

# Irish Dexter Times

Summer 2017

## The Promise Grows



**Summer is here!** Long days, warm nights. Dexter cattle grazing in the fields; calves racing around growing fat on their mothers' rich milk. Such a beautiful time of year, and such a busy time for everyone – especially the farmer.

**Welcome to all our new members!** Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders continues to grow. We are working for our amazing BREED and for YOU!

**Our Mission** – To bring Dexter breeders together to preserve the old bloodlines free from modern upgrading and save the Irish Dexter from disappearing.

**Forever**



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The barns were packed at the Richland County Fairgrounds for the 2017 Ohio Valley Dexter Cattle Breeders show. Dexters of every color and type were on display: black/red/dun, old and young, both modern and traditionally bred. We even had some “shorties” out there among their taller herd mates.

A number of LDCB members attended the show and got together while enjoying the festivities; many entering their cattle in the classes. “It’s exciting to see so many Preservation Dexters strutting their stuff in the ring.” A special congratulations goes out to Jillian Hazelton (Frisky Friends Farm) winning 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Youth Showmanship 9-11 class with Friskie Friends Fergie. Also Congratulations to Michael Mendenhall taking Sr. Yearling Bull with Legacy Mendenhall Cluny.

OVDDBA places a great deal of focus on the youth, bringing “future breeders” into the forefront of everything they do. Looking across the arena and seeing so many young participants alongside those more “young at heart”; we see how well their work is paying off. Ohio is a great group and put on quite a show. And as always

**- Open to All!!**

Sponsored by: Legacy Dexter Cattle Registry  
Grand Champion Female –Wieringa's Becky KO

Sponsored by: Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders  
Grand Champion Bull –Wieringa's Devin KG



Joanne & Mike Mendenhall  
Karrie & Jeff Winebrenner



Chad & Jamie Hazelton/family  
Vickie Solomon



As promised the Hands On Oxen Clinic presented by Vickie & Mark Solomon wrapped up the 2017 OVDDBA show with a bang. Vickie’s traditional shorty Ronan amazed us all as he worked through his paces, showing the many skills he is already learning as just a yearling. “New drovers” from the audience were able to work with him in the ring and take a turn at driving an ox. It was a great time!

Our Dexters are a true tri-purpose breed – dairy/ beef/ draft and interest is growing in training oxen. I believe we are going to be seeing many new teams and singles because of the Solomon’s efforts. Thank You! for sharing this important part of our breed’s history and heritage.

# LDCB News

## Missing an issue of Irish Dexter Times?

Whether you are a new member or just looking for a favorite article, past issues can now be found on our website – Drop down box under Home.

## Cattle for sale?

Check out the new Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders Map at <http://www.legacybreeders.org/members-map.html> Sign up now and take advantage of this new service. Fill out the form with the information you want displayed. Just go to <http://www.legacybreeders.org/members-map-form.html> LDCB members only.

Legacy offers a full-service Dexter Cattle Registry for Dexter cattle with DNA genotypes, and testing service with minimal cost and maximum benefit. Registration is simple and expedient.

Legacy is building a world-wide HISTORICAL one-of-a-kind record of Dexter cattle and their pedigrees.

**JOIN THE HISTORICAL EFFORT.**

Costs are minimal and the historical benefit to the breed maximum.

Legacy is THE source for ancestor connected pedigrees!

**Got Purple?**

### Legacy Dexter Cattle Breeders

President – Michael Mendenhall  
Vice President – Shaun Ann Lord  
Secretary – Karrie Winebrenner

Contact [LegacyBreeders@gmail.com](mailto:LegacyBreeders@gmail.com)  
[legacybreeders.org](http://legacybreeders.org)

# A TRAGIC LOSS FOR DEXTER CATTLE PRESERVATION

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, I received the first of several emails from Dexter acquaintances around the world sending me the news from Cobthorn Trust of the accidental death of Andrew Sheppy due to a fall on his farm.

There was an intense feeling of loss and sadness on learning of the death of Andrew, experiencing both the personal loss of a friend and mentor, and the greater loss of a committed preservationist whose world-wide efforts on behalf of preserving purity in the Dexter cattle breed and his vast knowledge and experience of Dexter cattle owners, bloodlines, and genetics, are simply irreplaceable.

Andrew became my friend and mentor in 2004 when he included the Legacy preservation effort and American Dexter samples in the Cardiff research project he spearheaded, and thereafter he generously shared his knowledge and experience with me over the following years. I never discussed pigs or chickens or bugs with Andrew, all of which were various facets of Andrew's diversified interests and interactions in the world of preservation. My relationship with Andrew was always focused on the Dexter breed, which, without doubt, will suffer the loss of Andrew's energy and committed preservation efforts, as I personally suffer the loss of my generous and witty friend.

History will not forget the lasting influence of Andrew John Sheppy's love and commitment to Dexter cattle and their preservation.

This is my favorite photo of Andrew with his cow, Cobthorn Dolly who set the record as his oldest Cobthorn cow on her 24<sup>th</sup> birthday in December 2016.

Judy Sponaugle



Andrew Sheppy and Cobthorn Dolly

# Prize Cattle Herd 1949

Ever wonder about this?

We see this link every time we go to our home page. The cattle are stunning – Dexter Perfection!  
Here's a look into the writings of the creator of the Grinstead Herd.

## DEXTERS by LADY LODER

Source: Acres U.S.A.

HERDSMANSHIP: Appendix 2

THE WHY AND HOW OF THE BREEDS

In 1908 I started Dexters by buying a dozen heifers from the late Duchess of Devonshire to stock a little 60-acre farm of very poor land. As I had to provide butter for the big house I found the Dexter the most suitable animal for this as being so hardy all they needed was an open shed in which to be milked, and they laid out all the year round, and the calves were reared in an open yard with a shelter roof at one end of it.

Butterfats were so good that in the summer we make 1 lb. of butter to every two gallons of milk, and I also won butter prizes competing against Jerseys.

I found I could keep five Dexters with the food required for three Jerseys, and when the artificial feeding problem became so difficult during the war, I gave up my Jersey herd, which I had kept on another farm for twelve years, and increased my Dexter herd as they were the most profitable animals on my poor land.

Dexters live to a great age and continue breeding well and still look quite fresh. Grinstead Dora 6th, the cow I took out to the Shows in 1949 and which won first and Champion at the Bath and West, Three Counties, Royal, Royal Counties and Sussex County shows, was ten years old and had had seven calves. Her average milk yield is 6,269 lb. with 4.06 per cent butterfat.

### Milk Yields

In the National Milk Records for last year, Mr. Spencer's herd of Dexters in Kent, on better grassland, averaged 6,201 lb. for his cows, and 4,978 lb. for his heifers. Mrs. Wells, with Ickwell Amaryllis, had the highest yield for a single Dexter—9,629 lb. in 286 days with 4.79 per cent butterfat. My own Grinstead Trixie 9th had the best yield for three successive lactations:

6,099 lb. with 4.63 per cent butterfat in 305 days with 3rd calf 6,315 lb. with 5.36 per cent butterfat in 305 days with 4th calf 6,912 lb. with 4.89 per cent butterfat in 305 days with 5th calf

A Dexter will yield between 500 and 600 gallons of milk without special feeding, but the following yields have been officially recorded, which by no means include all the yields.

Grinstead Taxus produced 433 lb. of butterfat in a year's lactation, representing an amount equal to her weight.

### Origin

Dexter cattle were originally natives of the south and south-western districts of Ireland, where they have been bred by smallholders for some considerable time. They are a mountain breed and have roamed about the shelterless hillsides in an almost wild state of nature. The name 'Dexter' may have arisen from a gentleman of that name who was agent to Lord Hawarden and who conceived the idea of producing a little cow, suitable for both milking and fattening within the limits of his own farm on Valentia Island.

Dexters were first introduced into England in 1882, and shown at the Royal Show in Norwich in 1886. The English Dexter Herd Book was founded in 1900.

The Dexter is the smallest British breed, the cow averaging 650 lb. in weight, their smallness being accentuated by the shortness of their legs, between knee and fetlock.

Being a mountain breed they are extremely hardy and can with advantage be kept out of doors all the year round, even in the severest climates encountered in this country. This is particularly true on land likely to be poached with heavier cattle, as due to their lighter weight, they can negotiate the worst gateways throughout the winter without undue troubles.

Name of Cow	Age in Years	Yield in pounds	No. of days
Hookstile Titania 3324	10	12,747	365
Ashtonhayes Patricia 4166	5	12,122	365
Starlight of Grinstead 3511	9	11,505	365
Thorpe Dora	7	11,341	364
Braxted Wendy 4286	7	11,136	365
Brokenhurst Penelope 3rd 3076	11	10,966	323
Grinstead Nightingale 3rd 3636	10	10,269	330
Ashtonhayes Portumna 4471	4	9,655	365
Grinstead Trixie 2nd 3977	4	9,592	362
Grinstead Hawk 5th 4108	6	9,518	351
Colomendy Marion 4188	7	9,477	354
Braxted Busy Bee 3928	7	9,441	342
Grinstead Dollie 2nd 4199	7	8,779	354
Nuthurst Hawk 3rd 3338	10	8,666	304
Beenham Dors 4632	6	7,763	329
Grinstead Lavender 6th 4597	4	7,114	314

Lady Loder cont.

They are omnivorous in their grazing; they are capable of thriving on the closest grazed pasture where normally only sheep could make a living, whilst they will continually pick over coarse roughage, tackling such weeds as thistles and nettles, reducing the whole to an even cropped pasture. They are therefore ideal animals to keep where horses are kept extensively.

Considering their small size they are excellent milk yielders. The milk is of good quality, having a high butterfat content. What is more, the fats are in small globule form, while the curd is 'soft', so that the milk is readily digested, making it pre-eminently suitable for children.

### Dual Purpose

They are essentially dual purpose; steers develop rapidly, and are marketable between their second and third year. The flesh is thick, with the right amount of fat, whilst the joints are small, which meets the butchers' requirements.

They are regular breeders and reach maturity early, the first calf being produced at two years old. In spite of this, they live to a good age, eight calvings being the average, whilst fourteen offspring are not unknown. This low wastage in Dexter herds is of very great value. They are extremely healthy, easily kept free from tuberculosis; and mastitis in its many forms is hardly known in a Dexter herd.

The maintenance ration of any animal varies according to its body weight. One accepted formula gives the relationship as two-thirds weight, from which it can be calculated that a 650-lb. Dexter takes roughly six-tenths of the food of a more normal animal of 1,300 lb. live weight. It therefore follows that ten Dexters can be maintained on the same area that supported, say, six animals of the larger breeds.

Over and above this maintenance figure, the ration required for milk can be taken as directly proportional; hence for equal milking efficiency the same ratio of ten to six holds good.

The result of being able to run more cows on a given acreage means that there are more frequent calvings, which by judicious management makes for a more level milk supply. Moreover, should a casualty occur in the herd, neither the loss in milk supply, nor capital value is so great.

For small farms a self-contained herd can be better justified; not only does the bull cost less to maintain, but the number of cows for which it is kept can be increased.

### Roughage Users

Dexters are capable of converting roughage into useful food. Yields of up to two gallons a day can be maintained on hay alone; cake requirements are less, 3 lb. per gallon of milk above the first gallon being ample. For fattening also, very little cake is necessary if the animals have their fill of forage material.

Calves are easy and cheap to rear; six pints of milk per day is ample for their needs, and for the first three months only. They start to chew at a very early age, and good hay should be available from their third day.

A rough guide to milking efficiency is that a 650-lb. liveweight cow giving 500 gallons in a year is 25 per cent efficient, whilst a similar cow giving 650 gallons would be 35 per cent efficient. By comparison a 1,300-lb. cow, would be required to give 800 and 1,150 gallons respectively for similar efficiencies.

The appetite of a normal Dexter is 20 to 25 lb. of average hay per day.

Dexters have always been represented at the Smithfield Club Show of prize beef cattle, both in pure bred Dexter class of animals under three years old, and of small cross-bred cattle of under two years old, and in the pure-bred class animals average 6¼ cwt. have always fetched prices well above the average.

### Good for Crossing

Dexters stamp their good qualities on any offspring, so that Dexter crosses also have good commercial value. This is particularly the case of using a Dexter bull in a beef herd where small early maturing animals are the result.

They have been exported to many parts of the world, including Argentina, Australia, Canada, India, Palestine, South Africa, and the United States, where in every case they have adapted themselves to the climate, and given satisfaction.

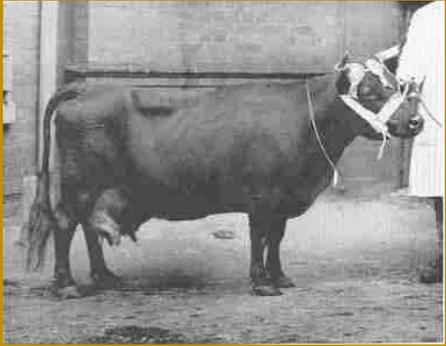
### How to Make a Start

If you are interested to make a start in the Dexter breed you would find it is well to discuss the pros and cons with an established breeder, but first of all why not have a look at the breed at an agricultural show. Dexter cattle are exhibited at most of the larger Agricultural Shows, and pedigree Dexter herds are to be found in most milk-producing counties of England and Wales, the owners of which are usually very pleased to show their herds. Names of Dexter Breeders can be obtained from the Secretary of the Dexter Cattle Society, 12 Station Road, Reading.

### Scale of Points



Dexter Bulls	points
General formation and character	25
Head, horns, and hair	25
Quality and touch	20
Colour*	30
	--
	100



Dexter Cows	points
Head, neck and horns	15
Body, top-line, under-line, ribs, setting on of tail, shortness of legs, etc.	25
Bag	40
Quality and touch	10
Colour*	10
	--
	100

\*White underneath forelegs and on brisket disqualify an animal.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A DEXTER

1. The Dexter is essentially both a milk-producing and a beef-making breed, and both these points should, in judging, be taken into consideration.
2. Colour—Bulls—Whole black or whole red (the two colours being of equal merit). A little white on organs of generation not to disqualify an animal which answers all other essentials of this standard description.  
Cows—Black or red, the two colours being of equal merit; a small amount of white on the udder and under-line is permissible (but not to extend beyond the navel), and also on the tassel of the tail.
3. Head and Neck—Head short and broad, with great width between the eyes and tapering gracefully towards muzzle, which should be large, with wide distended nostrils. Eyes bright, prominent, and a kind and placid expression.  
Neck—short, deep and thick, and well set into the shoulders, which, when viewed in front, should be wide, showing thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward.  
Horns—These should be short and moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve.
4. Body—Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind; hips wide; quarters thick and deep and well sprung, flat and wide across the loins, well ribbed up, straight under-line, udder well forward, and broad behind, with well-placed teats of moderate size, legs short (especially from knee to fetlock), strong, and well placed under body which should be as close to the ground as possible. Tail well set on and level with back.
5. Skin—The skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well, not too thin, hair fine, plentiful and silky.

Dexter bulls at three years old and over, should not exceed 900 lb. live weight, when in breeding condition, and younger bulls should weigh less in proportion.

Dexter cows should not exceed 800 lb. live weight, when in breeding condition.

If you read carefully, you will see how closely Lady Loder's description matches the first breed standard of DCS. One could almost surmise she wrote the standard!



The Dowager Lady Loder, with Dexter Cow, 'Grinstead Dora VI', milking champion at the Lincoln Royal Show.



# I Am a Dexter

Storm's Pixie of Sussex  
Legacy L00660TH-96HH  
ADCA 8210

January 4, 1996 ~ September 14, 2010



Olde Towne Farm was established early in 1999, in Mineral, Virginia. Within six months, we were fortunate to acquire a group of seven Dexters from someone not very far away. Included in that group were a small black cow known as Storm's Pixie of Sussex and her red/dun calf.

To all who saw her, Pixie was the quintessential Dexter – small and compact, with beautiful white horns with black tips, an expressive dished face with large dark eyes. At that time, testing was not available for chondrodysplasia, but there was no doubt in our minds that Pixie was a chondro carrier. Positive cows were routinely bred to positive bulls and many breeders crossed their fingers.

In 2001, we entered Pixie and her calf in the ADCA's Video Show and They took first place in the Cow/Calf Pair category. Pixie calved every year (although we did not register the calves that became beef steers). Some calves were small, and some were tall. All of Pixie's babies thrived. She took good care of each and every one.

As the years went by, it became apparent that Pixie was having difficulty moving. We gave her medication to help with this, but we did not want her to suffer another hard winter in pain. On a mid-September day in 2010, Pixie was peacefully euthanized by our vet and buried in a pasture.

Storm's Pixie of Sussex still has a loyal following of people who remember her, and we are glad that some of her offspring are still around to continue the legacy of this special little Dexter.

Gale Seddon

Hey! Every issue we will be featuring another outstanding Traditional/Legacy Dexter. Send us a photo and a little something, and we can all Share the Legacy!

# A Standard Description of the Dexter



Brenn of Paradise – Dwarf Bull



Lochinvar – Non-dwarf Bull



Legacy Jams Tuatha Jitsy – Dwarf Cow



Legacy Blue Tully – Non-dwarf Cow

1. The Dexter is essentially both a milk-producing and a beef making breed, and both these points should, in judging, be taken into consideration.
2. Colour.--Bulls.-Whole black or whole red (the two colours being of equal merit). A little white on organs of generation not to disqualify an animal which answers all other essentials of this standard description. Cows.-Whole black or whole red (the two colours being of equal merit). Black with white on the udder, or red with white on bag. The extension of the white of the udder slightly along the inside of flank or under side of the belly, or a little white on end of tail, shall not be held to disqualify an animal which answers all other essentials of this standard description.
3. Head AND Neck.--Head short and broad, with great width between the eyes, and tapering gracefully towards muzzle, which should be large, with wide distended nostrils. Eyes bright, prominent, and of a kind and placid expression. Neck short, deep and thick, and well set into the shoulders, which, when viewed in front, should be wide, showing thickness through the heart, the breast coming well forward.  
  
Horns.-These should be short and moderately thick, springing well from the head, with an inward and slightly upward curve.
4. Body.--Shoulders of medium thickness, full and well filled in behind, hips wide, quarters thick and deep and well sprung, flat and wide across loins, well ribbed up, straight underline, udder well forward, and broad behind with well-placed teats of moderate size, legs short (especially from knee to fetlock), strong, and well placed under body, which should be as close to the ground as possible. Tail well set on and level 'with back.
5. Skin.--The skin should be soft and mellow, and handle well, not too thin, hair fine, plentiful and silky.
6. Dexter Bulls should not exceed 900 Lbs., live weight, when in breeding condition. Dexter Cows should not exceed 800 Lbs., live weight, when in breeding condition.

It should be noted that this early standard describes Dexters with Chondrodysplasia (dwarfism). It should also be noted that at the time the standard was written genetic testing was not available, and dun had not been distinguished as being its own color, separate from red.