

RHASS MAGAZINE

AUTUMN 2020

society

save your show

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ROYAL
HIGHLAND &
AGRICULTURAL
SOCIETY OF
SCOTLAND

As a membership organisation, it is naturally to our members that our greatest thanks go, for your continuing and steadfast support



Dear Members

As I write, I feel great sadness not to be reflecting on another successful Royal Highland Show.

When the first news of Coronavirus broke, even the most pessimistic of us would have struggled to predict what was to unfold. While we focus on its impact on the Society, the human cost reminds us of what is important. Our thoughts are with everyone affected directly by this dreadful situation.

However, the rural community is nothing if not resilient and many have had to adapt to disruption and change in their business. RHASS too, has had to adapt to the circumstances in which it finds itself.

Safeguarding the Society is the first priority. The challenges facing us have been exacerbated by the loss of income, both from our flagship event and our normal events business, HCL. We are hugely grateful to our partners Royal Bank of Scotland, but also to many exhibitors, sponsors and contractors for their support at this time. As a membership

organisation, it is naturally to our members that our greatest thanks go, for your continuing and steadfast support.

The Board and staff continue to work tirelessly to navigate these difficult times and to grasp the new opportunities which have opened up. The love for the Royal Highland Show was on full display during 'Show Week', with 'virtual' action from the Technical Innovation Awards, RHET's online Discovery Centre, the Scottish Farmer's Champions of the Decade, the Press & Journal and Courier Scottish Online Agricultural Show, QMS and SAYFC online programmes, a superb broadcast and touching tribute from BBC Landward and the many virtual kist parties that were enjoyed across the globe. The Society owes a debt of gratitude to all who contributed and tried to fill the Royal Highland Show shaped gap in our lives.

While there is still much uncertainty as to what the world will look like this time next year, we are determined to deliver a 2021 Show to be proud of; in the meantime, we look forward

to showing off our fantastic new members' pavilion as soon as we are able to welcome visitors back to Ingliston.

Beyond that we are already looking ahead to RHS 2022, when we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the first Highland Show and play host to the prestigious Golden Shears World Shearing Championships. It is with these plans firmly in our sights and our determination that the show must go on, that we have taken the decision to launch a fundraising appeal. If we are to continue protecting and promoting the industry and our rural communities, through the Show and beyond, we need your help. The support of members and donors has never been more vital than it is today.

Let's look ahead to 2021 with optimism. In the meantime, please stay safe and well.

Bill Gray, Chairman



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SCOTLAND



Jo Andrews, Fundraising
& Partnerships Manager

SAVE YOUR ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

Our principal charitable event, the Royal Highland Show has a very special place in all of our hearts. Its cancellation this year left a gaping hole and, as we grieve its loss, our dearest hopes for next year are tempered with the uncertainty facing all such events, and the ongoing financial impact of the pandemic on the Society.

Our much-loved Show will celebrate 200 years in 2022 - we must do all we can to ensure it survives.

The Royal Highland Show is the flagship in our charitable mission to protect and promote Scottish agriculture and rural communities, for everyone in Scotland. Right now, RHASS is facing a £6 million shortfall in income, a shortfall which puts the future of the Royal Highland Show and all of our charitable activities at risk, at a time when our rural communities and the industry need us most.

We have taken urgent and difficult decisions to cut costs, but this is not enough. The uncertainty around Scotland's events business continues to impact on income, while we must soon begin to invest in the preparations for the 2021 Show.

It is likely that in 2021 we will have to make some changes to the Show as we know it, but we plan to do all in our power to ensure it can go ahead, while acknowledging the certain prospect of additional costs and fewer visitors in the aftermath of the pandemic.

To help us start the preparations for the 2021 Royal Highland Show and to allow us to continue our charitable work this year, we need to raise £2 million. This equates to £125 for every one of our 16,000 membership.

We value enormously the ongoing support and loyalty of all of our members and understand that for some, a donation will not be possible at this time. Every donation, whatever the amount, is important in helping us to reach our target and if you are able to help, we would appreciate this greatly. Your support will make a real difference.

Thank you

PLEASE DONATE WHATEVER YOU CAN

rhass.org.uk/getting-involved/make-a-donation/

A donation form is also included in this magazine

CONTACT US: fundraising@rhass.org.uk

SHOW WEEK GOES ONLINE



**RHASS MARKED 'SHOW
WEEK' BY SWITCHING TO THE
VIRTUAL SPACE TO RECREATE
SOME OF THE SHOW'S MAGIC**

The 18th to 21st June would have been the four days when the Royal Highland Centre played host to Scotland's biggest celebration of food, farming and rural life – the Royal Highland Show.

Instead of enjoying the excitement of the greatest show on earth, we were confined to our homes and farms, to stop the spread of Covid-19 and to protect the NHS.

While we understood the importance of following government guidelines, it was none-the-less a sad time for those of us who build our year around 'the Highland'.

Determined not to let the week go by unnoticed, RHASS marked 'Show week' by switching to the virtual space to recreate some of the Show's magic.

Many other organisations, including RHET, SAYFC, RSABI, Scottish Farmer, QMS and others also shared online content to reflect what they too were missing from the Show: from kist parties to cookery demonstrations, quizzes and even award ceremonies, social media channels came alive with Show moments that sparked joy and genuine engagement.

It wasn't only online that went into overdrive, phones also rang off the hook with the Phone 5 initiative that encouraged each of us to call five people who we would normally have caught up with at the Show. The feedback to this simple idea in support of RSABI was overwhelming and it played an important role in connecting those of us who perhaps felt isolated or alone during this particularly difficult time of lockdown.

RHASS was also delighted to support the DC Thomson Virtual Scottish Agricultural Show initiative to reflect the year that all agri shows were shelved. Congratulations to the Press & Journal and The Courier on this hugely successful online initiative.



David Tennant



Richard Neville, Head of Newspapers
DC Thomson Media

Richard Neville, Head of Newspapers at DC Thomson Media, said, "I'm thrilled that the team at DC Thomson Media are bringing the Scottish Agricultural Show to life in Scotland, virtually.

The Courier and The Press & Journal have long been champions of local farming communities, and continue to be so throughout this difficult economic time. Partnered by the Royal Highland Show, The Scottish Agricultural Show saw the very best Scottish farmers, suppliers and manufacturers come together to showcase all of their hard work. We're pleased to be able to provide this opportunity for the Scottish agricultural community to come together."

Show Week Summary 2020



20 VIDEOS POSTED



Jackie McCreery,
Yester Farm Dairies & RHASS Director

7 DAYS OF #showmoments



#Phone5 INITIATIVE LAUNCH



Fiona Armstrong
RHASS President

THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW ONLINE STATS

FACEBOOK

(15 - 21 June)



Total Reach **121,750**

Total Engagements **24,481**

Total Video Views **79,819**

New Page Likes
(45 new likes per day) **319**

TWITTER

(15 - 21 June)



Total Impressions **73,815**

Total Engagements **2,377**

INSTAGRAM

(15 - 21 June)



Total Engagements **1,727**

Total Video Views **5,676**

DC THOMSON VIRTUAL SHOW

Golds **2**

Silver **6**

Certificates of
Commendation **5**

Combined Facebook
post reach **163,267**

Combined Facebook
engagement **5,531**

3 second video
views **13,114**

11 categories **700**

TECHNICAL INNOVATION

Social reach
in excess of **163,402**

PR reach in
excess of **231,650**

SCOTTISH FARMER CHAMPIONS OF THE DECADE

Sections of the
Show covered **37**

Votes cast **9,000**

Sir William Young Award Winners 2020

Jimmy & Willie Thomson

Father and son team Jimmy and Willie Thomson have been awarded this year's prestigious Sir William Young Award for their exceptional contribution to the world of sheep breeding.

The award recognises outstanding contribution to livestock breeding and commemorates the service to Scottish agriculture by the late Sir William Young. Last year, leading pedigree cattle and sheep breeder, Jim Goldie, was the recipient.

Based at Hownam Grange, a 1650-acre hill farm on the Roxburghe Estate which the family has tenanted since 1941, father Jimmy and son Willie have been at the top of North Country Cheviot (NCC) breeding for many years now. Willie lives at Hownam Grange with wife and farming partner Laura and their three children, while Jimmy now runs another tenanted farm at Kelsocleugh in Yetholm in partnership with wife Peggy.

Hownam Grange runs two flocks of pure North Country Cheviots, comprising of 450 NCC ewes inbye, and a flock of 800 NCC hill type ewes hefted on the hill ground. They also have a herd of 80 Blue Grey suckler cows, which are bulled with an Aberdeen Angus bull and the calves sold as stores or as breeding heifers.

They have shown Cheviots as far back as the 1950's, but only started at the Royal Highland Show after Jimmy judged at the 150th Highland Show. While they also have shown Galloway cattle, Scotch Halfbred sheep and commercial sheep, it is their North Country Cheviots they are renowned for.

Flocks from both farms have picked up championship rosettes up and down the UK. Jimmy and Willie's sustained attention to the finer points of both the Park and Hill types of the North Country Cheviot breed has seen them take not only the overall Champion at the Royal Highland Show on numerous occasions, but also the Interbreed championship four times, the reserve three times, and the Queen's Cup in 2010.

Alongside this, they have also sponsored the sheep interbreed pairs competition at the Show for three years, been awarded the John Miller Trophy, Fife and Kinross Gold Cup and more – as Jimmy says "We can't get much more from the Highland, surely!".

2019 was a fantastic year for the pair, with one ewe lamb selling for £4500, a new breed record for a female, and during the September tup sales at Lockerbie both sale days were topped with Hownam Grange tups selling at £6000 each.

Their breeding knowledge is reflected in the number of prestigious positions held by the pair, with Jimmy a past chair of NSA Scotland and Honorary President of NCC Society, while Willie is the current Past President of the NCC Society.

Their contribution to the North Country Cheviot breed has also recently been noted by the Scottish Farmer, which identified them as one of two families considered to be the very best of stockman in Scotland and shortlisted three of their sheep in the magazine's Champions of the Decade competition.

Although facing the challenge of a sale season impacted by Covid-19 restrictions, in the long term their plans are to create a future-proofed business structure for the next generation, should they wish to continue the family's successful farming legacy.

Willie commented on their win:

"The award is as big as it can get in our opinion. To be recognised and win such a prestigious award for breeding livestock is a real honour, especially since it is our passion and something which we get a good deal of pleasure from. There have been some amazing livestock producers who have won the award in the past and to be in that company is overwhelming."

While they also have shown Galloway cattle, Scotch Halfbred sheep and commercial sheep, it is their North Country Cheviots they are renowned for



L-R Bill Gray, Willie & Jimmy Thomson

QUADRANT ONE

Just a few days before lockdown was introduced in March 2020, the Society received the keys to the new Members' Pavilion and event space at the Royal Highland Showground. The Board is delighted to report that construction of the pavilion was completed on time and within budget.

It is hugely disappointing that due to the cancellation of this year's RHS and ongoing social distancing measures, the Society is unable to share this beautiful new building with you as planned. Plans are however in hand to do so as soon as possible and when guidance allows.

The new space offers members a spacious, contemporary and friendly environment in which to gather and meet old friends, to enjoy a glass of beer and to take in the spectacular views of the Main Ring. The facilities for members' dining and relaxation at the Show, and for family and commercial events and conferences year-round, are superb. Boasting flexible event conference space, with the latest acoustic technology, a state-of-the-art kitchen and covered outdoor terrace on all sides, the building is the new beating heart of the Showground.

Since the Quadrant One capital campaign launched in 2019, the generous support of our members and others for the new pavilion, has been hugely appreciated by RHASS.

The Society would like to thank all those who have given their support to help us reach our campaign target

The support received so far puts the Society almost half way to reaching its Quadrant One target of £1.5 million and there are some exciting opportunities remaining for our supporters, in recognition of their involvement in this hugely impressive development at the Royal Highland Showground.

RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES

Gifts of £100 and above are recognised in Society. Gifts of £1000 and over will also be acknowledged online.

GIFTS OF £5000

There are a limited number of opportunities for individuals, families, businesses and organisations to have their support recognised by brass inscription on the cedar wood cladding of the fin wall, at the east of the pavilion's outdoor terrace. At the time of writing, there are approximately 50 spaces remaining, offering fifty lucky folk the chance to support the pavilion, and be a part of the memories that will be created there, for years to come.

PRINCIPAL DONOR BOARD

Major Donors to the campaign will be recognised inside the pavilion in accordance with their contribution. Individual naming opportunities are also available on request.

SOCIETY BENEFACTOR

For individuals or families who wish to support the Society with a significant personal gift, in recognition of their long association with RHASS or as a legacy of a successful and long-established family business, we would be delighted to discuss opportunities for philanthropic support and recognition as Society Benefactor(s).

**To have a confidential discussion
about supporting Quadrant
One, please contact Jo Andrews
at jandrews@rhass.org.uk**

"The facilities for members' dining and relaxation at the Show, and for family and commercial events and conferences year-round, are superb"



RHASS sincerely thanks the following for generously supporting the Quadrant One campaign

Kay Adam	William Gibson	Anne Logan	Anonymous
BAGMA	Willie Gill	David Lyle	John and Kirsteen Sinclair
Alex Bankier and Family	John and Muriel Good	Marquess of Ailsa, Cassillis & Culzean Estates	Harry Sleigh and Family
Elizabeth Bayne-Jardine	Bill Gray	John S. Mathers	Rt. Hon. Dr Gavin Strang
John & Margaret Cameron	Dr. Ron Harkess OBE FRAGS	Kenneth Matheson	John A. Thomson
Charles Coubrough & Co. Ltd	Jim Hastings	Gillian McLaren Anderson	Richard Vernon
Malcolm Coubrough	Mr & Mrs T. Henderson and Family	John McWilliam	The Warnock Family, Sandilands
Directors of the Borders Area 2020	Alasdair and Lucy Houston and Family, Gretna	The Moredun Foundation	The Family of Sir William and John Young, Skerrington Mains
Les Davidson	Alan Laidlaw	A.E.H. Salvesen	
John Dewar Charitable Trust	Arthur and Susan Lawrie	Willie Sanderson	
		Seafield and Reidhaven Estates	

RHASS Directors & Officials 2020-21

In non-Covid times our Directors and senior staff members would gather for an official photoshoot. This could not happen this year, so instead we have taken our own from home until we are safe to meet again.

President:

Fiona Armstrong, Lady MacGregor,
Lord Lieutenant of Dumfries

Vice Presidents:

Alasdair Houston MBE

Hugh Ramsay MBE

Edward Percy Keswick Weatherall

Alistair Marshall

Chaplain

Reverend Alex Cairns

Chairman

William G Gray

Chairman Designate

James C Warnock

Honorary Secretary

Allan J Murray

Honorary Treasurer

John G Sinclair

Honorary Vice Presidents

James G Dunlop

James F Warnock MBE

Ordinary Directors (32)

ABERDEEN

2017-2021 John McWilliam

2018-2022 Sarah Mackie

2019-2023 Christo Shepherd

2020-2024 Eric A Mutch

LOTHIAN

2017-2021 Jacqueline McCreery

2018-2022 John G Sinclair

2019-2023 Louise Elder

2020-2024 William G Gray

BORDERS

2017-2021 Thomas Tennant

2018-2022 John Seed

2019-2023 Gordon Gray

2020-2024 Rob Livesey

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

2017-2021 Matthew Currie

2018-2022 Heather M Wildman

2019-2023 Jim Hastings

2020-2024 Aylett Roan

HIGHLAND

2017-2021 Alistair Kenneth
Sutherland

2018-2022 William M Downie

2019-2023 Robbie Newlands

2020-2024 Martin MacDonald

PERTH

2017-2021 Kay J A Adam

2018-2022 William F Arnot

2019-2023 Fiona Roebuck

2020-2024 Susan Lawrie

STIRLING

2017-2021 James C Warnock

2018-2022 John Owen

2019-2023 Anne Logan

2020-2024 Andrew Hornall

STRATHCLYDE

2017-2021 Alexander Bankier

2018-2022 Bryce Sloan

2019-2023 Alexander C Wilkie

2020-2024 David CS Alexander

Extraordinary Area Directors (8):

Aberdeen Philip Benzie

Lothian Fiona Ross

Borders Kathryn A Dun

Dumfries
& Galloway Elizabeth Vance

Highland Tom Henderson

Perth Val Smith

Stirling David Lyle

Strathclyde William Robb

Extraordinary Directors (up to 12):

Year one:

Andrew Rennie

James Logan

Neil Thomson

Ian Beck

Dennis Bridgeford

D Bruce Lang, Uplands

Gordon Sutherland

Keith Campbell

Year two:

Kenneth Matheson

Ewan M Brewis

**Extraordinary Director representing
the British Agricultural and Garden
Machinery Association (BAGMA):**

Alasdair Straker

**Extraordinary Director representing
the Agricultural Engineers'
Association (AEA):**

Les Davidson

Honorary Directors & Advisors

Martin Hall

Julian Pace

Management Team

Chief Executive

Alan Laidlaw

RHET Executive Officer

Katrina Barclay

Director of Operations

Mark Currie

Finance Manager

Stuart Rae

Commercial Director

Lorne Scott

Fundraising & Partnerships Manager

Jo Andrews

Society Secretary

Marie Livingstone

Auditors

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Simple Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8BL

Legal Advisors

Shepherd & Wedderburn, 1 Exchange
Crescent, Conference Square,
Edinburgh, EH3 8UL

Public Relations Officers

Represent, 57 Calton Road,
Edinburgh, EH8 8FJ



Kay Adam



Bill Arnot



Joanne Andrews



Fiona Armstrong



David Alexander



Alexander Bankier



Katrina Barclay



Ian Beck



Philip Benzie



Ewan Brewis



Jackie McCreery



Mark Currie



Matthew Currie



Les Davidson



Martin MacDonald



James Dunlop



Dennis Bridgeford



Rev. Alex Cairns



Kath Dunn



Will Downie



Louise Elder



Bill Gray



Gordon Gray



Martin Hall



Jim Hastings



Tom Henderson



Andrew Hornall



Alasdair Houston



Alan Laidlaw



Bruce Lang



Susan Lawrie



Rob Livesey



Marie Livingstone



Anne Logan



James Logan



David Lyle



Sarah Mackie



Alistair Marshall



Kenneth Matheson



Allan J Murray



Eric Mutch



Robbie Newlands



John Owen



Julian Pace



Stuart Rae



Andrew Rennie



Aylett Roan



William Robb



Fiona Roebuck



Fiona Ross



Lorne Scott



John Seed



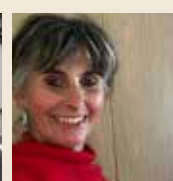
John Sinclair



Christopher
Shepherd



Bryce Sloan



Val Smith



Alasdair Straker



A Kenneth
Sutherland



Gordon
Sutherland



Thomas Tennant



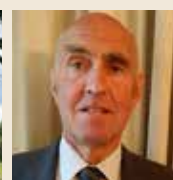
Neil Thomson



Elizabeth Vance



James C Warnock



James F Warnock



Percy Weatherall



Heather Wildman



Alexander Wilkie



John McWilliam

RHASS SUPPORTS MOREDUN FOUNDATION

RHASS has become a Gold sponsor of the new Mordeun mobile laboratory and outreach vehicle which has been developed to celebrate the Foundation's centenary in 2020. There has always been a close association between the two organisations.

When Moredun was set up in 1920 as The Animal Diseases Research Association, it was the only society of its kind in the UK. It was founded by the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture and the Farmers Union of Scotland.

Moredun's early work was undertaken using a mobile laboratory, which became the iconic image of the organisation as years went by. To mark its centenary, Moredun is developing a new mobile laboratory and outreach bus, which will take mobile technology out to the field, onto the farm and into schools, to promote the health and welfare of livestock through research and education.

The Moredun bus will be in attendance at the 2021 Royal Highland Show and at RHET events in due course. RHASS is delighted to sponsor this exciting development and wishes Moredun well in its celebrations this year.



RHASS SUPPORTS SAYFC IN COVID-19

RHASS has agreed a one off £6,000 donation to SAYFC to support them during Covid-19.

The cancellation of the Royal Highland Show has had an impact on SAYFC's income and RHASS Directors felt the organisation needed additional support and so agreed the additional funding.

SAYFC Chief Executive, Penny Montgomerie said:

"As with all organisations, we are finding Covid-19 a tricky time yet we are needed more than ever to keep young people connected and active in their communities. I would like to thank RHASS for their support at a time when they are also grappling with great financial difficulties."

SOCIETY SECRETARY WINS GOVERNANCE AWARD

Marie Livingstone, RHASS Secretary, has been recognised in the 'Board Influencer' category at the prestigious inaugural DMJ Governance Hot 100 awards.

Celebrating the top 100 most innovative, influential and creative governance professionals from across UK industry sectors, the Board Influencer category recognises individuals that influence strategic decision-making at the most senior levels in their organisation.





Scottish farming leader and former RHASS Chairman Willie Gill dedicated his OBE to the hundreds of volunteers and staff who help stage the Royal Highland Show and countless other events each year. Easter Ross-based Willie Gill said he was “humbled” by the honour.

Mr Gill stepped down last summer after serving in a series of prestigious posts at the Society. The 68-year-old also left the board of Highland Grain in the same month, and now works with his son David at Rosskeen Farm, near Invergordon, which has been in the family for 125 years. Mr Gill awaits a new date for his honour to be conferred, as it has been postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Willie said of his award: *“When you get onto the Executive Committee you quickly understand that the Society is much bigger than the Show itself and its charitable activities really have a significant positive impact on the sector. I am so pleased to have been part of this organisation.”*



RHASS JOINS FORCES WITH ONFARM PODCAST

The OnFARM team was commissioned by RHASS in May to produce a series of episodes celebrating the very best of the rural sector, including the work of RHASS and RHET, as well as highlighting the social and economic impact of the Royal Highland Show and the other smaller shows throughout Scotland.

The series has been painting a portrait of rural Scotland’s resilience in the face of Covid-19 and illustrating the ways in which RHASS and the Royal Highland Show act as the ‘social glue’ for Scottish rural communities.

BILL GRAY AS CHAIRMAN UNTIL 2022

Chairman, Bill Gray, will remain in his position until July 2022. Normally, the chair is a two-year appointment, however RHASS Directors took a decision at the July board meeting to enable Bill to stand for a further year to 2022, in light of the cancellation of the 2020 Royal Highland Show.

HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS APPOINTED

Immediate Past Chair Jimmy Warnock MBE from Sandilands Farm, Lanark and James Dunlop of Kirkcudbright, have been made Honorary Vice Presidents to reflect their significant contribution to the Society and the RHASS Board. These are 12 month appointments.

RHASS ANNOUNCE CHANGES TO THE BOARD FOLLOWING AGM



Jim Warnock, 59, from Gartfinnan Farm Clackmannan has been appointed Chairman designate.

A farmer and managing director of JDWAgri Ltd, Jim has been a Stirling area Director at RHASS since 2010 and was appointed to the Executive Committee in July 2019. During this time he has served as Steward for Cattle, Sheep, Light Horse and Heavy Horse before being selected as Chief Steward of the Main Ring for the past five years.

Married to Irene, the couple have three children, Duncan, Calum and Kirsty who are all involved in running the family farm.

Past Chairman of Stirling Young Farmers and Past Chairman and President of Stirling Agricultural Society, Jim has been a member of RHET Forth Valley for the past eight years delivering classroom talks, farm visits and other RHET Events.

The position of Chairman Designate will be in place for two years.

Accessibility at the RHC



By Lorne Scott, Commercial Director at the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland (RHASS)

When attending an event, most people probably don't even give accessibility a second thought. But for many people, attending a festival, conference or concert requires extensive planning and research before they even purchase a ticket.

While it can take extensive amounts of time, money and effort, every venue can and should be doing everything they can to ensure they are striving towards the goal of full accessibility. This can be anything from installing step-free access to considering how well your event space is lit.

At the Royal Highland Centre, we have invested heavily in our accessibility over the last few years. We have two venues with a fully functioning Changing Places toilet, which allow those who need extra equipment and space to use these facilities safely and comfortably.

In addition to these, across our fixed venues on site we have nineteen accessible toilets and fifteen baby changing units – this number increases dramatically during the Royal Highland Show, where we install an additional Changing Places toilet and parent and baby rooms amongst other extra facilities.

On site we also have lowered curbs at all crossing points to ensure all customers have free access of movement, and our new event space is especially accessible, featuring complete ramped access to the east and west lobby areas and accessible bar and reception areas.

We also have the flexibility to accommodate priority parking bays at the closest possible access points to our range of venues, depending on the needs of the event organisers. Again, these facilities are increased during the Royal Highland Show, where we add over 500 accessible parking spaces across the east and west entrances. We see first-hand the extensive demand for mobility scooters during the Royal Highland Show – last year over 100 were hired daily.

While there's always more that event venues could be doing, our team is focused on navigating this complex landscape and driven by a passion and dedication to making our site as accessible as possible for everyone. And while that's a difficult task, we are invested in continually improving what we can offer event-goers to ensure that their day out is enjoyable.

If you would like to book your private or corporate event at the RHC, contact:
lynneh@rhass.org.uk.

WEDDINGS AT Ingliston

**SECURE YOUR WEDDING FOR 2021
AT THE ROYAL HIGHLAND CENTRE**



THE PERFECT VENUE FOR THE PERFECT DAY

Set in the heart of the historic Royal Highland Centre.

Edinburgh's newest wedding venue provides the perfect space for your big day. Whether you're planning an intimate ceremony or grand celebration, our newest venue at Ingliston can accommodate your vision, with space for up to 350 guests. A covered external terrace has gorgeous views of the surrounding grounds, and is the perfect setting for photos - no matter the weather!

Bookings now being taken for 2021, so contact us today to discuss your requirements.



ROYAL
HIGHLAND &
AGRICULTURAL
SOCIETY OF
SCOTLAND

Book your wedding now by visiting

www.royalhighlandcentre.co.uk or call 0131 335 6273

FOOD & FARMING EXTRAVAGANZA

18TH & 19TH JUNE



RHET

The Royal Highland Education Trust

Patron HRH The Princess Royal



Despite the Show not going ahead this year, RHET did not want to miss the opportunity to try something new and exciting during Show Week.

Thursday and Friday of the Highland would usually host several thousand school pupils, travelling far and wide to experience all the event has to offer. With schools closed and learning going digital, the idea was born to offer an interactive online suite of themed activities for two days.

The event was open to anyone and everyone, with an option to sign up to receive email updates and a countdown gaining over 1,000 subscribers ahead of the event. The RHET Food and Farming Extravaganza was formed of 8 zones, each with a combination of films, quizzes, games, slideshows and hands-on activities to try at home.

"We were honoured to work with a great number of businesses, organisations and individuals who really pulled out all the stops to provide us with new and varied content", explains Katrina Barclay, RHET Executive Officer. "With so many of our contractors and staff not working at present, the strength of the RHET network, reputation and amazing volunteers came together to create some unique content for people to access. Having everything under one roof for two days proved to be a huge hit."

RHET went 'live' on Facebook for the first time ever with a scone bake along at 10 a.m., and at the time of writing, the film has already reached over 3,000 people. Parents and teachers joined in the bake along and sent photographs of some of their delicious scones.

A total of four sessions, which included the scone bakeathon, coleslaw making, pizza baking, and soda bread baking, went live over the two days with an additional flapjack making session being provided by Hamlyns Oats. The recipes for all sessions are available online via rhet.org.uk/online-extravaganza/recipes

RHET ONLINE food & farming extravaganza

8 Different Zones

Explore each of our resource areas, with new activities, recipes and videos to watch

Ask A Farmer We've got farmers on hand to answer your questions	Countryside Area Ideas and activities around looking after and enjoying the countryside
Discover Farming Find out more about how farming works with information and activities	The World of Fish Learn more about the blue planet world of fish!
Livestock Lines Your chance to find out more about how all kinds of farm animals are cared for	Find Out About Food Get involved with exciting recipes and find out more about food sustainability
Science In Action Find out more about the science involved in food and farming	Working In Food Learn about all the different opportunities in the food and drink sector
Competition Time! Win a Hamlyns Oats prize pack, or a family pass to the Royal Highland Show!	



1,050 INDIVIDUAL EMAIL ACCOUNTS REQUESTED TO SIGN UP IN ADVANCE



2,540 CLICKS WERE RECORDED TO THE SITE OVER THE TWO DAYS



62% OF CLICKS REFERRED VIA EMAIL
23% FROM FACEBOOK
5% FROM RHET WEBSITE
+10% OTHER SOURCES



8 ZONES
 CONTENT ASSISTED BY A MIXTURE OF NEW AND EXISTING PARTNERS

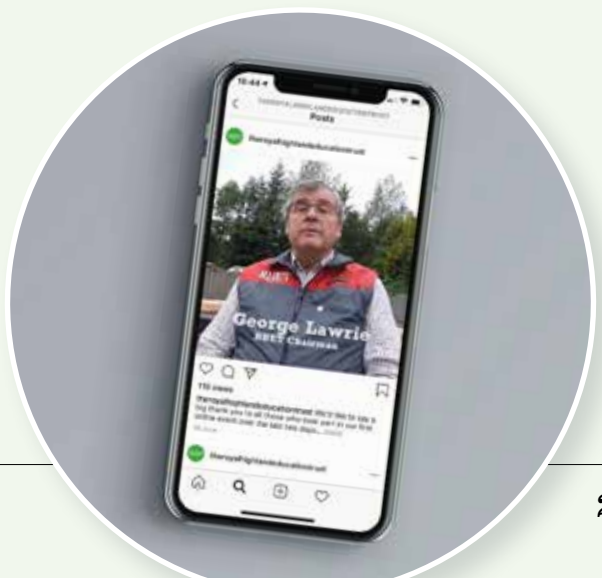


FACEBOOK

(15-21 June)

34,180 PEOPLE REACHED
1,335 PAGE VIEWS
7,150 VIDEO VIEWS
140 NEW PAGE LIKES

Thank you to all those who sent us film footage from their farms, crofts, dairy parlours and strawberry tunnels, to name but a few locations. Thanks also to the organisations who were running on a skeleton team for working with us to cover so many aspects of Scotland's food and farming sector. Demand for the resources was so great we have made it available for everyone to visit www.rhet.org.uk/online-extravaganza/



EXPANDING OUR DIGITAL OFFERING

With schools and nurseries closing their doors in March, RHET has been working hard to widen the range of free online offerings for people to access.

Website analytics have shown the already popular web-based RHET resource portal has seen a marked increase in time spent on each page by visitors. This change in user behaviour has been replicated by the variation of requests from both teachers and parents alike during the current lockdown.

"Our free online services are available for anyone to access" commented Sara Smith, RHET Learning and Development Coordinator. "We have been receiving requests for online classroom sessions, additional information and resource links from teachers and parents to support online/hub/kitchen table learning. We welcome any chance we get to demonstrate how food and farming education can fit alongside so many aspects of learning. We added several resources back in May which use ingredients or equipment people may have at home and these have proved really popular."

"Home-schooling has seen an increase in the usage of many of the baking and growing linked resources. Planting seeds sits alongside maths, science, ICT, and sustainability, and can help give a wider understanding about how long things can take to grow, the care needed and how tasty it can be, eaten fresh. Seasonality, local produce, food miles, the impact of climate and external forces all impact our farmers and growers, therefore taking the time to grow something small or large scale at home at this time has given people a great insight."

Thanks to the feedback and suggestions RHET receives from users of the resource portal and from the requests submitted, new material can be developed to link across the age groups and tie into the learning outcomes of the curriculum. Often the content is created in collaboration with partner organisations to provide wider subject coverage to reflect other areas of the food, farming and rural sectors. Keep an eye on the RHET website and social media channels for the latest additions.



THANK YOU

To all of you who have sent us donations at any time, thank you! From those who donated money during the Extravaganza because you valued the work and effort involved, to those who donated your Royal Highland Show caravan pitch fees, thank you for thinking of us. We are always so grateful when people raise money and send us donations. These much-needed funds help to keep the wheels turning, increase our chances of reaching more pupils and train more teachers and volunteers. *Thank you from us all at RHET.*



WHAT'S NEXT FOR RHET AND HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

As with so many of us right now, we don't know what or when RHET activities will be in demand from schools and nurseries once they return in August. We will work closely with schools and education authorities to ensure our practices and procedures for farm visits meet their requirements. The RHET coordinators worked with schools as usual until lockdown began and some have continued to work with their committees over the holidays, to prepare for the new learning opportunities.

WHAT COULD YOU HELP US WITH?

RHET works with hundreds of volunteers from all occupations and locations across the country on various activities. We warmly welcome anyone who may be interested in gaining some experience in helping with our local and regional committees, where ideas and plans are made for projects and fundraising ideas are generated.

Could you help us with our blog or video content?

If you are a keen photographer or videographer and looking to build on your portfolio, RHET could be an ideal platform for you to gain experience and build an audience.

Would you like to help us pass on cooking skills to Scotland's young people whilst covering the facts about Scotland's food production? We provide training, support and shadowing as required and if you would like to find out more, with no commitment to sign up, please get in touch for a chat.

www.rhet.org.uk/volunteers
email rhetinfo@rhass.org.uk



OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Did you know when you shop online via the EasyFundraising app or webpage, you can help generate funds for RHET? Retailers will pledge a percentage of your basket at the checkout and send it directly to RHET. This mounts up over time and we would like to thank those who have already done this and made RHET the charity of your choice.

Our supporter scheme is an ideal gift at any time of the year. From individual supporters (£25/year) to corporate supporters (£1,000/year) the funds raised pay for school activities across Scotland. Please visit our website to find more information about how to become a supporter of RHET www.rhet.org.uk/how-to-help/become-a-supporter/

2020 TECHNICAL INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS

Despite the Covid-19 crisis and switching to online awards there was a record-breaking number of entries for the 2020 RHASS Technical Innovation Awards. Overall, two Gold, six Silver and five Certificates of Commendations were awarded this year.

The awards, RHASS's most longstanding industry accolade, showcase and reward innovation and development within the agricultural sector and are a highly respected award scheme for manufacturers, distributors, providers and inventors. This year, applicants were invited to enter online with judging taking place virtually. A formal awards ceremony will take place at Ingliston House at the 2021 Royal Highland Show.

RHASS Chief Steward of Technical Innovation, Christo Shepherd said: *"The Technical Innovation Awards are a highly influential accolade that promote new ideas as well as acknowledging the work and commitment necessary to develop new products."*

"The benefits to winning for businesses are significant, and I am delighted that we had such a strong selection of entries to choose from this year. I would like to extend my congratulations to the winning entries."

Gold awards are presented to previous Silver award winners for continuous outstanding merit. This year, **Lambert & Dyson Ltd** earned Gold for their Landy PTO Hot Water Pressure Washer. Operating at up to 3000p.s.i. / 200bar with a throughput of up to 30 litres of water per minute, this P.T.O. power washer has the added benefit of a 12v burner system which will heat the water up to 90oC. Designed to run on either the front or rear linkage and deriving all its power from the tractor, requiring only a supply of water and fuel it can be used in most situations that demand heavy cleaning.



Limagrain UK were also awarded Gold for their Winter Wheat Breeding Programme. The Programme was recognised for the innovative methods Limagrain UK have adopted, from advanced trials design to double haploid and molecular biology. Their breeding teams have produced varieties for growers, with enhanced agronomical characteristics and market opportunities and have maintained their reputation for producing successful varieties for Scotland.

Earning a Silver this year is **Herd Advance** for their Herd Advance Stockman. The system was invented and designed from the ground up by beef farmers for beef farmers. Seamlessly, the Stockman brings together practical hardware and precision data software that, when paired with its cutting-edge app, lets farmers monitor in real-time the statistics and status of their herd on-the-go from a smartphone. Crucially, the Stockman allows the user to automatically sort animals without the need for handling.



Lely Holding S.a.r.l. also impressed the judges, winning Silver for their Discovery Collector 120. The Discovery Collector is specifically designed for barns with solid floors and takes a revolutionary diverse approach when compared to traditional manure scrapers. The Collector does not push manure but vacuums it. This makes the build-up of manure a thing of the past. This not only makes for a cleaner floor, it also ensures the cow's hooves remain cleaner.



Murray Machinery Ltd also earned a Silver this year for their Gravel Road Grader, which was designed to reinstate gravel roads which have fallen into a state of disrepair. It has undergone a major upgrade, with the addition of hydraulically operated ripper teeth, a hydraulically operated tilting frame and the new addition of a rear packer roller. The Road Grader is now able to carry out four different functions in the same machine. In utilising existing stone, great savings can be made on time, effort and the money spent on maintaining your gravel road.

Presented with a Silver award this year also was **Peel Tech Ltd** for their Peel Tech Filtration System. The System is the only one that can filter to Food Waste Act Section 48 regulations and captures excess potato peel and starch. The recent addition of a UV system will recycle all the water used, giving around a 94% efficiency in the production process. It can be used by chip shops, farmers, processors, sewage works and recycling plants to reduce waste caused by peel and vegetable starch.



Polaris Britain Ltd were also presented with Silver for their Polaris Ranger XP1000 ABS, which is the world's first UTV / SXS utility vehicle to combine an anti-lock braking system with an active descent control system. The XP1000 Ranger takes safety to a new level both eliminating run away and allowing safe, controlled braking in the most extreme applications.

A final Silver Award was earned by **Pottinger Landtechnik GmbH** for their Pottinger Impress Round Baler. The Pottinger Impress range of round baler offers a host of innovative new features not seen in round balers previously. A lower power requirement is achieved thanks to the patented LIFTUP Rotor technology where the crop passes over the feed rotor rather than the traditional route of underneath.



A Commendation was presented to **CASE IH** this year for their **Magnus AFS Connect Tractor**, which is the seventh generation of their flagship tractor, designed to enable both operators and owners to manage farming operations with new levels of precision.

Also awarded a Commendation was **Farmdata - a division of Landmark Systems Ltd** for the Cattedata Mobile App, which was developed to enable cattle keepers to have all the information on their animals at their fingertips. Cattedata Mobile requires no internet connection, all data is held on the phone or tablet. This means that regardless of where you are, you can look up any animal's record.

Another Commendation was earned by **Senesino Ltd** for their Numnuts tail docking and castration system. It provides targeted pain relief in an easy to use ring applicator, combined with an injector that dispenses NumOcaine local anaesthetic simultaneously with the application of the standard rubber ring. Numnuts provides lambs with the best start in life, giving welfare-focused sheep farmers an ethical sustainable approach to castration and de-tailing.

Vicon were also presented with a Commendation for their Vicon Extra 700 Mower Conditioners. The Extra 700 series are powerful mower conditioners with superb ground tracking, thanks to the new

innovative QuattroLink suspension concept. With its accurate tracking ability and highly flexible working range this suspension provides unrivalled cutting performance.

Finally, **Welsh Shearing Equipment Ltd** also received a Commendation for their ShearCordless MK2 Animal Clipper. The ShearCordless animal clipper is comparable in weight to a standard shearing handpiece but is well-balanced due to the ergonomically designed main housing, battery and clipper head. The interchangeable sheep head can be easily switched for a horse or cattle head, providing ultimate versatility to the user for all shearing/clipping requirements.

GOLD AWARD WINNER

Lambert & Dyson

Family firm Lambert & Dyson Ltd from Skipton in North Yorkshire earned Gold this year for their Landy PTO Hot Water Pressure Washer. Operating at up to 3000p.s.i. / 200bar with a throughput of up to 30 litres of water per minute, their P.T.O. power washer has the added benefit of a 12v burner system which heats water up to 90 degrees centigrade.

We spoke to Matthew Lambert to find out more about the Landy PTO Hot Water Pressure Washer, why they developed it and why they decided to enter the Awards in the first place.

Tell us more about Lambert & Dyson

"We are a small family firm (there are 6 of us in total) which was established in 1978. We manufacture high pressure cleaning equipment for agriculture industry and specialise in tractor mounted PTO driven pressure washers and drain jetting equipment."

What led you to develop the Landy PTO Hot Water Pressure Washer and how is it helping the industry?

"Our continual development of our tractor mounted range and the gap in the market for a powerful mobile hot water washer. It seemed a logical step to build a hot wash machine powered from the tractor. This portability allows for use anywhere with a tractor and a water barrel, enabling quick efficient cleaning without the need for a high voltage electric supply which further enhances safety for the user."

Why did you apply for the RHASS Technical Innovation Awards?

"We had seen in previous years the exposure and interest created by entering the awards. We saw the



small but prestigious Silver sticker on other pieces of equipment on the market and wanted the same for our own after all the time and effort involved in developing the unit.

"We are very proud to have had our machines going out of the door with the Silver award for the last three years and are over the moon to add a Gold sticker alongside it from now on."

How do you think winning will make a difference to your business?

"As with all innovative and ground-breaking equipment, it takes a new piece of machinery time to prove itself. We know the benefits of the hot washer over cold, and we are very pleased that the judges can also see the advantages. Winning an award like this gives in effect an independent stamp of approval to the machine."

How did you find the process of applying for Technical Innovation Awards?

"The process of applying was very easy and straight forward. We filled in the form, added three 'happy customer' references, a link to Youtube and a cover letter on why we thought we should be

considered for an award. Clicked the send button and away it all went. It couldn't be simpler!"

What are your plans for the future of your business?

"We specialise in cleaning equipment for the agricultural market. We are always looking at ways of developing and improving our range of tractor PTO driven washers and jetters. We have plans to incorporate the hot washer technology with another of our popular models to create a hot water unit with its own onboard water reserves."

Why do you think awards for innovation are important for the industry?

"Innovation awards are important for both the agricultural sector and the agricultural supply sector alike. Farmers like to have recommendations when purchasing new equipment. A Gold Technical Innovation Award is the ultimate unbiased recommendation."

What would you say to someone interested in applying for an award?

"If you think you have an innovative product which will help in the daily life of a farmer then go for it."

GOLD AWARD WINNER

Limagrain UK



Limagrain UK was awarded Gold this year for their Winter Wheat Breeding Programme. The Programme was recognised for the innovative methods Limagrain UK have adopted, from advanced trials design to double haploid and molecular biology. We spoke to Hannah Smith from Limagrain to find out more about their winning product, their plans for the future and why you should consider entering the Technical Innovation Awards next year.

Tell us more about Limagrain UK

"We are plant breeders and suppliers of superior seed varieties for farmers, growers and the food and amenity industries.

"Limagrain UK is the local agricultural seeds operating company of Limagrain Europe. Limagrain Europe is a business unit of Limagrain Groupe; the fourth largest seed company in the world. Limagrain is an agricultural cooperative owned by French farmers, and an international seed group.

"We breed and market agricultural seeds and amenity grass seeds for the UK market under the established brand LG. Offering the UK's strongest and widest offer of agricultural and amenity seeds, Limagrain has extensive portfolios of varieties and seeds in cereals, oilseeds, beans and peas (including vining peas), sugar beet, seed potatoes, maize, agricultural and amenity grasses and fodder crop seeds. These products are available widely from seed merchants operating throughout the UK and Europe. We also have a team of seed specialists operating under the Nickerson brand, selling seed directly from breeder to farmer.

"We employ around 160 people in the UK and have more than 10,000 employees worldwide."

What led you to develop your Winter Wheat Breeding Programme and how is it helping the industry?

"We believe that agriculture will first progress through plant improvement. As a seed company, our major contribution is through genetic progress – we're helping to improve the adaptability of crops and preserve the environments in which they are grown."

How does it feel to win a Gold RHASS Technical Innovation Award?

"We're proud to be recognised and appreciated by an independent board of judges for the work that we're doing to develop new varieties."

How do you think winning will make a difference to your business?

"It will allow the opportunity to share the investment that Limagrain makes into developing new varieties and bringing them to market. Alongside this are the advantages that these new genetics are bringing to growers on farm, which is extremely important to our business.

"Almost 16% of our seed sales is invested in research and development, which is more than the automotive industry, and 20% of our employees work in research.

"It will help cement our relationships with growers and highlight the benefit of the work that breeders are doing for the farming community."

How did you find the process of applying for Technical innovation Award?

"Extremely straightforward."

What are the plans for the future of the business?

"As an international seed group, Limagrain provides farmers worldwide with innovative solutions based on plant genetics and which help agricultural production systems achieve better agronomic and environmental performance. Limagrain thereby helps farmers meet societal expectations with respect to food quality and preservation of the planet.

"By offering a product line-up focused on seeds and know-how about plant

genetics, we are an alternative to the agro-chemical industry and its all-in-one offers. We are convinced that it is important to maintain farmers' independence and freedom of choice in their other production resources."

Why do you think innovation is important for the industry?

"In the coming years, agriculture must face the convergence of major worldwide challenges: a growing population, more diversified diets, heightened competition for access to water and energy resources, climate change, and much more.

"To feed close to 10 billion people in 2050, agricultural production must grow by 70% in quantity, quality, and diversity, which requires increasing yields, optimizing land use, and leveraging agricultural chains."

What would you say to someone interested in applying for an award?

"It's always rewarding to be recognised for your efforts contributed towards the profitability and sustainability of the agricultural industry – particularly by such a prestigious RHASS board."

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

By Brian Henderson



The cultivation of Cap'n Birdseye beards, hair of a length which was last fashionable circa 1968 and an empty social calendar might have come as a major shock to many sectors of the community when the Covid-19 lockdown became a reality in the last week of March.

For most in the farming world, though, these symptoms were pretty much par for the course as the biggest shock to hit British culture in a generation coincided with the hectic spells of lambing and spring sowing - when personal grooming and nights out are routinely abandoned by many in the farming community for weeks on end.

But while the industry hunkered down in splendid isolation and got on with the job, perhaps quietly proud that our role as food producers was getting a little bit more recognition, the sector didn't remain oblivious for long to the

turmoil which was pulsing through the rest of society.

The dairy sector was amongst the first to feel the pressure as the closure of cafes, work canteens and school dinner providers dramatically altered the demand for fresh milk. And while supermarket shelves stood bare, with strict rations on the number of pints that customers could buy, uncollected milk was being poured down drains on farms as the dairy companies struggled to respond to new marketing conditions and re-route supplies.

Already low cattle prices were further eroded as no one seemed to know how to cook the steaks which they normally enjoyed in a fancy restaurant at home - preferring instead the familiar comfort food of mince.

While the lamb market initially remained steady it soon suffered a

catastrophic drop when restaurants and street markets were shut down in France and the export trade came to a grinding halt. The resulting sudden and severe collapse in demand knocked the stuffing out of farmgate prices, giving a sharp pre-Brexit taster of the importance of maintaining sales to the continent.

And while arable farmers, struggling with the memory of one of the wettest sowing seasons for winter crops ever, soon found themselves praying for rain as a record dry spring followed - they too realised that their produce will not escape Covid's biting pinch come harvest.

For, as it was impossible to re-route the thousands of gallons of beer delivered in casks to pubs into cans or bottles to sell to a still thirsty public, output from once thriving breweries slumped - and much barley destined for the brewing trade was left unused and unwanted.



On the whisky side, while some distilleries turned their hand to producing alcohol for the ubiquitous hand sanitizers, the majority either closed or ran only a skeleton staff - again disrupting the normal usage patterns of malting barley and wheat – adding further to the huge quantities of grain already overhanging this year's harvest.

Many of those who had diversified outside the normal enterprises also suffered, with the agri-tourism sector being hard-hit with cancellations devastating business, an effect which knocked on into many other parts of diversified markets, including restaurants, cafes and wedding venues.

But for some, especially those on the urban fringes, the arrival of hordes of daily exercise takers on their land threw up the usual quota of bad apples who created problems when taking access,

spoiling it for all – as did those who viewed fields and farm roads as an alternative to closed council recycling facilities, with the blight of fly-tipping becoming commonplace.

But with heads down and noses to the grindstone, the industry focused on the daily grind and took these knocks with its normal stoicism – although the increase in calls to rural charities such as RSABI highlighted that the economic, emotional and mental stresses were taking their toll.

While the ringside chat at the local auction mart might have been missed, the realisation of the wider social impact only began to become obvious when it came round to the time for the local show – and, even more so, 'The Highland'.

For they weren't there to give us the opportunity to de-stress by catching up with the folk we hadn't seen

since the last Show and compare the highs and lows of the past farming year. And the economic thunderbolt to hit the organisations running these cancelled events – including RHASS – will inevitably reverberate for years.

But to end on a positive note, although benefits might be hard to find, the pre-Brexit timing of the crisis - and the stark reality of empty supermarket shelves – has perhaps helped re-focus the wider public's views on the importance of food security, the availability of local produce and the key importance of maintaining Scotland's world-leading welfare and environmental production methods as well as its high food safety standards.

Let's hope these stick as we approach Brexit and discuss trade deals with the rest of the world.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

PROFILE

JOHN GOOD

Annual member of RHASS
and past Society Secretary



As Society Secretary for 20 years I know how much RHASS needs and values the loyalty and support of its members, for its charitable work and in promoting the value of our land-based and allied industries to Scotland. The Society has come a long way since 1784. Let's invest in RHASS now, for today and for successive generations.

PROFILE

JOHN A THOMSON

Livestock Auctioneer
and Farmer from Annan



As a life member of the Society I have attended over 50 Highland Shows and every year I met some old friends and made at least one new friend. I also learnt something new that helped my methods of farming and I always thought the Show and the Society contributed enormously to the success of Scottish Agriculture. It is essential for all concerned to keep both going.

Our members are the life blood of the Society and it is at times like the present when your valuable support for our work in protecting and promoting Scotland's agricultural sector, is thrown into sharp focus.

Membership fees are an important source of income for RHASS and critical to the fulfilment of its charitable activities. We are aware that for some of you, membership is most closely identified with the Royal Highland Show and while this flagship event is our most high-profile charitable activity, your membership of the Society benefits a much wider range of work, year-round and for the sector as a whole. The cancellation of the RHS this year due to unprecedented circumstances has severely impacted our ability to continue this work, so we are grateful for our members' continuing support.

RHASS Membership Fees

Following the increase in the annual membership fee in 2018, the RHASS Board took a decision to propose an increase in fees for Life and Term memberships to bring them in line. The increases to £1,875 (from £1,500) and £625 (from £575) respectively were due to take effect in January 2021, subject to member approval at the AGM.

In the light of the Covid pandemic, this increase has been postponed but is likely that an increase will be proposed at next year's AGM. If you are thinking of becoming a Life or Term Member, or considering upgrading to Life Membership, now is the time to do it while prices remain at current levels! Likewise, for those wishing to purchase Life Membership as a gift for a young family member, we encourage you to do so now.

Payment plans are available – if you would like to discuss options, please contact the Membership Department by emailing membership@rhass.org.uk

The number of people taking out Life Memberships of RHASS has increased for the last 2 years and this shows no sign of abating if the last three months are anything to go by.

RHASS Senior Membership

This has now been set at 67 regardless of gender. Those already on the senior rate will remain on that rate even if not yet 67.

Membership Benefits

We are committed to ensuring that membership of the Society represents excellent value for money. At present RHASS membership offers the following opportunities and benefits:

- **The opportunity to support RHASS's charitable activities, for example in education (RHET) and mental health (RSABI) and in a range of awards and grants across the agricultural and rural sectors**
- **The opportunity to stand for election to the RHASS Board**
- **Society Magazine**
- **Complimentary entry to the RHS on the 4 days of the event (worth over £100)**
- **Opportunity to buy discounted entry tickets and Members' guest tickets to the RHS**
- **Access to the exclusive Members' area, restaurant and bars at the RHS**

We are continually reviewing the benefits we think will appeal to members while striking the right balance as to relevant offers and unwanted inserts in the magazine.

We would be happy to hear from any members who have suggestions for offers that you wish us to consider.

Our Society goes digital

As you will have read elsewhere in this magazine, the coronavirus pandemic has had a catastrophic impact on the Royal Highland Centre's events business, in addition to the cancellation of this year's Show, with a predicted loss in our annual income of over £6m. In the last three months we have had to take some tough decisions to protect the organisation and the future of the Society.

In many a crisis, there is also opportunity and we are taking the time, during this period of uncertainty, to fully review our business and to see where we can find efficiencies, save costs and improve your membership experience.

During the last three months, most of us have been using digital communications on a much greater scale than ever before: all Committee meetings and two RHASS Board meetings have now taken place successfully online, and everyone has welcomed the flexibility this offers, along with cost and time savings for RHASS and our Directors. While we envisage a return to some face to face meetings at Ingliston in the future, we will continue to make the most of online meeting facilities, where appropriate, as we go forward.

By the same token, we believe that now is also the right time to accelerate our plan for the digitisation of our membership activities for the benefit of all.

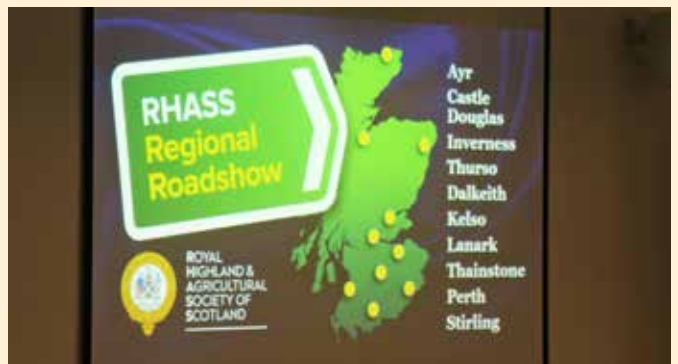
At this moment in time it costs the Society £1 per member to send a letter by mail, with a full mailing costing over £15,000. The cost of printing and distributing Society Magazine by post three times per year is in the region of £70,000. Important savings can and need to be made if we are to weather the impact of the pandemic on our finances over the next few years.

We are exploring the steps we need to take to bring member communications and records fully online. The benefits in terms of cost savings and efficiency, as well as membership experience, are expected to be considerable and we will share further detail of our plans in due course. In the meantime, we urge everyone to ensure that their correct email address is available to us on our database, as email will in due course replace much of our current communications. By furnishing this information now, you will be helping us enormously when the time comes to make this transition.

Please email membership@rhass.org.uk to confirm your current email address, quoting your name, address, including postcode and membership number (if you know it).

Members' Pavilion

Directors were disappointed that they weren't able to share the new Members' pavilion and event space with members at the Show this year. The building was completed and delivered on budget and on time in March, shortly before lockdown began. You can read more about the new space on pages 18-19.



Supporting RHASS

The Society is hugely appreciative of the support it has received from members and other stakeholders over the years, and we thank all those who have recently donated to the Quadrant One campaign. We gratefully acknowledge their important contributions on page 13.

It is vital that, as a charity, we ensure that we have a sustainable income stream, now and in the long term. This means diversifying our income base so that it does not rely wholly on our commercial activities, the reasons for which will be very clear to us all. As a charity, we are also required to offer the opportunity for people to financially support our work through donations, in order to maximise our charitable activity and impact. With this in mind, we will be introducing a regular giving programme later in the year, offering members, the public and other Society stakeholders the chance to get involved and support RHASS's work for the longer term. We welcome your ideas and suggestions in developing our plans in this area.

Good governance

IN A TIME OF CHANGE



'Unprecedented' is a word that's been used a lot when talking about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. As well as the well-publicised impact on the Show and other planned events at the Royal Highland Centre, the pandemic also presented some significant challenges when it came to the governance of the Society.

RHASS is led by a Board of up to 59 Directors and, in a normal year, between eight and twenty of those may change, bringing in fresh perspectives and experience. However, with the cancellation of the 2020 Royal Highland Show and the uncertainty around timing of the return of large-scale events to the Showground, Directors were of the view that RHASS required stability and continuity on the Board this year, to help us weather the storm.

At all times, but even more so in times of crisis, good governance is critical.

The Society's governing documents were not drafted with a global pandemic and its consequent impact in mind. The Society had, therefore, to find a pragmatic and sensible way to adhere to their requirements, and to make

any changes in the best interests of the charity, while recognizing the exceptional nature of the current circumstances and the need to avoid any unintended consequences for the future.

One such change was the re-appointment of the Dumfries & Galloway Presidential Team for a further year. We look forward to the team bringing already well-developed plans to promote this region to the 2021 Royal Highland Show.

RHASS Directors are appointed from across Scotland and each year, eight 'one-year' Directors are elected to the Board. A time-limited change was made to the Bye-Laws to enable those one-year Directors to be re-appointed for a further year.

RHASS's Chairman would normally serve for a two-year term but the Board were keen that the current Chairman Bill Gray, would have the opportunity to serve a further term, to ensure stability and continuity at the helm of the Society during this challenging time. This required some flexibility around the role of Chairman Designate, which was approved by the members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Good governance ensures that we adapt and change to face new challenges, in a measured and controlled way.



The AGM itself saw significant changes this year as it was impossible under social distancing requirements to hold a quorate, face-to-face AGM. The Scottish charity regulator OSCR released some helpful and pragmatic guidance in this area and RHASS held its first ever virtual AGM on 7 July.

Since mid-March, all Board and Committee meetings have been held by Zoom, in line with changes to the Bye-Laws approved at the 2018 AGM. Being able to meet in this way has been critical to the running of the Society under the current circumstances. In future, it is likely that

virtual or hybrid meetings will continue, as they make best use of the charity's financial resources and Directors' time.

Good governance ensures that we adapt and change to face new challenges in a measured and controlled way. As with everything RHASS does, the best interests of the Society in fulfilling its charitable objects are the top priority.

If you have any questions about the governance of the Society or would like to find out more about becoming a director, please contact the Society Secretary – mlivingstone@rhass.org.uk.



This Society Magazine and this Last Word are not quite what you or I would have expected at this time of year.

In normal times, I would be celebrating another successful Royal Highland Show, and I hope we would be basking in the feedback from members on the new pavilion and event space and looking forward to a year of significant charitable activity and impact in the sector.

Instead, like many other organisations we are coping with a perfect storm, reviewing our current situation and taking difficult decisions to secure the future of the organisation. At the beginning of the year, we were on track to enter a significant growth phase, following investments over a number of years to bring Ingliston up to the highest standards allowing us to attract significant business to the Royal Highland Centre (RHC). This is important to the sustainability of the charity, as it is the income from this business along with revenue generated from you as members, and the Royal Highland Show, which allows us to carry out our charitable activities.

The order book was looking healthy and we were confident that we were in a good place to reap the benefits of hard work, investment and robust planning. And then the pandemic hit, causing mass cancellations, including the Royal Highland Show.

What does this mean for the Society? Effectively, we have lost income of £6 million and, while we have taken immediate steps to secure the future in the short term through the furlough scheme, Government grants and cuts in spending, more needs to be done.

You will have read in these pages and elsewhere that we are embarking on a new fundraising campaign. This will help to ensure that we can continue and develop our long held charitable mission, to protect and promote the interests of rural Scotland, which includes delivering the Royal Highland Show next year, and for years to come, and our wide-ranging charitable work throughout the year. Fundraising is a new activity for us as an organisation – we are not used to asking for your support – but these unprecedented times remind us that we are a charity like any other. With our events calendar all but wiped out, and the timing of a return to public events uncertain, now is the time to appeal to our members, to industry stakeholders and to the Royal Highland Show public, to give them an opportunity to play their part in our protection, recovery and our future.

The Board and I value enormously the contribution you as members already make to the Society and I urge you to continue to support us in this way. We understand of course, that for some, it will not be possible to do more. For those who are able and wish to support our work further with a donation or through regular giving, we intend to provide that opportunity. With the help of everyone, we can secure the future for the Show and the Society.

Thank you

Alan Laidlaw, Chief Executive

This is farming

As a farming entrepreneur,
Fiona would love more young
women to follow her lead.
Must be the shepherd in her.

With our industry specialists,
we're proud to help women
in agriculture thrive.

#ThisIsFarming

Fiona Turnbull, Fruix Farm

Partner of the Royal
Highland Show since 1981



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rhass.org.uk/getting-involved