

Kicking back with a Lord

Okay, it's not every day one gets to chill out with a real live Lord.

Last week, I had the opportunity to hang out with John Charles Harold Ferdinand Lyon-Dalberg-Acton, 5th Baron Acton. Now if that ain't an intimidating name, man, I don't know what is.

But when I met him at Robert Little School, his intro was brief and friendly. "Hi Ted, I'm Johnny."

Later I sat and chatted with Johnny, over a coffee (on my part) and ice tea for Johnny, as we discussed all sorts of things between here and there— 'there' being the United Kingdom, more specifically the County of Gloucestershire—and 'here' being, well here, Halton Hills.

An accomplished author of 14 books and sometimes pig farmer, Johnny Acton was not only a delight to chat with, but downright interesting. We talked a bit about farming and his raising some heritage breed pigs. I explained sheep farming to him to a small degree— after all, his home county is covered with sheep in the rolling hills.

He spoke of his family history, when his great-great-grandfather lost a leg during the great civil war in England in 1642.

"He probably just banged his leg— no one is quite sure of the severity of the actual wound— but by the time the story had been handed down through the generations, it'd been blown right off," grinned Johnny.

Whatever the story is, the wound—and his military service— resulted in him becoming a hereditary peer, or Lord for life, a title to be passed down to future generations of eldest male children.

"Although I knew it was going to happen to me, I didn't expect to become a Lord so early in my life," explained Johnny. "But with the passing of my father last year, I inherited it at a much younger age. My father was only 69

Ted Brown



years old when he died.

"But it's really just a title, a bit of nobility," said Johnny. "It may give us a good seat in a restaurant, but other than that, it's just a title."

However, that title has certainly given Lord and Lady Acton a good 'seat' while visiting Acton.

They enjoyed taking part at Acton Fall Fair last weekend, toured various farming operations on the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee bus tour, spoke at the Acton Town Hall dinner, and Lord Johnny will be doing a book reading at the Acton Branch of Halton Hills Public Library tonight (Thursday).

In addition, they have also had a visit to the United States, and a brief stay at a cottage in Muskoka.

So when Lord John and Lady Lucinda, (a.k.a. 'Johnny and Percy'), depart from Acton this coming weekend, they will leave behind many new friends— but I'm sure they will also take back many fond memories of their time in Acton.

I've personally enjoyed visiting with Johnny and Percy, while they've been here.

I was their chauffeur one evening, and we've enjoyed a number of good chats.

So I can now honestly say I've made friends with a Lord.

But, just to be clear, he's not the one who presented Moses with the Ten Commandments.

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