

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - MARCH 2012**

I attended the Launch of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival at the Theatre Royal, Norwich. The festival will begin in May and the programme will include performances from acts such as Duane Eddy, Nigel Kennedy and The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. It promises to be an exciting festival.

The Mid Suffolk District Council Chairman's Reception was held at Haughley Barn. The food was delicious and the speeches short. It was a very enjoyable evening.

The Seafarers Charity concert, held at the Regent Theatre, was a stirring event and made particularly thrilling by the Band of the Royal Marines.

Meeting and talking to people from so many different countries, before presenting their citizenship certificates, is rewarding. I am always impressed by their fluency in language and their sense of occasion. Many of the young boys were dressed smartly in suits and the girls in national costume.

The High Sheriff's Awards Ceremony, held in magnificent St Edmundsbury Cathedral, was very well attended by family and friends of those receiving awards. Awards were made to various voluntary organisations that do sterling work in so many vital areas.

I so enjoyed 'A Celebration of School's Music 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary' at Snape'. The music, provided, mostly by primary aged children, was innovative and fun.

Guests at Newmarket's Town Mayor's Civic Reception were entertained by a young band of 15 year olds, who did attempt one or two numbers that I recognised, but mostly played their own compositions. They were followed by a Johnny Cash lookalike who did very well, especially with 'Ring of Fire'.

Choral Evensong for Her Majesty's Courts of Justice at St Edmundsbury Cathedral was magical.

I was privileged to be amongst those to welcome the Duchess of Cambridge to the Treehouse Children's Hospice in Ipswich. The Duchess is royal patron of East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH) charity; the occasion drew considerable media coverage.

Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town council held their reception at the Community Centre in Leiston and was well attended.

It was interesting to be part of The Opening of Suffolk New College Sports Centre for the opportunity it gave to view the superb facilities.

The Mayor of Ipswich Charity Ball was a lively affair. Guest were entertained by musical groups of students from schools across Suffolk, Stagecoach, Clifford Road School and The Len Phillips Band that made sure things went with a swing!

A Civic Service to Celebrate Community Life was held at the parish church of St Mary's in Woodbridge. The music was uplifting and the Address by John McCarthy, survivor of 5 years captivity in the Lebanon in the 80s, was thought provoking and moving.

Forest Heath's Chairman's Reception was held at Red Lodge Community Hall and, the magician who entertained, managed to baffle and mystify all present, much to our delight.

**Patricia O'Brien March 2012**