

Spot Press

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

Traditionally Farmed
Gloucestershire Old Spots
Pork



Volume 25 No.2 SUMMER 2014

A Letter to all our members

The objectives of the GOS Breeders Club established in 1990 were:

- To encourage and foster interest in the breed
- To promote the sale of pedigree stock
- To promote the benefits of the breed to existing breeders and potential pig breeders
- To encourage cyclical breeding
- To market the benefits of GOS meat products.

Twenty four years on and most would agree that the club has achieved these objectives thanks to a lot of hard work by those running the club over those years and no less importantly to the enthusiasm shown by GOS breeders, keepers and consumers across the UK.

Membership numbers have declined in recent years, standing currently at 230 most likely due to the economic climate. Although GOS numbers remain steady we cannot be complacent whilst we remember the fate of those fashionable farm animals and dog breeds whose popularity led to over breeding which flooded the market with inferior stock and resulted in their sharp decline. Cyclical breeding is still useful for maintaining a diverse gene pool but most breeders are now line breeding and it is even more important that we strive for excellence in our pigs, their progeny and their produce.

Spot Press will continue to keep all members up to date with information alongside the club website with news, tips, marketing, interesting articles etc whether you chose to receive it via the Royal Mail or electronically. There is also our website www.gospcb.co.uk and you can find us on Facebook.

Shows still continue to be one of the best places to promote the GOS pig and nothing fills a tent faster than a sow and her litter of adorable piglets yet it is still only a small proportion of members who enjoy the delights of showing.

Help us to keep the GOS as a leading benchmark breed. The club can only continue with a thriving membership. Encourage everyone with an interest in the breed (especially when you are selling your stock) to join the club which can be done via the website or using a leaflet. If you do need to some membership leaflets please contact a committee member who will happily assist. Enclosed with this issue there is a page you can photo-copy or scan to give to prospective members.

The officers and the committee are here to run the club for you so do let us know if there is anything you would like us to consider for the future development of the club or suggestions for events. The club is very proactive and works hard on the behalf of the breed and all the club members.

The Officers & Members of the GOSPCB Committee

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Club News

Secretary Resignation- GOSPBC Committee Statement—As a result of the extraordinary committee meeting held at Stoneleigh Park on Sunday 29th June 2014 the committee has accepted Richard Lutwyche's resignation as secretary of the Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders' Club.

We are incredibly grateful for his hard work and dedication to the club over the past twenty four years in his roles as both secretary and treasurer without which the breed would not be in the strong position it is today. Most recently Richard was a major force in obtaining the TSG accreditation for the breed; he was instrumental in bringing about the patronage of HRH Princess Anne and played a large part in the success of the centenary celebrations in 2013. We hope that Richard will remain as an active member of the committee and will continue to play an important role within the club.

The committee are very sorry if they have offended Richard, it was never the intention to disrespect, cause offence or ask for his resignation. However due to the reduced membership and therefore income, we were proposing a reduction in remuneration, jobs and responsibilities. The committee wishes to assure the GOSPBC membership of its continued attention at all times.

Further details about your committee and their roles are published within this edition of Spot Press.

Recognition of David Overton's long service to the GOSPBC and GOS Breed



On Tuesday 8th July 2014 David Overton attended the Great Yorkshire Show to judge the Oxford & Sandy Black classes and afterwards was presented with a Border Fine Arts 'Bringing Home The Bacon' by Sarah Whitley one of our youngest club and committee members with thanks for all his tireless hard work and enthusiasm for the GOS pig. Tom Aulty was master of ceremonies and gave commentary to the watching crowd of pig keepers and general public. You will find more about David's long association with the GOS pigs in the committee member notes and in an Exfold herd showing special further within the pages of this newsletter.

GOS keeper wins prize for his cheese -Cong ratulations to Charles Martell & Son for winning Best Modern British Cheese with their Nuns of Caen at the 2014 British Cheese Awards held at the Royal Bath & West Show. Their other well known cheese of course is Stinking Bishop and their herd of GOS enjoy all the cheese making by-products

Results from horsemeat tests in processed meat products to be announced soon. Maybe Britain's flagging pig prices will get an equine boost! Results from the latest DNA tests on processed beef products will be revealed by the European Commission's health department by the end of July. Hopefully this will jog the memories of British retailers why their customers want short, highly transparent food chains and remind customers why they should buy locally produced meat for their families from a good farm shop or high street butchers.



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Club News

HRH Princess Anne visits GOS at great Yorkshire Show.

Our patron HRH Princess Anne dropped in to see the GOS pigs on show at the Great Yorkshire Show. See report on next page



HRH chats to Guy Giddy

Princess Freda beats modern breeds to become Interbreed Champion at Royal Three Counties

Our President Judith Sims took Ampneyknowle Princess Freda 33 to Malvern where she won her breed class and went onto become breed supreme champion and win a coveted Interbreed competition. Well done Judith. And all involved. Read more about her story in this issue of Spot Press .

Less known female lines win at Royal Cornwall

Messrs Darvill and Smith both had winners from the Dahlia and Primrose lines at Royal Cornwall show. These are lines which are rarely shown and its good to see them out in the show ring hopefully raising awareness of them.

Magnificent turnout of GOS pigs at Great Yorkshire Show

Once again GOS breeders turned out in force in Harrogate for the Great Yorkshire Show. Messrs Dallaway, Everitt, Kelly, Knaggs, Smith, Whiteley and Whitley showed some wonderful pigs, it's a pity they all couldn't be winners. Supreme GOS was Mr B Kelly's sow Forthill Ellen 463 who made the trip over from County Down, Northern Ireland and stole the show and our hearts and Mr O Whiteley's Dockebush Star 59 sensationally winning the Interbreed Young Pig competition before going on to be Reserve champion in the overall Interbreed championship. Sarah Whitley's threesome of July gilts cleaned up the honours in their greatly contested class too.



GOS ring at GYS

More from the GYS and all the other shows in the next issue of Spot Press which will be our 'Show Special'

Wedding Bells! -Congratulations to our former treasurer Steve Booth on his forth coming marriage to Jean. Lovely to see them both at the GYS where Steve judged the GOS breed classes.

Truss replaces Paterson at Defra -South West Norfolk MP Liz Truss will replace Owen Paterson as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. She understands farming and has a good understanding of how the pig sector works, particularly the East Anglia outdoor model.

HRH visits GOS at Great Yorkshire Show

The Princess Royal arrived at the Great Yorkshire Showground Wednesday 9th July at around 11am, meeting honorary show director Bill Cowling. Mr Cowling's six-year-old granddaughter Francesca Kottler presented a white rose, the emblem of Yorkshire, to the Princess Royal as she was welcomed to the show, which she put in her jacket lapel. Princess Anne then went to watch the show's first ever female sheep shearing competition.

But it wasn't just the sheep shearing contest that Princess Anne enjoyed while at the show, she watched pigs being judged, including the BPA Pig of the Year competition alongside the Marquis of Salisbury, and took a keen interest in the Gloucestershire Old Spots Pigs which are bred on Birchfield Farm at Summer Bridge, near Harrogate. One of the Birchfield herd's owners, Lorraine Whitley noted, "Princess Anne keeps Gloucestershire Old Spot pigs on her estate, so she was asking us all how many sows we have. She was really lovely." The princess also took time to speak to Mr Brian Kelly from County Down, Northern Ireland about his prize winning sow Forthill Ellen and to other members of the club assembled in the show ring including Marlene Renshaw and Guy Kiddy.



HRH with Mr Brian Kelly from NI



HRH chats with Guy Kiddy



HRH converses with Marlene Renshaw & Lorraine & Martin Whitley



Sometimes meeting Princess's just gets to be too much.....snoozed Forthill Ellen!

GOS SOW BEATS MODERN BREEDS TO BECOME INTERBREED CHAMPION AT THE ROYAL THREE COUNTIES SHOW.

Ampenyknowle Princess Freda 33rd

Bred by Ms Elizabeth Hurley

Purchased by Judith Sims at 8 weeks old along with two others which were sold on to other breeders to help save (at that time) the endangered Princess Freda line, Judith recalls "What a wild little devil she was after running out untouched on the Cotswold Hills. I put her in with some other young gilts and eventually she calmed down. The real beauty of her is she is a lovely natured pig, loves lots of cuddles and fuss and likes me to hold her hoof while farrowing! She has had 4 litters 9-8, 15-12, 12-11, and 15-12 and is due to farrow again soon."

Judith continued "We could not show her for a couple of years as she was born on 26th December too early for the January class. Last year she was beaten by her mate a Winterwood Primrose sow all except one time however this year she has bloomed and really come into her own, culminating in giving the breed a boost having a GLOUCESTERSHIRE OLD SPOTS SOW WINNING AN INTERBREED COMPETITION"



Judith's grandson Max with Ampneyknowle Princess Freda 33

Photograph Anthony Mosley for Judith Simms

See more results from The Royal Three Counties in our September Show Special issue

[Get Ready for Showing!](#) White Show Coats

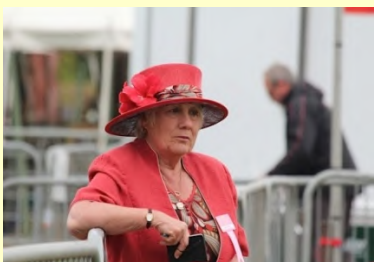
Unique to the GOSPCB, you can order these with the Club logo embroidered onto the breast pocket.



£30.00 each + £4.50p&p (same p&p for multiple orders)

See website shop

Meet the GOSPBC Committee



President Judith Sims - Shows & Rosettes co-ordinator

Currently serving as President of the club I have been breeding pigs for over 50yrs. We started off with a Saddleback crossed with a white boar (called a blue pig) progressing to pure Saddlebacks and then using a white boar to produce blue weaners and selling them all in the markets. How times have changed. Then everyone wanted pure white weaners, and so the Old Spots, with their superb mothering ability, came into their own and my late husband and I started the Winterwood herd, producing pure white weaners to a white boar, only breeding pure GOS for our replacement gilts. About 20yrs ago now the trend changed again, and I could breed them all pure GOS, as the demand for pure bred pedigree weaners for finishing grew. The breeders we bought our first GOS from persuaded us to show them and we gained our first Royal show Champion in 1972, we had the showing bug. I am still going strong with the help of grandson Max and partner Richard. Having semi retired I now only keep a few sows, selling weaners for finishing and producing the best gilts and boars for breeding, selling them at different stages to demand.



Chairman Andrew Robinson - Pedigree Queries

In 1977 I bought my first GOS, Star Marie and Star Antionette gilts from Freda Stafford-Northcote and a Prince boar from Clifford Earl.

A major portion of George Styles' pigs were purchased in 1983 when George was reducing the Ribbesford herd and our own expanded to 150 sows, the majority crossed with Landrace boars for the commercial market. In 1994 a herd reduction sale was held, Foston Sambo 21 being sold for the British all breeds record price of 4000gns. I currently have 14 GOS sows of the Ellen, Princess Ann, Princess Joan, Princess Mary, Star and Muriel lines which are the ones I have found to be the most reliable over the years.

When the GOSPBC was formed in 1990 I was elected the first Chairman and have held various positions over the years. I am a Vice-Chairman of the BPA, Chairman of the BPA Conservation Committee and a GOS breed rep.



Vice-Chairman Marlen Renshaw - Acting & Minutes secretary

Hello from Marlene Renshaw, secretary of the GOSPBC. I live in rural Lincolnshire and have been in the farming industry for over 50 years (ouch) As a family, my husband, Maurice, a son and two daughter's we started producing commercial pigs in 1970. I managed to sneak in my first GOS in 1986 but it wasn't until the mid 90's that I got seriously involved with the breed and in particular, showing. This really is the highlight of my summer, not just the competition but the camaraderie, and since the advent of my new knee and my grandson Luke, who has been travelling around with me since he was five, life in the show ring is easier. The commercial side gave me an interest in pig nutrition, and the differences in the needs of the breeds. I can talk about pigs all day and my mantra to any who ask is that you can breed meat pigs from good animals but you will not breed good pigs from rubbish, that's me in a



Treasurer Helen Lightfoot & committee member John Lightfoot

Photo: 2014 GOS Champion of Champions, John & Helen's gilt with Judge Guy Kiddy

(John) I have been involved with pigs throughout my life and with my father, kept an outdoor herd of about 40 saddlebacks and saddleback crosses selling weaners at the local market and keeping the odd one for our own freezer. The Saddlebacks made such good mothers but at the time, nobody wanted coloured pigs so we crossed them with modern, commercial pigs producing a more marketable, predominantly 'white' weaner.

In 2000, Helen and I moved to Gloucestershire and after finding it nearly impossible to buy the type of pork we had been used to, decided to grow our own again. We initially purchased 2 x GOS crosses which we reared for the freezer and in 2005 purchased our first Pedigree Gloucester Old Spot gilt – a Primrose, from a dispersal sale from the Cugley Herd of Eric Freeman. The rest as they say is history! We now have about 20 registered sows with replacements coming through & we are building up our finishing unit and do a little bit of showing (a great way of meeting like-minded people with a wealth of experience which they are willing to share).

Committee member Guy Kiddy -Husbandry & Livestock Queries (pic above bowler hat!)

I have been involved in pigs all of my life & Gloucestershire Old Spots in particular since 1992 when we bought our first Gloucester boar from George Styles. The Balsham herd was founded with this boar and 2 Ellen gilts purchased from near Melton Mowbray. We have shown ever since and have been lucky enough to have had some success in the ring and have won the GOS northern & southern championships as well as the Elwes Cup. Over the years the Gloucester's have been joined by other breeds most notably when my Uncle, Peter Kiddy retired from farming and we took over the Withersfield herd of large whites.

We have small farm on the Bedfordshire Cambridgeshire borders currently running 60 sows, a flock of Norfolk Horn sheep and a herd of Red Poll cattle. This very much a family enterprise with my wife Melany, son Nick & daughter Sarah all involved. We sell the meat through our farm shop as well as hog roasts for parties and other events. I also run an agricultural training & consultancy company delivering training in a wide range of subjects to farmers & their employees and advising on various livestock related issues to a range of organisations

I am passionate about conserving all of our pig breeds which I try to achieve by being a committee member of the GOSPBC, a council member of the RBST and currently chairman of the BPA



Richard Lutwyche (Honourary Member Gloucestershire Old Spot Club)

A Founder member of the GOSPBC in 1990, Richard served on the committee as both Secretary & Treasurer and is the man most people associate with the breed. His depth of knowledge about the breed is second to none. He serves on the Surrey Show committee and can still be found near or in a show ring judging and commentating.



Committee member Alison Littlehales -Facebook co-ordinator

Salutations from Shropshire! I live in the Shropshire Hills with my husband, two children and lots of sheep. Living on the side of a hill creates many pig keeping challenges but I haven't let it beat me yet. I have a background in the veterinary and pharmaceutical industry and love knowing how pigs work and finding out about new and exciting initiatives within the pig world. I have kept pigs for the past seven years and got involved with GOS in 2010. The whole family find them great characters, good mums and excellent to eat. We sell pork and sausages to pubs and at the farm gate. Hog roasts have been especially popular over the

past few years. I have had a go at showing, but confess I am a control freak and the thought of just a stick and board between me and a runaway pig puts the fear of God into me. Maybe next year...

Viki Mills – Honrary Member Gloucestershire Old Spot Club

The founder GOS in the Gillhouse Herd came in 1976 with a Princess Mary and a Princess Joan from the late George Styles' RibBbesford Herd, shortly followed by the addition of Josephine and Muriel lines. Rufus and Patrick boars were also kept. A particular favourite was a Ribbesford Patrick a high scoring performance tested boar we nicknamed Napoleon who lived to a ripe old age and was buried here on the farm, (in the days when you could do such a thing.) I started showing in 1979 and sometime in the early 80s was put on the GOS Judges' list. The Gill-



house Herd was extended to include pigs from the Berkshire, Middle White, Large Black and Tamworth breeds and we showed all of these from 1980 onwards. I served on the NPBA Minor Breeds Committee, which became the BPA Traditional Breeds Committee. In later years I chaired the Pedigree Show Committee and became an Hon-Vice-President of the BPA in 2009. I have just completed 9 years as Council member/Trustee of the RBST and I am also about to retire from Judging after being on various BPA lists for about 30 years. I intend however to maintain contact with the

Gloucester breed and pigs generally



Committee member Jonathan Crump

I live in Gloucestershire with my wife and family. I have kept Gloucester Old Spot Pigs for over 20 years. I keep 6 breeding sows and a boar along with a couple of Tamworth pigs; they are all outdoor reared, whey fed pigs.

I also keep Old Gloucester Cows and make Double and Single Cheese. I have a few White Park Cattle along with 300 sheep and a variety of poultry to keep me busy.



Committee Member David Overton

I got my first GOS pigs in 1982 and have kept them ever since. It all started with an in-pig GOS sow bought at a market where I was supposed to be buying pigs for my the research company I worked for at the time. Things snow-balled from there with Vikki Mills sourcing me a boar and encouraging me to get involved in showing. We made our showing debut at Lambourn Show in May 1983 and got a third prize, we were bitten by the show bug. Over the years we have had many successes with Anne Nicholls joining the Exfold team in 1987. The Exfold herd has toured the country from one end to the other ensuring that GOS were well represented in the showing. In 2010 I decided

to hang up my showing coat and take things a bit easier. I was one of the founder members of the GOSPBC and have served as both President and Chairman but am now retreating to the back bench of the committee

Committee Member Oliver Whiteley -Merchandise Operations



I am third generation farmer and wholesale butcher, I have also worked in PR and marketing for 12 years. I live just outside Harrogate in North Yorkshire and for any of you that might be getting confused am no relation of Sarah – just a coincidence!!

We got into GOS only 5 years ago having bought 2 gilts off Marlene Renshaw at Great Yorkshire Show; at the time we were running a couple of guest houses and looked at the GOS for as we all know the quality of both the fresh pork, the sausage and bacon. Demand soon outstripped supply, I researched bloodlines and we started to expand the herd mainly buying in sows from the Winterwood, Windmill, Foston, Exfold and Tennyson herds. It has been a very steep learning curve and the rest as they say is history.

Supported by a superb team of stockmen we now run between 750 - 800 pure bred sows on a batch system weaning 750 – 1000 piglets every three weeks to supply Marks and Spencer's with a range of pure bred GOS pork.



Committee Member Sarah Whitley I started showing in 2007 with just a few non pedigree pigs at Nidderdale show only 10 minutes from our farm where we have a Jersey cow herd and make ice-cream from their milk. In 2009 I bought my first pedigree Gloucestershire old spot sow Chapel Dolly 12. She was in-pig so this set me off on a good foot to start breeding pedigree GOS. Once I had started with one I got hooked on breeding them and we now have around 23 pedigree sows. I have females lines including Dolly, Bluebell, Muriel, Star and Princess but my favourite is the Dolly line as they are a heavier, deeper sort of pig with more style. My parents

and I go showing up and down the country with the pigs. One of our best wins was when our sow "Hilda" won the interbreed championship and reserve supreme champion at the East of England show. She then went on to win most points for a GOS pig in that year. We still have Chapel Dolly 12 and she has just pigged 15, but as she's an old lady now and getting clumsy she laid on 5 of them, but considering this is her 11th litter she's done very well (just had a sneaky look at some of their underlines this morning and there are two correct gilts :)) I'm looking forward to working on the committee and offering a youthful perspective on all the things the club does.



Committee member Mandy Garbutt -Spot Press & Website Minder! Got my first GOS in 2004 and immediately joined the GOS club. After a few hiccups and steep learning curves we currently have 3 sows (Princess, Dolly & Ellen) with a Patrick boar. Our old boar Gerry (10 this year!) is still marauding around. We started showing in 2009 after a false start in 2005 and have had some success particularly at our local shows. Quite often we're the only GOS pigs there. GOS pigs are always crowd pleasers and people love to chat and hear about them. We've found showing a great way to get our herd known and inform the public about the breed. I was co-opted onto the committee in 2007 and became a full member in 2009.

GOSPBC Regional Focus – The South East



Although the region is adjacent to London it has no single dominant urban centre and its largest cities have populations of only about 250,000. Indeed, more than 80% of the area is classified as 'rural' and there are more than 170 small rural towns (with populations of less than 20,000) and more than 1,400 villages. It also has a coastline with a total length in excess 300km forming the most part of the northern coast of the English Channel. Some 70% of the region is farmed. It is farming and forestry that manage and maintain the countryside and are essential to maintain and manage the quality landscapes. There are approx 23,000 farm holdings in the region.

There are currently 30 GOSPBC members listed in this region and these are the lines they keep. You can find some of their contact details

on the club website <http://www.gospbc.co.uk/the-club/club-members/>

ALL SOWS	SE
LINE	
DAHLIA	5
PRIMROSE	10
MURIEL	3
JOSEPHINE	41
COUNTESS	0
DOLLY	6
BLUEBELL	2
STAR	1
FREDA	1
P ANN	1
P MARY	6
P JOAN	5
ANTOINETTE	5
ELLEN	3
PRINCESS	56
TOTALS	145

BOARS	SE
PATRICK	17
GERALD	3
SAMBO	5
RUFUS	1
TOTALS	26



Gladys a good SE girl & handler Clare Wilson!

(BPA Figures to end March 2014)

The Davenport Herd By Simon & Ruth Beech



Starting out

Simon and Ruth Beech live in the heart of The Thames Valley, just south of the market town of Wokingham in Royal Berkshire. Their main business is a thriving Grounds Maintenance Contracting Company ; BEECH LANDSCAPES. There are many people out there in the pig community who have a lifetime of knowledge and experience to offer. Having kept pigs for only four years; We still regard ourselves as novice pig keepers but learning all the time.

Background

In December 2004, we purchased a 12 Acre small holding Long Meadow Farm, within a mile of home as a bit of an investment and pension fund for our retirement. I don't trust Banks or Insurance Companies to provide for the future any more!

I had just retired from a career in the Fire Service and with my Farming and Game Keeping background, I wanted to get involved with Livestock again. Both my Grandfathers had kept pigs before and during the Second World War. One had been employed at the A.E.I. Company in Rugby as a Fire Fighter and he kept his pigs in a field quite close to the factory. I never met him, but have the only surviving picture of him, tending his pigs probably during the War years. My maternal Grandfather Alfred Davenport was a small scale farmer in Warwickshire and we used his surname as our herd prefix in his memory. My father also kept pigs with his brother throughout the 50's and 60's and I have fond memories of helping to salt sides of dry cured bacon in Belfast sinks when I was a child.

First Pigs

We purchased our first two pigs in April 2010. Two 'in pig' Saddleback gilts from a neighbouring farm and our daughters promptly named them 'Betty' and 'Willma' (Flintstone). Within a couple of months we had a few piglets running around the place and we were up and running. A visit to Surrey County Show that year sparked my interest in The Gloucestershire Old Spots breed. I met Dave Overton, he was Club President at that time, and he extolled the virtues of the breed and the quality of the meat they produced. Once I had done some research in to the history of the breed and it's decline to near extinction in the 60's, I decided that G.O.S. was the breed for me.

Our First gilt was Wheathold Ellen 4, who we purchased from Mrs. Jane Fox in Tadley. As soon as we got her home and unloaded her, she demolished all our carefully prepared electric fencing, got in with the Saddlebacks and soon asserted her authority as "top pig". Orchardhigh Princess followed a month later with Exfold Princess 202 and then Mutterton Patrick 4 our young boar and from there we had the nucleus of our future herd.

Feeding

We feed a ready made pelleted ration supplied by a local firm that do on farm milling for those farmers that use 'straight ingredients'. It is delivered in one tonne bags, and we are fortunate to have our tele-handler on the farm for unloading. During the Autumn months, we have an arrangement with a local community group who make apple juice and Cider, with apples from neglected orchards in the area. They provide us with a good supply of apple pulp, which the Pigs love and they get a few sausages in return. All the pressing is done outdoors in the orchards, so it's not a problem in terms of it being Food Waste.

The Abattoir Despite my Farming and Keeping background, I still don't find it easy to take pigs to the Abattoir. The platitude "they had a good life" does not 'cut much ice with me' and having reared them from birth I often liken it to dropping your children off at Nursery School and saying 'goodbye', knowing that you won't be back to collect them.

Selling Pork

Finding an outlet for our finished pigs became a priority. Our first batch of six were duly collected from the Butcher all cut and pre-packed ready for the freezers and we had customers all lined up. Imagine our shock the next morning when we found the barn had been broken in to and every freezer emptied. We were left with a box of Heads, Tails and Trotters!! All we had to show for eight months hard work. Local Butchers were keen to take our pigs and we had good feedback regarding quality, however they were only paying trade prices for what was really top quality, slow grown, free range, rare breed pork. They were also reluctant to make sausages for us, fearing that we would "pinch their trade". As a result we had to go further afield and we were fortunate to find a Traditional Family Butcher in Oxfordshire who was happy to buy whole pigs at a good price and make sausages for us in bulk.

Showing

Showing pigs can be great fun and a real education. Everyone in the pig world is very friendly and will always help out new and inexperienced exhibitors. A two or three day show, gives you plenty of time to take part in the competition and also enjoy the stands and exhibits on the show ground. It's probably best not to tell the wife she will be sleeping in the livestock trailer until you have arrived and they lock the car park gates behind you!

With no previous experience what so ever we ventured to our local county show The Royal Berkshire at Newbury in September 2010. We washed what pigs we had and trained them to walk in a reasonable fashion with a stick and board. Having had lots of advice from Dave Overton and Richard Lutwyche we set off for Newbury with no expectations other than to 'have a go' 'gain some experience' and meet other pig keepers.

We picked up a first and second prize on the Saturday which meant our pigs qualified for Championships on the second day. We came away with Reserve Show Champion (Wheathold Ellen 4) and The G.O.S. Southern Championship runner up (Orchardhigh Princess). Not bad for a first outing, but I'm afraid our showing career 'peaked early' and we have never done as well since! Looking back, I don't think we realised how well we had actually done for complete novices.

We hope to be at the Royal Berkshire again this September so do come and say hello.



Remember that one of your Member benefits is automatic Public Liability Insurance covering your pigs while at a show in the UK. Some shows insist that you show proof of such insurance in which case you can request a copy of the document from the Club (£5 admin charge). Otherwise, it's one thing less to worry about and if you go for your own cover from the likes of NFU Mutual, expect to pay a premium running into hundreds of pounds!

Harsh Lessons Learnt

In the beginning, we spent a good deal of money on Arks and Farrowing sheds which I built myself from scratch, stock fencing and a livestock trailer “Far too much money” Ruth will tell you now.

My enthusiasm ran away with me and having read about the Bluebell bloodline being in rapid decline, I went out and bought four Bluebell gilts from two different breeders. In addition to my own Gilts I had reared and put in pig, we had embarked on a rather ambitious breeding programme. Within six months we were looking after over 100 pigs! The feed bill went ballistic! We got too big too quickly, I recognise that now, and with the onset of probably the coldest and wettest winter for a decade, we were about to learn some very harsh lessons over a period of four miserable months. I met a pig keeper at a show once, known only to me as “Mossy”, he took me to one side and said.... “You will never make any money out of small scale pig farming” and I have to say he was right!

On The Positive Side

Keeping pigs is incredibly satisfying, and can be a great education for young children, both in terms of responsibility and commitment, as well as knowing where the bacon on their plate comes from.

Pigs are incredibly intelligent and clever. They deserve respect. I get a great deal of satisfaction from producing and eating our own high quality pork, with succulent crackling and free from any antibiotics or growth promoters.

We purchased a Hog Roast machine which we hire out and we had a spectacular party in the barn with a Hog Roast for 300 people, to celebrate The Queens Diamond Jubilee.



One of our hog roasts

The Future

We have downsized our Herd considerably in recent months to a more manageable size, and life is a bit less hectic now. We have four Sows and have recently been using Artificial Insemination. It's incredibly easy to do after a bit of instruction from someone who has done it before. We currently sell weaners for fattening and I am still on the lookout for that ever elusive “Perfect Pig” to take to the Shows.

Some Pearls of Wisdom! The Club Web Site, is a valuable source of information, so if you are thinking about starting to keep pigs then do lots of research before you part with any money. I purchased a book called “Perfect Pigs” by Clare and Robin Wilson (Oaklands Pigs). It covers every aspect of small scale pig keeping and is well worth a read.

Start small, just buy a few weaners to begin with. Fatten them up, see how much work is involved, fill your freezer up and give some to friends and family.

Always buy birth notified or registered stock from a reputable breeder, this is particularly important as only the breeder can register pigs in the herd book which can then go on to breed pedigree pigs.

“An unregistered pig is just a pig” and you can't take them to shows.

Pigs are a big commitment as are any livestock, so think about who will look after them when you are off sick or away on holiday.

It's probably best not to name pigs! **but** almost everyone I know does!

So there you go, not all good, not all bad; these are simply our observations and suggestions based on our first hand experience of the job. We hope you've found them of interest.

Photographs Simon Beech

The Trewint Herd By Mark Dallaway

The Trewint herd is based at Hawkhurst in Kent. My family began in pigs in the 1970's, breeding commercial on a large scale (120 sows unit). However we ceased in the 1980's due to the recession. We began again with 2 Gloucestershire Old Spots sows 7 years ago, when our eldest son joined his school young farmers and wanted some pigs of his own.

We chose GOS for their good nature and because we wanted a traditional native breed. These are pigs we breed them for meat, selling as weaners, breeding stock and showing. The female breed lines we have are Princess Freda, Josephine, Dahlia and Princess, the male breed lines are Patrick and Sambo. We enjoy the breeding side, continuing the lines and producing youngsters then seeing what they turn out like. The GOS makes superb quality of home bred pork so we are educating family and friends in this.

My younger son (Alfie, 14 yrs) and daughter (Connie, 9 yrs) enjoy showing the GOS and meeting new people, other breeders and public too. They have been doing so for about 4 years. We travel around the south mainly although we do go other places. This year we ventured to the Great Yorkshire show in Harrogate which was quite a trip for us from Kent. This is them out in the show ring.



One afternoon a friend visited one of our sows with her litter of piglets who were enjoying their scrumptious breakfast, she took several photos. When she returned home she discovered 1 of the photos had a piglet in mid air, having been tossed up by its mother when feeding.



"Who said pigs can't fly"

Our main advice to prospective and current GOS keepers is to give everything a try, showing, breeding, pork producing, sausage making. Find out what works for you. Be realistic with your time available to look after them. Visit the GOS website frequently because the advice is very useful.

We hope you found our herd interesting and we hope to meet some of you as we travel around the shows.

Photographs Mark Dallaway

Teresa Cook Reports:**The South of England Show 2014**

The South of England Show is always a pleasure to go to. From the moment you arrive you are helped by students to unload but only after the vet has checked all on board first. When you are ready to go home the same happens everyone helps you to load and to go on your way. There is always a refreshment tent you can go to which is well stocked with drinks, biscuits and Anne Nichols wonderful chocolate cake. After the first days showing the stewards put on a fabulous BBQ for all of the pig competitors.

The GOS boar classes were amalgamated as were the Gilt classes

GOS Breed Champion Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Josephine 205 **Reserve** Mr. A. Dallaway Trewint Sambo



GOS Champion Male Mr. A. Dallaway Trewint Sambo **Reserve** Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Gerald 89

GOS Champion Female Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Josephine 205 **Reserve** Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Josephine 199

Boar born after 1st July 2013 1st Mr. A. Dallaway Trewint Sambo **2nd** Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Gerald 89
3rd Brook House Farms Framfield Patrick **4th** Brook House Farms Framfield Patrick

Gilt born after 1st July 2013 1st Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Josephine 205

2nd Mr. A. Dallaway Trewint Princess Freda **3rd** Brook House Farms Framfield Princess

4th Brook House Farms Framfield Primrose

Breeding Sow 1st Mrs. A. Nicholls Exfold Josephine 199

2nd Mrs. C. Wilson Exfold Princess 238 **3rd** Mr. A. Dallaway Exfold Princess 198

The TSOE also has a piggy obstacle course for pigs and their handlers to navigate which is thoroughly enjoyed by the watching crowd.



Anne Nicholls negotiates some tricky cones and a not so keen pig on the bridge.

With thanks to Teresa Cook & Robin Wilson for Photographs

The Showing Bug by Dave Overton

As some of you will have read before, I purchased my first GOS in-pig gilt, Diklers Josephine 3rd, in the spring of 1982 at the NPBA Sale at Gloucester. She farrowed in July a litter of 11, out of which I decided to rear 4 of the gilts. At the beginning of 1983 I thought I should try and find a boar. Vikki Mills found a boar for me and during a conversation about the boar she asked was I going to show any of the gilts, and I said I had not thought about it to which she replied "I think you ought to".

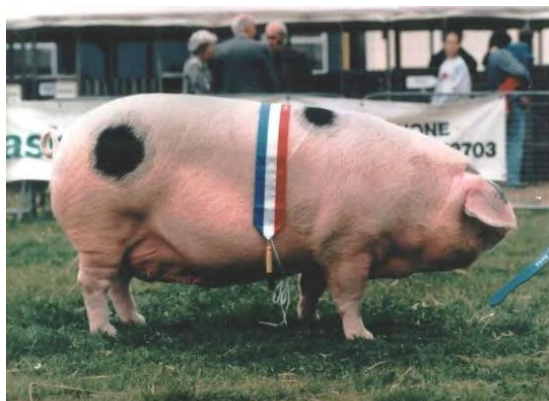
There was a nice little show in May at Lambourn, Berkshire. This is how I got into pig showing. It had been a very wet spring 1983 and so was the first Sunday in May but we still had a lovely day and a 3rd Prize Card and made some new friends. As we walked back to the trailer we had our first of many embarrassing show moments, my friend Austin and I pleased with our day walked and talked with the pig between us, or so we thought! We noticed that everybody was laughing and wondered why. The gilt had stopped for a convenience stop, we hadn't noticed so kept walking and talking but no pig between us. But never mind, I had been bitten by the Showing Bug and as they say the rest is history. We showed locally for the next 2 or 3 years - Singleton Rare Breeds, Chertsey, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire and persuaded Cranleigh to have pig classes again. These shows gave me good showing experience.

In 1986 after going to the RBST Show & Sale for the last 10 years as a spectator, I decided to enter two Jan Gilts. We were now with the Big Boys of the GOS world and what a surprise it was when the judge, the late Geoffrey Cloke, made them 1st & 2nd in the class not only that but we got Breed Champion as well. That called for a celebration that night.

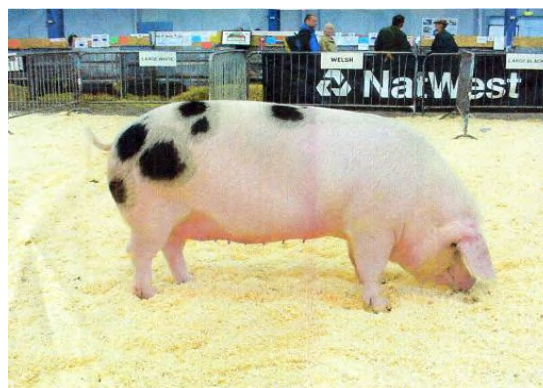
During the years before all the regulations came in about transporting livestock, we saw many different and amusing means of trailers. A Reliant Robin (otherwise known as a Plastic Pig— Ed) which had its engine and bonnet removed and a drawbar fitted, the drivers and passenger doors were still in place and the pockets in the doors were full up with sheep droppings but the story that still makes me smile is of the lady who drove a Citroen 2CV and a very small trailer in which she brought her Tamworth sow. The tailboard was made of a frame and just 3 planks of wood with gaps in between. When it came to the time to load the sow back in the trailer a carpet was placed over the tailboard, the sow was then walked up to the trailer, the lady would then place the sow's feet one by one onto the planks. Once the pig was in it was told to sit so that the tailboard could be closed. The sow had to sit, as the trailer was not long enough to shut the tail board if she was standing and off they would go with the sow looking out over the sides of the trailer.

By 1987 Anne (Nicholls) had joined the showing team and we started to exhibit at a few county shows including the South of England. It was here in 1988 that we won our first Interbreed Championship. I was at home recovering from an operation. Anne and Austin's hard work and skill got that one (but it was my pig!).

It was in the early 90s that we started doing a lot more showing. Devon Show being one - this show we always enjoy being the first one of our season, meeting up with friends and comparing our stock with everybody else's. It was at this Show in 1997 that our sow Exfold Princess 31st was made Reserve Interbreed Champion, and then went to the Royal Show and won the Elwes Trophy for Champion of Champions. The next year the same sow was Interbreed Champion at Devon Show, and this year she was only reserve in the Elwes Trophy, beaten by her daughter, Exfold Princess 54th. This was one of our proudest moments



Exfold Princess 31st Reserve Interbreed Champion



Exfold Princess 54th Elwes Trophy winner 1998

Our next good moment was at the Bath & West in 2000, having won the Breed Championship with Princess 54, we went forward to the Interbreed. That year being Millennium, the judging of the Interbreed was different; all the breed judges took part giving a score out of ten, but excluding the breed that they had judged in the classes. The scores were counted and Exfold Princess 54th was placed 4th as there were over 200 pigs at the show that year it gave us great satisfaction. Remembering that moment brings to mind another story as one year we were setting off to the Bath & West Show and whilst loading the pigs we thought one of the gilts looked as though she was coming into season. We unloaded her but as soon as she was on the floor her ear started to wave and no way was she going to move. We thought we would just have to leave her there while we unloaded the rest but during this time along came Will Newth. He was about 10 years old at the time and he said "Shall I put her in her pen?" We explained that she was hogging and would not move he said he would try. The next thing Will was walking her to her pen as good as gold, after that Will was in charge of her for the rest of the show.

Hatfield Show in 2004 is another one of our great moments when another of our Princess gilts, Exfold Princess 122, came good, winning Breed Champion, Best July Gilt and Interbreed Champion.

These are just a few of the moments in my 25 years of showing, there were many more i.e. the Elwes trophy wins, being Interbreed Champion at the South of England 2 years running, making a total of 4 times in all, and in 2005 winning Interbreed and top price at the BPA Show & Sale and many more. And also joining in the celebrations of other exhibitors when they had won.



Dave & Anne at GYS 2010



Master & Protégé? Dave leads Sarah Whitley

At this point I would like to say to anyone who is thinking of starting showing to do so as you will enjoy it and the other exhibitors will be very welcoming and helpful. A story to illustrate this is in my early days of pedigree pig breeding, I had a young boar for sale. There was a Rare Breeds Sale at the East of England Showground and I decided to take him there. After arriving and getting him washed and brushed up we went for some breakfast. At another table sat two ladies that we knew were well known pig breeders and Judges but we had never spoken to them, they were Joan Staig & Rachel Wylie, They both came over to me and said "You own the GOS boar, don't let him go cheap because he is the best GOS boar we have seen about this year" This I thought was a very kind thing to do and as I say, pig people do look after newcomers.

2010 was my last show season after which I hung up my show coat for good. Anne Nicholls still takes a reduced Exfold show team out so you will still see our pigs around the shows.

I hope this has made you think **YES!** we will go showing. You will find it to be good fun, in spite of the hard work in the preparation at home and at the show, the rewards will compensate. Not only the prizes you win but the people you meet and the tips and knowledge you gather will make it a great experience and a wonderful chapter in your life's book.

This article first appeared in Spot Press Autumn 2010 and has been updated with photographs from the Spot Press Archive and Mandy Garbutt

Merchandise - Support GOS - Wear the Logo!

Now is the time to order your GOS bespoke clothing. You can order via the website where you have the added advantage of being able to pay by Credit or Debit card using *PayPal* or contact the Secretary for an order form. The bespoke range with the Club logo embroidered on every item is high quality clothing that should last and last so go for it! P&P details can be found on the website and the order form.

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Members' Price: £14.99 each

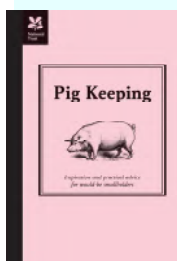
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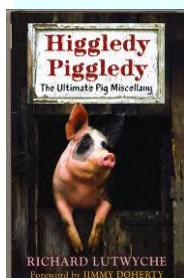
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Deposit will secure please ring for details and price Sharon 07760217453. Ross on Wye area.

GOS SOWS TO RE-HOME

We have 2 Gloucester Old spot sows, Exfold princess, which are registered with the BPA. They are celebrities as they featured in "Country file" on BBC 2 at 18 months.

Because of circumstances we need to find a new home for these 2 girls and as they are registered and are tattooed on their ears. They have been used for cross breeding with Saddlebacks and more recently with a British Lop.

They are currently in-pig and expecting in the next couple of weeks, so in about 6-8 weeks time they could be moved.

Please contact Jeremy Ingram for more information
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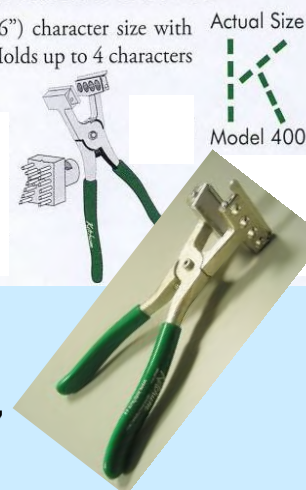
You should only need to buy one tattooing kit in your lifetime so make sure it's good quality. You will find cheaper equipment but one of the things that exercises established breeders is the poor quality of many tattoos in pig's ears that become illegible in a short space of time.

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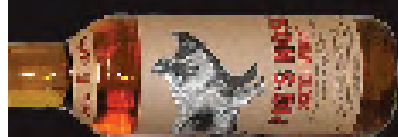


Part of the problem is technique but the biggest failing is the equipment available in the UK which is why the Club have been instrumental in importing from Canada special pliers that take 14mm high characters which are chisel point instead of needle point. Such numbers carry more ink through the pig's ear which, coupled with the larger size, means that there's a much better chance of the ear number being legible throughout the pig's life. Remember these are not only suitable for GOS but Large White, Tamworth, Middle White, Welsh, British Lop, Oxford Sandy & Black, Pietrain, Landrace etc.

Order details can be found on the Club's Shop on the website and you can order paying by credit/debit card via PayPal.

Pliers £72.95 - Numbers £42.95/set + £4.50p&p

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Contact details are on the front page of this issue.

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SPOT PRESS

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With contributions from Messrs
Beech, Cook, Dallaway, Renshaw &
Wilson & Spot Press Archive

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Editors Note.....

After gallons of Yorkshire Tea and frantic typing, you've just hopefully read and enjoyed the first issue of Spot Press that I have put together for you.

Many thanks to all those who contributed with articles, photographs, technical help and encouragement. I'm still learning my way around the editing suite so apologies for any wonky photographs or dodgy fonts! Special thanks to the team at Tees Print for all their patience and help.

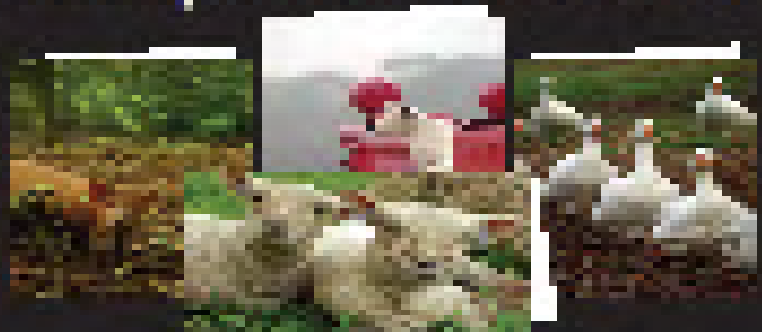
If you have any comments to make; good, bad or indifferent please post your comments on the website forum or send along with any suggestions or photographs by e-mail to fowgillfarm@hotmail.co.uk

The next issue will have reports and photographs from as many of the shows that our members have been to as we can possibly fit in. The regional focus will be on Scotland and Northern Ireland.

At Fowgill we've belatedly started our showing season and await with some trepidation our litter of September's. Pigs are all outside at last and all the buildings are being cleaned ready for the coming winter. With pigs there's always something to be getting on with.

Have a lovely summer. Best Wishes *Mandy Garbutt*

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