



# Heathfield Agricultural Show News

Autumn 2022

## A REAL LOOK AT COUNTRY LIFE



Ben Maskell with Whimfellpark Opalfruit

[www.heathfieldshow.org](http://www.heathfieldshow.org)

# RECYCLE

## Bill Gower, Show Chairman



Planting tree on Showground for Queen's Green Canopy Jubilee celebration.  
Rita Dingwall, Chair 2022 Heathfield Show, Bill Gower Vice Chair

Heathfield Agricultural Show has a policy of recycling and I am honoured to be our first recycled Chairman! In taking on this role I must first thank Rita Dingwall for her tremendous work and dedication over the last four years. I know it has been extremely difficult to keep things ticking over when no show was in the plan as an

end result. However, time was not wasted, as the creation of the Show's status as a company limited by guarantee took place and a knock on requirement, the necessity of reforming our banking arrangements and IT systems a knock-on requirement. Dealing with different banks is certainly an arduous and thankless task which

Rita undertook with frustrated gusto!

Thankfully, Rita was able to enjoy a highly successful Show this year so she had some satisfaction and recompense for her term in office.

With all successful operations there is a great team of Committees who have had to make changes to the way they now operate.

The driving force behind all this has been our Show Secretary, Nicola Magill. Her ability to rise to a multitude of challenges cannot be underestimated - from seeing through the change to a company limited guarantee, the new website and the IT systems. Sourcing suppliers of marquees was challenging in itself as our main supplier ceased to hire out marquees. Unfortunately, this is a continuous problem as at least one of our 2022 suppliers is no longer able to supply us with the marquees we need.

I feel at this juncture it is also important to inform everybody that Nicola has decided the time is right to step back from the position of Secretary following the 2023 show. Seeking a replacement will not be an easy task. The position will be advertised and job descriptions are available if you are interested. Hopefully this will lead to a candidate being in place before the 2023 show to secure a smooth hand over.

The Flower Show organisers have decided that they can no longer continue which will be a great loss as their dedication and enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

If anyone knows of a flower club or individuals who may like to take on this role please contact the Secretary who can furnish them with the details.

Equally, if you know of anybody who would like to be involved with the Show in any shape or form, please contact the Show Secretary, they will be made most welcome.

Looking forward to the 2023 Show, a lot of arrangements are already in place. These include an old

favourite, the Monster Trucks, as one of our main ring attractions. The livestock layout that was so successful this year will continue with a few tweaks and hopefully more entries.

The Horse Committee, as with all parts of the Show, are constantly evolving their classes to meet up-to-date demands for change and trying different approaches.

Another bonus from our financially successful 2022 Show was, that in

addition to supporting our long list of volunteer groups, Council felt able to honour a promised donation to the Ukraine Humanitarian fund of £3,000. We are informed that this is the best way to support farming and rural communities in Ukraine.

Everybody is now focusing on a successful 2023 Show (Saturday 27th May) and as always any offers of assistance will be gratefully received.

*Bill Gower, Chairman*



## FACTS & FIGURES:

19,000 attendees

£20,000 donated to local clubs and organisations

1,500 horses and livestock exhibiting

150 stewards, 65 Committee members, 55 scouts and cadets all volunteer to help run the Show.

# REJUVENATE

## Nicola Magill, Show Secretary

The 75th Heathfield Agricultural Show was a day of celebration. Not only was it our 75th Anniversary Show but also the return of the event after a Covid induced two year break. In many respects it was like starting afresh, suppliers had retired, gone out of business or were simply unable to get staff to fulfil our requirements. Preparations for our 2022 Show started in early 2021 when we weren't even sure the world would be back to normal by May 2022!

Putting our best foot forward we needed to Rejuvenate, Recycle and Renew the Show.

As it turned out, everything was starting to return to a new 'normal' in May 2022. I think those who came on Show day will agree all the worry and work that went into the preparations were worth it. We were rejuvenated and what a fantastic day it turned out to be!

I would like to thank everybody involved in organising all the different aspects of the Show for their help, and in doing so, made the day so wonderful.

*Nicola Magill*  
Show Secretary



# RENEW

## Rita Dingwall, Chair 2018 - 2022



Little did I know what the future held for my 4 year tenure as Show Chairman, and more importantly, what would be recorded in the history of the Heathfield Agricultural Show. The lead up to the Heathfield Show of 2019 went well and we had a great Show, apart from the marquees being vandalised a week before Show day. The people of Heathfield demonstrated their support by attending the Show in their droves and a great day was had by all. Special thanks to our contractors and Ground team who speedily resolved the issue.

Later that year we went on to be awarded the Best Agricultural Show/Event at The Farming Awards 2019 – one of our proudest moments for the Show.

2020 was an entirely different picture with Covid appearing on the

scene. There was no choice other than to cancel that year's show. Rather than do nothing, Show Council decided that it would be in the interests of Heathfield Show members to become a company limited by guarantee thereby limiting a member's liability to £10. Show Council now had time to achieve this, and this initiative was headed up by Vice Chairman (at the time) Bill Gower. This has now been accomplished so, with a change of name to the 'Heathfield Agricultural Show' along with a fresh new logo that was chosen from competition entrants, we can look to the future with confidence. 2020 also saw the formation of the 2020 committee, a committee of like-minded people, young and not so young, who have been working hard to encourage a sustainable environment for our team members and visitors to the Showground and this initiative also hopes to gain younger members to

become involved with the Show. Sadly, once again, the 2021 Show had to be cancelled. Council made an early decision in order to minimise the loss to the finances of the Show.

Finally, we started to prepare for the 2022 Show, our 75th anniversary, and what a day it was! The crowds came to help celebrate our special day, to renew friendships and to create memories. We were privileged to have a Hurricane fly over the Showground – something that I will never forget. The 2020 Committee provided 'The Green Trade Stand Award' which was well received by many trade stands, a successful addition to the existing four Trade Stand Awards.

I would like to say thank you to the people of Heathfield and surrounding areas, Show Council, Show Committees, Volunteers, Trade Stands, Exhibitors, Tootingworth Farm for providing the site, Contractors, our Show Secretary Nicola Magill and Bill Gower (now Chairman), Jeremy Courtney and Sarah Stonor (Past President and President) for supporting me throughout these challenging years. It has been one hell of a rollercoaster ride where I have laughed and cried, but more importantly, it has been a privilege to have served the show for the past 4 years. Thank you one and all and I would like to wish Bill Gower all the best for the years of his tenure, heading up Heathfield Agricultural Show, something that is very dear to all our hearts.

*Rita Dingwall*  
Past Show Chairman

# Obituary:

## JEANNE HEASMAN

The Heathfield Show lost one of its greatest supporters with the recent death of Jeanne Heasman from Lane End Farm Sheffield Park. Together with her husband David, this well respected couple began showing cattle at the Heathfield Show in 1972, firstly showing Friesian and then Ayrshire cattle. During that time they won numerous championships and went on to build a 270 strong herd of pedigree Ayrshire cattle which became one of the top herds in the British Isles and whose bloodlines

have gone all over the world. After joining the South East Ayrshire club in 1963 they were encouraged to show their cattle.

David said, "It was a huge learning curve," but with an eye for a good cow they experienced early success winning the best calf cup and two first and two second places at their first Heathfield Show.

Jeanne and David were great supporters of the Ayrshire breed with David being National President in 1997 and Jeanne being chairman of the South East and East Sussex Ayrshire clubs over a six year period. Hosting an annual calf show at their farm for many years enabled hundreds of young people to practice their showing skills, getting ready to participate in shows such as Heathfield.

Meeting Jeanne and David at one of these shows as a young teacher was the beginnings of a long relationship between the Heasmans and the Young Farmers from Oathall Community College whereby calves from Lane End Farm spent their summers at Oathall to be prepared for a variety of Shows, both local and national. Though busy people David and Jeanne gave generously of their time in order to support those young people for over thirty five years Jeanne often became mother acting as the responsible adult when the students needed to stay overnight on the Showground. She took her responsibilities seriously and set the standards in terms of hard work, stockmanship and the tidiness of the stock lines. Her expectations were high and rightly so! She was the ideal person who commanded respect but always knew which student might need an arm round the shoulder or who might need a ticking off! Many ex students from Oathall have expressed their sorrow at the loss of Jeanne. They all mention the support they received, the kindness and love they were shown and the knowledge and experience they had gained from their links to Lane End farm, many saying that it was a highlight of their schooldays.

Jeanne had many friends both in and outside the agricultural world and she will be sadly missed, particularly by those of us who love and support the Heathfield Show.

*Howard Wood MBE, Heathfield Agricultural Show Council member and past Sheep & Pig Committee Chairman*

Pylon Cowbell, Mrs Jeanne Heasman and Mrs Ruby Browning 1991 (?) at Heathfield Show

