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Dolly was the first mammal cloned from an adult cell, and not the first cloned mammal

A typographic fact sheet. No photographs.

This sheet stays with the Roslin Institute's own history, and with the Science Museum Group's catalogue wording where it is quoted.

How she was made

"Dolly was cloned from a cell taken from the mammary gland of a six-year-old Finn Dorset sheep and an egg cell taken from a Scottish Blackface sheep. She was born to her Scottish Blackface surrogate mother on 5 July 1996. Dolly's white face was one of the first signs that she was a clone because if she had been genetically related to her surrogate mother, she would have had a black face. Dolly was named after the country music singer Dolly Parton." The experiments "were carried out at the Roslin Institute and PPL Therapeutics by a team led by Professor Sir Ian Wilmut."

First, but not first

"Dolly was the first mammal to be cloned from an adult cell." She "was not the first ever cloned mammal. That honour belongs to another sheep which was cloned from an embryo cell and born in 1984 in Cambridge, UK." Megan and Morag "had also been cloned from embryonic cells grown in the lab at the Roslin Institute in 1995," and "a further six sheep, cloned from embryonic and foetal cells, were born at Roslin at the same time as Dolly."

A life at Roslin

She "was announced to the world on 22 February 1997." "In the week following the announcement, the Roslin Institute received 3,000 phone calls from around the world." She "had a total of six lambs with a Welsh Mountain ram called David. Their first lamb, Bonnie, was born in April 1998." When she was a year old, her telomeres "were shorter than would be expected," but "extensive health screens on Dolly at the time did not find any conditions which could be directly related to premature or accelerated ageing." In 2001 she "was diagnosed with arthritis," which "was successfully treated." After her last lambs, in September 2000, she was found to have been infected with JSRV, "which causes lung cancer in sheep." In February 2003 "she developed a cough. A CT scan showed tumours growing in her lungs." "Dolly was put to sleep on 14 February 2003, at the age of six." "After her death the Roslin Institute donated Dolly's body to the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh." The Science Museum Group's object history uses a shorter wording: she was "put down on 14 February 2003 when aged six after having a progressive lung disease." Both official sentences are kept.

The jumper, and what Roslin says now

A jumper was "made from the first fleece of 'Dolly'," design Holly Wharton, made by Steve Melia at the School of Textiles, Leeds University, 1997. After Dolly's shear, "2.7kg of her fleece was donated to the Cystic Fibrosis Trust to raise funds for research." The Institute's Cloning FAQs still say: "We do not clone animals any more. The technique has a very low success rate."

Sources, checked 17 November 2026: The Roslin Institute, The Life of Dolly; The Roslin Institute, Cloning FAQs; Science Museum Group, object 1998-48. This is not a Roslin or Science Museum publication. sheep.farmyard.im is part of the ReallyByte network, run by REALLYBYTE, based in the Isle of Man. ReallyByte — Fun. Educational. Useless.