

feature

He has dined in some of the world's best restaurants, met every member of the Royal family and counts Kevin Keegan as a friend. LIZ LAMB meets Dean Maddison, the best hotel concierge outside London

A genie for the mega-rich

HE HAS never been defeated by a request from the rich and famous. So when Christina Onassis demanded to know where the hottest place in Europe was so she could take her daughter for a walk on the beach, Dean Maddison quickly got to work.

Her wish was his command and within an hour the experienced concierge had arranged for a limo to pick her up from a hotel to take her to a private jet where she was whisked off to Spain for that all-important walk in the sunshine.



TEAMWORK – from left, Chris Waddle, Paul Gascoigne, his pal John Buchanan, Peter Beardsley and Dean



PRIDE – Dean, right, in 1990 as a concierge at the Hilton on Park Lane



ONLY THE VERY BEST – hotel concierge Dean Maddison at Jesmond Dene House

Dean, who was working at the Langham Hotel in London at the time, recalls: "It was chucking it down in England so she phoned down saying she wanted to take her baby for a walk.

"This was in the days before the internet so it wasn't that easy to find out the hottest place in Europe. "We worked out it was Madrid so she asked for a car and a private jet to be arranged straight away. It was all sorted within the hour and off she went.

"That was normal to her.

She only went for a walk for half-an-hour."

The 40-year-old, who lives in Newbottle with his wife Esme, always endeavours to get whatever his guests want.

This determination, along with his friendly North East manner, has led to him being named the best concierge outside of London in the prestigious Morris Golden Keys Concierge Awards.

As head of concierge at Jesmond Dene House since November last year, Dean has also met his share of

the stars here in the North East.

He says: "We had Sarah Ferguson staying here the other week. She was lovely. I have met her a few times. She remembered who I was. She said to me 'I know your face from somewhere'."

It is not Dean's first brush with royalty. The dad-of-one claims to have met every member of the Royal family including the Queen, Prince Charles and Diana.

"It was when I worked at the Park Lane Hilton and they used to come in regularly," he says.

"Diana used to come in a lot to get refreshed. Andrew would stand and talk to you and I saw Charles and the Queen a few times.

"I met George Best there too and we used to get a lot of boybands."

Dean never dreamed his life would turn out like this. He grew up in Houghton-le-Spring and at 16 he followed in his father's footsteps and joined the Army as a boy soldier.

But he decided to abandon his military career to go to London a year later

after his friends told him what fun they were having: "I thought it was a fantastic place. I got a job as a bell boy at the Hilton.

"I remember driving along Park Lane and looking up at the hotel and thinking 'wow'."

Dean decided to move back to the North East in 2004 so he and Esme

could start a family. They now have a two-year-old son, Calum.

Dean got a job as head concierge at Hilton Gateshead before moving to Linden Hall, in Morpeth, and then to Jesmond Dene.

Speaking about his recent award, he said: "I was ecstatic when I won. "I love my job, so it was great to win."

