

# Finlarg Herd

Reared on the Sidlaws



*Lammermuir  
Tremendous*

*Finlarg Livestock also include Simmentals,  
Scotch and Cheviot Mules.*

Robert and Hazel McNee  
Over Finlarg Farm, Tealing  
Dundee, DD4 0QE  
01382 380627

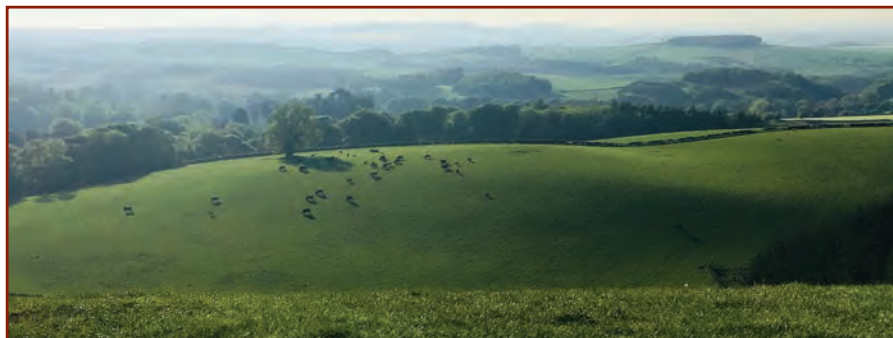
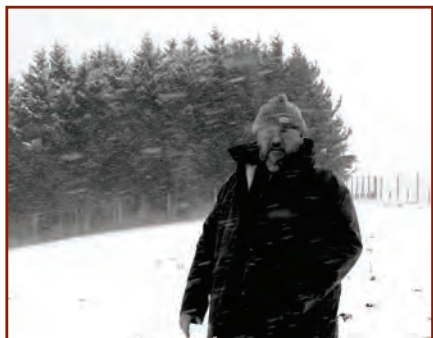


*Come and see  
us at Scotsheep  
on the  
3rd of June 2020.*

*Euan MacDiarmid*



# Out and About



For the last ten years, Sheila and I have run two farms at the edge of the Lammermuir Hills in East Lothian. The first farm, Newmains – roughly 350 acres – is a steep and hilly place but has good quality soil, allowing about half to be cultivated to arable if required, with the remaining land being too steep for anything other than grass. The second farm, Ruchlaw West Mains, of roughly 110 acres, is less than a mile away but feels a world away with its gentle slopes and very fertile soil. This year at Ruchlaw, new grass has been sown for an early silage crop before vining peas and then wheat. It's a bit of an experiment for us, and the aim is to develop a rotational system that involves minimal cultivation and nitrates.

Apart from a modest contribution of profit, what we are really after is straw for feeding and bedding at Newmains. There, we run about 60 Luings (and followers to finish), out all year round except for a six-week calving window which we have kept that tight from the word go, originally for very selfish reasons. Our kids, now all grown-up, were little when we started, and I was fully employed with other business so the farm had to be manageable part-time. In all honesty, we wanted to make sure calving was out of the way by the Easter school holidays. If you work that out, it means spring calving starts in February – very early – and extending by even a couple of weeks would mean mid/late January, which would be a big ask.

I could also justify six weeks of restricted movements and confinement to my office for my day job (only 40 minutes away), but more than that was difficult. These selfish reasons turned out accidentally to be, we believe, the smartest move we have made.

It means we have to have the cattle in really good shape and at peak for the bull, and it also means that we have to be very black and white on cows that fail to get pregnant in that narrow window. We have been strict on any cows that are less than self-sufficient too, because we just didn't have the time to deal with them.

The result is a herd that's – touch wood – very fertile and requires no real help at calving. Of course, there's always an exception: if a maiden or young heifer has twins, then fails to get into calf in the six-week window, she gets a second chance, and that's paid us back well.

Of course, what we've done in a few years is dwarfed by the genetics that started many generations previously. Our foundation cows were from Luing, Benhar and Milkieston. In our purchasing at Dingwall and Castle Douglas, the only disappointing factor has been that we had to bid harder than we wanted to get the heifers we had circled in the catalogue.







With a good bull from Charles Symons, we had a good start, and that accelerated when we were lucky enough to buy Harehead Mourie. I'm still in shock that my hand ignored our hard-line budget and remained airborne when Robin's hammer slammed down! Mourie is away now, but with straws and a good AI plan, the sight of his shape and character reborn every spring brings a private moment of pleasure.

As new farmers, we were anxious at calving, but as the years have rolled by, experience has brought a confidence that turned anxiety into enjoyment. Less really is more: give them peace and they are fine for the most part.

That approach has been helped by another selfish decision – the cattle shed is about half a mile away, a lovely walk on a summer evening, but grim in sleety, windy February. The eureka moment of a remote camera was a life-changer. You can hear a cow starting, and with zoom lenses, the detail is better than the human eye – we can watch and listen without interrupting nature at work.

I now always look forward to calving, and I'm sorry to see the end of it.

We don't wean until mid-December, which cuts down on feeding time (we winter the calves inside until March). Cows and calves get straw and minerals in the field and, from roughly mid-November, some creep feed to ready the calves. Luings hold on to condition so well that we have to watch that they don't get too fat for calving; keeping the calves at foot helps that. Calves in the shed are on silage and a peck of hard grains. We never used to give them hard feed, but a kindly piece of advice from a well-known Luing man – "Would you grudge them an apple a day?" – referring to the cost of a handful or so of hard feed stuck with me and, my goodness, it was good advice. It's back on grass in March and to finish in late August and September – with conversions and scores respectable enough. The scores matter; after all, what we, all of us, are about is turning grass into protein, and that's what makes the Luing a stand-out choice. If new entrants like Sheila and I can start farming with no experience, have time for other employment and turn out a decent end product, it tells you the raw ingredient is the star of the show – and that's the Luing cow. We enjoy farming, it's the Luing's soft and gentle nature that makes it seem so easy. And of course the Luing makes profit – little human input, long living, kindly and hardy – wrapped up with a DNA that converts grass better than any other beast.

Beyond Luings, we had been buying in store lambs to fatten each year but really for grass management. However, I have to face facts, I'm not a sheep man! We need to rest fields, and we accept some sacrifice for winter feeding as the lambs helped sort out heavily cattle-grazed fields. So, without lambs, we hope farmed red deer can do that job and, with rising demand, may become a good income stream. Two years ago, we took the deepest breath and leapt – we now have close to 250 hinds plus followers with a first major crop due to sell next autumn. They are seriously different animals – they are fantastic – clever, friendly and self-sufficient, living on, figuratively speaking (as Scott Renwick once described Loch Maree to me), bracken and misery! Time will tell if it's a success, but it feels right. I can tell you one thing for sure – once you've had to saw the antlers of a 30-stone stag who's not keen for you to do it, you absolutely know you're alive!

So, as new entrants to farming (ten years ago), I'm sure there are easier ways to make profit, but with the help of neighbours and fellow Luing farmers, the time has flown happily. Yes, it's cold, wet and frustrating at times, but every day brings a new chance and a new challenge.

**Paddy Crerar**



# Monzie Farm



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# LAMMERMUIR LUINGS

## LAMMERMUIR RED DEER

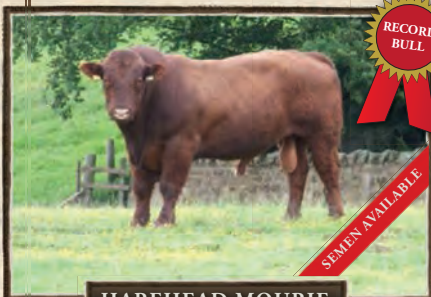


LAMMERMUIR HEIFERS

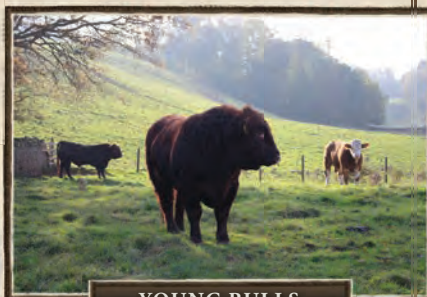


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# Out and About

**Kintail Luings are managed on a small croft at Newton of Ferintosh on the Black Isle, and on a hill croft on the west coast at Kintail.**

Graeme and his wife, Fiona, live on the Black Isle, and run the small herd of 12 cows and a flock of North Country Cheviots over both crofts, ably assisted by their three teenage children, Issy, Farquhar and Marcus.

Graeme introduced three Luing cows to Kintail in 2006 from the Westwater dispersal, as part of a croft environmental scheme. While working full-time, he needed cows that were low maintenance, easily calved and able to thrive in the fairly harsh environment of Kintail, which has an average rainfall of 72" a year, and covers 1,000 hectares from sea level to 3,500 feet.

Until the herd justified the purchase of a bull, the cows were run alongside the Lochbroom herd. All heifer calves were kept to build a breeding stock. The first bull was purchased privately from Wooplaw. Since then, Graeme's management of the cattle has evolved from the cattle being permanently over in the west to a more manageable system of having the cows in the east and the calves wintering and summering in Kintail.

For cost-efficiency and shared bull management, Graeme teamed up with Richard Lockett, of Knockbain Luings, Dingwall, to jointly purchase a Commonsides bull at Castle Douglas. This has proved to be an efficient way to manage two small herds. Both are accredited under the SAC *Premium Cattle Health Scheme*.

Both herds run with the bull at Knockbain over the summer. In October, the calves are weaned, the cows come home to Newton of Ferintosh, the stot calves are sold as store, and the heifer calves go over to Kintail for wintering. The cows start feeding on ad-lib silage around Christmas time, until calving in March/April. After calving, they are given 18% protein rolls for six weeks until June time, when they return to Knockbain Farm for another summer.

In Kintail, the heifer calves become tick-acclimatised, and winter on a supplementary feed and ad-lib hay out on the hill. There are three areas of native woodland blocks, which benefit from the low-density cattle grazing while offering great shelter and rotational grazing for the young cattle.



These heifers come home to the Black Isle at 20 months old, and are sold in May as bulling heifers. The annual Luing Society sale in May at Dingwall is the highlight of the year. The 2019 sale was the most successful sale to date for the Kintail Luings, selling six heifers to a top of 2,750gns and an average of 2,580gns. For Graeme, the Luing cattle have proven themselves worthy of their reputation for easy management, and for Kintail, a breed that has contributed to the sustainability and viability of the crofting business.

**Graeme MacRae**





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# Benhar



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**Andrew – 01501 731980 &  
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Roy – 01324 861230**





# NUNNERIE *Luing*

Alastair MacArthur m: 07887 512648 t: 01864 505234

2016 Heifers

design  
MacGiegar  
PHOTOGRAPHY



# Promoting the Breed

2019 has been a busy year for the Society, travelling from Thurso to Builth Wells, which is no mean feat when all those who have kindly helped out have farms to run at home, but still volunteer to assist at the growing number of events we cover.

The **NBA Beef Expo** was the first event of the year on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May at Junction 36, North West Auctions, Crooklands, Milnthorpe. Rory Bell kindly supplied stock for this event. It was quieter than expected, but still worthwhile.

**Scotland's Beef Event** a week later, at Bethelnie Farm, Old Meldrum, on the 30<sup>th</sup> May was a great success. The weather had been rainy overnight, which led many people to decide the ground would be too wet to get work done. Instead, a day out at the Beef Event was called for, with a huge attendance of 4,500. Stock was kindly supplied by Mr P. Simmers, Backmuir, Huntly with pairs of Luings, Sim-Luings and Luings cross bulling heifers.

**Highland Sheep** at Sibminster Farms, Thurso, on the 12<sup>th</sup> June was a busy and very cold event, but credit to all who

attended, wrapped up for winter winds in the month of June. Stock was supplied by E. McCall, Culmaily, Golspie, with a pair of Luings heifers.

Later that month, on the 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June, the **Royal Highland Show** saw fairly good weather, so there were no ill effects for the show itself. Thank you to all members who helped with setting up, manning and taking down the stand. We again had pens with bulling Sim-Luings and Luings heifers from Mr M. Thomson, Tillyrie. It was extremely busy over all four days, making it a very successful event, where we met with present, past and new (and potential) members of the Society. A record crowd of 195,400 attended. Possibly one of the busiest RHS yet.

The 19<sup>th</sup> July was the date for our **Open Day at Balcaskie Estates**. See pages 10 and 11 for a full report.


A team travelled down to the **Royal Welsh Show** hot on the heels of our Open Day for the show starting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July. This is a four-day event, and with the temperatures peaking again while the

event was on, it was particularly hard on both stock and human. No doubt plenty refreshments were required, for health reasons of course! Thanks go to the team for erecting and manning the stand once again. A pair of Luings cattle supplied by Mr I. Davies, Hafod-Y-Maidd, Corwen were displayed to show the qualities of the breed.

Huge thanks go to all who supplied a great show of cattle, and all those who gave their time to assist at different events. Without this assistance, we just could not continue to promote the breed at shows. Thank you again, and if you are interested in getting involved, please contact the Society office.









Team at Royal Welsh Show



*Visitors Welcome*  
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**Calves sold in Oban in October**

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## Extracts from Rules, Regulations and Bylaws

**Annual Subscription is due annually on the 1<sup>st</sup> January and members will receive a renewal notice around early January – receipts will be issued once payments have been received and processed.**

**Note the VAT rate remains the same at 20.00%, leaving a total due of £50.00 incl. VAT.**

### **Luing Bull and Heifer Registrations:**

1. Each Herd Book Year will end on the 31<sup>st</sup> December.
2. Breeders are required to update their cow herd as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December either online by lodging deaths and transfers or via a paper annual return upon request to the office.
3. Online registration is now available (contact Breed Secretary for details) for registering calves. Alternatively a birthing summary form will be sent to each breeder registering via a paper-based system and all calves born in that year should be entered. This must be fully completed for all calves to be registered: i.e. UK tag, date of birth, name and/or management tag, colour, horned/polled and sire. Breeders are encouraged to notify all other calves born (date of birth, UK tag and sire) so that full records can be kept for every cow on the database.
4. These forms must be returned to the Breed Secretary by the 28<sup>th</sup> February of the year following birth. Online registrations must also be completed by the 28<sup>th</sup> February deadline.
5. Any registrations received after the 28<sup>th</sup> February will be charged double fees. Any animals over two years of age can only be considered for Appendix B.
6. Pedigree certificates will be issued for all calves registered.

### **Bull Inspection:**

1. No bull can be sold at a Pedigree Luing Sale until it has been inspected by an appointed representative of the Society and has been accepted as conforming to the standards as laid down by the Society. Breeders must apply to the Society for this inspection by 30<sup>th</sup> August each year.
2. The bulls will be inspected as soon as is reasonably possible and the dam of each bull will be scored for classification form completion. Dams must be presented for inspection if they are still on the farm – regardless of whether they have been scored in previous years. The age of the dam at the time of assessment and the number of calves she has had will be heavily highlighted to ensure potential buyers know the scores relate to a young cow yet to fully prove herself.
3. Bulls passed for entry to a Society sale will have their pedigree certificate updated on grassroots. Bulls not to be entered for a Society sale but otherwise deemed suitable for pedigree breeding will also have their pedigree certificate updated on grassroots.

### **Sim-Luing Heifer Calf Registrations:**

1. Entries will only be accepted from members of the Luing Cattle Society Ltd.
2. To be eligible for acceptance into the register for Sim-Luing females, heifer calves must be:
  - a. out of Pedigree or Appendix A Luing females registered in the Herd Book of the Luing Cattle Society, and
  - b. sired by a Simmental bull registered in the Herd Book of the British Simmental Cattle Society Ltd.
3. All calves should be registered by the 28<sup>th</sup> February following their year of birth.
4. Following verification of the registration of both the dam and the sire by the Luing Cattle Society, the Sim-Luing heifer will be accepted for entry into the register and a certificate issued.



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**Note the VAT rate remains the same at 20.00%, leaving a total due of £50.00 incl. VAT.**

### **Charges:**

Annual Subscription: ..... £50.00 incl. VAT

### **Registration Fees:**

1. Calf entries (Pedigree, Appendix or Sim-Luing) are charged on a sliding scale based on the number of breeding cows (i.e. females over three years of age) held on Society records for each herd at the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year of birth of the calves being registered. This includes full Pedigree and Appendix A and B cows.
2. Fees for online registrations are charged as follows:  
1 – 25 cows in herd.....£8.50 per cow  
26 – 50 .....£8.00 per cow  
51 – 100 .....£7.50 per cow  
101 – 250 .....£7.00 per cow  
251+ .....£6.50 per cow
3. Fees for paper-based registrations are charged as follows:  
1 – 25 cows in herd.....£9.00 per cow  
26 – 50 .....£8.50 per cow  
51 – 100 .....£8.00 per cow  
101 – 250 .....£7.50 per cow  
251+ .....£7.00 per cow
4. If Sim-Luings only are being registered, a max of £9.50 per heifer will be charged for the first 15 calves; 16 or more calves will be charged at £8.00 per heifer. For registrations received on paper, these figures will increase to £10.00 per heifer and £8.50 respectively.
5. Individuals who feel that they have a special case will have the opportunity to appeal and the merit of the case will be considered by the Board.
6. Breeders will be invoiced when registrations are processed.

### **Transfer Fees:**

The purchaser of any full Pedigree or Appendix female animal outwith Society sales will be charged a transfer fee when that animal is transferred into their ownership of £10.00 + VAT/animal. Bulls bought outwith Society sales must be transferred before calves can be registered by that bull. The transfer fee for bulls will be £100 + VAT.

Bulls and females bought at Society sales are transferred free of charge. Updated copies of the full Rules, Regulations and Bylaws of the Luing Cattle Society are available from the Society office upon request.

**THE YEAR LETTER FOR CALVES  
BORN IN 2019 is Y**



# Obituaries

## Bob Church



The Luing breed lost one of its greatest ambassadors on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019 with the passing of Dr Robert (Bob) Church at the age of 82. Bob was a remarkable man who soared from his farm roots in rural Alberta to become a world renowned scientist, professor and leader in the fields of genetics and medical biochemistry. His list of accomplishments would fill many pages but I will mention three that were directly related to agriculture. Bob was responsible for some of the foundational research that paved the way for modern DNA sequencing. He was a pioneer and early practitioner of embryo transfer technology in cattle. Bob was also one of the world's leading experts on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) and as such was part of the panel convened by the British Government in the 1980s to advise on dealing with the emerging problem of BSE.

In addition to his scientific career Bob was a rancher. The saddle of his quarter horse on the ranch was like a second home – jeans and battered cowboy hat his usual attire.

Bob's connection to Luings began in 1964 when he was studying genetics at Edinburgh University. With a fellow student having the Cadzow surname it wasn't long before he was invited to Luing by the Cadzow brothers to look over the cattle and their genetic blueprint for the breed. This was the beginning of a five-decade connection with the Cadzow family and the breed. In the early 1970's Bob partnered with the Cadzow brothers to facilitate the establishment of a Luing population in Canada. In 1974 he established his beloved Lochend Luing Ranch in the foothills north west of Calgary.

Over the next decade Bob, along with Sandy Cross at Rothney, continued to import cattle to grow the breed base here as well as forming the Canadian Luing Cattle Association and organising early breed sales and promotion. He was behind the incorporation of polled Snowlander genetics into the Luing gene pool which led to the almost complete elimination of horns from our cattle. Bob also exported Canadian Luing genetics to the United States, South America and Australasia. Through the 1990s he maintained the Luing breed in Canada almost single-handedly.

In 2003 Bob was delighted to host the Society Open Day at Lochend and greatly enjoyed touring the group of Scottish Luing breeders around points of interest in southern Alberta and British Columbia. In 2004 he travelled back to Scotland to attend that year's Open Day at Scammadale where he met more of the UK Luing breeders.

For a man that received innumerable accolades and awards throughout his life I know one of his proudest moments was when he was appointed an Honorary Director of the Luing Society at his Open Day in 2003.

Bob was an extrovert and very much a "people person" which contributed to his ability to make connections and extend his sphere of influence to every corner of the globe. His ability to encourage, motivate and educate people at a level each could understand, whether they be students, ranchers or world leaders was unique.

He is survived by his wife Gina, children Jeff and Eileen and extended family. He will also be greatly missed by cattlemen, colleagues and friends around the world.

"I would like to thank all those members who were so kind to send me condolences.

"Your cards reminded me of several breeders who made the trip to Calgary many years ago and our tour around southern and central Alberta. Although that was our first meeting, I felt like I was part of the Luing family. And then Robert and I travelled to Scotland for the field day, I got to see many of you again and meet other Luing breeders. That was my first trip to Scotland and as Robert had done his PhD in Edinburgh, he gave me the royal tour. What a beautiful country and I could readily see why he loved it and why he chose the Luing to import into Canada.

"As most of you know by now, Robert passed away on September 6<sup>th</sup>, and I'm facing a new reality. Your cards mean so much to me and I thank you for thinking of me."

Gina Church



### John Cameron – Honorary Member

John Cameron of Monzie Farm, Blair Atholl sadly passed away on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019 so soon after the loss of his late wife Janet.

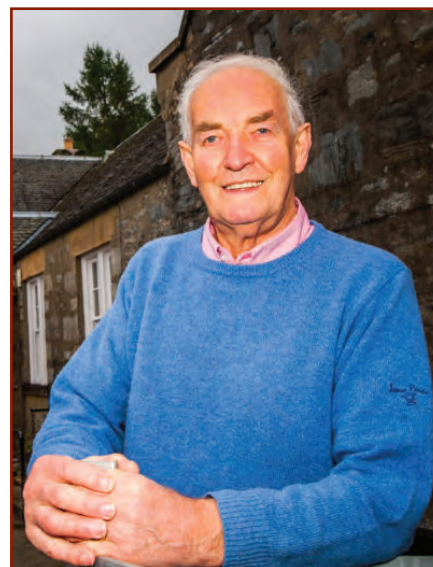
John was one of four, Bill, Fiona and the late Alisdair. John had four sons, Peter, Rory, Alisdair and Donald. Rory continues to run Monzie today.

John was a very forward-thinking man and this outlook took him to Oban in 1966.

At the first Luing sale in 1966 – six bulls sold at Oban – Luing Ferryman was purchased by John for 700gns. His cows had been Highlanders crossed to the Shorthorn and they had been the start

of the grading up system to become the foundations of the Monzie herd. Many friendships had been formed over the years with the Luing Society and many happy memories were had. John had been on the board four times starting in the first council with the breed in 67 – 69, 78 – 80, 87 – 90 and 96 – 98.

In 1969 seven herds had been involved in promoting and educating of this new breed. Monzie herd was active in this programme. Again, in August 1991 the Monzie herd held the now annual Open Day. With a herd having so much heritage we will continue to follow the herd into the next chapter.



### Jim Caygill

Jim Caygill, Rylstone herd, sadly passed away on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019.



In 2003 the Limestone Country Project was set up to help protect and improve some of England's most important wildlife sites by promoting the re-introduction of native cattle breeds to graze the limestone pavement areas of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. When looking for a breed of cattle to graze his limestone pastures the Luing cattle really impressed Jim – he thought the qualities of both the Beef Shorthorn and the Highland combined to give a great animal and carcase.

He established the Rylstone Luing herd through the purchase of 20 pedigree Luing bulling heifers at Stirling in 2003, from the herd of the Cadzow brothers. This was followed by the purchase from Giles Henry of a pedigree bull, Ettrick Demon, sired by Luing Velvet.

The high limestone pastures and fell ground had not been grazed by cattle for 100 years. The Luings were ideal for this because of their temperament and ability to live outdoors all year round, thriving on the sparsest grazing.

Jim was delighted with the Luing cattle and was quoted saying "It's like turning the clock back and having the animals of yesteryear and regaining the pastures as they were. Nature has a tremendous way of recovering. The flowers are flourishing and the pastures are coming back."

Jim took great pride in his stock and right up until his death his greatest pleasure was to shepherd the Luings with his son Jonathan.

He was welcomed into the Luing Society and the passion he had for his Luing stock was truly exceptional. This showed not only in the care he took of his own herd but also in his consistent promotion and championing of the breed and their benefits within the farming community, resulting in new herds being established across England and Scotland.

He was recognised for achievements in agriculture through accolades including winner of the Best Grassland Farmer in Yorkshire and winner of Yorkshire Farming Personality of the Year. He held several posts within the farming community, including: Chairman and past president of Kilnsey Show, a long-standing association with the Yorkshire Agricultural Society, member of Council, member of the Sheep Committee and Sheep Shearing Committee, and Sponsor Steward at the Great Yorkshire Show for 20 years.

Above all, Jim was a devoted family man with his wife Mary, their three children, Margaret, Caroline and Jonathan, and five grandchildren.

We will all miss him and his enthusiasm for all aspects of farming life, especially his Luings.

**Margaret Leeming**





CADZOW BROTHERS  
ISLE OF LUING  
Est. 1947

# Cadzow Isle of Luing,



Shane Cadzow  
01852 314234 / 07775 907644  
[cadzow@luing.net](mailto:cadzow@luing.net)



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