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Chairman's Message



Photo: Lauren Hutchinson

I hope that you're all keeping well? The weather has been very favourable recently and I hope that it has helped everyone with lambing. Like everyone, my lambing has had its challenges, but as always they are soon forgotten as we approach Spring.

It gives me great pleasure to let you all know that the Spring meeting and EGM will be held on Sunday 8 May at 2pm in Builth Wells. The 2019 AGM minutes are available on the Society's website and hard copies will be available at the meeting. The agendas are enclosed with this newsletter. It has been a long time since we were last able to meet. However, Covid has not gone away and I ask that if any of you are suffering any symptoms to kindly not attend. Can you please also let our secretary know if you will be attending. The EGM will be held immediately after the Spring meeting in order to approve any decisions that can't wait until the AGM in November and also to allow new officials and committee members to be elected.

This will be the last opportunity I have to address you all as your Chairman. Whilst I have been your Chairman for a longer period than anyone of us expected, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with members throughout the three and a half years. Whilst Covid has given us a few challenges as a Society it has also given us opportunities to try new ways of working. I wish to thank you all as members for your continued support and also the whole committee for embracing the opportunities thrown at us.

I wish you all a successful 2022. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Spring meeting, and of course, like many I am looking forward to the Royal Welsh Show where I will be honoured to judge the Torddu classes.

Diolch i chi gyd am bob cefnogaeth yn ystod fy nghyfnod fel Cadeirydd.

Cofion cynnes / Kind regards

Malcolm Evans
Cadeirydd / Chairman

Flock Focus – BUARTH Flock – Kevin Davies

Born and raised on a beef and sheep farm, just on the outskirts of Llanybydder, Sheep have always been my main interest and since I was very young I always wanted to form a small flock of my own, something different from what we already had on the farm.

My journey with the Torddu ewes began while working for the late Ronald and Sue Jones, Meinigwynion where I went for work experience while in college, this is where I first saw and learnt about the breed and their characteristics. A few years later I bought my first four ewes as somewhat of an experiment initially (and paid a staggering £16 for the 4) the idea was just to cross them with a commercial ram but was amazed with how a small hill ewe could produce lambs of such size and quality. A few years later I was convinced by the late Dai Lewis (Dai sheep) to get some more ewes, buy an old show ram from him, so with that in mind I bought eight aged ewes from the FFALD flock to run with my existing ewes and to keep them pure and since then the flock have just grown and grown. In 2007 I went about registering my flock and joined the society and the 'BUARTH' flock was formed.

The prefix Buarth comes from my grandparents' flock although it was with a different breed I felt that it was fitting that the names lives on with me living on the farm at the time.

Now the flock has built up to around 80 torddu ewes and also keep around 10 to 20 ewe lambs each year. The majority of the ewes are kept pure and some are crossed with an Aberfield or Texel tup.

We start lambing in January with the crossbreeds, then our hill ewes are due to start lambing from the 1st of March until the end of April. The majority of the ewes lamb outside, the badgers fit into that system superbly well, they graze on our top land which rises to 1300ft at the highest point, they are bought down closer to the farm for lambing and then return to the top land in the first week of May with their lambs at foot and stay there until weaning time.

The autumn breeding sales season are a very busy time for everyone but it's still one of my favourite times of the year. I sell the Badgers mostly in Llandovery Coloured Breeds sale, because the society sale, unfortunately always seems to clash with other sales for me personally, which can't be helped at that time of year. I have been very fortunate to get good prices over the years especially with yearling tups selling to some well renowned breeders which for me is as important as the price (well almost).

The summer months are extremely busy for me with work, as well as that I coach a Ladies Tug of War team, and therefore can't take the sheep to the shows as I'd like. I do try to attend the local shows and do take them to the Royal Welsh but for me the Winter Fair is by far my favourite show of the year. I was fortunate to go to the shows in Builth for many years with the Meinigwynion family and really enjoyed and learnt a lot and witnessed their successes over the years. In 2010 I was convinced by Ronald to take my own lambs to the Winter Fair and decided to enter a pair of badgers and speckles where I came 3rd with the badgers and 5th with the speckles - I've attended since then, although I have shown many different breeds over this time, the badgers have always been with me every year in the show and I have been lucky with getting to that final line-up on many occasions. In 2019 I came second and I think that really

spurred me on but I never imagined I'd win the class last year especially as I nearly didn't enter with the current pandemic I was really unsure whether to go or not, and it was quite literally on deadline day I decided to enter.

2021 was an unforgettable Winter Fair for me achieving the first place in the carcass after coming 2nd for the previous two year was a very satisfying moment but winning the live class out of over twenty pairs was in itself humbling, but to go on and win the pure Welsh mountain section and to get reserve champion in the overall upland and mountain section was unbelievable I was truly shocked and still can't believe it. Wwithout any doubt the proudest moment of my life and it was made even more special that I won with the Torddu.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their kind words since the Winter Fair, and have been truly surprised with how many members from the society that have been in contact congratulating me, some members which I have never spoken to before and for me this proves how close the society is and this has to be down to the people working tirelessly behind the scenes and promoting the breed, from the bottom of my heart thank you all.

While writing this I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people that have helped me throughout the years, from my family, friends and fellow breeders, and I'm now looking forward to see everyone in the next show or sale



MEMBERSHIP

Standard Membership is £15, Family £30 or Junior (U16) £5. There is a £5 surcharge on any other form of payments other than Standing Order.

Failure to pay membership by 31st March would mean that you will no longer receive any correspondence from the Society unless a double payment is made to reinstate the membership. Society rules also note that members who wish to compete at the Royal Welsh Show must be paid up members by 31 March. Please also be reminded that only paid up members will be able to vote at the Spring meeting and EGM.

Thanks for your cooperation,

Huw Williams
Membership Officer

Letter for Glastir

Please contact the secretary if you need a letter for the Glastir element. Please note that the letter the Society provides confirms membership only. It is your responsibility as members to provide evidence of sheep owned e.g. copies of registration forms, copies of flockbooks or invoices of sheep purchased.

Registrations 2022

The letter for this year's lambs will be K. Don't forget that all stock shown at shows and entered into the Society Show and Sale must be registered. The registration forms were sent out with the Christmas 2021 newsletter or they can be downloaded from the Society website.

New Members

We wish to welcome all new members to the Society. You will find previous newsletters on the website along with a helpful information sheet regarding tagging of lambs and also various information. If you have any queries regarding breed points and registering your lambs, please contact our Field Officer, Mr Timothy Evans on 07837 714854. He is more than happy to have a chat with anyone and willing to speak to you on the phone, visit you and your sheep or accept videos and photographs in order to assist all members.