

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
ROYAL JERSEY AGRICULTURAL AND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

Held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7.30 pm,
in the Members' Room at the Royal Jersey Showground

Item 1) Call to order, welcome and to receive apologies for absence:

The President welcomed members to the AGM noting that a full set of agenda papers had been posted on the Society web site and the Journal sent to members the previous week.

Present: Rob Perchard (President & Chairman), Richard Leith (Vice President, Agricultural Dept), Martin Preisig, (Vice President, Horticultural Dept), Steve Le Feuvre (Treasurer, Agricultural Dept), Jeremy Neil (Treasurer, Horticultural Dept), James W Godfrey (Chief Executive & Secretary of the Society, who took the minutes), Rachelle Robinson (Secretary, Horticultural Department), Colin de la Haye & Paulette de la Haye, Steve Falle, Lewis Rondel (Past President & Hon. Life Member), Derrick Frigot MBE (Past President & Hon. Life Member), Christine Gill, Charles Le Cornu (Past President & Hon. Life Member), John Le Feuvre (Past President & Hon. Life Member), Sarah Le Feuvre, Paul Houzé, Annette Houzé, Becky Houzé, John McMullon, Jennifer McMullon, Ian Mitchell (Past President), Jo-Ann Perchard, Tom Perchard, Dave Cottrell, Kevin Roberts, Tom Robinson, Collette Bisson (Hon. Life Member), Martin Rouault, Ian Le Marquand, Vincent Obbard, Gilly Obbard, Neil Fauvel, Jim Carter, Roger Tadier. Also present was Don Connolly of Messrs Alex Picot (the Society auditors).

Apologies: The Lieutenant Governor of Jersey, the Bailiff of Jersey, the Dean of Jersey, David Hambrook (Manager, Jersey Island Genetics), Max de la Haye (Hon. Life Member), David Leng, Andrew Le Gallais, Graham Querée (Hon. Life Member) & Pam Querée, Jennifer Rendell, Laurence and Louise Agnès, Amy, Alasdair Crosby, Pam Laurens (Hon Life Member), Graeme Le Marquand, Helen Hickman, Jo Dauny, Vicky Le Feuvre, Derek Russell, Jo Dawson, Richard & Louise Noel, Jeanne Gruchy, Clive & Stephanie Holloway, Marion Munz-Jones, Alan & Ivy Le Troquer, Eamon Fenlon, Jill Keogh, Dot Perks, Peter Williams, Alice Tostevin.

The President reported that Loraine Le Gallais was in hospital having been involved in a serious accident that week, and the members asked that Mr Godfrey communicate their best wishes for her recovery to Andrew Le Gallais.

Item 2) Minutes of the AGM of the Society held on 19th May 2022:

Approved on the proposition of Derrick Frigot, seconded by Ian Mitchell, with all in favour and were duly signed.

Item 3) Matters arising from the minutes: There were no matters arising.

Item 4) Annual President's, Treasurer's and Departmental Reports for 2022:

The President noted that reports covering the year 2022 had been published in the Journal and posted on the Society web site. The President noted the sad loss of the Society patron Queen Elizabeth and informed members that appropriate letters of condolence had been sent on their behalf. He also noted that Mr Godfrey attended the state funeral representing the Society, an account of which is recorded in the Journal. In commenting on other events, he welcomed the new Vice-Patron, the Lieutenant Governor Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, who had taken an immediate and active interest in the Society. He thanked the officers, committees, volunteers, and members for their support of the Society, who along with the excellent team of dedicated staff, continued to achieve success across an incredible range of activities for the benefit of the Island. The reports were adopted on the proposition of Christine Gill and seconded by Tom Robinson.

Item 5) Consolidated accounts for the year ending 31st December 2022:

The President noted that the accounts had been posted on the Society website as advised and introduced Don Connolly, from Society auditors Messrs Alex Picot, who presented the accounts and commented on the audit process.

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SLeF gave a brief introduction based on the Treasurers' Reports in which it had been pointed out that in trading terms the Society was cash positive and performing close to budget, however, two factors had affected the figures to produce the negative final position which were the increase in depreciation (a non-cash item) as a result of the significant investments undertaken recently and the unrealised loss on the investment portfolio.

Mr Connolly agreed and then took the meeting through the individual P&L accounts for the Ag Dept, JIG and Hort Dept. In general, both JIG and Hort. Dept. were stable in producing year on year results similar to prior year. The Ag. Dept. had seen an increase in rental income as events returned to normal after the pandemic, although associated costs, e.g. cleaning and utilities, had increased as well. Show income had also increased, however this was more than offset by a greater increase in show costs. He was able to confirm that the accounts presented a true and fair representation of the Society's affairs and was content that the Society was in a secure position with a £39,000 surplus once depreciation was taken out and a strong balance sheet.

The President thanked Mr Connolly for his support and asked for any questions. Paul Houzé questioned the large sums kept as cash at bank, to which Mr Godfrey answered that this was due to the Overseas Aid grants received in large tranches which were to be spent in the following months and had to be kept as cash, although they were held in a deposit account. Mr Mitchell asked if the auditors reviewed budgets for the following year, to which Mr Connolly confirmed that they did as part of their assessment of the Society as a going concern.

The President thanked Mr Connolly for his support and noted that the account had been approved by the Council and received by the members.

The President moved to agenda items 6 through to 11 to elect office holders for a term of three years for the calendar years from 2023 to 2025 inclusive.

Item 6) Elect a Vice President for Agriculture:

The President reported that one nomination had been received for Ricky Leith, proposed by Derrick Frigot and seconded by Paul Houzé. Following speeches from the proposers the President declared that, with no other nominations received, Mr Leith was duly elected.

Item 7) Elect a Vice President for Horticulture:

The President reported that one nomination had been received for Martin Preisig, proposed by Tom Robinson and seconded by Graham Querée. Following a speech from the proposer the President declared that, with no other nominations received, Mr Preisig was duly elected.

Item 8) Elect a Treasurer for Horticulture:

The President reported that one nomination had been received for Jeremy Neil, proposed by Martin Preisig and seconded by Steve Le Feuvre. Following speeches from the proposers the President declared that, with no other nominations received, Mr Neil was duly elected.

Item 9) Elect one member to the Council:

The President asked, as no forms had been submitted in the time scale set out in the rules if there were any nominations from the floor. Mr Ian Mitchell proposed Vincent Obbard, seconded by Steve Le Feuvre. Following speeches from the proposers the President asked if there were any further nominations, and with no other nominations, Mr Obbard was declared duly elected.

Item 10) Elect two members to the Agricultural General Committee:

The President reported that two nominations had been received; one for John McMullon, proposed by Derrick Frigot, and seconded by Sarah Le Feuvre, and one for Tom Perchard,

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proposed by Laurence Agnès and seconded by Rosemary Boléat. With no other nominations the President declared the two nominees duly elected.

Item 11) Elect two members to the Horticultural General Committee:

The President reported that two nominations had been received; one for Colin de la Haye, proposed by Tom Robinson, and seconded by Steven Falle, and one for Tom Robinson, proposed by Martin Preisig and seconded by Ian Le Marquand. With no other nominations the President declared the two nominees duly elected.

Item 12) Approve the annual subscription to be effective from 1st January 2024:

The President explained that the Council were recommending that subscriptions should be increased from the current level of £30 for individuals, £45 for joint members (calculated by the formula of 1.5 times the rate for an individual) and £7 for junior members. There followed a lively discussion which included points made on the merits of increasing rates at a time of economic hardship, the need to make regular modest increases rather than leave for a long period resulting in a larger increase, the events programme returning to normal following the pandemic, and the importance of increasing numbers rather than the rates. The President finally called for proposals and three were made:

- 1) Raised to £34 for individuals, £51 for joint and £10 for juniors. Proposed by Steve Le Feuvre, seconded by Tom Perchard.
- 2) Remain unchanged from the current. Proposed by Martin Rouault, seconded by John Le Feuvre.
- 3) Raised to £32 for individuals, £48 for joint and £10 for juniors. Proposed by Vincent Obbard, seconded by Colin de la Haye.

The President called for a ballot by show of hands, to be counted by Mr Connolly, which resulted in the third proposition gaining 20 votes, the first 6 and the second 5. The President declared that the compromise proposition was carried and rate would raise accordingly from the 1st January 2024.

Item 13) Award of Honorary Life Membership to Mr Paul Houzé and Dr Maurice Richard:

The President explained how the award of Honorary Life Membership, being the highest honour that the Society can bestow on an individual in recognition of outstanding service or achievement, is made at the discretion of the Council, with recipients nominated by the membership. He noted that this year's two recipients were both 'pioneers of the Jersey breed', and he quoted from the book of the same name, authored by Derrick Frigot, relating to the long "importation saga which had its beginnings in 1978" and the important role played by the two recipients.

He spoke of how Paul Houzé first joined the Society Council in 1978 as the representative for St Saviour, in those days the Council being made up of 24 members with representatives from each parish. Paul's vision and energy were soon harnessed, and he excelled for many years as chairman of the Breed Improvement Committee. Under his tenure many innovations to improve the breed in the Island were introduced, including; Embryo Transfer, Linnear Assessment and the Bull Proving Scheme. Paul led the Society's campaign to persuade the States to change the law to allow semen importation in 2008. He served three terms as Vice President and is currently Vice Chairman of the Jersey Milk Marketing Board and a Director of Jersey Dairy Ltd. Paul farms the Lodge Herd, in partnership with his daughter Becky, and they lead the current production tables. In the last herd recording year the herd averaged 7,770 litres per cow and with 750 kilos per cow of combined fat and protein. In the show ring the herd has achieved great success and produced multiple Supercows. The Lodge Herd is rightly recognised as one of Jersey's leading herds, with many great cow families, and is a testament to Paul's dedication to the breed.

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Paul Houzé, in accepting the award, thanked the Council saying he was deeply grateful and humbled. He spoke of the journey he has had in cattle breeding, and serving the Society, remarking that, whilst long, it had also been fun. He thanked his parents for their encouragement, his family for their support, and the companionship of many great friends he had made along the way. He believed that the Island has had many great cattle breeders and with all the tools now available, was building on a great legacy and reinvigorating the breed.

The President then spoke of Maurice Bichard's research and the reports that he authored for the Society, both in 2003 and subsequently in 2018, being instrumental in the development of the modern Jersey cow in the Island following the importation of semen in 2008. He noted that Dr Bichard is principally a pig breeding specialist who has successfully applied the principles of genetics and animal breeding to improving the performance of dairy cattle. Maurice tells us: *"Were it not for the evacuation from Guernsey in 1940-1945 I might well have followed a career in the island, perhaps re-starting my father's Icart Egg Farm in St Martins, or following my two grandfathers in commercial horticulture in St Sampsons. Instead, I was lured into livestock breeding in UK and joined a new movement to apply modern genetic principles to the traditional knowledge built up over centuries by practical farmers."* Dr Bichard became a prominent member of the team behind the Pig Improvement Company, or PIC, which has its origins in the Wallingford Pig Discussion Group during the 1950's and whose members were all involved in commercial pig production. The aim of the group was to scientifically advance pig breeding practices in the UK which at the time were not as advanced as those elsewhere in Europe. Dr. Bichard was initially appointed as a consultant for PIC in 1966, and subsequently as Director of Research and Development in 1974. He later became Technical Director until his retirement in 1995. The company he helped build, since its merger with Genus, now claims to be the world's largest animal breeding businesses. Maurice has also served as President of BCBC (British Cattle Breeders Club) for 6 years. After retirement he helped the Societies in both Guernsey and Jersey to continue to move their cattle breeding programmes forward. He has authored, amongst others: *Genetic Evaluation Review, A Report to the UK Milk Development Council, Review of Breed Development Services in the Island of Guernsey*, as well as his pivotal report of 2003 for RJA&HS entitled *Sustainable Development of the Island's Dairy Cattle* which was so instrumental in making the case for the importation of pure Jersey semen.

Dr Bichard, who had attended the meeting by video call, also thanked the Council and remarked how special it was to be honoured in this way by his sister island. He looked forward to watching how the breed continued to develop and wished the membership well.

Item 14) To conduct any other business:

Martin Preisig made a presentation of a bouquet of flowers to Rachelle Robinson for her exceptional work as Horticultural Department Secretary during the year and acknowledged the support of her husband Tom.

There was no other business raised and the meeting closed at 9.12 pm.

These minutes were signed subsequently, on adoption, on the (date) by:

The President / Chairman:

Vice President (Agriculture):

Vice President (Horticulture):