Meet this year’s Royal Highland Show icon

177th Royal Highland Show Preview
Scotland’s Larder Live! • Equestrian • Livestock • Countryside

NEW FOR 2017 - Aberdeenshire President’s Initiative
Country Living Magazine Pavilion • Scottish Bread Championships

A PERFECT MIX - Event highlights at the Royal Highland Centre
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COVER STAR: This year we’ve chosen another Scottish icon – the Clydesdale – as our hero image for the 2017 Royal Highland Show. Our Society cover star is Jennifer, bred by the esteemed Clydesdale breeder Ronnie Black of Newton of Collessie Farm in Fife.

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As spring brings new life to the country, there is a palpable sense of optimism as we approach the busiest time of the year for the hardworking rural community.

Plans are well and truly in place for the 2017 Royal Highland Show. It is shaping up to be another award-winning four days packed with the best in farming, food and rural life.

As you know, education is a key cornerstone of the Show: 30,000 children attend the event for free, while great strides are being taken as we connect future consumers with producers. It is the best way to ensure a sustainable future for our industry. RHASS and the Royal Highland Show see this as an important part of our charitable remit.

Our members are the reason RHASS exists, which is why we are looking at ways we can provide value for money for your investment in the Society. As many of you will be aware, the MacRobert Pavilion was past its best, so the Directors took the decision last year to demolish the building. With the demolition now completed and the site cleared, a new temporary structure will occupy the space for 2017. The new pop-up Members’ Area will be a quality venue for our members, with the same uninterrupted views of the Main Ring.

Last year we introduced a policy on behaviour which was well received by members, exhibitors and visitors alike. We plan to build on this for 2017 and look forward to your continued support to ensure we protect the reputation of the Society and the Show.

“The new temporary pop-up Members’ Area will be a quality venue for our members, with the same uninterrupted views of the Main Ring”

We look forward greatly to the Aberdeenshire initiative with its focus on tourism and food. This inspiring exhibition will capture the best of this beautiful part of Scotland and I commend the Presidential team for their vision and hard work in bringing this to fruition.

I hope you enjoy this pre-show edition of Society Magazine and look forward to seeing many of you in June. Let’s hope for another record-breaking four days.

Keith Brooke, Chairman
Rural life after Brexit

The Agri & Rural Affairs Committee of the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) recently held a panel session, supported by RHASS, focusing on ‘Life After Brexit’. An audience of over 80 was eager to hear thoughts and views from four industry experts on agriculture in the UK once it exits the EU, and what opportunities would be available within Scotland. Some challenging questions for the panel expanded the topic and ensured the experts were put through their paces.

The evening’s session concluded that there are both opportunities and risks to Brexit, but we all have the opportunity to take control and look at our business fundamentals now to ride the storm.

Honouring a legacy

Julie and Gunter Roskosh from New Mexico are sponsoring the female section of the Clydesdales this year. This is in memory of Paul Cooper who did more than anyone to promote the Clydesdale breed in the US. He imported only the very best, and today his legacy can still be seen in the pedigrees of horses all across North America.
A century of welcome

This year marks 100 years of the Scottish Women’s Institutes (SWI). From the first Institute started in Longniddry in 1917, there are now 731 all across Scotland with more than 16,000 members. A centenary SWI cookbook brings together recipes from members, professional chefs and celebrity chefs like Nick Nairn and Lady Claire MacDonald. As in previous years, SWI members lend their skills and knowledge to manage the Handcrafts Pavilion and competitions at the Show.

New members’ facility

Occupying the site of the former MacRobert Pavilion, a new pop-up Members’ Area at this year’s Show will take its cue from Scotland’s landscape and wildlife. A palette of heather hues and copper tones will create a contemporary, convivial and natural space for the bar and relaxation areas within the elegant structure. An entire wall of windows will provide open views for members to enjoy all the activities in the Main Ring.

Good mental health across Scotland

A newly established National Rural Mental Health Forum aims to help people in rural areas maintain good mental health and wellbeing. The Forum came out of recent research, carried out by the charity Support in Mind Scotland and Scotland’s Rural College, which highlighted the difficulties encountered in rural Scotland around mental health issues.

The Forum brings together multiple organisations from across rural Scotland, from Lerwick to Hawick and Stornoway to Galloway. Mental health organisations can find it difficult to reach those in remoter rural Scotland, while rural community organisations which have that outreach and access don’t always have the necessary mental health knowledge.

Organisations involved so far include RHASS, Forestry Commission, Samaritans, NFUS, Scottish Churches and Moray Wellbeing Hub. The new Forum brings these and other organisations together to help raise awareness and to encourage people in rural Scotland to ask for assistance.

RHASS was the proud headline sponsor of the 3rd Scottish Rural Awards which is the benchmark of excellence in Scotland’s countryside, celebrating the enterprise, skill and innovation of those who live and work in rural Scotland. Partnered by Scottish Field and the Scottish Countryside Alliance, the sell-out event took place at Dynamic Earth and the Royal Highland Education Trust sponsored the Education category.
Recent Scottish Agricultural Shows’ Forum research highlights the importance of shows of all sizes to rural communities across Scotland.

RHASS recognises the value of smaller agricultural shows throughout Scotland in promoting interest and participation in rural life. In autumn 2016, the Scottish Shows Forum sent a short questionnaire to all its members to assess the total contribution agricultural shows make to the Scottish economy. This included the number of people visiting and working at the shows and the economic benefit to Scotland. The information gained will assist lobbying the Scottish Government to support agricultural shows and support requests for funding from other organisations.

The Forum received responses from show organisers in 23 of 32 local authority areas. By far the largest proportion (41%) of shows are held in August each year. 90% of shows run for one day with only 8% lasting two, and the Royal Highland Show the only one to cover four days. Just over half (58%) of all shows indicated that, as a show organiser, they are a registered charity.

The research looked at visitor numbers at shows across the country. These ranged from up to 1,000 to in excess of 30,000 visitors each year. The data collected indicates around half-a-million people visit a Scottish agricultural show each year.

Other areas explored included the number of agricultural and trade exhibitors, the provision of bars and catering outlets at the shows, sponsorship, staffing, volunteers, and educational and school visits.
A NEW FACE FOR 2017

Last year it was Morag the Highland Cow. This year we’ve chosen another Scottish icon – the Clydesdale – as our hero image for the 2017 Royal Highland Show. Our Society cover star is Collessie Jennifer, bred by the esteemed Clydesdale breeder Ronnie Black of Newton of Collessie Farm in Fife. The young mare will appear on billboards, buses, social channels and TV the length and breadth of Scotland. Edinburgh Trams is also featuring Jennifer on a specially-created tram wrap.

Jennifer is a four generation Royal Highland Show Champion, winning the same prestigious rosette as her mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Ronnie is naturally proud that his prodigy has been chosen as the show pin-up for the 177th event. He said, “The Clydesdale is a breed of draught horse derived from the farm horses of Clydesdale which is in existence thanks to committed breeders who invest time and passion into protecting the future of this beautiful native breed. There is no better showcase to see this magnificent animal than at the Royal Highland Show.”
For four days every June, Ingliston becomes the centre of Scottish rural life. Hundreds of thousands of visitors flock to see over 6,000 of the finest farmyard animals, the largest showcase of Scotland’s best food and drink and the equestrian excellence of the country’s best riders.

The Royal Highland Show, supported since 1981 by partner The Royal Bank of Scotland, welcomed a record 189,000 visitors last year, generating £47million for the Scottish economy.

This year, the focus is on Aberdeenshire, one of the regions which hosted the Show prior to its permanent home at Ingliston. Food and tourism will be the main themes of the specially created Aberdeenshire Village.

68% of visitors voted the Show a great day out and, with free entry for children aged 15 and under, it’s great for families too. The RHET Discovery Centre runs a dedicated programme of activities to stimulate and educate the 30,000 young people who come to the Show.

The four-day event is also a valuable opportunity for farmers and producers to meet consumers and gain their valuable feedback. It all takes place in Scotland’s Larder Live with a generous helping of tastings, product launches, and cookery demos by Scotland’s top chefs.

New for 2017 is the Country Living Pavilion within the Lifestyle Village – the perfect place to find the best makers, designers and craftspersons.

Here’s to another record-breaking Royal Highland Show!
SCOTLAND’S BREAD & BUTTER

Scotland’s Larder Live is the Royal Highland Show’s very own celebration of the best of Scottish food and drink.

It’s the chance for producers to meet consumers and for visitors to find foodie favourites or taste something new. Competition is fierce in the Scottish Cheese, Butter and Ice-Cream Championships as hard, soft and artisan cheeses, butters, and ice-creams and sorbets battle it out for top spot in their categories. Demonstrations by some of Scotland’s leading chefs and bakers show how to make best use of local produce. Names include ‘The Kilted Chef’ Craig Wilson, Andrew Whitley of Bread Matters and Edinburgh’s Paul Wedgwood.

The best thing since…
The Royal Highland Show 2017 will host the inaugural Scottish Bread Championships. It’s the first time real bread has been highlighted and celebrated at the Show. Created and convened by Scotland The Bread and the Scottish Food Guide, the awards are open to all bakers, both professional and amateur. Submitted entries must meet the definition of ‘real bread’: bread made without the use of processing aids or any other artificial additives.

Judging takes place on Tuesday 20th June with awards presented during the Royal Highland Show (22nd to 25th June). Real Bread Campaign co-founder Andrew Whitley will convene the judging panel, which includes Real Bread Campaign co-ordinator Chris Young.

There are seven Championship classes which attract gold, silver and bronze awards for baking to a standard of excellence. Judges will also announce one entrant to be the overall Supreme Champion and one the Reserve Champion.

2017 Scottish Bread Championship classes:

1. Sourdough bread
2. Bread from Scottish-grown flour
3. A traditional or ancient Scottish recipe
4. A bread excelling in nutritional quality
5. A Scottish plain loaf
6. A gluten-free bread
7. Certified organic bread

“The Royal Highland Show is the home of Scotland’s biggest cheese show. As well as cheeses from nearly all of the cheese producers in Scotland, both big and small, it is a measure of how important this show is seen to be in the dairy industry that cheese is sent from throughout the UK - from Orkney to Davidstow in Cornwall, as well as from Ireland and Wales. It is a good example of how the dairy industry in Scotland has grown in diversity with all types of cheese being made. I am proud to be judging here again this year.”

Norman Ruby, Technical Sales Manager, Chr-Hansen (UK)

BERRY GOOD COFFEE
Artisan producer Berry Good presents Scotland’s first cold brew coffee liqueur at the Show this year. The newest addition to a range of small batch liqueurs, Cofaidh Liqueur (from the Gaelic for coffee) is made using freshly roasted coffee beans from local roasters. The cold brew style of production allows the beans to release more depth of flavour. Espresso martini, anyone?
A BREED APART

The numbers of horses entered each year for the Royal Highland Show eclipses every other section. It’s a fact which will be mirrored at every other agricultural show in Scotland.

Whilst the Highland also attracts a good proportion of entries from England, Ireland and Wales, the importance and significance of the equestrian industry across rural Scotland should not be lost on people. As with our cattle and sheep, Scotland is very good at breeding and producing top-class equines across the spectrum. The fact that the Highland has been, and continues to be, a testing ground for Olympic Gold Medal and Horse of the Year Show winners is something of which we should be rightfully proud.

“Scotland is very good at breeding and producing top-class equines.”

This year, our showjumping section includes established international riders, as well as those who aspire to follow in their shoes. Sunday in particular will showcase the considerable talents of the Scottish junior riders who are already committed to their sport and who wish to lift the championship crowns across the pony divisions.

Considerable focus will also be on some of our smallest and youngest riders in the Light Horse classes who will give their all to be awarded a ‘golden ticket’ as a Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) qualifier. Many of our older riders can trace their path to success back to being a small person on a cute pony in our main ring. One such person is Kirstine Douglas, a professional producer from Dumfries, who is featured with the Ridden Hunter Champion of 2016 on the cover of our Equine Schedule. There are 42 HOYS qualifiers competing this year, which is most surely a reflection of the quality and reputation of the Show in equine circles.

The innovative livestock underpass, unveiled at the 2016 Royal Highland Show, designed to resolve visitor congestion issues, has been shortlisted for a prestigious industry award.

The new structure, built as part of ongoing investments at the Royal Highland Centre, has made the final two in the coveted Infrastructure category at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Awards.

A huge hit during its inaugural Show, the underpass allows livestock to cross over the top of crowds when entering and exiting from the East side of the Main Ring, removing the historical delay for Show attendees at the livestock crossing.
HOME TURF
This is quite a year for Aberdeen-Angus cattle as The World Angus Forum returns to the breed’s UK homeland for the first time in 40 years. Forum delegates will visit some of the most noted herds in the UK and Ireland, which are today helping to further the success of the world recognised brand that is Aberdeen-Angus.

One of the main highlights of the 16-day event will be the Royal Highland Show, where exhibitors will be hoping to win the coveted Aberdeen-Angus championship. More than 150 cattle entries should prove a marvellous spectacle for visitors to the Show. International youth delegates will have the opportunity to absorb the atmosphere and excitement of the Showground and also take part in the stock-judging competition.

For more information on the World Angus Forum 2017, visit www.worldangusforum2017.com/programme

A PEDIGREE HISTORY
Sandy Watson first registered his Border Leicesters in 1958 while at Intockhouse Farm, Lanark, where he was brought up. That’s where the Intock prefix comes from. After giving up the tenancy of Morton Mains Farm, Thornhill, and retiring from farming, Sandy and his son Alex’s pedigree flock of Border Leicesters is now based at Cultiheldoch Farm, Crieff, where Alex is employed.

Sandy started out presenting his sheep at local shows, culminating at showing for the first time in 1985 at the Royal Highland Show. He and Alex have shown there every year since, winning the Border Leicester section four times since 2010.

All the tups and ewe hoggs are housed at the end of November. The potential show sheep are then selected at the beginning of April in preparation for the coming show season.

“Being champion at the RHS is the highlight of our year and gives recognition for all our hard work,” said Sandy. “It adds prestige and publicity to any breed, increasing the value of the stock when it comes to sale time. The best part of the RHS is the camaraderie among the exhibitors and meeting up with friends from over the years and being part of an event which showcases the best stock in the country.”
The Royal Highland Show welcomes £500k in sponsor support

The Royal Highland Show has raised almost £500k in sponsorship for the 2017 event, with title sponsor, The Royal Bank of Scotland, continuing to support the Show and the agricultural industry in Scotland. Here we focus on two new sponsors who have joined the many more that demonstrate their support for Scotland’s showcase for farming, food and rural life.

150 years of quality

Pollock Farm Equipment are delighted to sponsor the Ayrshire section to mark their 150th attendance as a trade stand at the Royal Highland Show.

In 1867, Andrew Pollock opened the Implement Works at Cowgatehead in Mauchline. He rapidly gained a reputation for manufacturing high quality, innovative implements.

Later generations carried on this legacy. John Pollock brought his own success to the company, selling over 1,000 of his well-known Byre Cleaning Systems in Japan. Jim McGhee joined A&W Pollock in 1967, first as an apprentice agricultural engineer, progressing to the drawing office and then salesman, making Jim the perfect candidate to take over the company, reverting to its original name of Pollock Farm Equipment in 1998, when John Pollock retired.

Sustainable support

The Royal Highland Show welcomes Scot Heat & Power this year as sponsor to the Renewables Area. Based in Uphall, Broxburn, Scot Heat & Power specialises in the supply to businesses of biomass heating systems and the provision of high quality, sustainable, renewable biofuel for heating.

The company’s association with RHASS goes back many years when Managing Director Malcolm Snowie donated the “Snowie Bridge”, which provides access from the Main Showground to the Countryside Area. Scot Heat & Power sees its association with the RHS as an important platform each year to showcase new and current technology to past, current and potential clients.

Malcolm said: “We are very pleased to be exhibiting for a sixth time at Scotland’s largest outdoor event, and particularly to be sponsoring the Renewables Area, which we see as fostering the sustainable innovations of tomorrow, while being closely aligned with our own company values. Scot Heat & Power’s continued presence at Ingliston demonstrates the strong focus that we place on our farming / agricultural and food industry related customers, and we are looking forward to making a strong contribution to an exciting and vibrant show as we aim to drive further value and efficiency in the marketplace.”

INTERESTED IN SPONSORING THE SHOW?
Contact our Fundraising and Partnerships Manager to find out more - sponsorship@rhass.org.uk
COUNTRY LIVING
AT ITS BEST

Country Living Magazine becomes part of the Royal Highland Show for the first time this year as it welcomes visitors to the CL Pavilion within the Lifestyle Village.

From the small companies featured in its magazine, Country Living has long been aware that Scotland is home to many talented makers and designers. The new Pavilion brings them together to offer an array of exquisite gifts, homeware, art, jewellery and much more. Home-grown local talent includes the Sound of Iona Tartan which takes inspiration from the colours and landscape of the spiritual Isle of Iona. Alongside them will be some of the UK’s finest independent producers and craftspeople offering unique artisan products – from hand-turned wooden pens made in Yorkshire to stunning jewellery from Dorset.

The Country Living stand also has details of its furniture ranges, small-business courses, bookazines, and Country Loving dating website.

One of the exhibitors featured in the pavilion is Can To Candle who have developed a range of high quality, eco-friendly soy wax candles which look and smell great without costing a fortune. The company mixes country rustic with modern elements as part of its packaging and design process. Upcycled paint, treacle and syrup cans, tweed and craft paper all add to the charm of the can candles.

SURROUND SOUND

There truly is something for everyone with the musical line-up for this year’s Royal Highland Show. Elvis is absolutely back in the building as he headlines on the West Stage. There are bands of all sorts – ceilidh, brass and pipe – as well as jazz, gospel, orchestras and choirs, including the Farmers and Farmers’ Wives Choir. From the Main Ring to the Members’ Area, music will be all around the Show.
President’s Initiative 2017

Historically, The Royal Highland Show travelled around eight regions in Scotland. Since finding its permanent home at Ingliston in 1960, the Show continues to celebrate this tradition with a focus on one of these eight regions. This year, it’s the turn of Aberdeenshire.
Planning for the 2017 President’s Initiative started as soon as Lord Aberdeen was appointed President, along with his Vice Presidents: Jim Brown, Neil Godsman, Sir Moir Lockhead and Alastair Macphie. Appreciating that Aberdeenshire’s farming element would be well represented throughout the Show, they quickly identified ‘Food and Tourism’ as their theme.

The 2017 President’s Initiative is bringing a flavour of Aberdeenshire to Ingliston this June to help visitors appreciate all that the region has to offer and showcase businesses involved in food and tourism.

The numbers are impressive: 300 castles, 55 golf courses, 13 distilleries, 165 miles of coast. Add to this fishing ports, mountains and beaches, as well as farming which contributes to the many food and drink businesses in the area. The President’s Initiative will capture much of this through the Aberdeenshire Village on Avenue J behind Ingliston House.

More than 30 Aberdeenshire food and drink businesses will create a pop-up farm shop for the first time ever at the Show. Look out for local specialities like Cullen Skink, butteries and skirlie, as well as new product launches. The Entier Cookery Demonstration Theatre will be host to chefs from the region’s hotels and restaurants serving up local dishes.

You’ll find well-known and less familiar names in the Distillery Tent, while the National Trust for Scotland features properties in their care in the area, such as Fyvie and Crathes Castles and Pitmedden with its farming life museum.

Golf is also important to the area and is home to Royal Aberdeen and Fraserburgh, two of the world’s ten oldest courses. Enter the putting competition on the stand for the chance to win a golfing prize in Aberdeenshire.

Antiques, arts and craft exhibitors will feature the very best of the North East. There’s the opportunity to see artists at work, as well as buy direct from them. Photographer Andy Hall launches his new book, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City – a New Perspective, with its combination of images and insight from famous locals.

The instant support for the Aberdeenshire Village vision impressed Lord Aberdeen: “What has struck me and the Vice Presidents is the enthusiasm that everyone has generated to be part of this initiative.”
From willow weaving to survival skills, find a wealth of rural talent in the Countryside Area. Rural crafts, culture and heritage are as strong as ever, as you will discover in the Countryside Area at this year’s Royal Highland Show.

Working animals, from gundogs to ferrets, will demonstrate their training in the Main Arena, accompanied by fun facts and interviews from commentator John Lamb. Huge eagles and vultures will give an impressive flying display as they soar overhead.

Fly-fishing master and mentor Andrew Toft will show how it’s done as he captures the crowds with his casting expertise. Watch Backwoods Survival School’s Patrick McGlinchey demonstrate his bushcraft and wilderness living skills and hear his stories and experiences out in the wilds.

You’ll also have the chance to get hands-on with a variety of rural activities. The Croft House exhibition includes typical home crafts and daily tasks which would have gone on in a croft house. Adults and children alike can have a go at kneading dough for bannocks, shaking cream to make butter, producing yarn from a drop spindle and peeling rushes for candle-making. There will also be an opportunity to learn some traditional waulking songs and listen to the stories surrounding them.

You can see Trevor Leat, one of the UK’s foremost creators of willow sculptures, at work on his beautifully intricate craft as he creates life-sized animals. You can try your hand too at weaving willow.

All this and more will fill the Countryside Area this June as we celebrate the very best of rural daily life. See you there!

Dogged determination

Working dogs are a mainstay of rural life. Catch these three canine events at this year’s Show:

1. THE QUACK COMMANDOS: a flock of Indian Runner ducks test the skill and speed of Border Collie sheepdogs.
2. SEALPIN' GUNDOGS: Labradors, Springers and Cocker Spaniels give an entertaining display of their gundog talents.
3. ORE COUNTRY TERRIERS: a racing demonstration with Bedlington, Border and Jack Russell Terriers.
Innovation runs in the family

Practical farming problems can lead to award-winning solutions.

Gordon Skea and son William of Angus-based ScanStone Potato Systems combine engineering knowhow with a background in farming to bring new innovations to improve how potato-farming works. With two RHASS Technical Innovation silver medals under their belt in 2012, they went on to win gold in 2015 for their open-fronted stone separator.

So where do they get their inspiration?

“Ideas come from our customers,” said William. “They tell us what they want or need and we decide if it is viable and justifiable.”

The gold-winning stone separator provides potato farmers with optimum soil conditions in the spring for planting to avoid misshapen potatoes at the growth stage. This pays off at harvest time, when the whole process is much quicker and more efficient thanks to the pre-sieved soil. The visual appeal of the potatoes is also increased for shoppers in supermarkets, making them more likely to be bought.

There is a strong after-sales aspect to the company. ScanStone customers like to fine-tune the filters and pitches of their separators, including a request for a two millimetre change in the sieving pitch to increase efficiency.

ScanStone has sold around 500 of these award-winning de-stoners to date, both in the UK – from Inverness to Cornwall – and across Europe, New Zealand, South Africa and the Middle East. Check it out for yourself at the Royal Highland Show.
Get ready for the Royal Highland Show 2017:

- Torch Keyring (Gifts)
- Diamond Quilted Gilet (Clothing)
- 1822 T-Shirt (Clothing)
- RHS Cufflinks (Gifts)
- RHS Pewter Quaich (Pewterware)
- RHS Ceramic Mug (Gifts)
- RHS Hip Flask (Pewterware)

It's packed full of great Royal Highland Show clothing and gifts - from polo shirts to cufflinks and quaichs. Enjoy shopping for all these items and more at: www.rhsstore.org
We were so pleased to hear that Members found last year’s new e-ticketing system quick and easy at the gate that we’re repeating it in 2017.

Before the Show, each Member will receive a QR-coded badge, unique to them, to scan at the gates for access to the Showground. Re-entry for Members will continue with the usual hand-stamp.

Dress to impress
All Members entering the Members’ Area are welcome to ‘dress up’ for the occasion. Gentlemen are encouraged to wear smart trousers, jacket and collared shirt, either with tie or open-neck. Smart denim jeans are acceptable, but without fades, stains, tears or frayed ends. No unduly scruffy attire is permitted.

We would be grateful if you could ensure children are also suitably attired and accompanying family members, and guests for whom you may buy guest badges, are made aware of the Royal Highland Members’ Area Dress Code.

Personnel on duty at the Members’ Area have authority to refuse admission to inappropriately dressed Members or guests.

Uniquely yours
You need to wear your coded badge at all times to access the Showground and the Members’ Area. Your badge is unique to you so you can’t give it to anyone else. All badges are cross-referenced with the Members’ database and there are regular spot checks across the four days of the Show. Please treat your badge with care before and during the Show as lost or stolen badges cannot be replaced.
ALL IN THE MIX

The Royal Highland Centre has seen its share of big name acts, among them Status Quo, Olly Murs and the legendary David Bowie. This June sees the world’s biggest girl band join that list of stars.

Little Mix are set to perform an exclusive outdoor gig at the Royal Highland Centre on Friday 30th June ahead of their UK arena tour. These Summer Shout Out live shows will feature all the band’s best-known hits, such as Shout Out to My Ex and Black Magic, as well as tracks from their new album Glory Days.

Head to www.royalhighlandcentre.co.uk/events/little-mix for details of how and where to buy tickets.
Keep on trucking

Whether a childhood fascination or a grown-up passion, trucks really capture the imagination. Truckfest Scotland, the UK’s largest truck festival, rolls into The Royal Highland Centre for the weekend on 5th and 6th August. Come along to meet Jesse McClure, star of Dave TV’s Storage Hunters, and Ice Road Truckers Lisa Kelly and Todd Dewey. Truck aficionados of all ages can check out all the latest models from major manufacturers. There’ll also be plenty of edge-of-the-seat action in the main arena from top stunt driver Terry Grant and popular monster truck Swamp Thing.

Find out more and buy tickets at www.royalhighlandcentre.co.uk

Pedal Power

Scotland’s biggest cycling event, Pedal for Scotland, returns for its 19th year on 10th September 2017. With four rides to choose from, this year’s event is accessible to every level of cyclist. The casual rider may take on the 7.5 mile Wee Jaunt in Edinburgh or the full-throttle rider can attempt the colossal 110-mile Big Belter from Glasgow to Edinburgh via the stunning Southern Uplands.

To be one of over 10,000 cyclists, sign up at http://pedalforscotland.org/.

Pretty Muddy

Things are going to get messy when Race for Life’s Pretty Muddy sets up its obstacle course at the Royal Highland Centre on Saturday 16th September. The event is open to girls over 13 and women to show cancer that hell hath no fury like a woman in pink. Choose between a 5k and a 10k course, either with a group of female friends or as a personal challenge. Scramble over an A-frame, crawl through the mud and generally have fun while raising vital funds for Cancer Research UK to beat cancer.

Find out how to take part at www.royalhighlandcentre.co.uk
NEW LOOK
RHET’s newly revamped website means it’s even easier to access the materials you need when organising farm and classroom visits. Teachers and volunteers now have their own dedicated pages outlining information and opportunities for both new and existing users.

BOOK ONLINE
Fed up of forms? Thanks to the RHET online booking system, teachers can book a farm visit or a talk from a farmer online. Simply go to the ‘Request a Farm Visit’ or ‘Request a Classroom Speaker’ pages on the RHET website to book automatically. Each page allows teachers to include details, such as class size and preferred date, and the request is then sent directly to the local Project Coordinator.

THE GOOD FOOD LEARNING RESOURCE
RHET’s new teaching resource aims to help secondary teachers educate their pupils about farming in Scotland. Working with Quality Meat Scotland, the RHET team has put together The Good Food Learning Resource to help students understand more about what they eat and where it comes from. The pack includes a ‘Seasons in Scotland’ calendar, a ‘Farming in Scotland’ poster, and a set of more than 30 fact cards for use in the classroom. Primary and secondary school teachers can download it free of charge from the RHET website or request a hard copy online.

Find out more about The Good Food Learning Resource and other fantastic RHET tools at www.rhet.org.uk/teachers/resources.
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT
Since 2009, Perth & Kinross volunteer Hugh Grierson has been organising informative and educational visits to his farm at Tibbermore. Hugh takes children on the fun and engaging journey that their food takes from farm to fridge to fork. The focus is on interacting with livestock: holding chicks and getting up close to pigs, cows and free-range hens. A recent highlight on one tour saw youngsters searching for worms in a freshly ploughed field while Hugh explained the important role of worms in organic farming. Hugh shows no sign of slowing down and is looking forward to teaching kids what really goes into their meals for many years to come.

LOTHIANS
While many people take things easy when they retire, others, like RHET Lothian Vice-chair James Wyllie, carry on working on what they enjoy. James and wife Barbara give regular class talks to children of all ages to help them learn more about food and farming. The couple also welcome school groups to their farm near Stenton to meet their sheep and lambs. Groups learn about arable farming, pick apples, plant trees and find out all the ins and outs of farming. Barbara and James are strong supporters of their local RHET committee and dedicate much of their time to raising funds to help RHET achieve its aims. No sign of retiring anytime soon then.

AYRSHIRE & ARRAN
A successful RHET volunteer needs vast amounts of experience and enthusiasm. Alistair and Lillias Love of Muirhouse Farm have both in spades. During his years as a volunteer, Alistair has welcomed hundreds of children to his farm and takes great pride in helping teach young people about the ‘Food & Farming’ journey.

Alistair is constantly impressed by how children and staff alike enjoy learning about everything involved in farming. Pupils also gain an insight to how subjects they study at school – maths, geography, natural sciences – are applied in producing the food they eat. RHET is sure this impressive couple will continue to inspire and delight school pupils for many years to come.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS
RHET’s Education Centre is currently undergoing extensive improvement works, thanks to Balfour Beatty Kilpatrick Ltd and Richmack Ltd. This includes new lighting, plumbing and joinery work, as well as power washing the outside and roof of the building.

Edinburgh-based Specialized Signs recently donated high quality signage for the outside of RHET’s Education Centre on the Royal Highland Showground. They also created a bright welcome board for the RHET office in Ingliston. Managing Director Graham Sim said, “We’re very pleased to sponsor such a great local organisation whose purpose is to bring farming, the working countryside and its practices to life for the young people of Scotland.”

“We have been very busy across the Showground, but we were more than happy to help with the refurbishment of the RHET Education Centre when we were approached about it,” said Andy Stewart, Balfour Beatty Kilpatrick Contracts Manager. “The building is one of the few permanent structures in its area of the Showground, so we recognise the importance of it being fit for purpose and ready for RHET’s education programme at the Show this year.”
RHET IN SCHOOLS
RHET provides a range of different services to schools across Scotland. While its popular farm visits and classroom speakers are well known, lots of work also takes place to help teachers and pupils understand the many aspects of farming and food production.

USE YOUR LOAF
One example involves offering young people across Scotland the opportunity to learn about ‘bread and butter’ issues as part of RHET’s Grow Your Own Loaf project - currently in its second year. RHET distributes wheat seeds to schools which pupils then plant in their school grounds. Their teachers receive training in how to supervise and educate about cultivation and bread-making. The pupils harvest their work by hand, dry it, and grind it into flour before baking bread with it. The learning continues with follow-up talks by farmers and visits to operational farms.

MORNING SHAKE-UP
We all know how important it is to start the day with a good breakfast. With that in mind, RHET started its year with the Shake Up Your Wake Up series of events across the country.

The scheme proved to be a particular success in Angus where, over the course of one week, 10 different events were held. These provided more than 550 healthy and natural Scottish farmhouse breakfasts to young people across the area. The project was so successful that it earned local radio coverage and even appeared as an STV news story.

GROW YOUR OWN
RHET recently launched its Mr Jazzy Potato Project competition to schools across Perth and Kinross. The project supplied free potato-growing kits, as well as instructions and step-by-step guidance for teachers to help their pupils learn about the story of the potato by growing their very own crop.

In cooperation with WCF Horticulture’s seed potato specialists, participating schools compete to see who can grow the best and heaviest crops, with prizes awarded to the most successful student growers at the end of the four-month long contest.

As well as being fun and informative, the programme also counts towards pupils’ progress on the Curriculum for Excellence.

“The support that we have been given from RHET has been outstanding. The children have enjoyed opportunities to take part in practical activities and have developed an excellent understanding of the different processes involved.

The trip to Glen Farm was a wonderful opportunity to see how a dairy farm works and gain understanding of the whole process of milk production. The pupils have been able to share their learning with their parents and the community. At an open event in school they let everyone try their own bread.”

Gael Campbell, Principal Teacher at Kincardine in Menteith Primary whose pupils took part in RHET’s Grown Your Own Wheat programme.

Visit the RHET website to find out more about these and other exciting projects.
FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

As a non-profit charity, RHET relies on the support of individuals and businesses to achieve its goal of creating a more food-literate society. Several of our local areas recently held fund-raising events which help to generate vital resources and help us deliver on our mission.

Perth & Kinross Countryside Initiative (PKCI) held a comedy night at the end of last year which sold out in a matter of weeks. The evening raised £4,200 for PKCI thanks to the sterling efforts of the committee and volunteers.

Dumfries & Galloway Countryside Initiative also held a sell-out event towards the end of last year. The local Farmers and Farmers’ Wives Choir provided a musical evening which raised a large amount of money for efforts in the local area. D&GCI also raised £550 at their ‘Guid Nicht Oot’ in February, which will provide a boost to their new Assistant Coordinator.

Other events recently held by RHET, or in the planning stages, include a ceilidh, a tractor day and a recipe book launch. Such events are an integral part of RHET’s funding landscape. Without them, RHET would not have the resources to do what it does best: educate young people on the importance of farming and the source of their food.

SECOND YEAR SUCCESS

The Good Food Champions programme has continued into its second year and is on course for further success.

Following a considerable reception in Aberdeenshire last year, the project will now involve schools in Glasgow and Lanarkshire, where primary and secondary teachers will take part in educational training sessions and visits.

The scheme covers subjects such as food and health, cooking and tasting, sustainability, and the overall journey from farm to plate. Teachers are then encouraged to take what they’ve learned back to their classrooms and share it in their cluster groups.

This year, the General Teaching Council for Scotland, The Rowett Institute of Nutritional Health, the Scottish Food and Drink Federation, the National Museum of Rural Life, and RHET Clyde are all participating in the programme to reinforce even further the shared learned experience. Their input also runs alongside help from RHET’s tried and tested network of local individuals and businesses.

For more information on project progress, visit the Good Food Champions blog at goodfoodchampionsblog.wordpress.com

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Host a school visit on your farm
Even once a year would make a huge difference

Visit a class in school
Props, pointers and pictures are provided if required

Sponsor a farm event
For schools in your local area (from £250 a visit)

Make a donation
Donate by texting ‘RHET17 £_’ to 70070 (fill in the gap with the amount you’d like to donate)

Donate when you shop online
Use easyfundraising to help us raise money when you shop online: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/rhetnational

Volunteer at the Royal Highland Show
For up to three hours and receive free tickets to enjoy the rest of the event

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to keep up to date with the next RHET fundraiser in your area

TheRoyalHighlandEducationTrust

@theRHET
RHASS has reported another year of impressive growth with total income in the year ending 30 November 2016 of £7.85 million, an increase of £779,000 on the previous year. This 11% rise is reflected in income generated from RHASS’s land assets, which generated £1.24 million, up 30% on 2015 figures.

The Royal Highland Show delivered a third successive year of record revenue: an increase of £284,000 raised the 2016 total to £4.35 million. Meanwhile, trading income generated by the Society’s wholly-owned subsidiary Highland Centre Ltd rose by £227,000 to bring in a new high of £1.6 million. Other key income streams, including membership subscriptions, also enjoyed a healthy growth in numbers.

Expenditure increased by £1.34 million to £7.67 million, a figure which includes the write-off of £560,000 of historical development costs. This year has also seen a significant increase in the value of Fixed Assets, with a corresponding reduction in Net Current Assets reflecting a prudent reallocation of cash reserves into the upgrading of the Royal Highland Centre site.

Reflecting on the figures, RHASS Chairman Keith Brooke said: “RHASS is in a very strong financial position with good performance across membership, Royal Highland Centre and The Royal Highland Show. This robust financial position will enable the Society to fulfil our charitable aims including delivering the award-winning Royal Highland Show.”

RHASS Chief Executive Alan Laidlaw added: “This is an exciting time as the Society forges ahead with our ambitious investment programme in the Royal Highland Centre. Our vision is to create the best outdoor event space in Scotland and we are making great strides in achieving this.

“Our vision is to create the best outdoor event space in Scotland”

We are committed to being a dynamic and progressive membership organisation playing a supportive and influential role in a thriving rural economy. Our investment in the Royal Highland Centre asset during this financial year will ensure we remain a sustainable business with an ability to generate sufficient funds to allow us to meet our charitable remit, including our significant financial support of the Royal Highland Education Trust.”
A Farming Life

Retired Scots farmer James Smith has seen lots of changes in the industry. He shares some special memories of his farming life and what keeps him young and healthy at 101.

Has farming always been in your family?
Yes, my father was a farmer. As a young man, I had planned to be a vet and my elder brother was going to do law. When my father died suddenly, our plans were shelved and, after discussion with my mother, we took over the farm, Mountainblaw in South Lanarkshire. The farm was just over 1,000 acres and we had Blackface sheep and also dairy cattle. I vividly remember my mother all those years ago making cheese from the milk.

What’s the biggest change you’ve seen in farming since you started as a young man?
Without doubt, it’s the change in the breed of Blackface sheep. They are now completely different to what they were. Another major change is the amount of rules and regulations.

What was your favourite part of the job?
The herding of the sheep. After my father died, my brother and I agreed to split the route. My brother would take the south and east part of the farm and I would take the north and west. We were out working by 7:15 every morning.

What gave you the greatest satisfaction?
I loved everything about the job, but working with the animals gave me the greatest satisfaction.

How old were you when you attended your first Royal Highland Show and what did you think about it?
I was 18 and I remember thinking it was marvellous to have everything under one roof. I still go every year.

What do you like best about the Royal Highland Show?
I like the variety of everything and I very much enjoy the showjumping but I think the Show needs to remain focused on agriculture.

What advice would you give to young people who want to go into farming?
Go with your heart and follow what interests you, whether it’s animals or crops. You also need to keep up with the times.

How do you like to spend your time?
I like listening to farming programmes on the radio and regularly read The Scottish Farmer, which has some really interesting articles. I’m fortunate to have good eyesight and can still read the small print without specs! I’m a founder member of the local Probus Club and still attend every fortnight.

What keeps you young and healthy?
I like good plain food and that keeps me healthy. I also talk a lot! I have so many friends and I always know what’s going on.
The annual Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards champion the best produce and producers from across Scotland. Many exhibit at the Royal Highland Show so come along for an authentic flavour of what’s on offer.

Two savoury treats from Mackie’s at Taypack are among those shortlisted for the Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards this year.

The much-loved Mature Cheddar & Onion potato crisps, one of the original flavours on the launch of Mackie’s in 2009, is shortlisted for the Confectionery, Drinks & Snacking award. James Taylor comments “It’s one of our most popular flavours in our UK and export markets, as well as amongst our staff! We’re also a finalist for Export Business of the Year – that’s a nice nod towards the hard work by our team involved in increasing the number of countries to a grand total of 23 across the world where you can buy Mackie’s crisps.”

We launched our crisp range at the Royal Highland Show and it’s always an important date in our calendar. We try to bring something new each year – new flavours or new products - and benefit from the chance to receive feedback from sampling at the show. This year we’ll have some new popcorn flavours and Mackie’s of Scotland will also be serving up a delicious array of hand-made ice-cream flavours –something special to try in advance of the new ice-cream parlour opening in Aberdeen this autumn.
RHASS are delighted to be partnering with Scotland Food & Drink. The growth of the food and drink industry in Scotland in recent years has been phenomenal, and that success would be near impossible without maintaining the links to agriculture which are core to the Society’s DNA. This is something we have focused on for over 200 years and will continue to do so long into the future.

Alan Laidlaw, Chief Executive, RHASS

HICKORY

Hickory has been shortlisted in the Local Sourcing category of the 2017 Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards. Started in 2012, Hickory is an East Lothian-based event catering company which has built its reputation on its commitment to Scottish, seasonal and sustainable produce.

As well as strong relationships with local producers in East Lothian, Hickory also establishes links with quality Scottish producers close to its events further afield, such Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute.

Launched in 2016, Hickory Bars will bring its Botanical Gin Bar to this year’s Royal Highland Show as a nod to the gin revolution sweeping the country. Guests can experience a range of 13 artisan Scottish gins, whose ingredients have been locally produced and ethically sourced.
Investing in our next generation

RHASS invests, both practically and financially, in Scotland’s rural future, including scholarships, awards and grants. Last year this included an award to LANTRA, a Nuffield scholarship and Academic Achievement Medals. If you’re interested in finding out about RHASS awards and grants, visit rhass.org.uk.

Stirling award

RHASS awarded its annual Academic Achievement Medal to Julien Stevens of The University of Stirling’s Institute of Aquaculture for the academic year 2015/2016. Julien graduated with an MSc in Sustainable Aquaculture with Distinction.

Sophie Brett: Oxford Farming Conference

I am a PhD Researcher at the University of Glasgow Dumfries Campus, where I am examining the value of an agricultural experience for Scottish secondary school pupils. Thanks to generous RHASS sponsorship, I had the chance to attend the Oxford Farming Conference in January this year. As a scholar delegate, I was able to attend all of the main speaker events and to network with those involved in the many different aspects of agriculture and industry. This was an invaluable experience for me, and the reception to my research was really positive and encouraging. I found the whole conference, and all of the speakers, hugely inspiring, and came away feeling enthusiastic and energised about the impact my research can have. It was thoroughly enjoyable and of immense benefit to me. Thanks so much to RHASS for the fantastic experience.
Dear Member

As we approach what will be my first year as Chief Executive at the Show, I feel a great sense of satisfaction as to what has been achieved since last year’s record-breaking four days.

Significant investment has been made in the showground – much of it is invisible to the naked eye but the positive impact on exhibitors and visitors will be very much in evidence.

Better connectivity to utilities including power and water, a newly refurbished foyer in Scotland’s Larder Live, a fully accessible changing station and a resurfaced North Car Park are just some of the improvements put in place over the last year.

The MacRobert Pavilion has now been demolished and rising from the site will be a premium-quality temporary members’ facility – it is not a permanent solution but one that will provide a better experience for members than the ageing facility that it replaces.

The might of the Royal Highland Show is significant both in terms of economic impact and importance to our rural communities – it is where reputations and connections are built and business concluded. The evidence of the Show’s influence is demonstrated each year … from food producers discovered by buyers from major multiples, to manufacturers making sales leads, to farmers taking home a RHS rosette which will secure their position in the record books.

Innovation is part of the Society’s DNA and we are always looking for ways to make the show better – this year the bread competition, the Aberdeen-Angus forum and the Aberdeenshire Village will join what is already an award-winning formula.

I am proud to be Chief Executive of the Society and the show is very much our flagship event. I used to attend the show as a boy and last year I took my newborn son on the same route my family used to take me. This year I will be out and about in the avenues, in the Cattle Hall and in the Members’ Facility. I hope to meet as many of you as possible during the four days – please do come and introduce yourself. My job is to work with you, the RHASS members.

See you at the show!

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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