

# Southdown News

Newsletter of The Southdown Sheep Society

Issue 26

Autumn 2018

## SOUTHDOWNS IN GREEN PARK



The Goodwood Flock headed in to central London in October to help promote UK Wool Week.

UK Wool Week is organised by the Campaign for Wool, and the Southdowns were part of a project working in conjunction with British Wool, The Woolly Roadshow and Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

Nick Page, daughter Amy, and Farm Manager Tim Hassell brought a trailer full of Goodwood sheep to Green Park, and, assisted by a police escort, the flock was shepherded down The Mall, to the amazement of the many passers-by.

The Woolly Roadshow had travelled from Glasgow, stopping at various points on the journey throughout the week, with the visit to London on the Friday being the climax of the Wool Week tour.

Special thanks to Tim, Nick and the team for bringing along the Goodwood sheep and helping to make it a memorable occasion.



*Amy Page and the yellow bucket leading sheep as Nick Page brings up the rear.*

## NOTES FROM THE SOUTHDOWN OFFICE

### 2018 LAMB REGISTRATIONS

More and more members are choosing 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.

#### 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 30<sup>th</sup> 2018, and at the latest, by December 31<sup>st</sup>.** Whilst we try to turn around all registrations promptly, there may be a delay in processing registrations at busy times in the Southdown office.

The Southdown Office is closed for all but emergency enquiries for two weeks over Christmas and New Year. **Please note that registrations cannot be processed until payment has been received and subscription is paid up to date.**

#### REGISTRATION CHARGES

on line registration fee per ewe lamb	£4
on line registration fee per ram lamb	£10
paper registration fee per ewe lamb	£5
paper registration fee per ram lamb	£15
late registration fee on line / on paper	£20 per animal

#### 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 certificate 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.

#### Stock for sale

Members may use the Society website to advertise

stock for sale at any time. Simply email the office with details. The charge for a brief advert on the website for three months is £10.

#### 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 please let the Office know.

#### Email

If your email address changes, please remember to inform the office, this can be done via Pedeweb.

All members for whom we have an email address receive the Southdown enewsletter throughout the year. The enewsletter gives the Office a chance to share information with members on a more regular basis in between the paper newsletters in Spring and Autumn. If you would prefer not to receive our enewsletters then please let the Office know.

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Many thanks to all those members whose subscriptions are already paid up to date. Just a reminder that the annual membership subscription is £40.

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!

And finally...if you have not yet updated your Standing Order Instruction, please inform your bank that the annual subscription is £40.

#### BACS payment details

**Account name: Southdown Sheep Society**

**Sort Code: 60-02-13**

**Account Number: 51501376**

### DATES FOR THE DIARY IN 2019

**Southdown Sheep Society National Show at  
Royal Cheshire County Show on Tuesday June  
18<sup>th</sup> 2019**

**The Early Premier Breeders Show & Sale will  
be held at Worcester Market on Saturday  
August 10<sup>th</sup> 2019**

**Traditional Native Breeds National Show and  
Sale at Melton Mowbray  
September 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> 2019**



## Checklists – A practical way of giving “attention to detail”

Some time ago I was directed towards a fascinating TED talk\* by an American doctor (Atul Gawande) advocating greater use of checklists in hospitals. The aim being, in complex - in fact all - procedures, to avoid mistakes and ensuring that everything that needed to be done was done. I suspect that this approach may be why, when I had an operation recently they kept asking me for my “name, rank and serial number”. At least I hope that’s the reason rather than checking for sanity. A similar checklist approach is used by pilots for take-off and landing.



*Wake sleeping lambs to check them*

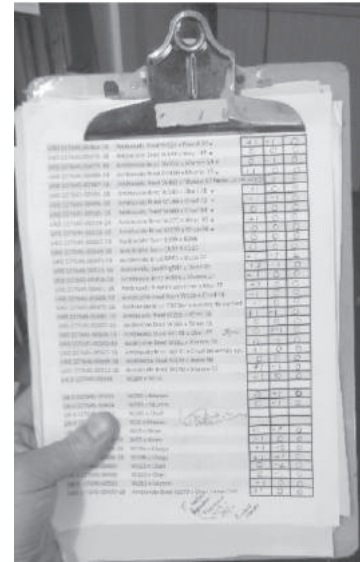
Checklists are something we probably all use as they can help us overcome forgetfulness, oversight or complacency. *And are a practical way of giving meaning to the oft repeated phrase “attention to detail” in our shepherding.*

I use two sorts of checklists: one is a “**kit list**” to make sure I have all the right equipment available in the run up for lambing, another is for going to a show/sale. The latter I keep on my mobile phone, and am still adding too. The other checklists I have recently developed are “**individual animal checklists**”. Currently I have three that I use – though only when I remember to check my checklist of checklists!

Probably the most valuable one is my late-night new born lamb checklist. In the early days of lambing it is quite easy to keep a track of lambs as they are born and put in a lambing box but as things get busy and I get tired it is very easy to miss at 1am something awry with a lamb and to think because it’s standing, and looks to be suckling, or snuggly curled up, all is well. So I make a conscious effort – with a clipboard and pen every night (at least) to check every lambing box for four things: Bums, Tums, Eyes and Skin. Or, if you want to make it more poetic, “Eyes, Bums, Skins ‘n Tums”

The **Bum** check is to check for some bowel movement, removing glued on faeces and unsticking the tail, (I use an old pair of flannelette pyjamas -not mine! The

flannelette seems to be the ideal material for this messy job), the **Tum** check is to feel if there is milk in the gut – being mindful of the fact that some full tums aren’t as full as they feel and could be constipated (diagnosis may need to be linked to the bum and the skin checks), the **Eye** check is for in-turned eyelids and any infection/glue eye and lastly pinching the **Skin** to see if the lamb is dehydrated.



The skin goes down more slowly on a dry lamb. I am sure there are other things to be checked on (feed and water) but these four seem to be the most essential. And, using the checklist means that no lamb gets missed in the hurly-burly of lambing. I also have a much-stained three years old lambing book where birth weights (use a fisherman’s digital scale), birth dates and ewe/lambs are recorded as soon after birth as possible, with an iodine navel dip done immediately after weighing.

I am also using a checklist to sort through my lambs and ewes for which ones to keep. I do spend ages thinking about breeding lines and analysing performance data, but I realised after spotting a shearling with parrot-jaw too late, that it is just as important to be thorough with the basics of a “correct” sheep. So for lambs I am thinking of keeping, at 18-24 weeks, I have a **lamb checklist** their mouths, feet, and depending on their sex, teats or testicles. For mouths and feet, I give positive and negative scores, as there is some variation between lambs and some are more borderline than others. A little while after weaning a similar **ewe checklist** is used with my ewes for culling though there is more emphasis on the condition of the udder. The same ewe list is also used to check condition score in the run up to tupping and during the winter as some ewes may need extra feeding.

The key purpose of the individual animal checklist is to make sure every animal is checked. I am pretty certain that my lamb survival rate in the barn immediately post lambing has gone up as a result. And it’s good to be picking out those ewes with damaged udders for early culling or greater care at lambing. Either way it is reassuring to know, for retained stock, that I am not wasting time and effort on an animal that is not up to the job or has an inherent weakness.

*Patrick Goldsworthy*

\* Ted Talks [www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)

**THE SOUTHDOWN SHEEP SOCIETY  
FLOCK COMPETITION  
2018**

**Judge: Mrs Anne Lambert**

**Class A** Flock of 40 ewes or over  
Winner is awarded the  
**Berkhampstead Rose Bowl and £25**

**1<sup>st</sup> Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd**

**Class B** Flock of 10 – 39 ewes  
Winner is awarded the  
**Gaddesden Trophy and £25**

**1<sup>st</sup> Amy Readhead-Higgins**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> DG & MY Crundwell**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Mrs L Clements**

**Class C NOVICE**  
Competition, not to have won a first prize  
Winner is awarded the  
**Frank Grantham Trophy and £25**

**1<sup>st</sup> = Ben & Katie Slack**  
**1<sup>st</sup> = L & J Trumper**

**Tufton Beamish Trophy  
to the Champion Flock**  
**Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer**  
**Reserve: Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd**

**Hobgen Salver** for the best intake of shearling ewes  
**DG & MY Crundwell**

**Miller Hallett Trophy** for the best ewe lambs  
**Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer**

**Paynter Wool Trophy** for the flock with the best wool  
**Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd**

**Noakes Trophy** for the best three lambs of each sex,-  
sired by a named ram, present and shown  
**Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd**

**The Jim Cresswell Trophy**  
for the best ram or group of rams  
**Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer**

**The Beryl Marsh Trophy**  
for the best newcomer  
**Ben & Katie Slack**  
**AND**  
**L & J Trumper**  
All trophies to be awarded at the  
**Southdown Sheep Society Field Day 2019**

**Trophies to be held for one year**

**2018 Flock Competition**

**From the Judge, Mrs Anne Lambert**

I would like to thank the participants in this year's Flock Competition for their warmth and kindness. It was a genuine pleasure to meet you all and to see and talk about your wonderful sheep. The flocks varied considerably, in that some had obvious French / New Zealand bloodlines, whilst others were more the small Post War type, but all were obviously their owners pride and joy. I am sorry you can not all be winners.

What I noticed most was when people are buying in ewes which do not match the exsisting flock, and with 35 points available for uniformity, this had a considerable impact. When looking at the flocks I imagine I am trying to purchase two, and the harder it is to choose then the more I know the flock will score well on uniformity. With some flocks now doing embryo transplants uniformity should easily improve.

Rams also attract a large amount of the scoring and some purchased rams, when they are "half the flock" were not of the highest quality, and this year in particular I have seen real quality rams left unsold. The top rams may not be cheap, but personally I would rather breed my own females and spend as much as I can afford on a top quality ram.

May I wish you all happy lambing for whenever you choose to lamb, good luck with your sheep and I hope I get to meet you all again soon.

*Anne Lambert*

**NEW MEMBERS**  
**A warm welcome to the Society's  
new members:**

<b>Miss Emily-May Elnaugh</b>	<b>Drinkstone</b>	<b>Suffolk</b>
<b>T Everard &amp; F Rademaker</b>	<b>Robertsbridge</b>	<b>East Sussex</b>
<b>Simon &amp; Wendy Everdell</b>	<b>Taunton</b>	
<b>Joanna Evlyn-Buften</b>	<b>Eldersfield</b>	<b>Gloucester</b>
<b>Peter &amp; Avril Harrod</b>	<b>Southend</b>	
	<b>Bradfield</b>	<b>Berks</b>
<b>Lynne &amp; Mark Hart</b>	<b>Colwyn Bay</b>	<b>Wales</b>
<b>Kieran &amp; Kim Head</b>	<b>Narberth</b>	<b>Pembrokeshire</b>
<b>Lily &amp; Henry Kirby</b>	<b>Milton Keynes</b>	
<b>Shiobhan Lea &amp; Family</b>	<b>Nuneaton</b>	<b>Warwickshire</b>
<b>Mrs Iona Morris</b>	<b>Bala</b>	<b>Gwynedd</b>
<b>Miss Hannah Rubie-Todd</b>	<b>Groombridge</b>	<b>East Sussex</b>
<b>Michael &amp; Valerie Sargent</b>	<b>Ware</b>	<b>Hertfordshire</b>
<b>Mrs K Taylor</b>	<b>Swaffham</b>	<b>Norfolk</b>
<b>Alys Theophilus</b>	<b>Llandovery</b>	<b>Carmarthenshire</b>
<b>Helen Tubman</b>	<b>Ledbury</b>	<b>Herefordshire</b>
<b>Graham Uridge</b>	<b>Ceredigion</b>	
<b>B S Watson</b>	<b>Huntingdon</b>	<b>Cambridgeshire</b>
<b>Robert Williams</b>	<b>Bristol</b>	
<b>Dr Katie Woodward</b>	<b>Lovedean</b>	<b>Hampshire</b>

## 2019 SOUTHDOWN SHEEP SOCIETY NATIONAL SHOW

The 2019 Southdown Sheep Society National Show takes place at Royal Cheshire County Show on Tuesday June 18<sup>th</sup> 2019. The Judge is Mrs S Harmer.

Classes are open to MV Accredited and non MV Accredited sheep

Animals entered must be owned by the exhibitor for a minimum of 4 months prior to the date of the Show.

**Please note: If there are less than 5 animals in a class, then the class will be amalgamated.**

### RAM

two shear or over, shorn bare on or after 1 February 2019

### SHEARLING RAM

shorn bare on or after 1 February 2019

### SIGNET PERFORMANCE RECORDED

### SHEARLING RAM

shorn bare on or after  
1 February 2019 (not eligible for entry in  
to other class/es)

### PAIR OF SHEARLING RAMS

shorn bare on or after 1 February 2019  
(not to entered in the single shearling ram class)

### RAM LAMB

born on or between 1 January and 28 February 2019

### RAM LAMB

born on or after 1 March 2019

### EWE

two shear or over, shorn bear on or after 1 February 2019  
to have reared lamb(s) in 2019

### SHEARLING EWE

shorn bare on or after 1 February 2019

### EWE LAMB

born on or between 1 January and 28 February 2019

### EWE LAMB

born on or after 1 March 2019

### PAIR BRED BY EXHIBITOR

comprising shearling ewe and shearling ram  
(not eligible for Championship)

### GROUP OF FOUR

comprising ram shearling or older, ram lamb, ewe  
shearling or older, ewe lamb, bred by Exhibitor  
(not eligible for Championships)

**For more information  
contact the Royal Cheshire County Show:**

Kerry Reid  
Competitions Officer  
Cheshire Agricultural Society CIO

T 01565 650 200  
W [www.royalcheshireshow.org](http://www.royalcheshireshow.org)  
E [info@royalcheshireshow.org](mailto:info@royalcheshireshow.org)



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CAS Ltd accepts no responsibility for information unrelated to its business.

## Advertise your flock

**As a member of the Southdown Sheep Society there are a number of ways in which your flock, or individual animals, may be advertised:**

### 2019 YEAR BOOK

The 2019 Year Book will be an A4 publication, in full colour.

Please note that all adverts included in the 2019 Year Book will also be included on the website.

Advertising rates for members are as follows:

**Full page £80**

**Half page £40**

*Centre pages, inside cover, front and back - please contact the Southdown Office for further details, and see the further information below.*

**2019 Year Book – premium pages : centre double page spread, inside front cover and inside back cover.**

It has been decided that these pages are on offer to the highest bidder.

If you wish to place an advert on any of these pages please contact the office with your ‘silent bid’. All bids will be considered after the closing date for receipt which is December 31<sup>st</sup> 2018.

### INTERACTIVE MAP ON THE WEBSITE

The usual £10 per box for the breeders’ listing (to include name, address, flock and contact details) is still be available at the current price: this includes a flag on the UK map on the Society’s website, and a boxed entry in the annual Year Book.

***The deadline for copy is January 31<sup>st</sup> 2018***

### WEBSITE ADVERTS

**The cost of placing an advert on the website is £10 per advert.** All adverts will include the flock name, breeder’s contact details including telephone numbers and email, and a brief outline of what is available for sale. Please note that no pedigree information, no show results and no photographs will be included. Adverts remain on the website for 3 months. These may be added at any time. Please email the office with details.



## Field Day and AGM at Mudchute City Farm

This year's Field Day was a change from the traditional Field Day which usually sees members and friends heading to a member's farm, often in a very rural location. Instead, more than forty members and friends headed to Mudchute City Farm in London, on August 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mudchute City Farm is a 32 acre farm situated on the Isle of Dogs in East London. Recently awarded Approved Conservation Farm Park status by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, the farm is home to a wide range of livestock, in addition to the small flock of traditional Southdown sheep. Jacob, Whitefaced Woodland, Oxford Down and Castlemilk Moorit sheep graze alongside the Southdowns, all with the backdrop of the tall towers of Canary Wharf. Donkeys, alpacas, Tamworth and Middle White pigs and a diverse range of poultry and waterfowl find a home at Mudchute. The farm is open every day of the year, and there is no charge for entry. In addition to the farm, the site includes a riding school and a children's nursery. All enterprises help to provide income to sustain the running of Mudchute City Farm.

After a brief introduction to Mudchute, farm manager and fellow Southdown member Tom Davis gave a guided tour around the site, introducing some of his favourite animals along the way. The site was a significant part of the wartime defence system for London and one of the WW2 anti-aircraft guns has recently been restored. Members posed for a group photo in front of the gun.

Following the guided tour, there was an opportunity to continue the debate on the "Pedigree analysis of UK registered Southdowns", the discussion being led by Tom Blunt, RBST Field Officer.

Lunch was followed by the Annual General Meeting. As is the tradition with Southdown Field Days, the day was rounded off with afternoon tea and cake.

### The 2018 Annual General Meeting

The Treasurer Neil Stainthorpe presented his report and the audited accounts for 2017 were formally adopted.

Chairman Adam Brown presented the annual Report of Council which was formally adopted by members.

A vote of thanks was offered to the outgoing President, Mrs Jane Ing, and she was appointed a Vice President of the Society. Incoming President Mrs Lesley Mead was welcomed. The President Elect is Mr Michael Sprake.

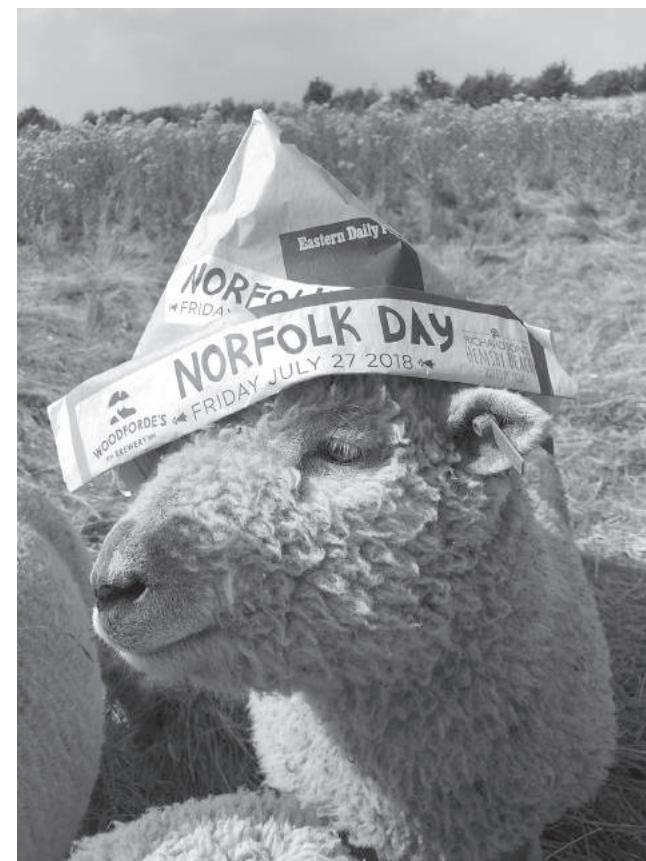
Seven nominations had been correctly received and following a paper vote, which included proxy votes, the following members were elected: Lindsay Dane, Patrick Goldsworthy, Tim Morris, Nick Page, Neil Stainthorpe. The following were unsuccessful: Sidney J Cook and Mark Robertson. The Chairman thanked all who had put themselves forward for election. The AGM concluded with a brief question and answer session before the meeting was declared closed.

## The Brigg Flock is out and about

Members Alison & Mark Robertson have been out and about with their Brigg Flock this year.

They accepted an invitation to take part in the Easter Service in Wymondham Abbey, Norfolk, and the lambs proved to be quite a hit, especially with the vicar!

In July, the flock helped to promote Norfolk Day and made it on to the front page of the Eastern Daily Press.



## German sheep farmers discover Southdowns

On a hot summer's morning, forty German sheep farmers from Mecklenberg (North East of Berlin) stopped off at Patrick Goldsworthy's Webb Ellis flock in Cambridgeshire. This was their first stop, on a four day "Road Trip" based around a visit to the Sheep Event in Malvern.



*Shearling rams (left), Patrick (centre), Jürgen Luckhoff (w camera) Uli Rath (translator w clipboard) Nicht sprechen Bockmist oder Hoden*

Tour leader, and chairman of the Association of German Sheep Breeding Organisations, Jürgen Luckhoff, said: "Before our visit we were unfamiliar with the Southdown, as there are only two flocks in Germany. We found them an interesting sheep in a well organised flock with a clear breeding programme. The Southdown produces fast growing lambs in a short time with a very good conformation."



*The Pied Piper of Grafham*

"It was also good to hear about the Signet-Sheepbreeder-Program which is very interesting to us, especially for a breed like the Southdown."

Patrick Goldsworthy commented; "Rose and I were delighted to be able to introduce the breed to some of our European colleagues. We avoided any Br\*\*it negotiations and focussed on the sheep and Rose's delicious homemade spiced banana cake which was all gone by the time our visitors left!"

## A Golden Fleece

It is not just in the 'live' sheep classes that the Southdown breed has been winning this year.

Graham Langford reports that his Nepcote Flock entered the South of England Fleece Competition



*Pictured with the Nepcote Southdown fleece is Graham Gostick, who helps with the Nepcote Flock.*

earlier this year, and out of 59 fleeces entered, their Southdown fleece was crowned Supreme Champion. Graham says: "The judge said that he had never seen a better Southdown fleece. We now go forward to the Golden Fleece competition in later in the year when the Supreme Champion fleeces from all the county shows will be judged at the British Wool Board in Bradford. Having not had a very good lambing period, we are over the moon with both delight and surprise for this success".

## Traditional Southdowns

The consultation on the Grassroots analysis of the breed produced a number of strong responses from members concerned about the future of the traditional type of Southdown. At the meeting in October the Council considered what might be done to support traditional Southdowns. As a first step two Council members with an interest in the traditional type, Lesley Mead and Lindsay Dane, have agreed to explore the idea of forming a Traditional Breeders Group within the Society. This would provide a focus for developing ideas for strengthening the position of the traditional type within the breed. They are contacting breeders who they know to be supporters of the traditional type, but would be pleased to hear from anyone else who is interested in preserving and promoting the traditional type.

Please email to  
Lindsay.dane@icloud.com  
or lesleyhollybar@btinternet.com



# Starting out as a new Shepherd on the South Downs

*Getting started with shepherding on the South Downs is not easy, however spinner/weaver Wovember blogger and Society member Louise Spong met up with new shepherdess, Rachel Cordingly, Head Shepherd Martin Pimm and Roland Grant of the West Sussex Educational Trust Fund (WSETF) to discuss Rachel's experiences of agricultural education and her route into sheperding on the South Downs. (A version of this article appeared on the Wovember.com website).*

If you read my previous article ‘Tansy’ you will know that a fictional Sussex shepherdess has been immortalised in a novel and film of the same name, and that they were very likely based on a real and long forgotten person who has been neglected by traditional commentators.

In late September last year, I travelled a few miles from where I live to the sleepy village of Burpham where writer and bee keeper Edward Tickner Edwardes was inspired to write his tale of a female shepherd. Here in the local pub, I met up with three people who are all involved in their own way in the continuation of sheep farming on the South Downs. Roland Grant (RG), secretary of a fund that supports agricultural students, Martin Pimm (MP) a shepherd and farmer of long standing, and Rachel Cordingly (RC) not long out of agricultural collage and bringing a shepherdess back to the village and its environs.

Before I introduce you to the first of my interviewees, I’d like to tell you a little more about how the writing of this article came about. If you haven’t guessed already there is nothing I like more than a good chat with, and about Sussex shepherds past, present and future. Yes, future! We’ll get to that, I promise.

One such shepherd of the past was a man called Herbert Padwick [HP]. I have Duncton shepherd David Burden to thank for introducing me to him and his enduring legacy. HP came from a distinguished farming family and as well as being a celebrated dairy farmer, was known for his love of Southdown sheep.<sup>1</sup> I believe his tireless activities in various organisations also show how he had the wellbeing of fellow farmers close to his heart. He was instrumental in setting up the Southdown Sheep Society, of which he was President in 1906,<sup>2</sup> and was involved in the formation of the National Farmers’ Union, serving as the first president of the West Sussex branch in 1910. He also sat on the local County War Agricultural Executive Committee and gave evidence to the Royal Commission on Agriculture on behalf of the national NFU in 1919. During this period HP supported various activities to further the financial support on offer to farmers both locally and nationally. Not only did he contribute to the NFU’s efforts to create a NFU mutual insurance company, he was also involved in the purchase of Government War Bonds on behalf of the West Sussex branch. It seems he was always thinking ahead to the needs of future farmers. It was this last act which leads me to introduce you to my first interviewee Roland Grant, the current secretary for the NFU West Sussex Education Trust Fund.

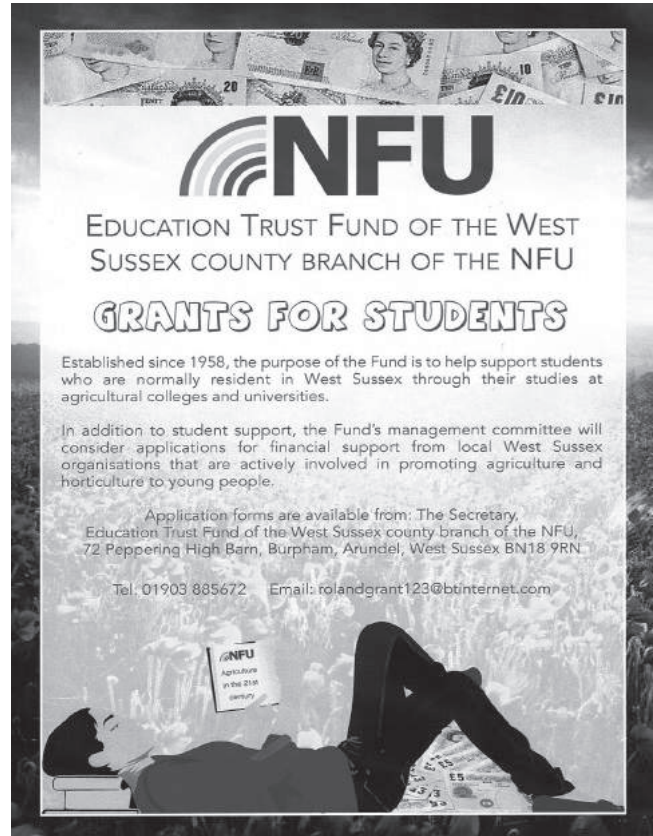
**LS: Can you tell me a little bit about yourself, how you came to be involved with the West Sussex Education Trust Fund (WSETF), why you feel it is important, and what your hopes for the future of the fund are?**

**RG:** I’ve lived in West Sussex for 20 years and have always been in the South East. I am now ‘retired’ and living in Burpham, so I’m lucky to be surrounded by Downland farms. I have been secretary of the fund for eleven years after a local farmer friend of mine Reg Hayden approached me to see if I would serve the committee that manages it. The fund is so important because it was set up by farmers to support the generations of farmers to come. Next year the fund will

be celebrating 60 years of providing financial assistance, having been started in 1958 when Government War Bonds purchased by the West Sussex NFU were joined together with some of the proceeds of the sale of the then West Sussex NFU headquarters in Chichester. One of the reasons I feel the fund is so important is very much connected to wellbeing; many bursaries and schemes get paid to the educational establishment, whilst WSETF goes directly to the student. This means it can help with a broad range of needs and is not restricted to tuition fees. In terms of my hopes for the future, I would really like to see more awareness of the fund and of course, more applications to it from local students.

**LS: Can you tell me the purpose of the fund, and whether the aims and objectives have been changed or added to over time?**

**RG:** The aims and objectives of the WSTF have remained constant; the fund is specifically for students who reside in West Sussex who need support in agricultural education or training. The student can attend any agricultural institution in England, but they must reside at the time of application in West Sussex. Students can apply more than once to the fund. For example, we may receive an application when a student is at college, and another when they have moved on to university. In the main, the fund has tended to receive applications from students about to start agricultural college straight from school. However, the committee is considering broadening the scope so that young farmers who are already farming and who may need further training can apply. Many certificates, for example machine handling need updating regularly and this can be expensive for those just starting out. We also welcome applications from mature students, an under-represented group, who may be considering a career change.



1 Smith, G. From Campbell to Kendall: A History of the NFU, Somerset 2008  
2 Porter, Valerie. The Southdown Sheep, Singleton 1991



**LS: How can people find out about the fund?**

**RG:** As secretary, I send out information to all colleges and universities that run agricultural training courses. We are delighted that our nearest agricultural college at Brinsbury is proactive in encouraging students to apply. However, we seldom see applications from other institutions, which is a shame. We would also like to see something on the national NFU website directing people to their local fund. It can make all the difference to have extra assistance available.

**LS: Are you able to tell me approximately how many people the fund helps?**

**RG:** On average we help about 14 students a year. However, we are able to support more and we would really like to see more students applying to the fund.

**LS: What sort of thing does the fund support?**

**RG:** The fund is broadly worded to enable us to consider a variety of things. From machine handling courses, safe to use certification, protective clothing, personal equipment and transport to attend a course; we treat each application on its own individual merit.

The committee also considers funding activities by other organisations related to agriculture and education. For example, the fund supports ‘Connect with the Countryside’ an initiative run in connection with South of England Agricultural Society. The scheme offers school pupils a hands-on opportunity to learn about food, farming, the countryside and the environment.

We also support the work of the local Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) that provides financial support to farming people who may be facing hardship.

When Roland’s near neighbour and local shepherd Martin Pimm’s flock started to grow he realised he needed another pair of hands to help maintain the equilibrium of wellbeing not only for the flock, but also his own health and happiness.

**LS: Can you tell me about yourself, what you do, how you came to be doing it, and tell us about the flock you shepherd?**

**Martin:** I don’t come from a farming background. I got into farming through horses. I liked horse riding as a kid and got a weekend job on a local farm leading ponies in, grooming them, getting the tack ready, and leading ponies out. This paid for my riding lessons. The farm also had cattle, sheep, and pigs and I got involved with farming in this way. By the time I left school I knew I wanted to get an apprenticeship on a farm. The farm I had done my horse riding on wasn’t big enough to take me on. I went through Sparshott college in Hampshire and got an interview on a mixed farm near there. They did a large amount of arable, and had a mixture of cattle, pigs and sheep. I stayed on this farm for 24 years. I went down the pig line on this farm rather than sheep, although I did a little bit of shepherding at busy times to help out.

Now I am in West Sussex, shepherding. When my other half and I had our son we wanted to move back to West Sussex. We heard about the farm we manage now. The estate had taken a large amount of land back from a retiring tenant farmer, and they wanted to put livestock back on the farm, and bring back a dairy. At the time they also had plans to have some pigs which fitted in with my experience, as well as a small flock of sheep.

In the end we steered away from pigs [Martin laughs] and went with cattle and sheep. We got larger and larger with the sheep, starting off with a flock of 350. This year we’ll put 1400 to the ram in November. We’re planning on stopping at 1500! We decided on Romneys because we wanted to lamb outside and they are quite a hardy breed, good at

mothering, nice wool and the meat doesn’t tend to run as fat as Southdowns; all this fitted with what the estate wanted for the farm.

**LS: What would you say is the most satisfying part of being a shepherd?**

**Martin:** Loads, loads; where do I start? Lambing time is really special, even the lead up to it is really busy, scanning and condition-scoring all the sheep, setting the fields out to split the ewes up into smaller groups, and keeping ewes who have lambed away from those that have yet to lamb. It’s a continual rotation of sheep and lambs around the fields. Although it’s busy and everyone is very tired we don’t mind the long hours because it’s so rewarding.

I also love using the dogs to work with the sheep. We work over a big area here. Although we’re not far away from the busy coast of Sussex, up here on the South Downs the only road is the one through the village. It’s a nice place for the sheep to be. There’s nothing better than looking around and seeing a lovely healthy flock. It shows all the jobs you’ve been doing, worming, vaccinating, foot bathing, shearing, all the work over the year has paid off. It gives me a real sense of pride and satisfaction.

Seeing Rachel gaining experience has also been rewarding, knowing that when she gets her sheep dog things will be a bit easier for all of us. It’s great progress.

**LS: For balance, I have to ask about the worst part of farming...**

**Martin:** Culling is the hardest part; having to make that decision. It’s always based on the health of the individual sheep; if a ewe is too long in the tooth as they say or has had mastitis or a difficult pregnancy and you know the next one will be difficult. Having to take responsibility to cull is never an easy one.

**LS: How many people are involved in helping with the sheep? Can you tell me about their roles?**

**Martin:** When we got to 700 ewes I knew we needed someone else to help out. That’s when we found Rachel. When we reach 1,500 later this year that will be a big enough flock for Rachel and I to shepherd well between us on the land we have.

At lambing time my partner takes time off work to help out and we also take on a student placement. Other than that it is Rachel, me, and the dogs.

We do also get help with shearing. The guys we use are shearing all year round so they know what they are doing and can do a much better job than either Rachel or myself could manage.

**LS: Are there any other aspects of wellbeing connected with the farm that you would like to share?**

**Martin:** The estate itself really cares about conservation, and they plan that side of things. The Duke wanted to get back to a ‘patchwork quilt of fields’ look, and we work alongside the rangers to do our bit. All the fields have 8-10 meters of conservation headland that has chicory and other plants for bird cover and wildlife. There are also beetle banks and new hedging. Most of the sheep have to be electrically fenced so they don’t disturb the conservation efforts of the estate. This takes up quite a bit of our time. However, as a consequence we see a lot more kites, owls, lapwings and hares. There really has been a huge increase in the wildlife which is lovely to see when you are out and about on the farm.

In this area of the South Downs after the war it was pretty much all arable and we needed the sheep to put the organic matter back in the ground. The sheep fit well into the arable side and vice versa. There may be permanent grass leys but

there are steep banks here so these are not very good for arable, yet the sheep can use these for grazing. The sheep fit into the arable side because they take a certain amount of acreage every year out of arable land. This is under-sown with grass so the sheep can graze for two years, then we can plough that up and have that for arable again. This system happens all around the estate.

**LS: What happens to your wool?**

**Martin:** All our wool goes to the British Wool Marketing Board (BWMB) regional depot. In the last few years as wool prices have grown a little we have now been able to cover our shearing costs, but we never used to. I would like to know what happens to our wool, but the system isn't set up for that. We do get a certificate telling us when we have sent in a good, rolled fleece and this makes us feel good. Other than that we don't find out what our wool is used for. Time-wise there just isn't the scope for us to do any more with the wool than sending it to the BWMB.

**LS: What about your hopes for the future? Is there anything else you would like to achieve?**

**Martin:** Our hopes are to continue with a healthy farm, keeping our own breeding stock, and being able to maintain the flock in peak health. There used to be a South Down Marketing Group that was set up to be a cooperative where local farmers could sell their meat to local supermarkets and butchers. Sadly, this didn't succeed; we would love to have a more local market for our produce.

There is a lot of uncertainty around Brexit. We worry about cheap imported meat of uncertain provenance. We don't produce enough meat here in the UK to be self-sufficient, so this is a real concern.

After completing agricultural college Rachel saw the Martin's advertisement for a post helping to shepherd the estate's flock. Now Burpham and the Downs around the village has a new shepherdess.

**LS: Rachel, can you tell us about yourself, what you do, and how you came to be doing it?**

**Rachel:** I grew up on a farm; my dad's dad was a farmer so it's in the family. From the age of four all I wanted to do was be out and about helping my dad. I always kept a few pet lambs and looked after them. All through school I just wanted to get home and get out on the farm. Some people say it's hard at 16 to set your life path, but I just knew. I left school and went straight to agricultural college for two years. You learn the basics and have the chance to study different modules: pigs, sheep, cattle, crops, soil and so on. Alongside lectures you have one day a week of work experience.

**LS: What is your fondest memory of agricultural college?**

**Rachel:** I loved milking duties. I had never done it before and it was really nice getting up early in the morning; well sometimes anyway! [Rachel laughs] It was totally different from anything I'd done before. Going to college gave me the opportunity to try new things, and put new things into practice.

**LS: Thinking about the West Sussex Education Trust Fund, how easy was it for you to apply, and are you happy to tell us what you used it for?**

**Rachel:** I found out about the WSETF through my tutor at college and the application process was easy. I applied for help to get to college and back, the purchase of some-steel capped boots, and a telehandling course for the tractor. Although I'm focused on the sheep, I help out at harvest time on the arable side and there's always something big like the animal water bowsters to move around, so I need the tractor for those jobs.

**LS: So you've swapped from cattle to sheep. How did that happen?**

**Rachel:** After college I got my first job on a mixed farm where I'd done my lambing work experience. Then I saw this job with the estate helping Martin with the sheep, and I thought I've quite enjoyed working with the sheep, and this is a bit different concentrating on one aspect. I really enjoy it.

**LS: Thinking about our wellbeing theme, can you tell me what you like about your new role as a shepherdess?**

**Rachel:** Lots of things! Before I worked with a Beulah Speckled flock they are a bit scatty and noisy. I prefer the Romneys we have here. We're more of a team, and I am much more involved in the planning as well as the day-to-day work. I like being focused on the sheep and with a larger flock there is always plenty to do. Like Martin, lambing time is my favourite time of year despite all those long hours. When you see all the lambs running and jumping around in the fields it feels worth it. I'm looking forward to getting my own sheep dog this weekend and having the opportunity to learn another skill, handling a dog.

**LS: Do you think there is a cut off in terms of the number of ewes in the flock?**

**Rachel:** Oh yes, Martin and I have talked about this. If you are dashing about all over the place trying to keep up then the health of the flock will suffer and you won't enjoy it either. That's when accidents happen. We're sticking with 1,500 between us.

**LS: What about your least favourite part?**

**Rachel:** I don't really have one. I don't mind bad weather; mud can be a bit annoying when it's clogging up your boots. You just need to have a spare pair of clothes because you never know what might happen.

**LS: Last but not least do you have any advice for other young people thinking about a career in sheep farming?**



*[From left to right: Roland, Martin and Rachel and the flock of Romneys on the South Downs above Burpham village]*

**Rachel:** You've got to be dedicated. I think it is easier coming from a farming background, especially the kind of hours we work. It's not nine-to-five and your heart has to be in it. You are responsible for your animals, and there's no real day off. Going to agricultural college is a great place to start if you haven't come from a farming background. You'll soon find out if it's for you.

*Thanks to Roland, Martin and Rachel for sparing time out from their busy schedules to talk with me, and for agreeing to share their woollness stories. After leaving the pub we headed up to the farm atop the South Downs to take this picture. I left them beside the field of sheep, with views across the Downs and clouds that felt close enough to catch looking as radiant as I felt.*

*Louise Spong – South Downs Yarn*



# AROUND THE REGIONS

## EAST MIDLANDS

### LINCOLNSHIRE SHOW 2018

Southdown breeders and friends gathered for the annual BBQ at the Lincolnshire Show on the 20th & 21st June 2018. This is the second year there have been Southdown classes at the show.

It was very encouraging to see such a good number of young 'Southdowners' at the event who along with the rest of us enjoyed the sunshine, the football and the BBQ. We all had a great time generously hosted by Pete and Ruth Paul - thank you!

*Looking forward to next year already!*



*East Midland members enjoying the post-show BBQ and get-together.*



*Young 'Southdowners' posing for the group photo.*

### East Midlands Trimming Day

Southdown breeders met up to learn about trimming their show sheep at breeder Sophie Arlott's farm near Grantham in Lincolnshire.

Under a hot May sun, Basil Cooper guided everyone through the vital steps needed to prepare for showing your sheep including feeding, shearing and washing, and gave top tips and techniques on trimming.

A huge thanks to Basil Cooper for supplying the demo models and sharing his knowledge and expertise.



*Members stand back to admire Basil Cooper's trimming skills.*



*Young handlers Toby, Jacob and Charlie Paul had a go and got stuck in! Looking forward to next year already!*

### NEW –Southdown Breeders Induction and Refresher Day

A new one-day training event for Southdown breeders open to new and established flocks, is being organised by Patrick Goldsworthy for 2019. The one-day hands-on training event in Cambridgeshire aims to ensure breeders have a sound understanding of the Southdown, its characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. It will also cover basic shepherding skills, showing and generally be an opportunity to share experience of Southdowns and sheep keeping.

The event will be delivered by experienced trainers, shepherds and Southdown breeders and is planned to take place in May 2019. If you are interested in attending this event and would like more information, please email Patrick at [patrick@goldsworthy-uk.com](mailto:patrick@goldsworthy-uk.com). Please note there will be a delegate fee (tbc) appropriate to a one-day participative training course.





Newly elected Council member Nick Page with long-standing member of Council, Duncan Crundwell.



Field day host Tom Davies, Southdown member and Mudchute City Farm manager, explains the history of Mudchute.



City Sheep: Manx Loagthan, Whitefaced Woodland, Oxford Down and Jacobs share the farm with a flock of Southdowns.



All grazing animals enjoy the backdrop of Canary Wharf.



The rescued donkeys are a firm favourite at Mudchute, especially with the Farm Manager.

## 2018 FIELD DAY AND AGM AT MUDCHUTE CITY FARM



Incoming President Mrs Lesley Mead addresses the gathering.



Retiring President Mrs Jane Ing welcome incoming President, Mrs Lesley Mead.



Chairman Adam Brown delivers his report to the members.



Tanworth pigs also reside at Mudchute.



The recently restored WW2 anti-aircraft gun.



The farm tour

Photography by Heidi Crundwell

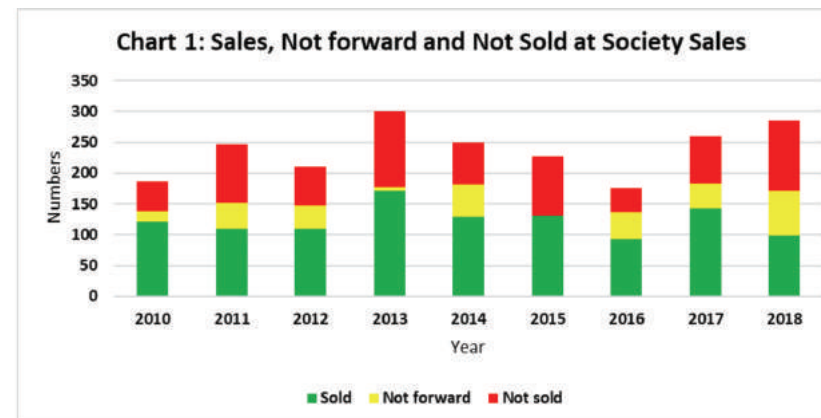


Enjoying a light hearted moment.



## Reflections on performance at recent Society Sales and a word about upset prices

There has been discussion amongst some members about the number of sheep sold and the prices realised in Society Sales in 2018, as well as concern that the new upset prices may have put off buyers. With the help of the breed secretary, Council member Patrick Goldsworthy has prepared some charts showing recent trends. These



include data from the “official” society sales in Kent (Maidstone, then Ashford 2015 only), Welshpool (2013/14) and currently Melton Mowbray and Worcester.

Chart 1 shows there is considerable year to year variation in the total numbers entered with a mean entry across sales of 238 per annum, with a mean 123 (51%) sold. With bigger entries (excepting 2013) some sellers choose not to take their stock to the sale (NB data on entries not forward for 2013 and 2015 is not available). In general larger entries result in a higher proportion of unsold sheep. There is no clear trend in the number of entries or numbers sold. For those trying to remember, the sale of the Golden Valley flock in 2015 and the two Chaileybrook/Brant sales (2014 and 2017), all c. 50 head, do not appear to have affected volumes coming forward or the numbers sold.

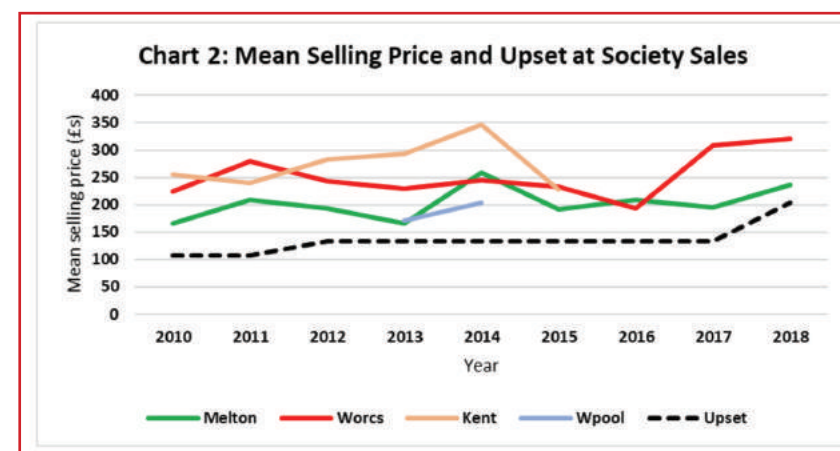


Chart 2 shows pricing trends. The mean price used is based on the average of the shearling and lamb prices realised and have not been weighted to take account of numbers sold. It is clear that in most years, sales in Kent (one of the breed’s home counties) have tended to attract a premium over other markets although the Worcester price has been improving. Melton clearly attracts the more frugal buyer.

### Upset Price

Chart 2 also highlights that the upset price had not changed for several years, and in the general the average price realised by sellers has been well above both new and old upset prices.

Council is well aware that there is some concern at the recent increase in upset prices, but the considered view was that an increase in upset price was long overdue, and that it would encourage breeders to put forward their best stock, as well as reflecting the true cost of producing a high-quality pedigree animal. Experience this year suggest that buyers will spend good money on good sheep (and even more on those with rosettes), while average sheep will struggle to reach upset price. This is assuming of course that there are buyers in the market.

At its October meeting Council agreed to leave upset prices as they are for 2019, the feeling was that the apparent lower sales was more a reflection of a lack of buyers (reflected in all sheep markets) following the very difficult spring and dry summer as well as the uncertainty of Brexit.

The upset price will be reviewed after the 2019 sales. One reminder though... if you are keen to buy do approach the seller promptly after the sale as some will be prepared to sell below or at upset price after the sale.

Patrick Goldsworthy

## Another successful lambing open day and school visit for the Southdown flock at Great Sir Hughes

Back in mid-March we once again opened the barn doors for the general public to come and see our flock of Southdowns as they got on with the job of lambing. Sadly, on the day the 'beast from the East' made a return and there was a freezing easterly wind and light snow coming down, it was a shame as the day before had been lovely sunshine which had been most welcome after all the cold weather we had endured in the lambing shed. But still over a 150 people braved the weather to come and have a look. They were first met by our rams who love all the attention that was given to



them as people proceeded round the barn. They saw a display showing and explaining the work of our chosen charity, The Rare Breeds Survival Trust. There was also a kids' corner where they could do colouring and learn about rare breeds. After that there were copies of the Southdown Newsletters, year books and leaflets for people to have a read through.

There was also a brochure about the Southdown duvets which people were quite surprised by and we understand they have since purchased. It was then off to the lambing shed itself where they got to see and touch new-born lambs that were only a few hours old with their heat lamps doing overtime to keep them warm. They got to hold ones that were a bit older but still in their mothering up pens, and watch lambs' race and play around the main pen. The ewes still waiting to lamb were snuggled down in their bedding and had no intention of lambing in such bad weather. People got to ask questions about how and why we do certain things which we feel they found interesting. It was then back off to the other barn for a very welcome warm drink and biscuit (once hands had been washed of course) and a goodbye to the rams as they left. In all we manage to raise £295.49 for the RBST.

A few days later with weather still not great we took a couple of ewes and their lambs to our local infants' school, so the children could get up close and meet them. One class at a time came out to the playing field to see, touch and ask any questions they had about them. They thought it was very funning when the sheep went to the toilet, mind you! We've found it



to be very rewarding and could tell of many incidents while doing these events that have been quite moving, from a little four-year-old boy coming out from his classroom bringing a picture he'd done after seeing the sheep to give to us or children writing in their book at the end of year that their best day at school that year was when the sheep came. To a dad in his mid-30s telling his daughter that it's the first time he's ever touched a lamb. We would encourage anyone if they can to hold an open day or get involved with a local school - it can be hard work setting up but get fun when you're doing it.

*The Richer Family*



### 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 free training as well as a great forum for small scale sheep keepers to exchange ideas and for help and advice.

If you want to know more?  
Visit [www.smallshepherdsclub.org.uk](http://www.smallshepherdsclub.org.uk)



## Southdown Champion goes all the way to the top at the 2018 National Southdown Show

The 2018 National Southdown Show took place on June 15<sup>th</sup> at the Royal Three Counties Show in Malvern, Worcestershire.

Judge Mr Paul Humphrey from East Dean, West Sussex, commented that it had been “a good show with a good line up of sheep in many of the classes”.

As his Champion Southdown, the judge selected an older ram, owned and exhibited by Jonathan Long. The Champion was awarded the Northumberland Perpetual Challenge Trophy (RASE).

The reserve Champion was a shearling ewe bred and shown by Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer, and awarded the Hazleton Perpetual Challenge Cup (RASE) and the Sheila Colman Trophy for the best shearling ewe.

The champion ram continued his success the following day when Interbreed judge Mr Charles Sercombe selected him as the champion of the Terminal Sire Breeds, before crowning him the Supreme Interbreed Champion.

Winning the best ram lamb class Cooper Perpetual Trophy for the best ram lamb was Johanna Miller from Redmarley, Gloucestershire. Ms Miller also took home the Miller Hallett Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best group of four sheep. The aged ewe class and the ewe lamb class were won by Mrs E Sargent.

The 2019 National Southdown Show will take place at the Royal Cheshire County Show.



President Mrs Jane Ing with Jonathan Long and the National Show Champion

## 2018 Findon Sheep Fair

The weather was dry and crowds poured into the Nepcote show ground with approximately 6500 people attending the fair. Introducing two new classes this year in the Southdown and Downland sections proved a big success. Splitting the ewe lamb class into lambs born before March 1<sup>st</sup> and lambs born after this date was very popular. Also introducing a ‘shearling untrimmed’ class was again well supported and this idea will be held again in 2019.

The winner of the Championship was Hannah Turner with her Southdown ewe. The judge was Lizzy Sargent.

We would like more Southdown farms to enter next year on the South Downs where the breed was first introduced.

*Graham Langford  
Findon Sheep Fair Committee*

## Old farmer's advice

**Your fences need to be horse high, pig tight and bull strong.  
Keep skunks and bankers and layers at a distance.  
Life is simpler when you plough around the stump.  
A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.  
Words that soak in to your ears are whispered, not yelled.  
Meanness doesn't just happen overnight.  
Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.  
Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.  
It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.  
You cannot unsay a cruel word.  
Every path has a few puddles.  
When you wallow with pigs expect to get dirty.  
The best sermons are lived, not preached.  
Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen.  
Don't judge folks by their relatives.  
Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.  
Live a good honourable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time around.  
Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't botherin' you none.  
Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance.  
If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.  
Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.  
The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every morning.  
Always drink upstream from the herd.  
Good judgement comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgement.  
Lettin' the cat out of the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.  
If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.  
Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.**

*Many thanks to Sarah Mitchell who kindly passed this on for the newsletter*

## Melton Mowbray Show & Sale

The second official Southdown Sheep Society sale took place at Melton Mowbray on Saturday September 8<sup>th</sup>, with the pre-sale show taking place the previous day.

Judge Stephen Humphrey from East Dean, West Sussex, selected a shearling ram as his show champion. This ram, de Pibrac 17/00231, bred by Nigel Barrington-Fuller from Essex and shown by Jim Cresswell, was sired by a Chaileybrook ram and out of a Goodwood ewe. In the sale the following day the champion was sold for 290gns to Mr J Gordon-Hall of Timberland, Lincoln.



*Amy Readhead-Higgins with the Reserve Champion, and Jim Cresswell with Nigel Barrington-Fuller's Champion.*

Reserve Champion in the show went to Amy Readhead-Higgins' home bred ewe lamb, Sutherland April, 18/00361. This ewe lamb, by a French sire and out of a Beckbred ewe, was later knocked down to M Dickens and family from Milton Keynes, for 300gns.

Top price of the day was paid for a 2016 born ewe, Sutherland Rosie 16/00263 from Amy Readhead-



*Judge Stephen Humphrey congratulates Nigel Barrington-Fuller.*

Higgins. This ewe, sired by a French ram and out of a home-bred dam was sold to R Cox of Stoney Stanton, Leicester, for 400gns. Not far behind this ewe was her stable-mate, another 2016 born Sutherland ewe, 16/00274, sired by the same French ram and out of a home-bred ewe. This ewe reached 300gns and headed home with her stable-mate to join the Port Hill flock of R Cox in Stoney Stanton.

Shearling ewes saw a brisk trade with quality animals selling well. Antony Graves' Brompton ewe 17/03930, sired by an Offham ram out of a home-bred ewe, was knocked down for 345gns to Peter and Ann-Mari Payne of South Mymms, Hertfordshire.

The first prize winner in the shearling ewe class in the pre-sale show sold for 340gns to Mrs Lorraine Clements for her Avenue Farm flock in Normanton-on-the-Wolds, Nottingham. From the Biscombe flock of Neil Stainthorpe, Biscombe 17/00241 was sired by an East Dean ram and out of a home-bred ewe.

Trade for the small number of ram lambs forward was consistent, with three ram lambs each finding new homes at 180gns apiece.

### **Averages**

*2 senior ewes 350gns; 21 shearling ewes 237gns; 8 ewe lambs 188gns; 1 senior ram 190gns; 3 shearling rams 293gns; 3 ram lambs 180gns.*

## The Findon Sheep Fair – and Jenny Dean

In 2010 my wife, Jenny, and I moved from Bedfordshire to Findon to be closer to our daughter and granddaughters, who live in Worthing. One of the attractions of Findon was Findon Sheep Fair, which we had first learned about from posters along the A24 when we were en route to Worthing. Sadly, we had never managed to visit the Sheep Fair and Jenny was particularly eager to discover what went on there, as she has always had a keen interest in anything to do with sheep and wool and is also a hand-spinner. However, her main interest is in natural dyeing, using traditional plant dyes and methods, and she grows or gathers plants, from which she makes a glorious range of colours to dye the wool she spins. She has also written several books on the practice and history of natural dyeing, on which she is an acknowledged expert. One of her books, *Wild Colour*, has become a classic and is highly regarded around the world as a definitive work on the subject of natural dyes; it was first published in 1999, with a revised edition in 2010 and is about to be re-printed again. Another of Jenny's books, *A Heritage of Colour* published in 2014, was based largely on plants growing in and around Findon and the inspiration for this book came from the realisation that the Iron Age dwellers at the hill fort of Cissbury Ring may have used similar plants to dye the textiles they produced. Inevitably, mention of an interest in sheep led Jenny to Graham Langford and the Nephote Flock of Southdown sheep and she has spun yarn and woven or knitted many garments using fleece from this flock. In September Jenny will, as usual, be at her pitch in a gazebo near the top end of Nephote Green, where she will be welcoming those who would like to see what can be created using Southdown and other wool and plants which grow in or near Findon.

*Roger Dean*



## An amazing first year for new members



*Nicky Jesse and Phil Tucker enjoying their amazing first year.*

Phil Tucker, from Hordle, near Lymington, Hampshire, joined the Southdown Sheep Society in summer 2017 and, encouraged and assisted by his sister Nicky Jesse, decided to take some of his Efford Park flock along to 'local' shows.

Nicky says: "It has been a wonderful first year for Phil and his sheep".

In the course of the 2018 show season Phil has taken the following titles: Supreme Interbreed at the New Forest Show and the Dorset County Show; Supreme Interbreed Group of Three at the Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show, and Reserve Interbreed at the Newbury and Berkshire County Show.

*Editor: What an amazing first year – we shall look out for further successes next year!*



*Lindsay Dane is this year's winner of the President's and Chairman's Trophy for services to the Southdown Sheep Society. Pictured here is Council member Stephen Humphrey presenting the award, the Hugh & Mary Clarke Trophy, to Lindsay.*

## 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: **Nicole Peart**  
01209 861356  
ellieandbaileypeart@aol.co.uk  
**Adam & Caroline Brown**  
01398 361245  
adamandcaroline@googlemail.com

### West Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: **Miriam Parker**  
01743 884483  
miriam@livestockwise.co.uk

### Wales Group

Co-ordinators: **Gareth Lloyd Hughes**  
01970 880804  
garethlloydhughes@btinternet.com  
**Dylan Williams**  
07771 542578  
Del2880@yahoo.co.uk

### East Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: **Sophie Arlott**  
07899 833157  
sophie.arlott@btinternet.com

### East Anglia Group

Co-ordinator: **Lindsay Dane**  
01353 721216  
lindsay.dane@icloud.com

### Beds, Bucks, Herts Group

Co-ordinator: **Lesley Mead**  
01525 270135  
lesleyhollybar@btinternet.com

### South of England Group

Co-ordinator: **Paul Humphrey**  
01243 811518  
pmhumphrey62@gmail.com

## AROUND THE REGIONS UPCOMING EVENTS SOUTH WEST GROUP

**November /December: visit to BWMB depot  
in South Molton to view grading  
and packaging plant**

**November/December: tannery  
visit in Tavistock**

**Early February 2019: "Christmas" Lunch**

**Contact Nicole Peart or  
Adam & Caroline Brown  
for further information.**

## Show and Sale preparation

There are a number of phrases which can be related to sales preparation, chief among them being ‘failing to prepare is preparing to fail’ likewise it has often been said that 90% of the genetics go in the mouth.

But I think my favourite and the most salient is one I heard from the late John Randall when he was asked when he started preparing sheep for shows and sales; ‘About five months before they’re born!’ was his response.

And never a truer word has been said about sheep than that. The ultimate key to having sheep ready for a sale is having the right sheep in the first place and that lies in having the right breeding stock and matching them correctly to maximise the quality of their offspring.

Of course, there is a lot that goes on between conception and sale day which can influence the quality of the stock presented for sale, but everything is underpinned by the genetics behind your sheep and the potential contained within them.

No doubt you will have heard a great many stories regarding preparing sheep for sales which suggest there are a number of ‘dark arts’ at work to ensure sheep are looking their best on sale day. Tales abound of the use of poultry feeds, high efficacy antibiotics, ‘angel dust’ and countless other ‘tricks of the trade’.

However, none of these can ever be a substitute for good, sound management and careful stock selection. And before dealing with pre-sale preparation it is important to consider whether stock are suitable for entry to a sale in the first place. This means undertaking a physical check to ensure the functional aspects of the sheep, teeth, toes and testicles (teats in the case of females) are all as they should be.

Additionally, all Society sales have upset prices. You should take an objective view of whether you believe your stock are worth at least the upset price and in all honesty a good deal more, before completing a sales entry form. If in any doubt take advice from a breeder you trust.

Below is a broad outline of how we undertake sale preparation within our flock, there are no great secrets to be told, it all comes down to an understanding of the influence of genetics and sound management.

When it comes to lambs for sale over the summer months these will, if they are to reach their full potential, need to be creep fed from about 3-4 weeks old, or grazed on high quality pastures, preferably containing species such as chicory or plantain.

We tend to wean lambs at 12-14 weeks old and split them in to sex groups at that stage. Ram lambs will then graze quality pasture alongside shearling rams and continue to be offered supplementary feed twice a day.

Those lambs not identified as potential sale lambs are split off from this group in mid-June and run on a lower input

basis, while those entered for sales remain with the shearling ram group.

About three weeks pre-sale lambs entered for sale have their bellies and backs clipped out and are washed. They then run at grass again or on an alternative forage crop (rape and turnips or similar) until a week before sale when they receive their first trim. Again, following this they go back to grass.

Two days before sale they will be brought in and placed in a straw yard and be trimmed a second time. They then remain in until the sale, receiving picked or cut fresh forage in the meantime alongside their twice daily feeds.

The amount fed will vary depending on the forage being offered and according to sheep condition and growth. Generally, lambs will receive something in the region of 1kg/day of supplementary feed, but this is often lower when high quality forage crops are available.

For shearlings the process is much the same. Our shearling rams spend the winter either grazing root crops or housed and fed a diet based on fodder beet with some supplementary concentrate too.

Shearling ewes are largely out-wintered and only offered supplementary feed in adverse weather conditions.

Shearling rams are then shorn in mid-February and housed until suitable weather conditions allow them to return to grass.

Once back at grass they are fed in the region of 1kg/head/day throughout spring and summer, with this rate reduced according to grass growth and alternative forage crop availability.

My preference is for these to graze a summer root crop of other alternative forage, such as a red clover/Lucerne ley or a ryegrass, clover and chicory ley, during the summer with lower rates of concentrate fed, accordingly.

Pre-sale preparation for these, in terms of washing and trimming is the same as lambs, with the aim being to present them in a fit, not fat, condition on sale day.

Perhaps the most important part of achieving this is applying a little and often approach to feeding. Moderate feeding throughout an animal’s lifetime allows it to express its potential and build the frame required.

This cannot be done by attempting to feed high levels of feed for a short time in the final few weeks pre-sale.

This article is intended to serve as a rough guide. It is important to remember there are no golden rules to preparing sheep for sale and, likewise, there are no shortcuts. Everyone will have their own preferred methods and feeds, but the fundamental principles remain the same.

Jonathan Long



# SHOW CHAMPIONS ROUND UP

*Well Done and Congratulations to those breeders whose flocks have featured in the Interbreed line-ups around the country during the 2018 show season:*

**2018 National Southdown Show at Royal Three Counties Show – Interbreed Champion: J & L Long**

**Chulmleigh Show**

Interbreed Group of Three, Interbreed Male Champion,  
Reserve Interbreed  
Champion A & C Brown

**Clynderwen Show**

Interbreed Champion, Interbreed Pairs Champion  
and Interbreed Group of Three  
Lynda Richard Davies

**Devon County Show**

Supreme Ram Lamb  
Mrs E Sargent

**Dorset County Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Phil Tucker

**Dunster Show**

Interbreed Reserve Male  
and Interbreed Group of Three  
A & C Brown

**Edenbridge & Oxted Show**

Interbreed Pairs  
Mrs E Sargent

**Essex Young Farmers Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Amy Readhead-Higgins

**Shaftesbury Show**

Supreme Interbreed Group of Three  
Phil Tucker

**Heathfield Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

**Honiton Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Randall & Mitchell

**Hertfordshire County Show**

Reserve Interbreed Champion  
Basil Cooper

**Kent Show**

Reserve Interbreed Champion  
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

**Llandeilo Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Lynda Richard Davies

**Mid Devon**

Reserve Interbreed Pairs  
A & C Brown

**New Forest Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Phil Tucker

**Newbury & Berkshire County Show**

Reserve Interbreed Champion  
Phil Tucker

**North Devon Show**

Interbreed Male Champion  
A & C Brown

**Royal Norfolk Show**

Reserve Interbreed Champion  
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

**Royal Welsh Spring Festival**

Interbreed Group of Three  
Lynda Richard Davies

**Royal Welsh Show**

Supreme Ewe Lamb  
Mrs E Sargent

**Rutland County Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Amy Readhead-Higgins

**South of England Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

**Suffolk Show**

Interbreed Group  
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

**Surrey County Show**

Interbreed Champion & Group  
Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer

**Tendring Hundred Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Amy Readhead-Higgins

**Tivyside Show**

Interbreed Champion  
Lynda Richard Davies

**Wayland Show** Interbreed Champion

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.*

## NATIONAL YOUNG SHOW STARS "TEAM SOUTHDOWN"

On the 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> August myself (Mollie), and my two team members Nick Cooper and Ellie Kempster, attended the National Young Show Stars competition. Kindly, the Southdown Sheep Society awarded us £150 sponsorship to take part in this event. I have owned and breed Southdowns for three years now underneath my prefix 'Walnut Tree' and along with us I took two of my home bred ewes.

I wanted to showcase the Southdown breed as having different breeds at home including Zwartbles and Llanwenogs, Southdowns for me are docile, they have dense wool, and they pass a well-covered carcass down to their offspring and are easy lambing.

The theme for this year was 'What is the future of farming?'



Obviously the Southdowns have a leg on each corner, are easy lambers, tups are good for ewe lambs and good grass converters, especially during this time as farms are struggling for grazing and hay prices going up due to the weather conditions 2018 has had.

We took part in different tasks and challenges, including stock judging, ring craft and a carcass quiz. The Southdown team managed to get the best points for stock judging, and in the carcass quiz and Mollie got the best points for her interview, while Nick and Ellie took part in ring craft.

Overall we came 3rd place in the untrimmed sheep section! We would recommend any young person to take part in this event! Again we would like to thank the Society for sponsoring us!

*Mollie Fosgate*

## Welcome New Council Member

At this year's AGM five places were up for election, and we welcomed back four members who returned to Council: Lindsay Dane, Patrick Goldsworthy, Tim Morris and Neil Stainthorpe, and especially welcomed Nick Page who joins Council for the first time.

Nick is well known to many Southdown members and breeders, having been shepherd at Goodwood Estate for over 30 years.



*Nick Page with his Champion Pair.*

The Goodwood Southdown Flock was re-established in 2002 and Nick has built up a pedigree flock of 97. Nick says: "Showing is my passion and I've achieved a varied success over the years. My aim is to promote the breed both for the pedigree and also commercially. Here at Goodwood we farm a commercial flock of 1000 breeding ewes, with 90% of the flock going to a Southdown sire.

The lambs are marketed through our wholesale business. We are an organic farm so there is an emphasis on finishing lambs from forage, this is where the Southdown does the job so well. We enter all the major winter fat stock shows, exhibiting both live lambs and carcasses. I consider this to be a huge shop window which enables us to promote the breed. It would be an honour and a privilege to represent the Goodwood estate on the Southdown Society Council."



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## ADRAN CYMRAEG WELSH GROUP

Annwyl, Aelod Cymdeithas Southdowns Cymraeg,

Mae ychydig o aelodau'r gymdeithas sy'n byw yng Nghymru wedi bod yn trafod ers dipyn am ddechrau grwp Cymraeg. Felly dyma ni, rydym yn mynd i roi cynnig arni.

Roeddwn am weld faint o ddiddordeb fyddai, gan ein bod yn teimlo gallwn gael llawer o hwyl trwy gael grwp Cymraeg. Dyma rhai syniadau o beth gallwn gwneud:

Cwrdd yn gymdeithasol, cynnal cyfarfodydd, crynhoi pwyntiau yn ystod y flwyddyn yn sioeau cymraeg gyda dosbarthiadau Southdown, parti Nadolig ac yn gyffredinol unrhywbeth gallwch feddwl am i wneud gyda defaid Southdown.

Fe fydd tal bach i ymuno fel aelod er mwyn helpu gyda costiau rhedeg y grwp. Nid oes aelodau o'r pwyllgor wedi eu ethol eto gan ein bod am weld faint o ddiddordeb bydd.

Os oes diddordeb gyda chi, unrhyw aelod o'ch teulu neu ffrindiau i ymuno a'r grwp, neu os oes unrhyw syniadau gennych ar gyfer y grwp gallwch cysylltu a fi trwy

ebost: lyndafree16@aol.com

Post: Lynda Richards- Davies, Preswylfa, Llanwrda,

Sir Gaerfyrddin. SA19 8AA,

Ffon: 07791596865

neu Dylan Williams ar 07771542578.

Unwaith bydd gennym syniad o'r swm sydd a diddordeb, gallwn cwrdd mewn lleoliad canolog.

Edrych ymalen i glywed wrthoch.

*Lynda Richards-Davies*

## Dear Welsh Southdown Society Members

A few of us Society members living in Wales have been talking for some time about starting a Welsh Southdown Group, well, here goes - we are going to give it a go.

We wanted to see how much interest we could get as we feel we could have a lot of fun by having a Welsh Group.

A few ideas of things to do have been flying around, for example:

Get together, meetings, points accumulators throughout the year in Welsh shows with Southdown classes, Christmas Party and generally anything you can think of to do with Southdown sheep.

There will be a small charge for becoming a member, this will be just to cover the running costs.

No committee members elected as yet, we are testing the waters first to see how much interest we get.

Please let me know if you or any of your family and friends are interested in becoming a member of the Welsh Southdown Group and have any ideas for the group; contact:

via email: lyndafree16@aol.com

by post: Lynda Richards-Davies, Preswylfa, Llanwrda, Carmarthenshire. SA19 8AA.

phone: 07791596865

or phone Dylan Williams on 07771542578

Once we have an idea of how many people we have with interest, we could arrange our first meeting in a central point.

Look forward to hearing from ewe.

*Lynda Richards-Davies*

## Size isn't everything

This little Southdown ewe's mother was scanned for twins in January 2013.

In March two very strong good sized lambs were born, followed by a minute third lamb weighing in at just under 1.5 kg looking very premature compared to her siblings.

She was tubed with colostrum and put in a hot box for the night.

The following morning she was vocal and requiring a 20ml feed of milk from a bottle, (that was all her tiny stomach could manage).



*Spider-Crab and her triplets.*

Our daughter Heidi persevered with her tiny feeds every 2 hours always returning her to her mother and siblings.

Her tiny hooves were small and soft and her legs were so very thin with very little muscle. She could not stand up or walk. Heidi made a sling and supported her tiny frail body and legs teaching her to walk for a few minutes every day until she was able to walk alone, albeit it sideways, like a crab. With her spindly legs and sideward gait she was nicknamed Spider-Crab. We managed to foster her onto another ewe who had had a single lamb and she reared and loved her as her own.

We have kept Spider-Crab in our flock and this little ewe has had 10 lambs of her own in four years. Twins in 2015, triplets in 2016, twins in 2017 and triplets again this year.

Of her total progeny, 2 rams have been successfully shown and sold and some of her daughters have been kept within our flock.

Spider-Crab has been a fine example of a classic hardy Southdown and will remain in our flock for the rest of her life.

*Duncan & Monica Crundwell*

## Worcester Premier Show and Sale

The Southdown Sheep Society Premier Sale took place at Worcester Market on 11<sup>th</sup> August with a top price of 920gns for the pre-sale champion, a shearling ram, from the East Dean flock of Messrs Humphrey, Chichester, West Sussex.

This son of Ridings Astronomer out of a home bred ewe was the championship pick of judge Roland Williams who gave him the male and overall championship and was later knocked down to Jessica Elnaugh, Drinkstone, Suffolk.

Next best in the shearling ram offering was



*Judge J Rowland Williams with breeder Paul Humphrey and the pre-sale Show Champion.*

Cambridgeshire-based Patrick Goldsworthy's Webb Ellis Mas, which sold for 600gns to S A and P Welton, Carmarthenshire. This one, a son of Ridings Daniel out of a home bred dam, was the highest ranked Southdown so far recorded with an EBV of 349.

Just on his heels at 560gns was another from the East Dean flock and half-brother to the champion. This one was knocked down to Howard Wood, Gwent.

Leading female trade was a 2015-born ewe from the East Sussex-based Wakeham-Dawson and Harmer team at 500gns. This ET-bred female is by the French ram Benoit and is out of a home bred female. She sold to Messrs Sparke, Buckinghamshire.

Two females then sold at 460gns, the first of which was the female and reserve overall champion, a shearling ewe from Lizzie Sargent's Offham flock, East Sussex. By a Ridings ram which was the 2016 National Show champion, this one is out of a Graywood female. She sold to K Wheeler, Herefordshire.

Next best was Carmarthenshire-based Edward Morgan selling a Chaileybrook-bred shearling ewe by Breton, a maternal brother to the 2018 National Show champion, Percheron. This one sold back to her breeders, the Long family, as a foundation female for Sophie Long's Littlebrook flock, Herefordshire.



*Mrs Sargent with the highest priced aged ewe.*

It was a Percheron daughter from Jonathan Long's Chaileybrook flock that topped the ewe lamb offering at 340gns. This one sold to Joshua Jack for his Dovecote flock, Milton Keynes.

Leading ram lamb trade at 360gns was a Ridings sired lamb from the West Sussex-based Goodwood Estate pen. This one is out of a Southern Cross ewe and sold to Jim Cresswell for his Diss, Norfolk-based Wattisfield flock.

**Averages: 9 senior ewes £200.08; 24 shearling ewes £286.34; 4 ewe lambs £262.50; 4 senior rams £158.81; 11 shearling rams £474.40; 9 ram lambs £257.25 (McCartneys).**

### East Dean Flock awarded The Cresswell Crook for 2018

A new trophy, The Cresswell Crook, has been introduced for the most improved Recorded Flock, and the East Dean flock were the worthy 2018 winners. Stephen and Paul Humphrey were presented with the crook by Society President Lesley Mead after the October Council meeting. The eagle-eyed amongst you will spot that the Crook has been backdated to 2013 with shields for previous winners. The crook itself was made by Jim Cresswell – hence its name – was bought at the 2015 Field Day auction and donated by Patrick Goldsworthy.





## YOUNG HANDLERS' PEN

### *A brilliant first year for young handlers*

Phoebe Oakes (4 years old) and her brother George (8 years) entered their first ever Young Handlers classes at local shows this year. Their parents, Lee and Kirsty Oakes from Swaffham, Norfolk, started their Southdown flock in 2013, but this is the first year that Phoebe and George have taken part in Young Handlers. They have had an excellent start: Phoebe came first in the junior young handlers at the Wayland Show with her Southdown ewe lamb Flower, and George came first at the Aylsham Show with his Southdown ewe lamb Fearn. George qualified and entered into the Young Shepherd of the year at Yorkshire in October!

Mum Kirsty adds: "Great success for our children and our Southdowns!"



*Proud mum Kirsty with Phoebe, having just won first prize in her Young Handlers class.*



*Older brother George makes it a double for the Oakes family by winning his class too.*

The Southdown Sheep Society tries to encourage our younger members and breeders. Please keep sending in to the office pictures and details of your successes and stories, we will try and print as many as we have space for.

#### **Southdown Sheep Society**

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