

SHROPTALK



The Newsletter of the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association

Autumn 2010

THE SSBA WELCOMES A NEW SECRETARY

SIMON Mackay has been appointed as the SSBA's new Secretary. He has taken over the role from Jane Wilson, who moved to a full-time job with the National Goat Association earlier this year.

At the Council meeting in September, which was Jane's last as Secretary, President Les Newman thanked her for working for our breed society for nearly 3 years and for giving the SSBA a long notice period. Jane was presented with a pot plant and some gift vouchers.

SIMON'S FOOD INDUSTRY BACKGROUND

Simon already has an interest in Shropshire sheep, helping regularly with the Southworth Flock in north Cheshire. He joined the breed society as Member last year and has attended many of our shows and sales, as well as some of the industry's larger farming events on behalf of the SSBA. Sheep are not his only agricultural interest: Simon also part-owns a few Dexter cattle - starting small as they say.

With a varied background in the food industry, Simon was once famed for being the youngest licensee in Britain, with his first pub at the age of 18. He studied catering and hotel management and has been responsible for hospitality at some of the country's most famous leisure venues including Haydock and Aintree Racecourses; the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff; and Loch Lomond and Royal Birkdale golf courses. He is used to looking after royalty, sports stars and "Top 10 Bands".

Simon is now a Safety Consultant within the food industry working from "the farm to the fork", looking after a number of well known companies.

Simon describes himself as having a very methodical mind that will be a great advantage in his new position with the SSBA. He is looking forward to doing his bit for the Society, helping to promote our sheep as well as keeping the wheels in the background turning.

Welcome on board, Simon!



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REPORTS FROM THE SHOWS AND SALES



Liz Bowles receives the Champion's trophy from the SSBA's President Les Newman at Shrewsbury Market, watched by a large crowd of keen buyers.

NATIONAL SHOW & SALE (WEST)
In July, the SSBA held its first show and sale at Shrewsbury's Livestock Market for at least 40 years. The event was hailed as a great success by members of the breed society and the auctioneers, Halls.

A good number of breeders attended to see some high quality stock exhibited in the

showing classes. Some 45 Shropshires were forward for the sale and there was strong interest from buyers, many of whom had travelled considerable distances to attend.

All the Shropshire females on offer were sold, and all but five of the males. The prices achieved were some of the highest seen in recent years and the SSBA believes that

breed records may have been set for a Shropshire shearling ram, shearling ewe, aged (or senior) ewe and ewe lamb sold at auction.

The top price for a Shearling ram of 560gns was achieved by James Thompson's Sansaw Shakespeare, sired by Sidedowns Hakka and sold to Mervyn Tweed in Northern Ireland. The top price for a ewe was 390gns for a shearling sired by Benfield Enigma from the Ushers Flock of Marion and Aubrey Webb and sold to Fiona Wilson of Osmonds. The same buyer also paid 330gns for a senior ewe from Sue and Mark Shiinwell's Brereton Flock. This animal, born in 2007 and sired by Morley Mozart, was the Reserve Champion in the showing classes. A ewe lamb from the Millenheath Flock of Jeanette Hares, sired by Alderton

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DON'T MISS THE BREED SOCIETY'S AGM

On Saturday 13th November 2010
at Sandwell Park Farm
West Bromwich
Starting at 10am
See page 3 for full details

REPORTS FROM THE SHOWS AND SALES

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James, was sold for 230gns to the SSBA's President Les Newman. Les also purchased the Show Champion, a ram lamb by Side-downs Joseph from the Hayne Oak Flock of Liz Bowles and Mike Bray, for 500gns. This was the highest price paid on the day for a ram lamb.

Sales Officer, Claire Jakeman, said: "The level of interest and the prices prove that Shrewsbury is a good venue for a show and sale early in the season. This is the time when many breeders are looking for a new stock sire. However, vendors should take note that, particularly with rams, it's only very good quality animals prepared for the show and sale ring that will sell."

"Female stock also sold well and we were particularly pleased with the level of interest and the extremely good prices paid for ewes and ewe lambs. What we thought would be the right time to sell our rams proved also to be the right time of year to sell ewes and bring new members into the society."

Annual Event

Les Newman added: "We introduced this new sale in response to requests from members for an event at a more westerly venue. Claire Jakeman, Alison Schofield and Pippa Geddes have worked hard to set up this up at Shrewsbury, and I would like to thank them on behalf of the society for their efforts. We've had a very successful show and sale, which we hope will become an annual event for the SSBA. I'd also like to thank Osmonds for donating prizes: Osmonds' sheep drench for the owners of the Champion and Reserve Champion animals; and James Thompson and his family for generously hosting a Barbecue at Sansaw Hall the night before the show and sale."

Average Prices (numbers sold in brackets)
Shearling Ewes: (7) 249gns; Shearling Rams (5) 392gns; Ewe lambs (14) 147gns; Ram Lambs (5) 287gns; Senior Ewes (5) 242gns; Senior Rams (1) 135gns.

Showing Results

Judge: John Bowles (E Bowles and M Bray's sheep placed by Yvonne Clinton-Palmer)

Ram (shearling or over)

1. S Farquhar
2. E Bowles and M Bray
3. E Bowles and M Bray

Ram Lamb

1. E Bowles & M Bray
2. M and S Shimwell
3. A and M Webb

Shearling Ewe

1. A and M Webb
2. E Bowles and M Bray
3. C Jakeman

Aged Ewe

1. M and S Shimwell
2. M and S Shimwell

Ewe Lamb

1. J Hares
2. J Hares
3. M and S Shimwell

Champion: Ram Lamb (E Bowles and M Bray) – winner of the Morley Trophy

Reserve Champion: Aged Ewe (M and S Shimwell) – winner of the Roydon Trophy

Best pen of two or more Shropshires – M and S Shimwell – winner of the Southworth Trophy (judged by Yvonne Clinton-Palmer).



The Show Champion at Shrewsbury: A ram lamb from the Hayne Oak flock of Liz Bowles and Mike Bray, purchased for 500gns by Les Newman..

NATIONAL SHOW & SALE (EAST) THE breed society's Eastern Show and Sale was held in early September at Melton Mowbray Market, Leicestershire.

Following an exceptionally busy season for private sales and exports, the number of Shropshires forward at this event was lower than usual. Seven females and 4 males were on offer on the day from 3 different flocks.

In the pre-sale show, Richard Spencer's ram lamb, Benfield Juggernaut, sired by Piddington Frederick took the highest honours, while Marion and Aubrey Webb's shearling ewe, by Benfield Enigma, was the Reserve Champion. In the sale ring there was strong demand for stock from the Webbs' Ushers flock, with their high genetic merit ram lamb (Signet index 148) selling to Valerie Tew and Paul Stead for 400gns. This was the top price achieved by a sheep of any breed at Melton Mowbray's Traditional Breeds Sale 2010. The Webbs' Reserve Champion ewe sold for 220gns to Linda Brawn and their ewe lamb went to the same buyer for 180gns. The Show Champion

and a ram lamb from the Clipston flock also sold, but other stock failed to find buyers, perhaps due to high reserve prices.

Average Prices (numbers sold in brackets)
Shearling Ewes: (1) 220gns; Ewe lambs (1) 180gns; Ram Lambs (3) 227gns;

Showing Results

Judge: Alan Oliver

Ram (shearling or over)

1. R Webb
2. A and M Webb
3. R Webb

Shearling Ewe

1. A and M Webb
2. R Webb
3. R Spencer

Ewe Lamb

1. A and M Webb
2. R Webb

Champion: Ram Lamb (R Spencer) - winner of the SSBA's Show and Sale Trophy

Reserve Champion: Shearling Ewe (A and M Webb)



Left to right: Richard Spencer (Benfield Flock) with the Show Champion at Melton Mowbray, judge Alan Oliver, and Aubrey Webb (Ushers Flock) with the reserve Champion shearling ewe.

SHROPTALK

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BREEDERS MEET TREE GROWERS IN COUNTY DOWN



SSBA members Mervyn Tweed (second from left), Jean Jones and Pat Delaney (second from right), promoting Shropshires to tree growers.

THE SSBA's two Irish Coordinators, Jean Jones and Pat Delaney, were joined by a third Shropshire breeder, Mervyn Tweed, at an open-day for Christmas tree growers in Comber, County Down.

The event was held in early June and it attracted a good turnout of around 70 tree growers. Many were very interested in the display of Shropshire sheep and the information that Jean, Pat and Mervyn were able to provide about using our breed in tree plantations.

"Seeing is Believing"

"Due to new restrictions on the use of agrochemical sprays, many growers are seriously considering Shropshires as a natural alternative to control the grass and

herbage between their trees," explains Jean.

"Both Mervyn and Pat keep Shropshires in their own Christmas trees, and their experience is proving invaluable in selling the system. We're finding that 'seeing is believing' is the best approach, as there are still a lot of sceptics."

Since the open-day, one new flock of Shropshires has already been established in Eire, with sheep supplied from Mervyn's Strangford Flock.

Other enquiries are still coming in and these are being actively followed up by the breed society's Irish team.

Sales Officer, Claire Jakeman, also attended the event, and has now trained Jean and Pat as official breed society inspectors.

SUCCESS FOR SOUTHWORTH RAM LAMB



A ram lamb from Barry Hodson's Southworth Flock was the Champion Shropshire and Reserve Interbreed Champion at Chelford Market's rare breeds show and sale in September. The ram lamb, by Sidedowns Debonair, was sold for 160gns to a breeder from the Nantwich area.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE SSBA will hold its Annual General Meeting on 13th November at Sandwell Park Farm, West Bromwich, West Midlands B71 4BG.

The venue is a restored Victorian farm with many interesting breeds of livestock, including a flock of Shropshires. The farm is not far from Junction 1 of the M5 motorway. The AGM is **open to all members** and a formal invitation has been included with this ShropTalk. The meeting is a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and to make some new contacts, including our new secretary and our two Irish co-ordinators, Jean Jones and Pat Delaney.

The formal business of the breed society takes place in the morning, and will be followed by some interesting presentations: This year we will have a talk from Richard Lutwyche, who many members will know from the Traditional Breeds Meat Marketing Scheme. Richard has been asked to present some ideas about how we can promote the excellent meat of Shropshires to farmers and butchers more effectively.

We also hope to have a presentation from Novartis Animal Health about their products, including the first new sheep wormer available to farmers for several decades.

A free lunch!

The SSBA's new Secretary, Simon, has secured a sponsor who has generously agreed to funding a buffet lunch for all members able to attend.

SHEEP IN TREES OPEN-DAY



ADRIAN Morgan (pictured above) hosted a special open-day on his Christmas tree farm near Castle Bytham, Lincolnshire at the end of May. The event was open to sheep breeders as well as tree growers interested in finding out more about how to manage Shropshires amongst trees.

Despite the rather damp weather, around 30 people attended. They were keen to view Adrian's Snowbird Flock, as well as his mixed species conifer plantations. President Les Newman was among the visitors and he thanked Adrian on behalf of the SSBA for organising the event.

SHROPSHIRE PROMOTED AT TECHNICAL EVENTS



EXPORTS 2010

2010 has been another successful and busy year for exports. A large consignment of 120 ewe lambs was sent to Benoit Gille in France during July. This society-led order was supplied by Alderton, Broomcroft, Hayne Oak, Hornpipe, Piddington, Morley, Roydon, Sansaw, Side-downs, Southworth and Ushers flocks.

Alderton and Ushers flocks also supplied a small private order of 10 sheep to Maryline Tournier, also in France. The animals were exported in February. Another private export with sheep supplied by the Alderton, Morley, Roydon and Ushers flocks went to Germany in June. The sheep were purchased by three of our overseas members: Raimund Kohl, Hans Sandmann and Andreas Bruder.

A private order of four shearling rams and a ewe lamb went to SSBA members Jean Jones and Mervyn Tweed in Northern Ireland this September. The rams came from the Morley, Piddington, Roydon and Sansaw Flocks, and the ewe-lamb also came from the Morley flock.

Future Demand

Demand from overseas buyers looks as though it will continue during 2011, with a serious enquiry having been received already from Russia.

Any members interested in exporting must meet the export health requirements and complete the relevant section of the Flock Return. This must be sent to the Registrar by 31st January 2011. The deadline will be strictly adhered to.

If you would like more information about export health status or exports in general, please contact our Export Officer, Sue Farquhar 01531 670439, email: hansnet@talktalk.net or our Sales Officer, Claire Jakeman 01244 301546, email: claire-jake@aol.com.

WEBSITE UPDATES

NEW arrangements are now in place for updating the SSBA's website. Updates will be made regularly once a month.

If you would like to have anything changed on the site, please let our secretary know by the first Friday of the month. The next deadline for an update is Friday 5th November.

VOLUNTEERS from the breed society helped to promote Shropshires at a number of technical events around the country during the summer and autumn

Pictured adjacent are Liz Bowles (far left) and Monique Hustinx, who staffed the SSBA's stand at the South Sheep Event in Hampshire.

South Sheep was organised by the National Sheep Association and the target audience was primarily sheep farmers and advisers and suppliers to the sheep industry. Some complimentary tickets were also given to local schools so that children could attend and learn more about sheep and farming.

Our breed stand was also taken to Scot-Sheep near Stirling by Barry Hodson and Kathryn Mills; and we had two stands (one in the MV section and one in the non-MV section) at the National Sheep Event at Malvern. Members helping on the stands at this show were Sue Farquhar, Richard Spencer, and Les Newman. In September, Barry Hodson Simon Mackay took two breed stands to the Dairy Event and Livestock Show at its new venue—the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham.

Why not help out next year?

If you would like to help to promote the breed at events during 2011, please contact our Breed Stand Officer, Barry Hodson, on 01925 765304 or 01744 811124. You will be provided with free entry tickets in return for your assistance.

INTERBREED CHAMPION!



This shearling ewe from Sue Farquhar's Piddington Flock achieved great success in the show-ring this season. She was exhibited at The Shropshire County, The Royal Welsh and Burwarton Shows in 2010, and at all of these events she won the Shropshire Championship. At the Royal Welsh, she also came 3rd in the Interbreed Pairs competition with Piddington Jack. And at the Shropshire County she went on to beat all other sheep champions to take the prestigious Sheep Interbreed title — the first time a Shropshire has won this at the Shrewsbury-based show in living memory. Congratulations Sue—it's been a year to remember!