INTRODUCING THE 2018 ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW ICON

+ 178th Royal Highland Show Preview
+ Scotland’s Larder Live! • Music • Presidential Area • Judges
+ RHASS Annual Report Pull-out • Long Service Awards • Moredun Update
+ Oxford Farming Conference • Nuffield Scholar Report • Farm Succession

MEET EMILY!
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Welcome

I count myself privileged to be Chairman of RHASS in the year of young people. Although my passport and picture suggests I am not in that category, I am fortunate to be surrounded by energetic and inspirational staff and Board Members whose youthful enthusiasm drive me onwards and upwards.

Everyone is asking about progress on the replacement of the MacRobert Building, and the good news is we are hopeful the new facility plans will be on display for your approval at this year’s Show.

As you will be aware, over the last twelve months we have been installing piping and cabling across the site to improve water and Wi-Fi services. This infrastructure work is unseen, but absolutely essential to keep Ingliston’s top of the range reputation.

Another new feature in the East car park is the construction of our very own ‘Beast in the East’, a 230 bedroom hotel, adjacent to the roundabout on Ingliston road, primarily to service the airport, but very handy for our many Show visitors.

I frequently refer to Ingliston as Scotland’s largest outdoor activity centre, adjacent to the airport terminal, and on the outskirts of the tourist magnet that is Edinburgh. It is very much a business centre, and the need to run it as such has necessitated some changes in our bye-laws, which will take us into the 21st century on the front foot.

In this year of young people, the Society’s affiliated education charity RHET is not only teaching thousands of schoolchildren where their food comes from in the Discovery Centre, but will also be performing in the Main Ring, with the Young Farmers, in a musical “Audience Participation Extravaganza”.

Our Show is all about you and your family. Whatever your age, we guarantee to educate, excite and entertain. Please put the dates in your diary now, the 21 – 24 June, and I look forward to seeing you all there.

Jimmy Warnock, RHASS Chairman
RHASS NEWS UPDATE

EQUINE AWARDS
It was great to see so many familiar faces at the National Equestrian Awards 2018 held at the Airth Castle & Spa in March (formerly the Horsescotland Annual Awards). Sponsored by RHASS, the awards recognise and reward outstanding contributions to the Equestrian community in Scotland.

WINNERS INCLUDED:
- Youth Coach of the Year: Duncan McFadyen
- Youth Volunteer of the Year: Dawn Edward
- Youth Performer of the Year: Fraser Reed, Equestrian
- Business of the Year: Sinclair Photography
- Equestrian Photo of the Year: Sinclair Photography
- Employee of the Year: Lynne Cree, who has worked for Fiona and Andrew Malcolm for 22 years as their Head Girl.
- Equine Breeder of the Year: Ronnie Black
- Owner of the Year: Deborah Thomson and Belinda McClung
- Club of the Year: Scottish Tetrathlon
- Volunteer of the Year: Audrey Smart
- Young Peoples Coach of the Year: Olivia Wilmot
- Participation Coach of the Year: Liz Love
- Performance Coach of the Year: Hannah Eccles
- Writer of the Year: Helene Mauchlen
- Performer of the Year: Derek Fox
- Lifetime Achievement: The Hon Heather Galbraith MBE
- Special Recognition: Muriel Colquhoun MBE

LONG SERVICE AWARDS
RHASS, together with Borders Union Agricultural Society (BUAS), has been recognising long service within the agricultural and rural industries for 74 years (since 1944) and to date has presented a total of 651 awards – covering a staggering 22,803 years of service.

The dedication and commitment to our industry is outstanding and a number of individuals received their awards at a dinner held at Border Union Showground earlier this year.

18 recipients, with 677 years of service, joined a reception in honour of their work, with six of the award winners being presented with their 2nd long service awards - one for 50 years and five for 40 years.

Alec Herkes, pictured, has worked for Marlefield for 50 years with three generations of the Goodson family, and said: "I am thrilled to get this award. I have been on tractors since I was five and it's all I ever wanted to do. I love the job and, even though I am 81, I still enjoy the new technology and the progress made in farm machinery. It's an exciting industry to be in – even at my age!"

Five of the farms represented have had previous recipients – Easter Softlaw, Hassendean, Marlefield, Caerton Mill, Ruletownhead. Credit should also be given to them as employers – well done everyone involved!

To find out more about these awards, visit https://rhass.org.uk/awards-and-grants/rhass-long-service-awards/
FREE ACCESS TO MOREDUN MEMBER PORTAL

As associate members of the Moredun Foundation, RHASS members can now sign up to the Moredun Member Portal giving access to magazines, disease factsheets, webcasts and member updates.

Moredun, which was established by Scottish farmers in 1920, is committed to promoting livestock health and welfare through research and education and is recognised worldwide for its contribution to research into infectious diseases of farmed livestock. As the focus on farm efficiencies and the need for responsible use of medicine increase, the benefits of this research and information to your business has never been more relevant.

Please register at portal.moredun.org.uk/user/register and select ‘Associate Membership’, then ‘RHASS’ and add your RHASS membership number in the Membership Type section of the form (add zeros at the front of your number if necessary and please ignore any letters). Your membership number is on the covering letter you receive with your Show tickets or, alternatively, please email membership@rhass.org.uk.

RHASS SUPPORTING INDUSTRY AWARDS

RHASS was the proud sponsor of the Scottish Rural Awards, held at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh. The night proved to be an inspiring celebration of enterprise, innovation, dedication and community spirit of those who live in rural Scotland.

RHASS also sponsored Scotland’s Finest Woods Awards, which recognised landowners where tree planting or woodland management has made an important contribution to the farm business and/or the local environment.

Jimmy Warnock, RHASS Chairman said: “Many progressive landowners in Scotland have recognised the benefits of incorporating woodland into farm management plans and have invested for the long-term reward for the environment, people and the economy of Scotland. RHASS is proud to support these inspiring individuals and to present the Awards programme with the RHASS Lilburn Trophy.”

The winners of Scotland’s Finest Woods will be announced at the 2018 Royal Highland Show in June.

GOOD LUCK TO THE FARRIER IN EUROPE!

Members of the Scottish National Farrier team will be heading to Switzerland in June to compete in the European Farrier championships. What a great opportunity to represent Scotland in Europe and we wish them the best of luck!
Having grown up on a farm, I have always had a passion for the environment and agriculture. I saw first-hand the devastating impact that agri pests can have on crops, both on a financial, and an emotional level. This very much inspired me to do what I do now. I conducted my PhD at the University of Aberdeen, and this was focused on improving production efficiency of a bio-molluscicide product for the agricultural industry, as well as developing new potential markets.

I then undertook a postdoctoral position at the University of Aberdeen, before moving to Norway for a short-term contract focusing on the Spanish slug. Thereafter, I established my own research group at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, which involves collaborating with the University of Aberdeen. This is focused on developing a new biological molluscicide for the European and African markets.

In addition, in 2013 I spent a year’s secondment at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Dar es Salaam, educating local farmers on chemical pesticide usage.

I have just finished studying a distance learning MBA at Robert Gordon University, and as part of the course, I put together a business plan to spin-out my bio-molluscicide research. As a consequence, I was awarded a LANTRA Award for Learner of the Year 2018, and also received a CARAS Award from the Society, after ranking in the top 10 people to ever sit the course in its 20-year history. The MBA has really opened my eyes to how my research fitted into the bigger picture, and I felt that the Nuffield was the next logical step.

The Nuffield is a fantastic leadership programme, that moulds the next generation of agricultural leaders, and that is really where I see myself in the future. It not only helps to develop technical skills, but also focuses on leadership skills and building a professional network.

The Nuffield Scholarship has three major components to it: one, your personal study, which can be anything under the ‘agricultural’ umbrella, two, the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC), which covers current affairs and leadership skills, and three, a select few scholars are chosen to go on a global focus programme. The Global Focus Programme (GFP) aims to visit a variety of countries to learn about international agriculture and bring best practices home to the UK.
As part of my own personal study, I aim to travel to the US, Canada, Brazil, South Africa, Europe, New Zealand and Australia, in order to learn about enhanced slug control methods. This will be done by investigating targeted crops, pest species, new product developments (biological, chemical and cultural), cultural practices, best Integrated Pest Management practices, application rates and methods, biological invasions and possible quarantine measures.

As part of the CSC, all the international Nuffield scholars travelled to the Netherlands in March. This included approximately 80 scholars from the UK, US, Canada, Brazil, France, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, along with some international scholars. At the CSC we learned about the agricultural industry in the Netherlands, along with field trips to a dairy and an organic vegetable producer. We also worked on our self-development, with a focus on leadership and group work.

As part of the GFP, I am on the Africa-focused programme. This involves travelling to the US, Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Kenya and South Africa, along with eight other international scholars. The international scholars are from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Ireland, and I am the only scholar representing the UK. So far, we have travelled to Oregon in the US, and learned about the dairy industry, oyster production, viticulture, beef production, wheat marketing, and hazelnut processing, all of which had a focus on value added products. We have just finished up in Washington D.C., where the group met with officials from the USDA to discuss trade, as well as meeting with the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry to discuss the Farm Bill.

As part of my own studies, I will be travelling to the US and Canada to meet with both industry and scientists who are working to develop a new biological molluscicide. In Brazil, I will be learning about the challenges they are facing following a recent slug biological invasion. In Europe, I will be learning more about the control of the Spanish slug, and the future role that chemical molluscicides will play. I will also be linking with an avid gardener who has come up with a novel barrier system. In South Africa I will be meeting with an agrochemical company who has developed a new application strategy for metaldehyde, and in Kenya will be liaising with a biocontrol organisation. In Australia I am keen to learn more about their cultural practices, and in New Zealand, how they are preventing future biological invasions with their quarantine protocols.

So far on my GFP trip we have only visited the US, however the one word I would use to describe US agriculture is massive. The sheer scale is beyond words. We visited a dairy of 1,700 cows, however this was small in comparison to those on the east side of Oregon where a 30,000-cow dairy is the norm. Sustainability was definitely something I questioned here.

Access to skilled workforce seems to be topical wherever we travel to, however I really liked the system introduced in Tillamook, where the community were involved with funding the extension office and are fully supportive of training the next generation.

The US seems to be quite open when it comes to discussing succession planning, but with the number of farms significantly reducing year on year, I wonder what the future landscape will look like in the US.

The greatest opportunity is value added-products. It has been mentioned time and time again wherever we go. Oregon seems to be a prime example of this, thanks to their Food Innovation Centre. Another great observation so far was the level of collaboration involved in the oyster production in Oregon. It was great to see producers working side by side with their local university.

My final comment about the US relates to hazelnut production. I learned that there aren’t enough producers to meet global demand, so maybe there is an opportunity there? I am learning so much, within different agricultural sectors, but that applies across the board. I am being exposed to so much that relates to UK agriculture, and I can’t wait to bring this knowledge back and share it with the farming community.

Before I commenced my study, I met with RHASS’ CEO Alan Laidlaw to discuss how the scholarship will benefit the Society and the industry as a whole. My short-term goal is to spin out my research into a feasible applied solution for the agricultural industry. However, my Nuffield Scholarship has really opened up my mind to various opportunities, and I would love to be involved with moulding UK agricultural policy.

Website: www.drjennaross.com
Twitter: DrJennaRoss
Speaking at the 2018 Oxford Farming Conference in January, Duncan McConchie, from Dumfriesshire, explained how he has transformed his family farm in Scotland into a hive of activity with visitors from all around the world.

Set in the heart of Dumfries & Galloway, on the hills above the Solway coast, you really will struggle to find a more stunning location. My family have farmed here since 1911, and as the 4th generation I am very thankful for the 107 years of family efforts that have preserved and managed the landscape.

Despite leaving home to follow a career in TV7 Media in Yorkshire, I have always had a deep appreciation for the landscape in South West Scotland. In my lifetime, my grandparents and my parents, Kerr and Caroline, have farmed and my brother, Murray, now works with them managing the (1,300) acre beef and sheep farm. Originally, my great-grandad was a tenant of a neighbouring 300-acre farm. He developed that business and diversified to support a growing family and set up a caravan site – one of the first in Scotland. The start of World War 2 put an end to tourism for a while, and it took a few years to get the Caravan Park back on its feet. In 1970, my Grandpa and Granny purchased Laggan Farm, and in 2000 my brothers moved home, Murray to run the farm, and John to run the holiday business.

In 2007, I decided to move back to get back to the rural way of life. The farm wouldn’t sustain an extra family, and in all honesty my brothers didn’t want to work with me! Necessity really is the mother of all inventions. The area had a thriving tourism industry between April and October and I had done some research which indicated I needed £500,000 to set up. Full of confidence I announced this to the family who weren’t so keen to gift me that amount! - and what I got was 5 acres and £2,500. Can you imagine the call to my 98-old granny, GG, to ask if I could turn her hillside paradise into an outdoor centre?! But credit to her, she embraced change and supported us all the way.

With £2,500 and 5 acres what do you do? Well I went and got taught how to be an archery instructor, having never done it in my life before. I offered classes in the cow shed during the summer months and then went on the road to local schools and sports halls when the cows came back inside.

This expanded into clay pigeon shooting. An area on the 5 acres lent itself perfectly to this so off I went to get trained to be instructor. Luckily, I was good at blagging it and manged to buy a couple of second-hand traps to get up and running.

And then we wanted to be different. Archery and clay pigeon shooting were on offer at other places. So, we wanted to do mountain balling (also known as zorbing). We went to New Zealand, met with the inventor of the Zorb - who wanted Â£1.5 million to join the franchise, and a guaranteed turnover - and decided to try it on our own right after watching it on YouTube. Dad got on his digger and we went to China to buy 2 balls. I got in the ball and we trialled it, learnt lots of lessons and adapted until it worked.

Segways were the next addition. There was only one other place in Scotland in 2011 doing Segwaying. We bought 4 Segways the day our twins were born, at £6,500 each. We ran tours up the hills overlooking the coastline and the investment soon paid off.
Ever keen to develop and move on, we then looked at doing a zip wire. We had a couple of companies in who saw the area we had at our disposal. The longest zip wire in the UK at the time was 380 metres – so we built what was then the UK’s longest at 820 metres (it’s now Scotland’s longest!). The scenery is amazing and the day we launched was the day the business really took off. The PR we got from the media, particularly the TV, was unbelievable.

We did try to get grants, but people didn’t think it stacked up. But we knew it would – and knew our passion to make this successful would pay off. So, we borrowed £100,000 and now get between 10,000 and 15,000 people a year doing the zip wire activity.

With that established, we wanted to go one step further, and I saw on YouTube an advert for a US soft drink company which had a human slingshot. (My wife has since banned me from watching YouTube!) I called the US company who were no longer in business, so I sent the video to two of the biggest adventure construction companies who both said it was not possible to build. I like a challenge so worked with my friend - and engineer – to design our own. In 2015 we launched the human slingshot, after many trials (and some personal injuries!) In all seriousness we did work with experts in the design, including RAF advisors (advising in the forces – we get up to 6G and speeds of up to 60 mph in a second).

With all these activities, it became clear people also want facilities. We spent a few years building a 40-seater log cabin café on the top of the hill. We employed 2 chefs and a management team to run it. A BBQ hut followed with a capacity of 25 – cooking is done on an open fire, by Jonny who was a street chef in India. We drive you up in the Land Rover and it’s perfect for star gazing – we are in one of the UK’s dark sky parks, so the skies are incredible.

So, what got us here? Well, Scottish Enterprise have been absolutely key to our growth. We were chosen as an Agri-Tourism monitor farm which allowed us to embrace succession. It took 2-3 years of discussions but the business, and that includes the family’s collective businesses, is now in a much better position for the future.

The Rural Leadership Programme really helped me unlock my potential. It gives you confidence when so many people don’t take you seriously.

We borrowed a lot of money with a vision to create a rural destination of excellence and that is what continues to drive us. It soon became apparent we needed accommodation, so we have recently built 10 luxury sea view snugs – this gave us the opportunity to package our business. I spent 11 weeks building the units and Vikki did all the interiors.

Our most recent project, which was opened in Dec 2017, is GG’s Yard (named after granny and next to her house). A £1.9 million build, this development has put us into the conferences/wedding venue market, and we already have over 100 bookings. We’ve had a 99% conversion rate for enquiries since the venue opened and we have had an amazing response.

The most critical aspect of all this is the people. Our team create the experience. We have 80 people now employed during peak season, and we truly believe in employing the right people. We select on attitude and will always employ someone, at any time, if I feel they will be an asset to the business.

Our focus is excellence and a major factor in this is staff. We prioritise upskilling and want to allow our staff to develop and improve. Investing in our people will ultimately be the success of our business.

www.ggsyard.co.uk
www.lagganoutdoor.co.uk
The agricultural industry is going through a period of unprecedented change and Oxford Farming Conference has always been at the forefront over the years.

Introducing New Council Member

Sally Williams - (Berwickshire)

Sally, who farms with her parents and sister on a dairy and sheep farm in South East Scotland, has been appointed on to the OFC Council starting in 2019. She is a strong advocate of utilising technology and precision farming methods, with her pedigree Holstein herd being milked by six robotic units. She is a passionate advocate for educating consumers about food and farming and is a volunteer farmer for the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET). Sally has a degree in Agriculture and Animal Science, is a Scottish Enterprise Rural Leader and is the past National Chairman of the Scottish Association of Young Farmers.

“I am delighted to have the opportunity to be part of the team delivering these world class conferences which do exactly what they set out to do: Challenge, Inform, Inspire” says Sally.

“The agricultural industry is going through a period of unprecedented change and Oxford Farming Conference has always been at the forefront over the years. The real strength of OFC lies in the variety of speakers who address conference. They cover topics that aren’t usually associated with an agricultural conference. This year for example saw Eve Turrow Paul talking about Millenials and James Wong introduced his “meat and three veg” ideal.

“By enabling delegates to see the bigger picture, challenge the status quo, embrace blue sky thinking and take that calculated leap of faith in their own minds means the conference plays a vital role for businesses, not to mention the opportunities for young people through the Scholars and Emerging Leaders programmes.”
ARE YOU PLANNING FOR SUCCESSION?

Managing a farming, or rural, business can be challenging. However, there are some factors that can be successfully controlled to minimise future uncertainty. RHASS talks to Sian Bushell, an experienced facilitator, to hear her views and thoughts on the often-difficult subject of succession.

“None of us get out alive and succession will happen,” says Sian, “And for the best outcome, its necessary to look at the issues, discuss and plan accordingly.

“There are serious repercussions to decisions you make now and in the future and I want to stress the importance of communication; the biggest problem in the equation. I appreciate these are often not easy or comfortable conversations, but for the future of your business, they are essential.

“I want to encourage you, and that relates to everyone involved, to be persistent; especially if a family member is hesitant or refuses to join the conversation. I believe the older generation should be the ones to start the discussion, but failing that the younger members need to suggest that the subject is addressed.

“I also recommend a neutral venue. And if necessary, involve a 3rd party; one that can ask the awkward questions but is respected by all parties.

“Utilise other sources of information. You can gain some great ideas and insight into the issues with research. This can result in some very useful and constructive discussions.

“Knowledge helps the conversation. But ultimately, the decisions have to be made by the people who will live with it: the family. It’s really important to acknowledge everyone’s worth in this process – if people feel undervalued or not recognised it can affect their willingness to cooperate.

“If the business cannot afford certain options, then discuss how shortfalls can be made. This is extremely important as it can reduce potential frustration and is good for self-esteem of the individual.

“Try and understand everyone’s point of view and what they want from the situation, and talk often around the kitchen table to make it less of a taboo subject.

“Despite the complexities, I believe it is possible to have a plan that all agree on, but start early and involve everyone. And revisit as circumstances change. Its vital the plan is relevant for it to be implemented successfully.”
SUCCESSION cont.

“Everyone should have a will – NO EXCUSES”

SIAN’S TOP TIPS

- **Plan for succession** as soon as your children are born. This means that there is time to ensure that all children are treated fairly without endangering the core business.

- **It is good business governance** to review succession at least once every year to ensure everything is on track and consider any changes that may have happened.

- **Talk about succession** with the family frequently and openly so that it does not become a taboo subject. Include all family members who are linked to the business including in-laws.

- **Have a proper plan for retirement.** What does it mean to you? Put a date on when you will be stepping back from the responsibility of running the business. Where will you live? Have you enough pension? If not, where will the extra come from? If it is from the family business, calculate exactly how much will be needed each year so it can be part of the business budget.

- **Everyone should have a will – NO EXCUSES.** The contents of the will should be discussed with the beneficiaries.

- **If a young family member is coming back to the business,** have a proper plan of integration. This will include where they will live, what hours they will work, payment, responsibilities and how to include them in the decision making.

- **Consider Power of Attorney** for those in the business.

- **Have proper, regular, business meetings** to ensure effective communication between everyone working within the business.

- **When considering succession,** the assets and the business should be thought of separately.

- **Use good professions at every step.** Always check with a tax expert before taking any course of action. Always have a proper partnership agreement. Having a clear idea of what you want to achieve means the professional can work to what you want far easier. However, succession is not just about tax. Any plan has to work for the family.
Royal Highland Show UPDATE

FROM THE SHOW MANAGER

In just a few short weeks, we will be welcoming you to this year’s Show, which is, as we all know, the best of Scotland’s farming, food and rural life. The standard of exhibitors and competitors across the Show are truly outstanding and a testament to all the efforts made by rural businesses and people throughout the year. I’m sure you will be impressed!

For members, the Show offers a perfect opportunity to learn about the latest industry innovations and information, speak to experts and interact with like-minded individuals. Not forgetting to just spend time with old friends not seen since last year, perhaps make a few new ones and generally have an exciting and enjoyable few days.

The Royal Highland has been a key event in the countryside calendar for 177 Shows and we are working hard to live up to that reputation again in 2018 - to make it 178. And if I could ask for your help in one way, bring somebody to the Show that has never been before, or not for a long time, and introduce them to a truly wonderful Show full of surprise and delight.

T
he most exciting celebration of food, farming and rural life is just weeks away and the whole Society is a abuzz to ensure we deliver a Show that is a fitting spectacle for our industry.

For four days, consumers and producers share in a celebration of the finest food. There is a once-a-year gathering of impressive livestock, a wide range of machinery and innovation on display, not forgetting rural skills and fashion, home and lifestyle shopping.

The top judges from far and wide

The task of placing around 6,000 head of the country’s top cattle, sheep, horses and goats will be in the hands of 41 judges from Scotland, 47 from England, 11 from Wales, 9 from Northern Ireland and one from the Republic of Ireland.

Another native champion

As we celebrate the iconic Scottish Blackface sheep as the ‘face’ of this year’s Show, here are a few highlights from the sheep section:

The Overall Sheep Inter Breed Championship - James Sinclair from Crookston in Midlothian and the Overall Sheep Pairs Inter-Breed Championship & Young Handlers Classes, James MacGregor, Dyke Farm, Milton of Campsie, Glasgow. Beltex will be judged by Jonathan Aiken from Dromora, Co. Down. Texel class will be the responsibility of Steve Richardson from Mount Pleasant Farm, Great Houghton, in South Yorkshire. Zwartbles, Rachel Meggarell, Co. Londonderry.

Full details are available on the Royal Highland Show website.
ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW UPDATE

MUSIC FOR ALL TASTES

From pop to pipes – our entertainment programme has something for everyone.

Headlining, Stevie McCrorie, winner of The Voice 2015, will take to the stage on Saturday afternoon. The National Youth Choir of Scotland Edinburgh Choir will also perform for the first time this year and Scotland's Newest Independent Opera Company, Opera Bohemia, will perform Opera highlights.

Back by popular demand is the Farmers & Farmers’ Wives Choir, who have proved to be a massive crowd pleaser at the Royal Highland Show since their first performance in 2014.

Scotland's schools and young people will be out in force – West Lothian Schools Pipe Band, James Gillespies School, St Aidens High Band, City of Edinburgh Music School and Queen Victoria School. Visitors can look forward to enjoying the musical performances of Irish singer Marty Mone and the ever-popular Artie Trezise.

Getting the feet tapping will be the Duncan Black Ceilidh Band (2017 Scottish Ceilidh Band of the Year) as well as the Royal British Legion Band and the Uddingston & Strathclyde Pipe Band.

FOOD INSPIRATION

What an incredible line up of chefs for Scotland's Larder Live!

Tom Lewis, Mhor, winner of Regional Ambassador for the Central, Fife and Tayside region 2017


Graeme Pallister, 63 Tay Street. CiS Chef of the Year Award 2013

Contini Restaurante

Paul Newman, Errichel House and Cottages, Thyme at Errichel Restaurant, Aberfeldy, winner of Food & Drink Awards 2018

David Haetzman, Chef Proprietor, Firebrick Brasserie, Lauder, winner, Restaurant Newcomer of the Year Catering in Scotland Excellence Awards 2017

Iain Campbell, 7th generation Master Baker, Campbell’s Bakery, with Ark of Taste Selkirk Bannock

Cringletie House - a hilarious double act!

Chris Rowley, Ballintaggart Farm, Thistle Award Most Hospitable B&B 2017

Andrew Whitley, Bread Matters & co-founder of Scotland The Bread

AliBob @ Cairn O’Mohr, Errol

Morven Hastie, Wishingwell Farmhouse, Drymen

Wendy Barrie, Founder & Director award-winning Scottish Food Guide & Scottish Cheese Trail
ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW UPDATE

IMPACT AND A GREAT DAY OUT

A recent report commissioned by the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland (RHASS) has illustrated the significant economic impact of the Royal Highland Show on the Scottish economy, which is calculated to be £54 million.

The 2017 Show attracted over 1,000 trade exhibitors and we continue to see increasing interest from exhibitors and competitors across the UK and abroad who now recognise this to be an international event with genuine business opportunities. Almost 40% of the exhibitors are from outside Scotland.

The event welcomed a record 190,000 visitors in 2017 making it Scotland's biggest outdoor event celebrating the best of farming, food and rural life.

The Show's 2017 Visitor's Survey found that 94% commented on the Show's 'great atmosphere' and we look forward to creating more of the same this year!

International Visitors

The Ayrshire Cattle Society will be hosting 40 visitors for a European Red Dairy Breeds Conference in June and the Royal Highland Show is on their busy itinerary. We look forward to welcoming them to the Show.

The ultimate Scottish event for horses and riders

The Royal Highland Show hosts the largest equestrian event in Scotland and the North of England and continues to strengthen its commitment to Scottish show jumping with a 25% increase in prize money for the winner of the Grand Prix, up to £7,500 from £6,000 awarded in 2017.

We have also teamed up with Spire Edinburgh Hospitals for the 2018 Show, which will see the Grand Prix change its name to Spire Edinburgh Hospitals Grand Prix. Taking place on Saturday 23 June, the event is the one of the true highlights of the Show and is the ultimate test for horse and rider in technical skills, and incredible entertainment for all.

It is truly inspiring to witness the skill and dedication that the competitors bring to the competition. We continue to invest in the Showground and, in particular, the show jumping facilities. The Olympic standard all-weather jumping ring, has proved a great success and assures competitors of a perfect jumping surface.
1918 PEACE & RECONSTRUCTION

This year’s Show will recognise the generous support of the Scottish farming community to the region of Flanders in Belgium, following the end of the First World War. Visit the Countryside Cottage Exhibition Area to look at the unique map of the Flanders area showing the distribution of livestock and other support offered to the Belgian Government to help rebuild its agriculture, after the devastation of the War.

All farms in Scotland which had provided such support were awarded a certificate, provided by the Belgian Government of the time. The issuing of these certificates was administered by the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. Maybe your farm was one of those farms?

MEMBERS’ AREA UPDATE

The members’ area at the Royal Highland Show is always a popular spot and we know it is valued by members as a place to gather, socialise, eat and drink and relax.

We are committed to providing this facility for members – and, as many of you know, have been working hard to ensure this is available not only for this year’s Show, but also for future generations.

For this reason, the Board has decided to invest in a new modern, events facility for year-round use that will meet the needs of members throughout the Shows of the future.

We are in the process of applying for planning, and timescales are subject to statutory consents, however we will keep members updated on progress. Further details will be available online later in the year and at the Show.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy the temporary facility that will be available for your use at this year’s Show.

DIRECTORS’ RECEPTION ............

All former Directors of RHASS are invited to join us for a gathering in the Board Room in Ingliston House at 4.30pm on Thursday 21 June 2018.

PRESIDENTIAL AREA – LOTHIANS

In the last issue of Society, we introduced the 2018 Presidential area, and the team have been busy preparing for this year’s Show. Jobfarm, the Presidential Initiative for 2018, has an exciting development. From interviewing and filming young people already employed in the sector, it emerged that work experience is the biggest influence on the decision to work in agriculture. Hence Jobfarm is developing a unique directory of farmers and related employers in the Lothians who are offering work experience to anyone over 16 years old for up to two weeks. Jobfarm is grateful for the enthusiasm and participation of employers who have made this unique concept possible. Jobfarm is also making a film collage of young people talking about their work as well as a website with information about jobs and careers in agricultural industries, all supported by a social media campaign. Jobfarm is scheduled to go live at the end of April and its tent at the Show will have career information and advisers on hand.
The purpose of RHASS is to support and encourage the best of agriculture, communicate and bring to life its value, as well as developing a great appreciation of the impact of agriculture on everyday life. We achieve this through our work with our members and stakeholders.

To download the complete Annual Review 2017 in PDF format, find the link on our website homepage: www.rhass.org.uk
RECOMMITTED TO THE FUTURE

Building on last year’s work, significant infrastructure investment continued in both the Showground and the Royal Highland Centre.

The aim of this investment is to create enabling finance, ensuring RHASS remains a sustainable organisation capable of delivering its charitable aims over many years to come.

INCOME FROM RHASS LAND ASSETS, MEMBERSHIP AND INVESTMENTS.
£1.98M

INCOME FROM THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW IN 2017.
£4.45M

INCOME FROM ROYAL HIGHLAND CENTRE LTD EVENTS.
£1.6M

TOTAL INCOME: £8.03M

CHARITABLE REMIT
INVESTMENT IN OUR CORE FUNCTIONS OF PROMOTING FOOD, FARMING AND RURAL LIFE.

INVESTED IN THE SHOWGROUND
MAKING SURE OUR GREATEST ASSET REMAINS A SAFE AND WELCOMING PLACE FOR VISITORS.

REINVESTED IN THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW
INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO ENSURE THE EVENT REMAINS A SHOWCASE FOR SCOTLAND.

INVESTED IN EDUCATION AND GRANTS
FUNDS RHET TO DELIVER LEARNING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND GRANTS FOR WORTHWHILE PROJECTS.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE: £8.27M
SHOW SPONSORSHIP
As a grant making institution, RHASS must seek to ensure that it has the necessary funding. A key source of income is generated by the Royal Highland Show. In 2017, we raised a record £455,000 in sponsorship in addition to Gift in Kind support estimated at £65,000.

The Show has built a hugely successful sponsorship programme, with many companies and individuals continuing to sponsor the event and its varied programme for a great number of years. From livestock to show jumping, from the Clydesdales to the Cookery Theatre, the RHET Discovery Zone and much more, the Show offers sponsors an unrivalled opportunity to showcase their brand and provides a platform on which to promote their business, build customer loyalty and network with new clients over four days of the best of Scotland’s food, farming and rural life.

TOTAL SPONSORSHIP £455,000
GIFT IN KIND SUPPORT £65,000 (ESTIMATED)
55.3% RETURNING FOR AT LEAST A 3RD YEAR
MORE THAN 10% OF 2017 SPONSORS HAVE SUPPORTED FOR OVER 5 YEARS
1 IN 10 SPONSORS HAVE SUPPORTED FOR OVER 5 YEARS, RBS HAS BEEN A PARTNER OF THE RHS FOR 37 YEARS (SINCE 1981)

GRANTS AWARDED
The Society’s investments are managed to ensure there are sufficient funds to support innovation and excellence. During the 2016-17 year, awards of £193,125 were awarded. A breakdown is outlined below. An additional £166,137 in prize money was presented at the Royal Highland Show.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>£ / 2017</th>
<th>£ / 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal Highland Education Trust 150,656*</td>
<td>241,113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Highland Education Trust – Countryside Initiatives</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>7,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANTRA</td>
<td>2,042</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuffield Scholarship</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman’s Award</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow and Edinburgh Veterinary Schools</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Achievement Medals</td>
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<td>2,278</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>£ / 2017</th>
<th>£ / 2016</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moredun</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CULTURE &amp; CITIZENSHIP</th>
<th>£ / 2017</th>
<th>£ / 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RSABI</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant to attend RASC Next Generation Mission in South Africa</td>
<td>2,538</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bursary to attend Commonwealth Agricultural Conference, Singapore</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxford Farming Conference</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Farriery Teams</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long Service Certificates and Ploughing Medals</td>
<td>6,325</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scottish Shearing Circuit Committee</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1,250</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>193,125</td>
<td>292,094</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This reduction is a result of a number of one-off payments in 2016
2017 FACTS & FIGURES

190,028

RECORD NUMBERS OF VISITORS FOR THE FOURTH YEAR RUNNING

+6%

+ 6% TICKETS ON LAST YEAR WITH 56% BOUGHT IN ADVANCE

28,982

OVER 28,982 CHILDREN ATTENDED FOR FREE

£8M

£8M INVESTED IN SHOPPING AT THE EVENT

2,000

SHEEP

1,100

CATTLE

408

HEAVY HORSES
It can be a challenge to keep up to date with all the legislation regarding land management, so RHASS has spoken to Gillian Bruce, NetRegs manager, SEPA to find out about recent changes.

Landowners take deep pride in and put huge amounts of hard work into, the management of their land, understanding its role in the landscape, the environment and the sustainability of the land for future generations. However, it is important to ensure that your management practices are in line with current environmental legislation. There have been a number of recent amendments affecting General Binding Rules that land owners need to know.

**Oil storage**

The storage of oil is now covered by GBRs 26, 27 and 28. If the container is less than 200 litres in capacity, it must be a strong container that won’t leak or burst. Larger oil storage tanks must have secondary containment, either in the form of integral bunding, or a constructed bund. Fittings and pipework must be located and operated correctly.

**Application of pesticides**

New rules have been introduced with regards to the application of herbicides for the control of invasive non-native plant species on land near watercourses. New GBR 23 allows the treatment of these plants on land without the need for a licence or registration.

**Riverbank protection**

A welcome change has been made to using trees, parts of trees or stones as riverbank protection - this is now carried out under the conditions of GBR 25 and does not necessarily require prior permission from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

This list gives a brief indication of the range and detail in the legislation which you need to be aware of. Additional consent may be required from other authorities, such as planning permission or permission associated with conservation areas or protected species.

What must be remembered is that there are always practical and environmentally sustainable solutions when it comes to managing your land effectively and efficiently. There’s a lot of help and support available and I urge landowners to utilise it.

Ensure that your business is compliant with environmental regulations and keep up to date with changes in legislation with NetRegs. NetRegs is a partnership between the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) in Northern Ireland and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) in Scotland, providing free environmental guidance to SMEs across the country.

For more information, please visit: www.netregs.org.uk
There is evidence of cheese production in Northern Europe from 8,000 years ago! 19th Century Scotland would have had hundreds of farmhouse cheeses - rural octogenarians will recall their granny making cheese! Cheese-making had been in terminal decline until a few determined descendants, plus new kids on the block, kick-started artisan cheese-making again. As a lover of farmhouse cheese, founding the Scottish Cheese Trail was inevitable! No two cheeses are ever the same and when you start exploring it is a fascinating subject.
Recent press has highlighted the interest in our cheeses as far afield as France and USA and although cheesemakers’ skills are referred to, they rarely mention the breed and feed used, fundamental to cheese production. Cheese depends on a number of variables affecting milk quality: the animal - sheep/goat/cow; the breed - Jersey/Friesian/Ayrshire; the terroir - hill grazing/valleys/meadows, and the feed – grass/grain/silage. Next, the skills of the cheesemaker: handling milk; creating curds; forming cheeses and maturing them. Cheese-making is no easy gig – you need to be fit, dedicated, patient and fastidious – but the end results can be amazing!

Both RHASS Director John Sinclair of Craigie’s and I have judged the World Cheese Awards and gained fascinating insights on how to evaluate cheese: scents of silage v. hay; spiced varieties; maturity and moisture content…. A heady evaluation of aromas and flavours!

Scotland has wonderful cheeses from the stormy Isle of Lewis to the lush pastures of Dumfries and Galloway. On Mull, the cows need to be hardy and their diet is supplemented with local distillery draff, giving a dance to their step and a zing to their cheese! The clover rich pastures of the Moray Firth are home to Connage, and Royal Deeside to Cambus O’May. St Andrews Farmhouse Cheese Company is Fife’s cheesemaker, and Yester’s creamy range puts East Lothian on the cheese map.

Lanarkshire is home to Errington and Ayrshire and Arran have fertile pastures perfect for Ayrshire cows. More enthusiasts are starting out on the cheesy road and if you fancy a go, West Highland Dairy runs excellent courses for aspiring professionals and happy amateurs!

Yes our cheeses can travel the world but it is important to differentiate why a particular cheese is better or different – our Scottish soil and the breeds we use, how we feed them - all affect the taste and quality and give us our unique place on the world stage.

At Scotland’s Larder Live! Cookery Theatre there will be an inspiring team of chefs on stage who support our Nation’s cheese including…Neil Forbes, Tom Lewis, David Haetzman, Graeme Pallister, Paul Newman, Chris Rowley, Ian Campbell, AliBob, Wendy Barrie and many more!

Scotland’s foodie, Wendy Barrie [w.wendybarrie.co.uk](http://www.wendybarrie.co.uk) is a highly respected campaigner for local sustainable food, popular cookery show presenter and food writer. Founder & Director of award-winning [www.scottishfoodguide.scot](http://www.scottishfoodguide.scot) & [www.scottishcheesetrail.com](http://www.scottishcheesetrail.com)

Wendy is Leader in Scotland for Slow Food Ark of Taste & Slow Food Chef Alliance Member.
The ‘face’ of the 2018 Royal Highland Show is the Blackface Sheep. We visit the farm where the champion blackface was bred to talk to the family about the importance of the breed to Scottish agriculture.

As we approach the Show in June, you will notice images of Emily the Blackface Sheep featuring on billboards, trams and even TV. This is an iconic breed to Scotland, suited to his often-challenging landscape, and a favourite of many Scottish farmers.

One particular member of RHASS who is a Blackface enthusiast and the owner of the animal being used in the Royal Highland Show promotion is Malcolm Coubrough.

Malcolm farms with his father at Hartside Farm, near Biggar and Whelphill Farm, Crawford, both in Lanarkshire. Whelphill has been in the family for 3 generations and is a 3,500-acre hill farm supporting 1,100 Blackface ewes. Hartside, which is around 10 miles away, was purchased 30 years ago and is around 2,000 acres. It is a beef and sheep unit, with 680 Blackface ewes, 350 Blackface x Bluefaced Leicesters, 50 pure-bred Texel ewes and a 90-head Limousin cross beef suckler herd.

Employees, Gordon McDougal and Ross Henderson work with Malcolm to manage the stock.

“We’ve always shown the sheep at local shows, but around 5 years ago I decided to tackle the Highland,” says Malcolm. “I like to challenge myself and it really is the shop window within our industry. I see it as a premium event to promote our breed, and felt our flock now had the quality to compete at the Show. We won the Overall Sheep Champion at Lesmahagow Show last year with Emily and really feel she demonstrates the best of the breed. We had fierce competition at the Highland, but she managed to win the breed title.

“The Blackface breed is all about character. A well-balanced animal with plenty of size, a good body and displaying a lot of character in the head. It is bred to survive the brutality that the Scottish Highlands can throw at it, so its needs to have the qualities and temperament to get through the harshest environments. Much of the Scottish landscape has been shaped by native breeds, such as the Blackface sheep, which have grazed the geography of Scotland for centuries. We owe a lot to these breeds for the beauty that we see. They have also provided an income for generations of...
farmers who have relied on the hardiness of these breeds to generate a living – which has been vital for the economy of rural Scotland. This applies to our farms – where nature dictates what you can farm - and it is down to us to make that work for our business.

“We have focussed on genetics and have used AI for almost 10 years. It allows you to get more sheep in lamb to better first choice rams and breed a flock that will thrive on our hills. We joined a syndicate last year with Ramseys at Milnmark, and Findlays at Blackcraig to buy a tup at Lanark, which was attracting huge interest. The ram, from the Easter Harpew flock, is full of character with size and has a real presence about him. He cost us £55,000 but a worthwhile investment to improve the flock. We purchased him last October, and his first lambs are due in April.

“As hill farmers we don't have scope to increase numbers, it's a very low input system and our stocking rates are set by nature. We need to look at ways to improve our product for market, and breeding plays an important role in that.

“It also gives us an opportunity to sell genetics. As we have improved the characteristics of our Blackies, we have seen demand increase. We mainly sell at Lanark, Stirling and Dalmally and sold 30 tups last year with a top price of £10,000.

“For the sale and the shows, its important we have the flock in good condition and I feel we have made significant improvements over the years. With the attention to breeding we now have a stronger flock that is more productive, which is absolutely necessary for the future of our farm. We improved nutrition by getting the mineral balance correct and that has evident in the improved fertility we have seen. By scanning we can manage lambing better, the singles stay on the hill and have access to energy buckets and the ewes carrying twins are brought down from the hill in February and fed a 18% protein ewe roll for additional nutrition. This means they are in much better condition to lamb and produce milk for the lambs.

“It's great to see the flock improve, and the hard work pay off and it's a real bonus, for my family and our staff, to win at the Shows. This year, we hope to continue our success. My wife Audrey, daughter, Emily (11) and son Charlie (9) will all be back at Ingliston in June to attempt a consecutive win.”

The Blackface breed is all about character. A well-balanced animal with plenty of size, a good body and displaying a lot of character in the head.
Back in March of this year, we launched our first Corporate Supporters’ Scheme for RHET. Many individuals and companies have already supported us in the 20 years since RHET was established to bring Scotland’s farming and countryside to our country’s children in the classroom. To those who have provided valuable time and financial support, thank you for your generosity and your belief in what we do.

The work of RHET is unique. There is no other charitable organisation quite like it in the UK, with twelve Countryside Initiatives (including RNCI in the North East) offering FREE visits to working farms and rural businesses for primary and secondary school pupils, as well as classroom visits, across the length and breadth of Scotland. We are the envy of many people we meet from Europe and beyond at farming conferences and events, and the results speak for themselves; over 6,000 children have joined a Food and Farming visit in 2017 with a further 12,000 visiting a working farm. Over 1,500 schools have hosted a classroom visit by a local farmer and over 700 teachers have attended our training sessions. In 2017, we hosted 7,000 children during the Royal Highland Show. In all of this we pay tribute to our volunteers who give time valued at £1.2m to the Trust each year and without whose tireless support we could not deliver this excellent work.

Demand for our services have never been so high. Unfortunately, we cannot respond to every approach from schools asking us to host a visit for their pupils, many of whom may never have seen a newborn lamb or climbed up on a tractor. Some don’t know where their food comes from or how it is grown. We are determined to do all we can to change this for every child in Scotland – but we need your help to do it.

You may be one of those lucky folk who grew up on the land or visited a farm when young, but for many children this is unknown. RHET has provided the opportunity for Scotland’s youngsters to learn about their farming heritage for almost 20 years. Today, our work has never been more important as we face challenges to health and well-being, to say nothing of the challenges facing our farming industry as it looks to the future. RHET is engaging with the next generation of food consumers and family cooks as well as the next generation of the rural industry workforce, from farming to food and business. If these industries are to survive and thrive, we must educate our children and showcase the opportunities available to them.

WHY ARE WE ASKING YOU NOW?
RHASS has provided significant financial support to RHET for the last 20 years to support core activities and help ensure it is able to deliver its mission. While this support will continue, it is important that RHET can build a stable and sustainable future with its own resources, so that we can continue to support the work of our Countryside Initiatives across Scotland. To do this, we are asking businesses and organisations like yours to become the inaugural supporters of this new membership scheme.

WE ARE INVITING ORGANISATIONS TO PURCHASE CORPORATE SUBSCRIPTIONS AT A COST OF £1,000
Every gift of £1,000 will enable:
• over 120 young people to visit a farm,
• 300 pupils to receive a classroom talk
• and contribute to the training of over 30 teachers

You may join the Corporate Supporter Scheme from 1 March online by making a payment of £1,000 to RHET (Royal Bank of Scotland, Sort Code: 83-28-37 Account number: 00141330) Direct debit is also available.

IN RETURN FOR YOUR SUPPORT, YOU WILL RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING:
• Acknowledgement of your company or business as a Corporate Supporter on the RHET website
• Name acknowledgement on the Supporter Wall at the Royal Highland Show
• Support for your organisation on social media @theRHET (+30,000 followers)
• Annual/bi-annual RHET newsletter

RHET relies on public and private sector support to deliver unique learning opportunities to Scotland’s young people. In this, the Year of Young People, I warmly invite you to become a RHET Corporate Supporter and help us to achieve our aims.

If you would like to know more about the valuable opportunities RHET can offer your organisation for partnership and stakeholder engagement, please contact Katrina Barclay, RHET Manager

CALL: 0131 335 6227
Teacher Training

RHET continue to offer training to teachers and high school pupils across Scotland covering all aspects of food production. So far this year, we have delivered 8 sessions and engaged 40 teachers and 282 pupils.

To ensure existing schools/teachers continue to see the relevance of RHET’s services and to highlight to new teachers the role of RHET in the curriculum, a new document will be available shortly covering all of the links we have to science, technology, engineering and maths.

Work is ongoing to develop a range of new cartoon strips to demonstrate how the industry works. If you would be interested in featuring in one of these please get in touch at training@rhet.org.uk

Half Marathon

A team of staff members from RHASS are doing their bit by training for and running in the Edinburgh half marathon in support of RHET!

Members of the RHET Central Team will be accompanied by RHASS staff members.

Team RHASS are no elite athletes, but they are passionate about supporting the work of RHET and are hoping that their fundraising helps contribute to the longevity of RHET.

The runners will aim to training at lunchtimes - together where possible - and share trainer tips and log their training runs. Your support would be a great help and boost of confidence to keep the team focused and to support RHET to continue to provide visits to the working countryside for many years to come.

Support Team RHASS on their JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/team-rhass

Other Ways to Help

There are several ways in which you or your business can help support the work of RHET. Our work has the core support of RHASS, but without the help of individuals and businesses we would not be able to provide many of our services for free to schools across Scotland.

1. **Sign up to become a Supporter of RHET.**
   An annual contribution of £25/£50/£100 will contribute to delivering experiential learning opportunities to young people, including visits to working farms, estate days and helping with expensive transport costs.

2. **Just like Team RHASS, you can fundraise** for RHET via the online giving platform JustGiving. This is very simple to set up, and all the online payments and Gift Aid are handled and processed by the platform.

3. **Volunteer with us!** There are many aspects of RHET that require the support of volunteers to deliver our charitable aims and objectives. Volunteers are needed for food and farming days, during our education programme at the Royal Highland Show and for a host of other events.

To learn more about how to help us and our work, visit www.rhet.org.uk/how-to-help/
RHET at the Highland Show

We are gearing up for another action-packed, engaging programme of activities for both school groups and the general public over the 4 days of the Show.

From the feedback we receive, our hands on sessions on food and farming make the RHET Centre a destination for many visitors to the Show, where hours can be lost in a plume of flour or steam from our busy baking and cookery areas. We are delighted to have continued support and sponsorship from QMS for the incredibly popular children’s Cookery Theatre where we showcase quality Scottish produce and how to create some mouthwatering dishes.

As well as food and farming activities, we will be running a fabulous raffle with amazing prizes to give away. Come along and see for yourself displays of our work, meet our volunteers who work tirelessly over the year and during the Show, sharing their passion for the industry. Join the Tram trail and explore the showground hunting for clues to be solved to enter the competition to win a prize or how about discovering more about the career pathways available in the agricultural sector? This and so much more will be taking place during the 4 days.

Keep an eye on our social media platforms and website for more information. We look forward to welcoming you at the RHET Discovery Centre in June.

Farming Festival Day in Ayrshire

RHET Ayrshire & Arran Countryside Initiative (AACI) organised a joint Farming Festival Day with the education team at Dumfries House.

Approximately 400 pupils from Ayrshire were able to visit over 20 different activity providers from Clydesdale horses and vintage tractors to spinning wool and farrier demonstrations.

RHET AACI worked closely with Jenni Henderson and the rest of the education team at Dumfries House to organise what was a terrific day for the school children. We hope to hold more events at Dumfries House educational Farm with exceptional facilities and resources.

AACI would like to thank Jenni Henderson, Susan MacDonald and everyone involved at Dumfries House for their help, support in making this event possible.

RNCI

RHET’s partner charity in the North-East, the Royal Northern Countryside Initiative, has been fortunate enough to secure funding for two new smoothie bikes which will pedal their way round the local farmer’s markets.

Thanks is offered to the Aberdeen International Airport team for these. Along with this, RNCI are continually working to improve their teaching resources and to offer a greater variety of services.

In addition, the RNCI has launched a new fundraising and awareness campaign, producing a first of its kind hair on hide kilt. This will be raffled, both online and at events. Launched at the Spring Show, tickets are already selling well. Visit their website to find out more: www.rnci.co.uk
Perth & Kinross

Building on the success of last year’s event, RHET Perth & Kinross hosted another comedy night fundraiser this year.

Comedy writing legend Phil Differ headlined the event, supported by comedians Graham Mackie, Jamie MacDonald and Jim Smith – a previous chairman of RHET Perth & Kinross and well known across Scotland for his rural humour.

The comedy night was again a huge success, raising over £4,000 for the area to help get children out onto farms to learn about where their food comes from.

Borders

Late last year, RHET Scottish Borders held a fundraising ‘Pig Racing’ night in Kelso Rugby Club.

The cuddly, pink, battery powered pigs squeaked and snuffled their way along the race track in front of a crowd of supporters on the night. Pig betting, delicious homemade stovies and a raffle helped to generate just over £2,000 for the Borders region.

This event was also used to launch the Scottish Borders Cook Book. Recipes for the book were collected back in March last year when a tractor tour visited all of the primary schools in the region.

In addition, celebrity chefs Ally McGrath, Sue Lawrence and Lady Claire MacDonald have contributed their own tasty recipes! Sales are going well with the book being stocked throughout the region. If you would like to request a copy, please email borders@rhet.org.uk.

Forth Valley

A fantastic unique 5km family fun run will take place in June to fundraise for RHET Forth Valley.

The route is fairly flat, traffic-free and goes past many of the animals at the Blairdrummond Safari Park before running along the banks of the river Teith.

The event starts and finishes at Briarlands Farm and all entrants and spectators gain free entry to the funyard after the event. This is truly a fun-filled, family evening out, with competitive runners still free to aim for a fast 5km time if they so wish.

A £6 registration fee is all that’s needed to participate, and all money raised will go towards educating children living in Stirling, Clackmannan and Falkirk areas on where their food comes from and how it is produced.

To get your tickets, search for ‘RHET Run 2018’ on Facebook or eventbrite.co.uk.
Edinburgh has an international reputation for its vibrant festival scene. To visitors and locals alike, Edinburgh is synonymous with the Fringe, a festival of comedy, drama and dance that takes place across the whole city in August. The Fringe Festival draws in huge crowds every year, with 2,696,884 show tickets sold last year.

The Fringe isn’t the only event that causes a mass influx to Edinburgh during the summer. Several festivals and attractions, including Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh Book Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival, the Royal Military Tattoo and Edinburgh Mela, which together with the Fringe draw in almost half a million visitors annually. It’s estimated that approximately 250,000 people gather to watch the spectacular fireworks display at Edinburgh Castle at the end of August, which signifies the end of the festival season.

This trend is not just confined to Edinburgh. Across the UK, event-mania is spreading. Increasingly, people in general, and millennials in particular are seeking out unique experiences. There are many theories as to why, one being that as millennials have less disposable income than previous generations, they are looking to spend what spare money they do have on life-enhancing experiences rather than expensive ‘stuff’.

As a result, people are more inclined to seek out the right events and travel further to reach them. For event-dense locations like Edinburgh, the result has been an increased demand for accommodation. Although this is great for the tourism sector, the city’s accommodation portfolio doesn’t necessarily hit the mark for every visitor. With the festival season lasting over a month, those staying long-term, amongst them festival performers, tend to seek out apartment rentals, whilst shorter-stay visitors tend to look for hotels. Unfortunately, these options can rarely be described as budget-friendly, nor do they meet the desired ‘festival-feel’ that many event-goers are looking for.

For many, festivals and camping go hand in hand. At RHC, Camping Ninja has created Edinburgh Festival Camping, which provides adventure-seekers with a wallet-friendly authentic festival experience when visiting Edinburgh during August.

In the past, event-goers have been put off camping by the prospect of horror-story showers, growling stomachs and the nightmare-inducing low battery notification. Of course, things have now moved on. To remain competitive, camping venues must be able to demonstrate to consumers that they can offer comfort as well as excitement. For example, visitors to the Camping Ninja site in August know that they will have access to free showers, a well-stocked on-site shop and free charging facilities, as well as a café/bar, free sporting equipment and the option to rent pre-pitched tents – ideal if you don’t fancy the idea of lugging a heavy tent around.

Camping Ninja also offers a cost-effective option for cash-strapped festival performers who are lucky to break even after a self-funded month at the Fringe – they offer an extremely competitive performers’ discount, and even have their very own Fringe venue on-site.

Our ability to respond to the latest demands in the events industry is something we’re proud of, and part of what we feel makes RHC the venue of choice for event organisers and guests alike.

Furthermore the money generated by RHC helps to support RHASS’ charitable remit and create a sustainable charity for the future.
### JUNE
- 1 & 2: Crafting Live Scotland!
- 1-3: Gardening Scotland
- 21-24: The Royal Highland Show

### JULY
- 6 & 7: ScotFest
- 15: The Scottish Car Show
- 17: The Scottish Horse Show
- 17, 25 & 31: Young Drivers
- 18-20: British Showjumping
- 21-22: MCN Scottish Festival

### AUGUST
- 3-31: Camping Ninja
- 4 & 5: Truckfest
- 9-12: The Monster
- 14 & 16: Young Drivers
- 18: Hacienda Classical
- 25 & 26: Scottish Kennel Club
- 31: Scottish Pet Show

### SEPTEMBER
- 1 & 2: Scottish Pet Show
- 1&2: Young Drivers
- 6: FutureScape Scotland
- 8 & 9: CleanFest
- Sep 21 - Oct 18: Sea Monsters
- 22: Pretty Muddy
As RHASS continues to strengthen the skills of the management team, we visit Jo Andrews, the newly appointed Fundraising & Partnerships Manager, and Marie Livingstone, Society Secretary, to find out what they will be doing for members.

**WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE JOINING RHASS?**

I started my career in the international division of Midland Bank, working in London, Brussels and Tokyo. After my children were born I took some time out and in 1997 joined UNICEF to manage corporate partnerships with British Airways and Starwood Hotels, a role which gave me the opportunity to travel to many beautiful but still developing countries to see UNICEF’s work with children - an amazing time in my career.

**WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE ROLE?**

The idea of working with rural interests and the Food and Farming industry was very appealing. I had already decided to move to Scotland and this role combined my love of the countryside, my passion for good and well sourced food and my interest in Scotland as a food and visitor destination.

**TELL US WHAT YOUR JOB ENTAILS?**

Right now, I am busy with sponsorship of the 2018 Show. We are very fortunate that many of the Show’s sponsors have been with us for a long time and we really value their support. It’s great to see new companies approaching us too – a testament to the high regard in which the RHS is held in Scotland and more widely. I am also helping RHET to develop new fundraising channels. After June I will be devoting more time to fundraising for many charitable and members’ priorities at RHASS. One thing is for certain - every day is interesting, different and busy!

**WHY IS YOUR ROLE IMPORTANT TO RHASS?**

RHASS plays a huge role in promoting and safeguarding Scotland’s rural life, its people, its industry and its future. In this, the year of Young People, we have a particular focus on the younger generation and sustainability – but without the financial support of sponsor partners and members RHASS cannot continue its work – that’s where my role comes in. If I can show supporters how they, and RHASS, can make a difference by working together the legacy of this beautiful and rich farming life can be ensured for the next generation.

**WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU MOST ABOUT THE CHARITY?**

The sheer range of opportunities available to the younger generation and to potential supporters without a doubt.

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ACHIEVING IN YOUR ROLE?**

A successful 2018 Show and a whole new range of opportunities for members and business, agri and non-agri, to partner with and support this amazing organisation.

**WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE FOR MEMBERS TO GET INVOLVED?**

Members are our life blood and the backbone of RHASS. They provide important support in lots of ways as they understand the traditions and raison d’être of the Society. For this reason, they are key to our future – we welcome financial support, of course, and we encourage members to get involved with the Society and by offering us their knowledge and passion for Scotland’s rural life.
“One of the Society’s key strengths is in its membership and the wide and diverse representation of views from all over Scotland.”

WHAT DID YOU DO BEFORE JOINING RHASS?
I was at Barnardo’s, the UK’s largest Children’s charity, for eleven years; the last three as Company Secretary.

WHAT ATTRACTION YOU TO THE ROLE?
The opportunity to make a real difference in an organisation already doing great work and with the potential to do even more. I am really excited by the ambition that is evident in the Society. The Society is unique and I was really attracted to that. Moving home to Scotland after nearly twenty years in London was a bonus!

TELL US WHAT YOUR JOB ENTAILS?
My job covers a wide remit including working with the Board of Directors and Members on the governance of the Society; leading the Membership Team to ensure that our Members are properly supported and receive a good service from their Society; advising on legal matters including data protection and being an active member of the senior management team. It’s hugely varied and there is no typical day.

WHY IS YOUR ROLE IMPORTANT TO RHASS?
One of the Society’s key strengths is in its membership and the wide and diverse representation of views from all over Scotland (and beyond). It’s really important that we support our members and respond promptly and quickly to any concerns. The Society Secretary is also responsible for working closely with the Board to ensure that Directors have all the information they need to lead the charity. And as the Society grows and moves forward with its ambitious remit, it is critical that we have the right policies and procedures in place to ensure we meet our legal and regulatory requirements.

WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU MOST ABOUT THE CHARITY?
Finding out we had a tuck shop!

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ACHIEVING IN YOUR ROLE?
Two things: working with the Board of Directors to get the right governance structures in place to support the Society as it moves forward and developing what we offer to our members, who are the backbone of our Society.

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON JUST NOW?
Having just had some key administrative changes to the Bye-Laws approved by our Members at the Annual General Meeting, I’m now turning my attention to updating our policies and procedures around data protection ahead of a major legislative change at the end of May. I’m also getting ready for my first Show and breaking in some comfortable shoes!
TAKING THE LEAD

We talk to David Lawrie, the newly appointed Chairman of the SAYFC, and 3rd generation dairy farmer, to find out his plans for the year ahead.

Having been in SAYFC for over 14 years, and worked his way up through the ranks, David Lawrie understands the benefits and strength of the organisation. And with such experience he is eager to continue in the success of previous generations and introduce the organisation to a new group of people keen to be involved in rural industries in Scotland.

“We currently have over 3,500 members and the numbers continue to increase year on year. What is great to see is the diversity of people, and we now have many members that are not actively involved in farming but want to learn. I find this extremely encouraging for our industry and embrace this change – it gives us a wider audience and helps us promote our industry to the consumer.

“SAYFC offers young people opportunities that no other organisation can – from discounted training to world travel and personal development. And although we lost our Government funding in 2015, many organisations have stepped up in support – such as SP Energy and RHASS – in recognition of the importance of our programmes to young people. We are incredibly grateful for this support and will ensure we offer our young members the opportunity to improve and grow for the benefit of the industry.

“SAYFC is in its 80th year, and this year we are celebrating by giving more and more power to our membership who have a lot to offer our organisation going forward. I think this is a universal trend within our industry where companies are now seeing what an asset youth is to their business, giving more responsibility and listening more to their views. This also applies at Government level, and SAYFC are now being invited to the ‘table’ to engage with politicians and have an influence on future policy. This is an area I am very keen to focus on, particularly as we enter Brexit. We have recently carried out extensive research within our membership to get the views of young people and its important this is communicated to policy makers.

The research identified 5 key areas of policy that are especially important to young farmers and new entrants. SAYFC, as the voice of young people in rural Scotland, has formulated these key Brexit asks that we will be taking to policy makers on behalf of their members.

1. Access to markets, with emphasis on the lamb meat market.
2. Availability of finance, to encourage innovation and growth.
3. Access to land, including looking at new fiscal measures that may encourage outgoing farmers to let land to new entrants.
4. Farm business support to support new businesses in a volatile marketplace.
5. A thriving industry, so we can continue to feed the country and manage the land and environment for our next generation.

Our industry has some incredible talent, and I want to work on their behalf to give them opportunities to excel, not just for themselves, but also the industry and the Scottish economy. As we enter a new era in our industry, I feel we have the ability and drive to succeed, and I am excited to see what progress we make in coming years.

I encourage anyone to come over to speak to us at the Royal Highland Show this year, where twelve young members have been responsible for organising our event (normally the task of the management team). Nominated by council members, this group of individuals promise to give us an event with an emphasis on attracting new members and having new appeal for existing members - it’ll be great to see what they have planned.
Anyone who has come close to the mighty grace of a Clydesdale horse groomed to perfection knows something of the preparation required to exhibit at the Show.

In my role as Chief Executive, I can say that I have seen first-hand, from both sides of the fence, the dedication and passion it takes to deliver our flagship event. Just like our tireless exhibitors, months of preparation combined with decades of knowledge held in the trusted hands of longstanding staff, directors and contractors, make the Show an event like no other.

Just a few short weeks to go, the excitement mounts for what is essentially a celebration of the value we place in what we do, and what we enjoy. The Show takes 12 plus months to organise but the last few weeks are particularly special, and as the anticipation and excitement builds it’s a great time to be at the Showground.

This year we will again have the temporary Members’ Area in place. With positive feedback on last year’s structure we will replicate this for the 2018 Show and would respectfully ask members to dress accordingly for the Members’ Area and remember this is a family event, so please enjoy the Show responsibly.

I would also like to extend an invitation to the Church Service that takes place in the marquee behind Ingliston House on Sunday 24th June. Starting at 10:00, the service is a calm oasis within the Show and a chance to celebrate all that is great about our industry.

While the Show is, without doubt, a focus at this time of year, RHASS strides ahead with numerous projects including the new Moxy Hotel, the digital infrastructure project, plans for the permanent Members’ Area, and our long term development goals. We will continue to update our members on all of these activities that help support our charitable remit.

The team at RHASS has never been stronger. We strive to provide excellence across the membership and deliver sustainable funding to allow us to invest in greater successes for our industry. However, we can only succeed if we have the best people and infrastructure in place to achieve our ambitions: if you want to be involved, please do make that known!

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very successful Show, and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during a great four days in June … fingers crossed the weather plays its part.

Alan Laidlaw, Chief Executive
We’re helping Scottish agriculture to grow

We’ve been working with the Scottish agricultural industry for nearly 300 years, and we understand the challenges farmers face better than most. So if you’re looking to grow your business, we’re here to help.

Find out how we could help your business.
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