

THE LORD COLGRAIN ELECTED NEW PRESIDENT FOR THE SOCIETY

February 2015

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At the 2015 Kent County Agricultural Society Annual General Meeting in February, Alastair Campbell, 4th Baron Colgrain was elected as President.

Lord Colgrain succeeds Lady Astor of Hever who has been President of the Kent County Agricultural Society since her election in 2011, following her husband Johnny when he stepped down to take on governmental duties in the House of Lords.

During her time as President she has supported the Society at the Kent County Show helping organise the Presidents Luncheon, VIP guests and assisting with hosting the day. She also supported the Living Land event and attended most of our Council meetings.

Kevin Attwood, Kent County Agricultural Society Chairman said "From my perspective as Chairman, Lady Astor of Hever has been a delight to work with, always willing to offer ideas, full of enthusiasm and continually promoting the Society and its charitable objectives. Our staff team have found her very supportive during her term of office and whilst she is standing down we all hope that she can find time to continue to support the Society in the future albeit in a less official capacity".

Lady Astor was presented with a Life Governors Membership and commemorative glassware as a token of the Society's gratitude for the hard work and support she has given over the years.

Lord Colgrain was delighted to be elected to the position of President. He was born and brought up in Kent, and obtained an MA in English Literature from Trinity College, Cambridge, before entering the world of banking, working both in the UK and Overseas. He

then spent a year at The Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, after which he spent six years working full time on his family farm outside Sevenoaks. For the last 30 years he has continued to oversee the running of his farm and at the same time has run an Executive Search business in London. Alastair is currently Chairman of the Trustees of Belmont House and Belnor Farms near Faversham, is a Trustee of Rochester Cathedral Trust and a Governor of Sevenoaks School, is a Kent Ambassador and was High Sheriff of Kent 2013 / 2014. He is married to Bella, who is a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent and Chair of the Kent Community Foundation and they have two grown up sons

Mary Anthony stepped down as Vice-Chairman of the Kent County Agricultural Society after several years supporting the Chairman, Kevin Attwood. Mary has been involved with the Kent County Agricultural Society for over 30 years, initially stewarding with horses, then as a Board Director. Mary was awarded a 30 year services award at Stewards Supper in December.

Lady Astor praised the retiring Vice-Chairman and said, "Mary has in depth catering knowledge and over the numerous years has provided the Society with her wonderful buffets which you will once again be enjoying later today. This knowledge has been invaluable to the Society in dealing with the caterers and organising the Official Luncheon's at the Kent County Show".

Lady Astor regarded Mary as a constant source of encouragement and has devoted a large amount of time to supporting the staff and everyone involved in the Society. On behalf of the Society and Executive Board, Lady Astor thanked Mary for all the hard work and support she has given over the years and presented her with the President's Award.

Lady Astor of Hever then presented Terry Whitehead with the Vice-Presidents Award. Terry Whitehead has been a committed Chief Steward of Livestock since 2009, acted as a Steward for over 10 years and a member of the Society for numerous years. A true stalwart of the Society and supporter of the Kent County Show. On behalf of the Society and Executive Board Lady Astor thanked Terry for all the hard work and support he has given over the years.

James Forknall, Director was duly elected as Vice-Chairman, James is married to Michelle and has three children. His family have farmed in Chart Sutton since 1953 and James set up his own contracting business at the age of 18. He now farms about 700 acres of his own, as well as contracting farming for others and runs the ever growing Contracting Business.

James was educated at Sutton Valence School. He was Maidstone NFU branch Chairman for 2 years and is a former Chairman of the very successful Weald Of Kent Ploughing Match. He is also a Director for RAMSAK and sits on the Hadlow College Agriculture Faculty Industry Board. Outside of farming, James is a rugby coach at Cranbrook Rugby Club and loves to ski and take "warm, sunny" holidays with his family.

On his unanimous election James said "I am very honoured to be elected as the Kent County Agricultural Society Vice-Chairman. I was a Member of Council for 2 years prior to being elected to the Board of Directors in 2013. I am looking forward to helping the Chairman achieve his vision of bringing more agriculture to the Show. I am in the ideal position of being able to speak to farmers and growers and to ensure that the Kent County Show has their support. In turn this will mean the annual Show in July will have more exhibits to inform and educate visitors about the wonderful larder we produce here in Kent".

After the formal AGM, Joe Cottingham, Director of Watts Farm Group delivered the 2015 Falmouth Lecture entitled "Growing with the Times."

Watts Farm Group combines four companies with a combined turnover of £32 million. As British farmers, their vision is clear; to supply their customers with a wide-range of produce, grown to the highest standards for the longest UK season possible. This success story has been achieved by ensuring a viable product range, adapting to the market and making sound investments in machinery, crops and personnel.

The lecture highlighted the need for growers to look at innovation and to invest in technology and to most importantly develop sound business strategies for the future.

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Notes to editors:

The Kent County Agricultural Society is an agricultural charity established in 1923 based at the Kent Showground near Maidstone in Kent. The charity organises the annual Kent County Show, Living Land, Agri-Expo, the Heritage Transport Show and Equi-Expo. The aims and objectives of the Society are as follows:

- The improvement of agriculture, forestry, horticulture, allied industries, rural crafts and the breeding of livestock.
- The demonstration of improved methods and processes connected with the above.
- The holding of an Annual Show for the exhibition of livestock, farm produce, horticultural produce, machinery, implements, tools, appliances, utensils, animal feeding stuffs, fertilizers, seeds and other things connected with or appertaining to agriculture.
- The encouragement of agricultural and horticultural education, research and experimental work by publications, grants or other means.
- To promote such other charitable purposes as the Company may from time to time determine.

Picture of Alastair Campbell, 4th Baron Colgrain attached.

For more information contact Lucy Hegarty, Kent County Show Manager

lucy@kentshowground.co.uk 01622 630975.

Kent County Show – 10, 11, 12 July 2015

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