



Belted Galloway Cow and Calf belonging to Alison Bunning at Honiton Show



DEVON SUPPORT GROUP

Autumn 2008



Lincoln Longwool Ram "Dave" (Kidland Edmund) belonging to the Howe Family of South Molton at Mid Devon Show



A class of Manx Loaghtan sheep at a mud-laden Kingsbridge Show, September 2008 with their owners



Two bearded and hatted "helpers" at Mid Devon Show. (Sam Tallwin with the balloon, Mark Robinson with the cup of tea). They are supposed to be selling "Guess the Weight" tickets – but it was hot and they did deserve a break!

From left: Hillary Hanson, Mark Robinson, Richard Barker, Barbara Barker

RBST DEVON SUPPORT GROUP

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Copy (including advertisements) for the next issue to be sent to the Editor by 1st January 2009

Contributors are free to express their own views which are not necessarily those of the RBST.

The Devon Ark is produced quarterly by the Devon Support Group.
Membership: £6.00 per household per year, payable in January.

The RBST was founded in 1973 and is a registered charity formed to prevent further extinction of British breeds of farm livestock. At least 20 different breeds had been lost between 1900 and 1973, but since the Trust was formed, no other breed has become extinct. RBST has recently widened its remit to include other native and traditional British breeds which are few in number.

The Devon Support Group exists to further the work of the Trust.

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Tel: 024 7669 6551 Fax: 024 7669 6706. Email: enquiries@rbst.org.uk
Web site: www.rbst.org.uk

Advertisements

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Soil Association Licence Number: AB18918

Sarah or Jim Whitson on 01884 860938
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Hillary Hanson
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hillary@sheldon.uk.com
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(can be collected at the Christmas Dinner 11/12/08)

Breeding stock for Sale

Richard and I started with 10 Manx ewes and now have 200 pedigree Manx Loaghtan and Hebridean sheep. We supply pedigree starter flocks in the South West, or you can have non-pedigree ones if you want pets or to eat them at the end of a season. We also sell rugs, sheepskins, fleeces and wool and can arrange for you to get some of our lamb/hogget meat. We also supply beef and pedigree Angus and Devon Ruby Reds.

Ring Barbara at Fowlescombe on 01548 821000

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I keep several breeds of rare and traditional Poultry, Waterfowl and Turkeys

I usually have contacts for breeds not available at Bearscombe and am happy to give any help I can with traditional poultry

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Peter Hayford
Bearscombe Farm Totnes TQ9 7JY
01548 821212

For Sale

We have a few rare and very pretty White Dorking chickens for sale. Some were hatched at the beginning of June and some on 12th August. They are excellent dual purpose birds and look delightful.
Mark and Liffy Robinson: 01548 560342
Or email: liffy.east-robinson@virgin.net

Please send advertisements to the Editor with £2.00 per issue or £6.00 for 4 issues (cheques payable to RBST Devon Support Group). Note: the RBST takes no responsibility for goods or services in these columns and any agreement entered into as a result of such adverts is entirely at your own risk. The Committee reserves the right to refuse an advertisement.



"I do my own thing"

From the Chairman,
Peter Hayford

October 2008

Here we are once again at the end of the summer show season which has been very successful in terms of promoting the Trust and getting out to let the public see what we are about. As those of you who went to the shows will know, the weather has been awful, apart from Mid Devon, which was a real taste of summer. Totnes and Kingsbridge in particular excelled themselves with acres of mud. The sight of my lorry sitting on a raft of mud and straw with its front wheels off the ground was a bit daunting, but thanks to the splendid efforts of the show stewards, I was extracted with not much delay and no damage. People who came to the rain sodden shows seemed determined to enjoy themselves and generally did just that. We had a lot of interest in the displays and the Guessing the Weight competitions as usual proved a great talking point. My thanks go to everyone who helped over the summer either with stock for displays or by being there and lending a hand. I hope you all found it worthwhile.

Sadly the trips to Riverford Organic farm and the river Dart did not draw enthusiastic crowds but no doubt we shall continue to try and organise events that interest you the members, so if you have any bright ideas on where people might be interested to go, do let me or Pip Shail (01803 864089) know what you think and we can work on it. I think I can safely say that everybody who went enjoyed the successful trips we have had over years such as Paignton Zoo, Sharpham Vineyard and the canal at Tiverton, so here's looking forward to the next one.

KINGSBRIDGE SHOW - 6th September 2008

- I have never seen mud like it!
- The English are the most extraordinary people!

Whilst we were putting the stand together on the Friday afternoon it was raining so hard outside that the water had nowhere to go except under the marquee flaps and around our feet - so we were paddling around setting up tables, arranging stock etc! The organisers of the show had laid down acres of straw outside to try to soak up some of the water, but the movement of lorries, tractors, trailers and cars across this had the effect of pushing the straw into wedges underneath the vehicles so by the end of the day on Saturday the mud and straw was in ruts a foot deep. Nearly everyone had to be towed from the showground by tractor, and Peter, whose lorry was almost off the ground with all the straw that had backed up underneath the wheels, had to enlist the help of two brave young men who lay on their backs and clawed the straw out with their hands before he could be moved at all!

However, the public did come - not as many as usual, and in spite of some hefty downpours, the weather was reasonable. There were some classes that we could enter our native breeds for the first time this year - hence the picture on the cover - and the organisers are hoping to get a special "rare breeds" judge for them for next year. So, anyone local to Kingsbridge, get training your sheep and enter them - it all adds grist to the mill and the public are very interested in seeing some examples of the more unusual breeds of sheep.

Future Events



Skittles Evening: following the really enjoyable skittles evening last winter we are going to repeat it this year.

Come to the Ley Arms, Kenn, Exeter EX6 7UW, which is off the A38 at the bottom of Haldon and Telegraph Hills (not difficult to find), on Monday 3rd November at 6.30 if you would like to eat first.

Skittles to begin at 8.00pm

Please call Hillary Hanson on 01647 253903

or email: hillary@sheldon.uk.com by 27th October to let her know numbers for those who will be eating.



Christmas Dinner: as ever organised by Sam Tallwin. This year to be held at the Red Lion Inn, Broadclyst, Exeter, EX5 3EL (01392 461271) on Thursday 11th December at 7.30 for 8.00pm

Details of how to book and menu choices are enclosed, so let Sam know how many will be coming

DO COME – IT'S ALWAYS A LOVELY EVENING

Devon Support Group AGM: to be held at the Cowick Barton Inn, Cowick Barton Lane, Exeter, EX2 9HF
On Monday January 26th at 8.00pm

The business of the meeting doesn't take long and will be followed by a talk by Simon Lee - "A day in the life of a Dartmoor National Park Ranger"

The pub does food, and is easy to find, so come and eat first before the meeting if you can.

BRINKWORTH SHOW Saturday 30th August



This event, the brainchild of Ken Cooper, Tony Chambers and Pat Holloway (all Council members), was put together to maximise the facilities which already exist each year for the main Brinkworth Show which is held on the Sunday. The plan was to mount a special Rare Breeds display on the day before and get as many of the exhibitors to come on the extra day as was possible. The organisers were delighted with the response and, with the active support of RBST HQ, went ahead with the plan.

Several of us from Devon went to show our support. Peter took poultry, Susanna Repik a trio of her very smart Indian Game and the Barkers had some of their beautiful woollen goods to display. Mark and I helped to man the stand.

In some ways it was unfortunate that it was the most perfect day weather wise, after weeks of unrelenting rain. This did mean that a lot of people were, no doubt, tending to all the jobs they hadn't been able to do up till then, so the general attendance was not good. However, there was a lovely atmosphere about the place and we had a really happy day. Adam Henson was busy with a film crew, there were lots of examples of rare equines and sheep, a couple of sows with their enchanting litters of piglets but only one or two commercial organisations. (There was some scrummy ice cream on offer!)

Richard Clarke, Peter Titley and Sally Renshaw were all there and they took turns on the RBST stand where their top brief was to sell membership. Sally Renshaw had put together an attractive "welcome pack" for Junior members which looked very good. We had useful chats with Richard Clarke and Sally about the difficulties of getting new members and suggested ways in which HQ might be of help in that regard. I understand that there was a some disappointment that the visitornumbers were so small, but it was a good day and the organisers are hoping to repeat it next year.

From Liffy:

You may have noticed that the format of the Ark has changed somewhat – that is because Peter Bates, who has been Editor for some while has now gone on to spend “more time with his cattle, pigs and family!” So I have taken over his duties – he will be a hard act to follow and we do thank him for all his wonderful efforts on our behalf.

If you have anything to include in the newsletter, do, please, let me know – I would be delighted to hear from you. Letters, cartoons, articles, anything that you think might be of interest to the rest of the membership, all would be good.

I look forward to hearing from you.....hint, hint!

With my secretary's hat on:

I have sent off one or two emails in the last few months, just as reminders of things that are going on, but I have had a few messages bounced back at me. I have probably got the address slightly wrong or something like that. Would you be very kind and let me have your correct address so that I can amend things in my Address book. The people concerned are:

Valerie Beardsworth, Anna and Nicola Douglas, John and Audrey McInerney, Patricia Sloggett, John and Judy Southcombe, Pat Stanford, Caroline Westacott

Thank you.

If you haven't heard anything from me and you have an email address, could you, again, let me know and I will get things up to date. My address: liffy.east-robinson@virgin.net

Mid-Devon Show – Saturday 26 July 2008

Several months prior to the Show date we have to confirm our intention to provide an RBST exhibit; indicate our site requirements and provide details of the livestock that will appear on our stand. Liaison with members who are willing to provide animals are confirmed together with their entry ticket and vehicle pass requirements which are forwarded to the Show Office.

Preparation of the Tiverton Showground by a large team of volunteers begins some two weeks before the show date. We make our first visit to the RBST site on the Wednesday afternoon to check that the marquee has been erected. The following day we are informed that the tables and chairs will be delivered and, in order to ensure that they do not “disappear” we make a further visit to stake our claim! Friday afternoon is set aside to take delivery of the large and heavy hurdles needed for the cattle, after which we carry numerous hurdles from the other side of the showground to pen the sheep and goats – these are all then erected and put in situ. To ensure that we are kept fit we also contribute to helping with the erection of the many dozens of pens which are to be used to accommodate all the sheep that are entered into the competitive classes. Just as we are flagging – fairly late on the Friday evening – the first of the livestock arrives for our stand in the form of a Belted Galloway cow accompanied by a Dexter cow to be her overnight companion; food and water for them are provided.

We get back on the Showground before 8.00am the next morning ready to receive the various ewes with their lambs and goats with their kids from the generous members who loan their animals for our exhibit. After fairly long journeys Sam Tallowin and Nikki Morgan arrive, together with Liffy and Mark Robinson whose car is heavily laden with the official RBST merchandise and all the show paraphernalia that is required to enhance and bedeck the stand. Peter Hayford’s familiar horse lorry is next to arrive containing various rare breeds of poultry and their pens; work starts in earnest to set up the stand with the merchandise, display boards, breed information, publicity banners, flags, etc. All of this to be completed before the public starts to arrive at 9.00am. Just as we are completing our tasks the first of the volunteer members arrive to take on their various duties and responsibilities throughout the day, which involve selling merchandise, supervising the well-being of the livestock, answering questions and providing information to the

public, selling tickets for the “Guess the Weight” competition..... At 6.00pm the whole procedure is reversed, to leave a clean and tidy site before joining the queues exiting the showground.

It is worth noting that Mid-Devon Show this year was blessed by one of the hottest days of the year, which resulted in massive visitor numbers, many of whom showed interest in our stand. The animals are always a big crowd attraction, particularly with the children.

Tasks do not just end on Saturday evening – subsequent stock taking of merchandise is required; monies have to be checked, thank you letters written to the owners of the livestock.....more etc, etc, etc!

Why do we do it? *‘Cos it is important to publicise our rare breeds.*

There is a strong sense of camaraderie amongst the team, but we could do with more help to spread the load, and we are always seeking more volunteers to support the exhibit during the day; equally, we welcome support from members for the provision of varied livestock to appear on the Group’s exhibits during the show season.

If you feel able to help in any way whatsoever, please contact Liffy on 01548 560342 and/or liffy.east-robinson@virgin.net.

Norma and John Sanders.

Honiton Show – Wednesday 7 August 2008

We left home in torrential rain only to arrive at Honiton in “dry but damp” mode. Much the same team who put the Mid-Devon exhibit were on site. The livestock included a Belted Galloway cow with her calf, a Fell Pony (who was used for the “Guess the Weight” competition) with her foal, together with various breeds of rare poultry.

As usual we relied on a small team of volunteers to ensure that things run smoothly, but, again, we could still do with some more support – please! The show is adjacent to the A30 near to Honiton and is very accessible from most parts of Devon.

Another success for DRBST – thanks to everyone who contributed. Maybe see **you** here next year?

Norma and John Sanders