

The Goddard Association of Europe

NEWSLETTER

No. 134 – March 2020

CORONAVIRUS

AGM Postponed Indefinitely

Scotland's national poet, Rabbin Burns, had a memorably polite way of expressing it in his address *To a Mouse*: "The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men gang aft agley". My thoughts exactly, though for now they are best left in an unprinted version! I am sure it will come as no surprise when, reluctantly, I announce that the AGM scheduled for 10 May has been postponed indefinitely. The fact that it is my last makes it for me all the more frustrating.

When news of the coronavirus (Covid-19) broke, my initial instinct was to carry on as planned; however, the announcement last week that those people over the age of 70 would be required to be 'confined to barracks' rendered it difficult to carry on, though not impossible. I hastily hatched plan B, which was to assemble at least five members (that number representing a quorum) under that age. That I succeeded quite quickly is tribute to the increasing number of 'younger' members who have joined the Executive Committee in the last two or three years – and I thank them most warmly for that; it gives me renewed hope for the future of the Association. Within hours, however, the next governmental bombshell dropped: a further recommendation that all unnecessary gatherings and travel should be suspended. That was the last straw, hence the announcement above.

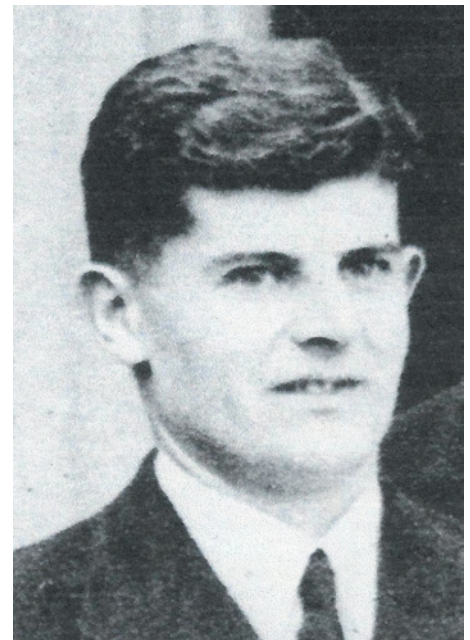
Indefinitely – quite impossible at this juncture to predict the outcome, but the way things look at present I suspect we are talking in terms of months rather than weeks, and that the more effective

is the government's strategy of containment so as to spread the load on the NHS, the longer these restrictions will last. This was also meant to be the last newsletter I would edit. In the circumstances I felt it right to issue an earlier slimmer version than usual so as to keep members fully in the picture. Newsletter 4 back in 1986, issued on the sudden tragic death of our founder Howard Goddard-Jones, set a precedent for this. I will now aim to make the July issue my last – though with the picture in the country changing almost from hour to hour whether it is actually produced as usual at the end of that month remains to be seen; I will not issue it until I have some clearer news about a resumed AGM.

We live in uncertain times and in uncharted territory. The nearest equivalent is the influenza pandemic at the end of the First World War which is said to have killed many more people than died in the fighting. We certainly have a fight on our hands again now against a silent unseen killer. Let's fervently hope we can prevail as soon as possible. Take care.

EDMUND GODDARD, CGM A POSTSCRIPT

In 1943 Eddie Goddard was the engineer of the four-man crew of the midget submarine X-6 which attacked and damaged the German battleship *Tirpitz* at its anchorage in a Norwegian fjord. A full account of his story appeared in Newsletter 78, May 2006. All four X-6 crew members were honoured: the commanding officer with the VC, his two officers with the DSO, and Eddie with the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, the naval equivalent for non-commissioned ratings. Eddie's CGM was one of only two awarded to X-craft crew. After the war Eddie returned to the engineering industry and some years later, on a business trip to Norway, was presented with an engine-room clock salvaged from



the *Tirpitz*. Eddie sold his medals at Southeby's in 1983 when they were bought by a private collector. They came up for auction again in February 2019 in London when they realised £77,000 with the buyer's premium bringing the total to £84,000. Eddie is pictured at his investiture in June 1945. The last surviving member of the X-6 crew, Commander John Lorimer, DSO, died on 1 December 2019 aged 97. *John of Accrington*

MOLLY GODDARD AGAIN

Since bursting on to the London fashion scene in September 2014, Molly Goddard has appeared twice in these pages (Newsletters 117 & 123). Now, February 2020, she has further enhanced her reputation with her latest collection as part of London Fashion Week held in Central Hall Westminster. The *Daily Telegraph* said, "Drama and excess make the daring designer's autumn / winter 2020 offering stand out from the crowd. The trouble for a lot of new designers who shoot to fame for doing one thing really well is that they can struggle to expand their signature into a fully fledged fashion business. Molly Goddard, now aged 31 and who founded her label in 2014 with a range of fifteen gathered tulle dresses, is an exception to the rule." And, in a two page spread in the *Evening Standard* for 14 February, her latest collection is said to have been inspired by a photograph of her with her father in the Portobello Road in the late 1990s. "I'm inspired by all the places I grew up around, from Kensington Market to Camden, but Portobello was such a creative place to live. I still think it is," she said. The daughter of a graphic designer and a primary school art teacher, she now has a studio in the East End, a stone's throw from Bethnal Green station where her sister Alice is her stylist and long-term collaborator. But she started out on her kitchen table before expanding to her parents' spare room. Encouraged by her boyfriend Tom, the plan had been to exhibit those fifteen dresses at a party at a town hall in Mayfair, which they had rented for £150, in the hope that it might help her land a job. "I never wanted to do my own thing," she said; "I think I always saw it as a bit egotistical." But after the event the phone started to ring and has, in effect, never stopped as more and more stores followed the lead of Dover Street Market and placed orders. At the Fashion Awards in 2016 she won the British Emerging Talent Award, and in 2018 she became the recipient of the Vogue Designer Fashion Fund. Her profile is further enhanced by models and celebrities who, by buying and wearing her creations, act as unpaid ambassadors for her. She has not let success turn her head, nor has she succumbed to the temptation to follow new trends; rather she has stuck to her original winning formula and gradually developed it. "I don't want to grow too much, or suddenly start doing shows with eighty looks in them and producing hundreds of clothes. I want to keep doing what we're doing and find other areas of growth....More than anything what I really want to do is to make clothes that people will wear for ever and ever." That might sound like talking herself

out of repeat orders; but you can be sure Molly will make those little differences that will ensure sales for a long time to come. I feel certain we shall hear more of Molly. Good luck to her!

CLERGY APPOINTMENT

In the 'Appointments in the Clergy' column of the *Daily Telegraph* for 18 February there was mention of a Rev. Trevor Goddard whom I have not come across before. Already vicar of the church of The Annunciation at South Kenton in the London diocese, he appears to be adding associate vicar of St Cuthbert of North Wembley in the same diocese. Does any member know anything more about him?

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

A polite reminder to all members that your subscription of £7.50 for 2020-21 is due on 1st April. Could those members who pay by cheque (made payable to The Goddard Association of Europe) please send them to the Treasurer Richard Morris (details below), making sure you identify yourself clearly, preferably by membership number. (Overseas members have their own arrangements with their respective co-ordinators.) It would be appreciated if you would take the initiative and thus save the Treasurer from having to chase you! Any members who wish to start paying their subscriptions by standing order may request the details from the Treasurer.

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