

York Older People's Assembly  
AUCTION OF PROMISES  
Thurs 22 Sept 2011

York Older People's Assembly  
presents...



**They Came, they Dined, they Bid  
and they left Rejoicing**

What we would call a “splendid evening”, the success of which far exceeded our expectations!

Our 66 guests, including the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, were met by smiling waitresses with trays of “bubbly” in the beautiful setting of the Guildhall with “starlight” screens, balloons, YOPA displays and the brimful Table of Promises. The round dining tables gleamed with silver cutlery and glassware sparkled in the candlelight. Conversations hummed and goodwill was kindled instantly. Councillors Sonja Crisp and Lynn Jeffries mingled with well-known and not-so-well-known York citizens and Steve Kershaw from York Digital Image took photos full of smiles with the offer of purchase from his shop on Bridge Street and the proceeds going to YOPA – great news!

We settled at our tables to be wined and dined in gracious fashion by the Food & Drink Festival team. The beef was described as the “best I’ve eaten”, “beautifully cooked” and the vegetable tangine and couscous was “a real treat”. After a tasty dessert and coffee we all sang Happy Birthday to celebrate Eileen Rhodes’ 87<sup>th</sup> birthday – what an amazing role model for keeping “young at heart”!

Elly Fiorentini had stepped into the role as our celebrity auctioneer when Harry Gratton had to go into hospital for an operation. He was reported as being out now and on the mend and sent us his best wishes. He had recommended Elly and she proved to be the star of the evening! Her informality and cheerfulness combined with a firm hand on the gavel and ways of winning more bids from the floor proved an entertainment in itself. We stood in awe as the first bid doubled the value of the item and she then went on from strength to strength with a final amount for the evening’s bidding of around £1,400!!! People were tired but still smiling as they collected their “promises” and wended their way home after a memorable evening.

We couldn’t have done it without the partnership of Michael Hjort, Debbie Waite and the Food & Drink Festival team, nor the amazing generosity of local businesses to whom we are truly grateful. Harrowells Solicitors had donated a table for YOPA to fill and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust filled a table with their sociable staff. The spirit of generosity was reflected in all our guests and their willingness to enter the bidding for almost every item. It was an evening full of good food, good company, good bargains and all in a good cause – as promised.

Sue Lister, 50+ Festival Coordinator, thanked all those involved in the creation of this wonderful experience. This is the kind of big hearted community venture that raises our spirits in these uncertain times. We are deeply grateful.

