



Southdown News

Newsletter of The Southdown Sheep Society

Issue 20

Autumn 2015

The West Midlands Group say thanks to Jane Ing

The West Midlands Group is one of the flagship groups in the country and members met this Autumn to say thank you to Jane Ing, who set up the group and has recently retired as group co-ordinator. Incoming co-ordinator Jo Schup reports on a memorable day:



The West Midlands Group met on 3rd October at Chris and Dave Rhead's beautiful house in Staffordshire. It was an informal event; viewing the prize winning Light Oaks Flock, having a good old chin wag and sharing hints and tips with fellow Southdowners.

Mike Slater gave a really useful demonstration on soil sampling and discussed how to manage acid soils.

As always, there was a sumptuous bring and share lunch after which Jane Ing was presented with flowers and a sheep headstock by the group to thank her for all her efforts as group secretary over the years.

Jane has been the co-ordinator of our Southdown Group for many years, and understandably, she has decided that she just can't stand it anymore and is stepping down.

Jane and Chris started their Southdown flock in 1982, with stock from the Brynglas flock of George Hughes, although they already had Suffolks. They wanted a sheep that was smaller, easier to handle, and the fact that they were a Rare Breed was an added incentive as they could do their bit to safeguard one of Britain's oldest breeds.

As Chris said, they are the perfect smallholders' sheep for people with only a few acres of mediocre grazing, and Jane and Chris were one of the first, if not the first, people to have Southdowns in Shropshire and help extend their traditional base beyond Sussex and Kent.

Jane and Chris started the West Midlands Group in 2006, being introduced by Clive Pritchard – Gail Sprake's predecessor. Chris had recently given up teaching and used her skills at crowd control to good effect. A notable event was at the Whites of Acton Burnell where Chris was telling everyone exactly what to do and where to be.



Chris and Jo Schup with Jane and Chris Ing

On the third meeting the theme was turning ewes: the gathering was Andrew Beckett and his brother, the Whites and the Ings. Cath White, although slightly more diminutive than Jane, seemed to get the hang of it very quickly. Then came Jane's go.....but the ewe turned Jane and stood looking over her – to the amusement of the attendees.

The Ings have made the West Midlands Group one of the most active and well supported in the country. Recently, Jane and Chris have returned to the joys of showing, helping their grandchildren Kitty and Barny to

win rosettes in both junior handler classes and showing classes. Jane and Chris are still very interested in the blood lines of the flock and maintaining the breed standards, and what Jane doesn't know about grass types isn't worth knowing!

We are truly grateful to Chris and Jane for all their sterling work for the West Midlands Southdown Group over the years.

Jo Schup
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2015 National Show



Nick Page with President Mrs Caroline Brown and judge Mr Brian Graves, receiving the Championship trophy.



Chris Rhead receiving the trophy for best group of sheep

The 2015 National Show was hosted by the Cheshire County Show and attracted breeders from well beyond the local area. The journey from Goodwood proved worthwhile for flock manager Nick Page, assisted by his daughter Amy, as their ewe lamb took top honours by winning the breed championship. This ewe lamb, Goodwood Candy 15/05221, is sired by a Ridings ram, by the noted Benoit sire, and is out of a homebred dam.

Judge Brian Graves said the ewe lamb had been an easy winner of her class, but the championship had been a tight call. "She's an exceptional lamb, with great breed character and fleshing and moves exceptional well. She's a sharp, showy lamb and just pipped the reserve champion to the title."

Reserve championship honours fell to the winner of the aged ram class, Chaileybrook 13/0001 from the Long family's Chaileybrook flock.

Winning the Northumberland Trophy for the best group of four sheep were Leek, Staffordshire-based Chris and Dave Rhead, while the Cooper Trophy for the best ram lamb was won by Daniel Bunting and family, Hertfordshire.

The Sheila Colman Salver for the best shearling ewe was awarded to the Long family's shearling ewe which is a full sister to the reserve overall champion.

Judge Brian Graves commented: "It was an honour to judge such strong classes at the breed's National Show and I commend all the exhibitors for the quality of the sheep put forward. There were no easy classes to judge and it shows the standard present in the breed across the UK."



Jonathan Long receiving the trophy for best opposite sex to champion

Golden Valley Flock Dispersal

The dispersal of the Golden Valley flock took place at Worcester Market in September, following on from the National Southdown sale. The sale was well attended by members and newcomers alike from across the UK and bidding was brisk with buyers wanting a final opportunity to purchase Golden Valley bloodlines. Top price of the day

was a ram lamb Golden Valley 15/00459, purchased by J Roland Williams, Aberystwyth. Second best at 800gns was the flock's stock ram which sold to a consortium of breeders. The best female of the sale, Golden Valley 13/00230, sold to Nigel Barrington-Fuller, Clacton, Essex. Daniel Bunting thanked all purchasers who had supported him over the years and at the dispersal sale, and wished all buyers the very best for the future.

**THE SOUTHDOWN SHEEP
SOCIETY
FLOCK COMPETITION 2015**

Judge: D Jenkins Esq.

Class A Flock of 40 ewes or over

Winner is awarded the Berkhamstead Rose Bowl and £25

- 1st Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer
2nd Goodwood Estate Co Ltd

Class B Flock of 10 – 39 ewes

Winner is awarded the Gaddesden Trophy and £25

- 1st J Mark Hawtin
2nd D G & M Y Crundwell
3rd Antony Glaves
4th Sophie Arlott

Class C NOVICE Competition, not to have won a first prize

Winner is awarded the Frank Grantham Trophy and £25

- 1st P E Goldsworthy
2nd Mrs L Clements
3rd Miss Holly Lutkin
4th Miss Miranda Wallace

**Tufton Beamish Trophy to the Champion Flock
J Mark Hawtin**

Reserve: DG & MY Crundwell

Hobgen Salver for the best intake of shearing ewes

DG & MY Crundwell

Miller Hallett Trophy for the best ewe lambs

Mrs Amy Redhead-Higgins

Paynter Wool Trophy for the flock with the best wool

J Mark Hawtin

**Noakes Trophy for the best three lambs of each sex,
sired by a named ram, present and shown**

DG & MY Crundwell

**The Jim Cresswell Trophy for the best ram or group of
rams**

Miss Holly Lutkin

The Beryl Marsh Trophy for the best newcomer

Mrs L Clements

*All trophies to be awarded at the
Southdown Sheep Society Field Day 2016
Trophies to be held for one year*

2016 Southdown Sheep Society

Annual General Meeting

Saturday August 6th 2016

**to be held at Goodwood,
Chichester, West Sussex**

**2016 NATIONAL SOUTHDOWN
SHOW - 125th ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATIONS**

SATURDAY AUGUST 6TH 2016

Judges: E J Cresswell and C Sercombe

The full schedule and prize list for the 2016 National Show will be available early in the New Year, to download from the website. Any member needing a paper copy should contact the office to request one. Entry fee is £6 per entry, rosettes to 7th place and prize money to 5th place (1st £25, 2nd £20, 3rd £15, 4th £10 and 5th £5). Entries will be accepted via Pedeweb and on paper.

Would exhibitors please note that the Southdown Sheep Society states all adult sheep should be shorn on or after 1 February.

- Aged Ram, shorn bare on or after 1 February 2016
- Shearling Ram, shorn bare on or after 1 February 2016
- Pair of Shearling Rams, shorn bare on or after 1 February 2016 (*not to be entered in the single shearing ram class. A minimum of 5 entries needed for this class*)
- Shearling ram, EBLEX/SIGNET Performance Recorded Ram (*NB: EBV figures must be supplied for inclusion in the show catalogue*)
- Ram Lamb, born 1 January – 28 February 2016
- Ram Lamb, born after 1 March 2016
- Ram lamb, born 2016, from EBLEX/SIGNET Performance Recorded flock (*NB: EBV figures must be supplied for inclusion in the show catalogue*)
- Aged Ewe, shorn bare on or after 1 February 2016
- Shearling Ewe, shorn on or after 1 February 2016 (*flock size of 26 breeding ewes and more, as declared in the 2015 flock return*)
- Shearling Ewe, shorn on or after 1 February 2016 (*flock size 1 to 25 breeding ewes, as declared in the 2015 flock return*)
- Ewe Lamb, born 1 January – 28 February 2016
- Ewe Lamb, born after 1 March 2016
- A Pair, bred by exhibitor, comprising shearling ewe and shearling ram (not eligible for championship)
- Group of Four Sheep (comprising ram shearling or older, ram lamb, ewe shearling or older, ewe lamb) (not eligible for championship).

**NATIONAL SHOW
SPONSORSHIP**

**The Society would welcome all offers
of sponsorship for the National Show.
Sponsorship of an individual class
costs £85.**

THE NATIONAL FLOCK COMPETITION 2015

FROM THE FLOCK COMPETITION JUDGE

November 2015

"I will begin by thanking those responsible for the invitation to judge your National Competition, and I will follow that with an even bigger thank you to all of those that took the trouble to enter this great competition. I enjoy judging very much, it's a bit like showing without all that hard work! I am fortunate in that I also judge cattle and this year I have spent 15 days judging various things, all of which have been a fantastic experience. Flock competitions are wonderful in that I get to meet you all 'in your comfort zone' at home, a totally different experience to the show-ring with all that 'dressing up', of sheep and handlers! I must apologise for not taking up all the offers of tea and cakes but there is just not the time to spare; I clocked up around 2000 miles and you just have to keep moving!

There are a few general comments I would like to make before I say a few words about the winners.

As a judge in the show-ring I always try and apply the unwritten rule that if you cannot think of something nice to say, then do not say anything at all! A flock competition however is somewhat different in that quite a few of the entrants actively sought my advice and opinions about their sheep, both of which I gave freely, trying very hard not to give offence. Generally speaking I think that most of you are getting it 'about right' but there are always exceptions! Be careful when buying in ewes; on a few occasions I was shown bought-in ewes which completely spoilt the flock. Be careful too when choosing to use rams that you have bred yourself; I saw too many which were below an acceptable standard and clearly would not have been purchased at the sales but were used because 'they were here'! Having said that I also saw some exceptional home bred rams and some very acceptable bought-in ewes that blended in perfectly with their new flock mates.

So to the competition itself. Class A, over 40 ewes, only attracted two entries and I knew the standard would be very high. There was very little between them but Wakeham-Dawson and Harmer (Sussex) won the Berkhamstead Trophy, just having the edge over Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd (Sussex), but as you would expect with Sue Harmer and Nick Page, brilliant stockmanship and management.

Class B for less than 40 ewes attracted seven entries. Winning this class, and the Gaddesden Trophy was John Hawtin (Northamptonshire). I was so impressed with this flock, they had high scores in every category. They are perhaps a more traditional type of Southdown, certainly not as big as some of the more modern types but the uniformity was near perfect, achieved with careful breeding and selection. The recently purchased ram was out of a female that had been sold from this flock previously and by a very modern type of ram, many

breeders could learn a lesson here I think. Reserve in this class went to the very impressive flock of Duncan and Monica Crundwell (Kent). Only six points behind the winners, a very close run contest.

Class C, for flocks not to have won a first prize previously, again attracted seven entries and was won by Patrick Goldsworthy (Huntingdonshire) and he receives the Frank Grantham Trophy. Patrick has put such a lot of work into his flock, paying great attention to detail and leading the way with performance recording. Let down a little on uniformity, but this is very difficult to achieve when trying to keep separate families within one flock. Runner up in this class was Mrs Lorraine Clements (Nottinghamshire), good scores across the board and a very nice type of Southdown, still learning but doing just great!

The Beryl Marsh Trophy for the highest pointed new entrant goes to Mrs Lorraine Clements, but watch this space, she is on the way up! Holly Lutkin (Suffolk) won the Jim Cresswell Trophy for the best rams. I was impressed with the very careful selection of purchased rams together with the pick of her own home-breds. Although a relatively small flock, great care has gone into a breeding programme which has also paid dividends in the show-ring. Although Holly has had help getting started, she now has complete management control and all at the tender age of 15!

The Noakes Trophy, for the three lambs of each sex by a named ram, goes to the Crundwells, super lambs and a great ram proving his worth. The winner of the flock with the best wool and the Paynter Wool Trophy is John Hawtin. Exceptional wool and maximum points made this an easy win.

The best ewe lamb class was hotly contested with some truly magnificent sheep entered. The Miller Hallet Trophy goes to Amy Readhead-Higgins (Suffolk) and the runner-up, only one point behind is Sophie Arlott (Lincolnshire). The final category, best intake of shearling ewes and the Hogben Salver goes to the Crundwell's flock who scored maximum points, and reserve on just one point behind was Helen Smith (North Wales). With this level of quality in ewe lambs and shearling ewes the breed is in good shape.

There is a pre-determined format to use when judging this competition. Points are awarded within eight categories up to a maximum possible score of 230. My overall winner on a score of 190, and the winner of the Tufton Beamish Trophy is John Hawtin, and a very close reserve goes to Duncan and Monica Crundwell on 184 points."

Denis Jenkins

South Downs hero receives new National Parks Honour



Long-standing Southdown breeder, David Burden, from Petworth in West Sussex is among the first in the country to receive the Order of the National Parks. This new National Parks award recognizes people who go 'above and beyond' to make a difference to the communities and wildlife of the South Downs National Park.

David Burden was presented with his certificate at the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) meeting in October by the Chair Margaret Paren. David and

fellow SDNPA volunteer Chris Page also each received a bottle of South Downs sparkling wine donated by Upperton Vinyard. They were nominated for the award by the SDNPA and awarded the Order by organisers of the recent National Parks UK conference in Dartmoor.

Margaret Paren, Chair of the SDNPA, said: "It's a great pleasure to present Chris and David with this new award that acknowledges the invaluable contributions they're making to the future of the National Park".

David Burden has spent over 50 years as Livestock and Farm Manager in West Sussex. As NFU Chair West Sussex he promoted excellence in British agriculture. As an active member of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution he has supported farmers experiencing financial pressure, medical or personal issues. As an active community champion he has supported local projects such as community allotments, village hall committees, village greens and fundraising events.

David has been a councillor for decades, first at Northchapel Parish Council and currently at Petworth Town Council. He was elected as a Member of the South Downs National Park Authority when it was established on 31 March 2010, a post which he held until May 2015.

David's Duncton Flock (No. 205) was founded in 1980, and David was for many years a Council member and Vice Chairman of the Southdown Sheep Society.

2016 – the 125th Anniversary of the Southdown Sheep Society

The anniversary weekend August 6th – 7th 2015 is to be celebrated at Goodwood, Chichester, West Sussex. The National Southdown Show, the Annual General Meeting and the Anniversary Dinner Dance take place at Goodwood on Saturday August 6th.

On Sunday August 7th there will be a Service of Thanksgiving which takes place in the tin tabernacle church at the Weald & Downland Museum, just across the Down in Singleton, West Sussex, a couple of miles from Goodwood by road. There will be an exhibition of shepherding through the ages at the Weald & Downland Museum over the weekend.

The Southdown Sheep Society Council has designated a "local" show within each of the regions as an "Anniversary Show":

- South West - Royal Cornwall Show**
- West Midlands – Cheshire Show**
- East Midlands – Newark Show**
- East Anglia – Royal Norfolk Show**
- Beds, Bucks, Herts – Bucks County Show**
- South of England – South of England Show**
- Wales – Royal Welsh Spring Festival**
- Northern Ireland – Balmoral Show**

Special rosettes will be available, and it is intended that one of the Southdown officers will be in attendance at each of the local Anniversary Shows.

DATES FOR THE DIARY IN 2016

- **NSA South Sheep 2015**
June 7th at Tisbury, Salisbury
- **NSA Sheep Centre at Royal Welsh Show**
July 18th – 21st
- **NSA SHEEP EVENT 2016 July 27th**
at Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcs
- **The Early Premier Breeders Show & Sale will be held at Maidstone Market on Saturday July 30th 2016**
- **125th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOUTHDOWN SHEEP SOCIETY – A WEEKEND OF CELEBRATIONS AT GOODWOOD, CHICHESTER, WEST SUSSEX**
to include the National Southdown Show, AGM, Anniversary Dinner Dance, Service of Thanksgiving, exhibition of shepherding throughout the ages
(please note that the Service and exhibition take place at the Weald & Downland Museum at Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex)
- **The National Southdown Premier Show & Sale will be held at Worcester Market on Saturday September 3rd 2016**
- **Traditional Native Breeds National Show and Sale at Melton Mowbray September 9th – 10th 2016**
- **Southdown Sale at Welshpool Market September 24th 2016**

Please note: dates are correct at time of going to press.

SHOW CHAMPIONS ROUND UP



The Interbreed Group of Four sheep at the Kent Show

Well Done and Congratulations to those breeders whose flocks have featured in the Interbreed line-ups around the country during the 2015 show season:

Herts County Show Interbreed Champion
Lesley Mead

Surrey County Show, Interbreed Champion & Group
Champion Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Kent County Show Interbreed Group of Four sheep
Messrs Lambert, Goodwood, Beck &
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Henley-on-Thames & District Show Interbreed Champion
Graham Ryves-Webb

Kent County Show Interbreed Pairs & Interbreed Trio &
Reserve Interbreed Champion
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Heathfield Show Interbreed Champion
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Suffolk Show Interbreed Champion
Miss Holly Lutkin

Suffolk Show Interbreed Group of Three sheep
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Suffolk Show Interbreed Pairs
Miss Holly Lutkin & Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Royal Cornwall Show Reserve Supreme Group
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

Edenbridge & Oxted Show Interbreed Pairs
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

South of England Show Interbreed Group
Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd

South of England Show Interbreed Champion
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

New Forest Show Interbreed Champion
Basil Cooper

Newark & Notts Show Reserve Interbreed Champion
Mrs Amy Readhead-Higgins

Please note: Whilst we try very hard in the office to note all Interbreed champions in shows up and down the country, we rely on our members to let us know of their successes. Please keep in touch with the office to tell us about significant results.

Southdowns star in the South Downs National Park gateway opening at Winchester City Mill

Wowie Dunnings was invited in June by the Southdowns National Park and Winchester City Mill to celebrate the opening of the Gateway to the Southdowns National Park at the Mill.

Wowie explains: "the reason I was asked was because they wanted some Southdown Sheep in the photo shoot. I was very excited and honoured to have been called. We picked our 2 cade lambs as well as my show champion from 2014 who was quite a bit bigger. We prepped them as

we would for a show and went off to the Mill. We made up a pen of hurdles in the very small garden penned in by the river on both sides. It was a lovely warm day. We took hay and food. Inside the Mill some school children from the local school were making sheep biscuits with the flour ground by the mill. Afterwards they came out to see the sheep. They were overjoyed. Some had never seen sheep this close, let alone touch them. One little boy had been to an open farm day and had been chased by a sheep as he was carrying a bucket of food. He was very nervous and asked which lamb was the most vicious. I told him that the lambs were both very gentle. He stroked them and gave them food. Just as we were leaving, the little boy came up to us and said that he wasn't afraid of sheep any more. That brought a smile to our faces and we were glad we had been there."



Lavinton Lamb wins Great Taste Awards



Southdown breeder Sophie Arlott is celebrating having recently received three Great Taste awards for products from her Lavinton Lamb enterprise. www.lavinton.com

The British Farming Awards highlight the determination and tenacity of British farmers in ever-changing and challenging conditions and climates. The New Entrants category is for farmers who have been in the industry for no more than three years, and are “able to demonstrate resilience, tenacity, and determination” in their attempt to pursue their own farm business.

Picking up the coveted Great Taste awards were Sophie’s Southdown cross lamb cutlets, Merguez lamb sausages and Moroccan lamb sausages. “I want consumers to enjoy the delicious taste of real lamb, using ancient native breeds which feed naturally on pastureland,” says Sophie.

Based in Lincolnshire, Sophie started with Southdown, mixed as a sire with Romney from Kent, Lleyn from Wales, and Cheviot from the Scottish Borders, as well as Hebridean, a ‘wild’ sheep which grazes on leaves, twigs



and grass, lending its fine-textured, unusually lean meat a rich, gamey taste.

Judged by more than 400 of the most demanding palates belonging to food critics, chefs, cooks, restaurateurs, producers and a host of food writers and journalists, Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers.

Sophie said she decided to enter the awards because, having had great feedback from top Michelin-starred chefs, she wanted to get recognition for her lamb from such a highly respected organisation as the Guild of Fine Food. Lavinton Lamb is served at top Michelin-starred restaurants including the 3 * Waterside Inn, Marcus (2*) and Bubbledogs Kitchen Table (1*).

“We’re delighted with these awards, particularly as it’s the first time we’ve entered – having not expected to win anything this year, it was a lovely surprise. For Lavinton, winning an award like a Good Taste star makes all the hard work worthwhile – we’re trying to buck the trend, and do something different.”

Mrs Arlott’s business Lavinton Lamb was also named the runner up in the New Entrant category in the recent British Farming Awards run by Briefing Media, parent company to Farmers Guardian.

AROUND THE REGIONS

There is a regional Southdown Group within easy reach of most members of the Southdown Sheep Society. All members are welcome to attend any of the regional meetings. For more information about what is going on in your region, feel free to make contact with the breeders listed below.

South West Group

Co-ordinators: **Adam & Caroline Brown** 01398 361245
adamandcaroline@googlemail.com
Sarah Cartwright
 01984 667217
Cartwright742@btinternet.com

West Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: **Jo Schup**
 01948 710731
jobuzzybees@yahoo.com

Wales Group

Co-ordinator: **Gareth Lloyd Hughes**
 01970 880804
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East Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: **S J Cook**
 01522 788295
susancook26@gmail.com

East Anglia Group

Co-ordinator: **Lindsay Dane**
 01353 721216
greatfen@btinternet.com

Beds, Bucks, Herts Group

Co-ordinator: **Lesley Mead**
 01525 270135

South of England Group

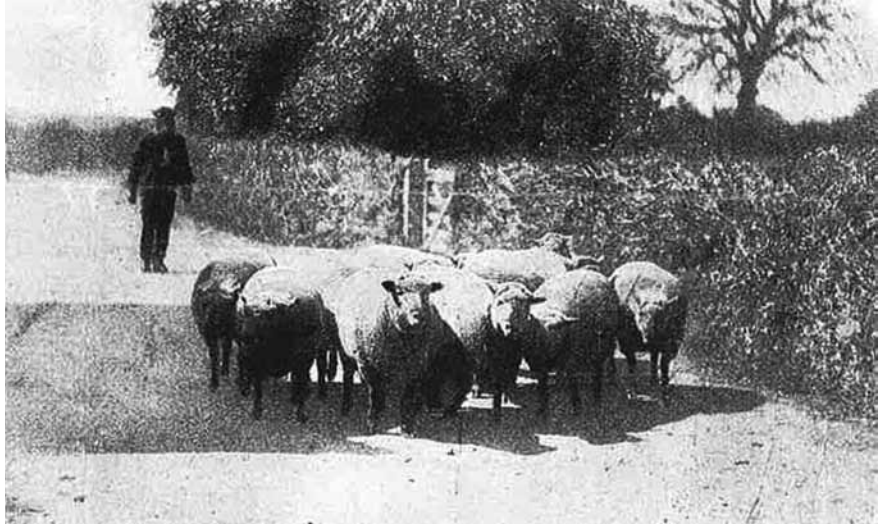
Southdown Sheep Society Council members Jessica Cross & Paul Humphrey are planning a South of England get-together in 2016, more details to follow.

A PEEP AT SOUTHDOWN SHEEP

Following the inclusion in the Spring newsletter of an article from a 1906 edition of *Country Life*, here are excerpts from an article on the breed in *The Sketch*, dated April 12th, 1899.

Truly may we be said to libel the lower animals by dubbing a man "sheepish", for in the eyes of many a flock of sheep is invested with a world of interest and beauty. In the present paper some facts are given concerning one of the most popular breeds of sheep, famed for the "beauty of their character" – the Southdowns. Mr Hempson is well qualified to speak on this matter for he can draw upon a personal experience of more than fifty years. He has frequently acted as judge at many of the most important shows – the Royal Agricultural, the Royal Counties, the Bath and West of England and others. Formerly there were two clubs for breeders of this class of sheep, but an amalgamation has been effected during the last two years, under the name of the Southdown Sheep Society, which now brings together all the principal supporters, and publishes a Flock-Book annually.

By some of the fortunate breeders large sums may be obtained in prizes. Mr Edwin Ellis, Summersby Hall, Shalford, states that he has taken over £3000 in prizes since the year 1887. Mr Hempson, however, does not exhibit at shows, as his flock, usually containing about 350 ewes, is kept purely for business purposes.



Southdowns on a sunny road

"I may claim," he says, "to be something of a pioneer, for, from the earliest days, when I started my flock in 1844 (registration being then little thought of), I can show from a private flock-book, regularly kept to the present date, which rams were used each year, and how many lambs were reared, with the number of breeding ewes lost".

"Who are some of the principal flock-masters at the present time?" "Southdowns are extremely popular amongst the nobility. The Prince of Wales has an excellent flock at Sandringham, and takes great interest in it. His Royal Highness has captured many prizes, and I have had to judge his sheep on several occasions.... where he has taken his chance with all-comers. Earl Bathurst is Chairman of our Society, and has over five hundred ewes. The Duke of Hamilton, who died three years ago, had a good flock which was sold off in 1897; I had the honour of presiding at the luncheon on that occasion. The flock was small in number, but of high character. The Duke of Richmond has a large flock of Southdowns, at Goodwood, which is of very old standing, and has on many occasions taken prizes at the Royal Show, and also at the Smithfield Fat Stock Show." "Would you describe some of the chief points in the history of the Southdown sheep?"

"They are one of the oldest pure breeds in England, though some Scotch breeds of mountain-sheep may be older. In some notes collected by the late Mr John Ellman, of Glynde, it is stated that about two hundred years ago sundry flocks of sheep, feeding on the Sussex Downs, were annihilated by a disease called small-pox, which was imported about that time from Holland. Arthur Young, in speaking of the Southdown sheep in 1788, much admired their hardy constitution, and the extremely fine flavour of the mutton produced from the Downs. Mutton has been said to be the choicest dainty that the epicure can desire, and one need not be a connoisseur to distinguish between Southdown and the tallow quality of some other breeds. Mr Ellman quotes the statement of a great London butcher that, when he had sold the haunches of a Leicester sheep, three-fourths of the carcass were put into the tallow-tub, but that every inch of some Southdown sheep could be sold for the best quality. In Brighton, I suppose, no one would dream of selling any other class of English mutton.

Thus these sheep are native of the Sussex Downs, and have been known for generations. In East Anglia they are not very generally kept. In Suffolk, for example, there is at present a great 'boom' in favour of Suffolk sheep, which somewhat resemble the Hampshire; but I shall always keep true to my old love, the Southdowns. If you attend Lewes Fair, you may see twenty thousand sheep, all belonging to this breed, not a single one of any other kind being observable. It is a very pretty sight to see all the shepherds all bringing in their flocks, some armed with their crooks, some with a cosy sheepskin slung over their shoulders. For a considerable distance the flocks are a conspicuous object as they are brought down to a stream to be watered or riven in to a fold near the Downs."

cont. over

Here is how the Flock-Book distinguishes a good Southdown –

In a good Southdown new look for a wide head wide and level between the ears; eyes alge, bright and prominent; ears of medium size, covered with short wool; face full, not too lng from eyes to nose, and of one even mouse colour, not approaching black nor speckled with white; shoulders well put in, the top level with the back; chest wide and deep; back level, with wide and flat loin, the whole covered with firm flesh; tail large, and set on almost level with the chine; thighs full, well let down, with deep, wide twist , ensuring a good leg of mutton; legs a “mouse colour”, and outside the body, the whole of which should be covered with a fine, close and even fleece down to the hocks and knees and right up to the cheeks, but there should be no wool around the eyes or across the bridge of the nose; the skin should be of a delicate and bright pink, *the carriage gentlemanly, and the walk that of a thoroughbred.*

The hardy constitution, the adaptability to almost

any climate, the habit of thriving on bare pasture, the generous return for good feeding, the comparative immunity from foot-rot, and less liability to “fly” (from the density of fleece), the general aptitude to improve other breeds by crossing, the beauty of character, the fine quality of mutton, and the excellence of its wool, only require to become known to be thoroughly appreciated by home and foreign flock-owners.

“Do you remember any high prices paid for this class of sheep?”

“They have not made the extraordinary sums lately recorded of some other breeds, but as much as 210 guineas has been paid for a ram. I was present at Mr Henry Webb’s sale in 1889, when the Duke of Richmond, bidding in person, gave this high price for the ram Cambridgeshire (Ear No. 118). At the same sale, Mr Ellis gave 140 guineas for a ram, and Mr Murietta 150 guineas, while Mr H Brassey paid 190 guineas for a fine specimen”.

The Sketch April 1899

Bluetongue Update

UK farmers are being urged to remain vigilante following a significant Bluetongue virus outbreak in central France this autumn. To date France has reported 56 outbreaks of BTV-8, the same strain as was circulating in northern Europe and the UK in 2007 and 2008.

Bluetonue is a serious notifiable disease causing fever death, salivation, lameness and early embryonic death [1].

As a result France has put in place a restricted zone, limiting animal movements. Of the 56 outbreaks reported so far two are in mixed sheep and cattle holdings, a further three are on sheep only holdings and 41 are in cattle only holdings. Some 10 of the outbreaks were identified as the result of clinical signs reported to the French vet authorities, while the rest were as a result of active surveillance being undertaken by the French authorities.

DEFRA [2] says the French are undertaking widespread surveillance, with 30 farms with breeding cattle from each of the 21 regions tested, with up to 60 cattle on each holding tested. In those instances where positive results have been found the French authorities report that most cases only relate to one positive result.

In addition, report cases are made as part of the passive surveillance programme in France, where animals showing clinical signs suggestive of notifiable disease are then followed up. The number of monthly reports has significantly increased, showing the increased awareness of farmers and vets, with over 140 suspicions since mid-September.

As a result of increased disease presence and the increasing size of the restricted zone in France all consignments of livestock imported from the restricted

zone since mid-June have been followed up on and tested, with all testing negative. However, all livestock owners are reminded of the possible risk and should consult their vet before arranging any imports from France.

Unfortunately, vaccine stocks are limited and, therefore, vaccination is being prioritised for holdings where at least animal has been confirmed with disease, animals in specific breeding programmes and animals destined for EU trade and under certain bilateral agreements for third country exports.

DEFRA currently believes the threat to the UK from the current outbreak is low, but that farmers should remain vigilante and report any suspicions immediately.

The risks of importing should be carefully discussed with your vet, and your quarantine and biosecurity measures reviewed [3].

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69537/bluetongue-flyer0407.pdf
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/animal-diseases-international-monitoring>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bluetongue>



centre spread

centre spread

SCHAFTAG (Sheep Day) IN COBURG

Southdown breeders Verena and Sebastian Heidenreich, from Bavaria, continue to fly the flag for the breed in Germany.

Verena explains: "The big event this summer was the show in Coburg - "Oberfränkischer Schaftag mit Prämierung" (Upper Franconia Sheep Day).

We took with us a collection of three Southdowns, one ram (Rhoen Max) and two ewes; the three of them presented a very nice and well-balanced picture, and two crossbred ewes (Coburg Fox x Southdown) just to show what you can do with a Southdown ram (there are lots of breeders of Coburg Fox sheep around, so I never give up hope of being able to sell one or two ram lambs).

And we took Eric, a 13 year old boy who visited with his school class and was so happy with the sheep that he wrote me a letter and asked me whether he could visit me and perhaps help me with the sheep. Since that time, Eric is often here and his parents gave him a so called "Schaf-Patenschaft" for his birthday this year.

This kind of "sponsorship" for a certain sheep is my newest idea - you pay a certain price, get a very official



Sebastian with prizes won at the Sheep Day

looking document and you can visit "your" sheep during the course of a year whenever you want. Plus I inform the sponsors about everything important so that they can take part if they want.

So Sebastian, Eric, me and five sheep went to Coburg - I thought it would be a quiet day and took blankets with me to rest under the apple trees. It wasn't really quiet: first Eric decided to take part at the "Young Breeders Contest", then the sheep were judged.

The results were: wool champion (our ewe), interbreed reserve champion ram (our ram), best collection of the special breeds (Southdown, Shropshire, Swifter, Dorper and two other breeds) and best ram of special breeds (well, that one was easy - the other breeders of special races didn't bring rams) AND a prize for Eric for having the courage to take part and present Max.

I'm very proud of our ram Max - the interbreed champion was a very big Merino ram of a famous breeder, imagine!!! Of course we returned home in very high spirits - and Eric, as his mother told me a few days afterwards, had no other topic of conversation for days!



Eric and Rhoen Max

Young Handlers' Pen - Matthew Sparke

Matthew from Stewkley, Bucks, founded his Northumbria Flock (No. 1247) earlier this year.

"Farming is obviously in my blood, my Mam and Dad tell me that even as a toddler I always wanted to be outside on the farm with the animals. I first saw Southdowns at the Melton Mowbray Sale in 2013 when I met Basil Cooper and I was determined to start my own flock. My Nanna in Northumberland gave me some money for Christmas so that I could get started with my 'Teddy Bear' sheep.

I was lucky to meet Tim & Lynn Morris at the Herts Show last year who were able to sell me my first shearlings. They arrived at the beginning of June and I was really excited to see them come out of the trailer. All four of them were really friendly and I became very attached to them straight away. Lambing for the first time with Southdowns in our flock was so exciting, I couldn't wait for the first lambs to arrive.

This year I was keen to start showing and entered the Ewe Lamb Class at Bucks County Show. I spent hours training, trimming and washing my favourite Ewe Lamb. A little nervously I entered the ring as there were lots of good sheep in the class and was shocked when the Judge put me in second place.

I have really enjoyed meeting other Southdown Breeders who are always very friendly. As well as Tim & Lynn, Daniel Bunting has been a great help in giving me advice about breeding and looking after my Southdowns. I am really excited and looking forward to lambing next year and increasing my Southdown Flock.



Matthew and his 2nd place Ewe Lamb at Bucks County Show

The National Gene Bank

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust National Gene Bank represents a wide range of bloodlines which are conserved in order to safeguard our native breeds, and to assist in the reconstruction of a breed should the need arise.

RBST collects material from animals, usually semen from males, but also embryos from cattle breeds.

Although RBST has for many years collected, stored and distributed rare breed cattle semen, the need to expand the archive to include other species of rare breeds became urgent as a result of the 2001 Foot and Mouth epidemic.

Some Southdown semen is already stored in the Gene Bank, and RBST is working with the National Sheep Association (NSA) to identify and check all sheep semen stored post FMD, irrespective of breed. We are grateful to Mrs Anna Woollard who recently gifted to the National Gene Bank a quantity of semen from Paxton George and Broadreed Richard.

We have an opportunity to work with RBST to preserve some of our rarest Southdown bloodlines. This work is being led for the Southdown Sheep Society by Council members Tim Morris and Lindsay Dane.

For more information on the National Gene Bank go to

www.rbst.org.uk

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the Society's new members:

Osian Jones	Holyhead, Anglesey
Will Morton	Lincoln
Fliss & Garry Lewis	Horsham, W Sussex
D & S M Heaton	Maidstone, Kent
Lizette Heathcock	Mobberley, Cheshire
Miss Beth Williams	Newtown, Powys
Walster Family	Wedmore, Somerset
Ruth Roberts	Holywell, N Wales
M & R Colley	Beverley, E Yorkshire
Mrs Nicky Hannan	Heathfield, E Sussex
Messrs G & M Sparke	Stwekely, Bucks
Mr P Furness	King's Lynn, Norfolk
Helen & Amber King	Warboys, Cambs
Nigel & Helen Howard	Darlington, Co Durham
Ianto Clwyd	Rhuthun, Sir Ddinbych
Duane Eric Funston	Omagh, Co Tyrone
Miss Jessica Fermor	Wye, Kent
Graham Finlay	Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucs
Pete Osborn	Lyndhurst, Hants
Alison Robertson	Wymondham, Norfolk
Miss Cherie Hawes	Ipswich, Suffolk
Ben Slack	Market Rasen, Lincs
Mr & Mrs G Hill	Tamworth, Staffs
Billy & Lucy Heyman	Beaworth, Hampshire
Griff S Jones	Pwllheli, Gwynedd
C & L Kempthorne	Granborough, Buckinghamshire
Mr James F Heckford	Stow-cum-Quy, Cambs
David Dewdney & Sandra Herwerdine	Brighton, East Sussex
Andrew Trump	Swaffham Prior, Cambs
Ali Thom	Kippen, Scotland

Findon Sheep Fair 2015



Jack Hobbs winning the Young Handlers' competition

The weather again was very kind to the Findon Sheep Fair with early showers clearing Nephote Green by 8am.

With a record number of sheep and entries totalling nearly 400 in all competitions since 2000, the show continues to become more and more established at the end of a busy showing season.

The Southdown Sheep were again well represented at the show and Hannah Turner won the Southdown and Downland championship with her Ram.

The Young Handlers entries were again very high in all age groups and the winner of the 9 to 11's class was Jack Hobbs with his Southdown.

The winner of the fleece competition was Hari Doman representing the Nephote Flock with her Southdown fleece.

**Next year's date for your diary is
Saturday 10th September**

*Graham Langford
Nephote New Zealand Southdowns*

Southdown Sheep Society Council

Following the retirement and election of new Council members at the 2015 AGM, the current members of Council are listed below. Any paid up member of the Southdown Sheep Society is eligible to stand for election to Council. The term of office is 3 years, after which time members are eligible for re-election. *Nomination papers are available from our website early in the New Year, with the closing date being April 1st.*

President: Jim Cresswell

President Elect: Lindsay Dane

Chairman: Jonathan Long (NSA representative)

Vice Chairman: Patrick Goldsworthy

Treasurer: Neil Stainthorpe

Adam Brown Sid Cook

(NSA representative)

Jessica Cross Duncan Crundwell

Elizabeth Sargent Paul Humphrey

Alexandra Long Tim Morris

Alan Mummary Les Newman

Dylan Williams Howard Wood

Secretary: Gail Sprake

Another season over.....

I am always sorry when another show season is over and it also means that we are all another year older! But looking back I am happy to say that it has been another successful year with these lovely Southdowns that I continue to breed. County shows are wonderful because they all vary from each other making each one a different experience. Some have good stockman's catering, others not, some sheep sheds are great and thanks must go to the wonderful stewards that year after year do a grand job at most of the shows. One small thing that amazes me is how the numbers issued to competitors vary. Some are huge with uncontrollable strings, others small with appropriate holes to fit on one's coat button, and one show does not have any at all. This last one seems to manage very well and obviously has no cost. Talking of cost why are some shows so mean with the rosettes they give out?! I have been in several classes this year when there have been over twenty entries in a class, in fact at Newbury the Saturday Group of Three had 36 entered, and when it came to the prizes being given, there were only rosettes to fourth place. (Happily I had the third.) But surely it would be better to reward more exhibitors than four. It is particularly encouraging to new or younger competitors to leave the ring with a ribbon. Unfortunately one show this season did not even have a champion rosette to present and I thought that was unforgivable and the stewards in question did not seem to be very apologetic, but said they would get the office to deal with it. I wonder if the winner ever got anything....

I know that sometimes judges ask the steward to send the back row of exhibitors out of the ring when there is a large entry, but would exhibitors themselves please show some manners and not leave the ring until the winner does do. And it's a nice gesture to say well done to the winner, even though you may feel that you should not have been beaten by them! I wonder if I was a judge whether I would ask the exhibitor to come back into the ring, and maybe even ask for their rosette back. In some horse classes where manners are key, the prize can be withdrawn at any stage until the horse has actually left the ring. Obviously in the sheep classes it is the exhibitor that needs manners and not the sheep!! I wonder though, do any sheep actually get put down by a judge if they are very badly behaved? It is only good manners on a competitor's part to put some time in at home so that the sheep do lead and handle well. Ewe lambs and shearlings can be very trying earlier in the season of course and ewe lambs particularly deafening. Another thing I would ask is that one wears a white coat that is big enough to do up. Most young handlers are turned out well in the show ring but that cannot always be said for adults. I know I am very traditional but I always wear a hat, collar and tie, and boots, the latter apart from being smart protects one's feet when inevitably trodden on. Judges of course vary in their opinions and procedures, but I would ask them all to come round to the pens after judging if they can, to have a word with the competitors, and not just the ones that have been in the prizes. Talking of procedures, I have always inwardly groan when a judge asks for sheep to be loosed in the ring, as being

led a lot mine usually graze or stand looking lost, or in the tups' case, go straight for the other exhibits or even me. At a show this season the request was made and the shearling ewe of mine was immediately quite sharp and alert, almost frightened. She won the class and the judge said that she had made his mind up by her being so. At the same show embarrassingly when two of my ewe lambs were let loose they proceeded to get under the hurdles into the neighbouring class of Jacobs. They took some catching of course, but had never done that before nor since at shows or at home.

We spend a lot of time with each other at shows through the season and being able to help each other is very rewarding. For the first time ever this season I got to a show and had left all my head collars at home, but pals baled me out. And at a very wet Rutland this year I was able to lend a hat to the judge of a different breed.



Lesley Mead

One other enjoyable side of showing is that I arrange for friends who live in the show area to come to the show I am at. As years go by pals move around the country and seeing each other is more difficult. There is always time to see them after the classes and it is wonderful to have a fan club if your sheep are doing well.

On a serious note, how often do you clean out your water tanks? Mine have ballcocks fitted so are always full, and as crows and magpies sit on them the water gets very dirty. I had left it a while as when I did the job recently I was really shocked - it was like the most hideous smelly soup. And actually doing the job doesn't really take long once started.

Well, we are in the middle of November, dreary but not cold. It will soon be scanning time, then it will be Christmas and come January the wonders of lambing. All the best to you all.

*Lesley Mead
The Holly Bar Flock*

South Downs Yarn – Update August 2015

It has been a busy and productive first year for South Downs Yarn (SDY). The first batch of Southdown wool from the South Downs was launched at last year's Findon Sheep Fair. We started the company not only because we wanted to celebrate the heritage of our local wool, but also because we wanted to make a contribution to its future. The knitting and craft community's interest in our work has grown steadily, with orders received from



across the UK and Channel Islands as well as America. We have lots of product ideas in development, and are excited to announce that later this year we'll be launching some exclusive knitting pattern and wool kits.

The ethos of the company is to showcase the breed, the Southdown, the place, the South Downs, and the people associated with both. These principles appear to resonate with a growing awareness and desire on the part of many involved with textiles to know how and where the raw materials for garments have been sourced and that the product is environmentally and ethically sustainable.

We are really proud that our yarn is: Geo-traceable

The sustainability and provenance of our yarn is the



core of what we do. Each skein and ball of wool can be traced back to the flock it came from. We work with local shepherds whose flocks are born and graze in the South Downs locality. Every flock has its own story and when you purchase our yarn we will tell you about it on the label.

Woollen Spun

Historically, Southdown wool was woollen spun, which makes it very warm. We continue this tradition by using an English mill to undertake the scouring, carding, and spinning. The winding of our skeins and balls takes place at SDY HQ, in Sussex.

Naturally dyed

In its natural, un-dyed state, we call our yarn 'Chalk Path', inspired by the geology of the South Downs. The plant-based dyeing of our limited edition, small batch yarns takes place in Sussex. The palette range reflects the colours and features of the Sussex coast and South Downs, from the reds, oranges and pinks of Shepherd's Delight, to the greens of Rock Pool, blues of Dew Pond, and more.



The first batch is named 'Duncton' after David Burden's flock and association with the place. David's enthusiasm and shared vision have been integral to the launch of SDY. We have also been fortunate to start working with the shepherds of the Nepochote flock and look forward to offering another batch of Southdown yarn from the South Downs to our customers next year.

*Louise Spong - South Downs Yarn
www.southdownsyarn.co.uk
southdownsyarn@gmail.com
@SouthDownsYarn*

Round up of the 2015 Society Sales

This year's Society sales at Maidstone, Worcester and Melton Mowbray saw both pedigree and commercial buyers in action, with good demand for well bred males and females.

At **Maidstone** trade was led by the champion from the pre-sale show, Jen Heathcote's aged ram Pluckley 13/00048, was sold for 1050gns.

This son of Goodwood 10/00049 sold to bulk buyers on the day, Messrs Sinden, Brenzett Green, Kent.



Maidstone Sale Champion: Pluckley 13/00048

Second best was a 950gns call for a shearling ram from the Whitcombe family, Southern Cross 14/00578, a Southern Cross 10/0070 son. He was bought by Messrs Coney, Belton, Lincolnshire.

Next top in the rams was a 500gns call for the first prize shearling ram from the pre-sale show, Ladywell 14/00168 from Duncan and Monica Crundwell, with this one selling to Michael and Gail Sprake for the All Saints flock, Suffolk.

Trade then followed the judging, with the second prize shearling ram from Jonathan Long and family making 480gns. This was Chaileybrook 14/0005, a son of French sire TC4028, he sold to Jess Middleditch, Sudbury, Suffolk.

Prices among the females equally as strong and peaked at 700gns for a ewe lamb from the Goodwood flock, with this one, Goodwood 15/05221, selling to the Sinden family, Brenzett Green.

Next best in the females was a 650gns call for a shearling ewe from the same home which also sold to the Sindens.

The same vendor and buyer combination was then responsible for a 620gns sale when Goodwood 14/04995 sold.

Also at this price was the best of the aged ewes, a 2012-born ewe from the Wakeham-Dawson and Harmer's Ridings flock. This was Ridings 12/01344 and sold to an undisclosed Welsh buyer.

At **Worcester** the best of the trade came when a ewe lamb from the Whitcombe family's Southern Cross flock, Surrey, sold at 470gns. This was Southern Cross 15/00656. Sired by a Langford ram she sold to Sid Cook, Brant Broughton, Lincoln.



Worcester Sale: Southern Cross 14/00533

Following her at 380gns was the male and overall champion from the same home. This shearling ram, Southern Cross 14/00533 is by the same sire as the top priced ewe lamb and sold to Messrs Fincham, Hook, Hampshire.

Then making 340gns was another shearling ram from the same home, Southern Cross 14/00536. Sired by the same Langford ram sold to Anna Riby, Yorkshire.

At the same money was the final shearling ram from the Whitcombes. This was Southern Cross 14/00562, a Southern Cross 10/00070 son which sold to Messrs Wakeham-Dawson and Harmer, Lewes, East Sussex.

And then selling at 330gns was the Trumper family's shearling ram from the Beilau flock. This one off a Southern Cross sire sold to B Price, Hay-on-Wye.

Following that at **Melton Mowbray** buyers were more cautious, with prices hitting a top of 320gns for a shearling ewe from the Avenue Farm flock sired by the homebred sire Avenue Farm 12/00026. She sold to P Freshwater, Bicester.

At 270gns was another shearling ewe, this time Alison Allen's entry by Wattisfield 11/00091. This one was knocked down to G F Harrison, Lakenheath.

Linda Clements then sold the shearling ram Stoneridge 14/00043 at 260gns, with this one being by Stonebridge 13/00033. Buying this ram was L R Oakes, Swaffham.

And making 250gns was the first prize ram lamb and reserve overall champion, Mark Hawtin's Spratton 15/00152, a son of a Golden Valley sire which sold to Patrick Goldsworthy, Huntingdon.



Melton Mowbray Sale Champion: Avenue Farm 12/00026

Off the Bookshelf

Working Shepherd – a new magazine for Shepherds

A new magazine has been launched devoted to shepherds, their flocks and their dogs.

The second issue (Autumn issue) came out in August, and includes hints and tips on keeping sheep and interviews with handlers and a crook maker. There's also an article on the Welsh Sheepdog and its recovery from near extinction, and a look back at the brother of the famous sheepdog handler, J M Wilson, who was a much respected shepherd in his own right. You can read more about Working Shepherd at

facebook.com/workingshepherdmagazine

If you would like to see a sample copy before you decide, write to Pauline & Andrew Hall at 5 Vale Crescent, Bishop Wilton, York Y42 1SU. Tel 01759 368577.

"Sheep Bells, notes from a bygone era"

by Andrew Hall

As well as the new magazine, the Halls publish a series of books on shepherding subjects. One of them tells the story of the bells, once a familiar sight and sound in downland Britain. It shows the construction of several

traditional bells and their origins, bringing together all the aspects of this fascinating piece of history in words, photographs and poetry.

Priced at £6.95 post free, it is also available from Pauline & Andrew Hall or on ebay

The Sheep Manual:

The Complete Step-by-Step Guide to Caring for Your Flock by Liz Shankland, with a foreword by Kate Humble.

Haynes manuals used to be the books you resorted to when you needed to fix your car or motorbike. These days they have branched out to cover a wide range of topics from a Nasa Space Shuttle Workshop Manual to a Men's Cooking Manual. The Sheep Manual is aimed at those who have recently acquired sheep or are thinking of starting a small flock. The Sheep Manual is a quick-reference, up-to-date, and easy-to-read guide which helps you choose the right breed for your land, provides essential health and welfare information, and guides the new flock owner through the first breeding and lambing season.

The author Liz Shankland is a practising smallholder living 800 feet up a mountain in Wales, where she keeps pigs, sheep, chickens and turkeys. She is also a journalist and broadcaster, and writes for Country Smallholding magazine.

On Line Access to the Southdown Sheep Society Flock Book and Registry

Pedeweb has been "live" since May 2014 and members are making increasing use of the on-line services now available. The Office updates the online system at the end of each working day, but online registrations cannot be processed until payment has been received. It is important that you include a reference name, or your flock number, with all payments, to ensure that this is easily identifiable.

Visitors to our website

www.southdownsheepsociety.co.uk

can look up member details, animal details, pedigrees, progeny lists and search for individual animals.

Members are able to do on line registrations, notification of transfers, and record deaths. Payment may be made by cheque or BACS. Please note that you do not receive paper confirmation or print-outs from the office with on-line registrations, unless these are specifically requested. In order to be clear that the information we provide is correct and that our members are happy for their

information to be made available, all members have been issued with an explanatory letter which gives details, including their individual, unique access code. Please note that members need to give the office permission to "share" their Southdown data, if we do not hear from you, then your name, flock name, member number and region only will be displayed.

The paper system will continue to be a service available to members, just as before, and paperwork may be sent in to the Office and will be processed in the regular way.

The current registration charges are:

on line registration fee per ewe lamb	£4
on line registration fee per ram lamb	£8
paper registration fee per ewe lamb	£5
paper registration fee per ram lamb	£10
late registration fee on line and/or on paper	£20 per animal

Welcome new shepherd

Many Congratulations to Lizzy and Chris Sargent on the birth of George on October 26th 2015.

Wedding Congratulations

Many Congratulations to Andrew and Samantha Beckett who celebrated their wedding on September 5th.

Southern Cross sale at Goodwood

Following the death of Philip Whitcombe in August 2015, the family is pleased to announce that the adult portion of the Southern Cross flock has been sold to Goodwood Estate.

Philip and Rosemary Whitcombe started breeding Southdowns in 1980 with the importation of New Zealand bred stock from Australia. Their Green Cross flock and from 1997 the Southern Cross flock have made a major impact on the Southdown breed, improving its commercial attributes, and there is now Southern Cross breeding in many of the UK's leading flocks.

Their son Robert, his wife Sophie, and Robert's sister Susie are retaining the youngstock and the Southern Cross flock name, but the poor health of Shepherd Peter Rycraft at Green Cross Farm has made it difficult to manage the flock in the immediate future, alongside the family's other pedigree livestock enterprises.

Goodwood Estate now has one of the leading Southdown flocks in the country, and Goodwood shepherd Nick Page is very excited to be able to add the Southern Cross genetics to his flock.

New advertising rates for 125th anniversary Yearbook

As part of the Society's 125th anniversary celebrations in 2016 we will be publishing an A4 125th Anniversary Yearbook in full colour. This publication will replace the annual Breeders' Directory and will be the Society's central marketing piece for the year. This publication offers breeders the chance to advertise to both existing breeders and those with an interest in the breed.

At the recent Council meeting it was agreed to modestly increase the advertising charges to reflect the increase in size of the publication and the availability of colour adverts to all.

The new advertising charges are as follows:

Full page £80
half page £40
quarter page £30

The usual £10 per box for the breeders' listing (to include name, address, flock and contact details) will still be available at the current price, including inclusion on the interactive map on the Society's website.

All adverts must be with the Southdown Office by January 31st 2016.

Rules of the Southdown Sheep Society

The Rules of the Southdown Sheep Society are published in the annual Flock Book.

At the meeting of Council in October 2015, these rules were amended to include the following rule relating to sheep entered for shows but not bred by the exhibitor.

It was agreed that exhibitors should take some role in the preparation and presentation of their entries, ideally having bred them.

Any animal entered in a show must be owned by the exhibitor for a minimum of 4 months prior to the date of the show.

A full copy of the current rules is included with the newsletter. All shows will be informed of the new rule.

MR PHILIP WHITCOMBE

The Southdown Sheep Society was saddened to learn of the death of Mr. Philip Whitcombe in August 2015, at the age of 92.

Mr Whitcombe was a well respected figure in the development of the breed. He and his wife Rosemary became involved with Southdowns in 1979 when they travelled to New Zealand on behalf of the Society to purchase sheep to strengthen the UK flock. So impressed were they with what they found that they also purchased a ram and some in-lamb ewes of their own to found the Greencross flock. Greencross sheep were widely used by other breeders until the flock was dispersed in 1996. However, in 1998 Mr and Mrs Whitcombe returned to breeding Southdowns with the Southern Cross flock, initially in partnership with an Australian breeder Geoff Baker. The Southern Cross flock remains hugely influential in the breed, with Southern Cross rams always in demand from both pedigree and commercial breeders. Mr Whitcombe played an active and constructive role in the affairs of the Society, serving at various times as a Council member, judge, host of the Field Day, and as President in 2005/06.

It is interesting to note that his obituary in The Daily Telegraph makes greater reference to his cricketing achievements than his considerable agricultural achievements. It is noted that his bowling ability was first noticed by the Australians in the summer of 1948 through twice bowling Len Hutton when playing for Oxford University against Yorkshire. Well remembered is the fact that he once dismissed Don Bradman for six in a first class match at Lord's.

The Southdown Sheep Society, and the wider sheep community, will mourn the passing of a true gentleman.

We extend our thoughts and sympathy to Susie, Robert and Sophie Whitcombe and their families.

NOTES FROM THE SOUTHDOWN OFFICE

The Council of the Southdown Sheep Society meets twice a year and the Notes from the Office aim to keep members updated on some of the important issues raised and discussed within Council meetings.

2015 LAMB REGISTRATIONS

Members now have the facility to register their lambs online using the Pedeweb system. All paid up members should have received details of their password and information held on line. There is a User Guide available to download from the Southdown Sheep Society website, together with some FAQs. To access the on line Flock Book simply follow the link from the Society website.

The current registration charges are:

- on line registration fee per ewe lamb £4
- on line registration fee per ram lamb £8
- paper registration fee per ewe lamb £5
- paper registration fee per ram lamb £10

late registration fee on line and/or on paper £20 per animal

Lamb registrations

Members should make every effort to register lambs as soon as possible to avoid omission from the next edition of the Flock Book. Please note that all late registrations (ie after the year of birth) remain eligible for registration but at the late fee charge of £20 per registration. All lamb registrations should be with the office by November 30th 2015.

The Southdown Office is always closed for all but emergency enquiries for two weeks over Christmas and New Year.

Imports and Exports

Members are reminded that the Office must be notified of any intended exports and imports. The rules as published in the current Flock Book state that "an export certificate must be obtained from the Secretary at a cost of £10 per Southdown and the sum of 5p in every pound of the sale price shall be paid within six months of the sale".

This zootechnical (export) certificate for pure-bred breeding sheep, their semen, ova and embryos, should accompany the animal (or germinal product) where they are traded or entered into the European Union to allow an entry or registration of those animals in other breeding books or breeding registers.

The Southdown Sheep Society therefore fulfils its obligations as a Defra recognised breed society by issuing the export pedigree certificate to allow entering of pure-breed breeding sheep in flock-books.

Annual Subscription

Many thanks to all those members whose subscriptions are already paid up to date. Just a reminder that the 2015 subscription (£35) was due from January 1st 2015. Standing Order instruction forms are available to download from the website or from the Office. Please ensure that

when making a BACS payment, or setting up a Standing Order for subscription payment, that you include your name as a reference with the payment! Just occasionally it is impossible to trace the source of a payment!

"Fiver" Ads

Individual and small numbers of animals (for sale or wanted) can be advertised on the website in the Stock for Sale Now section. Fiver ads remain on the website for up to 3 months and can be sent in to the office at any time. Please note that only basic details – and no photographs – can be included in the fiver ads.

Getting it right

Do we have your correct information? Please try and update the Office with any changes of address or contact details. If you spot any errors or inaccuracies in the information included for you in this year's publications do let the Office know by the end of the year as the Flock Book goes to print in January.

Email

The Office aims to make greater use of email in order to contact members in 2016. If your email address changes, please remember to inform the office.

Pre Sale Inspections

The pre sale inspections of sheep at all official national Southdown sales are conducted by a veterinary surgeon. The inspection consists of general health, teeth, feet and testicles. Any animal deemed to have failed inspection for any reason will not be eligible for show and sale. The decision of the veterinary surgeon will be final.

Please note that the inspectors reserve the right to weigh any/all sheep as they wish. Breeders entering sheep for the sales are strongly advised to check the weights of their animals before sale day. Any animal that fails to reach the minimum weight on sale day cannot be sold through the ring in the course of the sale.

Minimum weights	Upset prices
Shearling rams 70kg	Shearling rams 175 guineas
Ram lambs 40kg	Ram lambs 125 guineas
Shearling ewes 50kg	Shearling ewes 110 guineas
Ewe lambs 29kg	Ewe lambs 95 guineas

These upset prices and minimum weights are applicable at all official Southdown Shows and Sales:

Please note that there are no minimum weights or upset prices for aged ewes and rams.

WEBSITE

Regular website visitors will have noticed that we are experiencing some technical difficulties with our current website. As part of the rebranding strategy, the Southdown Sheep Society website will be replaced in Spring 2016. In the meantime the current website retains all the functionality and content. However, if you cannot find what is needed from the current website please call the Office for assistance.

The Paxton Flock heads to a new home

The Paxton Flock, founded by Mr J P and Mrs A Woollard of Crediton, Devon, was purchased last year by James & Jessica Cross, to join the Hawklely Flock at Scotland Farm, Hawklely, Hampshire.

WELCOME NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

At this year's AGM we welcomed two members who join Council for the first time

Jessica Cross

Jessica founded the Hawkley Flock in Hawkley, Hampshire, in 2010 and established Southdown Duvets soon after. Jessica explains that her interest in the Southdown breed "involves all aspects of animal husbandry and genetics but focusses on the value associated with the wool. Five years' experience establishing and running Southdown Duvets has provided me with a commercial perspective which will hopefully bring to the Council ideas which might contribute to the long term sustainability and well-being of the breed and for the benefit of all associated."



Jessica Cross



Tim Morris

Tim Morris

Tim Morris has a lifetime's experience of livestock, and founded the Kitwells Flock in Shenley, Hertfordshire, in 2011. Tim says that "as a small flock breeder I have really appreciated the friendly advice and support from fellow members and the Society. Although I trained as a vet, my experience is varied, from vet practice, medicine research, working for government and charities, and horseracing, and I currently sit on the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England, which is responsible for all Defra's policy on animal health. I would hope to bring this wide experience to serve the Society."



Jonathan Long



Patrick Goldsworthy

After six years leading the Council, Lindsay Dane retired as Chairman at the Council meeting on October 14th 2015. Following an election, **Jonathan Long** has been appointed Chairman of Southdown Sheep Society Council and Vice Chairman is **Patrick Goldsworthy**.



We welcome Southdown Breeders

The Small Shepherds Club was founded in 1977 to help shepherds in Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire with all aspects of keeping sheep from good husbandry to legal issues. Today with almost 300 members we provide a great forum for small scale sheep keepers to exchange ideas and for help and advice.

If you want to know more?

Find us – like us - and follow us - on facebook!
The Southdown Sheep Society can be found on Facebook -
<http://www.facebook.com/SouthdownSheepSociety>



Southdown Sheep Society

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