Shearing

Promoting our industry, sport and people

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Tony Mallinson's crew shearing at Hindsridge, near Ashburton, in August 2023. Top right: Sophie Beyrich, Sam Andrew, Richard Griffiths, Lee Marsden, Jasmine McCarthy, Shane Dennison. Bottom left: Kira Farmer, Tony Mallinson, Emily Pike, Tim Clarke. (Shane James photo.)



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Shearing

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UNDER COVER STORY

Greetings readers and Facebook followers and welcome to this 113th edition of *Shearing* magazine. It's also the third edition of Volume 39, which means our next one will take us into the fortieth year! The end of 1984 it was when Ian Morrison, Doug Laing and Hugh De Lacy (Snr) got together and produced the first edition of what started out as a NZ Shearing Contractors' Association newsletter.

It became a private publication in May 1989, under the editorship of David Grace (RIP) and passed briefly through the hands of John Hart to Last Side Publishing in August 2002. Editions 49 to 113 have come from LSP and hopefully there will be a few more.

We can say without a doubt this is the largest edition ever produced – 80 pages being twice the size of the old printed version. (Return to paper, anyone? Just kidding!)

We are making a conscious decision here to place some more emphasis on coverage of the competitions. Years ago we published winners from each show venue, but space became a premium. Here we publish the full honours board from the New Zealand Spring Shears at Waimate. Some legendary names will be brought back to mind, no doubt.

We reproduce a story from 30 years ago about Claude Waite and suggest he's a candidate for the New Zealand Shearing Hall of Fame. Agree or disagree?

We pay tribute to Southland's Russell McDonald, who passed on recently, and Aussie legend David Ryan, who died in January this year. We also remember Keith Collier, Southern Shears champion in 1980, who was lost at sea in 1998, along with two others on his commercial fishing boat.

And while we try to keep this magazine politically neutral, readers may have gleaned from previous postings that this editor is a 'climate change skeptic' (as distinct from a denier), meaning he is not convinced by the popular 'global warming' narrative spewed out by the World Economic Forum, 'Green MPs'and the like.

We think the 'war' against agricultural carbon emissions is crap and the concept of 'carbon credits' complete bullshit. We have a New Zealand scientist, Dr Doug Edmeades, expressing his opinion at page 26. Carbon dioxide is a fertiliser making the planet a much greener place. It's not a pollutant!

Hey, keep well through Christmas and the New Year and we'll do this again in April.

Ka kite ano
Nga mihi, Des Williams



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NZ WOOL CLASSERS ASSOCIATION



WOOL BALE CONTAMINATION A HUGE CONCERN

An alarming increase in the amount of content that's not wool is being found in New Zealand wool bales by wool scourers, wool buyers, exporters and manufacturers locally and internationally. The cost to our New Zealand wool industry is damaging financially and to this country's reputation as a producer of quality wool. It has been suggested that low crossbred wool prices are contributing to a quality complacency that undermines efforts to achieve higher prices.

The NZ Wool Classers Association is throwing its weight behind the call to raise awareness of the problem and has come up with a checklist to remind wool growers and wool harvesting staff of practical measures to take to reduce the risk.

Says NZWCA Registrar Marg Forde: 'Our classer and grader members work predominately with Merino and mid-micron wool and we are told the contamination is predominately in crossbred wool bales. However, our association firmly advocates for quality wool preparation and education, so we are speaking out.'

New Zealand's only wool scouring company, WoolWorks, tracks wool bale contamination at their facilities and the data makes sobering reading. Between July and October this year 955 items that weren't wool were discovered and documented in wool bales. They range from one tool to many rubber docking/tailing rings. The finds include the following items: 223 plastic, 10 clothing, 36 wood, 80 metal, 37 press bars, 31 pieces of fabric and 54 rope/string.

NZWCA checklist to avoid wool bale contamination

Prior to shearing:

- Wool growers consider how they are using wool shed for storage – ensure wool room is clear prior to shearing.
- Shearing board and wool room washed and cleared prior to shearing.
- Classers, pressers and woolhandlers check all fadges before putting wool in them, especially those that may have been sitting partially full before shearing begins.
- Count press bars at the beginning and at end of each shearing – there should be four!

During shearing:

- Rubbish bins provided and accessible.
- Designated storage area (hooks, shelves or large containers) for personal belongings of shed staff.
- Only work equipment (fadges, brooms) in the wool room.
- No drink bottles, clothing or towels stored near oddment fadges.
- Remove all rubber rings and lambs purses from wool.
- No smoking in wool room.
- Personal hook for Presser close to wool press.
- Count press bars before pinning each bale, there should be four!
- No food consumed in wool area – separate eating area is the ideal.
- Supply newspaper for Bin bales – don't use wool packs as bale dividers.

*Refer "**Clip Preparation – https://woolclassers.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NZWCA-2021-updated-Clip-preparation-document.pdf***

INSPIRING QUALITY WOOL WORK, UPSKILLING AND CONNECTING

The NZ Wool Classers Association 2023 North Island Industry Day was held last month at Castlecliff, Whanganui, with venue and hosting support provided by the good people at the Bremworth Spinners yarn plant and Elco Wool Direct.

As with the North Island Industry Day in Napier last year, the Whanganui day was organised by NZWCA Board member Sonya Johansen and Registrar Marg Forde. Marg explains that while inspiring quality work, upskilling and making connections are always the emphasis of the NZWCA Industry Days, the organisers are mindful of the different range of people attending compared to in the South Island.

Says Marg: 'The South Island is where most of our classer members are, and where most of the wool that is classed or graded is shorn off, so we take that into account when setting up our content, our speakers and our wool exercises for the North and South Island events.

'The feedback form content and the appreciation we received from those attending at Whanganui indicated two things – there is a real appetite for upskilling wool industry days such as these, and what we provided hit the mark."

Marg Forde wrote: Special shout out to shearing contractors Paewai Mullins Shearing Ltd of Dannevirke and Stu Munro Shearing of Taihape, who were the only contractors who filled up their vans and gave their staff the opportunity to attend our North Island Industry Day in Whanganui.

"We are very grateful to Bremworth Wool Carpets + Rugs for the second year running for the NI Industry Day making available the wonderful big wool rug (RRP $1499) for the prize draw at the end of the day, for all attendees. This was won by Ewelina Gren, a Certificate of Wool Technology and Classing student and staff member of Segard Masurel New Zealand. (NEWSFLASH: Bremworth will be donating the same for the NZWCA AGM/South Island Industry professional Development Day at Mosgiel next May.)

'Thanks also to all those who took the time to attend and support the day, especially our excellent speakers who gave up their time and shared their passion:

- Tom O'Sullivan Campaign for Wool – New Zealand
- Margo Riach The Wool Company
- Ian Hopkirk PGG Wrightson Wool
- Andy Caughey, Wool Impact Inc ***https://woolimpact.com/***
- Sam Hurley of Honest Wolf
- Andrew Karl – GM Yarn Plants, Bremworth Spinners
- SIT Telford Campus wool tutors Laurie Boniface and Richard Gavigan, super-supporters, speakers, suppliers of wool samples, set up, pack up and even spent their lunch time helping to mark the wool exercises.

Collaboration and positivity for NZ wool at it's best!

NB: A NZWCA Industry Day is being planned for Marlborough, and the next NZWCA AGM/Industry Day in May 2024 will be in Mosgiel – dates to be advised.







Images from the New Zealand Wool Classers Association Field day at Whanganui. ***Top left:*** *Participants among the samples.* ***Above:*** *Richard Gavigan (SIT Telford) and Stu Munro (Taihape contractor), happy with proceedings thus far.* ***Opposite:*** *Ian Hopkirk (PGG Wrightson Wool) delivers more important messages.*

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"New Zealand wool is making a comeback, and our industry needs more people who have the training and qualifications to back their passion and proven practical skills. There are lots of opportunities out there, and this course is a must for anyone wanting to further their career in wool." - Marg Forde, Registrar, New Zealand Wool Classers Association

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Vorne Wheki – nobody's lunch warmer!

By Des Williams

Unlike the vast majority of people who work in the shearing sheds, Vorne Wheki has never had any ambition to pick up a handpiece and shear with it. But when he went into a shed the first time 'just for a look' he began by giving the presser a hand and quickly thought that mahi could be good for him.

That was back in 1988, but we've jumped the gun somewhat. Now aged 61 years, of Ngati Haua Iwi affiliations, Vorne grew up on the family farm known as Hanatoria, near Tauwhare (on the outskirts of Hamilton). One of five children, with two brothers and two sisters, Vorne's parents milked 200 dairy cows (peak season) on 100 acres in a six-bay, walk-through shed.

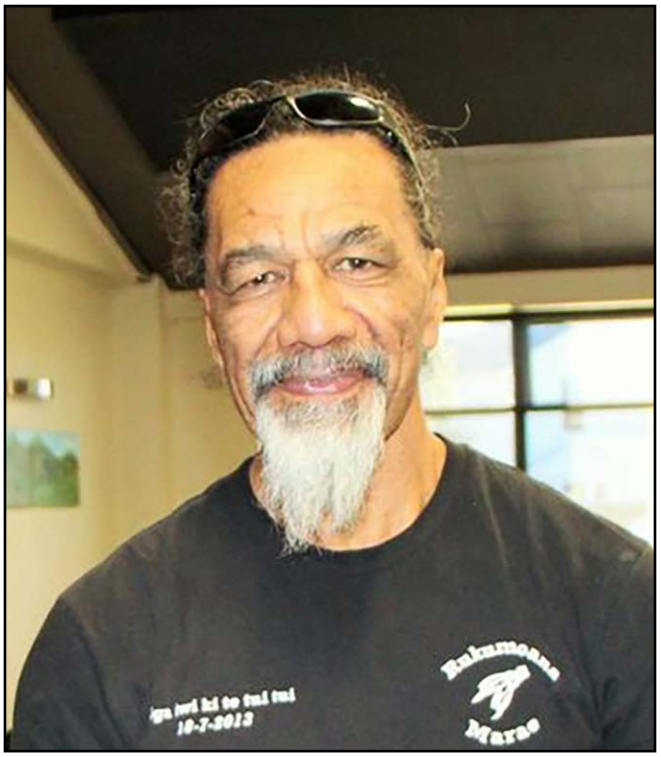
"My mother and father also took in many other children from what we called the 'stolen generation' to help with their raising (whangai adoption) and were notorious for not giving them back, so we ended up with many other 'brothers and sisters' in the family as we were growing up," he explains.

Vorne started his formal education at Ngati Haua Primary School at four-years-of-age and then moved into Hamilton City for two years at Peachgrove Intermediate and four years at Hillcrest High School.

"Then, on leaving high school at the end of 1979 I gained a retail butcher's apprenticeship in Auckland through the Maori Trade Training Scheme. After four years and becoming qualified as a butcher I returned home to the Waikato and spent a couple of years working in 'Project Employment Programme (PEP) gangs, doing road side clean-ups and riverbank clearing and that sort of outdoors, physical work.

"Then for several years I returned to my trade when I got a job at Jim Nuttall's Butchery in Tokoroa. I enjoyed that too, but I happened to be back in Hamilton for the Christmas-New Year break in December 1987 when my cousin and his partner returned home for a holiday from Southland, where they'd been working.

"When they were getting ready to return South again they suggested I go back with them, 'just for a look'. I remember we travelled down on New Year's Eve and arrived at Gore on New Year's Day 1988. It was the first time I had been in the South Island and it was the coldest day I'd experienced in my life! I began to wonder what I was doing down there!



"My cousin and his partner were both working for John Lawton, the shearing contractor at Otama and when they returned to work a couple of days later they suggested I 'come along for the ride'. I went into the shed and got talking to the presser, whose name was George Barrett – he came from up Ngaruawahia way. George was operating what I came to know as a 'twin-bin hydraulic Donald press' and the bales still had to be sewed with twine and needle at that time. (A method later replaced by staples.)

"I just started giving him a hand, I enjoyed what I was doing and thought to myself it might be an opportunity to start something new. And it was basically from that first time in the shearing shed that my love of the industry developed.

"I have always remembered some of the good advice George gave me at the time – "There is never 'nothing to do' in a woolshed"; "always keep your work area clean and tidy so it makes your job easier, safer and doesn't compromise what you are doing". People always tell me I'm as fussy as hell about keeping my work area tidy but I learned that from George, right from the start.

"Later, I went to see John [Lawton] about a job – George told me to make sure I told John I was experienced. As it turned out I wished I hadn't followed that advice because John then put me in one of the hardest sheds I've ever worked in. But it must have worked out in the long run because I'm still here doing it after 30 years."

Though many who start out in the sheds as shedhands soon set their eyes on getting a stand, Vorne says he has never really been tempted to have a go at shearing. "I thought about it a couple of times over the years but when I looked at a few shearers I'd worked with that were younger than me, their backs were buggered and I thought, 'No, that's not for me. I'll stick to the press. It's an honest job and an honest pay."

When asked about some of the contamination horror stories

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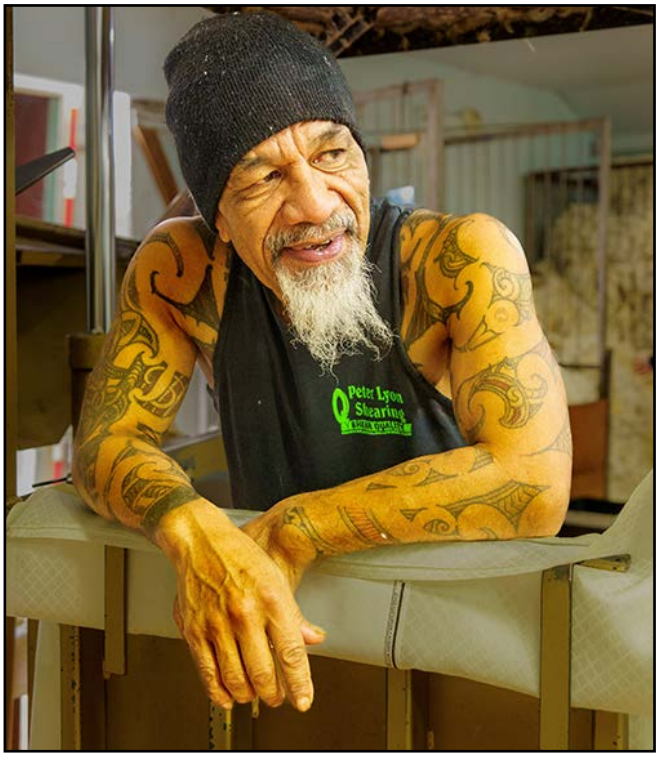

Opposite: *Vorne at Earnscleugh in 2022. (Marg Forde photo.)*
Above: *"There is never 'nothing to do' in a woolshed." That's what Vorne Wheki was told on his very first day back in 1988. But photographer Barb Newton caught him pretty close to that state at Olrig Station earlier this year!*

that have emerged over the years, Vorne says it still happens now and then but it's something he's really staunch about avoiding, especially in fine wool sheds, but also in crossbred sheds. "Some of that fine wool is worth more than what some of those shed workers make in a year, so we have to be really watchful. It goes back to lessons learned from our 'aunties' in the sheds years ago when I first started – they were brilliant to work with and we were taught to do things the proper way. Occasionally we still need to give some of our staff little reminders about keeping rubbish out of fadges and bales."

Vorne has moved around for work, in and out of the sheds, and including many years at the Mataura Alliance freezing works. Apart from that start with John Lawton, he found the off-season at the works coincided with the pre-lamb shearing at Alexandra and he started working as a presser for Peter Lyon Shearing. "That was another instance of a friend, Richard Power inviting me to 'come along for the ride'. He'd heard I was looking for a job, invited me to go with him and I ended up getting a job there too.

"Then when the works moved to all-year round employment there was a period of about five years when I didn't do any pressing at all. But, finally I decided I wanted to go back to an honest job in the sheds so I started working again at Pete's [Lyon Shearing]. I've been there now for about 20-25 years. I'd have to say they are the absolute best employers to work for. The way they bring on the young ones and look after them through thick and thin is fantastic. More recently, I've been doing some pressing work for ShearTech at Mossburn.

When he's in Alexandra, Vorne is on what's called the 'Town Run' which takes in Olrig Station, Earnscleugh Station, Lake Hawea Station, Lindis Peaks Station and he finishes his season at Mount Nicholas Station.

"All these sheds produce beautiful fine Merino wool which I have such a passion for and I always look forward to heading up there every year. This pre-lamb at Earnscleugh Station, owned by Alistair and Duncan Campbell, I had the privilege to press a bale of 12.5 micron merino wool which was classed by Rebbeca Braddick. The bale weighed 144kg but was worth a little under my annual wage.

"I have had the privilege to work with some of the best classers in this industry ever since starting in 1988. Sadly, many of them have now passed but I will always remember them fondly.

"When I returned to the sheds full time I was sad to see how far the standard of cross-bred wool preparation had fallen. I put this down to National [Government] changing the Employment Contracts Act, allowing fly-by-nighter contractors to undercut established contractors and the only way they could make a profit was by sending shed staff out one or two short and the wool couldn't be done properly.

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"Then there was the introduction of meat breeds and black fibres which saw the price of crossbred wool fall to an unsustainable price. I will always maintain the wool may not be worth much, but it is worth something even if its only two cents per kilogram."

Away from the sheds, Vorne doesn't have a lot of time for sporting and social interests ["It's been a long time since I've had any social interests!"] though he played some rugby in his younger days before becoming a convert to rugby league. He played league for several years before an injury brought a halt to that. Though now 'single' and based at Gore, Vorne has three daughters from a past relationship and two grandchildren (mokopuna). "Along with my work, they are my life now, my grandchildren."

And does he have any advice for a youngster aspiring to be a wool presser? "The first thing would be to warn them against going into the job thinking it's going to be easy. It's not easy and anyone coming with that attitude would be in for a shock. The actual pressing of the wool with a motorised press might be a bit easier than it used to be but the overall job of the presser in the shed throughout the day is just the same."

Final question – any other notable changes over the years? Vorne recalls before he spent that five years at the freezing works, the presser's duties included carrying the tuckerbox (cold food, scones and sandwiches etc) from the van to the smoko room in the shed, and turning the jug on five minutes before smoko and lunch breaks.

When he came back after several years away the trend had become one of shed staff wanting something hot or heated (pies etc) for smoko and somehow that had also become part of the presser's job. But not for Vorne.

"I'm old school, I didn't see warming up other people's pies and lunches as part of my job!"

* * * * * *

"A presser is constantly in motion. It's not just the physical demands of filling and pressing the bales, labelling them and stacking the 180-200kg bales but they must keep the shearers' pens full and are called on to do all manner of tasks to keep the shed running smoothly. In the old days they would also chop up the mutton for the cook." (The Shearers, Ruth Entwistle Low, Penguin Books, 2019.)

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Missing Trophies







These trophies have been missing for many years and rightful owners would like to see them returned. ***Top:*** *The open shearing cup from Aria Sports, missing for a decade or more.* ***Middle and Above:*** *Two trophies awarded to open shearers at the Great Lakes Expo in 1999 (Also known as the Spa Taupo Shears). The last year (and where) they were presented is not known.*

New Zealand Spring Shears Waimate 6-7 October 2023

Machine Shearing

Wairua Downs/Waimate Shearing/Lister Open Shearing (10 sheep, winter comb): Nathan Stratford, Invercargill 80.25 1; Jack Fagan, Te Kuiti, 81.16 2; Brett Roberts, Mataura, 83.65 3; Chris Vickers, Palmerston, 89.60 4; Paerata Abraham, Dannevirke, 90.76 5; Colin Dennison, Kurow, 93.11 6.

PGG Wrightson/VetMed New Zealand Spring Shears Open shearing (16 sheep): Leon Samuels, Invercargill, 52.02 1; Nathan Stratford, Invercargill, 52,34 2; Toa Henderson, Kaiwaka, 52.98 3; Brett Roberts, Mataura, 53.02 4; David Gordon, Masterton, 53,26 5; Jack Fagan, Te Kuiti, 61.89 6.

Lister Open Plate final (10 sheep): Corey Palmer, Dipton, 38.60 1; Floyde Neil, Western Australia, 40.20 2; Corey Barrowcliffe, Piopio, 41.02 3; Raare Edwards, 41.65 4; Hori Rata, Taumarunui, 42.89 5; Josef Winder, Invercargill, 44.20 6.

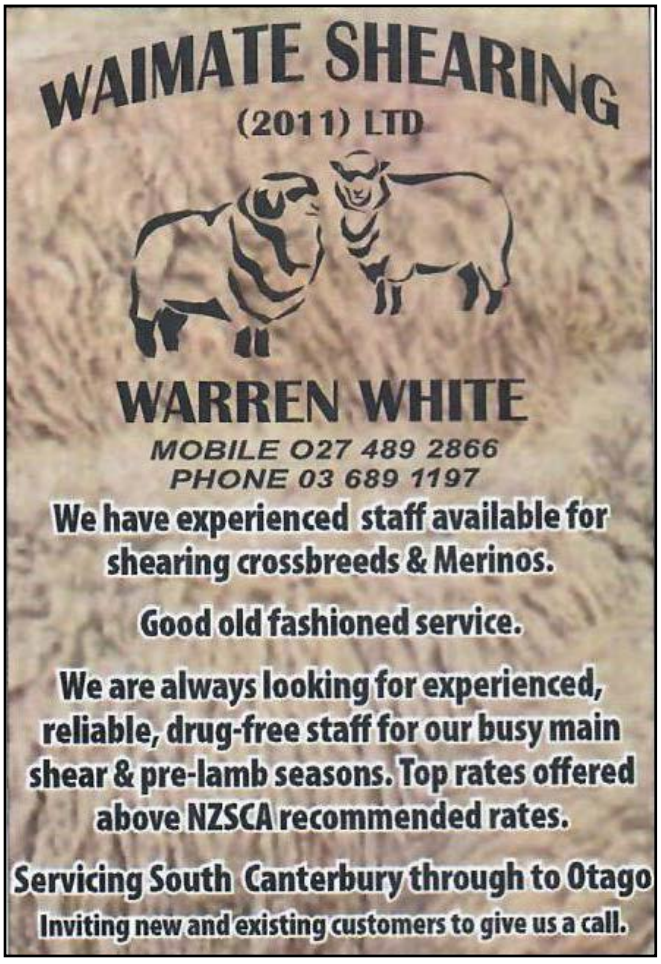
Kevin Butler Sheep Scanning/Mehrtens Agri Senior shearing (5 sheep, winter comb): Mark Taylor, Kurow, 68.62 1; Aidan Tarrant, Taumarunui, 75,87 2; Taelor Tarrant, 76.88 3; Tawhaarangi Taylor, Murupara, 77.30 4; Andrew Booth, Waimate, 82.84 5; Ruby Stone, Waimate, 88.96 6.

RD Petroleum/Bourndale Farm/Back Country Earthworkz Senior shearing (8 sheep): Kapua Brown, Taumarunui, 39.10 1; Aidan Tarrant, Taumarunui, 39.74 2; John Cherrington, Waikato, 40.09 3; Alice Watson, Seddon, 40,41 4; Reuben King, Kaiapoi, 40.90 5; Blake Crooks, Rangiora, 42.85 6.

Mark Murphy/Lister Intermediate shearing (5 sheep): Emma Martin, Gore, 33.30 1; Cody Waihape, Mataura, 33.51 2; Hautapu Makaere, Waikato, 35.55 3; Lydia Thomson, Rangiora, 36.59 4; Tim Dickson, Feilding, 37.04 5; Mariis Klopper, South Africa, 40.23 6.

Makikihi Fries/Clifton Downs/Lister Junior shearing (3 sheep): Jet Schimanski, Gore, 36,28 1; Reuben Wilkinson, Wyndham, 36.65 2; Connor Wilkinson, Wyndham, 37,87 3; Leevi Lex Wilson, Wyndham, 40.39 4; Donnie Stringer, Ranfurly, 40.78 5; Max McTavish, Lawrence, 43.20 6.

Paddy Dobbs Rural/Blair's Motor Repairs Novice machine shearing (1 sheep): Jacob Booth, Waimate, 23.42 1; Kane Miles, Christchurch, 23.66 2; Manawa Hunt, Oamaru, 46.41 3.





Above: *NZ Spring Shears open finalists; Jack Fagan, David Gordon, Brett Roberts, Toa Henderson, Nathan Stratford, Leon Samuels.* ***Below:*** *Waimate open plate finalists; Josef Winders, Hori Rata, Taare Edwards, Corey Barrowcliffe, Floyde Neil, Corey Palmer, Warren White (sponsor).*



Blade Shearing

Vet Centre/Merial Ancare/Headford Propagators/Lister Open Blade Shearing (6 sheep): Tim Hogg, Timaru, 66.33 1; Tony Dobbs, Fairlie, 68.02 2; John Dalla, Australia, 68.92 3; Allen Gemmell, Rangiora, 78.55 4; Phil Oldfield, Geraldine, 81.27 5; Andrew Murray, Australia, 88.45 6.

Royal Tavern Trans-Tasman Blade Shearing test (4 sheep): New Zealand (Tony Dobbs/Allen Gemmell) 105.71 1; Australia (John Dalla/Andrew Murray 116.99 2.

Woolhandling

Ellis-Lea Farms Open woolhandling: Joel Henare, Gisborne, 47.26 1; Tia Potae, Milton, 86.99 2; Amy Ferguson, Invercargill, 94.78 3; Cushla Abraham, Masterton, 167.12 4.

Bremworth South Island Circuit open woolhandling: Candy Hiri, Mataura, 108.91 1; Cushla Abraham, Masterton, 111.51 2; Keryn Herbert, Te Kuiti, 133.50 3; Amy Ferguson, Invercargill, 135.25 4.

Regional/Aoraki Wool Growers Senior woolhandling: Charis Morrell, Alexandra, 112.69 1; Tre Sciascia, Mataura, 116.67 2; Krome Elers, Mataura, 140.36 3; Shakira Matenga, Dunedin, 177.46 4.

Bremworth South Island Circuit Senior woolhandling: Saskia Tuhakaraina, Gore, 111.77 1; Krome Elers, Mataura, 134.68 2; Maiden Elers, Mataura, 144.75 3; Charlotte Stuart, Omarama, 154.44 4.

Kingswood Motels Junior woolhandling: Mikayla Neil, Piopio, 143.56 1; Sarah Lewis, Gisborne, 146.47 2; Lucy Elers, Mataura, 164.16 3; Tess Kelly, Rakaia, 212.27 4.

Waimate Flashback







Above: *Ritchie Gould of Pleasant Point won the senior shearing championship at Waimate's New Zealand Spring Shears in 1968. But not with the brass Wolseley handpiece pictured here. He's the owner of arguably the finest collection of shearing equipment in New Zealand, if not the world.*

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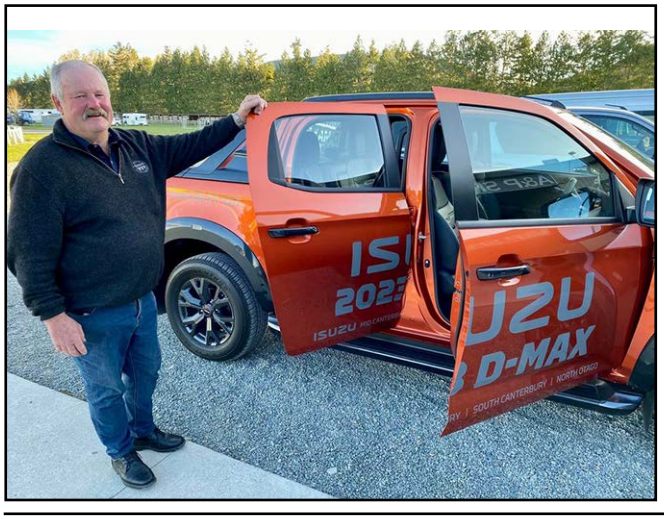


Images from New Zealand Spring Shears, Waimate. ***Top:*** *Wide-angle view of the board during the trans–Tasman blade shearing test.* ***Above:*** *Combatants after the battle. Australians Andrew Murray and John Dalla with New Zealanders Allen Gemmell and Tony Dobbs, with team manager Greg Stuart and Shears chairman, Warren White.* ***Opposite:*** *team members from both counties made the open blades final along with 2017 world championships representative Phil Oldfield (second left). But an 'old' new champion emerged – Timaru's Tim Hogg (right), who had previously won the title in 2012.* ***Below:*** *commentator John McBride travelled down from Taranaki for microphone duty and enjoyed sponsored wheels around Waimate.*



New Zealand Spring Shears, Waimate: Honours Board 1968-2023

Year	Open shearing	Senior shearing	Intermediate shearing	Junior shearing
1968	Brian Quinn	Ritchie Gould	Mike Boyd	
1969	Brian Quinn	Doug Sinclair	G Prattley	
1970	Brian Quinn	R Chamberlain	Doug Grant	
1971	Brian Quinn	Colin Gibson	B Ludemann	
1972	Joe Ferguson	George Cartney	John McGillen	
1973	Eddie Reidy	Sid Stronach	Peter Lyon	
1974	Brian Quinn	Peter Lyon	P Murphy	
1975	Martin Ngataki	Kevin Walsh	T Manning	
1976	Samson Te Whata	R Forbes	L Buckley	
1977	Roger Cox	Dick Murphy	William Lyon	
1978	Brian Quinn	Matt Mainland	Tony Chamberlain	
1979	Roger Cox	G King	W Cox	
1980	Roger Cox	David Fagan	R Grant	
1981	Samson Te Whata	A Scott	C Prendeville	Lionel Bugden
1982	Colin King	R Grant	Lionel Bugden	M Hoban
1983	Colin King	C Campbell	Mark Spain	Toni Summerfield
1984	David Fagan	Mark Spain	M Dobbs	G Barnes
1985	Rick Pivac	Tony Prestage	S Russell	Maurice Forde
1986	Colin King	Lionel Bugden	B Thomas	Gerald Spain
1987	Colin King	D Lawson	W Walker	P Trembath
1988	Kevin Walsh	Simon McKenzie	Norm Harraway	B Gould
1989	Edsel Forde	John Fraser	Steve Brosnahan	I Small
1990	Alan MacDonald	Ross Nimmo	G Stevens	Grant Black
1991	Colin King	Tony Fox	Grant Black	Nathan Stratford
1992	David Fagan	Colin Thirkell	Colin O'Neill	Justin Meikle
1993	David Fagan	Steve Brosnahan	Richard Tyree	Lyndon Newlands
1994	David Fagan	Ken Fergusson	Chris Jones	Matt Murney
1995	David Fagan	John Tangney	Chris Black	Sean Direen
1996	David Fagan	Nathan Stratford	Danny Atutolu	Dean Cox
1997	David Fagan	Jason Win	Nick Rose	Brendon Wadsworth
1998	Darin Forde	Ben Lissaman	Eli Cummings	Brent Carter
1999	David Fagan	Matt Gibson	Scott McNicol	Mark Guyton
2000	Grant Black	Dean Cox	Hamish Anderson	Paul Teasdale
2001	Nathan Stratford	David Kingston	Brent Carter	Andy Mainland
2002	David Fagan	Gary Morgan	Willie McSkimming	Harold Peri
2003	Darin Forde	Chris Black	Cody Waihape	Joy Porteous
2004	Nathan Stratford	Ivan Scott	Richard Maguire	Philip Devitt
2005	Nathan Stratford	Bill Melville	Bevan Holm	John O'Neill
2006	Nathan Stratford	Angus Moore	Robbie Mainland	Mason Adams

NZ SPRING SHEARS
Three-Grade Winners

Grant Black
Junior 1990
Intermediate 1991
Open 2000

Nathan Stratford
Junior 1991
Senior 1996
Open 2001

Brett Roberts
Junior 2009
Intermediate 2010
Senior 2011
Open ????

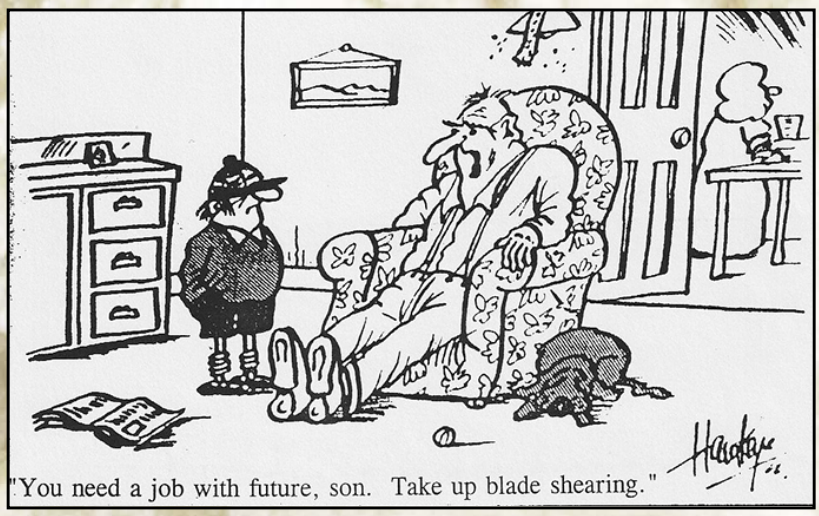
2007	Nathan Stratford	Nigel Warren	Mason Adams	Jimmy-Joe Elers
2008	Nathan Stratford2009	Maaka Rangiwai	Tipene Te Whata	Linton Palmer
2009	Cam Ferguson	Tipene Te Whata	Corey Palmer	Brett Roberts
2010	David Fagan	Kaleb Godsiff	Brett Roberts	David Gordon
2011	David Fagan	Brett Roberts	Linton Palmer	Andrew Leith
2012	Darin Forde	Corey Palmer	Phoenix Hawkins	Corey Smith
2013	Cam Ferguson	Jake Rangiuaia	Joseph Stephens	Lionel Taumata
2014	Cam Ferguson	Ethan Pankhurst	Corey White	Kelly MacDonald
2015	Nathan Stratford	Hugh de Lacy	Lionel Taumata	Sam Thomson
2016	Murray Henderson	Paraki Puna	Ruka Braddick	Jesse Barclay
2017	Nathan Stratford	Corey Smith	Liam Norrie	Brodie Horrell
2018	Nathan Stratford	Lionel Taumata	John Cherrington	Henry Mayo (England)
2019	Nathan Stratford	Brandon Maguire-Ratima	Mitchell Menzies	Jack Gordon
2020	John Kirkpatrick Troy Pyper (w/c)	Chris Malcolm Duncan Leslie (w/c)	Adam Gordon	Reuben King
2021	Leon Samuels Troy Pyper (w/c)	Braydon Clifford Russell Ratima (w/c)	Reuben King	Jack Pringle
2022	Gavin Mutch Nathan Stratford (w/c)	Mitchell Menzies Scott Cameron (w/c)	Josh Devane	Emma Martin
2023	Leon Samuels Nathan Stratford (w/c)	Kapua Brown Mark Taylor (w/c)	Emma Martin	Jet Schimanski
	w/c = winter comb			
Year	**Open woolhandling**	**Senior woolhandling**	**Junior woolhandling**	
1979	Graeme Bell	N/A	N/A	
1980	Des Pringle	N/A	N/A	
1981	Des Pringle	N/A	N/A	
1982	Peter Connor	N/A	N/A	
1983	Lorraine Foster	N/A	N/A	
1984	Dianne Phillips	N/A	N/A	
1985	Patrick Shelford	N/A	Dianne Maitland	
1986	Jeff McKenzie	N/A	R Ruffell	
1987	Elsie Karekare	N/A	Kaye Ross	
1988	Gina Nathan	N/A	Maxine Pu	
1989	Raelene Howes	N/A	Julie Hough	
1990	Raelene Howes	N/A	Richie Leckie	
1991	Joanne Kumeroa	N/A	Phyllicia Ratana	
1992	Joanne Kumeroa	N/A	Connie Shandley	
1993	Huia Puna	N/A	Lynn Anderson	
1994	Raelene Howes	Fiona Barakat	Nicky Fergusson	
1995	Gina Nathan	Charmaine Proudman	Angela Burnett	
1996	Patrick Shelford	Camille Ainsley	Emily Moore	
1997	Vanessa McAlister	Nicky Fergusson	Turoa Hiri	
1998	Patrick Shelford	Gaby Farantino	Tarsha Allen	
1999	Yvonne Abraham	Rhonda Wakefield	Karen Andrews	
2000	Joanne Kumeroa	Frank Naughton	Barbara McConnell	
2001	Leah Brenssell	Gina Malcolm	Staz Davey	

Year	Open woolhandling	Senior woolhandling	Junior woolhandling
2002	Joanne Kumeroa	Stacie Houkamau	Naima Titter
2003	Tina Rimene	Judith Tuhakaraina	Vanessa Clayton
2004	Lisa Fagan	Karen Andrews	Aroha Ryan
2005	Huia Whyte-Puna	Staz Davey	Angie Houkamau
2006	Joanne Kumeroa	Katrina Marsh	Denise Stokes
2007	Gina Nathan	Holly Scott	Melanie Barrett
2008	Keryn Herbert	Shona Pattison	Amylee Ruki
2009	Joanne Kumeroa	Toia Karipa	Ngahuia Thwaites
2010	Dallas Mihaere	Jamie Leggert	Alpha Wade
2011	Joanne Kumeroa	Kyle Wihongi	Foonie Waihape
2012	Keryn Herbert	Kodi Hawkins	Sarah Higgins
2013	Keryn Herbert	Juliette Lyon	Creedence Culshaw
2014	Joel Henare	Kelly Luke	Peketai Puna
2015	Keryn Herbert	Peketai Puna	Sharnui Newton
2016	Joel Henare	Erana Smith	Lashara Anderson
2017	Joel Henare	Ebony Turipa	Tyler Hira
2018	Joel Henare	Tyler Hira	Makayla Crawford
2019	Pagan Karauria	Sunni Te Whare	Heaven Little
2020	Pagan Karauria	Amber Poihipi	Kirwyn Kora-Rogers
2021	Joel Henare	Amber Poihipi	Marera Iwikau
2022	Joel Henare	Krome Elers	Tia Manson
2023	Joel Henare	Charis Morrell	Mikayla Neil

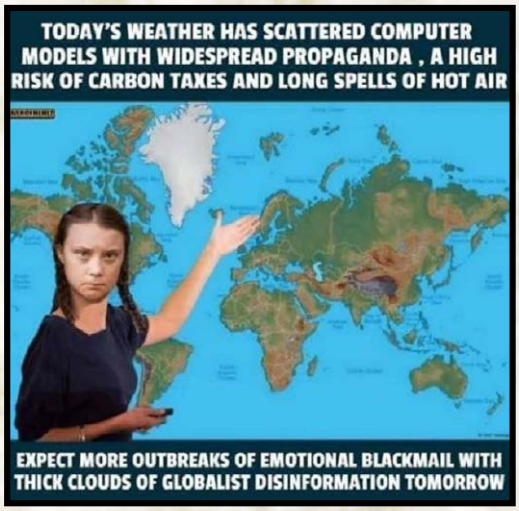


Above: *The New Zealand Spring Shears sheep crutching crew at Hakataramea Station, 30 September 2023. Back left: Dave Devlin, Kev Butler, Aaron Kerr, Jamie McGillen and Simon Wright. Front left: Caleb Clark-Fluery, Teagan O'Leary, Renee Rempala, Jade Rangi, Emily McGillen, Nanise Katonibau and Jacob Booth. (Waimate Shearing crew.)*

Year	Open Blades	Intermediate Blades	Year	Open Blades	Intermediate Blades
1968	Neil Baynon		1996	Tony Dobbs	Ivan Brown
1969	Neil Baynon		1997	Noel Handley	Bryce Hepi
1970	Sam Dobson		1998	Noel Handley	Trevor Doran
1971	Neil Baynon		1999	Noel Handley	Jason Casserly
1972	Alex Macdonald		2000	Peter Race	Billy Montgomery
1973	Mike Marshall		2001	Peter Race	Neil Strachan
1974	Peter Burnett		2002	Shane Casserly	Shane Hondelink
1975	Peter Casserly		2003	Bill Michelle	Mike McConnell
1976	Colin Cameron	Bill Michelle	2004	Noel Handley	Tim Hogg
1977	Colin Cameron	Evan Buttars	2005	Peter Race	Sam Duckmanton
1978	Peter Casserly	Neville Gibson	2006	Noel Handley	Scott McKay
1979	Peter Burnett	Alastair Kerr	2007	Bill Michelle	Jarrod Bool
1980	Peter Casserly	Peter Race	2008	Bill Michelle	Tyrell Boyd
1981	Donny Hammond	Tony Dobbs	2009	Mike McConnell	N/A
1982	Peter Casserly	Noel Handley	2010	Mike McConnell	N/A
1983	Dave Gillespie	Ross Kelman	2011	Bill Michelle	N/A
1984	Bill Michelle	Peter Brien	2012	Tim Hogg	N/A
1985	Tony Dobbs	Colin Kennedy	2013	Mike McConnell	N/A
1986	Peter Race	Andrew McKay	2014	Tony Dobbs	N/A
1987	Tony Dobbs	Chris Henderson	2015	Tony Dobbs	N/A
1988	Tony Dobbs	P Hames	2016	Tony Dobbs	N/A
1989	Tony Dobbs	Steven Dobbs	2017	Tony Dobbs	Wiremu Kihi
1990	Tony Dobbs	Chris Russell	2018	Tony Dobbs	Ken Robertson
1991	Dave Gillespie	Andrew Oldfield	2019	Mike McConnell	Jordan White
1992	Peter Race	Peter Hey	2020	Tony Dobbs	Jordan White
1993	Peter Race	Shane Casserly	2021	Tony Dobbs	Aku Waihape
1994	Noel Handley	Trevor Bates	2022	Tony Dobbs	N/A
1995	Tony Dobbs	Darryl Taukamo	2023	Tim Hogg	N/A



"You need a job with future, son. Take up blade shearing."









Above: *Brandon Maguire-Ratima and Lashara Maguire-Ratima (nee Anderson) "tied the knot" on 30 December 2021 at Winton, where they both live. Both were brought up in the south. The pictures were taken at Bradley Stewart's farm in Wreys Bush, up the road a few kms from Winton. Both Brandon and Lashara have followed the shearing and woolhandling competitions in the past, with Brandon winning the Golden Shears interrmediate title in 2018 and the Seniors in 2020. Lashara also made Golden Shears finals both those years in the senior woolhandling. Then Covid hit and their competition aspirations went on hold, along with the rest of the world. Lashara says they are now ready to resume their shearing sports careers and they look forward to taking part whenever they can. (We reckon Lashara might be the best dressed woolhandler ever – we're not sure if Brandon is wearing his wedding suit. Can't see a bow-tie anywhere ...)*

No ordinary Shearer

These days folk are encouraged to celebrate their diversity, but way before it became popular to do so a shearer who wholeheartedly embraced his ethnicity was David Joshua Bertanees, the fastest Greek/Maori shearer in the world.

Most people pronounced his name as 'Ber-tan-knees, and David seldom bothered to correct them, though he told me the correct pronunciation was 'Bert-tan-us'. David was born and raised in Palmerston North where his Greek grandfather established a fish shop and his father was a painting contractor. Obviously, David's mother was Maori.

David told an amusing story of how his father went out after tea one evening and came back a short time later, inviting the family outside, saying "Come and look at this." 'We stood there dumbfounded,' laughed David. 'In that short time Dad had brush-painted his work van green,' adding 'He'd made a jolly good job of it too.' I laughed as well as up to that point I'd never heard of anyone brush painting a vehicle.

On leaving school David took up an apprenticeship with Redpaths Roofing and Flooring but this came to a premature end when his boss was killed in a fall from a roof.

Unemployed David found work with Marton-based shearing contractor Hapi Winiata, thus his life in the sheds began. Eventually David came South with the late, well-known and respected Maori shearer, George Waitere.

Apart from his claim to being the fastest Greek/Maori shearer in the world, David also claimed he had never encountered the sheep he could not do 50 or better on in a two-hour run and that a claim in the 1960s even some decidedly fast shearers were unable to make. David underlined this claim when, first day back after six weeks off recovering from reconstructive surgery on his shoulder and straight into merino wethers, he was the only one to do better than two hundred.

David's personality was to die for, never bringing his problems to work, always smiling, lightening everyone's mood. Just small stuff maybe, but it's the antics of mates that keep you going. For example, one day I noticed David grinding his gear while shifting his weight from one foot to the other in time with the 'flip-flap' of the belt drive on the overhead.

"What the Hell's got into you, Dave?" I queried, has a tick managed to get above your bowyangs?" Without a pause David replied solemnly, in his Native American TV western accent, 'Good Indian dance to any music.' It still cracks me up.

David often joked he and I would end up in the same Old People's home. Being put in such a place is not a fate any man, let alone an old shearer looks forward to, but if I knew David was there I'd sign up tomorrow.

I lost track of David about 1975. Some say he went to Australia. If he did, I wonder if he ever encountered sheep he couldn't do two hundred on. And if he did, I'm positive he would still have managed to smile. Wherever in this world or the next the fastest Greek/Maori shearer may be, you can rest assured all privilege to know or have known him are still cracking a grin every time they remember him. (*Tony Mathews*)



Book Review: *It's Over!* John McBeth

This writer can still recall a slightly embarrassing occasion in the Christchurch Cathedral Square maybe forty years ago. He was waiting for the lights to change at a pedestrian crossing when Suzanne Prentice came along and stood beside him. It was during the busy lunch hour and she was instantly recognisable because she was often on television (*"That's Country"*) and he had seen her in concert a couple of times.

"How are you, Suzanne, nice to see you," he began. She was about to tell him what she'd been up to for the past year or so when the lights changed and they had to start walking, along with maybe a dozen other people. With similar numbers coming from the other direction, they got separated and she ended up maybe 10 metres ahead of him. But bless her, she turned and gave a little wave and a smile. And then it hit him: 'I don't know her at all, except as a television personality!' Though by her response, he could tell it wasn't the first time she'd been greeted by a total stranger.

So, when people like sports broadcaster John McBeth produce a book (his first) you hurry to obtain a copy because he's also someone you think you've known for 'yonks' and you know he'll take you behind the scenes for many of the great sporting moments you've witnessed 'together'.

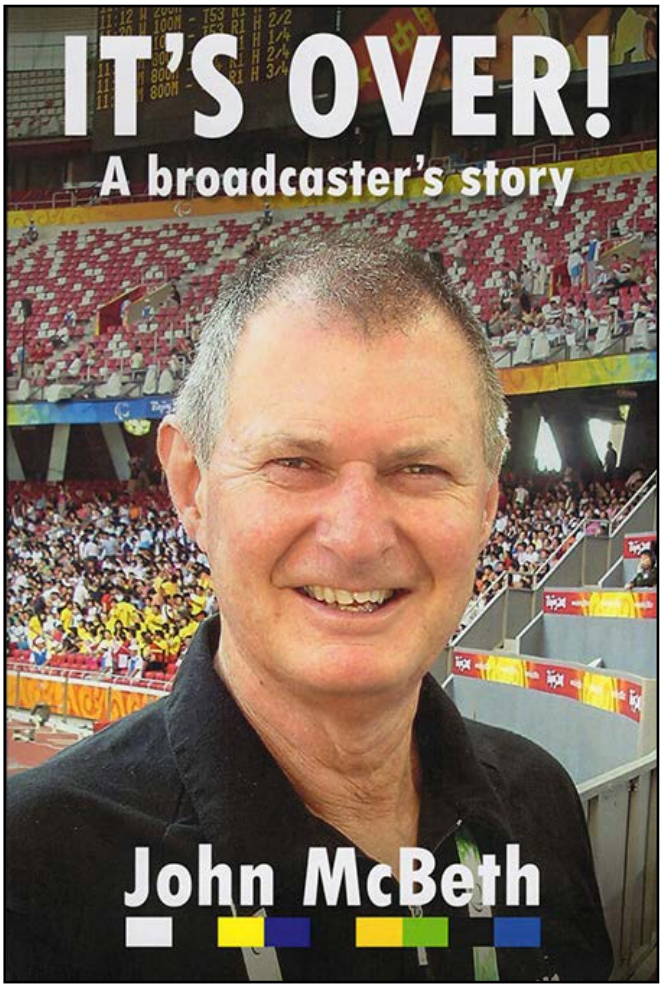
An explanation of the book's front cover reveals it was designed by John's 'talented nephew', Wayne Doyle of Timaru to incorporate the colours of the sports teams John has supported over the years: green and black for South Canterbury, blue and gold for Otago, black and white for Hawkes Bay, yellow and black for Wellington, the blue of the Raumati Bowling Club and (of course) the black of New Zealand.

As with any book first time in your hands, you do the quick flick, full of anticipation. At page 13 you glimpse a reference to his mother being a Braddick (of the shearing family from Eketahuna, you wonder?) And on the same page, a paragraph about the family living in the MacKenzie Country in the early 1940s, before John was born, where his father had been a blade shearer and a rabbiter.

And you note the photos of McBeth through the years, with fellow broadcasters and 'famous' sportspeople – Jock Hobbs, Grant Fox, Keith Quinn, 'Grizz' Wyllie, Anthony Mosse, Daniel Loader, Peter Bush, Pete Montgomery, 'Nisbo' …



Above: *The blade shearing gang at Clayton Station, established in the Fairlie Basin in the 1880s. John McBeth's father, Ian McBeth is standing at left. Photo from 1942.*



And then the read. John had his first glimpse of life on earth at the Kurow Maternity Hospital in June 1949. Among others who preceded him into daylight there were All Blacks Charlie Saxton (1913) and Phil Gard (1947). And, "Richie McCaw would have been born there, but there hadn't been a maternity home there [Kurow] for many years." The family was actually living at Omarama at the time, where John's father was employed on one of the stations. Kurow was a "bumpy, none-too-pleasant 55km ride on an unsealed road" in a Ford Ten car.

In 1953 the family moved to Timaru where the McBeths took ownership of a corner store, a thriving business that they kept for 20 years. It was in Timaru that John grew up with a love of sport in his veins, aided by such events as South Canterbury's 17-14 victory over the touring French team in 1961. This was an ill-tempered game that acquired notoriety when a local woman marched onto the field after a 'melee' and whacked the French captain with her umbrella, before returning to her seat amid a standing ovation from 22,000 spectators.

John started his career in radio at Radio 3ZC in Timaru, in the music programming department. That was in 1967. Then he transferred to Dunedin in 1972, still in music programming but his duties soon expanded to include helping the 'Scoreboard' team cover many different venues at weekends. Five years later, Otago's legendary Iain Gallaway retired from rugby commentary and … the rest is history in the making.

From Carisbrook, McBeth the commentator spent spells in the Hawkes Bay, and in Wellington, and was posted to the Commonwealth Games at Brisbane (1982) and the Olympics at Los Angeles (1984) for radio commentary duties.

(From page 24)
Not long after the Olympics John accompanied the All Blacks on a four-match tour of Fiji and got to 'call' his first rugby test. This was at Suva on 27 October 1984, a match won by New Zealand, 45-0.

The radio assignments kept coming – Argentina 1985, the Baby Blacks in 1986, the first Rugby World Cup. And then, in 1992, John was brought into the television broadcasting fold – in front of the camera where the New Zealand sporting public was able to put a face to the familiar voice, coming from rugby grounds, America's Cup yachting venues, winter Olympics …

In later years John McBeth has become a funeral celebrant (he conducted the service for his dear friend, the legendary sports broadcaster Peter Sellers in Dunedin in 2016) and a 'crusader' for mens' health. He's 'retired' from the sporting microphone and lives at Raumati where he has come to love outdoor bowls with a passion.

We've only just scratched the surface in this brief review but *"It's Over"* is a most entertaining read, embellished by tributes from people John's worked with over the years – Keith Quinn, Martin Tasker, Anthony Mosse. His own humanity shines from every page and even 1980-1986 All Black 'Cowboy' Mark Shaw, not known for his keen rapport with the media, told John, "You're not a bad sort of bastard."

So, if you ever find yourself waiting for the lights to change at a pedestrian crossing and John McBeth happens to be standing there, say hello. He'll know who you are!

(And if you are interested in acquiring a copy of '*It's Over*' by John McBeth, contact this writer in the first instance. It's not generally available in shops.) (*Des Williams*)

* * * * * *

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Chance Meet

I met him in town and he said to me then,
'How are the hill camps and the mustering men
Those beautiful scenes that the seasons arrange,
All along the wide sweep of the Mount Ida Range.

'The huts where we met and the bunks where we slept,
Good horses we rode and the grand dogs we kept.
The mobs that we swept off the slopes with a will
Through tall tawny tussock that covered the hill.

'The giant pine tree where the bulls love to rub,
Birdsong that rose sweet from the depth of the scrub,
All bring a rare warmth and they lift me at times –
And my heart's out of step when I'm reading your rhymes.

'How I'd like to be there – but there's no going back –
For I've turned from the ways that I knew on the track.'
He gave half a smile – it was just a chance meet
And was swallowed again by the crowd and the street.

© *Blue Jeans*



Above: *He was head and shoulders above the rest, as far back as 1996. The bloke on the right ...*



'We don't know how lucky we are, Trev ...'

It seems (and there is evidence aplenty) that the past few months have provided 'wall-to-wall entertainment' for your typical Kiwi sports fans, of which this writer confesses to be one.

For example, thanks to Paerata Abraham and the team at 'Shedtalk', we have been taken to shearing and woolhandling competitions and other shearing venues (world records) that we would never otherwise get to in person.

For other sports, and for the price of a monthly 'Pay TV' subscription, we can be there for all 27 days of the Tour de France; follow Novak on his way to winning the US tennis open, or John Rahm nailing the US Masters golf tournament. Plus our Silver Ferns netballers and Black Ferns rugby players have had their moments of glory beamed into our living rooms.

Then, bonus upon bonus, we've had rugby and cricket world cups running concurrently in France and India. Why, we have even been taken into the inner sanctum of the TMO's bunker room during a rugby world cup final. (Let's just leave that there!)

Amidst this feast of sporting activity,



you come across this little story, posted on Facebook recently about the '1942 Melbourne Cup'. No, not the big race at Flemington, but the off-course substitute held at Sandakan Prisoner-of-War camp, in Malaysia. Some quick research reveals Sandakan was established in July 1942 to hold some 1500 Australian prisoners captured by the Japanese in Singapore. [We will leave you to your own further research, suffice to say only six soldiers returned alive to Australia.]

Here follows the brief item about Sandakan's Melbourne Cup: *The importance of sport to Australians serving overseas, including those in captivity, endured throughout the Second World War.*

In 1942 prisoners at Sandakan prisoner of war camp marked Melbourne Cup day with a race. A track was set up between the officers' huts divided into thirty squares. A race caller drew cards from a deck to determine how many squares each 'jockey' could advance.

The first to reach the end was the winner and was presented with this 'Melbourne Cup', an empty bully beef tin mounted on a wooden stem and base. Accession number: RELAWM24544

#objectoftheweek #AWMobjects #AWMemorial

* * * * * *

And of the real Melbourne Cup in 1942: *Colonus* had one of the highest-ever winning margins in Melbourne Cup history when he beat *Phocion* by seven lengths in the 1942 race, with *Heart's Desire* third. Held during one of the worst times in Australia's history, the racecourse saw its smallest crowd for seventy years. *Colonus* was pace-setter from the stalls with no competition; the uninspiring race was described as a 'one horse affair'. His winning time of 3.33.25 is about ten-to-twelve seconds slower than recent Cup runs.



Above: *Kortez Mahia at Beaumont Station, August 2023. (Dion Morrell shearing gang.)*

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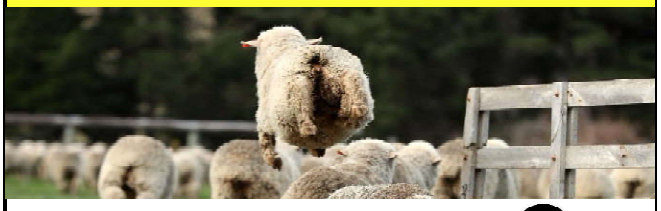

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Golden Shears 2023 – Reflections

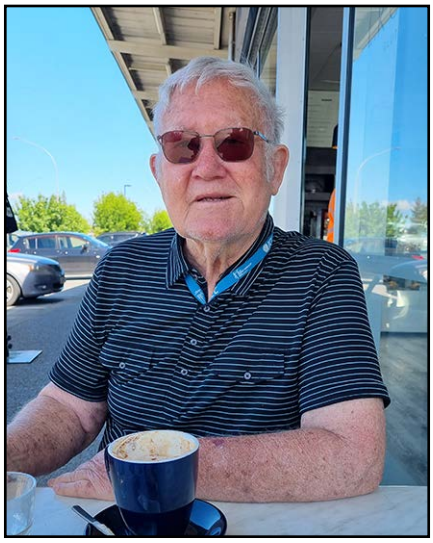
It only took me 60 years to attend Golden Shears for the first time. From the age of 20, I'd always wanted to attend but was never able to quite commit myself to do it.

From my teenage years I had a fascination for sheep shearing. Being a 'townie', I don't know where this fascination came from, but it continued through my whole life and I watched competitions wherever I could, as often as I could.

During my senior rugby days and being in the Poverty Bay representative squad (mid-1960s), I mixed with fellow players who were entrenched in the wool industry, including John Collins (All Black), Pat Ransley (Maori All Black), Reece Johnstone and Hiki Swann.

Jumbo Moxley, a wool buyer, was a past player for Gisborne High School Old Boys and supporter, along with Fred Tate, a trader. An infamous shearer I played with in the Gisborne Boys First XV and Poverty Bay juniors had a long spell with Her Majesty's Prison Service.

Whilst working in Williams and Kettle's office in Gisborne I had daily contact with Syd Williams and Peter



Torrie, the wool guys. At the annual Gisborne A&P Show I always spent time at the shearing competition, where names that come to mind include the Smilers and Stewart Symon, 1964 Golden Shears open champion.

Later, while working at Dalgety's office in Te Kuiti I had clients and contact with contractors Staples and Cressy, who were looked after by Len Holland and Peter Kape.

The 2023 Golden Shears was mind-blowing. On the Friday night you could be forgiven for thinking you had entered a nightclub. Bright lights, formal dress, lovely ladies and everybody having a good night out.

The highlight for myself was being introduced to Snow Quinn, the shearing legend. I was privileged to spend nearly an hour with him, talking about the King Country, his past career and his present-day life. (Also full of merit, lots of young people receiving his guidance and wisdom.)

One thing that caught my interest was the number of volunteers helping and the constant changes that were made to the stage and set-up. One wonders if there is an easier way! A time and motion professional would have a nightmare observing these continuous alterations during day and night.

In conclusion, I was in the company of a trusted gentleman, a long servant of the industry, whose background knowledge added significantly to my experience. I won't be able to wait another 60 years before I go once more to Masterton in the first weekend of March.

(Jack McHeath)





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Great Raihania Shears
Hastings 20 October 2023

Machine Shearing

Open Shearing (20 sheep): Tama Niania, Gisborne, 63.00 1; David Buick, Pongaroa, 63.05 2; John Kirkpatrick, Pakipaki, 63.50 3; Hemi Braddick, Eketahuna, 64.2 4.

Senior shearing (12 sheep): Forde Alexander, Taumarunui, 53.38 1; Te Ua Wilcox, Gisborne, 57.05 2; Laura Bradley, Woodville, 59.25 3; Mark Ferguson, 59.62 4.

Intermediate shearing (5 sheep): Dylan Young, Gisborne, 29.45 1; Mitch Nation, Napier, 37.55 2; Jake Goldsbury, Waitotara, 37.95 3; Tim Dickson, Hunterville, 41.35 4.

Junior shearing (2 sheep): Kaivah Cooper, Napier, 24.8 1; Tom Kerley, Wairoa, 26.15 2; Lachie Cameron, 27.9 3; Maureen Chaffey, Pongaroa, 32.30 4.

Novice shearing (1 sheep): Shawna Swann, Wairoa, 18,35 1; Ashlin Swann, Wairoa, 18.9 2; James Robertson, Feilding, 19,35 3; Te Ariki Te Hau, Flaxmere, 28.75 4.

Woolhandling

Open woolhandling: Ngaira Puha, Kimbolton, 182.67 1; Keryn Herbert, Te Kuiti, 194.23 2; Nova Kumeroa, Mataura, 203.82 3; Monica Potae, Kennedy Bay, 250.61 4.

Senior woolhandling: Tatijana Keefe, Raupunga, 168.53 1; Amy Bell, Weber, 195.30 2; Nohokainga Maraki, Flaxmere, 210.02 3; Ryley Paul, Wairoa, 290.88 4.

Junior woolhandling: Waiari Puna, Napier, 101.59 1; Makayla Neil, Taumarunui, 123.15 2; Rahera Lewis, Taihape, 155.09 3; Kalyah Ferguson, Waipawa, 171.00 4.

North Island Circuit

North Island Shearing Circuit teams event: Waiari Puna and Te Anna Phillips (Taumarunui) 155.76 1; Kalyah Ferguson and Tatijana Keefe, 185.05 2.



Above: *Tama Niania shearing in the semi-finals at Great Raihania Shears. He went on to secure a narrow victory over David Buick and John Kirkpatrick, with Hemi Braddick a bit further back.* ***Below:*** *Colin Watson-Paul with a taonga presented to him as a symbol of appreciation by the North Island Woolhandling Circuit judges. Carved by Lea-Anne Braddick of Eketahuna and presented by Emaraina Eruera and Ngaio Hanson.*



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Judges at Great Raihania Shears. Top: *Woolhandling, back left:Mary Bartlett (North Island Circuit secretary), Dawn Aramoana, Geraldine Turipa, Rouchelle Ashford, Holly Tarrant, Linda Tarrant, Bo Paku-Clark. Front left: Grant Roberts, Ian Hopkirk, Yvonne Abraham, Missy Riddell, Jills Angus Burney, Rose Puha.* ***Above,*** *shearing judges. Back left: Bart Hadfield, Marg Baynes, David Hodge, Ian Hopkirk, Tuma Mullins, Edwin Pewrry. Front left: Peter Vujcich, Jack Fagan, Tristan Mackey, Graeme Roadley, Peter McCabe, Sir David Fagan.* ***Below left:*** *Mary Bartlett and volunteer, taking entries and collating points.* ***Below right:*** *John Wolland sorting out the who gets what and why.*











Top descending: *Junior woolhandlers Waiari Puna, Makayla Neil, Rahera Lewis and Kalyah Ferguson with Edwin Perry; senior woolhandlers Tatijana Keefe, Amy Bell, Nohokainga Maraki and Ryley Paul; Open woolhandlers Ngaira Puha, Keryn Herbert, Nova Kumeroa and Monica Potae.*

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Top descending: *Junior shearers Kaivah Cooper, Tom Kerley, Lachie Cameron and Maureen Chaffey; Intermediater shearers Dylan Young, Mitch Nation, Jake Goldsbury and Tim Dickson; Senior shearers Forde Alexander, Te Ua Wilcox, Laura Bradley and Mark Ferguson; Open shearers with Na Rongowhakaata Raihania: Tama Niania, David Buick, John Kirkpatrick and Hemi Braddick.*



Lady in Red – Chiquita Tamepo from Waikouaiti at Great Raihania Shears, Hastings, 20 October 2023



Opinion: CO_2 No Pollutant

Irrespective of where you fall on the human-induced-global-warming spectrum – alarmist or sceptic – there is one thing we should all be 100% sure about. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) is a fertiliser because it carries one of the 16 essential nutrients (carbon, C) required for plant growth.

Plants acquire this essential nutrient in the form of CO_2 via a process called photosynthesis. The rate of plant growth is directly related to concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere, all other things being equal.

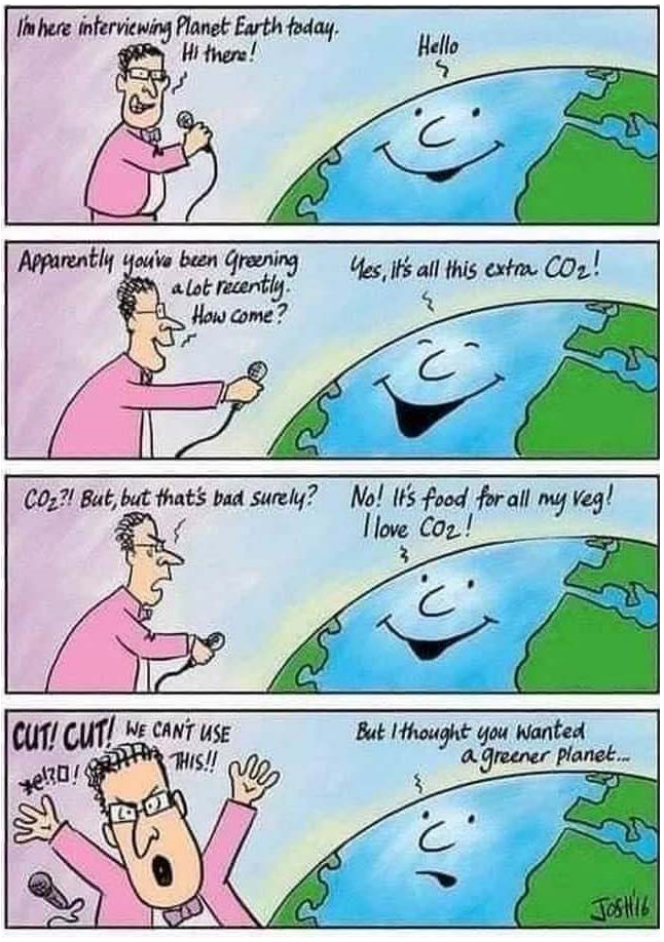


Dr Doug Edmeades

I can recall as a young scientist in the then Ministry of Agriculture much talk about a new special glasshouse being constructed at the Levin Horticultural Research Station. It was special because it was sealed so that plant growth – in this specific case, tomatoes – could be enhanced by increasing the concentration of CO_2 in the atmosphere!

There is now a large body of research quantifying this effect. From this data it is predicted that if atmosphere CO_2 was increased by 300ppm – and this, some say, is possible given current emissions – plant growth will increase by about 30-40%. A fertiliser indeed!

Satellite images have captured this fertilising effect.



The planet is becoming greener, and this effect is most discernable in arid areas. Why should this be?

The 'skin' – the outer layers of the plant leaf – have little openings called stomata through which gases can enter (e.g. CO_2, water) and leave (oxygen and water) the plant. As the CO_2 increases, the number and the size of these stomatal 'holes' decreases and consequently the plant becomes more efficient at using water.

The rule of thumb is that if you double the CO_2 concentration, the amount of water required by the plant is halved. These, I emphasise, are not trivial effects! These scientific facts about the important role of CO_2 are immutable and therefore we should be very careful how we use words like "pollutant" and "decarbonise" when talking about CO_2.

That 'stuff' that you see pouring out of industrial chimneys cannot be CO_2 for the simple and sufficient reason that the gas CO_2 is colourless. That acrid smog hanging over our large cities is not CO_2 because CO_2 is odourless. The pollution – the smog, if you like – that you can see is largely due to micro-particles suspended in the air, not CO_2.

So, can we agree to stop calling CO_2 a pollutant?

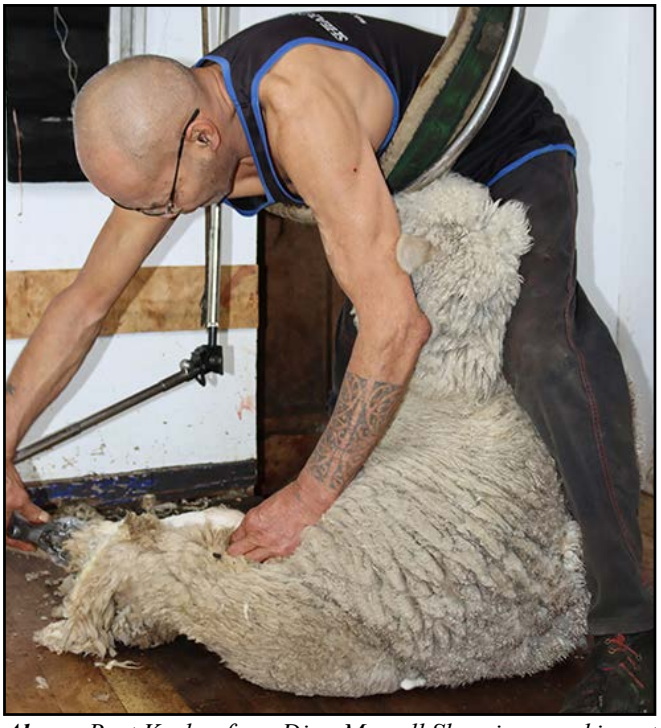
Similarly, some balance is required when talking about the negative effects of CO_2, especially in the context of agriculture. Sure, farmers need to be informed if their district is likely to become more arid because of global warming. But equally they should be informed that pastures will grow much faster, and they will be more drought resistant!

The whole narrative around 'climate change' has become clumsy and if we are to make progress in controlling the beast, we need to remain balanced.

(Published with permission from author.)

Dr Doug Edmeades spent 20 years as a soil scientist at Ruakura. In 1997, he established his own science consulting business which has evolved into agKnowledge.

* * * * * *



Above: *Bart Keelan from Dion Morrell Shearing, working at Beaumont Station, South Otago, August 2023.*

New champions at Alexandra

By Barbara Newton

It was an emphatic start for the mighty Deep South at the opening competition of the 2023/24 Shearing Sport's season when the region claimed six of the seven New Zealand Merino Shears titles at the Championships held in Alexandra's Molyneux Stadium.

Popular wins

Two new open champions were crowned; Leon Samuels and Tia Potae, both popular wins; a double for the small Southland town of Mataura when cousins Krome Elers and Lucy Elers won the senior and junior woolhandling events respectively; host town reps Tremain Cannell, took out the novice woolhandling, and the teams title was won by "UP the MOS" from O'Neill Shearing. Only Aiden Tarrant of Piopio prevented a Mainland whitewash by taking the senior shearing event.

The New Zealand Merino Shears for the second successive year hosted a First Nations Australian Indigenous Team from NSW and they and a wider group of young wool harvesters boosted entries in several events, including the junior and novice woolhandling, teams and the senior shearing event where three of the six finalists were from this group.

The wins for Potae and Samuels gained them each a place in the New Zealand Trans-Tasman Team to compete against Australia at the Australian National Shearing & Woolhandling Championships [held at Jamestown, South Australia, on 19-20 October], with the return test to be staged at Golden Shears in March next year.

There was a positive vibe for the duration of the two-day event and a good turnout, including a handful of 'experienced competitors' in both shearing and woolhandling events.

Open shearing

With the defending champion, Aussie Daniel McIntyre knocked out in the semis there was an interesting mix in the open shearing, an all-South Island affair. The final six included a couple of old experienced heads, Master Shearers and past champions in Nathan Stratford and Grant Smith; pacemaker Stacey Te Huia, and first-time finalist Duncan Leslie made for an enthralling contest.

It was a long time between final appearances in Alexandra for New Zealand rep and winner Leon Samuels – this was only his third finals appearance since making his debut back in 2014. It was a welcome return for Brett Roberts, the runner up, who had his best finish after a third in 2018 and fourth in 2019, while third placegetter Nathan Stratford had been striving for a sixth title since his first win back in 2006.

A regular finalist of late, 2022 runner up Stacey Te Huia was first to finish, but his time points advantage could pull him up no higher than 4th with quality taken into account.

Duncan Leslie, in his first open merino final (he shore in the senior final back in 2018), was fifth.

Last but not least, the sixth placegetter was the resolute Grant Smith who, at age 57, was appearing in his 12th open shearing merino final in Alexandra. But the twelve sheep shorn, by his own admission, were probably six too many for the man with two titles under his belt (2000 & 2004), and contractor who rarely shears these days, running out of puff towards the end of the pen. To put his performance into perspective Kornie Roberts who shore beside him on stand five was but a one-year-old toddler when Smith first contested this open final back in 1995, a span of a whopping 28 years!





Above: *The silent assassin, Leon Samuels celebrated his win in a quiet unassuming way with a fist pump on receiving the winner's John Ferguson Memorial trophy.*

Open Woolhandling

The heat and semifinal results gave no clear indication as to a probable outcome in the open woolhandling event final. Everyone in a final has a chance of winning, and the calibre of those below the line was high so there were good odds on a new name going on the winner's trophy.

There was always going to be fierce rivalry between cousins Tia Potae and Joel Henare, his 12th final and a four-times winner of the event. Up against them was Candy Hiri, New Zealand rep to the recent world championships in Scotland, in just her second fine wool final, and first time open merino finalist Logan Kamura. – previously a senior finalist back in 2011.

The appreciative crowd was not disappointed. With silky skills aplenty on show each sought to throw and prepare five Northburn wether fleeces and oddments to the industry standard required, in the quickest possible time. A good throw is a key component of a woolhandler's skill set and the bulky fleeces were certainly a challenge to land as flat as possible.

The spectators held their breath and all four finalists struggled for air once the last fleeces hit the tables and the time clocks were activated, the final frantic fleece preparation and clean up was undertaken, with just 30 seconds separating the first and last in the time stakes.

Henare, renowned for his speedy cleanup, was first to raise his hand followed by Kumara, Hiri, then Potae. However we all know that the competition is not just about speed, but a combination of that and quality which is largely determined by the outside judging.

Potae's quality was superior on the day, in fact, she was on fire for the entire weekend and subsequently took the Gina Nathan Memorial quality prize in addition to the coveted winner's New Zealand Merino Open Woolhandling Trophy.

It was a popular, deserving win for Tia, who by her own admission a few years ago was grateful to have been in a final and pick up a green or yellow, but the pure merino wool sash was always the ultimate prize to aim for, even if it did take some time.



***Above:** Tia Potae, after a wait of more than 20 years, at last gets to raise up "Roger the Ram". **Below:** Duncan Leslie graduates from senior finalist in 2018 to open finalist in 2023 – the 99th shearer to make the open final since 1962.*



New Zealand Merino Shears Alexandra 29-30 September 2023

Machine shearing

VetMed/PGG Wrightson Open Shearing (12 sheep): Leon Samuels, Invercargill, 92.99 1; Brett Roberts, Mataura, 95.81 2; Nathan Stratford, Invercargill, 98.41 3; Stacey Te Huia, Alexandra, 99.31 4; Duncan Leslie, Alexandra, 108.90 5; Grant Smith, Rakaia, 119.23 6.

NZ Merino Shears Senior shearing (4 sheep): Aidan Tarrant, Taumarunui, 67.09 1; Marites Woods, Australia, 84.87 2; Tyron Cochrane, Australia, 85.46 3; Dre Roberts, Mataura, 85.48 4; Hamuera Cribb (Kennedy Bay) 89.88 5; Blake Overs (Australia) 101.67 6.

Woolhandling

Peter Lyon Shearing/New World/NZ Merino Open woolhandling: Tia Potae, Milton, 112.99 1; Logan Kamura, Marton, 119.98 2; Joel Henare, Gisborne, 129.99 3; Candy Hiri, Mataura, 136.99 4.
Wools of New Zealand Senior woolhandling: Krome Elers, Mataura, 105.68 1; Tre Ratana-Sciascia, Taihape, 118.76 2; Shakira Matenga, Dunedin, 127.81 3; Saskia Tuhakaraina, Gore, 132.54 4.

FMG Junior woolhandling: Lucy Elers, Mataura, 99.85 1; Makayla Neil, Taumarunui, 137.96 2; Katie Karauria, Napier, 155.09 3; Hemi Taurima 169.88 4.

New Zealand Merino Shears vs First Nations Indigenous (Australia): New Zealand 313.109 1; First Nations 338.681 2.













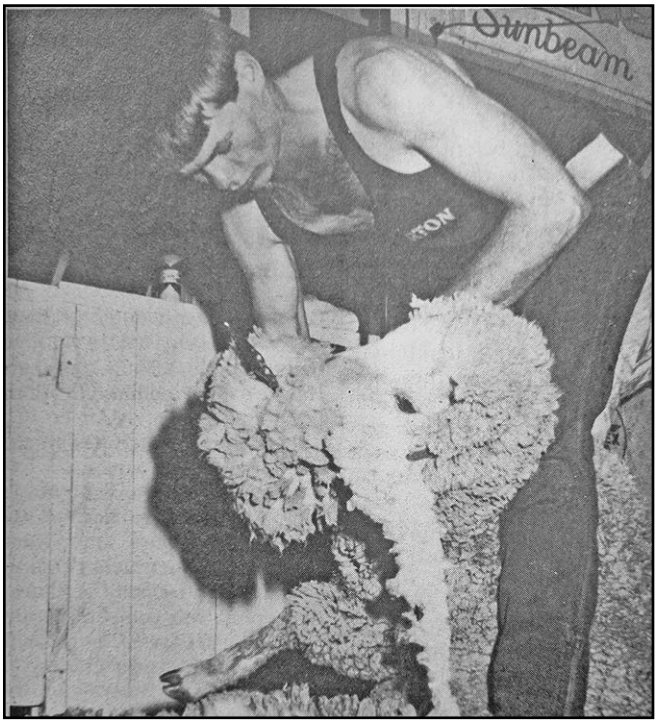
Top left descending: *Alan Paterson (Armidale) presents Peter Lyon (for Elsie and Peter) the Bruce Paterson Memorial Trophy for their unwavering continued support and services to NZ Merino Shears; Leanne Peeti and Waina Peneha; Tremain Cannell, winner of the novice woolhandling event.*

Top right descending: *Brian 'Snow' Quinn receiving the Murray McSkimming Memorial Trophy for services to the fine wool industry; Barry Taylor up the neck and rolling back the years; Mother and daughter judging act, Linda and Holly Tarrant (with Krome Elers at table).*



Above: *"The Legendary Board" is how photographer Barb Newton described this image of a heat from the New Zealand Merino Shears featuring Nathan Stratford (champion 2006, 2009, 2016, 2018 and 2021); Dion Morrell (champion 1996, 1997, 2002), Barry Taylor (champion 1992, 1998, 2003) and Murray Johnstone at far right. Johnstone (known as Muzza back in the day) never made it into the New Zealand Merino Shears open final in more than a decade of trying, but he did win the Senior title in 1987 (**pictured opposite**), beating Tony Wybrow, Kevin Hessell and Michael Proctor.*

Perhaps more of a half-bred specialist, Murray won the New Zealand Corriedale championship at Christchurch in 1990, shore in several other Canterbury and All-Breeds finals and appeared in at least 70 other open finals around the Canterbury region during the 1990s decade. In more recent times he's been a participant in multi-sports and triathlons, including the Coast-to-Coast one-day event.





Above: *From left: senior shearing champion Aiden Tarrant, senior woolhandling champion Krome Elers and junior woolhandling champion Lucy Elers.*

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Above: *NZ Merino Shears and First Nations Indigenous Teams, from left: Lane McSkimming (President/Manager): NZMT; Stacey Te Huia, Aiden Tarrant, Krome Elers, Joel Henare. FNIT: Dominic White, Daniel McIntyre, Angela Wakely, Jolie Orcher and Trevor Kennedy (Manager).* ***Below:*** *The sharp southern trio, Leon Samuels, Brett Roberts and Nathan Stratford.* ***Bottom:*** *Yes, we think it's orchestrated bullshit.*





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World Championships Team Managers and Judging Officials 2023

Country	Team Manager	Shearing Judge/s	Woolhandling Judge/s
Argentina	N/A	N/A	N/A
Australia	Tom Kelly	Daryl Wallace	Matt Stasinowsky
Austria			
Brazil			
Canada			
Chile			
Cook Islands	Sharon Hillis		
Czech Republic			
England	Peter Webber	Johnny Fraser	Gavin Stevens
Estonia			
Falkland Islands	Jack Wilson		
Finland			
France	Thimolean Resneau	Julie Resneau	Christelle Jeannet
Germany			
Ireland	Andrew Corrigan	Tom Dunne	Colin Crowe
Isle of Man	James Ratcliffe		
Italy			
Netherlands	Erik Bijlsma		
New Zealand	Ronny King	Donald Johnston	Janet Smith
Northern Ireland	John Murphy	David O'Neill, John Murphy	Wallace Boyd
Norway		Sven Reiersen	Ana Leira
Poland			
Scotland	David Stewart	Colin MacGregor (C/R), Andy Rankin, Gavin Donald, John Grant, Robert Brand, Alec Oliphant, Eoin Campbell	Kirsty Donald, Leann Bertram
South Africa	Izak Klopper	Christo Geldenhuis	Karin Lee
Spain			
Sweden			
Switzerland	Roddney Joppich		
United States	Katherine Moser	David Craven	
Uruguay			
Wales	Alwyn Manzini	Nicky Beynon, Clive Hamon	Gwenan Paewai (w/h ref), Meinir Evans



Any more names of judges/officials to go in these boxes? Anyone from Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Uruguay?

Tribute: Russell McDonald

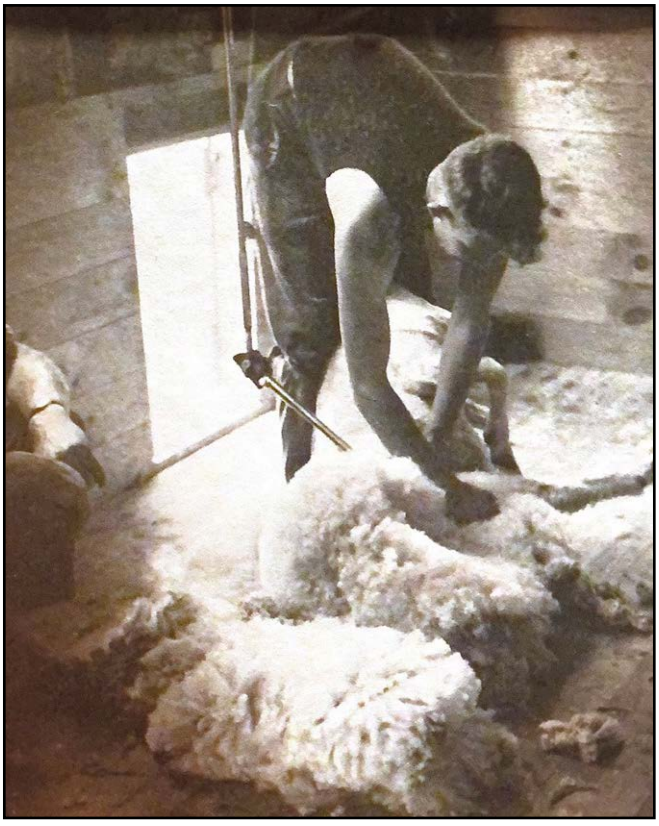
Russell McDonald was still a month away from his 20th birthday when he shore a South Island record tally of 357 ewes in nine hours at a Dipton woolshed. That was in 1954 at the Dipton West property of local farmer, Kevin English.

Although details of district shearing records of that time are somewhat sparse, one of the best previous tallies prior to Russell's effort is thought to be the 272 shorn by James Kean of South Hillend at Oreti in February 1944, some ten years earlier.

Having started out in the shearing profession upon leaving school in 1949 as a 15-year-old (the norm in those days), Russell began shearing under the tutelage of the highly-regarded instructor, Ron Hazlett, who had taken up a 'rehabilitation farm' at Dipton after serving in the Royal Air Force during World War II. Hazlett taught a different pattern to what later became known as the 'Bowen technique' and Russell quickly displayed a natural talent and ability with the handpiece, most often shearing in local sheds with his brother, Ian.

Russell shore with a Wolseley handpiece to do his tally. He had modified the yoke with some precision engineering and fitted Sunbeam 'chicken feet'. He was shearing with a straight comb and the record set was considered a 'mighty effort' at the time, producing exceptional quality on the big, woolly ewes.

Russell was born at Winton and grew up with five siblings on the family farm at Dipton West. Described as "an active outdoors boy", he relished the farming environment and devoted great care and attention to whatever task set before him.





Above: *Russell McDonald pictured during his South Island record shear in 1954.* ***Above right:*** *Russell after winning the New Zealand Royal Show/New Zealand championship before HMQ Queen Elizabeth II at Invercargill in 1963.*

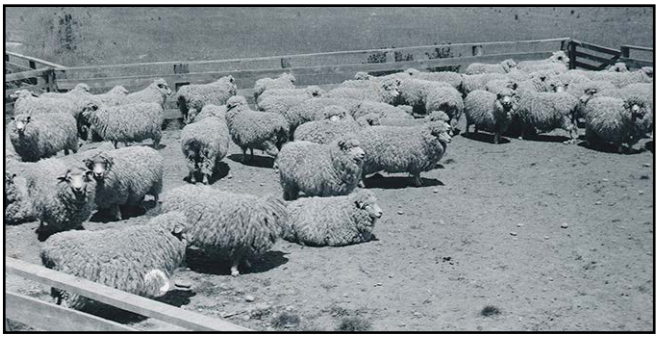
Through working in the sheds, Russell and Ian became friends with shearing brothers Alastair and Graeme Keown from Castle Rock and it soon became apparent that Russell's interest in the Keown family extended to the brothers' sister. Alison.

Russell and Alison married in 1959 and bought their first five acres of land opposite the Dipton school. They grew carrots on their block to supply to the local rabbit board, and Russell continued with his shearing.

Russell was one of five Southland shearers listed as participants in the open class shearing at the inaugural Golden Shears at Masterton in March, 1961, which drew 80 entrants from throughout New Zealand. He shore in heat eight alongside Godfrey Bowen but did not progress through to the semifinals.

(The other Southlanders were Albert Amai, Rangi Te Maiharoa, Ron Gardiner and Ian Harrison, with the last-named making it through to the final and finishing sixth. The group all wore maroon singlets with a gold 'S' on the front and Kitch King from Gore accompanied them to make sure they remained focused on the task at hand!)

Russell did not return to Golden Shears in 1962 because of the death of his father, but that same year he won a three-week trip to Australia with the New Zealand Shearing and Woolhandling team. Together with Ian Harrison and woolhandlers Jim Barclay and Tom Lynch II, they beat a Marlborough team led





Above: *Woolly Southland sheep, before and after the deft handiwork of champion shearer, Russell McDonald.*

by George Pickering to win the South Island elimination final. There was no competition involved with the team in Australia but rather an experience-building tour and familiarisation with the Australian wool industry.

Then in 1963 Russell won the Open Shearing final at the Southland Royal Show in Invercargill whilst Queen Elizabeth II was in attendance. The Royal Show competition (wherever it was held) back then also constituted the New Zealand Championship.

For the rest of his shearing career Russell mainly confined himself to his home territory, though he did do one stint in the North Island with the Keown Brothers. And in keeping with that innovative flair displayed when he modified his Wolseley handpiece, it is understood that Russell also had a big input into the development of the 'One Long Tooth' (OLT) comb in the early 1960s, (no doubt in association with Godfrey Bowen).

In 1964 Russell and Alison brought more land, and they also leased the home farm from his (by then) widowed mother. They gradually brought more land around them as it became available. Over the next five decades they raised their family of a daughter and two sons and became immersed in their farming enterprise and the community around them.

Along with farming Perendale sheep, Russell grew clover seed and grain. In the 1980s he and a group of Southland farmers took the New Zealand Wheat Board to court over a deal the Board had reneged on. The Southland Farmers won their case and it is still used today as a case study in the Law School at Otago University.

In 2012, with son Roger on the farm, Russell and Alison retired to Winton, but his interest in farming and shearing never wavered, and he kept up to date with current goings on in the political and farming scene.

Although Russell had suffered poor health over the past couple of years, NOTHING was going to stop him going up to Fairlight Station in February 2023 to watch Sacha Bond's world record attempt. Being a man of his time, Russell couldn't quite believe that a young woman could make such an attempt!

So up he went (accompanied by Stewart Weir) on that hot, hot Southland day, and watched the third run of the day. He was suitably impressed, though might have raised an eyebrow at the present-day world record quality standards.

Russell McDonald was a very humble man. It was obvious that everything he turned his hand to, he did with great care and perfection. The old adage, "Do it once and do it right" was, I think, Russell's motto.

Russell died on 27 August 2023, aged 89 years. He is sadly missed by Alison, his wife of 64 years, his three children (Rose-Mary, Roger and Malcolm), four grandchildren, and many extended family and friends. RIP Russell McDonald.

(By Stewart Weir and Des Williams.)



Above: *Russell McDonald with Joanne Crawford (Shearing worldwide Facebook administrator) during Sacha Bond's world record shear at Fairlight Station in February 2023.)*

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Competition Results

Poverty Bay A&P Show 14 October 2023
Machine Shearing

Open Shearing: Jack Fagan, Te Kuiti, 61.50 1; Paerata Abraham, Masterton, 62.20 2; Hemi Braddick, Eketahuna, 62.50 3; Toa Henderson, Kaiwaka, 63.60 4; Tama Niania, Gisborne, 64.95 5.

Senior shearing: Te Ua Wilcox, Gisborne, 41.75 1; Bruce Grace, Wairoa, 46.90 2; David Hodge, Te Puke, 52.15 3; Jake Hutchinson, Dannevirke, 56.1- 4; Jake Williams, 58.10 5.

Intermediate shearing: Dylan Young, Pehiri, 35.60 1; Ryka Swann, Wairoa, 42.65 2; Cheydon Winiata, Nuhaka, 45.75 3; Sam Parker, Raglan, 49.25 4; Matekino Puhia, Raupunga, 61.80 5.

Junior shearing: Kaivah Cooper, Napier, 37.75 1; Tom Kerley, Wairoa, 46.40 2; Raupunga Puhia, Raupunga, 53.65 3; Jodiesha Kirkpatrick, Gisborne, 54.00 4; Roy Pomare, Gisborne, 60.10 5.

Woolhandling

Open woolhandling: Joel Henare, 126.800 1; Brittany Tibble, Gisborne, 225.00 2; Keryn Herbert, Te Kuiti, 229.00 3; Samantha Gordon, Masterton, 266.00 4.

Senior woolhandling: Tramon Campbell, Gisborne, 135.00 1; Anne Connell, Gisborne, 164.00 2; Rahera Kerr, Hauturu, 3; Te Whetu Brown, Hastings, 187.60 4.

Junior woolhandling: Renee Apanui, 122.800 1; Jodiesha Kirkpatrick, Gisborne, 125.60 2; Kelly Barrett, 127.40 3; Waiari Puna, Napier, 128.40 4.

Novice woolhandling: Shaquille Hauiti, 48.60 1; Kalyah Ferguson, Waipawa, 57.00 2; Layiss Atkins, 72.00 3; Peti Biddle, Gisborne, 75.80 4; Aqua Lee Ruru, Gisborne, 80.20 4.

Ellesmere A&P Show 14 October 2023
Machine Shearing

Open Shearing (9 sheep): Jordan Boyes, Owaka, 39.05 1; Corey Barrowcliffe, Piopio, 41.22 2; Lyall Windleburn, Rangiora, 42.53 3; Alex Smith, Rakaia, 42.98 4.

Senior shearing (5 sheep): Reuben King, Kaiapoi, 26.55 1; James Wilson, Winton, 28.90 2; Aidan Tarrant, Taumarunui, 30.00 3; Dre Roberts, Mataura, 30.50 4

Intermediate shearing (5 sheep): Emma Martin, Gore, 34.55 1; Caleb Brooking, Mataura, 36.90 2; Cody Waihape, Mataura, 39.05 3; Lydia Thomson, Rangiora, 42.55 4.

Junior shearing (2 sheep): Callum Griffith, 41.55 1; Josh Youngman, 57.00 2.

Trans-Tasman Tests Jamestown SA 20-22 October 2023

Machine Shearing test: Australia (Nathan Meaney, Daniel McIntyre, Sam Mackrill) 227.15 pts beat New Zealand (Nathan Stratford, Angus Moore, Leon Samuels) 245.28 pts.

Blade shearing test: Australia (John Dalla, Andrew Murray) 152.60 pts beat New Zealand (Tony Dobbs, Allan Gemmell) 160.68 pts.

Woolhandling test: New Zealand (Tia Potae, Cushla Abraham) 51.35 pts beat Australia (Mark Purcell, Jayne Griffin) 58.10 pts.
Jamestown Open woolhandling: Tia Potae, 49.50 1; Kirsty Bone, 52.20 2; Marlene Whittle, 61.70 3; Kellie Hazel, 62.50 4; Tiffany Collins, 68.00 5; Victoria Lang, 70.30 6.

Northern A&P Show Rangiora 21 October 2023

Open Machine Shearing (15 sheep): Hugh de Lacy, Rangiora, 52.70 1; Taare Edwards, Taumarunui, 55.50 2; Luis Pincol, Chile, 55.60 3; Lyall Windleburn, Rangiora, 58.13 45.

Open Blades shearing (4 sheep): Tim Hogg, Timaru, 40.25 1; Noel Handley, rangiora, 43.45 2; Shaun Burgess, Rakaia, 77.10 3.

Senior shearing (10 sheep): Blake Crooks, Gisborne, 43.80 1; John Cherrington, Ngaruawahia, 45.75 2; Reuben King, Kaiapoi, 48.20 3; Sam Bryan, Aria, 57.10 4.

Intermediate shearing (6 sheep): Emma Martin, Gore, 33.67 1; Caleb Brooking, Mataura, 43.25 2; Lydia Thomson, Rangiora, 44.35 3; Daniel Vallejo, Argentina, 47.67 4.

Junior shearing (3 sheep): Levi Beedles, Rangiora, 37.13 1; Lachie Crafar, Kimbolton, 38.02 2.



Above: *Northern A&P Rangiora open finalists, from left: Mark Herlihy (sponsor), Hugh De Lacy, Taare Edwards, Luis Pincol, Lyall Windleburn.* ***Below:*** *Tim Hogg, Open blades winner at Waimate and Rangiora.*

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The moment your dream comes true

By Barbara Newton

It was an absolutely ecstatic Tia Potae who danced a little jig on receiving the prized winner's trophy, aka "Roger the Ram" at last and raised it high above her head in pure delight. She then gave a most emotional, passionate reply when thanking family, friends and the many supporters, non more so than her son Hoani.

For Tia a fine wool title has been over 20 years in the making since first competing in the senior finals in 2000 and 2002. Given that her first open 6th placing was back in 2010 she has been an intermittent finalist with 3rds in 2014 & 2021, and 4ths in 2015 & 2016 – in fact had the dubious claim as the most regular finalist who had not won until this year.

The win is a classic example of never giving up on your dreams, believing in yourself. Heart, passion, and commitment. Her motivation was in beating herself and not worrying about others, if she was good enough to "beat self then you are good enough to beat anyone else" on any given day.

The win sees a return for Tia to the New Zealand Trans-Tasman Team for the annual home and away series between the two countries, after she first pulled on the NZ blazer (it still fits!) as a young raw 21 year old in 2005/06 where she and the late Ronnie Goss lost in Australia but won the return at Golden Shears, and repeated again in 2013/14 with Keryn Herbert.

Now, as a mature seasoned classer, educator and competitor, she is excited to look to avenge those first defeats when she joins Cushla Abraham, along with machine shearers Leon Samuels, Nathan Stratford, Angus Moore and blade shearers Allan Oldfield and Tony Dobbs in the forthcoming Trans-Tasman contests against archrivals at in October and March.



Above: *After dancing the jig she didn't even know she could dance! Tia Potae acknowledging the judges, the sponsors, her fellow competitors, the crowd ... and just wow!*

It was her very first open competition, where she won her first open title, the NZ Woolhandler of the Year in Balclutha. With subsequent open wins over the years at Lumsden, Gore, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay and again at Balclutha in 2013 Potaes' future competitive ambition is having a crack at attaining her woolhandling Masters status. (Reaching a personal milestone may have been motivation for this – just saying!). This win in Alexandra has been the best possible start to achieving her goal of winning a few shows in the coming season. She is also the South Island woolhandling representative on the Shearing Sports National Committee.

Tia looks up to, and has great respect for a number of people related to the industry and whom she strives to emulate: Serena Lyders and Mavis Mullins who have both been in the industry, but are still connected and getting things done; and in the sporting arena Sarah Goss as a leader in addition to the utmost respect she has for her [late] mother Ronnie.

Potae has spent most of her life in Milton working mainly in the wool harvesting industry. She now resides and works in the Coromandel managing the Puawai Native Nursery Trust for the non- profit Coromandel Independent Living trust. Fortunately they allow her leave to continue her four month pre-lamb stint as a very adept professional merino wool classer in around Central Otago and Mid Canterbury regions.

The solo parent is eloquent, she can sing and has shown us she can dance.



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Tribute: Allan Sheppard

New Zealand Spring Shears (Waimate) life member Allan Sheppard died at Waimate on 31 October 2023 after a period of illness. We profiled Allan's career in the November 2021 edition of *Shearing*, and reproduce that story now, by way of tribute to Allan and his contribution to our industry.

* * * * * *

Shearing magazine's roving correspondent recently found himself camped at the popular Gore Bay Holiday Camp (eight kilometres from Cheviot) with Allan Sheppard, and took the opportunity to have a chat with this long-serving member of the shearing fraternity.

Allan was born at Kurow in 1951. His father, a former army service man (26th Battalion), worked as a labourer on a farm in the area after returning from the war in 1945 and later bought a farmlet of his own at Otekaieke.

Allan attended school at Otekaieke and initially did much of his shearing in the upper Waitaki Valley/Waimate. Like many others who started working in the sheds, Allan started first as a rousie (in 1969) and then took up shearing in 1970.

He started with a freelance gang in the Kurow District, with Kevin Wall, Kevin Sinclair, and his brother, Bill Sheppard. All were very good shearers – Bill was Golden Shears junior champion in 1969.

While still single, Allan started shearing further away from home. He worked for Bill Lowry and later Ian Anderson in the Otautau District (which, for the uninitiated, is just near Tuatapere) shearing ewes and lambs. The difference in Southland, however, was that it was quite unusual if he had to travel more than 10 miles to most sheds, whereas he had been used to travelling extensively back at home each day just to start work.

Allan considers a lot of very good shearers came out of the Kurow District during that particular time – one in particular was Dave Parker, who could have easily been a champion had he continued in the industry. Dave was a winner of the Sunbeam Encouragement Award, which earned him a trip to Australia with the New Zealand team.

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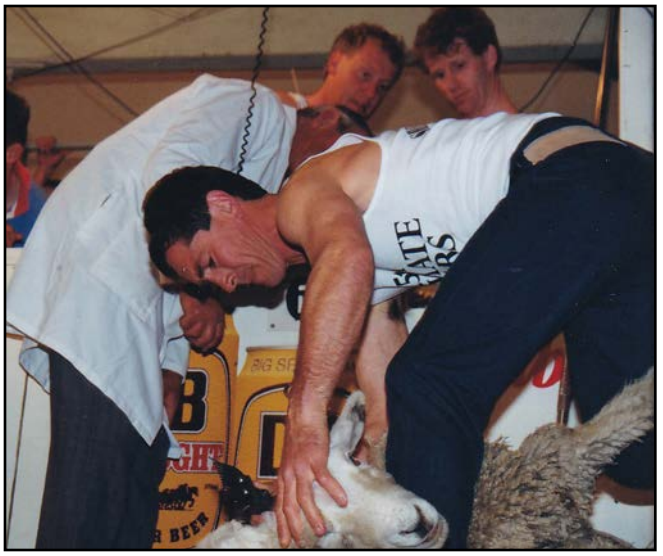
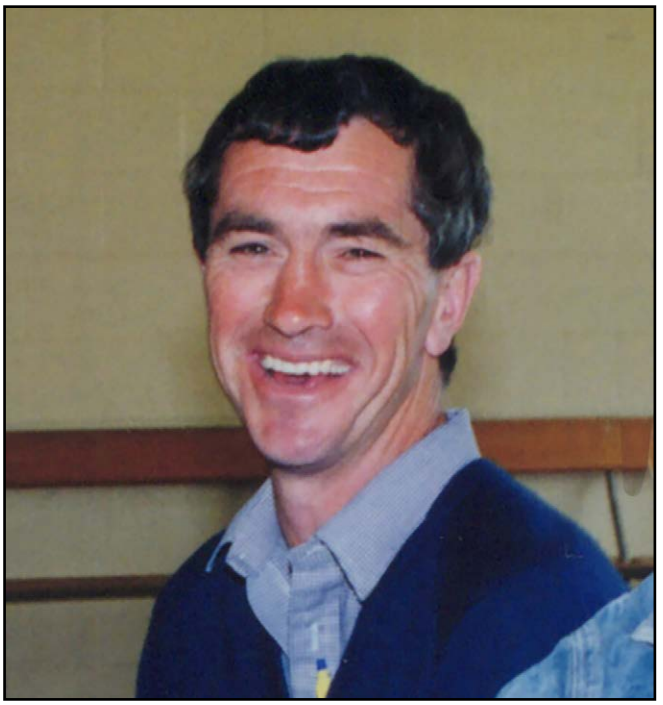


Above: *Allan Sheppard, pictured competing at the New Zealand Spring Shears, Waimate, in 1992.* ***Below:*** *At the cleanup after the 1993 Shears. Even that was fun!*



Allan continued shearing in the district until 1980, when he took a break and got married to Marlene. They bought a house in Waimate and then, after about six months away from the sheds, he went back to shearing. Allan also shore in the North Island for a number seasons. At one stage, he was based at Lochinver Station, which was noted as one of the infamous George Wilder's hiding places many years earlier.

Here, Allan shore with Jeff Rountree from Otorohanga. Jeff was a gun who regularly shore over 600 lambs a day, while Allan was pretty happy doing 400-odd.Allan recallsJeff doing '600s' for six days in a row and would have done it again but they ran out of sheep on the seventh day. (To page 61)

On one of those days Jeff had bettered the then existing world lamb shearing record.

During his career Allan entered the Golden Shears 'five or six' times and, while never a champion shearer himself, it was, looking back, a special period as they were great times to be involved in the sport.

Allan considers he worked with some talented shearers over the years. For example, the McCone brothers, Barney and John, and Jeff Crengle in Southland. Most of the shearers he worked with were always helpful, which made the job very enjoyable.

The main difference with shearing today is the size of the sheep, which are huge in comparison to his day. In 2003/04 Allan was the Manager for the New Zealand Shearing team for the trans-Tasman Test Series. This was certainly a highlight for him. The team, made up of David Fagan, James Fagan, Barry Taylor, Tom Fleming and Waina Peneha didn't win in Australia (Esperance) but they managed to square the series at Golden Shears.

Rugby also played a big part in Allan's life during his younger years. He was a part of the Kurow Rugby Team which won the Citizens Shield in 1976 – this was a first for the Club in the history of the shield. The Club also won the shield in 2021 for the first time since 1982 – and the afore-mentioned Dave Parker's son, Hayden Parker played a large part in securing the victory by 24 points to 13. In the later years, Allan's main sporting interest has been golf and it's a game he loves with a passion. (A trait common to most golfers!)

Allan still likes to keep an eye on the New Zealand shearing scene. He was involved with the New Zealand Spring Shears at Waimate for many years and is now a Life Member of that committee. He was very proud to be a part of the shearing sports scene, even though it was sometimes difficult to juggle work and sporting commitments together.

He is full of praise for the work the present committee has achieved with Warren White at the helm, bringing the show back to a two-day event and incorporating the New Zealand winter comb title. He says the new, purpose-built shearing pavilion is a credit to the hard work and enterprise of the Society. (*Chas Williams, Shearing November 2021*)

* * * * * *

In the Waimate Shears 50th anniversary souvenir book *Spring Shears, Spring Showers*, Allan Sheppard's appointment and role as manager of the New Zealand team for the 2003-04 Trans-Tasman series.

"It was the week after Golden Shears 2003 when I received a phone call from Philip Morrison, the President of the Wrightson national Shearing Circuit Committee. Philip informed me that he had put my name forward as a nomination to be the next Shearing team manager for the coming trans-Tasman test series.

"The nomination would be forwarded to the Shearing Sports NZ meeting for ratification. I was convinced that there would be other nominations and I didn't think too much about it. When Philip rang me several seeks later to inform me of my appointment I was "chuffed". It was a great honour that I was certainly looking forward to. The appointment generally recognises a person's services to the industry."

With team members David Fagan, James Fagan and Barry Taylor (shearers) and woolhandlers Tom Fleming and Waina Peneha, Allan related how the team had flown to Perth and then driven a hire van for the seven hour road trip to Esperance, where they were greeted with a Civic reception. "The beauty about being manager was that I got the driving job there and back."



Above: *New Zealand team manager Allan Sheppard with woolhandlers Waina Peneha and Tom Fleming at Golden Shears, Masterton, in 2004.*

New Zealand lost both the shearing and woolhandling tests at Esperance and the pressure was on both teams to turn the tables and square the series at Masterton, Allan recalled.

"The shearers were to get their opportunity first. Barry Taylor was off to a flyer but then struck some trouble. It was James Fagan who led the charge with a superb merino shear. NZ 210.312, Australia 213.235. Very close but enough for a New Zealand win.

"Tom Fleming and Waina Peneha really produced the goods in the woolhandling test. It appeared close time-wise but their superior quality was the foundation for a large victory by over 140 points. So my term as manager ended with a drawn series. They were a great team to manage and I was extremely proud of their efforts in both tests."

* * * * * *





Above: *Jock Martin Shearing gang at Craig James property, Moa Flat on 31 August 2023. Standing: Jason Leevey, Peter Mullan, Mystery Man, Glen Cameron, Megan Whitehead. In front: Amber Casserly, Harmony Tuhaka Cameron, Fraser Hart.*



Above: *Jock Martin Shearing gang at Craig James property, Moa Flat on 31 August 2023. Standing: Brendan MacGregor, Emma Martin, Ben Martin, William Vaea. Sitting: Reihana Knowles, Saskia Tuhakaraina, Jony Unahi, Sam MacGregor, Alaana MacGregor.*



Above: *Dion Morrell Shearing gang at Beaumont Station, South Otago, on 31 August 2023. Back left: Brendon Potae, Eru Weeds, Zac Manihera, Leon Voyce. Middle row: Marg Boynton, Kath Broughton (partly obsured), Ash Murray, Tia Taewa, Bart Keelan, Chris MacGregor. Front: Todd Reilly, Danielle Manihera, Dorothy McLean, Charlie Bennett, Tahnika Thompson, Hannah Robertson, Juanita Rangiwai, Kura Reedy, Elan Jones, Kortez Mahia.*





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He deserves a lot of credit for the way he stands the strain
For the bunk he has to swallow would drive most of us insane.

He must pay the highest licence, he must pay the highest rent
He must settle with the agent though he doesn't take a cent
And when it comes to paying bills he's a Johnny on the spot
He'll pay for what he sells you, whether you pay him or not

And when you walk into his place he greets you with a smile
Be you dressed in dirty overalls or banker dressed in style
Be you English, Irish, Dutch or French, it doesn't matter what
He'll treat you as a gentleman, unless you prove you're not.

It's not the aches and pains and hardships he endures
He doesn't tell his troubles though you always tell him yours
And if the weather is hot or cold, or turns to heat or snow
It's up to you to tell him, as he's not supposed to know.

Should he sit down to read the news, some fool with half a jag
Pulls up a chair beside him and begins to chew the rag
Though Job, they say, has patience, a more patient man by far
Then Job could ever hope to be – the man behind the bar.

Yet the preacher in the pulpit and the lecturer in the hall
Will assure you that the churches are against him, one and all
But when the church is planning to hold a fair or a bazaar,
They start by selling tickets to the man behind the bar.

But the time must come when he must shuffle off his mortal coil,
Hang up his coat and apron, no more on earth to toil;
When Saint Peter sees him coming he'll leave the gate ajar
For he knows he's had his Hell on Earth, the man behind the bar.

(Anon)

Rain on the Hut

Have you ever been caught in a camp at the back
Of the run, when the heavens were solemn and black? –
When the creeks are in flood and the way home is shut,
There is nothing as dismal as rain on the hut.

When the boss slates the fates with considerable force,
And the cook looks as sad as a sheep chewing gorse.
When your 'baccy' is damp and the beer is all 'cut',
There is nothing as dismal as rain on the hut.

When the wet hits the roof with an unbroken beat
And it seeps through the walls and lies under your feet –
Until even your mate sounds a bit like a 'nut'
There is nothing as dismal as rain on the hut.

When the rum was 'forgot' and the cards were left out –
When the bloke by the wall is a devil to 'spout',
(And he dredges up gossip well flavoured with smut)
There is nothing as dismal as rain on the hut.

When you think of the jobs on the flats you turned down,
When you think of the dolly birds waiting in town –
When the man who goes mustering must be a mutt,
There is nothing as dismal as rain on the hut.

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Rules for surviving in the modern world: Keep left, keep your head up and keep your eyes open. (Brian Quinn.)

If you are unhappy

Once upon a time, there was a non-conforming sparrow who decided not to fly south for the winter. However, soon the weather turned so cold that he reluctantly changed his mind and set off into the cold head wind.

In a short time ice began to form on his wings and he fell to earth, in a barnyard, almost frozen.

A cow passed by and crapped on the little sparrow. The sparrow though it was the end. But the manure warmed him and defrosted his wings. Now warm and happy, and able to breathe, he started to sing.

Just then a cat came by and, hearing the chirping, investigated the sounds. The cat cleared away the manure, found the chirping bird and promptly ate him.

The moral of the story

Everyone who shits on you is not necessarily your enemy.

Everyone who gets you out of the shit is not necessarily your friend.

And, if you're warm and happy in a pile of shit, keep your mouth shut.

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Jason Wynyard MNZM (1973-2023)

New Zealand and the world lost one of its all-time great 'rural sportsmen' with the death of timbersports giant, Jason Wynyard, on 4 October 2023, aged 49.

Jason several times displayed his incomparable skills before shearing audiences – including demonstrations at the New Zealand Shearing Championships with his New Zealand team mate, David Bolstad (RIP 1969-2011).

Bolstad and Wynyard also took part in a 'match race' against David Fagan and Dig Balme at Te Puke Shearing Sports in 2006, a contest that thrilled the large crowd present. A tag relay, a sheep each and a block each, with the shearers winning by the narrowest of margins in a total time of about 40 seconds!

Of Ngati Maniapoto and Ngapuhi iwi affliliations, Jason won the world individual championship nine times and the Stihl Timbersports Series in America 14 times. He first represented New Zealand in 1990, at the age of 16.

MP Hon. Willie Jackson noted in a tribute after Wynyard's death: "He dominated the sport across the world for decades, winning nine senior world championships and more than 230 [world] titles. While Jason is indeed famous for his sporting prowess, he is also loved across Aotearoa for his humble nature and willingness to accommodate the crowds. It was his strength of character that made him a true ambassador for the sport. Jason's achievements will inspire and motivate others to strive for excellence for years to come."

Joseph Romanos, writing of Jason in his book *'100 Maori Sports Heroes'* (Trio Books 2012), described him as "the most extreme example of a champion New Zealand sportsman being feted overseas while remaining virtually anonymous in his own country. In the woodchopping strongholds of the world, ranging from Sydney, to the American mid-west, to some European stops off the beaten track, Wynyard is a legend. He has been the best timbersports athlete in the world since 1997, one year after turning professional."

Romanos noted that, like golfer Sir Bob Charles, Wynyard was a natural right hander, but chopped left-handed, using his strong right hand to guide the axe.

Jason died just weeks after being first diagnosed with the aggressive cancer, *Burkitt Lymphoma*. *(Des Williams)*

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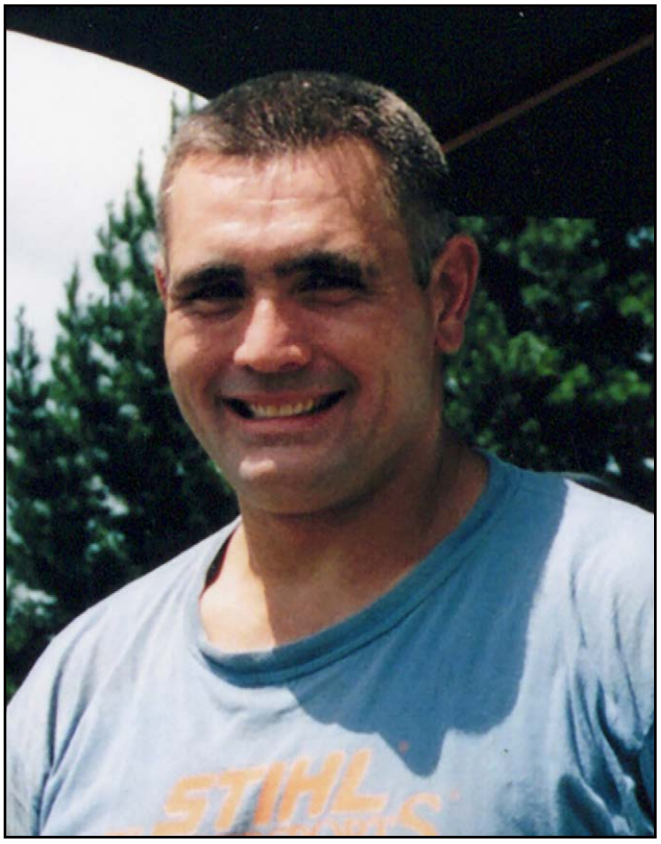





Top: *Jason Wynyard at Te Puke Shearing Sports 2006.* ***Middle:*** *shearers Dig Balme and David Fagan with woodchoppers David Bolstad and Jason Wynyard (right).* ***Above:*** *Wynyard's log, cut in the relay race against the shearers. No second cuts evident there!*

Marites Woods, 'Not too small ...'

By Barbara Newton

To have a female shearer in the final of a shearing event at the New Zealand Merino Shears is a rarity. So, when a young unknown Australian woman, Marites (Tess) Woods became just the ninth female to contest the senior shearing final it was worthy of attention.While the 20-year-old was unable to emulate the wins of Jills Angus -Burney (1985) and Te Atakura Crawford (2013), she did finished runner up. This was quite a courageous feat by the young woman in only her second year of shearing.

Background: Marites was born in Legazpi, in the Philippines. She became orphaned and at 18-months-old was adopted by an Australian farming couple, Lynn and Barry Woods, who brought her back to live at their farm (sheep, cows and crops) in Parkes, New South Wales. It was here where her interest in the wool harvesting industry began, with her father a woolclasser and, in particular, the diversity of skills required to work as a roustabout or woolhandler.

NZ Merino Shears Female Finalists
Senior Shearing
1984: Jenny Manttan
1985: Jills Angus Burney, Michelle (Anderson) Harrex
2002: Una Cameron
2013: Te Atakura Crawford
2016: Pagan Morrell, Shelly King
2017: Pagan Morrell
2021: Emily Te Kapa
2023: Marites Woods.

Open finalist
1989, 1991, 94, 98: Michelle Harrex

After finishing secondary school in 2021, where she studied agriculture, business and metal work, Tess subsequently chose shearing over woolhandling 'because I have a competitive nature and I like to push myself to do better.' She was determined to prove her father wrong when he suggested that 'You're too small to be a shearer.'

It didn't take long before the 18-year-old embarked on her shearing journey at a learners' course in Dubbo with trainers Wayne Hosie and Michael Newton. Shortly afterwards she meet up with trainer Elliot Learmouth, who has gone on to become the biggest influence on her career to date, improving skills and and providing big support at shows as well as being a great mate.

Mike Poirer and Grant Lester have also been very supportive with in shed training, as have close woolhandling friends Alice Hayes and Grace Dickson and contractor Drew Calton. Learmouth also introduced Woods to shearing sports just last year, and she's delighted that her day job 'has turned into my favourite sport' after giving up footy to focus on her job.

The petite young woman is deceptively strong, as witnessed by her calm and capable control of the bolshie merino wethers and rams she tackled with aplomb out at Earncleugh, prior to the Merino shearing championships. She puts this down to her fitness which has always been a priority for her. A keen sportsperson, she has been going to the gym from age 12, an activity she loves and which has aided her career in many healthy ways.

During her short career Marites comments that 'I've learnt a lot more life lessons in my career than actual shearing techniques. The shed life is a diverse world and from working throughout the local farms to different towns and in New Zealand my skills ranging from teamwork, leadership, courage, enthusiasm and adaptability have all been shaped and improved. These experiences have all helped teach me more about the person I am and who I want to be.'

To date her best tallies are: 300 crossbred lambs, 200 merino mixed sex lambs, and 170 merino ewes. She wishes to pursue the job for as long as possible. Her future aspirations include: being a trainer, representing Australia and maybe chasing a record at some time in the future.

'The excitement, passion travelling opportunities, competitions, wool innovation and everything that comes with shearing is what will keep me in the shed life for a while' and will no doubt delay for many years to come, her dream of one day retiring to the family farm.

The trip to New Zealand was the first time Woods had travelled alone without family. 'I was nervous but calm. The energetic atmosphere and kindness from everyone I met made me feel comfortable and welcome. The REDI.E team led by Samson Te Whata gave us opportunities to work in Dion Morrell and Peter Lyon gangs. This experience helped a lot with my performance.'

Marites is amongst the rising number of young woman taking up shearing as a career world-wide and if her accomplishments to date are any indication, she has a bright and exciting future ahead.

We will be seeing more of this young gutsy woman when she returns to New Zealand in January, 2024, as an AWI ambassador to train with New Zealand trainers, and to attend the Golden Shears. She is also hopeful of returning to Alexandra and the New Zealand Merino Shears again, later in the year.



Above: *Tess Woods, Phillipines-born Australian senior finalist at the 2023 New Zealand Merino Shears.*

Contractor liquidation

Most people in the shearing industry would use a four-letter c-word for an employer not paying a worker for work already toiled. Not just if that worker was a handy shearer, but particularly because the price of skilled shearing workers is the backbone of the industry.

Not that there aren't employers who haven't previously let contractors themselves down by fiddling tax or workers out of holiday pay and wages. And even though some very adept contractors have fallen into the IRD hole in the past, usually the threat of one prosecution is enough.

Not so for Roger Kidd of X Factor Shearing Ltd (Riversdale) who has now twice been found guilty of not paying his worker's deductions and business tax to the IRD. Liquidators identified potential claims against the Company's directors/shareholders, including a breach of director duties, an insolvent transaction, and an overdrawn shareholders' current account.

For the South Canterbury shearer (whom *Shearing* has chosen not to name) who spent three years pursuing X Factor, his driving force was the loss of almost $10,000 gross in unpaid wages from a summer stint in central Southland just before the first Covid lockdown.

After raising the matter with a Community Law Centre, he applied to the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment for mediation to resolve the wage arrears, based on photos of daily tally sheets and copies of several weeks wages that had been properly paid. The situation was delayed for months when initially the contractor wouldn't respond to communications from those agencies.

With that stalemate, the claim was filed in May 2021 in the Christchurch Employment Relations Authority (ERA) just as a wage arrears petition. Again, the employer barely engaged with the process, and matters stalled for several months. Shortly after the ERA set the matter for a hearing, in June 2021, the shearer's claim was caught up as a preferential creditor when the IRD applied to the High Court for the liquidation of the assets of the company to repay other preferential creditors and a significant IRD debt.

The evidence lodged with the claim satisfied the liquidators that the shearer was genuinely out of pocket, and his name was added to the list of creditors for the potential distribution of any company assets. *(Jills Angus Burney*



Above: *New Zealand blade shearers Phil Oldfield and Allen Gemmell, with Michelle and Barry Harrex in South Africa 1998, the year Michelle won the South African open championship.*



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NEW ZEALAND SHEARING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

Remembering Keith Collier

By Des Williams

For the first 30 years of Gore's Southern Shears, only seven different names featured on the open championship Honours Board. Snow Quinn (9), Roger Cox and David Fagan (6 each) and Edsel Forde (5), followed by Alan MacDonald (2) and Larry Lewis and Keith Collier once each. Six of those names remain fairly clear identities in the general shearing 'conscience', but probably not Keith Collier, who tragically lost his life at sea 25 years ago, in August 1998. The following story, written by Lynne Rosandich, is reprinted with minor adaptations from the Northern Shears souvenir programme, 3 April 1999.

* * * * * *

The fastest 12-year-old schoolboy runner in Auckland. Award-winning roller skater. Avid schoolboy rugby player. Champion ballroom dancer. Competent knitter. A never-to-be-defeated all round handyman. Farmer, shearer, free diver, real estate agent, commercial fisherman. These are just a few of the activities that filled Keiths life. 'Impossible' and 'can't' are words that never featured in Keith vocabulary. A challenge would always put a twinkle in his eye and a smile on his face.

Keith was born the third child of eight to June and Trevor Collier, in Gisborne where he spent the first nine years of his life before the family moved to Auckland. After obtaining UE at 16 he left home to go sheep and beef farming in Northland. When the shearers came Keith decided this would be a far better way to earn money, so he jumped aboard the shearers' truck and headed back to his birthplace to work for Robbie Cooper.

He was offered employment in the gang as a presser, however that was not what Keith travelled south for. His charm and self-belief won him a stand. He never had a clue - as arms and wool flew in all directions; but anyone could see he had a ton of guts.

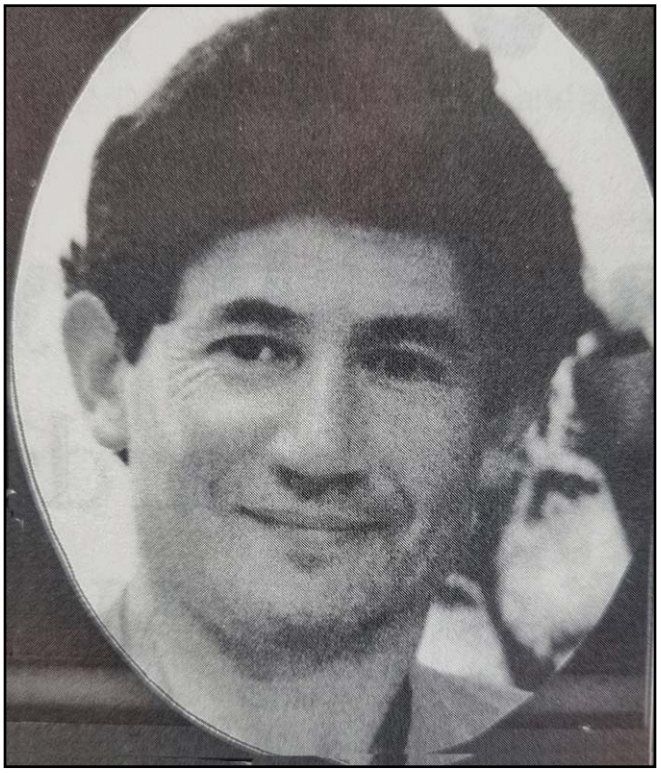
Following the work, he travelled to the South Island to shear for Joe Lloyd. Astounded by the pace and energy of the man, Joe asked Keith what he was doing, to which he replied he didn't know, as no one had taught him to shear.

Enlightened by a few of the finer techniques, Keith was soon shearing as many a day as his mentor. Never afraid of hard work and sheer enthusiasm to succeed saw him running gangs for Robbie Cooper by the age of 20. He was a 'fast man' before he had left his boyhood teenage years behind him.

Eventually, Australia beckoned and it was in the West he shore his first merino. He apologised profusely to the contractor for only managing to shear 240 on his first day, but assured the boss he would soon work them out. He was to spend several years in WA contracting from Jerramungup. He did however travel back to New Zealand each season. While based in Australia, his daughter Erin was born.

Keith returned to New Zealand permanently in the early 1980s, touring the North and South with his hand piece. In Northland he worked for Brian Waterson, eventually running gangs. It was not uncommon over different periods for Keith to average 500 a day on ewes and 600 a day on lambs. A mighty shed shearer respected by his peers, Keith also had some success on the competition circuit, among these the Southern Shears open championship at Gore in 1980 and the inaugural winner of the Kauri Circle in the north.

At age 28 Keith bought a farm in Pakiri, near Wellsford, 280 acres of a vision he held in his mind's eye. There was the challenge of fencing, including the boundaries, and the need to bring the land back into good viable pasture. During this period he met his future wife, Angela Rosandich. They formed a hard-working partnership, toiling alongside each other for many long days.



Keith Collier 1953-1998

However there was still always time for family, friends and recreation, mainly hunting, fishing and diving. Many of us who were lucky enough to have Keith in their lives suffered severe fatigue just watching the man live; while others found energy alongside him they never knew they possessed.

After selling the farm Keith and Angela moved to Tauranga, where they married and started a family and a new chapter in their lives. The strong influence of the sea was now to play a major role in their lives. Having sea time experience and his skipper's ticket, Keith moved into commercial fishing. Firstly snapper long-lining and latterly tuna fishing. He was well known and respected by his peers in the fishing industry.

His nickname amongst those who worked alongside him was 'Father'. This he earned by just being himself, a hard-working, caring man who was never too busy to teach or help his colleagues.

Sadly, tragedy was to strike on 18 August 1998 when Keith and his two-crew fishing aboard the Endeavour III were lost at sea in the Bay of Islands. Upon hearing the news, shearing legend Snow Quinn, who had shorn with Keith, said, 'If only I had half his energy." Mr Quinn described Keith as "a very hard worker, a very good shearer and a toiler who was really good for our industry."

* * * * * *

(To page 50.)

Keith Collier's brother Richard [six years younger] expands a little on some of the points in the Lynne Rosandich story: "Keith was the third oldest of the eight Collier children – four boys and four girls. We lived in Gisborne where Dad was a builder and Keith started his schooling in Gisborne.

"Then in 1962 or thereabouts we moved to New Lynn (Auckland) where Dad continued his building trade. Keith soon developed into a very fast runner and he eventually joined the Lynndale Athletic Club and began winning races. He also carried that speed onto the rugby paddock and he was always getting penalised by referees for being off-side. He played fullback and got to positions on the field so quickly the refs thought he must have been 'jumping the gun' when actually he wasn't'

Richard says he wanted to join Keith in the shearing sheds and eventually did so, though his brother discouraged him for a year or two to let his body mature.

"When Keith went to Australia he began contracting out of Jerramungup with another New Zealander, Ross Bryant and they did that for several years. Keith also shore with Bob White soon after going to Australia and Bob taught him how to prepare his combs for shearing merinos."

Richard says a quote from Northland shearing contractor Paul Paikea remains fresh in his mind: "When Paul first saw Keith shearing he noticed how fast his arms were moving. 'I thought to myself, he will be tired by the end of the day. When I looked at him again at the end of the day his arms were going even faster!'"

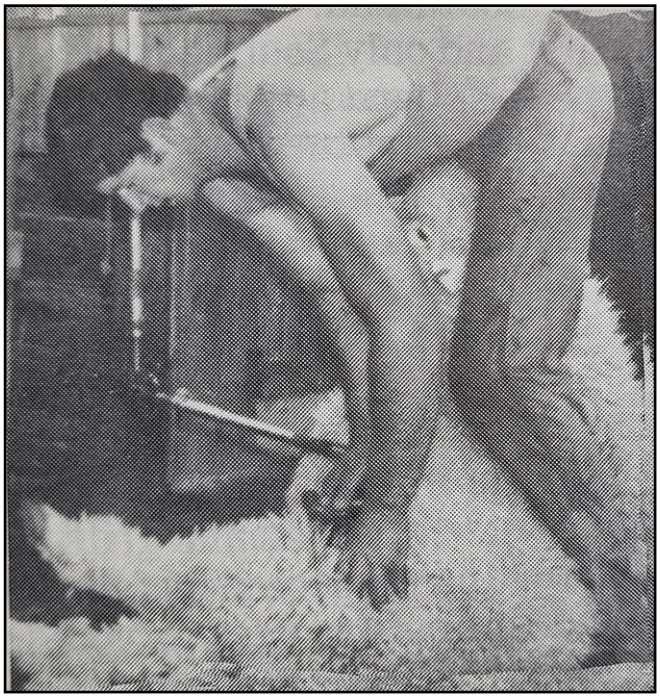
* * * * * *

The boating tragedy

Further information about the loss of the Endeavour III, Keith Collier and two crew members was contained in a *New Zealand Herald* story published on 7 July 2000. Written by Tim Watkin, the story carried the headline ***"Even the toughest fishermen don't always make it".***

Watkin described how the *Endeavour III*, 14.06 metres long and just over four metres broad, set off from Tauranga harbour on the morning of 13 August with three crewmen and 4.5 tonnes of ice on board.

"Skipper Keith Collier, aged 45, well-liked and respected, Reg Shaw, 58, and Lachlan McKenzie, 22, were headed to fishing grounds north of Great Barrier Island and looking for tuna. The wooden hulled, 30-year-old *Endeavour III* was in good condition and was well equipped with safety equipment, should disaster strike. It had been issued a Safe Ship management certificate just seven months earlier and was fitted out with a four-person inflatable life raft, two life buoys, four life jackets, four parachute rocket distress signals, two buoyant smoke signals, two Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacons and VHF and SSB radios.



Above: *Keith Collier at Southern Shears 1980.*

By Sunday 16 August the men had reached Port Fitzroy on Great Barrier where they took on-board 500 litres of diesel. By Tuesday 18 August they had 2.5 tonnes of fish in their hold and they radioed Tauranga coastguard to advise they were about to haul in their gear and head for home. The wind was 30 knots from the west and wave height about one metre.

Despite that message, and despite the fact that a gale warning had been in force for the sea area since the day before, Tim Watkin wrote how the trio evidently kept fishing until about 3pm before deciding to seek shelter at Opua, in the Bay of Islands.

Each of the men radioed to their families at about 7pm that evening, with no indications of worry or warnings. Collier's last contact was by mobile phone to an old fishing friend at 8.40pm, who reported Keith describing the conditions as 'pretty gnarly' but not sounding unduly worried. By that time waves were reaching six metres.

Late on Thursday 20 August the Tauranga Police were notified and a search began that would eventually cover 60,000 square kilometres, involving seven planes, two helicopters and 35 fishing boats. An oil slick was found near Moturoa Island in the central Bay of Islands and an oar, plus floats, bouys and other items of wreckage were recovered but the *Endeavour III* and crew were never found.

The Maritime Safety Authority accident report concluded it was "likely that *Endeavour III* capsized and sank in rough seas while heading for shelter in the Bay of Islands."

* * * * * *

Precise details of Keith Collier's shearing exploits are now somewhat vague, pre-dating as they do the 30 years of record-keeping undertaken by Shearing Sports NZ's publicity officers (this writer and Doug Laing!)

But without doubt Keith's major competition success was his victory in the open final at Gore's Southern Shears in 1980. From its inception in 1966, Brian 'Snow' Quinn won eight on the trot (1966-1973) before Roger Cox started his six-year reign from 1974 to 1979.

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So Collier became the third winner in 15 years. Talking about the event ten years later with Margaret Way (interview for the Southern Shears souvenir programme 1990), Keith reckoned the noise of the crowed had made his hair stand on end.

"He went into the event an underdog and won by beating hot favourite Samson Te Whata into second place, much to the delight of the very vocal crowd. It's ten years since that memorable final, but it's still vivid in Keith's mind.

'The crowd really got behind us in the final,' he says. 'When Samson Te Whata caught me in the final minutes the crowd were cheering so much it made my hair stand on end!'

Keith was living in North Auckland at the time of winning and he's spent part of the summer season shearing in the Lawrence area, Otago. He went on to make the Golden Shears semi-finals a couple of weeks after the Gore Show, proof of his philosophy "the more you put in the more likely you are to do well and, inevitably, get more out of it."

While he's not involved in show shearing much anymore, Keith, like many others, would like to see the competitions recognised as a sport. He recalls the Southern Shears as "always a well-run show and a pleasure to shear in."

Now aged 36, Keith had been shearing for 18 years when he finished his shearing career late in 1989 with a four-month stint in Western Australia.

"I've shorn in excess of 850,000 sheep – 250,000 of those merinos – and have no ambition to shear a million!" he says.

Keith is now living in Tauranga, engaged to Angela Rosandich and, like his father-in-law to be, former Golden Shears champion Ivan, he's commercial fishing for a living.

Keith had returned to Southern Shears in 1985 when the Show committee sought to celebrate its 20th anniversary by getting all five previous winners together for an invitation shear. The idea was overwhelmingly successful, with Collier the only one who did not also qualify for the Open final. And former Whangarei-based shearing administrator and commentator Phil O'Shaughnessy well remembers Keith's winning of the 'Kauri Circle' final in 1982.

"The first Whangarei shearing competition was held in 1981 and won by Ivan Rosandich. Then for the 1982 season a group of us here in the north, including Robert Hudson, got together and established the Kauri Circle as a way to promote the sport north of Auckland. I think that first year the contributing shows were at Kumeu, Warkworth, Paparoa, Dargaville and Kaikohe, with the final at Whangarei.

The 1982 final was held in conjunction with a "Wool Week" promotion run by the City Council and Godfrey Bowen brought some of his performing rams up from the Agrodome at Rotorua to be part of it.

"I recall Keith Collier won several of the individual shows including Kumeu and Warkworth, as well as the open final at Whangarei. The Circle final was a separate event, involving the six top qualifiers and Keith won that as well. He was an incredible shearer, so well regarded, so determined and so hard to beat."

* * * * * *

While Keith also shore at Golden Shears several times, his most successful venture to Masterton was also in 1980. Shearing in qualifying heat 10 alongside defending champion Martin Ngataki, Keith made it into the quarter-finals (top 24) with Greg Herrick, Ngataki, Sam Te Whata, Jack Dowd, John Fagan, Don Morrison, Ivan Rosandich, Roger Cox, Kevin Walsh, John Hand, Ray Alabaster, Adrian Cox, Larry Lewis, George Irwin, John Hough, Peter McCabe, John Te Ruki, Ken Pike, Peter Lyon, Mark Boot, Rik Pivac, Dave Wolland and Kerry Johnstone.



Above: *The five previous open champions at Southern Shears for the 20th anniversary in 1985 – Roger Cox, Larry Lewis, Brian Quinn, Keith Collier and David Fagan.*

Keith didn't want for speed, shearing his eight sheep in 9.40 (heat three), with only John Fagan (9.37 in heat one) and Larry Lewis (9.38 in heat four posting faster times.

In the first of two semis Keith shore his ten sheep in 11.05, 12 seconds ahead of Te Whata, while only John Fagan went better in the second, taking 10.54 sec. Unfortunately Keith's quality wasn't quite equal to the task and he missed the final, made up of four 'quality men' in Ngataki, Rosandich, Roger Cox and Adrian Cox, and two speedsters in Fagan and Te Whata. (Roger Cox won for the third time.)

Keith is survived by his daughter Erin and son Shannon from a first marriage in Australia, and by his second wife Angela (Rosandich) and sons Stephen and Brent (now in their thirties).

503	Kani, J. (Dannevirke)	J. 99	509	Smart, D. J. (Kakaia)	
504	Sands, L. G. (Taumarunui)	J.100	510	Murray, J. H. (Rotorua)	
505	Reid, W. (Feilding)	J.101	511	Lowen, A. J. (Te Awam	
506	Makgill, S. R. (Matata)	J.102	512	Ryan, D. (Australia)	
Comp. No.	**HEAT 4**	**Seat No.**	**Comp. No.**	**HEAT 5**	
519	Rolston, R. J. (Pahiatua)	J.75	525	Wilson, T. J. (Scotland	
520	Sanson, R. (Whangarei)	J.76	526	Jones, K. (Nuhaka)	
521	Johnstone, B. (Taupo)	J.77	527	Rountree, J. R. (Otoroh	
522	Oliver, K. R. (Pio Pio)	J.78	528	Te Whata, S. (Kaikohe)	
523	Christian, M A (Mangawhai)	J.79	529	Cooper, R. R. (Opotiki)	
524	Neal, D. (Blenheim)	J.80	530	Arkle, L. (Australia)	
Comp. No.	**HEAT 7**	**Seat No.**	**Comp. No.**	**HEAT 8**	
537	Howes, H. R. (Gore)	D.1	543	Corker, D. (Northland)	
538	Schofield, E. C. Masterton)	D.2	544	Kingston, J. (Carterton)	
539	Bull, R. (U.K.)	J.19	545	Ruki, J. K. (Pio Pio)	
540	Hicks, T. D. (Ngatea)	D.4	546	Fagan, G. C. (Te Kuiti)	
541	McCarroll, H. M. (Tauranga)	D.5	547	Gunson, J. C. (Whanga	
542	Weston, R. B. (Stratford)	D.6	548	Duggan, D. (Australia)	
Comp. No.	**HEAT 10**	**Seat No.**	**Comp. No.**	**HEAT 11**	
555	Jones, D. (Stratford)	D.19	561	Hettig, R. C. (Taupo)	
556	Stretch, F. (Masterton)	D.20	562	Johnston, M. J. (Pio Pi	
557	Telfar, B. M. (Mokoia)	D.21	563	Hough, J. (Riversdale)	
558	Burling, R. (Hawera)	D.22	564	Tai, R. (Masterton)	
559	Collier, K. D. (Henderson)	D.23	565	Williamson, A. L. (Taura	
560	Ngataki, M. (Mercer)	D.24	566	Smith, T. (Australia)	
Comp. No.	**HEAT 13**	**Seat No.**	**Comp. No.**	**HEAT 14**	
573	Gregory, D. J. (Taihape)	D.37	579	Sutherland, A. (N. Plym	
574	Hand, J. A. (Milton)	D.38	580	Cox, R. H. (Hawera)	
575	Williamson, R. A. (Tauranga	D.39	581	Aitchison, G. (Morrinsvil	
576	Phelps, A. (Hamilton)	D.40	582	White, P. (Masterton)	
577	Bolstad, R. K. (Hawera)	D.41	583	Johansen, D. (Taumarur	
578	Oliver, G. H. (Te Kuiti)	D.42	584	Jowsey, T. H. (Te Mata	
Comp. No.	**HEAT 16**	**Seat No.**	**Comp. No.**	**HEAT 17**	
591	Mainland, M. J. (Invcgl.)	D.55	597	Burling, I. S. (Hawera)	
592	Wakefield, J. T. (Prnghau.)	D.56	598	Harris, J. (Australia)	
593	Pike, K. J. (Hamilton)	D.57	599	Lewis, L. H. (Gisborne)	
594	Hutt, J. (Reporoa)	D.58	600	Love, M. (Gisborne)	

Keith Collier's peers at Golden Shears 1980.

Peeling through life

Shearing a sheep is not that different from peeling through life, or what shearing as a life philosophy could look like. (A light-hearted metaphor.)

Dragging out the sheep: The beginning, getting started in life, born into a situation and time. Maybe you sit comfortably, maybe not so much.

On the belly: Being careful around the edges and bits in the middle: Early childhood; being prepared for life. Maybe it is done thoroughly and exact, maybe a little *laisse-faire* and without much thought to the future or even, if unlucky, without care.

We are onto the crutch: The shitty and difficult years of a teenager, where things can go wrong. There may be cuts and it might be hard, sticky and slow going. Not much progress is visible, lots of frustration and poking around, a bit aimless and on the edge all the time.
Still, maybe you breeze through it, all is nice and tidy, easy to negotiate, and time passes quickly.

We come to the undermine, top notch and neck: Some skill needed here, some risk involved, some trust necessary. Lots of changes, new directions, different areas of life to negotiate. Your early adult years. Trying to find a direction, find your footing. You need to move a lot, change, adjust, do it differently. Bit risky around certain areas.

You have to take care, or you get hurt. Being independent may make you feel vulnerable and having to take responsibility may feel a little shaky. Maybe you are looking around on how the others are getting on, what their tricks of the trade are. You may even remember that asking for help is an option.

Dropping into the shoulder and around to the long blow: Things are starting to come together; your stride is getting longer and more confident. Things appear to be easier, but only if the belly and crutch was taken off properly. Otherwise, if that early time in your life was ill prepared, you may struggle to find the rhythm and you may fall behind the others. You may get stuck cleaning up old mess and experience frustration.

You are an adult, with family, pursue your career, and attempt to be financially stable. Taking care of your health generally starts around now. You think of the future and become motivated to move along strong. As long as you got rid of all the ugly bits earlier, you are in a productive stride. Your blows are full and long and smooth.

Over the last shoulder and into the last side: The twilight years. Maybe you start thinking of retirement, you are settled in your career and family. Things are falling into place, and it all starts to make sense. You can relax, it gets easier. Unless of course, you didn't shear the other sections properly, then you are still poking, struggling and stalling, cursing and cleaning up the mess.

Last blow, down the porthole, and out we go: We reflect: How many cuts, how many ridges on your sheep of life? Cleanly shorn and a pride to look back on? Mistakes tidied up. A nice fleece as a result and legacy left behind?

Wherever you are in your shearing of the sheep, (if you are reading this, probably somewhere between the undermine and the last side), may you have a smooth time ahead, manage to handle all the ridges from the past with ease and negotiate successfully around them into -eventually, and we hope a long time from now– a perfect last blow and a beautiful fleece left on the board.

(Gabriela Schmidt-Morrell)



Back left: *Leon Samuels, Kortez Mahia, Tim Wilson. Front left: Danielle Mahia, Stacey Young, Thomas Winiata, Jack Watt. (Morrell Shearing gang at Chittocks Farm, Kelso. (Claire Toia-Bailey image.)*

Who was that unsung hero?

By Tony Mathews

Thomas Edison got the credit for the light bulb, Alexander Graham Bell for the telephone, Guglielmo Marconi for the radio, Lord Rutherford for splitting the atom and Henry Ford for the assembly line. (Or was it Oldsmobile?)

When it comes to shearing we know Wolseley perfected the first successful shearing machine and Ed Bartlett improved the back joint on the hand piece used by all today. All received the recognition they so richly deserved. But we still don't know the name of the mechanical person who, in a stroke of genius, made the greatest contribution to lifting productivity since Wolseley's invention of the machine itself. That faceless and so far nameless person – was it he or she – who placed the heated up branch of a horseshoe over the three outside teeth either side of a concave comb and winged them out.

Harry Hughes was the first shearer I came across who did this but I imagine he picked up the idea from somewhere. Within six months the technique spread throughout the land.

As mentioned, the first straight concave comb did not meet with much success as the outside teeth had to be pushed quite a way into the wool before encountering the cutter. This winging out completely eliminated the entry problem and in no time virtually every shearer purchased a small butane blow torch which was used to heat the teeth, then by use of a flat-sided screwdriver, tweaked the teeth out to the desired wing.

A lot of brand new combs got broken in the process and the dreaded 'ping' meant an all-too-costly loss, but for all the losses shearers bore them willingly, for the gain far outweighed the loss.

Almost overnight the convex comb was dead, except for dagging, and it didn't last much longer for that. There was no stopping this revolution although many tried, most notably the Australian Shearers' Union. There was opposition from some New Zealand farmers as well: 'Teat catchers,' they wailed. 'Young fellows should not be allowed to use them,' cried others.

Farmers thinking along such lines were 180 degrees out. Learners who started on the pulled out concave combs had slower hands, thus placing their blows better and they climbed the tally ladder far more quickly. Instead of a young fellow thinking he'd done himself proud by doing 100 on his first full day I heard of some doing over 200 and most not too far shy of that.

Other farmers decried the wide combs, claiming there would be more second cuts. Again, how wrong could they be. I used to debunk this one easily by placing a convex comb on my forearm and pointing out if I kept the bottom tooth on the skin 2/3 of the comb would be off it. Then I'd do the same with the wide concave comb and the situation was reversed. Now even on my skinny forearm two-thirds of the comb were on the skin and the outer third was pretty damn close. I acknowledge there would be a rigid left, but that would be collected next time the sheep was shorn and a ridge never hurt the sheep, it only offended the eye.

The other major benefit was a massive reduction in serious cuts. By now the race was on to get comb manufacturers to make such combs. They were at first reluctant, under pressure from farmers and unions, but gradually they started pulling the teeth a bit, which most shearers pulled a bit more, until finally we are where we are today.

So, I suggest we search out this pioneer of further progress and bestow on them an OBE, for their contribution to wool harvesting was at least as great as that of Godfrey Bowen, who received that award.

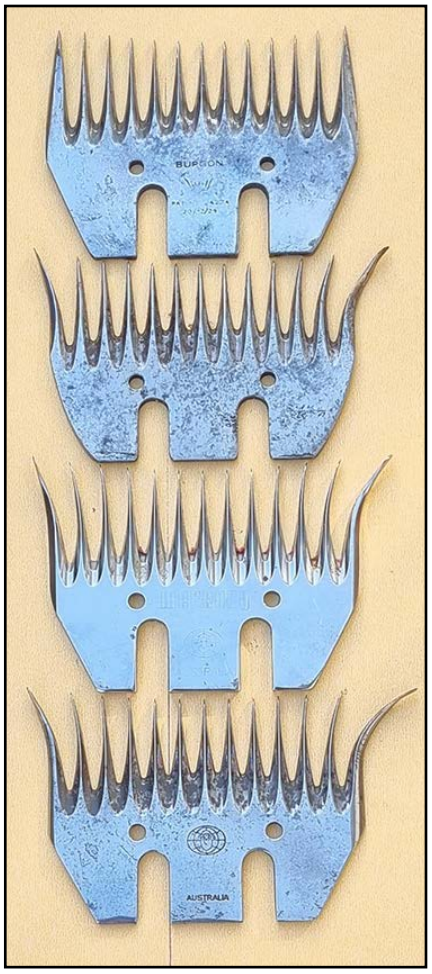
Both persons' efforts led to an extra-ordinary increase in productivity. So, let the hunt begin! *(Tony Mathews)*

* * * * * *

Posthumous OBE for Bing?

Ed note: If history is to put anyone's name beside the innovation, it may well go beside that of Bing Macdonald, followed closely by Joe Ferguson. This writer discussed the issue with Bing in *Last Side to Glory* (1991). Bing could not be sure that he was the first, but he was certainly first to prove it could be done without detriment to the wool, the sheep or the shearer. And it got him offside with the Wool Board, and Godfrey Bowen in particular.

"I was one of the first to bend the outside teeth on the old Burgon concave combs and it seemed to prove that the job could be done a bit faster because of that, without any loss of quality.



Top: *A Burgon 'straight' concave comb from Bing Macdonald's collection (78mm). Second: shearer-bent Burgon (94mm) (Pat O'Connell collection); Third: Sunbeam standard concave (94mm). Above: Sunbeam concave from Eddie Reidy's comb collection (pulled to 100mm).*

"The Wool Board seemed to think that the bent combs would cause more second cuts and wanted them outlawed from competitions. A number of shearers actually signed a petition to keep them 'legal'. Our point was that, since we were being judged on our quality, it wouldn't really matter if we used a lawn mower to get the wool off, if you were quicker, neater and faster than the other bloke. Like all new ideas it took some time to gain acceptance and of course, now they can buy them straight out of the packet already bent."

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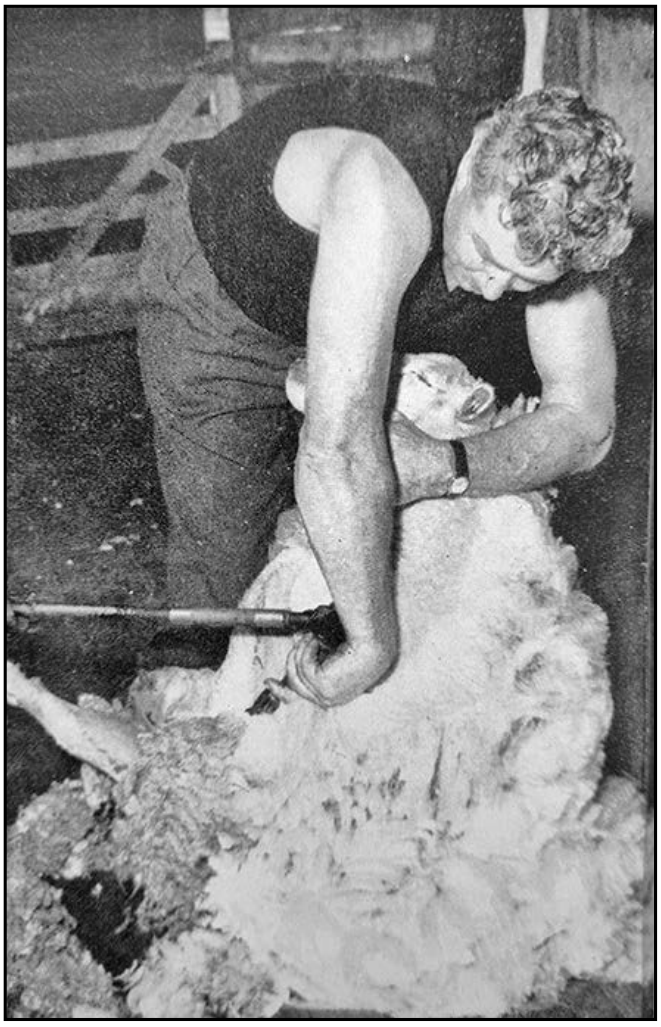

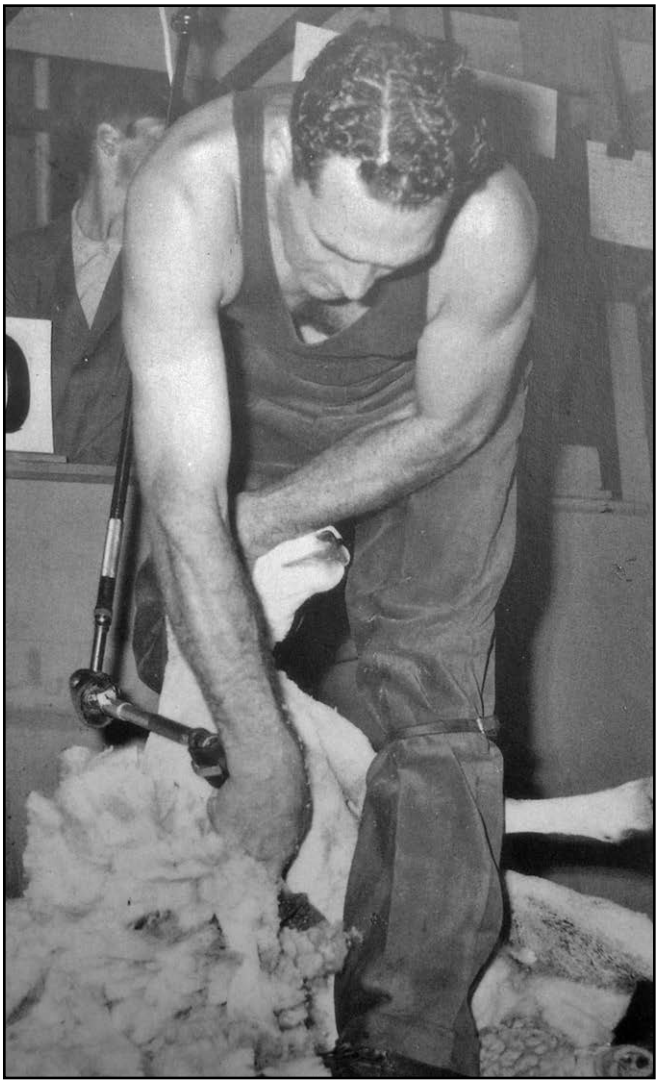

Above: *Ivan Bowen (left) and Bing Macdonald, c1959*

Where were you when ...

Everyone has their own "I was there when ..." stories to tell, placing them in context with some memorable event in history. For example, I was there that Friday night in 1959 when ex-US Navy wrestling champion Jack Benz fought Mexican 'Cyclone Cortez' in the Taihape Town Hall and local lad Henry Chase, unaccompanied, sang Elvis Presley's latest hit song, *"One Night With You"*.

I was also there at the first Golden Shears and many other perhaps less memorable events, but my most enduring "I was there" moment was at the 1959 Royal Show in Palmerston North when Ivan Bowen and Bing Macdonald battled it out in the final.

It was the first time I had seen such giants in action and was able compare their differing styles producing pretty much the same result. Sheep after sheep, the audience saw Bing draw well ahead of Ivan, only to have his lead destroyed in a moment by Ivan's lightning last side, proving beyond doubt "There are no shortcuts when it comes to taking it all off," as Johnny Hape said.

And of Henry Chase I've heard no more, but sincerely hope he went on to live a long and fruitful life.

But no, I wasn't at Woodstock. *(Tony Mathews)*

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Book Review: *'On the Verge'*

By Des Williams

Roger Leslie is not the first person to walk the length of New Zealand (Bluff to Reinga, in his case) and nor will he be the last. But it is distinctly possible that he and the most famous 'walker', Alfred Hamish Reed in 1960, are the only two to write substantial books about their journeys.

Mr Reed, renowned as publisher of many New Zealand books (AH & AW Reed) completed his walk in 1960 at 85 years-of-age and subsequently produced a 271-page book entitled *From North Cape to Bluff*. One on-line description of his expedition says: 'A younger man might have been tempted to break records, an older man … but then it is unlikely there will ever be an older man than Mr AH Reed walking the whole length of New Zealand; therefore the walk he has just completed must be considered as unique.

'There will never be another white-haired, white-moustached, ruddy-cheeked, spare-framed, waistcoated, floppy-hatted, ordinary yet extraordinary bundle of irrepressible energy loping along New Zealand's highways and byways.'

Some of those descriptors could be made to fit Mosgiel-based Roger Leslie. His hair is mostly white, short-trimmed beard and moustache (mostly white), floppy-hatted most of the time, probably 20 years younger than 'Alfred' and solid, rather than spare-framed, but most certainly an 'extraordinary bundle of irrepressible energy'.

Roger's walk was by way of fulfilling a childhood dream, ignited by a primary-school study of Mr Reed's walk and cemented by confirmation from his father that anyone could walk the length of New Zealand if they had sufficient determination and a good pair of boots!

A dream that stayed in Roger's mind for sixty years until finally, the time was right. Roger brought significant extra incentive to succeed in his mission by making it a money-raising venture, all proceeds to the Otago-Southland mental health agency, Able Minds.

My superficial research failed to find how long it took Mr Reed, though somehow it seems he walked 1700 miles, making many detours along the way as distinct from Roger's 1300-mile (2100 km) 'blue line' most direct route. Roger's research suggested the fastest known 'trip' had taken 49 days and he set himself the target of averaging 60km per day for 40 days. Mission accomplished in 37 days and 95 minutes!

'On the Verge' (walking on the verge of State Highway One) is a most entertaining account of an expedition that started beside the famous 'signpost' at Stirling Point, Bluff on 17 October 2021 and ended at Cape Reinga lighthouse. The man had done his 'homework' on the towns and places *en route* and he splices in little stories (and verses!) as appropriate – the huntaway dog at Hunterville, for example.

The resourcefulness of the shearer was called upon many times during the walk, not least because of the fact that the country was in 'Covid lockdown' when Roger reached Auckland and there's no way he was going to be permitted to walk through the city on his way north. Instead, a common-sense compromise – much korero with border guards south of Auckland resulted in permission to drive (without stopping!) from Bombay to the Northland border – 145km – where the walking resumed and where 'detours' were worked in to make up the extra 'miles'.



Above: *Roger Leslie, somewhere between Bluff and Cape Reinga, about to indulge in some carbo-loading and protein.*

At other places, road working gangs tried to prevent him walking through their 'construction zones'. Without any notable success.

Throughout the journey Roger was accompanied (followed!) by his wife Joy, in a campervan which for the most part provided their overnight accommodation and cooking facilities.

The six-year-old dreamer's father, all those years ago had mentioned that anyone walking the length of New Zealand would need a lot of determination and a good pair of boots. He got that right. The 'Hoka' brand (shoes, actually) that Roger bought in Dunedin on the recommendation of the shoe shop salesman were (like Roger) slightly the worse for wear but still going strong when they reached Reinga lighthouse.

You can obtain a copy of *'On the Verge'* by contacting Roger Leslie on ***leslieroger65@gmail.com.*** (Due from the printers mid-December. RRP $40.00)

* * * * * *

Roger Leslie is a regular contributor to ***Shearing*** *magazine. He has combined shearing with other employment for most of his life and has a strong background in distance walking and endurance events. The walk was also a fund-raiser for the Otago-Southland mental health agency, Able Minds.*

* * * * * *





Top and Above: *Positive signs that your health and well-being is all that it should be. One, the sheep are all shorn and two, the hay is safely in the barn. (At least it will be tomorrow, all going well!) This evidence submitted by a 'West Australian' who knows about these things ...*



Above: Jamestown (South Australia) Open woolhandling: Tia Potae, first; Kirsty Bone, second; Marlene Whittle, third.

Things looking a bit Grey? Where to get help

Mental Health line 1737 (open 24/7)

Lifeline (open 24/7) – 0800 543 354 (0800 LIFELINE)

Depression Helpline (open 24/7) – 0800 111 757

Healthline (open 24/7) – 0800 611 116

Samaritans (open 24/7) – 0800 726 666

Suicide Crisis Helpline (open 24/7) – 0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO). This is a service for people who may be thinking about suicide, or those who are concerned about family or friends.

Youthline (open 24/7) – 0800 376 633. You can also text 234 for free between 8am and midnight, or email talk@youthline.co.nz

0800 WHATSUP children's helpline – phone 0800 9428 787 between 1pm and 10pm on weekdays and from 3pm to 10pm on weekends. Online chat is available from 7pm to 10pm every day at www.whatsup.co.nz.

Kidsline (open 24/7) – 0800 543 754. This service is for children aged 5 to 18. Those who ring between 4pm and 9pm on weekdays will speak to a Kidsline buddy. These are specially trained teenage telephone counsellors.

Your local Rural Support Trust – 0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP)

Alcohol Drug Helpline (open 24/7) – 0800 787 797. You can also text 8691 for free.

For further information, contact the Mental Health Foundation's free Resource and Information Service (09 623 4812).

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Nothing Teaches like Teaching: Jan's journey as sheep shearing mentor

The Kiwi tradition of sheep shearing is being promoted in Germany and Europe by a passionate and skilled practitioner – Jan-René Hartmann.

The former salesman is a real jack of all trades. While being a successful working dog breeder and trainer, he is also an arborist, a teacher for craft and design and physical education (sports) and economy. But his true passion lies in empowering others to master the art of sheep shearing.

His transformative journey began in 2009 when he first came to New Zealand to learn the craft first-hand. Arriving in there as a determined newcomer, Jan immersed himself in the farming community, seeking out experienced shearers and instructers to learn from. His dedication to animal welfare and sustainable farming practices continues to shape his approach, ensuring the well-being of the animals during the process. He earned the prize of best quality in five different nations, giving him the name "Mr. Quality".

Meanwhile, the most beautiful experience is shearing with his four-year-old son Janosch, who already knows all the moves and tricks of sheep shearing and proudly supports his Dad at work. So despite his travels, Jan's heart lies in Germany, where he makes a significant impact on the local farming community.

Holding several sheep shearing courses each year, he aims to equip small-scale sheep farmers with the skills necessary to shear their flocks effectively. Through these workshops and demonstrations, Jan empowers aspiring shearers with the knowledge and expertise needed to maintain their flocks' welfare and boost their farm's productivity.

Jan's mission can be summed up as "Helping People Help Themselves." By fostering a sense of responsibility and compassion towards the animals, Jan ensures that his students not only become proficient shearers but also advocates for ethical treatment within the industry.

As he travels back and forth between New Zealand and Germany, Jan's journey embodies the spirit of teaching and learning. His commitment to empowering others underscores the adage, "Nothing Teaches Like Teaching," as he continues to sow the seeds of knowledge and compassion throughout the farming communities he touches.

Feel free to connect with Jan-Rene at : *www.hueteteam.de*; Instagram: @das_hueteteam; Facebook: Das Hueteteam







Top: *Jan-Rene Hartmann at Invercargill 2017 with Robert McLaren.* ***Middle and above:*** *Jan-Rene with groups of 'student shearers' in Germany.*

"Shearing in an open shed gives you a good insight into human nature. Two of us went to a shed for a 7.30am start to be met by the boss ,who told us there were 600 in the shed and he wanted them finished that day. The sheep were good shearing and by lunchtime the boss said that we could shear some of the sheep meant for the next day. "At five minutes to five and six hundred and fifty ewes out the porthole, we decided to knock off, have a beer and then go home. At 9.30pm Scotty got a call from the farmer who told him to send two shearers the next day who could work a full day! There's no pleasing some people!"

(Laurie Keats, *A Lucky Life*, Tararua Publishing, 2012.

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Shearing Sports New Zealand - Calendar 2023-2024

December 2 (Sat)	Whangarei A and P Show	Whangarei
	Geyserland Agrodome Shears, Rotorua A and P Show	Ngongotaha
January 13 (Sat)	Peninsula Duvauchelle Shears	Duvauchelle
January 19 (Fri)	Northern Southland Community Shears	Lumsden
January 20 (Sat)	Kaikohe A, P and H Show	Kaikohe
	Wairoa A and P Show	Wairoa
	Golden Bay A and P Show	Takaka
	Southland Shears, Winton A and P Show	Winton
January 21 (Sun)	Horowhenua A, P and I Show	Levin
January 27 (Sat)	Taihape A and P Show	Taihape
	Tapawera Shears	Tapawera
February 2 (Fri)	Dannevirke A and P Show	Dannevirke
February 3 (Sat)	North Kaipara A and P Show	Paparoa
	Rangitikei Shearing Sports	Marton
	Reefton Shears, Inangahua A and P Show	Reefton
February 6 (Tues)	Aria Waitangi Day Sports	Aria
February 10 (Sat)	Northern Wairoa A and P Show	Arapohue (Dargaville)
	Te Puke A and P Show	Te Puke
	Otago Shears	Balclutha
February 16 (Fri)	Southern Field Days Speed Shears	Waimumu
February 16-17 (Fri-Sat)	Southern Shears	Gore
February 17 (Sat)	North Hokianga A and P Show	Broadwood
	Ohura A and P Show	Ohura
	Murchison A and P Show	Murchison
February 18 (Sun)	Counties Shears	Pukekohe
February 23 (Fri)	Taumarunui Shears	Taumarunui
February 24 (Sat)	Apiti Sports	Apiti
	Kaikoura A and P Show	Kaikoura
February 25 (Sun)	Pahiatua Shears	Pahiatua
February 28 (Wed)	Wairarapa Pre-Shears Woolhandling	Mikimiki
February 29-March 2 (Thu-Sat)	Golden Shears International Championships	Masterton
March 2 (Sat)	Amuri A and P Show	Rotherham
March 9 (Sat)	Kumeu A and H Show	Kumeu
	Cheviot A and P Show	Cheviot
	Mayfield A and P Show	Mayfield
March 16 (Sat)	Warkworth A and P Show	Warkworth
	Waimarino Shears	Raetihi
	Methven Lamb Shears, Methven A and P Show	Methven
March 23 (Sat)	Waitomo Caves Sports	Waitomo
March 24 (Sun)	Flaxbourne A and P Show	Ward
March 31 (Sat)	Oxford A and P Show	Oxford
April 1 (Mon)	MacKenzie A and P Show	Fairlie
April 3 (Wed)	Autumn Shears	Hawke's Bay
April 4-6 (Thurs-Sat)	New Zealand Shears	Te Kuiti

SHEARING SPORTS NEW ZEALAND



Above: *Shearing Sports New Zealand's team at Jamestown NSW for the first leg of the 2023-2024 trans-Tasman test series. From left: Angus Moore, Cushla Abraham, Allen Gemmell, Mark Barrowcliffe (manager), Tia Potae, Tony Dobbs, Nathan Stratford, Leon Samuels and Heidi Middleton (woolhandling judge).*

SHEARING SPORTS NZ FINALISTS 2023-2024

Open Shearing

Adam Gordon (Masterton)
3 Canterbury open plate

Alex Clapham (England)
2 Pleasant Point open novice

Alex Smith (Rakaia)
4 Ellesmere
6 Canterbury open plate

Angus Moore (Seddon)
2 Canterbury

Ant Frew (Pleasant Point)
3 Ashburton A&P
2 Pleasant Point

Brett Roberts (Mataura)
2 NZ Merino Shears
3 Waimate winter comb
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 Ashburton A&P
6 Canterbury
2 West Otago A&P

Brook Hamerton (Ruawai)
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Chris Jones (Blenheim)
4 Nelson A&P

Chris Vickers (Palmerston)
4 Waimate winter comb

Colin Dennison (Kurow)
6 Waimate winter comb

Corey Barrowcliffe (Piopio)
2 Ellesmere

Cory Smith (Rakaia)
4 Pleasant Point open novice

Daniel Biggs (Mangamahu)
4 Taranaki Shears

David Buick (Pongaroa)
2 Great Raihania Shears

David Gordon (Masterton)
5 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 Wairarapa
2 Manawatu
1 Central Hawkes Bay
5 Canterbury

Duncan Higgins (Blenheim)
3 Nelson A&P

Duncan Leslie (Alexandra)
5 NZ Merino Shears
4 Canterbury open plate

Eli Cummings (Pleasant Point)
1 Pleasant Point open novice

Gavin Mutch (Dannevirke)
1 Taranaki Shears

Grant Smith (Rakaia)
6 NZ Merino Shears

Hemi Braddick (Eketahuna)
3 Poverty Bay
4 Great Raihania Shears
1 Wairarapa
3 Manawatu

Hugh De Lacy (Rangiora)
1 Northern A&P
3 Pleasant Point
1 Canterbury circuit

Jack Fagan (Te Kuiti)
2 Waimate winter comb
6 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Poverty Bay
3 Central Hawkes Bay
4 Canterbury

James Ruki (Te Kuiti)
2 Canterbury open plate

Jesse Barclay
3 West Otago A&P

John Kirkpatrick (Pakipaki)
3 Great Raihania Shears
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Jordan Boyes (Owaka)
1 Ellesmere

Joseph Gordon (Masterton)
1 Manawatu

Leon Samuels (Invercargill)
1 NZ Merino Shears
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Lionel Taumata (Mataura)
5 Ashburton A&P
5 Canterbury open plate

Luis Pincol (Chile)
3 Northern A&P
4 Pleasant Point
4 Canterbury circuit

Lyall Windleburn (Rangiora)
3 Ellesmere
4 Northern A&P
4 Ashburton A&P
2 Canterbury circuit

Mark Grainger (Te Kuiti)
3 Taranaki Shears

Murray Henderson (Halcolmbe)
4 Manawatu

Nathan Stratford (Invercargill)
3 NZ Merino Shears
1 Waimate winter comb
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Ashburton A&P
1 Pleasant Point
1 Canterbury
1 West Otago A&P

Nick Nalder (Takaka)
2 Nelson A&P

Paerata Abraham (Masterton)
5 Waimate winter comb
2 Poverty Bay
3 Canterbury

Paraki Puna (Napier)
3 Wairarapa

Shaun Burgess (Ashburton)
3 Canterbury circuit

Stacey Te Huia (Alexandra)
4 NZ Merino Shears

Taare Edwards (Taumarunui)
2 Northern A&P
1 Canterbury open plate
5 Canterbury circuit

Tama Niania (Gisborne)
5 Poverty Bay
1 Great Raihania Shears
4 Wairarapa

Toa Henderson (Kaiwaka)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
4 Poverty Bay

Travers Baigent (Wakefield)
1 Nelson A&P

Trevor Holland (Inglewood)
2 Taranaki Shears

Willie Hewitson
4 West Otago A&P

Willie McSkimming (Oamaru)
3 Pleasant Point open novice
6 Canterbury circuit

Open Blade Shearing

Allen Gemmell (Rangiora)
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 Canterbury

Andrew Murray (Australia)
6 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Evelyn McGregor (Glenorchy)
5 Canterbury

John Dalla (Australia)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Ken Robertson
5 Ashburton A&P

Noel Handley (Rangiora)
2 Northern A&P
3 Ashburton A&P

Phil Oldfield (Geraldine)
5 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Shaun Burgess (Ashburton)
3 Northern A&P
4 Ashburton A&P
4 Canterbury

Tim Hogg (Timaru)
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Northern A&P
2 Ashburton A&P
3 Canterbury

Tony Dobbs (Fairlie)
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Ashburton A&P
1 Canterbury

Senior Machine Shearing

Aaron McGee (Ireland)
6 Canterbury
2 Nelson A&P

Aiden Tarrant (Taumarunui)
1 NZ Merino Shears
2 Waimate winter comb
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
3 Ellesmere
3 Taranaki Shears

Alice Watson (Seddon)
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
3 Canterbury
3 Nelson A&P

Andrew Booth (Waimate)
5 Waimate winter comb

Blake Crooks (Rangiora)
6 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Northern A&P
1 Ashburton A&P
1 Canterbury
1 Nelson A&P

Blake Overs (Australia)
6 NZ Merino Shears

Brendon McGregor
2 West Otago A&P

Bruce Grace (Wairoa)
2 Poverty Bay
4 Wairarapa
3 Manawatu
4 Central Hawkes Bay
2 Taranaki Shears

Daniel Seed (Woodville)
4 Manawatu

David Hodge (Te Puke)
3 Poverty Bay

Dre Roberts (Mataura)
4 NZ Merino Shears
4 Ellesmere
2 Ashburton A&P
1 Pleasant Point
2 Canterbury
1 West Otago A&P

Forde Alexander (Taumarunui)
1 Great Raihania Shears
1 Manawatu
2 Central Hawkes Bay
4 Taranaki Shears

Hamuera Cribb (Kennedy Bay)
5 NZ Merino Shears

Hemi Paniora (Rolleston)
4 Canterbury

Jake Hutchinson (Dannevirke)
4 Poverty Bay
2 Wairarapa

Jake Williams (Gisborne)
5 Poverty Bay

James Wilson (Darfield)
2 Ellesmere
5 Ashburton A&P
4 Pleasant Point

John Cherrington (Ngaruawahia)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 Northern A&P

Jordan White
3 West Otago A&P

Josh Quinn (Seddon)
5 Canterbury

Kapua Brown (Taumarunui)
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
3 Wairarapa
1 Taranaki Shears

Laura Bradley (Woodville)
3 Great Raihania Shears
1 Wairarapa
2 Manawatu
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Liam Norrie
4 Ashburton A&P
3 Pleasant Point

Marites Woods (Australia)
23 NZ Merino Shears

Mark Ferguson (Masterton)
4 Great Raihania Shears

Mark Calder
4 West Otago A&P

Mark Taylor (Kurow)
1 Waimate winter comb

Reuben King (Kaiapoi)
5 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Ellesmere
3 Northern A&P
3 Ashburton A&P
2 Pleasant Point

Ruby Stone (Waimate)
6 Waimate winter comb

Sam Bryan (West Melton)
4 Northern A&P

Taelor Tarrant (Taumarunui)
3 Waimate winter comb

Tawhaarangi Taylor (Murupara)
4 Waimate winter comb

Te Ua Wilcox (Gisborne)
1 Poverty Bay
2 Great Raihania Shears
1 Central Hawkes Bay

Timo Hicks (Tapawera)
4 Nelson A&P

Tyron Cochrane (Australia)
3 NZ Merino Shears

Intermed. Machine Shearing
Angus Crombie (Marlborough)
6 Canterbury

Blake Mitchell (Patea)
1 Taranaki Shears

Caleb Brooking (Mataura)
2 Ellesmere
2 Northern A&P
3 Ashburton A&P

Cheydon Winiana (Nuhaka)
3 Poverty Bay
2 Wairarapa
3 Manawatu

Coby Lambert (Napier)
4 Canterbury
3 Taranaki Shears

Cody Waihape (Mataura)
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
3 Ellesmere
2 Ashburton A&P
1 Pleasant Point
2 Canterbury
1 West Otago A&P
2 Taranaki Shears

Daniel Vallejo (Argentina)
4 Northern A&P

Dylan Young (Pehiri)
1 Poverty Bay
1 Great Raihania Shears
1 Manawatu
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Emma Martin (Gore)
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Ellesmere
1 Northern A&P
1 Ashburton A&P
2 Pleasant Point
1 Canterbury
2 West Otago A&P

Ethan Fladgate (Te Awamutu)
1 Nelson A&P

Hautapu Makaere (Waikato)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Jake Goldsbury
3 Great Raihania Shears
3 Wairarapa

James Hogan
4 West Otago A&P

Louis Coombe-Gray (Waipukurau)
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Lucas Vallejo (Argentina)
5 Ashburton A&P

Lydia Thomson (Rangiora)
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
4 Ellesmere
3 Northern A&P
4 Ashburton A&P
3 Pleasant Point
3 Canterbury
4 Taranaki Shears

Matekino Puhia (Raupunga)
5 Poverty Bay

Marius Klopper (South Africa
6 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Merlot Tupara (Marlborough)
5 Canterbury

Michael Buick (Pongaroa)
1 Wairarapa
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Mitch Nation (Napier)
2 Great Raihania Shears

Ryka Swann (Wairoa)
2 Poverty Bay

Sam McCone (Geraldine)
4 Pleasant Point

Sam Parker (Raglan)
4 Poverty Bay

Thomas Adams (Blenheim)
2 Nelson A&P

Tim Dickson (Feilding)
5 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
4 Great Raihania Shears
4 Wairarapa
4 Manawatu

Tini Papanui (Feilding)
2 Manawatu
1 Central Hawkes Bay

TK Kempthorne
3 West Otago A&P

Junior Machine Shearing
Callum Griffith
1 Ellesmere

Connor Wilkinson (Wyndham)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Dominic Waihape (Temuka)
3 Pleasant Point

Donnie Stringer (Ranfurly)
5 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Ella Caves (Loburn)
4 Ashburton A&P
2 Pleasant Point

Gevo Hughes (Taumarunui)
4 Manawatu
3 Taranaki Shears

Jet Schimanski (Gore)
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Ashburton A&P
1 Pleasant Point
1 Canterbury

Jodiesha Kirkpatrick (Gisborne)
4 Poverty Bay
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Joel Burton (Taumarunui)
2 Taranaki Shears

Josh Youngman
2 Ellesmere

Kaivah Cooper (Napier)
1 Poverty Bay
1 Great Raihania Shears
1 Wairarapa
1 Manawatu
1 Taranaki Shears

Kane Miles
4 Canterbury

Kingston Renata
2 Wairarapa

Lachie Cameron (Hunterville)
3 Great Raihania Shears
3 Manawatu
1 Central Hawkes Bay
4 Taranaki Shears

Lachie Crafar (Kimbolton)
2 Northern A&P

Lemore Gillies
6 Canterbury

Levi Beedles (Rangiora)
1 Northern A&P
3 Ashburton

Leevi Lex Wilson (Wyndham)
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Marshall Buckman
3 Wairarapa
2 Manawatu

Mathew Norman (Fairlie)
4 Pleasant Point

Maureen Chaffey (Pongaroa)
4 Great Raihania Shears
4 Wairarapa
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Max McTavish (Lawrence)
6 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Peter Losty (Ireland)
2 Ashburton A&P
3 Canterbury

Reuben Wilkinson (Wyndham)
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Thomas Curnow (Nelson Lakes)
2 Nelson A&P

Thomas Marchant
1 Nelson A&P

Tom Kerley (Wairoa)
2 Poverty Bay
2 Great Raihania Shears
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Trace Patton (Timaru)
5 Ashburton
5 Canterbury

Trae Karaka (Amberley)
2 Canterbury

Raupunga Puhia (Raupunga)
3 Poverty Bay

Roy Pomare (Gisborne)
5 Poverty Bay

Novice Machine Shearing
Alex Jansen (Stratford)
1 Taranaki Shears

Ashlee Blanchett (Brightwater)
3 Nelson A&P (junior final)

Ashlin Swann (Wairoa)
2 Great Raihania Shears

Beth Kerley (Wairoa)
4 Taranaki Shears

Camden Bolton
2 Wairarapa
3 Manawatu

Ged Billing
1 Wairarapa

George Peacock (Waipukurau)
4 Wairarapa
2 Manawatu

George Prouting (Dannevirke)
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Grady Collis (Tauhoa)
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Harry Peacock (Waipukurau)
1 Central Hawkes Bay

Jacob Booth (Waimate)
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate)

James Robertson (Feilding)
3 Great Raihania Shears

Joe Smith (Stratford)
2 Taranaki Shears

Jorge Coplestone (Mangamingi)
3 Taranaki Shears

Kane Miles (Christchurch)
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Manawa Hunt (Oamaru)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Phebe Rayner (Motueka)
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Shawna Swann (Wairoa)
1 Great Raihania Shears

Tatijana Keefe (Raupunga)
1 Manawatu

Te Ariki Te Hau (Flaxmere)
4 Great Raihania Shears

Waiari Puna (Napier)
3 Wairarapa
4 Manawatu

Open Woolhandling
Amy Ferguson (Invercargill)
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
4 South Island Circuit Waimate
2 Canterbury

Brittany Tibble (Gisborne)
2 Poverty Bay

Candy Hiri (Mataura)
4 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
1 South Island Circuit Waimate

Cheri Peterson (Milton)
3 Canterbury

Cushla Abraham (Masterton)
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 South Island Circuit Waimate
1 Manawatu
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Jasmine Tipoki (Napier)
1 Wairarapa
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Joel Henare (Gisborne)
3 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Poverty Bay
1 Canterbury

Keryn Herbert (Te Kuiti)
3 South Island Circuit Waimate
3 Poverty Bay
2 Great Raihania Shears
2 Wairarapa
1 Central Hawkes Bay

Logan Kamura (Marton)
2 NZ Merino Shears
3 Manawatu

Monica Potae (Kennedy Bay)
4 Great Raihania Shears

Ngaira Puha (Kimbolton)
1 Great Raihania Shears

Ngaio Hanson (Eketahuna)
3 Wairarapa
4 Manawatu
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Nova Kumeroa (Mataura)
3 Great Raihania Shears
2 Manawatu

Ratapu Moore (Seddon)
4 Canterbury

Samantha Gordon (Masteron)
4 Poverty Bay

Tia Potae (Milton)
1 NZ Merino Shears
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 Jamestown Open (Australia)

Senior Woolhandling
Amy Bell (Weber)
2 Great Raihania Shears
4 Manawatu
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Angeline Colquhoun (Masterton)
3 Wairarapa

Anne Connell (Gisborne)
2 Poverty Bay

Ashleigh Ostler (Marton)
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Charis Morrell (Alexandra)
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Charlotte Stuart (Omarama)
4 South Island Circuit Waimate
1 Canterbury

Emma Martin (Gore)
4 Canterbury

Krome Elers (Mataura)
1 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
34 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 South Island Circuit Waimate

Lucy Gee Taylor (Rangiwahia)
3 Canterbury

Maiden Elers (Mataura)
3 South Island Circuit Waimate

Naki Maraki (Flaxmere)
1 Wairarapa

Nohokainga Maraki (Flaxmere)
3 Great Raihania Shears
2 Wairarapa

Rahera Kerr (Hauturu)
3 Poverty Bay

Ryley Paul (Wairoa)
4 Great Raihania Shears

Saskia Tuhakaraina (Gore)
4 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
1 South Island Circuit Waimate
2 Canterbury

Shakira Matenga (Dunedin)
3 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra

Tatijana Keefe (Raupunga)
1 Great Raihania Shears
2 Manawatu
1 Central Hawkes Bay

Tramon Campbell (Gisborne)
1 Poverty Bay

Tre Ratana Sciascia (Taihape)
2 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Te Whetu Brown (Hastings)
4 Poverty Bay
1 Manawatu

Vinniye Phillips (Taumarunui)
3 Manawatu
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Junior Woolhandling
Brittany Smith (Christchurch)
1 Canterbury

Christie Burn (Dannevirke)
4 Canterbury

Eleri Bradley (Woodville)
1 Wairarapa

Hemi Taurima
4 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra

Jodiesha Kirkpatrick (Gisborne)
2 Poverty Bay
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Kalyah Ferguson (Waipawa)
4 Great Raihania Shears

Katie Karauria (Napier)
3 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra

Kelly Barrett (Kawhia)
3 Poverty Bay
4 Manawatu
1 Central Hawkes Bay

Lucy Elers (Mataura)
1 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
3 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Makayla Neil (Taumarunui)
2 NZ Merino Shears Alexandra
1 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 Great Raihania Shears
2 Wairarapa
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Mere Maraki (Flaxmere)
3 Manawatu
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Rahera Lewis (Taihape)
3 Great Raihania Shears
2 Manawatu

Renee Apanui
1 Poverty Bay

Sarah Lewis (Gisborne)
2 NZ Spring Shears Waimate

Tess Kelly (Rakaia)
4 NZ Spring Shears Waimate
2 Canterbury

Tessa Kirdy (Ashburton)
3 Canterbury

Waiari Puna (Hastings)
4 Poverty Bay
1 Great Raihania Shears
3 Wairarapa
1 Manawatu

Novice Woolhandling
Aqua Lee Ruru (Gisborne)
4 Poverty Bay

Capree Wallace (Taihape)
2 Central Hawkes Bay

Corey Barrowcliffe (Piopio)
3 Manawatu

Gemma Buick (Pongaroa)
2 Wairarapa
4 Central Hawkes Bay

Georgia Rata (Taumarunui)
1 Manawatu

Kaivah Cooper (Napier)
2 Manawatu
1 Central Hawkes Bay

Kaylah Ferguson (Waipawa)
2 Poverty Bay

Layiss Atkins
3 Poverty Bay

Leila Tipoki (Napier)
3 Central Hawkes Bay

Piata Braddick (Eketahuna)
3 Wairarapa
4 Manawatu

Shaquille Hauiti
1 Poverty Bay

Sophie Humphrey (Masterton)
1 Wairarapa

* * * * * *



John Walsh always got to the Point

The Pleasant Point shearing committee (Get to the Point Gymkhana) recognised John Walsh for his 50 years of service to the event on 4 November 2023. Current show chairman Ant Frew (**pictured above right with John Walsh**) said John's contribution to the event had been imeasurable through his many roles over the years. "He's been organising the sheep – that's the hardest part now, with not many sheep owners in South Canterbury shearing eight months these days; organising sponsorship, workers on the day.

John Walsh recalls that he and Ritchie Gould organised the first competition in 1973. It was at the Pleasant Point Domain and held on the back of a trailer. "Then we decided, if the show was to continue, we'd have to organise a better facility so we got to and built a four-stand board and Norm Blakemore helped Richie and I with that. The Domain was a good venue to start with and the shearing was held in conjunction with many other activities – trotting races, wood chopping and the like."

A shearing contractor in the Pleasant Point area for about forty years, John says he used to take part in the open competition, but never made the open final. "I suppose fifth is as close as I got; The top four made the final and the next four (semi-finalists) also had a shear, which I won. I think I beat Peter Lyon, Richard Halkett and Kenny Tennant that year."

John's not exactly sure when the event moved from the Domain to the Main Street but it has continued to draw fantastic support from the locals and from shearers near and far. Open champions over the years have included Kevin Walsh (multiple), Darin Forde, Brendon Cox, Tony Coster, Ivan Scott, Geoff Holmes, Grant Smith, Grant Black, Justin Meikle and Nathan Stratford, who won it first in 2001, also in 2023 and quite a few times inbetween.

Ant Frew says this year's show went well until the last few minutes, when a thunderstorm arrived and all but washed out the open final. "Poor Luis Pincol was most affected, shearing on stand one with the rain pelting down. All the spectators had run for cover and Luis finished well behind the other three shearers but still had best outside quality."

Ant says the shearing stands are set up on Pleasant Point's main street, which is closed off to vehicles for the day from 7.30am to 5pm and more than 150 stalls set up to provide food and entertainment for the crowds, market and garden stalls, childrens' entertainment, train rides, tug-of-war contests, dog trials, live music and other events.

'Sir David Fagan came down to compete one year and he won the open final [2014]. He said it was the only instance he could recall of a main street being closed for a shearing event."

Invercargill's Nathan Stratford won the open final for the sixth time since 2001, with Ant Frew second, Hugh De Lacy third and (as mentioned) the saturated Pincol fourth.

All four winners on the day came from the seep South, with Dre Roberts, Mataura (senior), Cody Waihape, Mataura, (intermediate) and Jet Schimanski, Gore, (junior) also winning their respective divisions.

Get to the Point Gymkhana Shears 4 November 2023

Heiniger Open shearing (18 sheep): Nathan Stratford, Invercargill, 53.11 1; Ant Frew, Pleasant Point, 54.25 2; Hugh De Lacy, Rangiora, 55.68 3; Luis Pincol, Geraldine, 60.15 4.

Heiniger open novice (12 sheep): Eli Cummings, Pleasant Point, 42.36 1; Alex Clapham, England, 44.05 2; Willie McSkimming, Oamaru, 44.32 3; Cory Smith, Rakaia, 44.63 4.

Heiniger senior shearing (10 sheep): Dre Roberts, Mataura, 45.10 1; Reuben King, Rangiora, 46.14 2; Liam Norrie, Cheviot, 46.19 3; James Wilson, Darfield, 46.32 4.

Heiniger Intermediate shearing (5 sheep): Cody Waihape, Mataura, 27.80 1; Emma Martin, Gore, 30.12 2; Lydia Thomson, Rangiora, 32.96 3; Sam McCone, Geraldine, 34.24 4.

Heiniger Junior shearing (4 sheep): Jet Schimanski, 29.23 1; Ella Caves, Christchurch, 37.11 2; Dominic Waihape, Temuka, 50.50 3; Matthew Norman, Fairlie, 52.14 4.

Meanwhile, The Colin King Shield came back to North Canterbury hands after holder Southland was 'ambushed' at Pleasant Point. SSNZ's media man Doug Laing reported how North Canterbury claimed the shield in a three-way contest initiated by home-region team the Hanan Shield Districts, based on the rugby unions area of Mid-Canterbury, South Canterbury and North Otago. Comprising one from each of the four grades as required under the rules, chosen from performances in heats on the day, the new holders of the two-year-old shield had a unique 50/50 of male and female shearers and comprised open shearer Hugh De Lacy, senior Reuben King, intermediate Lydia Thomson and junior Ella Caves.

De Lacy anticipated the shield would be defended during the New Zealand Corriedale Championships in Christchurch on November 16-17 if sheep and time are available.

Southland, having won the shield by beating North Canterbury in Christchurch last November, had vowed to take the shield on-the-road to encourage competition and had successfully defended it in a three-way contest at the Ashburton A&P Show on 28 October, but could only manage second place at Pleasant Point, beaten by two points, with the home district placed third.

Colin King Shield Regional Challenge (10 sheep): North Canterbury (Hugh DeLacy, Reuben King, Lydia Thomson, Ella Caves) 44.68 1; Southland (Alex Clapham, Dre Roberts, Cody Waihape, Jet Schimanski) 46.50 2; Hanan Shield Districts (Willie McSkimming, Sam Bryan, Sam McCone, Trace Paton) 48.82 3.

* * * * * *

Shearing magazine's
New Zealand Shearing Industry Hall of Fame

Subjective category: By reputation and deeds, their names endure through New Zealand shearing history and folklore:

- **James Apes (1855-1938)**
- **Alex Hutchinson (1865-1943)**
- **Raihania Rimitiriu (1868-1934)**
- **Jimmy Power (1869-1902)**
- **Ihakara 'Ike' Robin (1886-1968)**
- **Bill Vella (1886-1971)**
- **George Stuart (1890-1953)**
- **Bill Higgins (1894-1939)**
- **Johnny Hape (1900-1969)**
- **Percy de Malmanche (1902-1968)**
- **Bill Richards (1907-1995)**
- **Bill Meech (1914-1985)**
- **Ivan Bowen (1915-2007)**
- **Les Richards (1917-2000)**
- **Godfrey Bowen (1922-1994)**
- **Bing Macdonald (1928-2004)**
- **Makaore Potae (1934-2001)**
- **Ken Pike (1938-****)**
- **Barbara Marsh (1943-2014)**
- **Mavis Mullins (1956 -****)**
- **Keith Wilson (1957-****)**
- **Darin Forde (1965-****)**

Objective category: World individual or teams championship winner supported by at least three major New Zealand titles:

- **Roger Cox 1977; Golden Shears 1977-78, 1980)**
- **Brian Quinn 1980; Golden Shears 1965, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1972; NZ Merino Shears 1968, 1970, 1978-79.**
- **Peter Casserly 1980; NZ Golden Blades 1975, 1976; Omarama Shears 1995.**
- **Colin King 1984; Golden Shears 1982, 1987-88; National circuit six times.**
- **David Fagan 1988, 1992, 1996, 1998, 2003; Golden Shears 16 times; NZ Open 16 times.**
- **Tony Dobbs 1988; Golden Blades 18 times.**
- **Joanne Kumeroa *(1969-2015)* 2003, 2005; Golden Shears 1995, 2001, 2004, 2010-12; NZ Open 1992, 1995-96, 2001-02, 2007.**
- **Paul Avery 2008; Golden Shears 2005, 2007; NZ Open 1995, 2000, 2007.**
- **Rowland Smith 2014; Golden Shears eight times; NZ Open eight times.**
- **John Kirkpatrick 2017; Golden Shears 2002, 2008, 2011, 2012; NZ Open 2008, 2009, 2012.**

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Claude Waite – thirty years ago

Thirty years ago this month (November 1993) we printed a story about former New Zealand Wool Board chief shearing instructor, Claude Waite. The story was written by former Shearing magazine editor, David Grace. Chances are nobody remembers reading it back then and so we take the liberty of reprinting it here. Claude is regarded (by this writer, anyway), as an obvious contender for the New Zealand Shearing Hall of Fame.

* * * * * *

Claude Waite is 82 now, a big country man stranded in the prettiness of a retirement villa in Levin. He has been weakened by ME ("We were too careless with chemicals," he says) but he still stands tall and his voice is like a muffled foghorn.

As he talks (he has plenty of political opinions) he gestures with huge hands, hands which he says have shorn more than 1,000,000 sheep. He started about 1926, went full time in 1931 around the Whanganui area. Before and after WWII, he was contracting in the Waikato.

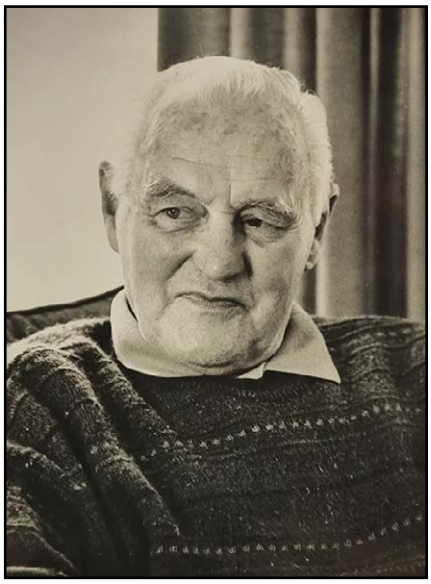
For 20 years he averaged 30 to 40,000 sheep a season – and there were a lot more before and after that. "More sheep than anyone," says Claude. But that is not why he is so respected.

Says Godfrey Bowen: "Claude became a Master Shearer mainly for what he did for shearing as an instructor. Claude had a great philosophy. He not only taught the trainees to shear, he taught them to be men! He was up before 5:00am, he was dedicated to the job, there wasn't a lazy bone in his body, he had the best gear, a clean box, a clean car … You could send Claude anywhere and get back a good report. I have nothing but admiration for him."

In his armchair in Levin, Claude talks about his early days during the Depression, when he worked around Whanganui for contractor Fred Ackerman.

The landscape

"The landscape was very different in those days, a lot more logs and stumps and a lot more bare-bellied sheep, the wool dragged off in the scrub. The gang used to travel in a Model A truck. The roads were terrible and you had to go very quietly if you weren't to go over the bank.



Above: *Claude Waite (1911-2000)*

The quarters

"Quarters were terrible too. All the shearers slept in one large room. There would be a piece of 6x1 round the floor a yard out from the wall and you slept in there on 6 inches of hay.

"There was no water laid on. You went into the river for a wash or got the hot water out of the Lister engine. You washed your clothes in a tin or the horse trough.

"Fred Ackerman was aged 35 to 40, based in Marton and he had a gang of six to eight – or two lots of four. He was very good with his men and the meals were good – lots of mutton and potatoes and rabbits. They'd catch the rabbits alive and put them in a sugar bag. When they wanted one, they would take it from the bag and knock it on the head.

The sheep

"The sheep could be terribly hard. At the start of the season, the farmer might want them out of the wool because they did better but you would be struggling to get 150 a day, they were so tough and sticky. But around Whanganui it was usually good because the farmers started well into summer.

"There was a lot of biddi-bid and all sorts of rubbish in the wool and your arms would be bleeding from the scratches. Lice and ticks – big cattle ticks – could be thick as grains of sand in some of the smaller sheds. At night they would be crawling all over you.

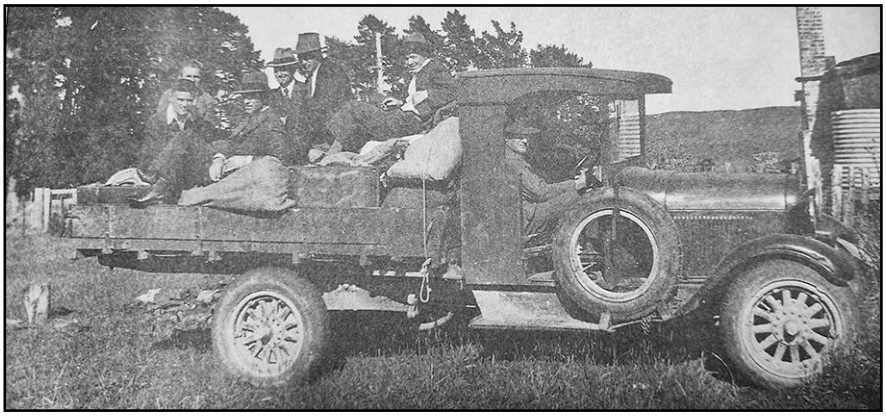
"Things were generally better – the pastures, the sheep and the parasites – on the bigger stations.

The gear

"The gear was primitive. I had three handpieces – one in my hand, one in the water pot and a third one cooling. I would change every 10 to 15 sheep when the handpiece got too hot to hold.

"The gear was never properly sharpened because no one knew very much and you weren't allowed to sharpen your own. You had an 'expert' to do it; nobody was allowed in the engine room with the grinder because there had been too many accidents and there was no compensation in those days. If the expert had a few in [a few beers], as long as the cutter touched the emery that would do!

"There were only candles at night so as soon as you knocked off you would use the daylight to get your combs ready for the next day, or you would get round the expert to do some more work on them for you.



Above: *Fred Ackerman at the wheel of his Model A Ford truck, with his gang and their bags on the back. Claude Waite (partly obscured) far left.*

"They were mainly narrow combs. When the wide combs came in we had a butterfly plate screwed on top of the fork to take the wider cutter. Cutters cost 1s 3d [one shilling and three pennies], combs were 5s [five shillings] and a handpiece was £14.00 – about $28.00 in today's money. The pay was 18s 6d per hundred sheep shorn.

"There was a 5:00am start. If it was still dark you waited but then carried on at night or cut your lunch break short to make up the nine hours. Fred always paid promptly, every shed he squared you up.

Shearing styles

"The shearers had many styles – everyone was a little bit different. You watched someone else and maybe did it yourself. I used to leg under my elbow, and then I learned the Ponga Paiaka belly. He was the first to do it. You laid the sheep straight back and instead of going round the belly, you went straight from the brisket to the crutch. Ponga taught me that.

"There were no women in the gangs, except maybe a middle-aged cook. The rousies were mainly young men wanting to shear, and the shearers would teach them. I would put one on my stand at smoko or lunch, and his sheep would go on my tally. I've seen a lot of good boys in my time.

Rivalry on the board

"But when you got a stand you didn't get much help from the white shearers because they were frightened you might move up on them. The Maori shearers were quite happy to teach you; they didn't care if you were ahead of them or not. There were a lot more Maori shearers in those days and they were the best – marvellous rhythm – and to me they are still the best.

"There was a lot of competition on the board. I've seen shearers collapse trying to head the best man off. I always had a little in reserve – but I always did one or two more to make sure I was the ringer!

Tough bosses

"Fred was the head shearer, and whatever he did, everyone else had to do or you weren't good enough to stay with him. Bosses were hard in those days because they knew if you didn't come up to standard, there were plenty to take your place. I've seen five or six shearers sitting on the landing waiting for someone to get the sack.



Above: *Claude Waite (left) instructing a trainee at Huiarua Station, near Ruatoria, in 1968. (Gisborne Photo News.)*

"Fred was loyal to good workers. If you did the job, you were there forever. If you didn't, he would fix your gear for you, give you a warning, but the next time he would kick you out.

"You had to be had to stick it out. The sheep were tough and it was hard work. You had to be fit and you had a mental attitude because you did not want to knock off work. If you lost the job, there were plenty waiting.

"When I cut this finger we were 25 miles from the nearest nurse. Fred put in stitches with a darning needle and cotton. He was pretty good at that, being able to sew up a sheep! He put Camfosa on it, wrapped it up and I went on shearing.

"This scar on my arm: A ram kicked and the handpiece spun around and cut the artery. I stitched it myself and went on shearing but the result was a stiff elbow because the sinew went back.

"Those were the stupid sorts of things you did!" (Claude Waite)

The fist fights and …

"There were plenty of fights; it was one way of letting off steam. It was bare knuckles. If you were knocked down you got up again and it went on 'til someone gave in. It could be about any stupid little thing like sitting at the wrong place at the table.

"I never got involved myself because I did a lot of boxing - lightweight in the Wellington and New Zealand champs. They never picked on me. There was always a bully in the place. I would say: 'I have some gloves in my bag.' But I never had to use them.

The fellowship

"People were not for themselves like they are today. Everyone helped one another. You were all good mates; even after a fight they were good mates. In the evening you couldn't go anywhere and you were too tired to do much but sleep. Fred never allowed booze in the shed and very few drank at night because they couldn't afford it.

"Most of the time you went to bed and read a magazine by candlelight. There was a lot of talk, a lot of jokes, and singing-especially the Maoris; they were always very musical.

"I liked the shearing. There was money in it, I never had back troubles and was happy in the job. They were good years – but you had to be tough.

* * * * * *

Footnote: Claude Waite died at Levin on 30 March 2000 (aged 88) and is buried at Avenue Cemetery. His wife, Melva Grace Waite, died in 1994. They had two sons, Roger and Gavin.

So, Claude Waite: Hall of Fame contender? Or just a 'Legend'?



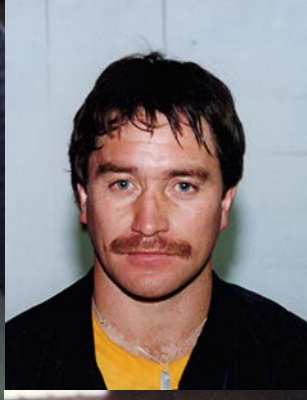
Opotiki A&P Show Shearing Winners 1974-2003

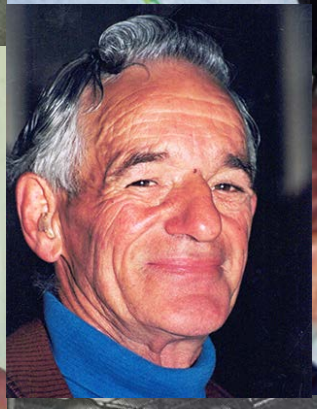
Year	Open	Senior	Intermediate	Junior
1974	Larry Lewis	N/A	B Collins	N/A
1975	Robin Cooper	N/A	Fred Koopu	Steven Cooper
1976	Robin Cooper	N/A	T Garrett	C Hogan
1977	Hugh McCarroll	N/A	Ivan Wylie	Brian Cooper
1978	J Schick	N/A	Ken Shaw	Paul Burt
1979	Larry Lewis	N/A	Geoff Hope	R Moore
1980	Stuart Makgill	N/A	Richard Thompson	John Burt
1981	B Mackey	N/A	David Wynyard	David Roberts
1982	Rained out	Rained out	Rained out	Rained out
1983	Ivan Wylie	N/A	David Hodge	Dawson Looney
1984	Ivan Wylie	N/A	Bill Gaskill	Murray Winters
1985	Rei Rangiawha	John Burt	Peter Allen	N/A
1986	Alan MacDonald	John Burt	Nigel Anderson	Andrew Deverall
1987	Steven Cooper	Hoani Wehi	Jimmy Edmonds	Carol Hodge
1988	Larry Lewis	Hoani Wehi	Andrew Deverall	Garth Rowley
1989	Dig Balme	Rudy Marshall	Alan Coster	Garth Rowley
1990	Dig Balme	David Gaskell	Lance Macdonald	Carol Hodge
1991	Jamie Fleming	Joe Paewai	Crawford Morris	Colin Stevens
1992	Steven Cooper	David Hodge	Greg Balme	Blair McCarroll
1993	Andrew Deverall	David Hodge	Garth Rowley	Samantha McDonald
1994	Koro Mullins	David Hodge	Bill Nikora	Samantha McDonald
1995	Henry Isaacs	Pura Ngarangione	Michael Stephens	John Ludeman
1996	Jamie Fleming	Errol Tuhi	Edgar Allan	Jamarl Hona
1997	John Kirkpatrick	Pura Ngarangione	Justin Ward	Cory Paewai
1998	Nigel Brown	Hawi Kopua	Bruce Hauiti	Mark Brabant
1999	Keith Wilson	Ian Kirkpatrick	Shane Hyde	Zenda Lingman
2000	Jamie Fleming	David Hodge	Shane Hyde	Kasey Bowring
2001	Rod Sutton	Willy Wilson	Robert Matenga	Ralph Ruru
2002	Andrew Deverall	Robert Matenga	Steve Whareherehere	Taane Lewis
2003	Nigel Brown	Ronnie King	John Waihape	Ringo Edmonds
2004	Rained out	Rained out	Rained out	Rained out
2005	Cancelled	Cancelled	Cancelled	Cancelled

HISTORY OF SHEARING AT OPOTIKI SHOW

Shearing competitions started in the late 1960s by Gordon Gault and Colin Latham, with Robin Cooper advising. The first few years it was run on the deck of two truck trailers. A demonstration by Godfrey Bowen was the first introduction to shearing at the show. One of the original judges who helped get the show going was Everard Morice. A shed was built near the stop banks of the Otara River until the Council took over the grounds and it was shifted in 1985 to the present site. In the weeks following the 1988 show this shed was burnt down, with the A&P Show losing all its equipment (jumps, seating, etc). Before the 1989 show the present shed was built on the old site. The show used to clash with the Golden Shears every third year until the BOP Shows settled for fixed weekends for their shows. This meant the locals really had to support the show shearing in one or more events to keep it running when clashing with the Shears. For many years there wasn't enough shearers to run both senior and open events so these were combined as open. Robin Cooper, Bill Gaskill and Dave Stansbury organised, competed, and judged at the show from 1973 until pulling the pin 2005/2006 season. The organising committee put in a big effort for the Centennial Show (1997) with advertising at events and increasing prize money. It paid off on the day with the committee overwhelmed by the response by shearers from Gisborne to Dannevirke, Te Kuiti and Bay of Plenty. Juniors – two, Intermediate – nine, Senior – 11 (one an intermediate shearer), Open – 22 (six senior shearers). Robin Kidd, who was our announcer on the day, gave a demonstration of blade shearing which was a real highlight with the shearers and crowd. ***(By June Gaskill)***















Faces from the Opotiki A&P Shears 1974-2003. Above: The 1997 Open finalists at the A&P Centennial Show: John Kirkpatrick, Dean Ball, Steven Cooper, Earl Paewai, Rei Rangiawha and Alan Brabant. Left column descending: Hugh McCarroll, Beeps Weehi, Steven Cooper, Andrew Deverall, Dig Balme. Next: David Hodge, John Kirkpatrick, Keith Wilson. Middle: Jamie Fleming, Pura Ngarangione. Right descending: Hawi Kopua, Alan MacDonald, Rei Rangiawha, Rangi Nikora, Koro Mullins (and Mavis). Note: Apart from the group image, photos are from venues other than Opotiki.)

David 'Daffy' Ryan tribute

His name was David but everyone called him 'Daffy' – the Australian shearing champion David Ryan, who died in January 2023 at the age of 77. Daffy will be remembered for many feats with handpiece in hand – Australian champion 1979; numerous Victorian State titles; long-time Australian representative; world record-setting merino lamb shearer, to name just a few. All of which added up to his induction to the Australian Shearing Hall of Fame in 2019.

But perhaps the "thing" Daffy should best be remembered for is the part that he, with brothers John and Mark Conlan, all Victorians, played in finally dismantling the Australian Workers' Union' attitude (extreme opposition to) the use of wide combs. Mark Conlan related a brief version of the story for this writer in *Top Class Wool Cutters* (Shearing Heritage Publications, 1996): Mark had gone to Western Australia (where wide combs were accepted) and shorn in a competition using wide gear. He came home to find the Union had banned him from all competitions in the eastern states.

Not content to take that lying down, Mark, John and David Ryan organised Australia's first non-Union competition, at the Victorian town of Beaufort.

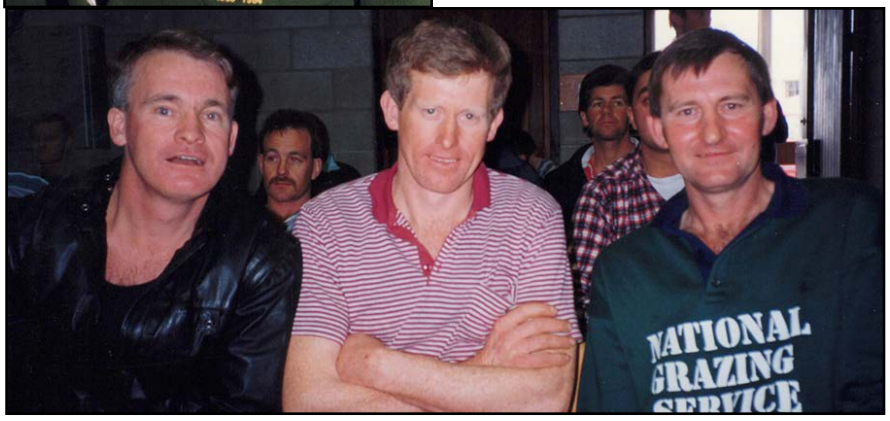
"The town of about 2000 people swelled to 5000 on the day, we shore under police protection and unionists threw coke cans full of water at the shearers and judges. The situation was bloody frightening, I can tell you," Mark said.



"Three Melbourne television crews turned up to film the action and, afterwards, we were escorted out of Beaufort by the police, with about 300 [non-competition] angry shearers behind us. The police took us as far as Ballarat."

And that day, Mark Conlan concluded, was the first step towards the 60 to 70 open competitions then held in Australia, and to the process which enabled representatives from all states to vie for a place in Australian teams.

Australian writer Terry Sim (*Sheep Central*) interviewed David Ryan in 2019, prior to his induction into the Australian Hall of Fame. While the accolades that came his way in a long career were nice to have, the thing that gave him most pleasure was was competing with his peers in the shearing sheds and being able to execute his plans on the board, and in life.



Top and Above: *David Ryan (right) with John Conlan and Mark Conlan (the infamous 'Beaufort trio') at Alexandra in 1993 during the world merino shearing championships.*

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"That was to achieve what I wanted to achieve in being a shearer that could shear for years and years and not be put on the scrap heap. To have enough to look after the family – and I couldn't do that if I shore 100 a day," the 73 year-old said. "I saw too many shearers around me in those days that were still shearing 100 a day and they were 60 years-old. They were still battling and they probably hadn't shorn more than that in their career and I know they had nothing."

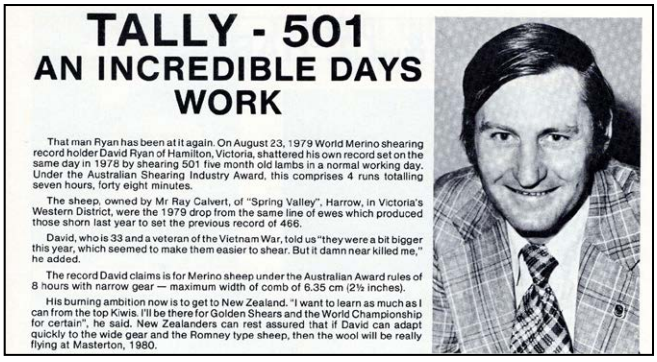
David Ryan had been born and raised at Balmoral, Victoria, and began shearing when he was 16. He'd planned to retire at about 45 years-old, but worked on until he was 51 years-old, after shearing and competing with narrow and wide combs at the highest level across Australia and in New Zealand.

He was driven to do more than his fellow shearers on the board and achieved this to become a gun shearer in the days when there were no training programmes, by planning his approach to each job," he told Terry Sim. Good shearing was all about good planning.

"You have to plan all this stuff. A lot of shearers just go home, go to the pub, whatever, but they don't plan, 'how am I going to approach these sheep, what am I going to do with them – how am I going to beat Harry or Bill, how am I going to get better,' he said.

"So, I just looked at other people, watched the better ones, and then took little bits and pieces, changed a few things myself and they started to work. You've got to use your brain, otherwise you will never be a good shearer," he said. "No-one ever showed me one thing about how to shear. I taught hundreds of people just before I retired, but no-one ever taught me."

David Ryan made his mark on 23 August 1978 when he shore 466 six month old Merino lambs with narrow combs. Exactly one year later he pushed that tally up to 501, again using narrow gear. Fast forward fifteen years later, to September 1994, he shore 625 merino lambs with wide combs, working alongside Trevor Bacon.



TALLY - 501
AN INCREDIBLE DAYS WORK

That man Ryan has been at it again. On August 23, 1979 World Merino shearing record holder David Ryan of Hamilton, Victoria, shattered his own record set on the same day in 1978 by shearing 501 five month old lambs in a normal working day. Under the Australian Shearing Industry Award, this comprises 4 runs totalling seven hours, forty eight minutes.

The sheep, owned by Mr Ray Calvert, of "Spring Valley", Harrow, in Victoria's Western District, were the 1979 drop from the same line of ewes which produced those shorn last year to set the previous record of 466.

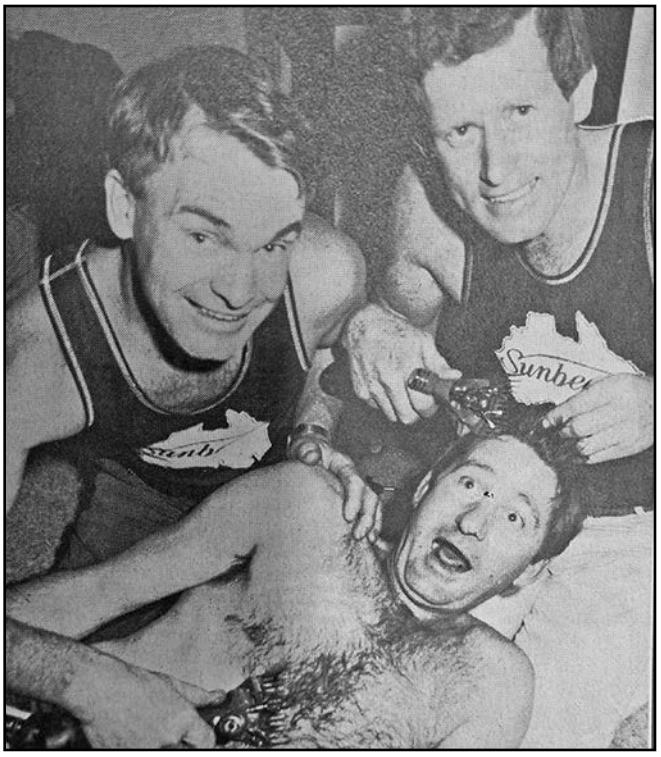
David, who is 33 and a veteran of the Vietnam War, told us "they were a bit bigger this year, which seemed to make them easier to shear. But it damn near killed me," he added.

The record David claims is for Merino sheep under the Australian Award rules of 8 hours with narrow gear — maximum width of comb of 6.35 cm (2½ inches).

His burning ambition now is to get to New Zealand. "I want to learn as much as I can from the top Kiwis. I'll be there for Golden Shears and the World Championship for certain", he said. New Zealanders can rest assured that if David can adapt quickly to the wide gear and the Romney type sheep, then the wool will be really flying at Masterton, 1980.

By the time he was 20, David was doing 250 a day and then his shearing aspirations went on hold when he was called up to do two years national service in the Australian army. His term included one year on active service in Vietnam. ["An interesting experience!"]

With that duty concluded, Daffy had ideas of joining the Police Force, but on his way to sign up he passed the office of the Graziers Co-op Shearing Company Limited (Grazcos), went in and got his first shearing job after leaving the army.



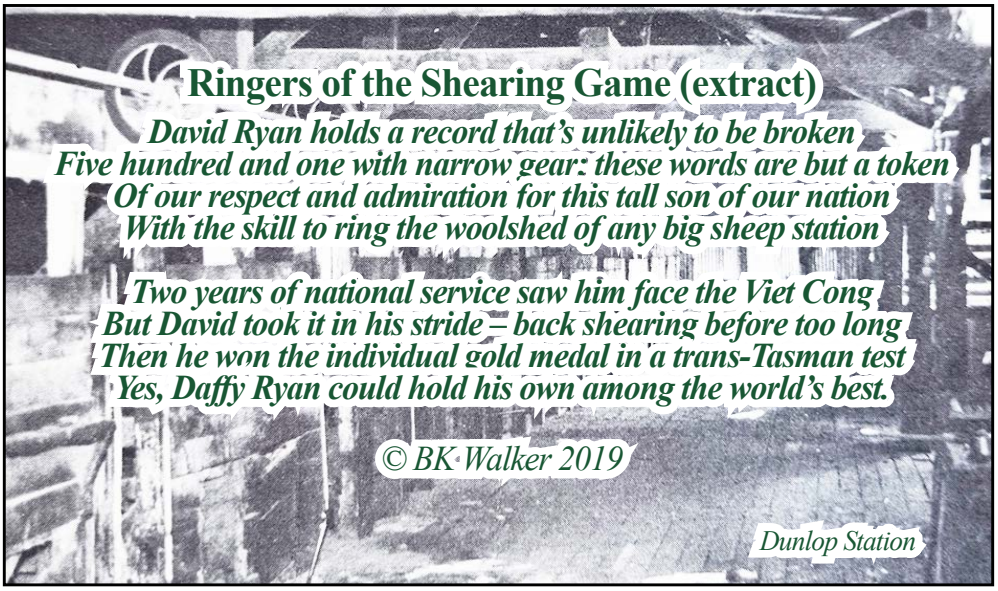
Above: *'The Beaufort Trio' in more jovial mood. John and Mark Conlan about to give David Ryan a trim with some wide gear.*

If the office hadn't been there, he would have been in the Police Force, he told Terry Sim. And all those fine achievement with a handpiece would not have happened.

Following that time spent in the army, David also spent 35 years of his life as a dedicated "legatee', a supporter of Legacy, an organisation that grew in the aftermath of World War I to support war veterans and their families. First in Victoria, and then for the past 20 years or more when he moved to Wangaling Beach, Queensland and became associated with the Far North Queensland branch, from which he received a Certificate of Appreciation in December 2022.

David 'Daffy' Ryan is survived by his wife Regina ('Gina') and grown children, Justin and Megan.

(Des Williams)



Ngaio Hanson's world experience

By Des Williams

Ngaio Hanson came home from the world championships in Scotland earlier this year with a feeling that she can now bring a greater level of composure to her performance in shearing sports woolhandling.

By her own admission, she had always felt a 'little bit panicky' in the competition arena – competing in front of crowds of people had always made her nervous. But qualifying second into the world championships semifinals and making the Royal Highland All-Nations top-six has enhanced her self-belief that she rightly belonged in that international company. Despite the fact that the northern hemisphere style of woolhandling is so different to New Zealand's methods.

It was also very helpful to Ngaio that she had plenty of family support with her – Mum (Lea-Anne) and older sister Emaraina, as well as husband Steven and their three children, Heidi (12), Lana (11) and Soren (7) all made the trip to Scotland with her. And the friends and family left at home were fantastic with their calls and messages of support.

"Mum and Emaraina came along to help look after the children while we were preparing for the championships. Plus my younger sisters Ana and Marika were already in Scotland, working for the season, so when they all got together I had my own little 'cheer squad' supporting me and that was so helpful.

"We managed to get to three competitions before the world championships – I went to Lysfasi in Wales and finished fifth; then to the Three Counties Show in England where I did no good at all, and finally to the All Nations in Edinburgh."

Now aged 34, Ngaio hails from the Eketahuna-based Braddick whanau. Both parents (James and Lea-Anne) had previously worked for Bill Morrison. Then James spent some time shearing open sheds by himself before developing his own shearing run about 1998.

"I was about 10-years-old when Dad started his run. Then Steven and I took over the business about 13 years ago and we now operate three gangs in the Manawatu/ Wairarapa districts in the busy time, and usually two gangs when things are quieter.

"Dad used to shear at the competitions himself so he was really keen for us to get involved. Mum had worked for Bill Morrison and she'd entered one woolhandling competition before the children started arriving. At the moment she is learning to be a woolhandling judge.

"There are six of us Braddick children with Emaraina the oldest, I'm next, followed by Hemi, Ruka, Ana and Marika. We have all taken part in the competitions in recent years."

Although she didn't realise it at the time, Ngaio's long road to a place in the New Zealand team began as a 16-year-old at Dannevirke in 2008. That led her to enter Masterton's Golden Shears the same season, where she finished second in the junior final won by Jamie McLean of Taihape.



Above: *New Zealand's team at the world championships in Scotland. Back left: Alan Oldfield, Tony Dobbs, Rowland Smith and Leon Samuels. Front: Ronny King (manager), Candy Hiri and Ngaio Hanson.*

In 2009 and 2010 Ngaio travelled to Scotland for some overseas work experience – a fortuitous choice of countries! Prior to the second trip she made the Golden Shears senior woolhandling final, in which she finished fourth behind Larnie Morrell, Choppy Pattison and Maryanne Baty.

It was during her time in the United Kingdom in 2010 that Ngaio first competed at the Royal Highland Show. There was a British rule that required any/all New Zealanders to enter the open grade so, while she was still a senior at home (New Zealand), she didn't have any other choice but to try her luck in the big league. "I'd just gone to the Show because I was working for Scottish contractor Will Dickson

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at Lothian and Borders, which is only about 40 minutes from the Showgrounds. It was prior to the world championships in Wales and New Zealand team members Keryn Herbert and Sheree Alabaster were also there competing."

She hardly knew either of them, except by name, and didn't know anything about New Zealand teams or opportunities for representation, but she finished second to 'a Scottish girl' [Leanne Bertram] and Sheree was placed third. She decided after having a friendly chat with Keryn and Sheree that she might try to follow in their footsteps.

With the arrival of her first child, Heidi, in 2011 and Lana a year or so later, Ngaio had to put the travel and the competitions on hold awhile. But she was back for the New Zealand championships at Te Kuiti in 2015 where she came within a third of a point of beating Joel Henare in the open final. Younger sister Ana produced a convincing win in the senior woolhandling final that year.

"When it came to the circuit events leading up to choosing the 2023 New Zealand team, I wasn't really all that serious at first and, in fact, I'd been thinking about giving up the shows altogether. But then sister Ema suggested we do them together, sharing the travel, so I said I'd do a couple to start with. Then I started to do alright so of course I had to carry on.

"Then when I made the top eight for the semifinals at Masterton, and the top four for the finals, the chance to represent New Zealand suddenly seemed within my grasp. It was unbelievable hearing my name called out as a member of the team but it was ever so close, with Candy Hiri winning





Top: *Ngaio Hanson at the New Zealand championships in 2015, finishing second to Joel Henare in the open final.* ***Above:*** *Ngaio the contender at Great Raihania Shears, 2023*



Above: *Members of the Ngaio Hanson 'Cheer Squad' at the world championships – sisters Marika, Emaraina and Ana Braddick pictured at Geyserland Shears 2015 when they made the junior, open and senior woolhandling finals, respectively.*

the selection final by about half a point, and I was just another fraction of a point ahead of Foonie Waihape."

"My last visit to Scotland in 2010 seemed so long ago and I'd always thought I'd never get the chance to return. So going back this year it was great to revisit some of those places with my husband and family and I even got to do a little bit of wool work before the championships."

Golden Shears 2023 also proved memorably successful for other members of the Braddick family, with brother Hemi fourth in the open final, sister Ana third in the open woolhandling; the East Coast team (Hemi, Ruka, Marika and Ana) won the YFC teams event and Ngaio herself finished third in the North Island woolhandling circuit final.

Ngaio looks back on the world championships as a great learning experience. She and Candy Hiri were arguably the least experienced team to represent New Zealand since the teams competition was introduced in 2000, with neither having previously been to a world championships or major international competition.

"Obviously we were hoping to do better than we did. We flew over there hoping to get into the final and the fact we didn't do that was the low point of the trip. But, we get over the disappointment, learn from the experience, move on stronger and wiser and hope to do better next time.

"Their systems are so different from ours and southern hemisphere contestants have to come to terms with that when competing in the northern hemisphere. It's pretty much all to do with the fleece roll and they are amazing at it."

Ngaio is conscious of the fact that she hasn't (yet!) won an open woolhandling final in New Zealand; she has that one appearance in the New Zealand championships final to her credit but so far a place in the final at Golden Shears has eluded her: "Yes, I must admit that is now an aim of mine, but a first placing in any open show would be nice!"

So far this season Ngaio has made finals at Wairarapa (third), Manawatu (fourth) and Central Hawkes Bay (second). She also made the semis at Poverty Bay Shears in October and now looks forward to making the most of her opportunities in the New Year.

And hoping some of that new-found composure she brought home from Scotland will result in her quietly ticking off a few more major woolhandling 'ambitions'.

* * * * * *

‘North to Alaska ...’

By Hilary Gietzen

The thought of going to Alaska to shear sheep didn’t come at once, rather one thought or idea led to another, particularly with the idea of going to Alaska on a motorcycle.

While in my last year of high school, I bought a new motorcycle, and used every excuse to drive it. When the school year had finished, I took a big trip, crossing the United States from coast to coast. That was quite a trip, especially for an 18-year-old. The next year, I’d had enough of the motorcycle, and it sat in the garage. I sold the motorcycle later that year.

I never drove a motorcycle again for about twenty years, until my wife bought a new Harley-Davidson Sportster. We drove the motorcycle on a few short trips the first year, and after that, it pretty much just sat in the garage.

When the Covid scare came, things were a bit different. I ended up driving that motorcycle on a lot of day trips. I went to places within my state (North Dakota) that I had never had time to go to in the past. On one particular trip, I had the thought of driving that motorcycle to Alaska.

I had mentioned that idea to a gentleman at the Harley-Davidson dealership. He said, ‘Oh my gosh, that would be a very long trip on a Sportster.’ He said that I needed a better motorcycle.

I mentioned the idea to my wife, of perhaps buying a better motorcycle. She said that if it was a Harley-Davidson, and it was red, that would be okay. The rest was up to me. I sought advice from some of my sheep shearer friends who have motorcycles, and others who had made long trips and the decision was made to buy a new, top of the line touring motorcycle. It came from Harley-Davidson, and it was indeed red.

The Covid scare continued, and I was refused entry into Canada without a Covid vaccination. I absolutely refused to get the ‘clot shot’, and therefore I didn’t go to Alaska. I rather took other trips throughout the United States. After two more years passed, the Canadian government realized that they were losing too much revenue in sporting events, and they admitted that the clot shot didn’t really stop the spread of Covid, and they opened their borders.

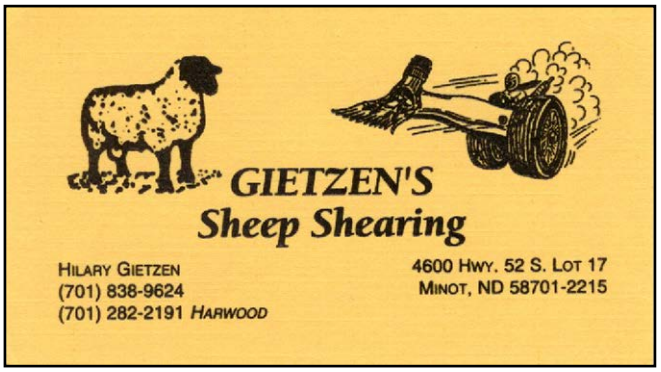
At this point I had not yet found sheep to shear in Alaska, but I started to search more diligently for work. I had made many inquiries, all ending with dead ends. Finally I was referred to a sheep shearer from California who spends time in Alaska.

I made numerous attempts to contact Arthur, but I couldn’t get a hold of him. And when I did, he didn’t have time to talk to me. Finally, we had a visit, but he didn’t really want me to shear his sheep since he is a sheep shearer. However, Arthur did invite me to spend time on his ranch.

Arthur’s ranch is out on the Aleutian Islands, almost 1000 miles southwest of Anchorage, Alaska. There is civilization and public transportation as far as Dutch Harbor. From there, access is only available by private airplane or private boats.

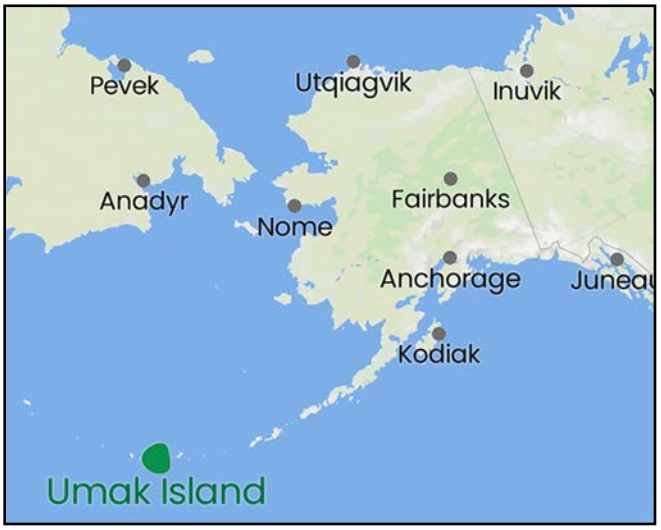
The ranch was started in 1918 by a corporation which owned a woollen mill. Of course, they were after the wool, not necessarily the lambs. It was later sold to another corporation. Sometime later the ranch was sold again. This time one of the hired men bought the ranch. He owned it for quite some time until he retired. Arthur was a hired man, and he took over management of the ranch.

I packed the motorcycle with a tent and sheep shearing gear.









It was fully loaded. I departed North Dakota headed for the west coast to board a ferry, making numerous stops visiting friends and family. All was going as planned, and soon I was on a three-and-one-half day ferry ride. I disembarked the ferry at 1:00am in the rain at Haines, Alaska. It was a sleepless night, but when Canadian customs were open, I drove through a portion of the Yukon Territory and back into Alaska. I arrived at Anchorage in time to store the motorcycle at the Harley-Davidson dealership and catch a flight to Dutch Harbor.

Arthur had intended to be at the ranch by this time, but he wasn't able to catch a ride for the last three weeks. So, he was able to meet me at the airport. When he arrived at the airport, he just stared at me, looking at me from top to bottom. He knew that we would be living in close quarters, something that I was not yet aware of. I was looking him over as well, but I hope that I was more discreet.

Since it was an ugly rainy day at Unalaska, the village near Dutch Harbor, we went to Arthur's quarters. When in Unalaska, Arthur stays in a twenty-foot shipping container. There is no electricity or water. And the place is full of stuff, as Arthur lives the western lifestyle.

As I was visiting with Arthur, I was sensing that Arthur is a religious man with a big heart. I also figured out that Arthur likes a hearty meal, so I knew that I was in good company. However, I am also sensing that things don't always go as planned for Arthur. He has been giving me reasons why he hasn't yet made it to his ranch, and why he is not yet prepared to make the trip.

Among his many stories, one particular story really caught my attention. He told me that a few years ago, he had some other shearers there, and they pulled the pin before they ever sheared the first sheep. Then he went on to say that he couldn't blame them, as the rats had taken over the house, but if they would have stayed just one more day, everything would've been just fine. At that moment, I looked over where there were two beds, and sure enough, there was evidence of rats.

I didn't know who these shearers were, as they were from the west coast of the USA, and I am from the north-central part of the country. It appeared that these shearers came to help them build some fences and shear his sheep.

Arthur had made arrangements to ride on a fishing boat to the ranch. I helped Arthur prepare to go to the ranch. When he leaves Unalaska this time, he will not be back to civilization for several months. The boat was delayed on departing, but that has given Arthur more time to get prepared for the trip. After waiting in Unalaska for four days, I was heading to this legendary place.

I have never in my life spent much time on a boat, and when I have been on a boat, I didn't really like it. Anyway, this boat took off into the open seas as darkness was approaching. We were intending this trip to take about thirteen hours, and it didn't take much time for me to lose my lunch. For the experienced fishermen, it was rough seas. As for me, it couldn't have been worse. It was impossible for me to get any more sick than I already was.

We were arriving at the ranch as the morning sun was giving me a view. The ranch is located in the area of an undeveloped harbor. We came through a small opening into an area of water protected on all sides from rough seas in times of bad weather. From the distance, I could see the ranch house and numerous other buildings. I noticed that all of these buildings were painted uniformly in a reddish-brown colour. It looked really nice. The captain anchored his boat and we went ashore on









his skiff. We intended to get Arthur's boat to load the supplies to bring ashore.

Once ashore, I could see that these beautifully painted buildings were not painted at all, but rather severely rusted, giving them their colour. The rust was such that fasteners were coming loose and the steel siding and roofs were coming off. The buildings were in bad shape to the point that some of them were unusable.

The shearing shed was very well designed for its time. It reminded me of some older shearing sheds in New Zealand. There was originally five stands with a line drive. The catch pens were very small with burlap wool sacks being used as a curtain. There was an old American-made motor and shaft hanging there. But at this time, it is not at all ready for shearing.

There were sections of the roof that were missing, and with the abundance of rain, there wasn't a spot on the board that was fit for shearing. The wool from shearing last year was scattered throughout the entire area. The hinges on every gate were severely rusty, some beyond repair. Many of the wooden gates and pens were broken down. The curtains on the catch pens were rotten and unusable. So, to sum up what I was seeing, the elements of weather and time had taken the fun out of dysfunctional.

So the first order of business was to get the supplies from the fishing boat to shore. Then move everything from the rocky shore up above the high tide line. We came to the house, and the door was boarded shut. After removing the outside boards, the inside door wouldn't open because the ceiling was falling down.

Once inside, if you could imagine, I was looking for rats and their evidence. The house was a mess with everything in it except what I had expected, rats and their evidence. As I was walking from room to room, I could hear a faint squealing sound. I was looking everywhere, trying to find the origin of the sounds. To my embarrassment, the sounds were coming from the high water boots that I was wearing.

The weather was really nice for getting settled into the house and starting on the necessary maintenance for preparing to shear. The projects were endless, so they continued into the next day. It was another nice day. Not hot, not cold, and plenty of sunshine. However, that was soon to end. During the night, I could hear rain dripping into the many containers scattered throughout the house where the roof was leaking. Thoughts of gathering the sheep were no longer a possibility.

I really wasn't disappointed because the adverse weather gave me the opportunity to do more maintenance without wishing that I was doing something else. I was removing hinges and other materials from every place possible in the attempt of getting the shearing shed prepared with one good stand. Keep in mind, there were no more resources or tools available than what was already there. With another day's time, things were looking much better, but the weather wasn't looking good at all.

There was no need to wake up early, although there were projects to do. Once Arthur realized that I had the ability to do such things as overhaul a carburettor without parts and minimal tools, the projects just kept coming. By the end of the day, I had a lot of maintenance completed. Arthur mentioned that the shearing shed hadn't been in such good shape for many years. The weather was looking like it might improve.

Arthur and I loaded the two four-wheelers with extra gasoline and a midday lunch, and we set out for gathering the sheep. The beautiful landscape of the Aleutian Islands was becoming more evident that, although beautiful, is not always accessible.









The ground was rough with endless amounts of gullies that were impassable with the four-wheelers. After several hours of searching the island, we located the sheep. It was a nice sight, seeing the feral sheep grazing so peacefully.

Arthur and myself had been around sheep all of our lives, so we have an idea of how to handle them. However, I can't really say that I have experience with feral sheep. These sheep didn't really want to flock together as I expected. They would break off in a group of a dozen or so, then later break off into groups of three or four sheep. It seemed best to take what we could get and leave the rest behind for another gathering.

All in all, things went very well. We ended up with more sheep than we had expected. When we had them confined to a small holding pasture, Arthur came to me and shook my hand. He said that he had never had a gathering go so well. Although it wasn't late in the day, we quit working and grabbed fishing poles with an evening meal in mind. What a relaxing feeling. The shed and equipment were all maintained and prepared, the sheep were confined, the weather was looking good, and there was fresh salmon on the dinner table.

The next morning arrived with beautiful weather and a lovely sunrise. The sheep were not yet dry enough to shear, so we decided to go for another gathering. It was much easier to locate the remaining sheep, but the renegades were left behind. When we saw the sheep, we drove around the mountain to head them in the best direction. Within a short time of driving around the mountain, the sheep had disappeared. After a considerable amount of time spent on searching, we found them hidden in a gully. I have never known sheep to do such a thing. After a couple of attempts of gathering and them scattering, Arthur suggested that we go home and try for another day. I agreed with him and suggested that we start shearing the sheep that we had already gathered.

After lunch, we started shearing. I didn't feel that I was shearing very fast, but it was hard for Arthur to keep up with the wrangling. He told me that he had never seen his sheep sheared so very clean with so little commotion going on. There were very few nicks on the sheep, and there were very few second cuts. When Arthur told me that, it made me wonder what goes on when Arthur shears, and what goes on when Arthur works with the other shearers in his traveling.

We finished shearing the remaining sheep that were gathered on the next day. There were more sheep than we expected, which of course made Arthur happy. We were sorting out the lambs and any sheep with long tails. It is also a good opportunity to sort out any other sheep that Arthur intends to butcher.

I helped Arthur cut the tails off of the replacement ewe lambs and put the butcher lambs and any other butcher sheep in a separate spot. The weather continued to be reasonably good, and we were intending on gathering the remaining sheep tomorrow.

We set out with the four-wheelers with more determination in mind. Once again, it was relatively easy to locate these sheep. But this time, the sheep seemed to have their batteries charged up. They would scatter in every direction with every opportunity that they had. They would run to the ocean, going down embankments that were impossible for the four-wheeler. I would climb down to the ocean and chase them by foot. That in itself was dangerous, as one slip of my footing would have made for a bad fall. However, at one point, Arthur had a group of sheep near the holding area at the same time that I did. It looked good as the sheep were about to converge and mingle.











However, without any reason or notice, both groups scattered, and went in the wrong direction.

I wasn't about to let a small group of sheep win, and I was in hot pursuit after them. I didn't think it was possible for a sheep to outrun a four-wheeler, but with the rough terrain, they were able to. I was driving in a determined but reckless fashion, as I didn't want to lose all my efforts for the day. I was climbing and descending steep portions of the mountains. At one point I had the four-wheeler stuck, setting on its nose. I was able to get it out of that situation, only to get stuck in a ravine later on. I didn't have the necessary energy remaining in me to get the four-wheeler out of the gully. I had few options, so I set off on foot towards the quarters.

I may not have used my best judgment getting into the situation, but at least I was smart enough to take plenty of photos marking my location. I climbed up the mountain behind me and noted in my mind the landmarks to head towards as I hiked towards the quarters, going up the mountains, and down the valleys. It was a several-hour hike. I wasn't concerned of any danger with the exception of the feral bulls that I had spotted earlier.

Upon arriving in the area of the quarters, I found Arthur. The group of sheep that he had escaped him as well. It was discouraging for both of us, and with both of us being exhausted, we called it a day. The next day, we set out retrieving the four-wheeler. Although I had numerous pictures to help me find the location, it was hard to find it. Once there and full of energy, it was easy to get it out of the ravine.

Arthur told me that I shouldn't take such chances, and I agreed with him. I decided that it wasn't worth the risk to get hurt in gathering the sheep. This was the end of the shearing, and from now on, Arthur and I focused on butchering whatever he intended to butcher.

I was looking for every opportunity possible to head back to Dutch Harbor, and later Anchorage, but there weren't any fishing boats coming into that harbor. And the weather wasn't fit for getting a private airplane in to pick me up.

There was plenty to do while I was there. There was never a dull moment, but I was certainly anxious to be on my way. And although I am not a fisherman, it was nice to go fishing on a daily basis and enjoy the catch. I was able to see the sights of some abandoned World War II ruins. I always kept myself ready to leave on short notice if a boat would arrive in the area.

Five days had passed and early one morning I spotted a boat in the harbor area. I was out there at a moment's notice, and in a short while I was sailing on the Bering Sea. Upon arriving at Dutch Harbor, it was easy to book a flight back to Anchorage because most of the fishing traffic was going from Anchorage.

It was nice to arrive at Anchorage and be back to civilization and telephone and internet service. I picked up the motorcycle and continued touring inner Alaska, eventually arriving at Fairbanks. From there I set out on the famous but lightly-traveled Alcan Highway.

I was pleasantly surprised by the beauty of the famous highway. However, I was not able to travel nearly as far as I thought I could, due to the rough conditions and the winding roads. The villages are very far apart, and it was necessary for me to plan my fuel stops. At one point I arrived at my planned fuel stop in the late afternoon. It was too early in the day to stop for the night, but the next village was about 350 miles (560 km) away. I found a fuel stop and a campground near the midpoint. As I was approaching at a perfect time of the evening, I saw some bears near the driveway.









The campground was not fenced as I expected it to be. When I asked the gentleman about that situation, he told me that they were black bears, and if they approached, I should just clap my hands, and they would run away. I was the only person in the tent area, but I saw numerous campers in a different area.

I looked over the situation more closely and eyed up some of the people in the campground. I decided that if I encountered a bear, I would run into that campground. I was confident that I was able to run faster than some of the others in the campground. With that assurance in my mind, I had a good night's rest.

Along the way, I contacted some of my sheep shearing friends and acquaintances. We had a wonderful social gathering in the Calgary, Alberta area. It really added to my trip. I continued along my way, passing numerous farms and towns that I remembered from shearing in Saskatchewan in the past. It brought back many pleasant memories.

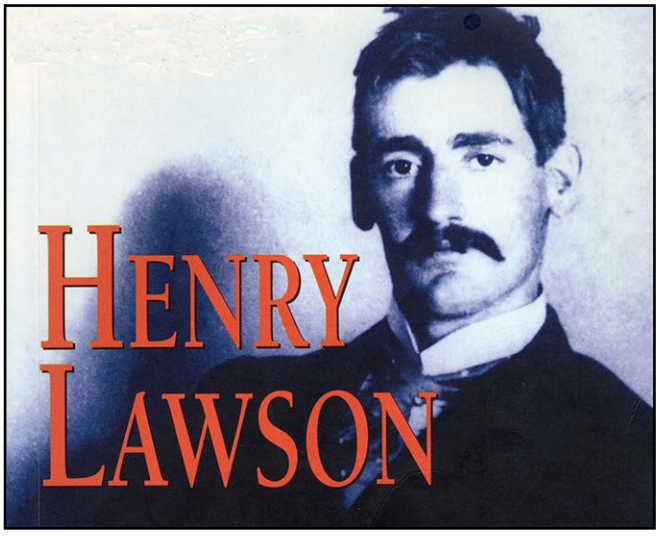
Upon arrival at my home in Minot, North Dakota, I took a picture and contacted my family. At that point, they admitted to me that when I left on that motorcycle, they thought they would never see or hear from me again. That put the missing piece of the puzzle together when my daughter wanted me to update my will and purchase life insurance before I departed.

If the opportunity to do the same ever came to me again, I would take the opportunity in the time of a heartbeat.

* * * * * *







Henry (the balladeer) was here

It's just gone 130 years [September 1893] since New Zealand's Government signed a new Electoral Act into law, making "us" the first self-governing country in the world to "enshrine in law the right for women to vote in parliamentary elections."

The new law followed more than a decade of action and petitioning by the suffrage movement across New Zealand, during which nearly 32,000 signatures were gathered and presented to Parliament. The Electoral Act 1893 was passed as a result of that petition and the campaigning that preceded it.

Millions of words have been written about this milestone in our country's history, but possibly one of the longer forgotten tributes was penned by the great Australian bush poet, Henry Lawson, who made two trips to New Zealand during the 1890s. The first as a single man and the second when he was married (and a son, Jim, was born in Wellington).

Henry Lawson was perhaps better known in the shearing sheds of Australasia during the late 1800s for classics such as *Middleton's Rouseabout, The Shearer's Dream, The Lights of Cobb & Co; The Last Review* and others, but this is how he captured this piece of historic New Zealand (World!) legislation:

The Morning of New Zealand

In the morning of New Zealand we should sing a *Marseillaise!*
We should sing a hymn of triumph, we should sing a hymn of praise
For the women are enobled! The narrow days are o'er,
And the Fathers of New Zealand shall be famous evermore.

Men, you cannot comprehend it! Men, you do not understand
That the actions of your leaders have immortalised the land!
For the filthy gods of ages from our shoulders shall be hurled,
And the influence of women revolutionise the world!

Many years may pass in error ere the nations realise;
And the South awhile is silent with the silence of surprise;
But the victories are coming, and the tribute is to come
In a roar of exultation from the hearts of Christendom.

'Tis the glory of New Zealand that her sons were first to see
That there never was a free land where the women were not free!
Time shall hear the nations asking why it was not ever thus,
For the freedom of our women comes with liberty to us.

(Wellington, New Zealand, December 1893)



'A handpiece shall not weary them'













One of the Bigger Jobs

It was recognised as being one of the bigger jobs on the annual programme (therefore it took some time), shearing the hoggets at Hodge's Pikowai in November. So, naturally they brought in the 'A'ged team – had to book them twelve months in advance.

They started with morning smoko, had a run before lunch, another short run after lunch, then some drinks, then they all ran home. The squad, pictured left from left: David Hodge (61), Edwin Perry (74), Hugh McCarroll (84), Peter McCabe (74), Con Bryenton (82) and Carol Hodge (59). Absent from photo, Lorraine McCabe (72). We think the numbers in brackets are their individual tallies, averaging 72.33. As one said, *'I'm glad we only do this once a year.'*









Above: *From left: Jack Fagan, Sir David and Lady Wendy Fagan, Ken and Robin Fagan and Mrs June Fagan, aged 98, family matriarch.*

Te Kuiti's Legends

A project at least ten years in the making came to fruition at Te Kuiti on 24 November 2023 with the opening of a 'Legend's Gallery' on the King Country town's main street. The gallery is about 80 metres south of the Sir Colin Meads statue and the 'Pinetree' again features in this latest development, as does Sir David Fagan (pictured above).

As the site's billboard explains, the Legends Gallery "honours residents who in their field of endeavour have significantly influenced our local, national or global communities."

The six honoured residents are featured in descending order of age:

Dame Rangimarie Hetet (1892-1995), renowned master weaver (tohunga raranga);

Les Munro (1919-2015), World War II bomber pilot and a member of the 'Dambuster' squadron [the venue for the New Zealand Shearing Championships is named in his honour];

Rt Hon. Jim Bolger (b1935), former Prime Minister of New Zealand and Chancellor at Waikato University;

Dr Koro Wetere (1935-2018), long-serving and influential Labour member of Parliament and Cabinet Minister;

Sir Colin Meads (1936-2017), All Black 1957-1971, IHC Patron and voted New Zealand's rugby player of the 20th Century;

Sir David Fagan (b1961), world renowned for his exploits with a shearing handpiece and leadership roles in the shearing and wool industry.

And there is still space on the reserve for future additions to the Gallery!



HELP US ALL RAISE OUR GAME IN THE WOOLSHED

Tahi Ngātahi is an online platform that uses video clips to pass on skills and safety tips to farmers, shearing contractors and shearers.

Our aim is to:

- reduce common injuries by 30% and prolong careers
- build a stronger, more skilled workforce
- make shearing more attractive to new entrants.

Tahi Ngātahi's part of wider efforts to revitalise the wool industry and will be integrated into the government's new $1.86m on-job training initiative Kaiaka Wool Industry Training NZ.

Visit www.tahingatahi.co.nz and sign up to show your support for this great industry.

For business support to make the best use of the programme, please contact Bronwyn Campbell at support@tahingatahi.co.nz or 0272436979

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NEW ZEALAND SHEARING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

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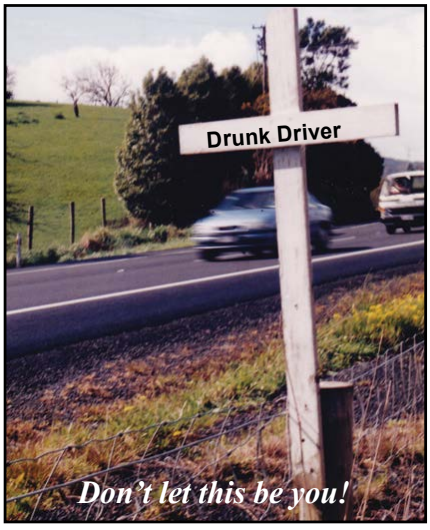




DON'T DO YOUR BACK IN

Learn Your Warm-Ups

Every year over 9,000 days are lost to injury in the wool sector. That's a lot of pain for no gain. Tahi Ngātahi's videos are designed to help everyone raise their game in the shed. You can learn short warm-up routines that help prevent back strains at www.tahingatahi.co.nz. A few extra minutes of simple stretches a day could save your back and boost your wallet.



DON'T BLOW YOUR WRIST

Don't Blow Your Wrist

With main shear looming, now's the time to prepare the body for those big tallies. Blown wrists are really common among shearers who hit the board hard after a bit of a break. Just like the All Blacks wouldn't play a test without a pre-season or any warm-up, you need to make sure you're in good nick before you pick up the handpiece. You can learn simple warm-up routines that help prevent blown wrists at www.tahingatahi.co.nz.



Confirmed World Record Attempts 2023-2024:

Friday 15th December 2023: The two stand and solo Women's 8 hour strong wool lamb records will be attempted by Megan Whitehead and Hannah McColl. Venue to be 'Grant Brothers Tin House', 759 Otapiri-Mandeville Road, Gore, South Island, New Zealand. Referees are: Dave Grant Convener, Australia, Neil Fagan, Robert McLaren, Paul Harris, Alistair Emslie New Zealand.

Tuesday 19th December 2023: Sacha Bond will attempt the women's 9 hour strong wool lamb record at 'Centrehill Station' 611 Centrehill Road, Mossburn, South Island N.Z. Referees are: Dave Grant Convener, Australia, Ronnie King, Alistair Emslie, Robert McLaren, New Zealand.

Saturday 23rd December 2023: The 8 hour two stand and solo strong wool lamb records are to be attempted by Paerata Abraham and Chris Dickson. To take place at 'Whitespurs Farm', 320 Puketiro Road, Masterton, New Zealand. Referees are: Grant Borchardt Convener, Australia, Paul Harris, Neil Fagan, Bart Hadfield, Ronnie King, New Zealand.

Sunday 7th January 2024: Amy Silcock is to attempt the Women's 8 hour strong wool ewe record at 'Ross Na Clonagh Farm', 7 Balance Road, Pahiatua, N.Z. Referees are: Mike Henderson Convener, Australia, Neil Fagan, Bart Hadfield, Ronnie King, New Zealand.

Wednesday 10th January 2024: Catherine Mullooly is to attempt the Woman's solo 8 hour strong wool ewe record at 'Nukuhakari Station', 780 Te Marama Road, Waikawau, King Country, N.Z. Referees are: Andy Rankin Convener, U.K. Neil Fagan, Bart Hadfield, Ronnie King, New Zealand.

Sunday 14th January 2024: A five stand 8 hour strong wool lamb record is to be attempted at 'Campbell's Block' Hokonui Hills, Gore, N.Z. Shearing for Forde Winders Shearing Ltd, shearers are: Max Winders, Trent Howes, Trevor Holland, Ben Boyle, Josef Winders. (Blake Hewes is a reserve). Referees are: Andy Rankin Convener, U.K. Neil Fagan, Bart Hadfield, Ronnie King, Alistair Emslie, Paul Harris, Robert McLaren, New Zealand.

Friday 19th January 2024: Hemi Braddick. Ray Kinsman, Flynn Harvey are to attempt the three stand 8 hour strong wool ewe record at 'Pohuetai Station' 516 Otope Road, Dannevirke, New Zealand Referees are: David Brooker Convener, Australia, Ronny King, Neil Fagan, Alistair Emslie, Bart Hadfield.

Friday 9th February 2024: Sacha Bond is to attempt the Women's 9 hour strong wool ewe record at Centrehill Station, 611 Centrehill Road, Mossburn, Southland. Referees are: Johnny Fraser Convener, United Kingdom. Bart Hadfield, Alistair Emslie, Robert McLaren, New Zealand.

* * * * * *

Jimmy Gibbs, the Gun Shearer

He is known to all the woolmen
Who travel out to the sheds,
The 'Bidgee, Lachlan, Bogan,
Paroo, Darling and Warrego Heads.

He is not a giant in stature
But he's a regular terror to work,
And he is stiil going strong and willing
At 'Toorale' not far from Bourke.

For 28 years he's been cutting
Big tallies of sheep far and wide,
And if many had his record
You couldn't hold them for 'side'.

But he is just plain 'Jimmy'
A jovial and chatty mate.
It's a lesson to see him amble
After sheep in and out of the gate.

He could spin quaint yarns til sundown
Of his sheep, sheds, mates and scores.
And often his tales of the old days
Fill the shearers' huts with roars.

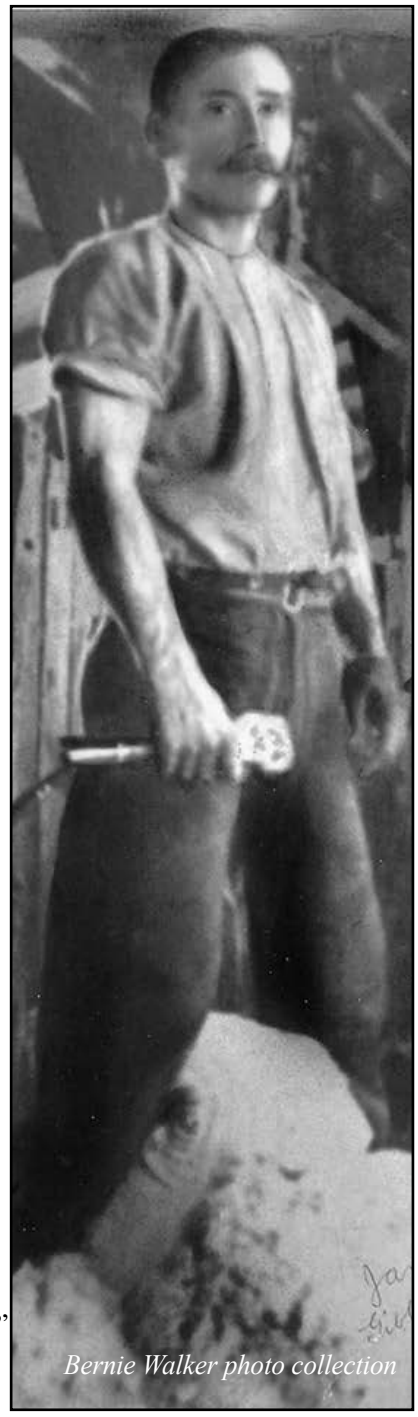
Like Johnny Walker, he's still going strong,
And these are no mulga fibs
The tally board here says plainly
228, the top score by Jimmy Gibbs.

There are mates who help to pace him,
Smart, Snow, Whitely and Moore.
But they are all chums with Jimmy,
Though a bit below his score.

May he live to pen some hundreds
Of sovereigns, aye and more,
And drop the scorching Boggi
And be wealthy instead of poor.

And shearers and men of the future
As they belt wool from wethers' ribs,
Will be telling the tales of old hands,
And be asking 'Did you know Jimmy Gibbs?'

(Jimmy Gibbs 1867-1941)
(Author unknown, 1920.



Bernie Walker photo collection

The farm manager, 'Mr In-between'

By Tony Mathews

Middle management is an unenviable role, being the meat in the sandwich so to speak, especially so when it comes to managing a farm or station. The absentee owner or overseers are more often than not people who wouldn't know the difference between a black current and a bloated cattle tick.

I always found managers more difficult to shear for than owners. If things go wrong, the owner is generally understanding, whereas a manager, being answerable to others, can get very touchy.

One manager who could get more than a little touchy was 'Wildman' Tom Tomlinson. Although not exactly a giant, Wildman Tom was nonetheless big, and presided over what remained of a once-grand station.

The old 12-stand woolshed with its two six-stand boards, now used only four, though the antiquated machinery operating the screw-worm wool press was still in use, but likely not for much longer as the sole remaining person who knew how to maintain its workings was way beyond retirement age.

Still, Wildman Tom ran a tight ship and the station was a credit to his management. Wildman was in an especially difficult position as the station owners, two spinster sisters, actually lived on the place and at least one of them rode about the place wearing a pith helmet, very much in the style of the British Raj, so she no doubt would be asking Wildman Tom why he was not chipping the shearers if she came upon any roughly shorn sheep on her daily ride. For all intents and purposes, Wildman Tom appeared amiable enough so I asked the presser, who had been in the gang for a couple of seasons, why or how Wildman got his name.

'Well,' replied the presser, 'the story I heard is one day a young shepherd did something really stupid, resulting in Wildman losing his temper to the extent he ripped a young tree clean out of the ground and chased after the young fellow, all the while shouting and waving the tree about. Just don't upset him,' the presser advised.

I had no intention of upsetting Wildman Tom for he had the most disconcerting habit of pinning to the wall anyone he spoke to, by placing an arm either side of them, thus his face was only inches away from whoever he was speaking to. In the confines of the shearing board this was hard to avoid.

After sixty years, memories are a bit foggy, but what is certain, there was a young shearer prior to my being sent there who was shearing way beyond his ability, really roughing them out. Wildman Tom pulled this fellow aside and in no uncertain terms told the lad he'd be down the road if he didn't shear them better. Perhaps the boy's knowledge of gear was not the best, or maybe he was out to make money not friends, or possibly just didn't care.

Anyway, a short time later he opened up a lamb pretty badly. It so happened Wildman Tom was standing up by the table and he let out a roar before starting down the board towards the luckless young shearer. Seeing Wildman charging down the board and aware of his reputation, the young shearer threw the lamb aside, switched off and dived out the porthole, yelling, 'Don't worry, I'm going.'

What eventuated after that I'm unaware, except he went alright, and as far as I know, he kept going.

When asked if the station was going to put on a shout at cut out, Wildman replied, 'Too right we are, there is a whole ocean of Adam's Ale out there,' pointing to the nearby sea. 'Might be a bit salty but then you shearers need bit of salt don't you, after all that sweat you've lost. Yeah right, no shout was forthcoming.

During my years shearing I saw more people put down the road by managers than by owners, although it was not always a fair dismissal, mainly a result of gangers not doing their job.

At one eight-stand shed we were crutching hoggets in March when the manager came in and turned the power off before delivering a well-deserved rant that there were ten hamstrung hoggets in the last count out.

The ganger, who was clearly not up to the task, tried to make a lame excuse which the manager silenced by yelling, "And you can shut up for a start because five of them came out of your pen." I believe the contractor lost the shed over it.

Managers and owners don't always get it right either. As a shearer, you know within your heart some sheep are in no condition to be shorn, but you shear them knowing if you don't, someone else will.

One cold September day we were shearing hoggets that had been shorn as lambs six months earlier. The farm was owned by a Dunedin businessman and run by his manager. I had such a bad feeling about the condition of the hoggets, coupled with the weather that was about.

I approached the owner, who had come up to watch proceedings and said, 'You know these hoggets are in no condition to be shorn, they should be left for another couple of months.' He just glared at me and said nothing.

Next morning, the contractor rang me to say six hundred of the hoggets were dead. There was no satisfaction in saying, 'I told you so.' I never heard whether the manager kept his job.

Too many managers and owners discount the opinion of shearers but truly, no one knows the condition of sheep better than they who shear them.

* * * * * *



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