

SHROPTALK



The Newsletter of the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association

Summer 2016

PRESIDENT'S SUMMER UPDATE

At the time of May Council Meeting for SSBA, Claire Jakeman reported that one small export order had been received. Subsequently further Society orders have been received from Holland, France, Germany and Belgium. Some members have also received small private orders.

Whilst the overall figure for export sales is likely to be much lower than the last two years, the sales help the UK market with increased volume of sheep available from the growing National Flock of Shropshires. We will see if the reduced value of the pound affects next year's orders.

Ruth Mawer provided a comprehensive report on the work that she does on our behalf with the Grassroots system. Liaising with Marion Webb the accounts records that are prepared enable Marion to keep a check on our finances and Ruth to keep a check on the sheep within our members' flocks. One area that members could assist with is to check their "birth notified" stock and kill/delete them as appropriate to enable Grassroots to provide an accurate record of the live stock.

Planning for the National Shows and Sales continued with details being shown in *ShropTalk*. Vice President, Paul Stead, has managed the update of our website with the approval being given by Council Members to our new provider at the end of May. More

details will follow shortly. Paul has also agreed to host an open-day at his farm in August - again, see this edition of *ShropTalk* for details.

Gillian Dixon (South Yeo Flock) has agreed to take over from Lorie Saffell as the Minutes Secretary and recorded the details of the May meeting for us.

News from Norfolk since my last notes includes weaning the lambs being completed by the end of April, the last lamb having been born in the first week of February. This should give our ewes plenty of time to reach good condition for the rams in late July.

We have another family wedding in late February 2017 so plan to finish lambing the week before!!

At the end of May, I judged the sheep classes at the Essex Young Farmers Show near Chelmsford. Tricia and I thoroughly enjoyed the day and the show on one of the warmer days of the summer.

We have exhibited at both the Suffolk and Royal Norfolk Shows with some success, but have made several sales contacts through being there.

Good luck to all showing members. If you can be tempted into the show ring, speak to a member who does show for an insight, and then start by taking your best sheep to a local show. You may be surprised.

Les Newman

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL SHOW AND SALE (WEST) SHREWSBURY MARKET ON SUNDAY 24TH JULY

3 Adult Rams (2 years an over)

9 Shearling Rams

11 Ram Lambs

4 Breeding Ewes (2 years an over)

53 Shearling Ewes

26 Ewe Lambs

A total of 106 Shropshires consigned by 22 different vendors

Digital copies of the catalogue will be available from mid July from the SSBA's and Halls' websites

Show Classes start at 8.30am, Sale of Shropshire sheep at 12 noon



SHROPSHIRE COUNTY SHOW WINNERS



Breed Champion at the first County Show of the season was Ellie Butcher's breeding ewe by Brereton Nairn. Reserve Champion was Mark and Yvette Openshaw's ram lamb, Holtridge Gerry, by Roydon Richard. Both are pictured above with judge, Claire Jakeman. Turn to page three for pictures of other early season show winners.

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Congratulations to Rob Hawkins (Wolverley Flock) from Wem Shropshire

Winner of the Wordsearch contest in the Spring *ShropTalk* celebrating the 50th edition of the newsletter. He wins a pair of hand shears kindly donated by Nigel Farr Farm Services of Westbury, Shrops



100 CLUB WINNERS

THE first draw of the year for the Society's 100 Club was made at the May Council meeting. Messrs CP and MC Crawford (Adamsfield Flock) from Chester won the first prize of £62. Runner-up was Barry Hodson (Southworth Flock) of Warrington winning £31. The next draw will take place at the AGM. If you wish to buy a ticket, please contact our Secretary, Simon Mackay.

BACS PAYMENTS TO THE SOCIETY'S BANK ACCOUNT

IF you make payments for stock registrations and transfers by BACS, please can you tag the payment with your flock letters and, if possible, also send an email to the Registrar and Treasurer to let them know what the payment is for. This will be an enormous help to the Society's officers, because unless payments are tagged it is often impossible to know what they relate to or who has made them. Thank you for your help!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE SSBA'S AGM will take place at Sandwell Park Farm, West Bromwich, West Midlands (close to Junction 1 of the M5 Motorway) on Saturday November 12th. The guest speaker will be announced in due course.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR PEDEWEB RECORDS

MEMBERS are requested to please manage their flock records on Pedeweb (the on-line breed recording system) throughout the year. For example, if you sell lambs for meat, or cull old animals, please delete their electronic records on the system. A guide to using Pedeweb can be accessed via the Links page on the SSBA's website.

NATIONAL SHOW AND SALE (EAST)

THE Breed Society's Eastern Show and Sale takes place as part of the Rare and Traditional Breeds Show and Sale held at Melton Mowbray Market, Leicestershire on 9th and 10th September.

This is a large event that is well supported by many breed societies. The show of Shropshire Sheep takes place on Friday afternoon starting at 2pm. This year the judge is Mrs Gail Sprake. The sale takes place on the following day starting at 12 noon.

Schedules are available from the Grassroots Systems' Website (see below) and from Melton Mowbray Market, Scalford Road, Melton Mowbray, LE13 1JY, phone: 01664 562971.

A buffet supper and disco is held at the market on Friday night, tickets £14/head, available from the market office (number as above). The schedule also lists accommodation available in the vicinity of the market.

The closing date for entries on paper is 31st July, but on-line entries may be made up to Midnight on 7th August through the Grassroots Systems' website: www.grassroots.co.uk/melton.html.

FARM OPEN-DAY AND BARBECUE on Sunday 14th August 2016

at Little Haven, Barford Road, South Newington,
Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 4LN

All members of the SSBA are cordially invited to this special event hosted by Paul Stead and Val Tew, owners of the Timberline Flock of Shropshires and the Sapphire Herd of Alpacas

The planned schedule is:

11.30am Start

Sheep available to lead a discussion on

- Breed Type - The Good, The Bad and The Ugly
- Stock Judging Competition - a bit of fun for all
- Farm Walk - including breeding ewes, rams, Shropshire cross lambs and Alpacas
- Barbecue (a small financial contribution gratefully accepted to cover the costs)

4pm Close

Please RSVP by 7th August to the address above or by email: stead544@gmail.com

Please **do not** RSVP to the SSBA's Secretary



JOINT WINNER OF THE PROLIFIC EWE AWARD

YVETTE and Mark Openshaw (Holtridge Flock), based in Norbury, Cheshire, are joint winners of this year's Sansaw Sidedowns Most Prolific Ewe Competition. They are pictured with the Hardwicke Trophy, and they also received a cheque for £12.50, half of the annual prize, drawn from a fund kindly donated by John and Pauline Bowles. They share the prize with the Turnock family (Troutsdale Flock).

The Openshaw's ewe that was the joint winner of the "Most Prolific" award is called Dolly (ear tag 024LU07) from the Alderton Flock of Peter and Pippa Geddes. Dolly, sired by Alderton Bruce Willis, was actually a cade lamb purchased by Mark and Yvette in 2008.

Having been bottle reared, Dolly is very friendly: "She is always the first one to greet us as we enter the field," says Yvette, "and she loves an ear tickle, as well as being hand fed ewe nuts from our pockets."

Over the years, Dolly has bred nine registered offspring. "She has produced some really fabulous lambs, several of which have been shown and obtained rosettes," adds Yvette. "We have high hopes for the ram lamb she produced this year - Holtridge Gerry (pictured above)." Gerry was shown for the first time at the Shropshire County Show - and as you will see from the front page, he more than lived up to expectations!

We will feature the Troutsdale Flock's joint winner in *ShropTalk* later this year.

EARLY SEASON COUNTY SHOW WINNERS



STAFFORD COUNTY SHOW

Champion: A ewe lamb, sired by Ushers Windy, from the Millenheath Flock of Jeanette and Robert Hares, Millenheath, Whitchurch, Shropshire.

Reserve Champion: A breeding ewe, sired by Piddington Hugo, from the Apiary Flock of Jan and Charles Morris, Stoney Stretton, Shropshire.

Best Opposite Sex to the Champion: A ram lamb sired by Alderton Special Agent from the Millenheath Flock of Jeanette and Robert Hares (as above)

Judge: Sue Farquhar, Ledbury, Herefordshire

ROYAL THREE COUNTIES SHOW

Champion: Sue Farquhar's Shearling ram from her Piddington Flock, Canon Frome, Ledbury, Herefordshire.

Reserve Champion: A shearling ewe, sired by Swallows Magic, from the Swallows Flock of George Clay, Monkhide, Ledbury, Herefordshire (ewe led by Mrs Harvey Clay)

Judge: Alison Schofield, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire



ROYAL THREE COUNTIES SHOW

(Shropshire Classes in the RBST Section)

Champion: A ram lamb from the Stonegrove Flock, owned by Stonegrove Livestock, Shrawley, Worcestershire - led by William Dorrell.

Reserve Champion: A two-shear ram also owned and bred by Stonegrove Livestock (as above) - led by Archie Dorrell.

Judge: Mr A Goold, Cambridgeshire

The ram lamb went on to take the Interbreed Sheep Title and overall Inter-Species Championship.

ROYAL CHESHIRE COUNTY SHOW

Champion: Anne Harvey's breeding ewe, sired by Piddington Knut. Anne owns the Roydon Flock, based on the Wirral, Cheshire.

Reserve Champion: Anne Harvey's shearling ewe by Roydon Royalist (details as above).

Judge: Mr S Johnson, Stafford

Well done to all competitors in the above events - thank you for helping to promote our breed!



IMPORTANT CHANGES TO FLOCK RETURNS AND MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

THE SSBA's Council has decided to introduce additional charges for breeders who do not complete their annual flock returns and/or do not pay their membership renewals on time.

Late flock returns and subscription renewals delay the production of the Society's annual flock book. Additionally, a lot of time and effort has to be spent chasing members who have missed the deadline.

Members will receive their annual flock returns and membership subscription renewal forms in September. The deadline

for these to be completed and returned is 30th November 2016.

There will now be an additional charge of £10 for flocks who send their forms back in December. This will rise to £20 for those that are not received until after December.

On payment of these fines, stock can then be registered. If the charges are not paid, the members concerned will not be allowed to register that year's lambs.

Please look out for your flock return and membership renewal and return them promptly by 30th November.

RAMCOMPARE

RAMCOMPARE is a major new project launched by a consortium of partners from the sheep industry supply chain. It aims to collect commercial data on cross-bred slaughter lambs in the UK.

The first stage of the project involves monitoring six commercial sheep farms that will use artificial insemination and single sire mating to produce a crop of over 500 lambs per farm per year.

Nearly 70 rams from five terminal sire breeds: Texel, Suffolk, Charollais, Hampshire Down and Meatline will be tested across these flocks over the 2016 and 2017 lambing seasons. The rams will be representative of the top 20% of the breed for genetic merit, based on their estimated breeding values for growth and carcass traits.

Data from lambs will be collected through to slaughter. The project will enable the performance of progeny by different rams to be compared under commercial conditions. A ranking of the tested rams, based on commercially important traits, will be generated at the end of the project in 2017.

If the project is a success, it will be extended into a second phase when other breeds of ram can be included. Shropshires would be considered for this trial, which is very exciting news because it would really help to raise the profile of our breed as a terminal sire. For more information visit: www.ramcompare.com



NEW members of the Shropshire Breed Improvement Scheme (SBIS) travelled to Usher Farm in Leicestershire for a special open-day on 18th June.

The event was kindly hosted by Marion and Aubrey Webb, who have been recording the performance of their flock with Signet since 2006. Their Shropshires are currently some of the highest genetic merit animals within the breed.

Sam Boon, manager of Signet Breeding Services, provided breeders with a presentation about the SBIS and the progress that has been made within the breed in terms of improving the growth and carcass traits of

lambs and increasing the maternal efficiency of Shropshire ewes. This was followed by an interesting and wide-ranging discussion which covered areas such as breeding for increased prolificacy in ewes and current initiatives to help farmers improve the worm resistance of their sheep.

The new SBIS recruits were able to discuss their own flocks' performance results with Sam. Then they took a farm walk to view the Ushers Flock of around 70 ewes and 30 ewe lambs, 5 rams and a group of ram lambs retained for breeding. Afterwards, a very good lunch was enjoyed by all at The Crown pub in nearby Gilmorton!



Ushers ram lambs



A group of Ushers ewe lambs



Pictured above from left to right: Sam Boon, manager of Signet Breeding Services, Gillian Dixon, Helen Forsyth, Jan Morris, Charles Morris, Paul Crocker, Marion Webb, Alison Kerby, Rob Kerby, Aubrey Webb and Roger Howell.

SHROPTALK

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 Visit our Facebook page:

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