

Alan Plom, Secretary to the Douglas Bomford Trust (DBT) reports on another busy few months for the Trust, not least because it has been *The Awards Season*:

MONITORING AND MENTORING

Our Trustees have also had several interesting and informative project review meetings to provide advice and ensure progress and cost-effective use of DBT's funds. These included a meeting at **RAU** with Malcolm Crabtree (DBT's Chairman), Paul Miller

(Trustee) and Karen Rial-Lovera, the DBT-funded Chair of Agricultural Engineering. This post has brought a new focus on the profession at RAU and further opportunities for collaborative working are being identified.

The Trustees half-yearly Management meeting was held at **Reading University**, when we also heard about Reading's projects and plans. **Lincoln University** was also visited to explore current and future work. More on their projects in future DBT Updates.

We also subscribe to support the **Agri-Epi Centres** and Paul Miller outlined the Trust's role at their Annual Stakeholder Day at Cranfield on 27 June. More than 60 representatives from leading academic and agri-food industry partners, technology providers, etc, attended this valuable networking opportunity, intended to 'build the Agri-EPI member community' and to stimulate new partnerships. It included a tour of Cranfield's Precision Agriculture and Soil Health facilities. (https://twitter.com/agri_epi)

The Trust also paid for 3 HAU Engineering MSc students to attend the international **Field Robot Event**, held in mid-June at Bernburg, Germany. Although '*ERIC_the_Robot*' was a potential front-runner in

testing, unfortunately various gremlins (technical and rules) intervened during the competition. However, the team still felt it was a great learning experience and have many tips to pass on to their successors. Read more about their project on Twitter: @ERICHAU4



ABOVE: Eric the Robot HAU's Alex Fisher, Rhys Thomas, and Megan Platt with ERIC (the Robot).

WOMEN IN ENGINEERING

HAU's 'e-News' recently reported on **Amy Boothby**, one of DBT's Scholars on the BEng (Hons) Agricultural Engineering course. Amy said: "Receiving a Douglas Bomford Trust Scholarship is brilliant. I'm going to spend some of the money promoting women to consider a career in engineering..."

Amy was influenced by a school visit to Jaguar Land Rover when, in her words, she was: "Beyond surprised, and my perceptions around engineering were completely changed. I realised that engineering could involve being at the forefront of innovation and solving tomorrow's problems today."

The engineering I study is about designing things, solving problems and making things better for future generations of farmers, so they can keep supplying the world with food."

Amy's aim aligns with the objectives of the Trust and I am sure that **Prof Jane Rickson**, the recently appointed (and first female) President of IAgRE will no doubt approve too. You can read more about what inspired Amy to take up her personal challenge and view on the benefits of employing female engineers at <https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/203238/>.



IAgRE 2018 AWARDS

Douglas Bomford's legacy was evident at IAgRE's 80th Anniversary celebration, held at Wrest Park on 24th May. Several speakers and recipients of awards recalled and thanked DBT for the support they have received from the Trust, which was founded in 1972, this included:

- **Clare Butler Ellis** (Research Manager, Silsoe Spray Applications Ltd), who received DBT's 'Best Paper' Award for her contribution to a paper on modelling bystander and resident exposure to pesticides, published in **Biosystems Engineering**, Feb 2017.
- **Michael Giannitopoulos** also paid tribute to the support given to him by the Trust when collecting the **CNH Industrial Award** for his **Cranfield University** thesis on optimising conservation tillage systems.

AGRI-FOOD CHARITIES (AFCP)

New Midlands Group

Alan Plom presented an update on the work and philosophy of the DBT at the inaugural meeting held at Harper Adams University (HAU) on 12 July, to stimulate closer understanding and collaboration between food and farming charities, societies and organisations operating in the Midlands. There are now around 150 charities nationally providing funds in the agri-food sector listed on the **AFCP website**.

Peter Mills (HAU's Vice Chancellor) outlined how charities are supporting new research and knowledge transfer and gave an overview of HAU's activities. Kim Matthews, (AHDB) described the needs of the industry and support given by charities to agricultural research. Other organisations represented included AHDB, RASE, PGRO, the Worshipful Company of Farmers, British Grassland Society, Shropshire Chamber of Agriculture and several 'Foundations' and other Trusts.