

Chapter Eight - Outside Influences 1970 to 1979.

More than any other period after the Second World War, the seventies were a period when outside influences seriously affected the Society. It was a time of rapid inflation, a decade that saw the introduction of VAT, decimalisation and metrication. It was also a period when self-sufficiency and the need for unpolluted foods became the rage. All these factors required the Society to adapt and adjust to new situations.

The new secretary was finding it an uphill task to catch up with the back-log of registrations and also keep the Society on an even keel financially. Membership was increasing rapidly, bringing in both more income and more work. Increased public awareness also resulted in more queries being received by the office. Things became serious when the introduction of VAT and a change in registration fees meant that many incorrect payments were being made. These had to be returned to the breeder, thus causing further delays. Finally these delays built up to such an extent that kids were being born to males whose registrations had not been processed. These kids could not be shown, or sold as pedigree, and unsurprisingly members were becoming very concerned.

The obvious answer was to employ extra staff to cope with the back-log, but finances would not permit this. In an effort to generate income, and to provide a service for members who were unable to buy in bulk, the BGS bought in items such as milk cartons and worming remedies for re-sale to members. Unfortunately this was only partly successful as these, especially the milk cartons, took up space for storage and time in repacking and sending out. For several years Mr Thornley had been selling surplus back copies of the Year Books and Herd Books (auctioning the rarer ones at AGMs and Conferences) and had raised several hundred pounds for funds. Mr Hornby had organised draws in 1970 and 1972 and these too had raised several hundred pounds. Despite this, the extra revenue was not enough to allow for employing additional paid staff and in 1975 it was decided to relieve the pressure on the office by payment of two Honorariums. The work of Show Secretary (dealing with all show matters) and Milk Recording Secretary (checking all yields eligible for the R prefix) were removed from the office in an effort to maintain services.

Despite the increased membership (it doubled in the seventies), inflation made a subscription rise necessary. From 1st January 1975 an enrolment fee of £1 was introduced. Two years later partnership membership was brought in. This gave one (nominated) member full privileges while the other was required to sign all registration forms - the stock being registered under the partnership prefix.

During the early seventies the Journal printed names of new members but in 1976 this was discontinued, with a

full list of members published in the subsequent Year Book. The Rules and Regulations, previously printed in the Year Book each year, were obtainable as a separate leaflet.

17 Devonshire Street, owned by the Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers, had been used for BGS meetings, but in 1971 this was sold and the Friends' Meeting House, Euston Road, became the new venue for meetings.

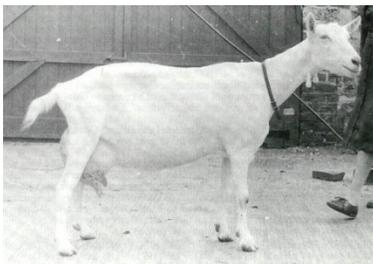
Other changes involved the committee: candidates for the elected Committee were no longer allowed to stand as area delegates for the same term of office. The areas were changed slightly to allow for an eighth delegate - to represent Wales. Overseas Affiliated Societies were represented by one of the elected committee. In 1976 a Market Advisory sub-committee was set up to cater for the many new members keen to market their produce.

In 1973 1500 voting papers were sent out for the annual committee elections...and only 300 were returned. This resulted in the consideration of a change to triennial elections, giving a saving of £500. The first of the three year committees was elected in 1977.

More herds were now milk recording despite the rising prices. Lists of qualifying yields received from the MMB were published in the Journal, and members who found they were wrongly omitted from the list were urged to contact the Milk Recording Secretary in order to enable all eligible goats' yields to be published in the full year's detailed record in the Herd Book. Club milk recording started again at the beginning of the decade, but at that time there was no facility for butter- fat testing in the herds involved. Later in the decade this problem was solved and details from these herds were published in the Herd Book with a C prefixing the yield. All males from Club recorded dams, or any mixture other than MMB recorded on both sides, were to be CR plus the yield of sire's dam and the dam.

The seventies saw some impressive yields; Mostyn Daphne won the Malpas Melba trophy four times – the first to do over 30000 lbs for several years. As a fifth kidder she had given 38094 lbs by 1st October 1974, with a final lifetime yield of 38527 lbs.

Langdale Gentle - six times kidded - followed her with a yield of 30073 lbs. For the two years ending 1st October 1978 and '79 Hayling Midi won the trophy, but thereafter eligible applicants seemed to fade away. At any rate no winners were published.



While the disruption was caused by decimalisation – banks not accepting half-pence and fees having to be rounded up – metrication was a different matter. Numerous regulation changes were required to Milking Competitions and Milk Recording to produce figures which could be compared to pre-metrication yields. Proteins could now be tested for, which posed questions about whether they should be incorporated into the new calculations and what the standard should be. The show season of 1976 was the last to weigh milk in pounds. The MMB had planned to

introduce metrication for the '75/76 lactations, but had to postpone it for a year. Thus the '76/77 yields were published in kilograms and also included protein tests. Again the question arose as to whether there should be a minimum average protein % to qualify for a prefix. Initially it was suggested that K should replace R for the recorded prefix but in the end the R was retained, followed by the initial three figures of the yield (with § and §§ males also showing three figures). The minimum yield for an R was now set at 1000kg.

After further imports a Register for Golden Guernseys was opened in 1971, solely for stock imported from Guernsey and their progeny. Eligible animals which had previously been registered as IR were now transferred into the Golden Guernsey Register. In 1975 the breed had its own SR and IR and two years later there was also an English Guernsey Register which recognised goats whose blood-lines were not entirely Golden Guernsey.

In 1972 the Anglo-Nubian Breed Society was formed and became affiliated to the BGS. (Several Agricultural Societies were also affiliated at the same time). By the end of the decade all breeds had their

own Breed Societies. ANs and GGs organised their own breed shows in 1977 to be followed by the other breeds in due course.

Up to this point Affiliated Societies had not been required to pay a recognition fee for shows they organised (unlike the large shows). However, by now all sources of income were being tapped and shows were proving expensive for the Society. In an attempt to cut printing costs show results were listed under surname only, and in 1978 the printed entries were 'run-on' without separate paragraphs per class. This proved to be unpopular and was discontinued.

Changes took place to show classifications. Diplomas, at first only available for open shows, later became available at those for Club members only - although the shows did not have to be held under the Rules and Regulations of the BGS. A new show classification M/C was introduced where only the Milking Competitions were recognised by the BGS. The term 'failed' replaced the rather pejorative 'disqualified' for an exhibit which did not achieve the minimum butter-fat or yield in a Milking Competition.

Another change which caused problems was the Transit of Animals (Road and Rail) order of 1975. This imposed conditions on the carrier which British Rail could not comply with and it was therefore unable to transport 'small animals' any longer. This was a blow to members who often sent stock on long journeys in the guard's van.

From January 1975 all male kids had to be ear-marked. This was followed in 1978 by the ear-marking of all goats registered in the Herd Book and Foundation Book. Earmark certificates had to accompany registration applications. Increased membership also meant new prefixes. In 1970 there were 100 of these - by 1976 they had risen to 550. The Herd Book was now so large that it could no longer be stapled!

The second International Goat conference was held in Tours in 1971 and several BGS members attended.

Centenary celebrations.

In October 1979 the BGS reached its centenary. The months leading up to this exciting date were spent debating the best ways of celebrating this milestone so that as many members as possible could be involved in some way. Should the Post Office be approached to issue a set of stamps which, by their national usage, would bring the Society to the notice of a wider public. Unfortunately we moved too late as the Post Office had already arranged their 1979 calendar. The successful ideas put forward included special awards at shows, special publications, and celebratory meetings in London and the Clubs. Money was to be raised for a Centenary Fund with an annual award to a member of the veterinary profession. Our Patron, Her Majesty the Queen, acknowledged the event

with invitations to a Royal Garden Party in 1980. One hundred numbered copies of a china goat (Mostyn Minimays on) commissioned from Shebeg Figure Pottery proved popular and were soon sold. Hilary Burn designed goat tiles which were sold at shows and three other suppliers produced souvenirs the sales of which benefited the Centenary Fund.

Celebrations started 100 years to the day after the BGS's foundation with a reception and buffet lunch at the Hotel Russell, London, on October 16th, 1979. Special invitations were sent to the Ministry of Agriculture, the Royal Veterinary College and the media. The principal guest was Gerry Wigan, M.P., and Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Two of the Society's Honorary Veterinary Officers were also present. It was originally planned that a hundred tickets should be available for members of the Society – in the end 150 people, including the special guests, attended. The event was ably master-minded by David Sawyer and a draw, for which Paul Franche and family sold over 27,000

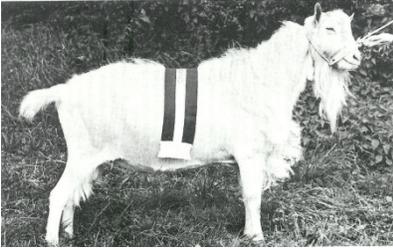
tickets, produced more funds for the Centenary Fund. Many smaller events were held throughout the country and were attended by Affiliated Society members as well as full BGS members.

In addition to these immediate celebrations taking place at various locations, it was felt that there should be a more long-term project to mark this milestone in the Society's history. Clubs and members were asked for suggestions, and the one which was most widely put forward was that something should be done to encourage veterinary interest in goats. At this time very few vets had much knowledge of goats and their ailments and tended to treat them as sheep. The BGS Centenary Committee proposed an award of £100 to be donated each year for a paper of about 5000 words, submitted by a vet who had qualified in the preceding ten years - the topic to be chosen by the BGS. The winning paper would be published in the Journal or Year Book. In more recent years funds, if applied for, have been allocated towards research into suitable projects beneficial to goats.

The money needed to be raised for this project was placed in a separate account - since it was to be used for something other than the everyday running of the Society. A minimum of £1250 was required to produce sufficient income to fund the £100 award. Throughout 1979 an appeal had been made for donations to the Centenary Fund and members and Clubs responded generously. Proceeds from the draw and the sale of souvenirs also contributed, as did the auction of an oil-painting at the 1980 AGM. This painting, of an Anglo-Nubian male head, was the work of Holmes-Pegler's daughter. Seventy pounds secured the picture for Mr Franche, the successful bidder. Overall more than £3000 - well over target- was raised for the Fund.

Throughout the 1980 show season A and B classification shows had special Centenary BGS Rosettes for Best Exhibit and for Best Milker, Best Goatling and Best Kid (of either sex), Best Adult Male and Best Buckling. In addition eight shows nationwide were nominated to award a silver spoon (donated by Miss Mostyn-Owen) for Best Goat in Milk. The chosen shows were one in each of the Area Representative's regions. At a further twenty selected shows Centenary Medallions (donated by Paul Franche) were also awarded to the Best Goat in Milk.

A special edition of the Year Book with numerous pictures and articles featuring personalities and goats, past as well as present, was planned. Also included was a section about the Society's founder and the beginnings of the Society. It was an ambitious project and ran well over budget. A dispute with the printers delayed publication, as did the extra time needed for editing and typesetting the larger publication. Members finally received their copies early in 1981 - but it was worth the wait. The joint Editors were still very occupied with the 1980 issue at the time the 1981 one needed to be prepared. Rather than miss an edition a different Editor was appointed.



SM CH 544/36† Mostyn Minimayson BrCh S3062H