

Times Past

Four-star family home

Family-run hotel West Lodge Park, in Hadley Wood, is celebrating its diamond anniversary.

Originally built as a lodge for huntsmen riding through Enfield Chase in 1419, West Lodge Park, in Cockfosters Road, is now a four-star hotel boasting attractive grounds.

It is documented that Queen Elizabeth I visited West Lodge, in addition to James I and Charles I who was the last monarch to have

have stayed there.

To mark the 60th anniversary, guests enjoyed a champagne lunch while three hornbeam trees were planted in the arboretum in memory of Edward Beale.

Edward was 41 when he bought the house in 1945 as a new venture and departure from the family bakery business, moving in with his wife, Betty, and son, Trevor.

His family lived at West Lodge Park for 50 years as he

renovated the hotel and indulged his passion for trees by planting the arboretum.

Today, the grounds of the hotel boast more than 800 varieties of trees and shrubs, including a 200-year-old strawberry tree, and a collection of hornbeams, recognised as the best in the UK.

The rare trees were used to make striking hammers for pianos, chopping blocks and mallets. They are deciduous trees which grow up to 30 metres in height and are native to the heavy clay soils of the south-east of England.

In the early 1960s, Edward set about making the lodge the highly-rated four-star hotel it is today, installing central heating, en suite bathrooms, a bar and restaurant.

But it was the arboretum that remained his pride and joy, and he never tired of showing it off to visitors. He was awarded the CBE in 1966 and died in 1998 at the age of 94.

His son Trevor took over the business in 1958 and today his grandson, Andrew, is the managing director.

"With such a rich history dating back to the 15th century, the 60 years we have owned West Lodge Park is a



Birthday bash: Celebrating 60 years in business at West Lodge Park are former hotel group chairman Trevor Beale and the Mayor of Enfield Cllr Bill Price

mere trifle by comparison," Andrew said.

"But I hope we have added a new chapter to this history book with my grandfather's

arboretum which has achieved national acclaim."

West Lodge Park is also home to the Edward Beale collection of old masters,

many of which were painted during the reign of Charles II by Mary Beale, England's first professional woman painter.



Well grounded: West Lodge Park in Hadley Wood