

# DBT

## All change

*Following the Douglas Bomford Trusts AGM in November, incoming Secretary David White reports.*

Welcome to my first article as the new Technical Secretary for the Douglas Bomford Trust. I will use this as an opportunity to update you on the changes that took place at the AGM held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023. Firstly, the Trust welcomed two new trustees, Julia Lucas and Jane Rickson.

### Family representative

Julia is a Chartered Accountant and honoured to be a Bomford Family Representative on the Board. Julia is eldest daughter of John Fox, one of



Family representative Julia Lucas



David White - DBT Secretary

the founder trustees. Douglas Bomford was John's boss and were great friends. Douglas was a surrogate grandfather to Julia and her sisters and he left Julia his pond yacht, Spray, in his will.

Julia has had many roles as a non-executive director and charity trustee over her career, including being an independent member of British Wool, and a trustee of the Stratford Town Trust, an ancient grant making charity.

Julia says "The DBT has a fantastic track record for supporting young agricultural engineers and expanding the understanding of agricultural practice over many years, collaborating with key institutions and experts. I'm delighted to be able to play a part in seeing it on the next phase of its journey. I'm not an engineer but I do know what needs to be done to nourish charities and enable them to deliver their objectives and that's what I'll be supporting the DBT to continue to do, to the best of my ability".

### Soils specialist

Many of you will already know Jane from her time as President of the IAgRE (2018 - 2020). Jane is an IAgRE Honorary Fellow, Professor of Soil Erosion and Conservation at Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute,

Cranfield University, and was honoured with a Top 50 Women in Engineering Award from the Women's Engineering Society in 2021.

Jane's work has focused on the role of soil and water engineering to deliver ecosystems goods and services, including water regulation, agricultural production and carbon storage using transdisciplinary skills to integrate engineering with economics and social sciences. Her research also



New trustee Jane Rickson

includes engineering the landscape to increase carbon sequestration and storage to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She has shown that adapting to extreme weather events associated with climate change is possible by working with farmers to design and test field engineering practices that can mitigate soil and water losses, such as the use of conservation tillage, grass waterways and field buffer strips. Other research has tested different soil cultivation equipment to improve soil health and crop growth, such as a project on regenerative agriculture in potato production with partners including PepsiCo and McCains. She is able to replicate real life field conditions in cutting-edge pilot scale laboratory facilities that Jane helped to design and build at Cranfield. Jane is an inspiration to soil scientists and land-based engineers across the world. Jane acts as a mentor for other women, especially young female researchers, and engages in outreach activities that encourage girls to take up science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) through her links with local primary schools and media work.

### Not quite hello to new Emeritus Trustee

Paul Miller (seated bottom front right), Director of Silsoe Spray Applications Unit, became an Emeritus Trustee. Paul has been both a DBT Trustee, and its Technical Secretary. Paul received the EurAgEng Award of Merit for Scientific Understanding, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2016. Paul has recently been appointed a Visiting Professor at Lincoln University.

### And goodbye to:

Alan Plom, (seated bottom front left), retired as DBT Technical Secretary (2017 – 2023). Alan was with the HSE for 32 years, and was Head of Safety Section in HSE's Agriculture & Food Sector where he led nationally on safety issues in agriculture and the land-based industries. At the AGM, the Board presented Alan with a gift as a thank you for all his hard work over the past 6 years. Alan, hopefully, you can now find more time to play your drums.

Finally, I was appointed as the new Technical Secretary. After 34 years full time at Harper Adams University, I have now gone part time. I am an ex-DBT Trustee (2012 – 2018). It is an honour and a privilege to be asked to be the new Technical Secretary. I hope that I can make a good a job as previous post holders.

The  
**DOUGLAS BOMFORD**  
SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING Trust

For further information,  
see the Trust's website:

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