

AT YOUR SERVICE

MARK WRIGHT

PRACTISES HIS BUTLERING SKILLS ON HIS GRANS AS HE TAKES UP A NEW ROLE



Mark serves tea to three of his leading ladies (above, from left) nan Irene, mum Carol and nan Pat. His next chore is polishing the silver, under the expert eye of John Robertson of *The Butler Valet School* (below). It's all good preparation for when the TV star offers his services as a butler as a competition prize



Television presenter Mark Wright might be married to actress Michelle Keegan, but he fully admits she's not the only woman in his life – far from it. His mum Carol, maternal nan Pat and paternal nan Irene also count themselves as influential figures.

"My nans have taught me to respect women," says Mark, 28, whose *Nanny Pat* and mum Carol are celebrities in their own right as stars of *The Only Way is Essex*, the reality TV show that Mark also starred in. Irene, who also lives in Essex, prefers to keep out of the limelight.

"They would tell me off for swearing," he adds. "My grandparents made me be polite and a gentleman."

It's his politeness and charm that earned the Heart FM presenter legions of fans – many of whom gathered outside St Mary's Church in Bury St Edmunds when he tied the knot with Michelle in May. "To get married is a personal thing, but to have so many people commenting on how amazing it was is incredible," he says. "I get people wanting to chat, which is lovely; a nice feeling."

One of Mark's lucky fans will get the chance to meet him when he becomes their butler for a day as a competition prize for Greek-style yoghurt brand Oykos.

"I'll never be a professional butler," says Mark, who is practising his skills on his mum and grandmothers at *HELLO!*'s fun photoshoot. "I don't think they'd want me to

turn up being posh and with a straight back. But I'll help them out."

Is he domesticated? "I like a clean house. If it gets scruffy, I can't stand it," he says. "I want everyone to take their shoes off."

"He never used to be domesticated, but since marrying Michelle he is," adds Carol. "He's very house proud."

HARD GRAFT

Mark, who found fame when he joined *Towie* in 2010, is no stranger to hard graft. "I worked as a labourer one summer," he says. "I was carrying plasterboards up flights of stairs all day – and they are heavy. I think being a butler would be a nice job compared to that."

Last year he was put through his paces on *Strictly Come Dancing*, going on to reach the final. He says it's "a relief" that he doesn't have to take part again. "I wasn't a good dancer, so I had to practise harder than most," he says. "I miss it and the adrenaline rush, but I'm glad I can be sitting back watching it this year."

Does he have any advice for this year's contestants? "Work hard and put the hours in. Expect it to be a long, gruelling three months." As for who he thinks will take the title, he says diplomatically: "They're all winners for doing it."

Next up for Mark is a new series of *Take Me Out: The Gossip*, which he has presented with Laura Jackson since 2012. The show is set on

'Both my nans taught me to respect women. They would tell me off for swearing'



the fictional Isle of Fernando's, known in real life as Tenerife. "I can't wait," says Mark, who will fly out next month. "I love doing that show – I'm out in the sun, I love the crew and I'm doing what I want to do, which is presenting."

On the show, a spin-off of dating series *Take Me Out*, Mark and Laura interview the newly matched couples. "There's always gossip," he says, adding that the programme has led to engagements, marriages and a baby. "I'd like another wedding this year."

In August, Mark and Michelle spent time in Los Angeles, where both had meetings about career opportunities. "I would never say goodbye to the UK, it's my home," he says. "But if a job came up over there I would go over for that and come back."

"I've always been ambitious," he adds. "I'll always want to keep going with my TV and radio presenting and keep improving and working hard."

If TV fame hadn't beckoned, Mark reckons he would be "working in property or still being a nightclub promoter and semi-pro footballer".

Does he ever step back to consider how much his life has changed? "Always," he says. "I'll be driving along and think, 'Wow, I am so lucky.'"

His nans must feel very proud. **H**

INTERVIEW: DAWN EMERY

LOCATION: 9 ALBION STREET, THROUGH E J HARRIS LTD LETTINGS

To be in with a chance to win Mark's services as a butler for the day, find one of ten lucky stickers inside Mark Wright promotional packs of Oykos and enter your details at oykos.co.uk.

Gran day out: Time for tea with Irene and Pat. "My nans have taught me to respect women," Mark tells HELLO!. It's the other woman in his life – wife Michelle Keegan – who has stood him in good stead for a stint as a butler. "He never used to be domesticated, but since marrying Michelle he is," says mum Carol. "He's very house proud"