

The 134th Annual General Meeting

including the Thurlstone Jersey Herd visit...

The 134th Annual General Meeting of the Jersey Cattle Society took place on Thursday 10th August and was kindly hosted by Thurlstone Jerseys at Manor Farm, Scaftworth in South Yorkshire.

Following the formal opening of the AGM the Society's President, Mrs Su Mahon welcomed over 40 members to the home of John, Susan, Tom and Claire Dickinson of Thurlstone Jerseys.

The Society then held a minute's silence for our passed Members who all gave so much to the Society.

Society Chairman Steven Bland then began AGM proceedings with his report. Mr Bland made strong reference to the dairy farmers of the future and the importance of engaging with the next generation to secure the strength in popularity of the Jersey cow going forward. Mr Bland spoke about succession and the importance of remaining commercially aware and being open to commercial opportunities; we must forge links as a Society and as individuals to see benefits and to raise the profile of the Jersey cow even higher. This has led to the exciting re-generation of the Jersey Youth to become Young Breeders headed up by Mark Davis and Becky Hurd.

Mr Bland thanked those members who show their Jerseys for the time, effort and expense put into providing such an excellent shop window for our breed. Mr Bland impressed the importance of the herd book and the elevated levels of work being put in to this by the Board.

Mr Bland then thanked the President, President Elect, Directors, Emma and Becky for their tireless work and gave thanks to all the families who step in to work at home whilst we all deal with Society business.

Mr John Whitby presented his Financial Report and Accounts for 2016. In giving his fourth annual report as Finance Director of the Jersey Cattle Society of the UK, Mr Whitby reported that although a loss is disappointing it was in line with what was expected and in fact less of a loss than forecast. Mr Whitby was pleased to report, despite the loss, overall the balance sheet had improved as our investments had performed beyond expectations. Mr Whitby noted the extraordinary legacy of funds left by previous members of the Society which made this result possible.

Mr Whitby went on to underline that the recent cloud of austerity hanging over the dairy industry globally which may have contributed towards a drop in membership. However, the quality, longevity and versatility of our Jersey cow leaves her well placed for the future of the industry.

Mr Whitby explained that in expenditure costs had increased in line with planned activities which included Show Uniform; Chief Executive Officer; Judges Conference; New Field Officer; Codes of Conduct and a Reform of the Articles being in progress. He stated we were proud to host the Jersey World Cattle Bureau and with hard earned sponsorship the event was cost neutral. The Society has also continued to support the Jersey Young Breeders, which under their reform Mr Whitby is confident will have a highly successful future in safeguarding our breed across the generations.

Looking forward delivering cash neutral budgets year on year is difficult. Mr Whitby was pleased to explain that many projects had been delivered or are set to complete in 2017 whilst significant cost cutting measures had been enacted.

Mr Whitby concluded his report that the Society is well placed financially to continue acting in the best interests of the Jersey cow. The accounts for 2016 were then formally adopted and the appointment of the Society's accountant Old Mill for 2017 approved.

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Su Mahon speaking on her term as Society President at the AGM, followed by lunch and then in the afternoon members walked amongst the Thurlstone herd.



Mrs Su Mahon spoke of her time over the past two years as Society President and the role Mrs Lena Lewis had played as President Elect.

Mrs Lewis spoke about her aspiration as the incoming Society President and the high standard to follow upon the departure of Mrs Mahon as the current Society President.

Mrs Mahon then spoke of Mr Frank Poskitt as the incoming President Elect. Mr Poskitt spoke about the tremendous honour he felt stepping into the role of President Elect and supporting the incoming President.

Following the above, Mrs Mahon moved to the election of Members to the Board of Directors, with Mr John Dickinson standing for re-election. Mr Dickinson

was re-elected.

Upon conclusion of the elections, Finance Director, Mr Whitby spoke of the mandate given by members two years ago to achieve the best possible long-term solution in respect of the Jersey Cattle Society Pavilion. Mr Whitby spoke of HS2 and its potential profound impact on the Stoneleigh site. He went on to speak of the new agreement struck between the Society, Jones LaSalle, Rugby Farmers Market and the new caterers Here, There and Everywhere, to enable the continued opening of the pavilion to support Rugby Farmers Market days. A significant redecoration of the Pavilion internally and externally had been agreed at no cost to the Society. Mr Whitby explained that no significant changes were expected within the immediate future, but changes could be expected in the future with HS2 and asked members for an extension of this mandate for a further two years. Extension of the mandate was given by Members of the Society. Under any other business Members spoke about milk prices, the value of Jersey products and notification to members of newly registered foreign bulls by AI companies.

Upon conclusion of any other business, the Society Awards for the Milk Production Competition (Year 2015-2016) were announced and read out by Mark Logan, Director for Shows, Judges and Sales. Full results on pages 8-9.

The Chairman, Mr Steven Bland, then stood to announce the winner of the Weydown Jubilee Trophy. The trophy is awarded each year to the member who has contributed the most to the breed in the last year. The trophy was awarded to Mrs Su Mahon for her tremendous work, tireless dedication and time given during her period as Society President.

Mrs Mahon thanked the members for their attendance and support shown for herself over the last two years. Mrs Mahon spoke about the marvellous opportunity given to her as President. Opportunities that saw members invite her into their homes providing kind hospitality as she travelled the length and breadth of the country, sharing in their successes at the shows and in business, and the most poignant part of all being able to represent the Society at two World Jersey Cattle Bureau Conferences. The first at home in the UK and the second in Costa Rica, which was the most extraordinary and amazing experience, seeing the versatility of the Jersey animal in such a different climate and the passion of the Jersey breeders. Mrs Mahon said she was overwhelmed to receive the Weydown Jubilee Trophy.

As the formalities of the AGM drew to a close, the Dickinson Family, John and Susan, and their son Tom and wife Claire then invited those present for a tour of their Thurlstone herd.

Tom is a fifth-generation farmer who took over from John and Susan in 2013. Tom is married to Claire and they have two daughters Ava and Zara who love life on the farm.

In 2006 John made the decision to change breeds from Holsteins to Jerseys having been looking for a different milk outlet to secure the future of the farm. A contract was then acquired with Longley. A milk vending machine is also in place and the family host Open Farm Sunday to promote farming. The HLS ground on the farm also supports a suckler herd. 280 Jerseys are now milked which has grown to allow the farm to support a full-time herdsman in Richard Saxby. The herd has 98 cows in their 4th or later lactation with 6 over 10 lactations. The cows are currently averaging 5800 litres at 6.0% fat and 4.0% protein with a daily yield of 21 litres (2nd August milk recording).

Crops grown include maize for maize silage, fodder beet, kale and Lucerne. Tom also runs a potato business which began in 2003, supplying Walkers, KP Crisps, McCains Chips and Tyrells.

As the herd visit drew to a close and the weather having been just exceptional, the Board and members thanked the Dickinson Family and their brilliant team of Richard Saxby



Clockwise from above: Members enjoyed lunch at Manor farm, John and Susan receive gifts of thanks from chairman Steven Bland, the cows grazing unphased by their visitors, Steven Bland speaking at the AGM, and Tom and Claire Dickinson also receiving gifts.



(herd manager), Josh Szczoczarz and Andrew Jennings for their time given in preparing for hosting the AGM and gave thanks for their immense hospitality provided which had made the day just perfect.

At the close of the day your Board met to appoint the Chairman and Director's Roles.

The following appointments were made:

- Society Chairman
Steven Bland
- Finance
John Whitby
- Herdbook & Breed Development
Collective responsibility of the Board
- Commercial
John Dickinson
- Membership & Publications
Helen Cox
- Judges, Shows & Sales
Mark Logan
- Jersey Young Breeders
Mark Davis