

Southdown News

Newsletter of The Southdown Sheep Society

Issue 21

Spring 2016

HAPPY 125TH ANNIVERSARY

A weekend of Anniversary celebrations for all members and friends

Saturday August 6th:
9.30am – National Show to commence

~
4.00pm – Southdown Sheep Society Annual

~
General Meeting
7.00pm for 7.30pm –
Anniversary Dinner Dance in
the Cedar Suite,
Goodwood Hotel

1891



2016

Friday August 5th:
7.00pm - Hog roast supper beside
the sheep marquee

Sunday August 7th:
10.00am – Service of
Thanksgiving to be held in Tin
Tabernacle Church, Weald &
Downland Museum
~
11.00am – morning coffee
in Building Crafts Gallery,
Weald & Downland Museum,
and a display of shepherding
through the ages
~
1.00-2.00pm – opportunity to
view the Goodwood Flock

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE REGIONS

The council and secretary look forward to seeing a great many Society members at the Anniversary weekend celebrations, but there are many other opportunities to join in the celebrations up and down the country. Each regional group has a designated "local" Anniversary Show this year and a special commemorative rosette will be presented to each exhibitor. One of the Southdown officers will be in attendance at each of these "local" Anniversary Shows. Even if you are not competing, why not come along to catch up with Southdown owners, breeders and exhibitors.

Northern Ireland – Balmoral Show – May 11-13th

East Midlands – Nottinghamshire Show – May 14-15th

Wales – Royal Welsh Spring Festival – May 21-22nd

South of England – South of England Show – June 9-11th

South West - Royal Cornwall Show – June 9-11th

West Midlands – Cheshire Show – June 21-22nd

East Anglia – Royal Norfolk Show – June 29-30th

Beds, Bucks, Herts – Bucks County Show – Sept 1st

South West Southdown Sheep Group

Twelve members and friends of the SWSSG joined together for lunch at The King's Arms Inn, Tedburn St Mary on 7th February 2016.

Adam Brown explained why the flock competition was unable to be held in 2015. This year the competition may be arranged via Gail Sprake, the Secretary of the Society.

There was also no stock judging event in 2015 but it is hoped to hold a competition, together with a barbecue on Sunday 21st August 2016. Alan Draper has agreed to judge it.

A raffle was held which raised £29. It was suggested the SWSSG might like to sponsor a class at the 125th Annual meeting which is to be held at Goodwood. A prize of £50 plus a bottle of champagne for the fleece competition would be offered.



Gillian Herbert of the Hareley Flock (No. 871) offers her comments in response to the article from The Sketch in the Autumn 2015 Southdown News. Gillian says that she found the article .." very interesting, not least because of the breed description which is considerably altered from most of the present Southdowns, including wool only down to the hocks and none around the eyes. We've always used British genetics and maintained the three distinct bloodlines.

Our flock began in 2004 with the purchase of the Hawridge flock from Simon Cutter. He'd bought them from a retiring farmer the previous year but a change in his farming policy enabled us to buy ewes, followers and the stock ram. We soon realized we had three slightly different looking lines of Southdown and over the years careful record-keeping has shown us the differences extend beyond the superficial. We call them, with a remarkable lack of originality, Types A, B and C.

Type A's lambs emerge with very woolly eyebrows and legs. They lamb on their own, are excellent mothers and generally produce twins, with a mix of roughly half ewe and half ram lambs over their lifetime.

Type B's lambs are slightly less woolly and the nose and legs are a darker mouse colour. If there's a first-time Mama that takes a day or so to settle down with her lambs it's likely to be a Type B, but they produce one or two more crops of lambs than a Type A over the course of their lifetime, again split roughly between the sexes.

Type C's are my favourite, and most like the photograph and description of the Southdowns in The Sketch article. A longer legged sheep, with less wool on the face and legs, and lighter colouring too. The ewes are particularly docile, lamb and mother up exceptionally well, almost always have twin ewe lambs *but*, once they get to around six or seven years old, will take the tup but not hold to service. I had a particular favourite that was tupped but scanned empty three years running, despite being in excellent health all her life and not carrying too much condition. These also tend to have striped hoof walls, which we find to be thicker and much less inclined to succumb to shelly hoof, a problem on our heavy clay soil.

On the one occasion we entered the Flock Competition the lack of uniformity in the Hareley flock was commented on by the judge. We've always regarded this as an advantage. Each type breeds true, whatever tup is used, so we have the option to retain breeding stock to help our aim for that year, whether longevity, replacement ewes or less work in the lambing shed.

*Gillian Herbert, Hareley Farm, Linley Green,
Herefordshire WR6 5RF*

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the Society's new members:

C & E Catchpole	Liskeard, Cornwall
Daniel & Michelle Bray	Petersfield, Hants
Nikki Carpenter	Ashorne, Warwick
Brian & Suzie Steer	Watlington, Oxon
Andrew & Joanna Hague	Axminster, Devon
Toby Batey	Penrith, Cumbria
Sam Brodie	Flore, Northants
T Sinden	Romeny Marsh, Kent
Louise Spong	Rustington, West Sussex
Mrs Lyn Palmer	Westerham, Kent
Veronica Aylward	Great Missenden, Bucks
Mr A & Mrs L Butler	Chesterfield, Derbyshire
Jack Bowles	Gainsborough, Lincs

Change of date and venue for the Early Premier Breeders Sale in the South East

The Early Premier Breeders Sale takes place on Friday July 29th at Ashford Market, Orbital Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0HB. Schedules and entry forms will be available from the auctioneers, Hobbs Parker, and the Southdown Sheep Society website in due course.

For more details contact:
Mark Cleverdon on 01233 502222
email: Mark.Cleverdon@hobbsparker.co.uk

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
garethlloydhughes@btinternet.com

East Midlands Group

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

East Anglia Group

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

Beds, Bucks, Herts Group

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

South of England Group

Co-ordinators: **Jessica Cross**
01730 827148
jessica@scotlandfarm.com
Paul Humphrey
01243 811518
nhfcamping@gmail.com

The National Gene Bank

Council members Tim Morris and Lindsay Dane are co-ordinating the work with Rare Breeds Survival Trust to identify and preserve some of the rarest Southdown bloodlines. If any members have rare and/or traditional bloodlines within their flocks, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Tim or Lindsay, or the Southdown Office.

For more information on the National Gene Bank go to www.rbst.org.uk

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.

2016 LAMB REGISTRATIONS

Registrations may be done on line using the Pedeweb system. Members need their flock number and individual 4 letter password in order to log on. Please contact the office if you need a reminder. 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 2016. The annual Flock Book goes to print in early January.

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 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-bred 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 2016 subscription (£35) was due from January 1st 2016. Standing Order instruction forms are available to download from the website or from the Office. Routine reminders are not sent out to individual members. 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.

If your email address changes, please remember to inform the office.

Pre Sale Inspections

The pre sale inspection 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

A Veterinarian's Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep,
Exhausted by those dog-gone sheep;

My only wish is that I might
Cause them not to lamb at night.

Back in to bed, then up again,
At two o'clock, and four AM....

They grunt and groan with noses high
And in between, a mournful sigh.

We stand there watching nature work,
Hoping there won't be a quirk:

A leg turned back, or even worse,
A lamb that's coming in reverse.

But once they've lambed we're glad to see
that their efforts didn't end in tragedy.

There's no emotion so sublime
As a ewe and lamb that's doing fine.

I'm often asked why I raise sheep,
With all the work and loss of sleep;

The gratification gained at three AM,
From the birth of another baby lamb –

How can you explain, or even show?
'Cause only a shepherd will ever know!

D L Salisbury D.V.M, USA

SOUTHDOWN PEOPLE - LINDSAY DANE – *President Elect*



It is a great honour to be elected as President-Elect, and particularly to succeed such an eminent breeder as Jim Cresswell. I will take over as President during the anniversary celebrations at Goodwood and will do my best to represent the Society during my year in office.

My wife Linda and I started the Great Fen Flock in 1994 with three ewes and a ram from the late Hugh Clark's Moulton Flock. Neither of us had a farming background, but we had done a year long evening class course on sheep keeping with the late Penri Jones at Milton College. That included several night shifts lambing the college's flock of Welsh Mules, which stood us in good stead when we got our own sheep. Penri had learnt over the years that the adult students on the evening class course were more likely than the teenage full-timers to stay all night and watch the sheep. We had been to shows looking at Southdowns and liked the look of the Moulton sheep.

Over the years we built up the flock to around two dozen ewes, but in 2014 we sold half the flock and have now settled on about a dozen breeding ewes. That suits our system which involves overwintering the ewes on our own land, and rotating them around a number of friends' paddocks and orchards for the rest of the year. We live in the Cambridgeshire fens, which has a very dry and windy climate, so can never rely on the grass growing all summer. Our flock live outside all the year round and are as a consequence very hardy. They only have a few days each year inside, immediately after their lambs are born.

We keep more rams than we need for our own use, as we have a number of flock owners who hire rams from us.

We do a little showing, usually at Suffolk and a few local shows, but are social rather than competitive participants. Over the years we have had some prize winners, but have only ever won one red rosette. We also regularly display our sheep for the Rare Breeds Survival Trust at local shows. This started when the Southdown was still a rare breed, but the RBST still maintain an interest in breeds such as the Southdown which have been successes and moved off their Watchlist. I am currently chairman of the East of England Support Group of the RBST.

My particular interest is in the traditional type of Southdown, with short legs and neck and tight fleece. We have therefore avoided bringing into the flock genetics from the recent French and New Zealand imports, preferring to use rams from breeders who have stayed loyal to traditional genetics. Our current senior ram is Spratton Percy who has a very traditional shape although not as large as many of the rams currently winning on the show circuit. Last year we added to the flock a Caer Owen shearling ram and a Holly Bar ram lamb.

Keeping sheep has provided a lot of interest and has brought us into contact with a lot of friendly, helpful people. It was not always easy to fit in with my full-time job at Cambridge University, but now that I have retired it is much easier particularly at lambing time.

The Burch Dare Perpetual Challenge Trophy

Throughout the year, points are accumulated by members by their participation in shows. Points are awarded too for the Flock Competition. The principles behind the allocation of points remain true to the wishes of the Burch Dare family as set out in 1934.

The 2015 results are as follows:

**Winner: Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer
(312 points)**

**Runner-up: Mrs Amy Readhead-Higgins
(223 points)**

**Third place: The Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd
(210 points)**



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

Southdown Sheep Society

Registered Office: Meens Farm, Capps Lane, All Saints, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0PD
Secretary: **Mrs Gail Sprake**

Office telephone: 01986 782251 mobile: 07885 777921
secretary@southdownsheepsociety.co.uk
www.southdownsheepsociety.co.uk

Find us – like us – and follow us – on facebook!

The Southdown Sheep Society can be found on Facebook -
<http://www.facebook.com/SouthdownSheepSociety>

