

Shearing

Promoting our industry, sport and people

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Shearing history for Matt Smith – the first world record tally shorn in the United Kingdom, August 2016.



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**Next edition due 24 November 2016.
Deadline for all material two weeks prior.**

UNDER COVER STORY

Greetings readers and welcome to this August 2016 edition of the magazine. Getting to the printers on time with the distraction of the Olympic Games going on in the background is never an easy task. Then someone from a stock firm or merchandise store phones up to ask when the next mag is due out because people are starting to come in looking for it! So you get yourself back on task, as they say!

As usual there is always plenty happening in our industry and the challenge is to provide a balanced range of stories. For our two-bob's worth, we reckon the new nine-hour world records shorn by former Northlander Matt Smith (731 adult sheep) and Ireland's Ivan Scott (867 lambs) at the same English woolshed earlier this month are truly gold-medal Olympian achievements.

While I would not advocate the inclusion of shearing in a Commonwealth or Olympic Games programme, it does make you wonder when you try to compare these efforts against Olympic 'sports' like that one played at the beach! And while Matt and Ivan had to rise to the occasion on their respective days, the strong teams behind them led by Allan and Rowland Smith, and Rotorua contractor Jeff Dorset (for Ivan) remind us that these first records 'overseas' probably would not have come together without New Zealand expertise and experience.

The subject of shearing industry training has been of intense interest since the end of the Tectra era and we can report in these pages that a new training agency, Te Ako Wools Ltd (with Jock Martin as Operations manager) is picking up the reins in conjunction with Primary ITO. See page 36 for further news.

Elsewhere we make a not-too-serious claim that shearing sports (in the guise of an 1868 blade shearing competition at Waipukurau) may well pre-date rugby in this country. It has been known that the Hawke's Bay A&P Association staged possibly the first machine-shearing competition in 1902, but the recent unearthing of a comprehensive newspaper report detailing the rules, the judges and the winning competitors adds a new dimension to our history.

It is also our unenviable task to report the passing of more great industry people – Bill Sheppard and Ron Stuart among them.

Finally, sincere thanks to all our advertisers, without whose loyal support the magazine would not see the light of day. See you all again in November (or early December).

Ka kite ano

Des Williams (editor)

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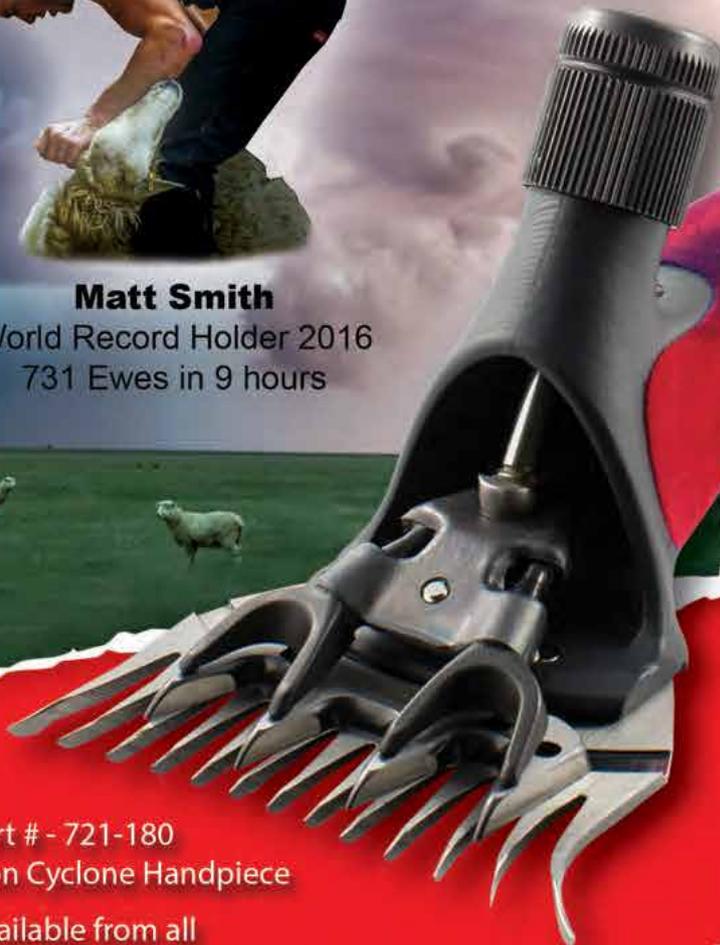
Matt Smith

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Matt climbs the big tree

By Tom Harding

Any shearer who finds himself dreaming of breaking a world record will already know that all the low-hanging fruit was harvested a long time ago. Over the years shearers have then reached progressively higher and higher up the tree, and now it's a very long, tough and risky climb to get to any that might be left.

The biggest, sweetest fruit of all, that everyone dreams of picking – the nine-hour individual strongwool ewe and lamb records, are right at the very top. To try to pick one of these little beauties takes an incredible amount of determination, hard work, skill, and most of all, guts.

Because when you aim that high, the chance of falling is much greater, and if you do it's going to hurt.

Fortunately for Matt Smith, he had all these necessary virtues in abundance when he took on the nine-hour ewe record at his home farm in Cornwall in late July. It was to be the first time an official world record had ever been attempted in the northern hemisphere. Originally from Ruawai, 32-year-old Matt had spent over half his life dreaming of this: 'It's something I've wanted to do since I was fifteen years old,' he says. 'It's a lifetime goal achieved, that's the long and short of it.'

'When I heard about David Fagan and Dion Morrell and Darin Forde breaking that record – and just to know that someone had shorn over 700 ewes in a day – it's unfathomable.'

'When you're working with local contractors and shearers, you know, good strong steady shearers doing 300 – 350 a day, as a young boy you idolise them, then you hear that someone has done twice as many...'

Only actually hearing the tone of his voice as he says those words can convey the respect he has for the men. 'But, you think,' he continues, 'if they can do it, it's "do-able".'

And 'do-able' it was: he put sheep number 731 down the porthole just after 5pm to put ten sheep on Rod Sutton's 721, a record which had stood since 2007.



Matt Smith doing the 'do-able' – up and beyond the 700 mark, where only David Fagan, Dion Morrell, Darin Forde and Rodney Sutton had been before. 731 ewes in nine hours.

In an age where, sadly, television talent shows have cheapened the standing ovation to an omnipresent, meaningless bore, here was an achievement that truly deserved one, and everyone knew it. And when it was still going on several minutes later, people's arms hurting but no-one wanting to stop, it gave the gesture back its currency like a breath of fresh air.

No-one could have been prouder than Matt's English wife Pip, whose parents rent them the farm. After putting in months of hard work behind the scenes it had all paid off. Ten-month-old son Dustyn probably just wondered what all the noise was about!

Matt's father Allan, who inspired him to start shearing in the first place, and brothers Rowland and Doug had also flown over from New Zealand specially.

A week later, after recovering from the day that has been compared to running three marathons, and after it had all sunk in, it must have felt quite strange for Matt.

'You spend your whole life trying to achieve a goal... What do you do when it's achieved?' he ponders. 'For me now I think it's all about putting things back. I've had a good run; I've had a lot of help.'

Matt is now looking into helping the British Wool Marketing Board with shearer training workshops, and who better to help train youngsters than a man who has reached the very top of the tree?



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NZ WOOL CLASSERS ASSOCIATION



The Wool Harvesting industry has taken a step back in time and we are now required to do a full preparation for some contracted merino wool. This will put considerable pressure on our few highly skilled wool handlers and the industry needs to fill this void.

It is pleasing to see the New Zealand Shearing Contractors Association has come to an agreement with Primary ITO to take over the wool harvesting training through their newly formed company, Te Ako Wools Ltd (meaning 'to learn'). We are sure this company will address the training issues of the past and start increasing the numbers of trained wool handlers, which, we as classers rely on to obtain a high standard of preparation and achieve the best result for the owner of the wool.

The formation of this company has taken some time and the industry owes a large debt to Jamie McConachie, Peter Lyon, Jock Martin and Brendon Mahoney who have spent many hours of their time to make this all happen. The New Zealand Wool Classers Association, at its recent board meeting, fully supported the formation of this company and offered it assistance where required.

The Association held its Annual General Meeting at Timaru and combined it with a field day. This included a tour through Canterbury Wool Scour and presentations by a number of wool industry personal. At the AGM two of our

directors – Alistair Eckhoff and Rose Barnett – did not seek re-election and we thank them for the contribution they have made over the past few years.

Two new Directors were elected – Vivienne Lewis of Taihape, who is a classer and also operates a shearing and fencing business with Rudy [Lewis], and Murray (Herbie) Ross from Fairlie, who is a classer and farmer. The Chairman and Registrar reports to the AGM are available to view on our web site www.woolclassers.co.nz

Our Merit and Commendation awards were announced at the AGM and we congratulate the recipients and look forward to new nomination for the coming season.

The association has held (in addition to Timaru) field days in Napier, Christchurch and Omakau. These have been well attended with over 35 in both Napier and Omakau. Reports received have supported our efforts and the contents of the day. These can also be viewed on our web site and in our August newsletter.

(And see page 30 for 2016 Merit Awards.)



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Left: Aneta Terehia Muir with her Q Stencil Merit Award, presented by NZWCA Patron, Dave MacPherson. Above: Karen Wilkins-Duff from Bluff Station receives her Merino Merit Award from Blair Davies, assistant Commercial Manager of New Zealand Merino Company Ltd.

Yes, it's Golden Shears at Masterton again next year,
the way it has always been since 1961

2-3-4 March 2017

Not to be confused with the World Championships
at Invercargill, 9-10-11 February 2017



Top: Peter McCusker of PGG Wrightson describes the merits of a show fleece to an attentive audience at the NZWCA field day at Christchurch. Above: Diane Chilcott receives her North Island Merit Award from Association Patron, Dave MacPherson.

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Mackintosh Shearing

The next shearing course is on 28 November. Another good reason to come work for us...

Last year we had a full-time Training Manager: he ran shearing courses at the start of mainshear, then worked one-on-one with our shearers in the sheds. It was great – our guys' learnt better (and safer) techniques, helping them to become faster while improving the quality of the job. Good skills for the shearers to take away with them. We are doing it again this year: Jerome McCrea will be back, with the first course starting 28 November. If you

work for us over mainshear, then you qualify to come on the course. You'll get plenty of follow-up in the sheds, plus Jerome teaches how to prepare and maintain your gear.

Jerome is passionate about our industry and well-qualified to be our Trainer: he was a Golden Shears finalist several times, worked the overseas and NZ shearing circuits, and is a TECTRA-certified instructor.

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Contamination levels far too high!

By Des Williams

Hawke's Bay Woolscourers Ltd has released a rather disturbing report on the level of contamination encountered at its plant during the 2015/16 season. There were 244 'finds' in bales for the year ended 30 June. That equates to 4.69 finds per week and is similar to the previous year.

'Press bars continue to be the most common find at 33% of the total. We cannot help wondering why a bale which has a press bar in it is not either identified or the press bar removed while it is still in the shed. We have had on occasion three consecutive bales from the same grower with one press bar in each – how is the next bale pressed?'

The report identifies plastic items, especially stock feed bags, as the next most common at 32% of the total finds, with items such as towels, singlets and socks accounting for 11%.

'Both these items cause considerable problems at the Mill. Plastic or cloth thread in the final scoured product will cause a problem at the Mill – along with a considerable claim often in the tens of thousands of dollars. Who packed the bale, and where should the liability for this lie?'

'Steel objects such as hammers, spanners, lengths of chain, grinding wheels and press cranks among other steel objects cause major damage to the wool openers and the scour train if not caught in time. These amount to 16% of finds.

'Paper makes up 8% of total finds – one of which was a



Cedric Aramoana and Dawn Ratana stare in disbelief at some of the items found in wool bales at the scourers. None of it looks very much like wool. If the press bars are missing for the bale you are working on – is there a fair chance they are in the bale you've just pressed?

poster demonstrating correct shed preparation!'

The report calls for both growers and shearing gangs to take more care and apply more vigilance in regard to contamination.

Contamination compounds up the problem

'What starts off as a \$6 can of raddle spray accidentally left in a wool bale can quickly escalate a company handling our beautiful New Zealand product into thousands of dollars of costs in stoppages, down time and waste.

'What about a cotton towel or hood that defribulates once shredded by big opening and carding machinery – this at the yarn stage is in the \$10-50,000 in claims recovered.

'These types of problems start in the shearing shed from carelessness (or perhaps deliberate) leaving shearing shed items near the main flow of wool into the press.

'Both Canterbury and Hawke's Bay Woolscourers do pay employees \$10 incentive to remove the items from the line. The quantities that need to be opened to feed the scour still see some contamination items unfortunately sneak by unnoticed. Both sites have metal detectors to give added assurance to our well scour product.'

The weekly average finds at the Canterbury site for the 2015/16 year was running at 8.4, up from 6.6 last season. These range from confectionary bar wrappers to grinder large spanners, but by far the most common item is the press bars from the press.' [Almost unbelievable!]



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Ivan Scott weathers the test

By Tom Harding

As Matt Smith stood basking in the glow of his standing ovation at 5pm on Tuesday, the sea of faces in the crowd told the emotional story of the moment; pride, relief, excitement, sheer joy, wonder.

There was one face in that crowd though that stood out like a sore thumb, standing somewhere roughly in the middle towards the front – this face was noticeably paler and the story it seemed to be telling was one of uneasiness and foreboding.

This was the face of 35-year-old Irishman Ivan Scott.

He would have undoubtedly been pleased for and proud of Matt yes; but he had bigger things to worry about now. For Matt had fronted-up and delivered the goods – in less than three days' time it was due to be his turn to face the same amount of pressure, the triple-marathon of endurance, the ultimate test of any gun shearer.

Because, to paraphrase what they say about buses, you wait forever for an official world record attempt in the northern hemisphere, then two come along all at once.

Ivan was to attempt the other 'big one' on Friday – the 9 hour lamb record, making good use of the international judges, specially built stand and all the rest of the infrastructure necessary.



Ivan Scott, 'mountaineer' - followed his recent Ireland ewe shearing record (820 in nine hours) with a new world lamb shearing record (867 in nine hours). Together with Matt Smith (see page 5), Scott has shifted the balance of power to the northern hemisphere. For the moment, anyway.

Did he look uneasy just because of the size of the task ahead of him? Probably, yes in part. He told a reporter in 2012 that shearing 744 lambs to break the 8 hour record in New Zealand was "a bit like climbing a mountain".

But it was probably also because somewhere, deep down in his subconscious, he knew he'd really be up against it here; if the 8 hour record that he'd broken twice was like climbing a mountain, this one was going to be like Everest, with a backpack on.

With only one more hour's shearing time in his favour, he would somehow have to do over 120 more lambs than he'd done in 2012 in order to beat Dion King's 9 hour record of 866.

Also, the Romney lambs necessary to get the wool weight probably wouldn't be as good going in the UK as in New Zealand, and there certainly aren't mobs of five thousand to pick the cream from; you have to almost just shear what's there to a point.

Furthermore, it didn't help one bit when catchy weather meant that the record had to be postponed two days until Sunday and the lambs repeatedly run in and out of the shed to try to get them dry.

And so it was tight, going right down to the wire all day. After the first run he was actually three sheep down on Dion at 193, but still just on course however if he could maintain that pace all day.

So in the end, a man of the calibre that could well have broken the 900 mark on a perfect day had to settle for beating the record by one, shearing a total of 867.

It works out at 0.04 seconds per lamb faster than Dion, considerably less time than the blink of a human eye.

But he did it, and the record that David Fagan and Alan MacDonald used to play tennis with in the late eighties and early nineties now stands that little bit higher again for anyone who fancies a go. But if that person is you, be warned: you've got a mountain to climb. Just ask Ivan.

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Interested spectators at Waitara Station's Big Day Out Fundraiser for Cancer in January were Simon and Bronwyn Harrison and their daughters, Marilyn (left) and Vivian (blue top). Both former prominent open class competitors, the Harrisons have been milking cows at Seaward Downs near Invercargill for the past 24 years. But that's not long enough to get shearing out of his blood, Simon says, because he's been going back to Cheviot for the past four years to do main shear for Dale Taylor!

Wide-combing it with ...

© Last Side Publishing 2016



That shotput fella Tom Walsh would make a good presser, eh?

Oh yeah no, definitely!



Buck Naked

.... and

Doug Deep



Central Otago's Alan Paterson was this year's recipient of the Alastair Simpson Memorial Trophy for outstanding service to the industry. He is pictured (left) with Golden Shears stalwart Selwyn Tomlin, who made the presentation.

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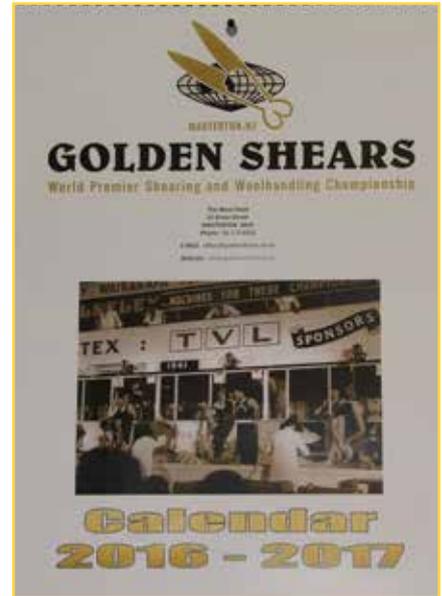
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From the days before colour photography? Not really, but there is some history in these photos. Top: The rams of Stonehenge and the clippers who clipped them. Chris Vickers, Ngahua Bedgood, Jim Hore, Walter Thompson and Andrew Hore. Above: It was a mere 23 years ago - Dion Morrell, Chris Vickers and the late Rick Pivac during a break in their three-stand world record at Clutha Downs.



Goldies Souvenir

The Committee at Golden Shears Masterton has produced a 12-month Calendar from July 2016 to June 2017 which includes all the competition dates through the coming season.

‘What is of real interest will be the photographs for each month which include two of our past Open Shearing Champions, making this a heritage calendar for the shearing fraternity throughout New Zealand,’ says Shears President, Philip Morrison.

‘Golden Shears has been staged 56 times with just 24 Open shearing winners – with all 24 photographs fitting neatly on the 12 calendar pages plus all 24 together on the back page of the calendar.’

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Rowly and James new Masters

By Doug Laing

World champion Rowland Smith and 2008 New Zealand Merino championship winner James Fagan were both made Master Shearers at the Shearing Sports New Zealand annual conference in Christchurch on 10 August 2016.

Both now also farming, each has represented New Zealand in the United Kingdom and trans-Tasman test series' and both are also World record holders.

But while Smith, 29, is targeting winning a place in the New Zealand team and defending his title at the 2017 world championships at Invercargill, Fagan, 37, has retired from competition.

Smith first competed in the 2001-2002 season, at the age of 14, when he was growing-up at Ruawai, Northland, and soon made an impression in the lower grades, winning the Golden Shears Junior title in 2004 and the Senior title two years later.

Now based in Hawke's Bay and married with two children, and with wife Ingrid running a small farm at Maraekakaho, near Hastings, he has now completed 10 seasons in open-class. The highlights being his world title in Ireland in 2014, three Golden Shears Open wins; four New Zealand open championships wins, and five North Island Shearer of the Year titles.

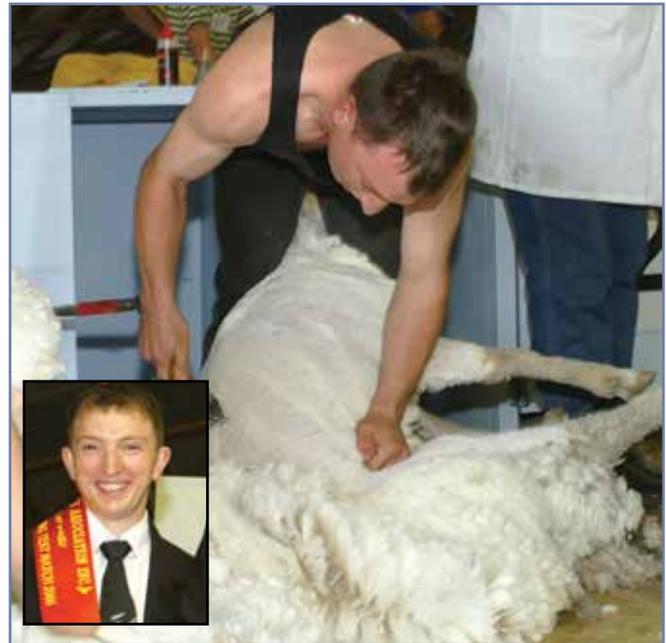
On the recent CP Wool Shearing team New Zealand tour of the United Kingdom he added the Royal Welsh Open title to his list of successes, which now include 87 Open wins – 72 in New Zealand, 14 in the UK and one in Australia.

He had previously also represented New Zealand in the United Kingdom in 2011, 2013 and 2014, and in the trans-Tasman series in 2013-2014. He will also be in the trans-Tasman team for tests at Warialda in October and Masterton in March. Rowland and brother Doug are also holders of the world eight-hour strongwool ewes record of 1066, in which he shored 562 during their big day at Waitara Station, Hawke's Bay, on January 11, 2011.

James Fagan

Growing up in King Country, the son of 1984 Golden Shears Open champion John Fagan and leaving school at 16 to shear, was one of many who had to battle long over the minor money in the wake of uncle David Fagan.

But now farming a leased block near Raglan, his 10 wins in over 110 finals included the New Zealand Merino championship at Alexandra in 2008.



New Master Shearer James Fagan, pictured representing New Zealand in the trans-Tasman test at Hay NSW in 2006. In the unlikely event of your not knowing what Rowly looks like, check photos page 33!

James Fagan added to that success by winning the New Zealand Circuit title at Te Kuiti six months later, becoming only the third shearer to win both titles, and the first to do it in one season.

After 30 wins in the lower classes, including the 1997 Golden Shears senior title, James had 18 seasons as an open-class shearer, which included 11 appearances in the National Circuit final at Golden Shears (currently known as the PGG National), being runner-up four times.

His best effort abroad was his 2009 Royal Welsh Open final win during his one New Zealand team United Kingdom tour, becoming the third of the now four Fagans on the Buih Wells honours board. He had earlier shorn in four trans-Tasman series tests, in 2006-2007 and 2008-2009.

Along with Roger Neil, Beau Guelfi, and Cartwright Terry he holds a share of the world four-stand, nine-hour-strongwool lambs record of 4188 shorn at Waihi Pukawa, near Turangi, on January 11, 2005. Topping the tallies, he produced a career-best 740.

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Ron Stuart – community stalwart

By Des Williams

A supremely talented rugby player from the 1960s and '70s (and later Rhodes Scholar / academic) named Chris Laidlaw once commented on the exulted status achieved by becoming an All Black. Forever after retirement, and no matter what else you may achieve in life, you are destined to be remembered as 'a former All Black'.

If a former All Black became Prime Minister, chances are his obituary notice would be headed up with 'Former All Black Dies', Laidlaw hints in a fine book entitled *Mud in your Eye* (Reed, 1973).

So what's all that got to do with the late Ron Stuart, who died recently at his Katikati home, aged 77. Well, Ron Stuart enjoyed that exulted status in our own industry of being a 'former Golden Shears Open finalist' – arguably shearing's equivalent to being an All Black.

Ron's 25 minutes and 41 seconds of fame at Masterton came in 1968, when he finished sixth behind Brian Quinn, Tom Brough, Joe Ferguson, Brian Waterson and Allan Williamson. No disgrace being sixth in that line-up!

Ron related to this writer many years ago how he'd first taken up shearing when he moved from his home district of Marton [introduced to shearing while attending Feilding Agricultural College] to Wharepuhunga, in the Waikato. He'd joined the local YFC and began shearing the sheep on the property where he worked.

He began working for contractor Jim Foreshaw, who was also the local YFC shearing champion. When intermediate-grader Ron beat Jim in the 1963 South Auckland finals, he found himself off to Masterton with the South Auckland team. So little did he know about Golden Shears, he hadn't even entered the other competitions, but managed to squeeze into the senior division by paying a late entry fee.

'I qualified sixth into the semi-finals and then was fourth into the final and ended up in third place behind Andy Taylor (Shannon) and Barry Baker (Ongaonga).

With further experience and all the while gaining a better understanding of how competitions were run, as well as taking the time to attend a couple of



Ron Stuart, 'former Golden Shears open finalist'.

shearing schools, Ron went on to win the YFC open competition 'back to back in 1967 and 1968.

'Yes, 1968 was probably my best year, for a couple of reasons. I got two ribbons at Golden Shears and daughter Jo-Anne was born a day or two later! Considering those other open finalists and the great shearers who finished behind me, I was happy with sixth.'

But since marrying his wife Jocelyn (Jo) in 1961, the couple's main focus in life had been to obtain their own farm and after chasing Department of Lands and Survey ballots for some years, they drew a 600-acre property near Mangakino that had previously been used for dairying until becoming over-run with ragwort. As Ron described it, they 'tidied it up, re-fenced it and adopted a traditional regime, carrying Romney ewes, beef cows, selling weaners and fattening heifers, and

breeding our own replacements.

Ron became deeply involved in local community activities, continued shearing sheep whenever the opportunity allowed and eventually became both a competition judge and a provincial instructor for the New Zealand Wool Board. His judging achievements including officiating at the Australian Golden Shears Euroa in 1981 and 1984, as well as the 1984 world championships at Royal Bath & West. In 1986 Ron, together with Ivan Bowen and Harry Brensell (West Otago) took sheep to the World Sheep and Wool Congress at Edmonton, Canada – a mission he described as 'quite a challenge'.

A keen deerstalker (NZDA executive committee member for six years), Ron also became deeply involved in saving the nearby Waihaha Forest from clear-felling (now part of Pureora Forest Park) and served for years on the Forest Park Advisory Committee. He was also a leading light in the Dam Country Shears competition which was held at Kinloch through the 1980s and 1990s.

And like former All Black Chris Laidlaw, Ron was a keen rugby man, serving Mangakino United as president and the South Waikato sub-union as delegate to the Waikato Rugby Union. An honoured 'former delegate'!

Ron and Jo retired to Katikati some years ago, where he endured a long period of ill-health that finally caught up with him on 21 June 2016. He is survived by wife Jo; their three grown children Jo-Anne, Bruce and Ian, and their respective families.

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A unique combination

By *Bernie Walker*

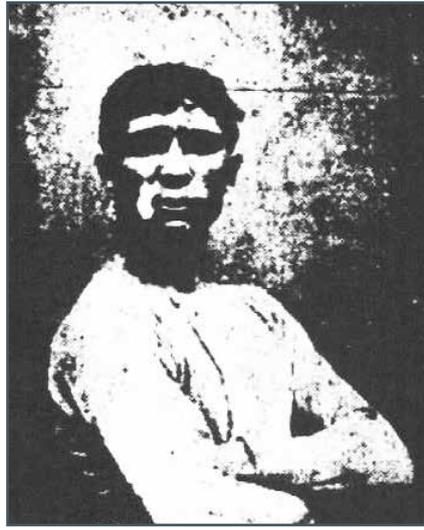
Unique among the men who set world shearing records in the early and mid-years of the 20th century was the father/son combination of Daniel Cooper and his son, also named Daniel.

In those days of big sheds and big shearing teams, it was an unwritten law and sound advice to keep 'sweet' with the cook. Dan Cooper Snr was shot and wounded by a cook's offsider when he failed to do so.

Shearing (No 89 November 2015) featured a story I wrote about a great South Australian shearer named Ted Rieck. The heading and the first sentence may have been a little misleading. Although Ted Rieck did exceed Jack Howe's record in 1950, he was not the first to do so.

Three years previously in 1947 Dan Cooper Jnr had shorn 325 Corriedales which not only broke Howe's record but also that of his legendary father, Dan Snr, who had shorn 316 full wool merino ewes on 20 September 1910 at 'Bundoran Station', near Richmond, North Queensland. [Published reports of this tally had incorrectly described Cooper as a New Zealander.]

Dan Cooper Snr, believed to have been of Aboriginal descent, was a quiet unassuming man from Moree in New South Wales. He became an outstanding shearer and also achieved distinction as a weightlifter and as a wood chopper. He was described as weighing some 9½ or 10 stone (approx 62kgs). After shearing 37,052 sheep in 1909, he was in his seventh season when he broke the record of New Zealand born Jim Power. The week of the record Dan shored 1575 sheep in 44 hours.



Dan Cooper Snr

After the 'Bundoran' cut out, Cooper and a mate called into the office of *The Northern Miner* in Charters Towers. He told the paper, 'I want that corrected about me being a New Zealander; I am a native of Moree NSW.' When asked about his record he said he had just caught the 317th sheep when the whistle was blown. He went on, 'It's no joke, a day's shearing at high pressure; it's like running ten miles at a hundred yards pace.'

He was confident he could beat Jack Howe's record. His mate said, 'Next time Dan goes for a record, he will be handy to 330.' Cooper was about to start at the Hughenden Scour and Depot shed to finish the year and intended to start the next year at Charleville in January.

There was quite a group of outstanding shearers in Queensland at this time, including Ted Dean, Les Seary, Fred Zimmerle, Joe Herricks,

Harry Livingstone and Bill Day, as well as Dan Cooper Snr. A great deal of time and effort was spent trying to match one against another, often quoting incentives of up to £1000. Ted Dean did defeat Les Seary at 'Northampton Downs' near Blackall over a day, and Dan Cooper had a victory over Bill Day on Sydney Showgrounds on Boxing Day 1911 (see *Shearing* November 2010). Nevertheless, challenges and rumours continued to fly although mostly it was just talk and speculation.

Cooper continued to shear big numbers from North Queensland through the New England area and down to the Snowy River in NSW until, in May 1914. While shearing at 'Mount Marlow Station' near Isisford in Queensland, he was shot by Robert White, a cook's offsider, after an argument at the table.

The *Townsville Daily Bulletin* of 15 June 1914 reported that White said to Cooper, 'You are one of the mob; this is the end of you for a start.' He then produced a revolver and fired at Cooper, hitting him in the left shoulder. Cooper fled (as you would) and two further shots missed. White also ran, but later handed himself and the revolver to Mr D Kerr, the shearing contractor who handed him over to the Isisford police.

During August it was reported that Cooper, after time in Isisford hospital, had begun shearing again and was 'improving every day but cannot go at the same pace as he used to, although he is slowly getting into his stride again. Danny is still carrying the bullet in his shoulder and it is likely to remain there.'

(To page 15)



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In November White was sentenced to six months imprisonment for having unlawfully wounded Cooper. The judge said he took into consideration the six months White had served since his arrest.

About 1918 Cooper was recruited, along with a number of other guns to go to Western Australia to work for PLB (Pastoralists Labour Bureau), the shearing contracting business established by former Queenslander, H J Doyle, the man responsible for creating The Mad Eight. Cooper's best day in WA appears to have been in 1923 when he shored 296 on the property of Mr Fox at York.

Although he was shearing all over the State, most of his time was spent in the pastoral zone of the Murchison and Gascoyne areas. At 'Sherrock Station', owned by Mr Edward Meares, he averaged 250 per day for the duration of the shed. Doyle was reported in the *Adelaide Mail* as saying 'One of Dan Cooper's best shed performances was in 1908 at 'Hamilton Downs' in Queensland. The shed lasted five weeks and his average daily tally for the whole time was 222.'

Thirty seven years later, on 20 October 1947, Dan Snr's record was, perhaps fittingly, broken by his 28 year old son Dan Jnr, from South Perth WA. Before becoming a shearer, Dan Jnr had worked in Elder Smith's woolstore at Fremantle. Speaking to *The Daily News* in Perth, his mother said she still had the Moffatt Virtue handpiece used by her husband when he set his record. She had received a telegram from the Lister company confirming her son's record. Listers stated that they intended to exhibit throughout Australia the Lister 'Ace' handpiece used to set the new record.

Of similar build to his father Dan Jnr weighed only 9 stone (58kg) at the time he was shearing for Mr CG Stuart on his property 'Glenara' at Langkoop, near Apsley in Western



The famous world championship of 1911 between Dan Cooper Snr and Bill Day. (Shearing, November 2010)

Victoria. Dan Jnr shored two hour runs of 78, 81, 85 and 81 to set the new record. The counts were confirmed by Mr Phil Secker of Stockowners Sheep Shearing Company. A contractor for 25 years, Mr Secker had done the 'Glenara' shearing for the previous three years.

The Coopers seemed to fade from the headlines after this, although I have seen a report of Dan Snr still shearing very respectable tallies in his seventies.

The support of Des de Belle in Canberra and Eldred Johnstone in Kyabram in researching this story is gratefully acknowledged. But so far we have not been able to find further information about this unique pair of champion shearers.

Editor's footnote: A report in the *Maoriland Worker* (20 January 1911) relates 'When he [Cooper Snr] made his record he was working on the six runs plan. The party worked 8hr 40min of full working days in six runs - two hours before breakfast and then five terms of 80min each, with 20min spells between. His feat was actually 316 sheep in 520min, a shade over 1min 38sec per sheep. ... The sheep were full-woolled ewes, cutting twenty bales to the thousand.'

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Ronny Hill's blade gang at Harry Brensell's Whitecomb Shed, near Heriot. Back left: Brendon Mathieson, Cameron Russell (farmer), Phil Hunt (farm worker), Jack Dobbie, John Kennedy, Wiremu Kihi, Ronny Hill, Matt Parsons, Shane Casserly, Peter Casserly. Front left: Fiona Walker, Dan Weir, Dallas Gorrie, Rosalea Button McGregor-Koch, Richard Hurring (CP Wools, at back), Amber Casserly (leading hand) and Tim Hogg. Absent: Sheldon Craig and Wendy Hawkins.



THE LEANING TOWER OF PEE-ZA?

There's a tried and true formula that we generally try to stick to in telling a story – if you answer all the 'who, why, what, where, when and by whom' questions, you have invariably given your reader as much as they need to know about any given subject. (Check the front page story on your local newspaper today – all those points covered off in the first sentence? Or into the second, maybe?) In the case illustrated above, all we have is the 'what'. We don't know who, where, when, why, how, or by whom. Fortunately the old saying, 'a picture paints a thousand words' is also true!

Our thanks to magazine readers who have been renewing subscriptions by internet banking. But please remember to let us know. Someone made a payment of \$20 on or about 20 May 2016 without leaving a name – was it you?



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When Jessica met Julian

When a tourist named Jessica tells a grape-picker named Julian that she and her mate would like to shear a sheep and learn something about the wool industry while in New Zealand, she'd come to the right place, you might say. This conversation took place at a MacKenzie vineyard where they were picking grapes for the Torlesse label.

Formerly of Cambridge but these days a north Canterbury Mainlander, Julian Stone soon had sheep, shed and handpiece organised and even managed to rustle up a copy of the November 2015 *Shearing* magazine to broaden their education. Despite the reasonably tidy 'body job' evident in the photo, Julian points out the tell-tale signs of the 'greenhorn' – left hand holding the front leg.

The Torlesse Wine label has a genuine connection to shearing, as the website explains: *Its winery began life as a farm woolshed, which, in 1987, John McCaskey*

converted into a producing winery for Glenmark Wines. In 1991 Torlesse Wines moved to Waipara and Torlesse and Glenmark have shared the production facilities ever since. Torlesse is thus one of the older wineries in the Waipara Valley. Numerous additions have been made to the winery and it is now self sufficient in all aspects of winemaking, from crushing and vinting through to bottling and selling.

A familiar figure at shearing sheds and competitions on both sides of the Tasman through the 1990s, Julian Stone has carried a deep interest in vintage machinery at the Mystery Creek National Fieldays through to his present involvement with the Kiwi Inventors Charitable Trust at Amberley.

Oh, and lest anyone forget, he beat a young David Fagan in the senior final at Raglan's Western Shears in 1980!

Things looking a bit Grey? Where to get help

Lifeline (open 24/7) – 0800 543 354

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

Healthline (open 24/7) – 0800 611 116

Samaritans (open 24/7) – 0800 726 666

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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or Steve Bool 027 204 7067



Blasters from the Past: NZ Wool Board instructors and others, mid-1980s at Flock House. Back left: Jane Patterson (NZWB secretary), Colin Gibson (Oamaru), Peter Casserly (Omarama), Paddy O'Neill (Fairlie), Chris Teutenberg (Gisborne), Peter Lyon (Alexandra), Rex Crengle (Invercargill), Bob Michie (Pukekohe), Stu Michelle (Otago), Ken Shaw (Matawai), Garry Read (Dannevirke), John Lawton (Otama), Willie Culshaw (Raupunga), Marie Quinn (NZWB Christchurch). Middle row: Bill Morrison (Eketahuna), Kevin Boyd (Northland), Percy Barrett (Marlborough), Dave Stansbury (Opotiki), Graeme Corkill (Taranaki), Bruce Field (Monash University, Melbourne), Ken Haldane (Christchurch), Ron Stuart (Mangakino), Alan Kinzett (Nelson), Alan Barker (Palmerston North), Barry Baker (Hawke's Bay), Bruce Ross (Phys Ed School, Otago University). Front row: Sandy Cassie (NZWB CEO), Garry Biggs, Murray Christie (Christchurch), Robin Middleton (Palmerston North), Peter Burnett (Christchurch), Robin Kidd (Palmerston North), Peter Carver (Christchurch), Trevor Oliver (Hamilton), Don Toshach (Canterbury), Koro Mullins (Dannevirke), Jim Keenan (Alexandra), Mark Vette (Animal behaviourist, Clevedon; the man who trained the dog in the Toyota 'Bugger!' advertisement.)



New Zealand 2016 team manageress Gwenda Saunders got to Lochearnhead on the stroke of Pimms O'Clock – leaving herself just enough time to get a photo of the Joe Te Kapa Trophy. Well done, we say!



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THE MAN THEY CALL THE 'GUN'

There are men who work in shearing teams as part of the pastoral force
And it takes a special kind of man to go out and stay the course
They ply their trade with a passion from the first to the final run
And the man with the greatest skill is the one they call 'The Gun'.

Every now and then someone performs an amazing deed
Perhaps he shears a big tally, or works through to the lead
They earn their reputation from the work that they have done
And the top tally man in the team is the one they call 'The Gun'.

Yes, the top tally man in the team is the one they call 'The Gun'
And they just seem to come and go on every shearing run
There are some who think that they are good, with some ability
But they wouldn't hold a candle to the real guns that I see.

The real guns go unnoticed because there's so few out there to see
And they don't need praise or backslaps from the likes of you and me
They take pride in what they're doing and in being number one
And there's no shame in running second to anyone they call 'The Gun'.

When it comes to shearing wethers, 'The Gun' is still so very quick
As he works his way through his pen, next best will be next pick
In his boss' eyes he can do no wrong – he is like a favourite son –
And the boss' words add to the legend of the bloke he calls 'The Gun'.

But there is really only one top gun and he's got no time for lairs
He's known by names like 'Lord' or 'God', or just 'The bloke Upstairs'
Just to do your best everyday is all he asks of everyone
And he'll never take a backward step to any earthly 'Gun'.

Because he's the one who guides the hand of the bloke they call 'The Gun'.

© Bernie Walker May 2016. (With apology and acknowledgment to Tom McIvor and Wayne McCulloch who co-wrote the original version about some of their bull riding mates. Thanks for the inspiration! BKW)

WHEN ELVIS LEFT THE BUILDING

Whenever Elvis left the building
Was it his job to turn out the lights?
I'd hate to think of electricity wasting
Through the darkening Memphis nights

Whenever Elvis left the building
Did he make sure the doors were locked?
People might enter to steal his belongings
At such behaviour he would be shocked

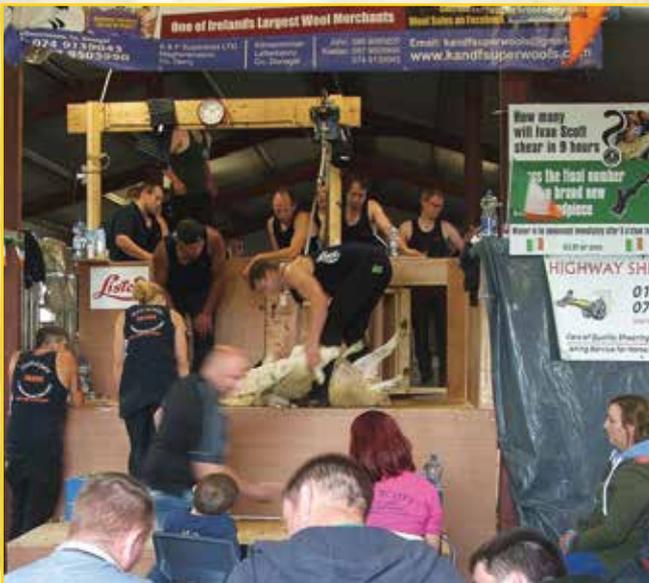
Whenever Elvis left the building
Did he leave a security man on guard
To watch over his golden records
And reels of movies in which he starred

Whenever Elvis left the building
Did he drive his Cadillac round the block
And was the old hound dog in the car
Barking out the tune to *Jailhouse Rock*

Whenever Elvis left the building
Did he exit through the basement door
And did he take with him his medication
Such a life-line you should not ignore

Whenever Elvis left the building
Did he ponder it might be the last time
When a life is lived hard and fast
One expects to hear the big bell chime

When Elvis finally left the building
Did the pathologists try to play it smart
'It wasn't the drugs that killed the King
Oh no, he died of a failed heart!'
© desperado



Ivan Scott on his way to the new Irish nine-hour record, 820 ewes. Phil Oldfield reports 'it was an incredible effort considering there were several different lines/mobs of sheep from texels and mules to hornies and Leicesters, all mixed.' Ivan is pictured above being watched closely by Joe Boylan, Helga Sinclair and Cartwright Terry.' The record was judged by Tom Dunne.



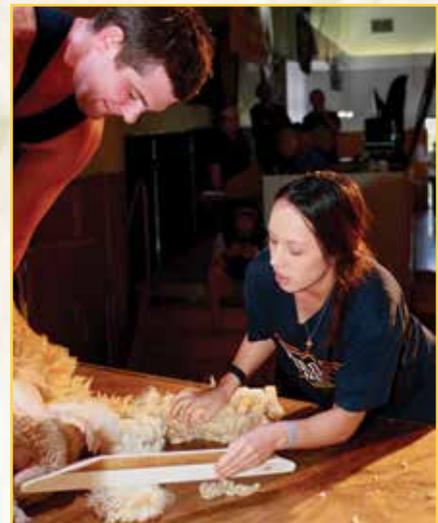
Amber Casserly and blades, Whitecomb Station



The team that crutched 6500 sheep at Waitara Station, with all proceeds going toward costs of running the Hawke's Bay shearing competition (Great Raihania Shears). Colin Watson-Paul reports they came from all over, from 13 year-olds to 65 plus, from as far afield as Taumarunui and from about six different crews. 'I can't believe the generosity of this industry – it still staggers me every time we do something like this,' he says.



Junior woolhandling finalists at the New Zealand championships in April, pictured with NZ Shears President and woolhandling guru Peter Lange. From left: Angela Kirkpatrick (Napier), Azuredee Paku (Masterton), Samantha Tipene (Eketahuna), Bianca Hawea (Masterton) and LaShara Anderson (Christchurch).



'A-nother' Kirkpatrick on the way to great things in competition: Angela, daughter of Johnny and Raelene, NZ Junior woolhandling champion 2016.

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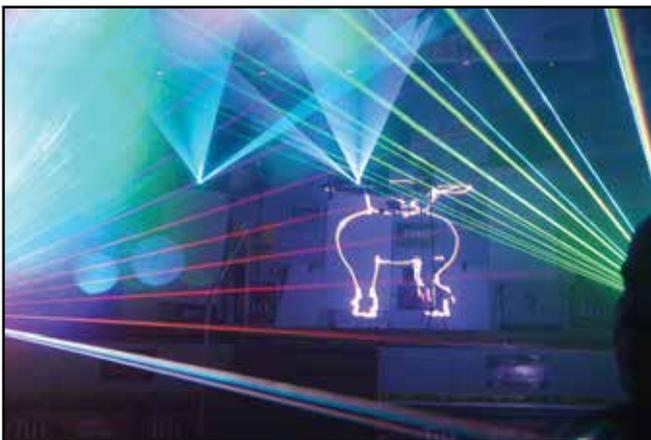
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Images from the New Zealand championships at Te Kuiti in April. Top left: commentator Koro Mullins interviews the Hadfield youngsters, Atawhai and Ariana after their shear in the novice event. They finished fourth and sixth, respectively. Centre left: Jordan Hart of Blenheim, on his way to fourth place in the junior final. Above left: spectacular lighting show to introduce the open final on Saturday night. Top right: Joel Henare asks himself if he's done enough, immediately after the open woolhandling final. The judges reckoned he had, giving him his third title in the event since 2010.

Centre right: judge Colin Couchman bends himself to the shape of the action while keeping up with the ever-promising handpiece of Eketahuna's Hemi Braddick. Above: not much taller than the catching pen door at present but that doesn't stop 11-year-old Topia Barrowcliffe from demonstrating precocious skill in the novice final, in which he finished third.



This hand-operated grinder was bought for £30 in a farm sale by engineer and farmer John Evans from Tredunnock, near Usk in South Wales. It is pictured with a narrow cutter and a tin of grinding paste which would have been smeared onto the plate, rather than sticking on an emery paper. The tin is split in the middle with a lid either end for coarse paste or smooth paste. Imagine grinding up on this after a nine-hour day of shearing pumice-ridden lambs on the Hawke's Bay coast... Thank God for electricity! (Tom Harding)



Grainy images of a blade gang at Mt Peel Station 1948. Top photo shows Bert Loffhagen from Rangiora in the course of shearing 230 ewes in 8 hours 40 minutes. (Photos from John Acland Senior via Phil Oldfield.)

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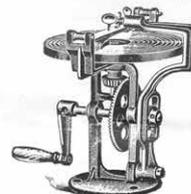
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WAIMATE SHEARS ON THE MOVE

The New Zealand Spring Shearing Championships at Waimate on Saturday 8th October 2016 will be held at the Southern Canterbury A&P Showgrounds.

Woolhandling will again be held at Russell Hart's woolshed, Greenhills Road on the outskirts of Waimate. Shearing will be held at the Showgrounds.

The change has become necessary because the previous venue, Waimate Stadium has been demolished and a new event centre built with no provision for the Shears. The shears is in the process of erecting a new pavilion at the Showgrounds but unfortunately it will not be completed for this year's show.

We apologise for any inconvenience and will be posting information regularly on our Facebook page.

All questions and enquiries to eileentony@msn.com

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Bill Sheppard obituary

By Des Williams

Former North Otago contractor Bill Sheppard has died at his Kurow home after a courageous battle with cancer. Life-long friend, shearing mate and duck-shooting partner Barney McCone told a huge turnout in the Kurow Memorial Hall how Bill had started his career in the shearing industry in 1964 by landing a 'rousieing' job with local contractor, Walter Linwood. [He'd gained something of a jump-start working for brother-in-law Rowan Breen during school holidays.]

'It wasn't long before Bill was off to a shearing school at Papakaio, and a career as a full-time shearer. He did 70 big romneys on his first full day and did his first 100 on smaller sheep a couple of weeks later. He wasn't fast because he wouldn't sacrifice quality for speed. That approach paid off for Bill at Masterton in 1969, when he won the Golden Shears junior title.

'There were 450 shearers at the event [54 in the junior division] and only four would go home with a champion's blazer. Bill was one of them. He was deservedly proud of his achievement and the blazer is now mounted and on display at the 'History of Wool' section in the Kurow Museum.

'In 1974 Bill started contracting in his own right. He was well organised, his staff were well trained, he made sure they were well fed and they were well paid. At his peak his shearers and shedhands were right up with the best in the country.

'From a farmer's point of view, when one of Bill's gangs came to do



Bill Sheppard (1947-2016)

the shearing they knew a good job was guaranteed. One of Bill's hallmarks as a contractor was his willingness to give learner shearers and shedhands a start.

'Bill also took a great interest in competition woolhandling and became a well respected and experienced judge. He gave years of service judging at the New Zealand Merino Shears at Alexandra, as well as Omarama Shears, Waimate Shears, the New Zealand Woolhandler of the Year competition at Balclutha, and at Golden Shears.

'After 34 years of contracting Bill sold his business to David Gard, and he went to work for Don Urquhart at Kurow Wools. It was a job he enjoyed and it kept him in touch with local farmers.'

Bill was bestowed a 'Life Member' of the Kurow Rugby Club in 1996 –

just reward for his long service. He'd started as a fourth grade player and made his way into senior ranks over the course of a 19-season club career. He was Kurow Club President at the time of his death, and also held the bar licence.

'Bill was also a long-serving member of the North Otago Rugby Council. He was a great community person and will be sadly missed by so many,' Barney McCone concluded.

Note: *Shearing* published a career retrospective about Bill (*Sheppard turned shearer*) in the April 2004 edition. Copies are still available in archives if readers would like to know a bit more about Bill Sheppard's career. A little extract:

'Bill initially had skilled local shearers working virtually eleven months of the year, shearing mostly corriedales. Then the corriedale trend gradually changed with the introduction of merino into the area.

'I've been fortunate to have people like Dave Parker, John and Alastair Emslie, Neil Gard, John Linwood and Barry Taylor. All these men have been valuable shearers in my gang. At times, North Island shearers have helped with pre-lamb because of sometimes having three gangs working in sheds.

'Bill grins as he tells how Bob [Barnes] sent he and Barney McCone to Hanmer to work in the sheds of Duncan McKay and John Wilson. "Both owners were great fellows and their hospitality was wonderful. Our quarters were two planks off the back fence and into the Hanmer Lodge!"'

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Hamahona (Sam) Tamati
Sam Tamati (closest to camera, above) worked for Brendan Mahoney for about 27 years and was regarded as one of the best shed shearers in Brendan's gangs at that time. He later worked with other Hawke's Bay contractors, Steve Cottrell and Farrell Crystal. Sam was a very humble man, usually too shy to enter shows or speedshears, though he did enter an event in Western Australia years ago and actually beat his nephew, Atawhai Hauraki for first place. [Yep, we remember how good Atawhai could be – especially in finals at Alexandra.]

Sam posted some big shed tallies in his time, for example he was the first to do 400 on big ewes at Otupae. He also shored 500s for seven days straight at Ngamatea – quite an accomplishment back then. Sam worked his guts out day in day out for many years in Hawke's Bay in pumice country and on good sheep, on his day, he was unbeatable. He was the man to beat for the likes of John Kirkpatrick, Dion King and Dion Morrell, all of whom worked with him years ago.

A friend, Angus McKinnon, tried to get *North & South* magazine to come and do a story about Sam but the shy shearer wasn't going to have a bar of that sort of spotlight.

Sam and his partner Joy moved to Australia in October 2012 to work for Atawhai Hauraki in Victoria, and then later with Mo Poka in New South Wales. Sam then became sick with lung cancer in October 2015 and he and Joy returned to New Zealand for Sam's last months.

Recent Deaths

Sam passed on 27 February 2016, leaving behind seven children (Jesse, Samuel, Krystal, Shari, Shae, Storm and Zachariah) including three sons who are following in his footsteps as shearers.

One of the things Sam was well known for was stitching himself up if he happened to cut himself with the handpiece – that used to freak a lot of people out when they saw it for the first time!

Sam was laid to rest at Whakorekore Te Kai Urupa near Bartletts, south of Gisborne.



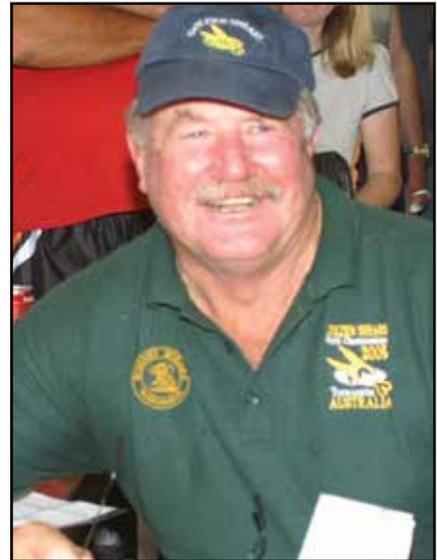
Above: Jim Macdonald, formerly from Hamilton and Waitetuna, died at Tauranga on 29 July 2016, aged 80. Last of the shearing quartet of brothers (with Alec, Tim and Bing) and survived by sister Shirley. Long-time Hamilton contractor and winner of New Zealand veterans titles at Raglan's Western Shears. *Shearing* published Jim's memories of working in Australian sheds during the late 1950s in the November 2003 edition.

Where The Sunsets Go

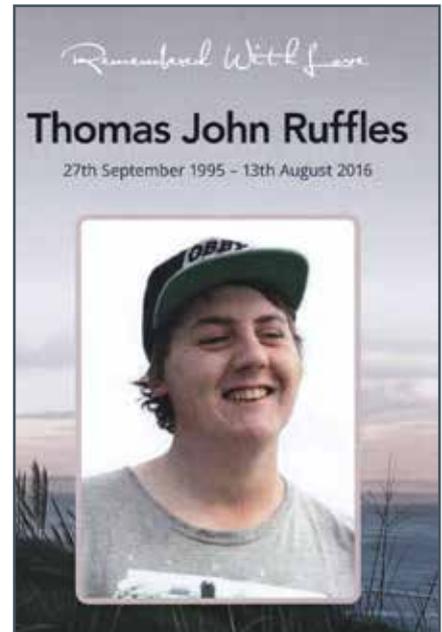
Let's celebrate a special mate
The way he'd want us to
Without a tear, without a prayer
With just old me, and you

A simple toast would please him most
With language he would know
Help wing his soul towards its goal
Out where the sunsets go

© Blue Jeans



Above: Jim Robinson, long-time President of the Warrnambool Shears Society and its association with New Zealand competitions, has died at his home in Australia after a period of ill-health. Jim was a stalwart of the competition shearing scene in Australia and was manager of Australian teams on occasions.



Twenty-year-old Tom Ruffles died in a car accident near Hamilton on 13 August 2016. Son of Sharon and step-son of Warren Parker (Raglan), Thomas had been with Mackintosh Shearing for a couple of years as a presser, and was beginning to make his way in the industry. In a moving eulogy, Warren Parker described the young man as one who was developing an awareness of the history of the industry and had been looking forward to making his own contribution to it.

Shearing sports older than rugby!

By Des Williams

There's a fair body of evidence to confirm that rugby, more or less resembling the game as we know it today, had its New Zealand origins in a match between the Nelson Football Club and Nelson College on 14 May 1870. The Nelson Club, formed at a public meeting on 30 May 1868, changed its name in 1870 to the Nelson Rugby Football Club. Whether before or after the match against the College is uncertain, and nor does it matter in the context of this story.

What may be of some little interest however, is the fact that New Zealand held its first shearing competition four months prior to that – at Waipukurau on 21 January 1868. So in a sense, we can perhaps claim that shearing sports predates rugby as a sport in our country!

Some shearing writers (including this fellow) have previously turned to the Hawke's Bay Show of 1902 (won by the Great Raihania) for evidence that shearing as a sport has been around for a wee while now.

But thanks to technology and websites such as *Papers Past*, recent research has produced clear evidence of a much longer history. For example, Canterbury laid claim to the privilege of 'Announcing the first sheep shearing competition in New Zealand'.



You've heard of Outward Bound? Well, these two blokes on the left side of the hog could be Inward Bound, unless they learn to harden up. The story goes that these two city boys ventured into the southern country to test if they were hard enough to become shearers. Put through their paces on some windswept hillsides and gullies over a weekend, the pair apparently came up short, in the initial estimation of their course supervisor. 'Don't be fooled by the photo,' the supervisor said. 'I'll probably be recommending to one that he consider taking up flower arranging for a career, while the other could find himself well suited to the inside of a pie shop.' (Note: all names with-held for fear of libel action!)

This from the *Christchurch Star*, 18 September 1872:

A decided novelty will be introduced at the coming exhibition [Canterbury A&P Show, 9 November 1872] in the form of a sheep shearing competition. A subscription list, in which contributions are limited to half-a-crown, has been opened and it is calculated that from 20 to 30 will thus be secured. This will be divided into four prizes, and Mr John Grigg has promised to find the sheep necessary for the men to operate upon.

The competition is a decidedly good thing to establish – for clean regular shearing means so much saved to the sheep-farmer – and it is therefore to be hoped that a set of prizes will always be included in future in the regular prize list of the association. Such competitions are very popular in other parts of the world, and once established they will become so here.

That last sentence is also of interest – we wonder in which other parts of the world they were already 'very popular'. But sorry Canterbury, unbeknown to you down there on isolated and sparsely populated Middle Island, the people of Waipukurau had beaten you to it by almost five years, as the *Hawke's Bay Herald* of Tuesday 21 January 1868 reported:

The sheep shearing competition takes place this day at Waipukurau. Considering the necessity of improvement in this direction, it is almost a pity that longer notice has not been given. We believe that, at the close of the show, such sheep farmers as may be present will be invited by Mr Russell to express an opinion as to the best mode of attempting to introduce a uniform and improved mode of shearing. Great complaints have lately been made of the way the wool is cut in two.

With no Facebook or Shearing Sports websites back then, it was actually 10 days after the event before readers got to find out the results. *Hawke's Bay Herald* 1 February 1868:

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There's some shearing and rugby history together in this photo. Pictured at the New Zealand championships earlier this year, Bud Snowdon (front left) and Glynn Meads (front right). Between them they played over 170 games for King Country, with Bud coming on as a replacement to score a famous try for King Country-Wanganui Combined against the 1977 British Lions. And Bud attended the 2014 world championships in Ireland as a Kiwi supporter.

Notwithstanding the shortness of the notice, and the unfinished state of the shearing in some of the largest sheds, which prevented the attendance of many who would otherwise have been competitors, there was a considerable gathering of shearers, and a large attendance of sheep farmers and others.

The prizes were four in number – the first, £3; second, £2; third, £1; and fourth 10s. There were three judges, and Joseph Rhodes, Esq. (the only representative of the northern district who responded to the special invitation of Mr. Russell), kindly volunteered his assistance as a fourth. He was assisted by Mr A. Grant, Mr. Tiffen and Mr. Canning.

The object of the competition was to encourage good shearing – not only to get sheep evenly and closely shorn, but, in addition, that the fleece should be carefully preserved whole and free from such waste as that caused by the wool being doubly cut, from the shears passing twice over the same portion of the body.

The following rules were laid down by the judges, who, with Mr Russell, constituted the Committee of Management:

- Three sheep to be shorn within three-quarters of an hour; any shearers not finishing his sheep within the given time to be disqualified.
- No double cuts allowed
- The fleeces to be carefully kept whole, and the wool to be free from waste.

- All sheep to be opened up underneath the wool, and cut through the fleece, so as to avoid waste.
- The legs and joints to be thoroughly trimmed.
- All skin cuts to be counted, and judged accordingly.

The judges were present during the shearing, and carefully watched the shearers to see that the rules were properly complied with. The fleeces certainly presented a very even appearance. After a considerable time occupied in carefully examining both sheep and fleeces, the following were the awards:-

First – James Walker, shepherd to Te Hapuku.

Second – Inia Whangataua, of Takapau.

Third – Nguha, of Patangata.

Fourth – Hori Tawhai, of Waipaoa.

Out of the nine entries, five only finished their pens within the appointed time, four of whom were entitled to prizes. Porikaapa was disqualified through the careless shearing of one of his sheep, otherwise he would unquestionably have taken a high prize.

The judges had some difficulty in deciding between Walker and Inia. The nervous state of the Maori shearers generally seemed to have affected Inia, who was the favourite before starting; Walker, however, having trimmed the sheep better, though the cuts were about equal, was awarded the first prize.

Walker is quite a young shearers, and, having shorn only a few sheep this year, great praise is due to him for the manner in which he carried off the palm; but he should certainly learn to avoid skin cuts, or in another year, with probably an increased number of more experienced shearers, he will be in the rear. The manner in which he trimmed the heads and finished the necks was particularly admired; and in addition to this, his sheep were better and more evenly shorn than those of the other competitors.

Inia has fallen back on his old style, but is a beautiful shearers. His sheep were very nicely shorn; in skin cuts he was about equal with Walker, but want of trimming about the head, and inferior shearing about the neck, justly deprived him of first honours.

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Above: Phil Oldfield (second left) and Sean O'Sullivan 'shearing a few' near Waterville, County Kerry, with Sean's father James and local famer/publican Hawlee Shea taking close interest. Great sadness just a few days later however, with Sean O'Sullivan's sudden death, leaving behind wife Helena and two small children. Sean was a former Ireland blade shearing representative.

On what was otherwise a happy and successful tour of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, for the Oldfield father (Phil) and son (Allan) combination, the pair were joined by Michael Churchhouse to shear some Hebridean sheep for the North Yorkshire Wildlife Trust at Spurn Point, near Hull (above right), while Phil ran another training course for blade shearers while in Ireland (photo opposite).

On the competition scene, Allan Oldfield won both the Leinster and Ulster open blade championships; won the Devon County novice woolhandling title and the Connacht junior machine shearing title.

Allan also won the Lochearnhead open blades title (Lachie MacGregor Memorial Cup), beating Phil into second place with Welsh representatives Alfred Jackson and Gareth Owen third and fourth respectively. Allan then



placed second behind English legend George Mudge at the Royal Highland Show before rounding out the tour with victory in the Braes of Ardeoniag Cup, a local blade event at the Killen & Districts Agricultural Society Show.

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Max. weight for bales now 200kg

Over the past 12 months the National Council of New Zealand Wool Interests (Inc) has been working to create awareness around a change in the industry code of practise relating to the now acceptable maximum bale weight for greasy wool. The Council acts as the New Zealand member of the International Wool Textile Organisation, which represents the interests of the wool textile trade at global level.

The National Council and its members are committed to providing a safe working environment throughout the wool industry. Increasing concerns relating to bales weighing over 200kg (which are estimated to cover approximately 6% of the national clip) have prompted the Council to address the issue. Bales weighing in excess of 200kg can contribute to workplace accidents and throughout the industry provide a significant problem during dumping and shipping. These bales have been assessed as hazards during transport and handling, with changes deemed necessary to comply with tougher Occupational Health and Safety laws being introduced in New Zealand.

As a consequence, the National Council has recently made amendments to the Industry Code of Practise in relation to the maximum allowable weight of bales of greasy wool. The maximum allowable weight is now restricted to 200kg.

To help create awareness the Federation of Wool Merchants has funded a large number of stickers with the slogan "Woo Back, 200kg Max!" on them. These stickers are designed to be placed on wool presses or in wool sheds nation-wide as a visible reminder of the maximum weight. Wool Merchants and Wool Brokers have been distributing these along with actively promoting the new bale weight limits to growers through their respective newsletters.

The aim is to make woolgrowers and shearing contractors aware of the new limit in an attempt to eliminate the issue on farm. Woolgrowers are encouraged to comply with the new bale weight limit to minimise any re-packing and additional charges that may be incurred. For any further information or advice contact your local wool merchant or broker.



Grant Wellman (left) and Adam Marshall from Mainland Wools Ltd taking note of the new maximum weight (200kg) allowable for bales of greasy wool. The National Council of Wool Interests Inc. has introduced this change to the Industry Code of Practise in order to comply with tougher occupational health and safety laws being introduced in New Zealand.

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The Hocken and Coogan families photographed at the MataRata Downs property, North Taranaki, after the summer shearing earlier this year. Sarah Coogan reports her father Bryan Hocken said the four-stand gang was the youngest to work in the shed since it was built by his own father in 1966. 'They are all local boys from the Inglewood /Tarata area – 19-20-21 year-olds, doing very good tallies.' They work for R Munro Shearing. Sarah's intention is to take a team photo at the end of each shearing on the property. And the Hockens are long-time subscribers to *Shearing* magazine – a tradition now being carried on by Jarred and Sarah Coogan! Pictured front left: Dean Lobb (shearer), Thomas Lobb (shearer), Emmett Coogan, Jarred Coogan, Bryan Hocken, Helen Hocken. Middle left: Josef Jelinek (farm worker, Czech Republic), Trevor Holland (shearer), Ana Pene (woolhandler), Charlotte Proctor (wool presser), Sarah Coogan. Back left: Alex Coogan, Tracey Tokotaua (woolhandler), Liam Jansen (shearer).

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Farmer Merit Award

William Lacey (The Haycocks)
Sponsor: PGG Wrightson Wool

Classers North Island Merit Award

Diane Chilcott (Ngamatea)
Sponsor: Brendan Mahoney Shearing

Q Stencil Merit Award

Aneta Terehia Muir (Hiwinui)
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Test your driving skills

This year in preparation for pre-lamb shearing we organized a Defensive Driving Course for some of our drivers. No protest was heard to spend a few hours on the Cromwell Highlands Motor Sport Park with a professional rally driver slalomming around the race track! Up-skilling certainly is a lot of fun like that!

Our crew got to know their van much better, how it corners, how it brakes, how to control it in slippery conditions. They learned how to brake properly, what to do if the vehicle starts shifting, how to set up their seat for optimal vehicle control, and so much more.

Speed was a big subject, slowing down in difficult road conditions being the obvious and most important precaution.

If a rally driver gets overtaken regularly through the Queenstown Gorge in wintry conditions, then many of us are travelling too fast! Avoiding the situation of sliding rather than having to correct it is so much easier and clearly has a higher success rate! I would recommend a defensive driving course to anyone in the shearing industry, as most of us clock up a fair few kilometres each year driving up and down the country, often in the dark, and in any weather.



Defensive drivers - Morrell Shearing

A course like this also speeds up the process to get your full license if you are still on your restricted, and lets face it: every adult needs a full license!

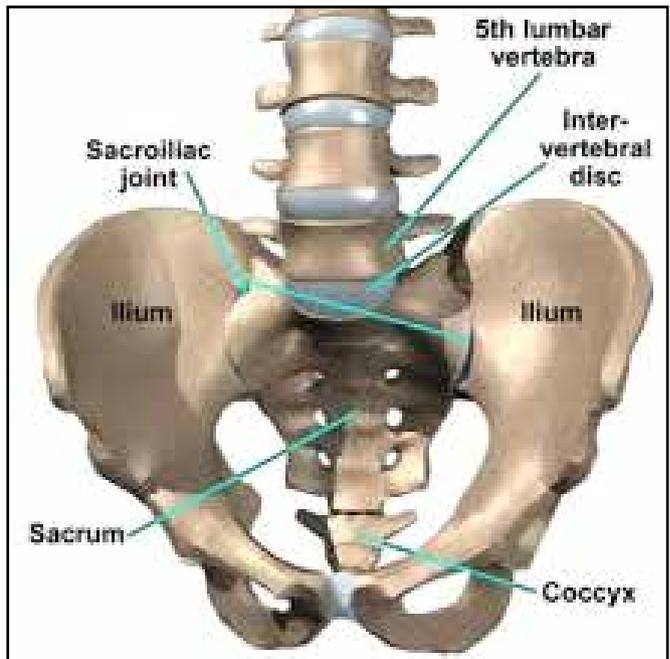
Your Sacro-Iliac joint

While we are on the subject of up-skilling, a quick shout out in regards to jumping off a raised board: Don't ever do it!

Here is the reason: Shearers especially, but also wool handlers and pressers put a lot of strain onto their sacro-iliac joint during their work. This is a joint in your hip, connecting the spine with the hip bone.

By jumping from a height onto a hard surface, that joint gets a mighty jolt, often resulting in jamming up. If the sacro-iliac joint jams up, it cannot move freely any more, resulting in back pain, hip pain, nerve pain, groin pain and even neck pain.

So, to avoid lengthy trips to the chiropractor, or time off work, replace jumping down from the raised board, to sitting down first, then stepping off, or to using the steps at the end of the board. (*Gabriela Schmidt-Morrell*)



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Tony O'Reilly – high flyer

By Des Williams

When a teen-aged Tony O'Reilly's relations from far-away New Zealand visited their ancestral home in County Cork, Ireland, back in the late 1950s, the young man quickly developed a desire to pack his bags and go see that other side of the world for himself.

At just 16-years-of-age, Tony had been happy enough on the family farm at Trafrask (near Adrigole on the north-western shores of Bantry Bay). A place of isolated scenic beauty near the (now) popular Ring of Kerry tourist route, the family farm carrying some 150 sheep that Tony had been learning to shear.

But then came these visitors from New Zealand – Mr and Mrs Jack Nesdale – a name that will be familiar to many readers – parents of Bill, Moss, Jack (Jr), Mick, Kevin, Vin and Gerald, and of whom only Bill did not become a shearer of noted ability.

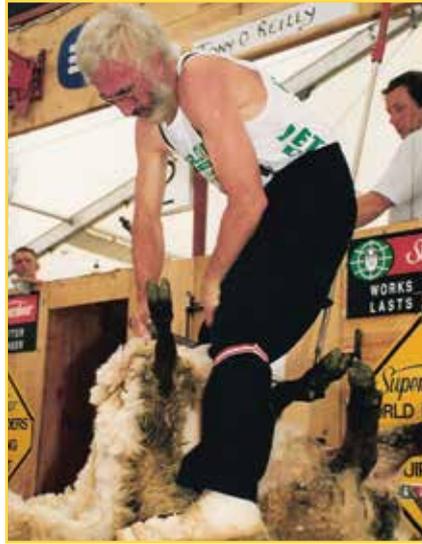
Jack Nesdale Snr had come to New Zealand from County Cork at the turn of the 20th century and then returned home to serve in the First World War as a medical man. Injured near the end of the conflict, Jack went back to Ireland, got married to Tony's aunty and returned to New Zealand and the farming life at Kimbolton in 1920. Young Tony was enchanted by the stories of life in New Zealand, especially with prospects for the future sounding so much better than what he'd become accustomed to at home,

Soon Tony had packed a few belongings and was on his way to Kimbolton and a new life under guardianship of his uncle and aunty. And before long he was shearing sheep for a living, firstly with the Nesdale gangs and then later with Palmerston North based contractor, Alan Barker.

Soon enough working for others evolved into Tony's going into business for himself and by about 1970 and still based in the Manawatu, he was a contractor himself, running four or five gangs. A good friend Bob Thompson had been instrumental in getting Tony established.

The lower Manawatu, Wairarapa and Hunterville areas provided most of his sheds, plus the Parapara Valley and Raetihi areas.

While he was living at Kimbolton, and by now in his early 20s, Tony



Tony O'Reilly returned to Ireland in 1998 to shear in the All-Ireland event at the world championships at Gorey.

obtained his pilot's licence, receiving the bulk of his tuition from a local man, Ron Tuckey. This involved wracking up 50 hours of flying, including 10 or 12 hours solo, mainly in a two-seater Piper Cub. The rare mode of transport allowed Tony to get to sheds much quicker in some remote places and also allowed him to attend shearing competitions around the North Island, provided there was somewhere close to the venue that provided safe landing. He was licensed to carry passengers and sometimes flew a Cessna 150 with four seats. He bought his own plane but later sold it when his wife suggested the plane had become the number one love of his life!

Among the shearers working for Tony in those days was a young bloke named Peter Black, who recalls those days with some affection.

'I knew Tony as a very good shearer, a great worker, a bit of a hardcase and he seemed to be an accident waiting to happen at times, especially when he was in his aeroplane!

'I worked for him in the mid-to-late 1970s, running a gang on some of the bigger sheds around Hunterville, Taihape, Raetahi and Whanganui areas. He was great to work for, you had no hassles with money, stores, or staff and organising the farmers.

'I think most people that worked for Tony would have some good stories to tell about him. He was just one of those

guys that things just seemed to happen to that were different.'

Peter Black recalls the time he was shearing at Pohunui, out from Hunterville, and Tony was flying up with a young fellow named Vince O'Brien to join the crew, and to catchup with the gang about the next few sheds they would be working at.

'Tony arrived overhead and he buzzed the shed, so we went out to watch him land. The strip was an angled one on the side of a hill, where you would land going up hill and take off going down. Well, he came in a bit out of line with the ground and the wheels got taken out and he wrecked the plane a little bit. But then he came down to the shed giggling away to himself, so he obviously wasn't worried at all.

'A few weeks later and close to Christmas, Tony asked me if I could stay and work up until Christmas Eve and he would then fly me back home to Central Otago.

But I told him after seeing him land at Pohunui there was no way I was getting in a plane with him to go anywhere!

'Another time he came in to his home base late one night and when he came out the next morning found he had not landed on the strip but the paddock next door.

Then there was the time when main power lines in the North Island were cut up and the popular rumour was maybe Mr O'Reilly had something to do with it! But all jokes aside, Tony was a very good boss and I enjoyed my time working for him.'

(To page 33)

Jack Dowd

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Cneifio Corwen Shears Canlyniadau / Results 2016



Corwen Shears Open finalists, back left: Matthew Evans, Ian Jones, Gwion Lloyd Evans. Front: Gareth Daniel, John Kirkpatrick, Rowland Smith. Below, Test teams, after New Zealand's win at Corwen: Martyn David (Wales manager), Ian Jones, Gwion Lloyd Evans, Rowland Smith, John Kirkpatrick, Sam Saunders (New Zealand manager). Having won the previous tests at Lampeter and Builth Wells (Royal Welsh), Wales secured the test series 2-1, and left New Zealand still without a series win in Wales since 2011.



Junior: Rhys Evans, Brecon, 1; Meredydd Pyrs, Betws Y Coed, 2; Aled Evans, Dolgellau, 3; Gwion Evans, Machynlleth, 4; Daf Roberts, Llandeilo, 5; Tomos O Jones 6.

Intermediate: Josh Page, Llangadog, 1; John James, Aberystwyth, 2; Steffan Jenkins, Lampeter, 3; Laurena Dumont, France, 4; Jeremy Leygonie, France, 5; Hugues Lachaume, France, 6.

Senior: Lloyd Rees, Brecon, 1; Dion Edwards, Betws G G, 2; Julien Dincq, France, 3; Ceredig Lewis, Aberystwyth, 4; Ifan P Jones, Machynlleth, 5; Sion Lewis, Lampeter, 6.

Welsh Open: Gwion Evans, Bylchau, 1; Gareth Daniel, Machynlleth, 2; Alun Lloyd Jones, Llangollen, 3; Richard Jones, Glyndyfrdwy, 4; Matthew Evans, Abertawe, 5; Rhys Jones, Llanelidan, 6.

International Team Relay: Wales 1; New Zealand 2; UK 3; France 4; Scotland 5.

Celtic Shield: Wales 1; Scotland 2.

Test: Wales vs France: Wales 1; France 2.

Commercial Blade Shearing Test: Wales 1; Scotland 2.

Commercial Blade Shearing: Gareth Owen, Beddgelert 1; Elfed Jackson, Bethesda, 2; Rheinallt Hughes Llanarmon D C 3; John Trevor, Caernarfon 4; Clive Hamer, Rhayadr 5; Wilson Wylie, Scotland 6.

Novice Wool Handling: Awel Jones, Cwmtirmynach, 1; Erica Swan, Bala, 2; Emma Smith, New Zealand 3.

Open Wool Handling: Jess Morgan, Aberdare, 1; Audrey Lamb, Scotland, 2; Rosie Keenan, Scotland, 3.

Gwellau Traddodiadol: Robert Edwards 1; Gwynros Jones 2; Elgar Hughes 3; Glyn Jones 4; Elfed Jackson 5; Rheinallt Hughes 6.

CP Wool International (20 lambs): New Zealand 95.1pts (Rowland Smith 12min 34sec, 47pts; John Kirkpatrick 12min 22sec, 47.6pts), beat Wales 103.45pts (Gwion Lloyd Evans 12min 7sec, 51.7pts; Ian Jones 13min 25sec, 51.75pts) by 8.35pts. Wales won the series 2-1.

Corwen Shears Open final (20 lambs): John Kirkpatrick (New Zealand) 12min, 46.55pts, 1; Rowland Smith (New Zealand) 12min 9sec, 47.05pts, 2; Gareth Daniel (Wales) 12min 2sec, 47.1pts, 3; Gwion Lloyd Evans (Wales) 11min 54sec, 48.9pts, 4; Ian Jones (Wales) 12min 36sec, 50pts, 5; Matthew Evans (Wales) 11min 55sec, 51pts, 6.

(Tony O'Reilly – from 32)

Gisborne's Jenny Manttan is another who recalled working for Tony in the 1980s. Jenny told the August 1991 edition of *Shearing*. '... I crutched for a winter and the next main shear I got a stand with Tony O'Reilly at Apiti. I was with him four or five seasons. He came over from Ireland to work for an uncle and he broke in land around Apiti. He was relentless with himself and everyone. He taught us to work hard – night runs and all. Everyone wanted to work hard because he worked so hard himself.'

And while some contemporary shearers well recall Tony turning up in his plane to have a shear, it was a fact too they sometimes heard the engine starting up quite early in the afternoon, meaning Mr O'Reilly might have failed to make the final on that occasion! Not like quietly driving away.

Tony says he started going to competitions at a relatively young age, often accompanying the Nesdales. But probably the final that he is most famous for making is the Golden Shears open in 1969. After a then-record high 96 open entries in 1968, the year of the absent Mr Snow Quinn drew 120 hopefuls, making Tony's achievement in making the top six all the more meritorious.

He was joined by George Potae, Kerry Johnstone, Danny Holland, Eddie Reidy and Brian Waterson, who had won the purple ribbon of 1963. As history records, the title went to Potae with 85.897 pts, with Johnstone second (84.425) and O'Reilly third, with 81.058.

Tony says he dithered over whether to change a cutter and thought in retrospect he would have improved his chances of winning if he had, because the cut for his last four or five sheep had gone, costing valuable quality points.

Tony came back to Golden Shears in 1970 but this time his comb was a fraction sharp and he put a cut on the sheep's leg that cost him a place. And that, though aged just 27, was pretty much the end of Tony's competitive career.

"Looking back now, it was totally ridiculous to give it away so early," Tony concedes. And who could disagree, with most champions at that time into their thirties at least before nailing the big prize.

Before giving the shearing away Tony worked for a season in England and then spent 10 years or so at the Takapau meat works, some 20 km from his home at Waipukurau.

After living so long in New Zealand he has no strong links back to Ireland, though still has a brother living there.

Muscling in on Generation (wh)Y

By Roger Leslie

The New Zealand shearing industry has for many years been a world leader in the development of shearing and shearers. It used to be a major exporter of expertise and its shearers were known all over the world (for mostly good reasons). What has happened to that reputation?

I read in the media that 25% of our current main shear team are imported. The X Generation of Kiwis produced few shearers and the Y doesn't look to be any different. 'Shearing' to them is something one does on Facebook. They have learned to question everything, value nothing, and have an over developed sense of self entitlement. Like bats they operate better at night and navigate with beeps and other assorted electronic noises. They can negotiate around each other without the need to look. Their thumbs are nimble but their awareness of what's going on is as devoid of vowels as text language.

We need to learn from this and advertise our industry better to Generation Z, before they doze off. Let's get school children visiting the sheds and point out that you can get a knighthood from being a shearer. I was taken on a field trip to a wool shed when I was a kid and loved it. To be fair I loved all extramural activities but it may be that this was what attracted to me to the world of shearing.

Germany has an 80:1 people-to-sheep ratio so shearing activity is something of a curiosity and field trips from schools and kindergartens are common.

I feel for those teachers trying to make it a good learning experience, all the while keeping it interesting and returning with most of the children at the end of the day, in a clean and relatively undamaged condition. Not on every occasion were these boxes all able to be ticked.

On one occasion a bus load of noise and bright clothing turned up to watch some Heideschnuken shearing – always the potential for some drama – or theatre, as the Germans



call it. I heard the teachers tell them to keep quiet and keep back. They did neither; they crowded in like spectators of the Tour-de-France, shrieking excitedly. We were shearing outside and the release pen was Germany itself. The next Schuken to be released deliberated for half a second on the lack of a clear escape route before leaping neatly between two eager faces. The sheep's passing left a splotch of mud on the front of one head and footprint on the back of the other. This had the desired effect of getting them to keep back, but not keep quiet.

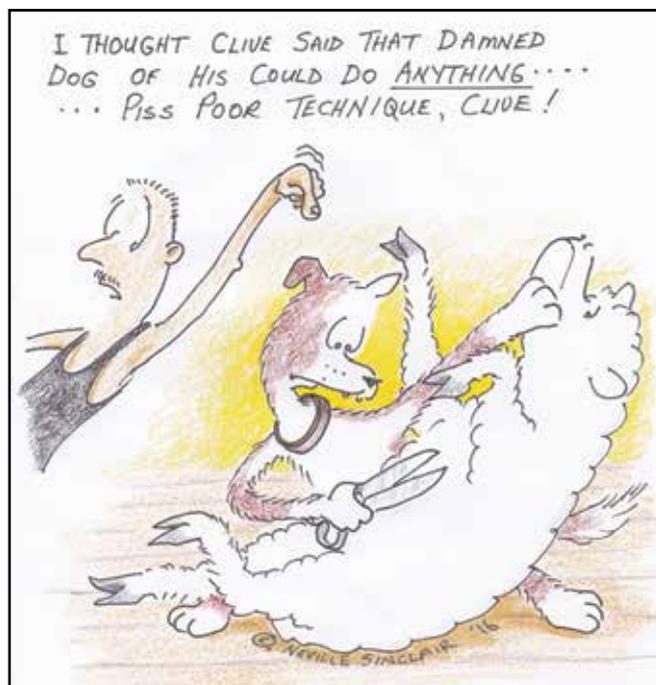
On another day a goat (often a part of the wander shepherd's flock) came up and nibbled the pocket of an impudent looking urchin. The lad turned and kicked at the goat which hopped nimbly out of the way, then butted him neatly on the bottom, knocking him flat on his face. This was well received by his colleagues and no doubt ticked the box of good learning experience.

Now that I mainly shear hobby sheep, I have more time to indulge in this sort of thing and I have found I enjoy a bit of theatre and my wool manager can certainly rise to the occasion. Hobbyists that have tried to shear their own sheep have seldom seen an intact fleece and the school children never have. When a fleece is thrown out on the ground, a wave of awe often sweeps through the crowd like an electric current. Sometimes they ask if she will do it again. It's easy to bask in this easily gained glory.

The last school group we entertained had an old-style teacher. The kids arrived in respectful silence, two by two, holding hands and all wearing high viz. She assembled them in ranks, explained the purpose of the visit and reminded them how lucky they were to have such important people condescending to allow them to watch. In a few sentences she covered the importance of wool and the place sheep held in the ecosystem, and reminded them that they would have to write about the experience on returning to the school.

She then asked if anyone had any questions. One fresh faced midget put up his hand, exuding an insatiable desire for knowledge. 'Yes Thomas?' she asked. In earnest tones he replied 'that man has really big muscles.'

She went red and became quite flustered. 'Yes, yes, he does, I suppose, but does anyone have any questions about the sheep?' No-one did. Another good day for Kiwi shearing and international relations.



Lister's Nexus Pro

Does the machine you are shearing on meet modern safety standards?

When it comes to sheep shearing, there are few names more synonymous in the world than the legendary Sir David Fagan. With five world championship titles and over 642 open wins under his belt, he is certainly a man who knows a fair bit about shearing gear. And when it comes to shearing machinery, there are few brands more synonymous in New Zealand than Lister.

Boasting a worldwide history steeped in tradition going back well over 100 years, it is no doubt that the Lister name is one that many sheep farmers will identify with.

Whilst David has only just finished his competitive shearing career, he has plenty more to give to the industry and has worked on the development team at Lister Shearing for the past six years. Lister Shearing also purchased the well-known Supershear brand in 2010 and a huge move has been undertaken to consolidate and update the entire operation. Lister shearing equipment is still manufactured in the United Kingdom but these days is produced in their modern factory in Stroud after moving from the old Dursley base in 2014.

The New Zealand distributor for Lister/Supershear gear is Acto Agriculture who distribute through the farm merchandise stores. The Acto team at the woolface are certainly well qualified enough and between them there are two of the most revered ex-Tectra shearing instructors (Tom Wilson and Russell Knight), Tom is also a former world champion and



within the squad there are five Shearing Judges as well as the New Zealand Scoring system line-up seen at many shows around the country.

So...what should you consider when purchasing a shearing machine?

Safety first – perhaps one of the most important criteria foremost in the mind on the up-to-date farming operation is the safety aspect of its capital items. The Nexus Pro machines are factory fitted with an electronic safety sensor to protect the user and avoid a lock-up. The cut-out switch automatically stops the machine immediately if the handpiece hits an obstruction in the wool. This not only protects the shearer but prevents damage to the components of your equipment.

Present day shearing machines are far quieter and lighter than traditional plant, and the Lister Nexus Pro QR is easy to manoeuvre at 18kg including the rigid downtube. That is nearly half the weight of the machines of the past, making it easy to install and more portable where required. The quietness of the motor reduces shearing shed noise.

What does QR stand for? QR stands for the Quick Release system which allows for rapid attachment and release of the rigid (or flexible) downtube from the motor unit. The QR downtube is swift and easy to use and ensures the correct setting of the downtube which saves time. The top sleeve of the downtube simply slides on and clamps into place which eliminates the need for tools.

There are plenty of other features which make this a solid investment – the powerful one-horsepower motor makes it the most powerful machine on the market and having three speeds ensures that it is suitable for all conditions in all types of wool. The units can be powered from either mains power or, due to their low starting current, from a generator which makes them ideal for use on shearing trailers. Each Nexus Pro QR is also fitted with a rubber support foot for protection of the machine during transportation.

Nexus Pro QR machines are available through all leading farm merchandise stores, view more details at www.acto.co.nz

Pearls of Wisdom

- In retrospect it becomes clear that hindsight is definitely overrated.
- The only advantage to living in the past is that rents are cheaper.
- Nowadays a balanced diet is when every McNugget weighs the same.
- Who says nothing is impossible? Some people do it everyday.
- When you're in deep water it's a good idea to keep your mouth shut.
- Most people don't act stupid. It's the real thing.
- Getting old is when a narrow waist and a broad mind change places.
- It's a good idea to save your money. Some day it might be worth something again.

(Alfred E Neuman – Mad Magazine)

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Industry training rises again

By Anna Cox

Primary ITO and the New Zealand Shearing Contractors Association, the advocacy arm of the shearing industry, have worked closely with the sector to launch a 100% industry-owned and operated wool harvesting training organisation, Te Ako Wools, with a renewed level of collaboration at the grass roots.

'We're excited about launching Te Ako Wools to the sector—we know it will bring huge benefits across the board. So not only to the trainees, but to farmers and shearing contractors – right down to the consumer,' says New Zealand Shearing Contractors' Association President, Jamie McConachie.

Te Ako Wools Operations Manager Jock Martin was a key driver behind the new entity and echoes Jamie's words.

'Created to be the world leader in wool harvesting training, Te Ako Wools will provide shearing, wool handling and pressing training. The company will foster strong industry relationships from the grass roots of production to the retail end,' he explains.

'We will engage with brand partners throughout the journey so they are involved in the full picture, increasing industry professionalism and adding value to the brand position of New Zealand wool,' Jock says.

A new team of Te Ako trainers is currently being formed and the first trainers have recently been appointed.



Dean Te Huia

'Our new trainers – Dean Te Huia and Cheryl Traill in the North Island and Robyne Murray and Chas Tohiariki in the South Island – have a huge amount



Jock Martin, Operations manager for Te Ako Wools Ltd, the new industry training organisation.

of industry knowledge and experience, and I know they're keen to share this with their trainees,' Jock says.

Primary ITO is committed to the new entity, and is looking forward to the benefits it will bring to wool growers, trainees, contractors and the wool harvesting industry as a whole.



Cheryl Traill

'The ITO team, along with the new team of Te Ako Wools trainers, have worked hard to make training a national foot print and ensure it is fit for purpose with how shearing, wool handling and pressing are carried out across New Zealand,' says Alister Shennan, Business Development General Manager at Primary ITO.

'One of Primary ITO's key responsibilities will be to ensure

the entity is appropriate as a vehicle to deliver quality training to the sector. This will include our AgExcel endorsement process of trainers and assessors,' Alister says.

For more information or if you're interested in training your team, please contact Jock Martin, Te Ako Wools on jock@teako.nz or call 0274 337 813.



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- Health and Safety workbook compliant with the Health & Safety at Work Act 2015
 - Enables each business to create a personalised Health and Safety manual (industry specific), policy and systems, and includes templates for relevant forms

Te Ako Wools Ltd

An industry owned training provider, set up with the backing and efforts of the New Zealand Shearing Contractors Association and Primary ITO.



Both employers and shearing staff (kiwis and overseas) can contact Te Ako Wools direct for training.

For all your shearing and woolhandling training requirements contact:

Jock Martin, General Manager

Ph: 027 433 7813 or Email: info@teako.nz

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Above: Shearing the lambs at Waitawhiti Station, near Eketahuna, viewed through the artistic lens of Zoe Richardson. Action involving the Tararua Shearing Gang (Lionel Tohiariri) December 2015.



This mob would have the woolhandlers on the run dealing to black wool! Thanks to Liz Brook for the photo – she explains the colourful lot belongs to a Manawatu Black and Coloured Sheep member. The sheep are used to having their photos taken, knowing their fleeces will be used by spinners and weavers.

Size does matter
Lew Pickens from Waimiha went down to Milton in 1964 to shear for George Potae. It was October and still not much work about so when Lawrence-based contractor Jim Frew asked George if he could spare a couple of blokes, George sent Lew and Eddie Reidy. They found themselves posted to Kyeburn Station to shear merinos. Lew says when they pulled up in the car, the blokes already at the shed were looking out the window, wondering who was coming to help them. 'They told me later they watched us walking towards the shed and decided among themselves that the taller bloke [Lew] would probably be okay but the little fellow with him [Eddie] didn't look like he would be much bloody use!'



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