



*Stonham Herd*

# Newsletter No. 121

## Winter 2021

# WOLDSMAN RED POLLS

S.G. PRESCOTT & SONS

WOLD HOUSE LUND DRIFFIELD E YORKS YO25 9TW

**Founded 1953**

All females are home bred and registered with the Society

Health status: Tuberculosis, Brucellosis tested.

No animal we have bred has ever had BSE.

**'Would you like contented animals like these? Contact us!'**



Herd size: 100 suckler cows, easy calving, all male calves left entire, sold as beef @ 15-18 months of age @ 550-600kgs or for breeding.

All young bulls weighed regularly & we are achieving gains of 1.7kg per day up to 365 days of age (own records).

Young cows, in calf and maiden heifers usually for sale.

Andrew & Office:

Tel: 01377 217232

Ben:

Tel: 07855 041632

Stephen:

Tel: 01964 550229

Fax: 01377 271813

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Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

# The Red Poll Cattle Society

*Established 1888*



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## Newsletter No. 121

### Winter 2021

<b>President:</b>	Q.G. Edwards
<b>President Elect:</b>	M.R. Cheetham
<b>Chairman:</b>	J.R. Williams
<b>Secretary:</b>	R.J. Bowler
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Mrs T.J. Booker
<b>Vice Presidents:</b>	Col. J.R.G. Crisp, A.M.G. Darby, A.L. Fletcher, Miss H.R. Philipson-Stow, S.G. Prescott, R.H. Smith.
<b>Council Members:</b>	Miss H.R. Arthan, Mrs S. Barnes, A.L. Barratt, Ms J. Bellamy, Miss J. Broughton, Mrs A.Daw, P. Grainger, Ms S-A. Grimwood, Miss E. Grint, P. Grint, Miss A-M. Hamilton, D.P. Hunt, A.J. Kirk, M.J. Martin. P. Wisden



## Dual purpose Red Polls

Charity Registration No. 213132  
Company Registration No. 27159

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### **Year Letter**

The year letter for 2022 registrations is M

### **Registration Fees**

Heifer in the Herd Book of year of birth £13.50

Heifer outside the Herd Book of year of birth £25

Bull £80

Transfer of ownership £10

Birth Notification £10

Please note that the Herd Book closes at the end of January for entries from the preceding year. When you sell a Red Poll, please return the pedigree certificate to the office. The certificate will be sent to the new owner on payment, by the buyer or seller, of the transfer fee.

### **Advertising in Red Poll News**

As a member, you can take a full page advertisement for £25. The rate for non members is £50. Half pages are priced pro rata. Next copy date 12th February 2022. For livestock sales please contact the Secretary, Ray Bowler, at the office. Steers are always wanted.

### **Membership Subscriptions as from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022**

Registering:	£50
Associate:	£25
Overseas Registering:	£75 in sterling
Overseas Associate:	£30 in sterling
Life Registering Member:	£750
Life Associate Member:	£300
Life Overseas Member:	£500

If your photographs appear in social media we have taken it that you don't mind them being reproduced in this newsletter or on our website. If this is not the case please contact me.

Many thanks,

Sally

salgrim27@gmail.com

07780964978

## Secretary's Report – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021

There are seven new members for election at this meeting, four registering, two associate and one overseas member. There are hopefully a few more in the pipeline. There are 351 members. The makeup of the membership is therefore: 254 Registering/Life Registering, 80 Associate/Life Associate, eight Overseas and nine Student/Junior. Sadly Richard Brookes and Richard Stebbing have died since the last meeting. Since the last meeting I have sent out eight information packs to persons enquiring about the Society.

1. Rob Havard, Phepson Farm, Kimbolton, Droitwich, Worcestershire, WR9 7JZ
2. John Headland, 56 Lacey Green, Balderton, Newark, Notts, NG24 3NJ
3. Marie Amber Smith, 3 Ruttle Close, Cholsey, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 9FP
4. Dean Anderson, Shadow Creek Farm, Site 12, Comp73, SS#2, Stn.Main, Fort St John, BC, V1J 4M7, Canada
5. Andrew Cavanna, Farmison, Bungate Green, Ripon, HG4 1QW
6. Jonathan Theobald, Mostylea Farm, Kibblestone Road, Oulton, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8TE
7. Charlotte Sharpe, Cowden, North Street, Charminster, Dorset, DT2 9RN

85 straws of semen have been sold since the last meeting including 25 Knepp Rambler to City College Norwich, 20 Castlefield Nu Duke to Huw Foulkes and 20 Bowland Zeus to Nigel Walters. The rest have been smaller quantities to various members.

30 bulls have been registered so far this year, 19 since the last meeting. John Williams has inspected four of these, Denis Jenkins two, Helen Arthan one, Joy Broughton and myself one between us jointly with myself doing the rest. Average points score for these has been 173 points. Myostatin and Igenity reports have been received for 23 of them (12 M1 and 11 M0). The remaining seven have been sent off but results aren't back yet. The Breeding Committee have had copies of all Igenity results, if anyone else requires a copy of them then please let me know. To date we have full profiles for 153 bulls and 107 females.

It's far too early to report on heifer registrations but out of interest I have received 172 so far. At this meeting last year I had only received 103 so that's good news, perhaps members are reacting to my request for registrations as soon as their calvings for the year are over.

Since the last meeting I have been out and about visiting members—new, existing plus some potential ones—25 having been visited in addition to inspecting bulls in Willingham, Brent Eleigh, Wallingford, Towcester, Braunston and Norwich. I have been to Canterbury to collect a set of Herd Books from an old member who had died last year and the family wanted to donate the books to the Society. I was asked to go to Easton College to give their students a talk on Red Polls and the Igenity Scheme. I have undertaken a tour of West Country members—John Williams accompanied me on some of the days. 15 members were visited over the five days, a report on the tour will be in the next Newsletter.

By the time of the meeting I will have accompanied Tony Barratt on his judging of the Southern Area Herd Competition which entails 12 member visits.

Cattle sales have been good since the last meeting, with several bulls changing hands.

I have several orders for steers which appear to be in short supply so if anyone knows of any that are available then please let me know.

*Ray Bowler*

## Genus Distribution Costs

This is to inform all members that if you are using AI, Genus has put up its distribution costs. Please see below. Therefore the more straws of semen you purchase the cheaper it is when distribution charges are taken into account. They have also put up storage charges but we, the Society, are going to cover these for the semen we have in store. The cost of semen straws to yourselves will remain at £8.00/straw for list 1 bulls and £16.00/straw for list 2 bulls.

### **Transferring Semen from Genus Central warehouse via Genus distribution network to Genus Tech based customers**

The cost for transferring stock to a Genus Reproductive Management Specialist customer is:

£4.20 per unit with **minimum** transaction charge of £42

Maximum charge of £630

### **Transferring Semen from Genus Central warehouse via Genus distribution network to DIY/ on Farm storage customer**

The cost for transferring stock to a person who has their own semen storage Flask (DIY) on farm is:

£4.20 per unit with **minimum** transaction charge of £63

Maximum charge of £630

### **Transferring semen from Genus Central warehouse to another Semen company**

Transferring semen to another genetics company

The cost for transferring semen to an alternative semen company is:

1 to 20 units @ £105 in total

21+ units @ £105 plus £4.20 per unit

Maximum charge of £630

### **Transferring semen within Genus network from one geographic location to another ie. Scotland**

If you wish to transfer your stock from one Genus field geographic location to another, the costs are

1 to 20 straws is £84 in total

21+ is £84 + £4.20 per straw, capped at £630 + VAT

*Ray Bowler  
Society Secretary*

## Cull Cows required

Society Member Matthew Wilshire has set up a small business selling meat from cull cows. Matthew is the ex-stockman of Lady Getty in Suffolk. It could well be a good way of selling your cull cows without them going to market or a large commercial abattoir. They will be slaughtered at Fowler's, Burnham-on-Crouch and Matthew will collect direct from your farm.

Please see below:

"I am after cull cows, preferably who haven't had a calf at foot for a fair while so there is some condition on them. However I would consider any cull cows, especially throughout the summer as I will have a little bit of grazing I can use to finish. I've used cows so far up to 14 years old, so age is not a stumbling block. Best way to contact me is via email address

[matthew@skylarkproduce.com](mailto:matthew@skylarkproduce.com) or phone number - 07825959497."



## Richard Brookes—Obituary

**B**orn in Cambridge, Richard's father was the director of Cambridge University Farm and Richard always wanted to farm himself. His ambition was to rear cattle.

School was a necessity and after his first day at school he announced to his parents that he didn't need to go again! Outside school, however, his love of the outdoors had him cycling for miles to follow the local hunt, go fishing or learning to ride. His father taught him to shoot and during the winter months he joined him rough shooting over the University farm. As soon as he got his first job, Richard bought himself a Labrador puppy to train as a gun dog and Labradors have been part of the family ever since.



Pursuing his farming ambition, Richard attended Seale Hayne Agricultural College in Devon, where he made many firm friends.

Despite having fallen in love with the West Country, Richard's first jobs were in farm management in Norfolk. He was a keen member of Reepham Young Farmers, taking part in stock judging and debating. He then joined Framlingham Farmers' co-operative, working in administration and was responsible for the large rape swathing campaign. However he still dreamed of farming for himself.

Whilst working for Fram Farmers, on holiday, riding on Exmoor he met Mary, romance blossomed and they married the following year. It was after Mary secured a GP partnership in Ixworth that they could start looking for a property which would enable Richard to keep some cattle, hence the move to Hepworth.

Richard left Fram Farmers and started rearing batches of calves. Three of these Simmental crosses had pneumonia and could not be sold with the rest of their batch so he kept them and they were his first suckler cows, Top Knot, Flighty and Specs. They were a bit big for the buildings so Richard decided to buy some Red Poll cattle due to their East Anglian heritage. These were hard to come by in the late nineties and Richard went to great lengths to improve the stock they started with. Initially, he double-suckled all of the cows, some proving more amenable than others!

The Hepworth Herd was established in 1999 with the first animal, Hepworth Rosebud born in March 2000. Since that time 107 animals have been registered under the Hepworth prefix, 12 of them being bulls.

Richard decided that the best way to know if you have good animals is to show them and after some difficult times in the show ring, Richard began to have success and was incredibly proud when Hepworth Tansy won Breed Champion at Wayland Show in 2009 and again in 2014. Perhaps his biggest success was winning the Cow in milk class at the Society's 2017 National Show at Norfolk with Hepworth Willow. Last year Hepworth Melica was Champion animal in the Society's Photographic Competition.

Richard was honoured to serve on the Council of the Red Poll Cattle Society over the last few years and to be Field Officer for Norfolk and Suffolk.

Richard's children, Matt and Ellie, became interested in showing, so thinking that a smaller breed would be easier for them some Dexter cattle were purchased—this was not the case! However, good friends were made when they joined the East Anglian Dexter Cattle group.

Richard's other great passion was point to pointing, following in his parents' footsteps. He attended his first point to point at a young age and thereafter missed as few meetings as possible, no matter what the weather. One bonus of the pandemic was that they started live streaming point to point meetings so when Richard was no longer able to physically attend, he managed to visit more courses than he could have hoped for. His last weekend was spent happily watching three meetings in Devon, Oxfordshire and Worcestershire.

Richard will be sorely missed by everyone he had contact with be it family, friends or colleagues. On a personal note I will miss our regular chats about farming, the Society or just life in general.

*Ray Bowler*





## Eastern Area Herd Competition—Results

Judge: John Williams

### Large Herd:

The Countess of Euston - Grafton Herd  
Sarah and Gerald Barnes – Hopeham Herd (Joint)  
Lady Getty – Lavenham Brook Herd (Joint)

**Small Herd:** Dr Michael Lynch - Loudham Herd

Nigel Steer - Wilsummer Herd  
Fletcher and Dunt – Charsfield Herd

**Overall:** The Countess of Euston - Grafton Herd

### Youngstock:

Sarah and Gerald Barnes – Hopeham Herd  
The Countess of Euston – Grafton Herd  
Lady Getty – Lavenham Brook Herd

### StockBull:

Heathgate Frank - Dr. Michael Lynch - Loudham Herd  
Nobodys Jupiter - The Countess of Euston - Grafton Herd  
Hopeham Iron-Ore – Rolf Marschalek – Gipping Valley Herd

### Homebred Senior Cow:

Hepworth Melica – The Brookes Family  
Loudham Elm - Dr Michael Lynch  
Canfield Bury Bella – Jonathan Clarke

### Junior Homebred Cow:

Hopeham Gretel – Sarah and Gerald Barnes  
Canfield Bury Arya – Johnathan Clarke  
Grafton Nicola - The Countess of Euston

### Homebred Heifer:

Grafton Penelope – The Countess of Euston  
Loudham Jessica - Dr. Michael Lynch  
Hepworth Elderflower – The Brookes Family (Joint)  
Sherbourne House Farm Teasel – Emily Groom (Joint)

### Progeny Group:

*Progeny of Heathgate Frank.*

Loudham Karona, Kelly and Kirstie—Dr Michael Lynch

*Progeny of Appleton Duke of York.*

Ladlers Juliet, Joy and Jazmin—James Rea

*Progeny of Hopeham Ever-Ready.*

Stonham India, Imelda and Iris—James Forrest (Joint)

*Progeny of Hopeham Enhance.*

Stapleford Baby Belle, Maroon and Candy –James Stygal (Joint)

### 3 Related Females:

Hepworth Melica, Elderflower and Gooseberry – The Brookes family  
Stonham Daisy, Iris and Juniper  
Hopeham Claribell, Lakesha and Jingle Bell – Sarah and Gerald Barnes

### Pure Bred Steer:

Wisummer – Nigel Steer; Stonham – James Forrest; Canfield Bury – Jonathan Clarke (Joint); Thornage – Thornage Independent Living (Joint)



*Large Herd and Overall Winner,  
Grafton Herd. John Williams  
and Andrew Benkiron*



*Senior Bull Shield Winner  
Mark Gilbert and John Williams*



*Senior Cow Winner  
John Williams and  
Mary Brookes*

**Cross Bred Steer:**

Seahawk Salers X – Ed Turner, Hasketon British White X – Sinfield Trust

**Suckling Calf:**

Regency Leading Lady – Charles Clack

Capel Manor Lou Lou – Capel Manor College

Ladlers Bull calf 300118 – James Rea

**Cross Bred Suckling Calf:**

Lavenham Brook Shorthorn X – Lady Getty

Seahawk Salers X – Ed Turner

**New Entrants:**

Wilsummer – Nigel Steer; Hasketon – Sinfield Trust

Regency – Charles Clack (Joint)

Wicklewood – Nicola Goodings (Joint)



*Youngstock Winner Hopeham Herd  
John Williams and Sarah Barnes*

## **Eastern Area Herd Competition**

### **Judges Report—John Williams**

I would like to thank the Red Poll Cattle Society for asking me to judge the Eastern Area. It was a busy few days visiting the area and meeting some members for the first time. The area is what I call the “home land” of the breed so with six large herds and thirteen small herds, including three of the Colleges, and some newly established herds I had quite a task in front of me.

I was greatly impressed with the quality of the cattle in the herds, I must say not a bad animal amongst them, a real credit to all their owners. The cattle were in good condition, we have had a good grass growing year though.

So getting down to the judging. I was looking for uniformity throughout the herd, good level top lines, depth in body and good movement throughout. I like to see nice tidy udders, well attached without too many extra teats. I like to see a herd which is working for its living, producing quality well grown calves for their age.

On the individual classes, very difficult decisions had to be made with numerous excellent quality cattle viewed.

A number of senior stock bulls, all in prime working condition together with a number of young bulls showing great potential, made the judging of these particularly difficult.

The cow classes were again very difficult to judge in all age classes. The final decisions being very close. The heifer class was particularly difficult as there were so many excellent animals to choose from, many of these will have a fantastic future within the breed.

The final results were as I saw the cattle on the day, I’m sure that if I’d seen them a few weeks later things would have changed and different results being seen.

Finally I would like to congratulate everyone who entered for the presentation of their stock, as previously stated a real credit to you all, the breed I’m sure is in great hands for the future. I would also like to thank everyone for their hospitality it really is a pleasure going around the herds meeting fellow breeders and members of the Society.

## Midlands Area Herd Competition—Results

Judge: Terry Mancey

### Large Herd:

John Pochin – Pochin Herd

**Reserve** – not given as there were four herds of equal merit

### Small Herd:

David Blunt – Abbey Herd

Virginia Dawes – Hinwick Herd

Ted and Sarah Clover – Belsar Herd

### Overall:

John Pochin – Pochin Herd

### Youngstock:

N.P. Foster and Partners – Canute Herd

David Blunt – Abbey Herd

John Pochin – Pochin Herd

### Stock Bull:

Little Linton Ferdinand in the Watgate Herd – David Hunt

Hopeham Heritage in the Pochin Herd - John Pochin

Kemerton Earl Grey in the Lawford Herd – Martin Holdings

### Homebred Senior Cow:

Abbey Crocus – David Blunt

Pochin Kilworth – John Pochin

Hinwick Clementine – Virginia Dawes

### Junior Homebred Cow:

Belsar Helen – Ted and Sarah Clover

Shuttleworth Florence – Shuttleworth College

Little Linton Grace – Sam Taylor

### Homebred Heifer:

Watgate Lily – David Hunt

Newhaven Unique Hilary – Jenny Bellamy

Abbey Juniper – David Blunt

### Progeny Group:

Progeny of Royal Roseman – Pochin

Lyddington, Newbold & Newark—John Pochin

Progeny of Admergill Duke – Canute Linus, Lady and Kacee – N.P. Foster and Partners

Progeny of Appleton Commodore – Abbey Iris, Jamesia & Honeysuckle – David Blunt

### 3 Related Females:

Andrew Frederick Berta, Shuttleworth Florence and Shuttleworth India – Shuttleworth College

Pochin Kibworth, Oxford and calf 100600 – John Pochin

Abbey Crocus, Iris and Jacaranda – David Blunt

### Pure Bred Steer:

Furroway No 500131 - Paul and Alison Wisden

Pochin No 500506 – John Pochin

Abbey steer – David Blunt



*Midlands Area Large Herd Winner  
John Pochin with Judge Terry Mancey*



*Small Herd Winner  
David Blunt with Terry Mancey*

**Cross Bred Steer:**

Abbey South Devon X – David Blunt

Watergate Angus X – David Hunt

Lawford Blonde X – Martin Holdings

**Suckling Calf:**

Lawford No 1070 – Martin Holdings

Hollingmarsh Lin – Martin & Caroline Kellner

Furroway Liberty – Paul and Alison Wisden

**Cross Bred Suckling Calf:**

Abbey No 300142, South Devon X – David Blunt

Hollingmarsh Leroy, Charolais X – Martin and Caroline Kellner

Lawford No 1058, Blonde X – Martin Holdings

**Pure Bred Dairy Cow:**

Ironstone Hilary 8<sup>th</sup> in the Newhaven Herd – Jenny Bellamy

**Cross Bred Dairy Cow:**

Newhaven No 2041 – Jenny Bellamy

Newhaven N0 2013 – Jenny Bellamy

New Entrants: Paul and Alison Wisden – Furroway Herd

**Northern Area Herd Competition—Results**

**Judge: David Hunt**

**Large Herd:**

S. G. Prescott and Sons - Woldsman Herd

John and Helen Langley - Oaklands Herd

**Small Herd:**

Tracy Vaughan - Riddings Herd

Helen Arthan - Chorlton Lane Herd

John Williams - Pinguis Herd

**Overall:** S.G. Prescott and Sons

**Youngstock:**

Oaklands Herd – John and Langley

Woldsman Herd – S. G. Prescott and Sons

Pinguis Herd - John Williams

**Stock Bull:**

Pinguis Frederick – John Williams

Appleton Okovango – S.G. Prescott and Sons

Mepshall Moon – Helen Arthan

**Homebred Senior Cow:**

Chorlton Lane Thyme - Helen Arthan

Riddings Ella Bella - Tracy Vaughan

Cheshire East Council, Tatton Park – Tatton

Bluebell

**Junior Homebred Cow:**

Riddings Gina – Tracy Vaughan

Chorlton Lane Hokey Cokey – Helen Arthan

Pear Tree Zara – Alan Bickerton



*Large Herd and Overall Winner  
Ben Prescott and David Hunt*

**Homebred Heifer:**

Woldsman J-Thirty Seven - S. G. Prescott and Sons

Moreton Fiona – Helen and Terry Mancey

Pinguis Emily 19<sup>th</sup> - John Williams

**Progeny Group:**

*Progeny of Nobodys Eclipse:* Riddings Inka, Isabelle and Ivy - Tracy Vaughan

*Progeny of Seahawk Condor:*

Woldsman J- Thirty Seven, J-Thirty Eight & J-Forty – S. G. Prescott & Sons

*Progeny of Appleton King Edward:*

Appleton Gertrude 21<sup>st</sup>, Grizzle 18<sup>th</sup>, Daffodil 19<sup>th</sup> - Andrew Griffiths.

**3 Related Females:**

Chorlton Lane Thyme, Hokey Cokey and I-I – Helen Arthan

Riddings Ella Bella, Inka & Kit – Tracy Vaughan

Pinguis Emily 19<sup>th</sup>, Emily 21<sup>st</sup> and Emily 22<sup>nd</sup> – John Williams

**Pure Bred Steer:**

Oaklands No 154 – John and Helen Langley

Chorlton Lane No 125 – Helen Arthan

Riddings No 085 - Tracy Vaughan

**Cross Bred Steer:**

Simmental X no 01767 – S. G. Prescott and Sons

Simmental X No 095 - Tracy Vaughan

**Suckling Calf:**

Chorlton Lane No 500148 - Helen Arthan

Pentrehen No 200062 - Andrew Griffiths

Oaklands Sunshine 4<sup>th</sup> – John and Helen Langley

**Cross Bred Suckling Calf:**

Red Angus X No 00169 – Helen and Terry Mancey

**Pure Bred Dairy Cow:**

Chorlton Lane Jonesey – Huw Foulkes

Chorlton Lane Jacky – Huw Foulkes

Chorlton Lane Julia – Huw Foulkes

**New Entrants:**

Leaside Herd - Chris Dedman

Pentrefelin Herd - Huw Foulkes

Pentrehen Herd - Andrew Griffiths



*Woldsman Finishing Cattle*

## Northern Herd Competition

### Judges Report—David Hunt

As always it was a huge honour to be asked to judge the herd competition and this year judging the northern region was very special after such a difficult year. There were 14 herds to judge and each one was a huge credit to the owners and the Society.

Sally and I began up in County Durham with Chris Dedman and his Leaside Herd, a lovely herd of cattle very well managed and a real credit to Chris. He explained to me at great length that he had retired and planned to take life a little easier, but I saw no evidence of that whatsoever. His enthusiasm was infectious and it certainly showed with his cattle. We then travelled south to East Yorkshire to visit Steven Prescott and the Woldsman Herd. I have seen this herd before and again I could not help being impressed with the quality of cattle Stephen had on show. 60 years of breeding and judging Red Polls certainly showed through and the uniformity of the herd was a joy to see. It is a very typical Wold farm with a proportion of land not suitable for arable cropping, this grassland is ideally suited to Red Polls and sheep and it was quite apparent that they were contributing very well to the bottom line. His cattle are well thought of throughout the country and we saw many of them as the foundation stock of other herds we visited.

The following day we visited Caroline Wilson near Matlock. Caroline has a group of youngstock brought over from Suffolk from her brother's herd, I was very impressed with her enthusiasm and knowledge of the stock and very much look forward to seeing this fledging Red Poll herd develop and expand.

It was then on to see Terry and Helen Mancy, as always a very warm welcome and an interesting visit viewing a well-respected herd and some great facilities for the cattle. The Moreton Herd is managed on a mixture of home and wildlife trust grazing and again we saw how well our breed thrives on pasture without supplementary feeding. Terry and Helen have been helping many new entrants and some existing breeders with stock from their herd and it is a great reflection on their stock that they are the foundation of some new herds.

Next stop was to see Pat McLaughlin and the Marsh House Herd, a small herd but lacking nothing in quality and very well fleshed cows with good breed characteristics, Pat has some enviable stock and is always in the money at many summer shows.

Tracy Vaughan and the Riddings Herd nestled just outside Denstone, was a delight to visit, just six breeding cows and 21 head in the herd but everyone a real gem. It quickly became apparent that this was a very special herd and difficult to see any animal which did not immediately please the eye. Tracy is a big advocate of regenerative farming and mob grazing and she should be very proud in what she has achieved with her farm. In the Junior Cow class Gina was a clear standout and the progeny group sired by Nobody's Eclipse was not to be beaten. Tracy clearly was not only a very forward thinking breeder but also keen to take advice and help. It was a pleasure to meet Caroline and Tim Hurdley, prize winning stockmen in their own right who took a keen interest in the herd and the Red Poll breed and great neighbours. Overall a most impressive herd very well managed and a clear winner of the small herd class.



Last visit for the day was to Helen Arthan and her Chorlton Lane Herd, it was a while since my last visit to view Helen's cattle and it was a pleasure to see her quality stock. As always Helen was striving to improve her breeding and it certainly showed with some impressive family lines, her group of 3 related females Chorlton Lane Thyme, Hokey Cokey and I-I were the standout in the class and Thyme as senior cow rearing her 13th calf a well deserved winner of that class.

It was nice to see Thomas Ball join the visit and pick out his favourites in the herd and a credit to Helen that she is so encouraging to the younger generation. With a smart new shed just completed the future looks good at Malpas.

After a pleasant stay at the Carden Arms it was off to see Andrew Griffiths and his Pentreheren Herd, Andrew is very lucky to farm in such an idyllic spot.

The herd is relatively new and his stock was sourced from Tony Barratt's famous Appleton Herd, so there was tremendous potential for the future. The progeny group sired by Appleton King Edward was quick to catch my eye as was Grizzle who had an exceptional udder. This will be a herd to watch in the future and Andrew looks to be developing a really nice herd of Red Polls.

From Welshpool we travelled to Wellington and the home of the best chocolate cake in Shropshire, John and Helen Williams and the Pingus Herd are based there.

John of course needs no introduction as he is the current Society Chairman, and has enjoyed much success in the show ring over many years. The herd consists of 11 cows and their followers, all the stock were very quiet which was to expected and of course Pingus Frederick was the standout animal in the herd and I placed him first in the Stock Bull class. Great presence, good top line and tail head with not too much daylight beneath him, a bull which has done John very proud. Many of John's cows had really nice udders and his group of 3 related females were great examples of the dual purpose breed we all love.

It would be remiss of me not to mention John's strong commitment to helping the wider community around Wellington and supporting Young Farmers is one of many organisation John devotes so much time to. The encouragement to Stephen and his local club is immense and I know how proud John was that it was due to some help by Stephen's friends that a very nice new shed for their cattle is now complete.

From Wellington we travelled to Bunbury to visit the Oaklands Herd of John and Helen Langley. This relatively new herd is one of the only two large herds in this year's Northern region competition. There are around 150 animals in the herd and the management is second to none. Some of the foundation stock came from Simon Temple's Bowland Herd and the Appleton Herd.

A totally forage based system with no concentrate food used at all, but real attention to detail with the grassland management using mob grazing on a paddock system. Conserved silage is graded with each bale marked to denote its quality to help manage the winter feeding especially to help with the fattening cattle.

Weaning of the calves was aided by using nose clips to minimise stress to both the cow and the calf. Regular weighing takes place to monitor weight gain which

was impressive with steers gaining 1kg a day. Helen and John have built an impressive range of cattle buildings and have invested wisely. Permanent stock fencing with intermediate electric fencing enables the cattle to access fresh grazing on a regular rotational basis. Helen has worked hard to develop a local trade for her beef with animals killed at 500kg gracing tables at many local restaurants as well as a range of local butchers. This herd is being managed on a very commercial basis with a real focus on meeting the demands of the end user, who could argue with that!

Finally that day we went to see Alan Bickerton at Middlewich and his Pear Tree Herd. Ten cows in the herd, a real commercial herd with great management from Alan. Zara stood out as a lovely example in the junior homebred class and numerous suckling calves looked like they would pay their way as well as any breed.

After another evening at The Carden Arms it was off to see Huw Foulkes and his Pentreflin Herd. Huw works locally away from the farm as a herdsman but has an unbelievable passion for the Red Poll and its ability to milk well from a forage based system. Huw is building up a fresh milk business and at present is milking his three cows when he has finished his shift next door. They are giving 15 - 20 litres a day from purely grass, and also rearing their own calves. Whilst they go through the old parlour they are at present being milked using a portable bucket milking machine.

Huw has four in-calf heifer due to join the herd (one in calf to Wagu) so the future looks bright. It was a most interesting visit seeing milking in progress and seeing yet again what a versatile breed we all are involved with.

Off then to see the Rowlands family at Mickle Trafford. This Plemondestowe herd is very much a family affair with both Ruth and young Naomi very much involved with the management of the animals.

The farm is in organic conversion and is managed in harmony with wildlife as well as supporting some fine stock. Red Polls have certainly fitted the ethos of this farming system and the family should be very proud of what they are achieving.

Last but certainly not least to Tatton Park to see Sam Walton. Sam is a really passionate stockman and is Farm Manager at the Cheshire East Council run Home Farm at Tatton. The herd consists of 11 cows which were in extremely good order, always out wintered and just parkland grass as forage.

Some really well bred cows with all the good Red Poll traits. I particularly liked the udders on these cows which were a superb example of good breeding. The group of three related females, Tatton Violet, Yvie and Zara really stood out as we look around the lovely setting of Tatton Park.

In conclusion a thoroughly enjoyable few days looking around some lovely herds of cattle managed by some very passionate breeders, well done to everyone who entered, you should all be very proud of your cattle and you are great ambassadors for our breed.

It was very difficult to judge and place many of the classes as the standard was so high and especially for the winner of the large herd, two exceptional herds both had so many strong points, both really deserved to be equal but there had to be just one winner so I went for the long established Woldsman Herd mainly due to the depth of breeding and overall history of the herd and of the breed.

## Southern Area Herd Competition—Results

Judge: Tony Barratt

### Large Herd:

Peter Irish - Fordscroft Herd

Caddy and Reading – East Knoyle Herd

### Small Herd:

David and Simon Tompkins - Boames Herd

Anthea and Jeff Daw - Wheatfield Herd (Joint reserve)

Rebecca Charley - Ruscombe Herd (Joint reserve)

### Overall:

David and Simon Tompkins – Boames Herd

### Youngstock:

David and Simon Tompkins - Boames Herd

Rebecca Charley - Ruscombe Herd

Peter Irish - Fordscroft Herd

### Stock Bull:

Hepworth Conker – Rebecca Charley

Abbeyvale Boyo – Roger Thomas

Mendip Icon – John and Sandy Davis

### Homebred Senior Cow:

Abbeyvale Dryas – Roger Thomas

Ruscombe Woodsia – Rebecca Charley

Abbeyvale Gentian – Roger Thomas

### Junior Homebred Cow:

Wheatfield Future – Anthea and Jeff Daw

Mendip Hope – John and Sandy Davis

Boames Gwen – David and Simon Tompkins

### Homebred Heifer:

Wheatfield Jenny Wren – Anthea and Jeff Daw

Boames Jennifer – David and Simon Tompkins

Ruscombe Jasmine – Rebecca Charley

### Progeny Group:

*Progeny of Appleton Barratt.*

Boames Isabel, Isabella and Ingrid – David and Simon Tompkins

*Progeny of Hepworth Conker.*

Ruscombe Jasmine, Juglans and Jade – Rebecca Charley

*Progeny of Woldsman Brigadier.*

Abbeyvale Ginger, Coffee and Coca – Jason and Hannah Griffiths

### Three Related Females:

Wheatfield Future, Imogen's Lark and Jenny Wren – Anthea and Jeff Daw

Ruscombe Woodsia, CandyTuft and Jade – Rebecca Charley

Boames Gwen, Jade and Lola – David and Simon Tompkins

### Pure Bred Steer:

Ruscombe No 400124 – Rebecca Charley

Wellshead No 300135 – Lord Huntingdon

Boames No 200032 – David and Simon Tompkins



*Small Herd and Overall Winners  
Simon and David Tompkins with  
Society President Quentin Edwards*

**Cross Bred Steer:**

East Knoyle No 674 (Red Angus X) - Caddy and Reading  
Boames No 300033 (Limousin X) – David and Simon  
Tompkins

**Suckling Calf:**

Boames Lily – David and Simon Tompkins  
Ruscombe HC 300143 – Rebecca Charley  
Wheatfield Lorraine's Linnet – Anthea and Jeff Daw

**Cross Bred Suckling Calf:**

Wellshead No 200148 (Red Angus X) – Lord Huntingdon  
East Knoyle No 679 (Red Angus X) – Caddy and Reading

**New Entrants:**

Wernfendigaid Herd – Jason and Hannah Griffiths



*Best Steer Winner  
Bryan Coventry Manager for Lord  
Huntingdon with Quentin Edwards*

## **Southern Area Herd Competition Presentation**

On beautiful sunny October day eighteen Society members and friends gathered at Boames Farm, home of the Boames Herd owned by David, Gillian and Simon Tompkins for the presentation of trophies and certificates for the Southern Area Herd Competition, farm walk and lunch.

Following tea and coffee and short speech of welcome, explanation of the origins and ethos of the farm and herd, we all made the short walk past old farm buildings and barns to view the main herd of in-calf cows who were perfectly gathered together almost posing for us beneath mature oak trees. With the sun shining on the glossy chestnut coats it was a beautiful sight, many of us were very happy to be able to gather again and enjoy the sight.

Following discussions about bulls, ages of cows and calving patterns we all walked over the busy A34 by a bridge that splits the farm in half. Turning onto a path which took us through woodland containing a mixed variety of native trees and plants to a sloping field, surrounded by mature hedges and more magnificent large trees, to view the youngstock. This made for more discussion about the finer points of the cattle, the cattle again being very co-operative and staying close by for inspection.

Following inspection a happy group of Red Poll enthusiasts returned to the barn now beautifully laid out for lunch with white table cloths and vases of flowers from Gillian's garden.

In the absence of Tony Barratt who judged the competition, Society President Quentin Edwards presented the trophies and certificates. Photos of happy winners preceeded lunch of individual boxes of beautifully presented local cheese, bread, tomatoes and apples. Wonderful homemade cakes, tea and coffee followed.

We then all said our goodbyes, as we left the barn it started to rain but no bother we had had an excellent day.

*Susanne Bowler*

## National Herd Competition—Judges Review, Quentin Edwards

### 1. *Small Herd. Boames Herd - David and Gillians Tompkins plus son Simon.*

Maggie and I arrived at Boames Farm to be greeted by Simon Tompkins, David's son, who is taking over the running of the farm. The herd, which has been going for seven years, consists of eighteen cows plus followers which father and son have been growing from their original purchase. The result is a fine consistency of cattle, glowing with health and very tame: the care and affection for the herd were immediately apparent; the whole herd came to say hello and lingered to inspect us while we chatted.

The farm business is work-in-progress and has concentrated on developing the herd rather than securing the commercial benefits to be had but David and Simon have won planning permission for the construction of two substantial cattle sheds to house the herd during the winter. This will be a huge step forward as current housing is on the far side of the farm whereas the new build will be very close to home. The battle to win approval for their future plans has clearly attracted local support and Parish Council encouragement but the planners needed persuading. After a great deal of effort this has been achieved.

The gear change from small to large herd will raise other challenges. The practical implications of doubling the herd may require a review of current winter feed provision as double the number of small bales will be required and moving hay mechanically will save time and effort when Simon's energies will be needed for managing the growing business. Large balers are expensive for relatively small farm units and historically the Tompkins had a lucrative side line in selling hay to the horse fraternity. The farm has been producing plenty of saleable hay but with doubling of the herd, land which has been let away will be taken back in hand to provide for the extra herd's consumption. One other string to their bow is the growing of wildflower seed and with 30 acres of woodland to look after as well there is clear enthusiasm for environmentally engaged farming.

With growth comes the need for a more active farming strategy for the product. The commercial market can be mean in responding to Red Poll's undoubted meat quality in texture and taste. Finding a private or direct market may be the way to maximise income but takes time and effort. It will be interesting to see what Simon decides to do.

### 2. *Small Herd. David and Lis Blunt - Abbey Herd*

We next drove on to the Abbey Herd near Milton Keynes. David Blunt has worked for Richard and Virginia Dawes and discovered Red Polls through them. In the last few years he has gone independent and, as a tenant on Dawes' land, has been carefully developing his own herd. David is an experienced stockman with a very good eye for cattle and a clear vision of what he is trying to achieve. Recently he has experimented with putting his beautiful Red Poll cows to a magnificent South Devon bull and the muscular development and chunkier frame of a more beefy animal is evident in the latest generation of calves.

However, I sense this experiment will be temporary and he will return to pure bred cattle. In many ways he is already achieving what he is after with his pure bred heifers, now at two years old nearly ready to join the bull. I saw fine examples of how purebreds can move towards an entirely beef confirmation - he is not far off. Clearly, what is lost is the dual purpose quality of the traditional Red Poll, the sleeker lines, the wonderful milky udders but the commercial world will not be ignoring David's Red Polls for much longer and he is getting good prices for them.

To a large extent, David's system and business have been inherited from what he was doing before and the layout of his handling yard may need rethinking if he is going to expand the herd by the ten extra cows that he plans. He is also engaged in some interesting bartering with local arable farmers, muck for straw, which may point the way for many of us as the Brave New World of nitrates limitation and carbon sequestration begins to bite. The Parkland he farms on two sites is ancient pasture and Red Polls don't need the highly nutritious grasses in abundance to thrive.

By keeping his eyes on the bottom line and picking his cattle with great care, avoiding anything that he would not be proud to show, David stands to have a successful herd that will be producing very desirable breeding stock as well as good meat carcasses.

### *3. Small Herd. Riddings Herd - Tracy and Richard Vaughan*

The Riddings Herd has been formed from Woldsman stock and Tracy has been steadily building her herd since 2007 but has had to pause as a result of illness and decided to sell some of her cattle. In the process she and Richard have carefully reassessed where they wish to go with a Red Poll venture. Their small family farm is part of a group of original smallholdings sold off by the local estate, each comprising around 40 acres and has wonderful views over the surrounding country. The decision to join forces with the family from next door seems a natural progression. They will share the 80 acres and the management of the Red Polls and a small flock of Portland sheep owned by Helen and Tim. It is planned that Helen will take on the management and day-to-day work of the farm while Richard and Tim continue to work elsewhere earning a more secure salary. Helen and Tim bring 30 acres of woodland to the enterprise which can become additional grazing land and a new cattle shed currently used solely for sheep. The plan is to regrow Tracy's herd and concentrate on the breeding and quality of stock as part of an environmentally sustainable farm.

The remaining stock Tracy holds consists of seven mature cows and their calves and four yearling heifers from the previous calving. The cows need to achieve greater consistency but are good animals with tidy udders, good length and excellent meat carrying frames. The heifers, all sired by the splendid but ageing bull, Creting Zeus, formed a very nicely defined bunch and were thoroughly enjoying their extensive woodland pasture. Zeus has done a good job in enhancing the body shape and defining confirmation that will help to set the character of the herd for the future.

Not surprisingly the Riddings land is under stocked and the new team will need to be careful that pastures do not revert and end up producing less. The plan to use electric fences in each field to define a mob grazing paddock system is good but will depend for its success on more mouths to feed. The sheep will have a roll to play too, cleaning pastures after the cattle.

Creeping thistle and docks are making their presence felt and, while the insects will thrive, a balance must be struck. Pure wild will not sustain the stock as well as managed variety and more varied leys might be a way forward in the future. The marketing and promotion of the herd is for the future but the aim is to ensure that the farming business sustains itself.

There is real excitement about this project and it has clearly been a therapeutic process for Tracy.

### *4. Large herd. The Pochin Herd - owned by John and Jane Pochin, managed by Andrew and Janet Kirk.*

The Pochin estate is very close to Leicester which is encroaching steadily on the rural beauty of this magnificent location. Andrew Kirk is both tenant and employee of the Pochins and manages their land as well as contracting for other neighbours and overseeing the Red Poll herd. It is a huge operation and quiet efficiency and a dedicated team were clear indicators of success. The scale of the operation was truly impressive and we were grateful to Andrew and Janet for giving us so much of their time and to the Pochins for showing us their herd.

These Red Poll are a small part of a much bigger beef cattle enterprise on the estate and adjoining tenanted land, sometimes up to 900 animals at a time. Their function is to make good use of the park and be a fine decorative presence, both of which they achieve. Andrew was instructed to create a distinctive quality for the estate and he has achieved this magnificently, breeding out weaker traits and insuring strong but still elegant cattle,



the classic Red Poll reconsidered. Typically, he would be the first to admit that there is still much to do: the top line is not consistently straight enough and there are some residual lighter coloured animals in a generally dark herd but there is a good consistency across a fine herd of cattle. A very fine bull was seen but he is currently lame. Andrew was confident he will recover and the foot trimmer was due soon. Achieving the objectives in a large herd takes time and patience: there are setbacks and surprises on the way but Andrew has taken on this extra task with great enthusiasm and has clearly enjoyed his involvement with Red Poll. Fitting them in with everything else he does requires ingenuity and some tough choices - the decision not to breed bulls at this stage being one of them.

We felt very privileged to have seen this beautiful estate and to admire the love and care with which it is maintained. The engagement in the local community, which amongst other things has inspired the local Barkby cricket team to the heights of the Premier League through the provision of a magnificent and beautifully maintained square and outfield, as well as a very fine pavilion and digital scoring board. Such engagement enriches the whole community and it is to be hoped that Leicester will appreciate its increasingly near neighbour.

We left Barkby to travel to another part of their land at Endmanthorpe to see a fine bunch of young stock. Here the impact of the breeding was clear to see in a very good group of heifers and steers. Their conformation was moving towards a more beefy profile with fuller rumps, neat and tight udders, with almost uniformly good top and bottom lines. The more consistent you get the more the exceptions show, but these still had plenty of growing to do.

Andrew spent about five hours showing us over much of the estate and sharing the worries that encroaching urban sprawl inevitably generates: the encounters with travellers courting hares, the feral children in some of the housing estates, a common thread in our visits has been the threats posed to cattle by public rights of way. Despite all this, the estate seems to rest round the magnificent James Wyatt designed house as a bastion of calm and civil conduct. We were privileged to see it.

*5. Large herd. The Woldsman Herd - Stephen Prescott, Andrew, Dorothy and their son Ben.*

The drive to Yorkshire was not as tiring as we had anticipated and we were strengthened by a delicious supper of Red Poll beef, real Yorkshire puddings and delicious home-grown vegetables on our arrival. The Prescott herd prefix Woldsman has been in existence for at least five generations and it is no exaggeration to say that the Prescott family, and Steven and Yvonne especially, have done a great deal to ensure the survival of Red Polls and to increase the quality of the National herd through the sale of Bulls and breeding heifers. Stephen's clear-headed determination to ensure that Red Polls pay their way as part of a large farm business has encouraged others to consider the Red Poll not only as a rewarding and enjoyable option for hobby farmers but as a precious breed with commercial potential. At the same time, Steven's presence on Council as a larger farmer has added weight and good sense to its deliberations and he and Yvonne have been warm hosts and engaging ambassadors for the breed over many years.

The sense of commercial purpose mentioned above has helped to shape the Woldsman herd and there has been a push to create a more saleable beefy version of Red Poll, whilst retaining the many temperamental qualities that make them such a pleasure to handle. Stephen, his son Andrew and grandson Ben have continued to experiment, to try cross breeding and to keep the herd paying. The extensive tour of the herd revealed some fine stock grazing over scattered fields - the journey round the whole operation was twenty six miles by car. As supervision falls increasingly to Andrew and Ben, the time involved will become an increasing factor and problems like the current state of eye infections which

seem to be recurring in the herd point to a need for isolation which is going to be tricky and time-consuming given the spread of the cattle.

The Yorkshire Wolds are a beautiful part of England with expansive views and hint of the proximity of even wider space in the form of the sea. This creates a feeling of exposure and the fine sweeping valleys in the terrain make a welcome protection from winds coming off the North Sea. It is also real corn land and harvest was well underway as we drove through miles of golden fields with the smell of corn in the air.

The Prescotts seem to be able to turn their hand to almost anything on their farms, from corn silos to quarrying their own chalk, from haulage businesses to bird seed supplying. Even more substantial barns have gone up since we last visited and all built on a carefully thought through plan for the big machines. They are a resilient and self-reliant family and it is good to see succession planning firmly in place. The next generation is already engaged in planning the future of the farm. We left them with a deep sense of admiration for what has been achieved so far and I hope that Red Polls will continue to be part of that in the future,

6. *Large herd. The Grafton Herd – The Countess of Euston, Managed by Estate Director Andrew Blenkiron.*

Driving onto the Euston Estate, it was difficult to work out where precisely we were on the Countess' land for this is the county of large estates and the presence of a Euston combine on the adjoining Eversley land finishing up harvest for them might have made it even harder to guess.

Once again we were presented with an immaculate and well-ordered large-scale farming operation: fields of onions, acres of harvested corn and a winding river with broad meadows grazed by Cheviot crosses and, of course, the wonderful glowing bronze of Red Poll - although as it was a bright sunny day, they were contriving to disappear in the shadows. Fortunately, our search for them was conducted by car so we did not spend hours searching in vain.

This is a magnificent estate with a strong feeling of long-standing high-quality production sharpened by the cutting edge of technology and a leading exponent of environmental stewardship. Everything serves the steady purpose of ensuring the estate makes money and it is cleverly interwoven with the new initiatives serving rather than suppressing the productivity of the land. Field margins are extensively planted with wildflower mixes, many of the species being rare. This enhances the pollinator and predator population for the crops and also provides inviting cover and food for pheasant and partridge. A huge anaerobic digester generates gas for fizzy drinks but also 8000 tons of rich fibre to enhance the estate's topsoil. The Red Poll herd was the best I have seen, having reached the consistency of uniform quality whilst maintaining the familiar quiet character and companionable animals. Again I encountered a very busy Estate Director who, besides the huge farming enterprise, is responsible for overseeing the safe passage of an array of big public events: the East of England Game Fair at the end of September, the Red Rooster Bluegrass and Blues Festival advertised as we were driving. All of these attract tens of thousands of people and involve meticulous planning and careful adjustments to the farming enterprise.

Andrew Blenkiron chooses to run the 60 cow Red Poll herd almost entirely by himself, justifying the decision by pointing out the handling advantages of the cattle being more biddable because they know him and were less likely to be flighty when confronted by unfamiliar people. But he also admits to enjoying the grounding business of caring for cattle. It is therapy in a high pressure job and means he is very much around the estate engaged in practical matters. This is good for his staff.

I was very much reminded of the number of times I've met old farmers whose memories go back to the 1950s and whose eyes light up at the mention of Red Poll.

There is something very companionable about them and people remember working with them with affection.

This herd was no exception for in addition to very good length and breadth of good beef breeding stock, tidy udders, there was a consistent glow of colour, lovely (to me) well-formed heads, bright clean eyes well apart, straight top lines with few rising tails and then, on top, a vigorous, enthusiastic, lively bunch of cattle, friendly and engaged, secure in their environment. It was clear that Andrew enjoyed looking after them.

*7. Small herd. Loudham Herd – Owned by Dr Mike Lynch, overseen by Estate Manager, Scott Jennings but managed day to day by Stockman Mark Gilbert.*

We left the Euston Estate after a tasty lunch provided by Jenny Blenkiron and drove towards Ipswich where we were due to visit the Loudham estate. This has been owned by Dr Mike Lynch for the last ten years, during which time he has been establishing a Red Poll herd. We were met by Mark Gilbert who is in charge of the cattle and the breeding program as well as maintaining the pastures. This is a good allocation of responsibility and he is clearly loving it. Arriving three years ago, he needed to pull the herd together and made the wise decision to cut back numbers in order to focus where the breed was going. The result is a herd in transition with several fine cows but not all of a piece yet. However, the young stock give a flavour of what is to come with improved confirmation and a lovely deep colour courtesy of their bull, Heathgate Frank, purchased from Denis Jenkins. He's a magnificent fellow, a good head, broad muzzle, eyes wide apart and with that warm curiosity that is one of the most appealing characteristics of the breed, the chest broad and deep, legs short and well spread to hold his substantial frame. As a genetic M1, he is a good example of what can be achieved and has put this herd on a promising footing for the future

Mark has a well-supported herd. There is good housing, scope for expansion and he can have what he needs to get things right. Just as there is room for greater consistency in the cattle, there is also the potential for more active pasture management to improve the lays and enable the land to carry more stock. It was good also to meet Nicole, Mark's assistant, a young woman coming into cattle management from a zoo background, looking after rhinos amongst other creatures! I didn't get the impression she would be phased by lively Red Polls.

The setting and the fine house and park make an attractive place to view Red Poll and again, here this breed can full fill another of its strengths; they look good in the landscape.

*8. Large herd. Fordscroft Herd - Peter Irish, wife Lilian and son Michael*

The final leg of our journey took us home to Cools for a pause and a catch up with our farm, then onto Peter Irish's farm at Crewkerne. Of all the finalists, Peter is probably the newest recruit to the Red Poll Cattle Society, but he brings a wealth of dairy cattle experience from having farmed on quite a large scale. Like many other cattlemen, he has decided to wind down by taking on a native breed. Over the years I have supplied Red Poll breeding stock to retiring farmers, vets, cattle dealers and others who find the idea of life without cattle inconceivable and they have chosen one of the breeds that have developed in the UK as the most attractive option. Again, the Red Poll has a quiet disposition, is naturally friendly and easy calving and handling. What's not to like?

Peter's herd, being relatively new, still displayed the variety of his sources, but it won't take long for the next few years to establish a more consistent pattern of animal. The layout of his farm has posed one or two challenges in that the cattle have been less than keen on making their way over extensive concrete dairy yards and are yet to come obediently to the call. I think Peter is experiencing something of the shock of exchanging dairy cattle for a beef herd, where the new relationship has to recognise that beef stock tend to have more of a mind of their own and are more easily called than driven.

At the same time, there's been some ingenious adaptations of the large dairy to its new occupants and I was particularly taken with the idea of metal bars across the old stalls so calves can have access to a protected space and can withdraw from the larger animals in the herd. Peter's dairy experience also leads him to be very hands-on and the treatments for preventing the dreaded Leptospirosis, BVD, Johnnes and IBR were rigorous and regular. He may allow himself to sit back a little as time moves on but there's no sign of that yet!

While Peter is getting to know his new cattle, his sons have developed a successful tourism business on the farm and beyond. Being quite close to the south coast suggested the potential for self-catering converted farm buildings, shepherds' huts, yurts and roundhouses. Michael is convinced that a major draw is the inclusion of hot tubs for many of the units and their high occupancy rates seem to bear this out. A small lake forms an attractive focal point for many of the dwellings but the real wow factor is the stunning setting of this farm. Dominated by the hill site of the 12th century Crewkerne castle, the farm nestles in a bowl formed by surrounding hills. It is one of the loveliest settings for a farm I have seen and I include my own in that!

At the end of our visit, Peter's wife, Lillian gave us a lovely cup of tea and homemade biscuits. Maggie and I were very grateful to all our hosts during the trip for their kind hospitality and generosity with their time. We really enjoyed seeing this wide variety of farming enterprises and the common denominator was some very fine cattle. Red Polls are in a good place to face the challenging future of farming.

Large Herd and Overall Winner – Euston Estate's Grafton Herd  
Small Herd winner. - The Tompkins Family's Boames Herd

## **Westmorland Show—Results**

### **Judge: Anthea Daw**

#### **Bull any age**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Jeremiah—J. R. Williams
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chorlton Lane Lordie Lordie—Helen Arthan

#### **Cow in milk or in calf born before 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Chorlton Lane Fanilla—Helen Arthan
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chorlton Lane Hokey Cokey—Helen Arthan
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Bowland Flame—Sally Temple
- 4<sup>th</sup> Pinguis Emily 21<sup>st</sup>—J. R. Williams

#### **Female born in 2019**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Alexa 2<sup>nd</sup>—J. R. Williams
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Measham—J. R. Williams

#### **Heifer born in 2020**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Morton Lady Kenya—Helen and Terry Mancey
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Poppy—J. R. Williams

#### **Pairs**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Helen Arthan
- 2<sup>nd</sup> J. R. Williams
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Helen and Terry Mancey

#### **Champion**

Chorlton Lane Fanilla—Helen Arthan

#### **Reserve Champion**

Pinguis Jeremiah—J. R. Williams



## Shropshire Show—Results

Judge: Mark Cheetham

### **Bull**

1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Frederick—J. R. Williams

2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Jeremiah —J. R. Williams

### **Cow in calf or with calf at foot**

1<sup>st</sup> Chorlton Lane Hokey Cokey—Helen Arthan

2<sup>nd</sup> Pear Tree Zora—Alan Bickerton

3<sup>rd</sup> Pinguis Emily 21<sup>st</sup>—J. R. Williams

### **Heifer born in 2019**

1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Alexa 2<sup>nd</sup>—J. R. Williams

2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Measham —J. R. Williams

### **Heifer born in 2020**

1<sup>st</sup> Pear Tree Katie-Ann —Alan Bickerton

2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Emily 23<sup>rd</sup> —J. R. Williams

3<sup>rd</sup> Pinguis Poppy—J. R. Williams

### **Pair**

J. R. Williams

Alan Bickerton

**Champion** - Pinguis Frederick—J. R. Williams

**Reserve** - Chorlton Lane Hokey Cokey—Helen Arthan

## Staffordshire Show—Results

Judge: Joy Broughton

### **Bull born in 2019 or 2020**

1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Jeremiah—J. R. Williams

### **Bull born before 2019**

1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Frederick—J. R. Williams

### **Heifer born in 2020**

1<sup>st</sup> Moreton Lady Kenya—H and T Mancy

2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Emily—J. R. Williams

### **Maiden Heifer born in 2019**

1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Measham—J. R. Williams

### **Heifer in-calf or in milk under three years of age at 1<sup>st</sup> calving**

1<sup>st</sup> Pinguis Alexa—J. R. Williams

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

1<sup>st</sup> Chorlton Lane Fanilla—H R Arthan

2<sup>nd</sup> Pinguis Emily—J. R. Williams

3<sup>rd</sup> Moreton Lady Kenya—H and T Mancy

4<sup>th</sup> Bowland Flame—S. Temple

**Champion** - Chorlton Lane Fanilla—H R Arthan

**Reserve** - Pinguis Jeremiah—J. R. Williams

### **Group of 3 owned by the same exhibitor**

1<sup>st</sup> J. R. Williams

2<sup>nd</sup> H and T Mancy



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## The Annual Red Poll Cattle Society Dinner

held at The White Hart Hotel, Salisbury  
30<sup>th</sup> October 2021

After missing a year due to the pandemic it was a great opportunity to catch up with so many members for a really splendid dinner. Fifty five people attended and the hotel went out of their way to give us a wonderful evening. All the usual amusements were included with Terina Booker arranging a draw with prizes as diverse as halters and a spanner set plus of course bottles and chocolates!



Tony Barratt presided over an auction of two sets of Stephen Prescott's fascinating biography and a beautiful turned yew bowl from Ray Bowler.



The trophies for the small herd winner, the Boames Herd and the large herd and overall winner, the Grafton Herd were presented by the President Quentin Edwards.



John Williams presented The Diana Flack Memorial Shield to Ray Bowler for all his work over the past year—this is an annual award for work done in the past year.

*Sally Grimwood*

## REGIONAL FIELD OFFICER ARRANGEMENTS

The Society operates a system of Honorary Regional Field Officers, as it has become clear that it is very difficult for one individual to cover the whole country. The system is co-ordinated by our Secretary, Ray Bowler. A list of Regional Field Officers is given below with contact details:

**Ray Bowler**—01245600032/07906761206 [secretary@redpoll.co.uk](mailto:secretary@redpoll.co.uk)

Area: South Suffolk, Essex, Greater London, Kent, Berkshire, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Devon & Cornwall

**Joy Broughton**—07961428431 [zulu623@gmail.com](mailto:zulu623@gmail.com)

Area: Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire

**John Williams**—07860269044 [jrw2@btinternet.com](mailto:jrw2@btinternet.com)

Area: Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Northumberland, Westmorland and Cumberland, North Wales

**Anthea Daw**—07508136409 [antheadaw@live.com](mailto:antheadaw@live.com)

Area: Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, South Wales

**John Anderson**—07833664121 [borenichjohn@gmail.com](mailto:borenichjohn@gmail.com)

Area: Scotland

If you wish to buy or sell cattle you should contact Ray Bowler on 01245600032 or 07906761206 or [secretary@redpoll.co.uk](mailto:secretary@redpoll.co.uk). Ray will pass the details to the relevant Regional Field Officer and arrange for inclusion on the website if you so desire.

If you have any problems or queries please feel free to contact: John Williams (Chairman) 07860269044 [jrw2@btinternet.com](mailto:jrw2@btinternet.com)



# RED POLL

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## West Country Travels – July 2021

Tuesday 6th July saw me travel to the West Country to undertake a tour of members in the area.

I went as far south as is possible in the UK starting off in Penzance. John Williams met me there as he was joining me for the first part of the tour.

After staying the night, the first visit on Wednesday was to Kenny Trembath's Sunset Herd. We had been there a couple of years previously to discuss the setting up of the herd on conservation sites in the St. Just area.



I have to say the cattle looked in excellent condition, the calves by Fedw Melchior looking particularly impressive. The project was working very well with everyone concerned very pleased with what was happening with regards to the fauna and flora on the sites and in the way the cattle are fitting into the management routine of these sites. The weather wasn't the best but we eventually found the cattle sheltering from the driving rain up on the moor, it certainly shows the diversity of the breed.

Next port of call was to Lionel Mann's Arthur's Herd just outside Falmouth. Once more the weather wasn't playing ball. A herd of about 20 cows of mixed breed

cattle, mainly Blonde crosses but with nine Red Polls amongst them. The cattle looked well with the in-calf heifers looking particularly impressive. Their sire is Lavenham Sir Galahad, they are in-calf to Bowland Ferdinand for



September calving. Lionel is very pleased with them saying they are easy to manage and just get on with life without and complications, he has been particularly pleased with their ease of calving which he says isn't always the case with the cross bred cattle. He has used AI in the previous few years but the service is becoming difficult so a bull might have to be hired next year.

Next call was to visit Viv and Audrey Caust in St. Austell. As you will all know Viv has been a member of the Society for over sixty years owning the Levalsa Herd. Although no longer having any cattle he still likes to know what's going on in the Society. He has been Chairman, President and served on the Council for many of those sixty years. He has promoted the breed in the South West all of this time and is still an active member of the RBST in Cornwall. Whilst there I collect a full set of Herdbooks which Viv has donated to the Society.

Travelling up to Devon to Will Brush's farm at Stoke Rivers the rain continued, not nice travelling. Will has recently re-located from Essex to a farm in an outstanding beautiful part of the country. The farm is a bit run down at present but Will has plenty of plans which will bring back the farm into a really good place. The twenty plus cows have settled well into their new environment and look very well. A local farmer has persuaded him to try a Stabiliser bull as Will had to sell Fedw Melchior due to his daughters coming into the herd. The first crop of Stabiliser cross calves, I have to say, look very well so it will be good to see how they do. Apparently there is a good trade for Stabiliser stores in the area, thankfully Will is very keen to keep the Red Polls as his maternal animal though. He had five fifteen month old heifers for sale as he doesn't want to increase the herd size and the majority of his cows are young so doesn't want any replacements in the immediate future. John then went home.

I went to stay the night with Liz and Malcolm Burbridge in Chulmleigh. Liz and Malcolm re-located from Essex a few years ago taking their Red Poll cattle with them. Today the HBC Herd consists of ten cows plus youngstock. Once again the cattle look really well with the 2021 crop of calves by Lavalsa Jacky Boy looking the part.



Hospitality of the highest order was given, a very big thank you to them. Jacky Boy has recently been sold and they are going to use AI in the future as keeping a bull the whole year around has proven difficult. The chosen bull this year being Bowland Ferdinand.

The next morning saw me travel across Devon to the newly established Fortescue Herd of Jilly Greed. This organic herd has been formed with cattle purchased from Liz Burbridge and Peter Irish, at present consisting of fifteen cows plus bull Appleton Eragon. They hope to increase numbers, in fact they have purchased the heifers from Will Brush.

The farm consists of about 100 sucker cows, mainly South Devon and South Devon x Blondes. They are looking to the Red Polls to put some milk back into their



herd, when I visited the bull was in with a group of cross bred bulling heifers. The herd is managed on extensive grazing with the cattle moved regularly onto fresh grazing, all the leys being an environmental mix. I look forward to seeing how this herd develops.



I then went to visit Nigel Walters and his Fovant Herd. Last year Nigel and his family moved from Wiltshire to Devon. The Red Polls were purchased a couple of



years ago from Rosemary Philipson-Stow when she sold the Underhills Herd, some 50 cattle being purchased. A few cattle had previously been purchased from Merna Merrett's Seafeld Herd and bull Heathgate Floyd from Denis Jenkins.

The aim of the Red Polls is to graze conservations areas of the farm and to eventually milk some of them. The main enterprise of the farm is a 150 cow dairy herd of which 80 are Ayrshires, which they took with them from Wiltshire, the rest being Friesians which came with the farm. There are a few Red Poll



cross Ayrshire in-calf heifers in the pipeline with more youngstock to follow, and as stated the aim is to milk some pure bred Red Polls in the future. There are sixteen in-calf pure breeds due to calve in the autumn which will hopefully fit the bill. The dairy herd is housed all the time with zero grazing carried out for as long as possible with silage in the winter. The cows are milked through three robots which I found fascinating to watch and learn about. This is truly very interesting farm to visit, I really look forward to seeing how the Red Polls take to the robots and the yields that they achieve.

To serve the daughters of Floyd, Nigel has ordered 50 straws of Underhill Super Jet as he wants to make sure he keeps the milk in the herd.

Next came a drive to Somerset to visit Peter Irish's Fordscroft Herd. This herd was



established three years ago with cattle from the Cools, East Knoyle and Lyndale Herds. Previously the farm had milked 350 Holsteins but a change in the farming system meant the dairy cows were dispersed and the Red Poll suckler herd

## **Fedw Stig 26877**



*Sire: Fedw Thomos*

*Dam: Fedw Crag*

*Born: 26:2:2002*

*Weight: June 2003 606kg January 2009 1150kg*

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Email: jrw2@btinternet.com

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established. The farm is organic with extensive grazing carried out in the summer with cubicle housing and silage in the winter. No concentrate feed is given, everything is 100% forage fed.

Appleton Eragon was the herd sire before being sold recently to Fortescue Farms. New bull, Canute Mack, is working well with the forty cows all of which look excellent. The yearling heifers are also of excellent quality. I can see a real future for this herd within the breed.

After staying the night in Crewkerne the following morning saw me drive across Somerset to Wells and the Hayden Park Herd of John and



Sandy Davis. John was previously in partnership with Susan Tanner and the Mendip Herd but for various reasons the partnership has ceased and John and Sandy have gone on their own. The herd consists of twelve cows, bull Mendip Icon, and associated youngstock.

The herd have limited

grazing available on site and rely on other small grazing parcels in the area. The cattle look well with this year's crop of calves looking particularly good. John and Sandy are doing a great job promoting the breed in the area as when allowed they attend many local shows.

Next call was to Mark Cleaver's Somer Valley Herd just outside Bath. This new herd, established last year with ten bulling heifers purchased from the Pochin Herd. Kemerton James Joyce was purchased from Adrian Darby with the heifers in-calf to him for September calving.



These are exceptional in-calf heifers, this is the start of what I feel will be a first class herd. Mark has started farming in partnership with this brother-in-law. Mark previously worked for Adrian Darby hence his interest in the Red Polls, the aim is to have a butchers shop on site specialising in native breed meat.



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Just down the road is another new member Trudy Harrison. She purchased her first Red Polls from Quentin Edwards's Cools Herd last spring, eight bulling heifers and six yearlings to form the foundation stock for her Homestead Herd. Pinguis Joshua was hired from John Williams last year, the resulting calvings haven't been without their challenges, the reason has finally been put down to be an Iodine deficiency, however the calves now look very well, as do the cows and bulling heifers. This year Trudy is going to hire James Joyce from Mark Cleaver as he is literally just down the road.

I then drove to Dorchester to stay the night with Tony and Ann Barratt. As you will be aware Tony and Ann moved there from Norfolk last September. Hospitality of the highest order was provided and it was good to catch up with them. Tony has kept a few cattle, they are kept at Tony's daughter's in Charminster which is about a twenty minute drive away. We went to see the herd the following morning. Tony's Granddaughter, Lottie, also has a few heifers, the cattle being all run together, Lottie has become a member in her own right taking the Cowden Life prefix.



The cattle are now all in-calf, due in the spring to Appleton Pytheas who Tony took with him.

On my way home I called in to see Richard Gregory and his Winchester Herd. As suggested the herd is based just outside Winchester. Richard has a small herd of six cows but I have to say what quality they are. He recently topped the market in Frome



with a twenty six month old steer which made £1450 which he was very pleased with. AI has been used exclusively over the years with the bull being used at present Pinguis Jacob. Richard's main enterprise is purchasing four to six month old stores from Frome market and

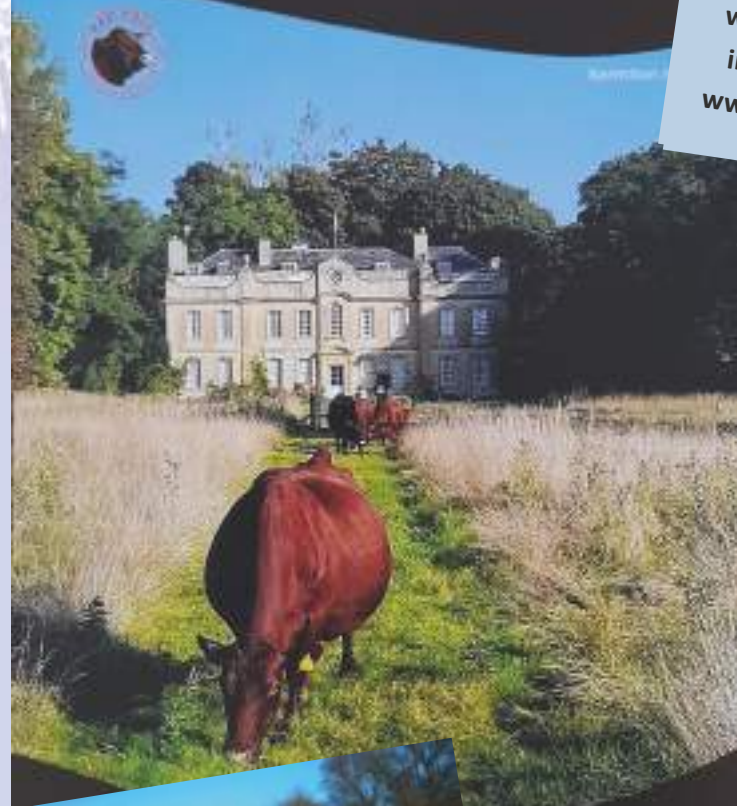
taking them through to finishing at 24 – 28months. Native breed dairy cross breeds are usually purchased with Angus and Herefords being preferred. He would like to do the same with Red Poll stores so if anyone has any for sale he will be only too pleased to hear from you.

Arriving home at 9.00pm on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July, after 1188 miles, I reflected on another busy few days but oh so worthwhile meeting members, both new and old, and in seeing marvellous cattle in a range of environments and management systems, it never ceases to amaze me the adaptability of the breed, long may it continue.

*Ray Bowler*

# Calendar 2022

This year's calendar  
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