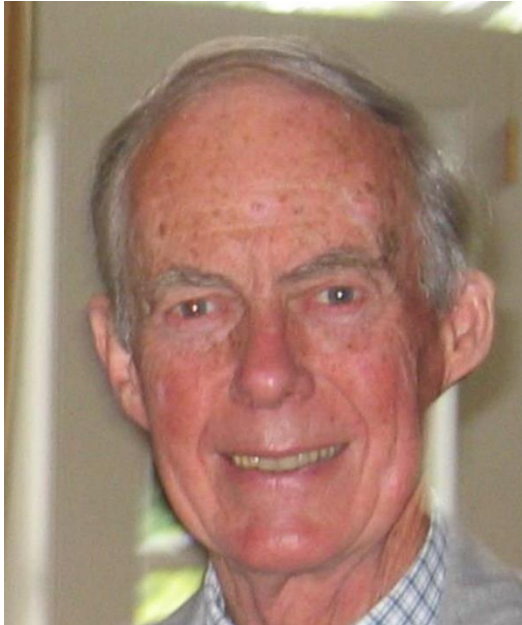


Trevor Beale 1934 – 2024



Trevor Beale has passed away at the age of 89

He was a consummate hotelier throughout his working life, moving to West Lodge Park Hotel in Hadley Wood near Barnet with his parents at the age of 10 in March 1945.

At that time Beale's Ltd, the long established family firm, were bakers and caterers in North London, but this was their first foray into hotel ownership.

The hotel at that time was a sleepy unlicensed "private hotel" with full occupancy in the 28 rooms by permanent residents, some of whom were quite eccentric.

Trevor recalled in his memoir https://www.westlodgepark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/WLP_Memoir_Brochure.pdf that one of the elderly guests used to sit in the bedroom corridor where there was free central heating, rather than in her room where heat was via a metered gas fire for a shilling !

Guests were summoned to meals by a gong at the foot of the main stairs and sat at individual tables around the sides of the restaurant, scowling at any transient guests in the middle of the room.

Comfortable chairs in the lounge were fiercely guarded by the residents, and in those days the Harrods lending library van used to drive all the way to the hotel more than once a week to suit the needs of the guests.

There were no en suite bathrooms, and Trevor's mother remembered coming across one man with nothing more than a towel around his waist who had lost his way back to his bedroom.

It was not until Trevor joined the family firm as the seventh generation of the family business in 1958, after Westminster, Cambridge and hotel school in Geneva, that the sleepy hotel was upgraded with bedroom central heating, a liquor licence and banqueting and the permanent residents given notice to leave.

The bakery in Holloway Road was shut down in 1969 and further improvements to West Lodge Park were made by Trevor in 1971 with a large expansion of the hotel and an AA four star rating. Various other hotels and businesses were bought and sold, but West Lodge Park always remained the jewel in the crown.

The Beale Arboretum in the 35 acres of stunning grounds surrounding West Lodge Park, developed by three generations of the Beales, Edward, Trevor and Andrew, has become well known with 800 species of trees, three national collections and fifteen champion trees.

He founded the West Lodge Park Concert dinner series in 1974, combining good food, wine and chamber music in one event, a template copied by other country house hotels since, and which continues to this day fifty years later.

Trevor became Chairman of the London Division of the British Hospitality Association, and a member of their main board. He was also Chairman of the Hotel and Catering Managers London Branch, an active participant in Prestige Hotels consortium, and later, in the Josephine Barr consortium.

A liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Bakers from 1955, he became Master Baker in 1993.

He retired from the family business in 1999 to pursue interests as wide as chairing Diocese of St Albans committees, Lay Chair of the Berkhamsted Deanery, Chairman of the Puffins Club for autistic adults, member of many different choirs over the years, and passed his Grade 7 organ in his eighties. He also wrote the definitive history of West Lodge Park https://www.westlodgepark.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/WLP-History_Book.pdf

In a post covid era when much of the hotel competition has closed down, the family firm has continued successfully, and is now run by the eighth

generation Andrew and Nick, and ninth generation Ashley and Emma, making it the oldest family business in the London area.

He leaves his wife Susan, four children, eight grandchildren and a great granddaughter.