

THE PEDIGREE  
WELSH PIG SOCIETY



Y GYMDEITHAS FOCH  
O GWEHLYTH GYMREIG

*Newsletter*

*December 2011*

*The board of Directors would like to thank members for their continued support and wish you all success for 2012.*



Merry  
Christmas  
&  
Happy  
New Year!

**Content:**

**Winter Fair Report; Brooksby Melton College; AGM Report; Membership Fees**





## Royal Welsh Winter Fair 2011

With memories of the 2010 Winter Fair hit by snow and ice still fresh, the RWAS had taken precautions this year against the possibility of repeated bad weather. These included a stockpile of grit, a contractor on standby, and investing in electrically heated tape to protect water pipes against freezing. In the event, however, they were not needed and visitors poured through the gates at Llanelwedd over the two days of the Fair to create a record attendance of 27,995 – 6840 up on last year and 1000 up on the previous record that had stood since 2006.

**Three Pedigree Welsh Pigs, kindly loaned by St Fagans Museum of Welsh Life, drew in hundreds of visitors to the PWPS stand at this year's Royal Welsh Winter fair.**



Heavy rain during the second day of the fair forced many visitors to seek shelter in the trade stand area which only added to the already high levels of interest on the PWPS stand resulting in new memberships being taken out and many more asking for further information about the Pedigree Welsh Pig Society and project.

The pigs formed the focal point of the stand with interested visitors trying their hand at guessing the combined weights of the 3 pigs, the actual weight declared at the end of the show was 210kg. There were over 400 entries in the prize draw. The nine correct answers were put to a second draw to provide the winner who was Phil Melland of Leek, who receives a £20 M&S voucher.

A back fat measurement demonstration carried out by Nigel Bennet of Schippers , using the hand held Renco lean meter, showed the differences in fat thickness between the 3 pigs which individually measured 11mm, 14mm and 15 mm. This demonstration was arranged to show how simple it can be to gather back fat thickness on the live animal as part of the performance testing programme. This measuring enables vital information to be gathered for indexing and identification of leaner animals in the breed improvement programme. It also demonstrated that pigs that might look of even finish are not always so!

As a result of the demonstration we have a number of breeders who are keen to get hold of one of these meters to try out performance testing on their farm.

**To repeat the message in the October newsletter:**

**If you are interested in becoming involved by providing information about your herd's performance, please let project manager David Moorhouse know on 01270 624619.**

**Remember, performance testing of herds, both large and small, is a vital step in the Welsh pig genetic improvement programme.**

## **Show Awards**

**BOTH** the top **single** and the **pair championships** in the pig ring went to home-bred Welsh entries from **Andrew Davies**, Trial Mawr, Llanon, Ceredigion. The champion single was bought by the judge Arwyn Morgans, Builth Wells, for £272.

The pork pig winners were PWPS members **Joyce and Geralt Owens**.

Farmers son and PWPS member **Tomos Hopkin**, 18, from Gwyrhyd Mountain Meat, Rhiwfawr, near Swansea became the first butcher to complete a hat-trick of wins in the **Welsh Young Butcher Competition** at the Royal Welsh Winter Fair 2011.

It has been a memorable year for the young butcher, who this summer also won the **Grand Slam British Young Butcher of the Year title**, beating rivals from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland

**Congratulations go to both Andrew and Tomos on their success!!**



## Brooksby Melton College

Brooksby Melton College (BMC) based in the heart of Leicestershire has been a farming college since 1946. The 850 acre estate provides essential hands-on experience to students studying agriculture.

In 2005 three Pedigree Welsh gilts from the **Empress** line and a boar from the **Soundvilla Herd** were purchased. These pigs formed the foundation stock for the **Brooksby Herd** which has now grown to ten sows, used extensively as a student resource and for commercial meat production.

Seventy five percent of the day to day tasks are performed by students. The college teaches a range of skills from basic pig husbandry through to A.I and the selection of finished pigs.



The students also learn how to prepare the pigs for the show ring and have enjoyed many successes. In June 2011 at the East of England Show, the young boar **Brooksby Earl 2** won Breed Champion, and over all Supreme Champion. Both he and his sister **Brooksby Empress 32** qualified for the Pig of the Year competition. Perhaps the most highly prized win so far was awarded to Brooksby Empress 32, shown in the picture opposite.

Competing against sixty five other Breed Champions, winners from all the shows throughout the summer, she came top of the class to win the prestigious Pig of the Year Competition 2011. She then went on to win Reserve Welsh Champion of Champions at the Annual Show & Sale at Beeston in September 2011

The preparation and showing of the pigs is done entirely by BMC students, demonstrating that the skills they have learnt on their course are to a very high standard.

Most of the pork produced is sold through local butcher shops, farmers markets and through the internet. Students regularly weigh the finishing pigs to compare growth rates and the college is keen to extend this to incorporate back fat scanning as part of the Pedigree Welsh Pig Society Project work. Hopefully these young enthusiastic students are the Pig Farmers of the future.

## AGM Report

The AGM took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at the Royal Welsh Show Ground, Builth Wells. After an address by the Society President, Bob Stevenson, the election of new directors to the board took place.



There were four vacant positions due to Helen Tongue, Christine Vaughan and Ken Stebbings stepping down following three years in office (as required by the Articles of Association) and the retirement of Peter Hopkins. There were only four nominations put forward: Helen Tongue, Christine Vaughan, Ken Stebbings and Ken Austin - all of which were elected by a show of hands from the members present and from the postal votes received.

A very forward thinking presentation from David Moorhouse, Project Manager, then followed. David has many good ideas on how the future of the Pedigree Welsh pig can be secured. He did stress the importance of **membership participation is to the success of both the project and the Society.**

After the meeting an excellent lunch was provided by Joyce Owens, Lynda Evans and Carwyn Evans. This was sponsored by **Mole Valley Farmers** to whom we are very grateful. Lynda offered a homemade Christmas cake for auction which, with the skill of Teifi Evans as auctioneer, made £48. This will go into the Membership account to buffer funds.

The prize draw took place and then the newly elected Board members retired for their first meeting to elect the officers. Helen Tongue was voted in as Chair and Ken Stebbings as Vice Chair. The Company Secretary is Mike Cross.

Sadly, since this meeting Joyce Owen has retired from the board. Being a mother to a small son, working and farming means that there is not enough time to donate fully to being a Director. Thank you Joyce for your work so far.

Contact details for the Board and the Project Manager		
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**Membership fees are due on the 1st January 2012 and new rates apply:**

- (i) Corporate membership, 2 categories;
  - a) £250 to include a website link, Entry in Beeston catalogue, Stand advertising, mention in relevant articles
  - b) £50 for website only aimed at small firms, schools etc.
- (i) Single membership £20 – one vote
- (ii) Joint Membership £25 – two votes
- (iii) Junior Membership (under 18yrs) £10 -no vote

Membership fees are vital to the work of the Society not covered by the SCE funding. This includes sponsorship of the shows and the prize money. Efficient collection of the fees is essential and therefore we would ask all members to pay by standing order where possible.

Those who have standing orders in place will need to either contact their bank to change the amount collected or fill in a new order for the amended amount. There is a standing order form accompanying this newsletter to be returned to the address below.

**PWPS, c/o Rhydybennau, Pentrecwrt, Llandysul, SA44 5AJ.**



If you would prefer to pay by cheque then please send a cheque for the appropriate amount to the above address.

We are updating the membership database and therefore we would be grateful if you could fill in the enclosed form and return it so that we know we have your details correct. Or you could email the details to [pstebbing@gmail.com](mailto:pstebbing@gmail.com). It is often the case that phone numbers and email addresses change without us knowing. In the interest of saving postage costs we would like you to indicate if you would be willing to receive your news letter by email. Please also let us know if you require a receipt.

**Society Ties**

Don't forget to order your Society ties: Cost £10.00 (plus P&P where necessary). Any profit from the sale of merchandise will go back to The Membership Account. E-mail [htongue07@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:htongue07@hotmail.co.uk)