



Highland Cattle Club of Wales Newsletter

Issue 57 – Autumn 2015



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Conservation grazing for the National Trust • Breeding Cow Assessment • Looks or genetics • Show reports & Results

CHAIR'S REPORT

It's been a busy year with lambing calving and all the normal winter routines followed by the show season. First Nefyn and last our local Llanbrynmair Show. Eirian my three year old daughter has been leading her calf in small shows and enjoying herself.

We've had some new comers to the Royal Welsh who appear to be looking forward to entering again next year.

It's a hard week for cattle and show persons but a lovely social week with a buffet meal on the Monday night and BBQs and get togethers throughout the week.

If that doesn't attract you some of the local shows are a lovely day out with prize money sometimes a lot more appealing than big shows.

The last major event was the Highland Cattle Society show and sale in October at Oban. A lovely weekend or week depending what you can fit in.

As it is a long drive from mid-Wales (7-8 hours) we decided to go for the week and took the caravan staying in a castle grounds, holiday park. Views of the loch, swimming pool for children, amazing and beautiful.

Some folds hold open visits over the weekend making visitors most welcome by allowing them to walk their ground and inspect the stock.

The AGM and Christmas Dinner is on the 28th November. I look forward to seeing as many of you as can make it.

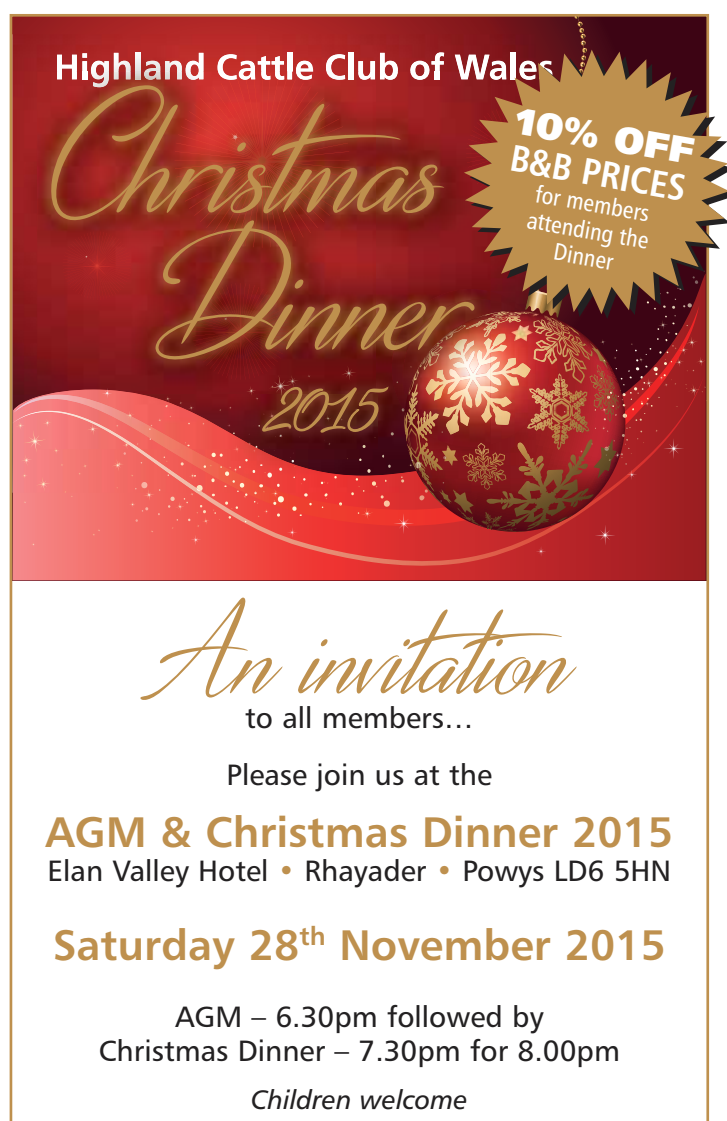
We're hoping to have an Open Day next year in June. Date and venue to be confirmed later. If anyone would like to host a fold visit please let me know. It doesn't need be lot of work. Everyone can be bring their own picnic and possibly visit more than one fold in the same area.

One last thing. If anyone has any suggestions for open days or fun days out for the Club forward them to myself at:

silverlinning944@gmail.com or call: 01650 521 284

Looking forward to next year.

Becky Rowlands (Chair)



Highland Cattle Club of Wales

Christmas Dinner 2015

10% OFF B&B PRICES
for members attending the Dinner

An invitation
to all members...

Please join us at the

AGM & Christmas Dinner 2015
Elan Valley Hotel • Rhayader • Powys LD6 5HN

Saturday 28th November 2015

AGM – 6.30pm followed by
Christmas Dinner – 7.30pm for 8.00pm

Children welcome

To Start

Soup of the day with crusty bread (v)
Pan fried garlic mushrooms with a lightly spiced crouton (v)
Prawn salad served with lemon mayonnaise
Savoury pate and toast
Fruit juice (v)

Main Courses

Traditional Christmas turkey served with home made stuffing
Roast Welsh Black beef and Yorkshire pudding
Poached salmon with warm lemon vinaigrette
Nut roast with vegetarian gravy (v/vegan)
Parsnip roulade with white wine and cream sauce (v)
Spinach and Ricotta crepes with Welsh Cheddar sauce (v)

Puddings

Traditional Christmas pudding with brandy sauce
Vanilla ice cream
Homemade coffee and Courvoisier ice cream
Fruit sorbet
Traditional sherry and raspberry trifle
Apple, calvados and cinnamon pie with creamy custard
Coffee or tea

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**£17.50 per person**  
(£12.50 for children under 12)

*Please see attached booking form*



# CONSERVATION GRAZING FOR THE NATIONAL TRUST

at Coed Berthllwyd, Dolmelynllyn Estate, Ganllwyd, Dolgellau

We are Geraint & Eleri Hughes and we have been keeping highlands for six years now. A few months ago, on March 18th we moved three animals to Dolmelynllyn NT estate to do some conservation grazing.

This had been a long time in the planning. Geraint works for the National Trust at Ysbyty estate and his colleagues at Dolmelynllyn had been enquiring about having some highlands for some time. We needed to get a CPH number for the site in our names. Although there is no longer the possibility of Sole Occupancy and we will have to TB test between sites.

They decided the number, and settled on three for the 50 acres to begin with. This May go up, it will depend on the job they do, and also on whether we have the number of animals spare to be there. The grazing contract will be renewed each year. These Highland Cattle are helping to graze brambles and second-growth trees to improve forest vegetation in Coed Berthllwyd, Ganllwyd.



*Geraint's colleague, Rhodri, NT Ranger at Dolmelynllyn with Wmffre and Hamish.*

At the moment we have an in calf heifer, (but not due to calf till very late in the year) Myfi and two yearling steers there, Wmffre & Hamish. The heifer has been used to conservation grazing for some years now, having lived up at Cors Bodgynnydd since we started grazing that, so is well able to guide and teach the youngsters on foraging as highlanders do best.

Conservation grazing, we find, is ideal for the steers – they go up there to roam and forage and grow slowly and naturally, making fantastic tasty beef. Also steers are the animals we won't need to move around as much – won't be showing them, or breeding from them etc. so really no need for moving them around, hence avoiding too many extra TB tests.

Dolmelynllyn won't be their home all year round as the NT feel they shouldn't be there over winter so they will be moved later in the year. Probably back to Cors Bodgynnydd for the

boys and home for Myfi, this will suit us with Myfi being due to calve very late in the year.

We have been grazing at Cors Bodgynnydd since the end of 2011. It is a nature reserve on the way up to Llyn Geirionydd, owned by the North Wales Wildlife Trust. Described as photogenic scrub munchers by Rob of NWWT, they are there to do a job on the reserve controlling the scrub and coarser grasses.



*Photograph taken January 2012, very soon after these three heifers started grazing at Cors Bodgynnydd.*

This also came about through Geraint's connections at work. The NWWT used Belted Galloway cattle at Cors Coch, another of their nature reserves and also wild ponies elsewhere.

We started up at Llyn Bod as we call it with three, again, this was decided by the trust, as an appropriate number to start on the 55 acre site, so they could assess their effectiveness. We kept three there for two years, and that was increased to a maximum of 5 by the trust by the third renewal. We did have 5 there at the end of last year, but then our first steer was ready for beef and was taken straight from grazing here to slaughter without extra feeding. There were lots of compliments about the beef. Later we brought Myfi home to the bull. As I said earlier, Myfi is now at Dolmelynllyn. There are three steers up at Llyn Bod at the moment.

The conservation grazing is great, the cattle are out on public footpaths, gaining recognition by the public for being docile, and sweet as well as useful for conservation. It's great for us as we can leave them to it pretty much – although we visit regularly to check on them – more so in winter, as they may need supplementing at that time, within what is allowed.

**Eleri Hughes**

# BREEDING COW ASSESSMENT

Two years or so ago I came across an article in the Galloway Cattle Breeders' Journal. It outlined a breeding cow assessment scheme that the Galloway Society had introduced for their members. Each paid up breeder (member of the Society) could have a free assessment of an agreed number of breeding females by an independent inspector. It struck me that it would be a particularly useful tool for HCCW members especially new members and breeders. I mentioned it to several HCCW members and committee members and met with a mixed response.

Subsequently I was invited, along with other Highland Cattle Society Judges and Fieldsmen to attend a meeting just outside Oban to discuss the idea of introducing a bull assessment scheme for members. I had several reservations about the scheme and decided not to participate or become an inspector myself.

Then coincidentally in June this year Doug Rowbotham invited me along to observe his Welsh Black cows being inspected by an independent inspector as part of a scheme being introduced by the Welsh Black Society.

The inspections were carried out by Jim Barber who, it turned out later in conversation, had assessed cattle all over the world. He had started farming with British Friesians at the age of 12 and has been involved with cattle ever since.

Inspection and assessment of the animals is based on 10 of their attributes and each is marked out of 10.

Those attributes are:

- |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Head and character    | 6. Udder        |
| 2. Girth and forequarter | 7. Teats        |
| 3. Body capacity         | 8. Legs         |
| 4. Hind quarter          | 9. Feet         |
| 5. Body balance          | 10. Temperament |

The total points for each animal indicate a breeding value:

70+ is average    80+ is good    90+ is excellent

As a result of Doug's invitation Duncan and Angela Handley asked Jim Barber to inspect their breeding females at Gilden Vale Fold. They invited a handful of other breeders, space being the limiting factor, some sceptical, some enthusiastic and some undecided. The results on the day were interesting as all participants ended the day enthusiastic.

This little missive was put together because I am convinced that this method of assessment will prove very useful as a tool for all club breeders who can engage with it. The reasons are as follows:

1. It enables breeders to develop meaning evidence of the value of their female breeding lines.
2. Have this evidence of the breeding strength in a female line will enhance offspring values. An advantage over non-assessed stock.
3. It can be used as an effective sales aid.
4. The inspector is completely impartial.
5. The inspections are all done by the same person so there is a consistency throughout the process.

I have witnessed this procedure on two occasions and would like to ask the HCCW Committee to offer a free assessment to all HCCW members. This would be a very useful way of using Club funds to benefit the members who support the club. It will of course also enable breeders to improve the quality of their folds and will therefore exercise a degree of improvement in the Highland Cattle Breed overall.

**Geoff Spawton**



*Cattle at Gilden Vale Fold*



I recently came across the following article in a copy of the Farmers Weekly. It raises some interesting points and gives opinions from both sides of the argument.

Two comments that ring true with are: 'some forms of progress are awfully short-lived' and 'if something looks right – it generally is right'.

Gareth

# LOOKS OR GENETICS

## Which should lead producers' choice?

Last week's British Cattle Breeders Conference in Telford, Shropshire, stirred up debate about the future of showing and genetic progress in the UK. **Rhian Price** reports

**A** world-leading Australian beef breeder has told his UK counterparts it is time to ditch showing and embrace estimated breeding values (EBVs) if they want to survive against increasingly efficient white meat producers.

Pedigree Angus breeder Tom Gubbins of Te Mania Angus, Victoria, said: "Showing is a thing of the past. It served its use well when we didn't have any other methods of breeding cattle, but it damages data."

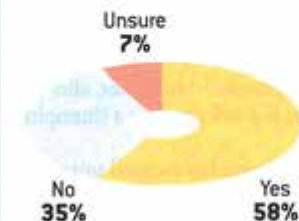
Mr Gubbins, who runs a herd of 1,400 breeding females in Mortlake, Victoria, said showing no longer had "any industry relevance".

He explained show animals could not be accurately performance-recorded when they were being kept in a different environment to the rest of the herd.

"We need to start engaging people about EBVs and how we do that is we talk about it more and fear upsetting a few people, but we have to change it or we will be overrun by the chicken and pig industry. "We are the lowest common

### IS SHOWING HOLDING BACK GENETIC PROGRESS?

\* The vote so far shows most think "yes" to the above question. Do you agree? Have your say at [www.fwi.co.uk/looksorgenetics](http://www.fwi.co.uk/looksorgenetics)



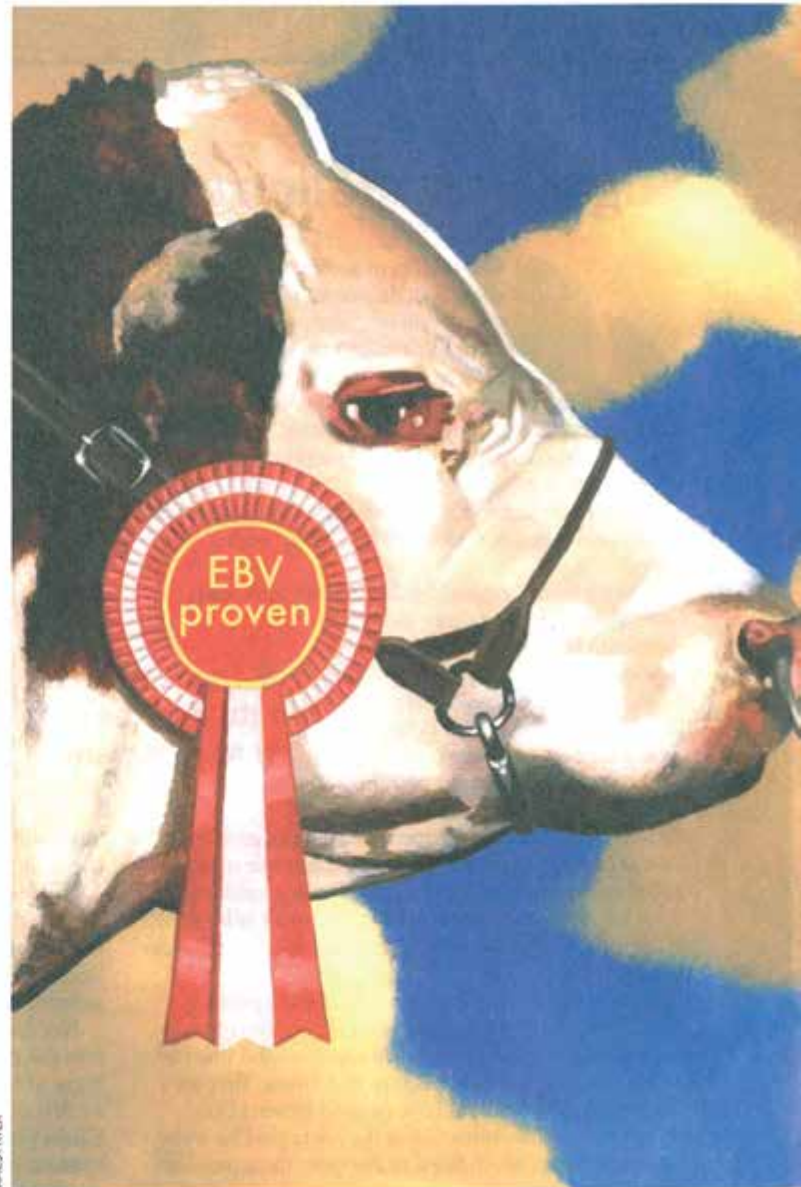
Source: Farmers Weekly (186 votes)

denominator. Every time they make genetic gain and lower their costs it displaces beef from the supermarket," Mr Gubbins warned delegates.

He said the fact commercial breeders were happier to choose breeding stock by eye was holding the industry back and these farmers must start using performance data to help make objective decisions.

Mr Gubbins added that breeders also had a role to play and needed to work closer with their clients to increase acceptance of performance data. He works with an alliance of 43 commercial beef farmers using Te Mania genetics. These producers can lease bulls or buy semen at cost price but Te Mania retains exclusive rights to selling breeding bulls.

To ensure breeding rights remain at Te Mania, bulls born on alliance farms are castrated and carcass data is fed back to the stud with to make further genetic improvements.



JAMES FRYER

## What you think...

### STEVE JONES

*Beef and dairy breed adviser, UK and North America*



\* We have to have a balanced approach. We have to embrace the evaluations we have been given.

There's credible evidence to show they work. EBVs are not smoke and mirrors. They are based on facts.

It is difficult for people to walk away from shows, because it is part of the whole beef cattle infrastructure. However, shows need to be more comparable to

commercial reality. In the dairy industry I would like to see what they have in Europe – progeny shows. That can be more of a useful addition, because you're getting a comparison within future daughters of bulls.

### PAUL WESTAWAY

*Beef farmer, Dymock, Gloucestershire*



\* We use showing as part of our marketing plan. I don't go to win prizes. I go to sell bulls. However, I would like shows to get closer to commercial reality. We would never

### TE MANIA FACTS

- \* 2,600ha
- \* 3,500 head of cattle
- \* The herd has been recording since the 1950s and was one of the first to join Breedplan
- \* Cattle are run in contemporary mob groups of 600 so progeny data can be accurately compared in one environment





and the cows that commercially make money – they are not the same animal. Those traits in show cattle are not the traits proven for profitable beef production.

**MELANIE AND MICHAEL ALFORD**  
Fox Hill Livestock, Cullompton, Devon



\* We don't follow EBVs at all. The stock isn't up to our standard. Cattle and sheep breeders are

brainwashed by EBV figures. But the figures can be incorrect in the way they are recorded.

We look at the whole picture. When we're purchasing an animal we buy the animal we like by eye. We are interested in the pedigree, the bloodlines and breed character – that's not recorded on EBVs.

A real stockman knows if an animal has good muscle depth and growth by eye, without having figures.

There's no point keeping pedigree stock if you don't like the look of them.

We use showing as a shop window for promoting and selling the animals we breed. If no one went to shows, many farmers would never see anyone else's stock. Shows are also educational for the public. They already don't know enough. What is the next generation going to know about livestock if shows stop?

**JOHN DAVIES**

*Deputy president, NFU Cymru and former Royal Welsh Show president*



\* When you consider at the Royal Welsh we have 250,000 visitors through the gates, it

is a fantastic shop window for Welsh agriculture. But one of our founding principles was to promote the latest science and innovation – we will have to remain true to that in the future.

What I'm keen to see young farmers do now is tell their stockjudging competitors to talk not just about the physical attributes of an animal, but the genetic merits as well, to ensure it is fit for the future. We have to recognise the white meat industry is moving on quickly.

take two out of three of our best cows at home to a show because they are not big enough. Yet they are efficient, fertile, have great udders, legs and feet, but they would never win a show.

**JAMES EVANS**

*Beef farmer, Linley, Shropshire*



\* Showing has got no relevance in modern-day beef production. It is fine if people want to do

it as a hobby. But it hasn't got any commercial effect on my business. Animals that are shown are not the animals fit for the British cattle industry anymore.

At the moment there are two tiers within a breed. The cows you show

## HIGHLAND CATTLE SOCIETY OBAN SPRING SHOW & SALE

Oban Livestock Centre  
Upper Soroba, Oban

**Sat 14<sup>th</sup> & Mon 15<sup>th</sup>  
February 2016**

## WINTER HOUSING

To keep your Highland cattle indoors it is important to be able to feed them without bullying taking place between them, and also that different rations can be fed if necessary. The issue of horns is also a major factor to be considered, the welfare issues of overheating and adequate ventilation are extremely important.

To allow for wintering inside we bought locking barriers from "Jourdine" which allow the cattle to be either locked, as a barrier length, or left unlocked, in a barrier length. The barriers can be manually unlocked, if necessary, allowing individual animals to be given separate attention.

These barriers can also be used for other breeds with the added advantage of being able to lock adult cattle in place for any routine jobs required, be it TB testing or medical treatment.

They have made management of Highlands in the winter possible in a yard system, which has been invaluable in these wet winters we have been experiencing recently, as poaching of land contravenes "cross compliance" rules. If Single Farm Payment is part of your farm income this is a point to be considered.

*Olwen Ford*

## HIGHLAND CATTLE SOCIETY SHOW & SALE

Chelford Agricultural Centre  
Macclesfield, Cheshire

**Tel: 01625 861122**

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

# SHOW REPORTS & RESULTS

## NEFYN SHOW

On a very breezy and cool May Day bank holiday the first show of 2015 took place at Nefyn on the LLŷn Peninsula. LLinos Ford, Becky Rowlands, Eleri and Geraint Hughes were the 3 folds showing cattle. The judge for the day was Duncan Handley, Gilden Vale Fold

Thankfully the rain stayed away. The first class was maiden heifers with 6 being brought forward. One was shown by LLinos, two from Becky's fold, and three from Eleri and Geraints fold. Extra handlers were drafted in with Julian, Olwen and Eleri walking beasts. Having given Duncan quite a task LLinos' heifer Cassie was placed first, with Becky's heifers 2nd and 3rd respectively.

There were two cows and calves forward in the next class with Becky showing her Highland cow and calf and LLinos showing Penny and her AAX calf. Duncan chose Becky's cow and calf, but admitted there was very little between them.



Geraint led the only bull on show, who behaved impeccably.

Best of breed and champion Highland this year went to LLinos' heifer, a first for both.

The Highland cattle were the largest pure breed showing on the day.



## RWAS SPRING FESTIVAL BUILTH WELLS

May 16th & 17th 2015

**Judge: Mr John Astley**

Classes were made up of traditional, rare and native breed cattle. Although we were offered our own classes we couldn't get enough committed exhibitors to say yes as it is quite early in the show season for those who enter. Geoff Spawton, Becky Rowlands and Beverly Evans bought our their highlands. Duncan and Angela Handley normally support too but were unable this year.

### **Bull any age – 4 entries**

Beef Shorthorn  
Welsh Black  
Australian Lowline

### **Cow or heifer in calf – 1 entry**

Australian Lowline

### **Cow or heifer in calf – 2 entries**

Welsh Black  
Highland – Beck Rowlands: Lady Ru 2nd of Celyn

### **Maiden Heifer – 15 entries**

Beef Shorthorn  
Red Ruby Devon  
Beef Shorthorn  
Red Ruby Devon  
Highland – Geoff Spawton: Molag 10th of the May  
Highland – Becky Rowlands: Frangag Missy 1st of Celyn  
Australian Lowlines

### **Best pairs**

Red Ruby Devon  
Welsh Black  
Beef Shorthorn  
Highlands: Becky Rowlands  
Australian Lowlines

### **Champion**

Beef shorthorn

### **Reserve Champion**

Welsh Black







## SHROPSHIRE COUNTY SHOW

May 23rd, 2015

**Judge: Mr B Dawson**

### **Bull born before Jan 2014**

J2 Farming: Jamie of Hisland

### **Female born before 31st Dec 2012**

Williamson & Harrison: Princess Analena of Reilth Top

J2 Farming: Mairearad Mhachair of Hisland

Hill, Suzanne: Lady princess of Walton

Rowlands, Becky: Lady Ru 2nd of Celyn

Williams & Harrison: Sara Dubh of Bien Esk

### **Heifer born in 2013.**

Hill, Arthur: Annag 1st of Egerton

Rowlands, Becky: Frangag Missy 1st of Celyn

Mumford, Guy: Beana 1st of Walton

Williamson & Harrison: Princess Brae of Reilth Top

Hill, Arthur: Seoag of Bien Esk

J2Farming: Sine Pibroch Dubh of Hisland

### **Heifer born in 2014**

Mumford, Guy: Urshula 38th of Walton

Hill, Arthur: Rachel Harris of Ardbhan

J2Farming: Sini Dubh 3rd of Hisland

Rowlands, Becky: Lady Juliette 3rd of Walton

Hill, Suzanne: Easter bunny of Walton

### **Pairs**

J2Farming

Mumford

### **Champion female**

Williamson & Harrison: Princess Analena of Reilth Top

Mumford: Urshula 38th of Walton

### **Breed champion**

J2Farming: Jamie of Hisland

## ABERYSTWYTH SHOW

June 2015

**Judge: Mr Frank Sutton**

A lovely day out with Geoff Spawton, Becky Rowlands and Gareth Davies assisting. The weather, fit for ducks, didn't spoil the day. It was Gareth's first show in the rain – something welsh shows offer for free!

Native breed classes with Highlands against Long Horns.

### **Bull**

Longhorn

### **Cow in calf or milk**

Becky Rowlands: Lucy 1st of Celyn

### **Heifer any age**

Longhorn

Geoff Spawton: Lus A Chore 2nd of the May

Longhorn

Becky Rowlands: Frangag Missy 1st of Celyn

Becky Rowlands. Lady Juliette 3rd of Walton

### **Best Pair**

Longhorns

Becky Rowlands

### **Champion**

Long horns



*Please make the rain stop!*





## ROYAL WELSH SHOW

July 20-23, 2015

Judge: Mr August J McColl

### Bull – any age

Handley, DT & AM: Barnaigh of Gilden Vale

### Cow any age in calf or with calf at foot.

Handley, DT & AM: Una Dubh 3rd of Gilden Vale

Monk, MJ & VM: Turfrida 31st of Eastol Moor

Rowlands, B & H: Frangag Lucy 1st of Celyn

Hill, Arthur & Sue: Sweet Princess of Walton

### Heifer Born 2012

Williamson & Harrison: Princess Analena of Reilth Top

Handley, DT & AM: Furan Froach 6th of Gilden Vale

Trees Lindsey: Capleadh Dubh of Grafton

Williamson & Harrison: Sara Dubh of Bien Esk

### Heifer born 2013

Alford, Charlotte: Ebony of Allanfern

Davies, Gareth: Taryn Dubh of Karith

Momford, Guy: Beana 1st of Walton

Monk, MJ & VM: Margaret of Chardwick

Williamson & Harrison: Princess Brae of Relith Top

Trees, Lindsey: Blackbess 4th of Grafton

Brewer, J: Furan Frouch 7th of Gilden Vale

Hill, Arthur & Sue: Annag 1st of Edgerston

Rowlands: B & H: Frangag Missy 1st of Celyn



### Heifer born 2014

Mumford, Guy: Urshula 38th of Walton

Handley, DT & AM: Jarcola Baratal 4th Gilden Vale

Handley, DT & AM: Una Raineach of Gilden Vale

Trees, Lindsey: Capleadh Dubh of Grafton

Hill, Arthur: Princess Easter Bunny of Walton

Monk, MJ & VM: Princess Dubh 4th of Chardwick

Rowlands, B & H: Lady Juliette 3rd of Walton

### Group of 3

Handley, DT & AM

### Champion

Williamson & Harrison: Princess Analena of Reilth Top

Handley, DT & AM: Furan Froach 6th of Gilden Vale



## OSWESTRY SHOW

1st August, 2015

**Judge: Mr Duncan Handley**

The judge was Mr Duncan Handley from Hereford and we thank him very much for attending and for such a fine job. We hope he and Angela had an enjoyable day. Lovely to see them both again.

We had an early start to get to the lovely Park Hall showground. Left home just before 7am but still a rush to get there, unload & get the cattle spruced up for judging at 9am. Other members of the club jumped in to help us unload and get the worst of the muck off when we arrived! So thanks for that – always a pleasure to show and meet up with this lovely crowd of people.

It was lovely day with a good turnout of highlands, more than any of other breeds. Well done to all for supporting our breed. We were sorry to be missing the Cim fold this year due to TB, we wish them well and hope they will be back next year.

James Williamson & Jacky Harrison nearly didn't take any cows following them both getting knocked down at the RWAS and suffering the consequences! But they did manage to bring one – the lovely Princess Analena. I'm so glad they did!

The weather was mixed, mostly dry, some sunny warm moments and also some drizzle showers but the worst of the rain mostly stayed off. We were lucky.

We were entered into 3 classes; cow and calf, two year old heifer and the yearling class with two heifers, so took 5 animals in total.

There was two entries for the bull class, both from Mr A Hill (Walton Fold) but neither were brought forward on the day.

So we were straight into the cow in calf or in milk class. An all female show for the highlands (apart from a calf or two perhaps). All four animals entered were brought forward and all were cow and calf, calves were various ages and stages of halter training. Ours had been brought in from field the previous afternoon and put on the halter and loaded onto the trailer all for the first time. She actually was a lot better in the ring than I deserved to expect! The absence of The Cim fold did mean there were less cows and smaller numbers than usual in some classes, but still very strong heifer classes which gave the judge plenty of thinking to do!

The full results are as follows, but we were all thrilled to see James & Jacky's Analena get female and breed champion – as she did at RWAS. And also Guy Mumford's lovely yearling get reserve champion. Well done!

Bob's granddaughter Jessica won the cup for the young handlers competition, fabulous to be keeping the tradition alive with the younger members of the family!

We all took something into the grand parade also, so the highlands were really well presented, heard lots of oohhhs and ahhhhs as we passed. The public will never get bored of seeing the highlanders.

All in all, a great, if tiring day – we are beginning to feel our age I think! Nevertheless we will be here next year! See you all then.

### **Bull, any age**

None brought forward

### **Cow in calf or in milk**

1<sup>st</sup> – A & S Hill with Lady Princess of Walton

2<sup>nd</sup> – G Mumford with Urshula 34<sup>th</sup> of Walton

3<sup>rd</sup> – B & H Rowlands with Frangag Lucy 1<sup>st</sup> of Celyn

4<sup>th</sup> – G & E Hughes with Annag 1<sup>st</sup> of Glenkinglass

### **Heifer born 2012**

1<sup>st</sup> – J Williamson & J Harrison with Princess Analena 1<sup>st</sup> of Reilth Top

### **Heifer born 2013**

1<sup>st</sup> – A & S Hill with Seonag of Blenik

2<sup>nd</sup> – G Mumford with Beana 1<sup>st</sup> of Walton

3<sup>rd</sup> – B & H Rowlands with Frangag Missy 1<sup>st</sup> of the Celyn

4<sup>th</sup> – A & S Hill with Annag of Ennlston

5<sup>th</sup> – G & E Hughes with Magdalena Breagha of Ucheldir

### **Heifer born 2014**

1<sup>st</sup> – G Mumford with Urshula 38<sup>th</sup> of Walton

2<sup>nd</sup> – A & S Hill with Rachel Harris of Ardbhan

3<sup>rd</sup> – B & H Rowlands with Lady Juliette 3<sup>rd</sup> of Walton

4<sup>th</sup> – A & S Hill with Easter Bunny of Walton

5<sup>th</sup> – G & E Hughes with Ceitidh Morag of Ucheldir

6<sup>th</sup> – G & E Hughes with Magdalena Sionnach of Ucheldir

### **A pair of animals owned by the exhibitor**

1<sup>st</sup> – G & E Hughes with Ceitidh Morag & Magdalena Sionnach

2<sup>nd</sup> – B & H Rowlands with Frangag Missy & Lady Juliette

3<sup>rd</sup> – G Mumford with Beana & Urshula 38<sup>th</sup>

### **Championship**

Champion – J Williamson & J Harrison with Princess Analena 1<sup>st</sup> of Reilth Top

Reserve Champion – G Mumford with Urshula 38<sup>th</sup> of Walton

*Eleri Hughes*





## LAMPETER SHOW

14th August, 2015

**Judge: Mr Doug Rowbottom**

The judge was Mr Doug Rowbottom from Pontrhydfendigaid and we thank him very much for standing in at short notice for Mr Robin Chilton and for doing such a fine job. We hope he and Evan had an enjoyable day. They were both very interesting to chat to and I think our newbies Fed & Sara found him very helpful.



We had another early start, leaving home at 6am and a three hour drive in the rain and mist. Still seemed to be dark when we arrived at the showground at 9am. Stayed drizzly until after we had finished showing, but did brighten up a bit later on.

It was an enjoyable day with a good turnout of highlands, again more than any of other breeds.

Some of you may have met new members Fed & Sara at the RWAS buffet. They were there at Lampeter to watch and since Geoff was on his own and short of a handler we dragged an unsuspecting Fed into a white coat and the show ring for the first time. He did really well and enjoyed himself I think.

Eirian Rowlands made her young handling debut with her calf LB! Very cute in her tie!

We were entered into 3 classes; cow and calf, two year old heifer and the yearling class with two heifers, so took 5 animals in total.

The results are as follows, Doug thoughtfully took his time judging, explaining his reasons for his decisions which is always helpful and interesting. It was a great show, and to realise at the end, when it came to the best cow bred in Wales prize, that every highland there bar one (our cow Annag) had been bred in Wales was fantastic! Champion cow on the day was Geoff Spawton's lovely two year old Oighreag 2<sup>nd</sup> of the the May. Well deserved.



### **Cow any age with calf at foot:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Becky & Huw Rowlands with Frangag Lucy 1<sup>st</sup> of Celyn

2<sup>nd</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes with Annag 1<sup>st</sup> of Glenkinglass

### **3 year old heifer:**

None forward

### **2 year old heifer:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Geoff Spawton with Oighreag 2<sup>nd</sup> of the the May

2<sup>nd</sup>: Becky & Huw Rowlands with Frangag Missy 1<sup>st</sup> of Celyn

3<sup>rd</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes with Magdalena Breagha of Ucheldir

### **Yearling heifer:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes with Magdalena Sionnach of Ucheldir

2<sup>nd</sup>: Geoff Spawton with Lus na Dearg 1<sup>st</sup> of the May

3<sup>rd</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes with Ceitidh Morag of Ucheldir

### **Bull, any age**

None forward

### **Best Pair:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes (pair of yearlings)

2<sup>nd</sup>: Becky & Huw Rowlands (cow & 2 year old)

3<sup>rd</sup>: Geoff Spawton (pair of yearlings)

### **Best Group of Three:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes

2<sup>nd</sup>: Becky & Huw Rowlands

### **Best calf:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Becky & Huw Rowlands with LB

2<sup>nd</sup>: Geraint & Eleri Hughes with Annag Maili of Ucheldir

### **Champion:**

Oighreag 2<sup>nd</sup> of the the May (Geoff Spawton)

**Reserve Champion:** Magdalena Sionnach of Ucheldir  
(Geraint & Eleri Hughes)

## MEIRIONEDD COUNTY SHOW, HARLECH

26th August, 2015

**Judge: Mr Alwyn Rees**

Forecast wasn't the best but it turned out lovely sunny day. It was the first time I'd been to the County Show. There was plenty to see and it was a nice day out.

Only 3 cattle forward for our classes: Any other pure breed cattle breed.

**Bull**

**Bull calf**

**Cow in milk**

**Heifer in milk or in calf**

Highland, Becky Rowlands

Highland, Llinos ford

**Maiden Heifer**



**Traditional British breed.**

Highland, Becky Rowlands

Belted Galloway, Olwen Ford

Highland, Llinos ford

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## "Y GORAU O DRI – THE BEST OF THREE"

**New Cattle Competition for 2015 – Sponsored by NFU**

A new group competition for cattle exhibitors was hosted at three agriculture shows in North Wales this summer.

A healthy prize fund was put forward by NFU Cymru to promote "Y Gorau o Dri – The Best of Three" competition at **Eglwysbach, Llanrwst and Cerrigydrudion** shows.

Livestock committee members from each show devised the format in an attempt to increase cattle entries.

The Group of Three competition was open to all pure bred cattle, which had to be exhibited at all three shows. Not necessarily the same three cattle, but at least three at all three shows.

Points were awarded at the three shows for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th places, with the winning group decided at Cerrigydrudion Show on Saturday, September 5.

The winning group was to collect £300, the second prize winner £200 and the third prize winner receiving £100.

Ifor Jones, livestock secretary of Cerrigydrudion Show, said: "We are very grateful to the NFU for sponsoring this competition, as it is important that the prize money reflects the costs and effort that goes into preparing and showing cattle at the summer shows.

"We hope this will be an incentive for all local breeders to support the competition.

After hearing about this competition we decided to enter our cattle into our three local shows which we haven't done previously.

## EGLWYSBACH SHOW

8th August, 2015

We always enter sheep to Eglwysbach show, I had entered 5 sheep, this year, as for the first time they had a dedicated Ryeland class. After deciding to enter cattle as well were concerned that the judging would clash so managed to rope in an eager helper in the form of my daughter's friend Erin, aged 16.

Erin came over on the Friday and shampooed the cows with us and had a practice walk up and down the road with Sionnach.

It was the any other native breed class that we had entered as there isn't a highland class. We were entered into 3 classes; bull, cow and calf and barren heifer with two yearlings, so took 5 animals in total.

When we arrived we unloaded and settled the cows in next to the Herefords. We couldn't see any other British breeds that didn't have a dedicated class so thought it must just be us. I left Geraint to spruce up the cows and went to set Erin up with the



sheep, still really hoping the judging wouldn't clash as I knew Erin was keen to help show the cows. In the end though, it did clash, I was able to show my ram myself then had to run over to help Ger show the bull, while Erin carried on with the sheep.

The sun was shining and it was really hot, which drew in the crowds. The judge for the native breed class was Mr Dylan Evans, Llanrhaeadr.

We entered the ring with Molach and after we had been judged the judge told us he now had to go and see the shorthorn we were against that was being judged in the closed pens! This must have been confusing for the spectators! It was fairly confusing for us. We got second. Exactly the same thing happened with the cow and calf, although the judge and steward were both very keen on the calf Maili. He was apologetic that we were against such a bigger breed, but we accepted that this is what happens in a native breed. We were just a bit baffled as to how being judged in the pen could be classed as the cows being 'shown'. We hadn't taken a heifer in calf, and the shorthorns got that. They hadn't got a barren heifer so we got first and second in that and then also got first in the pairs. However we got second in the group of three. The judge then suggested we bring our winning barren heifer over to the shorthorn pens so he could judge the champion female. By this time Erin was finished with the sheep and so she was able to do it. Both her and the heifer Sionnach were really brave standing so close as the barely halter trained cows were brought out of the pens to stand out and be judged just like sheep just on the outside of the pen. The shorthorns got male and female champion and reserve female and our bull got reserve male champion.

We had a break for some lunch before the interbreed pairs. Then the steward came round looking for young handlers and Geraint asked if Erin could go in, even though she hadn't entered. Erin was very keen and took Sionnach in, considering it was her very first time in the ring and showing cows she did really, really well. Not last, but 5<sup>th</sup> out of 7.

Then came the interbreed pairs, which Erin & I showed together – Geraint getting some time off! The judges deliberated a long long time on this one! To be fair I saw at least three or four judges in the ring take a good long looks at our girls as we walked them by. In the end we were last in the line-up (no surprise there then!) and the commercials got it. Geraint standing on the edges watching had heard many people comment that we were one of the best pairs in the ring though.

That was the end for us, and the cows could relax, although not entirely because as always they were required for numerous photographs all day. We had a really good day and as always had enquiries and compliments for the cows from lots of members of the public. We will look forward to going again next year. Next week Llanrwst!

### **Bull any age**

Mr Eric Evans, Nant y Fedwen, Carmel, Llanrwst with Shorthorn bull

Eleri & Geraint Hughes, Trefriw with Highland bull – Molach Ruadh of Thaggnam

### **Cow in milk or in calf**

Mr Eric Evans, Nant y Fedwen, Carmel, Llanrwst with Shorthorn Cow & Calf

Eleri & Geraint Hughes, Trefriw with Highland cow & calf – Annag 1<sup>st</sup> of Glenkinglass



### **Heifer in milk or in calf**

Mr Eric Evans, Nant y Fedwen, Carmel, Llanrwst with Shorthorn heifer

### **Barren heifer**

Eleri & Geraint Hughes, Trefriw with Highland heifer – Magdalena Sionnach of Ucheldir

Eleri & Geraint Hughes, Trefriw with Highland heifer – Ceitidh Morag of Ucheldir

### **Pair of Cattle:**

Eleri & Geraint Hughes, Trefriw with pair of highlands

Mr Eric Evans, Nant y Fedwen, Carmel, Llanrwst with pair of shorthorns.

### **Group of three**

Mr Eric Evans, Nant y Fedwen, Carmel, Llanrwst with three shorthorns

Eleri & Geraint Hughes, Trefriw with three highlands

Male Champion – Shorthorn bull

Reserve Male Champion – Molach Ruadh of Thaggnam

Female Champion – Shorthorn cow

Reserve Female Champion – Shorthorn heifer

### **Overall champion – Shorthorn bull**

## **LLANRWST SHOW**

15th August, 2015

I was working this weekend so Geraint took the cows by himself. Reduced the team down to just the bull, cow and calf and one of the yearlings.

The shorthorns were there again – in pens again, but we were assured by the steward that they would be shown in the ring this time.

This time the class was any other British breed, and in addition to the shorthorns there were two British Blue heifers to compete against!

Ger and the coos did their best but the results were all very similar to those above for Eglwysbach. Although the judge liked them and complimented them. Geraint was asked to take a cow into the grand parade despite not getting a first prize. All good signs that they would like to see the cattle again. In fact they are considering a Highland class for us (and hopefully others) next year.

It was lovely for local people to approach and ask are these the cows we see on our walks to the lake? And to hear how they admire them.

## **CERRIGYDRUDION SHOW**

5th September, 2015

The last show of the year for us, we have been to Cerrig with cows before, it's a nice show. We just took the minimum three to this show as we were short of time to prep any more.

We took two yearlings and a cow and calf. We had actually arranged to sell a yearling and a two year old between Llanrwst show and Cerrig and had just held on to Ceitidh one of the yearlings long enough to show her at Cerrig.

We had a quick look around and could see that the shorthorns were there again in the closed pens. We realised that they would have won the NFU prize then, but I was sure we were in with a chance of second.

Trevor Dines & Neville Hughes, the couple we had sold the cows to, arrived and we chatted for a while, managing to rope Trevor in for helping us show when it came to the group of three.

We showed cow and calf Annag & Maili, against the shorthorn cow and calf and got second. Then our two yearling heifers against a shorthorn yearling and the heifer calf. We got 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, the shorthorn heifer coming first and the calf last. There was no pairs class, so next was the group of three. Trevor was ready in a spare white coat and came into the ring to take over from Geraint with Ceitidh and Geraint went to fetch Annag. We got second in the group of three to the shorthorn bull, cow and in calf heifer. Good experience for Trevor though and I hope we will see him showing Breagha & Ceitidh against us in shows in future.



Time to relax a bit now and Trevor & Neville left, excited about the following weekend when we were due to deliver the cattle.

The cattle secretary came along eventually and told us that we had won second prize in the NFU competition! £200! He asked us if we could take a group of three into the ring but because we were short of handlers by then we said we would just bring in the two youngsters. Part way to the ring a steward offered to help and took Ceitidh from Geraint, while he popped back for Annag & calf. Unfortunately because we hadn't expected to be taking Annie back in the ring we had removed her snitch and she misbehaved somewhat whilst waiting for the official photographs, so they had quite a job getting one!

It was a great day. And brilliant to win the £200 – that will go nicely towards our Oban trip in October.



## INSURANCE – ARE YOU COVERED?

I thought that it would be a relatively simple thing to get public liability for my small fold. Our property is insured with NFU Mutual so I made my initial enquiry with them. All the relevant details were given and they said they would be in touch. When they contacted me I was told that the only way they could offer the cover was under a smallholding policy which would cost £1,200. I thanked them for their help but decided to get some other quotes! Several companies were contacted, none of which even bothered to get back in touch. I finally did get cover, through Caleb Roberts in Welshpool.

The policy is quite specific: **Smallholder, Attending or Showing Livestock at Agricultural Shows**. The maximum number of shows that I can attend is 5 per year and there is also cover for buildings and livestock straying or in transit.

This year I have seen several instances, at shows, that could have resulted in serious injury. A Charolais bull was particularly unhappy at the Shropshire Show and several members of the public were lucky not to have been hurt. Two members of the Highland Cattle Society were knocked over at the Royal Welsh

Show when an animal got loose and they failed to get out of the way.

I don't have a vast amount of experience with cattle but I do respect them. Certain members of the public simply don't see the possible danger. A 10mm blue rope that forms a ring is not the most effective way of stopping a 500kg+ animal!

If it's possible to make a successful claim for whiplash when you are involved in a minor car accident then being clattered by a cow is a certain way of never having to work again! We now live in a society where people will claim for any minor injury.

So, when you take your animals out to your local show are you covered? You may have insurance for your farm or smallholding which will have a public liability element but it may not cover you for showing as it may not be seen as a 'normal' activity.

That last thing I want to do is to put people off showing, but I would encourage you to check that you have sufficient cover.

**Gareth**

# OBAN AUTUMN SHOW AND SALE

Having bought a caravan specifically for the Royal Welsh Show Jacky and I thought we may as well use it! So we took it to Oban a few weeks ago for the Autumn Show and Sale. The dogs thought it was great sleeping on our bed – much better than the barn which is their normal bedroom!

The weather was magnificent – sunny, dry, no wind but a little chilly – the autumn colours on the journey up from Glasgow were outstanding and the sea at Oban was a bright shimmering blue. It would be difficult to imagine a better way to see Scotland in October.

On the Saturday afternoon we went to visit the Mottistone Fold a few miles north of Oban. Every year they welcome visitors to the Show and Sale to see their large collection of Highland Cattle and it makes a good start – meeting up with fellow breeders from around the UK and abroad and the farm is set in a perfect location overlooking Loch Creran.

We then went to the Mart and inspected the cattle before the show the following morning – there was a good turnout of cattle and of course there were a couple that we really liked! Trouble was that we only had the caravan and we thought a heifer might trash it on the long journey home!! Also we already have enough cattle on our 30 acres of upland land.

On the Sunday morning the Show started at 10.30 – with around 80 cattle for the judge to inspect there was plenty of time for a lot of socialising – we counted 11 members of the HCCW – about 20% of the entire membership! We certainly outnumbered those from the Northern and Midlands and Southern Clubs.

The Ceilidh on the Sunday evening at the Royal Hotel was good fun as usual and we enjoyed some Highland Beef from the Presidents Fold on the Isle of Mull – we understand that some attendees were up well into the early hours of the morning – unfortunately Scotland has significantly tightened up on its drinking driving laws and

we had to drive 10 miles back to the caravan and so all night revelries weren't very attractive for us! As it was the last chance many would meet Hazel Baxter, the departing Breed Secretary, there were the inevitable speeches and presentations and a few tears. We did meet the new Breed Secretary and whilst she has a difficult act to follow I am sure she is up to it – she was born in Wales and is looking forward to meeting us all at the Royal Welsh Show next July.

The Sale started at 10.00 on the Monday and after a slow start the pace picked up and, thanks to a Frenchman who bought a lot of heifers, most lots were sold for good prices.

The average price and the highest price by class were:

3 year old heifers £2,019 and £3,150

2 year old heifers £1,253 and £2,310

Yearling heifers £670 and £1,365

Heifer calves £628 and £861

Cows £1,667 and £2,730

There were only 4 bulls – all yearlings and the prices were £446 and £630.

At that stage we felt we had seen enough cattle for one weekend and so we missed the dispersal sale although I understand there were some good beasts and the prices were reasonable.

We decided to do a bit of shopping – we always have to buy some biscuits from the Isle of Mull bakery – they are delicious and always remind us through the rest of the autumn of a very enjoyable few days in the Highlands.

We then took the dogs for a long walk along the side of Loch Linnhe and drove home on the Tuesday with an empty caravan!

**James Williamson**

Remember to check the club website:

**[www.hccw.org.uk](http://www.hccw.org.uk)**

for the latest news, updates on events, show diary, adverts and more!



or follow us on Facebook

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