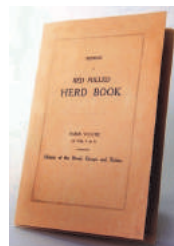


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Andrew & Office:

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Ben:

Tel: 07855 041632

Stephen:

Tel: 01964 550229

Fax: 01377 271813

Mob: 07985 745990

Email: prescott.andrew@btconnect.com

Email: ysgprescott@btinternet.com

Herd of Red Poll cattle arrives at Easton and Otley College

An East Anglian land college has continued to boost its farming content with the arrival of a herd of cattle at its Otley campus

Easton and Otley College welcomed six Red Poll cattle which were purchased from the Euston Estate, following advice from Red Poll Cattle Society Secretary Ray Bowler.

It follows the arrival last year of a sheep flock for the campus to help students get hands-on experience of handling livestock.

College farm manager Andrew Vernon said it was the first time that farming students in Suffolk have had their own herd for more than a decade.

“We would like to thank Ray at the Red Poll Cattle Society, Lady Euston and the Euston Estate for their advice and generosity in allowing us to pick through their herd and for offering such a favourable price,” he said.

“We continue to invest in farming because we want to remain true to our land-based roots and in terms of agriculture, we now have 33 full time students at the Otley campus and this is a large increase compared with the amount of students we had five years ago.

“The herd will be well looked after and eventually will become an integral part of farm life.

“Students will get to show them at county shows and overall, from my point of view, it’s great to see the farm consistently progressing in the right direction.” Level three agricultural student James Edmundson, 17, of Dallinghoo, near Woodbridge, said college staff had put in a lot of effort and it was starting to pay off.

“The arrival of the herd will help those from arable backgrounds get a first-hand experience of livestock – and that has to be a positive thing,” he said.

“Our group is quite mixed in terms of experiences so we all get to learn off each other and constantly gain new skills.”

Principal David Henley said one of his main priorities since arriving had been to invest in areas such as agriculture.

“The thing I like the most about this particular investment is that the Red Poll cow is a cross of the Norfolk red beef cattle and the Suffolk Dun dairy breed,” he said.

“It perfectly represents our stance of embracing both the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. We have been especially keen to do this since our August 2012 merger.” Red Poll, native to Suffolk, was first recorded in 1888 as a breed.



Andrew Vernon and Ray Bowler



Andrew Vernon picks up the Red Poll cattle destined for the Otley campus of Easton and Otley College from Euston.

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Society National Show – Royal Norfolk 2017 – 28th/29th June 2017

As you will be aware this year's National show is being held at the Royal Norfolk show at the end of June. As a Society we are arranging a major presence with our own marquee and hospitality.

We require some assistance in the staffing of the marquee on both days. If you could spare a couple of hours then that would be much appreciated. If you could let me know your availability then I'll arrange a rota.
Thank you in advance

Ray Bowler (Society Secretary)

Stewards

We are seeking two or three Stewards to assist the normal show stewards at the above show. Some experience would be useful however not essential. If you are interested then please contact me.

We are also planning to invite those who are interested to attend our Judges Standardisation day which will be held in the autumn.

Ray Bowler (Society Secretary)

Bull registrations

For those members who wish to register bulls can I please reiterate the criteria for inspection and registration. The below is taken from the Societies Byelaws:

18. At the Bull Inspection: (i) adequate handling facilities must be provided so that the Inspector can inspect the bull fully and in safety, and in particular the facilities must be such as enable the Inspector to view the whole animal (including the scrotum) at close quarters, to observe the animal walking on a level, hard and clean surface and to take a sample of tail hair for Myostatin testing. (ii) the Inspector shall ascertain the weight of the animal (preferably using a weigh crush/platform but each Inspector will be provided with a weigh band for use if necessary), shall complete the details on the Bull Inspection Report Form and shall subsequently forward the same to the Secretary together with the tail hair sample. (iii) if the Inspector considers that the facilities are not adequate for all aspects of the Inspection to be carried out properly and in safety the Inspector shall forthwith terminate the Inspection and complete the Bull Inspection Report Form accordingly.

Also for clarification the inspected animal must be:

- Over 12mths of age
- Be under 24mths of age, unless by agreement with Council
- Have gained a minimum weight gain of 0.9kg/day from birth (after deducting 35kg birth weight)
- Should not have been used to serve a cow or heifer

SECRETARY'S REPORTS

12th November 2016

There was one new member for election at this meeting, three at this meeting last year, they are registering. There are 367 members – 400 at this meeting last year. There has been 19 resignations since the previous meeting. This means that there have been 15 new members joining the Society in 2016, 18 in 2015, with 33 resignations. There are nine outstanding memberships for 2016 for which the Treasurer has sent out invoices on several occasions. However there are still 49 members who haven't paid the increased membership fees. They paid their old SO but no balance despite several reminders from the Treasurer. I feel once these members have been chased again we may lose even more members.

Since the last meeting I have only sent out two information packs to persons enquiring about the Society. This is worrying as I usually send out about 15 packs between meetings.

Semen sales are very steady with 23 straws being sold since the last meeting, this makes 136 for the year, 313 last year. Once again this is very disappointing trend, especially as 50 of these were to one breeder.

Three bulls have been inspected since the last meeting, making 26 in total so far this year. Two were M0 and the other M1. This makes 14 x M0, 11 x M1 and 1 x M2 for the year. I have inspected ten, Denis Jenkins five, Joy Broughton three, Mark Cheetham, Tony Barratt and John Williams two each with Terry

Mancey and Richard Dawes one each. The average points score is 170, with the highest being Appleton Sir Lancelot with a score of 184.

As is usual at this time of year registrations are coming in steadily; so far this year 236 females, 11 of which are grading, 239 last year. This is from 50 breeders, the same as last year. It appears that members are leaving it later and later in the year to register their animals. I really have to start chasing from now on, it was a struggle last year to get as many registrations as we did, I feel it is going to be even harder this year.

This last couple of months have been very busy travelling around the country, however around the country is a bit misleading as three of these occasions have been in the west of the country, with the Annual Dinner in Gloucestershire, the Judges day in Telford and the Southern Area Herd Competition Presentation in Worcestershire. Congratulations to Rosemary Philipson-Stow for winning not only the area competition but also the National. All of these events were well supported and excellent events. The Annual Dinner was followed the next day with an excellent Farm Walk around the Boseley herd of Simon and Caroline Phelps. We held the Eastern Area Herd Competition Presentation day at Hatfield Forest where James Rea grazes his Ladlers herd. There have been several committee meetings which I have attended, all of which have necessitated a fair amount of travelling, however we did

RED POLL FIELD DAY
Sunday, 23rd July, 2017
S G Prescott and Sons
Invite you to visit the Woldsman Herd



T H Prescott started farming as a tenant farmer on 228 acres, at Wold House Lund, in 1884. Leonard Prescott started the Woldsman Herd in 1953, as part of a milking herd, mainly to polled Ayrshire cows. The dairy herd was built up to approximately 60 cows before we took the golden handshake in 1978 to convert to Suckler cows, first of all multiple suckling, and then solely single suckling. The herd is approximately 100 cows and all followers, pure Red Poll bull calves, are left entire. Heifers are kept for breeding after culling unsuitable animals. We have started to use a Simmental bull on the cows with bull calves, mainly to reduce the number of females required for pure breeding.

All bull calves are weaned at six to eight months old and are then fed on a semi intensive cereal diet with silage available ad lib. All these bull calves must go for slaughter before 16 months or we are penalised quite heavily. We are achieving carcass weights of up to 340 kgs dead weight at this stage. The cross bred males are castrated at birth and can either be sold as stores or fattened. Similar with the females, we can sell or fatten them. Stephen came into the partnership in 1958, Andrew in 1982 and Benjamin in 2007. Wold House was purchased in 1921 and added to since. We now farm a total of approximately 900 acres of which 750 are arable crops—wheat, barley, oil seed rape and linseed and oats.

/from previous page

Since the last meeting I have sent out 11 information packs to persons enquiring about the Society.

Semen sales are fairly buoyant with 58 straws being sold since the last meeting which hopefully is an encouraging trend.

Three bulls have been inspected since the last meeting, making 29 in total so far this year. Two were M0 and the other M1. This makes 16 x M0, 12 x M1 and 1 x M2 for the year.

Registrations were a real struggle this year but by being persistent with emails and phone calls the final figures are not far short of the previous year.

Registrations for 2016 are 878 females and 29 bulls from 120 breeders, this compares with 935 and 27 respectively from 135 breeders, 71 of the females were Grading animals.

I haven't been to many members during the winter but will hopefully start again in the spring. I did go to Loudham Estate who have a new Estate Manager and Stockman. We had a general discussion about the herd and their management and the Society in general. On the same day I visited Otley College to meet the new Farm Manager and Stockman, and to talk to the students. They have finally taken delivery of some cattle from Euston Estate with some more to follow in the spring.

I have attended a Breeding Committee meeting at Tony Barratt's and a Show and Sales Committee meeting at Joy Broughton's. Joy and myself attended a meeting at Melton

Mowbray market to have a look around their new facilities and to discuss the possibility of holding a breed sale there in the future.

Cattle sales have been very quiet through the winter, a few small private deals have gone through though. This week has seen an increase in enquiries about bulls but nothing has been concluded as yet. The Otter Trust finally completed the purchase of Merna Merrett's cows, the heifers going to a potential new member in Derbyshire.

There is nothing to report regarding Probationary Judges.

As I said this time last year if there is anything else that you would like me to report on in future reports then please let me know as I feel this report consists of all the same things, just with different statistics.

Ray Bowler

New members:

C.P. & M. Rogers, Walcis Farm, Fakenham Road, Lenwade, Norwich, NR9 5QR

Dr. Davie Vive-Kananda, Beckney Wood House, Lower Road, Hockley, Essex, SS5 5LD



show. Can you imagine it now! Ray told me how they used to train the cows' horns let alone teaching them to lead.

While he was at Slaters', Ray met his future wife, Eileen Mitchell from Clayton Heights near Bradford. She trained as a secretary but joined the Land Army and went to work for a military man in Suffolk who had a milking herd of Red Polls. Later she moved to Slaters. On Boxing Day 1949 they married and left Slaters' to rent a 30 acre farm Eileen's father had bought in Clayton Heights. Here they retailed the produce from their newly established Leventhorpe Herd of Ayrshire cows (formed from Eyton cattle), hens, pigs and bees: there was a big mill nearby providing ready customers. The contrast between the lush grasslands of Shropshire on a big modern farm and a small farm on rough ground near Bradford was great!

Ray was forward thinking in his approach to farming and was always trying to improve the business. In the 1960s, he and Eileen bought their own farm, a hill farm near Skipton. Ray built up the herd, installed a pipeline in the shippens and was one of the first to try silaging in that area, joining the Grassland Society and sowing new leys of Italian rye grass.

In 1977, when Carol the oldest daughter had left home to get married and John, Ray's son, had gone to work on farms in New Zealand for 2 years, Ray carried out his ambition to move to a farm in Cheshire, Gradeley Green Farm, very near Reaseheath College. By 1994, Ray was milking about 65 Ayrshire cows, almost all home bred, stocked at 3.25 cows/hectare using paddock grazing by day and set stocking at night to get the most out of the land and the cattle. When John returned home, he came back and worked with Ray.

Ray had success in the show ring and in various herd competitions: reserve champion in the Cheshire Dairy Herd milking herd class for three successive years; first in the Cheshire Farms dairy herd class; reserve in the Cheshire Ayrshire Breeders Club cup. Ray was President of the Cheshire Ayrshire Breeders Group for some years and he was on the milk records committee. He was on the Nantwich Show committee and when he stopped showing, he acted as steward. Latterly, when Helen Langley convinced Nantwich Show to hold Red Poll classes, Ray was pleased that they had listened to someone at last: he had been trying to persuade them for years. Ray finally decided to retire and had a dispersal sale for his Ayrshire herd in 1998, after nearly 50 years with his Ayrshires. He held the breed record at that time with the sale for £5000 guineas of Leventhorpe Pimple 51st. His herd was greatly respected as one of the leading herds in the UK.

Ray kept 20 acres of land back, selling the rest to neighbours. In 2000, Ray, Eileen and John decided to start the Leventhorpe Herd of Red Polls. Eileen formed the connection with the breed from her experience in Suffolk. John bought a Red Poll heifer in calf to a Sussex bull and graded up many of the herd from the offspring, Leventhorpe Ribena. Ray bought stock from the Underhills Herd of Rosemary Philipson-Stow and the Pinguis Herd of J.

anybody who wants to buy Moreton Percy?" We did the deal with Clive on the phone later that day and Percy was destined to come home.

Helen Arthan (Chorlton Lane Herd) had hired our bull Moreton Lord Tobias (Bledisloe Trophy winner 2008) for the previous couple of years and so we agreed to share the cost and Percy went into joint ownership.

Now the problem was how to get Percy from Devon. After many discussions it was decided that it was too far with our aged trailer, so we had to find another way and the following took place.

At 6am on the 11th August 2009 Davey's Hauliers from Launceston, Cornwall, collected him from Clive Wills' farm near Plymouth, with a small vehicle (no large vehicle access). They took him to Launceston and transferred him to a larger vehicle going to Sedgemoor Market, Somerset. Wick Williams, hauliers from Cheshire, hauled cull cows from Sedgemoor to Ashby de la Zouch and so they collected him and bought him to Derbyshire where I met them, and Percy finished his journey in our trailer, arriving at Caverswall at 7.30pm.

Before leaving I had prepared a paddock and put a heifer in to keep him company for a couple of days to help him recover: he was already nine years old. We let him out of the trailer; he immediately served the heifer (who had not been showing signs of being in season) and then ate the corn put out for him. On the 27th May 2010 his first Moreton heifer, Moreton Baby Adelaide, was born at Caverswall to that service. It would

have been Jack's 89th birthday.

Over the next few years he mainly spent his summers in Caverswall and winters in Cheshire producing many more heifers than bull calves. Many of the heifers joined our show teams with great results.



On return to Caverswall

We had Percy put to sleep at home in Caverswall on the 8th January 2014: he had been struggling with an arthritic hip. During his life he produced 40 registered Red Poll females and one registered bull.

During 2016 Percy's offspring were shown at many shows, notably The Red Poll National Show at Cheshire, winning the Dry Cow class and Reserve Female Champion with Moreton Lady Africa (also Champion female at the Three Counties 2015, 2016). Chorlton Lane Evanesca won the heifer class and Junior Champion. Chorlton Lane Albert won his bull class, and went on to be Champion Bull and Reserve Show Champion for Michael Paddock and Sarah Marsden. (Eaves herd). Together the three animals won the Progeny Group of Three. A fitting tribute to a wonderful bull.

Terry Mancey

containing 5% white clover and a 15% red clover blend, plus added chicory. Deep rooting lucerne is also being trialled, and other diverse swards are planned.

“Finishing beef animals to commercial timescales and specifications just on grass leys and silage is possible – but it has to be of the highest quality,” says John. “Typical first cuts here have 11.5 ME and 13.7% crude protein (CP), and third cuts 11 ME and 16.4% CP.

“While ideal for finishing stock, this is usually too good for the cows and youngstock and we have to blend the cuts and include hay and straw to ‘water’ it down.”

After the cereal crop has been combined, the field is cultivated with two passes with a winged harrow, which lifts the soil but prevents loss of moisture and organic matter and minimises disruption to soil life. The seed mix is drilled using a homemade grass box on wheels with a flat roll behind.

The new ley is left to establish over winter and a light first cut taken in May. In the first year the grasses predominate but by the fourth year, red clover has taken over. Yields of 16t DM/ha are usual over three cuts.

Timing silage making is critical. The Turners prefer not to rely on contractors and carry out all mowing, raking, tedding and baling themselves.

“Our fixed costs are much higher than other beef producers,” admits Guy. “But our beef enterprise is completely reliant on high quality forage, and we want to cut it when we know it is ready.”

The grass is mown leaving high stubble, left to wilt for 12 hours, turned and left for a further 12 hours. It is then made into high density, one tonne bales and wrapped with six layers of high quality film in the field, within one hour of baling. The bales are removed from the field that day and stacked on their ends, three high using a bale squeezer.

“A lot of people said we couldn’t base a beef system solely on clover leys – but we have found them ideally suited to this farm,” says John, a founder of the Pasture-Fed Livestock Association.

“This is sustainable farming which is good for the land, but also provides us a commercial return for a high quality beef product. The pasture-fed approach could easily be dismissed as purely artisan and low output, but we believe it is a real option for mainstream beef producers as well.”

The *Pasture for Life – it can be done* booklet can be read on the PFLA website – www.pastureforlife.org. Red Poll Cattle Society members can also join the PFLA at this website, if they wish to.

Sara Gregson,
Pasture-Fed Livestock Association



A Woldsmen's Diary

Renowned Red Poll cattle breeder and East Yorkshire farmer Stephen Prescott has written and published a book about his farming life, the title of which was inspired by his herd prefix – Woldsmen. *A Woldsmen's Diary* is the first in a series, taking the family story to 1982. The second volume is to follow.

Stephen, has lived and farmed in the Lund, Drifffield, area all his life, farming first with his father, Leonard, then his wife, Yvonne, and later with their family. He first became involved with Red Poll cattle when he was a student at Askham Bryan Agricultural College, York, in the early 1950s. Since then he has occupied various prominent positions in the UK Red Poll Cattle Society and he and Yvonne each currently hold office as vice-presidents. The Society was founded in 1888 to promote and improve the breeding of Red Poll cattle, which is a milk and beef breed. Additionally, he has attended international Red Poll Cattle Society conferences around the globe and has contacts within the Red Poll cattle breeders' worldwide community.

On the national scene he became well-known on the UK Agricultural show circuit as both Red Poll exhibitor and judge. With Yvonne's secretarial assistance, Stephen, 80, has traced the Prescott family's history from its move – on a butcher's cart – from Holderness to Lund in the early 1800s. He used family diaries as well as farm and financial records to chronicle how the business grew and evolved in tandem with the family. The book

offers an in-depth look at not only changing times and practices in the agricultural industry but also into village life in Lund, in which the couple were heavily involved.

Stephen and Yvonne now live at Scarborough, near Drifffield, but remain active in the family business, S G Prescott & Sons, which farms land at Scarborough, Lund and Huggate, East Yorkshire.

Aside from their farming interests, Stephen and Yvonne have busy social lives with an interest in Scarborough Church and the Senior Club – an East Riding-wide organisation to which members can move on when their career with the Young Farmers Club movement comes to an end. They have both been involved with, and remain committed to, the YFC movement, which encourages young people's interest in agriculture and rural affairs. The couple have three children, Andrew, Helen and Angus, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

A Woldsmen's Diary retails at £10.95. For details of how to purchase, contact Stephen or Yvonne on 01964 550229 or e-mail: ysgprescott@btinternet.com





The Pasture-Fed Livestock Association (PFLA) is a farmer-led group that champions the rearing and finishing of cattle on just grass and forage crops.

Formed by four farmers in 2010, the association has come along way since then, and now has 250 members, 61 of whose meat is certified 100% grass-fed. They are able to display the 'Pasture for Life' certification mark on their products, and many of them sell them for a premium.

'Pasture for Life' beef has many benefits. It produces healthier meat for people to eat, having lower total and saturated fat content, more of the good omega-3 fatty acids, and more vitamins and minerals. It is an environmentally friendly way to farm, often with flower-rich meadows filled with insects, birds and mammals.

There is no reliance on imported feeds such as soya and grass-fed beef has a low carbon footprint. Growing grasses is known to rejuvenate worn-out soils and keeps streams and rivers clean.

Cattle that are raised on pasture are less stressed, tend to live longer and are more fertile.

Implications of 100% grass-fed

But the PFLA knows that it is hard to stop feeding cereals to livestock, if that is what has always been done. It has physical and economic implications.

To try and allay some of these concerns, the organisation has produced a booklet called *Pasture for Life – It can be done, The farm business case for feeding ruminants just on pasture.*

Using the AHDB Beef & Lamb Stocktake programme, the PFLA has compared the figures for 'Pasture for Life' farmers against the Stocktake average and top third performers.

The figures echo that of Stocktake – that making a living from beef and sheep farming is never easy. However, those that make the most of pasture can be profitable, due mainly to the fact that feed costs are substantially lower.

Case studies

Part of the booklet is taken up with eight profiles of 'Pasture for Life' members, including John and Guy Turner farming at Little Bytham in Lincolnshire, whose suckler herd is based on Red Poll dams.

John and Guy Turner are third generation farmers and their 100ha holding is predominantly limestone brash, and sits in a rain-shadow, with an average annual rainfall of 450mm.

There are 10ha of permanent pasture and the rest is down to a seven-year rotation. Four years of ryegrass/red clover leys are followed by three years of cereals – wheat, barley or oats.



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Mr Andrew Kirk 0116 269 2694 or

Mr Richard Sanders 01858 410200

/from previous page

Singing has been a big part of your life and you had formal training?

My parents and friends realised I had a good voice and father asked a rural music advisor whether she knew of a good teacher. I was lucky to be taken on by Peter Pears, who held classes and a type of master class in Norwich, where he would teach us in front of an audience. He was very particular. I was not a great admirer of Benjamin Britten and did not like much of his music. I would go up to Norwich and come back on the midnight train. I had a series of lessons in the daytime and in the evening a concert. In the daytime Benjamin Britten would give lessons in front of an audience, again like a master class.

Farming always came first and I said I would not give it up for anything else. I was asked to do singing professionally but I said “No” because I did not want to give up farming. If engagements came up, if I was away for a day or so I made extra arrangements at the farm. I had one

man permanently on the farm. I always had local people working on the farm.

Sally Grimwood: those sort of farms do not exist any more – they get bought up and rolled in with bigger ones. We still use small paddocks because they cannot get the tractors in.

I started off with 40 acres. Most was glebe land for the church. My father had the opportunity of buying it from the church. He first intended to be a Land Agent after Reading College but he was told “No, we do not recommend it at all. People do not have Agents any more. Father thought the only way was for him to become an Agent as he did not inherit any land.”

Where did your original Red Polls come from?

I think father did buy one or two at market or farm sales.

Terina Booker

Advertising on the Website

To advertise your Red Poll products on the website, please contact Sarah Barnes on 01508 470413 or sarah@gpbarnes.net

For livestock sales, please contact the Secretary, Ray Bowler, at the office. Steers are always wanted.

Advertisements are posted on the website for a month. They may be renewed after this time

“Profile of Miss Helen Wyles



On Monday, 8th February Sally Grimwood and I visited Helen Wyles at Winesham Nursing Home and the following is a record of Helen’s remarkable memory, especially considering that she will be 90 years of age in July 2017. Helen seemed to enjoy our visit – we certainly did!

How did the Coddendam Herd begin?

Father came out of the army after the First World War and bought Manor Farm, Coddendam, Suffolk, which was mostly an arable and grass holding. Most of the cattle were Friesians



with one or two Channel Islands mixed in. When you wanted to buy replacements, there were one or two for sale which they did not know much about. One came from Crowfield and before that a couple of Holstein and a Jersey. It was always a dairy herd. I was born at Manor Farm and my father was born at Coddendam Rectory, being the youngest son of the Rector. I was an only child. Father was not too keen on dairy and had been at Reading Agricultural College before the first World War. Some of our land was glebe to the church and we never had more than about 40 acres until the war and then it was all “dig for victory”. I was born in 1927 and was probably in my 20s when father died. I wanted to develop the herd with Red Polls, which were branching out quite a bit in the 1940/50s, exporting to Australia and New Zealand. I had about 20 from 10 or 12. We had a very good general worker who had been with my father since he left school and we did the milking between us. All hand milking. Cannot remember when I persuaded father to buy a milking machine. He thought they ruined the cows. It was open for people to come to the dairy once or twice a day and they could order milk. I started a milk round and I wanted to sell cream.

