

NEWSLETTER



Pencil drawing of a Swaledale ewe and lamb by Rebecca Nelson, Millstone Moor, Cockermouth

Message from the Chairman

It is with great hope, that by the time you read this, the weather will have improved somewhat and that you will all have had a reasonably successful lambing considering it being one of the most difficult Winters and Springs to memory.

The incessant rain has been relentless and doesn't seem to have stopped since last October. That, along with the driving winds and storms has proved a very testing period for our sheep. However, a positive of our breed is the resilience of the Swaledale ewe; seeing them this lambing time and knowing what they have had to contend with and still produce and look after her lambs is quite remarkable to say the least. The hardiness of the Swaledale lamb when born into sometimes terrible weather, yet still have the ability to get up and suck is in my opinion unrivalled.

I think at times like these it is so important to keep in touch with one another and 'keep talking'. As the saying goes a problem shared is a problem halved. Farming is difficult at the best of times but it's important to try and look after our mental health as much as possible and 'check-in' with our friends and neighbours. We are all in the same boat with regards the weather and we will all be having the same difficulties. It's important to remember you are certainly not alone.

Hopefully the Spring shows will give everyone an opportunity to meet up, share lambing time stories and view some quality sheep. I look forward to seeing you all around the shows and hope to see some strong entries.



We have NSA Scot Sheep in June and the NSA event at Malvern in July where we hope to have some good sheep to go on the stand. These events really allow us to showcase our breed and gives us the opportunity to highlight their maternal traits and importance in the sheep stratification system. If anyone feels they have sheep that could go on the stand don't hesitate to get in touch.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Districts for making me so welcome when I came along to your AGM's. The passion breeders have and enthusiasm you have for the breed never ceases to amaze me. As many of you will be aware there has been discussions around our 'crowning' protocols and Council agreed that they wanted to give the membership the opportunity to have their say - so look out for guidance on voting in your AGM notices.

Greg Dalton
Chairman



News from the Office...



The saying states, "Time flies when you're having fun", however, this Spring has been dominated by a very wet spell of weather, and very little fun for everyone lambing sheep, particularly those who have little shed space. Hopefully there will be brighter days ahead, with Spring Shows in sight and then on to Summer.

In Lamb Sales – There were less sheep entered and forward at the In Lamb Sales, of which the results and photos are reported within this Newsletter. Council have agreed, after monitoring these declining numbers, to withdraw the Association status from the sales at Bentham and J36, to strengthen the sales at Hawes and Kirkby Stephen. Council have agreed to support website advertising of female breeding sales at all sale centres this Autumn, each Auction Mart has been contacted by email for confirmation of these dates and some have chosen to advertise in this Newsletter.

Events – The Association will be attending Scotsheep and the Sheep Event at Malvern with the promotional stand. The stand will be positioned with other hill breeds, Blue Faced Leicester's and Mules to keep the flag flying for the Traditional Sheep Stratification system. Plans are in hand for sourcing sheep to go on display; members from D District have agreed to help 'man' the stand at Scotsheep. The Highland Show drinks reception will take place once again on the Friday evening of the show adjacent to the judging ring at 6pm, everyone welcome.

AGM – All paid up members of the Association will have received notice for the Annual General Meeting, this year, to be held at the Middleton-in-Teesdale Sports and Social Club, on Wednesday 12th June at 7.30pm. After consultation with all District's about the Crowning and registration process, Council have agreed that there will be a paper vote for members to vote on which Crowning process they would like for the next 3 years, on-farm or self-crown. The paperwork and guidance on how to submit your votes are included in this envelope. Votes are to be received at the registered office by 5pm on Wednesday 5th June or by email to office@swaledale-sheep.com by the same time. The results will be announced at the AGM.

Championship Rosettes – If your local show has classes for Swaledale sheep, the Association is happy to support you by donating a Championship rosette. Please get in touch and they can be posted out. Please don't presume that the rosettes will automatically appear on the day of the show!

Scrapie Genotyping – Please remember to have your tup hogs scrapie genotyped in sufficient time for the results to be back for crowning. Every year there are problems with results not being back in time.

NO GENOTYPE RESULT = NO CROWNING TAG

Sometimes members have to re-test odd tups due to the blood sample not being of good enough quality in the first instance which slows down the process.

Advertising – Thanks to Dalton Supplies and Hawes, Ruswarp, Penrith, Bentham, Barnard Castle (St John's Chapel) and Hexham Auction Marts who have placed adverts in this Newsletter; members have expressed opinion that they would like to continue receiving paper versions of the Newsletter, and with escalating postal costs, distributing the twice yearly publication is by no means cheap, so thank you advertisers for your support.

Wishing everyone well, fingers crossed for a good summer, and a good breeding sheep trade.

Rachel
Head Secretary

SWALEDALE SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ALL FULLY PAID MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE

103RD AGM

To be held in Middleton in Teesdale Sports & Social Club, Rose Terrace, Middleton-in-Teesdale, Barnard Castle, Co Durham, DL12 0QL

WEDNESDAY 12TH JUNE 2024 AT 7.30PM

All members will have received official notice and agenda.

GUEST SPEAKER:
RAYMOND LUND, AUCTIONEER

BENTHAM AUCTION MART

015242 61444 - Sale Days 61246
Stephen 07713 075 661
Greg 07713 075 664
Will 07590 876 849
www.benthamauction.co.uk

| | |
|--|--|
| Tuesday 25 th September ANNUAL SHOW & SALE OF 5000 DRAFT EWES & SHEARLINGS Also Other Hillbred Sheep | Saturday 19 th October ANNUAL SHOW & SALE OF GIMMER LAMBS Also 2 nd Sale of Draft Ewes & Shearlings |
|--|--|

Entries & enquiries to 015242 61444

HAWES Auction Mart

HAWES, NORTH YORKSHIRE, DL8 3NP

2024 Sale Dates

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuesday 24 th September Sale of 3,000 Crossed Swaledale Ewes. Catalogue closes Tuesday 17 th September | Saturday 12 th October Prize Show & Sale of 6,000 Swaledale Gimmer Lambs & Gimmer Shearlings. Catalogue closes Tuesday 1st October |
| Monday 7 th October Prize show & Sale of 5,000 registered & unregistered uncrossed Swaledale Ewes & Gimmer Shearlings. Catalogue closes Tuesday 24 th September | Tuesday 15 th October 2024 Sale of 3,500 Correct & Correct below Swaledale Ewes. Catalogue closes Tuesday 8 th October |

Enquiries to 01969 667 207

In Lamb Sale Reports

Hawes

20 January 2024 - Judge: Luke Staley

There was a lighter entry of in lamb ewes and empty gimmer hogs entered at Hawes, but a solid trade was achieved for the top end, in particular for Robbie Hallam, who took the pre-sale show championship with his 1st prize gimmer shearling. Sired by a Patrick Sowerby tup, Oakbank Hamlet, and in lamb to the Mark Ewbank tup, Intake D&D 7th, she sold for £2000 to John Tully, Burncroft Farm.

This was followed by Robbie's second sheep into the ring, another gimmer shearling, this time sired by Ghyll House Jawbreaker, and in lamb to the same Ewbank tup, she sold for £1400 and joined the Champion at Burncroft Farm.

The day's Reserve Champion from John Bland's pen, from Mossdale, was his 2nd prize gimmer shearling, which also sold for £1400 to John Tully. She was sired by a Brian Thornborrow tup, and scanned twins to a Richard Harker tup. John also topped the trade for gimmer hogg's, this time consigned from Thwaite Bridge. The hogg that stood 1st in the show, again sired by the Thornborrow tup, sold for £1200 to Ian Bell, Askrigg.

A highlight from the sale came from the Late Neil Bland with the sale of his gimmer hogg, with proceeds going to MS Research. She sold for £350 to Alan Alderson, Barras.



Auctioneers:
Hawes Farmers Auction Mart

Show results:

Supreme Champion

RC Hallam with 1st Prize Gimmer Shearling

Reserve Champion

J Bland with 2nd Prize Gimmer Shearling

Ewe

1st JR & SL Pratt
2nd JR Blades
3rd E & K Bland

Gimmer Shearling

1st RC Hallam
2nd J Bland
3rd JR & SL Pratt

Gimmer Hogg

1st J & SJ Bland
2nd Late NJ Bland
3rd RA Sowerby



Supreme Champion from Robbie Hallam, High Birkwith sold for the top price of £2000 to John Tully, Burncroft Farm



Reserve Champion was the 2nd Prize Gimmer Shearling from John Bland's Mossdale flock which sold for £1400 to John Tully, Burncroft Farm



Robbie Hallam sold another gimmer shearling for £1400, and joined his Champion at John Tully's, Burncroft Farm



J & SJ Bland, Thwaite Bridge sold their 1st Prize Gimmer Hogg for £1200 to Ian Bell, Askrigg

LEADING PRICES (£):

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| RC Hallam | 2000, 1400 |
| J Bland | 1400 |
| J & SJ Bland | 1200 |
| E & K Bland | 580 |

AVERAGES:

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| 3 Ewes | 426 |
| 4 Gimmer Shearlings | 1262 |
| 3 Gimmer Hogs | 583 |

J36 Kendal

27 January 2024 - Judge: Ricky Hutchinson

The Diamond Delights show and sale of Swaledale Stars held on behalf of the Swaledale Sheep Breeders Association had a nice entry forward. The pre sale show judging was in the capable hands of Ricky Hutchinson, who awarded the champion rosette to the one crop ewe consigned by T Brogden, Helbeck. Sired by Kisdon Odyssey, and scanned with twins to Helbeck Unique, she sold for £700 to M/s Parkinson, Hareden.

The reserve champion, from TW Hutchinson, Bail Hill, was the 2nd prize aged ewe. This three crop ewe, whose mother won the Great Yorkshire Show, scanned twins, and sold for £500 to M/s Staley, Kaber.

Auctioneers:
North West Auctions



Show results:

Supreme Champion

T Brogden with 1st Prize Aged Ewe

Reserve Champion

TW Hutchinson with 2nd Prize Aged Ewe

Ewe

1st T Brogden
2nd TW Hutchinson
3rd T Brogden

Gimmer Shearling

1st T Brogden

Gimmer Hogg

1st T Brogden
2nd T Brogden
3rd T Brogden

AVERAGES:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 3 Ewes | 533 |
| 1 Gimmer Shearling | 400 |
| 2 Gimmer Hogs | 350 |



Supreme Champion from Thomas Brogden, Helbeck, was the 1st Prize Aged Ewe which sold for £700.



Reserve Champion came from Thomas Hutchinson, Bail Hill, which sold for £500

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Friday 27th September

Annual Sale of Swaledale Draft Ewes and Shearlings from the North York Moors

Saturday 28th September

Annual Sale of Swaledale Gimmer Lambs from the North York Moors

SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.richardsonandsmith.co.uk 01947 602298



Hexham and Northern Marts

Swaledale Breeding Sale

Thursday 3rd October

First Draft Sale of Swaledale Ewes, Gimmers & Ewe Lambs.

Entries close Wednesday 25th September

Thursday 17th October

Second Draft Sale of Swaledale Ewes, Gimmers & Ewe Lambs.

Entries close Wednesday 9th October



Tel 01434 605 444 www.hexhammart.co.uk info@hexhammart.co.uk

Bentham

3 February 2024 - Judge: Shaun Taylor

The sale at Bentham saw a solid trade with the top pre-sale show honours going to the home of P&C Charnley, High Oxenfell, Coniston. Their 2021 born ewe, sired by Arngill Laurence (A31003) and out of a ewe purchased from S&D Robinson, Foredale Farm claimed 1st prize in the ewe class and went on to take Supreme Champion, she sold for £1250 to S&D Robinson, Foredale Farm.

Following this was the Charnley's second ewe into the ring, placed 2nd in the show, and Reserve Champion, sold for £1000 to the judge, S Taylor, Ellerbeck Cottage. This ewe, similarly bred to the first, but out of a ewe purchased from Richard Sowerby, sold

in lamb to West Briscoe Sultan, a son of the Hawes Champion from 2018, Park Lodge Jackpot.

Andrew Skidmore, Flakebridge Farm sold two gimmer hogs for £1200 a piece. This sale was Andrew's final one, so created interest from around the ring. The first hogg, placed 3rd in the show, sired by the homebred Flakebridge Oscar and out of his old show ewe which won Ravenstonedale Show for three years running, sold to W&K Hutchinson, The Coach House. The next hogg from Flakebridge to make this price, sold to M Hutchinson, Howgill Foot; this one was sired by High Birkwith Endeavour 1st and out of the best ewe on the farm.



Auctioneers: Bentham Auction Mart

LEADING PRICES (£):

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| P & C Charnley | 1250, 1000, 500 |
| DJ Coates | 600 |
| A & M Skidmore | 1200 x 2,550 |

AVERAGES:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| 10 Ewes | 485 |
| 1 Gimmer Shearling | 400 |
| 10 Gimmer Hogs | 500 |

Show results:

Supreme Champion

P & C Charnley with 1st Prize Aged Ewe

Reserve Champion

P & C Charnley with 2nd Prize Aged Ewe

Ewe

1st P & C Charnley
2nd P & C Charnley
3rd MC & AE Staley

Gimmer Shearling

1st B Thomas
2nd AD Coates & Son

Gimmer Hogg

1st DJ Coates
2nd DJ Coates
3rd A & M Skidmore



Supreme
Champion
from P&C
Charnley,
sold for
£1250 to S&D
Robinson,
Foredale
Farm



Reserve
Champion
from P&C
Charnley,
sold for
£1000 to
S Taylor,
Ellerbeck
Cottage



Gimmer Hogg
from A&M
Skidmore,
sold for
£1200 to
Wayne
Hutchinson,
Hawes



Gimmer
Hogg
from A&M
Skidmore,
sold for
£1200 to
Max
Hutchinson,
Howgill Foot

Kirkby Stephen

8 February 2024 - Judge: John Hutchinson



The Brogden family claimed top honours at the In Lamb sale of individual females at Kirkby Stephen. The championship was awarded to the 1st Prize Aged Ewe from S&P Brogden, Hillandale. This ewe, sired by Bull & Cave Jackpot, and scanned twins, was sold to T Bousfield, Brough, for £850.

Their son, Thomas, followed with his gimmer hogg which was placed 1st in the pre-sale show, and Reserve Champion. Sired by the Stevie Clarkson tup, Swalehead Powerhouse, she sold for £1000 to S Taylor, Ellerbeck Cottage.

Top price in the sale went to DJ Coates, Tetheran for his 2nd Prize Gimmer Hogg

which sold for £1800 to GS Coates, 7 Brough Meadows. This much admired hogg was by the homebred Butt Rigg Gary 1. Also at this price, D Humble, Cowshill, sold his 2022 born ewe, scanned twins to Bents Gorgeous, to J Tully, Burncroft Farm.

Following this was a 2021 born ewe from MC&AE Staley, Poppin Cottage, placed 3rd in the show and scanned for three, she sold for £1400 to S Tully, Barnard Castle.

At the completion of the sheep, the annual sale of Flock Books took place, with a complete set from 1920 up to 2017 being sold for £4,000 to J Reed, The Knarr.

Auctioneers: Harrison & Hetherington

LEADING PRICES (£):

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| DJ Coates | 1800, 750 |
| D Humble | 1800 |
| MC & AE Staley | 1400 |
| AT & A Bainbridge | 1200 |
| T Brogden | 1000 |
| M & EM Wilson | 1000 |
| Lewis Staley | 950 |
| S & P Brogden | 850, 600 |

AVERAGES:

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| 12 Ewes | 702 |
| 10 Gimmer Shearlings | 765 |
| 6 Gimmer Hogs | 680 |

Show results:

Supreme Champion

S & P Brogden with 1st Prize Aged Ewe

Reserve Champion

T Brogden with 1st Prize Gimmer Hogg

Ewe

1st S & P Brogden
2nd I Collinson
3rd MC & AE Staley

Gimmer Shearling

1st Hugh Harrison
2nd M & EM Wilson
3rd M & EM Wilson

Gimmer Hogg

1st T Brogden
2nd DJ Coates
3rd TW Hutchinson



Supreme
Champion
from S&P
Brogden,
sold for
£850 to Tom
Bousfield



1st Prize
Gimmer
Hogg and
Reserve
Champion
from T
Brogden
sold for
£1000 to
Shaun
Taylor



Top price was
for the 2nd
Prize Gimmer
Hogg from
DJ Coates,
which sold
for £1800 to
Gary Coates



Equal top
price at the
sale came
from Dan
Humble
with his
Gimmer
Shearling
which sold
for £1800 to
John Tully,
Burncroft

AUCTIONEERS

PHOTO SHOOT 120

43

GT-5198A-07

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Hawes



Stephen
Dennis
Bentham



Bradley
Thompson
J36



Mark
Richardson
Kirkby
Stephen



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(Yellow visual available in Scotland)

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The John Burton Award 2024



As many readers of this publication will be aware, John Burton, who has been long associated with the Swaledale breed in Scotland, very kindly donated money to the Association in 2023, to be used over 5 years, to be presented to a young member who has shown enthusiasm and commitment to the breed during the year, whether it be showing, social media or any other general involvement with the breed.

2024 is the turn of a young member from D District.

Alan Alderson, a past Chairman of the Association and Honorary Life Member, will be liaising with John and Deirdre throughout the year with recommendations and advice on who deserves to win the award, so that, as requested by John, the award can be presented on one of his annual trips to the ram sales.

Pictured top left: John & Deirdre Burton

Pictured bottom left: Winner of the award in 2023, Lewis Staley, member of C District



SHOWS 2024 Championship Rosettes

PLEASE DON'T PRESUME THAT THE ROSETTES
WILL AUTOMATICALLY APPEAR ON SHOW DAY!



If your local show has classes for Swaledale's, please contact the Association office, we are happy to support you by donating a Championship rosette or by promoting them through the Facebook page.

After the shows, email the results and a photo of the Champion, and again, these will be included on Facebook and the website.

The two trophies presented by the SSBA, which rotate around the Districts, are this year being hosted by E District.

The Rochdale Trophy

To be awarded to the Best Pair (Male & Female) at ROSEDALE SHOW on SATURDAY 17TH AUGUST 2024. For further details about the Swaledale section please email the show directly rosedaleshowsecretary@gmail.com

The Dalton Trophy

To be awarded to the exhibitor gaining most points in the Swaledale section, is going to FARNDALE SHOW on MONDAY 26TH AUGUST 2024. For further details, please contact the show secretary on 01751 430 885.



Winner of the Rochdale Trophy in 2023 was Joseph Nattrass, Shield Hill Top for winning Best Pair at Eastgate Show



Winner of the Dalton Trophy in 2023 was John White, Rigg Farm for winning most points at Alston Show

For further information about the host shows, please contact Kate Edminson, Secretary for E District on 07957 632 356 or Mark Graham, Chairman for E District on 07376 473 326



Champion Pies made from Swaledale Lamb

Article written by The Northern Echo, 12th March 2024

Swaledale member, Lydia Sunter who runs the Fish and Chip shop at Middleton in Teesdale entered her Minted Lamb and Potato Pie into the British Pie Awards earlier in the year, and came out with the Supreme Championship!

With almost 900 pies in the competition, it was the lamb pies, made using lamb from the Swaledale flock on the family farm near Hawes in Wensleydale, which came out on top. The farm is run by Lydia's brother David Amsden and Mum, Alice.

Lydia said: "We are delighted. We've been making our pies for over ten years now and although we know the locals love them, it's nice to get recognition from a national award for the quality of what we produce."

Judges' comments included "this is a come eat me pie", that the "pastry is a poem, perfectly seasoned and wonderfully flaky" and the "filling is very well balanced, meat is beautifully tender, and the mint is coming through well".

Matthew O'Callaghan, Chairman of the Melton Pork Pie Association said: "We had the pleasure of tasting some delicious pies, and Middleton in Teesdale Fish and Chip Shop stood out against the competition to triumph in the lamb pie category, and to go on to be crowned Supreme Champion, which is no easy feat."

The British Pie Awards now in its 16th year brings in entries from across the country and from bakers, butchers, pubs, sports clubs, and Fish & Chip shops amongst other pie makers – judged by a team of 140 judges.

Meat-based pie entries dominated the top four classes with beef and alcohol topping the entry rankings.

Neither Lydia nor David had run a catering business before, but as farmers they were used to hard work and loved home-cooked quality food. The business has grown from strength to strength and is well supported by locals and visitors alike.

One accolade was to make pies on the premises, using lamb and beef from the family farm.

Lydia said: "Mum (Alice Iveson) taught me how to make a rich short crust pastry and I developed a range of pies, including lamb with potatoes and mint; it's our best seller."

Two years ago, everything changed when their father died. David had to return to Wensleydale to run the farm and Lydia stayed in



Pictured, Lydia Sunter with her winning pies

Teesdale to run the Fish & Chip shop. It was a difficult time for the siblings who always supported each other, both were to become solo owners of businesses, and add small children to the mix (David has two girls, aged 5 and 2, whilst Lydia's daughter is 6 and baby Andrew arrived 7 months ago) juggling life is not an understatement.

Good staff are the backbone of any business and Middleton in Teesdale Fish and Chip shop has an "excellent team". Meanwhile, David ploughs a lone furrow alongside his wife Sam (and a little intervention from Mum). Their Limousin cattle graze high-lying limestone pastures alongside a flock of Swaledale sheep. It is the latter who provide succulent lamb for the homemade pies.

They also make three beef pies – Steak and Potato (which won bronze in the same contest), Steak mince and Onion and Cornish with steak and vegetables, as well as a Chicken Pie.

The limestone grazing, rich in herbs and flowers coupled with the wild purple heather on the moorlands surrounding the Dales, certainly gives the meat a distinctive, special flavour.

**Penrith & District Farmers' Mart LLP**
Auctioneers & Valuers

Swaledale Ewe Sale
.....
Thursday 10th October
Annual Prize Show & Sale of Swaledale
Ewes and other Hill bred Ewes,
Swaledale Gimmer Shearlings
Gimmer Lambs

Entries close
noon Tuesday 1st October

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Shearlings & Gimmer Lambs
Closing Date: WEDNESDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER

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Meet the District Secretaries

The Association's 5 District's each have their own District Secretary with 'A' District being divided into three areas, Middleton in Teesdale, Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland, resulting in 7 District Secretary's who are responsible for District meetings, registrations, and organising District Ram Sales.

A District Middleton in Teesdale



Full Name: Kayleigh Robinson (maiden name was Toms)

Where were you born, and then grow up? Bolam and Hummerbeck, County Durham.

What made you apply to become a District Secretary? I enjoy my sheep, meeting people and working alongside my husband with his Swaledale sheep and saw this role as a fitting opportunity.

What are your hobbies and interests? I love working with my sheep, (when things are going well). I love dogs and always have done, they truly are a man's best friend. Spending time with my family and friends, especially my daughter that is the best.

What is the most memorable moment with your sheep? Buying my own first sheep, some one-crop mule ewes and bringing them back to the ground I had started renting, that was a proud moment.

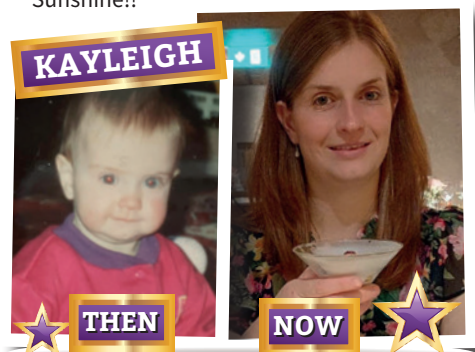
What's the most romantic thing that's happened to you? My husband proposed to me by writing on the pet lambs, 'will you marry me' which sounds lovely however he decided not to hang about and was at home on the couch waiting for me to return.

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning? My daughter, she literally wakes me up everyday.

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why? Spring, everything is to look forward to, longer days come back, lambing starts. Its a great time of year, usually.

What's your favourite brand of clothing? Clothing does not really interest me as long as it is practical, I am happiest in my old work clothes.

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small the cost, what would it be? Sunshine!!



Northern Ireland

Full Name: Joanne McSwiggan

Where were you born, and then grow up? I was born in Upperlands in Co Derry and this is where I still live today.

What made you apply to become a District Secretary? I applied to become Secretary for the Northern Ireland Swaledale's as it is a small District. I thought I could bring ideas forward to the group to expand and promote the Swaledale breed in the area.

What are your hobbies and interests? My hobbies are going for walks, Pilates and going on family holidays, shopping with my daughters and friends and supporting my children with their hobbies and sports.

What is the most memorable moment with your sheep? Going to Shows with my son Tiernan from when he was aged 13, watching him expand and improve the flock and seeing him going on to win a number of Championships. Also getting his name into the Swaledale circle at such a young age.

What's the most romantic thing that's happened to you? My husband Paul and I got married at a young age. We have a hectic life with a young family, a mountain and a lowland farm to run, we have limited time. We also have a small ATV business selling farm Quads, working together we make a good team.

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning? My family, I lost both my parents at a young age so my goal in life is to spend as much time with my children and husband and make as many memories as I possibly can.

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why? Summer, I enjoy the warmer weather, it is nice to walk through the fields and watch the lambs thriving and I look forward to all the Agricultural Shows.

What's your favourite brand of clothing? Ridgeline, they make great coats, as our mountain farm is 1000 feet above sea level, we can experience a lot of adverse weather conditions for working with sheep and I feel this brand keeps me warm and dry.

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small the cost, what would it be? One thing I was looking for, for our farm was a Sheep Handling System which we recently purchased. We went for a Cotter Crate Sheep and Lamb Handler System from Cotter Agritech, we plan to use this to make life easier for working with stock. If I win the Lottery, I will buy a house in the South of France and relax.



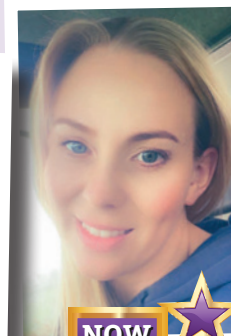
JOANNE



NOW

D District Weardale

FAY



Full Name: Fay Johnson

Where were you born, and then grow up? Hexham General Hospital, basically born and raised at Wolfhills

What made you apply to become a District Secretary? A moment of madness! I've been around the breed since I was born, crowning tups with former secretary Helen when I was a few months old. Although my time as D District secretary will be shorter than I

Southern Ireland

Full Name: Carol Frances Gillespie

Where were you born, and then grow up? I was born and grew up in Barnesmore Gap in Co Donegal.

What made you apply to become a District Secretary? I wanted to do my part for the breed here in Ireland.

What are your hobbies and interests? My hobbies and interests are mainly sheep showing throughout the year and getting sheep ready for shows.

What is the most memorable moment with your sheep? When we won Overall Champion with our Tup Garvan Tiny Dancer at the Association Sale in Stranorlar in 2021.

What's the most romantic thing that's happened to you? Every year we go glamping and it's lovely to get away and get a break.

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning? The Dream.

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why? My favourite season between the end of spring and start of summer, April/May time as the brighter evenings start and things start to bloom.

What's your favourite brand of clothing? My favourite brand of clothing is Tommy Hilfiger.

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small the cost, what would it be? Another farm further down the Valley that's not as wet.



had intended, I have been lucky to have had three wonderful supportive chairmen (Adam, Greg and Graham). Thanks to all D District members for their support during my time as Secretary.

What are your hobbies and interests? Playing hockey, travelling, walking, my niece's, concerts, and gin.

What is the most memorable moment with your sheep? Showing a gimmer hogg at Alston Show years ago and getting stung by a wasp, then getting told off for letting the hogg go... I have never forgiven wasps.



B District Swaledale

Full Name: Christine Lorena Clarkson (my middle name is a combination of my Dad and Mum's first names)

Where were you born, and then grow up? Muker

What made you apply to become a District Secretary? My Grandad was one of the founding members of The Association and I think I'll enjoy it.

What are your hobbies and interests? My main hobby is socialising. Currently I'm on the Steering Group of Muker Community Pub which has been taking up a bit of my spare time. I used to like reading books but I have got out of the habit.

What is the most memorable moment with your sheep? Selling Kisdon Lovely, a day I'll never forget.

What's the most romantic thing that's happened to you? Good question, I was given a sheep once!

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning? Rose & Sam, my twins!

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why? Spring because it means winter is over, though this year is testing that.

What's your favourite brand of clothing? Don't really have one, I'm guessing a brand of waterproof leggings doesn't count? Quite like Joules clothing, both the adults and children's ranges so I'll say that.

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small the cost, what would it be? Something to stop ewes having triplets.

What's the most romantic thing that's happened to you? I'll ignore this question...singleton!!

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning? Needing a wee.

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why? Favourite season is spring/lambing time, possibly as I'm a lambing time baby!! Although this year has tested my love of spring and lambing. It's a good job skin is waterproof!!

C District Kirkby Stephen



Full Name: John Wilfred Buckle

Where were you born, and then grow up? Buckles Farm, Barras, Kirkby Stephen.

What made you apply to become a District Secretary? I was persuaded by the late Johnny Beckwith, New Hall to apply and out of three applicants I got the job...45 years on I'm still here!

What are your hobbies and interests? Butchering, Swaledale Sheep, and Westlife concerts.

What is the most memorable moment with your sheep? Winning a rosette with a tup at C District sale.

What's the most romantic thing that's happened to you? Marrying my wife Maria 38 years ago.

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning? My passion for farming

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why? Spring - welcoming the new additions and seeing how our new tups have performed.

What's your favourite brand of clothing? Ridgeline.

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small the cost, what would it be? A lowland farm for sheep wintering.



What's your favourite brand of clothing? There might be too many to choose (typical female). Fairfax and Favor, Holland Cooper, Thrudark, and Outback would be towards the top of the list!!

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small the cost, what would it be? At the moment if you could buy sun and dry weather that would be awesome but that might be asking too much!!

E District Cleveland

KATE

Full Name: Kate Edminson

Where were you born, and then grow up?

Born in Lincoln, and grew up between Darlington and Barnard Castle.

What made you apply to become a

District Secretary? I was keen to be part of the Swaledale community and promote what a fantastic breed they are.

What are your hobbies and interests?

Horses - I used to train point to pointers, dogs and my little girl, who is 2-year old.

What is the most memorable moment

with your sheep? After a terrible lambing this year, my first set of twins from my own ewes and own tup.

What's the most romantic thing that's

happened to you? I'm not really romantic, probably getting a cup of tea made for me!

What's the one thing that gets you out of bed on a morning?

All the animals that need looking after have got me out of bed and through some pretty tough times; I owe them a lot.

What's your favourite Season of the Year and why?

I love cold frosty DRY winter mornings.

What's your favourite brand of clothing?

I've just found Ridgeline and absolutely love my smock and fleece hoodie.

If you could buy one thing to make your life easier, no matter how big or small

the cost, what would it be? A trained sheep dog would be amazing!!



Thank you...

"Just a little note thanking everybody who I have met during my time as E District secretary; thank you to E District for the beautiful shepherds crook that you presented to me at our AGM, I wish Kate every success", Shell Fawbert



Spring Shows 2024

Mungrisdale Show

Wednesday 15th May

Location: The Garth, Bannerdale View, Mungrisdale, Penrith

Entries Close: Enter on the day

Contact: Jo Edwards

johanna.edwards@btopenworld.com

Eastgate Show

Saturday 1st June

Location: Banners Field, Eastgate

Entries Close: 25th May

Contact: Paul Collinson

07809 543 672

Stainmore Show

Saturday 8th June

Location: North Stainmore Parish Hall

Entries Close: 20th May

Contact: Hannah Pedley

07792 453 510

Roman Wall Show

Saturday 8th June

Location: Twice Brewed, Hexham

Entries Close: 1st June

Contact: Tabitha Allen

07989 687 225

romanwallshow@gmail.com

Middleton Spring Show

Saturday 25th May

Location: High Force Hotel, near Middleton in Teesdale

Entries Close: 18th May

Contact: Kayleigh Robinson

07800 754 456

£2 Admission to the show will entitle you to discounted drinks all show day!

Tan Hill Show

Thursday 30th May

Location: Tan Hill Inn

Entries Close: 16th May

Contact: Raymond Calvert - 01748 886 335



NSA EVENTS & SHOWS 2024

The breed promotional stand will be at the following two events in 2024:

Scot Sheep

Date: Wednesday 5th June 2024 (All day event)

Location: Aikengall Farm, Innerwick, Dunbar, East Lothian, EH42 1SG

Information:

- The Hamilton family lamb 1400 head each year at Aikengall, comprising 700 Blackface ewes bred pure for replacements, with the remaining 700 Blackface ewes crossed to the Bluefaced Leicester for producing Scotch Mules, where the females are retained for breeding. 1400 Scotch Mule ewes are put to the Texel tup and lambled at Nunraw in March.
- The natural environment is treated as an equal enterprise on the farm with various stewardship schemes, latterly Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP)/ Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) having played a significant role in the development and improvement of infrastructure and habitats on the predominantly upland unit at Aikengall.
- As well as this, Aikengall also hosts Aikengall Wind Farm with Community Wind Power Ltd which became operational in 2009, comprising 16 Vestas V90 wind turbines. These wind turbines have a tip height of 125 metres, and each has a generating capacity of 3MW, generating enough electricity to power approximately 31,500 homes and based on displacing around 54,200 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide per annum.
- The Swaledale stand will be situated with the Stratification Group of Breed Societies, comprising hill breeds, Blue Faced Leicesters and Mules.

NSA Sheep Event

Date: Tuesday 30th July 2024 (All day event)

Location: Three Counties Showground, Malvern, WR13 6NW

Information:

- A biennial one-day show where sheep farmers can find out about the latest innovations and products available and can strengthen their technical knowledge by attending seminars and workshops. A series of competitions run throughout the day, providing entertainment and encouraging the next generation of sheep farmers, while a sheepdog sale is always a big draw for visitors.

Great Yorkshire Show

Date: Tuesday 9th – Friday 12th July

Venue: Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate, HG2 8NZ



There will be no promotional stand at this event. Show classes for Swaledale's take place on Wednesday 10th July.

Judge: Michael Allinson

Royal Highland Show

Date: Thursday 20th – Sunday 23rd June

Venue: Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh, EH28 8NB



There will be no promotional stand at this event. Show classes for Swaledale's take place on Friday 21st June at 9am.

Judge: John Stephenson



Focus: Brian & Matthew Lawson

Pictured, three generations of the Lawson family



She may be known as the ‘Queen of the Hills’ but she’s still got to earn her keep and it’s no different for the Swaledale ewes at Buddle House whose Texel-sired offspring have been used to build a prolific and, just as importantly, profitable flock for some years now.



It’s a decision that may raise some eyebrows even now but the Lawson family have been using Texel rams on their Swaledale ewes since the 1980s to produce what is sometimes known as a Texdale rather than using a Bluefaced Leicester to produce North of England Mules. This was a move that was definitely ahead of its time back then but is certainly reaping the rewards during a period when every penny counts.

The Lawsons’ history lies in these fells, as Brian’s grandfather farmed in the area before World War II and before the British Army obtained the ground which has since been leased to Brian and wife, Rachel, but now run by Matthew and his wife, also Rachel, together with sons, Jake and Oscar, both of whom take a keen interest in the farm but Jake is also a keen showjumper.

At Buddle House, near Marske, they own some 35 acres but manage around 3000 acres in total, half of which is fell grazing rising to 1400 feet with 350 acres classed as in-bye ground and the remainder as permanent pasture or allotment grazing.

Here they run around 800 Swaledale ewes with a further 250 gimmers not deemed suitable to breed pure covered by Texel rams, with first and second cross females making up a 1200-strong flock of Texel-sired ewes.

They also have a herd of 60 suckler cows, alternating between British Blue and Limousin sires to produce a strong crop of calves which are sold as weanlings or store calves through Kirkby Stephen with a few heading to Darlington.

“Back in the mid-1980s we were running around 1600 to 1700 Swales with 700 put to the Bluefaced Leicester, but the sheep trade dipped and the Mule trade took a hammering so we decided to look in a different direction,” explained Matthew, adding that the stress of getting Mule gimmer lambs prepared in the run up to

a sale could often all be in vain if it rained the night before.

Brian continued: “There were a lot of breeders in the area choosing to go down a different ewe path because of the drop in popularity of the Mule, but my father said we can change the tup but not the ewe so it was then we bought our first couple of Texel tups.

“We’d seen Texels around and thought they looked fit for the job, and they proved to be hardy when lambed outside. We did try a couple of other breeds but nothing matched the Texel – you can guarantee if a ewe lambed a pair on a wall back on a cold morning with some snow on the ground that she’d still have a pair the next morning.”

This was certainly an unusual move some 40 years ago and the family still kept on the traditional route of breeding Mules too, but the extra £10 to £15 received when selling those Texel-sired lambs either store or finished proved more than worthwhile.

“Don’t get me wrong, the Mule has certainly secured her premier place in the sheep industry – the Swaledale would be in a very different place without her – but when we took on more acres and were able to run a commercial flock it was the Texdales that proved their worth; she didn’t need to be taken off to be fed through the winter and seemed to thrive on our ground,” pointed out Matthew, with Brian adding that she could easily live alongside the pure Swale ewe.

With an expanding flock of first and second cross Texel Swaledales, the Lawsons were again looking for something a bit different to create the end product – a lamb with excellent conformation that was in demand from fat lamb buyers and finishers.

“In 1997 we bought two Beltex tups from John Hall, Inglewood Edge, and these were proper Beltex so we did wonder if they

Buddle House

would manage to do the job but John assured us they would and oh man those lambs were like bullets,” said Matthew.

“We started taking these Beltex lambs bred from the Texdale to the auction and folk had never seen anything like them before. David Findlay got in touch with us to do an experiment when Skipton mart had the meat plant and these lambs killed out at 52% and were all E grades, but don’t forget their grandmothers and great-grandmothers were Swales,” he added.

Reaping the rewards, in 2004 lambs were sold directly to Kitson Butchers who were paying 300p per kg deadweight, a hefty price back then, and when wagon loads were taken to Bentham auction they were easily making 190p live.

Comparing the breeds in Spring 2023, after a winter on turnips and no hard feed, the finished Texdales were averaging 50kg at £134, compared to the pure Swales at 42kg and £104.

“We’re not doing it to compete with the Mule,” pointed out Brian,

“We’re not doing that much different to the boys that buy Mules to put to a terminal sire, we are just taking a more direct route that works for us.”

“but purely from a commercial point it’s another string to add to the Swaledale bow. She may not scan at 220% or above but will easily scan 190-200% and is cheep to keep in winter, a real thriver and a right wick sheep.”

But as Matthew explains, it takes a certain sort of Texel tup to produce the goods and that sort of tup can be picked up for sensible money.

“You want a Texel to be as long as you can get him with plenty of width right from the shoulder – that’s important – and he needs to have a good hard skin on him. We don’t want a big head, it needs to be a head you can lamb,” said Matthew, adding they regularly buy at Skipton and Carlisle where they have paid up to 5000gns but their most recent purchases cost 1500gns and 750gns.

At the end of the day though, it all comes back to the Swale ewe which is suited to her life in the hills, being hardy and capable of lambing outside unassisted.

There has been a focus on the Swale flock in recent times and significant investment has been made, including the £14,000 Eric Coates ram bought in 2013 which made a big impression in the flock, putting colour back in the head and plenty of bone. He earned his keep by producing the family’s first shearling champion at Hawes which went on to sell for £10,000. The male portion of the flock peaked at £20,000 at Hawes a few years back.

Females, too, have sold well from the Buddle House flock with the team winning the pen of ewes at Hawes on many occasions with one of their greatest achievements being winning at Hawes and Kirkby in the same year. These pens of 10 have reached £1000 selling to David Hume and £650 too.

This year the Lawsons will have around 10 shearling rams and



200 draft ewes on offer, with a larger proportion of ewes retained this year as they ramp up the Texdale numbers again.

The pure flock is certainly paying its way but Brian is keen to point out it relies on producing that fat lamb. “The most important thing now in sheep farming is the fat lamb and you’ve got to supply what the buyers need,” said Brian.

“My father used to go to tup sales, no matter what the breed, and the first thing he would feel was the tail followed by the back then shoulder.

You’ve got to remember that, even in the pedigree job, 99% of male lambs are killers so our focus has always been on the lamb trade.”

Lambs are now sold through Skipton, Kirkby Stephen and Bentham markets with around 70% selling store and the remainder wintered through to the hogg season, and the Lawsons are finding it is a lot of repeat customers, particularly those from farm shop businesses, that are buying their stores to meet demand until their own lambs come through again.

Matthew added: “You’re getting a premium for your lambs while also saving on labour. We have three people that all come in part-time. Being on a Ministry of Defence tenanted farm means we have very limited access to the land which therefore doesn’t afford us the time to have with the stock that we would like, and having help available when we have access can be difficult.

“the Texdale suits us as she’s the epitome of easy care.”

That’s why it may be a more modern take on the crossing job from the hardy Swale ewe, but it’s a system that has worked well for the Lawsons for nigh on 40 years and with the next generation coming through it’s likely to last the next 40 years at the very least.



Swaledale Ram Sale Dates 2024

Ballybofey & Stranorlar Mart, Ireland

Saturday 21st September
All classes of rams & females

Contact: Carol Gillespie
00353 86 370 3140

Ruswarp, near Whitby

Friday 4th October

Contact: Kate Edminson
07957 632 356

Beatties Livestock Mart, Gortin Rd, Omagh, N Ireland

Saturday 5th October
All classes of rams & females

Contact: Joanne McSwiggan
07736 975 819

St John's Chapel, Weardale

Tuesday 8th October

Contact: Graham Carrick
07501 004 320

Middleton in Teesdale

Wednesday 9th October

Contact: Kayleigh Robinson
07800 754 456

Kirkby Stephen

Wednesday 16th October
Aged Rams & Ram Lambs

Thursday 17th & Friday 18th October
Shearling Rams

Contact: Wilf Buckle
07855 103 575

Hawes

Wednesday 23rd October
Aged Rams, Ram Lambs & Shearling Rams

Thursday 24th October
Shearling Rams

Contact: Christine Clarkson
07810 263 435



Part-time Job Vacancy for the position of D District Secretary



Person to be appointed and in place prior to the registration/crowning period, July 2024.

If you are interested in applying for the role, please call Graham Carrick on 07501 004 320, send a covering letter & CV to:

Graham Carrick (D District Chairman)
Hole House, Garrigill, Alston, Cumbria CA9 3HF

or email carrickgraham@yahoo.co.uk before the 30th JUNE 2024.

Applicants are most welcome to discuss the job role with the current secretary, Fay Johnson, if required on 07500 800388.

Once applications are received, all 'D' District Council members will be involved in the decision-making process.



Society Contacts

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Vice Chairman:
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Hole House Farm
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Head Secretary:
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