



Southdown News

Newsletter of The Southdown Sheep Society

Issue 19

Spring 2015

2016
125th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
SOUTHDOWN SHEEP SOCIETY

Saturday August 6th - Sunday August 7th 2016

A weekend of celebrations
at Goodwood, Chichester, West Sussex

Saturday - The National
Southdown Show
followed by the Annual
General Meeting

Saturday evening -
Anniversary Dinner
Dance in the Cedar
Suite, Goodwood Park

Tickets for the Anniversary
Dinner Dance (black tie/lounge
suit) will be available in the
Autumn. The cost is yet to be
confirmed but will be in the
region of £60 per head

Sunday morning - Service of
Thanksgiving in the local parish
church



NOTES FROM THE SOUTHDOWN OFFICE

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

2015 LAMB REGISTRATIONS

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

The current registration charges are:

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

Lamb registrations

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

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

Imports and Exports

Members are reminded that the Office should 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".

Annual Subscription

Many thanks to all those members whose subscriptions are already paid up to date. Just a reminder that the 2015 subscription (£35) was due from January 1st 2015. Standing Order instruction forms are available to download from the website or from the Office. Please ensure that when making a BACS payment, or setting up a Standing Order for subscription payment, that you include your name as a reference with the payment! Just occasionally it is impossible to trace the source of a payment!

"Fiver" Ads

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

Getting it right

Do we have your correct information? Please try and update the Office with any changes of address or contact details. If you

spot any errors or inaccuracies in the information included for you in this year's publications do let the Office know by the end of the year as the Flock Book goes to print in January, and the Breeders' Directory in March.

Pre Sale Inspections

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

Please note that the inspectors reserve the right to weigh any/all sheep as they wish. Breeders entering sheep for the sales are strongly advised to check the weights of their animals before sale day.

Minimum weights

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Shearling rams | 70kg |
| Ram lambs | 40kg |
| Shearling ewes | 50kg |
| Ewe lambs | 29kg |

Upset prices

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| Shearling rams | 175 guineas |
| Ram lambs | 125 guineas |
| Shearling ewes | 110 guineas |
| Ewe lambs | 95 guineas |

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

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

2015 Winter Fairs

South Eastern Prime Stock Winter Fair

Thursday November 19th
at Ardingly, Sussex
(for more information contact Mary Masters on 01273 517824)

English Winter Fair

November 21st - 22nd
at the Staffordshire County Showground
(for more information contact 01785 258060,
Email: enquiries@staffscountyshowground.co.uk)

The Royal Welsh Winter Fair

November 30th - December 1st
(for more information contact RWAS on
01982 554404/4403 Email: livestock@rwas.co.uk)

Ashford Cattle Show

November 30th - December 1st
(for more information contact Hobbs Parker on
01233 502222)

East of England Smithfield Festival

December 3rd - 4th
at the East of England Showground, Peterborough
(for more information contact The East of England
Agricultural Society on 01733 234451
email: kbuttriss@eastofengland.org.uk)

DATES FOR THE DIARY IN 2015

May 19th NSA Welsh Sheep 2015

at Glanmeheli and Drefor Farms, Kerry, near Newtown,
Powys, SY16 4LN
(Southdown Sheep Society contact Dylan Williams)

June 3rd NSA North Sheep 2015

at Millstone Moor Farm, Cockermouth, Cumbria,
CA13 0QA
(Southdown Sheep Society contact Neil Stainthorpe)

June 16th NSA Sheep South West 2015

at Higher Nichols Nymet, Nichols Nymet, North Tawton,
Devon, EX20 2BP
(Southdown Sheep Society contact Adam Brown)

July 6th NSA Northern Ireland 2015

at Ballymena Mart, Woodside Road, Ballymena, NI

July 25th The Early Premier Breeders Show & Sale at Maidstone Market

Closing date for entries July 1st Contact Lambert & Foster on
01892 832325 www.lambertandfoster.co.uk

Saturday August 22nd Southdown Sheep Society Field Day and Annual General Meeting

at Scotland Farm, Upland Lane, Hawkley, Hampshire, GU33
6NH by kind invitation of James & Jessica Cross

September 5th The National Southdown Premier Show & Sale at Worcester Market

Closing date for entries July 29th
Contact McCartneys on 01905 769770
worcester@mccartneys.co.uk

September 11th & 12th Traditional Native Breeds National Show and Sale at Melton Mowbray

Closing date for paper entries August 2nd
Closing date for on line entries August 9th
Contact Melton Mowbray Market on 01664 562971 www.meltonmowbraymarket.co.uk

September 17th The Dolphin Sheep Fair at Ardingly Showground

Contact Hailsham Market on 01323 844874
info@southeastmarts.co.uk

September 26th Native Breeds Sale at Welshpool Market

Closing date for entries August 19th
Contact Welshpool Livestock Sales on 01938 553438
welshpool@auctionmarts.com

November 30th closing date for Southdown lamb registrations in to office

December 14th closing date for Southdown lamb registrations on line

27th July, 2016 NSA Sheep Event at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern

2016 Southdown Sheep Society 125th Anniversary Celebrations, including National Southdown Show and Annual General Meeting

Friday August 5th - Sunday August 7th 2016
at The Goodwood Estate, Chichester, West Sussex.

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

OFF THE BOOKSHELF

"The Shepherd's Life"

by James Rebanks

James Rebanks is the Herdwick Shepherd, whose account of shepherding has a strong following on Twitter (@herdyshepherd1). "The Shepherd's Life" – a memoir and a story of the Lake District and its people that has recently spent several weeks at the top of the Sunday Times bestsellers list and was recently Radio 4's Book of the Week. James Rebanks' family has farmed in the same area for more than six hundred years.

The first son of a shepherd, who was the first son of a shepherd himself, he and his family have lived and worked in and around the Lake District for generations. Their way of life is ordered by the seasons and the work they demand, and has been for hundreds of years. A Viking would understand the work they do: sending the sheep to the fells in the summer and making the hay; the autumn fairs where the flocks are replenished; the gruelling toil of winter when the sheep must be kept alive, and the light-headedness that comes with spring, as the lambs are born and the sheep get ready to return to the fells.

These modern dispatches from an ancient landscape tell the story of a deep-rooted attachment to place, describing a way of life that is little noticed and yet has profoundly shaped this landscape. In evocative and lucid prose, James Rebanks takes us through a shepherd's year, offering a unique account of rural life and a fundamental connection with the land that most of us have lost. It is a story of working lives, the people around him, his childhood, his parents and grandparents, a people who exist and endure even as the world changes around them. Many stories are of people working desperately hard to leave a place. This is the story of someone trying desperately hard to stay.

This is a book worth reading, and hard to put down until the final page. A fascinating story of one man's life in the Lakeland Fells, there are stories that resonate with our own Downland shepherding experiences. A thoroughly good read! - Ed

Photo Caption Competition

Thank you to everyone who offered captions for the photograph of the ram by Heidi Crundwell (www.hrcimages.co.uk) and well done to Jo Schup from Shropshire who wins a Southdown polo shirt for her caption:

"Does my nose look big in this?"



HRCimages

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 2014 results are as follows:

Winners: Messrs Wakeham-Dawson & Harmer (369 points)

Runner-up: Mrs Amy Readhead-Higgins (231 points)

Third place: The Goodwood Estate Co. Ltd (192 points)



South Downs Show and Hampshire Wood Fair

August 15th & 16th

at QE Park near Petersfield in Hampshire

The South Downs Show is an event dedicated to bringing the reality of rural living on the Downs to life, whilst showcasing technology and behaviour change that will allow the landscape of England to remain fertile. This event brings the history of the Downs to the public eye and highlights the importance of the Downs explaining how this 'landscape' provides for our local communities—food, water, wood fuel, tourism, and more

The event attracts families with lots to see and do and the element of 'fun' designed to draw learning and interaction for young and old alike.

Show organiser Terena Plowright is aiming to bring as many native breeds of sheep to the show as possible, "we had a few shepherds attend last year and would like to build on this experience as it brought such joy and interest to the general public. I have a large area called Animal Valley where this section of the show will be set up. This is a large show drawing several thousand people and it has created an ideal opportunity to teach visitors about different aspects of rural life and the realities of the food chain. We can provide hurdles for your sheep and space for camping with them if you intend to stay for the two days (there is a traders' bar open in the evening)."

Terena concludes by saying "If you would like to attend the show so that the public can see your wonderful sheep, please email me for more information and a form".

Terena Plowright
Mobile 07918941398
www.southdownsshow.co.uk
TerenaPlowright@gmail.com
Also find us on Facebook and Twitter

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

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



The Southdown Flock Competition

The annual Flock Competition is open to everyone! There are 3 classes which accommodate all flock sizes, and a class especially for members who are novices. If you haven't ever taken part, maybe this is the year to consider doing so? Judging takes place late September/early October. The 2015 Judge is Mrs Alexandra Long, a very experienced sheep breeder and judge. Closing date for entries is September 1st.

Entry form and rules are available to download from the Southdown Sheep Society website, but if you would like a paper copy please phone the office and this will be sent to you.

An update from Council

following the Spring meeting of the Council of the Southdown Sheep Society that took place on April 28th

- At the closing date for nominations for the six available Council seats, six names had been received. Therefore at this year's AGM no election will be necessary. The six members who will be taking their places on Council from the AGM are: Sid Cook, Jessica Cross, Lindsay Dane, Patrick Goldsworthy, Tim Morris and Neil Stainthorpe.
- A judging workshop took place last December and a small number of potential new judges were invited to attend. Following discussion the following members were approved and have been invited to join the panel of Southdown judges: Adam Brown, Anthony Glaves, Gareth Lloyd Hughes, Nick Page, Steve Smith and J Roland Williams.
- A Communications Working Party has been set up to review all Society publications. This group will also undertake a review of the current website, after 5 years on-line the website will benefit from a refresh.
- The complete revaluation of all Southdown Sheep Society silverware is nearing completion. Nearly all trophies have now been inspected, documented, revalued and all engraving has been brought up to date.

Notable flocks head to new homes

2014 saw two notable flocks of Southdown sheep head to new homes.

The Ashmole Flock was founded by Sir Richard Cooper in 1995 with purchases from the Moulton Flock of Hugh T Clark MBE, and S M Mitchell, and continued since the death of Sir Richard Cooper by his daughter Miss Jane Cooper. The Ashmole Flock has been purchased by D, S & P Humphrey of East Dean, Chichester, West Sussex.

The Heathgate Flock was founded by Denis Jenkins in 1992 with the purchase of females from the Moulton Flock of Hugh T Clark MBE, and ram lambs from the RBST Show & Sale at Stoneleigh. The Heathgate Flock has been purchased by Chris & Laura Beck of Brook Hall Farm, Bramfield, Suffolk.

EBLEX WINNER REPORT

Buckland flock wins Most Improved Flock Award for the Southdown breed



Miriam holding a lamb

The Buckland flock, owned by Miriam Parker of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, has been recognised by EBLEX as the Most Improved Flock of Southdown sheep in England for 2015.

The award is presented by the EBLEX Better Returns Programme (BRP) to the recorded flock that has shown the greatest genetic gain for commercial characteristics over a 12-month period. There is a separate award for each of ten UK breeds.

Miriam Parker, and her partner Tim Green, started their Southdown flock in 1994 and at the time the breed was listed as “critical” on the Rare Breeds Survival Trust Watchlist. Starting small with only six ewes and a ram they wanted to support a breed where they felt they could make a difference. They both work full-time, Miriam is an internationally renowned expert on animal behaviour and Tim works as an agricultural technical director, therefore breeding sheep with easy care attributes was essential.

The Southdown as a breed suited their system, doing well on limited grazing of traditional sward. Being a hardy ewe, with a modest mature size she is easy to manage from maintenance through to lambing. Through pre-planning, they have developed a very easy, stress free system.

Promoting British breeding

Miriam has been careful to select essentially British breeding using performance recording as a tool to improve the genetics available, whilst maintaining the attributes of the breed.

Moving to their 18 acre small holding in 2000 they have gradually increased to 30 breeding ewes. Since 1994 they have seen the Southdown move from critical status to now, no longer being linked to the Rare Breeds Survival Trust Watchlist, as it enjoys renewed popularity whilst competing in the modern market.

“Southdown’s produce fantastic meat and wool, and consistently provide 1.5 lambs each year. The lambs are a nice size with fantastic vigour,” added Miriam.

“Customers find the rams ideal for use on ewe lambs or to produce lamb for the export market.”

Local demand encouraging the need for performance recording

Surplus lambs were sold successfully through her own box scheme lamb, using a local abattoir. Seeing the carcasses hung up the butcher, Mr Thomas of D & J Thomas & Sons, commented on their quality and since then has sold Southdown sired lamb through his shop. He actively promotes the use of Miriam’s Southdown rams as a terminal sire for other local commercial flocks.

“It is a win-win scenario, I clear my surplus lambs, producers are happy as lambs grow well off very little input, and they have a guaranteed outlet through the butcher’s shop,” said Miriam.

Miriam started performance recording the flock in 2011, thus providing rams ranked by index with information on specific breeding traits. Miriam promotes a blend of growth and maternal traits, and uses the figures to influence her breeding strategy. She finds it a useful tool to identify good traits within certain lines of sheep.

The Buckland flock is synchronised to lamb in January, during this time Miriam can provide maximum supervision with minimum interference. Body condition scoring is vital to ensure the correct level of nutrition in the ewes. With her scientific background, Miriam is a keen recorder and analyses results thoroughly to modify management accordingly.

“Ultrasound backfat scanning is useful as it hides nothing,” said Miriam.

“It helps to take the age factor out of the equation when comparing lambs and can identify those who are performing particularly well or falling behind.”

Selecting breeding stock as replacements or rams for breeding

There is a strict culling policy and female replacements are selected from the top third. Miriam pays attention to the Southdown breed type, index (with attention to the maternal traits), and the breeding line history on both sire and dam. Generally the flock promotes longevity and this is clear within particular breeding lines.

A select few ram lambs are kept and run over the first winter, the pair watch how they develop.

“My philosophy is to focus on stock that I would use in my own flock, nothing substandard is sold for breeding,” Miriam added.

“Females are sold to customers ranging from starter flocks to pedigree breeders. Commercial producers have come to buy a ram and decided to invest in a few females as well or vice versa.

“I do not advertise and have no website but receive plenty of interest through word of mouth and reputation.”

In order to help their index improve they recently purchased some higher index rams from Patrick Goldsworthy to boost muscle depth whilst retaining the family line. Being a relatively small group of recorded breeders it is not always an option

to buy in a ram with figures behind him, she makes informed decisions ensuring a sound history behind each newcomer.

Sales direct from the farm gate

Miriam encourages farm sales for both pedigree and commercial customers.

"Through selling off the farm I am able to get a good grasp on what each customer wants and direct them toward the type of sheep that will achieve that goal for them. They appreciate seeing the family lines and reviewing the different types," said Miriam.

Miriam regularly attends local shows and several successes in the butchers lambs classes proves the commercial success of the breed, and sparks interest with potential new buyers.

"It is vitally important that breeders continue to show these animals to ensure maximum exposure of the Southdown, and continue to promote the breed.

Congratulations to Rob Beaumont of Andersey Farm (The Andersey Flock, No. 583) who was runner-up in the 2015 EBLEX Most Improved Flock Awards.

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: **Jane Ing**
01939 260100
cgf.ing121@btinternet.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
greatfen@btinternet.com

Beds, Bucks, Herts Group

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

South of England Group

Co-ordinators: **Anne Lambert**
01293 871392
anne@rusper.org

"Coming from the rare breed arena when we first started, people were not familiar with the Southdown and didn't recognise it," Miriam said.

"The Southdown now has a huge opportunity as a terminal sire. It is a great achievement of the breed to be able to boast Championships in shows such as the Royal Welsh! The recent success of the breed speaks volumes," she was delighted to say.

Commenting on the win, Signet Breeding Services Manager Sam Boon said: "Rates of genetic improvement in Signet recorded flocks are at an all-time high. The difference between the best high EBV breeding stock and average animals is increasing year on year.

"This means commercial producers have more to gain when investing in rams with superior genetics. Pedigree breeders can capitalise on these differences too and this is exactly what Miriam has done. The improvement in the genetic merit of her flock is clear and she is to be congratulated on her achievement."

NEWS FROM SOUTH WEST BREEDERS' GROUP



Nineteen members and friends of the South West Sheep Group met for lunch at the King's Arms, Tedburn St Mary on February 1st 2015

2015 Events

The NSA Sheep South-West event will be held at E.W. Quick & Sons, Higher Nichols Nymet, Nichols Nymet, North Tawton on Tuesday, 16 June 2015. The Group will have a stand there as usual, and members are invited to help man this stand and promote the Southdown breed to the public. Please contact Adam and Caroline if you wish to help.

A stock judging afternoon will be held in late August 2015 (Saturday, 29 August – Bank Holiday weekend). Three judges - Alan Draper, Chairman; Gail Sprake, Secretary of the Southdown Sheep Society; and Caroline Brown - will assess some groups of sheep at North Hele Farm. Members will then compete. A barbecue may be held in the evening, weather permitting, and Gail will talk on the work of the RBST, in which she is involved.

A regional flock competition will be held in early September 2015 which will be open to everyone, whatever size their flock. It will be divided into two categories: 'Pedigree' and 'Commercial using a Southdown ram'. Both number of stock and experience will be taken into account by the judge, David Powell, stewarded by Adam Brown. The results will be announced at a dinner in November 2015 (date still to be decided).

For more information contact Sarah, or Adam & Caroline

DELYTH BATCHELOR

New member Delyth Batchelor explains how she started with Southdown sheep, and where this has led.....

In 2013 I read an article in a magazine about a lady who decided to have some sheep. She had done her homework well and the breed of sheep she wanted had to be friendly, good natured, and what I see as extremely good looking (cute). As soon as I saw a photograph of her with them, that was it, I was on a mission for two pet Southdown lambs. I didn't have to look far to find Marion Hart who lives nearby who has been breeding Southdowns for approximately 30 years. So, I buy two twin ewe lambs and not having any daughters but two sons Edward and Harry I decided to name them Edwina and Harriet.

In May the following year I had them sheared, I spoke to the Wool Board who put me in touch with David Griffiths who has a mill in Yorkshire. I spoke to him on the phone and explained that I had just 2 pet sheep and would it be possible to wash the fleeces. He asked me where I lived and as it turns out he also lived in Banbury for a number of years and we shared the same friends, this was before he went to live in Yorkshire. Yes, he was delighted to take my fleeces.

In December of 2014 my fleeces came back to me in skeines of natural undyed wool. There was a natural aroma of lanolin and the texture felt similar to the fleece I was so impressed.

So, now I need a lady who can knit. I searched the website for the local Women's Institute, and various other sites and came across a lady who lived in Banbury. She had been knitting for over 30 years and is interested in all aspects of wool. Her name is Hazel and I e-mailed her and told her my story and asked if I could visit her and bring my wool to show her. I told her I lived in a village just outside Banbury called Mollington and she said wow! So do I. When I went to see her I showed her my wool and she said "we were meant to meet, this wool has brought us together". She said she had never felt wool this natural and her hands would be lovely and soft after knitting with it.

I explained to her that I am an interior designer and that I would like to start a collection of natural wool products from my own pet sheep to decorate the home. I would like to start with some cushions and a throw for the bed as I believe that the texture of a thick chunky aran knit would be a beautiful addition to the home, as well as a healthy product. Yes, yes she was delighted and so excited we were like a couple of children.

Hazel has cleverly made the pom poms to look like little balls of wool. We are both pleased with the result and hope that we can



bring this natural hand knit product into homes that appreciate the work that goes into something as beautiful as this.

So, now after moving to a new farm I have increased my flock by purchasing another two sets of twins from Marion Hart who now happens to be a nearby neighbour.

Rob Beaumont brought up one of his Southdown Rams (son of Phil) in October and we have just had our first lamb who we have named 'Shaun.'

This means that this year I will be able to send a lot more fleeces to Griffiths Mill and get my little production of beautiful handknitted wool accessories to the market. More to follow.....

Delyth Ann Batchelor Interior Designer - DB design Interiors
The Grange, Mollington, Banbury, Oxon OX17 1AP



GRIFFITHS MILL

Griffiths Mill is located just off the A50 midway between the M6 and the M1 and easily accessible from all areas of the UK.

David Griffiths says “We are a family business with our own pedigree Angora goats, Lincoln Longwool, Boreray, Wensleydale, Shropshire, Shetland, Blue Faced Leicester, Hebridean, Merino x Wensleydale and Shetland x Gotland Gotland and Est a Laine Merino sheep.

We specialise in processing small batches of fleece/fibre from as little as a single fleece and we can guarantee that you will get your own fleece back.

We offer a range of services from scouring and carding to full woollen spinning.

We process sheep fleece, mohair (Angora goat), Angora fibre (rabbit) and Alpaca. We also sell a range of processed fibre and fleece either as batts, rovings or spun yarn (subject to availability).”

www.griffithsfarming.com

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- Gotland and Est a Laine Merino sheep.

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- from as little as a single fleece and we can guarantee that
- you will get your own fleece back.

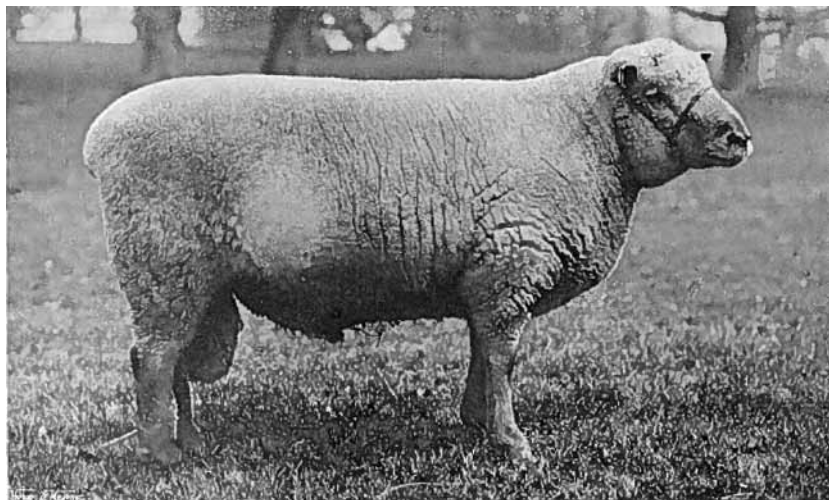
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www.griffithsfarming.com

LIVESTOCK AT GOODWOOD

The following extract was taken from an article entitled "Livestock at Goodwood", from the magazine *Country Life*, dated June 2nd, 1906.



Bournemouth Champion

It was an exceptionally pleasant experience to go down to Goodwood, not in the race week, when the bright colours have all been dimmed by the long-continued summer sun, but in the latter part of May, when the young fresh Spring flowers were still at their brightest. Over the fine pastures belonging to the estate of the Dukes of Richmond and Gordon, the daisies and buttercups shed a golden gleam. The hedgerows were gay with the blossoms of Spring, the white hemlock waved its tall blossoms, belated violets still blushed in the grass, even the primroses in this astonishing year had not lost their freshness, and the nodding cowslips seemed to have longer stems than usual....Needless to say, the air above this charming vegetation was melodious with the song of birds. From distant trees the cuckoos called, although it seemed to us that a fewer number than usual have visited England this year. Thrushes, blackbirds, finches and linnets were fluting merrily.....while every now and then one could hear the accents of the nightingale.

The Southdown sheep never was in greater favour than today, when the quality of the mutton it yields and the character of the wool are so widely appreciated by buyers of these commodities. It would certainly be found difficult to point to a flock of greater interest than that of which we give a few illustrations. Since

the estate of Goodwood was acquired by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon in 1720, it would appear that a flock of Southdowns has been kept on it, and it is believed to be one of the oldest-established flocks in existence. Mention was made of it as far back as 1788, while the laudatory terms used by Arthur Young in 1793 are very well known. Probably it is one of the largest flocks as well, as it consists of over 1000 breeding ewes. It has long been celebrated in the show-yard, as far back as 1836 and to the very cold and changeable weather that prevailed and 1837 winning the gold medal for the short-woolled sheep at the Smithfield shows. During quite recent years its representatives have taken very distinguished places at the exhibitions of the Royal Agricultural Society, and many championships have been placed to their credit.

It has always been a most carefully-managed flock, and, as far as possible, recruited from its own ranks; but about 300 of the best home-bred shearling ewes are added to the flock every year, and put to the best rams that can be procured. These usually have been obtained from famous breeders, including His Majesty the King, Mr Jonas Webb, Lord Walsingham, Mr J J Colman, and Mr Edwin Ellis. During the present year the flock has done fairly well. It is true that fatalities have been above the average owing to the very cold and changeable weather that prevailed during lambing time; but as there remains about one lamb to each ewe, it will be seen that the death-rate has not been as high as in some other flocks. No doubt this in part due to the fact that at Goodwood the Southdowns are in their native haunts – that is to say, on the ground best suited to them...

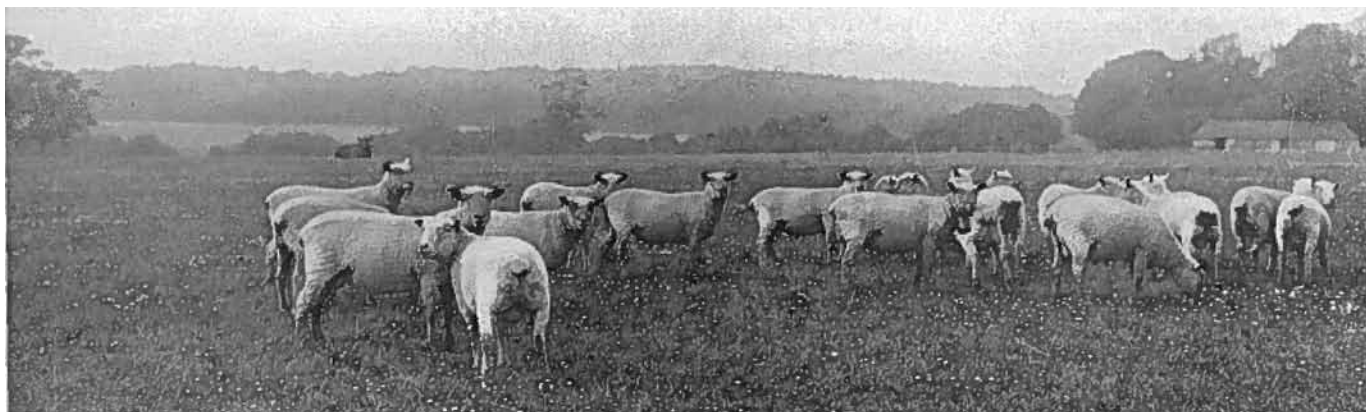
The Southdown sheep do remarkably well here, and as a rule both wool and mutton lose something of their quality when the sheep are taken to the richer inland pastures. Whether it be something in the quality of the grass or in the sea breezes impregnated with salt and ozone that wander over these hills, the Southdown, which is the best sheep for mutton in the whole world, is found in its highest perfection on these lovely Sussex hills. During the show season that is just commencing, it is believed that the Duke of Richmond's flock will hold its own.



Goodwood House

Sheep by no means constitute the whole of the livestock at Goodwood. There is also an excellent selection of cattle. The dairy, for example, is supplied by a herd of Jerseys that once was famous in the show-ring. More attractive butter we have never seen. The Duke of Richmond and Gordon is conservative

in dairy matters, and will not permit the introduction of any new-fangled separator. But perhaps the most remarkable element of the stock is the herd of Aberdeen Angus. There is also at Goodwood a very nice flock of shorthorn cattle.



On the home farm at Goodwood

Findon Sheep Fair 2015

Findon Sheep Fair and Village Festival will again this year be taking place on the traditional second Saturday of September (September 12th). The number of entries in the sheep judging has steadily increased in the last few years and for many small farms and shepherds Findon is very much on their calendars.

Organiser and Southdown member Graham Langford says "having reviewed last year's Sheep Fair we have decided to make a number of changes to this year's arrangements after listening to the farmers and due to the continued growth of the show. As you are probably aware we do have a separate section for Southdown and other Downland sheep and this year Anne Lambert will be judging for us."

Entry details and form can be found on the sheep section of the website: www.Findonsheepfair.co.uk



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

Sheep Paraphernalia

Do you have any unwanted sheep equipment or interesting paraphernalia?

Each year at the AGM and Field Day we usually organise a short auction in which kind members donate unwanted sheepy bits and pieces. All suitable items are gratefully received, and the proceeds from the auction help towards the Society's funds. All you need do is simply bring any items along with you on the day, or give the Office a call to make arrangements if you are unable to attend on the day.

2015 Southdown Sheep Society Field Day and Annual General Meeting

**Saturday August 22nd 2015
to be held at Scotland Farm,
Upland Lane, Hawkley, Hampshire,
GU33 6NH**

by kind permission of James and Jessica Cross

Apologies to Graham Ryves-Webb who was omitted from the round-up of Interbreed Champions in the Autumn newsletter.

Graham won Supreme Champion with a shearling ewe at the 2014 Henley-on-Thames Show, and won the championship too in the fine wool classes at the NSA Sheep South East event.

SHOWING SHEEP

There have been many publications over the years aimed at helping exhibitors prepare their sheep for shows. Books, articles, videos and DVDs all cover how best to improve one's chances in the show ring. However, this article was instigated by one of our long-standing and experienced Southdown judges, and is aimed rather at the handlers themselves, than their sheep.

A good steward makes a great difference: it is the steward who should ensure all exhibitors are present for the appropriate class and enter the ring in good time, but sheep and exhibitors should be at the ready. In a large class the steward may ask exhibitors to line up in catalogue order, thereby avoiding the rush for the perceived "best bit of ground" that might confer an advantage to a particular animal.

The sheep are the priority in the show ring and exhibitors aim to show them at their best. Exhibitors should concentrate on their sheep, making sure they stand correctly, and calmly, so that the judge is able to go about his business and work his way through the line-up handling every animal. A fidgety animal is more difficult to judge. Pay attention to your sheep, even if the judge has checked you out he will no doubt glance back, maybe often, to compare your animal with others as he works his way down the line, so be prepared.

The show ring is not the place to gossip or catch up with

friends, rather the exhibitor should be attentive to the judge, and the steward, at all times when in the ring.

Mobile phones have no place in the show ring and serve only to distract the exhibitor and the judge.

There is an old saying that the judge should aim to please two people: himself, and hopefully, the person to whom he awards the red rosette. At the end of the day, it is one judge's opinion, a snapshot of that animal on a particular day and they will please themselves.

Show ring etiquette extends to the presentation of all rosettes, and exhibitors should afford the judge due courtesy by waiting in the line-up until all rosettes have been awarded and the steward gives consent for animals to leave the ring. The first prize winner should exit first, followed by the remaining exhibitors. Conversations with chums around the ring as soon as the winner had been announced is frowned upon.

Judges are encouraged to take the microphone by the commentator once the judging is over, or maybe even between classes at major shows, and the judge usually tries to give a robust explanation as to his choice and preference of animals. It is hoped that exhibitors stay and listen to the comments offered. Similarly, judges usually head back down the sheep lines at the end of judging in order to meet informally with individual breeders. Then is the opportunity to talk at greater length about your animals. It is a missed opportunity for exhibitors if the judge finds himself in the sheep lines with not an exhibitor to be seen!

The Southdown Sheep Society is one of the oldest breed societies and the breed was influential in the formation of many other breeds. In the words of one experienced, long-standing judge: "Let's set an example to all the other breed societies".

Southdown National Sales

The pedigree breeders' sales are all listed in the newsletter, with contact details and closing dates. **Please note that this year entry forms and schedules are available to download from the Southdown Sheep Society website and from the individual auctioneers' websites.** Alternatively, please give the Southdown office a call and entry forms and schedules can be sent to you.

Sixth Sale of Traditional, Native and Rare Breeds of Cattle, Sheep, Goats and Pigs

Sunday 26th July 2015

Also sale of vintage / smallholder machinery and equipment and Farmers Market. Further details from Shrewsbury Auction Centre on

01743 462620

Entry forms available at halls.gb.com/auctions

Share your thoughts!

We are planning to publish a commemorative Year Book as part of the 125th Anniversary celebrations and would like to invite all members to contribute! This could be your thoughts on the breed, a little bit about your flock, why you chose the breed, amusing anecdotes or stories. It doesn't have to be long, but by putting everything together we will provide a snapshot of where the Southdown Sheep Society - sheep and breeders - is in 2016.

At the recent meeting of Southdown Council a copy of the Millennium Year Book was passed round. It was fascinating to look back on it even 15 years later, not least comparing the photos of certain Council members then and now. So the Anniversary Year Book could well become a collector's item!

Ed

Changes to Tagging & Movement Rules – a reminder

Two important changes came into force on 1st January 2015 affecting the tagging of slaughter lambs and the individual reporting of older (pre-2010/EID) animals.

Bin Your Old Slaughter Tags

From 1st January 2015 you must only use the single electronic (EID) tag for lambs intended for slaughter before 12 months. You must dispose of any non-EID slaughter tags. (Slaughter lambs tagged before Jan 2015 do not need to be re-tagged).

EID slaughter tags are yellow and have just the flock number printed on the outside and the individual number encoded onto the chip.

Continue to record slaughter lambs as a batch or mixed batch on ARAMS movement forms and in your Holding Register (that is, you only need to record the total number sheep being moved for each flock number; you do not need to include the animals' individual identity numbers).

Movement Reporting

From January 2015 you must include the individual tag numbers of all sheep and goats identified before 2010 on movement forms unless they are moving direct to slaughter (or direct to slaughter via a market).

This change is quite likely to affect flock owners as many of us have 'senior' sheep tagged prior 2010 according to a labyrinthine variety of old tagging rules.

Some of these will not have been individually identified. If you need to move sheep that are not individually identified the advice is to tag them with a full EID set.

In essence this means that almost all sheep moved will have to have an EID tag of some sort with the exception of sheep that were tagged with an individual (non electronic) number prior to 2010.

Full details of the requirements for identification and movement of sheep at:

Guidance for keepers of sheep, goats and pigs on the gov.uk website.

For a handy summary of all sheep and cattle tagging, recording and reporting requirements for 2015 please follow the link from the Southdown Sheep Society website to the Shearwell Data document.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to the Society's new members:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Messrs S D White | Northumberland |
| George Atkinson | Petersfield, Hampshire |
| Delyth Batchelor | Oxon |
| The Price Family | Herefordshire |
| Rosemary Aylett | Dorset |
| Victoria Chamberlin | Hertfordshire |
| Mrs Claudia Camilleri-Goldup | Kent |
| Margot Simpson | North Yorkshire |
| Jules Arrowsmith | Conwy |
| Mrs Naomi Thomas | Hampshire |
| Aeron Gwynne | Ceredigion |
| Ray Edwards | North Devon |
| Mr Mark Day | Northumberland |
| Celeste & Florence McKeague | Ayrshire |
| Lorna Wainwright | Cheshire |
| Dyer & Hitch | Kent |
| K, O & C Ring-Holmes | Cornwall |
| Mrs Jayne Jones | Shropshire |
| Alan Lappin | Northern Ireland |
| Simon Hornby | East Yorkshire |
| Mr R & Mrs H Latham | Norfolk |
| Miss R Ballard | Gwynedd |
| Mr Sam Bullingham | Devon |
| Jo Martin | Leics |
| Molly Minshull | Warwickshire |
| Sam Crawford & Jackie Bone | Somerset |
| Christine Ecclestone | Manchester |
| Ann Baden & Clive Acres | Surrey |
| Angie James | Norfolk |
| Jennie Spanton | Essex |
| Alison Gough | Yorkshire |
| Mrs Bev Carnall | Staffs |
| Mrs Anna Riby | East Riding of Yorks |
| SJ & CA Woodman | Cumbria |
| KJ Bell & Son | Norfolk |



The 2015 Scottish Smallholder & Grower Festival is open for entries, with schedules and entry forms for all shows now available from the website.

With shows for cattle, goats, pigs, poultry and waterfowl, and garden, craft and food there really is an opportunity for anyone to exhibit at the 2015 Festival.

For more information contact the website www.ssgf.uk

SOUTHDOWN PEOPLE

President Elect Jim Creswell

Jim Creswell is President Elect of the Southdown Sheep Society. Jim's shepherding career started with Southdown sheep when he headed down to Sussex with his suitcase, bicycle and his dog. That was in the 1960s, and Jim's life has been involved with sheep ever since. Over the years Jim has established notable flocks of Suffolks, Hampshire Downs and Southdowns. In addition to this, his sheep career has seen involvement with experimental stations, pioneering the first lamb milk replacement trials, and the development of a hybrid breed of sheep. Jim is a long-standing committee member of the Hampshire Down Sheep Breeders' Association and a past President and Chairman of that Society. He has been Chairman of the Southdown Showing and Judging Subcommittee since it was set up in 2007. He stands down from this role in the Autumn. Jim's sheep flocks these days include Hampshire Downs, Southdowns and Texels.

"First of all I must say how proud I am to be asked to be your President for 2015-2016.

When I look back on my shepherding career starting off at the Earham Estate in West Sussex in my teens little did I think that someday I would become President of the Society.

In my lifetime I have seen some ups and downs in the breed, at one time down to 50 or 60 flocks. I can remember in the 1960's going to the Suffolk show in the any other breed classes because we were the only Southdowns there, I was with the Barton flock at that time. We exhibited a pen of 3 shearling ewes, a ram lamb and a pen of 3 ewe lambs, one of these ewe lambs was selected for slaughter and the carcass was exhibited the following day. Having won the pen of 3 shearling ewes class, the ram lamb class and the pen of ewe lambs class we also won the champ carcass - when you think these were only our 3rd show team! The best were going to the Royal Show and other shows with breed classes.



Today the breed has over 300 members and to think we were in the rare breeds for several years, I think in a way this has helped our breed become more popular at that time. Now it is a completely different ball game, at the Suffolk Show we now have our own breed classes and these classes are the largest breed classes at the show. It just goes to show how popular the breed is.

The breed's commercial value is second to none, the taste cannot be beaten. When a Southdown ram is used on a commercial flock of ewes the ram passes on the easy fleshing quality to its progeny - we have to push the breed to the commercial farmer.

I intend to do my utmost to promote the breed during my year of office.

If I can help or advise breeders please don't hesitate to ask me."

Southdown Sheep Society

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