

## **Our visit to St James' Palace**

June, Di and I felt fortunate to be included in the Hospice 'party' attending Help the Hospice's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception at St James's Palace on 16 March – we thought, if we're lucky, we might even get to see the Her Royal Highness and the Duke of Edinburgh at close quarters.

As we didn't want to travel to London in our evening wear, we called a few hotels to ask for a quote to hire a room for a couple of hours so that we could get changed. However, the General Manager of The Stafford Hotel in St James's Place generously offered us a complimentary suite so that we could change into our finery for the occasion – which was an added and unexpected bonus.

Two of our party of five (Trisha and Judi) were to be presented to the Duke of Edinburgh and the remaining three of us (June, Di and myself) were separated from them almost as soon as we arrived at the Palace. We found ourselves a seat and waited for the royal party to arrive.....

Little did we know that the place we had chosen to wait would offer us a bird's eye view as the royal party entered the room?

We have to thank June for making eye contact with the Duke of Edinburgh because I am sure that prompted him to approach us and chat, at some length, much to the envy of those waiting to be 'officially' presented. What a coup - it made our day! To top it all the Queen smiled at us as she passed by to leave the room.

We collapsed into mild hysteria afterwards and talked of virtually nothing else for the entire journey home.

Helene Trebinska