

RHASS MAGAZINE

WINTER 2021

# society



## CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

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+ History of the RHS pull out

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+ Looking back on 2021 + 2022 Presidential Initiative

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# Contents

3	Chairman's Welcome
4	News
5	Remembering Harry Sleight
6-9	2021 in pictures
10-11	HOYS success story - Lexi Brash
12-13	Royal Highland Education Trust
14-15	Royal Highland Centre
16	Presidential Initiative 2022
17	Christmas recipe
18	RHASS Member updates
19	Chief Executive's Last Word
PLUS	Special 8-page 200th anniversary of the first Royal Highland Show pull out!



4



6



10



17



14



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FRONT COVER - From the RHASS archive.  
Young girl with foal circa 1955.



ROYAL  
HIGHLAND &  
AGRICULTURAL  
SOCIETY OF  
SCOTLAND



## DEAR MEMBERS

Welcome to another winter edition of Society magazine. I was hoping to be able to start this with "what a difference a year makes" and comment on how normality has returned. While restrictions are considerably eased, Covid-19 still looms over us in our daily lives. In that regard, however, we are proud to be still supporting the NHS with their vaccination centre in the Lowland Hall at Ingliston.

As we reflect on the outcomes from the COP26 summit in Glasgow in November, we must look forward to what will undoubtedly be a pivotal year for agri policy, with the introduction of the new Agriculture Bill and the Good Food Bill, both of which will have an impact on many of our members. Along with all the other industry bodies, RHASS will have a role to play in helping to meet these challenges.

At this time of year, we start to look ahead to what 2022 will mean for the Society. It is a tremendously exciting year as we prepare to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the very first Highland Show at Queensbury House in 1822. The layout for that first show is enshrined in a frame in Ingliston House – a somewhat simpler plan than the current showground! We cannot wait to be able to bring you all together for the Royal Highland Show at Ingliston to celebrate with us and to finally enjoy our new members pavilion.

As 2022 is the Bicentenary of the first Show, we are working on a plan to develop a new initiative that will build funds to allow us to support specific projects. As a charity, RHASS has at its core a remit to support the agricultural and rural communities of Scotland. This is ever more relevant given the many challenges facing

those communities as we deal with Covid recovery, continue to tackle issues of isolation, wellbeing and mental health and also face up to the new challenges presented by climate change and carbon emissions. Our continued support of RHET (Royal Highland Education Trust) further allows us to have an influence at grass roots level to educate, raise awareness and promote food, farming and rural life in Scotland.

All I am left to do is to sincerely hope that you are able to celebrate Christmas and New Year with family and friends and to wish you well as we approach the end of another tumultuous year. Let's all look forward to June 2022... make sure the date is in your diary!

*Bill Gray*

Bill Gray, Chairman



# RHASS AWARDS & GRANTS

## WOMEN IN FOOD & AGRICULTURE SUMMIT

RHASS will fund six places at the forthcoming Women in Food and Agriculture (WFA) Summit.

The event will provide attendees a valuable platform to network and learn from other women working across the worldwide food and agricultural sector. Successful applicants will also have access to the WFA Community Hub for 12 months, allowing ongoing learning and support after the Summit. The deadline for applications has now passed, and successful candidates will be contacted soon.

**The Summit will take place from 14-15 June 2022 in Frankfurt, Germany.**



RHASS is delighted to be supporting the World Clydesdale Show 2022, which will be hosted for the first time in Scotland next year.

Taking place in Aberdeen from 20th-23rd October 2022, the event will showcase the very best of the Clydesdale breed across various ridden and showing classes. With a charitable remit to promote the interests of the farming and rural industries, RHASS is providing a grant of £5,000 for the event, which was last held in the US in 2018.

Clydesdale horses are a huge part of Scotland's agricultural heritage and this was showcased at the 2019 Royal Highland Show's Clydesdale Celebration.

## OXFORD FARMING CONFERENCE



Earlier this year, RHASS put out a call for applications from ambitious young people from, or based in, Scotland wishing to attend the 2022 Oxford Farming Conference which will take place 5 – 7 January 2022 both virtually, and in person, in Oxford.

Annabel Brown has been selected to attend on a fully funded RHASS scholarship where she will have the opportunity to hear from inspiring and challenging speakers from across the world as well as networking with key individuals shaping the farming sector. Annabel is the Chair of the SAYFC Development & Wellbeing Committee and is a Project Coordinator for Lantra Scotland.

## NUFFIELD FARMING SCHOLARSHIP

Vic Ballantyne from Brora has been awarded RHASS funding, provided in partnership with the Worshipful Company of Farmers, for a 2022 Nuffield Farming Scholarship.

Vic, a farmer and B&B owner, will undertake a study titled 'Too fat? A study on female livestock in areas with extreme seasonal variability'.

The successful Scholars undertake international trips to further their understanding and knowledge of their chosen study topic. On return from their travels, they present their findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the industry in a variety of formats, including a written report and a presentation at the Annual Nuffield Farming Conference.



# REMEMBERING HARRY SLEIGH

## All at the Society were deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Harry Sleigh in October.

Harry was a hugely popular, and successful, exhibitor at the Royal Highland Show - he, his father and grandfather claimed an incredible 56 Championship titles over their many years of competing with Shetland ponies, Clydesdale horses, and commercial sheep. The Sleigh family have a long association with the Society as Directors and exhibitors, and kindly donated several trophies to the Show over the years. Harry's impact on the Highland Show and wider showing community cannot be overstated, and he will be sorely missed among the stocklines.

Highlights from Harry's Royal Highland Show career include 2015 & 2019, when Harry claimed Shetland and Overall Heavy Horse Champion (the Sanderson Trophy) in both years. In 2016 he also won the John Millar Trophy, which is awarded to the stockperson who makes the best presentation of their stock and the greatest contribution to fostering goodwill in the stocklines. Most recently his Shetland Pony stallion, Wells Dancing Brave, was Standard Champion at the Showcase earlier this year, and sold after the buyer viewed the pony on the livestreaming platform.

The Sleigh family, of St Johns Wells, Fyvie, first started exhibiting at the Royal Highland Show in 1864 and are believed to be the longest continually exhibiting family with the greatest number of Champions to its credit. Three generations have served as Directors of the Society, including Harry's great grandfather Alec Sleigh, who bred Clydesdales.

Back in 2019, Harry Sleigh shared his Royal Highland Show memories with us.

*"The Royal Highland Show is a real highlight in the calendar for anybody involved in agriculture. Working in agriculture can be lonely at times and the Show is absolutely one of those places where you can meet new people, as well as catch up with old friends."*

*"The Show is very much about the coming together of the older and younger generations. When young children come to the Show, it shows them just how diverse the industry is. They are able to see for themselves the huge range of different organisations that exist, and it opens their eyes to pathways in the industry and they can see what opportunities are out there."*

Harry's loss will have a huge impact on the Royal Highland Show community, and our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.



HARRY AND HIS SISTER SUSAN PREPARING NCC SHEEP FOR THE SHOW IN JUNE 1976



SHETLAND PONY WELLS VASHA, SHOWN HERE WITH THE QUEEN MOTHER AND HARRY'S SISTER, WAS CHAMPION IN 1968



# LOOKING BACK ON 2021

2021 was undoubtedly a year of ups and downs. With restrictions eased, we were delighted to see that many events in the agricultural & rural sectors could go ahead, including the Royal Highland Showcase.

All at RHASS were kept focused over the last year to ensure that our charitable remit continued to be fulfilled. Here, we take a look back at some of the main activities of the Society during 2021 under our key pillars of innovation, education, heritage, sustainability and culture.



FILMING AT THE 2021 ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOWCASE



GOLD TECHNICAL INNOVATION AWARD WINNER  
CALIBRATE'S HEATPUMP SYSTEM

## INNOVATION

### The Royal Highland Showcase

In June 2021, the Royal Highland Showcase was held, successfully drawing in over 400,000 viewers from over 100 countries to watch 252 hours of livestreamed footage over the week-long event.

### Technical Innovation Awards

The RHASS Technical Innovation Awards once again saw an impressive number of entries from a wide variety of innovators in the rural and agricultural industries. These included Gold award winners Calibrate Inc for their Heatpump Heat/Chill 6MW System.

### Vaccine centre

The newly completed RHASS members pavilion was transformed into a vaccine centre this year, alongside the Lowland Hall. To date over 225,000 vaccines have been delivered across these venues and we will continue to host the NHS over the coming months as they roll out their booster programme.



SHETLAND PONY COMPETITORS AT THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOWCASE



THE NEW RHASS MEMBERS PAVILION WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A VACCINE CENTRE EARLIER THIS YEAR



(L-R) JACK SMALES – HEAD OF SALES AT CALIBRATE, RICHARD VERNON – DIRECTOR OF HILLHOUSE QUARRY AND SPONSOR OF THE TECHNICAL INNOVATION AWARDS, SUSIE McDONALD – DIRECTOR OF CALIBRATE





PUPILS FROM PARKHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL GET UP CLOSE TO A CALF ON A FARM VISIT

## Royal Highland Education Trust

RHET launched its Year of Beef in September in an effort to educate school children about beef farming. This includes free classroom resources and online learning for teachers and students to access – see page 13 for more information.

## Supporting learning and development

As part of RHASS' charitable remit to support education and promote innovation in the sector, the Society sponsored a variety of awards and grants, including Vic Ballantyne, a Nuffield Farming Scholar for 2022.

# EDUCATION



## Preparing for the 200th Show

In 2022, we will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the first Royal Highland Show. This milestone is marked in a unique supplement in this edition of Society Magazine with a special timeline tracing the history of the last 200 years of the Royal Highland Show.

HIGHLAND CATTLE AT THE INVERNESS SHOW, 1956. 2022 IS THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

# HERITAGE



THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR HAS BEEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT THIS YEAR

# SUSTAINABILITY

## COP26

RHASS Chairman Bill Gray hosted MSPs at his arable farm in East Lothian this October to highlight the farm's sustainable practices ahead of COP26 in Glasgow.

Chief Executive Alan Laidlaw wrote in the Scotsman about the ways that we can cultivate a sustainable agricultural sector and took part in several events in the COP26 calendar representing the sector.

# CULTURE

## Sir William Young Award

The late Alasdair Houston, of Gretna House Farms in Gretna Green, was awarded the 2021 Sir William Young Award for his exceptional contribution to the world of cattle breeding.

## Promoting culture in the sector

The Society have given out a range of awards this year, with the aim of opening new streams to promote the cultural advancement of the sector and the sharing of ideas and best practices. This included funding for 6 places to attend the Women in Food and Agriculture Summit.



SIR WILLIAM YOUNG AWARD WINNER ALASDAIR HOUSTON



# SHOWCASE SUPERSTARS CELEBRATE HOYS SUCCESS

Lexi Brash & Wellbank Gabriel (Harry) are a truly home-grown success story – after securing Champion Junior M&M Ridden Pony at the Royal Highland Showcase in June, they then went on to claim the Championship at the Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) in October.

Lexi and Harry's amazing success is a testament to the hard work of the entire Brash family, including granddad Thomas, sister Kyra and aunt Diane. We spoke to Diane who told us a bit more about Lexi and Harry's partnership.

## How long has Harry been in the family?

"We will have had Harry for 8 years in January, having bought him as a 5-year-old. Lexi's older sister Kyra rode him for a couple of years and won his first ribbons with him, then Lexi took over when Kyra outgrew him. Harry was actually named by Kyra after Harry Styles of One Direction!"

"We are amateurs and home-produced Harry through the ranks – he is very much a family pony and definitely not a field ornament. He hacks out, does show jumping and jump cross and is a true all-rounder – the only thing he doesn't do is hunt, as he thinks he is 16.2 and takes off with all the big horses!"

## Lexi & Harry qualified at the Royal Highland Showcase earlier this year – how did you find it?

"We really enjoyed the Showcase this year. It wasn't as busy or as 'in your face' as usual with all of the big crowds – it was a different but nice atmosphere, and more relaxed. I think everyone was really impressed by the livestreaming in general and just grateful overall that it went ahead."

"Lexi has been competing there since she was 4 in lead rein classes and has come through the ranks to where she is now at age 11 – this year was actually the first time she had competed in a juniors class. Her favourite thing about it was being able to have a gallop in the big arena!"

## What is your family's history with the Royal Highland Show?

"We have been coming to the Highland as a family, as both judges and competitors, for many years. We stay at Linlithgow only about 12 miles from the show ground, so it's very much our local show. I compete too and won reserve supreme hunter back in 2019. This year my dad and I judged the cobs. I judged the ride judge and dad the confirmation."

## What was your HOYS experience like?

"This was both Lexi and Harry's first time competing at HOYS. We were all delighted with her for qualifying



LEXI & HARRY WINNING AT THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOWCASE

but didn't imagine they would win – the whole family is so proud of them and it is a huge feat for them to have their years of hard work pay off.

"Harry was one of only two amateur home-produced ponies in the 12-strong class, so it makes them winning even more amazing. 16,000 horses and ponies competed overall at HOYS this year, so to think they were one of the champions is unbelievable!"

## What is next for Lexi & Harry?

"Harry is now out in the field for the next 2 or 3 months for a well-deserved holiday, before we start to get ready for next year's show season. He and Lexi will be doing M&M working hunter pony and Junior M&M classes. It will be very hard to replicate the season Harry and Lexi have had this year, but we will keep our fingers crossed!"



LEXI (SECOND FROM LEFT) WITH HER SISTER & FRIENDS AT HOYS



HARRY WITH HOYS RIBBON AND RUG





# RHET'S FIRST- EVER VIRTUAL FARM VISIT WEEK HITS THE SPOT WITH SCHOOLS

A RHET ORGANISED FARM VISIT

From the 4th - 8th October, RHET hosted a series of virtual farm visits, with visitors from the UK and around the world choosing from a range of subjects including cows and beef, fruit and vegetables, dairy and milk, sheep farming, arable farming, cereals, and farm animals.

The week-long event was made possible due to RHET's network of passionate volunteers across Scotland – providing recorded videos from the length and breadth of the country.

There were over 2,600 teachers signed up to take part resulting in over 30,000 young people visiting at least one farm during the week.

*"My P3/4 class LOVED the virtual farm visit. It linked perfectly with our topic and the curriculum for excellence. They were so engaged in all the learning, and the videos captured unique insights which were fascinating. A great selection of videos. A great variety of farming types. Thank you all so much for organising this. 10/10!"*

*"My P4/5 class all enjoyed the virtual visits; we chose the alpacas as several of them live on cattle and sheep farms. We have missed our farm visits and regional farming events so this was a good way to bring farming into our school day."*

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR FARM TO FEATURE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL RHET PROJECT COORDINATOR.**



## RHET STRENGTHENS ITS BOARD

RHET is delighted to announce the appointment of three new trustees to its board for 2022: communication specialists Alana Black and Anna Davies, and fundraiser Kirsty Craig.

## SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS HAMPER

The festive season is fast approaching! RHET will be counting down the days till Christmas with their Scottish Christmas Hamper.

Over the month of December, you can learn more about the Scottish produce that goes into producing your Christmas dinner. This includes favourites like pigs in blankets, bread sauce, brussels sprouts, and turkey!

**FOLLOW RHET ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND TWITTER TO KEEP UPDATED AND GET THE NEWS AS SOON AS IT LANDS!**

## RHET AMBASSADORS

Earlier this year RHET put out a call to SAYFC members to become RHET Ambassadors - this was an opportunity for Young Farmers to gain valuable experience within committees, promote food and farming and help educate the next generation. All this while adding to their own skills base and leadership experience.

We are delighted to have 10 RHET Ambassadors from Caithness to the Scottish Borders. They have been tasked with forging links between RHET and SAYFC.

Our youngest Ambassador is Lucy Wilson from Carskerdo Farm, Cupar.

Lucy lives in the East of Fife on a mixed farm of dairy, beef and sheep alongside her grandparents and parents - the farm is very much family run. She is a keen member of Bell Baxter ADS, enjoys meeting new people and getting involved in new things. Lucy left school in May at the end of 5th year and is currently taking a year out before going on to Edinburgh next year to study Rural Business Management.

Lucy says she is looking forward to being involved with RHET Fife to help further her experience in the industry.

RHET is thrilled to be working with the Ambassadors for the current academic year and beyond.



## YEAR OF BEEF UPDATE

RHET's first annual initiative, the Year of Beef, aims to increase awareness of Scottish beef production through providing videos, teaching content and resources for teachers and young people.

The campaign has so far seen the whole RHET network step up to bring together new content, planning frameworks and digital skills, but the charity has found it hard to get recognition for the campaign and initiative beyond its normal agricultural audiences – we will continue to try and achieve wider exposure over the coming months.

The year will culminate with a celebration in the Discovery Centre at the 2022 Royal Highland Show.

**If you can support us in our educational engagement, please email [rhetinfo@rhass.org.uk](mailto:rhetinfo@rhass.org.uk)**

## WHAT'S COMING UP

RHET continue to offer a wide range of online teacher training opportunities and we kick off in 2022 with a 'Make it with Potatoes' primary session on 19th January.

We will also be supporting Scotland's Rural University College (SRUC) in February as we collaborate to share their 'cow to cone' data resource with two secondary teacher events in February.

You can keep up to date with all our upcoming training sessions and new resources at [www.rhet.org.uk/teachers](http://www.rhet.org.uk/teachers)



# A BUSY YEAR FOR THE ROYAL HIGHLAND CENTRE

With events largely shut down last year, 2021 saw the Royal Highland Centre emerge in the new year with a new plan and purpose – not least as the host of the largest vaccination centre in Scotland, having delivered over **225,000** vaccines to date.



VACCINE STATIONS SET UP IN THE RHASS MEMBERS BUILDING

*"I am really pleased with, and hugely proud of, the quality and finish of the pavilion"*



**We caught up with Mark Currie, Director of Operations at RHASS, to find out his reflections on the year the Royal Highland Centre has had, and what he is looking forward to for 2022.**

**What does it mean to you that the RHC played a part in the pandemic as a vaccine centre?**

"From the beginning of the pandemic, we were passionate about supporting the NHS and wider emergency services in whatever way we could. We have an excellent facility and an experienced team who are familiar with handling complex traffic and crowd plans, so we offered the venue straight away.

"We at first developed plans of being a drive-through vaccination centre or a Covid-safe education facility. In the end, and after months of discussions, we were delighted to launch the new members pavilion as a vaccine centre and then later the Lowland Hall as the largest vaccination centre in the country. So personally, for me, it was hugely significant to be able to support the country's recovery in this way."

**What has been the feedback on the RHC as a vaccine centre?**

"Once we were up and running, the feedback on the vaccine centre was extremely positive. We have created an excellent relationship with the NHS, to the point where we are now the only mass vaccination centre in Edinburgh.

"This has likely been down to our team's ability to find solutions to complex issues efficiently, whilst saving the NHS significant money. Being able to use our supply chain in terms of electricians, cleaners, security and duty managers has been a lifeline and has kept our team and buildings busy throughout an otherwise stagnant period for event organisations."

**What was your highlight of the year in regards to the Centre?**

"My highlight was the opening of the new members pavilion in January for the NHS vaccination centre. We were asked to get it live in just two weeks and on the first morning we had major snowstorms. The whole team were on site shovelling snow to make sure we had it open, and seeing the smiles on the faces of people coming through the gates was overwhelming.

"As people were leaving, they were telling us that they couldn't wait to hug their grandkids again, it was a genuinely emotional experience for everyone. It was great to see all the planning coming together and it was also the first time I felt like we had a chance at normality again."



THE NEW RHASS MEMBERS BUILDING

**Which events have gone ahead at the Centre this year?**

"During August and September, we had a run of outdoor events including some familiar faces, like Truckfest, our Supercar experiences, Festival of Motoring and many more. In addition to these commercial events, we were also able to host a RHASS equestrian event which was well received, however the highlight for me was the delivery of the Royal Highland Showcase.

"Whilst we knew we would never replace the Royal Highland Show, it was a fitting substitute under the circumstances and as a result over 400,000 people have engaged with the event online in over 100 countries. Whilst it was an almost eerie atmosphere at times on site, the product for those watching at home or in a tractor was top class and I was really proud of the team, our exhibitors and sponsors for what we were able to achieve in extremely challenging conditions."

**What are you most looking forward to with the official launch of the members pavilion?**

"I am really pleased with, and hugely proud of, the quality and

finish of the pavilion. Being able to welcome members into the space for the RHS200 will be an amazing moment for everyone. The internals of the space are magnificent, the bar is stunning and the new gallery steps looking onto the main ring will ensure a special experience for all attending."

**What is next for the members building?**

"It will continue to support the NHS vaccination programme into 2022 and, whilst we have some exciting events happening later in the year, you will need to wait a little longer until we can announce what is planned!"

**What was the biggest challenge of the last year?**

"The biggest challenge has undoubtedly been to make robust strategic decisions which protect both the Society and the Show for long-term. I strongly feel we have achieved this by making tough decisions early and staying close to decision-makers at government and local authority level.

"This has allowed us to ensure we had robust revenue streams

without over-stretching on expenditure lines – as a result, we have delivered an incredible set of financials for the year end, beyond what anyone had envisaged. In addition to this, the incredible support from our members through the Save Your Show campaign was overwhelming and ensured that we can deliver a spectacular and fitting event on the 200th anniversary of the first ever Show!"

**How you are preparing for the 200th Anniversary Show next year?**

"At the moment we are focusing on some key safety elements which will see the creation of safe seating areas and reduce queuing, pinch points and crowded areas. We have been planning RHS200 for months now and the team are working hard to ensure we deliver not only a safe event, but an occasion and spectacle that exceeds the expectations of all who attend.

"One of the key changes for RHS200 will be the need to buy dedicated tickets for each day and there will also be set capacities, both for parking and attendance, so it is absolutely essential that everyone who wants to attend buys their ticket early to avoid disappointment. The next batch of tickets go on sale early December – last year we sold out Saturday within an hour and the rest went within a couple of days, so please book early to avoid disappointment!"\*

*\*Members tickets will also be secured online, visit page 18 for more information.*



INTERIOR OF THE MEMBERS BUILDING



# INTRODUCING THE 2022 HIGHLAND PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE

By Ewan Macdonald, President

We are so looking forward to celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Royal Highland Show. After two very difficult years, it is an especially important year for us all and we feel extremely privileged here in the Highlands and Islands to promote our Presidential Initiative for 2022.

Our headline topic will focus on natural capital and investing and utilising all the sustainable opportunities in the Highlands and Islands, such as wind, wave, tide, hydro, biomass, solar and, newest of all, hydrogen. With our vast land mass and coastal area we like to think of ourselves as a leader of renewable energy in Europe, if not the world.

As I write this, Scotland is hosting COP26 with representatives from over 200 countries, businesses and NGOs. In my lifetime I have never known such level of activity or discussion on the topic. A great example, perhaps, would be the large land purchases for tree-planting to offset the carbon footprint from companies not typically connected to agriculture.

It is imperative we defend our livestock industry and we plan to incorporate presentations and talks to demonstrate that cattle are not bad news for Scotland's environment. We will be promoting the vast array of high quality, specialty food and drink from our area with a focus on our smaller producers, for whom the RHS is a tremendous marketing opportunity.

Tourism is another major contributor to the economy of the Highlands and Islands and, despite the recent lack of international travel, we have become an even more popular holiday destination due to our great open spaces and our



(L-R) THE 2022 PRESIDENTIAL TEAM - SANDY CUMMING CBE, ANDREW SHEPHERD, EWAN MACDONALD, ISOBEL MCCALLUM, ROD MACKENZIE

abundant lochs, mountains and glens. Staycations have increased demand and interest in healthier outdoor pursuits including mountain-biking, hill-walking, surfing and wild swimming to name but a few.

Our area has always worked with and promoted the Royal Highland Educational Trust. We hope to inspire our young people to value our region's natural capital and increase awareness of our economic and environmental opportunities through fun, engaging educational presentations and pursuits.

Within our team we have avid viewers of The Great British Bake off and we are currently under discussion as to what might be Our Show Stopper. Watch this space!

I think it hugely important that all visitors have a fantastic experience at the Show, to enjoy the new pavilion, to meet up with associates and friends, old and new alike, and to rekindle the energy and passion in the industry which we love and rely on. We look forward to seeing everyone at this long-awaited event.

## Festive food – A treat from Ballintaggart

Nestled in the heart of Highland Perthshire, Ballintaggart is home to a farm steading, hotel and restaurant serving local, seasonal produce. A family partnership, Ballintaggart Farm and the accompanying Grandtully Hotel is run by Chris, Rachel and Andrew Rowley.

Here, Chris shares with us this delicious recipe for roe deer carpaccio with Blue Murder, pickled shallot & nasturtium aioli – perfect for entertaining this festive season.



### Roe deer carpaccio with Blue Murder, pickled shallot & nasturtium aioli

SERVES 4

#### Equipment required

Chopping board  
Sharp knife  
Cling film  
Frying pan  
Saucepan  
Sieve  
Blender  
Piping bag (not essential)

#### Ingredients

300g roe deer loin  
150g Blue Murder, cut into small cubes  
Small handful of nasturtium leaves to garnish  
Sea salt and black pepper

#### For the pickled shallot

300ml white wine vinegar  
1 tbsp coriander or fennel seeds  
200ml water  
100g sugar  
5 banana shallots

#### For the nasturtium aioli

2 egg yolks  
A splash of white wine vinegar  
2 garlic cloves  
½ tsp of Dijon mustard  
300ml nasturtium oil (300g nasturtium leaves, 500ml rapeseed oil)  
Squeeze of lemon juice  
Salt and pepper



#### Method

Use a prime cut of roe deer such as loin. Trim off all sinew and fat, season well and sear over a high heat in a frying pan for colour. Allow to cool then roll into cylinder shape using cling film. Put in the freezer - for at least 24 hours, but up to 3 months. Remove from freezer and slice as thinly as possible using sharp knife or mandolin.

For the pickled shallot, peel and slice the shallots thinly. Put the white wine vinegar, sugar, seeds, and water in a pan and bring to the boil. Once the sugar has dissolved, allow to cool and pour over thin slices of shallot. Store the pickling liquid in a sealed container or jar.

For the nasturtium oil, blanch 300g of nasturtium leaves in a pot of boiling water for 10 seconds, then plunge into ice cold water. Drain the nasturtium leaves, squeezing out as much water as possible and place in a blender with 500ml of rapeseed oil. Blend for 1 minute and pass through a fine sieve.

For the aioli, place the egg yolks, vinegar, mustard, garlic and a pinch of salt into a food processor and blend. Keep the food processor running and slowly drizzle in the nasturtium oil. As you do this, you will see the egg yolk mixture emulsify and it should thicken. If you add the oil too quickly then the aioli will split, so it is important to do this stage slowly. When you have achieved the desired consistency of the aioli, season well. If the aioli becomes too thick, thin it down with a squeeze of lemon juice. Place aioli into a piping bag.

#### To serve

Arrange roe deer and aioli on a serving plate, scattering the shallot and Blue Murder on top. Season well. Garnish with extra nasturtium leaves.





RHASS DIRECTORS FOR 2021/22

## RHASS MEMBER UPDATES

**Important information for all members. You must book your days for the Royal Highland Show 2022.**

The way members will access the Royal Highland Show is changing for 2022.

We will no longer send out member badges in the mail as we have done in previous years, all member tickets will be processed online and exchanged for physical badges on entry to the show.

Capacity restrictions and Covid-safe requirements for the 2022 Royal Highland Show mean that we will be asking all our members to let us know in advance which days they intend to come to the Show. In order to book and receive the correct passes to enter the Show, each member will need to provide us with an individual email address. **The same email account cannot be used by more than one member.**

Thank you to the many thousands of members who have already provided us with their email addresses. If we don't have an individual, up-to-date email address for your membership, please contact the team at [membership@rhass.org.uk](mailto:membership@rhass.org.uk) as soon as possible quoting your membership number (found on your membership card) and your full name and address, including postcode.

We will be in touch with you nearer the time to let you know how to book your days at the 2022 Royal Highland Show along with any additional tickets and car parking etc.

### DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

The Board of Directors is responsible for the governance of the Society and all RHASS members are entitled to stand for election as an Ordinary Director for the area in which they are resident. Nominations

are now open for Ordinary Directors for the term 2022-2026.

Diversity of experience and background strengthen the decision-making processes of the Board and RHASS welcomes applications from all members. If you would like to be sent a nomination form, or are interested in finding out more about becoming a Director of RHASS or the election process, please contact the Society Secretary, Marie Livingstone, at [mlivingstone@rhass.org.uk](mailto:mlivingstone@rhass.org.uk) or the Honorary Secretary, James Logan, on [james@athelstaneford.com](mailto:james@athelstaneford.com).

The closing date for receipt of nominations is 5pm on Wednesday 12 January 2022. In the event of there being two or more valid nominations in any area, information on how to vote will be provided to all members who are resident in that area.

### GENERAL MEETINGS

The Society's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is planned for Thursday 28 April at 4pm. Please join us as this is a great opportunity to catch up with fellow members, ask questions of the Directors and learn more about RHASS's work.

Depending on government guidelines, we hope to be able to meet in person. Information on how to join will be provided nearer the time.

Ahead of the AGM, we are planning a short General Meeting in December to make some administrative changes to the Bye-Laws to simplify electronic communication with our members on governance matters.

For both meetings, please keep an eye on our website and social media, along with the Scottish Farmer, for more information and details on how to join.

## THE LAST WORD



*Despite challenges, the legacy of 2021 is not without its positives*

**As we reflect on the year that was 2021, I can't help but think of my Last Word in the 2020 winter edition of Society and how far we have come since then. In December 2020, the Society was still reeling from the impact of a 'no-show' year and the many other challenges thrown up by the pandemic.**

Not to tempt fate, but this year things are looking brighter, and it truly feels like we have weathered a storm and came out the other side stronger. As highlighted earlier in the magazine, we are planning a full Show for 2022 which will be all the more special as it marks the bicentenary of the first ever Royal Highland Show, which took place in Edinburgh's Canongate in 1822. The team are working flat out to plan a Show that will more than make up for missing last year – watch this space for updates in the new year.

Despite challenges, the legacy of 2021 is not without its positives. What the past year has shown us is that we are resilient, and the incredible response to the Save Your Show campaign has proven the value of the Show to our rural sector and highlighted how willing people are to lend their support and enthusiasm. The global reach of the Showcase this year

in particular has been humbling, with people tuning in from as far afield as Australia and the Philippines. Both the Showcase and the Save Your Show campaign have confirmed just how indebted we are to our members, sponsors, and the wider community.

I'd like to thank both our directors and staff team, who have all shown inspiring amounts of collaboration and togetherness – it is only when difficult times hit that you realise how strong the bonds between everyone have become.

Of course, the road between now and June won't be without its bumps and turns – but we hope to see you all back at Ingliston next year for what will be a very special celebration of the best of Scotland's food, farming and rural life.

In the meantime, I wish you and yours the very best of health and happiness for the festive season and the New Year!

Alan Laidlaw, Chief Executive





DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AT RBS RODDY MACLEAN WITH  
OVERALL CONTINENTAL BEEF CHAMPION BRITISH LIMOUSIN