

The 136th Annual General Meeting of the Jersey Cattle Society of the UK...

By kind permission of the Reader Family, Barnowl Jerseys, Northamptonshire.

The Annual General Meeting is always a great opportunity for Jersey breeders to come together to hear about the latest Society news and reports as well as a chance to catch up with old friends and meet a few new ones! This year the 136th AGM took place on 7th August at Cloisters Farm, Brackley, Northamptonshire by kind permission of the Reader Family and the renowned Barnowl Jersey herd. It was a privilege for the Society to be able to host the AGM at the home of the Reader family and join them as they celebrated 50 years since the formation of the Barnowl herd. Charles, Frances, Andrew and Heidi had meticulously prepared for the day, decorating the venue with illustrations from over 50 years of successful showing. There was also a unique display of many of the exquisite Jersey paintings, from self-taught artist, the late Frank Poskitt. Society Chairman, Mr John Whitby welcomed over 50 members and introduced Charles, Frances, Andrew, Heidi and their daughter Kaja, before Mr Whitby and Mr Charles Reader spoke in turn about the order for the day.

The Annual General Meeting started at 10.00am as the Chairman of the Society invited the Society's President, Mrs Lena Lewis, to chair the day.

The President expressed how pleased she was to welcome members, both new and old, to this year's 136th Annual General Meeting, thanking the Reader family for allowing the Society to host their AGM. Mrs Lewis felt the day would no doubt provide a great opportunity for members to see some great cows and cow families.

Following the apologies received, the President held a minute's silence for members who had sadly passed away over the year.

Chairman's Report

Mr Whitby reported on the work and events that had taken place over the course of the year and the new opportunities the Society had been working on for members which would be coming to fruition.

Mr Whitby also reflected on his position as Chairman, commenting he had not come into the role with a radical agenda: but rather to try and enable some of the things he thought he could contribute to and to get the job done, and if possible, pass on the mantle to the next Chairman with the Society in a good place. He continued, the Board, all of whom were unpaid volunteers, were very ably supported by the office team Emma and Allison and Field Service Officer Becky. They enabled the Society to go the extra mile to serve its members. Mr Whitby went on to say the Society has been enriched over the years by the presence of many wonderful characters. He talked warmly of Frank Poskitt who was President Elect at the time of his passing.

Mr Whitby noted the Board had continued to deliver the traditional activities of the Society: registering cows, ensuring breed sanctity and purity, supporting shows, especially the National Show in October; supporting members and encouraging our young members, alongside delivering some extra projects. In short, the Board had set about providing, to the best of its ability, what it had perceived as necessary to deliver what members expected from its Society. All this demanded financial resources and the Society was very lucky to have the wherewithal to facilitate this.



Members were welcomed to Barnowl Jerseys and Society Chairman John Whitby delivered his report.

The Society was always looking to new and innovative ideas and for the past year and a half the Society had been in comprehensive talks and made an agreement with the Scandinavian Company VikingGenetics. Mr Whitby welcomed the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the VikingGenetics Jersey Committee both of whom had travelled from Denmark to join the AGM. The basis of the agreement was a mutually beneficial arrangement helping VikingGenetics to access potential bulls and bull mothers from Society members, which if the animal progressed to stud, would be well remunerated. The Society's costs in this process would be covered with one of the objectives to provide new opportunities to commercial members whilst at the same time diversifying the genetic pool on offer from Viking. A full statement on the agreement is available on the website. Furthermore, as part of the Society's duties, considerable time and effort had been spent considering its investments. Mr Whitby said he would expand on this later in the AGM. Also comprehensive work had been completed to ensure inclusivity within the Society and creation of opportunities for all. To this end the Society's Articles of Association had been updated to become

more fit for that purpose.

One of the many highlights of the activities carried out in the past year, Mr Whitby reflected, was the Jersey Breeders Day held in Northern Ireland. The event was an open invitation to all Jersey cattle breeders and enthusiasts. It had been supported by breeding and feeding companies with a very informative range of speakers focusing on specialist Jersey topics. The day had been framed in the splendour of the beautiful Clandeboye Estate setting a fantastic precedent for a format which could be repeated across the United Kingdom.

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director, Mr Bland provided his first annual finance report for the period ending 31 December 2018, reporting the Society had made a small loss of £942.82. This figure, although slightly negative, was in line with the careful decisions made by the directors. Income and Expenditure: The Society had an improved fourth quarter of the year, helped by a better milk price and our Field Service Officer's and office team's work on registrations, whilst the Society had managed to reduce purchases and overheads by 21.4% through restructuring and sensible budgeting.

Balance Sheet: The Society had continued to retain net assets of just under one million pounds even though one of its investment properties, managed by the Addington Fund, had dropped in value due to essential maintenance work. Also, as reported under point 24 in the 2018 accounts, the Society's accountants had advised a re-evaluation of the way our investments at Addington were to be considered. These changes had led them to recommend a prior year adjustment and resetting of the criteria for assessment of the realisable value of the loans held by Addington. Moreover, St James's Place who manage the Society's other investments, did not perform as well in 2018.

In the light of these impromptu changes the board intend to conduct a full independent review of all investments in the next financial year. The review would be designed to help verify that the Society has a long term robust financial footing and ensure the security of the Society's fund was optimised.

2018 Activity: Mr Bland explained the board had looked strategically at the Jersey cow, its milk and its products, and how to return the value of the pedigree registration to members. In 2018, the Board allocated funds to increase show attendance, to the young breeders and to the National show. Continuing to support the Society's Field Service Officer Becky Hurd, enabling her to be seen by as many members and non-members as possible.

On the world stage the Society supported its President, Mrs Lena Lewis as she attended the World Jersey Cattle Bureau and the European Jersey Forum to represent UK members and it would be the aim to continue this work in 2019.

The Jersey Pavilion at Stoneleigh Park now generated a valued income and for now, Mr Bland was content to maintain the status quo but the Board would be keeping a watchful eye on future developments at Stoneleigh.

At the close of his report, the accounts for the period ending 2018 were formally approved and adopted and Old Mill Accountants were approved to continue as the Society's Accountants for 2019.

Elections

The President then moved onto the election of directors to the board. The President explained the current number of vacancies and at this year's AGM, Mr Mark Logan and Mr Mark Davis would be standing for re-election onto the Board, whilst Mrs Helen Cox had chosen not to re-stand. Both Mr Logan and Mr Davis were re-elected. Furthermore, two Members of the Society, Mrs Tracey Bunney (Lakeland) and Mr Douglas Hume (Grahams) were elected onto the Board.

As mentioned earlier in the Chairman's report, the Society's revised Articles of Association were proposed by Special Resolution and passed by a show of hands, with no opposition. (Please visit www.ukjerseys.com to download a copy of the 2019 Articles of Association).

Mr Bland, Finance Director, spoke about the requirement to seek an extension of the full mandate given by members for the Board to achieve the best possible long-term solution in respect of the Jersey Pavilion in Warwickshire. Members, David Shaw, Charles Reader, Iain Howie and Brenda Leddy put forward items for consideration. The mandate was agreed.

Under other business, the President, Mrs Lewis expressed her sadness at the loss of so many current and past members of the Society, not least that of the Society's President Elect, Frank Poskitt, whose presence at Board meetings, Society gatherings, shows and of course, at the Jersey Young Breeders weekend would be sorely missed.

Mrs Lewis continued how apt it was that a friend of Frank's, a family man and lifelong supporter of the breed now took up the role of President. She spoke of how well-known Mr John Stubbs was by many Jersey Breeders, a leading member with previous service on the Board. Mrs Lewis welcomed Mr Stubbs into his role before Mr Stubbs stood to say a few words.

Mr Stubbs replied he was taking on the position of President in unfortunate circumstance. Nonetheless, he was extremely honoured and thanked the Society for asking him to become President for the years 2020 and 2021.

VikingGenetics Collaborative Agreement Announcement

The Society Chairman, Mr Whitby spoke about ongoing ways in which the Board were looking to find new opportunities for members. He highlighted that the development of the JCS and VikingGenetics Breeding Programme Agreement provided just that opportunity.

Mr Whitby asked Mr Bent Olesen, as Chairman of the Danish Cattle Society and



Above: L-R Ole Sorensen, Vice Chairman of the Danish Jersey Breeding Committee of VikingGenetics, JCS President, Mrs Lena Lewis and Bent Olesen, Chairman of the Danish Cattle Society and as Chairman of the Jersey Committee of VikingGenetics.

Chairman of the Jersey Committee of VikingGenetics to join him at the top table. The full statement made by Mr Whitby at the AGM can be found on the website www.ukjerseys.com

In summary, Mr Whitby reported a mutually beneficial agreement, explaining the Jersey Cattle Society of the UK and VikingGenetics would be working together to identify females and male animals on farms in this country who might have the potential to enter into the Viking Breeding Programme. Please also refer to the feature written in this issue of the UKJT by Peter Larson of VikingGenetics on page 12-13.

Mr Whitby went on to make the following statement about the Society's investments.

"The work and restructuring which had taken place back in 2007 saw the Society's interest in a property in Reading sold. This money had then been placed into two investment vehicles; firstly, the Addington fund and secondly, in stocks and shares with St James's Place. Mr Whitby reported the Society had approximately £834,534 under investment. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance and legal advice received, the Board was in the process of undertaking a full review of its current investments and future investment strategy. The Society had engaged a firm of independent professional investment advisers, that specialised in the charitable sector. This may result in a change to our investment approach and our portfolio of investments.

Concerning the Society's investments with the Addington Fund, Mr Whitby reminded members that at last year's AGM, member Mr Huxtable asked a question about the Society's involvement with the Addington Fund. As many members might be aware, the 'Addington Fund is a well-known farming charity whose mission is to help farmers in England and Wales with disaster relief and to provide housing for displaced farming families.' The Society currently has approximately £542,000 invested with the Addington Fund.

The investment held with the Addington Fund was in the form of a loan to Addington for its purchase of three rental properties, that it leases to tenants, and in turn generates for the Society monthly income and a share in any capital growth of those properties. Two of these loans were secured against the respective Addington properties. The Society was presently in negotiations with Addington over the redemption of the third loan, following Addington's disposal of a part-interest in the third property, the proceeds of which the Society would then look to reinvest.

The financial information for Addington published on the Charity Commission's website

show it being in good health for the financial year ending 31 March 2018, with over £11m of net assets. It's results for 2019 were not due for report until the end of this year'.

At the conclusion of the statement, no questions were received.

Before the close of the AGM, Mrs Lewis asked if members had any other questions, they wished to raise for the Society to consider.

Mr Mark Taylor spoke about the impending problem of bull calves, Mr Iain Howie spoke about the importance of the Society reaching members across the UK and Mrs Su Mahon hoped the Society may be able to attend the Royal Norfolk show next year. All questions were noted as actions for the Board.

At conclusion of questions, the President, Mrs Lewis thanked members for their attendance before declaring the Society's 136th Annual General Meeting closed and then commenced the Society Awards.

Society Awards

2017-2018 Milk Production Awards Director, Mr Mark Logan, announced the winners of the prestigious 2017-2018 Milk Production Awards. For full results visit:

<http://www.ukjerseys.com/events/competitions/2019/mpc.pdf>

Barnowl Jerseys were one of the Milk

Production winners for 2017-2018, winning the Barnowl Trophy Best Female Family, which looks for three females, classified, linked to a common dam with three generations, combined total of butterfat and protein in the last completed lactations (305 days or less) in the relevant recording year.

Star Brood Cow Award

The Star Brood Cow award is in recognition of proven ability to raise the standards of type and production in the Jersey Breed through performance of her progeny.

5 Gold Stars were awarded to Killington Avery A Eleanor VG88, bred and owned by Member, Mr John Waller, Killington Jerseys (pictured below).



Mr Andrew Reader collecting the Barnowl Trophy.

Weydown Jubilee Award

The Weydown Jubilee Trophy is presented each year to an individual member who the Society feels has contributed the most to the breed and the Society in the past 12 months.

The Society's Chairman, John Whitby announced the Society's outgoing President, Mrs Lena Lewis as the recipient of the award for this year (pictured below). Mrs Lewis had been seen the length and breadth of the country and abroad representing the Jersey Cattle Society of the UK, above and beyond the call of duty.



Before the close of the awards, Mrs Lewis presented the Reader Family with a personalised hand painted Milk Churn with flowers to Frances and Heidi, thanking the family for providing such a wonderful venue to hold the AGM. Following the awards and gifts, the Reader family took centre stage.

50 YEARS OF BARNOWL JERSEYS AND THE FUTURE OF THE HERD AND FARM

Charles, Andrew and his wife Heidi had worked extremely hard to prepare the presentations given.

Charles delivered an extensive presentation on the history of the herd, with the purchase of the first pedigree Jersey in 1969, the move to Cloisters Farm in 1984 right up to the succession planning which was being successfully implemented.

The Barnowl herd is one of the most highly regarded Jersey herds, with the cow families of Fanfare, Victorias and Isis forming the foundation of the herd. The herd today has grown to some 120 milkers, 100 followers, averaging 6937kg at 5.37% fat and 3.89% protein

Andrew and Heidi, the next generation of the Reader family, with their beautiful daughter Kaja, spoke about how, as a family, they had worked hard to achieve a succession plan that was not only feasible but offered longevity for the future of the farm and the herd.

Working with Charles, Andrew plans to continue to develop the herd along the same lines as Charles and Frances have worked so hard to create, with the next steps for the whole herd to become A2A2 and BVD free. Alongside this, Heidi works tirelessly to support Andrew and the farm, carrying out the bookkeeping and the extensive paperwork involved with the EU RDPE growth grant application for business development for the planned farm shop development at Cloisters Farm. The family told that the hardest part, after the grant application, was securing the finance for the application. It was FolktoFolk and Moorgate Finance who came to their aid when traditional banking options were closed to them. Heidi and Andrew have great plans for producing and selling their own produce from the farm shop development as well as selling local produce and forming a butchery in the farm shop. Members were also treated to the homemade fudge Heidi plans to sell which she had made especially for members to try on the day.

As Heidi and Andrew drew their presentation to a close, Heidi gave some great advice and honest words about succession; "Communication is key. Our experience is that succession is not easy and for many it is not a comfortable subject, however early conversation is essential. We utilised positive support from a succession planning service, when conversations became strained, which really helped move the process along."



It was clear to see, that the family had worked extremely hard to get where they were and achieve what they had accomplished so far. This would enable the future of the farm and herd to become stronger and hopefully, as Andrew and Heidi's motto stands to make it to "#150barnowl".

Following Charles, Andrew and Heidi Reader's presentations, local caterers supplied a wholesome lunch, ably organised by Frances Reader, before members toured the farm and viewed the Barnowl herd with Charles and Andrew.

YOUR 2019-2020 BOARD:

Following the close of the AGM, the Board of Directors met to hold a short board meeting to appoint the position of Chairman and Finance Director.

The following appointments were made:

- Society Chairman - John Whitby
- Finance Director - Steven Bland

