

BROADLY SPEAKING

Our man behind the gates, **Richard Jordan-Baker**, shares life living at Broadlands



So I am now an orphan. Most dictionaries describe this as a child whose parents have died, and the word brings to mind Victorian waifs and strays in the Workhouse or worse. My mother died two days after my return from holiday; not from her Alzheimer's but from pneumonia and old age. I didn't get to be with her but there was a brilliant paramedic called Matthew who was with her at the end. It was a blessed release for her, and, to be frank, for me too. She had had enough and, in her words, was, 'ready to go'. There will be a memorial service in Lincolnshire in September.

Someone has said that I am now the 'head' of the family. I don't have much time for that. It rings of J.R. Ewing, Lord Grantham or Del Boy. Actually I don't feel any different at all. It has been a long time since I have been parented and this is just the next chapter of life. Turn the page. As Claire says when inevitable bad stuff happens, 'Put on your big-boy pants, adjust and get on with it.' With Mother's death come all the jobs we all have to do when someone dies. It would appear that the changes made to ease the process during the Covid pandemic still exist. Something good to come from all that bad.

Of more consequence in the big picture is we now have a new Labour government. No great surprise there but, for large estate owners and many others besides, not the best of news. We will have to see how much of the King's speech becomes reality and the effect of those bills in the short and long term. We can, I am sure, expect to see changes in taxation, planning regulations and employment law. Here in Romsey we can look forward to being supported by Caroline Nokes for a further term, providing continuity, strength, experience, maturity and action. I think for many, this time, it was a time to vote local not national.

The second Saturday in September sees us host the annual Romsey Show. One of our tenants, the Romsey and District Horse and Agricultural Society, organises and puts on this brilliant one-day show where 'town and country meet'. Broadlands has a long and respected relationship with the society, going back over 100 years, and a relatively new agreement now in place, agreed during the Covid pandemic, will keep the society and its show here for a while to come. Expect a great day out with something for everyone.

As I write, our Olympians are on the train to Paris, we are batting in the second Test at Trent Bridge and there's a Brit doing fairly well at the British Open in windswept Troon. Let us hope for some success.



Working at Broadlands is rather like Test cricket

Corridor of uncertainty

I was lucky to get a day at Lords for the first West Indies Test. There is nothing quite like a series of five day Test matches. It is so complex and bizarre in so many ways. The joy of being there is partly knowing that at no point will you have to try and explain it or justify it. There is an unsaid, common bond as everyone thinks about when is the best time and the worst time for it to rain; from which end to bring on the seamer and should we have a short third man or a forward square leg? I am often asked what it is like working at Broadlands. Well, it's rather like Test cricket in that the unpredictable weather is of huge importance; it is complex and misunderstood; it is traditional and old

fashioned yet ever changing; has to fight hard to keep its place in the world and, finally, after many days batting and bowling hard, the best you often only get is a draw.

To conclude, I am a big fan of Gareth Southgate and I think it a great shame he has resigned. He was heavily criticised, mainly by armchair critics who haven't ever managed much more than a wheelbarrow and yet seem to think they know more than a man who got us further and more often, than any other manager since 1966! Gareth never told us how to do our jobs and never would. I hope he goes on to great things if that's what he wants. And to replace him; bring on Sarina Wiegman. Now, there's controversial.