

Shearing

Promoting our industry, sport and people

Number 87: Vol 31, No 2, August 2015
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*Blades shearers' reunion at Omarama
February 2016. See page 34 for details*



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Photo credits: p5, 30 Primary ITO; p7 Jim Godbold; p14/15 Bruce Abbott; p16 Brendon Potae; p17 Hilary Gietzen; p18 Roger Leslie; p19 Chris Brears; p20 Lloyd Holloway; p24/25 Debz Ratima; p29 Dion King/Roger Randle; p31 Raenis Williams; p33 Lena Ropiha & Lydia Hill; p35 Jack Dowd; p36 Liz Brook (Little Ben), Charly Harvey (lego shearer); p37 Carol Hodge; p38 Roger Robbins (saddlebacks), Kirstie Nelson (shed scenes). All others *Shearing* magazine/Last Side Publishing.

**Next edition due 29 November 2015.
Deadline for all material two weeks prior.**

UNDER COVER STORY

Greetings readers and welcome to this August 2015 edition of *Shearing* magazine. We trust the winter is passing quickly (though not before it drops some rain on north Canterbury and other needy districts!)

A brief note about our cover photo: have you ever heard those radio advertisements about 'giant book sales' or 'massive childrens' clothing sales', or even 'huge whitewear sales'? But there were no giant books, no massive children and no huge fridges or freezers to be seen. Just words in the wrong order.

When we heard Peter and Gloria Casserly were organising a jamboree/reunion for shearers, classers, farmers and other friends, we thought to ourselves, 'that will be some 'big blades' occasion'. Which in turn brought to mind this photo taken at Toowoomba 10 years ago. Big blades don't come much bigger than the set being held by John Kennedy, Donny Hammond and 'Casso' himself – and blade shearers don't come much bigger than the photographed trio. Check page 34 for further details about the jamboree and register your interest.

On a more serious note, we again have to pay final tributes to several industry identities who have passed to the Great Beyond. We publish sad farewells in this edition to Joanne Kumeroa, Peter Ratima, Bruce Dodd, Jim Williams and Aussie poet Milton Taylor.

Now (for those who often suggest the magazine needs a centrefold!), we are doing something a little different this edition – our centre spread launches a 'Big Day Out' for shearing. This event – 'a rural telethon' to raise money for the Cancer Society, will take place at Lloyd Holloway's Waitara Station, on 4 January 2016.

A team of 16 shearing guns will come together in the same shed on a unique occasion to shear sheep and provide the basis for a major community event. We provide basic details here and will bring you further details in our November edition.

Finally, we hear tell there were some copies of the April 2015 edition that were printed with pages missing or pages out of order. If you happened to receive a faulty copy, email or call the office (contact details opposite) and we will gladly replace it with a true copy.

Meantime, keep your powder dry and we'll see you at the end of November or early December (we'll be a week later than usual, a move that may become permanent).

*Ka kite ano
Des Williams (editor)*



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Don't worry, be 'App-y' ...

By Anna Lindsay

Get 'app-y' with a fresh approach to learning! Primary ITO and Wool Systems have teamed up to develop an innovative approach for supporting learning in the wool industry.

'We've developed an app that's comprised of three parts – a multi-angle shearing video, a shearing logbook and an entertaining woolhandling game,' explains Robert McCrone from Primary ITO, who was involved in the app's creation.

'We wanted to engage our trainees by utilising new technology. We also know that people in our industry are constantly moving which is what spurred us on to investigate the option of an app.'

The app features an interactive video that provides a view of shearing positions from multiple angles. 'Apart from actual in-person training, it's difficult to show the correct shearing positions in detail.

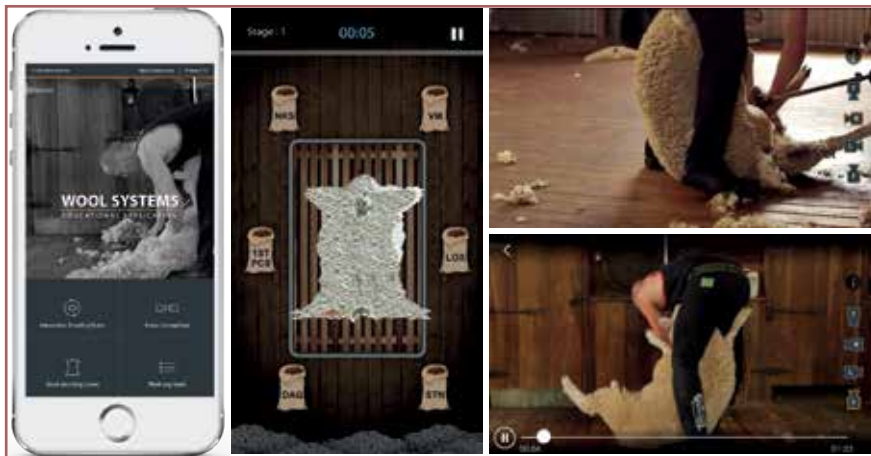
'For example, a simple diagram or video of a sheep being shorn will not properly identify the positioning of the shearers' knees. The goal of the video is to show this highly complex task that involves several manoeuvres and body positions,' Robert explains.

A comparison video allows users to compare shearing styles and positions with those of an expert. This provides the ability to record or use a video of themselves shearing a sheep and then view it side-by-side next to the professional shearing video. Trainees can then compare techniques and body positioning in order to hone certain aspects of their shearing technique.

The 'Work Log Book' has been developed to help learners record their experience, including the place,

dates and duration of the time spent shearing. This is useful for those who need to complete set hours as part of their training, or who wish to note their experiences if they later wish to communicate this when applying for future roles.

app is the perfect match for our people because they all have smartphones, and it's a transient industry. The app is going to evolve and develop over time, and so far we've been very happy with the uptake,' says Mavis Mullins, from Wool Systems.



The app also features a wool handling game to help users identify the correct parts of a fleece and then, sort it.

'Books with large amounts of text are generally not the best way to get this information across to our trainees. So we devised an engaging, yet educational, game that requires users to use their finger on the phone to slide certain parts of the fleece into the correctly labelled fadge. The aim of the game is to try and stay ahead of the incoming fleeces and last for as long as possible as the difficulty increases,' Robert says.

'It was about having some technology for this sector that we could migrate into a real training record. The

Primary ITO is committed to the wool harvesting industry, and the future of education in the sector. As well as a fun and interactive way to engage trainees, the app will be linked directly to the learning outcomes of the ITO's new wool training programmes.

The Wool Systems app is freely available for both iPhone or Android devices (search 'wool systems') or you can visit: <http://woolsystemsapp.com/>

If you're interested in enrolling or finding out more about Primary ITO's upcoming shearing, woolhandling and pressing workshops, call 0800 20 80 20 to speak to your local training adviser.



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Fifty second-shears - Jim Godbold

By Des Williams

Jim Godbold clocked up '50 second-shears' in a career that started with Morrinsville contractor Ian Hutchings in 1965. He was actually quite lucky to get into the shearing industry while still in his teens – before earning money the hard way he and a couple of mates had tried the easy way.

'When I was about 15 the three of us got into trouble with the law when we tried to rob a Hamilton bank! We managed to get in through a skylight but we didn't actually get our hands on any money, so our careers in crime proved to be pretty short-lived.'

With that little excursion to the wrong side of the tracks out of the way, Jim found work with Morrinsville contractor, Ian Hutchings, who had teams working down at Raetihi and Taumarunui.

'Ian was a very polite and well-spoken man, a delight to work for and he had me pressing and dagging and learning to crutch sheep during that first year – in the winter of 1965.

'From there I spent a year or so with Alan Barker at Palmerston North and during that time I attended a Wool Board shearing course run by Godfrey Bowen. I learned the 'Godfrey Bowen belly' and did a mainshear with Alan.

'Then my next move was to Whakatane, where I worked for Morrie Anderson. I remember ringing Morrie and asking for a job. 'Yep, I've got a job for you if you can shear.' Then I said I had a couple of mates ... 'If they can hold a handpiece they've got a job too!' he said.

'So Mike Ormsby, Robin Terry and myself started



Jim Godbold with Tana Morrison c1995 at Waimaha Station

working for Morrie. He was a top man himself, excellent shearers, had done top tallies at big sheds like Morikau with the likes of Danny Holland. Morrie wanted us to work hard but he also made us set goals for ourselves. Looking back I think that time with Morrie was the making of me – he was very easy to get along with and I tried to mould myself on the way he went about the business.'

Jim was working with Morrie in July 1967 when New Zealand converted to decimal currency. The one pound note was suddenly worth two dollars – for a moment there

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we thought our wages had doubled, but that dream didn't last long. It was interesting that Morrie only paid his staff twice a year. You could get advances when you wanted, but he had full square-ups at six-month intervals.'

Jim's next move (1969) was to Northland, and a job with Keith McGillivray at Wellsford. Brian Waterson and Norm Blackwell were on the scene at that time. He didn't actually get to work with Brian, but well remembers spending two or three weeks under Blackwell's wing.

'If you were working with Keith it was quite customary to stop for a beer or two on the way home after work. Norm was a no-nonsense bloke and a bit different in that respect. We would go out to these two-stand sheds and on the way home he would stop at a dairy and shout you a milkshake! 'I'm not buying you a beer – I need you to be fit and reliable and available for work on time!' he would say.'

But Norm also had some useful shearing tips for young Jim and it was while in the north he posted his first 500 on lambs, 'at a big shed on the coast near Wellsford.'

From there, Jim headed to Gisborne. There he met with Tana Morrison, 'the mother of my four children. Tana already had three of her own when we got together (Bernie, 'Dundun' and Pebbles) and we then had four of our own – Angie, Charmaine [married to Dick Michelle at Roxburgh], Daniel and Melody ('Melo').

'Apart from Melo they've all spent a lot of time in the sheds and probably in those first years as a contractor we



Jim Godbold enjoying one of his '50 second shears'

couldn't have got by without their help and Angie won a Golden Shears woolhandling ribbon some years ago.

Daniel Godbold enjoyed a successful career in rugby, representing the Chiefs as well as the Poverty Bay, King Country and Bay of Plenty Unions between 1995 and 2002. He now works for NZ Sevens coach Sir Gordon Titchens at Tauranga.

In 1986, Jim together with Larry Lewis, Stuki Smith and Jamie Fleming organised the first Sun City Shears competition at Gisborne. 'The show went off well and we ran it again in 1987. At the time the open prize money of \$2000 was probably the highest in the country. It seemed like a lot of money to me but Larry reckoned we had to offer top dollar if we wanted to attract the top shearers.'

As well as money raised through sponsorship, Jim recalls the committee

had to raise about \$6000 themselves to cover costs: 'That meant shearing for nothing in woolsheds with proceeds going towards the show. We only ran it for two years and then we went our separate ways but it was fun while it lasted.'

Jim started contracting in 1975, having moved from Rotorua to Gisborne. 'Moving to Gisborne was one of the best things I've done – great people, great climate and great shearing. I think of places like Avondale Station – I started out there shearing on stand seven; worked my way up to being ganger and was eventually the first person to shear 400 in the shed's 80-year history. The owners (Harris family) wanted front and back socks off the sheep so it was a hard place to do a good tally.

'The Waikura Valley near Hicks Bay is another favourite place. I first got sent there in 1963 by my probation officer after that little brush with the law mentioned earlier. I was sent there to be a 'cowboy' but it wasn't like I'd imagined from the movies! I was mowing lawns, milking cows and general farm work that wasn't glamorous.

'Several years later while working for Morrie Anderson I was back in the same valley shearing sheep. And later still I was back there as a contractor, so that was a great progression in responsibility!'

Jim also shored in Western Australia for nine winters, leaving Tana to capably handle the business in his absence. A couple of phone calls a week proved to be an efficient way of keeping in touch with any issues that might have arisen.

Jim clocked up 30 years contracting before handing over to Phill Proudfoot in 2006. He stayed on as manager for Phill in a 'hands-on' role that was all the more enjoyable without evenings spent organising staff and hours on the phone. But the Godbold name remains in the sheds. Son James Daniel (presser) and grandson Dylan Godbold (shearer) are both working for Dick Michelle at Roxburgh.

'Looking back on it all I'd say it's been a brilliant 50 years that started out as a bad boy in Hamilton and led to working with many fabulous people.

The likes of Danny Hill and Derek Wallace worked with me for 30 years, and Mike Duff for a long time. It was a lot of hard work, but a lot of fun.'



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*We encourage our staff to engage in training.
We should all learn something new every day!*

Haere ra Joanne Kumeroa

By Barbara Newton

The wool harvesting industry world-wide lost a champion, and a rich pool of knowledge far too soon when Joanne Kumeroa passed away recently aged just 46, after her battle with cancer came to an end.

A large number of family, friends and colleagues gathered at the Parikino Marae, situated in the Wanganui River Valley to farewell and to celebrate the life of a very strong and extraordinary woman who had touched their lives in one way or another.

Joanne the wool handler

While she liked music and fast cars, most will know her as Joanne the wool handler. As matriarch of the world wool handling and wool harvesting fraternity, Joanne was an inspiration, mentor, peer, champion and legend. It is hard to separate her work from her competitive career, as they largely go hand in hand.

Joanne worked in the wool harvesting industry for 33 years, starting as a 13-year-old working alongside her parents, Walter and Heather. Quickly learning her way and gaining respect, she was soon heading and leading the wool handling preparation team for many contractors throughout New Zealand. She went on to become a hugely respected and high profile competitor and personality in the shearing industry and sport worldwide.

Joanne also became a competent



Joanne Kumeroa (1969-2015) as she first appeared in Shearing magazine, August 1993.

shearer (with a best tally of 517 in a 9 hour day at a shed near Taupo not to be sneezed at).

In addition, from 2000 Joanne was a part time training instructor with Tectra here in New Zealand, and full-time with the Australian Shearing Contractors' Association from 2011. In the two years prior to her death she was also working for Australian Wool Innovation, employed in her dream job as the national trainer, training the trainers.

Joanne the champion competitor

Balclutha was always a favourite show and it was there her competitive career

began in the late 1980s, finishing fourth in the junior wool handling. She felt that if she was going to lose she might as well do so to the best, so the next season she entered in the open division (there was no senior category in those days).

Her first open contest was at Alexandra in 1989 where she finished second-last of 53 entries. Just two seasons later she won her first New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year title, and as a New Zealand representative took out the first of many titles at Warnambool, Australia. This began a long association with that show and, fittingly, her most recent win was there in October, 2014, some 23 years later.

Her competitive success is indeed impressive, easily the most successful wool handler worldwide to date. She was immensely proud of every one of her countless wins; multiple New Zealand major titles: (Balclutha (8), Alexandra (7), Golden Shears (6), Te Kuiti (6), and those overseas; Warnambool, Esperance, Dubbo and Ireland; as well as numerous North and South Island circuit wins; and won every major title in teams pressing and triathlon events.

In addition to wearing the silver fern at world championships, Joanne enjoyed success in many Trans-Tasman team contests.

However it was Edinburgh, Scotland 2003, where Joanne realised her dream by winning her first world championship title, which was to her the supreme achievement. She then backed that up in Toowoomba, Australia two years later, but was unable to make it a trifecta in 2008 at Bjerkreim, Norway. Naturally, she received many accolades as a result of those successes. In 1995/96 Joanne was awarded Master Woolhandler status, and has been New Zealand's number one ranked wool handler eight times. She was also recognised at the Maori Sports Awards for outstanding achievements in wool handling in 2003, 2005 and 2012.

Jo the entrepreneur also brought professionalism into the sport of woolhandling; obtaining personal sponsorship, creating her own label, and having her own manager. It is an understatement to say that she most



Joanne Kumeroa, world champion, Scotland 2003 with Bronwyn Tango (Wales) second and Alison McNeil (Scotland), third.

certainly set the benchmark for wool handling in the world.

Joanne achieved an awful lot in her short time with us. However there was one challenge left on her bucket list and that was to attempt a shearing record. I am sure that if it hadn't been for her illness she would have conquered that also. It was certainly within her capabilities.

I recall a little story that certainly sums up her fiercely competitive and determined nature. Joanne was someone who truly loved a challenge, in more ways than one. This was extended to her illness, vowing never to give in and defying all predictions on her final time frame with us.

Who could forget Joanne's performance at the 2013 Golden Shears in Masterton. For those that were there will recall that she had suspended her chemotherapy treatment in order to travel to New Zealand to compete in the event, to help fund raise and publicise the cancer story, and to reinforce the importance of being aware of our own bodies to ensure you didn't end up in the same predicament as her. You may also remember her obvious physical distress after completing each heat, quarter-final and semi-final.

The physicality and mental hardness of the final left her three fellow competitors totally breathless and spent. Somehow Joanne managed to drag up the strength and resolve to not only compete but to compete well and successfully against her healthy peers in the taxing and challenging final event. There were more than a few teary eyes in those that witnessed this courageous effort.

Reflecting on the weekend while driving Joanne back to Tauranga, I commented that, despite failing to win a fourth consecutive title she would be well pleased with her runner up placing in the open wool handling, given her state of health.

Jo replied, that yes it was a great weekend but that she had really wanted to win! Didn't we all.

Her competitive successes accumulated a multitude of ribbons and trophies that provided a magnificent display at the Parikino marae where she lay. But this was only a very small part of the person she was.

Whanau/Family

Born and brought up at Whanganui, Joanne was third in a family of five. A rebellious teenager, she left school at the age of 13 and began, albeit rather dubiously ('I hated it at first') woolhandling for her father Walter, working around the home district and also travelling down to Wedderburn in the Maniototo to begin her long association with Central



Humble world champion for the second time - Joanne Kumeroa with the Des Cook Memorial Trophy at Toowoomba 2005.

Otago and the merino wool that she loved so much.

She was fiercely proud of her family, three children and her grand-daughter, and they of her. Extended family was also important to her, taking an active and genuine interest in their accomplishments and well-being.

Joanne the friend

I am sure it is the case with each and everyone who has had anything at all to do with Jo, that our lives are the richer for having known this remarkable woman.

Joanne freely admitted that she and school were not a good mix, but she didn't let her lack of literacy skills hold her back at all or prevent her from becoming successful and influential in her life. In fact it probably accentuated her other attributes, especially in oral communication and listening abilities.

In my mind Joanne's greatest attribute was her ability to relate to a wide range of people. Her friendships knew no boundaries with regard to gender, age or social status. She had many special relationships, and these friendships were extended to families and reciprocated.

We are so grateful to her parents, Heather and Walter, her children and extended family for the privilege of sharing her during her all too short a life. Her engaging smile, bright personality and cherry disposition endeared her to everyone

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she came into contact with. As a friend Joanne was extremely thoughtful – often bearing gifts when visiting, and she had a very generous disposition with her time.

She developed into a terrific communicator, and we know just how well she could talk and talk and talk, loving nothing better than to chew the fat over a myriad of topics. Having said that, she was also a great listener, always giving you her undivided attention, although something that, at a younger age, was certainly not her forte!

Jo had her own quirky way of telling you what she was thinking and was not backward in coming forward with her opinions. Her perception of others' personal situation was indeed a rare gift. A number of her friends have made life changing decisions to alter their pathway and for the better as a result of this.

A very humble and kind-hearted person, Joanne put others before herself, and had a way of making each and everyone feel at ease, and so very special.

Jo was also very inclusive and rarely did anything on her own, particularly at competitions. Everywhere she went, she had an entourage of supporters with her.

There were no half measures in anything she tackled. Not only was she strong willed and determined she had very



Joanne Kumeroa, up to her elbows in merino wool. NZ Merino championships, Alexandra, her happy hunting ground.

strong opinions on matters. Right up until her final days, when her body was no longer able, her mind was scheming some adventure or other and still dispensing advice.

Her influence will be seen around the sheds well into the future; her skills and techniques copied and passed on to those whom she inspired and aspired to be just like her. This will hopefully include her exemplary work ethic!

Flying safety theory explained

A couple of years ago we published a footnote to a story from our American contributor, Hilary Gietzen. As a pilot who often flies to his place of work, Hilary, during a meeting with this writer in 2004, had offered his opinion that one-engined planes were safer than two engines.

As a self-confessed nervous flier, I had expressed a preference for having 'two chances' over just the one (engine) chance. Hilary later responded with the following extra information:

'I feel like I owe you an apology for telling you that a light twin engine airplane is not as safe as it would seem. I would like to explain why I have that opinion. In a single engine airplane, if the engine loses power, the airplane will pitch nose down and glide as it loses altitude. At this time the pilot can do a checklist, change a fuel tank, find a landing spot, etc.

In a twin with a left and right engine, it is much different. When an engine has a loss of power, the dead engine will want to go down and drag back, while the good engine is still pulling forward and lifting. The airplane will want to invert. The proficient pilot



Two engines good but one engine better, flying shearer suggests!

can control the tendency with rudder and aileron, however the airplane will have horrible performance. It will have a low service ceiling and little to no climb performance. As you continue to fly, you are flying on the edge with no room for error.

'If I feel this way of a light twin, do you think other people feel this way? Look at the value of a used light twin. Unbelievable. The manufacturers know it as well. They want safer airplanes as well. Look for example at a Cessna 337 (I think it is called a Skymaster) designed in the late 1960s. It uses a front and rear engine with centerline thrust. Looks like a good idea, but never really caught on. I don't know why.

'As the years progress, the manufacturers are using bigger engines, which have more performance, both with one or two engines. The problem with them is that a bigger engine requires more fuel, which is more weight, which is less payload.

On most airplanes, you cannot legally fill all the seats and fuel tanks at the same time because of weight. In the later years, the manufacturers are back to single engine with one large turbo prop. For example the Cessna 208 (Caravan) or the Pilatus, or Socata, or Piper Meridian. Has a propeller but burns jet fuel. They are very dependable and safe. Larger twins and airliners have so much power, and very well trained and proficient pilots, they are very safe, where the multi-engine is safer than a single.

'It has been many years since I bought my airplane and did research, but it seems to me that a Cessna 152, used mostly for training, and a lot of time flown by solo students, had a better safety record than a lot of light twins, flown by more experienced pilots. Interesting.'

(See page 17 this edition for Hilary Gietzen's latest contribution.)



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The year was 1964. Keith Holyoake was our Prime Minister; Peter Snell won two gold medals at the Tokyo Olympics; Coronation Street screened for the first time on New Zealand television; the Naki boys defended the Ranfurly Shield nine times; Sir John Kirwan was born, helping take our population to 2.62 million; Lordship won the Auckland Trotting Cup and New Zealand's Polo Prince won the Melbourne Cup. And four Brits known as the Beatles toured in winter, bringing sunshine and light to New Zealand's teenaged-female population.

But more important than all that – the gang pictured above was hard out on a North Island station, shearing several thousand of our then 70 million sheep.

So who are they, where were they working and where are they now? Still alive we hope. We know a bit more of the story than we are letting on at the moment - just curious to see what the photo brings forth from our readers.

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Who will save the sheep industry?

Dr Clive Dalton

All the media hype about the pain the dairy industry is suffering has overshadowed the parlous state of the sheep industry, which has been suffering for the last two decades or more. The only good year recently was the result of miscalculation by meat companies, and they made farmers pay for the companies' losses for the following year.

We all know that things go in cycles – and recent dairy events have shown that far too many industry commentators, business analysts and bank economists are not good at this – and farmers carry the can. Clearly New Zealand market intelligence gathering needs improving.

Sheep meat

New Zealand is a world-beater at producing sheep meat at low cost from clean, green pasture. The world beats a path to our door to see how it's done. So why have farmers been left with so little return compared to the others in the chain? And why have farmers just had to put up with ever-rising costs, and just live with the impact?

Over the years, sheep farmers were never short of committees or boards, and also had Federated Farmers supposedly to look after their needs. But these supporters never seemed to have the political clout that dairy farmers could muster with their own Dairy Board.

Time is running out

The government is still expecting agriculture to double export earnings by 2025, so MPI Minister Nathan Guy had better find somebody quickly to save the sheep industry. Reasons for this are not hard to find. Just think sustainable land use and environmental protection, or just think water! Dairy farming, the way things are heading is not sustainable and many observers are seeing this now.

A champion needed

Today's sheep industry has no clear champion, either technical or political, and it still lives with the belief that things will come right on their own. There are plenty of folk trying to fix things but you can't see much progress.



In the past, progress was driven by people like MAF Ruakura director Dr CP McMeekan and those who followed him, and Directors General of Agriculture all came and knew the industry and talked to farmers at conferences and field days. How many sheep farmers would know the name of the current Director-General?

Minister Guy cannot fix things on his own – he has to find an 'Agricultural Champion' with free reign from bureaucrats to get things happening to meet the 2025 targets. Here's a few things to start on:

Paddock to plate

The long journey of livestock from 'paddock to plate' is currently a technical dinosaur, still based on 1900s practices, with the industry lacking in technology investing more in it. We have meat companies competing for the same stock, stock travelling the length of the country by road and sea to these competing companies, stock going via saleyards to the works so somebody can make a few dollars a head on the way, sheep standing in open saleyard pens in heat and cold, saleyards bristling with stock agents charging farmers

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commission then added yard charges – all in the age of internet marketing and modern technology.

Saleyards are also a massive biosecurity risk for potential exotic disease spread, with many of them still a health risk in urban areas.

Sheep meat and marketing needs a drastic sort out as meat companies won't/can't do it. We urgently need new technology and research investment into slaughter of stock and meat processing like the contribution made by the Meat Research Institute of NZ (MIRNZ) in the 1970s-80s and which was killed by the Crown Research Institute concept.

Research – deserted

Researchers deserted the sheep industry 30 years ago along with support from MAF farm advisors and sheep and beef officers in every region in New Zealand. The industry has been sabotaged by opportunity-seeking financiers and marketers – all of them experts at clipping farmers' tickets, so farmers who did most of the work got the least proportion of the return. Nobody seemed concerned about a long-term strategy for sheep.

There is a mountain of sheep and beef research information in the industry done decades ago, but the miniscule extension service available to farmers today probably doesn't know about it!

Remember wool!

The wool industry needs sorting to get a realistic view about its future role in textiles. Wool harvesting and marketing needs a completely new approach as people willing to shear sheep will not exist in 2025. All the ideas that went into the 'too-hard' basket in the past need to be rescued.

We need to develop ways to remove the physical work associated with handling sheep, so the industry will reduce costs and improve recruitment prospects. Support training for the industry at all levels so employers reward staff for qualifications, so working with sheep is a career and not just a job.

Worms and bugs are winning the war

The current state of sheep health needs a major review to reduce the role pharmaceutical companies have in adding massive cost to the industry with no long-term sustainable benefit. Many of these products are causing more problems than they solve both in the environment and in increasing chemical resistance by disease organisms.

So many of these health problems need to be solved by genetics and not drench guns and needles. The way worm drenches are promoted at present is alarming with 40 pre-mating worm drenches for ewes made by five international pharmaceutical companies available to farmers, with stores and vets offering incentives. And this in a climate

of increasing resistance of internal and external parasites to chemicals, in both cattle and sheep. Nobody has told farmers that when their sheep are resistant to all available worm drenches – nobody would buy the farm, and it's future would be in manuka and bees!

Too much information

There has been some rapid improvements in sheep and beef genetic knowledge in the past five years, which along with more computer power have allowed stud breeders to have a massive increase in technical data on their flocks and herds. But there's an urgent need for stud and commercial farmers, to review the role of Sheep Improvement Ltd (SIL), to get an honest assessment of what they want and need. It's time a brutal examination of what is 'progress', as increased profit is the aim and not just increased production.

Stop the development of more sophisticated outputs which farmers cannot understand, and certainly cannot explain to their clients so they are not being used. The layout of the SIL ram selection list has not changed since my day as Technical Coordinator of Sheepplan in the 1970s, and we thought it was too complicated then!

Return to sheep

There will inevitably be land going back into sheep and beef from dairying, driven mainly by environmental concerns, especially over water problems. So there will be a need to develop new systems to farm infrastructure to convert dairy farms back to sheep, especially with emphasis on environmental protection, water use and reduced physical work and manpower efficiency.

We need to end up with New Zealand's sheep and beef industry as the world's centre of excellence in sustainable meat production.



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Woolclassers have Field Day

From Bruce Abbott

On 1 July 2015 the New Zealand Wool Classers Association (NZWCA) held a Field Day at the PGG Wrightson Wool Store in Mosgiel. This day was organised mainly for senior woolhandlers and it gave those attending an opportunity to see what happens to a bale of wool once it is received into a wool store.

Attendees were taken through the process of handling bales into the store, matching them up with the specification that come from the farm, lotting bales into sale groups, and putting the lotted bales through a Grab, weighing and coring machine (Grab sample being processed so sample can be taken for length and strength testing).

They were taken through the process of how a bin bale was handled and shown the wool binning operation. In conjunction with that, attendees were shown how the brokers go about putting together various bales from farms in the grouping and inter-lotting system. On display were samples showing some of the faults that had been made in the shearing shed due to poor preparation.

An afternoon session was held in the RSA room in Mosgiel, featuring various presentations. Richard Hurring from Elders Primary Wool, spoke about their 'Just Shorn' wool programme. Rob Cochrane (PGG Wrightson) spoke about 'Bale Weights' and Struan Hulme (Canterbury Wool Scour) presented on 'Contamination in Bales'.

Kristal Wilson gave a brief talk about the NZWCA Facebook page, 'Nzwca'. NZWCA Executive Officer Bruce Abbott gave an outline on what the Association is trying to achieve for its members and its recent expansion to providing an opportunity for senior woolhandlers to participate in the organisation. He also gave an update on progress in re-establishing the Certificate in Wool Technology wool-classing course previously provided by Tectra.

There were 35 attendees at the Field Day and it gave the woolhandlers an opportunity (which they took) to express their thoughts on the industry.

The NZWCA considers the day to be a most successful one and will be looking at holding more days for senior wool handlers next season, in different locations around New Zealand. Wool handlers can now become members of the NZWCA for an annual fee of \$40. More information is available on the Association's website www.woolclassers.co.nz, or you can contact secretary@woolclassers.co.nz



Attentive ears at the NZWCA Field Day (Mosgiel) in July

Steps toward a Stencil

So how do wool handlers with a Level 4 Certificate go about upgrading to a Q Stencil from the NZWCA?

Qualifications

Persons applying for a Q Stencil will be granted registration if they have firstly obtained one of the following:

- Level 4 or advanced wool handling certificate – quality assurance component already included.
- Holders of the Certificate in Wool Classing or Certificate in Wool Technology; please note holders of these Certificates also qualify for a P Stencil.

Requirements

- The Q Stencil holder undertakes to maintain consistent standards of Clip Preparation.
- Become a member of the NZ Wool Classing Association.
- Attend a classer refresher course at least once every three (3) years to maintain registration status.

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NZWCA Field Day participants at Mosgiel

Now what can you Grade or Class with a Q Stencil?

Holders of a Q Stencil may grade and apply their Stencil to Crossbred wool only.

Provisional Classer P Stencil – Who qualifies?

- A graduate of the Certificate in Wool Technology can apply for membership of the NZWCA and Provisional classer status.
- Holders of a P Stencil are required to nominate the breed group they wish to be considered for registration in when making application.
- A minimum of three (3) satisfactory classed clips per each category (Merino, Mid-Micron or Crossbred) are required to be submitted for consideration before full registration in the breed category submitted will be granted.
- They must attend a classer refresher course at least once every three (3) years to maintain registration status.
- They need to maintain membership in the New Zealand Wool Classers Association.
- How to go about obtaining more information?

The first point of contact is The Secretary of the NZWCA email secretary@woolclassers.co.nz or the Registrar email eo@woolclassers.co.nz or mobile 027 228 0868.

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How one thing can lead to another! When we heard about Peter and Gloria Casserly's plans for a blade-shearers' jamboree, we went in search of the photo that appears on the cover of this issue, taken at Toowoomba in 2005. And while searching we found the above photo of Derek Wyllie, also at Toowoomba that year. When the going gets tough, be it drought, snow storm, flood or some other challenge from Mother Nature, the tough get going. Example, Derek, who hasn't let the trivial matter of an artificial arm stop him from shearing sheep.



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Where are future shearers coming from?

Dr Clive Dalton

The 'Shearing Gang' TV doco is a great series, but how many new shearers will it recruit? Remember Agriculture Minister Nathan Guy's demand to double agricultural export earnings by 2025?

The sheep and wool industry, even though declining, has to make its contribution to this, because of the speed wobbles in dairying. Nathan Guy wants 50,000 more recruits at all levels in the industry in the next 10 years – and shearers must be part of this.

So can you imagine going to a High School 'Careers Evening' (and as a Polytech tutor I went to many) and after showing the TV programme, ending up with a long list of keen recruits? Fat chance! Students would hear in the strong introduction that 'shearing was the toughest job in the world, requiring commitment, skill and guts'! That certainly sounds motivating!

Up at 4am, standing around in the cold morning air for transport to the back of beyond, and then doing the equivalent of a full marathon each day for days on end, bent over for 8 hours each day in a position of early primates – and with no pay if you are not working. Even showing shearing as an exciting sport won't get new urban shearers, when they see the sweat and pain of getting to competitive levels.

So forget about urban recruits for the sheep and wool industry, the next generation of young Kiwi shearers (if there are any) will only come from those who have had close contact with current shearers and their families, so they have caught the bug by spending time in woolsheds since they could walk.

But the problem here is that these mentors are an aging and declining work force, and as I found at Careers Evenings, any students doing well at school are actively put off farming by parents, and may only go crutching or shearing to pay off a student loan.

There is little sign of any new technology making shearers redundant in the next ten years, with so little investment in research over the last 30 years, so the demand for future shearers will have to be met from immigrant labour.

These folk with no background in farming, have made a major contribution to the dairy industry, as they are hard working and very adaptable, learn quickly with appropriate training. New immigrants from Middle Eastern countries will also have some understanding of sheep and goats, which will be an added advantage.

So those involved in shearer training would be well advised to prepare for, and respect any cultural and religious changes needed, as it will change the way shearing sheds are run in future.



Looks like there may be one future shearer in this photo – that's a young Potae under James Smaill's wing and with a surname like that you wouldn't want to bet against him someday saying, 'Move aside, James!'



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Doing things differently

By Hilary Gietzen

I think of myself as a positive minded person. I have many thoughts and opinions. A lot of them I write down in my journal. At this moment several come to mind. Obstacles can be a stepping stone or a stumbling block, depending how you lift your feet. In business, if you do things the way you always have, you won't be in business long. If you keep going in the same direction, you are likely to end up where you are headed. All simple thoughts.

I have been doing things different here the last several years. A lot of people tell me I am crazy, and maybe I am, but I just tell them that I am not crazy, I am just ahead of my time. It all started several years ago when I latched onto a feedlot job. Some older shearers retired, and the first year I had 1800 lambs to shear. The farmer wrangled, and I sheared alone. It was a good job.

The next year, there was about 3000 lambs. It was an even better job. We have a short season, and most of this work was before the main shear, which makes the job more attractive. The next several years there were about 5000 sheep, and the farmer sheared them in several different groups. Since there were more sheep, the farmer wanted another shearer and hired a wrangler. I had several different shearers help, depending on who could come.

Numerous shearers wanted to help before the main shear, but it was hard to get help to finish the job after the main shear had begun. I had a good time shearing with good shearers, and made good friends, but not all shearers were up to par. I was actually worse off with the 5000 lambs, than I was with the 3000 alone.

I was sharing the work on good lambs before the main shear, and when the main shear was on, I was shearing alone on the bigger, less desirable lambs. Also, as time went on, I felt it would have been easier to run a day care center for children than shear with some of the shearers that were available. I remember one shearer telling me it was not necessary to shear lambs clean.

Another shearer would run his counter. I remember one shearer at the end of the day saying, 'Just think how much money you cost me by having me shear proper.'

Oh really? My mind was working. If you keep going in the same direction ... obstacles can be a stumbling ... In business, if you keep doing ...

When the farmer had a complaint, I was the one to hear it. To make things worse, I was too nice to take a cut on my friends and fellow shearers. I would have been better off if someone else had the job, and I worked for them.

On the next season, I did things differently. Instead of hiring a wrangler, I did it myself. I received the pay of the shearer, and I received the wage per head of a wrangler. It didn't take long for me to get things set up the way I wanted. I set up pens, used one-way gates in a race way, and moved the wool press closer to me.



In no time, I was within 20 sheep of my normal daily tally, and collecting the pay of the wrangler. Furthermore, I had more employment in the off season. It didn't take long for the farmer to notice better workmanship, and he complimented me as well.

Really made me feel good. The job has now grown to in excess of 10,000 lambs per year, and I am almost always shearing alone. Have been several years now, and I love it. Some of the things I notice are: No complaints of shearers. No one has ever been AWOL. Not much noise, no fuss, and the lambs are more calm. They walk up the race way on their own, while I am collecting the pay of the wrangler, and better workmanship.

I have been told that the pelts from this feedlot are marketed separately, and I hope and suspect the farmer gets paid a premium. On the down side, I have no one to pace me, and it is easier to slack off. I set goals, and race the clock.

I have been doing a similar practice on the ewes during main shear. The difference is I require one person to wrangle. Comparing what I am doing to the competing crews, the farmers are realizing how much less labor is required. For me, it makes more sheep sheared for less miles driven, and less road time.

I realise my strategy is not practical on all jobs or in all situations. However in the future, where we are seeing less and less sheep annually, I feel we will be seeing smaller crews, with less labor, and shearers spending more time on each job. For me, it is less headache and more profit.

Recently, someone asked why I like to shear sheep. I explained how one year in the off season, I drove a truck. On a daily basis, I had to wait for someone to load me, and someone to unload me, I had weight limits, and speed limits. I had road restrictions and logbook restrictions.

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Warning signs

By Roger Leslie

During my 45 odd years in the workplace the greatest change I have noticed is the preoccupation with Health and Safety, and the proliferation of signs drawing attention to this. I admit there was a need for safer workplaces but wonder if we've gone too far? Many of the signs I see, appear to assume a certain amount of stupidity in the target audience and others are not to be taken literally. "Hearing protection to be worn at all times" What? Even if there is complete silence? "This door is to remain closed at all times" Really? Why have a door there at all?

The shearing industry seems to have been bypassed by the sign industry (so far) although it has a greater potential for injury than most. In researching this article I visited 10 sheds and noted a wide range of signage from none to 22. I would sum these up as, the less the potential for harm, the greater the number and size of the signs.

The Germans have long since had a love affair with signs. They have a saying 'Ordnung muss sein' – order must be! They appear to believe this can be achieved with a mixture of signage and enforcement. I have a photo of a road intersection sporting 18 examples of information, instruction, direction, warning, and weather dependent speed limitation. Nobody can read all those and still safely drive through the intersection.

The Mayor of Essen stated recently, that the city had 230,000 official signs and set up a task force to find and remove the surplus, in case the people become immune to them. They found only 100 not essential to the smooth running of the city.

In some places the road signs even differentiate between normal wild animals and especially wild ones, and naturally have speed limits to match. This is valuable information in the milliseconds between seeing the deer and hitting it. In Germany that which is forbidden is divided into standard forbidden, extremely forbidden and police enforced forbidden. This year I heard a fourth (during a discussion on a new law) almost forbidden.

The last place left without signage is where sheep are shorn. The German sign-makers apparently know little of sheep and less of shearers. This is a good state of affairs. Shearers in general and hobby shearers in particular, make their own decisions and squarely face the consequences of those decisions.

You might imagine there could be little danger in shearing a couple of sheep in someone's garden. You might be wrong. Old orchards and gardens have many hidden hazards like over-grown fish ponds, mole hills and great thickets of nettle. The power supply can be uncertain and potentially lethal and the sheep themselves of vastly varying quality.

Last year I was shearing a mob of sheep owned by a coastal community group and was surrounded by a crowd of happy revellers/assistants as I went about the task. While I was changing a cutter, as often happens when shearing sheep that spend all year in the sand dunes, one of the helpers pulled the start-up rope. For the briefest moment, before the worm-drive kicked off, the hand-piece turned into a snarling ravenous beast bent on mayhem and destruction.



I think it was the school teacher (ever the enquiring type) and when asked why he did that he replied 'I just wanted to see what the rope did.' What kind of signage would prevent that?

I guess the greatest danger in the shearing environment, is the sheep themselves, because of their unpredictability.

There's nothing quite like a bottle fed pet sheep for unexpected behaviour and that certain contempt that familiarity seems to breed. This problem is multiplied if it's a ram and happens to be big and/or has horns. To be fair I am often warned about these dangerous animals and at times it's not hard to read between the lines when they have names like 'Bone Crusher' etc. Most problem animals can be easily handled if you are forewarned.

This year my wool manager was reaching over a water trough and feeding the power cable under an electric fence. As she is somewhat sensitive about electric fences she was fully engrossed in the task, when 'Gustaf' the pet ram barged her on the bottom and knocked her flat. This was not well received, nor was my finding amusement in it.

One dyke shepherd has a ram that has knocked a few passing cyclists off their bikes and chased some hikers from his section of dyke. This wouldn't even pass in New Zealand, let alone the well regulated society of Germany. Last year after I had shorn Bone Crusher the shepherd got the raddle out and sprayed 'Vorsicht!' (watch out) on the ram's side. That's as good a H&S sign as you are likely to see.

If you happen to be cycling along a random dyke in North Germany, remember – as Sergeant Schultz used to say, 'You haff been vorned!'

Courses in Wool Technology and Classing

Below are the successful recipients of the Tectra 2014 courses for Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing:

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Certificate in Wool Technology (Classing):

Cedric Reipa ARAMOANA; Kristal WILSON; Erana Raukura SMITH and Dayle CLEMENS.

People interested in doing these courses should contact Laurie Boniface, email: woolprof@gmail.com; mobile: 027 433 8925; landline 06 350 2304.

Book review: The Shearers

By Des Williams

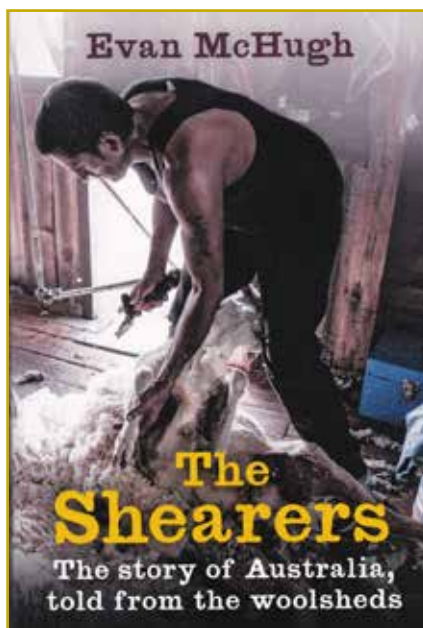
Having previously produced a catalogue of books with titles such as *The Stockmen*, *The Drovers*, *Outback Pioneers* and *Outback Heroes*, it was only a matter of time before Evan McHugh got around to *The Shearers*.

The Australian journalist tackles his task (as per the book's sub-title) of relating 'The story of Australia, told from the woolsheds' in a free-flowing, entertaining style that makes this book hard to put down. McHugh works his way through a dozen different eras, from the blades, the rise of machines, strikes, the golden days, the turbulent 1980s to the present day. 'The events of the 1980s neatly bookended those of the 1890s,' McHugh observes at some point in the narrative.

If you, like this reviewer, have the unexplainable habit of browsing books from the back to the front (we need to know how the story ends!), you are soon absorbed into the story of the 1980s and the 'wide comb dispute'. The words 'New Zealand' and 'New Zealand shearers' get quite a mention.

In the 1890s shearers were in the vanguard in building worker unity to protect their interests. In the 1980s shearers led the way in dismantling worker unity when it worked against their interests.'

It's ground that has been well covered



before, but McHugh has the ability to freshen facts and figures, and to relate the issues clearly and concisely. [But hey, Rory O'Malley becomes Rory McIlroy when the author acknowledges the former's extensive research and published findings about the wide comb era! Quick Mr O'Malley, take up golf before it's too late!]

Even that well-worn cliché about Australia riding to prosperity on the sheep's back is given a major overhaul: '...if the country rode on anyone's

back, it was on the aching, creaking, flexing spines of Australian shearers.' (I'm glad we got that sorted at last!)

An interesting little snippet: 'In 1950, the idea of a national shearing competition also gained support after America started organising a world shearing championship. As Australia was the world's largest producer of wool, especially fine merino wool, even the AWU [Australian Workers' Union] believed that an Australian should win it. While it was being organised (format, type of sheep, rules), the Americans suggested using wide combs. The idea went no further in Australia.'

How to best describe this book? Perhaps as one that any young shearers would be proud to give to his future mother-in-law. McHugh starts his narrative by pointing out that the tennis balls used at the Australian Open in January each year are coated with wool – New Zealand wool, actually.

It ends with a generous tribute. 'Without shearers, our history would have been very different: not only have they provided us with the means of keeping warm, they've also enriched us culturally, economically, politically and much more. We would all be poorer for a future without them.'

Nice words, Mr McHugh!

The book also contains a glossary of terms, profiles of Australia's Shearing Hall of Fame members, and a summary of shearing records and milestones.

(Publisher Penguin Viking 2015. My copy cost \$38.00.)



McSkimming Shearing (Taumarunui) stay out team, shearing at Kerry Alabaster's property at Bell's Junction, near Taihape. Back left: David McKenna, Jindel Borell, Liv Gardener, Trieste Rata, Hori Rata. Front left: Troy Stephens, Chris Brears (ganger), Will Dale, Rangipa Chase, Paulie Smith. (Kelly Brears photo.)

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The Conversation

Hawke's Bay farmer Lloyd Holloway was having a yarn with Heiniger rep Tony Hoggard and Hawke's Bay shearing contractor Colin Watson-Paul. A mutual friend was crook with cancer. It's a disease that affects just about everyone, they agreed, and has taken a lot of people from our industry. 'Why don't we put on a big day out for shearing and raise some money for the Cancer Society,' Lloyd suggested. 'I've got 5000 sheep we can shear at Waitara Station as a starter, and I'll donate all proceeds to the Cancer Society.'

'Bloody good idea. I reckon I could round up a whole team of top shearers and staff from around the country who would come and help us out on such an occasion,' Tony Hoggard promised. 'And our crews will be able to chip in with whatever else is necessary to organise this big day out for shearing to raise money for the Cancer Society,' Colin Watson-Paul added.

The Cause

Why do people go out of the Cancer Society? What makes them about raising money for cancer they know the services we provide cancer really make a difference to families.

The Cancer Society have experienced what it is like to receive a thunderbolt from the blue sky, isolated and uncertain. They don't know to or what's going to happen, the delay between diagnosis and treatment.

'It is during this time that you need someone to talk to,' says a social worker and Division of Support team.

'Those who live in remote areas experience the added stress, both financial and emotional that comes with having to travel for cancer treatment. Knowing you're being aware there's a family member the Cancer Society helps. They support others over a cuppa. The support for patients to make sure they get what they need. We are here to ease the load because there is so much to follow following cancer diagnosis.

To find out more about what we can do for you contact: www.cancernz.org

Donations to the Cancer Society (Hawkes Bay) as part of the Cancer fundraiser can be made to Account 06 0645 0235



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Monday 4 January 2016

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supportive care team visit
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the stress and lighten the
much happening for them
is,' Pauline says.

what support is available -
rg.nz

The Workers

Heiniger's Tony Hoggard says the plan is to get a team of 16 shearing guns and top shed staff from around the country to meet at Waitara Station (Napier end of the Napier - Taupo Highway) on Monday 4 January 2016.

'There will be world champions, world record holders, New Zealand reps - eight will shear for nine hours and if there are sheep left another team will start on them until the mob is cut out. Everybody we've lined up so far will be shearing for the charity. We'd like to challenge all other agricultural sector workers from around the country to donate an hour's wages to the big day out fundraiser. It will be like a big rural telethon and we hope to have hundreds of people involved, one way or another.'



**er Society New Zealand
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5851 00 (Ref. 'SHEEP')**



Les Roughan, southern stalwart

© Darnell Kennedy 2015

Les Roughan can be aptly described as the cornerstone of competitive shearing competitions in New Zealand for two sound reasons. The first is that Les has been involved with the shearing industry from a very early age and now at 91 years, it would be safe to assert that he is one of the country's oldest repositories of shearing sport history and knowledge.

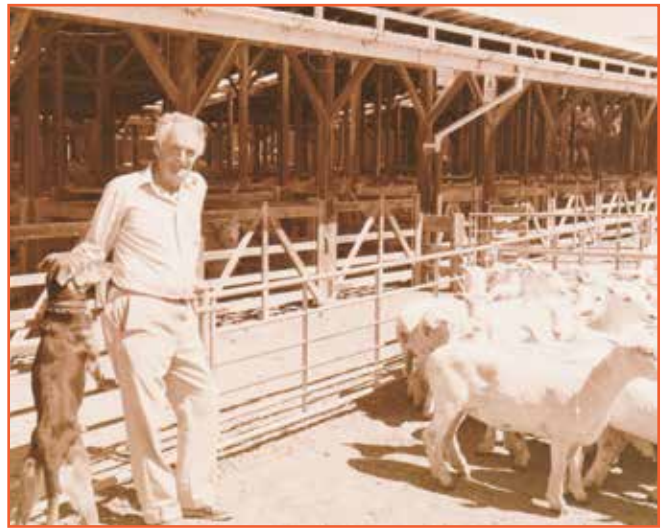
The second reason is that the success he demonstrated, as one of the founding members of the Southern Shears, in organising competitive shearing shows made Les a focal point in the establishment of nationwide shearing committees.

Born and raised at Lawrence, Les moved to Southland 60 years ago. He was a shearer before getting married but his life-long desire was to farm, so shearing was his financial gateway to his first farm which he purchased at Mandeville. As a farmer, Les naturally became an affiliate of the Gore A&P Committee, which hosted a local shearing show. But the committee desired a larger participation for the event so members which included Hugh Chittock, Ron Cunningham, Jim Barclay, Len Orr, Kitch King and Les, set about expanding the show and lay the foundations for a South Island version of the Golden Shears.

This formidable group gave rise to the Southern Shears Committee and in February of 1965 the inaugural show was held at the A&P show grounds pavilion. After the first show, Les recalls that there were many complaints about the judging rules and at this time, shearing judging was not governed by a set of universal rules, so it was decided that this was imperative for the sport to progress successfully.

This was a fact that was appreciated by many involved with the shearing sport so a meeting was organised for all South Island shearing committees. This meeting, which was held at the Agricultural Rooms in Harvest Court, Dunedin, proved to be a pivotal point in the history of shearing sport in New Zealand.

After lengthy and extensive discussions, what arose was a set of rules that provided a solid base for the advancement of competitive shearing in the South Island. Because competitive shearing was relatively young then, it was decided that a meeting of the same calibre be held annually



Les Roughan (and mate) circa 1995, working 'out the back' at Southern Shears, the competition he helped to establish at Gore, 30 years earlier.

in order to assess progress and make refinements, and this became the genesis of the South Island Shearing Committee. As a member of the original group that met in Dunedin, Les served as chairman of this committee for 15 years.

Les recalls how the methodical approach used by the South Island Shearing Committee to organise shearing shows drew the attention of those similarly involved in the North Island. Godfrey Bowen made enquiries as to how they could improve their processes and Les suggested to him that he form a North Island Shearing Committee, which he did. From that stemmed the New Zealand Shearing Committee, on which Les served for 10 years as the Southland representative.

Les fondly remembers the time when the Southern Shears Committee decided to move the show from the Ram Pavilion at the A&P Showgrounds to the James Cumming Wing. He had to approach the mayor for permission to use the venue for this event. The mayor was very reluctant to have sheep inside the venue but Les convinced him that they would leave the place spotless. And he was a man of his word because when the mayor inspected the James Cumming Wing following the show, he was thoroughly impressed and commented, 'sheep are cleaner than people'.

Les admires how the sport has advanced from its humble beginnings: 'shearers have got faster, gear has got better – combs, cutters and the machines.'

Les says he never shored with concave combs himself, but with convex combs and no bent tooth. Despite that, he has been paramount to the infrastructure of competitive shearing in New Zealand and this is evidenced not only by the survival of the committee he started 50 years ago, but also through the successful progression of the sport nationwide.

Such progression has only been possible as a result of the sound base that was established 50 years ago by honest-hearted men like Les Roughan, who simply enjoyed the sport of shearing.

(Adapted from Southern Shears programme 2015.)

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He did it!

By Gabriela Schmidt-Morrell

A few weeks back ... or is it already months ... or a couple of years?... (it is true that time goes faster the older you get), we sold one of our cars, Dion's car, no less.

Word of this car sale got round pretty quick and many were interested in buying those wheels ... meaning: pick up the vehicle and then pay it off over the next few months or so? And drive it around without a license? And make it a good price please?

Dion no doubt was going to do that, but I am the Finance Minister around here and, alas, those applications were turned down.

A few days later, one of our young learner shearers approached Dion and said he would like to buy the car. He reckoned he had the cash saved up and could pay for it tomorrow.

Really? How did that happen? He didn't even make that much money being a learner shearer, and was still building up his bucket, spending quite a lot of his wages on gear.

But sure enough, he turned up at the house and passed me a bundle of cash. I gave him the keys, fairly impressed I was, and told him, I would fill up the car for him for that price. So down to the petrol station we went, me filling up my car in a middle-aged-woman sort of a way, him on the other hand leaning in a very cool manner over the car, while loosely holding the hose with one hand.

I went in to pay for both, the lady behind the counter and I waited... and waited... and waited. The lady: 'That pump is still not pumping.'

'What do you mean, is it already full and he has not hung up the nozzle yet?'

'No, it is just not pumping.'

So outside I go and adjust the pump for him as discreetly as possible, so it finally starts pumping.

Later on that night, Dion comes home and asks me, did I

sell his car today? Because he just saw this young fella with his arm hanging out the window, dark glasses, hanging low, driving out of town.

Yep, that's him.

Now he has wheels and just got a whole lot more independent! He can fit all his gear in and never again has to leave half of it behind and buy new at the next place. He can come and go as he pleases, and on days off, he can actually do something. He now of course has the problem of people with less advanced money saving skills wanting to borrow his car or forever catch a ride. He will learn people management as well.

Anyway, I was impressed with this young man. He managed to save up a whole car's worth in a few weeks on a learner shearer wage. It can be done! A lot can be achieved if one stays away from drugs. He did it.

There was one more bonus after buying Dion's vehicle: (No, not a pretty girl, but maybe that too.)

He now has all these farmers and business owners from town waving out to Dion's ex-contractor's car for ages. He must feel pretty cool.

I feel pretty cool too, because nothing makes a contractor happier than seeing their people succeed in life and do well as an individual, financially and personally.

Gosh, I do hope he got himself that third party insurance though ...

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An Elvis fan has left the building ...

Tom Brough's Tribute to Peter Ratima

Tom Brough was great mates with Peter Ratima for 50 years. He was overseas at the time of Peter's tangi and the following notes were read on Tom's behalf by his son, Paul Brough.

Dad has known the Ratima family for over 70 years and they have always been a family he admired. Back in the 1920s, Peter's grandfather, Taite Ratima, had a butcher shop where he lived on the Mokauiti Road. Peter's father, Tom also lived in Aria and was respected as a very good bush feller, shearer and fencer.

Dad first met the Ratima family in the 1940's when Tom Ratima was felling bush with Aub Brough and camping with his family in a house at the back of Aub's farm. Peter's mother, Jane, was renowned for her cooking and Dad would often walk two miles through the bush to see the Ratimas and get a plate of Jane's wonderful camp oven stew. He would arrive at any time of the day and there would always be a big pot on. Tom and Jane Ratima had a huge vegetable garden everyone always admired at their house in Aria.

Dad was just a learner shearer when he first shored with Tom Ratima at Paraheka Station in 1956. The Ratima family were all known for their great work ethic and generosity. Tom Ratima's sons Jim, Herb and Peter all became good shearers and had their own shearing run around the Aria, Piopio and Awakino area for many years. One of their achievements was that a Ratima gang shored at Paparahia station every year for 40 years in a row.

Dad first shored with Peter in Mate Simon's gang at Aotearoa Station when Peter was only 16 and already a competitive shearer. Over the years they shored a lot together and Dad always knew he was in for a big day when Peter was there. He always admired the humour Peter could come out with even though it was full on with big days and hard work.



The Elvis Brothers - Presley (left) and Ratima, (right).

But Dad used to hate it when it was Peter's turn to take his car – he was a very fast driver, even on metalled country roads. Places like the Potaka Road. Just after daylight at the top of the hill Peter would look down and say 'No dust' which meant that no one was coming up. It was time to hang on as he would really plant his foot and slide around the corners on the loose metal, Dad knew he must have been looking pale by the time they got to the shed. One of Peter's boasts was that he owned three cars and they would all start. One was always parked on a hill Dad noticed.

They were coming back from Awakino one day with a fair bit of smoke behind them. And they pulled up at Elliott's garage in a cloud of smoke. Robin came out to serve them as he always did in those days. Peter asked him to 'fill it up with oil and check the petrol!' Robin just nodded as though that was the usual thing to do.

Peter and Dad had some great battles in the sheds over the years. One of the biggest was after a night in the Aria club when Peter casually asked if Dad could help shear a few lambs the next day. It sounded like an easy day when Dad agreed but when Kirk Simpson, Peter and Dad arrived for a

'There are no traffic jams when you go the extra mile.' (John Hardie, Southland/ Highlanders loose forward.)

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5.00am start the few lambs turned out to be over 1400.

Peter hooked in from the start and was six sheep ahead of Dad at breakfast time. Dad knew he would never hear the end of it if Peter beat him so he upped his rating and it was all on. They raced all day, by afternoon smoko Peter was still three sheep ahead. Then he got cramp and had to lie on the floor, and he asked Dad to grind a comb for him.

For a joke Dad gave the comb a short buzz on the grinder and put it aside unsharpened. Peter heard and realised what he'd done and there was some abusive language before Dad had to grind it again, properly this time.

After smoko they were back into it and Peter managed to hang in and when they cut the shed out at 20 to five Peter had held his lead and was still three ahead. Peter 517; Dad 514, Kirk 403. So much for the easy day, they were all buggered and by now Peter's cramp was so bad he couldn't drive his own car home.

Dad was okay and, while Peter often reminded him of the time he blew him away, Dad would quietly remind Peter how he had to drive him home.

Peter went on to be a well-known shearer throughout New Zealand. He had a long career in shearing competitions and made a lot of finals – he was well known for his speed in the finals. The other finalists knew they would have to be on their game to keep up if Peter was there. Peter and Dad shored in the Maori-Pakeha teams event at Golden Shears for several years and were placed 3rd in 1976.



The competitive Peter Ratima

When Peter was about 20 years old he had a serious accident while bush-felling for the Buckleys. In a freak accident a tree fell on him and Peter spent quite some time in Hospital with serious injuries. The Buckleys still have a paddock on the farm called the Ratima block, in recognition of the work he did there.

Despite the accident Peter went on to do all those years shearing, and he played rugby for King Country for a number of years. He was a natural sportsman whether it was golf, tennis, snooker or anything else he

tried. He first won the Aria snooker championships when he was only 21. He was always gracious in defeat but he sure let you know it when he beat you.

In the 1970s golf was very strong in Aria, with the annual championship strongly contested. One year Peter was in the finals with Jim Bosher, Dave Porter and John Brunskill. Peter had to shear a couple of runs in the morning of the final which took longer than expected so he was running late for the start. The other finalists were practising their shots when Peter finally turned up coming straight from the wool shed. He grabbed his clubs and lined up at the tee with his sweat towel around his neck and jandals on his feet and went on to clean up and win the champs.

Peter was really lucky to have such a wonderful wife, Alma. She was always there supporting him and they brought up a wonderful family all with the same good principles. One of Peter's great pleasures in later life was spending time with his mokopuna and his family was always very important to him. Peter's sons – Patrick, Peter Lee and the late Clint all became very good shearers and well-known in the shearing world.

Paul Brough then related that he and his brother Mark also worked for the Ratima shearing gangs when they first left school and this was a great introduction to working life.

'The Ratima gangs had a real work hard/play hard attitude and Pete was master of both.'

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Arthur Fayers' Cook

In the boom times of the Fifties, wool could fetch 'a pound a pound.'
Flock numbers boomed and sheep were shorn if shearers could be found.
And those who were available could prove a mix of sorts
Of petty felons, drunks, and deadbeats dodging family courts.

As difficult as shearers were to find in many cases,
Cooks were rarer species; non-existent in some places.
Though bad cooks came and bad cooks went and bad cooks hung around.
Good cooks, like sober stockmen, were so seldom to be found.

I'm speaking of the era when the power of steam was king,
When goods trains of the Sunshine State transported everything.
From stock and general cargo, food, and products from the mines,
Most cargo was conveyed by way of Queensland railway lines.

The towns along the roads of steel all flourished with the trade
Where publicans grew wealthy from the profits that were made;
Where derelicts and reprobates sought comfort in the scrub
And spivs and conmen plied their craft in every local pub.

Enter Arthur Fayers – neither conman nor a spiv
And Julia Creek's the home town where this legend chose to live.
A byword in the wild northwest, our Arthur was the man
Who never pulled on footwear and was called the Barefoot Ghan.

He was desperate for an outback chef to fill his shearing team,
And dusk inside a local pub, a likely spot 'twould seem
To find a willing worker in the evening's early dark.
Old Arthur chose his victim and he focused on his mark.

The Ghan approached his target and he read him like a book
As the fellow, full of liquor, bleary eyed and looking crook,
Slumped down against the timber bar preparing for a snooze
As consequence of lack of sleep and slurping too much booze.

Arthur stood beside him and he gave a pleasant nod.
'You done a bit of cooking, mate?' The drunkard answered, 'God!
Cookin'?' That's me long suit! It's the job I do the best.
From casseroles to custards I'm renowned all through the West!'

He started to elaborate but sagged and said no more
Whilst sliding from the barstool and collapsing on the floor
Where Fayers grabbed his wilting frame, rejoicing in his luck
As he threw his volunteer with swag and suitcase on his truck.

With Artie in the cabin, plus two cronies keeping warm,
Nine less-than-lucky passengers lay slumbering like a swarm
Of paralytic pythons giving vent to rattling snores
Entwined with random luggage, tools, and crates of kitchen stores.

Three hours of navigation down the corrugated track
Saw the final destination for the semi-conscious pack
Of men selected as the team to staff the shearing shed,
As with disconnected grumblings they all stumbled into bed.

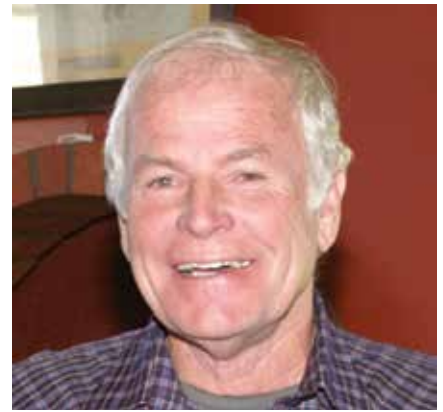
Came five o'clock; the east grew light to greet the roosters' crowing
And Arthur roused his sleeping cook to get the breakfast going.
His man, quite clearly rattled, stared perplexed around the place
With horror soon replacing wild confusion on his face.

Bogged down in sheer bewilderment, he found his voice to speak.
'Hey, how long will it take to drive me back to Julia Creek?'
'If I was driving,' said the Ghan, 'about three hours I'd say,
But 'til we finish up this job, you're here old chap, to stay.'

'I've got to get to Julia Creek! I must get back to town!'
His voice began to tremble and he looked like falling down.
'What's your flaming hurry?' queried Fayers, unconcerned.
His new cook slapped his forehead and his ghastly stare returned.

He stared with desperation from a horror stricken eye.
'Please, take me back! I must go back! And Arthur queried, 'Why?'
The poor coot gave a tortured sob and beat his brow again.
'There's a mixed goods bound for Richmond – and I'm s'posed to drive the train!'

© Milton Taylor 2014



Farewell Milton Poet

The shearing industry lends itself to tall tales that are true and untrue, especially about great days spent on the board with handpiece in hand. Like Clyde, the young bloke who told Ewen Mackintosh he could do 700 on a good day. He just hadn't had a good day yet!

Once in a blue moon there comes along a special breed, like the late Milton Taylor pictured above, who shore sheep for many years before capitalising on his ability to tell yarns, as well as write and recite high class poems and ballads of his own. All the time chronicling life in the shearing sheds of Australasia and recording our history at the same time.

The poem opposite is reprinted here as a tribute to the popular Longreach-born Aussie who came to New Zealand to shear in the 1960s, mainly in western Southland for Elbert De Koning and others. The story line illustrates just how things have changed in 50 years.

By the early 1990s Milton had refined his talents as a balladeer and entertainer to the stage where he was one of the leading lights in the Australian Bush Poetry world.

As recently as January this year, Milton was awarded the Bush Laureate Award for outstanding service: *'It is Milton's gentlemanly ways and his willingness to help others that has earned him this accolade. He has encouraged and mentored generations of young poets and has unstintingly supported bush poetry events all around Australia for many decades.'*

Several of Milton's poems have been published in this magazine, including *The Boy from Tech* (Aug 2002); *My Ute* (Nov 2007) and *Best Dressed* (Apr 2013).

Milton died on 16 May 2015, aged 71. His ashes are scattered on the banks of the Thomson River near his home town of Longreach.

Heiniger News 4 Ewes Winter 2015

Evo Key to Shearer Safety and Job Quality

With the success of the Evo Shearing Plant in the market today Heiniger has again been the first to bring much improved safety and quality to the shearing industry. As farmers upgrade their shearing machinery, so too the level of safety, quality and production can be upgraded. It has long been the thought that the shearing plant is only as good as the person driving it. With the improvement of the shearer their capabilities and capacities in today's shearing sheds, there is a vast majority of shearing plant that does not lend itself to being adequate for the job.

There is an expectation that the shearers will do their best to produce a quality job but this can be difficult when the plant that is driving their handpiece is not performing as it needs too. With the negativity being reported in the wool and sheep industry, it is even more important that the finished product we put to our customers, is of the best possible quality to achieve the best possible return. This can only be achieved by using tools that perform at their optimum potential to produce the optimum job. If your shearing plant is aged & worn there is a good chance that it is compromising both performance and safety to the shearers using it.

Evo Key to Shearer Safety and Job Quality cont.

It may well be time that new shearing plant was considered. Give Heiniger a call on 03 3498282 for a free information pack on the Evo Shearing Plant and upgrade yourself to the elite level of safety & production.

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Will you be at Waitara Station on 4 January 2016 for the Big Day Out? (See pages 20-21)

Further information will be available in the November edition of *Shearing* magazine

PAYE early or pay dearly ...

By Craig Macalister

Unfortunately, from time to time some people in business may find that they are experiencing problems in keeping up with their tax obligations. For a business owner faced with paying key suppliers, staff and the bank et al, paying IRD may well come at the end of the list of payees when funds are tight.

Initially borrowing from IRD can seem like a good idea: they don't ring to complain, they don't cut supplies, put you on cash sales only or cancel your account.

However, left too long, late payment of tax can escalate to the point it is very difficult to get things back under control.

PAYE is the most problematical. There is a significant array of costs applied: interest charges, late payment penalties (5 per cent initially then 1 per cent per month), and then a super-charged 'take that' penalty called the 'Not paying employer monthly schedule penalty' which is 10 per cent of the unpaid amount per month, and left unpaid carries on to accrue until it equals 150 per cent of the unpaid PAYE.

In my view, PAYE should always be paid unless the piggy bank is drier than a popcorn fart.

This is to not only avoid penalties and interest that can escalate the debt into la la land, but also because PAYE deductions can include things like child support payments and KiwiSaver contributions. Further, IRD can then decide to prosecute for failure to account.

One of the biggest mistakes I see businesses making in these circumstances is dealing with IRD on tax debt matters without getting advice off their accountant beforehand.

So many times I have seen businesses agreeing to enter into instalment arrangements with IRD that are simply not affordable. In many cases businesses who owe IRD money are very quick to grab hold of an instalment arrangement life line only to discover that they are not able to keep up to date with their current tax commitments (which are usually a condition of the instalment arrangement) and repay the arrears.

A seriously poor policy design feature of the tax debt rules is that any payment made by a taxpayer against their tax

debt is not applied against the core debt and penalties until the accrued interest is paid. Many businesses I have assisted in this regard have dutifully paid instalment arrangements to IRD only to find they have made very little headway against the core tax debt.

To cap things off, if a business with debt under arrangements trips up for any reason, IRD then cancel the arrangement and send a very unhelpful letter stating:

'Because you have not made the agreed repayments, we have cancelled this instalment arrangement.'

'You are now required to pay (usually a telephone number) within 14 days from the date of this letter.'

'If you do not pay in full within 14 days, we will take further recovery action, which may include starting legal proceedings without further notice.'

Often the letter arrives three to five days after the date of the letter, and very helpfully you cannot call the person who sent you the letter, rather you are directed to a 0800 number – which helpfully allows a cooling down period while you listen to a soothing electronic voice.

I find this approach very unsatisfactory.

Businesses that are struggling with tax obligations are often reluctant to go to IRD.

However, if they do, and they get themselves in an unaffordable instalment arrangement and trip up with the repayments, IRD seem to think that the business can then just write out a cheque for the full amount of the tax.

The fact that they put a pre-printed 'payment slip' in with the letter makes it hard to know whether you should laugh or cry.

Either way, my message for businesses that run into problems with IRD is to discuss this with your accountant before contacting IRD.

(Craig Macalister is tax principal at accounting firm Crowe Horwath. He can be contacted on 03 211 3355. This story first appeared in *The Southland Times* on 7 August 2015. www.southlandtimes.co.nz
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That's What I Said

Shearing is a tough job, and due to its seasonal nature allows no time off when the pressure is on.

As workers get increasingly tired and desperate for a day away from the woolies, the poor contractor often finds himself having to constantly rally the troops to avert a potential mutiny.

A few encouraging and uplifting words in the morning about the day ahead can bring a smile to the sourest face, but what do those words really mean?

In the United Kingdom and Europe especially, where conditions can be 'challenging' to put it politely, contractors have a vocabulary of euphemisms to send you off to work bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.

However, anything a contractor says that at first sounds benign should be treated with suspicion. Here is a guide to the most commonly used euphemisms – and what they really mean!

'You can have a bit more of a sleep in the van.' (*We'll be travelling for bloody hours today.*)

'They might have just caught a light shower as the farmer was running them in last night.' (*They are soaking, but I want you to shear them anyway.*)

'They're good combing!' (*They are enormous!*)

'They're nice and light!' (*They are scum!*)

'You should have an easy day tomorrow.' (*Tomorrow will be normal. As for today – you don't want to know.*)

'You'll get a good tan today.' (*Outside sweating buckets in the baking sun.*)

'At least it'll be nice and cool where we're going today.' (*Up in the mountains and absolutely freezing.*)

'The farmers are real characters.' (*It's a circus. Expect anything.*)

'You'll earn good coin today.' (*You'll be home around midnight.*)

(Thanks Tom Harding!)



UK tourists 2015 – top Dion King in action at Lochearnhead Shears. Above David Fagan, Dion King and team manager Ronny King at the Royal Welsh Show. The team won four and lost four on its eight-test tour.

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GET THE EDGE, MAKE THE CUT



Training the trainers

By Anna Lindsay

During winter in South Canterbury, Primary ITO organised a Train the Trainer day, incorporating lessons based on teaching and coaching skills.

'This forms part of the AgExcel quality assurance programme for trainers delivering Primary ITO wool harvesting programmes. Trainers are expected to complete a refresher course at least once every two years,' explains Tracey Shepherd from Primary ITO.

Local trainer Shirleen Cochrane ran a valuable session for the morning taking the participants through some training techniques. This began with how to plan for training, breaking down what needs to be taught and how best to get a message across.

Shirleen then worked through different learning styles, how to move from explaining what has to be learnt, through demonstrations, to allowing students to imitate and have a go and then the importance of practice. Along with practice the teaching switches to coaching.

This advice was very well received by the local trainers who readily recognised that shearing and wool handling are complicated skills that aren't learnt over night, but require a lot of opportunities to have a go and practice, practice practice, with guidance from colleagues and a coach.



Joel Henare safely lands another fleece

The session finished with a discussion on assessment and how we ensure consistency and fairness, and ensure that the candidates can consistently meet the standard required.

The afternoon session shifted to a local woolshed where the experienced trainers worked together ensuring consistency in procedures and sharing training tips.



Some of the trainers present are training their own staff under the contractor specific model offered by Primary ITO. This system allows

contractors to do their own training when suited to them, with Primary ITO Training Advisers ensuring all requirements of training are addressed before contracting the contractor for this delivery. A similar model is for professional trainers to deliver specifically for the Contractor Business, which Primary ITO calls our blended model.

'Primary ITO appreciates that the new systems of their delivery are a little confusing after the wool harvesting industry's training has been delivered predominantly by one Training Provider company for the past 20 years. However, our team of wools specific Training Advisers are there to assist the industry with finding the training option that is best for them,' Tracey says.

'Primary ITO is pleased that after a year of turmoil, tension and a lot of ill feeling, many contractors are returning to training, appreciating the industry always needs good shearers, wool handlers and pressers, and it's the trainees who miss out when contractors fail to engage in training,' Tracey concludes.

If you're interested in Primary ITO training for you or your staff, please contact your local wool Training Adviser on 0800 20 80 20 or for more information on Primary ITO, please visit www.primaryito.ac.nz.

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Thanks from Kumeroa whanau

Jo cut her teeth on the back blocks of Whanganui, under the hard hands of a whanau-run shearing gang. It was a proud, staunch, hard working, 'no excuses' style of mahi. It was here that Joanne (that is what our whanau always called her) learned how to do the 'hard grafting', led by the unwavering and often unseen parenting team of Walter and Heather.

The master classer you all grew to know, took a little while to find her feet on the highest podium in the shearing world. From a young age Jo was never one to just achieve, she always aimed higher than where the bar was set. From being the last one standing in bullrush to being the smallest second rower in the local rugby league team, she was always destined to be a star.

We are proud of Jo's achievements, but we may have never truly understood what she meant and achieved for the shearing community. We had trophies and ribbons to prove she was a world champion, but until she became ill we did not completely understand the aroha and appreciation people held in their hearts for her.

We loved hearing about Joanne's passion to share her knowledge with other competitors and people she worked with. Her mind set of helping others to improve, to improve herself, was the mark of a true champion.

We were blessed by all those who shared their personal experiences with Jo. All the stories shared brought us to tears and laughter and we were amazed at how much her friends wanted to do for her as a sign of respect for what she had done and stood for.

The little shearing symbols shown at Jo's tangi, such as the fleece on her casket, ribbons that adorned the walls of the marquee, or Uncle Ned sweeping up the koha with a board broom, may have been a first on the awa, however the whanau in the background with their sleeves rolled up, putting in the hard yards in the kitchen and on the marae did their cousin, aunty and whanau proud beyond words.

We as a whanau want to thank the shearing community for all you have done for Jo. Thank you to everyone that travelled from far and wide to be with us and farewell Jo and to those who couldn't make it for sending your messages of love. Our appreciation and aroha will always be there for you. Love and regards. (*Kumeroa whanau.*)

Obituary: Jim Williams

Jim Williams was never a shearer but he did an awful lot of work behind the scenes for an industry and sport that he loved. Ian Rutherford recalls that Jim was with the Bank of New Zealand at Milton in the early 1970s and became involved as a sponsor with the Otago Shearing championships at Balclutha.

Jim, who died at Christchurch on 19 July 2015 at the age of 85, was also one of the first delegates to the meeting at Wellington in 1973 that led to the formation of the National Shearing Committee. (Now Shearing Sports New Zealand.) Jim also played a prominent part in refining the scoring system used at competitions.



The late Jim Williams of Christchurch, member of the original National Shearing Committee and instigator of the All Breeds circuit competition.

Dave Clark of Cust says Jim was also involved in the introduction of the All Breeds circuit which involved competitions from north of the Waitaki River to Nelson and Marlborough.

'The circuit started in the open grade and expanded to include senior and intermediate grades. Jim was BNZ manager and the bank was involved as a major sponsor.

'Jim collected all the points, collated scores and refined the systems with Ian Rutherford. The All Breeds final was always held at the Canterbury Shears and during the 1970s and 80's featured the likes of Adrian Cox, the Walsh boys, Colin King and Peter Lyon and always very keenly contested.

'Jim Williams did a lot of great work behind the scenes for years at competitions and loved being involved with the shearers and the sport.'

Who Needs Facegook?

I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while carefully applying the same principles.

Therefore, every day I walk down the street and tell passersby what I had for breakfast, how I feel at the moment, what I did the night before, what I will be doing later, and with whom.

I show them pictures of my family, my dog, and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of notable landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody and everybody does every day.

I also listen to their conversations, give them the 'thumbs up' and tell them I like them and want to be friends.

And it works just like Facebook. I already have four people following me: two police officers, a private investigator, and a psychiatrist...

(*Buck Naked*)



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OUT ON BAXTER'S RUN

Jack Baxter sold his farm and run and shifted off to town
He couldn't face the rising costs when prices tumbled down
He cursed the mortgage on his land, his bills and overdraft –
Still Jack would rather rant than plan – and rather drink than graft

He's working at the freezing works, a solid union man
He takes a good cheque home each month and lives the best he can
He's just a number down a street where houses crowd and cram
He seldom thinks about Mt Sharp and couldn't give a damn

He has no interest to meet, no stock firm at his door
And when the drought is on the land it bothers him no more
The river wild may break its banks, the snows lie thick and deep
But someone else with worried mind looks round the starving sheep

His mail and paper at his door, a shopping centre near
A floor show at his local when he drinks his jug of beer
No breakfast in the early dawn, no supper late at night
And come disputes or strikes or stops Jack knows that Jack's alright

A stranger's boots are tramping through the tussocks and the rock
A stranger's dogs are slewing mobs that once were Baxter stock
A stranger's whistle from the crags drifts down the bridle track
Where no one but a Baxter rode three generations back

Where Baxter's father fought the slump – his tired gray wife beside
When times were lean and hordes of rabbits plagued the mountainside
And where his great grandfather turned the snow grass with the plough
A stranger through the clover fields drives round the cattle now

Where rusted wire and rotten posts and buildings showed neglect
When twice the country marched to war and lives and dreams were wrecked
Where years of sweat and toil and tears were ground into the land
Where stock that grazed since early days all wore the Baxter brand

A Baxter lies above the sea, who fell at Anzac Cove
Another near El Alamein, the desert sky above
They'd not have dodged a challenge thrown the way that Jack had done
They'd not have let a stranger rule way out on Baxter's run
© Blue Jeans 2015



The Hawkdun Range – Baxter's Run could be just over the far ridge.

Shearing Sports NZ Upgrades for 2015/16 Season

Shearing Sports New Zealand has announced the following upgrades for the 2015-2016 season:

Shearing: Senior to Open (10 wins or more in Senior class): Ethan Pankhurst, Jotham Rentoul.

Intermediate to Senior (five wins or more in Intermediate class): Hugh De Lacy, Marshall Guy, Kaleb Foote, Michael Herlihy, Ramone Smith, Corey White. **Intermediate to Senior** (tally rule): Petera Hone, Cayzer Wedd.

Junior to Intermediate (three wins or more in Junior class): Laura Bradley, Emily Te Kapa, Ricci Stevens, Hemi Lambert, Rob Hervey, Duncan Higgins, Kelly MacDonald, Ash Jones, Khochyce Forward.

Novice to Junior (three wins in Novice class): Cody Greig, Sarah Higgins.

Woolhandling: Senior to Open (three or more A-grade wins in Senior class): Ana Braddick, Sarah Higgins, Stevie Mason-Smallman, Connor Puha.

Junior to Senior (One or more A-grade wins in Junior class, or six or more placings): Chiquita Tamepo, Marika Braddick, Hannah Spiers, Chonnelle Kawana, Clarissa Lewis, Peketai Puna, Nova Kumeroa-Elers, Raniera Whare, Michael Herlihy, Monique Mackey, Jaya Deva Henry, Jessie Dean, Stephanie Smith, Nera Hitaua (6 placings).

Upgraded competitors have a right of appeal which should be forwarded in writing to Lara Russell, Secretary, Shearing Sports New Zealand, 57 Lane St, Ashburton, or by email to secretary@shearingsports.co.nz no later than 11 September 2015.

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Influence of Shearing

Experiments made in the agricultural station at Proskau, in Germany, on the influence of shearing in increasing the weight of sheep, have shown that shearing improves the animal's appetite, and the increase is set down to this cause.

So far as it goes the explanation is satisfactory, but the probability is that the tendency to grow fat after the wool is removed is the result of one of those compensatory processes which are so common in nature. Fat and wool serve as a defence against cold, and when one is wanting, the secretion of the other is stimulated.

It does not follow that in a warm country the same results will be obtained as are indicated by the German experiments. The results of shearing in Australia should be watched before being interfered with.

(Otago Witness, 11 March 1876.)



The British Southern Shears at Holmbush Farm World, West Sussex, proved to be a happy hunting ground for Fagan – Jack Fagan, that is. He won the open final (20 lambs) by seven points from Jon Roberts, with Nick Harding, Ed Gingell and Rob Lee filling the minor placings.

Harding, Gingell (first and second) and Lee (fourth) also featured in the senior final, with Jacob Moore (NZ, third) and Adam Webb fifth. Webb won the intermediate final, followed by Ross Thomson, Stacey Donald Whitu, Andrew Pannell and Suzie Parish.

Juniors: Will Hinton, Claire Sweeney, George Dalloway, Pannell and Jack Mighall. Novice: George Ticehurst, Amelia Wood, Emma Blomfield, Emily Killick and Lydia Hill.

Fagan had a more notable triumph a week or so later when he took out the Royal Welsh Open championship ahead of Dion King and David Fagan.



Four-year-old Kayze Ropiha (left) and his cousin Amadeus Hazelwood (6) had a great time helping their koro, Dave Heke, in this well-lit shed near Hastings.

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It Just Doesn't Tally!

If you are a junior, intermediate or senior shearer, and you competed in (one of) those divisions all season, you will have established a 'career record' in competition shearing. You've shorn against your peers, shearing similar sheep on the same day in the same conditions and under the scrutiny of the same judges, applying the same rules.

You might have had a successful season – made a few finals, won some ribbons and some prize money, you might have even won a few shows.

Let's say you're an intermediate – you actually attended 15 shows during the season, you made seven finals and you won a couple. So shearing against people of similar ability, you did okay – you didn't win the Golden Shears or a New Zealand championship, but you had some fun and you clearly demonstrated that you could handle yourself in that grade and you're looking ahead, thinking you might do even better next season.

Again (for the sake of this argument) you come from Southland (or Hawkes Bay) and have been shearing 250-260 adult sheep in your eight-hour day. There are no judges in the sheds during your eight hours of sweat, no one counting second cuts. The cocky might notice a few but he certainly isn't there all day and if you are getting a bit rough he might have a quiet word to your ganger, but he's not out in the pen applying a quality rating of five or nine or even 27 to your shorn sheep.

Then you come up to the King Country, where the sheep are smaller, sometimes a bit washed out – and hey, you can do 280! But still there are no judges, no second cuts counted, no other competition rules applied to your day's work. Because that's what it is, a day's work. Nothing even remotely like the sport you take part in each weekend, except for the common elements of sheep and shearing gear.

But wait – because you've done that 280 in the King Country (or Northland,

or Taranaki), you have demonstrated that you are now better than an intermediate shearer, and so you will probably find yourself upgraded to senior class by Shearing Sports New Zealand. Oh, and then you go back to those big sheep in Southland or Hawkes Bay and you're back doing your 250 or 260 – but your tallies are creeping up, nevertheless, towards exceeding that intermediate 'tally' on a regular basis, because of natural improvement in your ability.

When a competition shearer has a verifiable 'track record' from shearing at competitions, I cannot for the life of me see what relevance that shed tally has to what grade he or she should be in. It's like selecting an athlete to represent a club on the basis of training miles run during the week and ignoring the fact that he runs consistently last at athletics meetings each Saturday.

Shearing Sports – using the tally for upgrading just does not tally!
(Des Williams)

Wide-combing it with ...

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If we really need a new flag it should be black with a silver fern on the front and have number 7 on the back. Ya reckon?



Oh yeah no, definitely!



Buck Naked

.... and

Doug Deep

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Another Legend Passes

Bruce Dodd of Paparoa Northland, passed away after a short illness at the age of 67 years. Bruce was well known throughout the New Zealand shearing circle both in the North Island shearing for the Potaes and for the Schimanskis in the South, to name a couple.

A natural leader, Bruce followed through into running his own gang, contracting in and around the Far North. Bruce left New Zealand for Australia in the early 1970s, shearing through the Western Australian strikes for various contractors.

Bruce was amongst one of the first

gang of shearers to travel from New Zealand to NSW, Australia in 1983. The team included Alan (Dally) Vuletich, Dave Wilson and Henry Cross all from Dargaville, Northland.

With a lot of shearing, avoiding flood water, flying to remote areas and fighting through the strike we got the job done. At over 6'3", a gentle giant with a strong work ethic, Bruce was always a good man to have on your side and to shear beside.

Jack Dowd credits Bruce as the man who first brought wide gear into the Australian eastern states. 'Although Bruce was a top New Zealand shearer

he has also earned that special place in history for making a tremendous difference to the lives of shearers throughout Australia.'

Jack Dowd shore with Bruce at Lochinver Station in 1974 when he, Bruce (524), Ashley Petuha (496) and Gene Raroa (425) shore 1988 sheep in nine hours (Jack's contribution 543).

Bruce also featured in a Potae Shearing seven-man team that set an unofficial world record at Hakataramea Station in 1978. Shearing tough corriedales, Bruce led the way with 467, followed by Colin (Frog) Potae (440), Ally Vance (408), Bill Potae (405), Paul Ewing (404), Peter Dodds (347) and Frank Tai (321). The tally was noted as the biggest in the history of the Haka shed in more than a century. (Bill Potae recalls Paul Ewing had a substantial bet on who was going to do the most that day. He got it wrong and the winnings (or 'losings') went on the bar and kept everyone happy for several hours!)

Bruce Dodd also operated as a contractor in the Whangarei area, as well as at Esperance (WA) and Orange, New South Wales. Two sons, Peter and Owen Dodd, are also shearers.

Bruce served several years as a Shearing Sports NZ competition judge for the Northland area. He died at Whangarei on 23 May 2015.

(Contributions from Alan (Dally) Vuletich, Jack Dowd and Bill Potae.)



Hazy image from a crazy (but not lazy) day in summer many years ago – 1974 to be exact, when the late Bruce Dodd (second left) teamed with Jack Dowd (left) Ashley Petuha and Gene Raroa (right) to shear 1988 ewes in nine hours at Lochinver Station.

International shearing instructor, Jack Dowd has been persuaded to come to NZ for the coming shearing season to help developing shearers.

Jack started shearing at age 14, but continues to shear full-time when his busy training schedule allows the time. After 55 years of experience in all breeds he is constantly asked by other shearers to pass on not only his distinctively fluid and effortless style, but also his skill in experting combs. He believes this is a very important but largely overlooked aspect of the shearing skill. Shearers who know him say, 'Just try shearing a sheep with his gear to see the difference.'

Consequently, Primary ITO has asked him to come to New Zealand for the next season.

- Golden shears finalist at age 23.
- Master shearer at age 27.
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You should recognise this man – he shored 804 lambs in nine hours at Mount Linton Station on 30 January 2006, contributing to a new world record of 2350. He was with his brother and another good Western Southland lad.

Yep, you got it – Shane Harvey. At least, it's Shane as seen through the eyes and lego creativity of daughter Cheyenne (aged 9) who won the regional section of a national competition with her creation. Compare the photos above and below for obvious likenesses. Well done Cheyenne!



Little Ben, all dressed up and nowhere to go.



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(*Ask me how)



New Zealand championships 2015. Top: junior woolhandling finalists, from left: Peter Lange (President), Chiquita Tamepo, Raewyn Sinclair, Jaya Deva Henry, Sarah Hall, Monique Mackay. Second top: Junior shearing finalists: Russell Knight (Acto), Ricci Stevens, Shane Gouk, Laura Bradley, Connor Puha, Jeremy Morton, Mitchell Hoare. Insets: Chiquita Tamepo and Ricci Stevens. Bottom: Senior woolhandlers: Keryn Herbert (presenter), Ana Braddick, Tara Chapman, Paige Brausch, Erica Reti, Ashley Aporo.



No mountains or snow, but Island beauty!
You've no doubt seen episodes of 'Shearing Gang' on Prime TV and felt a few pangs of jealousy when you see those Peter Lyon gangs at Alexandra heading off into the scenic wonderlands of Central Otago and Southland. The sort of places that only tourists get to visit. It's reality TV that is actually real! Pete and his gangs would no doubt say someone has to do it and it might as well be them.

But there are also some great places at the other end of New Zealand where sheep have to be shorn and 'someone has to do it'. There's a beautiful island in the eastern Bay of Islands, known as Urupukapuka. Northland shearer Roger Cook was there with his 'gang' back in April.

Wikipedia describes the island (208 hectares) as one with many sandy beaches. 'The waters around the island are clear and diving is particularly good on the east coast where there is plentiful reef life. Indico and Paradise Bays are popular sheltered anchorages and ideal for most forms of water sports. Pohutukawa are abundant along the coastline. New Zealand dotterel, oystercatcher, pied stilt and paradise duck breed on the island.'

Urupukapuka is managed as a recreation reserve by the Department of Conservation and it has many sites of historic and archaeological significance, as well as popular camp grounds and walking tracks.

Thanks to great work by residents and near neighbours on the mainland, the island is predator-free and has recently received translocations of endangered toutouwai (North Island robin) and tieke (saddleback) as part of a community effort known as Project Island Song (bringing birdsong back to the islands). Thousands of native trees have been planted to assist regeneration of native forests.

But there's also sheep on the island, and that's where 42-year-old Roger Cook comes into the story. Roger has been shearing and working on farms around the Far North for most of his life. Having 'grown up around sheep and shearing' he one day found himself with a couple of stragglers that needed their wool removed.

'I think I actually shored them backwards but managed to

Shearing on Urupukapuka Island. Top: Roger Cook (red singlet) starts the undermine while partner Annette wields the broom. Opposite: Grant Cook (standing) lets one go while Roger deals to the last side of his sheep. Above: two saddlebacks bolt for freedom (Project Island Song).

get the wool off anyway. Eventually I attended a couple of Tectra courses, the first run by Sonny Marshall [Ohinewai] and later I had some instruction from Tony Clutterbuck, a well known trainer here in the north.

'The season is pretty short here, mainshear takes a couple of months and I usually work with my cousin, Grant Cook, in small, two-stand sheds and we work 7.5-hour days.'

Roger's association with Urupukapuka goes back to his secondary schooling, when school camps were held there, and he's been shearing the sheep for the Department of Conservation for the past six years or so.

'Urupukapuka really is a gorgeous spot and I always love the opportunity to go there. DOC carries about 180 sheep on the island so the farm land is lightly grazed and most of the land is used for recreation purposes. It dries out in summer so there isn't a case for carrying big numbers.

'There is a long history of Maori occupation [noted by Captain James Cook – no relation to Roger!] on one of his visits] on the island so it also has great cultural and historic significance.'

Roger has plenty of other farm-based work to keep him busy, but he never passes up the chance to load his handpiece with a comb and cutter. 'It's great just being able to put the head down and bum up and shear sheep. You are always working with down-to-earth, no-bullshit people who just make the job so enjoyable. When you can do it at a place like Urupukapuka it's even better.' (*Des Williams*)



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Christchurch – Ivan Scott
Pleasant Point – David Fagan
Rotorua – David Fagan
Winton – David Fagan
Duvauchelle – Tony Coster
Counties – David Fagan
Southern Shears – NZ Team – David Fagan, Tony Coster
Southern Shears – Wales Team – Richard Jones & Gareth Daniels
Southern Shears – David Fagan
South Island Shearer of the Year – David Fagan
Taumarunui – David Fagan
Apiti – David Fagan
Pahiatua – David Fagan
Balclutha – David Fagan
Aria – David Fagan
Methven – Tony Coster
Sefton – Tony Coster
NZ Shearing Championships – Dion King
NZ Shearing Circuit – David Fagan
McKenzie – Tony Coster

UK RESULTS 2015

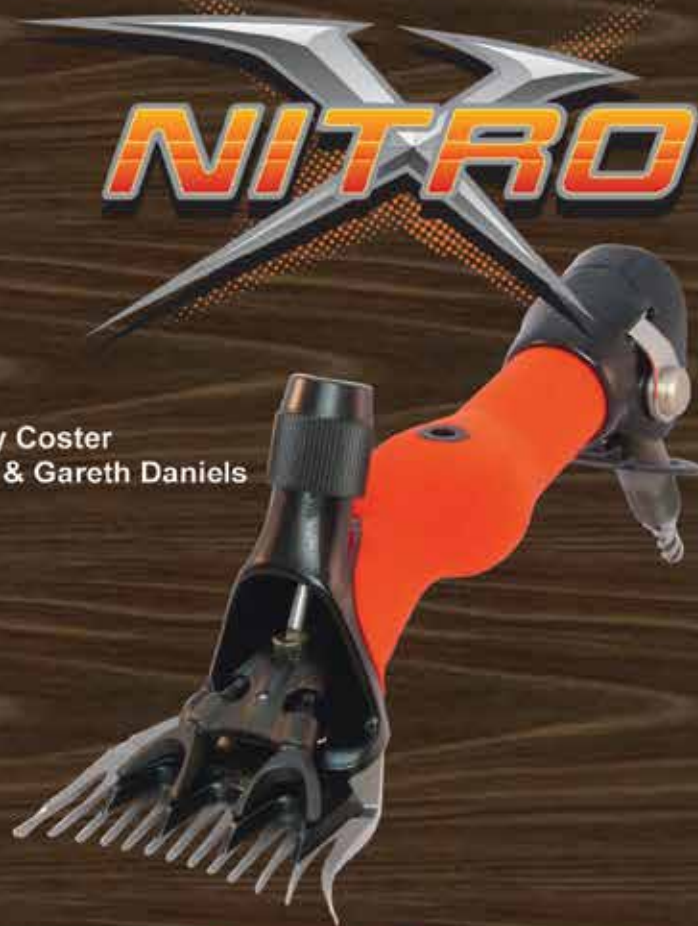
Royal Ulster – Ivan Scott
Northumberland – Richard Jones
Royal Three Counties – Richard Jones
Llysfasi – Richard Jones
Craic in the Braic – Ivan Scott
Nissa Shears – Dion King
Lakeland – Dion King
Southern Shears – Jack Fagan
Great Yorkshire – Gareth Daniels
Lampeter – Gareth Daniels
Royal Welsh – Jack Fagan
Corwen – Gareth Daniels
Brecon – Richard Jones
NZ vs Wales

PLUS 14 Speedshears including
1st & 2nd in Queenstown – David Fagan & Dion King

CURRENT WORLD RECORDS

All shorn using Lister / Supershear gear...

Individual 9 hour Ewes – 721
Individual 9 hour Lambs – 866
Individual 8 hour Ewes – 603
Individual 8 hour Lambs – 744



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