



BELTED GALLOWAY CATTLE SOCIETY

Secretary Ian J.R. Sutherland

Rock Midstead, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 2TH

Tel. 07891 245870 Fax 01665 579326

Email info@beltedgalloways.co.uk www.beltedgalloways.co.uk

AUTUMN
2012



TOM'S FINAL FLOURISH

Well-known Forfar breeder Tom Rennie dominated this year's Royal Highland Show by taking both the Overall Championship and the Reserve Champion's rosette. His 12 year old cow Mosstonmuir Primrose was judged Best Female and Overall Champion, while the Reserve Championship went to Best Bull Mosstonmuir Paddy. Tom also scooped many of the Special Prizes, including the best animal bred by the exhibitor, the best opposite sex to the champion, the best pair and the breeder of the champion.



A delighted Tom Rennie with overall Champion Mosstonmuir Primrose at a rain-sodden Highland Show

For Tom it proved to be a sweet result, as he has decided to call it a day and will disperse his herd of Belted Galloways this year at the Society's main sale which takes place at **Castle Douglas on Friday 26th October 2012**. The herd has enjoyed great success over the years, both in the show ring and at sales, and the Mosstonmuir name features in the pedigrees of many top class cattle. There is no doubt that, while it will be a poignant day for Tom, the dispersal will make for an unforgettable sale, and breeders are advised to get to Walleys Marts in plenty of time for what will be a packed event.



Visitors to the Society's stand pick their way through the sea of mud.

SHOWS ROUNDUP

2012 will be remembered for the havoc which the weather wrought on the programme of summer events, not least the agricultural shows. The biggest victim without doubt was the Great Yorkshire Show, which had to be cancelled after the first day. It was the first time the Society had taken part at the Yorkshire Show for quite a few years, and there was a great deal of interest in the stand, which was ideally situated adjacent to the cattle judging rings. The Beltie classes marked the beginning of a memorable summer for seasoned campaigner Anne Bell. Her homebred cow Clifton Daffodil was Female Champion and Overall Champion, while her bull Cairnsmore Dominator was judged Champion Male. Bred by Jane Landers, Dominator also went on to win Dumfries Show later in the season. Back at the Yorkshire Anne Bell completed a great day by winning the Group prize for three animals already shown. To top off the day a large gathering of breeders and friends enjoyed an extremely tasty barbecue of Beltie burgers laid on by Zan Kirk, who was also exhibiting.

In the local show circuit, Anne Bell continued to enjoy success, winning Stranraer, Stewartry and Wigtown, all with Clifton Daffodil. Jennifer Taylor was also in the frame, with wins at Dalry for her senior heifer Tobergill Nala and at Straiton with junior heifer Tobergill Orla. Early in the season Tom Rennie was to the fore with a win for Mosstonmuir Irish Primrose, a daughter of his Highland Show champion. Once again, thanks are due to all the competitors at every show for their hard work and the excellent way in which they promote the breed, particularly given the awful weather which had to be endured in 2012.

A.G.M. & ANNUAL DINNER – 25th OCTOBER 2012

Once again our annual get together at Castle Douglas is not far over the horizon, and this year sees a change of venue. Council has decided to try out Threave Gardens, a National Trust property set in beautiful grounds on the western edge of the town. For those Googling the venue it should be pointed out that this is definitely not Threave Castle, which sits in a loch and can only be approached by boat! The A.G.M. will take place at 6.30 p.m. in the Gardens' function room, a well-appointed venue which can hold around 130 people. The dinner will then take place at 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m. An order form for dinner tickets has been included with this newsletter, and this should be used to order tickets. The caterers have advised us that it will keep the cost down considerably if we could give them an idea in advance of what guests would like from the menu, so there is also a facility to choose on the same form as the tickets. Don't worry – a list with your choices on it will be posted at the dinner in case you forget!

NOSE RINGS

There has been some confusion and debate this summer about the necessity or otherwise for bulls to have nose rings fitted. The Society wishes to point out that all bulls which are to be shown or put through a sale ring must have nose rings fitted. Bulls entered for the sale at Castle Douglas will not be allowed in the sale ring without one.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

As usual a number of Council members will retire at the A.G.M. by rotation. In total there will be four vacancies, and at least one member has decided not to seek re-election. If you would like to come onto Council, or if you know someone who would, please contact the Secretary for a nomination form as soon as possible. Nominees should keep cattle themselves, be fully paid up members and be nominated by two other members. The nominee must also sign the form to indicate their willingness to stand for election.

N
E
W
S
L
E
T
T
E
R

FROM THE SECRETARY:-

THE GREAT DEBATE

During the past year or so Council has been discussing the question of breed standards and where we should be going with them. There is a need to clarify certain aspects of breed standards, as well as to take into account other important considerations both historical and with regard to the future of the breed. The debate has covered many different ideas and it is clear that Council embodies a complete spectrum of opinions on this important issue, which is how it should be.

At one end of the spectrum are the traditional breeders, who believe that the markings are what makes a Beltie a Beltie, and differentiates it from the other Galloway breeds. As such they are adamant that markings take precedence over all other considerations, even to the extent of depleting the gene pool of the breed in an attempt to eradicate mis-marking. Thus, taken to extreme, no animal without a perfect belt would be considered for registration. Neither would a female which had any white at all elsewhere on her body (this, of course, already applies to bulls under the current rules).

At the other end of the debate are the commercial-minded breeders, who believe that, if the breed is to survive well into the future it must concentrate on producing carcasses which would appeal to a much wider market than is now available to us, and if this has to be achieved by relaxing standards relating to markings, then so be it.

Obviously there are pros and cons in both cases. For example, the breed is not numerically large, and if standards were tightened up in an effort to eliminate carriers of genes for white feet our already modest gene pool would be decimated to the extent where we would probably be consigned to rare breed status forever. On the other hand, if breeders were to concentrate solely on confirmation in an attempt to breed larger, heavier and more commercial carcasses regardless of the shape of the belt or presence of white feet, then it would only be a matter of time before Belties ceased to resemble the cattle they are today.

The current rules for registration constitute a compromise between the two extremes. Cattle without a complete belt are currently not eligible for registration. This means that, tragically, some top quality genetics are being lost to the breed as these females and their potential offspring (which could turn out perfectly marked) can never be registered. But it was not always thus. Did you know that, many years ago, the rules allowed a female with a broken belt to enter an appendix, similar to the way the current rules deal with a white foot below the dew claw? If her offspring turned out well-marked they could then grade up to eventual full pedigree status and their genes would not be lost to the breed.

Similarly, on at least two occasions recently, a tremendous bull has had to be slaughtered because of the presence of tiny coloured spots of hair within the belt. On one occasion the spot was situated on the underside and could only be seen on hands and knees. This reflects the current rules, which are there to protect the integrity of the belt. It does seem a shame to lose excellent genetics because of a tiny spot of hair, but if spots are to be tolerated where do you draw the line? No bigger than a ten pence piece? As big as a football? Should they be appended, in which case bulls with spots would still be unregistrable?

You may now be getting a flavour of the many aspects of this debate and why Council has been discussing it without conclusion for so long. What are your views? We should be grateful for any opinions from whatever angle and if you would like to contribute to the debate please contact the Secretary or one of our Council members. This will be your opportunity to contribute directly to the continuing drive to modernise our Society whilst protecting this special breed.

Ian Sutherland

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

Thanks are due to Council members Jennifer Taylor, Caroline McMillan and Liz Wilkinson for helping to set up the Society on Facebook. As well as pages for the Belties there is also a page for White Galloways and the Irish Beltie Breeders Club has established its own pages. Contacts for putting information or pictures on our pages are as follows:-

*Jennifer Taylor jennifercountrykennels@speednetscotland.net Liz Wilkinson elizabeth.wilkinson@virgin.net
Caroline McMillan lessnessockfarm@btinternet.com Ireland: Ronan Delaney beltieclubireland@gmail.com*

SALES AND WANTS

The Society maintains a listing of cattle for sale or wanted on its website www.beltedgalloways.co.uk

- | | |
|---|--|
| Belties for sale – Dumfriesshire | We have good bulls and a selection of females for sale. Contact Mrs. Graham on 01556 650495. ajgraham48@hotmail.com |
| Belted bull – Dumfriesshire | Our famous stock bull, Coulmony Harris, is coming round to his daughters. Contact Robert McTaggart on 07717 853984. glenfarming@btconnect.com |
| Belted bull for sale – Lancashire | High health status, 19 months old. Contact Malcolm Handley 01200 446279 marty.croasdale@btinternet.com |
| Heifers for sale – Co. Durham | 1 -2 year old heifers from the well-known Gilmonby herd. Very hardy. Contact Paul Copen on 01833 628309 |
| Belted cows for sale – Invernesshire | Two Kinrea cows – regular breeders, good condition. One black, one dun. Contact Neil MacLeod on 01463 741488 |
| Young Belted bulls – Dumfriesshire | Young bulls ready for work from the Polbae herd. Contact Richard Wilson raw12b@hotmail.com or 07919 185272 |
| Belted cows & bull - Cumbria | Various ages available. Also belted bull Arnside Eclipse, 7 years old, leaves red & white calves. Ring 01539 625118 mrsemmarichardson@hotmail.co.uk |
| Dun & white heifers – Worcester | Two Dun Belties for sale. Contact Deborah Powell 01886 812337 or email deborahpowell111@btinternet.com |
| Belted bull – Somerset | 4 years old, proven breeder, easy calving. Contact Mrs. J. Look 07855 531902 |
| White Galloways – Northumberland | White bulling heifers and heifers with calves at foot always available. Contact Tim Oliver 07885 203066 oliveeastfarm@btinternet.com |
| Young bulls - Dumfriesshire | Young bulls and semen from the R.H.S. champion bull Park Perseus available. Contact John & Sandra Corrie j.corrie126@btinternet.com 01557 820232 |