

# WYE

*The Journal  
of  
The Wye College Agricola Club*



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# Wye College Agricola Club

**Agricola Club Secretariat, Cumberland House, Church Street,  
Wye, Ashford, Kent, TN25 5BJ, United Kingdom**

**Tel:** 01233 813884

**Email:** [contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

**Journal Editor**

John Walters

**Tel:** 01233 812 823

**Email:** [akermans38@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:akermans38@yahoo.co.uk)

**Production Editor**

Gill Bond

**With help from**

Francis Huntington

Vinny McLean

Jane Reynolds

**[wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](http://wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)**

# Wye College Agricola Reunion –

## Schedule of Events

### Lunch

We suggest that you might like to meet up with contemporaries at the Wye hostels – please make your own arrangements.

### 3.00pm – 5.00pm

Wye Heritage Centre – Latin School, Wye College.  
Exhibition: 'Wye College expedition – 1968 – The Gambia.

Tea/coffee and scones will be served in the Latin School until 5.00pm.

### 5.30pm

The Annual General Meeting of the Agricola Club will commence in the Kempe Centre.

### 6.45pm

Pre-dinner drinks and canapés in the Kempe Centre.  
A glass of sparkling wine will be offered, and a pay bar will be available throughout the evening.

### 7.30pm

Dinner will be served in the Kempe Centre.

Please see page opposite for menu.

Some wine will be included on the tables.

**Please note that for security reasons there is no access to the College buildings**

**Please do not park in the car park opposite the College**

**Please use the Kempe Centre Car Park or the Village Car Park.  
Follow the signs.**

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# Saturday, 29th September 2018

## **Annual Dinner**

**6.45pm for 7.30pm**

**Kempe Centre, Wye College, Wye, Kent, TN25 5AH**

All the arrangements are in place and we look forward to welcoming you to Wye on 29th September.

As before, we are targeting particular years; this time it is those who graduated in 1958, 1968, 1978, 1988, 1998 & 2008.

However, all years are of course welcome. In addition, if you arrived at Wye in one of these years you might like to celebrate.

Dress: Black Tie or Lounge Suit.

To reserve a place, please complete the booking form in the green pages at the back of the journal

### **MENU**

#### **Smoked Salmon**

Lemon & Lime with Crème Fraiche and Roquette Salad

*or*

#### **Stuffed Field Mushrooms**

with Mozzarella and Sundried Tomato

#### **Slow Roasted Lamb Shank**

with Rosemary Mash and Crispy Sage

*or*

#### **Pan Fried Sea Bass**

with Caramelised Fennel

**Lemon & Lime Tart** with Clotted Cream

*or*

Summer Berry Cheese Cake

#### **Coffee and chocolates**

(There will be some wine on the tables with more available to purchase, plus beer)

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# Contacts

## UK

**All queries (excluding membership):** John Walters

Tel: +44 (0)1233 812823

Email: [akermans38@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:akermans38@yahoo.co.uk)

**Membership queries:** Francis Huntington, Agricola Club Secretariat,

Cumberland House, Church Street, Wye, Ashford, Kent TN25 5BJ

Tel: +44 (0)1233 813884

Email: [contact@weagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@weagricolaclub.org.uk)

## OVERSEAS

### Do get in touch with your named contact

#### Australia

Matthew Coleman, Parklands, 265 Thwaites Road, Yannathan, Victoria 3981

Email: [matthew.coleman@ilc.gov.au](mailto:matthew.coleman@ilc.gov.au)

Peter Darby, Box 308, Lyndoch, Barossa Valley, SA 5351

Email: [petegaildarby@bigpond.com](mailto:petegaildarby@bigpond.com)

Susan Johnston, 84 Dunstan St., Curtin, Australian Capital Territory 2605

Helen Day, PO Box 193 Kapunda SA 5373

Email: [thday@bigpond.com](mailto:thday@bigpond.com)

#### Botswana

Motshwari Obopile. Dept. of Agricultural Research, Pb 0033, Gaborone

#### France

Tom Hickman, La Chambre Blanche, Lezele en Plouye, Huelgoat, Bretagne 29690

#### Kenya

James Hutchings, P O Box 1877 Naivasha

Email: [james@dogrock.net](mailto:james@dogrock.net)

#### Malawi

Stephen Carr, Private Bag 4, Zomba

Email: [scarr@sdnp.org.mw](mailto:scarr@sdnp.org.mw)

#### New Zealand

John Varcoe, 154 Charles Road, Karaka, RD1 Papakura, 2580 Auckland

Email: [johnv@everythingdesign.co.nz](mailto:johnv@everythingdesign.co.nz)

#### Nigeria

Christopher Akujuobi, Afribank Nigeria plc, N Chia Branch,

33 Hospital Road PMB 2002, Nchia-Eleone

#### Southern Africa

David Gooday, Lima Farm, PO Box 1288 Mbabane, H100 Swaziland

Email: [davidmalcolmgooday@gmail.com](mailto:davidmalcolmgooday@gmail.com)

#### Uganda

John Magnay, 17 Akii Bua Road, Nakasero, P O Box 32041, Kampala

Email: [johnmagnay@gmail.com](mailto:johnmagnay@gmail.com)

#### USA

Adrian Wadley, 1750 27th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94122 - 4210

Email: [wadley@gmail.com](mailto:wadley@gmail.com)

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# Editorial

John Walters – Chairman and Journal Editor

## Data Protection

You probably don't need reminding that new EU Data Protection rules have come into force in the UK this year (See page 11). You can rest assured that any data we hold on file relating to postal and email addresses for our members will continue to be respected according to our Privacy Policy. That is now controlled by our Data Protection Officer (Francis Huntington). We use the information merely to keep you informed via the annual Journal and our twice yearly e-newsletter. Occasionally, we may use it to solicit views of members concerning such matters as the future of the Club and/or your requirements of it. We will not share the information with any other organisation or third party apart from the printers/dispatchers of our journal who are obliged to use it for the sole purpose of publishing it and addressing the envelopes for mailing.

## Future of the Club

A sub-group of your committee has been examining some possible scenarios for the future administration of the Club and its associated Journal (there is a report on page 16). Looking a few years ahead, it is hoped that the Heritage Centre will have moved into newer, more permanent accommodation in the College and the management of both organizations feel that a closer collaboration with the Agricola Club at that time could be mutually beneficial. To solicit your opinions on this and other aspects of the Club, we have included a tear-out questionnaire with this Journal for completion by members whom we are unable to contact by email. PLEASE take some time to send us your views and opinions.

## On the negative side

We have lost a number of internationally-known members during the year, including **Professor John Nix** who died in March. It seems that anyone who knew anything about farming knew about *The Farm Management Pocket book* now in its 48th Edition. An extremely well-attended funeral service was held in Wye Church and there will be a memorial service in London. A tribute prepared by Professor Paul Webster can be found on page 66.

Two of my best pals from University days, **Drs Ian Robinson** and **Derek Cuddeford** (both in my 1964–67 cohort) sadly passed away, far too early. Together they represented 50% of our Animal Science quartet who, for six months or so, had to travel weekly to the RVC in London for our physiology lectures since our own lecturer was indisposed. We had some great times and both these guys went on to earn Ph.Ds and lead very successful and interesting lives (see page 70 for tributes to Ian. Derek will be remembered in the Journal next year).

Two other soon-to-be losses of a very different kind but nonetheless still very painful are **Gill Bond** (1964–67), our Production Editor, and **Vinny McLean**, our Database Manager and Committee Secretary. As I write this, I cannot for the life of me imagine how we are going to fare without them. Both, in their respective fields, have helped raise our Journal and our systems into the 21st century. Talent, clarity of vision and commitment of the kind they have brought to their roles are qualities that will be exceedingly hard to find anywhere, let alone in this corner of Kent. I have very serious concerns

about the survival of the Journal in its present form, particularly at a time when we are trying to build something for the future.

### On the positive side

Thank you for the magnificent response to requests in the Newsletter for material for the Journal. As you can no doubt feel, this year's edition is one of the largest ever ... not that we are pushing for records. But to me it's a measure of the interest that still remains, in those long past their sell-by dates, in how their colleagues are doing and what news of Wye. I feel sure that as some other younger cohorts get into middle age and start thinking more about the past than they used to, our member numbers will continue to hold up around the 3,000 mark. At least for another year or so! (See Paul Webster's updated actuarial assessment in page 16.)

### On or off balance?

I have recently speed-read the DEFRA document on the future for British Agriculture, published this year, entitled *Health and Harmony* with its foreword from the Environment Secretary, Michael Gove. In all my 50 years in agriculture,

from my first job as a journalist to my finishing role involved in the politics around the use of antibiotics in livestock production, I have never seen a more 'blue sky, everything will be fine' and 'we will do so much for the consumer, farmer, environment, animal welfare and the universe' piece of soft-soaping blurb.

If a fraction of what is promised is achieved, then apparently our world will be a much, much better place. I urge you to read the document – it's easily picked up on line – and tell me, is it me??? Or has somebody over-imbibed on gazillions of litres of optimistic juices??

On page 136, our own Emeritus Professor **Berkeley Hill** offers a more grounded insight into what conditions Britain may face after Brexit. It's not all bad news by any means but it will require farmers to keep a closer eye than ever on the ratio of input costs to returns. There may even be some benefits, not least of which is a move away from restrictive EU regulation and the dreaded precautionary principle. Who knows? We may even find room for GM crops in UK farming in our lifetime.

## The College as a photographic venue

Last autumn, John Walters arranged for the Hythe U3A Photography Group to visit the College. The Group was shown around by the security staff of Telereal Trillium, and were able to take some more unusual shots of the College, which, as we all remember, was extremely photogenic. A selection of these photos is scattered through this issue.



*A detail of the workmanship in the Dining Hall*



# President's Message

**Professor David Leaver (Post-Grad 1964–67 and Staff)**

Change is an inevitable fact of life and coping with the speed and direction of change can present many challenges. At a political level the potential changes arising from Brexit for those involved in agriculture are likely to be significant.

## **Young dairy farmers hold the key in a post-Brexit world**

However, government policies for the agricultural industry post-Brexit remain unclear and as a consequence, farming businesses are faced with uncertainty about their future. This uncertainty has the potential to hold back investments, so it was refreshing when attending a recent Dairy-Tech event at Stoneleigh to see that it was extremely well-attended with a high proportion of interested and involved dairy farmers and in particular a high proportion of young people. The event was aimed at innovation, technology, business efficiency and practical solutions, and the presentations of information, the discussions by producers and the demonstration of new products were very upbeat. Change is not only inevitable but will be absolutely necessary for success, and the younger generation will be the drivers of change so it was extremely pleasing to see their enthusiasm for the future at the event.

## **Staffing for dairy farms**

One specific area of concern in dairying, as for the horticultural industry, is the availability of labour post-Brexit. For dairy farmers this is not only about the potential loss of skilled and semi-skilled workers from the EU, but also about the potential supply of UK staff for this work. A recent RABDF survey showed that 56% of dairy

farms have used staff from outside the UK in the last five years, and a government survey of UK adults has indicated that very few UK adults are willing to consider a job where the main features involve working outside; working flexible hours; working with animals; working with machinery; working in small workforces; or working in rural locations. Whilst the innovative precision farming mechanisation and computerised management aids demonstrated at the Dairy-Tech event are going to be increasingly necessary on farms, dairying will continue to be a 365-day business with a highly skilled workforce required 24/7. Enthusing, educating and training young people for this work will be equally of importance.

## **UK farm productivity has not kept pace**

The term 'productivity' is now at the forefront of discussions on UK competitiveness for many industries. Together with many others I have been involved over the last ten years in attempting to highlight to the industry and to government that the annual rise in UK agricultural productivity (ratio of outputs relative to inputs), which is necessary for the agricultural industry and individual businesses to be competitive, has not kept pace with comparable countries. One of the reasons for this was the withdrawal of government funding for applied agricultural research in the late 1980s. This led to the closing of several research institutes involved in applied agricultural research and the loss of the ADAS Advisory Services and Experimental Husbandry Farms. The result was that a significant gap developed between the excellent UK basic science research, which underpins new technologies, and farming practice.



### **Bridging the gap between research and practice**

Fortunately, there has been a gradual realisation that the absence of government support for applied agricultural research has led to a negative impact on the growth in efficiency of production and the competitiveness of UK agriculture. New strategies and organisational structures have now been put in place by government and its agencies, and some research funding has been re-directed to bridge the gap between basic science research and practice. But it will take some time for these changes to feed through significantly into agricultural industry benefits.

Last year in the journal I highlighted how, in spite of the demise of Wye College, I continued to see the tremendous positive impacts that former students continue to make across a range of rural industries. Also, the past research of the College will continue to have beneficial impacts for some time to come. Nevertheless, it remains depressing to see the physical state of much of the College. Today I drove past Amage

Farm and the former Pig Unit on Amage Road, and past the Poultry Unit (subsequently Mechanisation Unit) on Sideland Road, and they are all in a sad state of repair awaiting future developments. Many of the College buildings are also in a similar state, so let us hope that we see significant positive developments of the College and its infrastructure over the next few years.

### **Future of the Club**

In addition to achieving its routine annual objectives, the Wye College Agricola Committee also has to consider the longer-term future of the Club, including how we manage the financial investments. You may have seen the analysis by Professor Paul Webster in the 2011–12 journal investigating the likely changes in Agricola Club membership numbers over time and the possible implications for the Club's investments. Clearly when we get down to only a handful of remaining members of the Club there will be a substantial investment remaining per member, if we continue to spend at the current annual rate. So we are taking a strategic look at possible future directions for the Club and we would welcome any views/contributions from members. please use the pink tear-out form at the back of this issue.

**See page 136 for Prof Berkeley Hill's follow-up to his article on UK agriculture in a post-Brexit world.**

# Secretary's Report

**Francis Huntington – Honorary Club Secretary**

It was excellent to meet so many of you at the Hog Roast last July. The 2018 AGM and Dinner will be back in Wye and will be held in the Wye School's new assembly hall adjacent to the Kempe Centre.

My report, once again, contains some repeat information; I make no apology as it is important that it acts as a reminder about why we exist and what we do.

## **The future of the Club**

Over the last year your committee has been discussing the future direction of the running of the Club. The draft proposals that are emerging from those discussions need to be shared with the membership, hence the report contained elsewhere in this Journal (see page 16). Before we vote on these proposals at our next AGM, we do need to consult the membership as widely as possible and to this end we have included a questionnaire in this Journal, see pink page 305; additionally, the survey will be emailed to the 1,500 or so addresses that we have on record.

## **Your Committee**

We continue to endeavour to bring down the average age of your committee. We are very aware that to keep the Club functioning, it is essential that the membership of the Committee receives a regular infusion of new blood. Do be in touch with me if you would like to join or know a member you would like to propose to ensure that the Club continues to function efficiently and with effective representation.

## **Club support for various ventures**

In the recent past, the Club has financially

supported Wye Heritage's Exhibitions such as 'Wye Hops', 'Louis Wain' and 'Wye in World War I'; this has been an important way in which the Club has been able to foster this emerging organisation. The existence of the Wye Heritage Centre and its future plans are intended to ensure that past students have a permanent point of contact and can easily access the history and heritage of the College. Your committee has already indicated its intention to continue supporting Wye Heritage as it develops.

The Trustees of the Memorial Fund are continuing to respond to requests for help and support where those requests meet the Fund's objectives; see our Treasurer's report and the Memorial Fund accounts and details of grants published in this Journal.

## **Annual Journal**

Your committee has again reviewed the possibility of making the Journal an 'on-line-only' publication; the conclusion was that the print version will remain for the time being but that this policy will be regularly reviewed. In the meantime, you can certainly request not to receive the printed version of the Journal by writing to us. You can access the on-line version at [www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](http://www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

2018 is the alternate year when we print the full address list, as well as the email addresses. We will again publish the names of 'lost' members together with their last known address. We are very dependent on members to put us in touch with those who have not updated their contact details – please scan the list and see if you can help us.



### **2018 AGM and dinner – Saturday 29th September**

This is the year when we hold the AGM and Dinner in Wye. Please see the details elsewhere in this Journal; the application form is in the green pages as usual. Please round up your contemporaries, perhaps even make a week-end of it. Your Committee has decided to suspend the 'after dinner speech'. The view is that the event is primarily about catching up with contemporaries. This year we will therefore close the formal proceedings with the toasts and then enable you to informally collect coffee (or whatever!) and circulate.

A good number have already applied for tickets following the details that were circulated in the Spring e-newsletter.

### **The membership database**

We do our best to keep the database as accurate as possible. We do need you to check your entry and to let us know if we have got it wrong or when you change your email or postal address. Our thanks to our database administrator, Vinny Mclean, who lives in Wye and can be contacted

by email should you discover an error in your record at [database@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:database@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

### **Privacy notice**

Please be aware that unless we are asked not to publish your details in the Journal, including your email address, your information will automatically appear. In order to conform with the new General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR), we are required to let you know that the Club holds your postal and e-mail address on a secure digital database for the sole purpose of keeping you informed of Club news, activities and events, and to enable us to print your details in the Journal and mail it to you. We do not share any of the information with third parties and do not publish the address list in the 'on-line' version of the Journal. All matters relating to data protection will be handled by the Club's Data Protection Officer, Francis Huntingdon, your Honorary Secretary. Our privacy policy is printed on page 182 and on the website.

### **New members**

We know that there are a substantial number of Wye College and Imperial College at Wye graduates, postgraduates and staff who, for one reason or another, have not joined the Club. We will continue to make an effort to recruit those who 'slipped through the net'. If you have friends, colleagues or contemporaries who are not members of the Club do please encourage them to be in touch. If you email us we can send you or them the application form and bank mandate electronically or, of course, a hard copy by mail.

### **Website and e-newsletter**

If you have not looked before, do check out [www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](http://www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk) The initial content is modest; however, we are about to transfer the site to a content management system which will make it much easier for us to update the site and increase the range of material in the years ahead.

We are very dependent on members to help with making the site interesting; please be in touch if you have material that we can add, eg. photographs, documents or personal reminiscences.

As you will have realised, we are developing electronic communications via the website and the e-newsletter; however, in order to be able to develop this further we do need to have your up-to-date email address; please forward this if you have not already done so.

### **Annual membership fees – check that you are up to date!**

On a number of occasions in the past, your Treasurer, Secretary and our Database Administrator have tried to ensure that all annual members pay the correct membership fee which currently stands at **£10 per annum**. Most members promptly updated their bank mandates; unfortunately, a few have not. Your committee has, therefore, reluctantly agreed that those in arrears will no longer receive the Journal. If you have contemporaries who are telling you that they no longer receive the Journal the chances are that either we do not have their current postal address or, for annual members, we are not receiving the correct subscription – please encourage them to get up to date!

### **'Lost' members**

Please check the 'Lost' list at the back of the Journal. If you know of the whereabouts of a contemporary it would be great if you could be in touch with that person or be in touch with us directly. If you notice that we have missed the death of a member it would be of great assistance if you could let us know of that death, so that our database is kept up to date and an announcement published, if appropriate. A number of members have been extremely helpful in spotting lost members and putting us in touch, thank you.

### **The future of the College campus**

For those who wish to be kept informed about the future of the Campus, I have again prepared an update which you will find opposite on page 13.

### **Club merchandise and publications**

I continue to hold all the stocks of Club merchandise and will be pleased to supply these by return – current prices inclusive of postage and packing are as follows:

Ties	£18.00
Bow ties	£22.50
Prints of the front of College (unframed)	£10.00
<i>The Record: factors leading up to and consequences of the merger of Wye College and Imperial College</i>	£5.00
<i>The College at Wye – A Historical Guide</i>	£8.00

Please make cheques payable to 'Wye College Agricola Club' or contact me about paying by BACS. As usual I will also make sure that these items are on sale at Club events.

### **Contact**

Just in case you have not caught up with your Secretary's details from elsewhere in the Journal, you can contact me at:

**Agricola Secretariat  
Cumberland Court  
Church Street,  
Wye**

**TN25 5BJ**

Telephone: 01233 813884

Email: [contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

Please check at the back of the journal that we have your correct email address. We do urgently need this in order to improve the effectiveness of our communications with you – if yours is not listed or needs updating please send it to: [database@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:database@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

# The future of the Wye Campus

**Francis Huntington – Honorary Secretary of Wye Heritage, the Wye College Agricola Club and a Wye Village resident**

As explained in the last Journal, Telereal Trillium (TT), as the new owners of the College Campus, has embarked upon producing its master plan and its detailed plans for the future development if the site (referred to as Wye 3).

A further change of ownership of the College's other properties and land holdings, not sold to TT, is now under way. Most of the previously tenanted farm land, farm buildings and the small amount of domestic housing, is now being sold by Imperial College. It has clearly completely reversed the previously stated policy of retaining the freehold of its property holding in Wye. We await the outcome of these changes of ownership and will update you on the plans of a number of new owners when they become clear.

As previously reported, Imperial College signed a long lease on Withersdane Hall and its grounds which are now being run as a drug and alcohol treatment centre by Promis.

In order to update Club members on the approach being taken by TT, I have set out the current 'state of play' for each part of the property that they now own and where plans are in the public domain. There are gaps; it is assumed that the plans for these areas will be declared once the master plan is delivered. If you are interested in keeping track of the various applications the best place to go is the Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council website: [www.wyeparish.info](http://www.wyeparish.info) where the applications are listed on the Home page.

## **Squires Hostel (opposite Leppers Shop) 1**

TT has been granted planning permission to

convert Squires to four individual cottages with associated parking.

## **Wolfson Student Hostel 2**

Planning permission has been submitted to demolish this building and replace it with a terrace of six houses. TT has been refused permission and this application has now gone to appeal. The inspector's report is awaited.

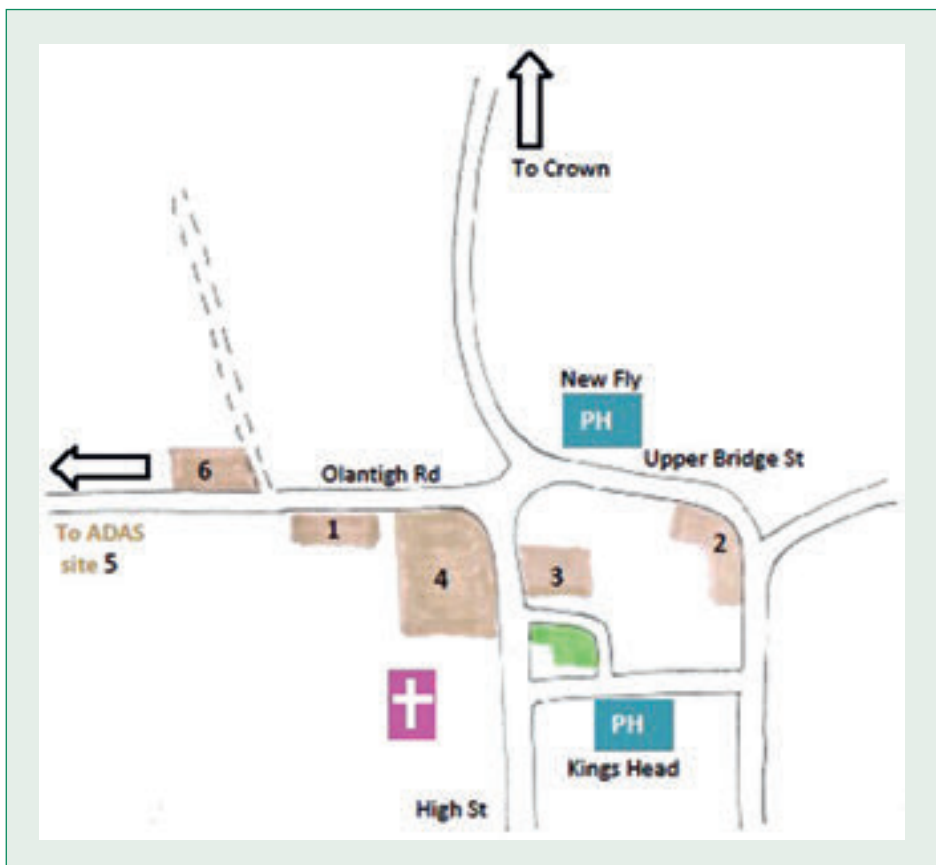
## **Nos 26–32 High Street, Wolfson Lecture Theatre and Car Park to the rear 3**

TT has submitted a planning application to demolish the Wolfson Lecture Theatre, refurbish Nos 26–32 and to add four houses to create a total of seven dwellings. Planning permission has been refused and this application has now gone to appeal. The inspector's report is awaited.

## **Medieval and Edwardian Buildings 4**

TT has prepared detailed plans for the conversion of these buildings into a total of 39 dwellings and has shared these plans with the community via an exhibition showing how the houses, apartments and flats have been fitted into the buildings with due regard for the limitations placed upon them by the Grade I and Grade II status. Parking is to be accommodated in a large new car park to the North.

The Old Hall, Old Lecture Theatre, Jacobean Staircase and the Chapel are likely to be designated as 'community spaces'. The plans have been generally well received, but reservations have been expressed about the Latin School being designated as residential (as an adjunct to the principal house) and the adequacy of visitor parking.



Restricted public access to the 'community spaces' has been indicated by TT but no details of how this might be achieved have been released. The plans do show the provision of space for the Wye Heritage Centre within the Edwardian buildings with access from the High Street; this has been well received by Wye Heritage and detailed designs have been developed. Whilst the planning application has been lodged, it is unlikely that the Borough Council will proceed with a determination ahead of acceptance of the master plan for the entire Wye 3 site.

### ADAS Site 5

As many of you will know, this site has become derelict and has been progressively vandalised. During 2017, TT's contractors cleared the site of asbestos, glass and other debris. They have also boarded up the remaining buildings to make them safe and secure. The conversion of the buildings from offices into approximately 50 flats has been prepared in outline and is being treated by the Borough Council as permitted development under central government's regulations allowing redundant offices to be converted to residential accommodation. The



Wye Neighbourhood plan has established that this development would lie outside the concept of a 'walkable village' and it is currently unclear how this will be resolved.

### Wye School 6

As previously reported, TT has leased the site, including the old hop garden, to the new secondary school which is currently accommodated in the Kempe Centre and adjacent temporary classrooms. Pupil numbers have now reached 450 and in order to accommodate the target number of 600 (including the sixth form) in permanent buildings, a sports hall, assembly hall, classrooms and changing rooms are now under construction and due to be completed in September. The new Multi-Use Games Area is in use and planning permission is being sought for change of use for the rest of the former hop garden, from

agricultural to a sports field.

Outside school hours, community use of the sports and assembly halls is envisaged.

### The next 12 months

It is clear that further site work will not proceed before the master plan is agreed. TT has informally expressed the hope that all relevant planning hurdles will have been surmounted during the year and that major building works can be started. As many have remarked, the deterioration of the buildings is clear for all to see and is of real concern.

For some, any additional development of Wye is to be resisted; however, for others, including the author of this report, the imaginative re-purposing of the College campus will open up new opportunities and benefits for a vibrant village with a history of constant change.

## The College as a photographic venue



*An inviting archway in the south west corner of the middle quad, leading to the Principal's office, the Old Hall and the Cloister Quad.*



# The future of the Club

Prepared by the Wye college Agricola Club Future Working Group,  
Berkeley Hill, Francis Huntingdon and John Walters

## Background

In January 2009, the then working group, comprising Geoff Dixon, Berkeley Hill and John Walters, reported to the Club committee, setting out a number of options for the Agricola Club's future. After reviewing all the options the committee decided to continue to base the Club's administration in Wye. At that time it was agreed that this policy would need to be regularly reviewed.

## 2018 Review

At their September 2017 committee meeting, a Club Future Working Group was formed comprising Berkeley Hill, Francis Huntington and John Walters. They met on three occasions and have compiled a series of proposals.

Following a SWOT\* analysis, the Group agreed to focus on the following strategic areas:

### 1. How best to safeguard the future ability of the Agricola Club to function and resource the Club's activities?

The group are of the opinion that it is unrealistic to expect the Club to function for the benefit of its members relying entirely on the voluntary time and effort of the officers of the Club. Over the last few years, paying a Database Administrator to assist the Hon. Sec. and paying a Production Editor to assist the Editor in preparing the Journal for printing, has enabled these two post-holders to continue to effectively service the Club.

SWOT = Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats.

The group considers that this approach is sound and that these arrangements should be continued and expanded into the future. The preference would be to recruit these inputs locally but at some point it might be necessary to hire in a professional company to carry out these functions should it prove impossible to find the right level of expertise locally.

Further, the group recommends collaboration with Wye Heritage and their proposed new Heritage Centre, in order to provide an administrative office and a 'home' for the Club.

### 2. How to best meet the reasonable expectations of Club members (including the maintenance of a Journal, though this may not need to be in the current form and frequency)

The group came to the conclusion that the only way to answer this question was to survey the membership asking them to respond to a questionnaire setting out the options which are open to the Club for the future.

These questions should be set out in an 'on line' survey sent to all members for whom the Club holds an email address. For those not inclined to complete an 'on line' survey the alternative to be offered will be a loose-leaf survey to be inserted in the 2018 Journal.

The questions to be grouped under the following topics.

1. Future of the Journal
2. Club events
3. Charitable activities
4. Collaboration with Wye Heritage
5. Future funding

### **3. Responding to the intentions of the contributors to the various funds in the changed conditions of the College's post-closure environment.**

The Group believe that it is important to take account of the wishes of the original contributors to the 'Memorial Fund', albeit modified to take account of the College no longer functioning as an educational establishment. The group acknowledged that the Trustees are already ensuring that money derived from this Fund is suitably being re-directed beyond the original 'welfare' needs of former students and staff and have conveyed these changes to the committee and the membership.

The expectations of those who commuted their 'caution money' to life membership and those who continue to pay an annual membership fee need to be respected. It is hoped that the survey will help support the decisions of the Committee and the Trustees, in managing the 'Club Fund'.

The Group felt that collaboration with Wye Heritage is likely to be well received. It believes that financial support of the administration of the new Heritage Centre will be seen as a practical way of sustaining the links to the history and heritage of the College, its student and staff experience, and the College's contribution to worldwide agriculture, horticulture, food production and care of the environment. Hopefully, the survey will gauge the support of the membership.

### **4. The 'Club Fund'**

Paul Webster had revised his 2011 calculations to estimate the numbers of members over the coming years, as well as the implications of these numbers on the Club's endowment and its ability to fund the activities of the Club. Calculations were carried out using the same methodology as before. As far as the expected membership profile

was concerned, the results showed little change. We had lost a few older members and gained a few younger members.

He observed that, in every year since 2011 but one, income to the Club's Fund had exceeded expenditure. The effect of this had been to increase its value over the period. Whilst in 2011 it stood at about £250k, by the end of 2017 it had risen to £325k. Part of this gain arose from the fact that withdrawals averaged £9.8k rather than the £12k originally forecast. But a large part of the increase had been the performance of the investments, which have averaged an annual total return of 6.6% over the seven years.

Using a similar approach as that used in the 2011 calculations, he showed that if we assumed that the investments perform at an expected 4% p.a. then we could withdraw around £7 per member or around £22k p.a. for the next few years without compromising future withdrawals. This compared with an average spend of around £9k over the past seven years. Thus, amongst other possibilities, a modest drawing down of capital is an option that would allow the Club to depend upon more paid support for its activities rather than relying on volunteers.

### **The next steps**

The Working Group's proposals, were considered by the Club Committee on 20th April 2018 and it was agreed to put them before the membership at the AGM on 29th September 2018. Ahead of that meeting, it was agreed to include the proposals in the 2018 Journal and to prepare and circulate a questionnaire to all members via the Journal and via e-mail to gauge their response to the proposals.

**PLEASE LOOK OUT FOR THE TEAR-OUT SLIP AT THE BACK OF THE JOURNAL AND FILL IT IN IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY REPLIED ONLINE.**

# The Wye Heritage Centre

## "Our past shapes our future"

**Francis Huntington – Honorary Secretary – Committee of Management**

Wye Heritage was launched in 2009 on the closure of the College, with the official opening of the Wye Heritage Centre in the Latin School on 15th October 2011. Over the past eight years the Centre has been open to the general public on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month. These Saturday morning openings have become very popular with a steady stream of visitors enjoying coffee and cake and becoming immersed in Wye Village's and Wye College's history and its collections, which are accessible via regular displays and exhibitions. We were also able to host the Club for tea on the occasions of the AGM and Dinner in 2014 and 2016, and will do so again this year.

### **The Centre**

As already reported, Telereal Trillium (TT) purchased the College buildings in October 2015 and have now produced plans to convert the Medieval and Edwardian buildings into 39 houses, flats and apartments. Wye Heritage has been working with TT and their architects to ensure that the Wye Heritage Centre has a permanent home within the College buildings. Together we have developed the plans for the Centre based in the old JCR (adjacent to the Wheel Room) and the rooms behind. This accommodation will provide entry from the High Street, a small courtyard, an entrance foyer, a main exhibition room, kitchen and servery, accessible toilet and a large archive store. The expectation is that the space will be made available to us on a long lease at a peppercorn rent. This proposal will provide the long-term facilities to which we have been aspiring for the past nine years. TT's current plans show the Latin School, which we currently use, being a part of the principal house, so no longer available to us.

### **Wye Heritage constitution and funding**

We are currently operating as a Members Association and anticipate becoming a Registered Charity as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) during 2018. Assuming that TT obtain the planning permissions for which they have applied, we should be in a position to sign a long lease fairly soon. Once we know that this can be achieved we will embark upon major fund raising in order to 'fit out' the Centre. We very much hope that Agricola Club members will become involved and provide a significant contribution to the funding. This whole Heritage project is fundamental in retaining, in part, the history and heritage of the College. We know that we will not be able to achieve this without the alumni involvement and we are counting on your support.

### **The physical and digital archive**

Anticipating the existence of a purpose-built archive store and exhibition space we continue to collect together photographs, documents and memorabilia from a wide range of sources and in particular from Club members and their families. If you have material relating to the College and your time as an undergraduate, postgraduate or member of staff and would be prepared to share it with us, then do please be in touch [admin@wyheritage.org.uk](mailto:admin@wyheritage.org.uk)

The Centre is equipped with computers, scanning, photographic and recording equipment to enable images and documents to be copied and held on a catalogued and searchable database. Along with many other important documents, we plan that, eventually, the Journals of the Agricola Club and the South Eastern Agricultural College will be digitised and be available on line.

An oral archive is also envisaged; we are still seeking to recruit past student volunteers to join the Oral Archive project – please contact us if you would like to help. [contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

### **Wye Treasures**

Most of the 'Wye Treasures' — namely pictures, documents and artefacts — are currently held in store by Imperial College in London. In order to inform members of the Club of these Treasures, we have published a list on the Club website, under the title 'Wye Treasures'. The Heritage Centre continues to arrange with Imperial College the loan of portraits and other artefacts. The portrait of Sir Edward Hardy is currently on display (see page 80). Eventually, we hope that key material will be housed in Wye rather than in South Kensington. In the world of history and heritage, we are reminded that 'context' is of huge importance. Much of this material's 'context' is, of course, Wye.

As well as cataloguing the items above, the late Donald Sykes made a well-researched listing of all the fixtures and fittings within the College. These have now been photographed and Wye Heritage committee member and Club member Michael Payne has prepared a detailed compilation of the fixtures and fittings. As many of the buildings are listed, there is every reason to be confident that TT will take the appropriate care of them, as determined by the local authority in consultation with Historic England. However, the temporary loss of the Jacobean Statues demonstrated how vital it is that TT are made aware of all of the fixtures and fittings, whether in the 'listing' or not, together with a record of their significance.

The compilation that Michael has prepared will provide Ashford Borough Council planners, TT and their architects with a ready reference. Those of

you who are on Facebook will already have seen some of the photographs and descriptions on the Agricola Club's site. Do take a look if you have not done so before.

### **The way forward...with your involvement**

The activities from 2009 to 2018 have demonstrated both the need for the Centre and the enthusiasm of those connected with the Village of Wye and Wye College to preserve and make available the history and heritage of both.

We intend to expand our hard-working and dedicated band of volunteers to run the Centre and to collect and preserve the history, heritage and life blood of Wye College. It was an institution that, throughout the twentieth century made a unique contribution to the development of Agriculture, Horticulture and the Environment across the globe. Much of that work continues today elsewhere; however, it is vital that the original thinking, research and experiences that underpin today's work is properly recorded and honoured.

**Wye Heritage is the organisation that will ensure that the above is achieved and the Wye College Agricola Club and its members have a vital role to play.**

**We think that our logo says it all – 'Our past shapes our future'**

**PLEASE BECOME A PART OF THIS IMPORTANT AND EXCITING PROJECT BY BECOMING A 'WYE HERITAGE' SUBSCRIBING MEMBER.**

An application form is in the green pages section at the back of the Journal. It costs only £10 a year to subscribe to Wye Heritage – please complete the application today. In addition, Gifts or Legacies would be particularly welcome in order to secure the future financial viability of the Centre.

# The Shrieval Procession 2018

**Michael Payne (1978–81) shares a recent piece of Kentish history**

Every year a new High Sherriff of Kent is declared and by tradition it is his or her prerogative to have the ceremony held in their local church. For the year 2017, the High Sherriff of Kent Elect was George Jessel, DL and so it was ordained that the Declaration Ceremony would take place at the Parish Church of St Gregory and St Martin's, Wye. Additionally, it was fitting that the Shrieval Procession to and from the Church should begin and end at the Latin School, part of the original Wye College.

The Office of High Sherriff of Kent is a non-political Royal appointment, without remuneration. The selected person represents the Sovereign within the county of Kent in relation to matters of law and order and matters relating to the judiciary.

And so it was that on the morning of Sunday 2nd April 2017 that Church Street, Wye, was once again lined by people to see the procession of dignitaries resplendent in their robes of office. The Church Warden of St Gregory and St Martin's, Mr David Ross, led the Incoming Procession followed by the Under Sherriff of Kent, Mr Robert Coombe. He in turn was followed by the Mayor and Mayoress of Ashford, Cllr. George Koowaree and Mrs Gloria Champion. Then followed the Chief Constable of Kent, Mr Alan Pughsley, QMP, the Chairman of Kent County Council, Cllr. Tom Gates, Mr John Fassenfelt OBE, JP and the Right Honourable The Lord Clarke of Stone-cum-Ebony. Next was the Chaplain to the High Sherriff Elect, the Reverend Canon Caroline Pinchbeck, who led George Jessel, DL himself. They preceded the Chaplain to the High Sherriff of Kent, the Reverend Canon

Mark Griffin and the High Sherriff of Kent Mrs Kathrin Smallwood. They were followed by the Resident Judge, His Honour Judge Jeremy Carey DL, the Vicar of Wye, the Reverend Ravi Holy, who himself preceded the Dean of Rochester, the Very Reverend Dr. Philip Hesketh. Finally, in order of precedence came Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Kent and his wife, the Viscount De L'Isle MBE and Viscountess De L'Isle.

Likewise at the end of the Service, which concluded with the National Anthem, the Outgoing Procession repaired to the Latin School. The order of precedence changed with the immediate past High Sherriff and her Chaplain swapping places with the newly declared High Sherriff, Mrs Kathrin Smallwood having been defrocked so to speak!

George Jessel himself is a third generation High Sherriff of Kent, with Sir Charles James Jessel, Bt, MA, DL, JP having been High Sherriff in 1903 and Sir George Jessel, Bt., MC, JP holding the post in 1958. The current High Sherriff of Kent is both a farmer and a 'Man of Kent' and is passionate about education as well as keen to support rural organizations.

Processions between the Latin School and the Parish Church of St Gregory and St Martin's have been an important part of the fabric of Wye over the centuries. The fact that the Shrieval Procession took place in 2017, the 570th anniversary of the foundation of the College of Saints Gregory and Martin of Wye is most apposite, linking as it does once more the ongoing relationship between the Church, the State and education.



*The Shrieval Procession with the new High Sheriff, third in line, on its way from the Latin School to Wye Church.*

## The College as a photographic venue



*A view of the Old Lecture  
Theatre*



# Wye College Seal 'reborn'

**Michael Payne (1978–81) recounts the fascinating story behind the College Seal**

Every year a new High Sherriff of Kent is declared and by tradition it is his or her prerogative to have the ceremony held in their local church. For the year 2017 the High Sherriff Included in the Statutes of Wye College, dated 14th January 1447, is the first mention of the Seal of the College, which was to be kept in a chest with the Statutes themselves.

On the 19th January 1545 the Provost, Edward Bowdon, and the Fellows surrendered the College, together with all its possessions, to King Henry VIII. This was by written Instrument under the Common Seal of the College, which was itself then surrendered.

Nearly 300 years later, in April 1834, a certain Mr Doubleday took a sulphur cast from the seal appended to the Deed of Surrender of 1545 and from which "a perfect outline of the same" was then drawn.

The design of the seal follows a common style for ecclesiastical seals of the period. Under two Gothic canopies are the effigies of the Patron Saints, Gregory and Martin, and beneath them, under another arch or niche of stone work, that of the Founder, in the hat and habit of a Cardinal, with uplifted countenance, the hands conjoined in the attitude of prayer. The Latin legend round the edge translates to read "The Common Seal of the College of Saints Gregory and Martin of Wye."

Morris, in his book of 1842, mentions that in the printed catalogue of a sale of ancient seals collected by John Caley Esq, FSA, who had been Keeper of the Records, there were upwards of 1,500 impressions in wax and in sulphur. It is recorded that impressions of the Wye College

Seal (lots 485, 486, 487 & 488) sold for 2s., 3s., 2s. 6d. and 2s. Also a drawing of the Seal (lot 474) by Howlett, described as very beautiful and elaborate, fetched 10s. 6d. For those of you reading this that are too young to remember, 1 shilling comprised 12 old pennies and is equivalent to 5p these days!

In order to mark the 570th Anniversary of the foundation of the College by Cardinal Kempe it was decided in 2017 to recreate the original seal by a process of back formation. In order to achieve this, the illustration from Orwin & Williams 1912, itself a representation of the drawing in Morris's book, was compared with one of the original Victorian sulphur casts. The design was then redrawn to the original shape and scale and this was then facsimile engraved intaglio in reverse onto a new brass seal. From this, in turn, a new wax impression was created and the Seal of the College was reborn.



*The impression from Cardinal Kempe's seal of Wye College*



*The recreated brass seal*



*The new impression of Kempe's Wye College seal.*

## The College as a photographic venue



*Staircase in 'The Old Building' (facing the Latin School garden), formerly used as the Grammar School Master's House.*



*Two of the Jacobean statues, aka the Ancient Britons*



## 2017 Agricola Club reunion –

On 1st July 2017, around 70 Agricola Club members converged on Richard and Mo Brown's farm near Huntingdon, accompanied by family members, some including their children. There was something for everyone; a hog roast, a well-stocked bar, plenty of room inside and out, somewhere for the children to play, a trailer tour round the farm, a warm day and even a convenient field for a helicopter to land!.

The largest contingent by far was at Wye during the 1960s, with the 50s, 70s and 90s running equal second. For many, it was 50 years since they had graduated. The grain storage barn was decked out with gay tablecloths and table arrangements inspired by the seed crops grown on the Brown's farm.

A special display based on material from the 1966 expedition to The Gambia (see 2016–17 Wye Journal, page 94) led by **John Peacock** (1964–67) was set up for those who wouldn't be seeing it at the Latin School in Wye. The high quality display boards were prepared by his daughter Christine. They will be on view again this year during the re-union weekend in September.

Two full trailers set off after lunch for a farm tour led by **Michael Brown** (1997–2000), which provided an insight into the production of various vegetable seed crops. An account written by Michael is given on page 32.



*Table decoration made with a selection of seed crops grown on the Brown's farm*



*Michael Brown gave an illustrated talk on the operation before leading a trailer tour of the farm.*

## a hog roast at the Brown's farm



*Beryl Charlton, Sean Charlton, Philip Charlton, Richard Thorogood, Adrienne Thorogood and Judy Goodson.*



*Suzie Pallett, Andrew Simpson, Jane Walters, Bruce Pallett and Angela Simpson .*



*Colourful table cloths, bunting and table decorations add to the atmosphere.*



*Colin Myram, Chris Duncan and Richard Foss.*





*Agricola club members enjoying the odd beer during the lunch.*



*Charlie Close Brooks, Bridget Duncan, Chris Duncan, Lorna Close Brooks and Gilly Myram.*



*Member enjoying the meal while catching up on old times.*

*The hosts, Richard and Mo Brown pictured in their lovely garden.*



*Off on the farm tour: Malcolm and Diedre Alexander with Eileen Long.*

# 2017 Hog Roast attendees

## From the 1950s

Graham Amos  
John Cole  
Ken & Margo Crundwell  
Susan Everitt  
Hugh & Gillian Gray  
David & Enid Hart  
Brian & Rosslyn Howard  
Jennifer Meir  
John & Shirley Palmer  
Tim Threadgold  
Frank Thompson

## From the 1960s

Malcolm & Diedre Alexander  
Andrew Blake  
Gill Bond  
Richard & Mo Brown  
Angela Buck  
Bob & Rosemary Callaby  
Phillip & Beryl Charlton & Sean  
Charles & Lorna Close-Brookes  
Tim Day  
Chris & Bridget Duncan  
David Forrest  
Richard & Elizabeth Foss  
Geoffrey & Judy Goodson  
Francis & Lucy Huntington  
Peter & Blanche Herman  
Tim Finn-Kelcey  
John Kingsley-Pallant  
David & Sally Leaver  
Richard & Eileen Long  
Robert & Mary Macaulay  
Mike & Dawn Marshall  
Graham & Louise Milbourn  
Simon & Penny Murch  
Colin & Gilly Myram  
Bruce and Sukie Pallet  
John & Paula Peacock & Christine  
Judith Rossiter

Andrew & Angela Simpson  
Richard & Adrienne Thorogood  
Paul & Bridget Timms  
John & Jane Walters  
Joe & Sue Youdan

## From the 1970s

Bob & Hilary Berry  
Phillip Brook  
Simon & Felicity Daniels  
Geoff Dodgson  
Penelope Feeney  
Peter Gerrard  
Martyn Hartwell  
Mark & Frances Glanville  
Pat & Harry Taylor

## From the 1980s

Jenny Greenwood  
Mike Fenelly + 1  
Tracy Fitz  
Yvette Wogan

## From the 1990s

Luke Atwell + 1  
David Brown + 10  
Michael & Josie Brown  
Alex Dinsdale  
Liz Goodliffe + 1  
Lindsey & Karen Gove and Robin  
Nicola Griffin  
Giles & Hayley Kingsley-Pallant, Hugo and Harriet  
Sue Nix  
Will Pine  
Mat & Angelique Ramscar, Saskia and Charlotte

## Plus

Ashley Field  
Martin & Ann Hay  
Shirley & Mike Matthews  
Jennifer Meir & John Turner

## Hog Roast thanks and comments

**Geoff & Judy Goodson** (1961–64): To the Brown family, thank you so much for hosting the reunion Hog roast yesterday. You went to a lot of trouble setting up your grain store for us all to enjoy – sitting in comfort, catching up with many of our Wye contemporaries. Please pass our thanks to Mo, Michael and all your family, we were fortunate with the weather and it must have been a temptation to have got on with the harvest rather than take us on a ride round the farm.

I found it very interesting to see first-hand how you have diversified into specialist crops and seed production. You have a very forward looking approach to your farming.

**Andrew Blake** (1964–67): Good evening all, I just want to let you know how much I enjoyed yesterday's get-together at which I met several people I hadn't see since leaving Wye, plus some others who I had bumped into from time to time over the years while I was with *Farmers Weekly*. I still can't believe that you, Mo, recognised me immediately – after nearly 50 years.

I appreciate that such events take a fair bit of organising, and I want to thank you all for arranging everything so well. I was particularly interested to hear your explanations, Michael, of the seed production when we toured the fields. Fascinating.

**Phil Charlton** (1963–65): Many thanks for your invaluable contribution to the success of the reunion on Saturday. We both thoroughly enjoyed it. Beryl stated that it was also a Nonnington reunion with four former students there on the day.

**Geoff Goodson** (1961–64): We really enjoyed everything about the reunion, so thank you to all involved in setting up the event. I started with good intentions of taking photos but was so involved in chatting and the ride round the farm that I did not take as many as I might.

**John Peacock** (1964–67): The Wye reunion at Covington on Mo & Richard Brown's farm was a great success and Paula, Christine and I thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. It was great to catch up with those from the 1964–67 years. Again this came down very much to the efforts that you, Jane and Francis and of course the Browns put into organising it.

**Tim Day** (1967–70): Hi John and Francis, just a short note on behalf of our 1967–70 group to say a big thank you to you both and the organising team for the 2017 Hog Roast arrangements. A beautiful day and a good opportunity for a catch up! I've attached a few pictures just in case you need any for the records, etc.



## The Agricola Club needs your help in the following areas, ASAP

- As we go to press, we are still looking for a venue to hold our 2019 BBQ/Hog Roast. If you can help please get in touch with Jane Reynolds (info@janesgardendesign.com)



- The Hon. Sec. needs a Database Manager to take charge of keeping the Membership record updated

*Familiarity with spread sheets would be an advantage. Training will be provided by the current holder of the post. \**



- The Editor needs a Production Manager to edit and lay out the Journal

*Some experience of publishing would be a great asset. Initial guidance will be provided through the current incumbent. \**



**\* Both of the above are professional remunerated posts.**



## Farm tour and talk by Michael Brown

Michael Brown, joint host and the third son of Richard and Mo Brown, introduced himself as the fourth of a family of Wye College graduates of 1966, '67, '93 and 2000, and commented that the 105th harvest had started the day before, as his great grandfather had bought the farm in 1912.

Thomas Brown, who was already farming in the area, was a clever man, Michael said: he had bought land cheaply, but disposed of a lot before the depression in the 1930s. From reading his memoirs it was evident that his Great Grandfather shared the same farming challenges – mainly the weather.

His Great Grandfather had fathered five children, and with their offspring this resulted in 27 people involved in owning the land in 1967. Now it is only two, and all the family still talk – a massive achievement by his father, Richard, said Michael – it is still a family affair.

He explained that the diverse ownership led to a separate farming company being formed, and it is still run this way today, with the business paying a rent on every acre it farms.



*An unusual form of black grass control?? Michael is standing in a very clean field of Ryegrass with the Charlton family's chartered helicopter in the background.*

Currently, 600 ha are farmed in two blocks, with 560 ha cropped, 10 ha to grass, and the rest to Environmental Schemes. The soil is medium/heavy clay. The farm has not expanded greatly over the years, and the family had no desire to take on land away from the main farm.

The development of the business into seed growing was mainly down to his father, and Michael has carried it on. Through the 1970s and 80s they grew a lot of vegetables seed, and Richard was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship to study the topic. The opportunities for vegetable



*One of two trailer loads of visitors who enjoyed Michael's farm tour.*

seed have declined, due to the demise of the British seed companies. Now the farm is growing far more grass seed and high grade cereals. In the 2017 harvest there were nine crops with a total of 16 varieties, approximately 75% of which went for seed.

There are currently 40 ha of vegetable seed, and Michael believes that they are growing the only field-scale crops of three species in the UK. At the moment, there are 130 ha of herbage seed: 60 ha of Fescue (a fine lawn grass) and 70 ha of an agricultural type Ryegrass. Also 240 ha of wheat – 60% for seed, including three varieties producing basic seed. Commercial wheat goes 12 miles up the road to Weetabix. There are also 80 ha of spring barley and some spring beans. There has been no oilseed rape for three years now.

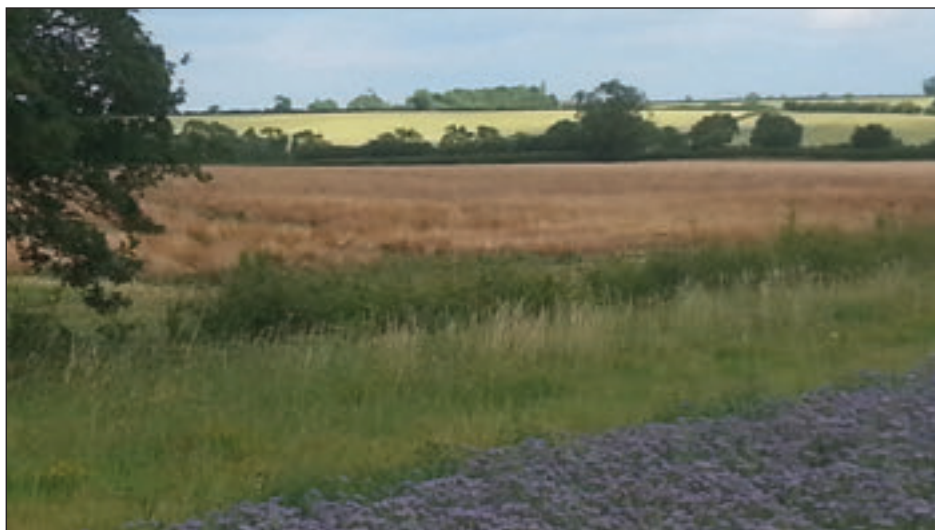
There is no fixed rotation; customer demand and the presence of Blackgrass are the main rotation factors. They carry out a lot of hand rogueing of blackgrass. In 2017 this took a total of 2500 manhours. All the tools available are used to keep

the crops clean, including interrow hoeing and spraying.

Michael believes that flexibility is the key to being successful in both seed growing and blackgrass control. Growing a grass seed crop for two to three years helps control the blackgrass.

No single cultivation system suits the farm at all times, so they have a variety of machinery. They employ more labour than you would expect for farm of their size, but they do try to undertake most of the machinery and building repairs themselves. In summary, their costs are higher, but the output is greater than on an average arable farm. But there are greater risks: in 2016 half of the parsnip seed produced failed to germinate well enough, so was worth nothing.

The farm has invested in cleaning equipment and can clean grass to a certified standard. Investment in renewable energy has been considered, but has not been a priority. They want to preserve their main asset first – the land and needed investment in grain storage.



*The view across an edge strip of Phacelia into the field beyond*

# The mid-'70's Gloucestershire reunion

Sent in by **Mike (1963–66)** and **Mary (1974–77) Alcock**.

Roves Farm is a 400-acre family farm set in the countryside just to the north east of Swindon. It is well known throughout this area for the wide range of additional attractions that can be found there. The Visitor Centre can provide a great day out for families, tractor rides, indoor and outdoor farmyard adventures, and animal feeding sessions, a farm shop and newly-opened butchery.

It is well known to members of the Agricola Club who have been coming to reunions here for at least the last 20 years, and so it was on 2nd July 2017 that some 110 members came from around the world, at the very kind invitation of **Rupert** and **Jo Burr**. Visitors included the **Beatties (1973–76)** from Tasmania, the **Pardoes (1976–769)** from Dubai and others from all parts of the UK.

Like all Agricola events, as soon as members get together, talking starts, remembering all the good times had at Wye, fellow students and friends, Withersdane and College.

At Roves Farm, what was normally the grain store, then lambing shed, had been swept clean, and trestle tables moved in providing a bar, food presentation tables and a large seating area. Tables were decorated with sweet peas and flower arrangements from Jo Burr's home-grown flowers.

## The menu

Highlight was a home-bred pig, spit-roasted,

Salads provided by **Andrew Jeffery (1974–77)** (Rastus) of Farringtons Farm Shop.

Local Lechlade sourdough breads,

Strawberries from Lathcoats Farm (**Steve Taylor 1973–76**).

Raspberry meringue rolls made by Jo Burr.

Local cheeses from Oxford and Gloucestershire.

Beer from Shepherd and Neame and small Oxfordshire Breweries, backed up by wines and a lot of non-alcoholic choices.

Starting at 12.00 am the party went on until the last person left at 6.00 pm with everyone having enjoyed themselves so much that there are requests for more reunions on a more regular basis.

Photos of the event can be found on the 'Wye College mid '70s' Facebook page.

## Comments from those attending

**Mary Stevenson (1970–73)** "Thank you so much for the huge amount of time and effort you put into yesterday's event. We both thoroughly enjoyed it as always. Great to catch up with so many friends."

**Tudor & Sally Dawkins:** "Well done, both! Terrific day and great to catch up with everyone again. Thanks to you and all involved in the preparation and arrangements."

**Sam (1970–73) & Bridget (1972–75) Kent:** "We just want to say how successful the reunion was. We both loved it! Everything went completely to plan thanks to you, Mike, Jo and Rupert - it just went too quickly. All the food and drink was delicious and just the right amounts. The longer since we graduated the more special the reunions are so we better start planning the next one! I hope you are not too exhausted, just satisfied with a great day."

**Pete & Chris Cornish (1972–75):** "We are writing to thank you all for your hard work in



staging a fantastic get-together yesterday. The constant noise and laughter emanating from the tables told its own tale!!! The whole afternoon passed off without a hitch as far as I was concerned (despite the fact that I managed to spill my beer into Chris's lunch!!) the food, the booze was just right for the occasion. Great to see so many old friends and I apologize for not talking to either of you (although I think Chris spoke to Mary!). Perhaps we can meet at the Kents in the not too distant future!! Again many, many thanks."

**Catherine Spencer** (1975–78): "Huge appreciation and many, many thanks for all your combined hard work to organize and deliver the wonderful get-together yesterday – great venue, delicious food and drink and of course outstanding company – and Charles and I enjoyed it hugely. It was a lovely opportunity to catch up with everyone and we heartily agree with the idea of having reunions more frequently – though I'm sorry it means more work for you all."

**Rastus (Andrew Jeffery)** (1974–77): "I would heartily endorse Mike's comments, and everyone seemed to enjoy the day. I am also mightily impressed with how you have picked yourselves back up after the catastrophic fire 5 years ago – you should be very proud of what

you have achieved, and the whole place is a real credit to you.

**Rohan** (1970–73) & **Diana Page**: "We thoroughly enjoyed the event and there were several people that Rohan hadn't seen for far too long, so it was a real trip back in time. The venue, food and selection of drinks were excellent, not without a lot of hard work being put into the day. We do hope it won't be too long before we next meet up."



*Rupert and Jo Burr, the hosts.*

## Mid-70's Glos Attendees

Michael & Mary	Alcock	Bill	Hurley
Louise	Beaton	Andrew	Jeffery
Phil & Lis	Beattie	Sam & Bridget	Kent
Mary	Bosley-Laird	David & Christine	Kerr
Gary	Bradbury	Chris	Knock
Cathie	Brown	Malcolm	Laird
Rupert & Jo	Burr	Martin & Janet	Law
Peter & Diane	Byrne	John & Lesley	Magnay
Richard & Judith	Cartwright	Richard	Marks
George & Jane	Chancellor	Nick & Lucie	Marsden
Graham	Clampin	Robin	May
Peter & Chris	Cornish	Chris & Sue	Miller
Tom	Cowcher	John	Moore
David & Jackie	Crook	Angie	Napper
Tudor & Sally	Dawkins	Rosemary	Newman
Bernard	Day	Lesley	O'Connell Edwards
Nicola	Deakin	Rohan & Diana	Page
Peter & Sue	Doyle	Jonathon, Mary Anne & Kathryn	Pardoe
Mike & Rachel	Edwards	Sue	Reynders
Clair	Eley	Peter & Linda	Riley
Penelope	Feeney	John	Sangster
Gordon	Flint	James	Siggs
John & Chris	Gatenby	John & Nicky	Simmonds
Charlotte	Gibb	Charles & Caroline	Spencer
Stephen & Valerie	Giffen	John & Mary	Stevenson
Charles & Tamsin	Green	Steve & Gail	Taylor
Bob	Greifenberg	Rex & Nicky	Walters
Peter & Henrietta	Greig	John & Alison	Werren
Ken	Grimsdell	Stephen & Jane	Westover
Mark & Sarah	Hann	Angus & Kathleen	Wielkopolska
Lindsay & Carolyne	Hargreaves	Elizabeth	Wilson-Haffenden
Paul & Heather	Hayward	Michael & Hilary	Winter
James & Clare	Holdstock	Alison	Wright
Frank	Hopkinson		
Malcolm & Liz	Hughes		





# Alumni tuck into some new grub

**Paul Turnbull (1979–82) gives an account of the Wye College Alumni reunion in Nairobi, Kenya, December 2016**

With a surprising number of Wye College alumni currently residing in Kenya (rather more than the dozen or so overseas members on the Agricola list), **Steven Humphreys** (1978–81) and **James Hutchings** (1979–82) mobilised the Wye network for a memorable event in Nairobi on 8th December 2016. The venue was the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) located at the Dудuville Campus, Nairobi (*dudu* means insect in Kiswahili).

ICIPE's main objective is to research and develop alternative and environmentally friendly pest and vector management strategies that are effective, selective, non-polluting, non-resistance inducing, and which are affordable to resource-limited rural and urban communities.

## The benefits of insects as human food

Dr Segenet Kelemu, Director General, ICIPE, was the guest speaker and she enlightened us all on the potential of insects as alternative sources of food for human consumption and feed for livestock. Insects are ubiquitous: they reproduce quickly, have high growth and feed conversion rates and low environmental impact. Insects are also valuable sources of minerals and vitamins essential for human development. To prove the point, alumni were treated to an array of dishes of cooked insects. While some approached the dishes with trepidation, most came back for second helpings.

The event was educational as well as social. In

addition to making some new acquaintances, some of us were surprised to find that some of the people we work with had a Wye College connection!

## Wye College alumni who attended the reunion:

**Kenneth Ayuko** (1997–98) is Executive Director at AgRisk Research, based in Nairobi.

**Kennedy Gitonga** is an agricultural adviser for the United States Department of Agriculture, based at the United States Embassy in Nairobi.

**Hamish Grant** (1977–80) is farming at Gogar Farms near Nakuru and is a leader of sustainable dairy production. See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT8xxsrNes8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT8xxsrNes8)

**Boyce Harries** is championing natural processed coffee from his Chania Estate in Thika. See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RFynHAQZRw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0RFynHAQZRw)

**Steven Humphreys** was Division Director for the International Fertilizer Development Centre, East and Southern Africa Division, based in Nairobi. The Humphreys have since moved to Niger.

**James Hutchings** is General Manager of Stokman Roses, Naivasha, the leading rose and plant propagators in East Africa.

**Nick Hutchinson** (1975–78) is Group Managing Director at Unga Holdings, one of Kenya's largest millers, manufacturing flour, human nutrition products and animal feed.



*Steven Humphreys and guest speaker, Dr Segenet Kelemu, Director General, ICIPE*



*Left, Marion Humphreys cooks insects fit for human consumption!*



*Above, left to right: Henry Pomeroy, Kennedy Gitonga and Hugh Wood.*



**Garvan McCannis** Deputy Head of Mission (Trade & Development) for the Embassy of Ireland to Kenya.

**Erastus Mureithi** established Suera Flowers at Nyahururu, and has served as a Member of Parliament.

**Mary Onsongo** is the activity manager of the Feed the Future Accelerated Value Chain Development for the United States Agency for International Development, based in Nairobi.

**Justin Rakotoarisaon** is a seed systems specialist, and is the Secretary General for the African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA) headquartered in Nairobi.

**Hugh Scott** is Director of the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund, a private sector challenge fund that provides catalytic funding to enterprises in 24 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Anna Stabrawa** is working for the United Nations Environment Programme headquartered in Nairobi.

**Paul Turnbull** (1979–81) is Deputy Country Director for the United Nations World Food Programme based in Nairobi, supporting food security and nutrition projects in the arid and semi-arid counties of Kenya.

**Nicholas Wasunna** (1990s) is the Regional Emergency Specialist for the United Nations Children's Fund, based in Nairobi, working in countries throughout eastern Africa.

**Hugo Wood** established a substantial farm at Olerai Farms and has been the Chair of the National Cereal Growers Association.

## Guests

Birgitta Farrington happened to be in Nairobi and represented her husband Tom (Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics in the 1970s).

Francesca Turnbull is translating documents from Italian to English and helping organize events in Nairobi.

Marion Humphreys was assisting at Real IPM in Thika, and helped cook the insects at ICIPE!

Henry Pomeroy (ex-Cirencester) happened to be in Nairobi and represented co-founder of UK non-governmental organization CHASE Africa, **Robin Witt** (1979–81).

Henry and Louise Wainwright founded Real IPM in Thika, which aims to develop low-cost biological control solutions and holistic Real IPM programmes to reduce the use of chemical pesticides. They produce high-quality predatory mites, benign fungi and bacteria.

Ma McCann accompanied her husband Garvan.

## Apologies were received from

**Robert Allport**, Programme Coordinator for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations representation in Kenya.

**George Nesbit** (1979–81) who is managing a warehousing facility in Mombasa.

## Vote of thanks

On behalf of the Wye College Alumni in Kenya, I would like to thank Steven Humphreys for organizing an excellent reunion in Kenya. We wish Steven and Marion well for the new chapter in their lives in Niger but we are ready to welcome them back to Kenya at any time!

## The College as a photographic venue



*The passage alongside the Cloister quad leading to the Middle quad and the Dining Hall.*

## The '60s Penguins reunite with the Polled South Devons

Sent in by **Peter Johnson** one member of the Penguins Dining Club at Wye.

On 15th July 2017, gathered on the Dorset farm of **John Virgin** were **John** and **Helen Betty**, **Richard** and **Sheila Janaway**, **Malcom** (1963–66) and **Sue Ogilvy**, **Charles** and **Margery Adams**, **Mike** and **Elsie Lyth**, **Sue** and **Peter Johnson**. Apart from the knee-replaced Ogilvy, all were 1965–68 vintage. The highlight of the reunion were the polled Virgin South Devons.







# We'll meet again – 60 years on

**John McInerney** explains why what is now the 4th reunion was so special for the cohort of 1957–60 Wye students. Photos by Gordon Rae.

**Q:** *What lasts 60 years and still comes up as good as new?*

**A:** The pleasure of meeting up with the student friends of one's youth and innocence.

To those of us who were part of that elite intake into Wye in October 1957, it is no surprise that there is an enduring sentimental attraction to revisiting the memories and personalities of those (for most of us) special three years when we were young, optimistic, relatively carefree and – as is now obvious – ridiculously privileged to be given the opportunity of state-funded education and living at Wye during that period of its halcyon years. The experiences we enjoyed, the friends we made, the personal intellectual capital we created and the invaluable groundwork it laid for our subsequent careers have been woven into our lives and personalities and, as we look back in our more mature years, can be seen as having provided the core of what we became as individuals. No wonder it is something we value strongly, feel deeply grateful for, and find the chance to re-establish some of the old acquaintances and memories to be an appealing proposition.

## 60th Anniversary reunion

So it was that a group of us from the 1957 cohort met up again, on 1st November 2017, to mark the 60th anniversary of our first encounters. (60 years and still wanting to relive those magic moments! What is it about Wye that so captured our affections?). This was the 4th time since we graduated that we had

arranged just such a gathering. First, in 2010 at the Agricola Club dinner in Cirencester to mark 50 years since graduation; then in 2015 at the Agricola Club summer gathering at Basingstoke; then in 2016 for a lunch at the Farmers' Club in London; and now back to the Farmers' Club again. (Luckily, 'though few of us have a London Club to declare when we first fill in the *Who's Who?* form, **Gordon Rae** is a longstanding member of the Farmers' and, as before, got us in the door). And once more it was Gordon who masterminded the whole event, contacting our contemporaries, canvassing opinions on dates and locations, organising the menu and venue, and generally taking charge of the detailed arrangements – including fulfilling the crucial role of official photographer.

## Those we missed...

The early planning stages were greatly assisted by access to the excellent Agricola Club database of members and contact details, for which we are most grateful. Out of those contacted, a total of 26 of our intake wanted to join up again (this was a remarkable 30% of the original cohort). But inevitably things start to get in the way for many of them, and in the end we had to carry on for various reasons without **John and Avril Bennett**, **David and Sue (née Wills) Collinge**, **Ruth Gasson**, **Dick Grimshaw** (in the USA), **David Gooday** (in Swaziland), **Ted Martin**, **Mike Pash**, and **Caroline Thompson**. And then at the last moment **John** and **Jane Usher** had to drop out, he being laid low with a lurgi.

## These we welcomed. . .

But that still left a sizeable gang of us keen to renew and re-strengthen past connections, while possibly being unable to refuse a glass of wine in the process. This year **Tony Gardener** was able to make it, for many of us someone we hadn't seen since graduation in 1960. We were also able to congratulate **Doreen** (née **Griffiths**) Maitre who had tied the knot with partner David Miller just four days earlier and whose bridesmaid, **Elisabeth Walker**, had ensured she was finally sober enough to get to the venue.

In addition, the assembled company consisted of **Colin Ames, Michael and Rosemary** (née **Cooper**) **Clark, Ken** and **Betty Drake, David** and **Christine Evans, Tony** and **Tessa Evers, Nat** and **Alison Gent, Angus** and **Sheila Golightly, John McInerney, Tony** and **Valerie Mitchell, Gordon** and **Judith Rae**, plus **Martin** and **Jenny Roberts**. The seating arrangement was constructed via three round tables, which allowed easy cross-talk and facilitated circulation between courses. The fascinating thing was how easily we all picked up the pieces of our previous connection as though we had never been away, and conversation, laughter, teasing and reminiscence were joyfully engaged in as the years slipped away. Even Tony Evers and Doreen Griffiths, who had each enjoyed only one year of the course (First Year exams were a real bugger in those days) were as integral a part of our gang as anyone. Were we all so fundamentally altered by Wye as to eventually possess the same social genes?

## Other events of note in 1957

We were, of course, conscious of those who were no longer with us, and the toll of 60 years meant that a number of greatly-missed

colleagues were being remembered with affection. We reflected on them and others during the 'John Bennett toast to absent friends' (Bennett had left a cheque for several bottles of good wine to compensate for his absence). And we were reminded among other things that our entry to Wye was not the only significant historic event of 1957. To mention but a few: Eden resigned and Macmillan became PM; the frisbee was invented; the Treaty of Rome setting up the European Economic Community was signed; Lennon and McCartney met for the first time; the first Sputnik was launched; the Fordson Dexta was introduced; the Windscale nuclear disaster occurred; the Wolfenden Report was published; the first premium bond winner was selected by ERNIE; the Boeing 707 first took to the air; Sid Vicious was born; and so was someone called John McInerney who came to fame in the 1970s rock band 'Bad Boys Blue' (and, as Gordon aptly noted, the name John McInerney has never been heard of since). To crown it all, social researchers at the University of Warwick (which didn't exist when we went to Wye!) have recently declared that 1957 was Britain's happiest year of the 20th century. It felt like that to us, too.

## See you all again in 2020

Everyone left with a warm feeling that we wanted it all to happen again as there was still so much pleasure in each other's company, so much to share and catch up on. The target now is to assemble again, at least in 2020 to mark the 60 years since we graduated. By then even the youngest of us will be well over 80 - but we are made of stern stuff, forged in the Wye furnace and toughened on its anvil of rigorous living; so bring it on!

See over for photos 

# The 1957 to 1960 reunion, London November 2017



*Elizabeth Walker*



*Anthony Mithell*



*Tony Gardener*



*Rosemary Clark*



*Angus Golightly*



*Nat Gent*





*Colin Ames*



*Tony Evers*



*Ken Drake & John McInerny*



*David Evans*



*Michael Clark*



*Doreen Maitre*



*Martin Roberts*



*Gordon Rae*

## News of members

### Births, marriages, deaths and general updates, obituaries and lives remembered

#### Deaths

**Ken Bowyer** (1958–62) died in October 2016.

**Richard Constanduros** (1960–65) died on 18th March 2018; a well-attended Thanksgiving Service was held at Glen Urquhart on 29th March.

**Derek Cuddeford** (1964–67) sadly passed away on 5th February, 2018 after a long battle with prostate cancer. Derek is survived by his wife Mieke and his three daughters Morag, Harriet and Emily.

A memorial lunch was held on 24th March at Hengstforder Mühle, a restaurant close to their home in northern Germany and a place where they both had many wonderful times together. The restored windmill and river provided the perfect setting for a celebration of Derek's life and illustrious career as an animal nutritionist. The lunch was attended by over 60 of their friends and colleagues from all over the world.

Mieke gave the eulogy and this was followed by a poem read by Derek's best friend from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Professor Michael Thrusfield. A summary of Derek's earlier life at Wye and his subsequent career was printed in *Wye*, Vol XVIII, No 5, 2014–15 and a tribute will be published in next year's Journal.

Derek will be greatly missed by his family, his many friends and colleagues.

**Janet Dewey** (née **Pryce** 1942–45) died in 2007.

**Max Hooper** (Staff 1960–63) died 10th February 2017. *See Obituaries*, page 57.

**Joan Hosking** (née Whitaker, 1948–51) died on 15th October 2017. *See Obituaries*, page 56.

**Paul A Keane** (1962–66) died in February 2013.

**Binnie Knight** (1946–48) died in September 2016.

**J Campbell Main** (1952–56) died on 2nd January, 2018. *See Obituaries*, page 58.

**Pauline Grace Mills** (née Briault, 1951–55) died in September 2017.

**Professor John Nix** (Staff, 1961– 2004). *See Lives remembered*, page 66.

**Tez Quirke** (Staff) died on 24th May 2018. *See Obituaries*, page 62.

**Dr W Ian Robinson** (1964–67) died on 7th September, 2017. *See Lives remembered* page 70.

**Jo Stephens** (née **Davies**, 1953–55) died in June 2017.

**Frank Tait** (1950–53) died in December 2017.

#### News

##### 1950s

**Mrs O. Aburrow** (1950–53) wrote: "Most outings are of a medical nature. Paid help keeps the garden tidy but unproductive – no fruit or vegetables. Cyclamen provide the only colour."

**Susan Johnston** (née **Webb**, 1954–57) writes from Australia; "Still married to Joseph ( wedding on 13th April, 1957 at Battle, Sussex). We live close to the National Arboretum which was developed after the 2003 fires! **Tom Neales**

(staff, 1952) was our Botany lecturer at Wye in the '54-'57 period. He and his wife Elizabeth moved to Australia, where he worked at the university in Melbourne; we stayed with them in 1960 when we were looking for work in Australia. Tom died in August 2010 – he and Elizabeth visited us shortly before he died. One daughter was a medical doctor in Canterbury, another daughter was an agricultural journalist in Australia. **Peter Newcome** (1935–38) was a friend of my coffee-growing family in Coorg, India, before moving to Australia. I visited him and their son George, on their farm in Fish Creek, Victoria, near the ocean, in about 1985. He died in July 1997 and after his wife Pam died, their son took over the farm with his wife Colette."

## 1960s

**Antony Frost** (1969–73) wrote: "I am Vice-Chairman of TEAMGlobal (The European Atlantic Movement). This is an educational foundation. We organise conferences in schools and universities on topics of international importance.

Previous conference was at Gumley House School on Tuesday 17th October. The subject 'Fake News – How can you tell?'

We organise study tours for students and teachers. Next study tour to Brussels, Monday 2nd April to Friday 6th April 2018."

*(Obviously, we are too late for both of these events but it illustrates the type of opportunities offered by Antony's business – Editor).*

**Peter Cooper** (1964–67). *From the Editor:* Thanks to **John Peacock**, I recently got back in touch with Peter whom I had not seen since we graduated. He has contributed an interesting 'Life After' on page 88. In one communication, I asked him about the 'iconic' blue MGA Twin Cams that

## Congratulations to Emeritus Professor Berkeley Hill

We are delighted to announce that Prof Berkeley Hill was made a medallist of the Order of the British Empire in the 2018 New Year's Honours awards for his services to Music in Kent. We offer him our heartfelt congratulations from all in the Agricola Club.

he posed around Kent in back in the day. His response was great: "Hi, yes – the MGA Twin Cams (WXA 811)!! Sadly it had to be sold back in 1968 in order to have the funds to purchase a Morris Minor 1000 that we took to Northern Nigeria whilst I did my PhD stuff there! Interestingly, not so long ago I was contacted by a new owner of WXA 811 asking me for any history I had of it. He has completely restored it and it is now apparently worth its weight in gold!! Good to know that after 50 years it is still thundering about."

**Andrew Blake** (1964–67): After Wye I managed farms for about 20 years, initially mainly hops and fruit in Kent, and then arable & dairy in Wiltshire. It all came to a sad end on an estate near Marlborough when I was sold with the farm and the new owner wanted to shoot rather than farm. I stuck it for a year, but eventually resigned (my successor survived only six months and was sacked on the spot after he forage-harvested some pheasants!). *Farmers Weekly* threw me a lifeline and I stayed there for nearly 22 years until I was granted voluntary redundancy – just six weeks away from my official retirement date in July 2009. I now write as a freelance for anyone who needs my scribbling (see page 86 for more Blake exploits).

**Robert Blackburn** (1965–68): "I worked for the MMB as a consultant for three years, then joined an accountancy firm specialising in farming and rural businesses and then set up my own practice in Leyburn for 35 years until retiring seven years ago. The only Wye College person I see occasionally is **Barry Potter** (1965–68) who lives in York."

## 1970s

**Tim Nevard** (1973–76) writes from Queensland, Australia; "Although we still live in the 'bush' we're now only 7km from town at Banggana, where we keep Sussex x Brangus cattle. Gwyneth works as the co-ordinator for tourism, arts & culture on the Atherton Tablelands, whilst I'm retired apart from a couple of non-executive directorships. Our children are all doing well and are currently all working in Queensland."

## 1980s

**Linda Tame** (née **Knight**, 1981–84) wrote: "In December 2012, I married Ian Tame, whom I met on one of my Tanzanian building project trips. We moved to Wales where we bought a 28 acre smallholding. So I am now 'farming' in a small way for real. We have rare breed Llanwenog sheep and Shetland cattle. We also have Dexter cattle, poultry and 3 goats. We sell meat directly to customers and sell Llanwenog wool directly to spinners."

**Nicolle Croft** (1986–89) wrote: "Well, 2017 will go down as a year full of surprise, commiseration and celebration. Nature takes and nature gives..."

As many of you have heard, the frost hit hard here in Bordeaux (and elsewhere) but I have been amazed at the stoicism of the wine producers, always hoping that nature might pull out the stops and all will be ok. For many, the grape bunches never materialised and 2017 will be thin

on the ground. Those better situated on the higher land seemed to have produced some nice juicy fragrant wine this year.

Update on the 2017 vintage in Bordeaux. Franck has one vat (instead of 13) but every cloud has a silver lining. It is 'Terre Rouge' his premium plot on the 'pieds de côtes' slopes next to Château Tertre Rôteboeuf (which came from his 97 year-old grandmother!). He always wanted to make a premium cuvée of Château Béard la Chapelle St Emilion Grand Cru and this year he has no choice, it is all he has!

We both celebrated a few decades this year (him four and me five!). As a surprise birthday present, we are expecting a little boy mid November. A 1 in 10,000 chance! We are both very happy.

Hope you are all enjoying some great Bordeaux

### Nicolle and baby update



Thomas and I are doing very well. He's 8 months, crawling and constantly enamoured with the joys of life and it's challenges. It certainly puts things into perspective at the age of 51—what a year!

My book *Bordeaux, Sip by Sip* has come to a standstill, it seems due to editor problems (its a tough world for old book editors in this digital age) and so I may have to be publishing it myself ... will be in touch.

wines and don't forget Bordeaux's smaller producers (SIP) who need your support!

My 'Italiano' sister Gail is joining me to take on the food and wine tours in Piemonte. What a beautiful unspoilt region full of food and wine experiences to discover!

One last 'event' I wanted to share with you is a step-by-step guide to tasting for my students of WSET and food and wine matching that you might find interesting. My book *Bordeaux Sip by Sip, how to discover the real Bordeaux* was due to be published by Feret in early 2018. I will keep you posted on all developments!

I really appreciate the wonderful TripAdvisor reviews that have been coming through. It really seems to help future like-minded clients to find us (through the mass of offers). I have hit the 100 mark, so that is a celebration in itself!

Santé – the best of health to you all."

## Later

**Prof. Paul Webster** (1964–2005) wrote in with some words about swimming deeds.

"Having played what might be termed 'coarse' water polo until the age of about 50, I then started in Masters swimming competitions in which swimmers compete in 5-year age groups from 25 years old upwards. As one gets older the competition does thin out a bit! So last year I found myself the fastest swimmer in my age group in France (and no. 2 or 3 in GB). It's good exercise and gives an excuse to visit cities throughout Europe as one gets better at it. Last year, apart from the French open championships in Vichy, we also visited Florence for a two-day international event and met up with **Michele Chiarini** (1988–91), for whom I was Director of Studies.

Exercise, good company and surrounded by the best of renaissance culture! How better to spend time?"



*All going swimmingly for Paul – Webster wins gold at French Masters Championships! Paul, second from left, pictured here with fellow competitors.*

## Letters

John, Congratulations to you and Gill on another excellent edition. Being largely confined to barracks from a knee op, I ( unusually!) read nearly all the articles and especially enjoyed the one on Tristan de Cunha and particularly appreciated the facinating very well written report on the The Gambia expedition by John Pocock\*. I'd like to have written to him directly, but no email address in the journal listings. The highly topical article by Berkley Hill, crystal ball gazing on Britain's agric. policy post-Brexit was also much appreciated. It would be good to have a follow-up article next year when hopefully there may be a clearer idea on the direction and details of where we going.

Regret still not mobile enough to travel to the Browns next w/e, but will be hosting a mini 6th form reunion here the following week with Chris & Wendy Gibbs and joined by Tom & Gill Cusack.

Keep up the good work, Regards, **Malcolm Ogilvy** (1963-66)

*\*If you had looked for John Peacock rather than Pocock, Malcolm, you would have found him! – Ed.*

*PS we do have a follow -up article from Berkeley Hill – see page 136.*

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Dear David, The new look and reminiscence-packed Journal is indeed a joy to read. I look forward to your article next year - sorry not to be more help.

Very best wishes, **Jenny Mallett** (1954–57)  
*Taken from an email sent to David Bennett regarding his article on page 76 in last year's journal.*

Hi John, The Journal arrived yesterday - I was beginning to wonder where it was. Great edition - well done. I particularly liked page 31 !!

We had a very successful maca season with a harvest of 4.7MT – my best so far but still a tonne short of potential – will keep trying.

At the moment we have had no rain for over 6 weeks & with trees now in early flower we could do with a drop

Best Regards to all, **Chris Warn** (1963–66)

*Comment from the Editor...this was an email received in late August 2017. It had taken the Journal months to reach Chris in Australia. The Macas to which he refers are nothing to do with the ex-Beatle. It's his main crop, Macadamia nuts.*

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Hello John – Thanks for providing another very readable copy of 'Wye'. I could not put it down for 24 hours. The story I liked best was 'Farming life on Tristan de Cunha'. What a tragedy of the commons! But I dare not write too much praise, or you will put it into your next publication.

I was also intrigued by **David Hosford's** article about working for Wards of Egham. **Joe Johnston** (1953–56), **Mac Hood** (1953–56), Mike Tait and I ran the two Massey 726 harvesters, complete with their roadmen's huts in 1955 (I did a bit more work in 1956 before call-up). There are a lot of yarns to tell. I am not sure how we got the job, but it must have been passed down to us from the previous year, and was passed down by us afterwards. I will write my bit and then pass it on to Joe for his contribution. If other people are reminded of working for Wards then we can all contribute (a bit like the ploughing cup report of some years ago).

**David Bennet** (1953–56)



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A big "thank you" to all those involved in producing the journal to a high standard.

Yours sincerely, **William Cropper** (1959–62)

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Dear John, In spite of the fact that this year I had made a contribution to the Journal I again enjoyed reading it very much and congratulate both you and Gillian on your efforts resulting in an excellent read.

I noticed that you had lost contact with **Dr Peter Cooper** (1964–67) and as I was in touch with him last week concerning another reunion with those from Aleppo days I have copied it to Peter. He now lives in Devon and I think Peter would be delighted to hear from you.

The Wye reunion at Covington on **Mo & Richard Brown's** farm was a great success and Paula, Christine and I thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. It was great to catch up with those from the 1964–67 years. Again this came down very much to the efforts that you, Jane and Francis and of course the Brown's put into organising it.

Keep in touch and we look forward to seeing you both in Ireland.

With best wishes, **John Peacock** (1964–67)

*Thanks very much John. Peter Cooper has made a significant contribution to this year's Journal...see page 88 - Ed*

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Dear John, I read the latest Journal from cover to cover in the week that it arrived, and committed myself to writing to compliment you and the editorial team on such a good edition. I really enjoyed it, so am somewhat embarrassed to be

reminded of my commitment by an email last week soliciting responses!

The quality and variety of articles was very good, and I was impressed by the very clever interlinking between articles.

It was interesting how many of the articles had made comment on the fact that if one has been to Wye, somehow the activities of everyone who went also went there are of interest, even if one has never met the person, nor had any experience of the activities in which they have been engaged. I have even found out about someone who lives not far from me. Whilst recognising the space advantages of email addresses – it is rather a shame that the UK address section no longer gives an indication of location.

When I was setting off for Wye for the first time, my father commented on how important would be the friends I made there, since they would remain important for the rest of my life – and so indeed it has turned out.

I have always shied away from writing a piece for the Journal, feeling that it was a bit egocentric, but this year's journal has brought home the fallacy of that, so I am making another commitment to myself in response to the recent email – hopefully I will be a bit more diligent with that than I have been with this email.

I have not been able to make any of the AGM/Gatherings this year, but am determined to put next year's dates into stone.

With best wishes, **Andrew Patterson** (1967–70).

*Andrew, the full postal address list of members is published EVERY other year! – Ed.*



Dear John, We were sorry to have to miss the Wye Summer bash again this year. Hope a success.

In May we were blessed to have our old chums **Hugo 'n Rachel Wood** ('67–71 ) visit us at home in Dorset. This reminding us of our glorious stay with them back in 2014.

I wrote a review of our trip in a letter to them after that stay. (See page 114 – Ed.)

We thank you 'n yer team for the Journal and yer on-going, all-round efforts for us old students.

Best Regards, **Andy Turney** (1966–69)

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John, Thank you very much for the latest edition of the Wye journal, which I very much enjoy reading, and can only imagine the hours of work it must take to produce.

The article on page 79 by **Steve Walsh** reminded me of a photo taken at a time when official sports team photos were being taken, and we always seemed to get a few extra tagged on. The enclosed (see opposite) shows our 'chemistry team'. Seated is **Robin Battle**, **George Goddard** is holding the pestle and I am holding the mortar, **Dave Stacey** is under the cup next to me. **Doug Thomson** and **Kit Smith** are lying in front. **Steve Walsh** is standing at the back holding a geologist's hammer over the head of the lecturer whose name I cannot for the life of me remember.

We had a lot of fun at Wye as well as more serious matters which led into our very varied careers. Reading what others have done after Wye makes me realise how uneventful my own has been. The closure is an unmitigated disaster.

Best Wishes, **Jim Butchart** (1961–65)

Dear John, The latest Wye journal has just arrived and a very quick perusal suggests it is going to be every bit as good as the last one.

I am sitting here in my conservatory, with a pot of coffee, all set to enjoy a good read with leg up following knee replacement surgery. Who would have thought that chasing Lucy Huntingdon around the athletics track in pursuit of the *Victrix Ludorum* all those years ago would have led to this!

It has been a sad year for me as Fred died after thirteen years of poor health and most of my recent reminiscing has been over our 48 years together. It is a great pleasure to be enjoying the sunshine with a fresh wave of pre-Fred memories washing over me as I recall all those I knew at Wye who have contributed to the journal .

Who knew there was all that talent? Whoever would have guessed that from the frivolities of the time, the apparent lack of attention ever paid to anything serious and the rampant speculations about our futures? ...now all in the past...how time flies !

Should I say *carpe deum* or is it too late?

Very best wishes, **Judy Rossiter** (née **Brown**, 1962–65)

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Dear Mr Walters, Being a new member I received a copy of the 2016–2017 journal a few days ago which I have read from cover to cover, and found really fascinating. What an excellent publication. As a result I have written the attached which I thought might be suitable for members news (see page 108). If it needs to be shortened or changed please do whatever is needed.

Yours sincerely, **Paul Latham** (1956–59)



*The Chemistry Team (see Jim Butchart's letter).*

And again!!:

Dear Vinny, Yes, the journal arrived last week. I've read it from cover to cover. What an excellent production. Wish I had become a member 50 years ago!

Thanks for your help, **Paul Latham**

I would just like to say I really enjoyed the Journal with colour, it made me feel young again like I felt when I was at Wye in the days of **Colin Ames** and **John Macinerny**! Thank you.

Sincerely, **Pamela Sellars** (1957–60)

Hello, My name is **Gill Keevil** (née **Steen** and previously Jill with a J – long story!). So as Jill Steen I was at Wye from 1980 to 1983.

I was delighted to receive the latest Journal today. It came to me by a circuitous route as I realise that for the past 23 years it must have been going to my old address! A friend visiting recently recognised a photograph of our old house in

London as now being the home to friends of theirs and as a happy result of this chance occurrence the latest Journal found it's way to me and now I realise I have been missing out!

Strangely Imperial College has my new address and so I had always assumed that dearly beloved Wye had been swallowed by Imperial, newsletters and all, so I am very happy to find I have news to catch up on!

If you could update your records and add my email address to the list that would be wonderful.

I was delighted to find news of people I knew during my time at Wye, I was very interested to read the article by **Prof Berkley Hill**; I believe I still have his book on Agricultural Economics and I still remember his lectures in the OLT very well! I will also be ordering **Martin Hole's** book!

Many thanks for the Journal and I look forward to being reconnected!

Very kind regards, **Gill Keevil** (1980–83)

## Obituaries

**Joan Cecily Hosking** (née **Whitaker**  
(Wye 1948–51)

*Written by members of her family*

Joan Whitaker arrived at Wye in October 1948 straight from Guernsey, where she had been working at a leading nursery, and with sufficient Higher Certificate credits from the Godolphin and Latymer School to go straight into the second year of the B.Sc Horticulture degree course, on which the women were heavily outnumbered by the men, many of whom had just come out of the armed services. She was among the first occupants of the women's Withersdane residence, won the Franklin Spade for best horticultural student and graduated in 1950, but was obliged to remain at the College for a third year.

She obtained a one-year Ministry of Agriculture postgraduate scholarship to continue at Wye, working on plant chemical research under Prof. Louis Wain. It was during this period that she soon met **John Hosking** (1950–53), newly arrived as an undergraduate on the B.Sc Agriculture course. He was a farmer's son, but had specialised in modern languages at school.

His failure in the mid-session exams was generally assumed not to be due to poor knowledge of chemistry and biology, but to the amount of time he appeared to be spending with Miss Whitaker (by then of course a member of staff), and he was warned by Principal Skilbeck that he was in danger of being asked to leave at the end of the summer term. Not to be deterred, Joan successfully taught her future husband how to concentrate on facts instead of theories, and to answer scientific questions in a few lines instead of pages.

They became engaged in the autumn of 1951, and Joan then spent two years at the National Institute of Agricultural Botany, Cambridge, while



John completed his degree at Wye. They were married in the Isle of Wight in 1953, after which they returned to the family farm at Charing, where Joan took over supervision of the commercial glasshouses until the first of her two sons was born in 1957, the year in which they also moved into Pett Place. When this was sold in 1969, they built a new house nearby. There, Joan not only created an entirely new one-acre garden, but also started to study the technique of piano playing and taught herself conversational German and Spanish. She was also a member of the Agricola Club Committee during that period.

The piano started as a hobby but developed into a teaching career, alongside her garden. During the next 50 years or so, without advertising or professional qualifications, she taught and inspired more than 100 young and not-so-young pupils up to Grade 8 on her Blüthner and Broadwood grand pianos, with notable success. Meanwhile, her reputation as a gardener and plantswoman was maintained at the Charing Church Fete, where she exhibited dozens of different named roses each year for the Gardeners' Society.

Joan died in October 2017 at the age of 87, after a long struggle with Parkinson's Disease. Her Memorial Service took place in May 2018, when a recital was given on her piano in Charing Church by a former pupil who has become a concert pianist; members of her family read poems and quotations from her commonplace book.

## Max Hooper

**Biologist, Historian and expert in estimating the age of a hedgerow (staff at Wye 1960–63).**

*Written by Peter Marren, published in The Guardian, 9th May 2017.*

Max Hooper, who has died aged 82, on 10th February 2017, was a biologist and historian who pioneered the ecological study of hedges. His best remembered discovery was what became known as Hooper's Hedgerow Hypothesis, or more simply as Hooper's Law. By examining the composition of a large number of hedges across Britain, he realised that there was a strong connection between age and diversity.

As hedges grow older the number of constituent species increase at a steady rate, a gain of roughly one species every 100 years. Hence one can estimate a hedge's age simply by counting the number of woody constituents over a 30-metre stretch. Hooper would have been the first to admit that his hypothesis does not run to planted hedges, and seems to work better in the south than the north. Nonetheless it has become an important tool of landscape surveyors and is a demonstration of the value of historical investigation in science. It has also influenced the more mixed hedgerow plantings of recent years.

Hooper was also one of the first people to demonstrate how fast hedges were disappearing from the farm landscape in the 1960s. Through detailed archive studies he showed how the western part of the then county of Huntingdonshire had changed dramatically from the medieval open-field system into a chessboard of enclosed fields, a landscape that had survived more or less intact until the second world war. Since then it had reverted to its former open state with the loss of 90% of its hedges.



Apart from his investigative work, Hooper was a teacher on field courses, encouraging schools and universities to take up projects on hedges. He was a good speaker, able to communicate with students and children as much as fellow scientists, and his enthusiasm was infectious. It probably helped that he was a colourful figure with his beard, the woollen smoking cap he often wore and his self-deprecatory manner. At least one well-known naturalist remembers being inspired to take up a scientific career after Hooper had taught him how to identify grasses. His interests were not confined to botany; he had a passion for collecting silver spoons, for history and genealogy ("any old stuff" he claimed) and, more surprisingly, driving classic cars.

Hooper was born in Leytonstone, east London. His father served in the RAF, then based at Biggin Hill. Max attended Sir George Monoux grammar school in Chingford and won a scholarship to read botany at University College London. His doctorate, also at UCL, was on the cytology – the study of cells – of grasses. He became a close friend of a fellow student, David Bellamy, with whom he went on an expedition to Sierra Leone – returning, it is said, with a young crocodile in the wash basin of their cabin.

In 1960 Hooper took up a lectureship at Wye College, the agricultural arm of London University, where he met his future wife, Phyllis Waldron. In 1963 he was appointed to the team at Monks Wood in Huntingdonshire, which was beginning to study the effects of pesticides on wildlife under Norman Moore. Hooper's remit was to look at the possible genetic effects, but when those turned out to be minimal, Moore suggested he turn to hedges instead.

One outcome of this work was *Hedges* (1974), in the famous Collins New Naturalist series, written with Ernie Pollard and Moore. Another was his creation of a highly successful Historical Ecology Discussion Group, which brought in experts for its symposiums. In 1974 Hooper also co-wrote two bestsellers with the author Richard Adams, *Nature Day and Night* and *Nature Through the Seasons*.

In 1973 the research station at Monks Wood became part of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology within the Natural Environment Research Council. Hooper became head of the plant ecology section in 1981, and head of station two years later, a post he held until his retirement in 1992. Inevitably, promotion meant a preoccupation with administrative matters, but as a Monks Wood old boy he was always ready to support and encourage staff over their difficulties. He spent part of this time on secondment to UCL to teach on its MSc conservation course.

Hooper was an active member of the Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust from its formation in 1968, and served on its council. He was also an honorary fellow of the British Naturalists' Association and a recipient of its Peter Scott memorial award. He was buried among native trees and wild flowers at the Arbory Trust's Barton Glebe, near Cambridge.

He is survived by Phyllis, their children, Rachel and Jeremy, and two grandchildren.

## **J Campbell Main (Wye 1952–56)**

*Tributes paid to 'true gent' and Autism Somerset founder by Alice Simmons (published on line at Burnham-on-Sea.com)*

Tributes have been paid to 'autism champion' Campbell Main who passed away aged 85.

Mr Main, who lived in Burnham-on-Sea, founded Autism Somerset in 2011 after fathering a son with autism. Born in Cumbria to farming parents, Mr Main had a lifelong interest in farming and the countryside and toured the West Country by pony in 1949. He moved to Somerset from Essex in 2003 after retiring as a lecturer in agriculture from Writtle College. He is survived by his wife, Catherine Main, three children and four grandchildren.

Allison Ward, director of Autism Somerset paid tribute to Mr Main, describing him as a 'champion' and a 'courageous' man.

"Campbell was a truly remarkable man who was well known to many of us as a champion of our people," Allison said. "With the heart of a lion, he took on the cause for rights and support for people with autism and galvanised us, their families and carers, to fight alongside him. He was knowledgeable and courageous, making himself known to all, undaunted by titles or hierarchy.

Campbell made sure to always be where his views mattered, he knew his beliefs and stood by them. He was a warm and personable human being, with a background in farming that gave him a love of the countryside. He was a family man and spoke proudly of his grandchildren, it has been an honour to know him."

Mr Main was an active campaigner for young people with autism and was well-known in Burnham and Highbridge. His charity, Autism Somerset, offers support to people suffering from autism by connecting them with health, education and social care professionals. In 2013,



he was awarded the Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Chairman's Award for his work in founding Autism Somerset and for championing autism support.

Tina Emery, co-director of Somerset Parent Carer Forum also paid tribute to Mr Main, describing him as 'a true gent'. "He was a driving force for the rights of people who have autism," Tina said.

"He was an amazing unsung hero of this world and was proactive well before autism became a buzz word. Many families benefitted from his strength, his foresight and tenacity without knowing who he was or what he did. He's left an amazing legacy that is Autism Somerset and he will be sorely missed."

A spokesman for Autism Somerset said the charity will continue in his memory.

**Peter Attwood** (1953–56) says: "Just in case no one else has passed on the news, Campbell Main died on 2nd January 2018. He was home at Grove Farm, West Huntsplill, Highbridge, Somerset after a visit to hospital the day before following a 'turn'. Pat and I went to a well-attended funeral held at West Huntsplill on

15th January where we were the only Wye representatives, greatly outnumbered by people from Writtle where Campbell found his niche as a popular lecturer in agriculture.

After his retirement he spent an enormous amount of time and energy getting recognition for autism as a condition needing much better help locally and nationally.



*Campbell Main on the Prin's (Dunstan Skillbeck) horse.*

## John B May (Wye 1956–59)

*Bob Baxter (Wye, 1956–59) writes:*

John May was an almost exact contemporary of mine. We both grew up in Folkestone and attended the Harvey Grammar School there. We went up to Wye in 1956. There John ran a folk dance group, and remembered fellow callers Keith Uttley and Frances Hawkins. He was also a keen member of the East Kent Morris Men. I remember one occasion when this rather boozy side





assembled outside the Porters' Lodge at the College. The dancers did their usual stuff with handkerchiefs and staves, while the Hooden Horse, a traditional Kentish adjunct, pestered the bystanders relentlessly. The Horse consisted of a figure draped in a brown blanket and equipped with a clacking wooden mouth designed to collect loose change from the unsuspecting audience. The feet (rather flat) that protruded from the underside of the beast gave the secret away: it was none other than fellow student J B May!

Graduating in 1959, and with the Colonial Service no longer recruiting – and partly to avoid National Service – John decided on a teaching career. He gained the appropriate qualification at the London Institute of Education. He did not enjoy his first assignment, teaching science at a grammar school where exam-passing was paramount. At this time John, Barry Marsh – another Harvey contemporary – and I lived in bed-sits in Muswell Hill, north London. Against the advice of colleagues, John transferred, in 1962, to Ashmole Secondary Modern School in Barnet, as Head of Science. Here he successfully developed a practical science course suited to the ability of the boys he was teaching. This led, in association with a consortium of local secondary modern schools, to his developing a new science programme that eventually led to the creation of the Certificate of Secondary Education. It riled

John that children who failed to get to grammar school were written off as 'failures'. He spent his working life attending to the educational needs of the 'bottom eighty percent' and other underprivileged students in the UK and abroad.

In 1967 he transferred to the Nuffield Foundation Science Teaching Project where he worked closely with schools in helping to develop educational facilities for the academically less able children in secondary modern schools. This led to a post at Chelsea College, University of London, where he became Head of International Education. After Chelsea College became part of Kings College, John became Director of the International Education Unit. During these years he was responsible for a wide range of courses. As an education consultant he travelled extensively, establishing and supervising science programmes in Malaysia, the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and post-revolution China. In addition to his university work, he served on the Executive Committee of the Council for Education in the Commonwealth.

John was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in 1989. This was successfully treated, and he was able to continue his work. He retired in 2000. Sadly the disease returned in 2003. Heart failure limited his movements, but he enjoyed volunteering at a plant nursery run for people with disabilities, and 'wheelchair rambling' with his wife, Tandi.

I last saw John in November 2010, when he kindly entertained me to lunch at the Royal Commonwealth Society in London. Although he was not in the best of health, we enjoyed a good chin-wag about old times.

John survived to enjoy his 80th birthday party in June 2017. He died in hospital of pneumonia on 18th October. He is survived by his second wife Tandi and by sons Andrew and Ian by his first wife Pat, who died in 2015, and two grandsons. His daughter Kathryn predeceased him 1987.

## Pauline Mills (née Briault) (Wye 1951–54)

*Pauline's husband, Gordon, sent in this appreciation of his late wife.*

Pauline came from a financially-modest home background, and so she needed to be very determined in order to reach Wye College. While attending a private (church) school, with financial help from a charity, she got good results in her school certificate, but found the school did not teach biology for the higher school certificate. So Pauline transferred to a (fee-free) local-government school, to get her higher school certificate in the subjects of her choosing.

Her father's approach to the role of breadwinner then became even more important than before. As a teenager, he had gone to art school, and this led to an uncertain career of casual work. Initially, he drew for august publications such as the *Illustrated London News*. And to promote such engagements, he frequented the Fleet Street pubs, where he mixed with editors and other journalists.

Upon marriage, and the birth of three daughters, the demands on his income became greater. Pauline's mother sometimes had trouble in putting food on the table. Accordingly, when Pauline got her HSC, her mother was keen to have Pauline start to contribute to the family income. Pauline had a different target: she wanted to study horticulture at Wye. Pauline won, and peace was declared.

To gain the practical experience required for entry to Wye, Pauline went to work for a grower that sent fresh vegetables to the leading London hotels, for lunch on the same day as they were picked. With the work-day beginning at 6 am, the firm provided board and lodging for its field staff.

After a year of such experience, Pauline arrived at Wye, where she enjoyed the communal life at



*Gordon and Pauline Mills*

Withersdane. She seems to have thrived on the intellectual content of the courses. Her practical record, however, was not without blemish. Though she had not learned to drive a car, she was invited one day to drive a small tractor on the College farm. Alas, she soon put it into a ditch. A larger tractor (and another driver) were needed to pull it out.

Upon graduation, Pauline became a research assistant at the University of Birmingham, where the professor encouraged her to pursue a modest study of her own, as part of the overall project. Pauline wrote a short account of her work, and this was published in *Nature*.

There followed a succession of other jobs, all making use of her scientific knowledge. As it turned out, the most important was her appointment as a scientific information officer at Fison's Pest Control, based near Cambridge.

At the same time, the company also appointed an American woman, Sally, who had a master's degree in chemistry. The idea was to combine chemistry and horticulture to give good coverage of the relevant journal literature. Sally's (British) husband, John, was a graduate student at Cambridge University, where he met and became friends with another graduate student, Gordon, ie me.

By now, you may have guessed the next twist in the plot: Sally and John became match-makers. In the romantic setting of a beautiful summer evening, on the famous 'backs' of the Cambridge colleges, they conspired to introduce us

I was about to move to my first academic job, as a lecturer at the University of Sheffield, in a city not known for its agriculture and horticulture. After the eventual registry-office marriage in Sheffield, Pauline secured a job as a scientific information officer at the British Steel Castings Research Association!

Most subsequent moves were intended to aid my career. The next move was to Bristol, where Pauline broadened her job prospects by becoming qualified as a librarian. She then got a job in charge of the (small) medical library of a teaching hospital.

During that time in Bristol, Pauline also began her acquaintance with America, when we spent a year in Charlottesville, Virginia. While there, visa restrictions prevented Pauline from taking paid employment; but she sometimes worked as a volunteer.

After Bristol, we had three years in Canterbury, where I joined the academic staff at University of Kent, Canterbury. (And in one of those years, Pauline attended the annual dinner at Wye.)

The next move was to Sydney, which offered better weather than England, which helped Pauline to manage a health problem. After the required three years, we became Australian citizens. Pauline again found employment in technical libraries, notably as Librarian of the Linnaean Society of New South Wales. And I joined the staff of the University of Sydney.

During a later visit to Charlottesville, Pauline decided she would like to sit in on one of the History courses at the University of Virginia. To seek permission, I advised her to knock on the

professor's office door, explain that her husband had a visiting position in the University, tell the professor she would like to sit in on his course, and promise not to submit any written work. The professor readily agreed.

That experience sparked Pauline's interest in history. So she enrolled as a 'mature student' in the University of Sydney, and took undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts – with considerable success, especially in history. These revealed a world that differed greatly from the scientific one she had studied at Wye. Yet she lost none of her respect for science. Thus, she acquired an unusual breadth of knowledge and vision.

In the final years of her life, Pauline participated in two book groups, and in a group studying French; in each of these, she earned a reputation for her intelligence.

### **Tez Quirke (Staff 1991 – 2000) – a one off**

*Tribute prepared by Lee Taylor, a friend from University days (except for para six, added by Mary Lucas who was librarian at the time of the Kempe Centre development).*

Our friend Tez was a 'one off': he certainly had a remarkable life.

Born in Rugby in 1946 to Irish parents, his father was a labourer and his mother a cleaner. The pictures of Tez the youngster show a cheeky chappie, with a zest for life bursting out of the grainy small black and white prints. He passed the 11+, and enjoyed what Laurence Sheriff Grammar School could offer, throwing himself into sports with gusto, and getting good enough exam results to get into the new plate-glass University of Sussex.

Tez spent the year between school and uni with VSO as a teacher in a rural Kenyan school: typical Tez brio to be confident enough at 18 to teach students around the same age as him. It



influenced his choice of academic school at Sussex: African and Asian Studies, where he read Economics. He engaged enthusiastically in student politics – it was the late 1960s – and successfully ran for Student Union President under the unforgettable tagline: *Tez for Pres*.

Tez established a close working relationship with Asa Briggs, the formidable Vice Chancellor, and with many other senior staff there, which was invaluable during this volatile time in universities and society. Sussex was an ideal springboard for Tez.

After university, he had a brief foray into accounting, rapidly finding it was not his métier, and, like a number of us here, was attracted by the ideals and opportunities of the Open University, where he worked in a regional office and then as Admissions Officer.

He moved on to Middlesex Polytechnic Business School, and then to the Overseas Development Institute before going to Wye College for a decade as Secretary and Clerk to the Governors. Perhaps these were Tez's happiest years: he enjoyed being a big fish in a small, specialist institution, he was a stalwart of the Flying Horse pub, and he was close to London, and to Eurostar for forays to the Continent, and Gatwick for wider travel.

During Tez's time at Wye the Learning Resources Centre – later named the Kempe Centre – was built. Tez was enthusiastic about the project from the outset. He drew together and encouraged the team of the Librarian, Head of IT and Estates Manager to compile the brief that was put out to architectural competition. Nicholas Hare architects were appointed and together the tight-knit group took the project to fruition including the raising of funds through appeal. Meetings would always start formally but in true Tez fashion they finished with adjournment to the pub where any more complex issues were resolved amicably. The award-winning building's completion in 1997 was one of Tez's proudest moments.

When Wye merged with Imperial College, he retired for the first time, having – as he told many of us – negotiated a good deal. He returned to his flat in Bloomsbury and metropolitan man Tez re-emerged: a denizen of The Lamb pub, a member of the British Museum, the Tate and Gresham College. He came out of retirement to support the strategic shift of the newly independent Courtauld Institute, revelling in the opportunity to work with Prof Eric Fernie – and in having world-class art as part of his daily life.

What were Tez's hallmarks as a university administrator? His sharp intellect was the bedrock. Certainly not a '9 to 5er': he worked when it was necessary, and delegated as much as he could to his staff, whom he supported and nurtured. He was a strong advocate of working women at a time when this was not a given. Tez was strategic: he saw the wood rather than the trees. He was a networker, seeking out those with influence, being collegiate. This of course often involved one or many shared pints, long lunches and dinners with the wine flowing.

Tez lived in Rugby, Brighton, Birmingham, Milton Keynes, Islington and Bloomsbury; he made the



*Tez as seen by Debi Angel, graphic designer, artist and friend.*

significant decision to move to St Leonards three plus years ago and had found a congenial group of friends, notably at The Horse and Groom. He loved his flat in Marine Court, with its wonderful views of the sea: he would regularly say what a lucky lad he was.

All his life, Tez enjoyed playing and watching cricket and rugby – several people here share his enthusiasm for Middlesex County Cricket Club and Richmond Football Club. He was a stalwart of the Desmond Dribble six-a-side football team at the OU; a fellow player said he was grateful to be on the same side, as Tez tackled enthusiastically. Indeed.

He loved railways (and was always a reliable source of info about timetabling), travelling, especially with a companion, art – Paul Nash and Eric Ravilious in particular – and music – of course music of the Sixties, but also Shostakovich and other composers. He was

intellectually curious, although perhaps he got more set in his opinions as he grew older (as we probably all do) and certainly after a few drinks. He was an epicure, cultivating a discriminating palate for the enjoyment of good food and drink.

One friend paid tribute to his 'sense of humour and robust enjoyment of life being a real tonic'. We would have all wished him longer to enjoy life in St Leonards; he chose his individual, idiosyncratic way to live. A friend said: *'My experience of him was no doubt like many others, of a warmhearted, gregarious, straight-talking friend whose capacity for enjoyment sometimes hid a person of great compassion and sensitivity.'*

A former colleague commented that he was 'a man born neither to have peace himself nor to allow peace to others – and so ever a catalyst for new ideas'.

I think he will leave an indelible set of memories for each of us here. Rest now in peace, Tez, dear friend.



## The College as a photographic venue



*An example of the intricate brickwork found around the college.*



*Part of the stained glass window in the Northbourne Room, formerly the Principal's Study, containing the Kempe Arms, probably when he was Bishop of London.*



## Professor John S. Nix BSc(Econ)(Lond), MA(Camb), CBIM, FRAgS, FIAgrM (Wye 1961–1989)

*A tribute to one of Wye's luminaries by Professor Paul Webster who started out at Wye as a post graduate under John's tutelage*

Professor John Nix, who died on March 15th 2018 aged 91, had an outstanding career as the leading figure of his generation in the study of farm business management. In his teaching, research and publications, he was concerned to improve the management skills of the agricultural industry. His particular contribution was to provide a basis for the rational transformation of theory into practical results.

Coming from a non-farming background in Brockley, south London, he took a London external degree in economics at the then University College of the South West at Exeter. This was followed by three years as an Instructor Officer in the Navy. On leaving the Navy, he joined the Farm Economics Branch of the School of Agriculture in the University of Cambridge in 1951. As well as authoring a number of studies into the economics of various farm enterprises in East Anglia, he became involved with the early modelling work on farm systems which was developing at the time. In addition, he became a seasoned speaker at farmers' meetings.

### **Taking research to the farmers**

In 1961 he came to Wye to join the Economics Department as lecturer and also as Farm Management Liaison Officer whose task it was to provide economic and management support for the NAAS, the state-run agricultural advisory service of those days. This latter role meant that, as well as conducting research and teaching within a university environment, he was expected to extend the results of his research directly to individual farmer clients.

### **Author of the Farm Management Pocket Book**

This gave him a unique insight into the practical data needs of farm planners and was a stimulus to the production of *The Farm Management Pocketbook*, the first edition of which came out in 1966. The 48th edition appeared in 2017, now under the editorship of Graham Redman of The Andersons Centre. John will be remembered for the originality and dedication that went into the production of this publication which was, and still is, used every year by farmers, managers, students, bank managers, rural planners and tax inspectors (!). He always emphasized that the data was for planning purposes only and should always be modified if local conditions or knowledge suggested it. I do remember him being somewhat taken aback when one farmer said that he found the Pocketbook very useful for filling in complicated farm survey questionnaires about yields, labour use and other items (thus completing the data circle!).

The Pocketbook started life as a MAFF committee project for which members each agreed to contribute a section. John agreed to be responsible for the arable section but became impatient with the non-appearance of the rest of the material and so decided to complete the task himself, with the Wye Economics Department acting as publisher. Around 4000 copies were sold in the first year and, as inflation took hold and

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Professor John Nix is to be held at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street on Wednesday 12th September at 3pm. Agricola Club members who knew John are warmly invited to attend.



Photo courtesy of *Farmers weekly*.

information on changes in technology became available, the Pocketbook was updated each year. John imposed a strict timetable for himself and went into purdah. Woe betide anyone who interrupted him over that period.

### **The standard reference for UK agriculture**

The list of enterprises and types of data included expanded greatly as the years passed. One of the secrets of its success was the willingness of a small army of helpers to provide the expanding data. So many helped him because they knew him; they knew the data would be put to good use; that it would be acknowledged properly, and that no one was making large amounts of money out of it. He insisted on keeping the price as low as possible so that even students would not find it beyond their means. In other words it became a proper public good. Estimated to have sold a quarter of a million copies by the time he retired, it became a standard reference for UK agriculture.

### **An analytical approach**

As an academic, he was known for his analytical approach to farm management problems. The first edition of his textbook *Farm Planning and Control*, jointly authored with C.S. Barnard, came out in 1973, with a second edition in 1979. It was regarded as the best UK treatise on the subject, was used throughout the world and was translated into Spanish. He also authored, together with Paul Hill and Nigel Williams, a second textbook *Land and Estate Management*

which appeared in 1987 and ran to three editions during the 90's. There was a third textbook, *Farm Mechanisation for Profit* with Bill Butterworth appearing in 1983.

In 1973, following the expansion of the economics teaching at Wye, he was appointed as Head of the Farm Business Unit. He lost no time in developing a tight unit with a strong focus on teaching and research. He was always supportive of his staff in the development of their own careers and encouraged them to explore whatever avenues they felt might be productive. He was a popular lecturer with a heavy teaching load both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. His notes were legendary, often consisting of a few ragged foolscap sheets with scribbles added year after year until almost illegible. One of his secretaries even found a discarded sheet and had it framed. Many of his PhD students became lifelong friends.

### **First Chair in Farm Business Management**

All this activity resulted in his appointment in 1982 to a personal chair in Farm Business Management, the first such chair in the UK. In 1984 he oversaw the introduction of the degree in Agricultural Business Management, another first for Wye. "Often copied, never surpassed", his staff would say. Over the next 20 years, and well after his retirement, graduates of this degree continued to enter and to prosper in the ever changing agricultural industry.

Despite his commitments within College, he always maintained a heavy programme of lectures at farmers' meetings, conferences and other gatherings up and down the country. He was in demand as a speaker or advisor to many organisations associated with the industry. At one time he was a regular on local television. His easy style and willingness to explain things in simple language endeared him to his audiences. He was an excellent ambassador for both his subject and the College. Shortly after his retirement in 1989, he was appointed Emeritus Professor.

### A string of notable awards for such a positive man

Throughout the period, he was very active in what is now the Institute of Agricultural Management. He was a founder member of the old Farm Management Association and was its chairman from 1978 to 1981. He edited its journal *Farm Management* for many years and established it as the premier academic journal of the subject. He received many awards for his work from a variety of organisations. In 1982 he received the first award by the British Institute of Management for Outstanding and Continuing Contributions to the Advancement of Management in the Agricultural Industry. He was president of the Agricultural Economics Society

for 1990–91 and in 2011 was awarded its Award for Excellence in recognition of his Outstanding Contribution to Public Policy and the Farming Industry. He became a Fellow of Wye College in 1995. In the following decade he received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the NFU and *The Farmers Weekly*.

Beyond all his achievements he will be remembered by his former colleagues and his students for being so encouraging, so positive, always ready for a joke, and such a hard worker.

His first wife Mavis, by whom he had two daughters and a son, died in 2004. In 2005 he married Sue Clements who survives him.

## What a year to be a Spitfire pilot



Charlie Brown (1978–81) pictured with his iconic Spitfire. We hope one day to have the back story from him, but in the meantime, I am happy to report that I spotted his name in the list of credits linked to the recently released documentary film *Spitfire* that was shown in cinemas nationally on one day in July – all very fitting as the RAF celebrates its 100-year anniversary. (Ed.)

# Carolyn Hardy

**The eulogy to Carolyn Hardy delivered by her niece Prunella Scarlett was a fitting tribute to a special lady (Obituaries, *Wye Journal* 2016–17, pp 46-49), writes Gordon Rae (1957–60), who adds his memories of Carolyn.**

The first time I met Carolyn was across an interviewing table in early 1993. She was one of four luminaries from the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) who were grilling a short list of candidates for the post of Director General. From memory, her questions were searching but asked with both charm and good humour. As I was to learn later, Carolyn was a person with whom it was fun to work.

Although I did not know it at the time, I do believe that being a Wye College graduate, as were both Carolyn and her husband Alan, might have helped a tiny bit!

Having been in ICI for nearly 30 years doing a range of technical, development, market research, product, project and general management roles, ie, a rather 'commercial animal', I was somewhat different from those who had gone before.

After my appointment, the new President of the RHS, the Hon. Treasurer, Carolyn and I were keen to continue "to lay the foundations of the new RHS" as a more modern, open and outward looking organization.

To me, that meant creating a management structure with ability in depth, ensuring the society was financially stable and increasing the membership on the back of more and better RHS Shows, improving and adding to the number of gardens and modernizing the RHS Journal, *The Garden*.

Carolyn helped to guide and encourage me in my new and completely foreign world of a long

established, widely respected and conservative horticultural charity.

Although we took our respective roles very seriously there was a lot of fun and laughter both within and outside our monthly Council meetings.

I did, I fear, try to move a little too quickly at one point. Carolyn quietly took me to one side and said with her usual confident charm, "Running the RHS as a charity is not quite the same as running business in ICI". That's all she said; it was all she needed to say. Somewhat tongue in cheek I had been referring to the RHS as "the business".

My fellow directors politely asked me to refrain from calling the society "the business". They told me that the RHS was a charity not a business. After a while I agreed. I said I would stop calling it "the business", on one condition. The condition was that we ran it like one!

When Carolyn retired from the Council I kept in contact with her, ringing two or three times a year until Prunella Scarlett told me that Carolyn was suffering from Alzheimer's and no longer really knew who was phoning her. From then on, Prunella was my source of information until Carolyn died.

Carolyn Hardy helped me into a job which proved to be six of the happiest years of my working life, and for that I will always be indebted to a charming, fun-loving, determined and very thoughtful lady.

# Ian Robinson – a man in a million

## **A tribute from his daughter Tess, with inputs from her brothers, written on behalf of the family**

Dr Ian Robinson (Wye 1964–67), humanitarian, global specialist in agricultural development, Director of AA International Ltd and a loving husband, father and grandfather, died on the 7th of September 2017 in hospital in Aberystwyth from acute myeloid leukaemia.

He worked in agricultural development for over 45 years, in 70 different countries throughout Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia in marginal areas including conflict zones. His extensive field experience provided him with an in-depth understanding of rural issues and concerns in semi-arid areas, which became his specialist subject.

After helping establish the Centre for Arid Zone Studies (CAZS) at the University of Wales in Bangor for 13 years, he then set up his own company in Aberystwyth – AA International Ltd, which, for 11 years he ran with his small team to improve the lives of rural farming populations across impoverished regions of the globe. Most recently, he had developed a unique and innovative software application for farmers to use in assessing crop yield in Uganda.

### **Early start in agriculture**

“Passionate about his work”, an overused phrase, is not enough to describe his commitment to reducing rural poverty in the most inhospitable countries in the World. But his work is only half the story – his spirit, generosity and charm ensured that he made things happen, whether at work or at play.

Born in Wokingham, the oldest of three boys to Bill and Barbara Robinson who hailed from Glasgow and the East End of London, Ian began working as a part-time, child labourer on local

farms from the age of 11. At 18 he was a proficient tractor driver and herdsman, with good enough A-Levels from Windsor Grammar School, where he was Head Boy, to gain a place in Wye College, London University, the first of his family to do so. Encouraged by their parents, sport was a big part in all three of the boys’ formative years, with Ian excelling in local representative rugby, athletics and football teams and much later in life, contributing colourfully to his own children and grandchildren’s progress in their chosen sports.

### **Study of Welsh sheep led to a career in agricultural development worldwide**

His sporting interests continued at Wye College, where he played rugby and football. He also performed Shakespearian drama, and sang professionally in folk groups with his future wife, Faith. He went on to complete a PhD (Wales) in the mountains of Snowdonia in North Wales from 1967 to 1970, taking charge of a flock of sheep, some errant shepherds and a remote cottage to investigate the effect of the environment on Welsh Mountain ewes. A post-doctorate career in agricultural development in the UK and overseas extending to 47 years followed, resulting in him completing several hundred short missions in some of the most difficult and dangerous places on earth.

This approach to work, where he was a frequent visitor to war zones, was combined with an equally adventurous approach to his time off. Taking his young family on holiday to the disputed Kashmir region of India in 1979 was matched only by an impressive ‘road trip’ that saw him drive from Oman to Corfu in a Fiat 127 to meet up with his young family who had



*Ian's (first left) focus was helping to improve food production in post-conflict territories such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, Rwanda and Somaliland.*

travelled there by more conventional means (aeroplane in this case), for their summer holiday.

An assignment for the World Bank during a turbulent period of West African politics in the 1980s saw him working for two years in both Benin and Ghana where, in spite of being present to witness more than one 'Coups d'etat', his family again joined him for their holiday. They, of course, could not believe their luck!

### **Despite the time away, family remained a priority**

Although separated by continents and seas, sometimes for many months at a time, his family and their Cwmsymlog home, near Aberystwyth, remained his priority. On returning from Bhutan, Chad, Mali or Timbuktu, as well as vivid descriptions of the places he had visited for work,

Ian would bring back cassettes featuring local musicians and, occasionally, items of ethnic dress. 'Function over form' was his mantra when it came to sartorial choices for watching his children play sport, and this would extend to him wearing Tibetan or even Afghan headgear when weather conditions required. Together with his vocal encouragement to whomsoever of his offspring happened to be playing rugby, football or hockey, it ensured that he was always noticed (both visually and audibly) throughout the playing field touchlines of Mid Wales.

The mid-1980s saw him recruited by The British Council to improve three agricultural colleges in Syria. Needing a car in the Syrian capital, he completed another impressive road-trip, literally a 'road to Damascus' experience, as he crossed





*Ilan in Sudan in 2006. He was extremely hands-on and liked to become directly involved at village level offering farmers advice on seeds, crop storage and marketing.*

Europe and the Balkans in a navy blue VW polo, driving from his home near Aberystwyth to Syria in less than a week. He brought the car back via the same route, only for it to break down in Dover – possibly the most dangerous part of the entire trip.

### **Founder of Centre for Arid Zone Studies**

By now, his technical expertise in the driest zones of the world had been recognised and rewarded with an invitation to help establish, and later direct, the Centre for Arid Zone Studies at the University of Wales, Bangor. This started a new chapter in his career, moving from working in the relative comfort zones of unstable West African dictatorships, to active war-zones where he once again set up and ran development programmes to improve agricultural performance (with the war-zone work in particular conditioning him for

battles over petty university politics in years to come).

### **Into the danger zones**

For the first time, it unfortunately coincided with unwanted attention from the enemies of those benefitting from his work and he was fortunate to survive an attack on his team in December 1989. Returning from a Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission on behalf of the UN, but under the auspices of Oxfam-UK, the team was intentionally land-mined in no-man's land between Eritrea and Sudan. Indirect claims of further death threats from the Dergue (Ethiopian Government at the time) against persons involved in such development activities in the region, resulted in a period of secondment for Ilan, away from the arena. He was seconded to the Philippines (1990–93) for an EC-funded project to establish five Agricultural Training Centres.

In 1993, the end of the civil war in Ethiopia left a vanquished Dergue, an independent Eritrea and a new government in Ethiopia, which opened the way for his return to the Horn and East Africa. At the same time, he was invited to take over Directorship of CAZS, a position he held until 2005 which enabled him to reinforce all the CAZS development and training activities in Africa and in conflict zones elsewhere.

### **AA International – a new venture**

He established AA International shortly afterwards, which, under his guidance has prospered and grown into an internationally recognised organisation producing a range of tools, manuals and approaches to improving agricultural production in the world's poorest countries.

With his five children now grown up, it was his grandchildren who would also benefit from the wonderful gifts and stories that he brought back from all his travelling. His children could then share long drinks into the small hours with him discussing politics, sport and listening to his favourite music.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to identify a single clear legacy from all of his work, so perhaps it is best to remember who he was rather than what he did. His easy charm, his kindness and passion hid a fierce determination which really did 'make things happen'. Those fortunate enough to have spent time in his company will never forget him.

### **Celebration of the life of a remarkable man**

Ian's family, that's Faith, their children Jason, Stefan, Shaun, Ben and Tess and the six grandchildren, organised 'Celebration of a Life' at a hotel in Machynlleth, mid Wales, a little north of Aberystwyth, which is where Ian based his consultancy business and not too far from their remote bungalow home in the hamlet of Cwmysymlog.

There was a terrific turnout of family friends, work colleagues and a few old college friends; sadly, two more alumni who were planning to attend met with unfortunate incidents on their way there and failed to make it. Happy to say, they are fine now.

Tributes were paid by a number of individuals associated with Ian's life over the years; the opening address was by his brother Paul, followed by John Walters, a long-term friend from Wye days, and Maddy Lewis, a friend and student from the Welsh Agricultural College. Then came Graham Day, described as a 'friend and sometime landlord from Bangor'; travelling in from some remote location was another friend and colleague, Turi Fileccia, who is a senior agronomist with FAO; closing that section of the afternoon's proceedings was a friend from Aberystwyth, Ken Booth, who had authored an obituary in *The Guardian* (October 23, 2017, it is still available to read on line and is an interesting and informative adjunct to the eulogies to this remarkable man, printed on these pages).

### **Ian Robinson – one in a million**

*Transcript of a tribute to Ian from fellow alumnus and lifelong friend John Walters (1964–70) delivered at the Celebration of a Life memorial gathering on 2nd November 2017.*

"Jane and I have known Ian and Faith for over 50 years and have many tales to tell. But on this occasion, Tess has asked me to cover his time at Wye College. So here goes:

It's the mid-1960s; Harold Wilson is PM; Lyndon B Johnson is the new President of the USA following Kennedy's assassination and America commits to joining the war in Vietnam. It's The Swinging 60s, flower power and free love time – allegedly!

So to Wye College - that Agricultural and Horticultural outpost from London University, situated in the heart of the Kent countryside. A lot happened there. Faith met Ian there, I met them both there and a lot of others met Ian there; and I met my wife whilst there. Jane was at the nearby physical education training college; and if none of that had happened, life would have been very different.

Ian and I met for the first time in 1964, during freshers' week, possibly when we both signed up for the rugby Club; only, on that fresher's intro night, he also signed up for football. Turned out that he was pretty damned good at both ball sports. I'm sort of glad that talent didn't stretch to cricket, although he was no slouch at that either. Fortunately, we both discovered that we were pretty mean darts players which later helped to finance our beer drinking down at The George.

At some point subsequently, he and I became friends, which surprised me when I thought about it as we were so very different. He had lots of friends and I felt privileged to be one of them.

### **Animal Science quartet**

But boy, was he bright. That became increasingly obvious when the two of us joined **Derek Cuddeford** and **Charmian Stebbing** in our second years to form a specialist quartet, the Agricultural Sciences, Animal Option, which is how we remained through the rest of our time at Wye. Just how we fared in finals is best left to history but somehow, three of us finished up with Ph.Ds (I have lost contact with Charmian but I believe she went on to complete a Veterinary degree.)

Over time, Ian introduced me to a whole new genre of music. I was fine with the hits and groups of the day in the '60s, but he was much more astute. He was a devotee of the Windsor

folk and blues festival and knew of the likes of Clapton, John Lee Hooker, Ewan Mc Call and Peggy Seeger, Martin Carthy, to name but a few. For me it culminated in some terrific musical education sessions on Sunday evenings – a small bunch of us gathered in Faith's room at Withersdane at about 7pm, indulging in a good egg and sausage fry up, listening to Mike Raven on Radio 1 delivering his R & B and Soul programme.

### **Faith's influence**

Faith obviously had a tremendous influence on him in those early days. **John Peacock** recalls sitting on a beach in Corfu in the summer of '65 with Ian and two other mates, **Ted Schofield** and **Milroy Russell**. They had been on holiday for a week or so when Ian suddenly said something like, "Guys I'm off. I must go home. I'm in love with Faith".

In the early years of their courtship at Wye, they faced the ignominy of being asked to keep quiet ...they were whispering sweet nothings during a mycology lecture. Never the ones to be deterred, they went on to be stars of their year group. They both had strong thespian talents and appeared in many of the outstanding amateur dramatic performances. Amongst them was a rather dark comedy *The Fire Raisers*, along with some lighter Gilbert and Sullivan and Shakespeare productions.

Equally rewarding for us were their appearances during formal, or totally informal, singing sessions where, for example, the duo's rendition of the Scottish ballad *Wild Mountain Thyme* was an absolute knock out. Prof **Richard Phipps**, a contemporary of ours, now at University of Reading, emailed to say that for him, a folk evening with Ian and Faith playing and singing Joan Baez songs in Withersdane Hall was both "magical and unforgettable".

But duets were not limited to Faith and Ian alone. Singing sessions after rugby matches were virtually obligatory; a mutual friend of ours, **Chris Gibbs** (1963–66), recalled one really special performance – a duet between Ian and one **Ted Schofield** and entitled *The Twins*. Now you have to know that Ted was a big guy; very tall and quite hairy. He literally towered over Ian when they stood side by side.

Chris explains: "One of my keenest memories is Ian leading this après-rugby song with great skill, musicality and enthusiasm. I learnt from this song some details of human anatomy and intimate social behaviour of which previously I had no knowledge. We picture Ian most easily with sparkly brown eyes, flowing locks, a pint in one hand (leaving room for relevant hand gesture with the other), telling us in a duet with Ted about me and my brother St John."

He continued, "He definitely had a quiet intellectual side. But he often kept that well hidden, and instead he lit up the room and we loved him for it."

In a similar vein, **Richard Long** (1963–66) recalled the time when he and Ian performed a unique and amateurish rendition of the Woody Guthrie/Cisco Houston version of *The Golden Vanity*, a folk song originating in the 17th Century about a ship threatened by a Spanish galleon and rescued by the ship's cabin boy.

Richard and Ian delivered this as a fringe performance during a Julie Felix concert in Withersdane Hall in 1965. They were subsequently mentioned in the local *Kent Messenger* newspaper review as a support act to Julie Felix which they considered was very generous of the reporter. They had sung in attempted harmony to Richard's rather laboured/simplistic guitar playing, which wasn't helped by the essential Dutch Courage beers

taken beforehand. He often recalls the event with a wry smile and has not played in public since!

### Moving on

When Ian was close to finishing undergrad studies he was offered an opportunity to continue with post-graduate work on the Wye campus. But he had a counter offer also from The University of North Wales, Bangor. Wisely, he sought counsel from the then Principal, Dunstan Skillbeck. Dunstan drew the analogy for Ian of a person who sits too long in the comfortable armchair and then finds it too difficult to get off it again. In other words he advocated the value of change and spreading the wings, gaining new experiences. No one I have known personally, before or since, has spread their wings wider, or with greater impact than Ian.

His CV, which runs to 17 pages and refers to over 100 publications, says it all; it lists projects he worked on in over 50 countries, visited in many cases multiple times and including Uganda, Eritrea, Rwanda, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan – just think of all the attendant dangers and difficulties travelling in those countries involve.

He was one in a million.

### Recognition in his adopted homeland

At the end of January, Faith was invited to an awards ceremony in the Museum in Cardiff by the Wales for Africa organisation. There she received a posthumous award on Ian's behalf in Special Recognition of his work over the years in Africa. The presentation of the attractive trophy, constructed from 300 year-old Powys oak and Welsh slate, was made by Jon Townley, a member of the Welsh Government, who heads up the group.

# Wye College Agricola Club AGM

## Minutes of the 65th Annual General Meeting held on Friday 29th September 2017 at 7.00 pm in the Latin School, Wye

### Present

David Leaver (President and Chair), Berkeley Hill, Francis Huntington (Secretary), Jane Reynolds, John Walters, Paul Webster (Treasurer) and three members.

### 1 Apologies for absence

The secretary had received apologies from Susan Atkinson, Charles Course, Geoff Dixon, David Simmons, Chris Waters and Nigel and Ali Poole..

### 2 To confirm the Minutes of the 64th AGM published in the Journal

It was resolved that the Minutes of the 64th AGM were a true record; proposed by Jane Reynolds, seconded by John Fraser and signed by the Chairman.

### 3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

### 4 Chairman's report

The Chairman, David Leaver, reported that the Hog Roast held on 1st July was a very successful and well attended event, excellently hosted by the Brown family on their farm near Huntingdon. Grateful thanks to the Brown family were recorded.

The committee have set up a group to review the future of the Agricola Club and its finances. The Treasurer had previously provided a projection of the effect of an inevitable decline in membership. They will also consider whether or not it would be appropriate to work more closely with Wye Heritage in view of the accumulation of Agricola memorabilia. They will draw up a proposal for consideration at the next committee meeting.

Member Richard Longhurst said that there is a revival in agricultural economics and a need for mentors to young economists. Berkeley Hill reminded members that one of the original objectives of the Club was to support agriculturalists.

### 5 Secretary's report

The Secretary, Francis Huntington, said that his Report in the 2016-2017 Journal encapsulates the work of the Secretary. He deals with an increasing number of enquiries from Members as they are more likely to email than to put pen to paper. He indicated that he would continue to keep members of the Club informed via the e-newsletter. Now that the Heritage Centre is well established, member's visits to Wye invariably include a visit to the Centre.

### 6 Treasurer's Report and to receive the Club accounts for 2016–2017

Agricola Club accounts: the Treasurer, Paul Webster, presented the Club accounts. Subscription income was slightly up as compared with the previous year. Two events were held during the financial year; the September 2016 Dinner and the July 2017 Hog Roast, there was a small deficit on these events. The larger Journal last year resulted in an increase in costs. But the transfer of £10,000 from the Club's funds within the Memorial Fund resulted in the small overall deficit of £167 for the year.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Paul and seconded by Lucy Huntington and unanimously approved.

## 7 Memorial Fund – Trustees Report and Accounts 2016–2017

Memorial Fund: the Memorial Fund made three awards during the year totalling £6k. The Tropical Agriculture Association received £2k for its Scholarship Fund; two candidates for the Worshipful Company of Farmers Courses received a total of £1.5k; and the SOAS External Programme received £2.5k for support of students carrying out their dissertation research. The list of dissertations supported last year was published in the Journal.

The Accounts for the year ending 31st July 2017 had been circulated. They showed a deficit of £6k after £10k transfer to the Club, plus £6k of awards referred to above. However since the value of the two portfolios increased by around £33k, the overall Accumulated Fund increased by £27k over the year.

Portfolio performance was satisfactory during the year. The Memorial Fund portfolio maintained its dividend and gave a 4.2% capital gain whereas the Club portfolio improved its dividend and gave a 4.9% capital gain. During the year our holdings of M&G ZDP matured, and on the advice of Candour, we reinvested in an equity-based fund, Aberforth Smaller Companies Fund and a property based fund, TIME Commercial Freehold.

The Trustees are appointed by the Agricola Club committee. The accounts had been approved and signed by the Trustees at their AGM earlier in the day.

The Treasurer repeated the Trustees' annual request that any member who is in need of support, or is aware of any other member who is in need, should contact the Trustees.

Lucy Huntington asked whether more scholarships are being granted. The Treasurer explained that the amount granted is related specifically to the request. Berkeley Hill said that the working group looking at the future of the Club should consider this issue and present a proposal to the Trustees.

## 8 Appointment of Independent Examiners of the Accounts for 2017–2018

The Treasurer said that Chavereys had served the Club well with a swift turnaround of the accounts and that each year they deduct part of their bill as a contribution to the charity. He recommended that Chavereys be appointed Independent Examiner for 2017–2018. This proposal was unanimously approved.

## 9 Journal Editor's report

The Editor, John Walters, said that there had been a very positive response to the 2016–2017 Journal, and mentioned the excellent work carried out by Gill Bond in laying out the material ready for the printers. He had received some articles for the next Journal and asked Members to encourage their contemporaries to write.

## 10 Elections

Committee: the Secretary explained that Susan Atkinson, Charles Course, Berkeley Hill, Henry Holdstock, David Simmons, Chris Waters and Paul Webster were due to stand down. He had not received any response from Henry Holdstock but all the other Members had indicated that they are prepared to serve on the committee for a further three years. It was resolved to accept these nominations; proposed by Francis Huntington, seconded by Jane Reynolds.

Francis will speak with other Members attending the meeting about them possibly standing for the committee.



Vice Presidents: there were no new nominations for Vice President.

Honorary Membership: there were no new nominations for Honorary Membership.

## **11 Future plans for Club events**

The 2018 Annual Dinner will be held at Wye School on 29th September 2018. It was agreed that there was no need for a guest speaker, other activities to be confirmed in due course.

## **12 Report on Wye Heritage Centre**

Francis Huntington explained that the situation remains as reported in the last Journal. Wye Heritage is currently based in the Latin School and they have been offered the former Junior Common Room, a larger space with access directly off the High Street. The accommodation would provide a main room for exhibitions, archive/storage space, a small kitchen and disabled WC facilities. The move is likely to be 2½ to 3 years away as the whole site of the former Wye College is subject to approval of a Masterplan before terms for a lease can be drawn up. The lease is expected to carry a peppercorn rent but there will be a service charge to pay.

Wye Heritage offers ordinary membership for households and corporate membership for local organisations. Corporate members include The Agricola Club, Brook Agricultural Museum, Wye Historical Society, Wye Arts Association, Wye Women's Institute, Wye

with Hinxhill Parish Council, Wye Parochial Church Council, Wye Business Association, Wye Gardeners' Society, and Promis, a rehabilitation centre at Withersdane. Corporate members are able to use the facilities to store their archive materials, although ownership remains with the organisation. It is hoped to have achieved charitable status during 2018.

## **13 Update on Telereal Trillium's current plans for the Wye Campus**

As mentioned earlier, the whole of the Wye Campus (known as WYE3) is subject to a masterplan; this includes the sites north and south of Occupation Road and ADAS as well as the laboratories and the student union building. Telereal Trillium has applied for planning permission to convert the Medieval and Edwardian buildings into 39 dwellings with car parking and two new houses to the rear. The proposal is for an Extra Care Home on the site of the science laboratories, 20 executive houses on ADAS and a further 40 dwellings on the north side of Occupation Road. Plans for the south side of Occupation Road (including the covenanted land) and the student union are, as yet, unclear. There are also planning applications lodged for the site of Wolfson House and 26–32 High Street.

## **14 Any other business**

There were no items of other business.

The meeting closed at 20.00 hours.

# Agricola Club AGM Agenda 2018

**Saturday 29th September 2018, Kempe Centre, Wye**

The 66th Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 29th September 2018 at Wye School, Kempe Centre, Wye, starting promptly at **5.30 pm.**

## Agenda

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes – confirm the minutes of the 65th AGM published in the Journal
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Secretary's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report and to receive the Club accounts for 2017–2018
- 7 Memorial Fund - Trustees Report and Accounts 2017–2018
- 8 Appointment of Independent Examiners of the Accounts for 2018–2019
- 9 Journal Editor's Report
- 10 Elections:
  - Committee – there are six vacancies
  - Vice Presidents – Nominations to be received by the Secretary at least 14 days before the meeting
  - Honorary Membership – to receive and vote on the committee's recommendations
- 11 Proposals for the future management of the Club
- 12 Report on the 'Wye Heritage Centre'
- 13 Update on Telereal Trillium's current plans for the Wye Campus
- 14 Any other business

## Wye College treasures - portraits

### Sir Edward Hardy

We continue the series of brief biographies of past Principals, Governors and Fellows. As previously this coincides with the regular and rotating loan of portraits to the Wye Heritage Centre from the Imperial College picture store where the 'Wye Treasures' portraits are currently housed. We are indebted to Imperial College Archivist Anne Barrett for her assistance in making the loan arrangements.

**Sir Edward Hardy b1887 d1975**

**South Eastern Agricultural College student  
1906–1910**

**Governor of the College 1925–1965**

**Chairman of Governors 1936–1945**

**Fellow of Wye College 1949–1975**

Edward Hardy was the son of Col. Charles Hardy of Chilham Castle. He was a student at the College and then farmed locally at Boughton Aluph, expanding from 250 acres to 670 acres during the early 1940s. His farms were managed from 1937 by Reg Older, also a former student, and from 1947 he partnered Reg Older in Romney Marsh Farms. He was Chairmen of Kent County Council from 1936 to 1949.

The portrait is that of Sir Edward Hardy as a Fellow of Wye College painted in 1967 by John Worsley, prolific war artist, portrait painter and contributor to the Eagle comic.

### The College as a photographic venue



*A corner of the Cloister Quad, with an archway leading to the the Parlour.*



**Sir Edward Hardy 1887 – 1975**

# The tale of 'Shepherd Bob'

## A case of wool not being pulled over the eyes

**Bob Baxter (1956-59)** recounts a daring jape involving a sheep that came to naught

Back in the 1950s, when summers were long and sunny and beer was 5p a pint, there was little for Agric. students to do in their second year. Part One had been successfully negotiated and the only external exam was in Economics\*. A group of us decided to stage a 'jape'. Some time before, a plough had mysteriously and famously appeared overnight, perched on the ridge of the roof above the Porters' Lodge.

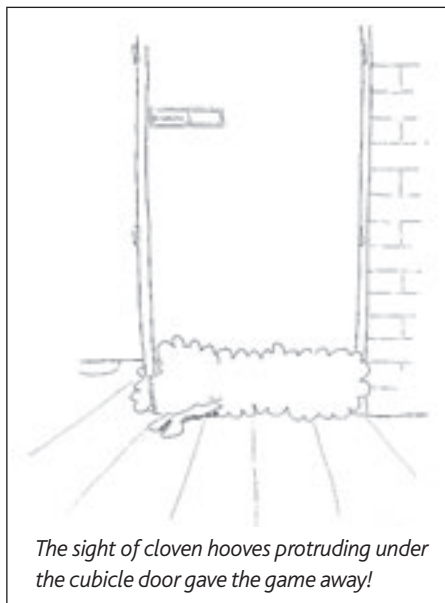
We could not hope to emulate such an achievement, but our juvenile minds thought that it would be amusing to get a sheep into the Inner Quadrangle. The idea of the animal chewing the immaculate, hallowed lawn and doing its thing on a sward denied the student foot, seemed an appealing way of cocking a snoot at the College authorities.

A plan was duly laid. The project and team were to be divided into several sections (cornering the sheep in its field, transporting it to the College, getting it through the building, etc.). It was not long since the conquest of Everest. I was selected for the last, South Col-equivalent, stage. I did have a bit of a reputation, following a phase of clambering around on the roof of Withersdane Hall with **Brian Vale** (1956–59) – but that is another story.

All went well at first. The sheep was successfully 'kidnapped' and somehow transferred, unnoticed,

*\*Economics was a strange, alien subject to us.*

*Those tricky three-axis graphs of supply, demand, elasticity etc. were readily comprehensible after a few beers in the Kings Head of an evening, but, come the cold light of day, all was unintelligible again!*



*The sight of cloven hooves protruding under the cubicle door gave the game away!*

along Scotton Street under cover of darkness. My partner-in-crime was **Bertie Loxton**, noted for his strength and courage on the rugby field. We managed to pull the poor animal up onto the flat roof of what was then the Noisy Common Room. Luckily the animal was docile – or possibly in shock. A window in E Block happened to be open; it was a warm night. We hauled our charge though. We explained to the startled Third Year occupant, '**Abo**' **Mason\*\***, that we were just passing through with a ewe. He duly went back to sleep.

We eased open the door...out into the corridor! We felt we were well on our way. Just the stairs down to ground level to negotiate! But what was that? The heavy tread of a night porter climbing up those very stairs! Thinking quickly, we





\*\* Abo was not his real name. The Vet Science lecturer, Mr Patterson, a Scotsman famous for his description of 'maasses and maasses of suppurating pussess', explained on one occasion that a cow's stomach was divided into compartments. These included the 'omasom', and next to it, the 'abomasom'. Sadly the nickname stuck.

manhandled the sheep into a cubicle in the toilets and went in with it. Bertie made a noise like someone being sick (he had plenty of experience). The idea was that the porter would conclude that it was just another miserable student suffering after too heavy a Saturday night out and would go back to the Lodge, curiosity satisfied. No such luck: the official spoilt everything by switching on the lights! The sight of cloven hooves protruding from under the privy door rather gave the game away.

It was a 'fair cop' and the end of the project. We had to confess all, and skulk away. I don't remember what happened to our woolly companion, but I learned, much later, and to my chagrin, that she/it was part of a controlled grazing experiment.

The exploit got to the editorial ear of the student underground news sheet (was it called 'Golden Boy'? ). I enjoyed my 'fifteen minutes of fame' (Andy Warholl) as 'Shepherd Bob'

## The College as a photographic venue



*The archway leading to Lecture Room A.  
The door on the right opens into the Old  
Lecture Theatre.*

## Working for Wards of Egham

The article in the last issue of *Wye* from David Hosford about working for Ward & Sons ('A combined adventure', on pages 68–73) reminded us of similar experiences when we worked for the same company in the summer of 1955. Provided by various authors.

Our team consisted of **Mac Hood** (1953–56) and **David Bennett** (1953–56) on one harvester and **Joe Johnston** (1953–56) and **Mike Tait** on the other. We do not know how we got the job, but can assume that we inherited it from some students in the previous year. Some other Wye students (**Ian Stratford** (1955–58), and **Nick Mallett**) worked the following year, but there were rumours that RAC students got onto this employer in later years. It would be interesting if other Wye employees of the firm added their stories for publication in the Journal.

There was no doubt that the attitude of Lorrie Gates was a most important contributor to the success and enjoyment of the venture. By 1955, he had a better car than the one David Hosford reported. Shortly after we arrived and were crawling all over the combines to find out how they worked, he shouted out "Just tell me the truth, have any of you driven combine harvesters before?" The answer was almost no one. And we all did some damage as we worked.

### Damage to combines

The best story I remember was from 1956 when Nick Mallett, pulling out of the crop with a shower of rain and driving back to the camp, hit a half-hidden bag of wheat that wrenched the steering wheel out of his hands and the combine hit an oak tree, bending the whole table on one side! When he saw the damage Lorrie was heard to remark "I have been employing students for some years, but none has done this much damage in one go!" Or words to that effect.

### Trouble on the public roads

Driving the combine with the van in tow (our 'caravanserai') always caused problems, but there weren't issues about the lack of lights, number plates, brakes or other essentials that are required today. But the caravanserai was very slow. At one time David Bennett was driving along the A4 through Slough (before the M4 was built this was the Great West Road). Eventually, Mac Hood overtook him, stopped him and pointed out that there was a 3 mile traffic jam behind him. So he pulled over.

The limited capacity to turn could be quite a problem. David Bennett was driving past Eton College, where there is/was a long high brick wall close to the side of the road. Try as he might he could not edge away from it, but was eventually saved by a turn in the road after a few hundred yards. There were rumours that the following year Ian Stratford had a serious breakdown (puncture?) on the same road. It took until almost dark to fix it, by which time he had a police escort, which turned the whole outfit into the nearest gate!

Different tasks took us to different areas. David and Mac started among the horticultural holdings on the other side of the A4 opposite Heathrow. The furthest west they got was the river flats just west of the Grassland Research Institute at Hurley. They also got up into the foothills of the Chilterns near Stoke Poges, but not very far south into Surrey.

One of the most interesting customers was a car buff, who had a shed full of Aston Martins and



*The 'caravanserai' at rest.*

similar sports cars. His 12 year old son drove around the property in a miniature MG.

### **A difficult customer**

Most of the farmers we worked for were pleasant enough, but there was one that David Bennett clearly remembers. David was walking behind the combine checking the amount of seed coming out of the straw walkers to see whether the drum needed adjusting, when the farmer asked him what he was doing, so he explained. That afternoon the farmer came back after a liquid

lunch, did the same test and shouted at Mac that he needed to adjust his settings!

There were, of course many pubs to be frequented to slake our harvester's thirst. But we all fell in love with the barmaid at The Hinds Head at Bray, south of Maidenhead. We would congregate there in the evenings after a hard day's work (probably all unwashed and covered with dust). She was about 30, and so was half way between an attractive partner and a mother figure. She stated that she was off to Beirut to host a posh bar there – we all advised her to stay in Bray.

# Memories of plimsolls, ploughed fields and punishing runs

**Andrew Blake (1964–67)** recalls the gruelling exploits undertaken by the Cross-country Team of yesteryear.

I wonder how many other Agricola Club members recall the Cross-Country Team of the mid 1960s and its exploits?

I was secretary (the bloke with the beard in the photo), and still remember our exhausting road runs while training over a circuit around Brook village. Given the flap-flap sound of the plimsolls I wore at the time, it's no wonder that I've had to have cartilage ops on both knees.

More draining was the college's true cross-country course described quite correctly by captain **David Stone (1964–67)** (centre, front row) as a "killer".

It was only about three miles long, and its start was on level road just beyond the college Poultry Unit. But shortly afterwards we turned right, left through a wood, and onto a field which always seemed to be ploughed. We then faced several muddy climbs and descents through woods and a farmyard at the back of the Crown. The final half mile was down a steep slope through two grass fields separated by a gate, the finishing line being back at the road where we'd begun.

"It was somewhat hazardous if there was any traffic around," David recalls. "I remember just beating **Francis Hicks (1965–68)** (right, front row) to that line when we were running against the Wye rugby team."

Exhaustion aside, my particular recollection of that downhill finish, usually such a relief, was the time I turned my ankle so badly I thought it had broken. I didn't run again for some time thereafter.

During our time we organised a couple of Canterbury to Wye races open to all. On at least one of them an enterprising student from the Shepherd Neame brewing family ran a very successful wager book.

The nature of our course was such that we usually had the edge in home matches, for example over Writtle College. But deliberate, or otherwise, Writtle got its own back when we visited Essex and encountered a distinct paucity of way-marking.

Another memorable event for David was a national road race in London over ten miles. I didn't take part – either because of my damaged ankle, or more likely because I was courting my future wife, Jenni, at the time.

"Our team was second from last, beating only the Army Medical Core," says David. "But that wasn't bad considering most of the opposition was from various harrier clubs and most of us were using our cross-country studded shoes. Boy, what a bunch of keen amateurs we were!

"It's a good job the London Marathon hadn't been invented or we might have felt obliged to enter."

The mention of ploughed fields jogged another memory. After one race, the College received a complaint from the farmer and I had to go and pacify him. We never heard from him again after I pointed out that we had been on a public footpath – David Stone



**Wye College Cross-country Team 1965**

*Back row (left to right): Peter Kane; Andrew Blake; Malcolm Harrison (aka Norfolk); Robert Blackburn; Chris Newell. Front row (left to right): Peter Wright; David Stone; Francis Hicks*

## The College as a photographic venue

*A colourful arrangement of flowers in the Principal's study, later the Northbourne Room. They have lasted since the college was closed as they are made of silk.*





## An accidental career

**Peter Cooper (1964–67), recounts the way in which his career from 1964 to 2010 was controlled by a series of 'accidents' that took him away from the family fruit farm along a path that encompassed a variety of African countries.**

At the age of 18, upon leaving school, I fully expected to join my father on his apple farm in Benenden, Kent, first as a partner and then eventually, I assumed, as the owner of Goddards Green when he decided to retire! I would of course have to buy out my two sisters' shares of the farm, but fruit growing was a prosperous business at the time and that should not have been a serious problem. All that was needed was for him to ask me and that would have been that. However, I fully understood that my parents might wish for me to demonstrate a bit of 'get-up-and-go' of my own before such a wonderful life was handed to me on a plate and so I had no problem at all in attempting to do just that. After an interview with a charming but rather aged Professor the year before, I had been offered a place at Christchurch College, Oxford, to read Physics, Chemistry and Maths providing I achieved satisfactory results in my S-levels. That I felt should demonstrate the required 'get-up-and-go'!

And yet fate held some really rather strange cards in her hands. There were times over the coming years when I felt that something else and/or someone else was pulling the strings and I was about as in control of what happened next in my life as the proverbial puppet. Read on and judge for yourself.

### **Accident one – Summer 1962**

The long-anticipated S-level results arrived. Great celebration by all at Goddards Green! I

had passed all three with a couple of 'distinctions' in Maths and Physics. Christchurch and Oxford waited in the coming autumn. Hurrah! However, a telephone call to Christchurch to tell them the news that Peter Cooper was on his way was a trifle baffling. *"Cooper you say? Peter Cooper? To read Physics, Chemistry and Maths? Starting this autumn? Let me take your telephone number Mr Cooper and we'll get back to you."* This sounded rather ominous and a worried household waited for a couple of days for the return call. When the call came, our worst fears were realized. Christchurch had no record at all of the offer ever being made by my aged and absent-minded interviewing Professor who had indeed subsequently retired. They had contacted him and he apparently had no recollection of our conversation. Christchurch in fact believed my account of events and was deeply embarrassed, but all places had been filled and the best they could do was to offer me a place in the autumn of 1964 – two years hence.

That caused the gloss of a glittering career at Oxford to become rather dimmed and I looked around for somewhere else to go. It did not take long before I chanced upon Wye College, just down the road outside Ashford, which was offering a new course in Agricultural Science, starting in 1964. There were three options, Plant Science, Animal Science and Soil Science. I plumped for the soils option simply because the



other two required A-Levels in either Biology or Zoology, neither of which I had, whilst the soils option would make do with Physics, Chemistry and Maths!! Three things made this a happy choice. Firstly, it was all much more to do with my eventual career as an apple farmer; secondly, Wye accepted me rapidly; and thirdly, Wye required that all prospective applicants did a year's practical farming prior to entry. Growing up on a farm didn't count and the practical had to be done away from home. The latter seemed as good a way as any in filling in my 'gap year and a half' before starting at Wye.

### **Accident two – Summer 1967**

Three years at Wye had passed and were splendid from all perspectives. The results had come through and I had passed with an Upper Second Honours Degree in Agricultural Science (Soils Option). My father had suggested that we drive down to our local pub, the Bull, and celebrate together, taking with us a bottle of champagne which he insisted we mix (about

50:50) with draught Guinness, resulting in several glasses of the famous, delicious and rather inebriating Black Velvet. This surely was the moment that he would offer me a partnership in the farm, but as we drunk on in an increasingly jolly and happy way, I realized that it was still not to be. We were just celebrating my degree together – and that in itself was lovely. Eventually the champagne was finished and the publican, Sidney Whitman, put a phone call through to my mother suggesting that she come and collect her boys and take them safely home! Happy times, but what on earth was I now to do? What should be my next bit of 'get-up-and-go' that would finally convince my parents I was ready? Throughout the summer holiday, I could think of no sensible option and then, once again, fate intervened with the arrival of a very formal letter in a brown envelope from the Ministry of Agriculture in which they offered me a scholarship to study for a PhD in Soil Physical Chemistry under Professor Peter Arnold at Newcastle University and would I like to accept this offer.

I was completely dumbfounded. I had never thought of anything along those lines and had certainly not applied for the scholarship that was being offered. *Someone had though.* Someone had put together my degree in Soil Science with my S-levels in Physics and Chemistry and had decided that a PhD in Soil Physical Chemistry was just what the doctor ordered for Young Cooper! To this day, I have no idea who had put my name forward. However, given the absence of any other sensible ideas, I accepted the offer, bid farewell to the Home Counties and drove north to Newcastle and my new digs with a couple of old age pensioner Geordies.

### Accident three – Spring 1968

Things were going swimmingly in Newcastle. I got on famously with Prof. Arnold, Newcastle is a great city with wonderful folk and the research was proceeding well. One fly in the ointment however – a delightful fly, but a fly nevertheless. In the summer of 1966, I had met Briony-Jane (B-J) Houstoun at a friend's party in Wales and as time had passed we had come to the conclusion that we would like to marry each other! However, we were both very young and whilst her mother, Pamela, reluctantly agreed to our engagement she, in hindsight quite sensibly, put her foot down on marriage until (i) we were both older and (ii) I had a "proper job." Being an impecunious student in Newcastle, I was told, certainly did not qualify as a proper job! Having to wait for three long years before any proper job became remotely possible, coupled with very infrequent times spent with B-J proved to be just too much. I decided to cut my three-year PhD to a one-year MSc and head back south to find some sort of "proper job" that would satisfy Pamela! Peter Arnold was sad – but understood and agreed to my plan.



1969: Taureg on the road to Sokoto, N. Nigeria.

Maybe the proper job might even be becoming an apple farmer? This did seem to be option number one, as on one warm summer's evening on one of my infrequent trips south, B-J was staying with us at Goddards Green and we were sitting in the garden after supper. My mother, by this time in an expansive mood, had waved her arms around in all directions, encompassing the house, garden and the farm beyond and had said "*Just think Briony dear, one day all this will be yours.*" A definite clue you might feel, and yet still no mention of a partnership turned up.

But a letter did. Another formal letter in a brown envelope, this time from the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM) which offered me a scholarship to study for a PhD in Soil Science at Reading University under Professor Walter Russell. The research was to be undertaken on organic sulphur fractions in Northern Nigerian soils and I was to join Dr. Andy Bromfield in a 'Sulphur Deficiency in Groundnuts' project at Samaru Research Station for two years to undertake the research with a third year at Reading to write up. I should arrange to fly to Kano, Northern Nigeria in March 1969. Would I like to accept this offer?

*I mean, what was going on here?* (i) I had just deliberately cast aside the opportunity to get a PhD in order to look for gainful employment and get married, (ii) I had certainly *not* applied for any scholarship to work overseas and (iii) in my wildest dreams I had never thought of working in Nigeria where the tragic Biafra civil war was still raging, albeit many miles from Samaru in the south eastern parts of the country.

*Who had suggested my name for this scholarship? Who was this person who appeared*



1971: Father, Mother and PC at Reading University.

*to be watching my every move with an apparent and presumably benevolent determination that I should not be allowed to escape academia?*

And yet, the idea had some merit. I had no other job offers at the time and tentative enquiries with ODM revealed that if I were married, the scholarship was doubly generous. In addition, because Northern Nigeria was considered a pretty tough environment in which to live health-wise and because of the ongoing civil war, a truly eye watering and tax free 'hardship allowance' would also be paid whilst we were overseas. When all of that was added up over a 3-year period, it came to a sum three to four times higher than any salary I could possibly expect to get in any first 'proper job' in UK. B-J and I chatted about it and decided to put the idea to Pamela. It was not, she said, a proper job, but did agree that it was a jolly well paid 'not proper job'. B-J and I were married in November 1968 and headed off to Nigeria in March 1969.

### Accident four (a) and four (b) – Winter 1971

The research in Nigeria had been completed and B-J and I, together with our new daughter Tabitha, had returned to UK, in a well-heeled sort of state! We had rented the lovely old six-bedroom Townsend Farm House in Streatley-on-Thames and bought an MGB-GT! The PhD had been safely written up at Reading and had been accepted. Finally, at the graduation ceremony in September 1971, I was officially awarded my Doctorate of Philosophy with proud parents and B-J in attendance.

Now surely was the time to settle down in UK with my family, hopefully as an apple farmer, but if not, then in some other sort of job. Surely someone would employ a young Dr. Cooper? Still no partnership offer from my father, so once again a job hunt was underway when another of those 'brown envelope' letters arrive at Townsend, again from ODM. This one provided details of five vacant positions in research projects overseas (in Lesotho, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Nigeria) and enquired which one of them I would like to apply for.

Easily dealt with. A polite letter back making it clear that, whilst I was very grateful for and had really appreciated the Nigerian scholarship, I really was *not* thinking of an overseas career and was in the process of finding a job in UK (a junior lectureship at Reading University was looking promising at the time). A couple of days had passed when I received a telephone call from ODM with a conversation that went along the following lines.

ODM: *Good morning Dr. Cooper. We have received your letter and were wondering whether you remember signing various forms when you accepted the scholarship?*



1973: Family of cheetahs in Masai Mara. Kenya

PC: Yes, indeed I do. I remembered signing all sorts of bits of paper, one of which was the Official Secrets Act which had rather amused me at the time.

ODM: Well, we are referring to the form that detailed the terms and conditions of the scholarship. Do you recall signing that?

PC: Um, no, not really. Why? Is it important?

ODM: Well, I have it here in front of me and we believe that it is important. In it you agreed that upon successful completion of your PhD, you would work for the ODM for a period of five years, providing of course that the Ministry was in a position to offer you suitable employment. If you failed to honour that agreement, you accepted that you would repay the Ministry the entire value of your scholarship. We feel Dr. Cooper, that the five positions that we currently have available constitute suitable employment.

Ye Gods! Had I really signed the form and agreed to that? It certainly rung no bells at all, but also equally certainly, it appeared, I had! Repayment of the total cost of three years was

completely impossible, most of it had already been spent and as yet I had no other source of income, only the small amount of savings that remained and the rent for Townsend Farm was steadily eating into those.

So once again my life was being diverted from what I wanted, this time not by some 'unknown person' but by my own stupidity!

Ah well, nothing for it but to read through all the project bumph and decide which one to go for. Eventually B-J and I decided that I should go for the Lesotho project since the country had a very pleasant climate, beautiful landscapes, snow-capped mountains, easy access to South Africa where all sorts of adventures were possible, and above all else, a King, a fact of which we both thoroughly approved. So, having boned up as best as I could about Lesotho and the project, off I set to ODM, housed in Stag Place in London, to be interviewed.

There were quite a lot of us there and one by one our names were called out and we were sent to the appropriate room where a panel awaited us. Quite early on, my name was called and I was asked which project I was to be interviewed for (surely they should have known?). Having said the Lesotho Project, I was told that the Lesotho Panel was third room on the left down the corridor – or some such.

The interview started well enough with some fairly general questions and answers, but got progressively more difficult as we started to discuss the project itself and what I thought I could contribute. To be honest, I found myself completely unprepared for questions that seemed to have little to do with what I had understood about the project, so an immense





*1976: East African Vintage Car Club champions in my 1928 Model A Ford.*

amount of waffle from Dr. Cooper ensued and I went home feeling rather depressed. About a week later I received one of those dreaded brown envelopes and was amazed, but also horrified to read that I was to be congratulated on winning the position in The Maize Project, based in Kitale, Western Kenya.

*What on earth was going on?* I had looked at that project and discovered that Kitale was a stone's throw away from the Ugandan boarder where Idi Amin was already starting to behave very badly and B-J and I decided that we had had enough of that sort of rumpus in Nigeria. Surely I had received the wrong letter, so a quick phone call was made to ODM to sort things out. I made it clear that I had been interviewed for the Lesotho job, and that was the job I wanted. On the contrary, I was told, I had been interviewed by the Kenyan Maize Project Panel and they had been impressed with my performance. Was I going to accept the position or not?

To this day, I can make no sense of what had happened. Had I been directed to the wrong

room? Had I miscounted the number of doors on the left? How was it that the interview panel did not realize straight away from all the bumpf they had in front of them that I had *not* put my name down for their Kenyan project and that I was in the wrong room? And how on earth had my practically incomprehensible waffle made them feel that I was just the man for the job? Whatever the answers might be, one thing was clear. In the words of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "*Someone had blundered.*"

None of it made any sense at all, but since the alternative involved repaying large sums of money that I didn't have, off we set in 1972 to the Highlands of Kenya with Tabitha and our new son, Daniel, for what turned out to be six delightful years with almost no bother from Idi Amin at all.

#### **Accident Five – Spring 1979**

Our six years in Kitale were over and we had returned to UK as a family of five, with a second daughter, Orlanda, in tow. I had been asked to write up the whole project under the wing of



*1986: Temple of Bel, Palmyra, Syria, long before ISIS destroyed it.*





*2006: Masai woman as the Kikuyu Escarpment, Kenya.*

John Monteith who was Professor of Environmental Physics at Nottingham University's School of Agriculture at Sutton

Bonington. We had bought a house in East Leake nearby and discussions were well underway with John about the possibility of my joining his group on a permanent basis when the writing-up was completed. The United Kingdom had joined the European Economic Community (as it then was) in 1973 with negative impacts on British fruit growers. 'Apple Mountains' were developing in Europe and fruit growers were struggling. My father was already thinking about selling Goddards Green and any hopes of my childhood dreams had finally faded away.

And then another envelope arrived. Not a dreaded brown envelope this time, but an airmail letter with a Beirut postmark. Dr. Harry Darling, the first Director General of the newly created International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) had been given my name (hmmm!) as someone who might like



*2001. Autumn near our house in Almonte, Canada*

to accept a three-week consultancy to develop a funding proposal to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for a programme on Soil Water and Nutrients research in West Asia and North Africa. If I was interested, ICARDA would provide me and B-J with Business Class tickets to Beirut where I would meet him and be briefed and then on up to Aleppo in Syria, where the work would be based, to do the necessary consultations and writing. It was a wonderful offer which came with a pretty eye-popping daily rate of pay, so off we set and had a fascinating three weeks in Beirut and Aleppo.

Back to Sutton Bonington where both the writing-up and discussions about future employment proceeded apace. About two months later I received a phone call from Harry Darling who was in London visiting ODM and who wondered if I would like to pop down to have lunch with him so that he could share news on the progress of the proposal I had written. I was sitting in the waiting room at Stag Place when Harry burst in, beaming from ear to ear, as he usually did.

*"On your feet Young Cooper, and for your information, it is current practice to stand to attention and salute Director Generals you know."*

I leaped to my feet, stood to attention, saluted and off we went for lunch in the ODM canteen. It turned out that UNDP had agreed to fund the proposed programme for a five-year period with a staggering budget, which in today's terms amounted to 9 million US dollars! With that good news came an invitation from Harry to join ICARDA, based in Aleppo, and lead the

programme I had detailed in the proposal.

Once again, my plans had been hijacked, but this time with a fantastic research opportunity which, given the accompanying 'employment and benefit' details was almost impossible to refuse. Later in 1979, after discussions with B-J and John Monteith, I accepted the offer and the Cooper family headed off to Aleppo.

### **In control at last – 1990 to 2017**

Ten years in Aleppo had come to an end and from there onwards what remained of 'my career' was thankfully more planned! In 1990, we moved from Aleppo back to Kenya, this time in Nairobi, where I had been appointed as Director of Research at the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) and then in 2000 from Kenya to Ottawa, Canada where I became the Director of Environment and Natural Resource Management at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). In 2004 we returned once again to Nairobi where I had been asked to head up the Climate Change research of the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). In 2010 I finally retired and returned to our house in Dorset, but still do the odd bit of consultancy work as a Senior Research Fellow with the Climate Change, Agricultural and Food Security programme (CCAFS) of the CGIAR.

As I sit here finishing up the typing, I do wonder how very different things might have been if, 56 years ago in 1961, an aged and absent-minded Professor at Christchurch College, Oxford had safely filed away his notes about his interview and his offer to Young Cooper!

In retrospect, I'm rather glad that he didn't.

## Tales from Africa 'old hands'

**Rob Savory (1957–61), relays some amusing accounts of life in Africa gleaned from old friends who had worked on that continent with him.**

In September 2017, I visited the UK for the first time in 35 years and met up with some old friends who had worked in Africa and who had kept in touch with me. These included Wye graduates **Mike Pash** (1957–61), **Glenn Allison** (1962) and **Peter Gerrard** (1960–63). Other 'old hands' who attended were David Wendover (Reading) and Peter Whitworth (Harper Adams). **David Norman** (1959–62) and **Peter Aagaard** (1965–68) were invited but unfortunately couldn't make it.

Our 250 years of combined service in Africa included Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Cameroons and Nigeria. Consequently, our reminiscences were spattered with Kiswahili, Chichewa and Hausa household words that would have been included in every-day English conversations back in Africa. (Why say *fire wood* when you can say *kuni*?)

Each participant was asked to prepare a *Best Story from Africa* to be formally presented at the reunion dinner. Here they are:

### **A case of mistaken identity – Malawi**

*Mike Pash*

I was employed as a Conservation Planning Officer on a three-year contract with the Ministry of Agriculture based in Blantyre in the Southern Region of Malawi.

In the early part of 1969, in Blantyre Township, rumours were rife that local people were being killed in the middle of the night by Werewolves who entered through the roof of their houses and killed people with an axe. The rumour was spread that it was necessary to collect 80 barrels

of blood to send to South Africa in lieu of a loan repayment. The loan had been obtained by Dr Kamuzu Banda from South Africa for major infrastructure works.

As time went by and several people had been killed, townspeople became so scared that they were sleeping outside their houses.

From Blantyre the rumours spread to outlying Districts, even as far as Namwera some 145 miles north. I was on safari in the Namwera area. One evening, whilst travelling in my Land Rover accompanied by a Greek tobacco farmer, I got a puncture. After changing the wheel, I was lying on the ground alongside the Land Rover removing the jack when I noticed many pairs of legs around the vehicle. I stood up only to find that we were surrounded by angry local Africans, all carrying pangas. They were sure that we had arrived to kill them and collect more blood for Dr Banda.

Fortunately, my Greek farmer friend was able to speak enough Chichewa to explain and convince them that all was well.

Later, the culprits in Blantyre (who were being paid by a political enemy of Dr Banda) were caught by the Police. It turned out that the two murderers worked in a town bakery. After their bread-making duties finished at 3am they proceeded to kill someone. It was noticed that the murdered bodies had traces of flour on them. This was traced back to the two bakery workers who were finally arrested and brought to justice.



*Africa Old Hands reunion dinner. Left to right: Glenn Allison, Peter Gerrard, David Wendover, Peter Whitworth, Rob Savory and Mike Pash.*

### **A flash flood at Mahalapye – Botswana**

*David Norman (in absentia)*

The story that I have decided to give is about an experience roughly five years into my stint in Botswana. We were doing farming systems related work in a number of villages where trials were undertaken, usually implemented and managed by farmers. To encourage farmer-to-farmer interaction, we held farmer field days where we would transport farmers from another village, thereby giving them an opportunity to interact with each other.

On this particular occasion, we transported about 70 farmers and their wives, by government lorry, from Shoshong to Makwate – the host village, which was about 60 kilometres along a dirt track. We also invited the Botswana USAID (US Agency for International Development) Director and officer responsible for agriculture to attend – since they were responsible for funding the project. In addition, some senior government officials also attended.

As you know, Botswana is an arid country but

on this day it was raining. The route to the village, through deserted bush land, had one small causeway across a dry river bed that I had never seen covered with water. Therefore, I was not concerned about the rain, although I was a little discomforted when the Village Head, in a prayer at the beginning of the field day, alluded to Noah and the flood.

Anyway, the farm visits, plus a communal meal, proceeded satisfactorily and, in late afternoon, the procession of vehicles started back along the dirt track only to arrive close to dusk at the causeway where, to our consternation, there was a raging flash flood.

It was interesting to observe a number of incidents that developed: several pundits kept measuring the level of the flood with sticks resulting in contradictory conclusions as to whether it was rising or falling. One local took most of his clothes off – with the intent of trying to swim across the river -- wrapped his clothes in a stone, and then tried to throw the bundle across the river, only to see it fall short and disappear downstream.

The farmers started complaining as to why we were stranded; the USAID agricultural officer told me I should arrange for a helicopter to 'evacuate' the USAID staff. Much to my surprise, the USAID director was quite composed, except that he was complaining about running out of cigarettes!

Therefore, since this event predated the mobile telephone era, and concluding that I should exert my leadership qualities (!?), a couple of other staff and I returned to Makwate, found a telephone at the local police station and informed individuals in Gaborone that we would not be returning that night. USAID said there was no way they would arrange for a helicopter to be sent, but the major object of our trip, the purchase of cigarettes, was accomplished! On returning to the 'river', with rain continuing, and the Director smoking contentedly, we all settled down in our vehicles to a sleepless and foodless night.

It was sunny the following morning and, given some evidence that the flood was receding a little, a French technical expert suggested trying to cross with one of the lorries. He stood on the running board outside the driver's door and with his guidance the lorry started drifting off the causeway – in my mind the French national anthem was playing loud and clear! Fortunately, disaster was averted by it being towed out backwards by another lorry.

At that point, I reluctantly decided my leadership qualities needed to be demonstrated once again! Mindful of the clothes incident the previous evening, I decided not to disrobe and hence swam, fully clothed, across the 'river' connected to a rope. Apparently this did not meet with the approval of the farmers, some of whom commented: "Why are they letting that 'old' man swim across the river?"

Anyway, I did cross and proceeded to the local village (Mahalapye), telephoned USAID, which arranged for a vehicle to be sent with clean dry clothes for the Director and staff, and I also indicated that we should all be home that day. The 'river' continued receding and, later that day, evacuation was completed with the farmers somewhat disgruntled that we had put them in such a predicament – it seemed they expected something analogous to Moses and the Red Sea!

Looking back, I do not recall any courses at Wye College that prepared one for such real-life experiences in Africa!

### **Safari to Malawi**

*Peter Gerrard*

In 1968, I was working for the Kenya Government in the Ministry of Lands & Settlement on a local contract without many prospects. I applied and was accepted for a job in Malawi with the Ministry of Agriculture as Principal Settlement Officer tasked with establishing new agricultural settlement schemes.

Alice and I had just got married and we decided to drive down to Malawi with all our possessions in my new Volvo123GT. Off we set – Namanga, Arusha, Babati Dodoma and on to Iringa. The road between Dodoma and Iringa deteriorated into a grass track; we reckoned as long as we aimed for the hills in the distance that we should be OK.

Eventually, we arrived at Mbeya and stayed in a quaint hotel up on the hill. Dinner was a bit odd, a curry ... but we were sure it was cat – very fine bones and definitely not chicken. On to Chitipa at the Malawi border. Immigration was no problem but the Malawi Young Pioneers were very bored (probably only one vehicle a day) and they took their time to examine everything.

On the roof-rack there was a pair of water skis. "What are those?" they must have thought they were some new weapon of mass destruction. The Young Pioneers were getting more and more excited over this discovery and demanded an explanation. So I said "Oh, they are special shoes so I can walk on water. Like Jesus." The Young Pioneers immediately let us pass, in fear and trepidation. We continued on our way to Zomba and six happy years in Malawi.

### **The All Africa Pilot Training plane – Tanzania**

*Rob Savory*

In 2008, I took my wife to Tanzania, a country that I first visited as a boy in 1948 – back then of course it was called Tanganyika. Our holiday included a trip to the Ruaha Game Reserve and we booked to fly there from Dar es Salaam. Our plane was a 4-seater Cessna, piloted by a dour Swede with an equally dour Swiss co-pilot. It so happened that the President of Mozambique was due to arrive that day on a state visit so we were hurried through the airport departure formalities by the Tanzanian officials. We climbed into the two back seats of the Cessna. Unfortunately, the pilot couldn't find the key to start the plane. He looked everywhere, but

without success. Meanwhile the tower was telling him to take off *mara moja* because the President of Mozambique's plane was fast approaching. The pilot frantically rang his office in the airport building and asked them to look for the key to the Cessna. Me, I was enjoying being back in Africa again!

Meanwhile, parked up next to us on the tarmac, was a small 2-seater plane with signage announcing **All Africa Pilot Training**. While we were waiting for our key to be located, two people came out of the airport building and got into this plane. It was the instructor and his pupil. Nothing much happened while they were doing the pre-take off checks. But then they tried to start the plane's engine. Unfortunately, the battery was almost flat and the prop just turned over a few times, very slowly. It was at this point that I said, in a dead-pan voice "Why don't we all get out and give it a push-start?" I had expected a witty repost but no, my suggestion was met with a stony silence. And I could see one of the pilots shaking his head slowly in disbelief. And I'll bet that the story about a silly old bastard who thinks that you can push-start an aeroplane is still going the rounds in aviation circles in East Africa.

Mike Pash and David Wendover are still contributing to agricultural education in Africa via the Bicon Overseas Agricultural Trust (BOAT)–*Kazi nzuri sana!* - that was founded in 1991. The charity delivers training to trainers in the Developing World to help improve agriculture and people's livelihoods. Six-week courses are based at Bicon College, East Devon. BOAT has now trained over 130 people mainly from East and West Africa. More recently BOAT has identified a niche for training managers from Agricultural Colleges and Community Development Projects to manage their businesses more effectively and efficiently. The six-weeks intensive residential course on Institutional Management and Business Planning (International) is accredited by Plymouth University. So far 49 students have completed the course and the feedback has been most positive.

For more information (or to make a donation!) contact them on [www.boatagtrust.co.uk](http://www.boatagtrust.co.uk)



# From Wye to a multi-faceted artist

**Tom Hickman (1972–75) discusses a few of his artistic achievements that have led the way from Wye via Australia and France to the Outer Hebrides.**

Each year, when I retrieve the Wye journal from my letter box, I am reminded that I should write to correct my entry in the overseas members listing. There, under France, you will find me with a correct address but my start and graduation dates are incorrect perhaps owing to me re-joining and becoming a life member in 1993. I attended Wye from 1972, graduating in 1975, and believe me I do feel those extra 20 years! (*Tom is listed as (1993–96 – Ed. )*)

## **Split between Brittany and Isle of Lewis**

Although I still live part of the year in Brittany, much of my time is spent in the Outer Hebrides on the Isle of Lewis, having bought, in 2005, the last croft house on the road north east out of Stornoway. Last summer I completed and opened my Studio 17 in the coastal village of New Tolsta. My work as an artist is a continuous process of evolution adding further strings to my bow and feathers in my cap. Having spent my formative years as a child on the Mull of Kintyre, I never broke that Caledonian umbilical cord; so returning to Scotland saw my subject matter in oil paints concentrate on the raw beauty of the coastal wilderness.

I had, for several years, been working in feathers that culminated in a successful exhibition in Western Australia where for almost a decade I had also been collecting shell. My shell work is complex and very time-consuming and, although not seen on public display, has found homes in private collections.

Spend time in the Outer Hebrides and you can't fail to be influenced by wool so, from painting the sheep on the neighbouring crofts, I turned

to working with the discarded wool bobbins from local Harris Tweed weavers. The resulting stump work embroidery went on display at the Victoria Gallery in Bath in the spring of 2017 and proved to be a real crowd pleaser with around 25,000 people through the doors.

For those who read such things and wish to see more of my work I write a blog called "Hebridean dreaming" (<http://tomhickmanart.blogspot.co.uk>). The posts recount life as an artist living in a remote, beautiful and, at times, harsh place, with notes and news on my work and gardening discoveries like the 6,000 year-old Neolithic axe head dug up right outside the back door. Gardening on Lewis is quite a challenge but none the less rewarding.

## **Wye was largely a waste of time**

My years at Wye were for the most part a waste of time; however, my enthusiasm and creative passion always rose to the surface during Tom Wright's lectures, and on leaving Wye I would have made my life in landscape gardening and design had I found the entrance. I was surprised to read that Dr Wright only became a member of staff in 1978, after I had left, as his lectures succeeded in illustrating the powerful and often destructive hand in which agriculture has to transform our visual world. His attention to detail was well illustrated during our Pimms-soaked field trip to Christopher Lloyd's garden at Great Dixter, when he made sure the bus pulled over opposite an extraordinary bungalow garden where the proud owner displayed a truly magnificent collection of garden gnomes.

The portrait of the 4th Baron Northbourne



*Tom at work in his studio*



*An example of Tom's stump work embroidery..*

reminded me of a memorable meeting I had with him at Betteshanger when organising an exhibition of artwork for the then new student's

union building. I always regretted not having the £60 that could have bought one of his fine watercolours of Japanese anemones.

# Wye College – the foundation for success

**Peter Ranson (1962–66) recounts the often dangerous episodes in his life after leaving Wye, and considers that he survived due to the training he received at college.**

Membership of Wye College proved to be a pivotal event in my life, providing both academic and social education that furnished a rewarding career. Having survived life in ‘B Block’, including being placed on a non-stop train to London in the rush hour, with **Peter Brown** (1962–67), dressed only in our pyjamas, to recover the college’s tortoise from Roehampton College where our lady friends had taken the treasured mascot, I felt life’s difficulties were just additional hiccups.

Following graduating, I joined NAAS for a short-term assignment sampling soil from land at risk from floods. Peter Brown (yet to graduate from Wye but not for the lack of trying) accompanied me in this activity. Peter and I were to meet continuously over the next 50 years. I had applied to join the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Stock to obtain first-hand experience of tropical and subtropical horticulture and was awaiting confirmation of appointment.

## **Delay turned out to be lucky**

The delay in my appointment was fortuitous as I met my future wife, Marion, who had just returned from nursing in New Zealand. Marion was a sister midwife attached to the Westminster Hospital in London; her district and clients included the Royal Household, parliamentarians and the ladies from Soho and was often seen in her nurse’s uniform, riding her bicycle in Horse Guards Parade following HM’s troops on her way to visit mothers-to-be. Marion was from Kent and part of her training had been undertaken at

Folkestone Hospital, where senior nurses advised: “don’t attend those Wye College dances as the Wye male students are dangerous!” We were happily married for 46 years until her death four years ago.

I sailed to Australia in 1967 on the last ship to pass through the Suez Canal prior to the Six Day War. Fighting had already started in Aden. My life has had a number of close call events, but then who would wish for a dull, mundane existence?

## **Bridging the gap between scientists and growers**

I joined the Redlands Horticultural Research Station in Queensland and investigated a number of problems with different crops. It was here that I realised the State’s farmers of that time had difficulty in understanding the scientific findings and the scientists had difficulty in conveying their messages in simple, understandable language. I became the liaison officer between the research scientist and the farmers, visiting farms and explaining in appropriate terms new cultural issues. Field days were organised and numerous articles explaining research findings prepared. I had been in Queensland a year when Marion sailed out and some months later we were married.

We moved to Tasmania to assist in the interpretation of research to the farmers. Politics was a major stumbling block and European technology had yet to catch up with the States’ horticulture. One interesting observation I made was that Captain Cook took less time to sail to



Australia than it was taking for some apple shipments to get to the UK. These findings were not appreciated! Skin diving was good in Tasmania, somewhat cold, but many good meals of abalone and crayfish were caught.

### **Spices and earthquakes**

I returned to tropical horticulture by joining the Department of Agriculture in Papua New Guinea, stationed at Kerevat outside Rabaul, East New Britain. I was to investigate spice crop production; unfortunately, after only a couple of months, our house, already missing a third of its roof, was shaken off its foundations in a series of massive earthquakes. The house, riddled with white ant damage, was unfit for habitation and we were moved to Popondetta, located close to the active volcano Mt. Lamington. I established a nursery to produce clonal cacao and continued my interest in spices, especially cardamoms, pepper and nutmeg. These were crops that imposed minimum environmental damage, had significant value and, in areas with no road access, their

value supported air freight while still providing an income.

Promotion of cardamoms in the highlands required walking through the forest-covered hills on compass bearings. Flying in light planes to airstrips cut in the side of mountains was stimulating, with landings and take-offs unlike any commercial experience. Typically, I would be on my own and lived in village-constructed, bush material huts. These were fine but cooking took place inside on open wood fires and since the huts did not have a chimney, the smoke helped to keep the mosquitoes down while permeating one's skin so that, on my return to my home, clothes and body smelt like tarred rope, regardless of how much washing took place.

### **To Nigeria via the UK**

Once independence was advanced by the Australian government, life became unstable for the growing family so we returned to the UK. I was invited to join Agricultural Planning Associates for some consultancy work in Northern Nigeria. Fascinating and challenging, the environment was very different to the wet tropics of PNG. To undertake our surveys we needed to travel long distances, but petrol was in very short supply. A notable event was when I had to commandeer a petrol pump by standing on top of it and reading my authority from the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture instructing that all should help us in the survey we were undertaking. Given there was a queue for a week to get to this pump, this was somewhat risky. Looking back I concluded that by filling our Land Rovers and a 44 gallon drum this way, I was possibly lucky to be alive. Wye College had fostered a bold approach to problems.



*Peter Brown, Ranson's pal from College days, who also lives in Australia, sails and also lives dangerously!*

### Mixed up in a coup

One day I was in Lagos and was walking into the Department of Agriculture, just as the President was being machine-gunned in the building next door. Not good; a *coup d'état* was taking place but worse was to follow for me. The only transport to my home in Kano was a train. I noted the wrecked carriages from previous insurrections had bullet holes in the upper bunk region. I selected a lower bunk but all was still not good as I was taken off the train in Ibadan accused of being associated with the President's death. Following a day's, questioning I was driven out into the country to an isolated police station. Sandwiched between two armed police their automatic guns attached to their arms by string, I felt events were not progressing well. Shut in a cell smeared with brown and red stains, I decided to consume some letters I had written in Lagos but not posted, as they contained my views on the coup that were not complimentary.

Following a poor breakfast, I was stimulated to take a bolder approach. Telephones did not work but I had seen a radio so I instructed those detaining me to radio the chief of police in

Kaduna State (I had played squash with him and hoped he would vouch for me). The next day I was released as I was told I had been 'probed' and all was now satisfactory. As luck would have it, **David Allen** ((1963–67) was at the University of Ibadan and I asked to be taken there. From the university, after a student demonstration tried to wreck the halls of residence, I returned to Kano to the amusement of my fellow consultants. My family had joined me in Kano but unfortunately, after the *coup d'état*, concerns for their safety determined they should return to the UK.

### Back to Australia

For the family's long-term future and stability we returned to Australia where I continued to source rural products needed for Nigeria's development; these included water drilling rigs and refrigerated cold storage. Australian products were ideal but once again tragedy struck; after organising the supply of cold stores the government of Nigeria revoked its letters of credit as they lost market share in the crude oil sales and basically had no funds for rural development.

But fortune had not abandoned me; I was requested to lecture in Horticulture at Gatton Agricultural College, west of Brisbane, now part of Queensland University. After six years lecturing in production, marketing, post-harvest physiology and management, I thanked Wye for teaching me so much!!! Students taught me as much as I taught them; we had an enjoyable relationship. A highlight was taking the fourth and final year students on a 21-day train tour of North Queensland in old wooden rolling stock carriages complete with open verandas and wrought iron railings at the end of each carriage. These were linked to freight trains and we were shunted into sidings while we inspected different farms and



production centres from Brisbane to Cairns. The mature-aged students demonstrated their acquired skills by climbing out of the train windows, sitting on the roof then climbing back in the window on the opposite side while travelling through the sugar cane farms. This was a rite of passage and demonstrated an invaluable finish to formal lectures.

However, lecturing was not a well-paid profession and as I now had three children, the need for an increased income was essential. So I joined the Northern Territory Development Corporation (NTDC) to assist with the allocation of funds for the tuberculosis and brucellosis eradication campaign (BTEC) designed to free the Territory and country of these diseases. Investigation of the past activities of the NTDC revealed numerous anomalies to the point that the whole organisation was run through the shredder and a new export-oriented organisation, Nortrade, was formed.

### **Close encounter with a python**

I soon learned one has to be flexible in the Northern Territory. I was even called to 'demonstrate' large pythons for the Wild Life Department, at the Pacific Rim Exhibition held in Perth while the America Cup Races were taking place. I pretended to be a tree so they could coil over me using their tongues to sense where they were. The pythons were calm to the point of inserting their tongues in my ears and nose, but with no malicious intent, just curious!

I thought a period of stability had arrived and the family moved to Darwin. Here we could wind surf even if it involved running into massive turtles and sailing over the top of sea snakes. Fortunately, we did not encounter crocodiles while wind surfing. Crocodiles were plentiful and I worked

with the industry and even promoted a crocodile eating event to stimulate the trade. Climbing into pens with fully grown salt water crocodiles was undertaken with considerable trepidation. Politics again raised their head and Nortrade was incorporated within another government department so it was time to return to Brisbane.

### **An insight into indigenous life in Queensland**

I felt obligated to pass on my accumulated rural and commercial knowledge so I joined the Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs. Commercial agricultural and economic advice turned out not to be of high priority. Employment with this department provided a valuable insight into the operations of government and ministers and the objectives of indigenous communities. I visited both mainland and island communities, gaining an insight into indigenous life in Queensland.

Fate smiled once again as I was asked to join the Queensland Chamber of Commerce and Industry with the objective of examining constraints on industry imposed by government legislation, and promoting exports. The position provided an opportunity to use my accumulated knowledge of the state's industrial and rural strengths and was a logical progression. For ten years I represented industry on numerous State and Federal inquiries and committees including State purchasing, Defence, Transport and Health. I took special note of the advice proffered in the TV programme *Yes Minister* and at times played the perfect Mr Humphries, even proposing the establishment of a committee to investigate specific problems in which we had no interest. In later years I concentrated on international trade, meeting and offering advice to all incoming trade delegations to Queensland.



Life has been rewarding; I have two sons, a daughter and five grandchildren. I have achieved the objective of moving to Australia as my children have happy stable lives for themselves and their families. We all have much to thank Wye for, where education was more than looking

at a computer screen and replying to multiple choice questions; it fostered a close interaction with our lecturers and fellow students, equipping us to play a useful role in society with the ability to adapt to challenges as they were encountered. Shame on Imperial!!!

### Comments from the Editor:

It was a visit I made to **Phil Charlton's** (1962–65) fruit growing and packing operation near Maidstone (more of that in the future) that started this. Phil had recently contacted some old mates through the Journal — the two Peters in the article — and that resulted in more news and material.

This is what Phil wrote to me: "When I first went to Wye my first year was spent at Withersdane. My immediate neighbour was **Peter Ranson**. He disappeared for a year because of glandular fever and then returned to continue his course. He was a Hortic and I was an Agric. We lost touch after Wye and it was only last year that I contacted Peter R through the Journal and hence the emails. **Peter Brown** (1962–66) was in my year and at the end of our first year we spent our summer vacation in the US working our way around the States. **Dick Foss** (1962–65) was also with us (he and Pete were at Marlborough together). Our fourth member was a Tim Smith who had failed his exams and never returned to Wye (he left us half way through our trip!!)" Both Petes finished at Wye in the same year (Pete Brown having failed his finals first time but he got them the second time).

Through my contact with Pete Ranson I then managed to contact Pete Brown, and as you can see they are both close friends in Australia. According to Dick Foss, Peter Brown's sailing trip around the world was somewhat due to the memory of his brother who was lost at sea attempting the same many, many years ago — off the coast of France or Spain, so I believe.

Then Peter R sent me some more comments:

"I recently spoke to Peter Brown who was on a week's sailing trip in his new yacht. Unfortunately the engine would not start but all was not lost. Since Peter has just had heart surgery with a pacemaker, a defibrillator and ventricular controller added to his chest, plus a couple of stents, physical effort had to come from his wife Joanna. While I was talking on the mobile phone, Joanna was swimming and dragging the yacht behind her — environmentally friendly to the last. That is so typical of Peter B — a solution to problems always found!!!

That goes along with another experience Peter B had whilst sailing. He came across a whale snagged in a discarded fisherman's net. Quick as a flash, he dived overboard, cut the ropes with a carving knife and released the unfortunate mammal. That story hit Australian TV."

## Where an MSc from Wye can lead

**Harry Gill (1968–72)** charts his career that led him from work as a volunteer in Latin America to a lectureship in California where he rubbed shoulders with Hollywood A-listers.

After receiving my M.Sc. in Economics of Developing Countries in 1972 from Wye College, I decided to work abroad as a British Volunteer. My first choice was Kenya, because I was born there and spoke Swahili, so I wanted to give something back to my first motherland. The second choice was Tanzania, again because I had been there and spoke Swahili. The third choice was India, where I had also been; moreover, I spoke two of its languages, Punjabi and Hindi.

In the end, however, the Catholic Institute for International Relations – what better organization for a Sikh to work in! – decided I would be of better use in the Caribbean, and South and Central America. So I had to learn Spanish.

My first assignment was to write a \$10 million loan proposal to the World Bank on behalf of the Dominican Development Foundation, which gave micro loans to subsistence farmers. I was told by the World Bank officials, that at that time (1974) I was the youngest person to have successfully submitted a loan proposal to the World Bank. All credit goes to Wye College!

Then, still working as a Volunteer, I was asked to write a loan proposal on behalf of the Inter-American Development Bank for the development foundations of nearly every Latin American country except Cuba and Chile; this was because Fidel Castro and Augusto Pinochet, respectively, were in power in those two countries.

From my experience with officials, I knew that they often made fertilizer recommendations that left poor farmers worst off than before. So I wrote a book titled *Improving Crop Yields in Developing Countries*. This book shows how to set up fertilizer field trials, how to do statistical analysis, and how to use the results to make the best fertilizer



*Harry Gill with his daughter, Simi*

recommendations to subsistence farmers. This book was dedicated to some of the staff of Wye College. (It can be downloaded free of charge from my website: [BKMultimedias.Com](http://BKMultimedias.Com)).

After nearly four and a half years as a volunteer in the tropics, I thought that the UK might be a little cold for my bones, so I settled in Santa Monica, California, where I continue to teach economics at Santa Monica College. In 1984, I had the good fortune to live in Bel Air, Los Angeles, next to the Hollywood producer Hal Roach, the man who produced all the Laurel and Hardy and "Little Rascals" movies. We became excellent friends and he asked me to write his biography. The book, titled *Hollywood Pioneer: The Life and Times of Hal Roach*, is now available online (at amazon.com and other sites). All the profits from sales are donated to LEPRO (The British Leprosy Association). The book can be ordered from Lepro, 28 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TG, (Email: [lepra@lepra.org.uk](mailto:lepra@lepra.org.uk)).

It was an honour and a privilege to have studied at Wye College. I still keep in touch with several faculty and former classmates there, and will always be grateful for all they did for me.

## News of 'new' member

**Paul Latham (1962–66) gives a brief account of his life since leaving Wye and explains how he came to write a book about useful plants in the Congo..**

*Editor's comment: Paul may be 58 years late joining the Agricola Club, but he is very welcome!*

Further to **Gordon Rae's** (1956–59) comments on the 3/6d lunch I discovered I owed him, we arranged to meet up at the Farmer's Club earlier this year. Not being a member, I was not permitted to pay so Gordon will now have to add that to the bill! Nevertheless, we had such an enjoyable time together, that I decided, rather belatedly, (58 years to be precise) to become a member of the Agricola Club. I remember that at the time I left Wye, we were given the option of either using the £5 caution money to pay for membership of the Agricola Club or we could take the cash. Being rather low in funds I opted for the money.

I very much enjoyed my time at Wye and was influenced to work with farmers in Africa when **Stephen Carr** (1948–51) came to speak to the Christian Union about his work in the Sudan. That resulted in 16 years in Kenya, first running a farmers' training centre at Thika and then working with school children in both Kenya and Uganda. The latter involved assisting the young people to grow vegetables and keep small livestock to earn money to pay for their school fees. The aim was also to help them see that farming could be profitable.

Our two daughters were born during our time in Kenya. My wife, Ena, and I left Kenya in 1978 and after a spell at the Salvation Army headquarters in London, moved to Zaire, (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) in 1984 to run a beekeeping programme in Bas-Congo province. I found the people and the country fascinating. The knowledge of the names and uses of plants that villagers had was incredible and I decided, on

retirement, to record as much as I could, so that the knowledge would not be gradually lost. Deforestation around Kinshasa was so bad that I could see many species would simply disappear.

With the help of a retired Belgian botanist, who had worked in the province, the identities of most plants have been established. Edinburgh Botanic Garden library has a wealth of information on the plants and I was also very fortunate to find a Congolese biologist, who not only takes excellent photos, but also has been able to check much the information on plant use that I collected from literature and in the field. The study has now been published (see photos opposite). It includes not only the direct use of the plants but also important species visited by honeybees for pollen and nectar and the plants on which edible caterpillars feed, as these and other insects are an important part of the diet in the lower Congo.

Ena and I now live in a small village in Perthshire, near where her family live. Most of the fields are contained by dry stone walls and, after a neighbouring farmer taught me how to repair them, I started on the walls surrounding our own field and then was asked to help repair walls (or dykes as they are called here) by local farmers. The money earned has been used to pay for publishing my books.



Cover of the French edition of Paul Latham's latest book: the title translates to Useful plants from Bas-Congo. (The province has since had a name change to Congo Central.) The book has 405 pages while the new English edition has 625 pages. Copies of both can be downloaded at [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu)



*A passion fruit plant with agricultural instructor Peter Gathii and Paul Latham at the Salvation Army farmers' training centre, near Thika in Kenya in the 1970s*



*This is a page from the English edition of the book. The illustrations show the African Pea or Dacryodes edulis tree, the fruit of which is popular throughout the province, and indeed much of West Africa.*

# Wye – the crucible for today's environmentalists

**Chris Baines (1966–69) recalls how experiences from his undergraduate years spent at Wye”, helped shape him into one of the country’s leading environmental movers and shakers**

I arrived in Wye in the autumn of 1966 and remember being astonished by a landscape that actually smelled of apples. I had grown up on the edge of Sheffield, the son of a village schoolmaster in a family of ramblers with a love of wild countryside and a passion for gardening. Holidays were spent in Snowdonia and weekends in the Peak District, so a sleepy village in the soft south was something of a culture shock.

## The “killing fields” of Wye

I always say that I spent my three undergraduate years learning how to kill things. The post-war agrochemical revolution was at its most gung-ho, and nature in agriculture and horticulture was seen as a pest, a disease or a weed. At my first chemistry lecture, Professor Wain proudly introduced himself as one of the team that invented DDT. That baptism of fire-power, combined with a childhood where almost all my familiar green spaces were built on in the post-war housing boom, shaped my next 50 years. Working *with* nature in familiar landscapes has been an abiding theme.

In my first year there were no lectures in the afternoon and we were free to roam (or possibly even study!). Whilst the Hooray-Henrys raced off to Folkestone or Canterbury in their sports cars, I was car-free (and carefree) and used my time to explore Wye’s local countryside. I sketched and painted, and generally learned to love a landscape which contrasted completely with the mountains and moorlands of my youth. Fifty years ago, Wye’s farmland was still rich in wildlife. There were nightingales in local woodlands, yellowhammers in the hedgerows,

pastures thick with cowslips and orchids, and an abundance of butterflies. In 2015, I walked that landscape with an old Wye friend once more. The contrast was depressing. In a 30-ha field of flowering red clover, I saw two bumblebees and in a five hour walk, just two red admirals.

## The student revolution of the late '60s

Along with the agrochemical revolution, the late 1960s was also a time of student revolution. Jack Straw was president of the National Union of Students and I also played a small part. Whilst Paris streets were being ripped up and hurled at the establishment, and thousands were marching on Whitehall, in Wye we pushed the boat out with risqué barn dances at second-tier education colleges. We did tackle more serious issues too. We campaigned to end the exorbitant practices of waiter service at every meal, and daily room cleaning, and as writers of the second year review, one or two of us came close to court action when we showed that student accommodation fees were being used to heat lecture theatres. I was the President of the East Kent Students’ Association, which linked me into politics way beyond Wye, and that also shaped my next 50 years. The newly established University of Kent in Canterbury was a part of my presidential empire. It was a hot-bed of Trotskyite revolution – at least in contrast to reactionary Wye – and I thoroughly enjoyed the difference.

The woods below the Crown have nightingales and yellow hammers; there are wild orchids a plenty and no shortage of cowslips. Maybe there has been a revival?—Ed



### **Folk concerts at Withersdane**

As a relatively isolated institution, we made our own entertainment, and for three years I ran the college folk club. Sheffield was at the heart of the 1960s folk revival and in my work experience year on Sheffield Parks I had become a reasonably accomplished folk singer. At Wye we had a resident team of competent musicians. I played guitar and sang and we also had two talented fiddle players, a gifted singer-song writer and – stroke of genius, this – the two teenage daughters of the Professor of Agriculture. Once or twice each term we would organise a concert at Withersdane. Guest singers would be hired from London, and the entire Wye College community would turn up to sing their hearts out. That experience undoubtedly underpinned my later roles as a public speaker and TV presenter.

### **The beginning for careers in landscaping**

In addition to the agrochemicals issue, the politics and the performing I had a fourth very significant influence. Tom Wright arrived in my final year. He was a young lecturer from Pershore College, and his role was truly transformational. He introduced his students to the possibility of a career in landscape architecture, where a jack-of-all-trades like me might combine skills in

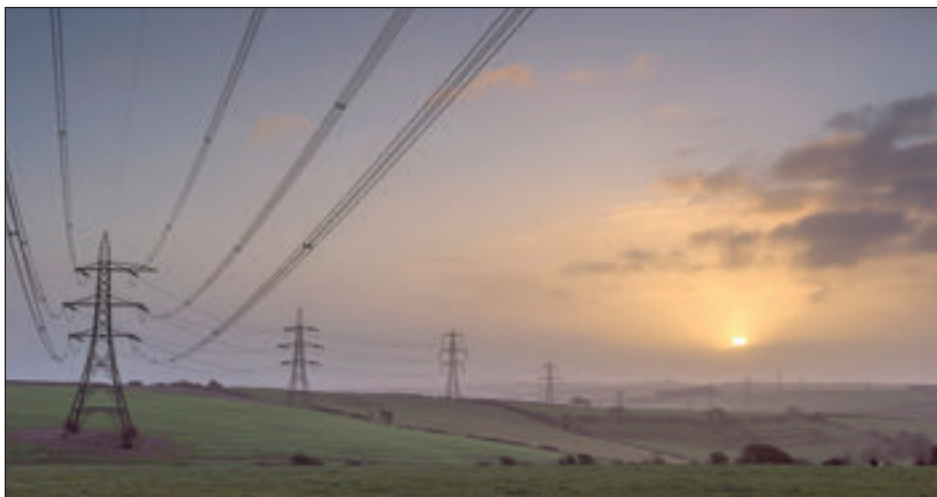
horticulture, the arts, physical geography, politics and a love of the wider landscape. Tom was a breath of fresh air in an academic world of organic chemistry, agro-economics, pomology and floriculture. It is no coincidence that well over half my horticulture contemporaries went from Wye into landscape careers.

### **Landscaping the world over**

When I left Wye in the summer of '69, I headed for California – where else? Sadly I went to work with flower power of a different kind. I transplanted big trees with a commercial nursery before travelling round North America and returning to my first real job in the West-Midlands in late autumn. Since then my career has been extremely diverse, and never dull. I began with landscape contracting at a time when that industry was still embryonic. By the mid '70s I was spending a good deal of time designing and planting landscapes in the deserts of the Middle East, teaching post-graduate landscape management, and working with communities in grim inner-city housing estates in London, Liverpool and elsewhere – all at the same time.

When the Thatcher government was elected in 1979, all public spending on housing was withdrawn. I closed the Landscape Design Group and became a sole trader and that has remained the case ever since. The 1980s saw me valiantly establishing community gardens with inner-city kids and one of the most satisfying moments came at the end of the Brixton riots. Everything was trashed – but no-one had touched the sunflowers on our Tulse Hill Nature Garden. I was a founder of the first urban wildlife group, in Birmingham, and I also played an active role in establishing the London Wildlife Trust. In both cases this was a dramatic break with traditionally exclusive UK nature conservation. By contrast we were celebrating the commonplace and actively encouraging public involvement.





*Working to remove power lines and pylons from National Parks and AONBs*

### The start of wildlife TV programmes

Throughout the 1980s, I enjoyed a very active media career. I had a national network TV series for several years in a row. My regional series *Your Country Needs You* formed the model for BBC *Countryfile*, and I was also one of that programme's original presenters. My children's environmental action series *The Ark* won an *International Wildscreen* award, and included a programme about the impact of agricultural pesticides as well as nuclear waste, traffic pollution and waste recycling. In 1985 I spent a year transforming my suburban garden into a wildlife garden. I like to think that the resulting film *Bluetits and Bumblebees*, the accompanying book *How to Make a Wildlife Garden* and my creation of the very first wildlife garden at Chelsea flower show, helped to create a perfect horticultural storm. The RHS were so wrong-footed by the whole idea that they inscribed my Chelsea medal for a **wildfire garden**, but 30 years later the book is still in print, and now published in a new edition as an RHS Classic Gardening Companion.

### Influencing industry to look after the environment

For much of my working life as an independent environmentalist I have "supped with the devil". Over the years I have worked with house-builders, quarrying and construction companies and the water industry. I have played leading roles in environmental programmes for Exxon-Mobil and Shell UK, and advised the finance industry on ethical and environmental investment. In every case my independence has been my most valuable asset, and almost always I have been engaged to help forge more productive partnerships between the public, corporate and not-for-profit sectors. As an example, I am currently chairing the stakeholder advisory group for the National Grid, determining where best to spend £500 million removing pylons and power lines from National Parks and AONBs.

I have travelled a great deal, speaking at conferences across five continents and I have always devoted a great deal of my time to practical conservation. As a Vice President of the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, I toured with the

folk-rock Albion Band to raise funds; I spent 11 years as a trustee and then adviser to the Heritage Lottery Fund and I have been President of the Thames Estuary Partnership and the Association for Sustainable Building for almost 20 years.

Wherever I go I hear the plaintive plea for more joined up thinking in these challenging times. Can we use HS2 to restore the lost ecological riches along a wide corridor through the damaged farmland of Middle England? Can off-shore wind farms also serve as sea bed refuges for fisheries recovery? Can urban green space networks be funded as a cornerstone of the healthcare economy? Can the uplands be farmed and forested in ways that protect and purify our drinking water and reduce the risk of urban flooding?

### Environmental movers and shakers started at Wye

I like to think that my three years of tangled experience at Wye equipped me to help with the joining-up. The year after I left, Wye expanded into environmental studies, inspired again by Tom Wright. Now, all these years later, it is striking to see how many of the UK's environmental movers and shakers can trace their roots back to that golden age of revolution in the lee of the North Kent Downs. When I was there I was pleased to be an energetic fish in a very, very small pond. Any splash we made at the time seemed isolated and insignificant. How satisfying it is, two generations later, to see that those early ripples are still managing to make worthwhile waves.

## How we were way back then



*An impromptu photo of the 1965 College Squash Team:  
Standing: John Walters, 'Titch' Beresford, John 'Stalky' Hudson,  
Seated: David Wyatt, David Allen, Peter Cooper, Ferris Whidbourne and Chris Hardingham*

# Kenya re-visited

## Andy Turney (1966–69) describes a visit to a Masai Mara safari camp.

In May 2017, **Andy Turney** (1966–69) and his wife, Wendy, had a visit from their old chums **Hugo** and **Rachel Wood** (1967–71) to their home in Dorset. This stirred up memories of their glorious stay with them in the Masai Mara, Kenya, back in 2014. The following is essentially what they wrote to them at the time by way of thanks.

After a couple of stimulating and fun days on the farm with **Hugo** and **Rachel Wood** (1967–71) Wendy and I flew with Hugo to spend the evening and night at Tarquin and Lippa's new developing Safari camp farm project. Wendy and I were up a tad before 7am for Rachel to take Hugo to his wee 1952 Cessna 180 for him to fly himself home for work, so enabling Rachel to take us on a tour round the Masai Mara.

We were pretty excited at the prospect. We drove there for a few hours with Rachel expertly getting us into the swing; and as the realisation of the majesty of it all was starting to dawn on us we stopped off at The Governor's camp for brunch. By now we had seen virtually no other vehicles.

### Looking for the 'big five'

After brunch Rachel set us off to see the hippos – about 30 sun-bathing plus another 30 wallowing. So by now we had seen a huge range of animals, already too many to list; although at that point none of the big five – lion, leopard, rhino, elephant and buffalo.

So Rachel set off in search. We saw about a score of vultures hovering just in front of us and asked one of the rangers, in his Land Rover converted for tourists, as to any sightings of lions – we were directed past the airstrip and onto a scuffed up stretch of ground. We followed his advice and

soon spotted seven very laid-back, contented lions, partially in the shade, under some scrub. It was special to get right up close for many minutes especially with Rachel's skilful manoeuvring of the 4X4.

### Not so friendly elephants

Then we headed along to find a wee family of elephants. Again we spent lots of time with them up real close until suddenly Rachel detected a perceived lack of friendliness (euphemism) from the big Mummy elephant. This resulted in the only time all day that Rachel's foot hit the accelerator with some urgency. As we then veered back towards the lower levels on the Governor's camp we stopped with a 200 plus degree view in front of us of...certainly many tens of thousands of the Masai Mara's beautiful beasts, including many scores of differing species.

Just to our left, a magic view, amongst a lush oasis – a mix of buffalo, elephants, water bucks, several species of antelope besides the baboons and lots of silly, scurrying mere cats (as we called 'em, or mongoose).

This was the moment of realisation. We were in a very special place, stunned by the awareness that there cannot be a more dramatic exhibition of the 'beauty 'n the beast' living in such symbiotic harmony, absolutely anywhere in this wonderful world.

This was also, I guess, the start of our long trip back to Hugo and Rachel's home farm. En route we saw ever more wonders, and nearly out of the park, my favourites, a pair of contented, sleepy cheetah. We asked Rachel if she'd be happy to drive up real close to try to encourage them to take a walk for us, enabling them to show off their loping casual stroll. They duly obliged.



*You would think that after a tour of the Masai Mara, Andy Turney (right) could produce a more exciting photo than two wallowing water buffalo! Here he is in Dorset with Hugo Wood.*

### Healthy Masai cattle

As we were leaving and driving through the fringes of the Masai Mara to where it was more intensively grazed (too intensively grazed as observed by Tarquin, something he has in mind, working with the locals and authorities to correct) by the Masai cattle, Wendy, still keeping lookout on her, the right side, with me still looking to the left, said with a sigh "look at that poor lame calf" that was taking up the rear of the mob as the Masai were driving them to their night enclosure. That perhaps being the most emotional moment of the whole magic day for me. Still bringing a wee tear to me eyes as I write this many weeks later: the realisation that this was the first and only 'below par' animal we had seen among the tens of thousands of all shapes and sizes of such beautiful and, yes, healthy beasts that we'd relished observing with such bewilderment all day. Our understanding of this supreme balance in nature had grown with every new visual experience.

Mind, I then thought back and reckon that yes maybe we had seen one or maybe two Thompson

gazelles looking a little tucked up and standing aside all alone. As an old farmer I know there are various reasons for an animal or human to slide away – by itself, all alone. To me the reason that stands out, and I think is relevant here, is when they are 'out of sorts'.

It had been a long day driving over ground that varied from rough to very rough, which was no problem to Wendy and me in our sheer bemusement at the majesty of it all. For Rachel it had been blooming hard work and ways beyond the call of duty – something much more than Wendy and I deserved. We still had more than an hour to drive home on real hard rough 'roads'.

We saw a couple of schools along the road under the banner of 'Free the Children', a Canadian charity. It was heartening to see so many well-dressed, healthy and happy looking children walking home from school. Along that rough road and around Hugo and Rachel's farms, Rachel commented that 40 years ago few children were so well dressed and many not shod at all.

Thank you Rachel and Hugo. You are an inspiration as well as wonderful fun hosts.

# Wye College Icelandic Expedition 1958

**Alec Forsyth (1957-60) recounts the expedition to Iceland and provides a fascinating insight into this far-flung European country some 60 years ago.**

First plans were talked over on 24th November 1957, when it was decided to take an eight-man expedition to Iceland to collect botanical and geological specimens and to correlate the plants with the soils. After permission was obtained from the College authorities, the British Museum and the Icelandic Research Council were contacted with a view to obtaining a research permit. This was duly granted in March 1958.

On the sunny morning of Saturday, 19th July, 1958, the Wye College Icelandic Expedition set off for the docks in Leith after a warm send-off from the College staff. Our 3-ton Bedford truck had been adapted to house us in relative comfort, to provide an office in the front compartment and a store-room for food and equipment in the rear.

## **First problem encountered early**

The journey north proved more eventful than we had bargained for. On the first morning, the heat of the engine plus the heat of the day itself caused the petrol to vaporise before it got to the engine. To counteract this, our co-driver poured water over the carburettors and though this frequently brought us to a spluttering stop we managed to reach London by the early afternoon. As the day wore on and it began to get cooler, our trouble stopped and we could make up some time. We drove on throughout the night and reached Newcastle by 4 am. Just outside Edinburgh we were lucky enough to be directed by a garage proprietor to a farmer who allowed us to sleep in one of his disused huts.

Early on Monday morning we set off for the docks at Leith. After much delay, we were cleared

by the customs and boarded our ship, the M/S. Gulfoss. The truck went as deck cargo, although – as she nearly fell out of the cradle while being hoisted aboard – Edinburgh was almost as far as she got.

We had mixed weather on our voyage but only one really stormy day, of which the less said the better. At about supper-time on Wednesday night, Iceland was sighted and we passed through the Westerman Isles at about 1 am. Even at that hour it was still daylight, for we now had the sun with us for 24 hours in the day. We dropped anchor at about 5.30 am. in the bay just outside Reykjavik where we were boarded by passport and immigration officials. We docked in Reykjavik itself some three hours later.

The harbour was fairly small and its most noticeable feature was that all the small cranes were mounted on trucks, which made them extremely versatile. Most of the day was spent in getting our kit cleared, but **Dickie Dight** and I managed to see Professor Thorarinsson of Reykjavik University to discuss our work in Iceland.

Our first job was to make a preliminary survey of the glasshouse industry at Reykir. We arrived there that evening and found ourselves in a valley surrounded by lava hills with a warm river running through it. In many places there were steam vents, most of which had been tapped for steam as a source of heat for the glasshouses and for domestic use.

We camped for the night near the river and next morning **Peter England, Chris Wood, John Gray** and I went off to look at the glasshouses. The



*The Icelandic tam pictured in Wye with their trusty Bedford truck:*

*Left to Right: Richard Dight, John Gray, Robin Mackenzie, Andrew Nowell, Alec Forsyth, Robert Savory, Christopher Wood and Peter England.*

chief attraction was the banana house, though unfortunately the crop was not commercial. Meanwhile, the rest of the party enjoyed a bathe in the village's warm, open-air swimming-pool.

### **Road-making Icelandic style**

From Reykir we started on our journey proper, taking the road towards Pingvellir and getting our first taste of Icelandic dirt roads with their lava-ash surface. The normal method of making a road there was to bulldoze up a ridge of earth, where necessary, and roughly flatten the top with a giant scraper. The traffic, what there was of it, did the rest. Every spring the swollen rivers washed away large tracks of road and, for the short summer which followed, this was the only economical method of road-building and repair.

We stopped for lunch at the head of Lake Pingvallavatn, near a waterfall where the water came out of the lava. We then took the road which passed between the Ok and Langjokull

icecaps. The going was pretty rough at times and in one or two places we even had to make-up and clear the road in front of us. The worst stretch, of nine miles, took us three hours to get through.

The vegetation here was sparse and the whole surroundings bleak and stony; as if to remind us where we were, a keen wind whipped down off the icecap.

After a few hours, we began the descent, down the mountain sides and along the valley bottoms. Sometimes we had to ford a river, fortunately without incident. We drove on throughout the evening and reached the main Reykjavik-Akureyri road about midnight. Here we pitched camp.

### **Minor damage to truck and passengers**

The next morning we started early and made good progress up to the late afternoon. By then we had completed a very steep climb out of a valley at Polstadarhi. We were just levelling off when we had to pull in to the side of the road to



let another car pass. It was here that the road refused to hold up to our weight and slipped away so that the lorry toppled over onto its side. Eight rather shaken men climbed out and surveyed the damage, while **Robin Mackenzie**, our doctor, did what running repairs he could to my head which had got cut in the proceedings. By a stroke of luck a surgeon shortly passed by in his car and took me off to the nearest hospital at Saudakrokur, a habitation of about 100 houses, about 25 km. away. He then returned and gave a couple of stitches to Dickie's eye.

Meanwhile, **Andrew Nowell** managed to contact a garage with the result that two trucks arrived that evening, one with a crane and the other with a winch. By this means the truck was once more righted and pulled back onto the road. Such precipitations, we gathered, were not uncommon on these roads.

A makeshift camp was made that night by the roadside and the next morning was spent in patching up what little damage had been done. That afternoon I was picked up at the hospital and we continued our journey. We arrived at Akureyri the following morning, the largest town in the North with a population of 8,000. The weather was now fine and our route became quite spectacular, passing between and over the mountains. During the afternoon we stopped at the Godafoss waterfall. This was shaped like a horseshoe in a beautiful gorge, and was perhaps the most striking of the many waterfalls we saw.

We then drove on, skirting Lake Myvatn on one side with grotesque lava fields on the other, and so on to the desert road. Here we nearly got stuck again as we gingerly pulled to the side of the road near a pipe bridge with about an eight foot drop on either side. The back wheel sunk into the soft ash and the truck lurched over at an angle. I don't think that I, or my fellow travellers in the

compartment, have ever moved so fast as when we bailed out of the truck. The drivers, on the other hand, were rather surprised to see us bale out, as the cab had not tilted so far. We were soon on the move again, however, and camped that night on the bank of the River Holsselskill in a region of shifting sand and ash bound in by marram grass. It was here that we had our first party when an American and his wife dropped in on us. They provided vodka and whisky and we provided more whisky.

### **More help from passersby**

The next day was somewhat overcast but we enjoyed a good view of the spectacular Dettifos waterfall, the largest waterfall in Iceland. Its water thundered down into the deep gorge cut through columnar basalt. That evening after a good run we reached our destination, the Alandstunga Valley between the Rivers Sanda to the north and Holkna to the south. Once again we came to an abrupt halt: the left back wheel broke through the surface of the peat of the semi-track we were driving along and the lorry sank down in that quarter up to its chassis. This somewhat surprised us, as a farmer whom we had passed a few minutes earlier had waved us on and smiled – though we later learned that he had been trying to signal us *not* to go on. This time our own efforts to release the truck were of no avail, but the farmer and his son arrived with their Fergie tractor and with the aid of this, two large poles and much toil and sweat, the wheel was levered out and the truck driven away in 4-wheel drive to some firmer ground nearby. We thanked the farmer profusely for his help and were pleased when he accepted some cigarettes and bars of chocolate in token of our gratitude.

### **Base Camp 1 – wet and boggy**

It was here that we decided to make Base Camp 1 while we did our first stint of scientific work. In the 10 days which followed, it rained

almost continuously, with an average temperature of 43°F and a relative humidity of 87%.

Our valley was bounded by the two rivers mentioned above, with high hills inland and the sea about two miles downstream from our camp. The valley floor was made up of areas of bog and stony ground, part of which appeared to be alluvial and part of aeolian origin. The bogs were dissected by small underground streams that rose to the surface occasionally, showing up as small pools about a yard wide and the same in depth. From these trout were quite easily caught, using silver paper as a lure.

Between the heavy showers of rain, the geologists dug soil profiles in the peat and other deposits. A few ash bands were clearly seen, two of which Prof. Thorarinsson later identified as having come from Mt. Hekla, one being 2,700 and the other 4,000 years old. Some small soil polygons were also found in this area, the best near the River Holkna.

The botanists grouped the flora according to the dominant species in each area and kept the flora of each area separate from other plant societies. Using this system, the surrounding valley and the sea coast were covered. As scouting parties sent inland reported that there were no changes in the plant associations, it was decided to move a little

further south and examine an area of shifting sands by the River Holsselskill.

On our way to this new area, we passed some large soil polygons, some of which were over 3ft in diameter. These were carefully examined. Our route also took us past an American Airforce fishing hut, where we were entertained to coffee and collected a useful quantity of extra luxury foods.

### **Base Camp 2 – dry and sandy**

Base Camp 2 was, in contrast, a dry camp as we enjoyed fine weather for the whole four days we were there. The surrounding area was mainly covered by shifting sands, some colonized by marram grass, some showing secondary colonization by other grasses and shrubs. Marked wind erosion was evident in this area. Ash bands were also found here. Soil profiles were dug and samples taken.

### **Base Camp 3 – a lava field**

After completing our programme, we moved to Base Camp 3, on a lava field on the shore of Lake Myvatn. This was our best camp and we stayed for a fortnight. Our tents were pitched on fairly level ground among the lava, near to the road and by the side of the lake.

This lake has been formed by the surface of the lava-flow solidifying and then collapsing after the molten under-layer had flowed on. It was consequently full of small islets and lava pinnacles. Birds thrived there and many types of duck were to be seen by those who could distinguish them – which is to say by **John Gray**, our ornithologist.

To vulcanists this area was also of great interest and provided a wide variety of work. Our camp was in the shadow of a very large volcano called Hverfjall. The surrounding lava was in parts said to be about 2000 years old and was extremely

#### **Our team and their roles:**

Peter England, *Leader and Botanist*;  
 Christopher Wood, *Secretary and Botanist*;  
 Robin Mackenzie, *Treasurer and Geologist*;  
 Robert Savory, *Q.M. and Botanist*;  
 Andrew Nowell, *Botanist*;  
 Alec Forsythe, *Photographer*;  
 Richard Dight, *Geologist*;  
 John Gray, *Botanist and Ornithologist*.

rough. It supported a large variety of lichens and mosses and even a few groups of silver birch which ranged from 4 to 11 ft. high, according to age and soil depth.

The entire surrounding country was very mountainous and apart from the craters and lava flows, signs of volcanic activity could be seen in the sulphur deposits, steam vents and warm springs. The most spectacular examples of these were at Namaskard where we saw numerous powerful jets rising straight from the ground and pools of boiling mud, some quite fluid and some viscous.

### **Underground warm swimming pool**

One of the great assets of Base Camp 3 was its proximity to the underground bathing pool at Grjotagja. Here, there were two main caves underground; one for men and one for women, entry being made through holes in the side of the roof. The water was constantly at a temperature of 105°F, and in places reached a depth of 8ft. Also, about two miles from the camp, was the village of Reykjahlid which boasted a hotel where we could drink milk (the beer, tea and coffee being of poor quality), dry out our kit and even listen to the news in English, if we were lucky.

### **Climbing Mt Blafjall**

It was from this camp that Dickie and Robin made their successful trip to collect obsidian specimens. Later on, two parties set out to climb Mt. Blafjall, which is some 1222 metres high and capped with snow. Andrew and Robert made up one party and Chris and Peter the other but, unfortunately, they were both driven back after 36 hours by bad weather and poor visibility.

The most memorable occasion was perhaps Day 24 – the half-way mark in our whole expedition. We organized a party to celebrate it, which meant chiefly that we washed for dinner and used a knife and fork. We had a special menu,

however, which consisted of tomato soup, roast chicken (tinned) with peas and potatoes followed by fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, coffee, rum, whisky and cigars! In contrast, our ordinary evening meal might consist of vegetable soup, stewed steak with onions, cabbage and potatoes, followed by rice-pudding and coffee. A normal lunch, however, would be confined to nuts, oatmeal blocks and chocolate, with sometimes a cup of tea to wash it down.

### **Geothermal heating for glasshouses**

After completing our work at Lake Myvatn, we retraced our route in easy stages back to Reykir, to make a proper survey of the glasshouse industry. As was mentioned earlier, we found that the heat for the glasshouses was supplied by the hot springs. The crops grown included not only usual ones like tomatoes, cucumbers and carnations but also plants which we would grow out of doors like parsley, wallflowers and roses. The Icelanders had an understandable passion for flowers. Before we left Reyir we were also lucky enough to see drilling operations for steam and, down by the coast, whales being cut up and processed – an operation calling for a very strong stomach!

During our remaining few days in Iceland we visited Lake Hvitvatn, which lay between the Langjokull and Hofsjokull glaciers. Miniature icebergs floated about in water made milky by suspended rock-flour – ground up by the glaciers. Successful attempts were made by two parties to climb Blafell, a mountain of some 3920 ft, close to our camp. Notes were left in a bottle at the top and good sport was had by all, crossing crevasses and climbing up large bolder scree as well as some normal pitches.

Back at Reykjavik, we were fortunate in being lent a small flat through a contact of Robin's, who also entertained us and showed us the Keflavik NATO base.



*During the visit of HRH Duke of Edinburgh to Wye College on the 5th November 1958 he met with the expedition members and discussed the expedition activities and outcomes.*

*Left to right: Richard Dight, Alec Forsyth, Christopher Wood, Peter England, HRH Duke of Edinburgh, Robert Savory and John Gray.*

### Sorting out the plant associations

We again managed to see Prof. Thorarinsson who seemed most interested in our work and was of great help in tying up one or two loose ends for us. Plants were collected from 19 different associations in north-east Iceland. Each of these areas was given a code letter and showed as many different types of vegetation as was possible including bog, desert, windblown sands, lava fields, hot steam vents, pasture and so on. A total of 528 angiosperms, 143 mosses and 273 lichens were collected and pressed for retention by the British Museum. Classification of these specimens was carried out by the Department of Botany at the British Museum, to whom we were deeply indebted for all their advice, and the loan of collecting equipment for use on the expedition.

Over 1000 colour photographic slides were made

covering camp life, soil profiles, soil polygons, landscapes, individual plants, plant associations, geological and volcanic structures. These photographs were donated to Wye College for teaching and reference.

We sailed for England on 6th September and enjoyed a calm and pleasant voyage home. After a short stop in Edinburgh we drove down to Wye. We arrived back at College at midday on Thursday, 11th September, where we were warmly welcomed by the Principal, the Vice-Principal and other members of the SCR.

We think the expedition was a great success, and on behalf of the team, I should like to record our gratitude to: HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, The Governors of Wye College, The Principal and members of the College Staff and over 60 firms and organisations whose generous contributions made this expedition possible.

## Flying high in Ireland

**Jane Robinson (née Finn-Kelcey 1975–78) recounts her team's most recent success in the Ladies International Fly Fishing Championship 2017 on the wild waters of an Irish Lough**

I've been fly fishing for a number of years now, – 20, in fact – and absolutely love it. I don't think anything beats setting off for a day's fishing as early in the morning as possible – the anticipation of catching fish and just being out in the great outdoors all day gives any fisherman or woman real joy.

### **Competitive or not?**

I've been in the England Ladies Fly Fishing Team (ELFF) since 1998, having fished my first International on Llyn Brenig in Wales that year. It isn't really a competitive sport, in that you are only really competing against yourself to catch that elusive trout or salmon that is bigger or fights harder than the last. However, having qualified for the ELFF team by fishing the National competition over 12 times now, I can honestly say that it is an experience not to be missed and extremely competitive! There are 12 female members of each team, representing England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and normally one or two travelling reserves. Each

team has their own team manager, and usually a fly-tyer who travels with us to the host country. There are always several spouses and partners who come along to support each team, and everyone stays in the same hotel for the week; so you can imagine the camaraderie that exists each evening after a hard day's fishing (somewhat reminiscent of being back at Wye, sharing stories in the Union bar after a 'hard day's graft' in the lecture hall or the laboratories!?).

The International takes place over a week, with at least two practice days and the Match day always fished on the Thursday, between 9.30am and 5.30pm. In 2017, we were in Ireland, on Lough Melvin, half of which is in Northern Ireland and half in Eire which meant that there were marker buoys at various positions on the lough, indicating when you were crossing the border. There were many references, of course, to the possible repercussions of Brexit and who was going to tell the fish ....etc.

I hadn't been able to fish the International matches for the past three years due to my job as an Executive Headteacher and so, having retired this year, I was really looking forward to this match. Ireland is my favourite place for fishing as it is wild fishing at its best, with no stocked fish, and every lough is totally different to the next. England hadn't won gold for three years but this year we had an exceptionally good team spirit, with one of the most experienced teams we have had for a number of years.



*Team effort nets the winning fish 10 minutes before the end of the competition.*

## A wild Irish Lough

Several of us went out a few days early to acquaint ourselves with the water a little better – what a lough it is! There are three different types of trout on Lough Melvin:- the sonaghan (a sub-species of trout only found in this lough); the gillaroo (a beautiful golden coloured trout); and the brown trout. There are also ferox here and salmon – both team-mate Louise Callow and I were lucky enough to catch a salmon (on practice days, thankfully!) on the fly – mine came to a claret dabbler and Louise's to a mini humungus!

As the week progressed, the fishing became harder and harder but we persevered and stuck to it. Lough Melvin is meant to fish really well during June, but not last year – the fish were few and far between on practice days and our Irish boatmen were scratching their heads and very apologetic. There was great excitement on match day itself, which was wilder, wetter and windier than any of our previous outings. With winds gusting at 35mph and gale force 5/6 winds it was going to be a tough day's fishing even for the most seasoned anglers. There was nowhere out of the wind and rain and our boatman, who was very experienced, eventually tried to get us closer to the shoreline for a bit of protection.

### Left stranded

However, he hadn't anticipated the speed of the boat as we fished over the rocks (where, thank goodness, I caught a very nice gillaroo) and he ended up going over the side leaving us stranded on the rocks for a time. My Irish boat partner and I couldn't haul him back into the boat but we did manage to make contact with the fishing lodge which sent out the rescue boat. We were both carried ashore while our boat was pulled off the rocks and our boatman, Malcolm, was



*Jane with her salmon*

duly rescued. He was probably in his early seventies and had already told me that he was 90% deaf (which is why he couldn't hear me shouting at him about the approaching rocks) but he insisted on continuing for the remainder of the match, even though he was soaked to the skin and his lifejacket had gone off. So, out we went again for the last couple of hours to carry on the match, although neither of us managed another fish. As you might imagine, Malcolm was given a lot of stick from his colleagues when he went back in.

### Success, celebrations and trophies

We had two new caps in the team - Andrea Smith, who caught three measuring fish and was top rod for England, and Gwyneth Mooney who caught two, with the last being caught 10 minutes before the end of the match (see picture). We beat Ireland by only one fish, and won gold; many celebrations took place and many trophies were presented that evening!

I'm back in the team for next year, and already looking forward to another International on Llyn Clywedog in Wales.



# Agricultural extension in North West China

**Jerry Groom (1962–65) draws on his long experience in China to explain the dramatic changes and gradual advance in agricultural extension in this vast nation.**

I have spent the last twenty or more years in and out of rural China and have watched and participated in the dramatic changes in the agricultural advisory-cum extension service in the country. Since its initiation in 1949, the public advisory service has theoretically been offered in every Township (there are approximately 30,000 that can be designated as mainly rural) irrespective of how remote they are. Data from 2006 indicated that there were around 787,000 government extension workers providing services to 637,000 villages. This could be translated into a rural audience of approximately 300 million people, representing 19% of the total population.

## One step forward, two back

This extension structure evolved through a number of distinct stages to reach its current level of maturity. After a good start in the early 1950s as a national network of County-based demonstration farms, there was a retrograde centralisation into communes during the 'Great Leap Forward' (1958–1963) with collective food production based on many false premises often resulting in widespread famine followed by a virtual paralysis of the rural advisory system

during the 'Cultural Revolution'.

With the arrival of Deng Xiaoping in 1978 a national extension system was re-established. Soon after, land use rights were given back to individual rural households with holding size based on family numbers (Rural Household Responsibility Contracting System). Production targets and 'orders' as to crop/livestock choice and farming methods were delivered through a network of County-level extension centres that integrated agro-technology, soil and fertilizer, and plant protection services. Large numbers of field staff (70% with some basic technical qualification) ran networks of Township and village-level groups building on indigenous knowledge and skills. Farm families were re-energized by this return to normality which gave them the security of a house lot and land led to a significant rise in productivity.

## An overstaffed burden

However, this overstaffed system soon became an unwelcome financial burden on the local administration. Central government reforms conceived a 'privatised' system with the County and Township stations directed to earn their own income through commercial activities. This quickly turned a free public extension service into a system where incomes of extension technicians were linked to sales of agricultural inputs but still geared to attaining production targets directed from 'above'. The result was that farmers were encouraged to use more pesticides, fertilizers and expensive seeds. By 1993, many Township Extension Stations had become autonomous, semi-commercial advisory centres, each with



*Individual smallholder mixed cropping.*



their own administration and farming inputs shop linked to a cooperative banking system, plus County specialists providing a technical back-stopping service.

Over time, this extension system has fractured and all the problems of a devolved bureaucracy have emerged: shrinking professional staff numbers leading to reduced contact time with

farmers, confused responsibilities, too many non-professional technicians and lack of staff updating. With millions of independent smallholders the rural environment could have become destabilised. But this did not happen and a major influence was the introduction of a legal framework for transferring land-use rights. This has allowed the consolidation of plots of land; the land still belongs to the state, but the farmer who has a long-term right to use the land can now contract out the land-use right to an entrepreneurial farmer, a farmers' organization (either a cooperative or a village committee) or a commercial enterprise.

### **Consolidation into larger units**

The result has been the consolidation of small scattered plots of land into larger units which allows for higher degrees of mechanization and specialization. Land transfers tend to be more common in areas where agriculture is potentially more commercial; less common in provinces like



*Demo scheme in the highland area of Qinhai.*

Gansu and Qinghai which are further from markets and where farmers have fewer alternative employment opportunities.

Government has strongly encouraged this introduction of outside management and these new-found entrepreneurs (some from coal-fired industry bankrupted by environmental legislation) have created a variety of production and management models. These include:

- High-tech production units with protected cropping systems including environmental control, hydroponics and a year-round production season that produce quality fruit and vegetables. These operations are run by commercial enterprises; the smallholders who are displaced from their land are usually adequately compensated financially and given the opportunity of working on the unit but, in the words of a manager, "We have turned smallholders into industrial labourers".
- Areas of contract field crop production where a commercial company has negotiated rights on a block of land and works with a group of smallholders to provide management, technical expertise for production, machinery and a market for the produce. Smallholders have entered into long-term rental agreements and, in many cases, cash work opportunities as well. This is often



*Contract cropping in Ningxia.*

enthusiastically taken up because, as an agricultural university staff member commented, "No-one can make a living out of a smallholding these days".

These land management systems can encompass up to 50% of the cultivated land in a Township. On other areas, the 'demonstration blocks' introduced in the 1990s extension model still exist. These are directly managed by the Extension Station technicians using a T&V (Training and Visit) extension approach often supported by staff from research organisations. The farmers who participate get some introductory training, timely technology advice, free inputs and mechanisation; they also receive a stipend for participating in the demonstration and the income from selling the crop. Bearing in mind that Chinese smallholders pay no personal or business tax, VAT or community charge, it is a pity for them that the average size of the holding is less than one hectare!

### **Cooperatives fill the gap**

This still leaves a proportion of the households without any advisory support. Here there is a growing number of farmer cooperatives that are making an important contribution in the context of technical training and advice. The farmers maintain their land rights and often the cultivation of their own smallholdings but occasionally with some limited land use rights transfer. The groups of cooperating farmers hire their own technical specialists to help with production, usually somebody from a university or research institute, or develop a partnership with a commercial partner in the areas of processing or marketing. A consultant working with cooperatives commented that management committees are introducing innovative ways to bring technical expertise into their group. One



*Cooperative smallholdings in Liei River Valley, Gansu.*

grape cooperative in Jiangxi signed a contract with a research institute for technical support; according to the agreement, payment to the institute was to be made on a formula based on the increased yield resulting from the advice received.

Alongside these different models is a range of mass media that provide an overarching information service to those willing and able to take on new ideas: national TV has a channel (CCTV7) specialized for agricultural and rural areas; there is a national agricultural extension website ([www.farmers.org.cn](http://www.farmers.org.cn)) with news on new

varieties, new technology, first-hand information from demo farmers; and, even radio broadcasting schools are turning themselves into distance learning professional schools to provide farmer training.

### **A mix of extension models**

So, the narrow, bureaucratic, top down word of mouth 'big stick – small carrot' transfer of technology extension system of the 1980s has matured into a demand-driven market-oriented pluralism of available approaches. These different models are working in parallel with a pro-poor poverty alleviation programme 'all carrot and no stick' which is strongly supported by multi-national agencies. It has led to a variety of pilot initiatives stimulated by the Ministry of Agriculture that is monitored and encouraged by universities to establish an inclusive village level agricultural extension service. Perhaps this could be one of the tools with which the current government long-term plan to enhance rural households' income and livelihoods could be achieved whilst reinvigorating rural centres. As the inevitable chatty taxi driver said, "Why do people have to move to the cities for work; why can't



*Township extension technician in post-harvest evaluation in Xanjiang.*

## Wye courses and food production: a note on changed perspectives and priorities

**John McInerney (1957–60)** recalls the course content at Wye in the 50s and wonders if the UK has got its priorities right when it comes to food production.

When moving house last year after 33 years in a big old rambling farmstead which had positively encouraged hoarding, I happened upon the box that contained the files of all my old Wye lecture notes, timetables, exam papers and sundry bits of paper from my student life there in the late '50s. So I sat down for a few hours and relived the perceptions and wisdom of a past era. Aside from the sentimental recollections and waves of nostalgia it all engendered, I was struck among other things by the tremendous contrast between how and what we were taught then and how degree-level agricultural education (to the extent that it still exists in some comparable form) would be conducted now.

### Extremely full timetable

For a start, judging by the attitudes of my grandchildren, the intensity of our timetable would be a cause for revolt – or total abdication – by the present generation<sup>1</sup>. For all 10 weeks of the Autumn and Spring terms, and for much of the Summer term, we had scheduled contact hours of at least 25 hours per week (this includes practicals and farm walks); the timetable ran from 9.00 to 1.00 in the morning and from 5.00 to 7.00 in the evening every weekday except Wednesday (when we were free from lunchtime) with the addition of fortnightly tutorials on some afternoons. Added to this the exam timetable would probably give rise nowadays to concern over cruelty or human rights abuse. Our finals, for example, consisted

of eight 3-hour written papers, starting at 10 am on a Monday and finishing at 5.30 pm on the Thursday – six hours a day on each of four consecutive days to decide your future! It's true the practicals – 3-hour ones in each of Botany and Zoology and a 6-hour marathon in Chemistry – were spread over the following 10 days, so it wasn't all bad. But no wonder we went out and got rat-arsed when it was all over!

### Focus on output

The other quite distinctive feature of our course programme was the total emphasis on agricultural output and its supporting framework of science and technology, unadulterated by any of the accessory (some might say fundamental) considerations which nowadays surround farming and rural land use. The word 'environment' doesn't appear anywhere in my lecture notes, except perhaps in reference to the housing of pigs or chicken. We focused a bit on 'conservation' – but only in terms of making hay, silage or dried grass. The word 'organic' only ever appeared as an



*When productivity was all*

<sup>1</sup>Though medics and vet students nowadays still have to face a programme of similar intensity





*John pictured during his Wye days – to jog people's memory.*

adjective preceding the word 'matter' or 'chemistry'. Pollution and agrochemical residues had obviously not been discovered. The idea that wildlife had any relevance to farming processes (other than as pests) would have been dismissed as nonsense, while any suggestion that what was quite obviously farmland might be more meaningfully considered as 'countryside' would have been regarded as just wishy-washy. Land use was all about levels and patterns of crop and livestock production – any transfer into housing or roads, for example, essentially being regretted as the 'loss' of agricultural land. And the relevance of farmers getting involved in tourism or using their land for other people's recreation – other than out shooting with their mates – would have been almost laughable.

### **Rural economy**

In fact, although in our finals we had exam papers labelled Rural Economy I and Rural Economy II these were simply the collective labels for topics such as farm management, capital investment, economies of farm size,

agricultural policy, efficiency indicators, production costs, farm records, etc. We never explored what today is referred to as 'the rural economy' – the mix of people and resources that rural areas consist of, along with the web of economic activities that they engage in – because the important thing was taken to be simply farming. What now is accepted as multiple uses of rural land would for us have been seen as intrusions into the primacy of agricultural production. 'Farm diversification' meant pursuing a combination of productive enterprises (mixed farming rather than specialisation); it would have been unthinkable to accept the validity of the non-farming enterprises that take place on farms today. Even part-time farming (which now characterises over half of all farm businesses) was looked at rather disdainfully, as though it meant not taking things seriously!

### **Feeding the nation**

We were imbued with the notion that our subject was crucial because "agriculture produced the nation's food" – but the shaky logic of this was never explored. That is, the fact that in those days almost half of the nation's food actually came from outside the UK, that farming could claim to contribute at most about a third of the value content of food anyway (value added? Never heard of it), coupled with the fact that almost nothing that left the farm (other than eggs, milk and field-scale vegetables) bore much resemblance to what anyone would recognise as 'food', was all left unsaid. So the idea of 'the food chain' that gets so much emphasis nowadays was never evident. The only venture beyond the farm gate was in reference to something called 'marketing', which appears to have been some vague process that was left to someone else and was only important insofar as it was another damn thing



that got charged to farming revenue;<sup>2</sup> the attitude towards anything beyond farm production was perhaps best captured in one of our finals exam questions which invited us to discuss the proposition "The middleman is an economic parasite"! Related to all this, 'the consumer' was simply some notional entity who appeared in a demand-supply diagram showing how prices formed in a market; the idea that she (we were unashamedly sexist in those days) might have any ideas – or knowledge, or preference come to that – about provenance, locality of origin, quality, brand image, assurance, etc was unconsidered (never mind anyone other than us – and the Ministry – having any interest in what goes on in farming). In this context it is notable that the specific topic of animal welfare did not figure anywhere in our lectures on livestock production as a potential issue of concern.

### **Narrowly focused courses**

Looking back on all this from a contemporary perspective our course programme does appear to have been awfully narrowly focused – and one wonders whether this was necessarily and understandably so, or whether there were just no incentives at that time for thinking more expansively about where things might be going in the future (other than in the direction of even greater and obviously beneficial 'progress' from developments in productive efficiency). Yet on the other hand the environmental movement, concerns over farming 'intensity', production surpluses and the need for structural adjustments in agriculture had all become established within 10 or 15 years of our graduation, so presumably there must have been already some signs in the tea leaves. We

are, of course, talking about almost 60 years ago and the world has changed markedly and rapidly since then. Britain still remembered its food insecurity of the Second World War; the 1950s was the era of rapidly developing science-based farming technology, and the need to foster its adoption in the drive for greater productivity and domestic production was paramount. So there was almost nothing that suggested that agricultural production was anything but a pre-eminent activity of the economy; nor that it sat in a complex relationship with a wider non-urban, non-industrial resource-using context that one needed also to understand.

### **Production vs environmental goods**

So were we left with limited perspectives on our subject? Or has wider public opinion actually been led excessively into a misguided view of the essentials of agricultural resource use? For sure those social and technical side effects of modern farming that are clearly negative need to be recognised, understood and kept under control – or at least kept in balance. But there are instances where one wonders whether the agenda has not now been taken over too much by a secure and vocal class in society pursuing their own interest in the name of the wider social benefit.<sup>3</sup> Externality effects of resource use in some form or another are inevitable in all industries; they are part of the unavoidable costs of production. Trying to minimise or eliminate them as the dominant objective is as erroneous as is the aim of simply trying to maximise production. So when I hear Michael Gove declaring that the post-CAP agricultural policy will be based solely on paying farmers to produce environmental goods, I shudder.

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<sup>2</sup>Though in recognition of activity beyond the farm gate we did have a visit to a slaughterhouse, and also, most memorably, to a brewery,

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<sup>3</sup>One is reminded of the famous American bumper sticker – 'Don't complain about farmers with your mouth full'



*Wildlife friendly farming*

### Striking the right balance

For sure it would be highly undesirable if many valued countryside features/components actually disappeared completely, but that isn't exactly the problem. (The UK has apparently lost some 40 million breeding birds over the past 50 years, for example – but there is still an estimated 170 million flying around, so who – aside from RSPB members – feels actually worse off?). Despite the reductions that have taken place over past decades there would still seem to be plenty of hedgerows, trees, ponds, birds, rough grasslands, wild animals, etc – not necessarily everywhere, but it's unreasonable (and inefficient) to produce environmental goods everywhere.<sup>4</sup> Who exactly will benefit from these extra environmental goods? Who will necessarily know they exist, and then know how to benefit from them? We are told that beetle banks are good for wildlife, for example, but how many urban taxpayers should be

content to subsidise their provision because a biologist says "trust me, I'm a doctor".

### Costing environmental goods

The trouble with this vague and generalised category of environmental goods is that we don't know what they are worth, so we don't know how much to pay for them. Nor do we know how to tell when we have sufficient. At least for agricultural products there are quantitative measures of their availability in any location, and there are market prices that indicate, however crudely, what value we would gain from some amount more or less of them. But the same is not true of environmental goods. We can calculate approximately how much wheat will be foregone by having 2-metre green strips along every field boundary and therefore roughly what that will cost; but there is no comparable way of measuring how much resulting environmental benefit is created or what that is worth relative to the cost. So the provision of environmental goods is largely down to arbitrary choice and political decision, which means it is determined ultimately by interested pressure groups, opinion formers and those who know how to feel benefit from their provision. Yes, I know this is the nature of public goods, that they have to be provided for and paid for by everyone whether you want them or not; but in this case it should mean their public provision should be determined by everyone also. Impossible. So it's all a bit shaky as the basis for an agricultural policy.

Perhaps after all, in a post-Brexit Britain, agriculture should concentrate on what we know (and my generation of Wye students learned) it is good at, namely producing abundant quality raw materials to support adequate affordable food supplies in an uncertain globalised world of growing population.

<sup>4</sup>No one complains that Heathrow is basically an environmental desert, so why shouldn't specialist agricultural production areas equally be focused on their primary role?

# The forgotten front: WW1 in East Africa

**Malcolm Alexander (1963–67)** gives an account of the conflict in German East Africa during the 1914–18 war, sparked off by memories of his great uncle who was stationed there.

My awareness of the events of WWI was awakened by the onset of the Centenary Remembrances nearly four years ago, but became more personal when I looked at the War in East Africa. My great-uncle, Claude Oldfield, had been a young officer with the Colonial Service in Northern Rhodesia, stationed at Abercorn, close to the border with German East Africa. Today the names are changed: Abercorn is now Mbala, in Zambia; German East Africa is mainland Tanzania.

## The longest campaign of WW1

The longest campaign of WWI was fought, not in Europe, but over the vast area of German East Africa (GEA) – it was certainly not just a 'sideshow'! Over the four-year period, the German forces consisted of approximately 3,000 white and 12,000 black and Arab men, opposed by some 127,000 British, including white, Indian, black and Arab. In all 11,189 men died, with 10,811 incapacitated through disease and wounding, and more died of illness and starvation than from battle injuries. The armies could not have functioned without the work of black African porters, carriers and labourers, bearing loads of up to 60lb. An estimated 95,000 black support service men died, the majority, 41,000, coming from GEA.

The country had developed under the impetus of Carl Peters, its protectorate status confirmed by the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890. Lake Tanganyika formed a western border with the Belgian Congo, while to the north Lake Victoria bordered British East Africa near Nairobi. To the

*'In all the German colonies, though but a few decades old, a life full of promise was discernible.'*

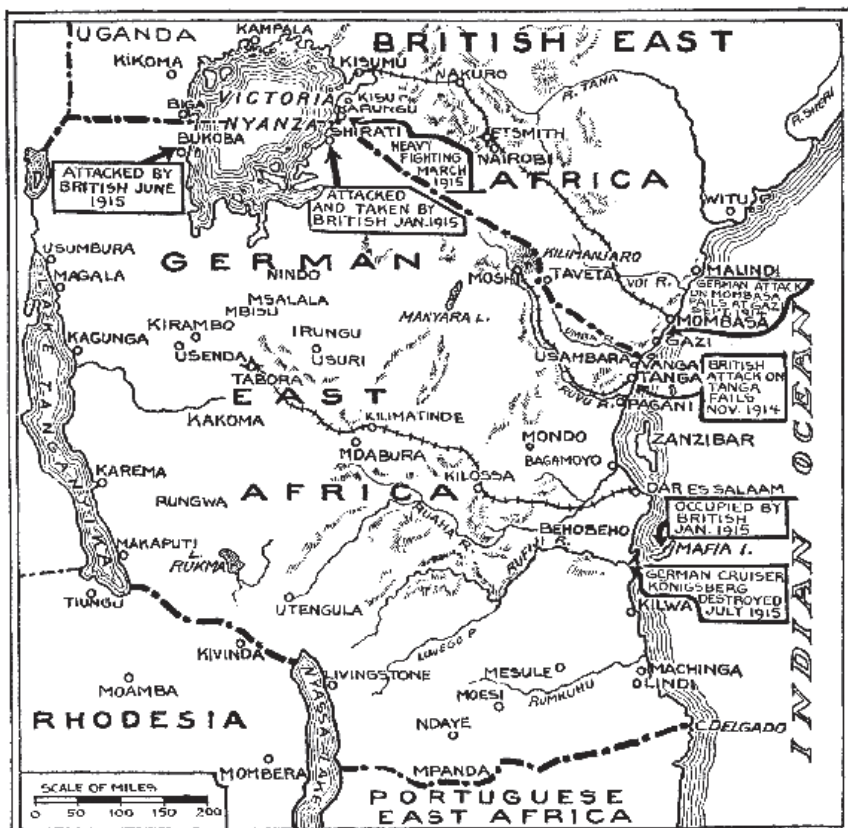
Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck,  
*My Reminiscences of East Africa*

south, Nyasaland and Lake Nyasa bordered the territory of a third imperial power, Portuguese East Africa. The 1890 Agreement also provided that Heligoland (in the North Sea) should belong to Germany but Britain would control Zanzibar, marking the beginning of a process by which territories were defined with lines drawn on maps far away in Europe. Only later were the boundaries tested on the ground, with the War effectively becoming the last stage in the 'Scramble for Africa'.<sup>1</sup>

## A large developed colony

GEA was a big country, three times the area of present-day Germany, with two significant ports, Dar-es-Salaam and Tanga, and two railways: the Usambara Line from Tanga to Moshi, where coffee is grown on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro, and the Central Line running west from Dar-es-Salaam, via Morogoro and Tabora, to reach Lake Tanganyika at Kigoma. Agricultural plantations had been developed, based on sisal, rubber and cotton, but never achieved a profit. Nevertheless, the colony was a possession that the Germans could be expected to defend fiercely.

The historian, Hew Strachan, has explained that Britain and Germany had opposing objectives.



*Map of German East Africa*

Germany wanted to open up the war in order to divert Britain's attention away from Europe. From their colonies, the Germans could effect this strategy on several fronts – on land, sea (in the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean) and on the inland lakes (Victoria, Tanganyika and Nyasa). However, it was in Britain's interest to try to close the down the war so that it could concentrate its efforts in France and Belgium.<sup>2</sup>

### A central dominant personality

The history revolves around one dominant

personality, the colony's military commander, General Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck. The first substantive action of the campaign in East Africa was an amphibious landing at Tanga in early November 1914, by the British Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' under Major Aitken, which was wholly and unexpectedly repulsed by the Germans. This victory raised German morale and they realised that value might indeed exist in confronting the British in Africa.<sup>3</sup> It took more than a year after the Tanga debacle before the British forces and their allies started to subdue

von Lettow-Vorbeck, the appointment of General Smuts to command the expedition in February 1916 marking a turning point. By September 1916, von Lettow-Vorbeck had been confined to the south-east of the country, and by November 1917 he had been forced south across the border into Portuguese East Africa, where he maintained a very mobile campaign throughout 1918.

### Hostilities end two weeks after Europe

My interest had been stirred by finding Claude's personal photographs of von Lettow-Vorbeck's formal 'Surrender' at Abercorn on 25th November 1918 – two weeks after the cessation of hostilities in Europe: but how had this come about? By late October that year, news was reaching the German forces that an armistice was being negotiated, but von Lettow-Vorbeck's reaction was to push on. He had now entered British territory in Northern Rhodesia and on 12th November had reached Kasama, whilst Captain Spangenburg seized the bridge over the Chambeshi river, 50 miles to the south.<sup>4</sup>

### Breaking the news

The next morning, after the capture of an

English motorcycle dispatch rider, Lettow-Vorbeck was handed a telegram: 'Send following to Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck under white flag. The Prime Minister of England has announced that an armistice was signed at 5 hours on Nov. 11th and that hostilities on all fronts cease at 11 hours on Nov. 11th. General van Deventer.'<sup>5</sup> Lettow-Vorbeck remained unbowed: 'I felt convinced that the conclusion of hostilities must have been favourable, or at least not unfavourable to Germany.' On 14th November, he met the District Officer, Hector Croad, who explained that the Kaiser had abdicated and quit Germany. Eventually accepting the news, he was instructed to proceed immediately with his troops to Abercorn.

On the morning of Monday 25th November, the sky swollen with rain over Abercorn's parade ground, as the British flag fluttered in the wind and a contingent of Northern Rhodesia riflemen and askari formed up as guard of honour for the signing of the surrender, they could see the 'Lion of Africa' for themselves. Colonel Hawkins was surprised:

'Von Lettow himself turned out to be a very different man from what we had



*Ceremonial Parade at Abercorn of the Northern Rhodesia Regiment and the 4th Battalion, King's African Rifles, after the surrender of the German forces, 25th November 1918.*



*Claude Oldfield on patrol on the GEA Border, 1917.*

expected. A little over medium height, and wearing a short pointed beard, with fair hair turning grey, he is a fine looking man of forty-nine...instead of the haughty Prussian one had expected to meet, he turned out to be a most courteous and perfectly mannered man: his behaviour throughout his captivity was a model to anyone in such a position'<sup>6</sup>

### **A hero's welcome back in Berlin**

Back in Berlin a hero's welcome awaited him. On 2nd March 1919, Lettow-Vorbeck led a 'Victory Parade', marching through the Brandenburg Gate to be received by the Weimar government. He and his men had earned the distinction of being the only German force to occupy British territory during WWI, fighting the last battle on African soil on 13th November 1918.

As demobilization got underway, a further calamity for the African population was gathering pace, with the outbreak of what became known as 'Spanish 'flu', said to have

originated in Sierra Leone. Although normally a killer of the young and elderly, it hit those in the prime of life, striking with amazing speed, killing around 4% of the East African population, and an estimated 20 – 40 million worldwide. In Africa, the loss of so many able-bodied males resulted in acute food shortages. In the words of Mulenga Chisanga Paulo, a young survivor of the pandemic, 'After the end of the White Man's War catastrophe fell upon us. A bad air fell upon our country. People died like flies. No village or family was spared. There was death everywhere'<sup>7</sup>

The Centenary of the End of WWI in Africa will be marked in Mbala, Zambia on 25th November 2018.

Malcolm Alexander has written *Ulendo: An African Love Affair in the Footsteps of Rhodes*, the biography of his great-uncle, Claude Oldfield, to be published in 2018.

<sup>1</sup> The Heligoland archipelago gave Germany control of the new Kiel Canal and the approaches to their North Sea ports

<sup>2</sup> Strachan, Hew, *The First World War in Africa*, Oxford University Press, 2004

<sup>3</sup> Peter Baxter at <http://peterbaxterafrica.com>

<sup>4</sup> Paice, Edward, *Tip and Run: The Untold Tragedy of the Great War in Africa*, Weidenfield & Nicolson, 2007

<sup>5</sup> von Lettow-Vorbeck, Paul, *My Reminiscences of East Africa*, Hurst & Blackett, 1920. In May 1917, Jan Smuts handed over the command to another South African, Jacob van Deventer.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Paice, *op cit*.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Mwelwa C. Musambachime, *African reactions to the 1918/19 Influenza Epidemic in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland*, Department of History, University of Zambia, Lusaka, 1998.



# What conditions will UK agriculture face after Brexit?

**Berkeley Hill**, Emeritus Professor of Policy Analysis, updates us on research, conducted by Agra CEAS Consultants, into the post-Brexit situation for farming

The agricultural producers and sectors closely linked with them are rightly concerned with how the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union and its Common Agricultural Policy (Brexit) will impact on them. In the past two years, some 20 studies have been published by or on behalf of various organisations, each focusing on aspects of particular concern to their members. Among these publications are accounts of sessions held by Select Committees of the House of Commons and House of Lords dealing with Brexit (the House of Lords has a sub-committee devoted to Brexit and agriculture). Evidence given to these Parliamentary bodies often duplicates existing reports and studies, though the Committee system allows for a degree of scrutiny and follow-up of points of interest.

In terms of official work by Defra on the likely impact of Brexit on agriculture, Michael Gove (Secretary of State) was less than clear in his reply to questions from MPs in a Commons Committee session at the end of 2017 on what has been happening within his Department. However, from informal contacts, Defra is known to have been interested in sector-level modelling of Brexit, and has partially funded a FAPRI\* project (together with the other agricultural departments in the UK) that looks at the impacts on the prices which farmers receive for their products as the result of new UK/EU trading relations.

But trade is only part of the story. The studies agree that there are four main features of the post-Brexit environment of agriculture that must be taken into account.

- **The shape of possible domestic agricultural policy**, and in particular what may happen to the levels of Direct Payments (in particular, Basic Payments) once the UK has exited from the EU and its Common Agricultural Policy. This topic is complicated by the fact that the UK's devolved administrations may choose to apply different types of support post-Brexit, or to use different levels of the same support mechanism. However, recent policy statements from Mr Gove show he intends to phase out Basic Payments, paid on the area farmed. Though agri-environment and similar payments currently under rural development measures are likely to be increased, these are primarily designed to compensate for the extra costs of delivering environmental services or to replace income forgone, and do not support profits in the same way as do Basic Payments.
- **The outcome of trade negotiations in the Brexit process that will impact on market prices received by UK farmers**, and which carry implications for trade with the rest of the world. Changes that make UK exports more difficult are likely to depress prices on UK markets, and those that make imports more expensive (border checks, increased tariffs etc.) will benefit British farmers by raising their prices, though consumers may end up paying more. There will be an impact on the net incomes of farm operators and their business viability.
- **The availability and cost of migrant labour**, which can be expected to also affect the cost of UK labour. If labour from the EU-27 cannot enter as easily, farmers will have to pay more to

\*FAPRI – Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute



attract workers from other industries. Some estimates suggest that labour costs will increase by 50%, which will have a big impact on sectors such as horticulture, which use large quantities.

- **Any change in the regulatory burden** on farmers as a result of leaving the EU. Lighter regulation can be expected to be felt in lower production costs. An example could be the relaxation or simplification of required agricultural practices currently applied under agri-environmental schemes. However, care would be needed where the ability to trade with the EU-27 could be affected, such as with the use of chlorinated washes on chicken.

Clearly many details of each of these four factors cannot be known until the outcome of the current debate on domestic policy and the Brexit trade deal are settled. So much at present is conjecture. Consequently, several studies have used scenarios, in particular looking at the best and worst set of circumstances that might emerge, so that farmers can prepare themselves for these boundary situations.

One of the studies, for the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) which receives levies from farmers in various sectors, was conducted by Agra CEAS Consultants, the firm based in Wye that was originally a spin-off of Wye College and is still part-owned by Imperial College. The work was carried out by Dylan Bradley (a director of the company who did his PhD at Wye) and myself. Both the detailed technical report and the Horizon summary are available from the AHDB website.

The scenarios adopted, put forward by AHDB and refined by us, are as shown in Figure 1. The first corresponds as closely as possible with present conditions of the single market, though even with a free trade deal between the UK and EU additional costs are incurred (there will be the need for some border checks, etc.). In the second scenario there is no trade deal with the EU but the UK unilaterally adopts a liberal trading policy with

Figure 1: Three scenarios investigated.

Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free Trade Agreement made with EU</li> <li>• Agriculture support, labour costs and regulation unchanged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No trade deal with EU, but UK unilaterally lowers all tariffs to zero</li> <li>• 50% reduction in overall agricultural support</li> <li>• Permanent labour costs rise</li> <li>• 5% reduction in regulatory costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No deal with EU</li> <li>• WTO tariffs apply to exports from UK to EU and go all imports to UK</li> <li>• 75% reduction in overall agriculture support</li> <li>• Labour (permanent and seasonal) costs rise</li> </ul>

all countries; importantly, it also reduces domestic support by 50% of current levels by eliminating Basic Payments but transferring funds to rural development schemes (which include agri-environment). In the third there is also no Brexit trade deal, but trade with all countries (including the EU) is then carried out on WTO terms; there is also a larger cut in domestic support. This represents a very 'hard' Brexit and a very tough domestic regime.

**Assessment of impact on five main farm types**

Assessment of the impact of each scenario is made at individual farm level using accounting information from the Farm Business Survey (averaged over three years) in England and changes in market prices estimated using a gravity trade model. The results for all farms and five main farming types are given in Figure 2; some types such as horticulture and pigs and poultry are more difficult to model and are not shown separately.

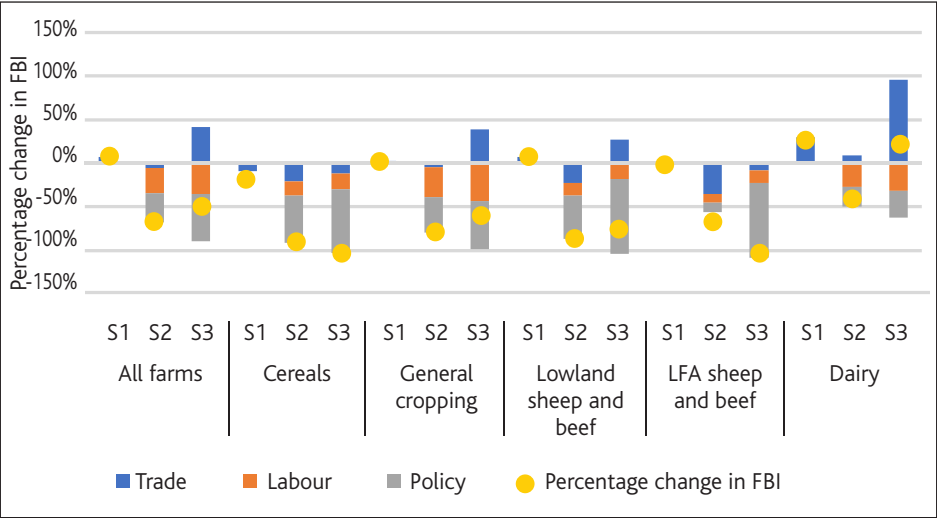
The yellow round spot indicates the change in Farm Business Income, and the columns show the contributions of the policy, trade and labour

changes to the net FBI shift (regulatory changes only apply to Scenario 2, are small and are omitted from this graphic). It is worth noting that:

- As would be expected, Scenario 1, which is very similar to the present situation, shows minimal shifts in FBI, though dairying benefits because the extra cost of dairy imports raises market prices for milk a little.
- Farming types are affected differently by the other scenarios. For the types other than dairying, scenarios 2 and 3 result in large falls in FBI. The biggest falls are seen in Scenario 3 in cereal farms and LFA\* beef and sheep farms. Dairying is again an exception under Scenario 3 as milk prices are expected to rise as tariffs on dairy imports from EU-27 countries increase.
- What happens to domestic policy (grey column section) is usually more important to

\*LFA = Less Favoured Areas, eg upland or mountainous.

Figure 2; Percentage change in average Farm Business Income for all farms and main farming types



income changes than are the trade implications (blue column section), especially in Scenario 3 where spending on support is more severely curtailed.

- Among the types shown, changes in labour costs resulting from restricting immigrant labour is most important in affecting FBI among general cropping farms, probably reflecting the dependence of those with field-scale vegetables on this form of casual labour.

Of course, exercises of this sort are dependent on the assumptions built into them. With time some of these will become more concrete. In the first quarter of 2018, Defra started a consultation on the issue of how to phase out Basic Payments and which types of rural development schemes should be continued and expanded; so later in the year, domestic policy intentions should be known. Mr Gove has also talked about encouraging the Home Office to treat migrant agricultural labour as a special case. While trade negotiations are continuing it is not possible to know the outcome

for UK agricultural prices, and a resolution may not emerge until close to the Brexit date, though some commentators find the extreme crash-out WTO arrangements unlikely.

### High output to input values ratio is key

However, some findings are less sensitive to details of scenarios. More detailed analysis, available in the Agra CEAS published report, show that farms that perform well in economic terms (by having high ratios between the value of their outputs to their inputs, including imputed values for the farmers' own labour) are in a stronger income position irrespective of which scenario is chosen. Poor performers are always disadvantaged.

**The message to farm managers and advisors is clear – whatever your farming type or size, pay attention to this ratio and take steps to improve it. You will be in a better position to cope with Brexit and the shift to a national agricultural policy, whatever forms these take.**

## Brexit, glyphosate and the plough

I spotted this letter in *The Times* in July 2107 and thought it worthy of publishing in the Journal, mainly because I agree with the position adopted by the writer, **Malcolm Ogilvy** (1963–66). Interestingly, some friends of his suggested that his stance appeared to put him in the pro-Brexit camp; he vehemently denies this accusation. Another reason why I agree with him!— Editor:

### End of the Plough

*Sir, Jerome Starkey covers well the advantages of direct drilling or minimum tilling ('Farms thrive by ditching the plough', July 1). However, he omits to point out that a primary function of ploughing is to control weeds that would otherwise compete with emerging crop seedlings and that the increased adoption of ploughless farming internationally has been closely linked to the use of herbicides to control emerged weed s before seed planting. The most widely used and important of these, glyphosate, is under serious threat of being banned in the EU. If that did occur, Brexit might benefit British farmers by offering a way to continue developing ploughless farming, something denied their EU competitors.*

# Afghanistan: integrating agriculture, nutrition and health Part 2

An update from Wye's own correspondent, **Dr Nigel Pool** (1991–92), on a project aimed at improving the impact on nutrition of agriculture in South Asia.

## Influencing policy and practice

I reported last year on my research in Afghanistan, and am pleased to present an update on our work. The Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA) research programme consortium aims to enhance the impact of agriculture on nutrition. The research focus is on how agriculture and agri-food systems can be better designed to improve nutrition. It is concerned with multi-sectoral strategies, policies and interventions that can enhance nutritional status, particularly of women and children. The process involves understanding the facilitators and barriers to linking agriculture and nutrition, and the nutritional impacts of agri-food value chains. LANSA activities in Afghanistan to date include the mapping of stakeholder perceptions of sectoral policies and programmes, primary research, secondary data analysis, policy dialogue, capacity strengthening, research uptake and dissemination.

The research has been led by me as a member of SOAS staff of the University of London International Development Centre (LIDC) in collaboration with a range of organisations in Afghanistan: Afghanaid, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, United Nations Environment Programme, and BRAC. Local partners have been essential in linking to governmental and other

organisations in Kabul, and in conducting fieldwork in Provinces such as Badakhshan, Bamyán, Kandahar and Nangarhar.

## Policy and stakeholder landscaping

### Mapping stakeholder perceptions

The objectives of this research were to identify the interrelationships among key organisations in agriculture and nutrition, evaluate the local evidence linking agriculture to nutrition, and understand the perceptions of decision makers about policy making and implementation, and the capacities needed for improving nutrition through agri-food systems. We found a lack of policy integration between agriculture and nutrition, and little attention to women's specific roles. Policies themselves were said to be often donor-driven, ill-designed through top-down processes, with insufficient knowledge and awareness of local realities and heterogeneity of context.

Communication within and between sectors was good at the national and provincial levels, but communication between the national and subnational levels of government was poor. There was evidence of coordination activities among myriad policy formulating bodies, funding and implementation partners, but there are many inconsistencies to overcome. Finally, the deteriorating security situation and increasing humanitarian needs, particularly from returning refugees, point to the need to integrate in a deliberate way the acute humanitarian interventions and long-term development needs, of which malnutrition is just one element.

Funded by UKAid: This research has been funded by the UK Government's Department for International Development; however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK Government's official policies.



## Secondary data analysis and primary field research

### Anaemia deficiencies

South Asia is the region of the world with the highest levels of iron-deficiency anaemia. There has been little work on understanding anaemia in Afghanistan, but anaemia prevalence amongst non-pregnant women has been estimated at 25%. Food fortification or supplementation are potential approaches to addressing micronutrient deficiencies, but are problematic in typically dispersed and remote communities. Analysis of secondary data on health and agriculture was conducted in order to identify the drivers of anaemia in women, and the food sources of iron. We found that ownership of agricultural assets, particularly sheep, and their use in food production were found to have an important role in alleviating anaemia, especially where local food markets may be inadequate.

### Dietary diversity and food market access

The diversity of foods in diets is an important factor in enhancing nutrition. For Afghanistan, where bread is the principal food, lack of dietary

diversity is very important. Secondary national data were used to analyse the relationship between agricultural production and dietary diversity. Qualitative research is also being conducted in Bamyan Province to understand at household level what are the drivers of dietary diversity, with a view to identifying interventions that address malnutrition by diversifying farming and increasing food storage and access to markets. The results confirmed an important seasonal dimension to home production and market supplies. Higher levels of farm production diversity were found to be positively associated with dietary diversity in the regular season – late spring to autumn, but not in the lean season – late autumn to spring.

### Irrigation and dietary diversity

The linkages between irrigation and dietary diversity are a largely unexplored phenomenon. This is important in an arid country such as Afghanistan, where productive enterprises such as kitchen gardens, fruit trees, fodder crops, staple grains and potatoes depend on irrigation. Analysis of secondary data showed that household access to irrigation infrastructure is associated with greater household dietary diversity. The irrigation effects could be mediated through two pathways: enabling household production and consumption of a greater diversity of foodstuffs, particularly nutrient-rich foods; and also through greater access to nutrient-rich foods sourced from markets, purchased with income from productive enterprises, particularly horticulture and tree crops such as fruits and nuts. We need to know more!

### Seasonality

Seasonality of agricultural production in remote and extreme environments is an important factor in limiting food self-sufficiency. Emerging from these data is the question of how easy – or difficult – it is even for rural people to buy food





*Halfway up the Koh-i-Babar Mountains*

from local markets. Access to markets for nutrient-rich foods can be critical for food security and nutrition – except that logistics and communication problems can also limit availability of, and access to, marketed foods during the same lean periods. This suggests that investments in infrastructure and communications systems may be important for addressing seasonal nutritional deficits, alongside ensuring both food production and food diversity secured through markets.

### **Vegetable gardening by adolescent girls**

A pilot project has been undertaken to assess the impact of nutrition promotion and collective vegetable gardening by adolescent girls in three Provinces around Kabul. This initiative combined elements of nutrition education and social empowerment in community settings in addition to training in technical horticultural production and realising improved supplies of nutrient-rich foods to participating households. Traditional social constraints and gender conservatism were significant barriers, but the nature of the

collective action was found to provide safeguards, enabling the girls to participate in the project and contribute to a degree of community transformation.

### **The contribution of dairy production and value chains**

Empowering women is an important way of ensuring that household resources and decision-making contribute to nutrition. We have noted that access to micronutrient-rich foods can be achieved by increasing incomes which enable net consumers to purchase nutrient-rich foods from markets. Dairy production is not only important for providing nutrient-rich foods that can be stored, but in Afghanistan is also one agricultural sector in which female participation is high, with a range of potential benefits for women in terms of income and employment.

New survey work is being undertaken to gain further insights into the contribution of dairying to livelihoods and nutrition, including those of urban consumers in Badakhshan Province. We are gaining insights into the effectiveness of gender-sensitive interventions in nutrient-rich food value chains. At the same time, we aim to identify opportunities to increase domestic production and dairy processing vis-à-vis dependence on imports – or dumping – of foodstuffs from neighbouring countries. The dairy value chain model is relevant for other provinces and other countries characterised by similar nutritional vulnerabilities and underdeveloped production and market opportunities.

### **How will this research make a difference?**

Research outputs have been disseminated through a range of media such as conferences, small-scale meetings, and in written form as policy briefs, working papers and refereed journal articles. LANSa will continue to engage with stakeholders through a variety of channels and

media up to and beyond the end of the programme in 2018 in order to integrate agriculture and nutrition policies and programmes, and to promote coherence among national and international stakeholders in addressing the complex challenges of malnutrition in the diverse regions of Afghanistan.

Overall, improving nutrition, particularly through food-based approaches, needs a higher profile in Afghan policy discourse. The evidence from this research programme has potential to impact areas from agriculture through food markets, consumption patterns and household nutrition to the policy-making environment. It has already been fed into the work of Afghanistan's zero hunger strategic review group. Two workshops with local communities and policymakers, respectively, are planned in Bamyān for 8th and 9th July. A third is also likely in Kabul on 12th July with interested organisations courtesy of DFID.

A key theme is the decentralisation of policy-

making to the provincial level. Devolution requires a balance of responsibilities between the capital and the provinces, taking into account the availability of technical expertise and local capacity, and the ability for sectors and organisations to communicate effectively in provincial and district fora. It is expected that provincial-level or sub-national governance would result in policies that are context-specific, and with fewer inappropriate projects and policies created centrally or copied from other countries. In the medium term, a donor and stakeholder conference is needed to synthesise perspectives and policies of all stakeholders, linked to the decentralisation agenda.

In the long term, so much depends on the security situation, which is not improving. I still believe that it is important to 'hang in' and do what we can to stabilise the situation and offer hope – and not just for agriculture and nutrition – for when things get better...



*Potato fields in Bamyān.*

## A lot of coffee in Brazil in 1952

**John Barham (1949–52) provides a glimpse of life on a massive Brazilian coffee farm over half a century ago.**

I was an Agric student at Wye from 1949 to 1952 and by the end of September 1952, I had arrived on the Brazilian farm, Fazendas do Cambuhy. It was about 350 km north west of the city of São Paulo and had been bought by an English firm in 1924. It covered 136,000 acres (55,000 hectares), or 1½ times the size of the Isle of Wight. The farm was about 35 km long from north to south and the same width in the north but about 22 km wide in the south. The southern boundary was a river, those on the east and north ran for long distances in straight lines as originally the farm had been a rectangle.

### **Farm layout with 4.5million coffee trees**

A wide band to the north was extensively planted in coffee; next to that was a strip of poorer land in the centre of the farm, with scrub and poorer grass, fenced so it could be grazed by cattle. The southern end of the farm was largely made up of fertile, red earth much of it planted in coffee. At its peak the farm had had 5 million coffee trees, and in 1952 it was about 4,500,000. There were about 18,000 head of Zebu cattle, a local breed; there was also a large commercial piggery.

All the coffee until recently had been planted on the square, with the trees about 4 metres apart in blocks of at least a thousand trees; subsequently contour ditches had been dug through each block to reduce erosion. All arable land now had contour ditches made soon after it was first ploughed and then maintained irrespective of the crops planted.

The roads were all dirt with a simple, but fairly effective, drainage system which fed rain water off into contour ditches. A wooden cattle grid was installed where a fence crossed a road with a gate

alongside it. The farm had its own telephone system which used the ground instead of a second copper wire but with the normal two wires for the outside line. The switchboard was at the head office, which was located towards the northeast of the farm and had a grass landing strip for small planes by the road to the small town of Matão. Electricity was installed throughout the farm, including the houses of the agricultural workers. A metre gauge railway line ran through the farm and two of the stations were used for loading coffee for shipment to Santos from where it would be exported by the company that was the major shareholder in the farm.

For administrative purposes the farm was divided into 26 agricultural sections of varying sizes, each managed by a Brazilian administrator who was supervised by one of the three English managers while a Brazilian was responsible for the cattle and the piggery. They and the Commercial Manager, a Swiss, and the Chief Accountant, an English veteran of World War 1, all reported to the General Manager, who was a South African.

### **Variable rains affected coffee yield**

Weather was an important factor, with the rainy season starting in September and lasting until March: it did not rain every day but normally it was enough to provide crops with sufficient water. During the dry season which followed, and included the winter months, there might be an occasional light rain but I remember years when there was no rain at all. Coffee production was very dependent on good rains and on the farm in the four years from 1952/53 there was a high yield of 69,000 bags, each of 60 kilos and a low of 21,000 bags.



*Hand winnowing of coffee.*

After a few months I was told I would be taking over as Administrator of the southern section called Niagara, so named on account of a small waterfall. Niagara was the largest section, it still had some coffee but a start had been made replacing this with avocado pears and oranges. It had some pasture, arable land where we grew maize and rice, although in one year of poor rain we lost a rice field of 240 acres. There was some semi-virgin land, of which we were clearing a little each year. Like nearly every section Niagara had a school, with a house for the teacher.

The office was next to my house and I started at 05.30 to prepare for the day's work, some of which I would then discuss with my manager when he phoned. We also had to plan the work for the tractors; I had three track-laying Internationals, including one with a bulldozer blade, and several little grey Fergusons for light cultivating work and haulage, for this work they replaced several mule teams. I also had the only lorry in the three southern sections.

The work in the coffee was all done as piece work

for which I had to set the price with the advice of the foreman.

### **Coffee harvesting**

The coffee bean that you buy in the shops had started out covered by a fine white film as one of a pair inside the bean growing on the tree. This pair of beans was covered by a pulp and enclosed by the skin which started out green, turning red and finally, as the pulp dried, turning black. It was at this stage the coffee was harvested onto large sheets on the ground, mostly by hand with perhaps help from a maize stalk. It was important to keep this coffee separate from that already on the ground, which would have picked up flavours undesirable in top quality coffee; the two were handled separately.

The coffee from Niagara would go to the Alabama Section, 15 km away, where it would be unloaded into a water tank whose flow would carry it down to the drying ground of black bricks. The beans would be spread out and turned regularly by men driving mules with wooden blades designed for the job. Overnight the coffee would be piled up in long rows and covered with tarpaulins. Finally, when the manager thought it was dry, it would be taken into the mill to be stored in one of the large wooden bins with other coffee of a similar quality. There it would stay for a couple of months before being milled to remove the all the covering I described earlier and the 60 kilo bags of green coffee would be ready for shipment to Santos and export.

### **Daily routine**

All workers paid on an hourly rate had to be outside the office by 06.00 for the roll call by the senior foreman. Their hours of work were 06.00 to 10.30 when there was an hour for lunch of the staple diet of rice and beans that they would have brought with them. After lunch they worked until 13.30 when there was then a pause for half an hour; the day's work finished at 18.00. A siren

outside the office, which had replaced the traditional bell, would be sounded to give the time for these breaks but those working further away had to rely on their own good sense of time as so few had watches.

I would give orders for the day's work to the foremen in charge of the gangs and the men working on their own such as the tractor drivers, and some skilled workers including the carpenter. I had a couple of older men whose job was killing ants, which could do serious damage in a very short time. Workers were encouraged to catch snakes which were sent to the 'snake farm' in São Paulo where the venom was extracted for the production of injections for those bitten by snakes. Once the orders had been given I went round the stables and the plant nursery where we could be bringing on young coffee, avocado and orange plants as well as eucalyptus, which we planted to fill in small areas which would later be cut for firewood.

After breakfast, I would go out on one of my horses to inspect the work being done as well as seeing what we would need to be doing next. The afternoon could well be the same but I could spend an hour on paper work which was important as every type of work was costed. I had a clerk new to the section, whose assistant was a bright 14 year old whom I had taken on straight from school as he knew everyone in the section, which was a help both to me and the clerk.

### **Investment in irrigation**

As already mentioned, coffee production was very dependent on good rains, especially as coffee flowered during the dry season. Following some years of indifferent yields a decision had been taken to make a significant investment in irrigation pumps with many kilometres of aluminium pipes and the necessary sprinklers, and as well as making earth dams to store the





*Coffee drying grounds from the air.*

water. At Niagara, we had a very simple and cheap solution with a temporary dam above the waterfall, which could be installed in a few minutes, and gave us a pool of water deep enough for our two pumps irrigating the young oranges and avocado pears.

The planting of coffee, oranges and avocado pears followed similar lines. The contour ditches were refreshed, and the surveyor would mark the place for each plant with a bamboo stake. A gang of men and women set out the young plants and about half a dozen more competent workers then did the planting. The plants were given a really good watering from a tank pulled round by a tractor. The leaves of young avocado plants tended to get burnt by the sun so women used old sacking and bamboo stakes to make a cover for each plant.

### **Local services provided by estate**

There were a number of activities not strictly agricultural run by the commercial manager: a cotton gin which ran for a very short period as so little cotton was now grown on the farm; and an oil mill for which cotton seed and groundnuts were bought in for the production of cooking oil.

There were a number of general stores across the farm that supplied everything the workers and their families needed: food, material for making clothes and a few basic tools. This they bought on credit at the beginning of each month and the cost was deducted on the payroll at the end of the month.

The State of São Paulo had recently laid out some new highways, one of which forked just inside the boundary of the farm. Although far from ready, these wide straight dirt roads were already being used. The farm had built and was operating a petrol station at this fork together with a restaurant whose menu, served 24/7, was a beef barbecue with the traditional rice and beans that were an important part of every Brazilian's daily diet.

The farm ran an ambulance, whose driver was a trained midwife, which was used to take those requiring hospital treatment to the hospital in Matão.

Social life for the expats and the senior Brazilians was based on the club at headquarters, which had a good clay tennis court with lighting and a bar, as well as seating out on the veranda. Work did not finish until 18.00 hours, so for those of us living out in the sections visits to the club were weekend events. Niagara was 27 km from headquarters and it would take me about 40 minutes to do the trip. As a bachelor, I could stay in the bachelors' quarters, known as the Bullpen, on Saturday nights at the company's expense.

The farm was taken over by a Brazilian in 1954 who, in June 1956, decided to sell it and I left in November. I then worked for an American company based in São Paulo and subsequently at their European headquarters in Brussels until the company was sold in 1987.



# Wye, water and wags

**Peter Youngs (1961–64) provides a fascinating insight into how rules on water abstraction for irrigation evolved from a 1977 crisis.**

I was persuaded to write an article for the *Agricola Journal* by **John Mackinnon**, who was our specialist pig vet at the Broxtead Estate and who I got to know quite well while managing there. He, in turn, when dining with friend **John Walters** at Wye, was persuaded by John to do some canvassing for contributors in his neighbourhood. No such thing as a 'free dinner' John M!

My own working life has been relatively unremarkable, so I thought that an insight into the world of water abstraction for irrigation and its regulation might be of interest to some readers. It is only a very small part of the British farming scene, but the issues, I am sure, are repeated in the many ways in which we produce food. To friends and colleagues who have been there and done that, I apologise; you will be bored!

## Managing the Broxtead Estate

I was one of a dozen or so who graduated from Wye in 1964 and opted for a career in Farm Managing. After a two-year 'apprenticeship' in Norfolk, I obtained the post of managing the Broxtead Estate near Woodbridge in Suffolk for the Paul family. There were already links to Wye; my predecessor was '**Sam**' **FJ Jolly** (1951–54). In my later years at Broxtead, I was responsible to the late **Jonathan Paul** (1962–64). I remained in this position for 35 years until I decided to retire from it in 2002. I was succeeded by Andrew Paul, son of Jonathan and **Tessa Paul** (née **Durie** 1962–64).

Some may think that 35 years in the same job must be boring, but farming is a continuing series of challenges and innovations, and I was very much left to get on with the job. Furthermore, my wife and I are natives of Suffolk and continued many old friendships playing hockey, tennis and

badminton. The very active local farm club completed the social scene. It was an enjoyable existence. I was lucky because many managing jobs disappeared due to divorce settlements, the appearance of farming companies and other reasons.

## Entering the world of water resources

I planned to retire from Broxtead at age 60 for a number of reasons and I thought the estate really needed some new blood. When I made the original decision to retire, I did not really have a retirement plan. Again, I was lucky; it came to me, and I became involved in the world of water resources and their regulation. Water has always fascinated me; I remember that even in prep school days, I and one or two friends would dam up the local ditch and create sluices and spillways. After nearly flooding the school playing fields, our activities were banned!

The background to this starts with the type of farming at Broxtead, which is typical of East Suffolk. Here the soil is very sandy, being a product of the coralline crag (calcareous sand) beds underneath. These start in the west along a line linking Ipswich in the South and Lowestoft in the North (virtually the A12) and get deeper going eastwards towards the coast. The area is a pleasant mixture of rivers, estuaries, forests, heather and farmland.

As always in farming, the soil type governs the type of crops that can be grown: the sandy soil is ideal for root crops and now salad crops. The climate here is also moderated by the sea and allows early and late cropping, which is not possible in the frost-prone fens. This has all resulted in the present day large enterprise – capital-intensive, vegetable production supplying



*Peter and his wife Sue.*

the major supermarkets. The other input essential to investment in this type of production is water, of which fortunately East Suffolk has a reasonable supply. Water is essential to obtain quality as well as quantity of production to guarantee a return on the investment.

### **EA invokes Section 57 of Water Act**

The story really starts in 1997: the year before had been very hot and dry and the intervening winter lacked its usual rainfall. By the early summer of 1997, rivers were drying up. The Environment Agency then invoked a little-known Section 57 order (being part of the 1994 Water Act). This enabled them to stop spray irrigation if there was potential for environmental damage. It came as a bolt out of the blue to most irrigators, particularly at the time of greatest need. A group of local growers in East Suffolk, (all members of the now defunct Anglian Produce potato group), met with the EA Drought Officer to find a way of resolving the problem.

It was agreed at the meeting to restrict the annual abstraction for that year to 50% of licensed volume. It was rather tongue in cheek since the group had no idea how the other 60 or so abstractors in the area would react. Fortunately it rained soon after the meeting. The Drought Officer later confided in me that East Suffolk

average uptake of license for 1997 was 49%! We had kept our part of the bargain! It was soon apparent that spray irrigation was bottom of the list for priority and top of the list for restriction.

### **East Suffolk Water Abstractors Group (ESWAG)**

The group, who originally negotiated with the EA, realised that something needed to be done about this situation. The East Suffolk Abstractors Group (ESWAG) was born. I chaired the original group and, with the help of Framlingham Farmers Group, ran it from my office at Broxstead. At the same time another key Water Abstractors Group (WAG) was born, the Norfolk Broadland Area Water Abstractors Group (BAWAG) which still has one of its founder members, Andrew Alston, as Chief Executive. At this point, I must mention that other groups already existed for the purpose of sharing a limited resource, the Lark Valley Group and the Rother Valley Group being two examples.

The group continued in this format until 2002 when I retired from Broxstead. Upon learning of my impending retirement, the ESWAG committee invited me to become manager of the group on a more permanent basis. This was an offer that I immediately accepted. At the same time, I applied for a Rural Enterprise Grant to fund the group. This application was successful and paid my salary for four years as well as transport costs to meet all the group members and equip an office at home. During these four years, the continuing subscription income from members built up a useful reserve for the group. Since the grant years, the subscription level has been set to break even.

This enhanced role varied considerably, from lobbying Ministers, our local MP and local councillors, to providing a helpline on abstraction issues for members. Liaising with the EA and the NFU was also very important for learning about new proposals and passing these on to the ESWAG committee or membership in newsletters for comment. The ESWAG mission statement (any

respectable organisation has to have one), was to represent the interests of irrigation abstractors in East Suffolk. I remained in this position until 2016.

The first problem to address was raising the profile of the irrigated crop sector. The first report, produced in 1998, mentioned its importance to the rural economy, substitution of imports etc. and the environment. Other reports followed, but by far the most influential was the Pullen report, *'The importance of Irrigated Agriculture to the Economy of East Suffolk'*. It was produced by Steph Pullen, a PhD student at Cranfield University, under the guidance of Dr Jerry Knox. Steph established from three sources, including ESWAG's own members database, that the annual output from irrigated agriculture in East Suffolk was about £60m, of which 15% went directly into the local economy as wages and a further 20% indirectly through services. With no irrigation, ie

growing combinable crops only, the output would be £12m annually with a proportional loss to the local economy.

This report made a considerable impact on local politicians and councillors. One would also like to think it enables the EA to have a more proportionate view on water resources. The other report of consequence was produced as a result of a stakeholder meeting attended by our chairman, Richard Pipe. (Towards the end of my involvement there was far more interaction between Public Water Companies (PWCs) and other water abstraction stakeholders.) At this meeting our chairman was challenged about a water strategy for agriculture, which, of course all PWCs have to produce for Ofwat, but none existed for agriculture. Again, Dr Jerry Knox came to the rescue and produced one based on some climate change, supply and demand scenarios he had been working on at that time.



*Agricola members pictured at Peter and Sue's Golden Wedding Anniversary celebrations in 2017. From left: Jim Butchart 1962–64, John Youngs (brother) 1967–69, Peter Youngs 1962–64, and Sue's brother John Chaplin (did not go to Wye).*

## NFU involvement

The NFU became involved in water abstraction at quite an early stage. Being a specialist subject, it initially came under the remit of the NFU Environment specialist at that time, Paul Hammett. However, as the importance of water abstraction increased, it soon became apparent that a full-time NFU Water Resources Officer was needed. Paul was chosen for this position and with his shrewd, quiet but tactful manner, he is now a leading consultee in the water industry. Through Paul's work, most irrigation areas in the country now have an abstractor group or similar representation. Regular meetings of these group representatives with Paul keep him informed about local issues and in turn they learn about national policies. These meetings also brought me in contact with several Agricola Club members, **Symon Murch** (1962–65), **Lindsay Hargreaves** (1975–78), and **Tim Jolly** (1969–72), to name but a few.

## Environment Agency

The Environment Agency, of course, is the major player in water resources. Surprisingly, it has never appeared to oppose or resent the appearance of WAGs, in spite of the fact that in the early days they questioned many of the abstraction regulations that the EA had to enforce. Fortunately, the EA realised that WAGs were representative bodies and much easier to liaise with compared with trying to elicit a response from hundreds of individual license holders. Initial meetings tended to cover a wide range of agricultural subjects but became more water-focused as time went on. With Paul Hammett co-ordinating the abstractor groups, some helpful agreements were negotiated with the Agency. Co-operation on early warning and likely format and extent of restrictions was one success.

## Abstraction Licensing

Most people know that anyone abstracting more

than 20 m<sup>3</sup> of water per day from any one source must have an abstraction license. Prior to the late seventies they were issued by the local river authorities and had no end date. They were fairly easy to obtain and land owners and water companies alike took advantage of this to obtain good volumes of water. They are referred to as Licenses of Right and, so far, the EA has declined to challenge their status in light of the European Human Rights Laws. Although owners still have to pay an annual abstraction fee whether they are used or not, there is a considerable volume that is not used. Land owners, in particular, regard them as an asset to be kept.

Since then, licenses have been issued by the Environment Agency. These are for a fixed period (referred to as time limited) and their need, efficiency of use and their posing no threat to the environment, determined by the EA, have to be proven before renewal is granted. In the early years, having a License of Right or a Time Limited License, made little difference to the owner. However, in recent years with increasing environmental pressure on abstractors, it has led to considerable conflict within the industry. Where there is an environmental problem, Time Limited Licenses can be reduced or even revoked at renewal, whereas Licenses of Right cannot be touched. Owners of the former, therefore, feel aggrieved that they are having to take all the hits. Also, licenses are issued on a first come first served basis and, when issuing a new license, the EA has to take all existing license holders into account in deciding whether that license is used or not. This does not make for the most efficient use of existing resources. The River Deben in Suffolk has only 20% uptake of license on average, although any more than this would make it over-abstracted anyway. The government announced a new licensing regime some four years ago to resolve this problem but, to date, it has made little progress. It is also a problem for Paul Hammett at the NFU who has members in both camps.

## Environmental reviews

During this recent period, the EA undertook various reviews aimed at protecting the environment and complying with EU laws. The Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) looked at the status of all water management units (mini catchments) in England and Wales and classified them as water available, no water available, over-licensed or over-abstracted. This is still one of the factors to be taken in to account when deciding if a new license can be issued. Most of East Suffolk is over-abstracted or over-licensed. CAMS have now been succeeded by the River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) to fall in line with EA practise. The status of the water availability still holds good, except for water management unit now read water body.

The other significant assessment was the Review of Consent (ROC) which looked at the ability of a license on its own or in conjunction with others to cause environmental damage. Any Time Limited License so doing could be altered or revoked at renewal. Owners of Licenses of Right would have to be compensated. Government refused to do this from the treasury and instructed the EA to raise a fund by levying all abstractors in the same way that the normal abstraction charge is raised, ie so much per cubic metre of licensed volume. To date, about £5m has been raised in the Eastern Region and very little paid out. The levy has now ceased and £5m of abstractor's money now sits in the government coffers. It would be difficult to refund because licenses in the meantime have changed or might not even exist.

## Water storage

Most of the regulations referred to above relate to summer abstraction when there is a greater chance of environmental damage. Most abstractors appreciate this. Fortunately there is water available, even in the driest eastern side of the country, at times of high rainfall and high river flows. Government recognises this and does support the storage of this surplus water for

summer use. Grants for the construction of reservoirs are available from time to time. Until recently only winter high flows have been allowed to be abstracted for storage. This water is charged at a lower rate than summer water, as a further incentive.

Recently, at a drought conference, the Minister announced that summer high flows after storms could also be abstracted. (This has been a long-standing source of frustration to abstractors who see flood water rushing past their pumps after a summer storm.) Unfortunately the EA was not prepared for this and could not allow it because it did not know whether to charge summer or winter rates for the water! In principle, the storage of surplus flows is logical, but there are many problems to be overcome. There is not the infrastructure on many of our streams and rivers to measure and transmit flow data to EA offices and/or abstractors. They need to know ASAP when such flows occur, since some may be short-lived. Inevitably the wording on abstraction licenses would need changing to allow for this as well.

On a happier note, a project that could help water resources for irrigation in the future does appear to be progressing through the enthusiasm of a group of local farmers, in spite of many setbacks. While at Broxtead, I often attended an Internal Drainage Board (IDB) meeting to discuss ways and means of getting rid of surplus water. In the same week we might have an ESWAG meeting to discuss water prospects for the following summer. There had to be some potential here.

## Storing surplus water

A survey of drainage pumps in East Suffolk found that, on average, they pumped as much fresh water into the saline estuaries as is used for all the irrigation in East Suffolk in an average year. This does not include water released through sluices, which is difficult to calculate. Initially the EA were against the storing of this IDB water, claiming that it was necessary for the environment of the estuaries. Fortunately they have since backed



down on this principle and a project to pump IDB water into farm reservoirs is being planned on the Felixstowe peninsula.

A second project being looked at in East Suffolk is aquifer recharge, which has been used in certain parts of the country. About 50% of the area's irrigation water comes from the crag aquifer, mentioned earlier. Like the chalk, its porous nature means that it can hold a large volume of water that can be abstracted by means of well-point systems or boreholes. However it does rely upon recharge from winter rainfall and after a series of dry winters the aquifer may fall to an environmentally dangerous level affecting the springs and streams flowing from them. This happened in 1997 and with very little rainfall so far this winter, could well happen again in 2018. Again, with encouragement of ESWAG and local farmers, a plan to recycle water from the streams back into the aquifer has been proposed. At present concerns about polluting the aquifer with unsuitable water have to be overcome.

In conclusion, I must say that the water connection has been a very enjoyable and interesting part of my life. It allowed me to keep in touch with the local farming scene and continue to meet fellow land managers. Dealing with a Government agency gave an insight into

how Government works (or rather does not work!). Lack of decision comes as a mixed blessing to water abstracters, depending on whether they are seeking to hold on to their existing water volume or are seeking a new source. I cannot see this changing in the near future. Likewise, with the present propensity to consult, consult and consult again, WAGS will be essential to ensure that agriculture has a fair share of water resources for food production in the future.

Since forwarding the original copy of the article, DEFRA have come out with a set of proposals.

"Earlier in 2018 Government announced yet another proposal to reform the water abstraction regulations. It appears to address many of the issues referred to in my article which was written in the summer of 2017. Environmental damage, sustainability and unused licenses feature strongly. However, it does propose more flexibility of licenses for trading and greater and easier access to high flows to improve water availability. It also announced pilot areas to trial these proposals, one of which is East Suffolk. Interesting times ahead for my successor, Tim Darby, no doubt".

**Peter Youngs**



# Bucket lists, life-long learning and soya beans

**Richard Longhurst (1966–69) ruminates on the outdated model of North to South movement of expertise.**

This year I have achieved something from my bucket list; it was not on the scale of abseiling down the Matterhorn but it gave me much satisfaction. It was started off with a stray comment in my interview at Wye in December 1964. On being asked my interests, I had chimed up with “well I am very interested in malnutrition”, whereupon head of the panel Principal Dunstan Skilbeck said “I hope this is not based on personal experience”, followed by everybody on the panel saying “ha, ha, ho, ho”. Skilbeck then said: “why don’t you do Voluntary Service Overseas for your practical year?” This triggered a lifetime interest in how agriculture could be used to directly improve human (especially child) nutrition. My VSO work in eastern Nigeria was to introduce soybeans as a high protein food to grow and eat in an area of severe child malnutrition. When I came to Wye in a somewhat under-informed state, the late Ian

Carruthers told me that I asked about growing soybeans in the south east of England (as the answer to everything), much to everybody’s merriment, of course.

## Why assume ‘we’ teach ‘them’?

When I returned from VSO, many of my volunteer cohort wondered what value we had added to the communities where we had worked, and all agreed that we had learned most from our work experience. There were also some comments made along the lines of: “Why is it assumed that it is ‘us who teaches ‘them’”? “Why do the richer countries take the view ‘you have the problems and we have the solutions’”? This is reflected in the traditional model of development aid, where the ‘North’ i.e. industrialised, ‘developed’ countries in Europe, North America, Australia and Japan, sends aid to the ‘South’, the so-called ‘developing’ countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In the 1970s when I was a post-grad student at Sussex



*There is advice to be had from India to prevent floods such as these.*



University, Britain faced many economic problems, including the oil price shock, and some of my colleagues wondered why 'development' was a concept only confined to poor countries. I agreed with this and started to collect any academic or newspaper article, or official report that might have looked at these sorts of reverse transfers or approaches to sharing practical ideas.

### **Applying actions from the South**

So at the risk of sounding boring in terms of bucket list fulfilment, I did, at the end of last year, write the introduction to a collection of previously published articles that looked at 'development in Britain', 'learning between North and South', and 'applying actions from the South'. This introduction is for an archive Bulletin from the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University. It is 'open access', to be found, for those whose excitement has grown over the last few paragraphs, at the following link: <http://bulletin.ids.ac.uk/idsbo/issue/archive?issuesPage=2#issues>

There are some practical examples of South to

North exchanges, for example in areas as diverse as microfinance, local government budgeting, global health, child immunisation campaigns and addressing economic austerity. Today, this topic is described as 'universal development', and the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals have given an impetus to this approach, in so as far as the Goals apply to all nations.

### **Advice from India about flood mitigation**

The relevance of the approach in agriculture is marked by shared challenges such as climate change, ageing populations, declining infrastructure and services, and rural unemployment. There are some practical ideas; most recently is the reporting of flood management. Flooding has been substantial in many parts of the UK with damage to property and livelihoods. There was the 'to dredge' or 'not to dredge' debate. As journalists have pointed out, for decades the British government has been funding scientists working in the tropics and using their findings to advise other countries to protect forests and replant trees to prevent communities downstream from being swept away. Of late, advisers from India have come to London to show how putting back snags in rivers slows down the rate of flow, so slowing down runoff, using techniques developed in Rajasthan. These cost much less than standard flood defences.

However, promoting and applying sharing ideas between South and North has been hard work. Some changes in mind-set are needed. In the late 1970s, the late Professor B S Baviskar from the University of Delhi and a world expert on cooperatives was invited to study rural development in Britain, funded by the Arkleton Trust. He and his colleagues visited rural development programmes in Staffordshire, Hereford and Worcester, and the east of Scotland, in the similar manner to the 'missions' of experts that visit developing countries, taking three weeks for their enquiries.



*Growing soya beans in Kent? .*

### **Indian suggestions regarding the decline in rural communities**

The authors looked at the British situation from their Indian perspective, identifying a general decline in rural communities, suggesting that the bias of policy-makers in favour of urban and industrial centres had aggravated the problem. They asked if the policy (at the time) to encourage large farms and discourage small ones was viable, and how this was related to unemployment, and proposed that size of operation and productivity should be based on employment days rather than acres/hectares. They argued the need to see rural problems as a whole and the large farm policy could not be justified with growing unemployment and increasing poverty. National policy in rural development has changed more towards this view from the 1980s. Interestingly, the response from the British officials interviewed was one of support for these views, although one said that the visit was far too short, asking how could these visitors understand in such a short period, mirroring of course the complaints of those who have to host 'missions' from the UK.

### **Taking an integrated view of rural development**

What this and other research (notably from geographers) and practice suggest is that the

attention to rural development in the South takes a more integrated view of agriculture and natural resources, including rural communities, livelihoods and jobs, rural welfare and the use (and misuse) of authority, and that may have greater application in the North. There is a longer tradition of studying from bottom-up in the South, and also not just treating rural areas as sites for agricultural production. If there is to be a renaissance of the role of UK agricultural economists, as suggested by the current President of the Agricultural Economics Society, Peter Midmore, these views remain very relevant.

Can UK agriculture and rural development learn from the experiences of the South? What are the mechanisms that will support these non-traditional transfers of knowledge and practice? Well, working that one out goes onto my ever-lengthening bucket list. That is the problem believing you have ticked off one thing off, the list just grows.

Finally, what about growing soybeans in the South East of England, which had caused such mirth to my contemporaries? Well on BBC Country File at the end of October 2017, there was a section on just that – growing soybeans in the UK, near Canterbury, I believe. As Country File is the closest I get these days to learning about UK agriculture, that news gave me much satisfaction.

# The Tropics: where great expectations can become great ironies

**Hugo Ramirez-Guerrero (1998–2001)** reflects on ways to improve agriculture and life in general in tropical regions

Most people – my family, friends, neighbours, and I – have been facing a dramatic turn of events in my country, Venezuela. I now realize that our current Venezuelan reality is not unlike that faced by many other tropical countries. We can see that, despite the introduction of innovative strategies or revolutions (industrial, green, molecular, social, cultural, economic) in our countries, we nonetheless too often face increases in hunger, poverty, health problems, and a severe loss of biodiversity, among other challenges.

In addition, people in tropical regions are the most likely to face year-round natural disasters and other meteorological events. All these impacts and the irrational application of foreign models cause low crop yield, poverty, new pests and diseases, and human and animal migration among other negative social, political, and economic consequences.

To help us move in a more positive direction, I would like to humbly share some reflections on how to better carry out our innovative agricultural/horticultural work in tropical and neighbouring regions.

## 1. Proud of our Tropical regions

We have to be very proud and protective of our tropical regions. We should be aware and continue to explore, integrate, respect, and conserve all local resources (including the richest biodiversity and our priceless human resources), while acknowledging local challenges. Certainly, we all need to implement and be guided by the axiom: *Think Globally and Act Locally*.



## 2. Teamwork

All people from tropical countries (academics, researchers, politicians, economists, social and religious leaders, private and public sectors, communities) should work together as a team, committed to achieving real, sustainable development using local resources, including our rich and invaluable biodiversity.

## 3. Empowerment of local people

In this work, we need to support, encourage, and empower local people to enjoy, work for, and benefit from a diverse tropical environment. A good example could be doing applied research that addresses local realities. I had the opportunity to earn a Ph.D. under a split programme, in which I completed a literature review as well as lab and greenhouse experiments at Wye College, then followed up with field experiments in Venezuela. The project allowed me

to get to know the real challenges and opportunities faced by commercial growers in my home country. This combined academic and local field experience strengthened my vocation and passion for tropical agriculture.

#### 4. Distinguish between climatic regions

Now is the time to clearly distinguish tropical, subtropical and temperate regions. There is no doubt that there are well-marked differences, but those differences are often not explored, acknowledged or respected. One key example is how concepts and models, developed in temperate countries, have been commonly introduced to other regions as panaceas. Another example is when researchers try to communicate and share their own experiences worldwide. In general, we only consider a researcher successful when she or he writes and publishes papers in high-impact journals. Consequently, most people neglect and often do not recognize the quality of the work of researchers not published in such publications. Since the time of Gregor Mendel (1868), many professionals from anywhere still find it hard to overcome this global communication barrier. (Jules Janick – *Chronica Horticulturae*, 48-2, 2008; San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment – DORA).

In keeping with this theme, here are four of my latest, unpublished, draft papers:

- Ramirez-Guerrero, Hugo. 2018. BioTropical Horticulture: Integrated and Personalized Production of Vegetables, Fruits and their Allies. Action Pilot Project currently addressed to Organized Communities.
- Ramírez-Guerrero, H.O. 2015. Aurora Tropical: Sustainable Ways to Transition to BioTropical Horticulture. Paper as keynote speaker at Thai International Symposium.
- Ramírez-Guerrero, Hugo; Perez, Martha Cecilia;

and Nishi-Patrick, Minoru. 2015. Farmer field school in tropical vegetable production. Outcomes report addressed to Interim Skills Development Facility (ISDF, Australian Government). Utulau, The Kingdom of Tonga.

- Ramirez-Guerrero, Hugo. 2015. El Nino and La Nina do deserve, expect and claim TROPICAL AID. Opinion article wrote during Sabbatical leave in Tonga (2014–2015).

These and some other related papers are available as full text at

[www.horticulturatropical.org](http://www.horticulturatropical.org),

[www.researchgate.net/](http://www.researchgate.net/) and [scholar.google.com](http://scholar.google.com)

#### 5. Avoiding populist movements

Last, but not least, we must avoid any populist movement where people get together to subtract and divide. We do say that only politicians and religious leaders practise populism to diminish diversity and the power of their opponents. However, at the end of the day, we and most social, academic and research leaders are also applying populism when we do believe that our prototypes are the panacea for solving current problems of other people.

For example, it is usual to hear that researchers found a miracle gene, species, plant, animal, fertilizer, technology or model to alleviate poverty in tropical regions. I have learned the limitations of this thinking when – sadly -- I encounter the hunger, social poverty, and massive human migration from tropical regions caused by the loss of political, economic, social and religious diversity and integration. In my own example, Venezuelans used to be a well-represented number of splendid tourists and foreign students (under- and post-graduate ones); nowadays we have instead become a nation of more than 4 million tropical emigrants, exiles and refugees. We are now an example of a tropical nation where

great expectations have been transformed into great ironies.

Thank you so much for reading this. I look forward to being part of a fruitful, growing movement to regenerate our tropical environments and societies. United to Sum and Multiply.

*"Sustainable development in the tropics must be built on an educational and research strategy which integrates, respects, rescues, promotes and strengthens the marvellous environmental and human diversity."*

### A topical update

"Caracas was once the most prosperous city in Latin America, boasting a scheduled Concorde flight from Paris. Now a collapse in public services is forcing residents in even its wealthiest areas to adapt to the everyday tedium of lavatories that do not flush and showering with buckets.

More than half the 5.3 million people in the capital have been without regular running water for longer than two months....."

Stephen Gibbs, Caracas, in *The Times*, 12 May, 2018.



## New caps for Rustics

*In recognition of their longevity and for their commitment to an annual Rustics cricket tour, the Agrícola Club made a generous financial contribution towards the cost of a new set of 'baggies' (Australian name for their floppy cricket caps) for the squad, most of whom are ex-Wye graduates or their offspring. Their annual tour report in the Journal provides much amusement (at least it amuses me! – Ed.) See over.*



# Wye Rustics Cricket Tour 2017

Report by **Dickon Turner** (1982–85)

## The Tour Party

*Ex-Wye College:* **Simon Richardson** (1971–74), **Peter Holborn** (197–75), **Nigel Snape** (1977–80), **John Dinnis** (1979–82), **Andrew Craze** (1982–85), **Martin Hole** (1982–85), **Dickon Turner** (1982–85), **Charlie Squire** (1987–90)

*Wye College Progeny:* Richie Turner, Robert Craze

*Honoured Guests:* Chris Neild, Ryan Waldock, Josh Holmes, Freddie Preston, Kick Douglas, Kurt Leuthart, Jack Upton, Tom Care, Janno Moller, Nick Tapp

## Kilmington 2nd July 2017

What more could you ask for: a sparkling summer's day, a verdant beer garden, the waft of Sunday roast dinners, a new Rustic flag fluttering in the gentle breeze on a makeshift flagpole, a bouncy castle for the younger tourists, and Charlie Squire in surprisingly quiet mood due to bursitis of the right elbow. An announcement from Kilmington that they were a couple of players short put pay to Robert 'Micro' Craze's dream of an afternoon of Otter Ale and sunshine and he was drafted into their ranks. The other vacancy was quickly filled by ... Squire! The thought of battling against the Rustics proved an irresistible anaesthetic and his bursitis arm shot up when another volunteer was requested.

Rustics batted first and unleashed their South African recruit, Janno Moller, who flashed his first delivery to fine leg before being caught spectacularly by an outstretched bursitular arm. Squire was like a fielder possessed, claiming a second catch from the bat of Tom Care as the



*The new Wye Rustics flag fluttering alongside that of the Devon Dumplings.*

Rustic innings stuttered painfully to 89 for 6. Hole had been bounced out by the bowling of Rocket, and Freddie Preston clean bowled as he charged a Craze delivery.

It was Kurt Leuthart's ability to penetrate the holes in the Kilmington field that saved the Rustic innings. His free-scoring 58, in partnership with the free-pulling Ryan Waldock (44), ensured Rustics set a reasonable total of 202 for 9 declared.

In response, Kilmington lost their opening batsmen to the new ball pairing of Preston and Josh Holmes, but this brought a young Rockett to the crease, alongside a determined Squire. The boundaries were starting to look far too short as the batsmen's wands put the Rustic bowlers under a spell of immense pressure. Their magical partnership of 142 took the game beyond the tourists ... or did it? The introduction of Moller's extreme pace, and a wicked googly from Care, brought three wickets for no runs and the match might have been back in the balance. But when Craze walked out to bat and

immediately gloved a ball over his father's outstretched fingers, Rustics chance had gone. He calmly saw Kilmingston to victory in partnership with another explosive Rockett.

The minibus journey back to the Rustic retreat was uneventful until Squire and Hole exited on all fours having stumbled into the driver's gearstick, almost sending the vehicle lurching into parked cars. As a tip for the driver, Moller left the contents of his stomach.

### **Devon Dumplings 3rd July 2017**

The score of 80 for no wicket off 17 overs was a harsh reflection on the surprisingly swift opening bowling of Jack Upton and a rather pale Moller. The track at Exeter County Ground was proving docile and the Dumplings' opening batsmen rewarded their skipper's decision to bat first. The tweekers of Micro Craze found more response as he extracted sharp spin from the dry surface. However it was his undeviating arm ball that confused the batsmen and brought his two scalps.

Perhaps the most notable performance in the field was from wicketkeeper Andrew Craze who was reading his son's bowling more successfully than the batsmen and, in testing conditions, he conceded no byes. Also, Nigel Snape performed heroics when he got his body in the way of four

certain overthrows, but as he was the square leg umpire, this was hardly in the spirit of the game. The Dumplings opener, Grant Stone, carried his willow through the innings, amassing a magnificent 159 not out. His partner, Paddy Rowe, was on 76 when his skipper (fretting over a late declaration harming their chances of a victory) advised there was one over to go before he must declare. Josh Holmes was brought on to bowl and Rowe smashed each of his first three deliveries for six. The over continued with two dot balls and a 4, leaving him on 98 not out, but the captain was unrelenting and closed the innings on 281 for 2 declared.

The Rustics opening pair of Preston and Craze studiously saw off the new ball bowlers and went to tea on a steady 54 – 0. Thereafter they recognised that a more forceful approach was required and so Craze dined out on his productive reverse sweep while Preston went aerial, driving elegantly over the inner ring of fielders. They were still together as the last 20 overs were called and 137 runs required for victory. Now the Dumplings skipper was fretting over a premature declaration.

Preston reached his century from 106 deliveries, soon followed by Craze whose ton came from 113 balls, and still there was no sign of their



*Preston slog sweeping*



*Craze reverse sweeping*

concentration relenting. When Preston was fortunate to survive a sliced lofted drive, Craze sought to calm his partner with the reassuring words "steady on old boy, I want to create memories out here".

With 8 balls to spare, the pair achieved an astonishing 10 wicket victory, Preston ending unbeaten on 163 and Craze on 113. Rustic records were smashed as the Dumplings were devoured. But spare a thought for Leuthart, who turned down the opportunity to open the batting, preferring to bat at No.3 so he sat patiently in his pads for four hours.

**Shobrooke Park 4th July 2017**

Having gone in search of their ancestors within the caves above the coastal resort of Beer, the Rustic woolly mammoths set off for a new fixture at Shobrooke Park on the foot slopes of Exmoor. When the younger Rustics returned from Beer beach (having frightened away the innocent families through their inappropriate swimwear), they discovered there were plenty of cars to transport them to Shobrooke, but insufficient drivers. Frantic recalling of a Craze Snr from the pub, and the retrieval of Kick's car from Exeter ensured the match started only a few minutes late.



Bored of watching the dominant batting of Preston and Craze, Rustics set out with a fresh opening partnership of Upton and Leuthart. They struck 91 for the first wicket in just 15 overs, but not without alarm, particularly when Upton played the ball onto his own stumps but with such finesse that the bails remained in place. Following their dismissal, and the run out of the luckless Moller with a direct hit from the boundary, it was down to Kick Douglas and



*Hole (left) and Dinnis (right) during their brief partnership before the players went off for tea within the picturesque thatched pavilion (opposite)*





Holmes to steer the Rustics towards a competitive total with some commanding batting on a flat track. A late cameo from Martin Hole saw him dropped three times in his 10 not out as the Rustics reached 267 for 6 from their 40 overs.

At the interval, Snape showed a remarkable turn of vertical speed as he sat down for tea. Young Craze had whipped away his chair resulting in a crash landing on the pavilion floor. There was artistic carnage as egg mayonnaise, Victoria sponge and Darjeeling created a Jackson Pollock masterpiece on his clothing.

The Shobrooke response commenced in confident style with their Aussie left-hander dominating a second wicket partnership of 114. He seemed determined to hit every delivery from spinner Richie Turner over the short boundary at cow corner, and the scorebook suggests he had reasonable success in this regard. What the scorebook does not reveal is that he was chancing his arm hitting against the spin and was dropped twice on the boundary, as well as surviving a very loud LBW appeal when

the umpire (Turner senior) failed to recognise that an off break bowler can occasionally spin the ball. When he was expertly caught by Moller off a skyer, the score was 145 for four, and with Craze Jr finding more form with the ball, Rustics were back in the game. However, a young Devon county left-hander, D Pyle, decided to try and out hit the Aussie by peppering the car park with some exceptionally clean striking. Various wily bowlers were introduced into the attack in an attempt to distract the batsmen's concentration, but Dinnis's two overs went for 24, and Waldock's for 33. Pyle reached a memorable century as the home side ran out comfortable winners by six wickets and with five overs to spare.

### **Beaminster 5th July 2017**

Craze Snr arrived at the Beaminster ground to find his business laptop, with all his sensitive customer details, had been left behind at the Rustic retreat in Seaton. This shocking breach of data protection did not concern Moller, who opened the Rustic batting by smashing the new ball into a thicket well beyond the boundary at



*Moller (left) and Turner Jnr (right strike out at Beaminster.*

long on, from where it was never retrieved. He reached a truly sparkling hundred from just 17 overs and out of a total score 131 –2. When he was the third man out, the Rustic score began to stumble and the lower order were hastily retrieved from the bar stools in The Greyhound. Turner Jr recorded his highest Rustic score of 41, but no other batsmen passed 20 as the innings fizzled out at 220.

As with the fixture at Kilmington, it is many years since the Rustics tasted defeat at Beaminster, but at 137 for one in the 19th over, the home side were dominant. Turner Snr was the main culprit in a Lurpak-fingered fielding display, while the bowling was looking decidedly weary. It required the batting heroes Moller and Turner Jnr to alter the course of the match. When they were introduced to the attack, their pace and spin claimed six wickets for just 49 runs, and another Rustic victory was looking secured. However, the tourists' inability to deal with left-handed batsmen saw the match swing again as Keenan scored a courageous 38 not out to see Beaminster cruise past the Rustics total.

The Highways Agency made every attempt to

prevent the Rustic tourists travelling to Kent that evening, by closing all useful motorways. However, the resourceful Rustics took to the back roads and eventually arrived at Snape Towers for a late barbecue and midnight swim. It was noticeable that most of the Antipodean opposition for the following day's crunch international match had already retired for an early night.

### **OWLS 6th July 2017**

The OWLS (Older-Wiser-Larger-Slower) are a collection of Kiwis and Aussies (with a lone Dutchman) who were on their inaugural tour of the northern hemisphere. Snape had arranged a fixture with the Rustics that was played at a delightful ground within Belmont Park, Faversham. On arrival, there was frantic searching for the new Rustic flag which was surely hiding somewhere within the Craze car. After the vehicle had been emptied of all kit, overnight bags and customer's data, the flag could not be found. There was much sniggering back in the West Country, from those well aware it was still in Hole's car,

On a hot morning, Rustics were set to sweat in

the field as the OWLS reached 73–1 with Hugh Wright (brother of the New Zealand opening bat) reaching a half century. However a comical run out by Leuthart, and the guile of left-arm swing bowler, Nick Tapp, brought the Rustics back into contention. Inspired by the appearance of WAGS on the boundary, catches were being held, the most spectacular being a Douglas's one-handed, overhead, pluck at gully. A dogged team effort restricted the OWLS to 228 all out from 51 overs.

Scores of 200+ runs had been easily chased down in each of the other tour matches, so when Leuthart and Craze put on 100 for the 3rd wicket, the lower order were already relaxing with cool beer in hand. However, on reaching 50, Craze was forced to retire and the OWLS' left-arm spinner, Andrew Nuttall (who played first class cricket for Canterbury, NZ) began drying up the runs with an unerring 18-over spell. The score had slipped from 135 for 2, to 158 for 7. Neild and Turner Jnr refused to throw in the towel and pushed the tally to 190 when Craze returned at the fall of the 9th wicket. The penultimate over went for 14 to give Rustics hope, but Nuttall's last over only went for one and Rustics had to settle for a tense draw at 206– 9.



*The Belmont Park folly (and Nigel Snape)*

While the tour ended with just one win from five matches, it was a deceptively successful week as the cricketing standards remained high, the tour numbers were strong and the defeats only preserved the fixtures for future years. Squire, a team player to the last, had left tour early and was quick to message his personal tally of two wins from two games play.

### Statistics

Rustics	202 for 9	C. Leuthart 58	R. Waldock 44	
Kilmington	206 for 5	J. Moller 4.3 -0-19-2		
Dumplings	281 for 2 dec	R. Craze 13-1-47-2		
Rustics	284 for 0	F. Preston 163*	R. Craze 113*	
Rustics	267 for 6	J. Upton 78	K. Douglas 78	J. Holmes 49
Shobrooke Pk	268 for 4	R. Craze 8-0-44-2		
Rustics	220 all out	J. Moller 101	R. Turner 41	
Beaminster	223 for 7	R. Turner 7-1-39-3	J. Moller 3-2-2-1	
OWLS	228 all out	R. Turner 8.2-1-35-3	D. Turner 4-0-21-2	N. Tapp 6-1-35-2
Rustics	206 for 9	A. Craze 65*	K. Leuthart 45	



## Book reviews

### Mary Knighton

By Richard Brown (1963–66)

*Reviewed by Judy Rossiter (née Brown (1962–66) and no relation!)*

What do farmers do in the winter? Well, they write books of course! Or, if your name is Thomas Richard Brown, you write an 800 page novel that will, with any luck, prove to be the 21st centuries' answer to *Gone with the Wind*. Richard may have to overcome his aversion to self-publicity if this is to prove the case as he failed to mention this epic achievement at the 2017 reunion at his farm near Huntingdon in July, not thinking it to be appropriate for the event.

This couldn't be further from the truth as the book is about a rural dynasty at the turn of the century and everything about it would appeal to anyone with any connection to the land. The story is told in minute detail; it takes a paragraph to describe a man lighting a cigarette, but this is a clever ploy to build a relationship between the reader and the characters in the tale. Although the story is slow moving, the

reader is reeled in after a hundred pages or so and the tension begins to mount.

#### Starts off benign and beguiling

The early chapters are benign and beguiling, the style of writing slowing the reader down to the pace of life being described so it becomes mesmerising, like a clear slow stream gently rolling the pebbles around it's river bed as if getting to know them. One is so lulled by the tranquillity, the small petty daily concerns, that when the story shifts up a gear the brutality is truly shocking. The same attention to detail is given but without any need to be explicit, the removal of a belt and lowering of braces is enough indication of an imminent assault and nothing more graphic is required to thoroughly unsettle what might have seemed an insipid everyday story of country folk.

Quote from: 'A Note from the Author '. Richard says "I wrote Mary Knighton as a work of fiction set in the period from the end of the nineteenth century until about 1930. I trace the life of the protagonist, Mary, from her late school years through a failed marriage until her life is determined by the needs of a disabled boy. All the characters are fictitious; however, there is an element of truth in parts of the plot and some of the individuals bear similarities to those I have known in the past, but are long since deceased. I have made every attempt to portray country life as accurately as possible, including the isolation which goes along with the idyllic rural scene as well as the brutalities on the one hand which contrast with the passions on the other".

The story of Mary Knighton is played out in the rural backwater of North Bedfordshire and describes the lives and often harsh existence of the yeoman stock from which she comes. It starts in 1898 as she is ending her schooldays and contrasts the rural idyll with the isolation and cruelty that country life can bring. Mary is headstrong, passionate and alluring, but after a promising start to a career in fashion, circumstances conspire against her and she is eventually forced into a hapless marriage. How she copes and overcomes her misfortune is compellingly told and her relationships with others develop as the story unwinds.



Tea flows through this tale like the chorus in a Greek tragedy. It seems it was the universal remedy to every sorrow and pain and the toast for every joy. It emphasises what a nation of 'pill poppers' we have become since first aspirin and then paracetamol became the universal cure-all pills, or rather the lack of them, are also at the

root of the greatest social change to emerge from the story.

### Status of lower class women

The overriding issue is the status of lower class women at the time. Unpalatable though it may be, the class system has to be acknowledged as such, as it was clearly accepted as a matter of fact at the turn of the century and the greatest tragedy to befall a woman in this category at the time was an unwanted pregnancy. Wealthier women had more options available to them and in aristocratic circles it was hardly a problem for many, so universally accepted was the custom for mistresses. They were more knowledgeable about the risks of their profession and had access to early contraceptives, but girls in the farming community were often kept ignorant of what we now call the facts of life. Despite being surrounded by livestock, they would have been shielded from any action they might learn from.

These country women were certainly the drudges of the time and the telling of their tale emphasises just what an impact the introduction of the contraceptive pill has had on women's liberation. The two went hand in hand and coincided at the time the author would have been graduating from Wye. Who can remember the so called 'summer of love' in 1967? The feminists hit the headlines and such writers as Betty Friedan, Germaine Greer and Marilyn French, to name but a few, launched their careers. Richard's tale would endorse their achievements for contributing so much to the status of women today. Many would say there is still much to be done but it is only by looking back at the accurately portrayed circumstances prevailing at the beginning of the twentieth century that it cannot be denied just how much has been achieved. Who would have expected a farmer to be putting this on record? Does writing so well from a woman's point of view suggest a strong female influence in the family?



Richard says, 'yes' but does not say who! He did, however, agree that he named many of his fictional characters after contemporaries at Wye so readers may want to spot how many they recognise.

Richard is no George Eliot (some may heave a sigh of relief!); his is a simple story, written simply but none the less moving for all that. There is no lengthy self-examination by any of his characters; the descriptions and dialogue are meticulous but the reader draws his or her own conclusions about the implications of all that is said or in many cases, of what is left unsaid. The story is told with an enormous amount of compassion, which makes it very moving to read. As it unfolds, it becomes a real page turner and has a very satisfying conclusion. It could not be expected to be a 'happy ever after' ending; the story is too deeply embedded in reality for that. But the overwhelming sense of moral courage lifts the spirits at the end.

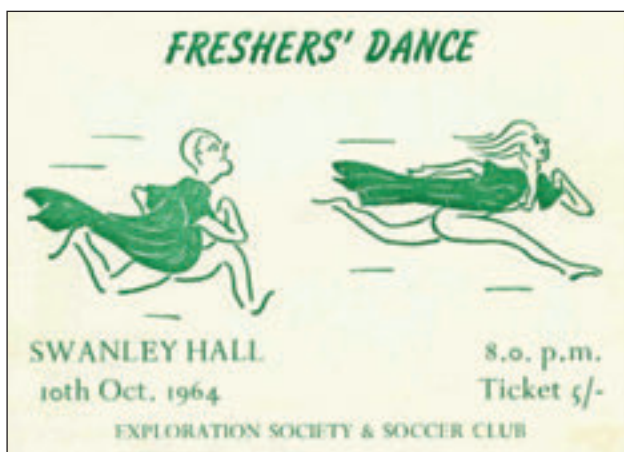
#### Potential for a TV series

The writing is so detailed it is almost a script already and would readily transpose to a TV series. If there are any Agricola Club members

working in the media, look no further for a series to follow *Poldark*. A pretty actress for the leading character and some handsome, sheaf-tossing men for the threshing scenes, should have male and female audiences happily settled for a Sunday night slot. Failing this members, you will just have to read it for yourselves - excellent value in either the paperback or online version. (The 800 pages do make it heavy so the Kindle version may be a good option if this is to be your holiday reading and for which it would be an excellent choice). For those of you who have already discovered the book - and many have already left very favourable comments on the Amazon site - you will be delighted to know that Richard has more in the pipeline. The next, *Thisbe*, will be illustrated and is aimed at children but equally suitable for any age; and then there are three more semi-autobiographical works *Long Stop*, *Postman's Knock* and *Feeding the Pigs* down the line.

For a signed copy email  
[thomasrichardbrown1967@gmail.com](mailto:thomasrichardbrown1967@gmail.com), or  
 for Kindle go to Amazon, where you will see  
 that it has many 5-star reviews!

**A reminder of  
 how things  
 were for  
 women at Wye  
 in the '60s,  
 sent in by Judy  
 Rossiter**



# Wye Community Farm update

**Richard Bowden (1987-89) sends latest news from the Wye Community Farm**

Formed by local residents as a positive response to the closure of Wye College, Wye Community Farm has for the last 10 years been working to reconnect the public with food, farming and the natural environment. Today WCF farms around 120 acres, mainly on the Wye NNR but also on behalf of several local landowners with small areas not suited to large-scale agriculture. Enterprises include a herd of British White cattle, flocks of rare and native breed sheep, PYO raspberries, and log and charcoal production.

Our young farmers meet every Saturday to care for the livestock, with the Probation Service arranging for offenders to attend throughout the week to complete their community payback orders. We would be pleased to give Agricola members a farm tour should you visit Wye. We

would be even more pleased to welcome you as a member; details of how to join are on our website [www.wyecomunityfarm.org.uk](http://www.wyecomunityfarm.org.uk)



*A newly born British White male calf.*



*Young volunteers meet every Saturday, pictured here at the Wye Market*

# The Wye Roller – or Old Contemptible

**John Walters (1964–70)** takes a ride through a book about a 1912 Rolls and its then owner who brought it to College in 1910 and then volunteered them both for a role the Great War.

In the 2013–2014 edition of the Journal, we published a photo of a 1912 Rolls Royce Silver Ghost that had been brought down to College by its then owner and converted into a work horse...the photo showed it stacked up with chairs and students posing around it in a sort of artistic setting.

The reason we had these photos at all is that we had been contacted by one Charles Howard, a collector and dealer of old cars, who had recently acquired the vehicle and wanted to find out more about its first private owner, **Barrington George Dashwood Stopford** who had been a student at Wye in 1910–13, before the outbreak of World War 1.

Although not particularly wealthy, Stopford was the grandson of the Earl of Courtown and owner of two Rolls Royces. He had been a naval officer prior to attending Wye.

But back to the beginning. Howard located the vehicle in 2008, languishing in a building in Celina, deep in rural Ohio, USA. It had hardly been used since that day it had been purchased, possibly due to the lack of a self-starter. Researching the history of such a vehicle was simplified by the fact the company keeps good records of every car they build; these are now held by the Rolls-Royce Enthusiast Club and are available for a small fee. In addition, Barrington Stopford's daughter- in-law, Mrs Sally Stopford, had an excellent set of photographs to illustrate the story.

So Howard decided to restore the vehicle, with much expertise supplied by colleagues and friends; and then more recently he published

this book, which he called *Old Contemptible*. For anyone even remotely interested in restoration of old cars the journey of rebuilding this old vehicle will prove of great interest. Equally, the story of Barrington Stopford, and his colleague and fellow Rolls owner and co-driver, Walter Carlile, make for interesting reading.

It appears that at Wye, Stopford was keen that his Rolls Royce would serve his fellow students and their staff and their families. When he died in Rhodesia in 1930 at the age of only 41, the uses to which he put his Rolls Royce were recorded in his obituary in the *Wye Journal*. One of those uses was as a staff car in the Great War. Early in August 1914, the British rushed their regular army over the Channel to aid their French and Belgian allies. The battle of Mons was a disaster and the French and British were forced into a humiliating retreat. The retreat had already begun when a number of Rolls Royce vehicles representing the RAC Corps were assigned the duty of hurrying General Snow to his staff at the front at La Coteau.

Stopford died in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) in 1930, having travelled there to take up farming. There were suggestions that his death was under suspicious circumstances. The 1930 *Agricola Club Journal* carried a report of his death that was first announced in *The Times* July 22nd, 1930:

*"On July 19th, 1930, at Raheen, Umtali, Rhodesia, Barrington George Dashwood Stopford aged 41 (by cable)."*

Barry Stopford was at the College from 1910 to 1913. It is a coincidence that we should have





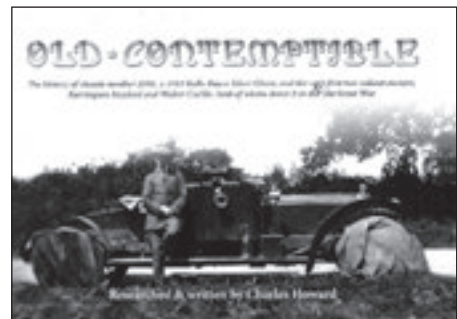
*This was probably the first and only Silver Ghost to have been used as a viewing platform for sporting events; the first, but not the only one, to have been converted to a flat-bed truck and the only Ghost known to have a very unusual skull and crossbones mascot on its 'nose'.*

read the announcement of his death at the beginning of Cricket week, because he was an indefatigable worker in these festivities. The possessor of a Rolls Royce, he placed it at the disposal of the Committee to convey goods and passengers throughout the week. He was known familiarly as 'the Admiral', as he had been in H.M.S. Britannia, Dartmouth. He was a very loyal student of the College and did all in his power to enhance its prestige. Many old students will remember his hospitality and will regret the passing of a typical Wye man.

For Rolls owners and other 'petrol heads' there is much to enjoy in this well-illustrated book showing various stages in the life of the Rolls up to its recent acquisition and refurbishment by Charles Howard who researched and authored the book. None of that changes the tremendous

life history of a car that travelled to the USA and saw action in the Great War as well as a good life at Wye.

For information on how to obtain the book, email: [card.howard@btconnect.com](mailto:card.howard@btconnect.com)



*Front cover of the book, printed in 2014 by Lavenham Press Ltd, Lavenham, Suffolk*



# Surviving Botany Lab. at Swanley at risk

**Dr Bob Baxter (1956–59) explains the risk facing the Botany laboratory and appeals for views or memories, or ideas to preserve it.**

The Women's Horticultural College, founded at Swanley in 1887, was the first horticultural education institution in the country and possibly the world. The centre became Swanley Horticultural College in 1891 and it amalgamated with the South-Eastern Agricultural College in 1946 to form Wye College.

## Last surviving building

The Botany Laboratory is on the former Swanley Horticultural College site in Hextable, and latterly has been refurbished as a heritage centre. It is the last surviving building of the former College complex. Sevenoaks District Council recently put out a 'call for sites' in its effort to find locations for new housing. The Botany Laboratory site has been put forward as one such. If accepted, it is likely that the laboratory would be demolished. At the time of writing (February 2018) the first period of consultation on the future of the site has been completed. A further chance to comment will occur during consultation on the draft local plan for Sevenoaks District, due in spring, 2018.

I have to admit that my own links to the building are tenuous. I was an agriculture student at Wye a decade after the amalgamation. At that time the Swanley legacy was represented by the name of the fine new concert hall built alongside the accommodation block to house the female students at Withersdane. The spirit of Swanley was maintained through the teaching skills of such Swanley 'refugees' as Frieda, **Schim**, Schimmer and Margaret, **Dockie**, Smith. I became aware of the threat to this building through my

membership of CPRE Kent's Historic Buildings Committee. KHBC has as its aim the preservation of heritage buildings in the county.

The building was erected in 1928 as a purpose-built laboratory; its tall, metal-framed windows designed to allow in plenty of the light required for botanical studies. It is no Hampton Court Palace, but as a working facility it stands as a representative product of its time. Many students will have studied within its walls, both from Swanley Horticultural College and later the Kent Horticultural Institute.

## Distinguished alumni

Swanley Horticultural College boasted several distinguished women among its alumnae. These included landscape designer **Cynthia Crowe**, landscape architect and co-founder of the Landscape Institute **Brenda Colvin**, and gardening writer and broadcaster **Frances Perry**. The building, therefore, has a considerable heritage value and I share the view of many local people that it should be saved for posterity. Use has been found for the building in that it currently houses a heritage centre (itself containing memorabilia from its former educational role) and Hextable Parish Council offices. Loss of the laboratory would deprive Hextable of one of its few buildings of note.

The laboratory building is linked to an area of formal gardens (not included in the housing proposal site) that formed part of the grounds of Swanley Horticultural College, and before that, of Hextable House. Loss of the building would undoubtedly detract from the historic significance of the gardens.



*Susan Pittman's photo of the former Botany Laboratory today, now referred to as Hextable Heritage Centre*

If any reader has views about, or memories of, the Laboratory I would be delighted to hear from them. Please contact me at [robaxter@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:robaxter@tiscali.co.uk).

I am indebted to Louise Ives, Susan Pittman and John Medhurst for their help and advice in compiling this article.

*This is how the Botany Laboratory looked when in use.*  
See <http://www.hextable-heritage.co.uk/index.html>



# Memorial Fund research grants

## Support for MSc students via the Tropical Agricultural Awards Fund.

*Professor Paul Webster, Treasurer and Trustee, Wye College Agricola Club Memorial Fund*

In 2016 the Memorial Fund's Trustees agreed to a request from The Tropical Agriculture Association (TAA) for funds to support its scheme that enables UK-based MSc students to travel to developing countries to further their dissertation research. TAA supported 16 students during the year, of which two awardees were selected for Agricola funding, because their subjects were closest to the courses that used to be offered at Wye College. They were James Giles of Imperial College and Alice Stedman of the University of East Anglia, whose studies are outlined below.

### **Climate Policy and Agriculture in Viet Nam: Obstacles to a Climate Ready Policy Framework.**

*James E Giles, MSc Environmental Technologies, Imperial College London*

*Supervisor: Prof John Mumford*

*TAA Mentor: Jonathan Stern.*

Viet Nam's agricultural sector requires a robust policy response to overcome the profound challenges posed by climate change. As one of the countries deemed to be most adversely affected, Viet Nam must juggle the competing demands of adaptation to ensure food security, mitigation to meet nationally and internationally agreed emissions reduction targets, whilst continuing to pursue poverty reduction measures for the rural poor.

The study identified a number of intervention points through which improvements could be made for future climate policy. These included: a more holistic approach to donor engagement; improved systems for data and information sharing; a more inclusive policy drafting process;

implementation and budget planning at all stages of the policy process; and improved monitoring and evaluation.

### **Hidden practices for achieving agricultural water management and resilience: the limitations of mainstream narratives**

*Alice Stedman, MSc Water Security and International Development, University of East Anglia*

*Supervisor: Professor Bruce Lankford*

*TAA Mentor: Antony Ellman.*

The aim of the study was to understand how narratives around achieving agricultural water security and agricultural resilience play out in South Africa, in the context of poor national governance. Research revealed 'hidden' or 'alternative' local practices and dynamics which are not discussed in the literature, including the buffer found in the unused water allocation of a large area of farmland and 'excessive' or contentious water licensing.

## Support for a farmer via the Worshipful Company of Farmers

Professor JPG Webster  
Wye College Agricola Memorial Fund

Farmer Gow's  
Ferham Road  
Longcot  
Faringdon  
Oxfordshire  
SN7 7PR

Dear Professor Webster

### **Worshipful Company of Farmers – Advanced Course in Agricultural Business Management**

*What a fabulous course. Such a diverse range of delegates, speakers, subjects, farm visits, case studies...and a seemingly inexhaustible recipe book in the kitchen!*

*Thank you so much for your very kind sponsorship; it was very much appreciated.*

*Now back on my small farm, we have just been welcoming families over the school half-term break. Many have never been on a farm before. Most have never handled a young chick, bottle fed a goat kid or cuddled a lamb. Some amazing experiences for a largely urban population, fascinated by farming and the countryside.*

*Next week we are welcoming young professionals interested in our lambing workshop. These are a great way of engaging with an intelligent audience, eager for first-hand contact with farmers and farm animals. Staff work hard to encourage a positive and enjoyable engagement with all visitors. The local economy benefits, especially from national and international visitors staying in the locality, who tend to visit multiple attractions.*

*The diary is filling up with school trip bookings – up to 150 classes visit us each year, mostly early years – Key Stage 1. We are currently working with a local wind and solar charity – WeSET – to develop a green energy presentation to Key Stage 2. A new tenant – horticulture and aquaponics – will potentially add Key Stage 2 and 3 programmes to our portfolio.*

*What have been the benefits of the Course to date? Multiple, but including:*

- *Thinking time away to review and re-evaluate the farm business*
- *Devolved responsibility for the operational role of the farm*
- *A good update and awareness of UK agriculture in both the national and international context.*
- *'Added value' to our commodity products, an oft-repeated message from various speakers*
- *22 points to action, including succession planning*
- *A great group of people to keep in touch with – WhatsApp messaging is currently discussing the merits of trucks for low mileage, arable use. Our first re-union is booked for 8 & 9 March, 2019.*
- *Commitment to working with young people re-enforced. Renewed commitment particularly to those identified as 'needing a chance'*

*Not a bad list for 3 weeks study!*

*Best wishes*

*Anne Gow*

# Agricola Club

## Accountants' report for the year ended 31st July 2017

In accordance with the engagement letter dated 18 August 2014 we have compiled the financial statements of Wye College Agricola Club for the year ended 31 July 2017 which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet and the related notes from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

The financial statements have been compiled on the accounting basis set out in note 1 to the financial statements. The financial statements are not intended to achieve full compliance with the provisions of UK Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

This report is made solely to you, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken solely to prepare for your approval, the financial information of Wye College Agricola Club and state those matters that we have agreed to state to you in this report in accordance with the guidance of ICAEW as detailed at [icaew.com/compilation](http://icaew.com/compilation). To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of Wye College Agricola Club for our work, or for this report.

You have approved the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2017 and have acknowledged your responsibility for them, for the appropriateness of the accounting basis and for providing all information and explanations necessary for their compilation.

We have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to

us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial statements.

B P Wilkinson FCA  
Chavereys  
Chartered accountants  
Faversham  
Date: 1st September 2017

## Notes to the accounts

### 1 Accounting policies

The club prepares accounts on an accruals basis, using UK Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as guidance.

All income, except interest on investments, is derived from members or from sources outside the scope of Corporation Tax. As such the club is covered by Mutual Trading exemptions.

The club elects to write off the income from 'lifetime membership' applicants in the year of application.

# Agricola Club

## Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31st July 2017

	2017		2016	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>				
Sale of ties, prints etc.		169		54
Subscriptions		1,597		1,548
Annual dinner		3,220		-
Hog roast		2,418		-
Memorial Fund journal contribution		10,000		8,500
		<u>17,404</u>		<u>10,102</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Opening stock	465		505	
Closing stock	(339)		(465)	
		126		40
Annual dinner	3,671		-	
Hog roast	2,636		-	
Wye Journal	9,350		7,835	
Website expenses	166		166	
Meetings, expenses and secretarial	990		1,227	
Insurance	332		321	
Accountancy	300		300	
Purchase of equipment	-		175	
		<u>17,445</u>		<u>10,023</u>
		<u>17,571</u>		<u>10,063</u>
<b>Net (deficit)/surplus</b>		<u>(167)</u>		<u>39</u>



## Balance sheet as at 31 July 2017

	2017		2016	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>				
Lloyds Bank	12,378		13,154	
Stocks	339		465	
		12,717		13,619
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Accruals	(300)		(300)	
Deferred income Dinner	–		(735)	
		(300)		(1,035)
<b>Net assets</b>		12,417		12,584
<b>Accumulated funds</b>				
Opening reserves		12,584		12,545
(Deficit)/surplus for the year		(169)		39
<b>Accumulated reserves</b>		12,417		12,584

We approve the accounts set out on pages 2 to 4 disclosing a net deficit of £167 and we confirm that we have made available all relevant records and information for their purpose.

These accounts were approved on 1st September 2017

**Prof J P G Webster**

**Treasurer**

(for and on behalf of the committee)

# Agricola Club Memorial Fund

## Accountants' report for the year ended 31st July 2017

In accordance with the engagement letter dated 18 August 2014 we have compiled the financial statements of Wye College Agricola Club Memorial Fund which comprise the income and expenditure account, the statement of assets and liabilities and the related notes from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

The financial statements have been compiled on the accounting basis set out in note 1 to the financial statements. The financial statements are not intended to achieve full compliance with the provisions of UK Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

As a member firm of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) we are subject to its ethical and other professional requirements which are detailed at [www.icaew.com/en/membership/regulations-standards-and-guidance](http://www.icaew.com/en/membership/regulations-standards-and-guidance).

The report is made to you, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might compile the financial statements that we have been engaged to compile, report to you that we have done so, and state those matters that we have agreed to state to you in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the members of Wye College Agricola Club Memorial Fund, for our work, or for this report.

You have approved the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2017 and have acknowledged your responsibility for them, for the appropriateness of the accounting basis and for

providing all information and explanations necessary for their compilation.

We have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial statements.

B P Wilkinson FCA  
Chavereys  
Chartered Accountants  
Faversham  
Date: 1st September 2017

## Notes to the accounts

### 1 Accounting policies

The charity elects to prepare accounts on an accruals basis.

Investment assets are revalued to market value at the year end. Net gains and losses are recognised as movements on the retained surplus.

### 2 Student / member awards

The trustees actively seek suitable candidates with a view to satisfying the objects of the charity.

# Agricola Club Memorial Fund

## Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31st July 2017

	Note	2017 £	2016 £
<b>Income</b>			
Dividends received		14,049	13,223
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Student / member awards	2	6,000	3,276
Support of Wye College Agricola Club		10,000	8,500
Governance expenses		4,113	3,846
		(20,113)	(15,622)
<b>Net deficit for the year</b>		(6,064)	(2,399)
<b>Retained surplus brought forward</b>		472,195	449,994
		466,130	447,595
Net Increase in value of investments		32,828	24,600
<b>Retained surplus carried forward</b>		498,958	472,195
<b>All receipts are unrestricted funds</b>			

# Statement of assets and liabilities

## as at 31st July 2017

	2017		2016	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Cash funds</b>				
Current account		1,770		1,325
Cash held by broker - Portfolio 1		3,376		2,237
Cash held by broker - Portfolio 2		1,501		(1,679)
<b>Investment assets</b>				
4,104.00 Charifund Income Units		66,298		61,422
<b>Portfolio 1</b>				
846.42 Rathbone Income Units		7,951		7,428
37,500.00 M & G High income		-		44,531
4,497.70 Artemis Income Fund Dist.Units		10,211		9,352
7,000.00 Invesco Perpetual monthly inc plus fund		7,848		7,528
2,650.00 Investec Capital Accumulator Class A		6,195		5,588
1,717.60 IFSL Brooks Defensive Capital Class B Acc		3,385		6,768
88.00 Veritas Global Equity Income GBP Class A		17,415		15,536
44.85 SSGA GBP Liquidity Fund INST Stable NAV		45		49
10,000.00 Threadneedle High Yield Bond clas1		4,362		4,252
21,079.87 TIME Commercial Freehold Fund Cls D (Inc)		22,678		-
1,746.00 Aberforth Smaller Companies (ASL)		22,846		-
		<b>102,936</b>		<b>101,033</b>
<b>Portfolio 2</b>				
15,000.00 Alpha Prop Inv Freehold Income Trust		-		29,238
1,472.25 Fidelity South East Asia	18,580			19,752
8,000.00 First State Asia Pacific Leaders Class A	-			45,766
27,500.00 Henderson UK Property	27,184			25,806
19,109.93 Invesco Perpetual Monthly Income Plus Fund	21,424			21,508
40,000.00 M & G High Income InvT ZDP	-			47,500
55,000.00 M & G European High Yield Bond X Class	26,202			24,068
19,000.00 Newton Global Higher Income	37,763			35,625
114.76 SSGA GBP Liquidity Fund INST Stable NAV	115			295
45,000.00 Threadneedle High Yield Bond Class	19,629			19,134
7,400.00 Threadneedle UK Property Trust	6,304			5,949
4,722.00 Murray Income Trust (MUT)	37,032			33,715
1,862.00 Aberforth Smaller Companies (ASL)	24,364			-
8,000.00 Stewart investors Asia Pacific Leaders Class A	50,198			-
22,484.83 TIME Commercial Freehold Fund Cls D (Inc)	24,189			-
15,000.00 TIME Freehold Income Authorised H (Inc)	30,594			-
		<b>323,577</b>		<b>308,357</b>
<b>Less accruals</b>				
Accountancy		(500)		(500)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>498,958</b>		<b>472,195</b>

We approve the accounts set out on pages 2 to 4 disclosing a net deficit of £6,064 and confirm that we have made available all relevant records and information for their purpose.

These accounts were approved by the trustees on 1st September 2017

**Prof JPG Webster**  
Trustee

**Mrs J D Reynolds**  
Trustee

# Wye College Agricola Club Privacy Policy

## Privacy statement

### INTRODUCTION

This privacy policy sets out the basis on which any personal data which is collected from you, or that you provide to us, will be processed by the Wye College Agricola Club (WCAC).

The WCAC is committed to ensuring that your privacy is respected and protected. Should we ask you to provide certain information by which you can be identified when using our website, you can be assured that it will only be used in accordance with this privacy statement. We have legal obligations to use your personal information in line with applicable laws.

The data controller is the Wye College Agricola Club Honorary Secretary, Francis Huntington, Agricola Secretariat, Cumberland Court, Church Street, Wye, TN25 5BJ

WCAC may change this policy from time to time by updating this document. You should check the website from time to time to ensure that you are happy with any changes.

By visiting [www.agricolaclub.org.uk](http://www.agricolaclub.org.uk) or by providing us with any personal data, you are accepting and consenting to the practices described in this privacy statement and other documents referred to in it.

This privacy statement (together with our Terms of Use and any other documents referred to in this statement) sets out the basis on which any personal data we collect from you or third parties, or you provide to us, will be processed by us.

Please read the following carefully:

What our policies and practices are regarding your personal data:

- Who we are
- How we collect information

- What information we collect
- How do we use the information we collect about you?
- Do we use cookies?
- Will you be contacted for marketing purposes?
- Legal basis for processing your data
- Disclosure of your information
- Where we store your personal data
- How long will you keep my personal information?
- Access to information
- Contacting us
- Changes to our privacy statement
- Subject access rights
- Complaints and compliments

### WHO WE ARE

The Wye College Agricola Club is a members' organisation whose aim is to keep its members in touch with each other and to preserve the heritage and ethos of the former Wye College. The main means of disseminating information is via an annual Journal and quarterly e-newsletters

Within the context of this privacy statement, "we" are the Wye College Agricola Club.

We promise not to sell or swap any details that our members provide to us with any other organisation or third party other than the Wye Heritage. (See below the arrangements we have in place with Wye Heritage.) We respect your privacy and value your support and interest and the work that you may do with us.

Please read this privacy statement to understand how we use your personal data.

## HOW WE COLLECT INFORMATION

We may collect and process the following data about you:

### Information you give us

- You may give us information about yourself by responding to WCAC communications, filling in forms which we provide to you at meetings, by mail or on our site [www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](http://www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk) as well other sites and web pages operated by us or on our behalf (our sites) or by corresponding with us by phone, email or otherwise. This includes information you provide when you enquire about our activities, register for an event, sign up for emails, place a merchandise order on our sites, or other social media functions on our site, or when you report a problem with our site.
- We will also collect information about individuals with whom we would like to stay in touch at our events.
- The information you give us may include your name, address, years at college, degree, email address and phone number.
- If making a purchase over the phone we will also collect debit and credit card information.
- Website: In addition to the information you give us when filling in a form, signing up to an event or placing an order on our website, we collect aggregated or anonymous information about how you use the websites.

For general guests to our website, the information gathered is anonymous; we can capture technical information, including the internet protocol (IP) address used to connect your computer to the Internet, browser type and version, browser plug-in types and versions, operating system and platform. Information about your visit, including the full URL, clickstream to, through, from our site (including date and time), information you viewed or searched for, download errors, length of visits to certain pages, page interaction

information (such as scrolling, clicks, and mouse-overs), methods used to browse away from the page.

## WHAT INFORMATION WE COLLECT

We may collect the following information:

- Name
- Contact information including email address and mobile phone
- Demographic information.
- Other information relevant to membership surveys

## HOW WE USE THE INFORMATION WE COLLECT ABOUT YOU

We use information held about you in the following ways:

- For administration purposes (for example we may contact you regarding your membership payments, to check the details that we hold about you are correct or for the event you have registered for).
- To keep a note of your preferences on what and how you want to engage with WCAC.
- To analyse the personal information we collect and combine it with other information which we have collected to create a profile of your interests and preferences so that we can understand our members/visitors better.
- To provide you with the goods, services or online content you select and any other related goods or services we may provide.
- To invite you to events or to request your support for particular campaigns/surveys that we are running.
- To provide you with information about our work or our activities that you have agreed to receive and to keep you up to date with the work of WCAC.
- We may periodically send promotional emails about our activities, new merchandise, special offers or other information which we think



you may find interesting using the details which you have provided.

### **For other people with whom we work**

- Where we work with another organisation, for example Wye Heritage, with whom we engage or wish to engage, to provide you with information about our work or our activities and to invite you to work with us.

### **All people with whom we engage**

The following purposes are relevant to all with whom we engage:

- For internal record keeping, including the management of any feedback or complaints.
- To ensure that content from our site is presented in the most effective manner for you and for the electronic devices that you use.
- To ask for your help in completing surveys about WCAC.
- To administer our site and for internal operations, including troubleshooting, data analysis, testing, research, statistical and survey purposes.
- As part of our efforts to keep our site safe and secure and to detect fraud and other abuses of our site.

Where possible we use aggregated or anonymous information which does not identify individual visitors to our websites.

We do not usually collect “sensitive personal data” unless there is a clear reason for doing so, to ensure we provide appropriate facilities for you to be able to participate in an event/function.

### **DO WE USE COOKIES?**

A cookie is a small file which asks permission to be placed on your computer’s hard drive. Once you agree, the file is added and the cookie helps analyses web traffic or lets you know when you visit a particular site. Cookies allow web applications to respond to you as an individual. The web application can tailor its operations to

your needs, likes and dislikes by gathering and remembering information about your preferences.

We use traffic log cookies to identify which pages are being used. This helps us analyse data about web page traffic and improve our website in order to tailor it to customer needs. We only use this information for statistical analysis purposes and then the data is removed from the system.

Overall, cookies help us provide you with a better website, by enabling us to monitor which pages you find useful and which you do not. A cookie in no way gives us access to your computer or any information about you, other than the data you choose to share with us.

You can choose to accept or decline cookies. Most web browsers automatically accept cookies, but you can usually modify your browser setting to decline cookies if you prefer. This may prevent you from taking full advantage of the website.

### **WILL YOU BE CONTACTED FOR MARKETING PURPOSES?**

Email and other electronic channels: We will only contact you for marketing purposes by email or other electronic means such as SMS and social media if you have agreed to be contacted for these purposes. We shall continue to contact you unless you tell us otherwise.

Post: Where you have provided your postal address we may send you correspondence by post about our work unless you have told us that you do not wish to receive such information by post.

### **LEGAL BASIS FOR PROCESSING YOUR DATA**

Where you provide your contact details (ie postal address, email and/or mobile telephone number) to us and signify that you consent to us contacting you.

Please see the information below under the heading called “Contacting Us” if you wish to change the way in which we contact you or to ask us to cease contacting you.

We also rely on the legitimate interest legal basis for some processing, which applies to the following:

- Where you are a member and we are contacting you about our activities.
- We consider that we have a legitimate interest in continuing to contact you by email, post and/or telephone once you have provided your details and there is no overriding prejudice to you by our use of your data in this way and for these purposes subject always to our carrying out appropriate checks.

## **DISCLOSURE OF YOUR INFORMATION**

We will only use your information within WCAC for the purpose or purposes for which that information was obtained. We may share your information with selected third parties such as suppliers including printers and mailing houses and sub-contractors for the performance of any contract we enter into with them or you. We require such suppliers and any third party that processes data on our behalf to sign a legally binding contract that requires them to comply strictly with our instructions on how they may use your data and which requires them to comply with data protection law.

We will keep your information confidential except if:

- We are under a duty to disclose or share your personal data in order to comply with any legal obligation, or
- In order to enforce or apply our terms of use or supplier terms and conditions to protect the rights, property, or safety of WCAC, or others.

## **WHERE WE STORE YOUR PERSONAL DATA**

We are committed to ensuring that your information is secure. In order to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure, we have put in place suitable physical, electronic and managerial

procedures to safeguard and secure the information we collect online. We are also on the Data Protection Register.

All information you provide to us is stored on secure servers. Where we have given you (or where you have chosen) a password which enables you to access certain parts of our website, you are responsible for keeping this password confidential. We ask you not to share a password with anyone.

Although we take appropriate measures to protect your personal data, the transmission of information via the Internet is never completely secure, and any transmission is at your own risk. Once we have received your information, we will use strict procedures and security features to try to prevent unauthorised access.

We will ensure:

- That all personnel who have access to and/or process Personal Data are obliged to keep the Personal Data confidential.
- We comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Legislation with respect to security, breach notifications, impact assessments and consultations with supervisory authorities or regulators
- We will notify you without undue delay on becoming aware of a Personal Data breach

## **Your debit and credit card information:**

If you use your credit or debit card to buy something or pay for a registration online or over the phone, we will ensure that this is done securely and in accordance with the Payment Card Industry Security Standard.

We do not store credit or debit card details following the completion of your transaction. All card details and validation codes are securely destroyed once the payment has been processed. Only staff authorised and trained to process payments will be able to see your card details.

## HOW LONG WILL WE KEEP YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

We will hold your personal information on our systems for as long as is necessary for WCAC's relevant activity and in accordance with applicable legal requirements and tax and accounting rules, e.g. we will keep a record of financial transactions for at least seven years.

For those individuals working for other organisations we will retain your data for as long as we have a working relationship with you at that organisation or any other organisation which is engaged in work which is relevant to our activities. Where your data is no longer required we will ensure that it is disposed of securely.

We will only contact you according to your preferences that you have chosen, you can request to be removed at any time.

Where you contribute material to us, e.g. for inclusion in the Club Journal –Wye, we will only keep your content for as long as is reasonably required for the purpose(s) for which it was submitted unless otherwise stated at the point of collection.

### Hyperlinks on this website:

Our website may contain links to other websites of interest. However, once you have used these links to leave our site you should note that we do not have any control over that other website. Therefore, we cannot be responsible for the protection and privacy of any information which you provide whilst visiting such sites are not governed by this privacy statement. You should exercise caution and look at the privacy statement applicable to the website in question.

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Act gives you the right to access information held about you. Your right of access can be exercised in accordance with the Act. For further information about how you can obtain that information please refer to the paragraph below 'Subject Access Rights' and [www.ico.org.uk/for-the-public](http://www.ico.org.uk/for-the-public).

## CONTACTING US

If you wish to contact us either to obtain information about our work, to amend your preferences or to stop us sending you information about our work and activities, please contact us:

- By emailing us at [contact@weagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@weagricolaclub.org.uk).
- By phone on 01233 813884
- By post to Agricola Secretariat Cumberland Court, 24 Church Street, Wye TN25 5BJ

## CHANGES TO OUR PRIVACY STATEMENT

Any changes we may make to our privacy statement in the future will be posted on the website and, where appropriate, notified to you by email or post. Please check back from time to time to see any updates or changes to our privacy statement.

## SUBJECT ACCESS RIGHTS

An individual has the right, subject to certain exemptions, to access the personal information that an organisation holds about them. Accessing personal data in this way is known as making a subject access request.

Upon your request we will delete, destroy or return Personal Data and copies thereof to you unless required by Applicable Law to store the Personal Data.

## COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

**If you have any queries about this privacy statement please contact WCAC directly.**

If you wish to make a complaint about how we use your information, please contact us at [contact@weagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@weagricolaclub.org.uk) . If you are still unhappy, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office via their website (<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>)

# Agricola Club Members' Lists

## Message from the Database Administrator – What's in a name?

Back in the dark ages, the forenames of married women alumni were recorded as just an initial – the initial of their husband. It seems incredible now but that's how it was. I would be very pleased to amend your record to your full forename. In fact I would be pleased to amend any record where we only have initials, and you are welcome to have the name by which you were known when at college rather than your formal names, if you wish.

Please would you check your start and graduation dates (both maiden and married names) and let us know if they are incorrect – there are some that appear to be rather odd.

With UK addresses please include the county. Just occasionally the committee asks me to produce a list of counties with the number of members in each so it helps to include the county in the address.

We are trying to track a student called P. Julian Dodd – do you have any contact details for him?

Finally, Francis Huntingdon sends out an e-newsletter three times year; please let us have your email address if you wish to receive them.

Mrs Vinny McLean, Database Administrator

[database@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:database@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

### Data Protection Act

Members' names, addresses and years at Wye College are kept on a database for ease of administration and use. Under the Data Protection Act we are required to have consent for this from all members. These details will be disclosed only to those officers of the Club whose function requires them, also to the printers of the Journal and distributors for the purpose of despatching the Journal and other communications to members. Any member who objects to their details being kept in this way should inform the secretary Francis Huntingdon immediately at [contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk).

# Survey of members of the Agricola Club – 2018

If you have responded via the on-line version of this survey  
please do not complete this form.

**1 In what form and how frequently would you like to receive the Agricola Club Journal? Tick one option only.**

- a) No change to current arrangement, i.e. posted hard copy to all members, electronic version on the Club website

☐
- b) Hard copy posted to those who request it, electronic version on the Club website

☐
- c) Reduce frequency to every other year, hard copy posted to those who request it, electronic version on the Club website

☐
- d) Only produce the Journal in an electronic version

☐

Other comments about the Journal

**2 What form would you like Club events to take? Tick one option only.**

- a) Dinner in Wye alternate years with a less formal summer event in another part of the country in the other year, as at present

☐
- b) Dinner also migrating around the country.

☐
- c) Another alternative (please specify below)

☐

**3 Would you support greater collaboration with Wye Heritage, which already embraces the conservation of the history of Wye College? Tick all that apply**

- a) I would favour an arrangement by which the separate administrations of the Agricola Club and Wye Heritage Centre could work together ☐
- b) I would support the use of Club funds to further the work of the Wye Heritage Centre ☐

What other aspects of the preservation of the History and Heritage of the College would you like to see developed

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**4 When did you graduate from Wye College/Imperial College at Wye?**

Tick **all** that apply

- |                |                          |          |                          |          |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| a) Before 1950 | <input type="checkbox"/> | c) 1970s | <input type="checkbox"/> | e) 1990s | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) 1960s       | <input type="checkbox"/> | d) 1980s | <input type="checkbox"/> | f) 2000s | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you were a member of the staff please give your years

---

**5 What course did you study at Wye? Tick all that apply**

BSc ☐ MSc (internal and external) ☐ Research degree or other ☐

**6 You might like to take the opportunity to share with us any other thoughts that you have about the future of the Club.** Alternatively, please send us an email at [contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

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Please mail this form to Agricola Secretariat, Cumberland Court, Church Street, Wye, TN25 5BJ



# Wye College Agricola Club Annual Reunion and Dinner

Saturday 29th September 2018

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. no \_\_\_\_\_

Years of attendance at Wye College \_\_\_\_\_

Please see page 3 for Menu

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at £40 (inc. VAT) per person

Please list full names for the seating plan \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there anyone else your party wishes to be seated near? \_\_\_\_\_

**Menu options:** Please indicate numbers:

**Dessert**

**Starter:** Smoked Salmon ☐ Stuffed Field Mushroom ☐ Lemon and Lime Tart ☐

**Main:** Lamb Shank ☐ Sea Bass ☐ Summer Cheesecake ☐

Please indicate any dietary requirements \_\_\_\_\_

**AGM** Please indicate numbers attending the AGM of the  
Agricola Club on Saturday 29th September at 5.30pm

**Please return this form** and your cheque payable to the 'Wye College Agricola Club' by  
**September 10th** to

Mrs Jane Reynolds, The Pent, Postling, Hythe, Kent CT21 4EY.

Any queries to [info@janesgardendesign.com](mailto:info@janesgardendesign.com) or 01303 862436.

Your application will be acknowledged by email (please write it clearly!) otherwise please  
send an SAE.



# Wye College Agricola Club

## News Please

Marriages, births, deaths, changes in career, or anything else of interest. Photos are welcome; please send via email or supply copy prints, since we cannot promise to return them.

**Copy deadline 15 January.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name at Wye \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. no \_\_\_\_\_

Is this a new address? Yes ☐ No ☐

Current date \_\_\_\_\_ Years at Wye \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live overseas? If so, would you be prepared to represent the Agricola Club in your country? This would involve advising any visiting members and occasionally sending us news.

**News.** Please email, or else write clearly or type.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue overleaf or add another sheet.

Return this form to Mrs Jane Reynolds, The Pent, Postling, Hythe, Kent CT21 5LS

[info@janesgardendesign.com](mailto:info@janesgardendesign.com)



# Wye College Agricola Club

## Application for Membership

Surname/Family Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name at Wye \_\_\_\_\_

First Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. no \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Academic details: Graduate/MSc/PhD/Staff (Please delete as appropriate)

Year of entry \_\_\_\_\_

Year of leaving \_\_\_\_\_

Degree course (Dept. if PhD or staff) \_\_\_\_\_

### Declaration

I offer myself for election to the Wye College Agricola Club and agree to abide by the Club Regulations (copy available from the Hon. Sec. or visit [www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](http://www.wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)). I authorise the Club to publish my name and address and email in the Wye Journal and agree to pay the annual membership fee, currently £10 per annum, by standing order.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

On receipt of your signed application it will be placed before the Committee for acceptance. The Hon Sec. will send you a standing order form to complete.

Please return this Application to

Francis Huntington, Hon. Sec.

Agricola Club Secretariat, Cumberland House, Church Street, Wye, Ashford TN25 5BJ





# Wye College Agricola Club

## Change of Address or Email

Please return this form before Christmas to:

Francis Huntington, Hon. Sec.

Agricola Club secretariat, Cumberland House, Church Street, Wye TN25 5BJ

Email: [contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk](mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk)

Addresses for the list go to press at the end of April, and changes cannot be included later.

Surname/family name \_\_\_\_\_ Name at Wye \_\_\_\_\_

First name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. no \_\_\_\_\_

Degree course taken at Wye (Dept. if Post Grad. or staff) \_\_\_\_\_

Years of attendance at Wye \_\_\_\_\_

### Data protection act

For many years we have published members' names, postal addresses and emails in the Wye journal. When you provide us with updated information we are now asking you to confirm that you give your permission for your contact information to be published in future Wye Journals and on the Club website..

I confirm that I give permission for my details to be published in the Wye Journal and to be accessible to members on the Club website.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Wye Heritage

Our past shapes our future

## Wye Heritage Centre - Membership Application Form

Please support the work of the Wye Heritage Centre by becoming an annual member and help us to preserve the archives, photographs, artefacts, memories and ethos of the former Wye College. Now housed in the Latin School, Wye.

Membership annual fee £10.

Surname/Family Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name at Wye \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to my details being held on the membership database

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The current membership fee is £10.

Please enclose a cheque made out to 'Wye Heritage'.

We will then send you confirmation and a Standing Order for subsequent years.

Please return to: Wye Heritage Office, Cumberland House, Church Street, Wye, TN25 5BJ



# Wye College Agricola Club

## Committee Members 2017-2018

Elected	Retire	Position	Name and Address	Tel no
2015	2018	President & ACMF Trustee	Prof David Leaver Sole Street Farm, Crundale, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7ET <a href="mailto:jdleaver@gmail.com">jdleaver@gmail.com</a>	01227 700978
2016	2019	Chairman & Journal Editor	Dr John Walters Akermans, 38 High Street, Wye, Ashford, Kent, TN25 5AL <a href="mailto:akermans38@yahoo.co.uk">akermans38@yahoo.co.uk</a>	01233 812823 07969 739974
2015	2020	ACMF Trustee	Mr Charles Course Heathpatch Ltd, Dairy Farm Office, Semer, Ipswich, IP7 6RA <a href="mailto:charles@dairyfarmoffice.co.uk">charles@dairyfarmoffice.co.uk</a>	01449 741481 07889 218590
2015	2018	Secretary	Mr Francis Huntington Cumberland Court, Church Street, Wye, Ashford, Kent TN25 5BJ <a href="mailto:contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk">contact@wyeagricolaclub.org.uk</a>	01233 813884 07860 390087
2017	2020	Treasurer & ACMF Trustee	Prof Paul Webster 25 Chequers Park, Wye, Ashford, Kent TN25 5BB <a href="mailto:jpgwebster@gmail.com">jpgwebster@gmail.com</a>	01233 812786
2015	2018	ACMF Trustee	Mrs Jane Reynolds Pent Farm, Postling, Hythe, Kent CT21 4EY <a href="mailto:info@janesgardendesign.com">info@janesgardendesign.com</a>	01303 862436
2017	2020		Prof Berkeley Hill 1 Brockhill Road, Hythe, Kent CT21 4AB <a href="mailto:b.hill@imperial.ac.uk">b.hill@imperial.ac.uk</a>	01303 265312 07777 696945
2015	2018		Prof Geoff Dixon Hill Rising, Horncastles Lane, Sherbourne, Dorset DT9 6BH <a href="mailto:geoffrdixon@btinternet.com">geoffrdixon@btinternet.com</a>	01935 387470 07774 628641
2017	2020		Dr Susan Atkinson 52 Maxton Road, Dover, Kent CT17 9JL <a href="mailto:susan.atkinson@talk21.com">susan.atkinson@talk21.com</a>	01304 211977 07808 435968
Co-opted 2017			Mr Gary Saunders Elms Cottage, Hinxhill, Ashford, Kent TN25 5NT <a href="mailto:garybrodoak@aol.com">garybrodoak@aol.com</a>	07816 332190
2017	2020		Mr Chris Waters 2 The Moat House, The Moat, Charing, Ashford, Kent TN27 0JJ <a href="mailto:chrishwatersmail@gmail.com">chrishwatersmail@gmail.com</a>	01233 712599 07710 835523
2017	2020		Mr David Simmons Whitehill House, Brogdale Road, Ospringe, Faversham, Kent ME13 0DN <a href="mailto:dhsimmons@btconnect.com">dhsimmons@btconnect.com</a>	01795 532100 07850 872342

