



# Cotswold Sheep Society Newsletter

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This Newsletter is independently edited and readers should be aware that the views expressed within its pages do not necessarily reflect the views held by Council.



Joe Henson  
1932 – 2015



June Lewis-Jones  
1935- 2015

# **EDITORIAL**

**Mark Pettitt**

It was very sad to hear that Joe Henson and June Lewis-Jones both passed away earlier this year. I was fortunate to have met Joe at the AGM in July where he recalled to me how he first got into farming and went on to set up the Cotswold Farm Park. I never met June but had heard much about her.

In this newsletter there is an obituary for Joe Henson written by Angela Reid and an obituary for June Lewis-Jones, written by Margaret Pursch.

I had a request recently from a member to include information on parasite control. So when I found an article giving an insight into farming parasites and how to control them, I decided to reproduce it in full in this newsletter, with the kind permission of XLVets, with the hope that it might be of interest to you too.

Is it worth keeping and registering your ram lambs – find out what to consider and to look for in Davina Stanhope's article.

Did you have a visit from Steve Parkes? I did. And apart from bringing Daniel (the ram), Steve came to judge our small flock. He has now completed judging. The results of which will be announced at the Winter Social (Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November).

If you see something that might be of interest to other members, or would like to contribute an article about your own experiences, please do let me know. We would love to hear from you.

## **Joe Henson (1932 – 2015)**

**Written by Angela Reid**

On 6th October Joe Henson died peacefully after a short illness, surrounded by close family. Joe was born into a theatrical family in London in 1932, and he became known to millions for many years for presenting farming programmes on the BBC, along with household names such as Angela Rippon and Phil Drabble.

Having taken on the tenancy of Bemborough Farm in 1962, Joe was able to realise his ambition of breeding pedigree livestock, which combined with his pioneering interest in rare breed conservation, led to the opening of the Cotswold Farm Park in 1971.

It was working with a number of similarly minded conservationists that inspired Joe to play a major role in the foundation of the Rare Breed Survival Trust in 1973 and he was the founder chairman of the new charity.

Joe received an MBE for his services to rare breed conservation in 2011. His enduring legacy is the widespread recognition of the importance of genetic diversity and the resurgence of rare and traditional breeds. It was a source of great pride to him that no rare breed of farm animal has become extinct in Britain since the setting up of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

One of the breeds that Joe played a vital role in saving was, of course, the Cotswold. He passed his enthusiasm for the breed on to his children Libby and Adam. It is not often that a Cotswold fails to feature on an episode of Countryfile.

Joe was a regular and most charming guest at the Winter Social, and was often to be seen chatting enthusiastically about the breed beside the Moreton show ring. He was a great, and wise, friend to the Society, and he will be missed by us all.

## **June Lewis-Jones (1935-2015)**

**Written by Margaret Pursch**

### **Remembering June Lewis – A Cotswold Legend**

For those of you who may remember June - sadly she passed away in August.

June was a great supporter of Cotswold Sheep and had her own small flock for several years with Robert Boodle being her mentor. Her first two ewes she owned were named Yan and Tyan (the old system for counting sheep); they came from Joe Henson and were kept in paddocks close to the famous Wool Church of St.Mary's in Fairford. June sheared, spun, knitted and wove their wool using her own vegetable dyes (From Fleece To Fabric was just one of the books June wrote). Her cottage is

adorned with pictures and paintings of Cotswolds and things made from wool, even a lampshade

June married Ralf in 1998 and became June Lewis-Jones, at the wedding in St.Mary's. Of course the happy couple were thrilled to come out of church to be greeted by Lyn and Shaun Gibbings with a Cotswold Ram Holybrook Hero, a descendant of Pimpa, bred by June. This was a total surprise and a memory she treasured. The bride's wedding attire was made entirely of Cotswold wool, even the hat. This was displayed at my last Woolley event in Meysey Hampton.

June was a writer for Cotswold Life Magazine for forty years and wrote many articles on Cotswold Sheep. She was also the author of 29 books ranging from History of Fairford to Cookery and her love of Cotswold Sheep.

June was laid to rest in Fairford Church Yard along with a lock of Cotswold wool. A dear friend to me, who will be missed by many.

## **Ram Lamb Registration**

### **Davina Stanhope - Chairman**

I have recently been asked by a number of members about the registration of ram lambs, so have decided to write a short piece about it in the hope that it will help. Obviously it helps the Society, financially, if you register ram lambs, however the following must be taken into account: In 2013 there were only 82 registered flocks, of which many would not be requiring a new ram as generally you need only change your ram every two to three years. So, consider is there a big market? It is costly to register, feed and, if not sold as a lamb, to feed for another year and try to sell as a shearling. I am not trying to put you off, but so many people are upset and disappointed that a sale is not achieved. It is imperative to ensure that only the very best of your lambs are considered and that we continue to uphold the quality of the breed. You have to be especially discerning when considering keeping your ram lamb, you can be more forgiving with the ewe lambs, but remember that your choice of ram does affect the quality of your whole flock.

First and foremost your ram lamb must be a correct sheep:

- Does he stand up well on his pasterns? - long pasterns are undesirable
- Does he stand four square? - inturned feet are not good
- Does he have a good mouth?
  - Teeth not being forward – overshot
  - Bottom jaw not too far back – undershot or “parrot mouthed”
- Does he walk well? - very important
- Is his general confirmation good?

- Scurs (small horn type growths which move if wiggled) are not desirable
- Horns - definitely no
- Does he have two testicles?
- It is a good idea to check how many teats he has. There should only be two, if there are four this can be passed onto his daughters where it is very undesirable. Often the “spare” teats stick out and are empty, the lambs will suck these and go hungry even though the ewe has plenty of milk from the other teats.
- Inturned eyelids - Entropion, can be passed to his progeny and is undesirable
- Is he well grown? –he needs to be around 45kg or more at six months of age

Then you must make sure that he conforms to breed standards. Is he a good Cotswold? The criteria for this can be found in the 2013 Flock Book, on page 41, but in a nutshell:

- Head: Should be masculine, wide between the eyes and staying broad to the nostrils, black nose, but should be long enough not to be called thick or short. A good fringe and a white face devoid of spots or freckles, some may occur, but preferably not.
- Ears: Should be neither small nor large and covered with white hair. Black spots on the ears are normal.
- Neck: Should be big and muscular but long enough to enable him to carry his head well up, giving him a proud appearance. It should be slightly narrower at the ears.
- Shoulder: Should lie well back, and along the spine should not dip. His topline should be straight with no dips.
- Ribs: Should have depth, carried through to the back end and not run up like a greyhound
- Rump: Should be level with his back and give him a square look.
- The leg of mutton: The fleshing should go well down to the hock. Both back and front legs should be straight, moderate in length and set “a leg at each corner”
- Body: Should have a firm not flabby feel and well covered with long lustrous wool.
- Wool: Should be even from front to back. If you start at the front (shoulder) and check at intervals all the way back, the crimp and style should be the same all the way along. We have a number of types of wool, some more crimpier than others, however all must be even throughout. There should be no

black wool on any part of the body.

- Legs: Should be covered in white hair, the back legs carry wool much lower than the front. Black spots and brown freckling are undesirable.

If anyone has any queries or requires advice I can be contacted on 07968 218470, or alternatively any Council Member will be happy to discuss any of the above.

## **The View from Here**

**Mark Pettitt**

A wonderful, sunny, end to September and the smallholding has never looked better. The grass seed we sowed last month has grown where we use to have pigs although the stubble turnips have had to battle against the weeds.

Five of our ram lambs were sent off to the abattoir in September and were sold as half lamb boxes, weighing about 8-9kg. Fortunately, we kept one ourselves and were very pleased with the flavour of the meat.

For the first time, we decided to get the skins back from the abattoir, which, of course, involved the completion of some paperwork. Having been told of the importance of salting the skins without delay, we waited at the abattoir after dropping off the lambs and brought back the *warm* skins, laid them out in our polytunnel and covered with copious amounts of salt for two weeks. The skins are now with the tannery and we await the results with anticipation.

Having limited space, we are now debating whether or not to keep the remaining ewe lambs. A big part of me wants them gone so we can rest the ground and save having to feed them over winter, but I may need to replace a ewe if one doesn't get into lamb for a second year.

Daniel, the ram, rented from Steve Parkes, has been with us for about eight weeks and is starting to look a bit bored, having marked all the ewes. It would be quite nice to have the ewes scanned this year so we know what to expect and avoid over-feeding any that are not in lamb. Lambing is due to start mid-January which I definitely think is the way to go, in order to get the lambs up to weight while there is still plenty of grass to eat. We'll just have to make sure the caravan is stocked up with plenty of coffee and soup.

# MORETON-IN-MARSH SHOW

Angela Reid

It was bitterly cold, grey and drizzling when members arrived at the show ground in the early morning. However the green and white marquee of the Cotswold Sheep Society, which had been put up the previous day by the noble band of stalwart volunteers, stood like a lighthouse to guide us to our pens. Dodging enormous lorries disgorging Herefords, Limousins and numerous other breeds of cattle, goats, sheep and pigs, we walked, drove or otherwise persuaded our Cotswolds into their pens.

There was a good turnout in all classes, with particularly strong entries in the lamb classes, which meant that Jon King, who was judging, had a challenging job on his hands. Full results are on the Moreton-in-Marsh Show website ([www.moretonshow.co.uk](http://www.moretonshow.co.uk))

It was extremely encouraging to see so many Young Handlers in the show ring. It is vital that we encourage the younger members to take part in 'sheep' activities. It is their enthusiasm, which will in the end keep the breed in existence.

As usual the Society stand was the source of hot drinks, delicious cakes and many other tasty dishes for members and their families to enjoy. The raffle raised useful funds for the Society, and the Society merchandise sold well. Thanks must go to all those who worked so hard to make the day a success, particularly to Margaret Pursch for organising the food, and to Kate Elliott and Judy Wilkie who nearly froze to death as they heroically sold merchandise and raffle tickets as well as answering all sorts of Cotswold related questions. We are also extremely grateful to the spinners who always provide such a real attraction for visitors to the stand.

The day drew to a close with more than thirty Cotswolds joining the Grand Parade. They were a wonderful, and most impressive, sight!



# Protect your flock by mastering the art of ‘farming’ parasites

By Josephine Child, Endell Veterinary Group – XLVets

Controlling sheep parasites is widely considered to be one of the largest issues facing the industry today. To have any hope of tackling the problem we need a sound knowledge of the life cycle and epidemiology of the various parasites important to sheep production.

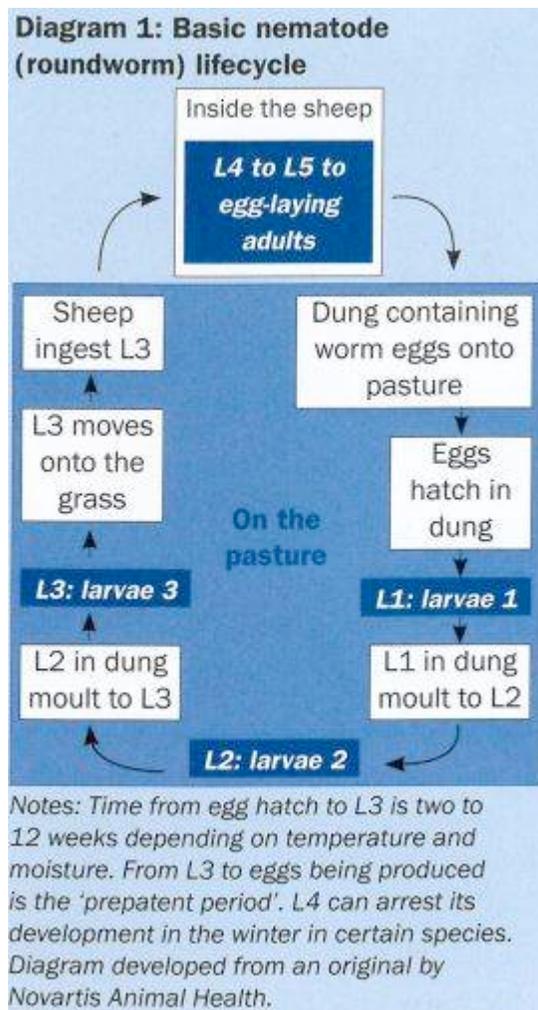
With the exception of *Nematodirus battus*, common nematodes (roundworms) found in sheep have a largely similar lifecycle – see diagram 1. In appropriate conditions (when temperatures are in excess of 20°C and humidity is high), worm eggs shed onto the pasture can develop into infectious larvae in as little as three weeks.

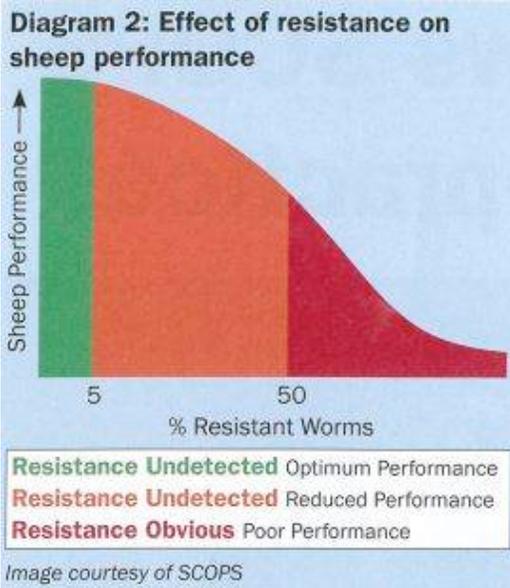
Adult parasites within the abomasum of the sheep, lay eggs, which are passed out in the faeces onto the pasture. The eggs then hatch, giving rise to the first and second larval stages of the parasite (L1 and L2). When the parasite progresses to the third level (L3) it becomes infective, and the larvae at this point their lifecycle migrate on to the herbage and are eaten by the sheep. Once eaten, these ‘L3 larvae’ develop into their final ‘L4’ larval stage, which occurs in either the abomasum or intestine, depending on the species.

Both the L4 and adult stages of nematode parasites can be pathogenic (cause disease) to the host, depending again on the specific parasite concerned. Typically, the damage is to the absorptive lining of the intestine and abomasum, although with some nematodes further production-limiting effects are seen in the host due to parasites feeding on blood (e.g. *Haemonchus contortus*).

Common signs of gastrointestinal parasitism are scouring, poor body condition, ill thrift and open/dull fleeces. However, the real issue is the huge economic impact that gastrointestinal parasitism has on production at a subclinical level. Even moderate nematode burdens will reduce daily liveweight gains, feed conversion efficiency and have a negative effect on appetite.

The challenge that we are facing is the development of an increasing level of anthelmintic resistance within the general nematode population in this country.





‘Resistance’ to an anthelmintic is defined by the medicine having an efficacy of less than 95%, determined by faecal egg count reduction tests. If we don’t test for resistance then it’s likely the detrimental effects on production will only be noticed when around 50% of the total worm population is composed of resistant nematodes – see diagram 2.

There are several factors that will affect the rate of development of resistance, and it is these key points on which SCOPS principles are based:-

1. **Whether the anthelmintic is effective:** Under-dosing can lead to a poor kill of nematodes and select for resistant worms. This is common with incorrect calibration of dosing equipment, underestimation of weight of sheep or poor dosing technique. It is also important to know your resistance status and select an appropriate worming product based on this information.
2. **How frequently a chemical group is used:** Repeated doses with the same anthelmintic group will continually select for the survival of resistant worms, having a compounding effect on their prevalence in the population.
3. **The proportion of the total worm population exposed to anthelmintic:** If the nematode population is almost entirely in the animal (i.e. there is a very small in refugia population) the selection pressure for resistance is high. For example, when lambs are dosed only the susceptible worms are killed, while the resistant ones survive; if those lambs are moved immediately to a clean pasture, the only worms carried over to the new, clean field are those that were resistant to the worming product used, which will go on to produce eggs. The general worm population on the new field will therefore be composed of almost entirely resistant parasites. It is therefore crucial to maintain an in refugia population of susceptible worms on your pasture.
4. **Quarantine protocol:** While not directly related to speed of resistance development, it is essential that you do not inadvertently buy in resistant parasites. Therefore strict biosecurity and quarantine is necessary.

In short, we are aiming to control parasites by using products that are always effective in reducing a parasite burden, whilst maintaining a susceptible in refugia

population to reduce the speed of resistance development.

Faecal egg counts reduction tests are one of the simple ways in which we can measure resistance, map its progress and develop farm-specific control strategies to prolong the efficacy of wormer groups. Faeces samples are taken from 10 marked individual animals for worm egg counting. They are then treated and egg counts repeated post –treatment.

In recent years there have been significant developments in the chemical groups available. These new groups need to be carefully integrated into any control strategy to preserve their use for as long as possible and reduce the speed of development of resistance in the UK.

Faecal egg counts can help determine whether anthelmintic treatment is required at all. Testing and good stockmanship can be used to effectively control the worm burden early in the season (so call ‘early season suppression’) and lead to lower pasture contamination levels later in the summer. This can be achieved by taking regular faecal samples once lambs reach five to six weeks of age. Sheep farmers who base their treatment regimens on this will see a reduction in use of anthelmintics overall, as well as reducing the selection pressure for resistant worms.

With a well-managed first grazing season involving sustained exposure to a low level of nematode larvae, adult sheep will develop a strong immunity to gastrointestinal parasites. As a result, adults in the flock should not require routine treatment. The necessity to treat such animals should be discussed with your vet, as good flock management can certainly be used to prevent the need to treat the majority of cases.

Your control strategy may also include other methods of parasite control to reduce dependence on anthelmintics, such as careful grazing management to reduce pasture larval contamination at peak times of the year. For example, exposure of lambs to infective L3 larvae can be minimised by reducing finishing times, which also leads to lower overwinter survival rates of the larvae, and therefore reducing the challenge the following year.

### **Grass management**

Grazing susceptible stock on low risk pasture will also help. For example, utilising new lays for weaning lambs onto, or using adult ewes with a strong natural parasite immunity to pre-emptively ‘hoover’ an existing ley before susceptible lambs are introduced onto it. Including cereals or brassicas in rotation will help to achieve ‘clean’ grazing, while the practice of mixed grazing with cattle can achieve a parasite dilution effect when such grazing isn’t available. There is also an increasing interest in ‘bioactive forages’, such as chicory and saifoin, which have been shown to decrease the effects of parasitism, although the mode of action behind how they achieve this is still not fully clear.

# Recipe – Rosemary Chops

By Wendy Pettitt



## Ingredients

6 Cotswold Lamb Chops

2lb Potatoes chopped

2 tablespoons sunflower oil

A few sprigs of fresh rosemary

3-4 garlic gloves

Fresh or canned cherry tomatoes

1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

Optional – courgette, cauliflower or other vegetables

## Method

Preheat oven to 220°C

Heat some of the oil in a roasting tin and brown the chops then set aside.

Add the rest of the oil to the pan and fry the potatoes for 5 minutes.

Add the rosemary and garlic and the lamb back to the pan.

Add courgette, cauliflower or other vegetables

Roast in the oven for 20 minutes

Add the tomatoes and drizzle with the balsamic vinegar

Continue roasting for another 5 minutes

Serve.

## SHEEP FOR SALE

This is a free service for buyers and sellers. The list is constantly being updated, so please do contact the Secretary, or check the website, if you wish to buy.

**RAMS FOR HIRE: Contact Mr Steve Parkes, 47 King George's Field, Stow On The Wold, Gloucestershire, Tel. 01451 830461 for further details.**

## COUNCIL CORNER

- **Winter Social:** Council would like to remind you that the Winter Social will take place on Saturday 28th November at the Westwood Centre, Northleach. (6.45 for 7.00). Please do come along - this is always an excellent evening giving everyone a chance to relax and chat with old and new friends, **while** at the same time raising vital funds for the Society. The Winter Social form accompanies this newsletter.
- **Winter Social raffle prizes:** The raffle is always a very enjoyable part of the evening – all raffle prizes will be gratefully received!
- **Merchandise:** The Society will have some new merchandise on sale at the Winter Social, it will also be available via the website. There will be a new range of mugs, hand painted with the head of a Cotswold ewe, and a tea towel sporting a beautiful design by talented animal artist Nic Vickery. Both will make perfect Christmas presents for any sheep enthusiast!
- **The Frank Williams Trophy:** The nomination **form** is included with this Newsletter and will also be found under ‘Downloadable **Forms**’ from the website! Please do consider sending in a nomination, as this trophy is an excellent way of thanking a member, or non-member, for their hard work on behalf of the Society.
- **Trade Mark:** Council would like to apologise that there has been some delay in finalising the Lamb and Wool Trade Mark Agreements. Both are now up and running however, and we would encourage you to think about signing up if you have not already done so. Using the Trade Mark will help to promote the breed and give added value to your wool, or your lamb. Richard Mumford has kindly agreed to run the schemes for the Society and can be contacted on Tel: 01386 860374 or via Email: [richard.mumford@agmfarm.co.uk](mailto:richard.mumford@agmfarm.co.uk)
- **Flock Book:** Adverts are immensely helpful as a way to reduce the cost of producing the annual Flock Book. If you want to advertise your flock, or your business, or have any contacts who might like to do so, then please contact the Secretary for further details.
- **Past Flock Books:** A final reminder that excess past Flock Books will shortly be destroyed owing to lack of space to store them. If you do wish to purchase a set, or an odd one to fill in a gap, then please contact Angela Reid on 07768 354613 or by email at [amreid343@msn.com](mailto:amreid343@msn.com). Postage and Packing only will be charged, and a donation to the Society will be gratefully received (pre-ordered books can be collected at the Winter Social.)