

Newsletter

Inspiring, encouraging and developing excellence in the management and leadership of UK agriculture



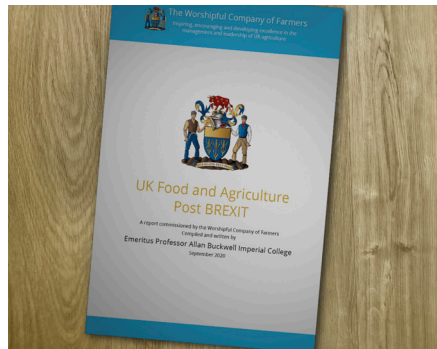
The new Master, Richard Whitlock is installed



The new Master with his Wardens Karen Mercer and Richard Davies



PO Jennifer Smith receives the WCF Sailor of the Year award on HMS Defender



The outgoing Master's Research Report is published

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Your new Master – Richard Whitlock



Master Farmer Richard Whitlock

Richard lives with his wife, Liz, and various occasional outdoor grazing animals on the Beds/Cambs/Herts borders. Born in the New Forest, Richard went to agricultural college in Berkshire before moving to Bedfordshire at the start of his working life in Agricultural Merchanding. He commenced work with Sidney C Banks plc who were subsequently bought out by Cargill, and following the merger with Allied Grain, became Frontier. For most of his career he has worked in the domestic and international grain-trading sector, becoming Grain Director of S C Banks and Banks Cargill. At Frontier he was appointed Industrial Crops Director with responsibility for Kings

speciality crops and initiated the wheat supply chain contract with Vivergo, the bioethanol plant at Hull.

For the last 10 years Richard has run his own consultancy company providing market insight to grain production, trading, and processing companies.

Richard's recent roles include consultant to CRM AgriCommodities, Chairman of Camgrain's crop marketing committee and Vice-Chairman of LEAF. He was Chairman of TASCC (the merchant's equivalent of Red Tractor) for more than 10 years and has represented the UK grain trade on COCERAL in Brussels. He has served as an AHDB Combinable Crops Board Member and chaired their Market Intelligence Committee.

Richard was Chairman of the Oxford Farming Conference in 2014/15 and Chairman of the East of England Agricultural Society's Conference from 2016-18. He is a member of the NFU Eastern Region Crops Board.

Richard and Liz have two married children and four grandchildren from five years old downwards. Their children, Louise and Ben, live near Royston and Thame, so, Covid permitting, play time and story time are never too infrequent.

Aside from work, family and the Livery, Richard enjoys long-distance cycling, off-shore sailing, skiing, gardening, off-the-beaten-track holidays, good British ales and a little safe, but not very accurate, game-shooting.



The new Master with his wife Liz and children Louise and Ben



Young people at Surrey Docks Farm

The Master's Charity Ambitions

The theme for my year is "A Helping Hand". During these constrained times it is particularly important to support those who may not have the privileges we do.

Our Livery has an especially proud history of supporting charitable causes, mainly through our various agricultural education programmes. We have been forced to cancel our Leadership and Management courses this coming year due to Covid-19. Next summer, as a one-off alternative we are therefore planning to support an equally worthy cause by providing full-day visits to mixed-enterprise, working farms for enthusiastic teenagers from the City of London farms.

We plan to visit CEVAS accredited host farms within a 50-mile radius of London. Many of the keen young people associated with City Farms have never visited a full-scale farm because they have neither the confidence nor the contacts.

These visits could provide an opportunity for many of our 400 Liverymen to become involved with part of the organising, thereby maintaining a sense of fellowship and fun within the Company. So, no matter what your skill set, we can find you a role by offering your time, your talent, or your financial support. I will act as the main coordinator, but we are seeking volunteers for the following roles:

- One liaison Liveryman for each of the interested City Farms
- Volunteers to help identify and engage with suitably located CEVAS accredited or prospective accredited farms who can host teenage visitors

- Packed lunch makers or providers
- Helpers and agricultural story tellers on the visit days
- Livery donors to help pay for hiring coaches or minibuses and farm hosting

Donations to:
The Worshipful Company of Farmers – business account
Acc no – 00902144
Sort- 60 00 01
Ref: A Helping Hand

We plan to put all the arrangements in place over this coming winter and hope the farm visits will take place next summer or when the coronavirus regulations permit. We will have rewards in spades if we help others less fortunate than ourselves.

Please contact the Master directly if you wish to offer your support:
richard@richardwhitlockltd.co.uk





Senior Warden Karen Mercer at home on her farm

Now I am Installed as Senior Warden, the countdown to when I have the privilege of becoming Master has really begun. My year will be one of Celebration as it will be 70 years since we were granted our Livery charter. We will also be celebrating the 70th Advanced Course in Agricultural Business Management and 25 years for the Challenge of Rural Leadership. We have every excuse, not that I have ever needed one, to celebrate and party. I hope we will be able to move about and

meet more freely by then and do what we do best, enjoy great fellowship.

My plans, for what I hope will be a series of interesting speakers, addressing various aspects under of my umbrella theme "The Family Farm Going Forward" are gradually coming together. The Agricultural Lecture topic will be 'Succession', a subject not without its difficulties and often the elephant in the room. My Summer Visit will take place in my home county of Staffordshire where we are being hosted by some diverse family farms, which should be of great interest. For the final evening I am looking forward to welcoming you to my home, whatever the weather, and intend to provide an evening that is enjoyable and fun.

As all involved with agriculture realise, the industry is facing a level of change not seen or needing to be addressed with such urgency for decades, we are on the brink of immense metamorphosis. There's BREXIT of course and the Agricultural and Trade bills working their way through Parliament. Over the past six months Covid 19, has highlighted the fragility of future UK food supply and how important UK food security is. Add in climate change issues and

the UK endeavouring to reach nett zero greenhouse gas emissions, BPS being phased out and the new ELMS scheme introduced, pilots are due to start next year and a full roll out scheduled for 2024. To work ELMS needs to be simple, flexible, accessible to all farmers and have productive agriculture at its heart. The plain fact is that unless farming is viable, it is difficult for farmers and growers to enhance and protect our countryside. I am sure, like me, you recognise we are only custodians of the land we love and farm and must endeavour to pass it on to future generation's in better heart than we found it.

Our young farmers are going to be crucial in helping lead the industry through the changes and challenges ahead. Both the ACBM and the CRL courses need to ensure that their content continues to be relevant and gives delegates the tools and attitude to help shape the future of farming in Britain.

I believe that with challenge, comes opportunity. When it comes to my year, I hope to highlight the relevance and opportunities for the family farm in future.

Senior Warden - Karen Mercer



Junior Warden, Richard Davies

I was first introduced to the Worshipful Company of Farmers by Past Master Rosie Carne and became a Liveryman in 1999. I joined the Court in 2016 as Chairman of the Fellowship & Communications Committee, the obvious place for me to put my background in agricultural marketing to best use. In 2019, I stepped across to take on the chairmanship of the Education Committee which has been one of the most interesting jobs I have had in

the Company - education is absolutely core to our purpose as an organisation and it has been a real pleasure and a privilege to be able to make a small contribution to our work in this area.

I have also been very involved in the setting up and early stage development, of the WCFA, our alumni association. It has been great to see this new branch of our activities grow from nothing more than a vague idea, to become a thriving reality now with over 200 members and more joining each year.

I am not a farmer, nor am I from a farming background. In fact, I trained as an economist and then as an accountant, before discovering that my niche was marketing and moving into FMCG advertising - working on major chocolate, beer and motor brands before advancing to become CEO of one of Saatchi & Saatchi's networks. In 1998 I set up my own agency RDP Ltd, with its first major client being Ciba Geigy Crop Protection in the UK. In the years that followed the agency acquired a substantial portfolio of major agricultural clients and a specialism in agriculture generally. In 2007 I sold the

agency but I still work part-time as an independent strategy consultant for large, agri-industry multi-nationals and have a fascinating non-executive role as the chairman of Arvum Ireland, a substantial, family owned, international agri-science, seed breeding and animal feed business based in Waterford. We buy practically all the wet grain from Ireland's brewers and distillers - so in one sense I am back to my roots again.

Over the years I have developed a real passion for agriculture and I am committed to helping it, communicate more effectively with its regulators, the government, the rest of the food chain and society at large.

With the whole of agriculture entering a period of change greater than any it has faced in the last 70 years, I see the need for clear thinking, a genuinely global perspective and great communication, as critical factors in its success. I am determined to help the Worshipful Company of Farmers make an ever-increasing contribution to the evolution of the debate in these critical areas.

Junior Warden Richard Davies

New faces join the Company and the Court



Newly clothed Liveryman Christopher Spokes signs the Livery Register



Liveryman William Antrabus with the new Liveryman Richard Price and Lord Henry Plumb



New Court Assistants - Mark Hall, Gavin Lane, Peter Wiggins-Davies, Mary Foster and Nicholas Major take their oaths



Newly elected Court Assistant and Chairman of Education - Gavin Lane

In this most unusual of years it was wonderful to see so many Liverymen and guests attend our socially-distanced event at Ashwell church. The incoming Master and our Clerk had spent many a long hour looking at alternatives for the installation but having settled upon the final plan at this lovely venue in rural Hertfordshire, it provided an opportunity to not only have our usual Harvest Thanksgiving and install the new Master and his Wardens, but also to welcome new members to our Company and new Liveryman to the Court.

With five Court Assistants vacancies occurring through the normal retirement process it created the opportunity to infuse some new blood onto Court. Liveryman Mark Hall has been chairing the Fellowship and Communications Committee for some time now and joins



Newly clothed Liveryman Paul Rous signs the Livery Register

the Court in that capacity. Liveryman Gavin Lane has just taken on the role of Chairman of the Education Committee from Richard Davies who was installed as Junior Warden on the same day. Liveryman Peter Wiggins-Davies also joins the Court. Back in 2016, Peter was one of the Company's Nuffield Scholars, and many of you may remember seeing him speak, most eloquently, on his topic of Rural Estate Strategy at one of our lunches in 2018. He now sits on the Henman Brooks committee. Liveryman



New member of the Court - Peter Wiggins-Davies

Mary Foster joins the Court and sits on the Finance Committee. Last but not least Liveryman Nicholas Major joins Peter on the Henman Brooks committee.

The outgoing Master, in one of his last acts in office, welcomed all new members to the Court and they duly made their oaths and were presented with their Court badges, all in a carefully choreographed, socially distanced way of course.

In addition to the appointment of the new Court members, the Ashwell service proved an opportune time to cloth three new Liverymen. Richard Price, Christopher Spokes and Paul Rous were all presented, took their oaths and with due ceremony, were clothed in the Livery of the Company.



PhD student, Sneska Lee, wins WCF Best Agricultural Student award



"Sneska has faced several challenges studying such a diverse scientific area, including adverse weather conditions and the COVID-19 lockdown. She has continued to demonstrate a determined, focussed and positive approach and we are delighted to offer her this prize. I also wish to thank The Worshipful Company of Farmers for offering this prize and supporting education in the agricultural sector."

Sarah Swift at the Environment Agency added "We are delighted that Sneska has received this award. She has shown dedication and professionalism throughout the project. This is an important piece of work, which will contribute to our understanding of Lincolnshire's watercourses."

Sneska Lee, a PhD student at the University of Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology (LIAT), has been awarded The Worshipful Company of Farmers prize for the best agricultural student of the year.

Sneska's work focuses on the investigation of sub-surface, agricultural field drainage and its impact on sediment loading in Lincolnshire watercourses. This research is extremely important for improving our understanding of soil health, surface water quality and in preparing ourselves for the impacts of climate change on weather in the UK.

On receipt of the good news, Sneska said "A massive thank you to the university and the Worshipful Company of Farmers, this is just fantastic news! I am honoured, and I would be delighted to accept the award. Big thank you also to everyone in team LIAT and to the farmers who have been hosting my sampling equipment. Without their support I wouldn't be able to walk this very unpredictable and challenging path I chose."

Prof Simon Pearson, Director for Lincoln Institute for Agri-Food Technology said

Bethan Winfield wins Best Agricultural Student at the Duchy College



With social distancing issues making it impossible to hold their traditional awards ceremony, The Duchy College, Stoke Climsland, had to resort to posting Bethan her Student of the Year Award.

Despite missing out on a presentation ceremony, Bethan still looks pretty happy to receive our award in this picture she sent us. She also attached this message: "Hi, to everyone at the Worshipful Company of Farmers, thank you for the nomination for the award, it means a lot to me and I just want to thank the college too - they have been amazingly supportive in helping me achieve in the last two years!"

Despite Covid-19 Awards made at ten other colleges

Award ceremonies have been cancelled at many colleges this summer/autumn but it is pleasing to hear that many colleges have made awards by post to students whose dedication and hard work in difficult circumstances certainly deserved recognition. WCF Awards were made this year at Bishop Burton College, Duchy College, Harper Adams, Myerscough College, Nottingham Trent University, The University of Lincoln, The University of Newcastle, University of Nottingham, The University of Reading and The University Centre Sparsholt.



Tom Gregory wins WCF Sparsholt Award

Social distancing wasn't going to stop Sparsholt College making sure that Tom got his award. They sent Shaun Millen, one of his lecturers, to the family farm to make the award in person. The traditional handshake had to be forgone however - but it doesn't seem to have spoilt the occasion!

Cranfield takes the Business Growth Programme online and Tim Loves it



compressed into just a few weeks; quite common. But like all educational establishments Cranfield has had to revise its offer to address Covid -19 issues. This has resulted in the BGP going to an all online format, and whilst this has seen a substantial reduction in the course fee, it did cause the Education Committee

tool used by lots of land professionals, applied to the WCF for a grant to attend the online version of the BGP. He is in the middle of his course right now and took time out to report back to the Company on his experience to-date. And he couldn't have been more enthusiastic, or complementary about the course and the way that Cranfield have handled the transfer to a ZOOM based experience. "I am really loving it, I can't recommend it too highly. It's a very engaging and interactive experience. I am part of a small group of four delegates, with the whole class for this course being about twenty. We work really closely with the tutors and with each other and it is really making me think about my business in the most profound and positive way."

The Business Growth Programme (BGP) at Cranfield University is a course that the Company has been supporting for some time. The feedback from delegates has been consistently good, with comments such as Johnny Wakes 'It felt like all the useful parts of an MBA

some concerns - would the online version of the BGP really live up to the expectations created by the traditional version.

It seems we need not have worried. Tim Hopkin, founder director of The Land App, an innovative land mapping

Tim's course will finish in a few week's time, and he will present his strategic business plan to the group early in the new year. So we look forward to a further update in December and hopefully for the chance to invite Tim to one of our lunches when things get back to normal.

Update on our Henman Nuffield Scholars



to the committee this week. Lizzie Carr-Archer is deep in the research phase (albeit rather hampered by the Covid-19 travel restrictions) and we have just announced our new scholar Chris Manley, who as many of you will know, sits on the WCF committee and is very involved in helping deliver the 2020 Virtual Learning Extension Day.

Three excellent scholars and all working on very diverse projects. Ed has visited 8 countries to explore the question - 'What makes rural estates successful and what benchmarking measure do they use to monitor success'. He surveyed estates covering over 1.5 million acres and found the

best estates are proactive, have a clear mindset, have a strong sense of purpose and apply rigorous benchmarking to continually improve.

Lizzie is currently researching 'The effect seed breeding could have on farm input costs in future' and Chris is in the early days of planning his project around the topic of 'Taking Agriculture to the Leading Edge'.

More news on each of these projects in the next edition of the newsletter and in the meantime if you would like to see Ed's Nuffield presentation you can find a link to it on his website www.barnstonestate.com



The Out-going Master's Research Report – launched online

In these Covid-19 dominated times, it is pleasing to announce the successful online launch of the Master's Annual Research Report. The title that Immediate Past Master, David Bolton, commissioned Professor Buckwell to write is **UK Food and Agriculture Post BREXIT**, a follow-up to Professor Buckwell's earlier BREXIT paper prepared for the Company.

The then Master's Plan 'B' (after Plan A had already been dropped), back in those balmy, almost mythical, pre Covid-19 days at the beginning of his year, was to have the paper presented as the centre piece of the 2020 Agricultural Lecture and Dinner. The dinner was due to take place on the 28th September this year. Unfortunately,

like so much else, it had to be cancelled. Recognising the importance of getting this very timely piece of analysis out to as wide an audience as possible, as quickly as possible, the then Master quickly convened a team to organise and run a webinar launch.

The decision was taken to present the report, first to a small group of key journalists and then to the members of the Company and influencers, in two separate online meetings, held on the same day that should have seen us all attend the Agricultural Lecture and Dinner.

Professor Buckwell's presentation was very well received by all those who were able to join the meeting. The Q&A session

after each presentation was expertly hosted by the then Master Farmer, David Bolton and brought up some really key points for discussion.

Coverage of the report has been quick to follow with it appearing at some length, almost immediately, on Farming Weekly Online. We are confident that the other news outlets represented with provide for further dissemination of Professor Buckwell's thought provoking analysis.

You will already have found a full copy of the report bundled up with this newsletter and perhaps even browsed its key conclusions. A full read is also recommended – it's a really helpful synthesis of so many strands of thought.

Livery trip to Lausanne 6th – 10th September 2021

The Clerk advises that there are still one or two places left on the postponed Company visit to Lausanne, Switzerland. The Clerk and his team of agents have worked extremely hard to re-book basically the same itinerary as originally planned with just a few minor changes to accommodate the changes in the actual weekdays we will be there. For anyone who hasn't yet booked consider this. The historic and beautiful city of Lausanne nestles on the shores of Lake Geneva, in the French-speaking Swiss region of Vaud. It is home to the International Olympic Committee's

headquarters, as well as the Olympic Museum and lakeshore Olympic Park. Away from the lake, the hilly old city boasts narrow, medieval, shop-lined streets and a 12th-century Gothic cathedral with an ornate facade. The 19th-century Palais de Rumine houses fine art and science museums.

The Company's re-scheduled visit, takes place over four days, flying out from Heathrow on Monday 6th of September. We will be based in the beautiful Chateau D'Ouchy hotel, situated on Lake Geneva. The trip includes a host

of delights, from visits to cheese and chocolate factories, to a boat trip on Lake Geneva. In fact, almost every mode of transport you can imagine is represented. You get to travel by plane, boat, railway and even cable car. And of course, with all the catering being overseen by our admirably well qualified Clerk – you can be sure everything will be top notch.

The return to Heathrow will be on Friday 10th September

To book see the events section of the Company's website, or contact the Clerk.

The screenshot shows a document titled 'Key messages' with a list of 17 numbered points. The points cover various aspects of Brexit, including the timeline of events, the impact on trade, the environment, and the future of the UK food system. The text is presented in a clean, professional layout with a blue header and footer.

The in-coming Master's Research Report – labour supply and demand post BREXIT

As British farming moves into a new, post-Brexit era there will almost certainly be a shortfall of suitable agricultural labour. Conversely, there will probably be a supply of labour looking for jobs during and after the present public health crisis. Is there a way of successfully connecting these two ends of the same problem?

Employers in other commercial sectors are already seeking new prospective employees from unconventional backgrounds. Is now the time for British farming to widen its net

of recruitment too? Your Livery have appointed Exeter University to carry out a research study to identify potential agricultural labour availability and demand. The paper is being researched and written by Dr Caroline Nye, a Research Fellow and social scientist at the Centre for Rural Policy Research, with professorial oversight by Professor Matt Lobley.

The study will include engagement with agricultural trade associations, farmers,

London City Farms, organisations who help workers with career changes and charities who work with people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The research will also identify the current situation regarding labour shortages and how employers could make farming an attractive career choice for non-agricultural labour.

The findings of this paper will be presented to the Livery Company early next summer.

Beer Halls and Gin Palaces – Christopher's latest virtual extravaganza



The Blind beggar scene of the infamous gangster Cray murder



The Grafton Arms – the Goons chosen watering hole

Christopher Day is at it once again. He has arranged yet another fascinating, virtual tour of the capital city – it takes place on the evening of Wednesday 18th November commencing at 6.20pm and concluding around 7.30pm.

Those who enjoyed the first virtual pub crawl Christopher arranged, or one of the two online evening jaunts around some of the City's more interesting Livery Halls, will know these events, guided by the quite excellent Simon Whitehouse, are a veritable cornucopia of fascinating facts, insights and historical oddities.

For this tour we start by sharing cocktails on the Fenchurch Terrace of the Sky Garden, London's highest public garden with spectacular 360 degree views of the City's iconic skyline. Then, via a series of

eleven stops at pubs such as the Blind Beggar, where Ronnie Cray murdered George Cornell in front of witnesses as apparently blind as the eponymous beggar, the Eagle, reputedly Britain's first Gastro Pub and the Punchbowl, once owned by Madonna and Guy Richie, to finally arrive at around 7.30pm at our destination for the evening, the Grafton Arms, famous watering hole of the Goons.

There will be a stop along the way for break, a quiz to keep you on your toes and time at the end of the tour to share some fellowship with fellow tour guests.

The cost of joining the tour is £6.00 to cover the guiding costs, payable via the invitation to the event from the Clerk.



Health & Wellbeing Forum Goes from strength to strength

Past Master Philip Wynn reports

Three years since its inception The Health & Wellbeing Forum, now under the chairmanship of Liveryman Jim Hume, goes from strength to strength. Now bringing together 50 organisations, the deepening relationships enable open discussion, invaluable knowledge exchange, collaboration and the provision of mutual support.

The publication of the WCF Health and Wellbeing Report only 18 months ago, has already inspired some significant initiatives:

- A successful bid by Rose Regeneration for Defra Resilience Fund monies. Research quantifying the financial and social value of the work of the many charitable organisations supporting the farming sector is currently underway and will be complete early next year.
- The establishment of the Defra Charity Roundtable meetings; a vehicle for a two-way update on current issues that inform those involved with both policy and the industry's overall resilience.

Initially envisaged as being six monthly meetings, Covid-19 moved the Forum to bi-monthly Zoom meetings with speakers, including Rose Regeneration, FCN and the NFU's Farm Safety Foundation. These have been hugely successful and are set to continue in this format with DEFRA's Charles Hotham speaking on 'The Agricultural Transition in England' in November, together with Alicia Chivers CEO of RABI talking on 'The Foundations for Change' – considering how to define and develop integrated assistance.

The WCF is clearly recognised for its work in Health and Wellbeing. Our experience is valued and, even though we don't always headline the initiatives, we are often contributing in the background. We are seen as practical, pro-active,



trustworthy and discreet.

As our industry faces immense uncertainty, our Forum members are bracing themselves for an unprecedented level of calls for help and we should be very proud of the significant role we have played in ensuring that the impact of their work is greater than the simple sum of its parts. The secret of our success is a passionately held common goal and collaboration.

The Outgoing Master was invited to attend the most recent ZOOM meeting of the forum and reports as follows:

9 October saw Jude McCann in Northern Ireland – CEO of the Farm Community Network (this was the Farm Crisis Network between 1995 and 2013) – presenting to twenty-seven participants. Issues stretched from succession planning, to the cost of Will writing. The current loss of Agricultural Shows around the country, and the loss of all they contribute to society, was aired in depth.

The Addington Fund, RABI, Rose Regeneration and all YANA (You Are Not Alone) participated strongly. November's Agenda includes DEFRA speaking about its plans for Agricultural Policy Transition in England and RABI will update the

Forum on their method of defining and delivering assistance.

The Forum consensus was that tensions and worries on farm, are increasing not decreasing because of commercial, seasonal and market factors, as well of course as Covid-19.

The subject of mental wellbeing and rural suicides has been raised in Parliament (May 2019 see Hansard Volume 660).

Onslaughts from social media, the complexity of support schemes however well intentioned, the poor standard of rural broadband and the absence today of the friendly "rep" or a local bank manager were all mourned. The rep is now online, or non-existent and the bank manager a faceless decision-making computer, both weeks and miles away.

Research by the Farm Safety Foundation discovered that 81% of farmers under the age of 40, believe mental health is the biggest hidden problem facing farming today. Whether bureaucratic, geographic or simply farmers' pride – there is clearly still very much work to be done and the Company should be rightly proud that it is playing a very active part in ensuring it is.



The Clerk's 'Virtual' Farm Cart trundles on!

The Clerk would like to formally recognise the generosity of Liverymen which has led to the Virtual Farm Cart collecting an excellent £2,961.85 in donations to-date with a further £2,015.00 donated in church for the Harvest Thanksgiving, which the Company shares equally with the church – so our share £1,057.50. So a total donated since the launch of the farm cart of very nearly £4,000.00.



Liveryman Christopher Day celebrates 1000kms of daily runs in 200 days

Liveryman Christopher Day (64) has run 1000 km in the first 200 days of lockdown. A distance of some 620 miles, equivalent or running from his home in Lincolnshire to John O Groats and back down as far as Inverness.

In addition to being a keen runner, Christopher is also a flag enthusiast. After each 5k, Christopher records a 'post-run' video interview for his 16k Twitter followers, including a daily 'Guess the Flag' feature.

Friday 2nd October marked day 200 of running. He was joined by his regular running partner Clive Parker. The two runners are pictured above with the flag of the day (answers on a post card).

Christopher continues to run his 5k daily and, with an extensive flag collection, the 'Guess the Flag' feature looks set to continue for a while to come yet!



HMS Defender awards WCF Sailor of the Year

We are delighted to announce that Petty Officer Jennifer Smith has been awarded the WCF prize for Sailor of the Year on HMS Defender. The citation on the award says: *This Term PO Smith has demonstrated that not only is she key to the success of the Logistics department, but she is also a real asset to DEFENDER as a whole*



Surrey Docks Farm celebrates arrival of new loader

Operating a farming operation of any kind in the confines of an inner-city location, surrounded by dense housing, was always likely to present some significant challenges. And for our friends and affiliates at Surrey Docks Farm, one of the biggest was the muck heap. The farm's livestock generate significant quantities of muck on a daily basis and even with the new muck bins the Company helped to fund, handling it has proved really tricky.

Part of the answer has now been provided following the sterling efforts of Liveryman Chris French and the Redhill NFU branch. Chris reports, "After many months of drawn out deliberations we finally achieved our target of £15,500 for the tractor including VAT. This was funded in the main by Redhill NFU's application to The Farmers fund that is looked after by Regional NFU Trustees. Their generosity, together with funding from The Worshipful Company of Farmers and a small top up from myself has made the gift possible, needless to say the Farm are all delighted and grateful."

A small plaque is being produced to recognise the gift and it is hoped that next Spring we will be able to officially unveil it on a suitable wall at the Farm.



Save The Date for The City Food Lecture 2021 - Wednesday 10th February.

Due to ongoing coronavirus restrictions, the 2021 City Food Lecture will be presented as a virtual event. It will be fully interactive with plentiful opportunities to get involved. The City Food Lecture - re-imagined!

The organisers are delighted to announce that the Keynote Speaker will be Mel Smith, CEO of Ocado Retail, the world's largest dedicated online supermarket.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following were admitted as Freemen at the Court at meetings held on the 15th September and 12th October 2020

Mr John Wake

Proposed by Philip Graham Wynn
Seconded by James Samuel Peck

Mrs Lucy Joanne Heath

Proposed by
Rosemary Susan Nattali Carne
Seconded by
Richard Thornton Halhead

The following Freemen were Clothed with the Livery at a Service on the 13rd October 2020

Richard Anthony Price
Dr Paul Rous DL
Christopher Daniel Spokes

News from the 70th ACABM & 25th CRL

Our partners at the Royal Agricultural University and Duchy College report high levels of interest in both our delayed courses. From the RAU the team report that we have over 30 serious applications and the quality of applicants is very high indeed. With only 18 – 20 places maximum to allocate for the 70th course, which will take place in November – December 2021, this is going to mean a very high level of competition for places and hopefully a very strong cohort.

As one way of keeping in touch with potential delegates for the ACABM course, we have agreed with the WCFA

association to extend an invitation, to all those we know are interested in applying, to attend as guests at the three webinars planned by the WCFA to replace this year's Covid-19 affected Learning Extension Day.

The CRL at the Duchy College is of course just that little bit later than the ACABM but our administrator Ali Bunkum is also reporting good levels of interest, with 5 applicants having already submitted full applications. The Duchy College are planning to run a webinar for applicants and for those interested in considering applying. Date to be confirmed but likely to be mid-January.

EVENTS

All events are subject to confirmation and the prevailing Covid-19 rules applying at the time. The Clerk will issue regular updates as events draw near to advise members of the latest situation. Please also keep an eye on the WCF website for the latest news.

Dates and Times for your Diaries in 2020-2021

2020

Thursday 19th November
Past Masters Meeting
Venue TBA

Tuesday 8th December
Court Meeting
Fishmongers' Hall

Tuesday 8th December
Court & Livery Luncheon
Fishmongers' Hall

2021

Tuesday 26th January
Annual Banquet
Drapers' Hall

Wednesday 10th February
City Food Lecture
Virtual

Tuesday 16th February
Inter-Livery Pancake Race
Guildhall Yard

Tuesday 9th March
Court & Livery Luncheon
TBA

Wednesday 21st April
Agricultural Lecture & Dinner
Plasterers' Hall

Monday 17th May – Wednesday 19th May
Master's Summer Outing
Cambridge

Tuesday 8th June
Court Meeting
TBA

Tuesday 8th June
Court & Livery Luncheon
TBA

Monday 6th September – Friday 10th September
Livery visit to Lausanne
Switzerland

Tuesday 12th October
Court & Livery Luncheon
TBA

DEATHS

It is with sadness and regret that we announce the deaths of the following:

Geoffrey Samuel Grantham CBE, of Orchard Close, Horncastle Road, Woodhall Spa Lincolnshire who died on the 18th August 2020. He was Clothed on the 10th September 1979.

John Frederick Seymour, of Kirkby-in Cleveland, North Yorkshire who died on the 3rd September 2020. He was Clothed on the 7th December 2010.

Mrs Anne Veronica Webster, of The Poplars, The Crescent, Retford, Nottinghamshire Who died on the 11th September 2020. She was Clothed on the 3rd December 2002

Mr Noel Edward Lionel Hill of Saint Michael's Peace, Shepton Beauchamp, Somerset who died on the 5th October. He was Clothed on the 1st October 1991