



THE SOCIETY OF DORSET MEN



NEWSLETTER - SPRING - 2025

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

There is little room for much comment from the chair in this issue. Alas, membership continues to decline, with the impact of the decision to admit ladies still to be felt, and recruitment must be a priority. We can now look forward to a full programme of events which starts with the County Dinner on 10th May, where our speakers are Michael Dooley and Angus Campbell. I would also draw your attention to the trip to Windsor on 3rd September. I hope you find something of interest within and send you my very best wishes.

LYDLINCH BELLS

Although the parish church of St. Thomas a Beckett at Lydlinch has a 12th century baptismal font, the rest of the building is Perpendicular Gothic, the nave, chancel and west tower being 15th century with the north aisle and south porch added in the 16th. The tower has a peal of five bells, and the church is Grade II* listed.

Sadly, however, we learn from Sally-Anne Barrett, wife of member John, that the bells are now in need of much work, at great expense. Sally-Anne writes:

“Vor Lydlinch Bells be good vor sound” - so wrote the Dorset poet William Barnes in his poem of the same name published in 1879. The poem celebrates the distinctive sound of the Lydlinch Bells but sadly these bells are now in urgent need of restoration, which will enable them to once again be ‘good vor sound’ and importantly much easier to ring and echo the poem. Currently a number of potential local ringers are now being taught by members of the Mere Branch of the Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers and fund raising has started to reach the target of £55,000 which is anticipated to be the final cost. It was fitting that the first donation towards this restoration came from the Society of Dorsetmen.

Our picture shows Alan Holley, our Charity Co-ordinator, presenting a cheque for £250 to the vicar, Mary Gubbins, accompanied by Chris Tuffin, John Barrett, Sally-Anne Barrett and Louisa Elwes.

Members, if they so wish, may donate individually by BACS to sort code 20-99-40, a/c number 83240002, Lydlinch Church St Thomas a Becket, and the annual Tea in the Garden, will be held at the Old Rectory, Stock Gaylard, on 6th July, 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm, entrance £5.00, to which all members are welcome.



COMMITTEE NEWS

The Committee last met on 21st. January. The **Treasurer** reported a projected loss for 2025 of £1645, caused mainly by forced changes to the website. The **Membership Secretary** reported a nominal membership of 730, but was chasing issues with several members. Six new members, including three ladies, were admitted, but there were three deaths and five resignations. **Coming events**, the website and shop items were all discussed and are reported on elsewhere in this Newsletter. **Charitable donations** included £100 to the Echo Christmas Toy Appeal and £260 to North Dorset Women's Refuge, with a proposal to support Dorset Youths Club this year. (See also the item on Lydlinch Bells)

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 10th April, 2025**, in Dorchester.



Isle of Purbeck Golf Club - venue for the Purbeck Lunch

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP currently stands at 723 names on the Register. A new Information Leaflet, incorporating a Membership Application Form, has been produced to give to prospective members. Members may request a few copies from the Secretary to help with recruitment.

NEW MEMBERS: Elizabeth DAY, Patricia RUSSELL, John STOKOE, Julie HAWKINS, Sue WESTLAKE, Hadyn BEAZER and Anthony WILLIAMS.

We welcome them all and look forward to meeting them at future Society functions.

DEATHS: Kenneth SALTER, Weymouth: Anthony CADDY, Wareham: Christopher CARTER, Weymouth: George PRESTON, Wareham: John TORY, Blandford: Roger PEERS, Bridport: Donald KNIGHT, Bridport: Alan OLD, Dorchester: Robert OXFORD, Gillingham: Tim PRYCE, West Stafford: Terry TEBBUTT, Weymouth: Martin BRICKELL, Blandford: Peter FRAMPTON, Sherborne: Amis GOLDINGHAM, Swanage: Timothy ARMSTEAD, Wareham: Robert COBB, Swanage: Neal LAWSON, Dorchester.

"To hear behind his last farewell, the geate a-vallen to." (William Barnes)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Sir David CHECKETTS KCVO, Sir Christopher COLVILLE, Robert CORNICK, G FRAMPTON, R N HANNAY, A HATCHER, J R HILLMAN, K JAMES, Geoff JEANS, David POTTER, J ROGERS, Kenneth WILLSON.

Although we are still receiving subscriptions from these members, we have no current address for them. If any member can help with information, please contact the Membership Secretary.

THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF DORSET

The Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset is a traditional and welcome guest at our County Dinner and this year is no exception as we welcome the current incumbent of the office, Michael Dooley LVO FRCOG, and his wife Barbara. For many years we have welcomed Angus Campbell CVO, now our Chairman, in this role and, to our delight, Michael and Angus will speak in conjunction.

Michael Dooley has had a long and distinguished medical career and has worked at Dorset County Hospital for over 25 years. He is Consultant Gynaecologist to the Royal Household, and practices in London and Dorset. He was lead Gynaecologist at the London Olympics, and Team Doctor for the British Equestrian Federation for eight years.

He has raised considerable sums for charities and other good causes, including the Dorset County Hospital, a local hospice and the Royal Osteoporosis Society.

Lord-Lieutenant is an honorary title given to the monarch's personal representative in a county and has carried varying tasks throughout history. They were first appointed by Henry VIII in the 1540s when the military functions of the Sheriff were transferred to him. His preset duties are numerous and include arranging visits for members of the Royal family and escorting Royal visitors, and the presentation of medals and awards on behalf of the Sovereign and advising on nominations for Honours.



PURBECK DINNER

After a break of several years, a Dinner was held at the Isle of Purbeck Golf Club on 6th March, 2025, for members and their guests. Originally held for Purbeck Area members this event fell foul of the Covid restrictions. This occasion was open to all in the hope that it will awaken sufficient interest for it to once again be a regular in the calendar.

Most efficiently organised by Neil Hardy, ably assisted by Mike Bonfield and Nick Caddy, an excellent meal was enjoyed by the assembled gathering. The toast 'Dorset, our County' was proposed by the Society Chairman and a raffle raised over £200 towards the fund for an Admiral nurse.

The success of the evening was measured by the agreement to feast again at the same time next year - Thursday 5th March 2026.

DORSET YEAR BOOK 2025

The Editor is urgently seeking articles for the 2026 Year Book and will welcome contributions from members. Please send to:

editor@societyofdorsetmen.co.uk

PIN BADGES and CUFFLINKS

A new supply of Pin Badges and Cufflinks has been obtained and they are now available from the Secretary.

Pin badges are £2.00 each (plus £1.50 P&P)

Cufflinks are £5.00 a pair (plus £1.50 P&P)



steveplov@yahoo.co.uk

EVENTS DIARY FOR 2025

A full programme of Events has been organised for the Society in 2025.

Please watch the website for alterations and updates

County Dinner

George Albert Hotel, Warden Hill, Saturday 10th. May, 2025. Cost £45 per head. Speaker—The President, Mr Angus Campbell CVO

Hambro Cup – Golf Competition

Came Down GC, Dorchester. Wednesday 21st. May, 2025. Contact d.upshall@googlemail.com (Pay on the day)

Walking History Tour of Dorchester

Guided Tour by Mark Chutter (Chair of the Thomas Hardy Society) (free) and Cream Tea (pay on the day). Maximum 30. Sunday 29th June, 2025. Meet 1.45pm County Hall Car Park (next to Colliton Club) DT1 1XJ

Founders Day

Dorchester Cemetery, Weymouth Avenue, Sunday 6th July at 2.00 pm (Details to be announced) Contact Peter Lush chairman@societyofdorsetmen.co.uk

Visit to Forde Abbey House and Gardens

Wednesday 30th July, 2025. Details to be confirmed

Windsor and Thames River Cruise

Wednesday 3rd. September, 2025. Cost £70, includes a ploughman's lunch and transport

Annual General Meeting

Sunday 26th. October, 2025 - venue to be confirmed

Christmas Lunch

The Crown Hotel, Blandford. Sunday 7th. December, 2025. Details and menu to be announced in due course.

Except where otherwise mentioned, further details can be obtained by email to chrisgoodinge@hotmail.com

Bookings should be made to the Treasurer mogwich@hotmail.com

Pay 'Society of Dorset Men' by bank transfer to 40-46-23 A/c 21182226

For those not using internet banking, please email the Treasurer for alternative arrangements

