

Nene Valley news

YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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NEWS IN BRIEF

NHS chefs serve up silver medal win

Two local NHS chefs rose to the occasion during a high profile cooking competition wowing the judges and winning a silver medal.

Kerrey Healey and Natasha Day from Cafe Vie, Isebrook Hospital, in Wellingborough – part of Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) – were competing in the NHS 4 Nations Chef Challenge, part of the world famous International Salon Culinare, on 20th March at ExCeL, London.

The pair – who were previously regional winners in 2022's NHS Chef of the Year, and fourth in the grand finals – competed alongside seven other NHS teams. Kerrey and Natasha came second overall, winning a silver medal.

Kerrey said: "It was an honour to represent the Trust and to work alongside Natasha again. It was a great competition to enter, fast paced but enjoyable."

Natasha said: "We had an amazing day, supported by our managers, and meeting up with friends from the NHS 2022 competition. It gave us the chance to show how our skills in cooking have improved over the whole experience."

Countywide awards relaunched to celebrate residents doing good on their doorstep

Working in partnership, Northamptonshire Community Foundation and the North and West Northamptonshire Unitary Authorities have relaunched the Rose of Northamptonshire Awards for 2023.

The Rose of Northamptonshire Awards were first launched in 2021 by the High Sheriff's Office, the Lord Lieutenancy, and what was at the time Northamptonshire County Council. The awards were part of the Unsung Heroes Initiative, looking to identify and express thanks to groups and individuals who worked tirelessly to keep communities safe and businesses moving during the global Covid-19 crisis.

This year, the countywide awards initiative will identify residents who continuously go above and beyond to support their local communities, with support from several representatives for the county, including James Saunders Watson Esq, Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire; Crispin Holborow DL, High Sheriff; Chairman André González De Savage, Chair of West Northamptonshire Council; and Chairman Larry Henson, Chair of North Northamptonshire Council.

James Saunders Watson Esq, Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, said: "I am delighted that the Rose of Northamptonshire Awards are being relaunched. This gives all of us in Northamptonshire an opportunity to recognise the incredibly valuable contributions that individuals and groups make to our lives in the county. This also highlights the importance of volunteering, which is one of the key themes of the Coronation."

Rachel McGrath, CEO of Northamptonshire Community Foundation, said: "Northamptonshire Community Foundation is absolutely delighted to be working in partnership alongside our respective local councils to re-launch the Rose of Northamptonshire awards. In doing so we wish that so many more community groups, charities, social enterprises and volunteers get well deserved recognition for the incredible good so many do on the doorstep of our county and to celebrate civic pride in our local communities."

If you know someone who always goes the extra mile to better the lives of those in their local area, nominate them for a Rose of Northamptonshire Award. More information, the nomination form and nomination criteria can be found on Northamptonshire Community Foundation's website - www.ncf.uk.com/page/?title=Rose+of+Northamptonshire+Awards&pid=178



March 2023

Launch of 2023 Rose of the Shire Awards

March - May 2023

Public nominations submitted & received

End of May 2023

Public nominations close

June 2023

Shortlisting of nominees

July 2023

Judging panels

July - August 2023

Winner announcements & certificates presented

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A LITERARY LEGEND AND HIS LOVE FOR A LOCAL TOWN

Whenever prolific author Herbert Ernest (H.E.) Bates visited Higham Ferrers as a boy, he was in his element – and so too is his eldest grand-daughter, actress Victoria Wicks.

Now, Victoria is preparing to visit Higham Ferrers once more to recount tales about her grandad's time in the historic town which had such a powerful influence on him, inspiring much of his life and work.

It will be the second time she has visited Higham in recent months and is returning following requests from H. E. Bates fans who were unable to make her earlier talk in November.



Victoria Wicks, grand-daughter of the famous author

Victoria, a director of the company which handles the literary estate to promote and protect the works of her late grandfather, will unfold tales about his boyhood in the town as well as his later life.

She will be accompanied by the author's son, Richard, who will read from his father's work, as well as actor Graham Padden, who can do the Northamptonshire accent, perfect for reading in as H.E. Bates as a young boy.

The Rushden-born author produced more than 1,000 works, including 11 novels, more than 300 short stories, several non-fiction books on country life and gardening as well as poems, plays and stories for children. And some of his work is still being discovered.

One of his most famous tales is 'The Darling Buds of May', the adventures of the Larkin family, which were televised. Victoria was the script consultant on the series.

She has recently completed and edited a collection of her grandfather's

country essays that have never appeared in a collection before. Entitled 'Why I Live in the Country', it is due for publication next year.

Victoria will recount how the author spent as many of his weekends and holidays as he could in Higham Ferrers, staying with his grandparents, Lucas and Priscilla, in York Road. Years later, when the writing bug bit, he set many of his stories in Higham with real people as the characters – cousins, grandparents and locals – many of whom recognised themselves.

"Grandfather Lucas was born in Kennel Row and the cottages and the walnut tree became part of our family folklore," Victoria recalled.

"His grandfather was a great storyteller and spoke about Henry Chichele – who became Archbishop of Canterbury – as if they had been plough boys together.

"H.E. worked on his grandparents' smallholding near Chichele College as a farm boy learning all he could about the countryside. This invaluable knowledge led to his many country books and essays."

Victoria said that whenever she returns to Higham, she feels very close to her family's roots.

"I think of H. E. as a boy riding a pony to the Green Dragon pub for supplies of beer for the men, or playing in the corn stooks with his cousins or sitting on the pony and trap with his grandfather or helping his grandmother to bunch violets for sale on his grandfather's horse-drawn dray.

"I feel I see them all everywhere whenever I visit and it all feels just an arm's length away."

Victoria is currently writing a book about her grandfather's time in the RAF

Prolific and best-selling storyteller Herbert Ernest (H.E.) Bates. Picture by James Jarche

during World War 2. He had been commissioned to write short stories that would bring war and its participants vividly and excitedly alive.

Many were written under the pseudonym 'Flying Officer X'.

"What is not generally known is that he hated war. It is interesting that a man so dedicated to the hatred of war was able to write about the men who fought in it with such insight and appreciation," she said.

The H. E. Bates illustrated talk on 30th April will be held at Bede House, Higham Ferrers, from 2-4pm, with memories shared afterwards over a cream tea. Tickets (£12-50) are available at Sidey Design on the Market Square, Higham Ferrers. Early bookings can be made via friendsofstmaryshf@gmail.com

