

# all over the shop

## THE CULT SHOP

A pleasing purveyor of quality and quirk

## FOR GOODNESS' SAKE

A trinity of channels for charitable urges

## THE GANNET

Tucker tips for the galloping gourmet

## THE GOBLET

Raising the bar on snifters and vinous libations



## WRY SOCIETY

# the festival organiser

Can the founder of Barleybury music festival bring himself to hand over the reins to his son – or will it all end on a sour note?

**D**ad! Dad! Calling dad? Over.”  
“Eddie. I’m just on the other side of the hospitality tent.”  
“Oh right. Roger that. Just coming over now.”

As he watched his son, dressed in a mud-splattered Adidas tracksuit and wearing a pair of lemon-yellow Wayfarers, knocking back pints of cider, stumbling as he waded through the quagmire that had this year even managed to make it into the VIP section, Jethro Fowler felt – not for the first time – a slight judder of concern that his

son might not quite be ready to take over the running of the festival.

Was someone that excited about a walkie-talkie really equipped to organise the world’s biggest music festival? Truth be told, Eddie had always had a skewed view of life, but perhaps this was only to be expected from someone whose birth had been announced, live on stage, by T Rex and who, aged five, had taken Ziggy Stardust to school for a Show and Tell.

In the absence of a more able successor, Jethro had no alternative but to hope for the best. There was no way he could do

another year: 45 years as the bearded face of Barleybury was enough for any simple sheep farmer (especially one with £3m). Before he vanished entirely in life’s rear-view mirror, he had things to do and new pastures to explore (if he didn’t make it to Mustique soon, Mick might stop asking). Not to mention an exasperated wife. Poor Tess had never signed up for any of this. Originally it had just been the two of them, rolling hills and a flock of sheep. When he had suggested supplementing their income with a few bands playing in a field, she had borne all of it with good grace. Until last year, when the female headline act tried to crawl into bed with her in the middle of the night.

“Right, dad, so I just need you to sign off on a few things before I’m too drunk to know what I’m doing.”

“Okey-dokey then.”

With his sunglasses pulled down to the tip of his nose, Eddie looked demented as

he swiped manically at his iPad. “OK, so, the Mudd-o-meter app is live and getting loads of hits – I won’t say I told you so. I’ve cleared Obama’s landing with the council – he’s agreed to do a selfie with the recycling team, I’ve sourced the kefir goat probiotics for the headliner’s smoothies, made sure there’s no leather in Stella McCartney’s teepee and – for no reason, other than because it’s funny – ordered three kilos of M&Ms for Eminem.”

“First things first,” Jethro muttered quietly to himself, as he looked out, with more than a twinge of nostalgia, over the billowing flags and sea of humanity nestled, like a beautiful, benign army of love, in front of the Obelisk stage.

“Oh... and, oh, you’re gonna love this, dad... guess what else I’ve done?”

But it was no use. Jethro wasn’t listening. Hypnotised by the swifts swirling in the pink twilight skies, he had been transported back in time, from Strawberry Fields to Champagne Supernovas, Sympathies for the Devil to Electric Light Orchestras, Material Girls and Scissor Sisters and hundreds of thousands of Common People, all sleeping under the stars in a state of major-minor togetherness...

So entranced was he by this wonderful vision, that Jethro even began to hear things – his name, chanted by the 100,000-strong crowd – and feel himself being lifted onto the shoulders of giants. He saw his face being flashed onto huge, pixellated screens and felt a microphone being thrust into his hand. He saw Tess – there was Tess – standing on the stage, in her wellies and best tweed skirt and he heard his own voice, the voice of his much younger self, booming through the falling night. “People love music” it said. “I’m going to start a festival. I’m going to start a music festival.”

The next voice he heard was Eddie’s and, in a terrible moment of lucidity, he realised that this was no longer a dream. There was his son, still in his sunglasses, pint glass

held aloft, standing at the microphone and yelling like a football hooligan.

“My dad is going to sing!!” he was shouting. “He’s going to sing like he’s never sung before because, guess what Barleybury? Guess what?! Please give it up for the soon-to-be-retired Jethro Fowler who has NEVER. EVER. Sung a note in his liiiiiiiiife!” **CHLOE FOX**

**“Obama’s agreed to do a selfie with the recycling team”**