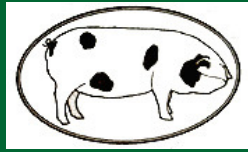


Spot Press



Volume 17 No.4

WINTER 2007-08

What Do Members Want?

The Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders' Club is the second oldest of the pig breeders' clubs and the largest. It has arguably been a major contributor in the rise in both population numbers and public awareness of the breed. As we enter the eighteenth year of existence, there is an ongoing perception among those given responsibility for running the Clubs' affairs of a degree of apathy among members.

Requests for input into plans for the centenary go unheeded; attendance at this year's AGM again looks likely to consist of the committee plus a few noble stalwarts; workshops and farm visits are never over-subscribed. Entries for this year's aborted Show & Sale came from committee members plus just three or four (of 350+) members.

For some years now, the committee's anguished cry has been 'what do they want?'

Well, firstly let's look at what the Club offers. There's a good deal to encourage the showing of pigs. The Club provides Championship rosettes at virtually all the shows where GOS are likely to be found. We organize the Northern & Southern Championships and provide qualifying rosettes for eligible pigs plus a sash, rosette and trophy for the winner of each. We also organize the BPA's Champion of Champions and provide the qualifying rosettes and rosette and sash for the winner. Ditto the GOS Pig of the Year points competition. All these help to raise the profile at shows and encourage participation in what is the pedigree pig's shop window. To this end, we also provide free for all paid-up Full & Family Members Public Liability Insurance whilst exhibiting at shows.

Communication and education are another area where the Club is proactive through the publication of *Spot Press*, the website and the provision of the interactive Forum and through occasional workshops and the publication of *Rare Breed Pig Keeping*.

Marketing is another area that the Club gets involved in with its participation in the Breeds of Gloucestershire Show & Sale providing an opportunity for the sale of breeding stock at a dedicated event. Then there's the work going on in trying to secure European protection for

meat from pedigree GOS pigs which should prevent the supermarkets passing off crossbred pork and bacon as 'GOS'. This should be important for all breeder members.

During the exceptional circumstances of the 2007 outbreaks of Foot & Mouth disease, the Club endeavoured to keep members updated of developments through the website and via email.

We also liaise with outside bodies on the breed's behalf such as Defra, the BPA, the RBST etc. We advertise in the smallholding journals and liaise with the press and media to obtain as much PR for the breed as possible.

So why do you, the members, give the impression of not being fully engaged? Certainly you are busy with your pigs, fighting the ever increasing burdens of rising costs and red tape. Perhaps this means you have no time for anything else.

Therefore, in this edition is a questionnaire designed to provide feedback to the committee. Please don't be apathetic and just ignore it but take a few minutes to fill it in and post it back and give us your ideas on what else you think the Club should do and what will get you more involved in Club activities.



A wintery scene at Wick Court where Jonathan Crump's pigs enjoy life in the orchard..

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Club News

Overdue Subscriptions

Notices were sent out in January to all those whose subscriptions had not been paid and we have had a good response. However, some members have resigned by default by not having paid their 2008 subscription by 31st January (see Constitution). If you come across any GOS keepers over the coming months who complain at not receiving communications from the Club, the chances are their membership has lapsed so tell them to contact the Secretary to arrange to rejoin.

There are new people coming into the world of GOS all the time. When newbies approach you about buying pigs or asking advice, do encourage them to join. They can do this via the website—www.oldspots.org.uk—and the subscription represents good value for money.

Website

A reminder that we had to build a brand new website last February and that those of you were registered to participate on Forum on the OLD site must reregister on the new one since the data on the old site was not transferred back to the Club. This is a simple process which does not take long to accomplish.

Is your name and contact details on the website as a GOS breeder of registered stock? If not and you'd like it to be, please contact the Secretary. You will need to sign and return a form re Data Protection but as soon as this has been done, your details will be added for viewing by the thousands of visitors to the site.

The site is undergoing a steady expansion in information included and you should check back from time-to-time to see the most up-to-date information.

In less than a year, the website has clocked up over 44,000 hits from around the world!

Feedback—Secrets Revealed

Following publication of this photograph in the Autumn edition, Stephen Booth, Club Treasurer, phoned to say that another copy of the same picture was hanging in the NFU offices in Lancashire. He duly returned there and noted from the inscription that this was the Whittingham herd belonging to James Allsup at the County Asylum, Whittingham, Preston, Lancashire and that the photo came from a 1921 edition of the Farmers Guardian. According to the early herd books, the Whittingham herd did not last many years and was probably newsworthy as being about the only herd in the North West at the time. Thank you, Stephen!



Judging the Interbreed Championships at the 2004 Three Counties Show. Photo by Richard Lutwyche.

Three Counties Show 13-15 June

Improvements and developments at the Three Counties Show at Malvern have been announced. At the main show (13-14 June), there will be a new Pairs class in each breed with a championship. On the Sunday, the Rare & Minority Breeds Show has had a revised prize list which effectively doubles the prize money. The more entries there are catalogued, the more prize money there is and the more prizes awarded in each class so that for the pigs, instead of a first prize of £12 it can now be £24. Exhibitors can enter just the rare breeds classes on the Sunday if they prefer which can be helpful to novice exhibitors. The GOS judge this year is Dave Overton. Schedules are available in February (01684 584900 or email fonap@threecounties.co.uk) and entries close on 7th April.

Minutes of the 2007 AGM

Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders' Club Annual General Meeting

The Jersey Cattle Pavilion, NAC, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG

Sunday 18th February 2007 at 12.00 noon

MINUTES

Thirty members were in attendance. The President, Judith Sims, took the chair.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Mesdames Sharon Barnfield, Elizabeth Best, Jane Clifford, Gabriel Dudley, Caroline Hextall, Pamela Treadgold, Ann Uglow, Maggie Wilson and Messrs Paul Barrett, John-Paul Body, Peter Bond, Jonathan Crump, David Fenton, Guy & Melany Kiddy, Julian Newth, Chris Penrice, Kevin Sprigg, George Styles, Del & Jan Tapping, Paul Waddington and Mark Woods.

2. Minutes of the 2006 AGM

The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

Lewis Barnfield commented that no red cards were awarded at the Show & Sale in August. General discussion took place and the consensus was that if pigs were not good enough then the decision was correct.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman, Dave Overton, gave his report as follows:

Last Spring the Club was asked by the Cotswold Sheep and Gloucester Cattle societies to join them in 'A Breeds of Gloucestershire Sale' at Cirencester. We agreed to do so and the date was set at 5th August. Unfortunately numbers of entries were disappointing but after some last minute chasing we managed to get 46 entries. Prices were varied, some very good, some not so good even though the event was well attended. I must add that the prices followed the same trend at the BPA sale at Ross a month later. At this point I must thank Richard (Lutwyche) and all his helpers who made the day run smoothly. There has been comment that the sale was just an excuse for a party – the only one I saw was a hard-working one. It has been agreed by the Committee to support the event again this year so pick out some pigs for the sale so that we get more entries.

There has been a lot of debate in recent months about the Cyclic Breeding System and what is right or wrong. To try and sort out this problem, Andrew (Robinson) and I felt that the two longest running breeders of GOS as Chairman and Vice-Chairman should have a meeting with the BPA to discuss the matter. What was said at the meeting was that once the missing herd books had been proofread and corrected (a massive task being undertaken by Andrew) and the DNA analysis completed which should indicate how closely related the breed is. The initial results completed by Dr Rex Walters of some 13,586 pigs is encouraging with inbreeding being relatively stable having peaked in 1996.

According to the BPA database, there are 3,244 live sows and 687 boars so the next stage will be to carry out a survey to eliminate those pigs which are no longer alive. After all this we should be able to develop a clear set of rules to take us through the 21st century.

(cont.../4)

Minutes of the 2007 AGM (cont)

Now I come to a situation that must be a cause of concern for all of us. In the last few weeks, two major supermarkets have been trying to obtain GOS stock to get into having what they will call GOS meat on their shelves which could just be a GOS boar crossed with commercial sows. So I urge you all to refrain from selling them stock or our specialised market will be gone. As you are probably aware, since 1999 Richard (Lutwyche) on behalf of the Club has been trying to get the name of GOS registered in the EU so that only Pork, Bacon etc. from only pedigree stock that has been birth notified can be sold under the label of GOS. After all this time, there has been some movement and they now require a tasting test to be carried out to prove it is better than the rest and we have now committed some of the Club's funds on this trial for the work to be carried out at Bristol University. Richard will no doubt tell you more on this in his Treasurer's Report.

To conclude this report, I have decided to stand down in favour of a younger model.

5. Accounts to 31st October, 2006

The Treasurer, Richard Lutwyche, presented the annual accounts (attached). Income had increased by £1,800; through subscriptions, £1,500; the Show & Sale, £200; and interest earned, £230. Expenditure declined by just under £500 with savings on room rental and insurance but increased expenditure on the website. The result was a surplus of £1,135 which compensated for last year's loss of £1,105.

He went on to expand details of the taste testing needed to secure TSG status for GOS pork and bacon. Defra had verbally offered £5,000, the Traditional Breeds Meat Marketing Co Ltd £1,500 and we were in talks with the RBST for a further £1,000. From the £10,000 that leaves £2,500 which the Club Committee have sanctioned payment for. Discussion took place and Joe Henson proposed that if the RBST was not forthcoming, we should match the balance from Club funds and place an appeal in Spot Press for donations from members to recoup our assets.

6. Election of Officers

As nominations had not exceeded posts, no election was required under the Constitution and the following officers were confirmed:

President – Mrs Judith Sims

Chairman – Mr Andrew Robinson

Vice-Chairman – Mr David Overton

Secretary – Mr Richard Lutwyche

Treasurer – Mr Stephen Booth

Committee – Mrs Marlene Renshaw

Mr Malcolm Hicks

Mr Simon Mounteney

Mrs Viv Coates

Three vacancies exist on Committee and co-options would be invited following the next Committee meeting.

7. Election of Hon Auditor

Mr Neil Frear was proposed by Stephen Booth and duly elected.

(cont.../5)

Minutes of the 2007 AGM (cont)

8. Member's Resolution – proposed by Mr Andrew Robinson. To amend the Club's Constitution as follows:

- i. To amend paragraph 14(ii) by deleting the words 'Merchandising officer'. Carried with three abstentions. Mrs Suzanne Moss objected to the decision to cease merchandising.
- ii. To insert as paragraph 14(iii) 'There will be two Honorary Vice-Presidents who will be *ex-officio* on the main committee and all sub-committees with full voting rights (providing that they do not concurrently hold any other office).' Carried unanimously.
- iii. To renumber paragraph 14(iii) as 14(iv) and paragraph 14(iv) as 14(v). Carried unanimously

9. Any Other Business

Marlene Renshaw asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Carol Knights. Discussion took place about the confusion over cyclic breeding. Joe Henson reminded the meeting that successful breeds were supported by happy and well run breed societies/breeders' groups and that it was important to maintain the best atmosphere for the benefit of the club.

Lewis Barnfield suggested that committee/administrative functions should be split among more people.

The Pig of the Year award was made to Malcolm Hicks although the trophy was still with Guy Kiddy.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 13.33 hours.

(Annual Accounts appear overleaf .../6)

Pubs Named After The GOS Pig

There are currently two pubs in the country named after the GOS (and none after any of the other breeds). Both are located in Gloucestershire, The Gloucester Old Spot at Piffs Elm between Cheltenham and Tewkesbury and the Old Spot Inn found in Dursley.



The Gloucester Old Spot showing the inn sign and the frontage of the building now and before the recent makeover. This establishment used to be called the Swan and was renamed about 20 years ago. THE GOSPBC committee used to meet here around a rickety circular table in the small alcove on the right in the right hand photo.



The Old Spot at Dursley is a real ale drinkers' paradise which serves, among others, a selection of beers from the Uley Brewery including Old Spot ale and Pigor Mortis.

(Photos by Richard Lutwyche)

Minutes of the 2007 AGM (cont) Annual Accounts

GLOUCESTER OLD SPOT BIG BREEDERS' CLUB

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS for the year ended 31st October, 2006

	2005/06	2004/05
RECEIPTS		
Subscriptions	6,012	4,465
Donations & Fundraising	83	135
Show & Sale	203	0
Interest received	230	121
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOME	6,528	4,721
MERCHANDISE SALES		
Sales	195	1,723
Less: Cost of Sales:		
Opening stock	750	1,176
Purchases	0	1,535
Closing stock	(388)	(750)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
(LOSS)/PROFIT ON MERCHANDISE	(167)	(238)
BOOK SALES		
Sales	302	500
Less: Cost of Sales:		
Opening stock	235	555
Closing stock	(2)	(235)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
PROFIT ON BOOKS	69	180
PAYMENTS		
Printing, post & stationery	2,989	3,016
Room rental	70	353
Show & sale costs	219	179
Insurance	0	350
Secretarial Honorarium	700	700
Advertising	162	114
Sundry expenditure	103	246
Computer & website costs	1,052	675
Donations	0	135
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5,295	5,768
(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	1,135	(1,105)
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
BALANCE OF FUNDS AT START OF YEAR	8,033	9,138
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	1,135	(1,105)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
BALANCE OF FUNDS C/FD AT END OF YEAR	9,168	8,033
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Represented By:		
Bank Accounts	9,850	6,870
President's Fund	606	593
Stocks held	390	985
Creditors	(1,183)	0
Subscriptions in advance	(495)	(415)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9,168	8,033
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

*CAHILL RECA
7.2.07*

Selecting a Boar by Bill Howes

Buying a young boar

- Always buy from a reputable breeder. He/she will sort out registrations, transfers etc. He/she will have a reputation for fair dealing and will not want to jeopardise that!
- Check what bloodlines are available. You should select one as far away from yours as possible. Having the same bloodline is ok as long as it is well diluted and out crossed through the generations. The BPA website gives you the chance to compare pedigrees but mind that it doesn't become addictive!
- If possible, look at the sire and dam of your chosen boar.
- Before you take him home, prepare a strong run or pen for him to go straight into – preferably within sight or company of others.

Buying an older boar

- All the above.
- Look at his progeny or figures of litter sizes.
- Is he quiet? If not, don't buy him!
- However quiet a boar may be, NEVER trust him.



Dave Overton's Exfold Gerald 58 was Breed Champion at the 2005 BPA Show & Sale

Keeping your own bred boar

- Select one from a good litter size. (8+)
- Choose the largest in the litter if possible.
- Make sure he has two testicles. This may sound silly, but it has been known for boars to be kept with only one. Check his underline. It is just as important for him to have a good underline as for a sow. (There should be 3 pairs of teats in front of his sheath.)
- Check the Breed Standards and make sure the boar conforms i.e. good legs & feet, good length of body and good hams.
- Separate him from the gilts at about 4 months of age. They will start to cycle and he will try to serve them. Try to keep at least one friend with him, or within sight of the others if that is not possible.
- Feed him well to keep him growing well.
- Check his conformation again when he is 5-6 months old. If you are not sure what to look for, ask a fellow breeder to look with you. If he's not up to standard, send him for sausages!
- Although you've been feeding well for growth make sure he doesn't get too fat. He won't work if it's too much effort.
- Your boar will be ready to use at about 10 months old. There is an old saying – 'If they're big enough, they're old enough!' 10 months is a good general guideline.
- When serving a sow or gilt, put them outside in a grass paddock if possible. If not, a yard or pen with a good floor to prevent either of them slipping. If he slips and hurts himself, it will put him off working.
- Make sure the roof is high enough! That may sound silly, but you need to add the height of the boar on top of the sow!
- If he can't reach, take him away. He'll just get frustrated and grumpy. Try again later, or leave him until you have a smaller sow or gilt available.

General Notes

- NEVER TRUST A BOAR. It doesn't matter how long you've known him, he only has to toss his head too close and you could be seriously injured!
- If he starts to become nasty tempered, don't sell him on for breeding. Send him to slaughter.
- Have strong doors and gates.
- Let him be visible to and by others. Remember that boars will fight each other and don't let them get together!
- If you can, he will be happiest in company, so let him run with dry sows.
- Always include him in your vaccination timetable, (worming etc.) and an occasional treatment for lice is advisable.
- **Your boar is half your herd. Buy or rear the best possible.**

(First Published in Tamworth Trumpet)

A Beginners Guide to Showing by Nick Hunkin

At most shows with GOS pigs, there are usually the following classes:-

1. July boar born between 1 July and previous December 31.
2. January boar from same year as shown.
3. Sow born before previous 1 July in pig.
4. Gilt born between previous 1 July and 31 August.
5. Gilt born between the previous 1 September and 31 December.
6. Gilt born after January same year.

Prepare your farrowing times in advance to coincide with these classes.

Older boars are not recommended for absolute beginners but you will soon be only too keen to bring them out when you get used to showing.

July litters

From your litter, keep as many good underlined weaners as you can afford to (you can always sell off any extras for either breeding or pork later on). Make sure the weaners have at least 14 sound teats (7 a side) and more is even better. Make sure there are no inverted teats and be ruthless in your selection process if there are.

At about 4 to 5 months old make your final selection. Look for good hams, straight back and generally smart alert appearance. You may have relatively local show pig people who I'm sure would come and help you at this stage if you're not sure. Make sure you feed your show pigs well; 6 lbs of proprietary pig feed per day is recommended for all show pigs but when they are first weaned, ad lib them with grower pellets if you can for the first 3 months. If this proves too expensive, we are very lucky with Old Spots that they grow well on almost any food and you can supplement your pig feed with vegetables (roots or greens), potatoes* or maybe sugar beet making sure it is pre-mixed with water and soaked overnight.

Get them used to board and bat as early as you can and you can always walk them round their pens inside. As soon as possible walk your pigs outside if you can set up some kind of dummy show ring, so much the better. They will get used to it. If they tend to rush about on initially going outside, wait a few moments. They will soon settle down and quieten.

At around 8 months take them out on any quiet country roads you may have nearby, always make sure there are at least 2 people to help control the pigs and warn the traffic. In my experience, drivers are usually fairly laid back and often delighted to see the pigs walking about. Try to do this at least 3 times a week up until the season begins.

A week before the first show, gently wash the pigs with tepid water and a mild shampoo (Johnsons baby shampoo, certain horse shampoos, Lux etc are all quite adequate and recommended for pigs). Avoid detergents which are okay for some of the white breeds but can sometimes cause hair loss. Use a medium powered hose to remove stubborn dirt from the bottom of feet and noses. Be careful not to get shampoo inside the pig's ear as it will cause them to become lopsided.



Nick Hunkin providing one of his entertaining commentaries.



Smaller shows such as Stroud are a good place for beginners to start (although Guy Kiddy pictured here is one of the 'old hands').

When loading your trailer to go to the show, use plenty of straw especially on the tailgate and leave no room for possible escape between the back of the trailer and the shed door. Try and keep the pigs as calm as possible. We are lucky with GOS as they are usually amongst the best and easiest loaders providing the preparation is good AND ABSOLUTELY NO ESCAPE ROUTES AVAILABLE!



Hatfield House Show always attracts good entries and would be a good place to visit to talk to exhibitors and watch how they do things.

Once at the shows, ensure pigs are walked a few times before judging (especially the night before so they get used to their surroundings and being around strange pigs).

If possible watch experienced pig showmen show their pigs. You will learn more from this than anything. But be patient - it takes time to do the job well.

When in the ring, don't get worried if the pigs do a runner and start some of the other pigs off as well. Just go along with it. If you stay calm and collected and keep as close as you possibly can, chances are the pig will calm down fairly quickly. If you get wound up and harassed, chances are so will the pig. They pick up their owner's moods almost psychically!

The judge will want to see firstly all pigs walking around against each other clockwise if possible. He/she will then inspect the pigs individually with particular attention to underlines (good to get someone to practice doing this on the pig at home). They will then often walk the pig individually and finally walk all pigs again against each other.

They will then make their selection and the rosettes will be doled out usually first prize first. From the first prize winners of all the individual classes, the judge will finally select a breed champion, reserve champion and sometimes male and female champions individually as well. If you go out to some of the larger shows, you will almost inevitably get quite a decent prize as at many of them there have only been a few exhibitors in recent years.

For older sows, again it is always more difficult to teach an old dog new tricks but road walking and regular handling will help. If you can purchase an older show sow from a regular exhibitor, so much the better as they invariably will be used to things and quiet.

As your young pigs get older, so they become easier to show and it seems to get in the blood so after 4 or 5 years you will find everything very much easier than when you started.

Finally with January pigs just get them in the ring and try and keep up!!!!
- That's what everybody else will be doing.

Come on, get out there and have a go. All us oldies will be there to cheer you on and help in any way we can. Don't be scared!!!



The ultimate to aim for is probably the Royal Show at Stoneleigh although being over four days it takes a lot of commitment so perhaps it is best to work up to the RASE via the other shows first.

*Ensure you comply with the law and only feed vegetable matter that has never been in a kitchen, domestic or commercial (not even from a vegetarian restaurant!). If you want chapter and verse on what can or cannot be fed, go to www.defra.gov.uk and in the search box on the opening page, type in 'A Guide for New Keepers Pigs' which takes you to a short brochure full of useful information.

[Remember that Bluetongue disease restrictions do not apply to pigs and that pig classes should go ahead unimpeded this year—Ed]

(This article was first published in Tamworth Trumpet. Nick Hunkin is not only a Tamworth breeder but can be found at some of the leading shows giving an erudite commentary in the pig rings). Photos by Richard Lutwyche

Try Charcuterie by Chris Rundle

Chris Rundle, farming and food editor at the Western Daily Press, says we don't need to live high off the hog to find the finest flavour.

As soon as the children were old enough to go on holiday (in my son's case, six months) we took them to France. And as soon as we took them to France they fell in love with the food, particularly the charcuterie. Thereafter almost as soon as we were off the early-morning ferry they would be clamouring for lunch, knowing full well what it consist of a fresh baguette, a jar of gherkins and a huge wodge of rillettes, tasting all the better for being eaten *al fresco*.

Mostly it was pork rillettes, until we got down to the south west and it was duck or (even better) goose. But with the pâtés, the terrines and everything else the French do with bits of the pig, decent charcuterie formed something akin to our staple food for the whole fortnight every year.

One holiday we even had a go at pigs' ears, though they were not judged a huge success. But fromage de tête—known here more prosaically as brawn—with its gentle background of garlic and its thick green veins of chopped parsley - was another favourite.

Where has all this artisan food gone in our own country? Only the occasional restaurant will offer you rillettes and then they generally charge you the earth, even though it's one of the cheapest pork-based delicacies you can make. I only know of one butcher—in Bristol—who still makes Bath chaps, [there's another in Herefordshire—Ed] the tongue and cheek of a pig, boiled, moulded into a cone shape, breadcrumbed and eaten cold (and delicious) like ham.

And if people don't eat brawn any more that's because of what our industrial-scale food processors have done to it: turn a flavoursome, nourishing dish into a ghastly concoction of gristle and cartilage all bound up in pink jelly. I wouldn't feed it to a dog—and if I did the dog would probably refuse it. If you are lucky you will know of a craft butcher who makes proper English brawn, traditionally eaten with mustard. It has a long and noble pedigree.

"Good bread and good drinke, a good fier in the hall,

Brawn, pudding and souse and good mustard withal" wrote Thomas Tusser in 1573.

At that time the constituents were pieces of pig meat (usually from wild boar), which were 'collared' by being wrapped in a cloth and boiled. By the 1800s, however, the term had come to mean a dish prepared by boiling a pig's head, removing and chopping the meat and setting it in its own cooking liquor. The method still holds good today, and you don't need me to tell you of the superior flavour you will achieve by using a GOS.

Both these dishes are cheap, simple to make, and quite fascinating in the way they turn low-cost ingredients into something really rather special. If you wanted to get children involved in the rudiments of charcuterie there would be no better place to start than right here.

RILLETTES

Ingredients. Three to four pounds (1.3 to 1.8kg) belly pork, including any bones, roughly chopped into two-inch squares—or a mixture of belly pork and goose or duck legs, similarly chopped—large sprig of thyme, three bay leaves, 20 black peppercorns, four fat garlic cloves, crushed, half a pint of dry white wine or good dry cider, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, teaspoon ground mace.



Rillettes of pork—simple and delicious

Method. Place the meat, herbs, peppercorns, garlic and wine or cider in a roasting pan with enough water to give no more than half an inch of depth, cover tightly with foil and cook for four hours in an oven pre-heated to 150°C 300°F gas mark 2. At the end of cooking the lean meat should be falling away from the fat and the bones. While the pieces of meat are still warm remove with a slotted spoon to a board, pull away any fat or bone and shred the lean meat using two forks—don't be tempted to use a food processor because you will end up with a nasty sludge when the aim is to retain some texture. Place the shredded meat into a bowl and mix in the mace and generous amounts of pepper and salt (meat dishes to be eaten cold always need more salt than you might think). Using a skimmer remove the fat from the cooking liquor and stir around half a pint (275ml) into the meat, stir it round with a fork—it should have a reasonably sloppy consistency but still retain some firmness. Spoon the mixture into individual bowls or ramekins and chill overnight before serving—at room temperature—with crusty bread and gherkins. The rillettes will keep for up to three weeks in the fridge if the pots are sealed with lard or butter.

BRAWN

Ingredients. Half a pig's head (get the butcher to chop it into four), *bouquet garni* of thyme, parsley and bay leaves, large glass of white wine and a similar quantity of white wine vinegar, 20 black peppercorns, four crushed garlic cloves, sea salt, freshly-ground black pepper, two double handfuls of finely-chopped parsley.

Method. Place the head, *bouquet garni*, wine, vinegar, peppercorns and garlic into a large pan or stock pot, cover with water, bring to the boil, skim off any impurities, cover and simmer gently for two hours. Allow to cool slightly, then using a slotted spoon remove the pieces of head and any loose pieces of meat. Pull all the lean meat from the bones. Chop all the meat and the tongue finely, using a sharp knife, and place in a bowl. Boil three-quarters of a pint (425ml) of the cooking liquor over a high heat until reduced by half and add to the bowl with the parsley. Season generously and mix well. Pot, store and serve as for the rillettes.



Brawn or Head Cheese

In Praise of the Suckling Pig

From Charles Lamb's *Essays of Elia* written ca 1885

Of all the delicacies of the whole *mundus edibilis* I will maintain this to be the most delicate. I speak not of your grown porkers – things between pig and pork – these hobbledehoy; but a young and tender suckling, under a moon old, guiltless as yet of the sty; with no original speck of the *amor immunditiae*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, as yet manifest; his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a gumble, the mild forerunner or *praeludium* of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed or boiled; but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well watched, not over-roasted *crackling*, as it is well called; the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet, in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance, with the adhesive oleaginous – Oh, call it not fat! – but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it – the tender blossoming of fat – fat cropped in the bud – taken in the shoot – in the first innocence – the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food; the lean, no lean; but a kind of animal manna, or rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him while he is doing! It seemeth rather a refreshing warmth than a scorching heat that he is so passive to. He equally he twirleth around the string. Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age; he hath wept out his pretty eyes – radiant jellies – shooting stars. See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! Wouldst thou have this innocent grow up to the grossness and indolence which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal, wallowing in filthy conversation – from these sins he is happily snatched away...

A Short History of the Female Lines by Andrew Robinson



Andrew Robinson is not only Chairman of the Club but also one of the BPA's Breed Representatives. As well as running one of the largest herds (Foston) in the country, he takes a very keen interest in the history of the Gloucestershire Old Spots. This article was first published in *Spot Press* in March 1992.

Following on from the articles provided by Ken Harris and reproduced in the first two editions of *Spot Press*, a number of members have asked if it was possible to relate the originally approved sows to those we have in the breed today.

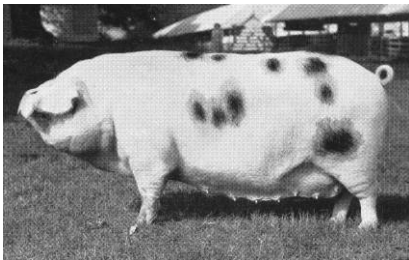
The Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Society Herd Book Vol.1 lists 247 sows registered by the inspectors; however, of the original names given, none are in current use. Today, we have 15 family names which represent 7 distinct female lines. In the case of the GOS breed, three main events have had a major effect on naming policy and the number of families we have:

1. The change of naming bye-law by the NPBA in 1963 whereby the female progeny must continue the same name as their mother.
2. The adoption of a cyclical breeding system in 1967 in Mr George Styles' Ribbesford Herd which created a number of new family names.
3. The dispersal of a number of old-established herds in the early 1970s (e.g. Chedworth, Frampton, Nashes, etc.), which resulted in the demise of a number of distinct family names.

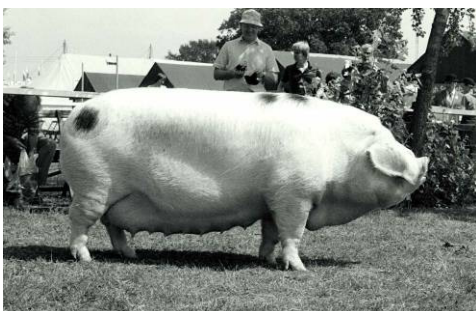
Of the seven distinct lines remaining, five trace back to the earliest days of the Herd Book, the remaining two entered via the grading register in the 1950s. These are as follows:-

PRINCESS

(Princess Ann, Princess Freda, Princess Joan, Princess Mary, Ellen)
The Princess line has always been closely associated with Stanley and Gordon Cullimore's Walgaston Herd. The foundation sow was Thornbury Bridget, bred by Messrs Bennett & Howard of Thornbury, Glos. and descended from Thornbury Beatrice (Vol.1 H.B.No.61). This Thornbury breeding also became the ancestors of Major and Mrs Fuller's noted Chalfield



Shorelam Maid bred by W A Greeslade of Bristol who won the RASE Breed Championship for Vic Withers in 1955



Blossom family. Following a number of name changes at Walgaston, the first Princess was registered in 1938. Subsequently, this became the most widespread family in the breed, particularly following its division in 1967; some 324 Princesses having been registered at Ribbesford prior to this date. The Princess Freda branch dates back to 1953 and a mating of Chedworth Fred 17th to Walgaston Princess 101st. The Ribbesford Ellens come from Mr W Lamaison's herd in Sussex; their foundation being a sow bred at RAF Melksham in Wiltshire, a daughter of Walgaston Princess 61st.

The Princess line has produced many notable show champions, Shorelam Maid during the 1950s for Vic Withers and her great-granddaughter, Poundbury Muriel 8th during the 1960s for Cecil Painter come to mind. More recently, the Winterwood Princesses have produced many winners for Ray and Judith Sims, these being descendants of Walgaston Princess 169th - Royal Champion in 1972 and the breed record holder for fecundity having reared 213 pigs in 20 litters.

Winterwood Princess 42 was RASE Breed Champion for Ray & Judith Sims in 1984.

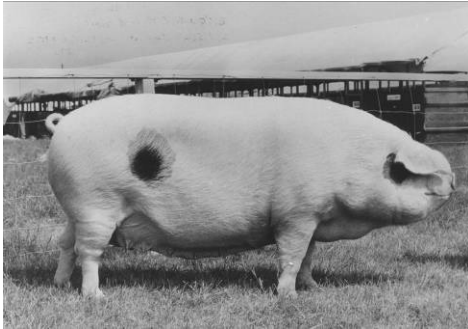


Poundbury Muriel 8 bred by F S Tuck in 1957 went on to win the Royal Show Breed Championship (among others) for Cecil Painter in 1961

MURIEL

(Countess, Star, Star Antoinette)

As with the Princess line, the Muriels also come from the Cullimore's Walgaston Herd. Their foundation sow was Colesbourne Muriel, bred by Col Henry Elwes. Col Elwes was also a stalwart of Gloucester cattle and is now immortalised for GOS breeders through the Elwes Cup. This trophy is reputed to be the most valuable offered by the BPA and is now presented for the annual 'Champion of Champions' having previously been awarded to the winner of the annual Herds Competition.

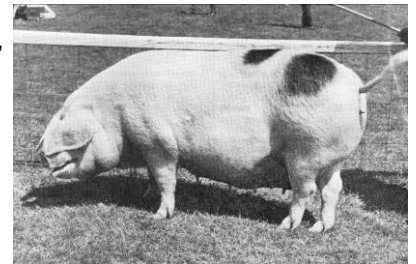


Bixbury Muriel 3 who won the Royal Show Breed Championship for Joy Ham (née Withers) in 1965.

The Muriel family has a very long pedigree dating back to to Williamstrip Janette (Vol.1 H.B.No.66) bred by Viscount Quenington. The name Janette was used for a number of years also producing the noted Chedworth Flora and Pansy lines. The naming policy at Colesbourne seems to have given each pig a different name, therefore the name Muriel was not established until the 1950s.

As with the Princesses, the Muriels have produced many great show sows. Joy Ham had

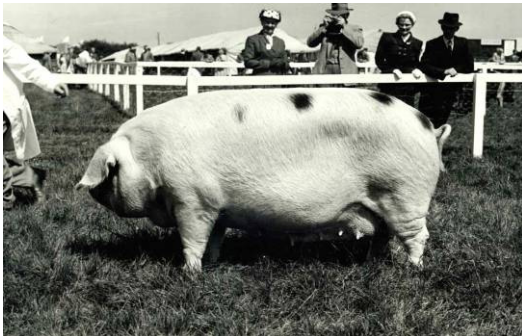
the notable Bixbury Muriel 3rd in the mid-1960s and our President [now Patron— Ed], Ribbesford Muriel 162nd - Royal Champion in 1969/70/71 who was to become the ancestor of some of the Star family.



Ribbesford Muriel 162 is the only GOS to win the RASE Championship three years running.

JOSEPHINE

The Josephines are another family which can be traced to the earliest volumes of the Herd Book. Founded from Kitesnest Judy bred by Mr F Rea of Wotton-under-Edge, Glos., the name Josephine became established in the Ithells herd of Mr T King, also of Wotton, in the 1920s.



Nashes Josephine 68 Breed Champion at the Royal Show in 1957 for Jim Sherriff.

The present family descends from some of the original purchases Mr George Styles made to found the Ribbesford Herd from Mr J F Wright of Lapworth, Birmingham. Mr Wright was better known as a master-breeder of Large Whites, the Solihull Herd being world-renowned. The Solihull Josephines also founded a family in Mr Jim Sherriff's Nashes Herd which were to produce many champions.

By the mid-1970s, the family was reduced to just one sow but subsequently has become very popular.

The sow on the front of our Breed Leaflet is Ribbesford Josephine 87th - Champion at the Three Counties show in 1985.



George Styles with Ribbesford Josephine 87 at the Three Counties Show 1985.

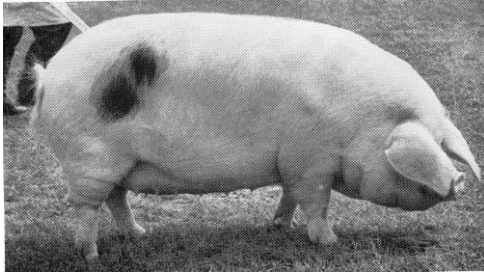
DUCHESS

(Bluebell)

The Duchess line has always been closely associated with Jim Sherriff's Nashes Herd. The first Nashes Duchess was registered in 1920 from a sow bred by Mr C Bennett of Berkeley, Glos.. In former years the family was very widespread and over the last seventy years, has probably produced more show winners than any other.

(cont over12)

A Short History of the Female Lines by Andrew Robinson (cont)



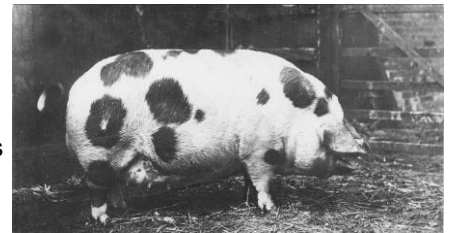
Nashes Duchess 150, Jim Sherriff's RASE Breed Champion in 1953.

The Duchess name died out with the dispersal of the Nashes Herd, however, luckily the family remains under the name of Bluebell.

The present family is descended from Frampton Alicia, one of the foundation sows at Ribbesford and purchased from Vic Withers at one of the Bristol Shows and Sales. Alicia's grand-dam was Frampton Bluebell, (hence the name), who was a daughter of Nashes Duchess 78th.

The model for our Club logo, Frampton Rose Marie 3rd* is

a further descendant of Duchess 78th, being full sister to Frampton Alicia from a mating of Colesbourne Ripper x Frampton Sunbeam.



Nashes Duchess 3 was a prize winner at several shows in 1922.

**Photo included in Spot Press Autumn 2007*

DAHLIA

The original Dahlia was entered in the Grading Register in 1953 and the family was then graded to full pedigree.

DELPHINIUM

(Dolly)

As with the Dahlias, the Delphinium line was graded-up from 1953. The original name died out in the mid-1970s but some descendants remain today as the Dolly line. This is currently rarest of our distinct lines being reduced to a handful of sows.

PRIMROSE

Finally, we come to the enigma of the GOS breed - the Primroses. This family is well established from the early 1920s and until recently had only passed through the Solihull and Ribbesford herds.

Unfortunately, the Primrose family is reputed to carry a sex-linked gene for 'split-skull' which is passed by boars bred from this line. Subsequently, this family has been low in numbers for some time and those of us who keep them should continue to exercise caution by ensuring that boars bred from them are reared for meat production only. I understand that a trial was conducted in the early 1980s using a 'Primrose' boar. The resulting litters had approximately 80% of the piglets affected.

On the positive side, Primroses have always been excellent sows and inherently seem to attain a very large size in maturity.

*"One evening in October,
When I was far from sober,
And dragging home a load with manly pride,
My feet began to stutter,
So I laid down in the gutter,
And a pig came up and parked right by my side.
Then I warbled, "It's fair weather
When good fellows get together,"
Till a lady passing by was heard to say:
"You can tell a man who boozes
By the company he chooses."
Then the pig got up and slowly walked away."*

Benjamin H. Burt

[De Wolf Hopper, Once A Clown, Always A Clown]

Members' Advertisements

FOR SALE

Four Weaners for Fattening and 3 Good Breeding Gilts in Gloucestershire

4 weaners for fattening ready now plus 2 Princess Joan gilts around 6 months old and 1 Countess gilt 8 months old.

Jonathan Crump , Arlingham (s of Gloucester) 01452 740117

jonathancrump@btinternet.com

Two Lovely Weaners in Lancashire

Two gilts, very sturdy with good conformation and markings. Will be birth notified—Ready Now Tel: 07974 323916

Andrea Stephenson

In-Pig Sow and Boar in Aberdeenshire

It is with sad heart that I advertise my beloved pigs for sale but due to a change in family and work commitments we no longer have the time to look after them. We have remaining one Rufus boar b. Sept 04 and 1 Princess Ann sow b. Apr 04. She has produced lots of lovely litters. Both have lovely temperaments and are easy to handle. Will sell for £50 each for a quick sale.

Sarah Horsfall

01888 511436 / 07766 781373
sarah.horsfall@uk.bp.com

Weaners & Gilts in Devon

Two pedigree birth notified Princess gilts for sale. Nine months old, lovely temperaments, well handled and outdoor reared. Will be registered. Weaners also avail-

FOR SALE

able.

Phone Christine or Jeff on 01271 327036 or email: cm.greening@btinternet.com

Weaners & Gilts For Sale in Cornwall

Weaners for sale, various lines and both sexes. Also 6 Star Antoinette gilts 4 months old.

Rose Kingdon, Newquay 07795 168151
rosekingdon@gmail.com

In-Pig Young Sow & Maiden Gilt, Worcs

Nice, well-proportioned, cyclically-bred Dolly sow just under 2yo. First litter of 9 with no problems now in pig due 03/08 to a Sambo. Plus daughter from last litter 7 months soon ready to serve. Both reg'd and farmed outside, well looked after and bred from own stock for shape, size and nature over last 3 yrs. We are having a rest from pigs due to sheep commitments. Would suit someone just starting or who had recently fattened some pigs and wants to go a bit deeper. Must go to a good home and not for slaughter.

David & Sally 01299 861127/07968
600168 dsr-services@supanet.com
Bewdley area

Four Year Old Patrick Boar in Worcs.

Moving home forces sale of lovely Threeoaks Patrick 3 thus only £60 to a good home for a quick sale.

Phone 01527 68520 (ask for Jack)
Redditch

FOR SALE

Two Registered Dolly Sows, Somerset

Born 03/04, proven good mothers. Unfortunately due to recent additional family commitments am unable to give them the time they deserve hence reluctant sale.

Rob Shortman, Shepton Mallet

01749 343055 / 07928 262042
robandkila@tiscali.co.uk

Weaners in Gloucestershire

Dolly/Gerald & Primrose/Gerald weaners for sale 11 weeks old and ready to go.

Helen Lightfoot, Gloucester
01452 700510
helen.lightfoot@tiscali.co.uk

WANTED

Boar (Preferably on Loan) South Glos

Boar wanted to service 2 10 month old gilts in Chipping Sodbury

07866 797565 or email:
silviepritchett@yahoo.co.uk

Couple of Weaners & Some Advice

New to pig keeping and want to keep a couple of GOS for the table. Based in South Wales—are there any local breeders who can sell me some and provide advice?

Ian Roberts

ian@oldcastlefarm.com



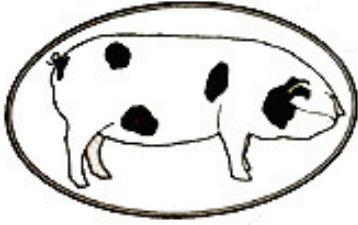
whisky and wines @ Arkwrights

You've got the meat now get the drink!

What better accompaniment to a prime bit of GOS meat could there be than this Finest Pig's Nose whisky? This is just one whisky from our range of over 500. If you're looking for a comprehensive range of single malts, vatted malts, other spirits and wines then look no further. Visit us at:

Arkwrights, 114 The Dormers, Highworth, Wiltshire SN6 7PE
Phone: (01793) 765071

Or buy online at: www.whiskyandwines.com



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We're on the web—
www.oldspots.org.uk

GOSPBC Fighting Fund

In our effort to maintain the integrity of genuine pork from pedigree Gloucestershire Old Spots, we are undertaking considerable work to protect the real thing for the benefit of breeders everywhere. In response to this appeal please send any donation to GOSPBC c/o Mr S Booth, Broadoak Farm, Chapel Lane, Warburton, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 9TY.

All donors will be acknowledged in **SPOT PRESS**.

SPOT PRESS

The Spring edition will be published in April/May and we invite contributions and suggestions as to what you would like to be included.

Edited by Richard Lutwyche

We thank all those contributors listed within these pages.

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The Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders' Club (GOSPBC) was established in 1990 to promote the qualities and values of the Orchard Pig, then a very rare breed. Now with over 350 members and more pedigree GOS being registered than almost any other breed, the Club and its members are now more important than ever.

What do you get from membership of the Club?

You receive quarterly, a copy of the newsletter, **Spot Press**, in full colour. You may advertise therein and on the website www.oldspots.org.uk free of charge. The website also supports a Forum for raising queries and points of view. If you wish to show pigs, you have £2m public liability insurance just by being a member. You can compete in the various club competitions. You can attend workshops and other events organized by the Club and enjoy discounted entries for the Show & Sale.

Help us to keep the GOS as the leading breed of the 21st century. Encourage everyone with an interest in the breed (especially those who buy pigs from you) to join the Club which can be done via the website or by requesting forms from the Secretary.

As you can see from this edition, the Club is very proactive in working tirelessly on behalf of the breed and all Club members.

Boars at AI—A Full Set

The following boars are standing at Deerpark AI Centre and semen is available to order by phoning 028 7938 6287. To check the pedigrees, go to the online herdbook at www.britishpigs.org.uk and type in the registered number for each and then select 'Pedigree'

R001153GS Alsa Gerald 451

R001685GS Greenan Rufus 4

SSG/80 Whinneyhill Sambo 3

R003320GS Windmill Patrick 6

How Much Do You Charge?

A local farmer got in his truck and drove to a neighbouring farm and knocked at the farmhouse door. A young boy, about nine, opened the door. "Is your Dad home?" The farmer asked.

"Sorry mate, he isn't" the boy replied. "He went into town."

"Well," said the farmer, "Is your mum here?"

"No, sir, she's not here either. She went into town with Dad."

"How about your brother, Greg? Is he here?"

"He went with Mum and Dad."

The farmer stood there for a few minutes, shifting from one foot to the other and mumbling to himself.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" The boy asked politely. "I know where all the tools are if you want to borrow one. Or maybe, I could take a message for Dad."

"Well," said the farmer uncomfortably, "I really wanted to talk to your Dad. It's about your brother Greg getting my daughter pregnant."

The boy considered for a moment.

"You'd have to talk to Dad about that," he finally conceded. "If it helps you any, I know that Dad charges £50 for the bull and £30 for the pig, but I really don't know how much he gets for Greg."