

Charolais at 60

Breeder Profile

Pat Stephens

Rosanna House, Rathoe, Tullow, Co. Carlow

Herd: ROSANNA CHAROLAIS

192nd Member of the Society

Date of Membership: 28th March 1979

Q & A

1. Why Charolais? what first attracted you to become involved in Charolais Breeding.

We had beef Shorthorn cows in the 1960's and we crossed with Charolais bulls and the results were outstanding. Our first Charolais cows were Irish pedigree and the first calf born out of this was Rosanna Lucinda on the 24th May 1975.

We participated in the grading up system that was introduced at the time. Prior to the mid 1975's it was quite difficult to import cattle to establish a full French herd. During that period the herd book with the Department of Agriculture allowed a grading up programme to develop. Full French animals were very expensive arriving in Ireland due to a lengthy quarantine period on spike island in Co. Cork. It was an exciting time as the breed was being developed. If a herd wanted to purchase a new bloodline in France they had to apply to the Department of Agriculture themselves to seek licence approval.

2. When and where was the herds first Charolais purchased?

The first full French pedigree Charolais that we purchased was at the Show and Sale in Goffs, Kill, Co. Kildare in April 1976. She was bred by Mr. Frank McInerney who had the Scariff herd at the time. She was a daughter of Bent Carabiner. From this point forward, only full French bloodlines were used for breeding in the herd.

3. What has been the biggest enjoyment/achievement from breeding Charolais cattle?

For me the biggest enjoyment has been seeing some special/super calves being born.

Some of the biggest achievements was seeing Rosanna bloodlines pop up in some of the best stock in the breed. I was fortunate enough to be able to breed Rosanna Jupiter, who now is in the bloodlines of over 1,000 animals registered in the British Charolais herd-book and his bloodline can be found in many prize winners and champions of the breed. A bull like him is a "once in a lifetime" achievement.

4. What do you think of the standard of Charolais in Ireland today compared to when the herd was first established?

The standard of the stock at the top 20% today is very good. There was possibly more milk in the dams of the original imports into Ireland compared to now.

5. What do you look for in a good bull?

A good head, legs/hooves, top line and size. Then I consider a lot of the finer things like the back-breeding in the pedigree and good hair etc.

6. What do you look for in a good breeding female?

Again, first and foremost the head, good legs and hooves, length and top line, milk and ability to calve is very important.

7. Do you have any special feeding regimes; (a) prior to calving; (b) when preparing animals for show/sales?

(a) A good pre-calving mineral is a must. I try to keep all calving females on ad-lib hay if available.

(b) I don't specialise in preparing animals for show and sale, I mostly sell on-farm to repeat customers so I wouldn't have any special feeding regime for shows/sales.

8. What advice would you give to new breeders who are just starting out on their journey breeding Charolais cattle?

Purchase working stock from good bloodlines and be careful not to purchase over fleshed females.

9. What's the biggest change in farming you've seen over the nearly 50 years since the herd was established?

The high quality of nutrition for stock has been the biggest change and the ability of machines to handle a lot of work fast on farms.

10. Where do you see the breed in 10 years-time?

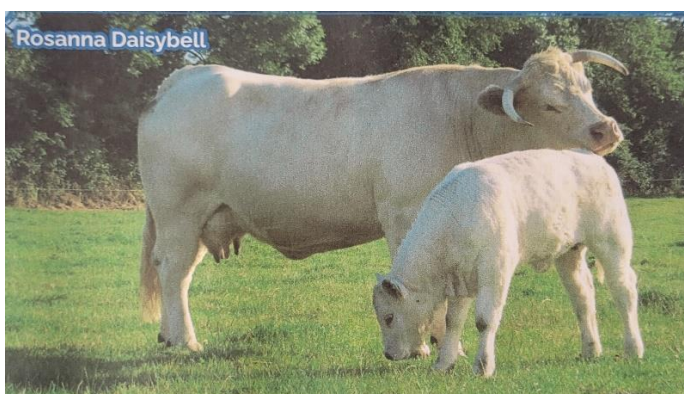
I am encouraged to see a lot of young people showing stock right now. I hope they will set up new herds of pedigree Charolais cattle so in 10 years the breed will be in a very good place.

11. What is/was the best piece of advice you received re. Charolais?

To be very patient and to make your choice and back your own judgement.



Rosanna Jupiter



Rosanna Daisybell – Still breeding calves at 16 years of age. She's the dam of Rosanna Jupiter and Rosanna Rudolph. Rudolph is the sire of the Junior Female Champion at the Royal Highland Show in 2024



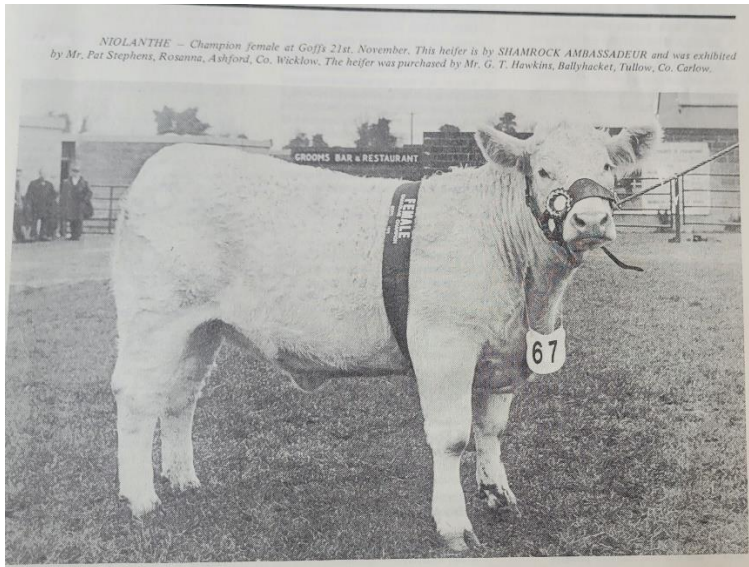
Rosanna Fameux at 4 years of age. Sire of Rosanna Jupiter.



Young heifer within the Rosanna Herd



Rosanna calf in Punchestown.



Niolanthe – The first Champion Female for the Rosanna Herd. She sold to Mr. G.T. Hawkins for 5,000gns at a sale in Goffs on 21st November 1978. Sired by Shamrock Ambassadeur.