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Inspirational second heyday

Your Book Review (*Caterer*, 19 June, page 12) carried some comment on Robin Sheppard's story of his year of serious illness in *A Solitary Confinement*.

While his book and the review concentrated on his illness, Guillain-Barré syndrome, there is an inspirational side to his story that those of us who know him have been particularly impressed by. His story has become a triumph of positive thinking over incarceration.

Your article refers to his heyday as a Catey winner in the early 1990s at the Bath Spa, but as his friend and colleague at Bespoke Hotels, I would say his best days could still be ahead of him. His work rate is quite phenomenal. He has thrown himself back into work as the best antidote to pain and/or self-scrutiny.

In April he was reappointed managing director of Bespoke Hotels - a role he last formally held before his collapse in December 2004 - and the company has grown rapidly in recent times to managing over 10 hotels, including a forthcoming lease on a new-build 70-bedroom hotel in Bermondsey. Most of this business development has been Robin's recent achievement. His heyday may be just arriving!

David Coubrough
Chairman, the Bespoke Hotel Company