



Welcome to the
**Annual Conference
& AGM 2026**

Cumbria

Monday 11th - Thursday 14th May



On behalf of the President, Office Bearers and Council of the Society, we extend a warm welcome to the 148th Annual General Meeting and Conference in Cumbria.

The hotel is The Crown Hotel, Steele's Bank, Wetheral, Carlisle, CA4 8ES.

Amy is on hand should you need any help with anything during your stay and can be called on **07925 529821**. The hotel staff are always available to ensure your stay is as enjoyable as possible and can be contacted anytime on **01228 561888**.

For those delegates arriving on Sunday, dinner should be pre-ordered with Amy before your arrival.

Breakfast is served between 7am and 9.15am daily.

There is a pool within the hotel which is free to use during your stay.

Dress Code

Sunday & Monday - Casual

Tuesday - Smart casual - remember your dancing shoes!!

Wednesday - Black Tie.

Farm visits

Mike Cartner, Rodney Armstrong and Amy will be available on the bus if you have any questions.

Alternative Programme

Annabell Armstrong will answer any queries you may have and can be contacted on **07999 747518**.

Bio-Security

It is essential that all delegates participating in farm visits ensure that footwear being worn is suitable for disinfection, and that all normal bio-security procedures are followed.

Itinerary

Sunday 10th May

Check in from 3pm

7.30pm Evening dinner (pre-order required)

Monday 11th May

9:30am Depart hotel for Middle Farm

12:00noon Return to hotel for Lunch

1.30pm Council Meeting

3.30pm AGM & Presentations of Society Awards

4.30pm Meeting of New Council

Alternative Programme

10:00am Glass Fusing (in Hotel)

7:30pm Dinner

Tuesday 12th May

09:00am Depart hotel for herd visit to Sanderson & Denmans

12.30pm Herd visit and lunch, Troutbeck

Alternative Programme

09:00am Depart hotel for tour of Hutton-in-the-Forest House & Gardens

12.30pm Lunch at Troutbeck followed by flower arranging

4:00pm Return to hotel

7:00pm Drinks reception followed by evening meal and entertainment

Wednesday 13th May

09:30am Depart hotel for herd visit to Orton Hall

12.30pm Herd visit and lunch, Plaskett

4:00pm Return to hotel

Alternative Programme

9:30am Depart hotel for Watch Tree Nature Reserve & Cafe

12:00noon Collected by buses for afternoon at Plaskett with upholstery demonstration

4:00pm Return to hotel

7:00pm Drinks reception followed by evening meal and entertainment

Dress Code - Black Tie

Thursday 14th May

Check out at your leisure before 11am

Delegate List

Rodney Armstrong
Annabell Armstrong
James Waterhouse
Nicola Waterhouse
Robert Cornish
Anita Cornish
John Watson
Avril Watson
Michael Broadley
Diane Broadley
John Broadley
Barbara Broadley
Jesse Bostock
Sara Bostock
Steve Bailey
Rachel Bailey
Mark Barnes
Jane Barnes
David Sayer
Tracey Sayer
David Law
Margaret Law
Peter Berresford
Elaine Berresford
David Fearn
Marlyn Fearn

Robert Miller
Marion Miller
Hew Howie
Wilma Benson
Michael Howie
Angie Howie
Chester Callow
Sue Callow
Robert Adams
Anne Mountain
John Whiteford
Dot Whiteford
Mark Partington
Maria Partington
Robert Fitton
Louise Fitton
Arthur Lawrie
Susan Lawrie
Paul Jenkin
Penny Jenkin
David Gibson
Charlotte Gibson
David Sanderson
Christine Sanderson
William Biggin
Janet Biggin

James Rankin
May Rankin
Jo Billings
Jennifer Adams
Ernest Billings
Kythe Billings
Ian Patrick
John Watson
Linda Batty
Howard Batty
Richard Danforth
Ian Hutchinson
Harry Bolderston
Charlie Bolderston
Pam Bagg
David Heasman
Duncan Hunter
David Williams
Chick Service
Elaine Irwin
Tim Busch
Wendy Young
Gilmour Lawrie
Tom McCreadie

We look forward to welcoming many local friends and breeders throughout the conference.

Middle J Whiteford & Sons

The Whiteford family of Jack, Margaret and daughter Agnes came to Middle Farm in May 1947 from Dumbuck Farm, Dumbarton in Scotland with 99 head of cattle, and one Clydesdale horse. William and Thomas (Twins), John and then Robert were born after the move to Middle farm. Originally, Middle Farm was 385 acres which was tenanted from 1947 until 1976 and when the boys left school and were working on the farm, Middle Farm was purchased. In 1968 a new byre was built to house 120 cattle along with a silage pit. Another farm was also purchased in 1968, Tercrosset Farm in Brampton for youngstock until Thomas left the business and is now run by Thomas and his family.

Further alterations were made between 1977-78 with a new five door byre, more silage storage, a slurry system and a new milking parlour along with a commodity shed. In 2014 saw more modifications giving more cubicles and replacing bull beef housing.

Middle Farm is a family run unit of Willie, John, along with Stephen, his wife Sally, and their two children Scott and Connie, plus regular and casual staff. Farming a unit of 500 acres which includes two blocks of rented land and adjoining buildings with most of the land ploughable with the exception of some steep land in permanent grass.

The cow ration is grass silage made up of three cuts, fodder beet and chopped straw and hay added to the diet. J B Nutrition supply the blend and youngstock rearer. We calve all year round, and buffer feed during the grazing season. Our youngstock are summered and wintered away from the main unit.

Our milk contract is with Arla supplying the Lockerbie Creamery and to improve our milking efficiency, the decision was made to install a 26/52 Dairy Master rapid exit parlour in September 2017 and in 2025 we built a new calf unit which includes automatic calf feeders.

All of our breeding is to dairy bulls. In 2001 when Foot and Mouth hit, although we were very fortunate to have escaped it, our AI flasks went down, so we continued with our own stock bulls as by this time some of their bloodlines had an infusion of outside genetics, this when we addressed the situation by calling our herd Whiteford Red & Whites and Middle Ayrshires.

To quote Clive Norbury "the breeding programme is based on blending the best attributes of the Ayrshire and the Red & Whitw Holsteins, and through the use of mainly home bred bulls containing the blood of specially selected brood cows and sires Willie and John have developed a cow which is distinctly unique and they have virtually developed their own breed".

The herd has been built on blending the strengths of the leading families in the herd, through sons of the top cows and most of these bulls have come from the Emerald, Mitzi, Oranje, Jean and Crummie families.

Current sires used on the milking herd include Moathouse Poldark, Ravenhill Revolver, Cuthill Towers Calcutta and some semen purchased from Cattle Services.

Sires used from the Mattinson family are Troutbeck Progress, Troutbeck Showstopper, Troutbeck Romantic and Troutbeck Tango.

Reduction sales have been held 2010-2015 and 2020 – 2025.

Middle farm look forward to welcoming you to view the herd on Monday 11th May.



Sanderson

D & C Sanderson



David and Christine would once again like to welcome everyone to Thackthwaite Hall to view their herd on Tuesday 12th May.

Unfortunately, in 2001 the original herd was lost due to Foot and Mouth, and was restocked from the Waxham herd in Norfolk and a selection from Syke and Middle, with more recent additions from herd sales such as Ballygreggan Beana EX95, Carnell Claire 30 EX91, Brieryside Rock Patsy EX90 and several more.

The farm extends to 200 acres (all grass) with 50 acres rented for silage (two cuts taken). The herd of 180 cows is milked twice a day, and the milk is sold to Arla. The youngstock are grazed mainly on rented ground in the summer and are housed up the road on a neighbouring former dairy farm in the winter months. The system is kept quite simple – David is in charge of feeding the cows with direction from Ian Wozencroft from New Breed UK, and Christine does most of the milking with the help of Jake Sayer several days a week along with Alan Armstrong, and Amy Sayer for the odd milking. Christine's sister, Marian Byrne, feeds all the calves with the help of young Jack Turner. Daughter Lynne and Grandchildren Carys and Mason also help when needed.

The family enjoy showing, and have won the Great Yorkshire Show with Waxham Whiterose, Sanderson ES Buntie 161, and Sanderson Buntie 6. In the last two years David & Christine have also won two All Britain and Ireland Photographic Classes, Sanderson Champ Buntie EX91 was Champion 5 year old in 2024 and Sanderson Skyfall Surprise EX92 was Champion 8 years and over in the 2025 competition.

Current Stockbull is Sanderson Chris EX90, son of Carnell Claire 30 EX91 who was purchased at the Carnell dispersal Sale in 2022, he is sired by Cuthill Towers Buster. Chris replaced the last stockbull Moathouse Baretta EX91 who was out of Moathouse Barbara 9 EX92 by Karmouraska Bigstar. Two young bulls were retained last year Sanderson Emperor, by Waxham Executive from the Emerald family going back to Middle Emerald MR EX91 who won the National Dairy Show and Sanderson Gunshot, by Moathouse Baretta from the Georgette family who go back to Middle Georgette MM EX95 who was purchased with Nick Armstrong.

Calves on the ground currently are mainly by Chris with many more to come as well as pregnancies to Calderglen Hard Rock, Laroc Mini-Wheats, Swaites Deer Hunter, Beeline Ladies Man and Claynook Zafar P Red.

Ballygreggan Beana EX95 has recently completed lifetime production of 100 tonnes in her 12th lactation, she has two daughters milking in the herd, Sanderson Jacuzzi Beana EX90 and Sanderson Jacuzzi Beana 2 VG87 with granddaughters and one great granddaughter to follow on. Beana is the fourth cow to reach the milestone after Waxham Lizzie 56 VG86, Waxham Biscuit 20 EX93 and Sanderson White Rose 445 EX93.

David and Christine enter the Cumberland Herds and progeny competition every year and try and support the Club as much as possible. The Sanderson family are looking forward to meeting you all in May.



Denmans JC & AM Sayer



Ayrshires cows were first brought to Denmans Farm in Cannington, Somerset, around 1960 having milked Shorthorns until this time. The milking herd was dispersed 20 years ago this coming December, though Ayrshire and Holstein heifers are still calved and sold fresh by David.

In 2023, Jake and Amy took over the membership with the Society having just got married and had the opportunity to buy cows that Jake new well at the dispersal of the Sandyford portion of the Brieryside herd, where he had worked as herdsman for just short of four years. At that time the Brieryside animals were joined by two yearling heifers from Plaskett and Cuthill Towers Gusty Mandy who was purchased at the Black & White Sale the previous December. These families now make the foundation of the herd that call Thackthwaite Hall their home, where David and Christine Sanderson kindly house the girls with their Sanderson herd. The cows that were purchased all come from good cow families with strong pedigrees, encapsulated by Gusty Mandy, now scored VG88 (3yr) completing 13 generations very good or excellent. In 2024 Rosehill Hawaiian Pamela VG87 (2yr) was purchased in partnership with Ben Broadley, Whitepeak Ayrshires, with the aim of adding another great family through embryo transfer.

Throughout the year we enjoy showing at local and national shows with much success. In 2025, Denmans Paulette was unbeaten as an incalf heifer, having been placed second at the All Britain All Breeds Calf Show the previous autumn. Mandy lead the junior cows on both of her outings last year. Other recent showing highlights include winning the junior cow class at the National Ayrshire Show in 2023 with Brieryside Magic Patsy whose daughter, Denmans Patsy won her class at the ABAB Calf Show last year.

The small herds twelve month average is 8170 kg at 4.31% Fat and 3.34% Protein which is all above the breed average.

Jake and Amy aim one day to milk their herd commercially, in the meantime the aim is to breed a more consistent type of cow with good production and easy management traits.



Troutbeck

JJ & M Mattinson & Sons



The Mattinson family are excited to welcome the delegates of the 2026 Ayrshire Conference on Tuesday 12th May.

The Troutbeck herd was established back in 2001 and over the last two and a half decades our herd numbers have steadily grown to the current 320 milkers. In the winter of 2017, the herd made the short journey to the newly acquired Bridge House site where they moved into their new green field facility. The cows are milked twice a day through a Fullwood 36/36 parlour and the yield for the herd is currently averaging at 9491kg at 4.63% bf and 3.49% p, with a calving interval of 379 days. Keen to embrace progressive technologies for the better of our herd, we feed a mix of grass and maize silage, fodder beet, brewers' grains, and blend through a robotic Triolet feeder.

The Troutbeck girls have had many successes in the show ring and the family continue to proudly show our cows at local and national level events. A particular highlight for us was the award of both Champion and Reserve at the national Ayrshire show at Dairy Day in 2021 where we exhibited Troutbeck Skyfall Peony Rose EX95.

As passionate stockmen, our family invest significant effort in shaping our herd with genetics that give us a modern functional animal that suits our system without losing the much-admired attributes of the Ayrshire breed; as such we feel privileged to be spoiled for choice when it comes to excellent cow family lines. Despite this, the family's stand-out favourite cow family remains the Jess family, with the Queen of the herd Troutbeck Burdette Jess EX96 due to calve before the conference with her 12th calf. The influence of this tremendous cow on our herd form and reputation cannot be understated: many of her sons have been widely used and Troutbeck Progress in particular has left a lasting impression across our herd profile. Current sires being used include Troutbeck Progress, CSA Punchline, Marleycote Snowdrop Legend, VR Vimo, Delta Ted Talk, and Delta Party P-Red.

We are positive that everyone will have a wonderful stay up in Cumbria for this year's Conference: our county is rightly reputable for its beautiful scenery, fantastic hospitality and – most importantly – phenomenal Ayrshire cows. We look forward to seeing you all.



Orton Hall

Byron Johnston & Family



At Orton Hall the Johnston family run a mixture of farming enterprises. After a recent change in farming policy, it was decided to reintroduce the dairy herd. Originally milking Northern Dairy Shorthorns then progressing to British Friesians previously. A range of breeds were considered when choosing the right breed for our grass-based system. However, after viewing breeds across the country from: Holsteins, Friesians, Fleckviehs and crossbreeds the Ayrshire breed came out on top.

Ayrshire cattle showed distinguished traits compared to other breeds, ideal medium size weight approximately 550kg with a calm temperament alongside easier management than other breeds. Excellent forage efficiency was a key reason for choosing the breed, as the core of our business is maximising milk from homegrown forage. Superior milk quality was another reason, with high milk proteins and small fat globules makes it ideal for cheese making, therefore tailoring our needs towards our milk contract with the milk sold to First Milk (Regenerative Co-op).

The majority of the herd originates from the Rankin family at Badenheath from Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire alongside cows from Middle, Brierside, Plaskett and other herd dispersals. Sandyford Lucky Charm dominates the core of the herd breeding from the Badenheath prefix. Cow families to look out for include Badenheath Blossom, Dandy and Candy providing cows reaching ninth lactations with plenty of lactations ahead.

The Orton Hall prefix was established in 2023 with heifers milking from sires including, Pam Ayr's Heirloom, Remsberg and Royal Flush Sea King. Current breeding sires include: Troutbeck Daring, Hacker, Challenger, Bournstar, Catalyst, Crispers and a stock bull Plasket Jester.

As new members to the Ayrshire breed we look forward to welcoming you all and hope you enjoy the herds visits around Cumbria.



Plaskett Messrs Armstrong



The Armstrong family welcome delegates for the 2026 Conference in Cumbria, farming on the edge of the Solway Coast.

The herd was founded by the Strickland family in 1938 with non pedigree females before taking on the tenancy at Plaskettlands in 1942. The Plaskett prefix was then established with the society in 1946 which then lead to the first cattle being made pedigree in 1948.

We farm 250 acres over two steadings on mostly light, sandy land and currently have 225 head of cattle, 105 milk cows, with 120 followers.

Due to the longevity of our Ayrshire herd, we only need 20 replacements a year, so at least 50% of the herd are now served to the either British Blue or Angus. Both sexed and conventional semen is used on the rest of the cows.

We keep a few bulls out of the best cows and register them as this gives us an option to have a bull to serve heifers with and also to sell on if required. Any other Ayrshire bulls are sold fat at 16 months. Beef calves are sold between two and six months old depending on shed space and current market values.

Cows are fed on a grass based diet, and they are grazed for seven months if the weather allows. Big bale silage is fed through winter, with dairy cake in our 10/20 swing over parlour. Our milk is sold to First Milk on a cheese contract so good fats and proteins are essential.

We aim to be self sufficient, and all of the crop and tractor work is done in house, with only the grain harvest contracted out. This is done alongside the potato sales on three markets a week from June to December, and further sales from the farm.



Thank You

The conference would not be possible without the support of the below companies. Both the Society and the Cumberland club are grateful for their continued support.

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