

Unconfirmed minutes of the 61st Annual General Meeting of the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, Wednesday 15th March 2017.

Present: Richard Robinson, Rupert Caplat (Branch Chairman), Tom Overbury (Vice Chairman), Mike Whiting (Branch Secretary), Nigel Anstee, Nick Handy, Dick Godwin, Andy Newbold, Nigel Warner

Apologies: Rob Robinson, Glen Craig

1. Welcome

The Secretary, Rupert Caplat, opened the meeting by welcoming members, guests including the speaker Professor Dick Godwin and Andy Newbold who was representing the IAgRE President and giving the President's address.

2. Minutes of the 2016 AGM

The only comment raised was regards to an update on Bob Painting. Richard Robinson kindly agreed to follow up and update the branch members accordingly.

Proposed: N Handy Seconded: R Robinson

3. Consideration of the Branch Accounts

The accounts were prepared and sent to the meeting by IAgRE Chief Executive Alastair Taylor. A closing balance of £341.54 was recorded at 31 December 2016, which although was slightly lower than the 2015 end of year record, was a reflection of the active event programme.

Proposed: N Handy Seconded: R Robinson

4. Chairman's Address

Rupert Caplat reviewed the year starting with the following address which can be found at the end of these minutes.

5. Election of Officers for 2017/18

Rupert Caplat thanked the elected officers for their contribution to the Western branch and opened up to the members the invitation for anyone wishing to take on a role within the committee. There were no responses and Richard Robinson recommended that the committee were re-elected as per the current arrangements. Andy Newbold supported the proposal and there were no objections.

Chairman:	Rupert Caplat
Vice Chairman:	Tom Overbury
Honorary Secretary:	Mike Whiting
Information Officer:	Nick Handy

Committee members:

Nigel Warner
Richard Robinson
Nigel Anstee

6. AOB

The Chairman, Rupert Caplat, asked all members present to consider suitable visits or speakers for the coming year and to let him or any member of the committee know. The Branch has a sum of money to spend so this can be spent on visits, lectures and other events. In addition to make invitations available to colleagues / contacts that would be interested in the IAgRE activities.

Rupert Caplat, Mike Whiting to make contact with Mike O'Sullivan at Lackham College. This is with regards to the additional room hire and catering costs, which are unsustainable for the available branch budget.

Proposals for future talks and visits were discussed with suggestions being:

- Visit to Thatcher's cider operations in Sandford, North Somerset. Richard Robinson to kindly follow up and arrange a date.
- Visit to local agricultural dealer who is opening a centre of excellence for Krone foragers. Suggested by Nick Handy who kindly agreed to follow up and propose a date for possibly May 2017.
- Potential visit to Wyke Farms; <https://wykefarms.com/green/> Mike Whiting to investigate and report back.
- Contact has been made with Robert Wiseman's at Bridgewater regarding a visit and in principal accepted. Mike Whiting to follow up and arrange for Autumn 2017.
- George Sly of Sly Agri – A possible option as Sly Agri have just introducing a new drill to the market; <http://www.fwi.co.uk/machinery/sly-unveils-new-disc-drill.htm>
- Another option is Martin Lole from Mzuri who are based locally at Pershore, West Worcestershire. Mzuri have just announced plans to build another manufacturing facility in Poland; <http://www.fwi.co.uk/machinery/mzuri-build-machinery-factory-poland.htm>
- Rexquote Ltd, near Taunton – possible visit suggested by Rupert Caplat to view Road/Rail conversions on excavators, cranes and tractors.
- Mike Whiting has visited SKF bearings facility at Clevedon which supplies the aeronautical industry. Worth a visit and keep as an option.

R Robinson mentioned the Young Engineer event was held on the Tuesday 4th April at the Kubota training school, Thame, Oxfordshire.

It was agreed a committee meeting should be held at a location and date to be confirmed to further discuss and plan events for the 2017/18 season.

7. Presidential Address

Andy Newbold gave a review of IAgRE's activities on behalf of President. Any Member who would a copy of the address please contact the Secretary. The address included the reminder to log all CPD activities as random sampling will be undertaken from 2017 onwards for maintaining the IAgRE professional status. Rupert Caplat reminded everyone that the branch attendance book is available as a record for who attended events. Mike Whiting suggested CPD recording is included for discussion at the next committee meeting.

8. Close

The chairman closed the AGM by thanking all who had attended. He then welcomed Professor Dick Godwin who gave a presentation on the "Pros and cons of minimum tillage". Any Member who would a copy of the presentation slides please contact the Secretary.

2017 AGM Chairman's address – 15th March 2017 RAU Cirencester

Welcome to the 61st Annual Western Branch AGM and my third as branch Chairman. I want to also welcome our new Honourary Secretary Mike Whiting who has taken up the challenge with great enthusiasm since the last AGM.

I wanted to summarise the branch activities in the past year since the 2016 AGM at Lackham. That being our 60th AGM I realised that, since then, we've been a little quiet in terms of Branch activities in comparison to previous years and I wanted to allay any fears that the milestone had led to some form of retirement and taking things easy, far from it. By the number of suggestions for talks and visits at our Committee meeting last May we have plenty of life left in us still, the issue is organising them all.

I say this every year but we are one of the more active Branches in the Institution which is due to the support of the Committee, Branch Members, our industry connections and our academic institutions who we rely on to host our meetings. Suggestions for visits and talks are always welcome from all members and not just the decisions of the committee.

For the well attended 2016 AGM at Lackham we had the pleasure of the company of Alastair Taylor, Chief Executive of the Institute who gave the Presidential Address. This provided a mutually beneficial conversation between branch members and a relatively new Chief Exec – it allowed Alastair to experience one of our meetings and for us to receive news from HQ from the horses' mouth. Once the AGM was wrapped up we were treated to a talk by David Lester of MAN Trucks on their remote telemetry systems which was organised by Nick Handy. This was a fascinating insight into what GPS tracking technology that we know well in agricultural machinery is capable of providing in the Commercial on-highway business. The increases

in efficiency of large and small Haulage companies due to time and fuel savings can be enormous.

Comittee mtg – held on 4th May 2016 @ Autoguide Equipment where we discussed plans for the 2016/17 programme. A large amount of suggestions were made with quite a list being very professionally minuted by Mike Whiting. We are steadily working through arranging this programme with some suggestions probably being postponed to the next season. One in particular was a visit to the Mueller Wiseman plant at Bridgewater which in principal has been agreed but a date not yet finalised.

After a postponement from 2015, a visit to Woodlands Farm at Chedworth near Cirencester was kindly provided on a pleasant July evening by the owner Nigel Finch. Nigel escorted us around his dairy business literally from field to fork (or in this case spoon) i.e. the whole process including the pasture, parlour, yogurt making and packaging facility, chill room and farm café.

On the 23rd November at Lackham we were very honoured to have a true legend talk to us – Ray Clay. The talk was arranged by Richard Robinson and attracted a good turnout of both members and Lackham students. Ray is best known for being one of the founding engineers on the JCB Fastrac working mainly on the suspension, steering and braking designs for this ground-breaking tractor. Before his time at JCB he worked at Bedford trucks, Vauxhall and the Transport & Road Research Laboratory so was very much from an Automotive engineering background which allowed him to apply this technology to a ground-breaking high speed off-highway vehicle. This “Life and Times” talk was very entertaining and very well attended.

The first meeting of 2017 was a Film Night at the Greyhound Inn at Bromham hosted by Jim Wilkie. Jim is the founder of the Old Sodbury Sortout for vintage machinery and commentates at both the Heddington and Rainscomb Park Steam Rallies. What Jim doesn't know about tractors and other machinery isn't worth knowing and we were treated to films on Caterpillar, MF (1200 & three point linkage), Spitfire maintenance and David Brown. Despite some mechanical issues with the projection equipment the evening was a great success. Jim has plenty more films so a follow up event may well be organised in the near future.

Shortly I will hand over to Andy Newbold, past IAgRE President, who has very kindly come this evening to present the 2017 Presidential Address with all the latest news of the Institution and the good work it is doing. After that and a short break we will hand over to Professor Dick Godwin, another past president of the Institution who will present a lecture on Minimum Tillage – a subject committee member Nigel Anstee has been requesting for some time. Lastly I'd like to thank you all, committee, representatives of Institute HQ (I reckon we have 3 past Presidents) and other gathered members and guests for your support in the last year and for attending this AGM. In particular the support of Mike, Nick, Nigel and Richard in organising these visits without which the branch would not be what it is.

Thank you.

R. Caplat