



Cattle from the GraceDieu herd taken during the 2019 Open Day

## WHITE PARK CATTLE SOCIETY LTD DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER



### Message from the Secretary

Hello everyone

We have experienced a very wet autumn in Warwickshire and the river in my home village of Marton has flooded the surrounding fields and the road several times. A couple of properties next to the river have also been flooded. I know that much of the UK is being similarly affected by the wet weather, so we hope that all our members and cattle are safe and well.

The wild-haired photo of me was taken at our AGM in August when we visited John Deere dealer and Welsh cowboy Frank Sutton, who owns White Park cattle, Longhorn cattle, Bison and Quarter Horses at his ranch near Raglan. A report from this fantastic day appears later in the newsletter.

Before we know Christmas will be upon us so may I wish you all a very peaceful festive period.

Best wishes, Jane x

## Report on AGM and Open Day for 2019

Monmouth in south Wales was the location for our 2019 Open Day and AGM when we visited 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 was evident in the authentic hides and artwork in the meeting room.

After morning coffee, we held our AGM chaired by the President, Lawrence Alderson CBE. The presentation of the accounts for 2018 by our Treasurer showed that we had made a surplus in the year, made possible by a donation from Anthony Milner towards the production of our magazine, the generosity of our 2018 AGM host and several late registrations. The Directors retiring by rotation were John Barker, Henry Rusch, Guy Myddelton and John Lean. All stood for re-election and were appointed unopposed. Following the AGM there was a presentation by a local vet, Vicki Fisher, on the importance of bio-security.

Lunch comprised a superb cold meat buffet organised by the Sutton family and we then started our tour of Parc Grace Dieu on two trailers. Our first visit was to a field of White Park cattle grazing contentedly by the river before we climbed higher up the farm to view some Longhorn cattle, who were noticeably more active as they galloped away from our trailer. A second herd of White Park was viewed as we continued our tour of the farm. We then stopped off at the highest point on the farm to visit a barn full of historic John Deere tractors and view the educational work that Frank conducts on the farm. On our way home for tea we saw several totem poles and a field of Bison, which reflect Frank's love of all things American.

Our event was concluded with a three-course meal of White Park beef supplied by Frank at the nearby Beaufort Hotel in Raglan. The after-dinner speaker kept us all entertained with his stories of working for the Metropolitan Police in the 1970s.

We would like to thank Frank and his family for their very generous hospitality during this year's Open Day which was one of our best attended events for several years. We were pleased to welcome several new members plus Justine and Allan Rowland, who had travelled all the way from New Zealand!



## Items raised during the AGM

During our AGM meeting several items of interest to members were raised and discussed:

- The President reported that DNA testing of hair samples is due to move from micro-satellites to SNPs in order to present a faster and more accurate result. Our breed profile is currently established on microsatellites and the Society is therefore preparing for the move to SNPs.
- Council is currently working on a beef certificate scheme to allow members who produce beef to market their animals as pedigree White Park.
- It was noted that there is a current drive in the media to reduce red meat consumption. The President said that it is intensive meat systems only which are damaging to the environment. Cattle such as White Park, which are raised on non-intensive systems, had no global warming effect as the carbon emissions are cancelled out by the production system.
- Due to the UK's imminent withdrawal from the EU Defra is taking ownership of some of the current EU regulations. Defra has recently requested that breed societies produce a breed improvement programme. The President and Council are working on a document that incorporates the heritage and diversity of the White Park breed and its adaption to non-intensive systems whilst paying homage to commercial production.

## 2020 AGM and Open Day

Next year's AGM and Open Day will be taking us over to the east coast of England for the first time in many years when we visit Catfield Hall by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Tim Harris.

**The date of the open day is Saturday 27 June.**

Catfield has one of the largest herds in the Society and has produced many quality bulls over the years.

Catfield is a village situated in the heart of the Norfolk Broads, adjacent to Hickling Broad, and is near the market town of Stalham. The hotel where we will be holding our evening meal is the Sprowston Manor Hotel, Norwich, NR7 8RP (tel: Davina 01603 410871). If you are attending the AGM and would like to stay at the hotel, please quote the White Park Cattle Society when making your booking and you will receive a discounted rate. Early booking is advised. There is a wide range of alternative accommodation to choose from in this popular tourist area.

Further details of the day will be published early next year, and we hope to see as many of you as possible at this annual event.



## Society Mugs

Council is considering producing some WPCS branded mugs for next year's Open Day. At the 2019 AGM members were asked to give their opinion on a variety of shapes of mugs made from different materials. The most popular mugs were those made from bone china. The proposed mugs will display the WPCS logo (see above). Council members Amy Cope and James Gill are now working on securing some prices for a bone china mug, so watch this space for further news.

## DNA ANALYSIS OF WHITE PARK BULLS

During the inspection of a bull for possible registration a hair sample is taken from the bull and its dam for DNA analysis. This analysis is undertaken to confirm that the bull's DNA falls within the acceptable range for a White Park and ensures that the integrity of our breed is maintained. However, in some instances the dam of the bull is not available for a hair sample (ie, it is died). In order to maintain the high standards of our DNA process members are requested to take a hair sample from the dam of any bull calf that is being kept entire for possible inspection and send the sample to Jane at the WPCS office for retention. If a bull inspection is requested where the dam or her hair sample is not available, the inspection may be refused.



## **Herd dispersal at Melton Mowbray Rare Breeds Sale**

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

Two bulls - Manx Cosmopolis and Heathylee Gladiator - formed part of the dispersal. Manx Cosmopolis was inspected on the day before the sale and following the subsequent receipt of his DNA results was confirmed as a Pass Plus bull. All the animals at the sale were purchased by potential new and existing members. It is satisfying to learn that three new White Park herds have also been established.

## **Registrations of animals**

During the AGM members were reminded that all prefixes should be one word of no more than 12 letters. When registering an animal the name should also be one word of no more than 12 letters although numbers after the name are required if the name has been used before. The colour of the animal is also required;

White with black/red points  
White with speckled points  
Pale  
Whole coloured (Black or Red)  
Overmarked (patches on the body)

We will be amending Pedeweb and our paper registration form to reflect these new colour choices.

Did you also know that registered animals attract a higher compensation payment in the case of them being a TB reactor? The cost of the registration would be recouped many more times over and is therefore the best form of insurance.



## **Are you looking to purchase White Park females?**

Several of our members are currently advertising White Park females for sale on our website. Please visit our "For Sale" page on [www.whiteparkcattlesociety.ltd.uk](http://www.whiteparkcattlesociety.ltd.uk)



We would like to wish all members of the Society a very peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Thank you to Adrian Hoskins for his wintery scene of Edgehill Barbour and Edgehill Brian enjoying the snow!



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