



2019 spring calves from the Witton herd taken by Ann and Trevor Sanders

## WHITE PARK CATTLE SOCIETY LTD JUNE 2019 NEWSLETTER



### Message from the Secretary

Hello everyone

I am now working at my laptop with the back door open, so summer has finally arrived. We always love to see pictures of calves enjoying the sun so please forward any photos to me.

Our Open Day and AGM is going to Wales this year and there has already been a confirmed booking from the members who live the furthest away from Monmouthshire - New Zealand to be precise. Justine and Allan Rowland wrote an article in our previous newsletter about their White Park calves which were born by embryo transfer and are combining a visit to the UK with attendance at our Open Day.

My workmate Beatrice turned one year old in May and I couldn't resist sharing this beautiful photo of her!

Best wishes, Jane x

## Open Day for 2019 - 10 August

Monmouth in south Wales is the location for our 2019 Open Day and AGM when we will be visiting the home of Council member Frank Sutton.

Frank and his family have lived at Parc Grace Dieu Farm near Raglan since 1981 and Frank is very well known in the area as he is the main John Deere dealer for south Wales. The farm comprises 600 acres and as well as being home to the substantial herd of Grace Dieu White Park cattle is also home to Longhorn cattle, North American Bison and American Quarter Horses. Frank has a great passion for the American wild west and the life of a cowboy which is evident in the authentic hides and artwork in the Sutton family home.

Our itinerary for Saturday 10 August at Parc Grace Dieu will be as follows:

10.30am - Arrival for coffee and biscuits

11.00am - AGM followed by the Open Forum

12.15pm - Lunch

12.45pm - Tour of Parc Grace Dieu

4.00pm - Return to the farm for afternoon tea and cakes

4.45pm - Depart

7.00pm - Evening meal at the Beaufort in nearby Raglan. Our three-course menu will be:

*Chef's soup of the day*

*or*

*Pork Liver Pate, Crostini, Chutney*

*--ooOOoo--*

*White Park Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding*

*or*

*Sea Bass*

*Served with Fresh Vegetables and Baby New Potatoes*

*--ooOOoo—*

*Blackcurrant and White Chocolate Cheesecake*

*Or*

*Apple Pie served with Cream*

*--ooOOoo--*

*Coffee*

We are looking forward to another memorable Open Day and would like to thank Frank and his family for offering to host us this year. If you are going to be joining us please book early as there is another event in the area on the same weekend.

Justine and Allan Rowland, who bred two White Park calves by embryo transfer last summer, will be attending the Open Day and they are happy to speak to other members about the process.

We do hope that you can join us on 10 August. A booking form has been circulated but if you would like another copy please get in contact with Jane.



Photo of Pass Plus bull Broadecton Clayton by Jan Mccourt

## **Keeping bulls for inspection and registration**

The sustained success of our White Park breed relies to a large extent on continuing production of quality bulls and Council places a high priority on this aspect.

The membership as a whole is encouraged to retain more bulls for breeding. Assuming a bull on average probably has an effective breeding life of three or four years, it can be estimated that approximately twenty bulls are needed annually for pure breeding to replenish the breeding pool.

Members individually are advised to keep entire only bulls of the best breeding. Therefore Council urges you to seek advice to retain only bulls that are sired by a superior herd sire (look at [bull evaluations on the website](#)) and are out of a cow who is of good breeding and which consistently rears a good, well-grown calf. Please also take advantage of the opportunity to discuss breeding policy with the breed inspectors when they visit.

## Bull Evaluation

The registration procedure for a White Park bull includes several different aspects.

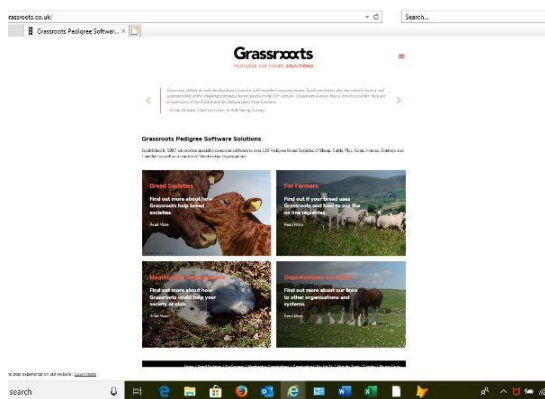
The primary purpose is to validate his purity and parentage, and this is achieved by DNA testing and reconciliation of his result with those of his recorded parents and comparison with the breed profile.

The second objective is to evaluate his breed characteristics and type, and this is achieved by visual inspection by inspectors appointed by the Breed Society.

The third objective is to predict his mature quality through a procedure known as linear assessment as part of the programme to improve the value of White Park cattle in a range of different rearing systems within the livestock industry.

The bull evaluation table shows the results for this aspect of the registration procedure. White Parks are a late-maturing breed, but bulls are presented for registration at about two years of age. They may have been reared on production systems which vary from intensive feeding to extensive grazing. The purpose of linear assessment is to remove the effects of age and management in order to show the genetic potential of the bull, although the ultimate proof will be the quality of his progeny.

Because the White Park is adapted superbly to extensive grazing systems the Society does not wish to see young bulls forced by high feeding and therefore does not impose minimum weight limits. The linear assessment procedure is the best way to allow bulls to be reared 'naturally' without prejudicing their eligibility for registration.



## New Grassroots website

In common with many other breed societies the White Park Cattle Society uses Grassroots to maintain and update its herd book. The online Grassroots Pedweb system is where only members can log in to view their herd details and cattle owned by other members. This system

also allows information such as death notifications, registrations and transfers to be sent to Jane at the office for processing. You can access the site from the Home Page of the White Park Cattle Society website [www.whiteparkcattlesociety.ltd.uk](http://www.whiteparkcattlesociety.ltd.uk) If you need a reminder of your membership number and password please [contact Jane](#). The site is user-friendly and registrations/deaths/transfers can be accessed from the "Manage my Herd" tab. Jane can also send you some instructions on how to use the system.

Grassroots has just launched a new website that provides information on how farmers and livestock breeders can use the online Grassroots software, the many services Grassroots provides and a direct link to all the Grassroots breed society websites and online registries. You can access the website on <http://home.grassroots.co.uk/>

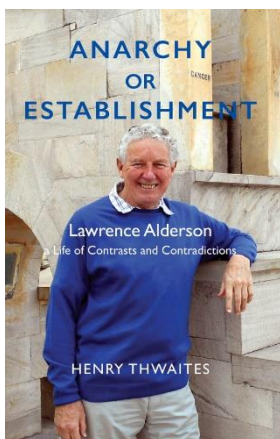
The other news is that Grassroots is developing a specialist app for use on phones and tablets, which will make it even easier for farmers to interact with their breed society registries and manage the records for their flocks and herds. This will link to the next generation of Grassroots breed society software which is also under development.

Grassroots is asking for feedback on their new website so if you have any comments please forward these to Jane on [whiteparks@aol.com](mailto:whiteparks@aol.com) who will forward them to the Grassroots team.

## A life of contrasts and contradictions

A new book entitled "Anarchy or Establishment", due to be published shortly, might be of interest to members. The biography is the journey of a shy boy from a remote Pennine hill farm to a man who is now a renowned international consultant on conservation genetics with a CBE for services to rare breeds - our very own President, Lawrence Alderson.

Lawrence has dedicated much of his life to saving traditional native breeds and was founder president of Rare Breeds International and the founder, scientific consultant, director and chairman of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. He is an eternal optimist with a 'glass half full' attitude to life, always looking for positive opportunities even when the outlook is bleak. His smiling northern sense of humour has carried him through many farming disasters such as Foot and Mouth Disease.



Lawrence is keen to point out that the book is an unauthorised biography, with all the opinions expressed and interpretations being solely those of the author Henry Thwaites! However, Lawrence was asked to check the text for factual correctness.

"Anarchy or Establishment" is 224 pages long and has 145 photos. It retails at £25 and is available to order from Hayloft Publishing on [books@hayloft.eu](mailto:books@hayloft.eu) or 079 713 524 73.

If you do buy the book and attend our AGM I'm sure that Lawrence will be happy to sign your copy for you.

## Updated book on White Park Cattle

A third edition of the White Park book, published independently by Amazon (KDP label), under the title 'Breeding the Best: White Park Cattle', is now available for purchase. Feedback on the second edition published last year was complimentary but there was a wish for more illustrations so these have increased by 60% - there now are 108 - and some updated information from recent research has also been included.

Author Lawrence Alderson will be bringing 10 signed copies of the new version of the book to the Open Day. If you would like to purchase a copy beforehand you can do so on [Amazon](#). The cost is £20.48 with free delivery.

## Cows, breeding cows and heifers up for sale

Several cows with calves and heifers from the Hoosherd in Hertfordshire, owned by Fergus Milne and Matthew Hargreaves, are up for sale. There are also two older cows available



who have been retired from breeding and Fergus and Matthew would like to see these ladies being used for conservation grazing. One of the cows up for sale has recently given birth to twins.

If you are interested in the heifers, cows with calves or cows to be used for conservation grazing then please contact Fergus on [fergusmilne@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fergusmilne@hotmail.co.uk)



## Pass Plus Bull for Sale

Bickleigh Olympic is a Pass Plus bull who is looking for a new set of ladies to charm. He was bred by John Lean of Rashleighayes Farm in Devon. Olympic has never left the farm and the Bickleigh herd is a closed herd with no bovines having been bought in for the past 16 years.

Bickleigh Olympic was born in August 2012 to Bickleigh Elsie and sired by Bickleigh Hobson.

If you are interested in finding out more about Bickleigh Olympic please contact John Lean on [johntlean@outlook.com](mailto:johntlean@outlook.com)



## Herd dispersal

The Manx herd of White Park cattle, which resides on the Isle of Man, is being dispersed at the National Show of Traditional and Native Breeds being held at Melton Mowbray Livestock Market on 13 and 14 September 2019.

Owner Paul Davis says "Overall, it's has been great experience owning White Park cattle. They calve well, the meat is excellent, and they are great at clearing land. In fact, our ladies

seem to prefer rough, coarse reeds to soft green grass. Despite the big horns they have not been difficult to handle, and our two bulls are docile and well-behaved. They look good on the fields and are impressive on the landscape."

The Manx herd was established when John Barker dispersed his Collegewood herd in 2014 and some of the foundation cows are still in the herd. Full details of all the cattle for sale will be made available when the catalogue is published. Representatives from the Society will be at the sale so we hope that some members will be interested in joining us.

## **13 AND 14 SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **MELTON MOWBRAY NATIVE BREEDS SHOW AND SALE**

Sale entries for the show are now open on-line at [home.grassroots.co.uk](http://home.grassroots.co.uk)  
Please click on 'For Farmers', Melton Show and Sale' and then 'Melton Entries'  
On-line entries close on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2019

Please note that this is not an official White Park Cattle Society show and is organised by Grassroots Ltd.



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