

## ***Beales Hotels, the best loved company in the UK?***

Beales Hotels, Hertfordshire must be among the best loved companies the UK if staff length of service is the judge. The family business has possibly the most experienced management team, with 38 members of staff having worked for the company for over 600 years.

Beales Hotels is the oldest family business in Hertfordshire, dating back eight generations to 1769. The company owns two highly rated four star hotels, West Lodge Park in Hadley Wood and Beales Hotel in Hatfield.

Finance Director Tony King celebrates 40 years with the company this year, he began his career as a waiter back in 1971 :

“I never intended to stay, I only came here as a fill in job and have never looked back,” said Tony. “This company is different, we all pull together in a close knit team. Everyone has a say, we are not just faceless employees. To have so many long standing members of staff, in a trade where staff are usually very transient, is testament to how well looked after the staff are here.”

Tony earned just £7 a week back in 1971 as a waiter, but with encouragement from senior managers who spotted his potential, he worked his way up the career ladder. Over the years, running such prestigious hotels,



*Left : Tony on crutches after a skiing accident, meeting Sir Bobby Robson and Alan Lamb at Hatfield Lodge.*



Tony has met many famous faces and most of the England football squads.

Now in the midst of a recession, Tony holds the purse strings as Finance Director :

“I am busier now than ever before. It is a challenging time, we have to maintain our high standards regardless of the economic climate. Our customers expect only the very best when they stay with us. But again, our staff are a priority and we have been able to ride the storm without making any redundancies.”

The UK average for length of service is five and half years, Beales Hotels has a total of 170 staff, 38 of them have worked for a total of 630 years, that’s an average of 16 years each.

Managing Director Andrew Beale has worked in the family business for nearly twenty years: “The experience our team has is invaluable, many customers come back year on year and are greeted by familiar faces, which they love. You simply can’t buy loyalty, it has to be earned and I am very grateful to all of our team for their centuries of service!”