

Out of town – Gem of a hotel celebrates ruby anniversary this year

With two significant anniversaries falling in the one year, 2020 is shaping up to be a very special one for Coupar Angus hotelier, Alan Bannerman.

Two of his hospitality businesses are beginning new marketing campaigns, and the hotel is ideally placed for your staycation this year.

His hotel, the Red House Hotel, the only one in Coupar Angus, has been owned and run by the Bannerman family for the past 40 years. Dating back to Victorian times, when Coupar Angus had a vibrant railway station, the building was originally called The Railway Hotel. When the trains ceased to run, the neighbouring potato store and railway yard was purchased from Scottish Brewers in 1979 by Alan's father Norman, and his Uncle Telford. The two men called their business partnership, Nortel Leisure. Redeveloping the building into The Red House Hotel, the business opened its doors to guests in 1980.

While Alan's father Norman is still involved in the business today, his Uncle Telford sadly died shortly after the hotel first opened. Alan, together with his siblings Ian and Susan, formed a partnership with his dad, and mum Moyra, to continue to run the hotel together.

Alan has effectively taken the reins for the past twenty

years, investing over £400,000 to build up the hotel's brand and competing effectively in today's market. Every bedroom is now en-suite, and three rooms at the hotel are more accessible for the less able bodied, with one having wheelchair access. On the leisure side, the hotel has a state of the art gym which has recently been refurbished. There is also a sauna and squash court, with a Sports bar offering snooker and pool. The 160 seater function suite hosts around twenty four weddings a year.

In what is a more continental approach to service, the Red House Hotel offers a full all day menu, under Head Chef Nigel Liston, so that guests can enjoy its range of dishes anytime of the day. Created using ingredients from a range of local Perthshire suppliers, these include two local butchers, T H Stevenson Butchers from Stanley, and David Reid from Burrelton. All beer and lagers are supplied by Tennents in a long running relationship.



A recent highlight reflecting Alan's support of many local golf courses in the area, including Blairgowrie, came in 2016

when The Red House Hotel won Best Golf Hotel (20 rooms or less) from Scottish Golf Tourism Association. The hotel was also nominated in the same category in 2019, with the hotel continuing to offer superbly priced play and stay golf packages.

“It’s been a very eventful forty years you could say!” said Alan Bannerman, “We are very grateful to still be here in Coupar Angus running this Hotel which, as well as being a landmark in the town, is actually one of Coupar Angus’s largest employers. We’re open all year round and have a strong reputation for good old fashioned personal service, and for retaining the same staff over the years.”

“I am sure my Uncle Telford would be very proud of how well the Red House Hotel has fared for itself over the past four decades, which have seen huge changes in customers’ short breaks and leisure habits,” continued Alan. “It’s a shame that so many other Hotels in the town have ended up closing. This is a stunning part of Scotland with so much to see and do, from hillwalking and golfing, to visiting distilleries and Castles. We’re only forty five minutes from the Glenshee Ski Centre, and the new V&A in Dundee is a very accessible day trip from here too. We want to showcase the whole area!”



The Dalmore Inn, in Blairgowrie, was added to the business portfolio in 2009 and is reasonable for another anniversary celebration. Originally a small hotel which had fallen into a state of disrepair, Alan carried out a major £1m refurbishment creating a stylish 120 cover Scottish country restaurant and bar with its own label gin. He also owns Number 31 at Wellmeadow in Blairgowrie, a popular café/bar serving food and snacks all day.

“It was a good decision to add The Dalmore Inn to our portfolio ten years ago, and it’s yet another reason to look back and be proud of what we have achieved,” said Alan. “Food provenance is everything at the moment and our focus here, as well as at the Red House, is to communicate that to our customers, which I think we now do very well, with plenty information provided to them about all our food and drink suppliers, many of whom we have used for a long time.”

A team of 24 operate The Dalmore Inn, with Front of House, Arnaud Merrouche, and Head Chef Iain Naismith, heading up the business. The seasonal lunch and dinner menus are changed

every three to four months. Regular gin events, where the Inn's own label gin, exclusively created by Persie Gin, is showcased, have become very well attended.



“Both businesses have recently benefitted from new websites,” said Alan, “It’s another investment to make, but so important that we present ourselves well. “We’re also undertaking a new PR and Marketing campaign, with media from all over the UK coming to sample what we have on offer. We can’t think of a better way to celebrate our two special anniversaries!”

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