

Unconfirmed minutes of the 66th Annual General Meeting of the IAgrE: Wednesday 16th March 2023. Lackham College

Present: Rupert Caplat (Branch Chairman), Mike Whiting (Branch Secretary), Richard Robinson, Sharon Jarvis, John Golden, James O'Sullivan, Tom Overbury, Nick Handy, Steve Constable, Brian Mathew, Geoff Burgess, Richard Danby; student from Lackham College.

Apologies: Nigel Anstee, Mike Marsh, Chris Biddle, Tom Overbury, Nick Handy

c.c: Sarah McLeod: IAgrE

1. Welcome

The Chairman, Rupert Caplat, opened the meeting by welcoming members, guest & evening presenter, Steve Constable IAgrE President and who was providing the President's address. Also, Rupert thanked Sarah McLeod, the IAgrE team and members from the RAU and Lackham College for their support to the Western Branch.

2. Minutes of the 2022 AGM

No issues were raised with regards to the 2022 minutes.

Proposed: Richard Robinson Seconded: Brian Mathew

3. Election of Officers for 2023/24

Rupert Caplat thanked the elected officers for their contribution to the Western branch. There were no expressions of interest from other members to take on roles within the committee,

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

Committee members:	Richard Robinson Nigel Anstee
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Proposed: James O'Sullivan Seconded: Geoff Burgess

4. Chairman's Address

Rupert Caplat reviewed the year with his annual address, as attached below.

5. AOB

Rupert Caplat raised the subject of the branch map, and how the Western branch covers the entire area from Wiltshire, across into Wales and through to the South-West. This generated discussion regarding the location of members, and whether there was any opportunity for Richard Robinson to set some meetings going in the Devon area.

Monmouth College (<https://www.coleggwent.ac.uk/our-college/facilities/usk-farm>) is another potential contact, similar to Hartpury College.

Brian Mathew suggested that some educational establishments may offer accommodation if visits deemed it necessary to stay over. There could also be opportunities for speakers via the Society for the Environment; <https://socenv.org.uk/>

Geoff Burgess referred to opportunities for speakers from the grounds care sector.

As with previous years there will be a planning meeting scheduled for late spring / early summer. Ideas and suggestions include:

- i) Geoff Burgess insight into career and experiences.
- ii) Visit to KTwo trailers at Southampton: <https://www.ktwo.co.uk/trailers/>
- iii) Visit to ABT products – Ross on Wye: <https://www.abtproducts.com/>
- iv) Teagle products: <https://www.teagle.co.uk/en-GB/>
- v) Oakham treasures: <https://www.oakhamtreasures.co.uk/> combined with a local visit near Bristol.
- vi) Recruitment evening visit to a local agricultural machinery dealership. Either TH White, or Hunt Forest Group, opening a new John Deere branch near Wells in Somerset.
- vii) Workshop interactive session with Fred Gwinnett (Lackham College lecturer).
- viii) Keep the 'European tour' on the agenda, New Holland combine factory in Belgium; <https://www.profi.co.uk/news/new-holland-transfers-flagship-crs-belgium/> and Kubota engine factory; Dunkerque : <https://www.fwi.co.uk/machinery/kubota-opens-french-tractor-factory>

7. Presidential Address

Steve Constable kindly provided the President's address.

8. Close

The chairman closed the AGM by thanking all who had attended. Rupert Caplat introduced Steve Constable to present on his career with Spaldings.

2023 AGM Chairmans address – 15th March 2023, Wiltshire College, Lackham

Here follows the 67th Annual Western Branch AGM Chairman's address. Good evening and welcome Western Branch members and guests to the Western Branch 2023 AGM.

I want to summarise the Branch activities in the past year since the 2022 AGM.

At the 2022 AGM also held here at Lackham, Paul Hemingway, the previous Institute President again gave the Presidents Address for the third year in a row but this time in person rather than online via Zoom as was the case in 2021. This was followed by a very informative talk on the New Holland T6 methane powered tractor by Alastair Walshaw, Innovation Manager at Case New Holland. Alternative fuel sources are a hot topic in the Agricultural Engineering industry (and for that matter many more industries) currently so it was an example of branch events keeping up to date with the latest industry developments.

In September 2022 we were back at our other "home", the Royal Agricultural University at Cirencester, for a talk by Stephen Lamb and Stephen Day of Bridgestone UK on their range of agricultural tyres. Bridgestone are a relative newcomer to the agricultural tyre market and therefore the talk covered a number of concepts on the subject of inflation pressures and footprints which challenged a few pre-conceptions and provided some interesting calculations on how the correct tyre choice and operation pressure can affect crop yield.

Later in October we visited Bromham Biogas at Bromham between Chippenham and Devizes to view their Anaerobic Digester system which had been built within the last 2-3 years. AD systems are nothing new and we had visited one at Kemble near Cirencester in 2013 but the difference at Bromham was that some of the gas was exported directly to the gas grid rather than only used for the generation of electrical power on the farm. The owner Jim Butler and his manager Andy Mercer gave us a very detailed tour of the whole facility including the digesters, the slurry lagoon, the generator building and the control room.

Unfortunately, I missed our first meeting of 2022 in mid-January but I'm reliably informed that the talk on setting up of Sprayers by Ian Forman of the National Sprayer Testing Scheme was very well received. This was held here at Lackham but in the engineering workshops. I'm told it was also quite cold and looking at the photos this seems quite evident. The attendance by a number of Lackham students was no doubt going to be of use to them in their future careers.

If any member wishes to get further copies of the reports, please let Branch secretary Mike Whiting know.

Shortly, I will hand over to Steve Constable, IAgrE President, who will present the 2023 Presidential Address with all the latest news of the Institution and the good work it is doing. After that and a short break to allow other guests to join its back to Steve to present tonight's main talk covering his career with Spaldings.

I say this every year, and this year's no different, but we are a very active Branch in the Institution which is due to the support of the Committee, Branch Members, our industry connections and our academic institution members who we rely on to host our meetings. We like to provide a programme which covers the latest Ag Eng developments (methane tractors and robotics a case in point) but also events which look at the history of the Industry and an opportunity for some socialising. Suggestions for visits and talks are always welcome from all members and not just the decisions of the Committee. Please feel free always to call or email myself or the Secretary to let us know what you would like to see.

Lastly I'd like to thank you all, the committee, representatives of Institute HQ and other gathered members and guests for your support in the last year and for attending this AGM. In particular, the support of Mike, Richard, Nick and Tom in organising these events without whom the branch would not be what it is.

Thankyou