



# Update for Supporters October 2023

# EDENBRIDGE & OXTED AGRICULTURAL SHOW

Celebrating the country way of life since 1837

**With the dust well and truly settled now on the 2023 show we're finding time to reflect on all the wonderful things we saw and all the positive new developments.**

The weather looked kindly on us and we were blessed with absolutely perfect show conditions that ensured comfort for animals and visitors alike. We're proud to report that we hosted 45,000 people across the Sunday and Monday of the August bank holiday weekend, with our highest public ticket sales since 2011!

With so many visitors, we needed to ensure that the competitions they came to enjoy were well-supported and that they reflect one of our key charitable purposes - to promote the improvement in breeding and rearing of livestock. We were so proud that leaders in their fields chose to spend their bank holiday exhibiting their horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, dogs, rabbits and even guinea pigs with us. Competitors travelled from the furthest corners of the country to join us.

We welcomed livestock that had taken titles at county shows nationwide along with local competitors. There was strong, but notably good-natured competition with our esteemed judges facing difficult decisions in the show rings.

It's fortunate that there are two of us sharing the chairmanship of the show as there's so much we wanted to see alongside all the other responsibilities that come with the role these days. Together we lead the team of trustees, committees, employees and contractors, and we're accountable for delivering a safe and enjoyable, largescale public event. These requirements seem to get ever more onerous and costly. We're very conscious that we're operating in a very challenging financial climate, with many pressures that impact our show's finances.

As with any charity of our size, each year we review our budgets to look at our costs and look to see where our 'break even' point might come. For us this depends largely on how many trade stands will book in with us,

on the generosity of our sponsors and of course on how many visitors might come through our gates.

This year, increases in our essential contractor costs were eye-watering. Keeping the cost increases below 15% has required some very difficult conversations and has not been an easy task. We need to thank those who help us with everything from bins through to first aid, electrics, furniture, PA hire, plumbing, printing, security, stables, tents, ticketing, toilets and trophies! Together we've worked to keep our costs fair but our service strong. Of concern though was that had we applied this year's costs to last year's visitor numbers we would have faced a financial loss in the order of some £60,000.

We have not yet concluded our financial year and our accounts will take a while to reconcile. We are hopeful that we might carry a small surplus back to our reserves but our show has to work to find creative solutions to help secure a long term financial future. We are determined to do so whilst remaining committed to the preservation of the E&O Show's core values and character which shone through so brightly this year.

Whether you came along as a member, a sponsor, a steward or a competitor, we send you our most grateful thanks for your support. We very honestly couldn't do it without you.

Bill Peters & Holly Taylor  
Joint Show Chairmen





# Meet the 2023 Champions!



Our CLM Overall Beef Champion is this superb British Simmental cow, Brandane Kirsty. Owned by well-known breeder Jimmy McMillan from Suffolk, she was shown with her 2023 calf at foot.



The Blockfield Perpetual Challenge Salver for the Champion Dairy Female (sponsored by The Downing Partnership) was presented to Peter Prior & Designer Holsteins for Designer Brady Alicia.



Winning the Inter-Breed pig championship, sponsored by Oakland Pigs, was clearly exhausting for Tedfold Lena, a pedigree Duroc pig owned by Oliver Giles.



Judged by renowned breeder Will Price from Worcestershire, our 2023 Supreme Sheep Champion (sponsored by BTF Partnership) was this magnificent Beltex ram, owned by Mandy Friend.



Congratulations to Mr Chris Spree from Kent who collected enough points in our horticultural competition classes to be awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Banksian Medal.



For the third year running, Will Moreton took first place in the Quitkick Supreme Ridden Horse championship riding Sarah-Ann Gunn's lightweight show hunter, Kilcarna Brilliant.



## Famous Faces



Zoe Colville (left) with judge of our Junior Shepherd classes, Stefanie Georgetti



Earl De La Warr (left) with our Joint Show Chairman, Bill Peters



Claire Coutinho MP and above, Spencer Wilton

## In Memoriam

It was with great sadness that we heard of the recent passing of our charity's longest-standing trustee, past Chairman and past President, Mr John Garner (19th June 1936 - 7th October 2023).



Farming locally at Black Robins Farm just outside Edenbridge, John's name has been synonymous with the show for an incredible 70 years. His particular passion was always our Country Sports area; he was instrumental in creating this section of the show and it was a committee he took great pride in leading and building.

A popular character, John was well-known particularly for his kindness and will be very much missed. The thoughts of our trustees are with John's family at this time.

We took some quiet moments on the Saturday evening before the show in the company of our Honorary Chaplain, The Reverend Ian Whitley, once again to remember absent friends. We also unveiled this smart new bench engraved in memory of longstanding dairy cattle exhibitor and Agriculture Committee member Jeanne Heasman who passed away last year. Our thanks to Maggie Howie and the cattle exhibitors for their generous contributions towards its purchase.





# Sponsor Focus



Big smiles for Rona King and Piper who won the special 'Edenbridge Express' have-a-go gundog scurry competition on Monday. This was the first year in which Priory Vets have sponsored the gundog competitions and competitors were pleased to be presented with rosettes proudly bearing their name. Piper also won the Association of Show & Agricultural Organisations Centenary Champion rosette.

We had nominated the Edenbridge Express as our show's unique championship to be celebrated in the association's centenary year.



Our charity's trustees are keen to acknowledge and thank local firm White & Sons. Whilst a long-term sponsor of our roadside advertising boards, this year they extended their support to sponsor our online tickets and have also provided professional services as an in kind contribution.



It's great to see more of our sponsors presenting rosettes and trophies to competition winners. Here's Michael McNally (far right) presenting the Warners Solicitors Beef Champion, Heathbrow Nationwide, with his awards.

We had **131** sponsors in 2023. They range from kind individuals and families who want to support a particular section of the show through to companies looking to get their brand associated with our event and seen by our visitors.

Some provide support 'in kind' by lending us essential equipment or providing us with a service we need. The average value of sponsorship in 2023 was around £300. At present the cash income from sponsors accounts for about 5% of our annual income.

With our costs rising so quickly then we will need to rely further on the generosity of our sponsors than ever before.

Could your company help us by linking together in partnership? Please contact our Show Director to talk further about commercial opportunities.

Contact:  
Judy Whittaker, 07514 669708  
showdirector@edenbridge-show.co.uk

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A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT FAMILY CONCERN





# President's Prizes

**Our new Show President wasted no time in getting to know every corner of the showground in this, the first of his two years in the role.**

The President has a number of roles through the weekend and beyond, and local farmer and businessman Jan Boomaars was certainly keen to do his best for the show. We rely on an enormous team of volunteers for every section, to help with everything from judging and stewarding, arena parties, manning gateways and horsewalks, car parking, staffing paygates, welcoming sponsors, greeting and entertaining the public. Jan was insistent on meeting as many of these volunteers as possible and on spending time listening to their feedback and learning more about how all the pieces of the wonderful jigsaw puzzle that is our show come together.

He also met many of the traders that transform our showground into their shop window for the weekend, and he made sure to visit every corner of the show to see the fabulous breadth of the exhibits we bring together for the public to watch.

One of the privileges of the Show President title is to select the winners of two prestigious prizes that extend back through the years of our show's history. These are the Winston Churchill Memorial Trophy for the Best Exhibit in the show, and the Diana Barnato Walker Trophy for the Reserve Best Exhibit. After great consideration, Jan awarded the Diana Barnato Walker Trophy to the Surrey Federation of Womens' Institutes who had staged a magnificent competition and exhibition for their members within our Horticulture Marquee. The Churchill Trophy was presented to Mike Deakins, the Chief Steward of our Dairy Cattle section for their tremendous achievements this year.

To take cattle off the farm and prepare them for the show ring is not only a time consuming business, but it's very costly too in labour and transport to say the least. We look around and see a national and regional trend of falling exhibitor numbers and fewer cattle than ever competing at agricultural shows, particularly in dairy competitions. However, we are humbled to see how many competitors still support the Edenbridge & Oxted Show and for many, it's now the only show they attend. Our cattle exhibitor numbers are as healthy now as they ever were, with over 300 cows competing this year, and a whopping 100 of those being dairy cattle. Competitors travelled from Bristol, Essex and Devon to show their dairy cows with us. The standard of competition and a strong show from the Holstein breeders made sure that our winners were truly worthy.



*Having got to grips with one of our oldest exhibits, Jan got down to presidential business and presented prizes in all sections of the show.*







# News from the equestrian rings

Our packed equestrian schedule was bursting with almost 1200 entries all performing at a superb standard. 17 lucky horse and rider combinations won golden tickets to the Horse of the Year Show in October, 3 more won Royal International Horse Show qualifiers and one victorious pairing will be competing for glory at the London International Horse Show. Many more came to compete for fun in classes tailored for local children and enthusiastic amateurs in all disciplines. The ridden heavy horses were back by popular demand, we hosted a new working hunter horse class for local riders and a new Local Mini Ridden Championship.

New in the equestrian competition for 2023 was a Heritage Ridden qualifier for the London International Horse Show. This saw native breeds from Shetlands to Welsh Section Ds compete under saddle for a very prestigious ticket indeed. Kindly sponsored by Sparrowhawk's Equine Cremations this new section was well-supported with entries and won by a Fell stallion, Greenrivers Luke, ridden by Sarah Parker.



Success in the showjumping rings was particularly notable for young Phoebe Farman. Just 17 years old, she rode Tracy Priest's horses Iniesta and Diara Sue to take both first and second place in the biggest jumping class of the show, the Area Trial. Sponsored by property specialists Jackson-Stops in Oxted, this was a very challenging course which Phoebe tackled with expertise beyond her years.

Thanks must also go to Ashdown Feeds and to Bloomfields Chartered Town Planners who kindly sponsored our new Horse of the Year Show qualifiers for non-native and native coloured horses respectively.



Did you spot the distinctive blue and white stripes of the youngsters from Warlingham Rugby Club? They volunteer their time to help with the showjumping and arena displays. We have made a donation to their club which funds new tour kit for their Academy.



## Could you help?

We rely on so many volunteers to help keep our equestrian competitions running smoothly. We are always looking for people to steward, assisting judges/competitors in the ring, manning a gateway or helping keep pedestrians safe on a crossing point. Even if just for a couple of hours then we'd love to hear from you. Please email [info@edenbridge-show.co.uk](mailto:info@edenbridge-show.co.uk) to chat more about volunteering.

A big 'thank you' to our driving commentator, Nigel Fuller who very kindly stepped in to help as our emergency stable manager this year when the lovely Barry had to leave at short notice. Thank you to our competitors for their understanding of the situation too!





# Horticultural Highlights



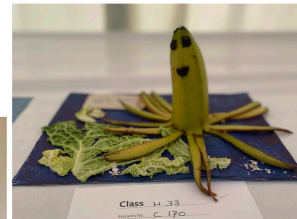
How pleased does horticultural entrant Casey Stone look with her beautiful trophies? Casey entered our floral art competitions for the first time. She was bowled over to win her class and the Lady Churchill Challenge Cup for the Most Meritorious Exhibit. Congratulations Casey!



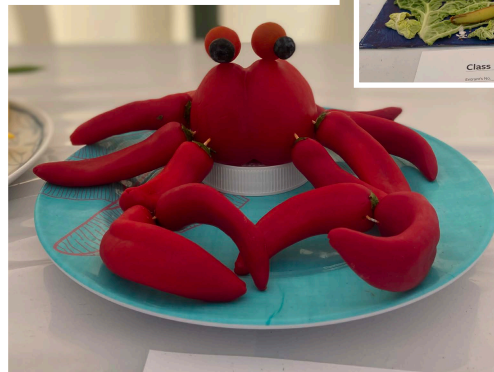
Always a riot of colour and oasis of calm, our horticulture tent celebrates the fruits of the garden, from flowers to fruits and vegetables.



The children's classes are free to enter and our 'make a sea creature' class certainly drew some fabulous entries!



Did you know... that many of our horticultural exhibitors allow us to sell off their entries at the end of the show? This year we raised £180 from the kind donations of those taking the beautiful flowers and vegetables home.



Fond memories for Heulwen thanks to Windmill Manor Care Home and Barchester Healthcare.

Retired farmer Heulwen Lewis from Swan Lane Farm, Marlpit Hill, joined us at the show this year to relive happy memories of times there with her father, Jenkin Rees Lewis, bringing along a selection of his competition awards.



Together with family members and kind staff from Windmill Manor Care Home Heulwen enjoyed a glass with Show President Jan Boomaars and show trustee Margaret Watts.





# Did you know...?



Whilst they've been helping at our show since the 1980s, we have to recognise the mammoth effort that goes into our show from Tonbridge Juddians. This rugby club find us 80 volunteers who man our paygates, operate the scanners and welcome the public every year. It takes many hours of organisation and we're ever so grateful to them. We make a donation to the club in thanks for the time they contribute to our event.

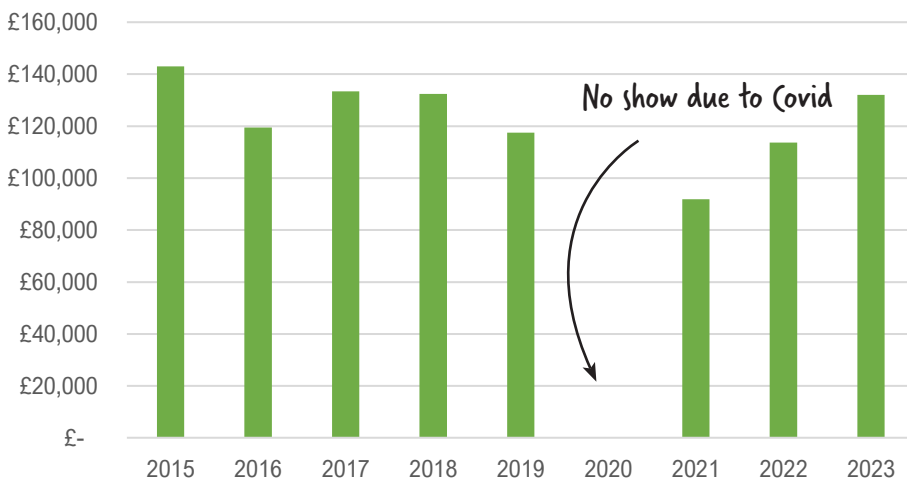
our show will donate around £13,000 to community groups who help at the event and a further £6,000 in grants to charities supporting farming, the countryside and education.

We crunched some numbers and reckon that our visitors spent a whopping total of just under £60,000 on ice creams at our show! Did you notice that we made some changes this year? You asked us for more choice and for a local option for your ice creams. We welcomed Salcombe Dairy (who have a Kent office too!), Park Farm Brasted and The Barley Mow with outdoor stands for their delicious ice cream.

Park Farm even offered a dog ice cream for your four-legged friends. Made by James and Louisa Edgar on their farm just down the road, their white chocolate and raspberry flavour was declared the best by our official tasters. [www.parkfarmbrasted.co.uk](http://www.parkfarmbrasted.co.uk)



### Trade stand income



Whilst our trade stand figures have always been a little up and down, Covid caused significant change for many of the companies that used to come to shows like ours year in, year out. Some traders took to the internet, finding a new audience and lower operating costs. Some sadly ceased trading altogether or took the opportunity to retire. It has been a challenge for us to build back up to pre-covid levels - and to work with our new layout to find great locations for our traders - but we're really pleased with progress and with this year's trader numbers.



We had around 240 trade stands this year, and around 40% of them were new to the show. This is so encouraging for the future as we work to recover not only the reduced income but also to offer our visitors the sorts of stands they want. Our volunteer trade stands committee is committed to growing what's on offer and on encouraging local businesses to make the most of our platform.



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