

## DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER



## Chairman's Comments Bill Dowle D1076

As is widely said by many, 2020 is a year that will be remembered for numerous reasons. Definitely not for decent wool prices which were bad enough without the turmoil "The Virus" has impacted on the world and the entire wool trade (fashion and industry) which has decimated the already shaky wool market even further.

For NZWCA it will be the year that our Executive Officer/ Registrar decided that time was up. Having taken on the role 6 years ago for a "maximum of 2 years", following serving 4 years as a director, Bruce Abbott has rightfully decided he should finally have the retirement he deserves. We will still hear from him time to time no doubt as his passion for wool and wool harvesting is so great. We have benefited from that as he has grown our Association from one that was at a crossroads. We either had to grow our membership and influence, and gain industry respect and support or we were doomed as it was financially unsustainable without something changing, we had been formed from Wool Board levies, and our reserves were not going to last for ever.

I have to admit to having some doubts that we would get substantial sponsorship support from other parts of the industry but it has happened and this, along with the respect the Association has garnered as a result of its contribution to the wider industry has been great to see. This has been due to Bruce's work and perseverance.

The effort put into training has seen The Certificate in Wool Technology course is a key industry training component, including successful completion being a requirement to becoming a registered wool classer. The difficulty in securing a permanent provider for this programme has been of considerable concern to the Association. Over the past six years it has moved from Tectra to Lincoln/Telford, then Taratahi and now the Southern Institute of Technology /Telford. In between there was a lot of uncertainty and the Association worked diligently with others each time to locate and imbed the programme in its new home. Much of this is due to Bruce's tenacity and passion, with I must add, a lot of help from our appointed board member Allan Frazer. Added to this, is of course, Bruce has been the driving force behind the establishment of the new Grading Course. The first intake has completed the practical learning component of this course with organisation and delivery resting heavily on Bruce's shoulders. There will be more intakes of this programme to come and as long as the National Council of Wool Interests adopts the "Prefix Brand" (similar to the approach adopted in Australia) that Bruce has promoted with full endorsement from the board, we will see the acknowledgement of registered classers and approved graders involvement with the individual clips noted in the catalogue. To demonstrate that a professionally trained person has overseen the preparation of a clip can only enhance the credibility of the standard of New Zealand wool offered as it moves through the value chain. This will also improve recognition of qualified wool handlers and hopefully result in an improved market for wool, some of which should be passed on in a monetary form to those who are doing the hard work in the sheds.

To see an attendance of some 80 people at the Industry Day in Oamaru on October 29<sup>th</sup> (there is a full report on the day elsewhere in this newsletter), was very encouraging and another recognition of what NZWCA is providing for its members and others in the industry. PGGWool having all of their wool team at the day was tremendous and while some of the wool handlers may have felt overawed to be working through the exercises with full-time members of the broking team, I'm sure they will have learned from them. It was also great when marking the exercises to see how some of the shed workers were doing as well as these trade personnel. Although it would have been great if more of our members had attended.

The evening of the Industry Day saw the Board sit down for our first face to face meeting for over a year; yes, we do use Zoom for keeping in touch like most businesses have had to. We spent some time discussing how to get a replacement for Bruce. His shoes will be hard to fill but there will be someone out there with a passion for wool and wool harvesting that may take us in a slightly different direction, but the base is there to continue to grow and develop as an Association. Are you the one that would like to have a go at it? There is further information in this newsletter about the position; it is a paid for part time job, but the personal development opportunity and engaging with a great many passionate people will also provide a lot of satisfaction. I will close by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, it's scary how fast it is coming round, and I hope you have a think about the position available; it is a great opportunity for someone, maybe YOU. Keep up the good work.



# EXECUTIVE OFFICER/REGISTRAR REPORT

## Bruce Abbott A 1457

*It has come to a time that at a ripe old age of 75, I have decided to retire and allow that the position be passed on to a younger person whom I am sure will bring a new perspective and vigour to this position.*

I have been involved in the NZWCA for the past 10 years, firstly as a director four 4 years then your EO/R for the past 6 years. I originally took on the role of EO/R for two years but due to developments initiated by our association stayed on for a further 4 years to support the association in the many initiatives they promoted.



Over the time of my tenure I am personally very proud to have assisted in raising this association profile and giving it a substantial voice within our industry.

If I may I would like to reflect on the many positive and successful initiatives over that time;

1. NZWCA has been instrumental in increasing the number of students completing the Wool Technology Course from less than 5 per year to 30 per year. This has helped securing on-going funding and support significantly.
2. NZWCA organised and compiled a review of the Wool Technology course to upgrade the content of the course to the benefit the wider wool industry.
3. NZWCA worked tirelessly to promote the formation of an NZQA Level 4 Wool Grading Course through Primary ITO and Southern Institute of Technology
4. NZWCA compiled the majority of the first grading course was delivered at Telford in October 2020
5. The Merit Award is the show case of our association and this has been enhanced with the recipients receiving branded tops and caps. NZWCA increased numbers substantially to 33 nominations in 2020.
6. NZWCA has made a powerful advocacy to increase recognition of your registration number. Presently a proposal is before the National Council of NZ Wool Interest (NZCWI) and recently presented to the Strong Wool Action Group (SWAG).
7. NZWCA has revitalised the field days by holding up to 6 field days per year (unfortunately COVID-19 put a halt to that this year). We promoted and held Industry days for the past 3 years and have involved not only our members but all in the industry. Attendance has consistently between 80/90 people.
8. NZWCA has upgraded the web site twice over the past 10 years. This has enabled your association to connect with members and has provided information to assist all in our industry sector plus people who may be interested in working in our industry
9. NZWCA Created a Facebook page which has been used extensively and enables quick updates on issues that you need to be advised about.
10. NZWCA has been keeping members informed through 2 or 3 newsletters per year and with the adoption of regular emails it has enable us to update members on matters of interested.
11. NZWCA have become members of both Wool Research Organisation of NZ (WRONZ) and the National Council of NZ Wool Interest (NZCWI). These organisations are important leaders of our industry and our involvement ensures we have seat around the table of decision makers.
12. NZWCA originally organised a Health & Safety programme but with the NZ Shearing Contractors organising the Tahi Ngatahi Health & Safety programme it was felt that our members would be better covered by an overall programme for the entire sector.
13. NZWCA instigated a new member category "Associate" At present we have 55 by contacting Wool growers, Shearing contactors and Wool Merchants to join. This has vastly helped our financial position.



14. NZWCA been very fortunate in being able to increase our sponsorship over the past few years. From a couple of thousand dollars a year this has been increased to over \$15,000 per year. I thank the following for their support, Federation of Wool Merchants, NZ Merino, PGG Wrightson, CP Wool, WRONZ, NZSCA, Peter Lyon Shearing, Brendan Mahoney Shearing, NZ Council of Wool Exporters, NZ Wool scouring Ltd and NZ Wool Testing Authority. We look forward to this continued support to enable this association carry on the work it has been doing

In addition to this NZWCA Instigated talks with WRONZ to secure five, \$1000 sponsorship for students attending the Wool Technology Course

These are some of the highlights that have been achieved but there have been a few disappointments also, and they are

1. Classers/Graders using their registration number on the work they do without being members of your association. However, over the past couple of year there has been a number of people re-joining and supporting the association.
2. To date we have not secured recognition of your registration number but as mentioned before this is still work in progress
3. NZQA training for the wool harvesting sector has had many ups and downs since the closure of Tectra. It is hoped the new initiatives of the NZSCA are successful in turning around the availability of training
4. NZWCA members not taking up the opportunity to enrol and complete the Tahi Ngatahi Health & Safety programme. (Only 35 of our 193 members have joined).

On a personal note, I believe our whole industry must now work together more than ever. Part of my motivation to become members of the wider industry and include them in our association has been motivated by this belief. As an industry we need to be able sit around a table together to find the best way forward. Here I mention the success of the Avocado industry where some years ago they had no direction but they sat at a table to work through the problems they faced and now we pay around \$2 for one avocado where as some years ago you would buy 3 for \$2. In unity you find success.

I have had tremendous support for my proposals over the years I would like to thank these individuals;

Firstly, the NZWCA board who generally supported my proposals throughout. Particularly my thanks to Chairman Bill Dowle in his unpaid position was always available take a call from me and also your secretary Annette Gamble whose work greatly increased over the past few years. My sincere thanks to Annette for all the assistance she given me over these past 6 years. Thanks to Barbara Newton taking over handling the face book page and gathering information for our newsletters. Allan Frazer for the many hours he has spent on work/documents he produced for the association. We are fortunate to have had Allan's services since the formation of the association. Allan has assisted me in formulating proposals, advancement of training and to be honest correcting all my mistakes on the document I have penned.

Thanks to all the Wool Brokers/Merchants for their support and to the following people thank you for your support and assistance, Rob Cochrane, Dave Burrige, Grant Edward of PGG Wrightson, Robert Gilmore and his staff at PGG/Wrightson Wool store Mosgiel, Mark Greenlaw, Roger Fuller and Simon Averill of CP Wools, Blair Davies and Mike Hargadon NZ Merino, Dean Harrison of Federation of Wool Merchants, Duane Knowles of NZWTA, Peter Christensen of NZ Council of Wool Exporters, Mark Barrowcliffe and Jamie McConachie of NZSCA, Laurie Boniface Tutor of the Wool Course, Tony Cunningham and Struan Hulme of NZ Woolscours Ltd and most of all to my wife Pat who has put up with the many hours I have spent on NZWCA business.

My thanks also go to the most important people of NZWCA, you as members, I thank you for the support and encouraging words that I have received and without you, there would not be an association

At the time of writing no successor has been appointed and whoever is appointed to this position I will give you my support if at any time it is required.

Lastly, I wish you all an enjoyable festive season and we all look forward to a free Covid-19 world in the near future.

To all: "Stay Safe and Choose Wool".

**Cheers Bruce**





## The Case for Wool Classer and Wool Grader Professional Development

During NZ Wool Board management of wool classing it was mandatory that, to maintain the right to class and use their personal stencil, a classer had to attend a recognised “Classer Refresher Day” at least once every 3 years. There were many good reasons for this:

- Well practised wool classing is a vital element in maintaining the reputation NZ wool.
- It ensures that the inherent qualities of the natural fibre are presented in a manner that facilitates efficient handling and processing at all stages along the value chain leading to optimising returns.
- Wool classers as a result of their training and experience have earned the right to be called “professionals” and like many professions they owe it to the good standing of their profession to continue to enhance their practical and theoretical knowledge by participating in recognised refresher training programmes.
- While the fundamental skills don’t change, testing those skills in competition with fellow professionals, helps to maintain high standards.
- Appropriate training programmes can also provide for new learning relating to customer demand, enhancing communication skills to facilitate shed management and achieving best practice health and safety.
- Further, once qualified classers are generally self-employed, and participating in events with fellow classers provides an excellent opportunity for sharing experiences and learning from each other as well as industry leaders from other organisations such as scourers, brokers, buyers and processors who attend these events.
- Attending a Refresher course does take a day away from earning on the job but the timing of such courses is generally arranged for lows in the seasonal workload. Further, as one commentator working with professionals in another sector put it:

**“In my experience these people are already ahead of the game just by showing up. They are committed to learning and have figured out how to make time for it.”**

When NZWCA was formed in 2006 it wanted its members to continue to attend a recognised “Classer Refresher Day” at least once every 3 years. To assist in this NZWCA has run many Refresher days around the country catering not only for classers but also graders wool handlers and wool growers.

Yet, many members of NZWCA have not attended a Refresher Day for a long time.

I consider this to be unacceptable.

Yes, easy for me to say so because I am not one of you experiencing the daily challenges of working in the sector. BUT every classer that I have met demonstrates a real depth of passion for what they do and to me that goes hand-in hand with seeking continuous learning around what they do. Reflecting this and to continue to keep calling wool classers “professionals” I consider all members must support their Association, and in turn their profession, by committing to attend a recognised “Classer Refresher Day” at least once every 3 years.

I also extend this plea to include all grader members of NZWCA. This recognises NZWCA’s initiative to encourage more grading of strong wool as a means to achieving the best price on the day, irrespective of the overall state of the market at any given point in time, as well as their arranging for a course to be delivered for wool graders.

I raised this at this year’s AGM in Oamaru and received strong support from those attending.

Is the profession up for this?

If there are classers who don’t agree let’s get the debate out in the open. The editor has promised to air all correspondence on this most important topic and let’s also include at the same time any suggestions as to how our Refresher Days might be made even better.

**Allan Frazer**

**Independent NZWCA Director**





# NEW ZEALAND WOOL CLASSERS ASSOCIATION

## Industry Day in Oamaru, October 29<sup>th</sup> 2020

By Marg Forde – A1260



No matter where you live it takes commitment to attend the NZ Wool Classers Association industry days like our most recent one in Oamaru on October 29. For me, despite the fact I had to travel from the North Island where I live, the effort to attend was undoubtedly worth it.

Originally this NZWCA industry day was planned for May (pre-season, as has been the case in previous years) to be held in conjunction with the association's AGM. However COVID19 meant our AGM was conducted via Zoom, and the industry day rescheduled to October 2020.



The Scottish Hall in Oamaru was a new venue for NZWCA, organised by board member Don Urquhart, thanks Don, it was an excellent spot for our purposes, and the local Lions Club ladies' catering was pretty spot-on too!

Registration began at 7.30am. After hot drinks, meet and greet, welcome and the mandatory health and safety for the day briefing we were given time to spread out and either expand on the networking or begin to undertake some or all of the four wool exercises excellently gathered and laid out in the hall by our Executive Officer Bruce Abbott.



There was something for everyone in the exercises. There was mid-micron grading of fleece samples which posed the standard but important grading questions: which fleeces would you put into the main line and which would you take out, and why. There was a comprehensive breed and types exercise with some really challenging oddments. The sample that stuck out for me was the wool baled wet, solid yellow, a really graphic example, especially for those of us who mostly only see wool after its shorn and before it is baled.

The breed recognition exercise required matching 25 wool samples with 25 breed names. Some were obvious and easy and some, I was pleased to note by the chatter in this area, I was not alone in being not so sure about. The meat breeds were what I found tricky, only subtle differences in the likes of Ryeland, Southdown and Dorset Horn I decided. Apologies to stud breeders! And, there was the wool of a Herbert sheep, which I vaguely knew to be one of the "wild" breeds evolved in NZ from sheep that escaped early farming and bred and survived. This Herbert wool motivated me to do some more research when I got home. Interesting, thanks Bruce, great sample.



The fourth exercise was Yield and Micron Assessment. Bruce had gathered 30 fleece and oddment samples ranging from strong crossbred wool to superfine merino. Helpfully he also supplied a table of fleece and oddment yield percentages for a range of microns. This exercise reminded me how rusty I am on yields, it not being part of the list of considerations at the classing table I guess. The micron aspect underlined for me the craft of classing. I know for myself at least, classing is all about the clip in front of me, "this fleece is finer than that one, and this fleece is stronger than that one". Putting a micron on each of the 30 boxes, each sample in isolation is a great challenge. Kudos to everyone who did this and handed their sheet in for marking.

I was stoked that I was only one correct answer away from equal- topping the micron exercise. I did put some time into this part of the exercise, professional pride was at stake. As expected, I got my ass whooped in the yield answers!



Having a go at the wool exercises wasn't compulsory.

Everyone had until the end of lunchtime to complete the exercises and hand them in if they wanted them to be marked. Then Bruce put out the answers and that's where the learning/upskilling/refreshing really began.





There was a good range of speakers. In the morning Bronwyn Campbell spoke on the Tahī Ngatahi Wool Harvesting Health and Safety Programme, Mark Herbert from the Canterbury Spinners Ltd Oamaru mill and Steve Finnie from Fuhrmann Wool Exporters. In the

afternoon Teri McClelland from Southern Institute of Technology on wool technology and grading courses, Craig Smith of Devold Wool Direct Ltd and National Council of NZ Wool Interests. I didn't get to hear the afternoon speakers (busy with other Board members marking wool exercise entries, but not my own of course). I particularly enjoyed the positivity Mark Herbert was able to offer in his timeslot. It was heartening, in these times of such low wool returns and Covid-induced market uncertainty, to hear of increasing demand for carpets made from the wool yarn spun at the Oamaru plant. Mark told us Godfrey Hirst and parent company Mohawk are going gang-busters selling into the US and Australia and they were also returning to supplying NZ Government housing contracts.

They have a programme in place to train and retain textile industry workers, they are hiring, staff are working overtime and they are not shutting the mill down over Christmas. All news too good not to share! I checked with Mark and got his permission to pass on the details to an agricultural journalist friend of mine



This was the resulting story:

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/business/430980/demand-up-for-nz-made-wool-carpets>

Eighty people attended the industry day in Oamaru, but of those, Bruce said only 23 were NZWCA members. It's encouraging to see companies with wool interests supporting NZWCA events, for example sending testing house and wool scour staff; a large contingent of PGG Wrightson wool personnel were at our Oamaru day, I gather they had also spent some quality time together the afternoon and night before! But, I'd add to the disappointment Bruce Abbott has expressed at this low number of association members there, and encourage my fellow classers to make the effort to attend such days. To do so supports the organisation that has undoubtedly kept our classer registration capacity and recognition alive and valid for us all, since the Wool Board disestablished. But more than that, at a personal level the gain is huge. Classing can be a lonely gig; you're not very often around numbers of other classers. I always come away from industry days like the Oamaru one feeling energised by being with so many others with a passion for wool, and grateful for the opportunity to be alongside and learn from so much combined wool knowledge. You never stop learning.



**Wool Exercise winners were:**

**Breed and type Exercise - Lucy Gee-Taylor - Peter Lyon Shearing**

**Micron Exercise - Grant Andrews - CP Wool**

**Yield Exercise - Daryl Paskell - PGG Wrightson**

**Overall Micron & Yield Exercise- Amy Ferguson - Peter Lyon Shearing**

**Breed recognition Exercise - Guy Palmer NZWCA Registration Number A 1678**



# WOOL PREPARATION/MARKET UPDATE

*High Preparation Standards need to continue when prices are poor, with the removal of skirtings, very tender wool, hard yellow cotts, raddle and seed.*

With wool prices for crossbred wool still very poor it is imperative preparation standards are maintained to a high level.

With many areas experiencing very wet conditions recently and the warmer weather not far away, we are going to see many faults appearing in the wool clips that need to be addressed.

Hard colour and Cotted fleeces are the 2 major issues and these need to be removed into secondary lines. Do not over skirt these off lines.

Second shear and lamb's wool preparation is much the same as previous seasons, with the main issue in lamb's wool being seed. This needs to be removed.

## RADDLE

As mentioned in previous newsletters this is still a major issue. Any raddle should be removed regardless of the colour being used. This is non Scoureable and causes major problems in scourments.

## FINE WOOL

With the season nearing completion the preparation and classing of these clips continues to be of a High Standard. Well done to all those involved as mistakes can prove very costly.

## MARKET UPDATE

Volatility has been a familiar word used in the Wool Market this season particularly in the Fine Wool sector. We have seen substantial rises and large falls on a daily basis across most micron categories fine than 29 micron. This gives an indication of what effect Covid has had on the industry, with overseas markets only purchasing what they require in the short term, and various processors reducing throughput through their Mills.

Crossbred prices continue to be very poor. We have recently seen some upward movement but this has been short lived with the market going into a negative direction at time of writing. These levels are certainly not sustainable and much work needs to be done to lift demand.

As Classers and people involved in the Woolshed it is important we keep a positive attitude and do not let our guard down in the preparation.

To everyone and your families have a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy Year.



ROGER FULLER

CP WOOL

Wool Brokers Representative





## MARKET COMMENT



Dave BurrIDGE  
South Island Auction Manager  
PGG Wrightson Wool

The fine wool selling season is starting to draw to a close, to what has been another extraordinary season with possibility the most challenging set of obstacles that all players within the wool pipeline had to face.

The timing coming out of lock down and with the resulting uncertainty and the dire predictions right on pre-lamb shearing caused more than a little anxiety for wool buyers and wool growers.

After an unprecedented 10 week absence of wool sales at a peak time of the year, the market opened on very shaky legs on the recommencement of wool sales in late May.

While those early sales post lock down offered very poor returns, and market volatility wreaking havoc but against most expectations, the market ultimately made a remarkable recovery for most wool types and largely mirror returns prior to pre-lockdown.

It has been comforting to see well classed and presented wool clips coming forward for sale despite the uncertainty that this season has presented.

As industry service providers, the old adage always counts; Good light, excellent presentation, well classed clips means the very best returns for growers'.



### Contamination Emphasised by Struan Hulme Production Co-Ordinator Canterbury Woollscourers

The importance of finding contamination at the scour was emphasised at the recent Classer Association Industry day recently by Steve Finnie representing Furmann Wool Exporters.

Presently any contamination finds by our sorters at the scour when the bales are opened. Wool scours both NI and SI pays a finder's fee and is claimed by the sorter, as long as the contamination with the wool pack is handed in. These are recorded daily/weekly, and where a grower can be identified pack and contamination sent back to Broker/Merchant to follow up.

Mentioned at the field day was a specific case of a spray can, pierced which had released a quantity of fresh Pink raddle all over the product. This actually resulted in shut down of the plant; find the can underneath in a drop box, resorting of greasy and scoured product. At a \$8000-\$10,000 per hour running costs, pressure is really on to get back going again and therefore to eliminate this type of hold up.

The number one contamination for the South Island find is press bars!!! Steve wondered how the presser could press the next bale with one press bar missing. Also the damage to wool scour opening gear should the sorter miss finding does sometimes happen, our Short Wool Processors will beat the metal out of shape for the second or two that the wool is being opened in a closed area. Damage may be done to the removable grates which will cost serious engineering time/money.

Steve thanked the Classer Association for the excellent display of contamination and bringing this issue to the attention of the wider industry.



In closing I would like to thank all the wool handlers, pressers, shearers, classers, shepherds and Farmers that do step up and ensure our shearing shed is a clean and tidy place to work in. If we get this right at the start unintentional contamination being included with the wool will be greatly reduced. Take a leap forward and offer to take the towel or Jersey to the persons work bag out of the work area, small gestures go a long way.

A must mention to all the Brokers and Merchants staff who also find contamination while working with bales, loading binning etc. Thank you





## Wool Clip Grading (Pilot) Course

Fourteen wool handlers attended the inaugural Southland Institute of Technology (SIT) wool clip grading course held at Telford recently, the first National approved certificate offered to wool handlers for over four years.

The course is a micro credential with 10 NZQA credits (100 hours of learning) and is approved by the Tertiary Education Commission and NZ Qualification Authority.

Participants came from around the South Island: Marlborough, Canterbury, Central Otago and Western Southland.

Bruce Abbott was ably assisted by Kristal Wilson (classroom and experienced wool handler) and Ken Payne (shearer) in the delivery of the course. Others who helped put the course together included: Laurie Boniface & Richard Gavigan (distance learning component), suppliers of wool samples (farmers & brokers), Bronwyn Campbell ((Tahi Ngatahi), Jenny Harraway (NZ Merino), and staff at Telford and SIT.

MPI were sponsors of this first course



“The overall presentation and content of the course received very favourable comments,” said Bruce Abbott, “with a 95% approval rating. A very pleasing result given the course was put together in a short time frame once approval was given by NZQA, and wasn’t without its challenges”.

Having completed this practical component the participants then have to do two distant learning assignments.

Once all of these have been successfully completed the participants will receive a National Certificate from SIT.



“The qualification recognises the skill and experience senior wool handlers have,” Abbott said.

“To me the official recognition for the job they do has been a long time coming.

“Wool preparation can add value to the clip or take value off, depending on the workmanship, and that has needed to be recognised by the wool industry for a long time.”

As this was a pilot course some changes will be made to further enhance the presentations in the future.

Due to the level of interest it is proposed to take the course on the road next year to other regions for ease of attendance and delivered in a shearing shed.



## Profile of Dianne Webster

A recent participant in the inaugural grading course Dianne Webster has had a lifetime of interest in wool harvesting. Since attending the course at Telford she now has a better understanding of the whole industry, increased her knowledge about the wool chain, learnt why things are done a certain way and the financial implications of shoddy clip preparation.

Brought up on the family sheep farm in Derbyshire, UK, and where her father shorn sheep during the summer, Dianne was always keen to help out so it was inevitable her future would involve the rural sector.

After leaving school she attended a local College of Agriculture to get a basic grounding, before being employed as a shepherd on several properties in the Scottish Borders working with a variety of sheep breeds, such as Suffolk, Scottish Blackface and Cheviot and crossbreeds during this time.



She then later furthered her education by completing an Advanced National Certificate in Agriculture at Northumberland College of Agriculture after which led to a job as an assistant shepherd in North of England which also farmed sheep she was already familiar with.

A few years down the track Dianne decided to spread her wings and headed to the Southern Hemisphere in 1989 on an agricultural exchange, spending 9 months in New Zealand where she worked on a sheep and cropping farm near Lincoln that farmed 1400 Corriedale ewes. After 6 months in Australia she returned to NZ to work for Ken Haldane, a shearing contractor in Canterbury. During her time there she worked as a wool handler on mainly crossbred and corriedale wool. She learnt the basics, good work ethics, tried her best and picked up knowledge along the way. It was here that Dianne met her husband Kelvin, a shearer who also worked for Ken.

After a brief sojourn back to Scotland the couple returned to NZ in 1995 to take up Haldane's established shearing run with 9 full time shearers.

Nowadays their business (DJ Webster Shearing Ltd) is very much a small and family orientated concern with both Kelvin and son James shearing full-time. They are joined by daughter Ady who fills in on her days off from her job as a hairdresser.

Dairy conversions and irrigation are slowly changing the farming practices in the area with many of the Corriedale clips giving way to crossbred and composite sheep flocks.

Dianne acknowledges the vast differences in the sheep, wool quality and preparation required here in NZ compared to that of the United Kingdom.

"I'm thank full to every person that has worked for us over the years", says Dianne. "I have learnt so much from other wool handlers. I admire the skills they have, and the flair they execute their job with. I appreciate the teamwork they show and their helpfulness"

Prior to attending the SIT grading course Dianne had already built up a good rapport with the local wool merchants and with the backing of her client's competently graded a number of clips.

Doing the course has given her a new found confidence in her work and she is very much looking forward at being able gain her Q stencil and apply it to bales of wool that she will be responsible for preparing in the future.

Dianne & Kelvin live on a 25 acre lifestyle block near Dunsandel, just south of Christchurch which they use for trading sheep. Forever the busy woman there are never enough hours in a day, the office not a favourite place, but when time permits Dianne loves to get out in her garden.



# Otago Daily Times

## Convinced wool's worth investing in



... sheep that is producing good wool too, not just meat.??

**Convinced** wool's worth investing in ...

Story - 23 November 2020 04:30

<https://www.odt.co.nz/rural-life/rural-life-other/convinced-wool%E2%80%99s-worth-investing>

Article written by Sally Rae

## Looking for something new to do, could this be for you?

We are looking for a very passionate wool champion to steer the day-to-day operations of the New Zealand Wool Classers Association (NZWCA) including acting as the Registrar for our members.

This is a paid part-time position (approximately 40-60 hours per month) which would be best suited to a person with a working knowledge of the wool industry and wool classing in New Zealand. Good communication and administration skills are essential.

Our current Executive Officer/Registrar Bruce Abbott is retiring at the end of the year after six years in the role. NZWCA also employs a part-time secretary to support our EO and Association activities.

If you think you could be the one to grow into this worthwhile and dynamic wool industry position and would like to know more please contact

Bill Dowle, Chairman NZWCA, Ph 029 358 3175 email [bill@farmore.co.nz](mailto:bill@farmore.co.nz) or

Vice-Chair Marg Forde Ph 07 823 4334 email [e.m.forde@xtra.co.nz](mailto:e.m.forde@xtra.co.nz)

Our website is [www.woolclassers.org.nz](http://www.woolclassers.org.nz)



*Sharlene Adamson A2014*

*Classing at a shed in the  
Roxburgh District*





## Wool Clip Grading Training Programme

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The Southern Institute of Technology (SIT) recently delivered its first Wool Clip Grading Training Programme at the Telford Campus near Balclutha. Designed to develop the skills and knowledge of experienced wool handlers wanting to gain accreditation in grading crossbred and Halfbred wool, the inaugural course generated excellent feedback from participants and their employers.

The new training programme is structured in accordance with NZQA Unit Standard 31978, which was developed by the Primary Industry Training Organisation in close consultation with the New Zealand Wool Classers Association. The programme is also supported by the NZ Shearing Contractors Association.

Students learn to operate in accordance with on-farm and workplace procedures and wool industry requirements, as well as work in a team to achieve the best possible results for farmers and the wider wool industry. Their practical wool handling skills are assessed and they spend time learning about wool faults, sheep breeds, wool grading and pressing, and the roles and responsibilities of wool graders.

The New Zealand Wool Classers Association considers students who achieve NZQA Unit Standard 31978 to have the appropriate skills and knowledge to be registered as a Q-Stencil holder.

Given the mobile and highly dispersed nature of the wool harvesting workforce, future delivery of the programme will be either on-site at the Telford Campus or at various locations throughout New Zealand. The training also consists of some reading and written work before and after the face-to-face, practical workshop.

In some cases, distance delivery may be considered where a student is unable to attend a workshop but has access to an appropriately recognised member of the New Zealand Wool Classers Association to supervise on-the-job practical components. In these cases, students would be provided with online access to learning materials and activities.





## New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing (Level 4)



In October this year the Southern Institute of Technology was given accreditation and approval by NZQA to deliver the New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing (Level 4), which is replacing the Certificate in Wool Technology.

Students enrolled in this programme will develop a range of skills and knowledge relating to the production, harvesting, classification and processing of wool. They will learn to manage the responsibilities and output of a woolshed team, and also learn about sheep breeds and how to identify and evaluate different wool types. They will study the wool supply chain, including wool

processing systems, as well as health and safety and communication specific to the wool industry.

The programme will be offered through “blended” learning, incorporating distance learning with a week-long block course to cover the practical component. Students who have partially completed the Certificate in Wool Technology (Level 4) will be able to apply for cross credits towards the new qualification.

Employment opportunities after graduation include working as a wool classer either on-farm or in broker, merchant, scouring or exporting businesses. They are likely to be self-employed when working on-farm and can go on to hold senior roles in the wool industry.

For more information on the Wool Clip Grading Training Scheme or the New Zealand Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing, visit <https://www.sit.ac.nz/campus/Telford> or email [Telford-Distance@sit.ac.nz](mailto:Telford-Distance@sit.ac.nz). You can also call Laurie Boniface on 0800 200 009 to discuss wool industry training needs.

### NEW ZEALAND CERTIFICATE IN WOOL TECHNOLOGY ADVERTISEMENT IN SHEARING MAGAZINE

The information in this Advertisement is not correct.

It states it is a 17-week full time course when it is a Distance learning part time course over 2 years.

It comprises of 2 courses each year and each course to be completed over a 17-week period.

In addition, there is a 5-day block course to attend either in Napier or Christchurch.

For more information and enrolment go to Southern Institute of Technology web site

<https://www.sit.ac.nz/programme/id/11405/xmps/1441>



## Tahi Ngatahi Online Health & Safety Programme



Tahi Ngatahi is an online platform that uses video clips to pass on skills and safety tips to all working in the wool harvesting industry.

This is a joint initiative between the NZ Shearing Contractors Association, Federated Farmers, Work safe and ACC.



### Accessing the course

It is very important that you have some record of doing an H&S programme. NZWCA have joined the Tahi Ngatahi programme to give our members **FREE** access to this online training programme.

*This course now replaces the previous option*

For your **FREE** access you need to go to the NZWCA web site: [woolclassers.org.nz](http://woolclassers.org.nz), click on **Members Area** in the menu, then go to **News**, click on **Health & Safety Programme**- read more, learn more.

To get underway follow the procedure to connect and **SIGN UP**

Then once received and accepted your request, we will reply and let you access the programme

Topics covered include:

- Why H & S is so very important.
- Shearing shed preparation prior to shearing.
- Who is responsible?
- Handling of sheep and equipment.
- Personal health & fitness.

Ensuring you look after yourself and the people who you are working with.



## CALLING FOR LAST ORDERS

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### Metal Stencil and Clothing Orders

Last Orders for the metal stencils and clothing items so get your orders in

Metal Stencil: Please transfer \$25 in the

NZWCA account:

02 0828 0036732 00

With your name in the particulars, and registration number in the reference boxes,



Clothing: Now includes a crew neck top for \$35.

You will need to go to the website [www.woolclassers.org.nz](http://www.woolclassers.org.nz)

Under Members Area, click on Branded Clothing to check out the range, delivery, payment details and to place an order

## From the desk of our secretary

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### CHANGES:

Association Address: Due to NZ Post increasing the PO Box annual price for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in 2 years. We have cancelled this service.

All correspondence can now be sent to:

NZWCA

C/o 67 Jacks Drive

West Melton 7618



### SUBSCRIPTIONS:

As most of you will know banks are phasing out Cheques.

Please pay your subs via Direct Credit in 2021.

### NO CLASSER CARDS:

We will no longer be posting a classer card when your subs are paid. Our website is kept up to date and is where the Brokers look for registered classers.

Should your subs not be paid before June 30<sup>th</sup> your registration will be suspended on the website until you subs are paid.

