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www.amop.org.uk

Harson's Newsletter for 2020.



Dear Purchasers,
Greetings,

The impact of COVID-19 prevented the "Court" from meeting in London in December, so I can only report to you from the relative safety of Guernsey. At the time of writing this (19/12/20) we have only 3 active cases of Covid19 in Guernsey, while I believe our sister island of Jersey has 947.

I congratulate Noël Bramley in Rochester, and Patrick Delafield in Jersey on organising two functions prior to the return of Lockdown. In Guernsey I attended a dinner at the United Club where we welcomed two new Purchasers, Nigel Higgs and Sir Richard Collas. Among Purchasers gathered in 2020 was Ian Laughland, well known in Rugby circles, most especially North of the Border. Ian represented Scotland on 31 occasions, either as an inside centre or fly half, and gained further fame when leading London Scottish to multiple victories in the Middlesex 7 a side competition, and also the Scottish equivalent at Melrose.

Sadly, I must report that Douglas McCully has intimated to me that having reached the age of 80 it is time for him to relinquish his duties as Chief Crook. He was appointed in 1999 to succeed Harry Denne, and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

I hope that 2021 will bring us a respite from the Pandemic, and that life will return to normal, but I ask you all to keep safe; and hopefully we shall be back together in time to enjoy the company of each other on the golf course or the Pavilion

Purchaser's Cohort Reports ~ 2020

East Kent ~ KPs Douglas McCully, Robert Prestige & Dominic McCully.

Golf at RCPGC ~ Deal.

Sadly, no Golf this year at Deal but those Purchasers wishing to play in either or both of the Tardif matches this year on Sat 17th April & Sat 6th Nov 21 should email: prestige@3parklane.co.uk.

We have made no donations this year as we have been without the guidance of Harry Denne who was gathered on 23rd Dec 2019. Sorely missed.

Purchasers v Haymakers Cricket Belmont House 1st August 2020

This year, despite the dreaded lurgy, a highly entertaining socially distanced game of cricket was conducted on the idyllic Kent Downs. It provided a brief respite in what has been a grim year. This year the opposition was provided by the Haymakers who are the OKS Cricket XI (Old King's Scholars or Old Boys of King's School Canterbury). Judging by their conduct they should provide rich pickings for future recruitment.



The Game was conducted in its customary energetic style with Tony Allan and myself acting as flawlessly neutral umpires. The Haymakers captained by Billy Selman opened the batting scoring a respectable 187 all out but only utilising 33 of the 39 available overs. Top scorers were George, Jayesh and Freddy with 31,28 and 28 respectively (according to the score book surnames are no longer fashionable at public school!!). Wilshaw (Michael) 3-12 off 5 overs and Williams (Alexander) 3-15 off 3 overs topped the bowling, and yes Arran de Mobray was plum LBW first ball off my nephew's electric bowling, even the non-strike batsman agreed when De Mobray asked for a review.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions no centralised lunch was possible, which meant the traditional Purchaser's buffet lunch featuring Noel Bramley (KP)'s delicious sausages were denied, instead spectators were invited to contribute to the raffle with a £20 note bearing their name, this also provided a register for track and trace had it been required. It was great to see so many familiar faces if only from a distance. Picnics around the boundary in beautiful sunshine contributed to the bucolic atmosphere.

The Purchaser's innings after lunch turned into a real nail biter. McVitie (Jamie) top scored with 46 and Williams (Alexander) contributed 33 for an all-round man of the match performance. The 9th wicket fell in the 34th over with 14 runs still required fortunately young Atkins (Cole) and Roots (William (not Joe)) held

their nerves so it is with great pleasure I can report another victory for the emerging force that is the Purchasers' cricket team.



The Lime Tree Trophy was presented to Captain Atkins (David). The following Purchasers were made; Williams (Alexander), McCully (Henry) and Allan (Charlie). £700 was raised for the cause.

Next year Belmont have agreed to host us on Saturday 7th August, it would be wonderful to see as many people as possible, pandemic permitting, join the fun.

Gloucester ~ KPs Jeremy Dancey, David Foyle & Philip Dancey.

Members: Active Members: 47. Non-Active Members: 2. New members: Dick Powell, Paul James & Chris Yorke

Events during the year: On Saturday 25th January we sponsored Hartpury RFC again this year for their match against Coventry RFC which was a great day out with 28 members and 25 guests followed by Steak & Chips at the usual local hostelry. We raised £380 from our final score 'guesser'.

Donations: During the year we donated £215 to a local vulnerable young man via the contact centre we work closely with.

Funds: Current funds available for distribution: £903

2021 Events: TBA

Guernsey ~ KP Jamie Doggart

It is truly hard to describe how fortunate we have been here in Guernsey, while the United Kingdom has suffered a really horrendous year. Apart from travel restrictions life here has gone on pretty much as usual after an early lockdown was eased back in the Spring.

Consequently, Guernsey Purchasers have enjoyed a more or less normal year – with three Meetings and our usual Annual Dinner at The United Club. In February we were invited to our local newspaper's premises to witness the printing of Saturday's edition. An interesting – if noisy experience, but fortunately refreshments in the sound-insulated Boardroom permitted normal levels of conversation.

Our Meeting in July, chez Terry Iles was extremely well attended after our short lockdown as was the September get-together at Guernsey Yacht Club hosted by Peter Warry and Nick Guillemette. With air and sea links severely limited, we have enjoyed the presence of Harson Burley at all our functions this year. Funds raised over the year have mostly been directed towards Guernsey Welfare, a wonderful organisation which really does identify the needy causes here on the Island. Even in Guernsey there is poverty and hardship.

Our philosophy of trying to give help where a little means a lot is not made easier by data protection rules, which seem to me to have consequences above and beyond what was intended almost to the point of absurdity – but we bash on bravely!

We have been fortunate enough to have three new recruits to the cohort: Mike Webber, Nigel Higgs and former Bailiff Sir Richard Collas, all of whom have attended their inaugural meetings and are in possession of their ties.

It remains for me to wish all Purchasers an easier ride in the coming year. It would be good to hope that the seas and skies will open up and allow us to visit dear old Blighty and, of course you to sample the delights of Guernsey, where you may be assured of a warm welcome.

Jersey ~ KP Patrick Delafield.

The Purchasers of Jersey have met only once this year due to the unpleasantness. The cancellation of our April Fate Day Dinner was rendered all the more distressing because it was, for once in a long, long time, to have taken place actually on our Patron's Day, April 1st. And an additional gloss on the proceedings was to have been the introduction of no less than two Postulants for Membership. All agreed however, after careful consultation and the absorption of several refreshments (at a suitable distance, of course), that it would be foolish to go ahead.

By contrast, the Jersey Purchasers felt sufficiently confident in the general recovery to hold our November Fate Day Dinner and that was attended by a very jolly assemblage of 14 Purchasers who developed an occasion of great jollity. Unfortunately, neither of our intended Postulants was actually able to join us due to other commitments, but assuming that the unpleasantness abates somewhat in the early part of 2021 despite its present resurgence we shall look forward to welcoming them in April.

Because of the now well-known restrictions there has been little contact with our normal group of beneficiaries but we expect to distribute some funds shortly. Contacts have been maintained.

As things stand at the moment the Jersey Purchasers plan their first 2021 Dinner for Wednesday April 28th, being the week immediately following Easter, and the date for the November Fate Day Dinner will almost certainly be Wednesday November 3rd. As always, visiting Purchasers would be enormously welcome.

I am again advised by sundry Jersey Purchasers that we can look forward to meeting another Postulant at our April Fate Day in addition to the two whom we already look forward to seeing then, and I continue to hope this small but steady incremental progress will continue. As I remarked last year, age shall not weary us, but tempus fugit.

Rochester ~ KP Noël Bramley.

We can all agree that this has been a difficult year for all due to the worldwide spread of the Covid-19 virus. Thank you to all of our Members who have donated and attended our events.

Our dear member, Norman Morgan was gathered in April and we made a donation to the NHS in his memory. The NHS has been in the frontline in the virus war. More recently we lost Richard Smith 9th December 2020. A victim of Covid-19.

During our brief respite from lockdown many Rochester Purchasers and wives attended the splendid day of the Cricket at Belmont on 1st August. COVID-19 restrictions necessitated a 'bring your own chow' and, of course the viral antidote- drink. During near perfect weather some of our members even watched the game.

Our annual Fate Day Dinner was converted to a Luncheon which was held at the Castle Club, Rochester on 29th October. Although understandably short in numbers due to unease amongst most people about travelling and socially mixing, we had an enjoyable time and even managed to raise some funds for our charitable account.

We have tentatively scheduled a Fate Day Luncheon at The Castle Club for Thursday 4th November 2021. It is, of course, open to all.

During the year we have donated £250 to 'The Garden Classroom' £500 to The Wisdom Hospice, £1000 to The Young Lives Foundation.

Let us hope 2021 will see us all emerge from lockdown restrictions to enjoy our time and have some fun raising funds to assist others.

Our Funds currently stand at £2392.15. Rochester Purchasers now number 30.

Rye ~ KP Bob Stephenson.

Another quiet year in Rye and sadly, Iain Laughland was gathered after a long period of ill health. He had 31 caps for Scotland and was a past President of the SRU. Greatly missed.

Unfortunately, the annual golf match against "The Rest" had to be cancelled. Let's hope for a bumper 2021!

Scotland ~ KPs Keith Oliver & Brian Adair.

I am pleased to report that Purchaser Alastair Shepherd has been appointed Custodian of the Scottish Barony Register. The appointment is unique and is a credit to Alastair.

This is the only highlight of a year blighted by COVID-19. The Scottish cohort has not met in 2020. There are 27 members and regular numbers at dinners are around 20.

I think I reported a substantial donation made in November of last year to Bethany Trust
Again Greetings. C. Keith Oliver

Sussex ~ KP John Spink.

Like other areas COVID-19 led to the cancellation of the match against the Sussex Martlets in June and the Piltdown golf in August. Hopefully we will have some normality in 2021 and Nigel Russell is planning the Martlets match for Monday June 28th. I hope we can have the Piltdown golf day on Monday 16th August. We remain intact and I think my last count of 22 active and 14 inactive is right. I am looking for an active Piltdown member to give local contact. Keep active and well in this current appalling Lockdown.

Weald Purchasers ~ KPs Ian Standen & Peter Ludgate.

As you can imagine the Clay Shoot and the Dinner, we had planned had to be cancelled because of Covid-19. We sincerely hope that we can reschedule them both in 2021 and will keep you all posted.

West Kent ~ KP John Fraser.

Sadly, due to COVID-19 and my incapacity related to multiple Hip Operations our West Kent activity has been very limited this year. The Rochester Purchasers and ourselves did manage to have a limited

number lunch at The Castle Club Rochester on 29th October 2020. The West Kent share of the money raised came to £193.19.

The usual fines for Fete Day misdemeanours raised £90.

Disbursements in 2020: We donated £500.00 to "The Young Lives Foundation".

Our funds currently stand at £275.08.

Our membership is currently 23.

Greetings from West Kent

Purchasers Golf v the Sussex Martlets GS ~ Monday 28th June 2021 ~ Match Manager: Nigel Russell.

As with so many events in 2020, the annual golf match against the Sussex Martlets scheduled to be held at Piltdown's lovely course on 29th June was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. In the face of continuing uncertainty, it was decided not to try and resurrect the fixture during the year but, given vaccine and a fair wind, we hope for a return to our friendly and social rivalry in 2021 on 28th June; if anyone would like to play, please let Nigel know (nigelrussell@uwclub.net)

Purchasers Web Site. www.amop.org.uk

Purchasers with access to computers should visit the Purchasers website which has been running now for five years. We are most grateful to KP Philip Dancey for the efforts he had taken to set up and keep the web site running.

Purchasers Function Dates for 2021.

- **TBA** - Gloucester Purchasers Hartpury Rugby.
- **TBA** - Gloucester Purchasers Annual Dinner.
- Thursday 1st April – Fate Day
- Thursday 8th - Sunday 11th April – Halford Hewitt Golf.
- Saturday 17th April - Purchasers Lunch at Noon followed by Tardif Golf Match– RCPGC Deal.
- Wednesday 28th April - Jersey Purchasers Dinner.
- Monday 28th June - Purchasers v Sussex Martlets GS – Piltdown.
- **TBA** Gloucester Purchasers Cheltenham Cricket Festival.
- Thursday 15th - Sunday 18th July - 149th Open @ Royal St Georges, Sandwich.
- Saturday 7th August – Belmont Cricket Three-way tournament of 100 ball Cricket. Purchasers v Badlesmere Bronchials v The Haymakers.
- Monday 16th August - Piltdown Purchasers v Purchasers Golf – followed by lunch @ Piltdown.
- Wednesday 3rd November - Jersey Purchasers Dinner.
- Thursday 4th November- Rochester & West Kent Fate Day Luncheon at the Castle Club.
- **TBC** Friday 5th November - Fate Day - Guernsey Annual Dinner.
- Saturday 6th November - Purchasers Tardif Golf Match teeing off at 11.00hrs RCPGC Deal followed by Dinner @ The Mermaid, Bishopsbourne.
- **TBA** Gloucester Purchasers Chepstow Races.
- Saturday 27th November - Rye Purchasers v Purchasers Golf and lunch @ Rye. **TBC**
- Friday 3rd December - Court Meeting followed by luncheon at the East India Club. **TBC**

A happy and prosperous 2021 to you all together with my Greetings & Good Purchasing!

Harson