoncreamery.co.uk](http://hartingtoncreamery.co.uk)), where she met cheesemaker Robert Gosling and his team who produce award-winning Dovedale Blue and Hartington Stilton. After that we stumbled upon the microbrewery Aldwark Artisan Ales ([aaabrewery.co.uk](http://aaabrewery.co.uk)) for the ultimate beer to go with our cheeses. A stunning double and a fascinating tour. What a lot Derbyshire Dales has to offer! More political news in further issues.

