

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY:

Organizational Structure

Promotion & Development

Recognition

Skills

Quality

Education

Standards

Liaison

Activities

Strategies

Focus

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New Zealand and Australian Pilot Wool Classing Course

The first pilot program of aligning New Zealand wool classers with the Australian Code of Practice finally occurred, after two years of development, at the TAFE Western Institute in New South Wales.

Earlier this year six classers: Katrina Bishop; Rebecca Braddick; Wendy Hawkins; Murray McLachlan; Tuia 'Oz' Moeke and Emarina Watson successfully completed the Certificate IV in Wool classing course with distinction.

The main aim of this scheme is to **improve career opportunities** for existing classers by extending their work program in Australia during the New Zealand off season.

Since the conclusion of the course four of the participants of this pilot have received their Australian stencil, with two of them remaining in Australia to work. One has since returned to work in southern NSW, while another is planning to return after the pre-lamb season in New Zealand.

Course tutor Frank Roberts commented that *"The overall knowledge and experience of the New Zealand classers was of a very high standard"*.



Pilot scheme participants *left to right*. In front Murray McLachlan, D1677; Rebecca Braddick, P2103; Emarina Watson, A2706; Wendy Hawkins, A2708.

At the back: Frank Roberts (Tutor); Katrina Bishop, (with shades); Tuia 'Oz' Moeke, P2097; and Kerri Capill, D1353 (TECTRA).

Anyone interested in attending a future course, with an expected 75% of Australian content to be delivered in New Zealand, should contact Kerri Capill, phone: 0800 496657.

BOARD NEWS

Message from the incoming chairman:

After taking over from the excellent job done by our inaugural chairman Graeme Bell (A 223), it is my intention to focus on what is important for wool classers in the future.

It is our immediate focus to get the new wool classers course up and running in an affordable and cost effective manner.

The NZWCA thinks it would greatly assist the practical /hands on part of the course if it were done in the woolshed under the guidance of a “mentor classer”. This would cover as many commercial classing types as possible, approximately two days at a time and be at no cost to the classer, farmer or contractor. This will be incorporated in year two of training to allow for and encourage leading shed hands and Q stencil holders to qualify as classers and ultimately increase the number of new classers entering into the profession.

The success of the new classing course is very dependant on those who are approached to make themselves available as “mentor Classers”, so please support this project.

Classer refresher courses must be maintained at the existing high standard and available to all classers who wish to maintain their stencil accreditation and classer registration. The requirement to attend a refresher course has been extended from three to four years. This will allow the classer to alternate between courses in Queenstown and Christchurch and attend a course at the nearest venue and will keep the cost of running them down. These courses must have commercial relevance and be affordable to attend.

Martin Paterson
Chairman, NZWCA. (FD 1772)

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The AGM was held in Christchurch on 23 April 2009, and was attended by 52 members, two new Board members were appointed.

They are: Ian Kofoed and Bill Dowle who will join Martin Paterson (who offered himself for re-lection), Mavis Mullins, Alistair Eckoff and Graeme Bell.



Important notices

- Phone messages to Dave: it would appreciated if you could please leave your full name and a contact number
- You cannot use your stencil if you have not paid your NZWCA subscription
- If you are not a financial registered member for this financial year then become so, or contact the registrar to arrange to have your stencil put on hold or withdrawn
- Merit awards are made in consultation with buyers and brokers and awarded to financial members only.

For all enquiries contact:

Registrar: Dave Carr
NZWCA
PO Box 7327
Sydenham
Christchurch.

David.Carr@tectra.co.nz

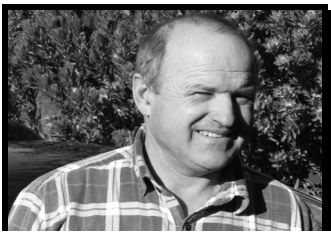
Phone: 03 3539293
Cell: 021 372244

BOARD NEWS

MERIT AWARDS 2008/2009

<u>Merit Merino</u> Commendations:	Dick McArthur	A 647	<i>Earnsleugh</i>
	Murray McLachlan	D1677	<i>Mt Nicholas</i>
	Juliet Jones	FA 887	<i>Matarae</i>
	Martin Murray	FM 1624	<i>Maryburn</i>
<u>Merit Mid Micron</u> Commendations:	Ian Kofoed	A 2086	<i>Bushey Park</i>
	Sandra Harnett	A 1889	<i>Mt Possession</i>
	Gavin Wilson	FH 2050	<i>Wilfield</i>
<u>Merit Crossbred</u> Commendations:	Annabelle Tripp	FC 1871	<i>Snowden</i>
	Shirley Munro	P 2073	<i>Longlands</i>
	North Island	Lynette White	<i>Roundaway</i>
		Q 144	

Introducing a couple of new faces on the board:



IAN KOFOED

A 2086

Ian comes from a farming background in North Otago.

After five years in the army Ian returned home to the family farm for a period prior to the dissolution of a family partnership.

He then farmed on his own account until 2001 when he sold and shifted to Oamaru with his wife and teenage children.

Here he started working for Rowland Shearing, with whom he still works, shearing, wool handling and pressing throughout the district and completed a Certificate in Wool Technology in 2004 to compliment his earlier Diploma in Agriculture.

For the past three years Ian has been successfully working his way into creating his own open shed classing run. He has a dozen or so clients and "unfortunately almost as many Shearing Contractors".



BILL DOWLE

D 1076

Bill is also from a half-bred farming background dating from the mid 1980's in the Kaikoura area.

In 1988 he studied extramurally at Massey to gain the Certificate of Wool Handling Systems followed by his merino and shed classer status.

With the sale of his farm, Bill shifted to Sefton in 2004, and took over an engineering business but continued to attend Fibre Select days to maintain his interest in the industry.

In 2007 he re-entered the rural community when he began a new enterprise of servicing lifestyle properties which includes wool classing, with a number of his clients in the Awatere Valley.

Bill has been involved in many community organizations over the years such as Young Farmers, Federated Farmers, and School Board of trustees, and more recently with Land Search and Rescue where he is one of six Police SARS advisors. He is keen to promote classing as a vital part of clip improvement for the wool industry and to encourage young people to take up the challenge of classing.

2009/2010 SEASON

In the current world financial situation nothing is assured of being easy or indeed continuing along previous lines and the wool industry is no exception.

Not only is the stronger sector battling for an increase in its use and diversification but the finer edge is also finding it difficult to trade. It is therefore imperative that classers maintain that contact with their client's broker representatives to ensure every possible avenue to add value to the total New Zealand clip is undertaken, and by not compromising our high quality preparation standards.

Classer Mentor Scheme

In addition to the new classer training course an added initiative is the classer mentor scheme. This is to assist in improving the hands on component and an opportunity for trainees to gain familiarity with the practical implications of theory in a working shed situation from experienced classers.

It will involve selected classers taking a student under their wing for guidance as to their roles and responsibilities for 3-5 days in the shed. The mentors and students will be matched up according to locality and the clip preparation type desired. EG: best practice, contract or specialist clip preparation. The student's role will be one of a learner classer and work independently, not as another shed hand.

Identification of suitable mentors and details of their role is under development at present. The intention is to have the entire current student in- take "mentored up" for the forthcoming season.

New Zealand Merino Classer Web site Access

- The NZM Classer Web Site give you access to up to date market information as well as the clip information from properties that you have classed at
- To obtain a log-on code please contact Tegan Jones on 03 3777 990 or Tegan.jones@nzmerino.co.nz
- NZM will then send you a form to fill out and for you to get your grower clients to sign to give permission to access the clips test records.

REFRESHER COURSE EXTENSION

The requirement to attend a refresher course has been extended from three to four years.

This has resulted from funding issues required to run these events of which Meat & Wool NZ are the major providers, and the cost to classers of attending.

It does not preclude anyone from attending all of the courses on offer. In fact with particular regard to the finer end of the clip it is in your best interests and that of your clients to attend as regularly as possible.

Markets and requirements are changing all the time, not just from season to season but often within each selling period.

Some key points

- Don't compromise on preparation.
- Think QUALITY.

Ensure buyer confidence by:

- Keeping all black fibred wool separate.
- Removal of all medulated fibre- especially in cross bred and mid micron wool.
- Maintain your registration.
- Use your stencil on all wool you are responsible for preparing.
- Keep up the good work.

One of the most positive messages from the recent Merino New Zealand "Woolstock 2009" conference was issued by Mark Bryden from SmartWool who emphatically stated that "we need more wool!"

GINA NATHAN M1664

The New Zealand wool harvesting industry has lost a champion with the sudden death in March of Gina Nathan.

Gina was a highly talented wool handler and respected classer who, along with a handful of her peers, did much to raise the standard of wool preparation in New Zealand, and ultimately the world, and in particular that of the fine wool sector to its present high level.

Gina started working as a wool handler in the mid 1970's in Hastings before heading down south to Alexandra a few years later to work for Gary Smith then Fred Wybrow, and since 1985 for Elsie & Peter Lyon.

During the next 30 years she worked in a large percentage of the wool sheds in Central Otago, becoming a top wool handler, teacher, mentor and wool classer.

She once described her passion for wool thus: "especially for merino- the feel of it in your hands, the fleece in full flight landing perfectly on the wool table, then seeing prepared to perfection- an awesome sight". This was reflected in her Shear Sporting success with numerous New Zealand open wool handling titles comprising every wool type in a career spanning 22 years- a Master Wool handler in the true sense of the word.

As well she was: a South Island Shearing Team member for many years; South Island wool handler of the Year; finished runner up to Patrick Shelford representing New Zealand at the World Championships in Masterton in 1996; handled the wool in a number of world shearing records by shearing icons David Fagan, Edsel Ford, and Dion Morrell.

In addition she also was responsible for training many of our country's leading shed hands and top competitive wool handlers, setting them high standards to achieve through her diligence and conscientious work. Graeme Bell remarked that "Gina performed to a standard both in the shed and at the show, gained [my] respect and of others in the industry".

It was while working in Riversdale with Huia Whyte- Puna, with whom she was competing against at the shows and who inspired her to study in 1994 at Lincoln for the Certificate in Wool Handling systems.



Gina gained her early classing experience working with and walking in Dick McArthur's shoes.

Two of her more notable clips that she classed for a number of years were "*Ribbonwood*" at Omarama where she classed for Glenda and Colin McKay, and the large challenging mer/polwarth "*Ida Valley*" clip.

Although lacking in communication skills fellow workers, including shearers, were never left in no doubt as to what Gina's expectations were!

She certainly made everyone in the gang step up to the mark, not just the person she may have singled out for attention at the time.

Generally Gina was harder on the experienced wool handlers as they should have known what they should have been doing, but had a different level of tolerance for learners.

(Continued page 6)

Show Fleece entries

In recent years there has been a decrease in the number of fleeces entered in the local A&P Shows and also for the National Golden Fleece Competition. In some cases they are non existent or at such a low level they are losing interest from the farmers and the public.

Shearing is the time to identify those top fleeces for quality and weight and put aside by the classer for further selection and possible entry in the local show.

The fleeces are judged on the same criteria we use when classing according: to micron, evenness of length, style, tensile strength, colour, and weight.

The Otago Merino Association Cancer Fleece competition is going from strength to strength, not just in Otago but in the as a result of classers efforts throughout the country.

Let's see if we can also assist in raising the profile of our half bred and crossbred growers by keeping a selection of adult and hogget fleeces aside during shearing for display at local shows to promote local growers, their stock management and breeding, and to keep the New Zealand wool clip in the public eye.

FOOTWEAR

Look after these!

Our feet are key pieces of our body's skeleton. They hold us up for most of our life time, and they transport us about from place to place, yet our out feet are often then most neglected part of our body.



A couple of ways we can ensure healthy and well functioning feet is in the type of **footwear** and **socks** we choose to wear.

Footwear

Because we spend all day on our feet it is imperative that our footwear is appropriate and matches the activities undertaken by the wearer while we work.

The most important requirement is that the shoes are well made and that they fit comfortably, and give plenty of support to help in the prevention of foot problems and related injuries to the area of the legs and back.

Ultimately appropriate footwear should be chosen on the basis of structure, function & fit and not by colour, style or name.

Socks

The types of socks worn are also extremely important and wool based socks are strongly recommended. If you are not already aware wool based socks literally breathe, the wool fibre moving the moisture away off the skin and so are ideal for those who get sweaty feet. Not only are they warm and comfortable, but they are odour free, durable and now come in a great array of colours and styles.

Do your self a favor and buy a few pairs, you'll not only be helping your self and the health of your feet but in the long run the wool industry and your future!

So make sure your footwear fits, is suitable for the work you carry out, is comfortable and supportive and that you replace them when they become worn and you can be assured of happy healthy feet during your lifetime.

Dick McArthur is now back home in Alexandra residing temporarily at the Centennial Heights Motel. Please ring Beth on 027 245 7978



**The flu.
Keep it yourself!**

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> from page 5...Fine wool connoisseur!

Gina was also into her music, was a keen artist and we can never forget those hairdos!

She may have left this world but it will be a very long time before she is forgotten.

The shed staff of today is charged with the job of ensuring Gina's standards are up held and to continue her legacy of "perfectionism" into the future generations of our wool handlers.

There will no doubt be a ghost watching over proceedings throughout many woolsheds in Central Otago in the forthcoming seasons!

Arohanui.