

Celebration of Robert Bakewell's Tercentenary



1725



2025



To all Members

What do you know about Robert Bakewell? Possibly not a lot!

Although in the 18th century he was a seminal figure in the improvement of farm animals – Sheep, cattle, and horses- he is now not as well known as such men as Jethro Tull and Coke of Norfolk.

Born in 1725, he became well known for the quality of his livestock and in particular the improvement of the Leicester Longwool sheep and the longhorn cattle. He developed a sheep (known as the Dishley Leicester, the improved Leicester or the Leicester Longwool) which became the forerunner of many of the current breeds such as the Border and Blue-faced Leicester's.

Robert Bakewell was born in 1725 and so 2025 is the tricentenary of his birth.

It therefore feels appropriate to celebrate this and several organisations wish to do so.

Since our breed is the one most associated with him and his work, we are planning an exhibition and conference in June 2025.

Whilst still in the planning stage, several ideas are beginning to take shape.

The first of these is an exhibition at Rutland Show on June 1st 2025 where the show organisers have kindly allocated us a space for an exhibition and a parade in the main arena. Several other sheep, cattle and horse breeds have expressed an interest in joining us at Rutland Show.

The following three days will be devoted to visits (Dishley Grange for one), talks and panel discussions on different practices across the globe. The emphasis will be on the preservation of the breed and on wool and crafts. Well known speakers such as Tullis Matson – an expert in AI and winner of the Marsh Christian award for conservation in Genetic Bio-Diversity and Dr Philip Sponenberg from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va., who has written several books on colour genetics and rare breed conservation and also breeds Leicester Longwools. are hoping to join us

Visitors are expected from Australia, New Zealand, America, and Sweden and so we are hoping that as many of you as possible will join us for at least some of the time.

The events will be based around Melton Mowbray and there are numerous interesting places to visit for accompanying partners. Several venues are being investigated and costings should be available shortly.

Please put the dates in your diary (June 1st to June 5th, 2025) and if you are interested in being involved (for example demonstrating wool/crafts and your sheep, helping with the organisation, or for more information) please contact Sue Hatton (whitelodgefrisby@btinternet.com) or Margaret Rutherford (margaret.r70@gmail.com) . All offers of help however small will be much appreciated.