

GIBBONS

— SOLICITORS —



Howard with the Owner and Manager at The Marquis

My dear readers: thank you for your Birthday wishes. I was in fact 56 years old at my last Birthday. There were a number of correct answers to the competition but having made a draw I will deliver a bottle of Champagne to Peter Cox of Hitcham. There will be a booby prize for one of your number who thought that I was 76!

It was with an air of anticipation that Frank my chauffeur and butler walked towards my padded leather chair in the Library at the Gibbons' residence. Frank had been hit on the head by a large mango that was growing in the Orangery which appears to have affected the meter of his gait. Frank was quite limp as he placed a silver tray before me bearing a large envelope which was soon sliced open by a silver knife. There amongst a gold lining was an invitation to the Opening Party of The Marquis Hotel at Layham. I was due to be going to Kensington Palace that night but hastily re-arranged. And so it was that accompanied by my good friend Lady Jan Radcliffe the mascot of our motor car was silhouetted against the hotel as Frank descended an incline to the entrance.

The former Marquis of Cornwallis has been extended and developed by its owner Stephen O'Leary into a hotel. As one might imagine, the finish and fabrics are beautiful. The rooms have been luxuriously finished. One could see seven or eight chefs through a glass in the restaurant to the kitchen. I gather that the chefs are Spanish and that the beef is supplied by the Queen's Butcher. Canapes which were rather too large for my liking were delivered. Hotels could well take a leaf out of the book of the Grill Rooms on board Queen Mary 2 to provide the finest service. I wish the new hotel and its owner every success. Why not book for that special occasion.

There was talk that the exorbitant Stamp Duty Land Tax rates on second properties may be watered down by the Government and that remains to be seen. I hear so many stories of people using these enormous conveyancing outfits and on-line services where the client is unable to speak to anyone and various different people handle the same matter. We provide service, service sets us apart. We know our clients. We can see clients out of hours by arrangement if that assists. I have often mentioned to you the merits of entering a Lasting Power of Attorney which would enable a relative or close friend to administer one's affairs if one was prevented from doing so through mental incapacity. If you would like to find out more, then please telephone.

A very Happy Christmas to you all.

Howard Gibbons

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