

# LONGHORN CATTLE SOCIETY AGM Weekend 12-14 October 2018

## Co Durham

*The Society AGM is in Co Durham this year.*

*We will be staying at the George Hotel, Piercebridge, Nr Darlington, Co Durham, DL2 3SW and the weekend is centred around the village. The village sits on the River Tees and was an important village in Roman times with a fort being built, the remains of which are open to the public.*

*Once again we have an excellent turnout for an AGM weekend with around 90 people booked in for Saturday and 80 for the evening meal at the Hotel. It is anticipated there will be around 70 people visiting the Raby herd on Sunday.*

**The photo competition will be on display at the George Hotel for guests to vote for their favourite pictures in each category**

### Itinerary

**PLEASE RESPECT THE BIOSECURITY ARRANGEMENTS PUT IN PLACE BY OUR HOSTS**

#### **FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER**

Members arrive at the George Hotel. <https://thegeorgehotelpiercebridge.com/>. Guests to make their own arrangements for dinner tonight. Dinner is available at the Hotel or there's a pub in the village, The Fox Hole <http://www.the-foxhole.co.uk/>.

#### **SATURDAY 13 OCTOBER**

**Visit to Harry Hodgson and his wife Joanna, and Harry's parents Chris and Liz. Piercebridge Farm, Piercebridge, DL2 3SE**  
<http://piercebridgeorganics.co.uk/>

**Meet at the Farm at 10.00 for a 10.30 start**

*There isn't sufficient parking at the farm for all of us so it would be appreciated if those staying at the George Hotel would walk to the farm if possible - it's less than half a mile. From the Hotel turn right over the River Tees and into the village. The farm is on the left hand side set back off the main road. There is a sign at the end of the drive.*

Harry and his family farm 450 acres of tenanted grassland, a lot of it farmed without subsidy. He runs 1200 ewes, a herd of commercial suckler cows, over 30 Longhorns, 3500 laying hens, finishes 2000 outdoor pigs and rears and finishes 60 organic free range broilers every week for the farm shop and butchery. One other full time person is employed and a couple of part time people are also on the farm.

The farm is entirely grass with the sole aim of producing all red meat off grass and to provide the highest quality meat to supply the organic farm shop and butchery and no beef is sold to anyone else. Harry aims to breed hardy, well shaped, easy fleshing, easily managed cattle that will finish at 24 months with no concentrate feed at a minimum weight of 600 kilos. He runs a system based around maximising outputs whilst minimising costs through correct investment in land, genetics and machinery. Harry is in his 30's and he and his wife Joanna have two young children.

**12.30 Lunch at Piercebridge Farm**

**2.00pm AGM**, at the George Hotel, including the presentation of the Bull of the Year Award, Cow of the Year Award, Heifer of the Year, Paul Lockett Novices Award and the Junior Handlers Award.

**7pm for 7.30pm.** Evening dinner at the George Hotel. We will be joined by the Hodgson family and it is hoped representatives from the Raby Estate. Dress code smart casual. We will have a raffle so please bring something if you are able.

#### **SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER**

**Visit to Raby Longhorns, Raby Castle, Staindrop, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL2 3AH.** <http://www.rabycastle.com/>

**Meet at the Estate Tearooms at 10.30am for an 11am start.**

*From the George Hotel take the B6275 heading north and turn left onto the B6279 to Summerhouse, go through Summerhouse and Ingleton and then follow the road until it comes into Staindrop. Turn right onto the A688 and then turn left into the Castle main entrance.*

As herd number 79 the Raby Herd is one of the oldest herds still registering cattle in the Herdbook. The Herd was established by the Farm Manager Peter Boylett in 1973 with four Eyebrook cows and the bull Rousham Bunter being the foundation stock, as part of a rare breed park project. This was eventually discontinued, but the Longhorns remained and were integrated into the commercial suckler herd, with Bunter being used as a crossing bull. The Longhorn herd expanded in the mid 1980's when the commercial suckler herd was dispersed, with Peter buying cows in to form a core herd of around 12 cows, which then expanded by breeding and retaining replacements. The herd had notable successes in the show ring, especially at the Great Yorkshire Show with the bulls Linton Coriolanus, Lupat Horatio and Raby Whinestone all winning the Breed Championship. Peter Boylett retired in 2000 and the herd is now managed by Andrew Richardson with Lady Barnard taking an active interest in the cattle. We will be escorted around the herd by Robert Sullivan the Farm Manager for the Raby Estate.

Tea and coffee will be available to members after the tour. If members wish to stay for lunch at their own expense the tearooms will be open serving hot or cold meals, however an indication of numbers at the start of the day would be appreciated so the Castle staff can serve everyone in a timely manner.

*Depart.*