

As the saying goes “An army marches on its stomach”

So too did attendees at the 2025 NZWCA Industry Professional Development Day/AGM at Lincoln University, thanks to these legends, Rhonda Wakefield, Liz Phillips and, at the back, Lynn Smith.



Rhonda and Liz got the brief - *bring food for two smokos and one lunch for 100 plus people, set up and serve it with tea and coffee in a lecture room with no sink, no bench, no water* - and, being the rock solid wool harvesting industry stalwarts they are, they rose to the challenge, rolled with it and delivered above and beyond. In the spirit of the day, Lynn, also an industry stalwart (who with her husband Grant runs ProShear) came along to help her mates.

Thank you so very much Rhonda, Liz and Lynn. You made it look easy, even though we know it wasn't. And you had a good time doing it. Anyone wanting catering done in Canterbury (no job too big or small, or hard or easy, as proven!) get in touch with Rhonda and Liz fatyinkurow@xtra.co.nz

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Chairperson's Report

New Zealand Wool Classers Association (NZWCA)

Annual General Meeting – 9 May 2025

It is with great pride that I present my first Chairs Report for New Zealand Wool Classers Association for the past year. The 2024–2025 period has been one of both reflection and renewal, as our industry navigates ongoing challenges while continuing to demonstrate resilience, craftsmanship, and adaptation.

Acknowledgement's

I would like to start this report with some thanks. Firstly, to Bill Dowle who after an impressive tenure of 11 years stood down from the chair's role. Thankfully he continues on the committee as deputy as we appreciate his wisdom and counsel.,

Thank you to New Zealand Wool Industry Charitable Trust for their continued support with the sponsorship of the Wool Classing Certificate scholarships. It is recognised that many, if not all, recipients are also in full time employment so additional time is required beyond the working day to complete the course, so this financial support is gratefully received.

Thank you to all the generous sponsors WoolWorks, Wool Exporters Council, Federation of NZ Wool Merchants, NZ Merino Company, Bremworth, PGG Wrightson Wool, Wools of New Zealand, Peter Lyon Shearing and NZ Wool Testing Authority both financially and for your time - on behalf of our members we are sincerely grateful.

Industry Outlook

We, together with all involved in the wool industry, welcomed Minister Nicola Willis' announcement that from 1 July government departments are required to use wool carpet. There are many Ministers and MP's that have pushed for this and to those who have I say thank you – special thanks to Minister Mark Patterson for his tireless pursuit in getting this across the line. While the strong wool sector remains under pressure this latest initiative will hopefully see some value add for the industry.

Evolving consumer preferences and the drive for natural fibre has seen the fine wool market hold and, in some cases, strengthen. New Zealand wool retains its global reputation for quality and sustainability—values that our classers are instrumental in upholding. The rise in demand for traceable, ethically sourced and harvested fibre presents opportunities we must continue to embrace and lead.

Membership and Professional Development

We finished the year with 176 full registered classers, 11 Q Stencil Graders, 54 Associate members and 2 Wool Harvester members. Our membership is growing, and we are committed to enhancing our offerings.

This year, we welcomed 8 new Provisional and Owner classers and 1 Provisional Grader, a positive indicator of the interest and investment in our profession.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our senior classers, and industry partners who have made the educational efforts across the industry a success.

Continued professional development remains a cornerstone of our work. The development of a suite of classing documentation to assist our classers is key going forward. We are committed to ensuring all members have access to training that reflects industry best practices and global expectations.



"Minister of Wool" Mark Patterson MP in discussion with NZWCA chair Tracy Paterson and Walt, a visiting American academic and wool enthusiast at NZWCA's Lincoln University event



Collaboration and Advocacy

We continue to have dialogue and strengthen relationships with wool brokers and processors, advocating for greater recognition of the role classers, and their stencils, play in maintaining New Zealand wool's premium status. Big thank you to our committee member Sonya Johansen and Registrar Marg Forde for their work with the Food and Fibre Workforce Council - Muka Tangata and other industry members to develop the NZQA Wool Harvesting Training new Microcredentials. Our Association is well represented in industry, and our voice is being heard.

Our partnerships with training institutions and other industry education initiatives help to integrate classing standards more closely with wool harvesting. These links are vital for building a shared understanding across the entire wool harvesting and supply chain.

Looking Ahead

As we look to the coming year, key areas of focus include:

- **Developing an enhanced** suite of documents that will assist the registered classer
- **Promoting certification** and maintaining quality assurance processes both in the education piece and stencil status
- **Promoting the profession** to those who wish to have a deeper understanding and connection to the fibre
- **Fostering industry pride** in the work that classers do as stewards of wool quality

Further Acknowledgements

Thank you to our Registrar, Marg Forde. Your tireless pursuit of enhancing the objectives of our Association is to be commended. Your many hours of "behind the scene" work does not go unnoticed.

Thank you to Terrence, Marg and Edsel for your presence at the Wanaka Show. It is a huge few days and your willingness to "fly the NZWCA flag" is much appreciated.

Thank you to Annette our long serving secretary. Your guidance and support is the heart of the Association.

To the NZWCA Board, thank you for your continued governance and support. To our members, your dedication to excellence continues to inspire confidence across the wool industry. Finally, to our partners across the supply chain, we thank you for your collaboration and shared vision for a thriving, high-quality New Zealand wool sector.

Tracy Paterson

M2154

Chairperson

New Zealand Wool Classers Association

Proudly supported by:



NZWTA



WoolResearch

**BJ Mahony
Shearing**

**Peter Lyon
Shearing**
SHEAR QUALITY



PGG Wrightson



Brenworth



WOOL
EXPORTERS
COUNCIL

Speakers available to watch online

Couldn't make it to the NZWCA 2025 Industry Professional Development Day/AGM at Lincoln University in May?

OR

Attended, but would like to revisit what you heard?

For the first time, NZWCA has had Industry PD Day speakers filmed and the content is now available either via the links on our website or directly via our newly-established You Tube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@NZWoolClassersAssociation>

Four morning speakers were filmed:

- Tracy Paterson chair NZWCA “Why NZWCA and what your membership does”
- Hon Mark Patterson MP aka “Minister of Wool” Minister for Rural Communities, Associate Ministers of Agriculture and for Regional Development
- Ministry for Primary Industries – Lucy Newton/Peter Hyde “The law and your role in animal welfare”
- Opsec Solutions South Island Director Marcus Fowler
<https://www.opsec.co.nz/> keeping safe in the workplace, de-escalating, managing and resolving conflict



NZWCA Patron and Board member Allan Frazer, whose initiative it was to get the filming done, with media studies student and videographer Daniel Alexander



Opsec Solutions Marcus Fowler



Ministry for Primary Industries representatives Peter Hyde and Lucy Newton



Hon Mark Patterson MP

NZWCA Industry Day summary:

Wool Classers hear tips to cut conflict

by Tim Cronshaw, Central Rural Life *(shared with permission)*

Wool classers have brought in a conflict-resolving expert to help them defuse any aggro in the woolshed.

Shed boiloverters are uncommon, but the New Zealand Wool Classers' Association (NZWCA) wanted to front foot the issue at an industry professional development day at Lincoln University.

They invited Opsec Solutions South Island director Marcus Fowler to talk about ways to keep safe in the workplace and manage conflict.

NZWCA chairwoman Tracy Paterson said they invited Mr Fowler to address conflict resolution in the woolshed with de-escalation training.

She said he made many good points about dealing with potential tensions, including how to approach people and communicate with them during a conflict event.

“This is the first time we have had this type of speaker. He came with practical insights about how people could manage if there was any escalation of aggro in the shed and how could a classer or anyone in the shed help with that and keep it a harmonious workplace.”

Mrs Paterson said a starting point was for everyone to know their responsibilities in the shed.

“He asked for real-life examples and it was really great participants in the audience actually were able to voice things that had happened and in that sense he asked how it could be dealt with better and how we could improve on that next time. There was a lot of really great take-home messages . . . He was very good and a lot of people got a lot out of that.”

She said conflict was seldom seen in woolsheds.



Dr Rob Kelly of Lincoln Agritech spoke and later hosted groups of attendees through the Agritech facility



Professor Jon Hickford of Lincoln (second from right) spoke on sheep genetics, wool management on farms, value-add opportunity for classers and with Don Morrison of Pastoral Measurements Ltd ran a popular workshop

“Like every aspect of life the bad behaviour is not the norm. The wool industry is a very professional operation and unfortunately sometimes the small minority makes the headlines and you miss all the amazing things being done outside of that. We wanted the day to be a celebration of wool classing and we are super proud of all of our wool classers who do a tough job, so it's important to recognise those high standards.”

NZWCA expects to have completed a checklist document for classers covering off liabilities and defining accepted responsibilities particularly in relation to animal welfare this month.

Other speakers tackled undercover video footage released last year by animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) about the mistreatment of sheep on farms and within shearing sheds over two years.

Mrs Paterson said members were given insights into their role in animal welfare, the welfare code and handling of sheep by representatives from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

“The big issue which was addressed by several different speakers on the day was to do with the allegations from Peta and we needed to know our members were being represented in relation to the work they have done with MPI in the background.”

MPI was working with wool sector groups to support good animal welfare practices and improvements in the industry.

Much of the focus of the Peta footage had been on shearing activities.

Mrs Paterson said “everybody in the shed” still had to know their responsibilities.

“We talked about responsibility and how from the classing perspective we are creating a suite of documents to assist a classer when they go into a shed — whether they are dealing with a contractor or a farmer — essentially to make sure there is a document to say whose responsibilities are where. That was quite exciting and is being worked on. It’s about everything [including] quality control, obviously a huge thing for a wool classer and there is a lot of work between a farmer and a classer because obviously the farmers want to maximise their wool cheque and a classer wants to know what the farmer is looking for and what contracts they’ve got.”

FLOC Wool Acoustic Interior Surfaces business development manager Tom O’Sullivan talked about taking crossbred wool to the Beehive and walls of the world.

Mrs Paterson said the ongoing conversation about more wool grading of strong wool was raised.

Many initiatives were working to raise the profile and profitability of strong wool, she said.

NZWCA chair Tracy Paterson talks Mark Patterson MP the “Minister of Wool” through the wool exercises



“We are hopeful in the future the grading side for the stronger wool will be elevated and there will be better prices.”

Minister for Rural Communities Mark Patterson relayed his passion for wool and Lincoln University professor Jon Hickford told the audience of nearly 110 wool classers and industry people about genetic progress and value-add opportunities being made in the sector.

Mrs Paterson said good numbers completing the certificate in wool technology and classing course at the Southern Institute of Technology showed the wool industry was in good heart.

“That’s fabulous because it’s not just about wool classing in the shed, there are other jobs within the industry and that’s really promising.”

Shared with permission and thanks: Central Rural Life e edition 28.05.2025

<https://digital.rurallife.co.nz/html5/shared/ShowArticle.aspx?doc=CC%2F2025%2F05%2F28&entity=Ar01001&sk=867447B1&mode=text>

Links to other coverage of the event:

<https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/news/wool-classers-key-to-sectors-success/>
<https://www.farmersweekly.co.nz/news/wool-classers-call-for-action-on-animal-cruelty/>



Key classing messages for 2025/26 season from PGG Wrightson wool rep Peter McCusker



Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their efforts last season in what was a difficult year for wool preparation in the South Island and parts of the North Island as many farmers struggled to keep sufficient feed up to their sheep. I know many fine wool classers had very sore fingers and wrists after days of trying to break staples to remove all the tender wools.

Merino contract prices are again looking like they will be several dollars greasy/kg ahead of the spot market this season so the pressure will be on again from growers wanting to achieve their full quota of contract wool. Thankfully this season should be a lot better for tensile strength with good feed levels in most areas.

Not meeting specification for tensile strength requirement was the number one reason for failure of Merino contracts last year. When testing a Medium/Strong Merino wool staple for strength in shed maybe splitting the staple into two and then testing can make it a bit easier to assess.

The main reason for failure of Crossbred contracts in the North and South Island last season was too high VM or too high with the Y-Z colour measurement. Once again, the VM levels should be lower in the coming months as sheep generally have good feed levels in front of them and will not be pushing into scrub as much but please try to keep VM as low as possible for all crossbred wool.

Resent heavy rains do not seem to have effected colour too much if wools I have seen being shorn in the last week are an indication (NOTE: May).

We still saw too much poor colour 2nd lbs in Crossbred lamb wool this season also seedy 2nd lbs in Halfbred lamb wool in the South Island and Crossbred lamb wool in the North Island.

Just a bit more attention to removing lamb bellies/pieces/top knots would be great. I would sooner see slightly over skirted 2nd lbs than it being left in the main line of lamb fleece wool.

We have been seeing some very good colour wool coming into the market during Autumn and pre-lamb so please skirt these wools accordingly to maximise the price.

There has been comment and request from buyers to remove poorer colour frib wool from bellies or bellies/pieces.

As growers try to reduce costs by using 2nd hand packs could all woolshed staff try to make sure the woolpack label is used if possible to write brand and bale number. We are seeing brands/bale numbers/descriptions on bales that are totally illegible and this takes a lot of extra time to sort out at our end.

Please be cautious when classing out lines under four bales as grower incurs an extra small lot fee and the market may not pay a premium.

Finally, the wool specification in an ideal world should arrive with the wool or before the wool arrives either hard copy or filled out online then emailed.

- ***Presented by Peter McCusker at the 2025 NZWCA Industry PD Day/AGM***



Prizes for Merit Award and Commendations

2024 SEASON NZWCA CLASSER AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

Announced and presented at the 2025 AGM/Industry
Professional Development Day at Lincoln University



Owner Classer merit award winner Tracy Paterson
with sponsor rep Kevin Waldron of PGG Wrightson
Wool

Owner Classer sponsored by PGG Wrightson Wools

Merit – M2133 Tracy Paterson for Matakanui

Citation: Tracy always does a great job on their wool clip, they can shear for two weeks in a row. She works in the shed but has farm responsibilities too, it's a big job. They have many contracts and every line she classes for them gets in. Always a good micron difference and never any wrong numbers on bales or on specs.

Commendation:

FM2138 Sally Smith for Awapiri

Owner Classer commendation recipient Sally
Smith with Kevin Waldron of PGG Wrightson Wool



Provisional Classer Encouragement Award sponsored by Peter Lyon Shearing

Merit – P2241 Amberlee Kahukura-McGinnis for Bonspiel

Citation: Amberlee coped very well getting her shed management and classing inspection done on a farm where she had to make merino, 1/4BD and 1/2BD lines and keep them all open throughout shearing. Her classing decisions were borne out by test results. Small shed but kept tidy. Great rapport with shed staff.

Commendations:



P2084 Heidi Middleton for Lauder Creek

P2232 Katrise Saunders for Ivybridge (now H2232)

Provisional classer commendation recipients

Heidi Middleton (at right)

and Katrise Saunders with NZWCA vice chair Bill Dowle



North Island Classer or Grader sponsored by WoolWorks

No nominations for North Island classer or grader



2024 SEASON NZWCA CLASSER AWARDS
AND COMMENDATIONS continued

New Zealand Wool Classers Association

Newsletter, July 2025

Crossbred Classer or Grader sponsored by WoolWorks



Merit - P2177 Tegan Caves for Merinvale

Citation: Tegan has done an excellent job of classing and preparing the Merinvale Perendale wool clip. She had very good distinction between lines for colour VM and style grade, maximising farmer client returns. The clip is shorn in two woolsheds so keeping consistent is important, and this showed in her test results. Tegan had a varied number of experienced wool handlers between properties and both sheds are cramped for space and bins.

Crossbred merit award winner Tegan Caves
with sponsor rep Mitchell Young of
WoolWorks



Mid Micron sponsored by Wools of New Zealand

Merit – A1864 Phillipa (Pip) McConway for Medway Hills

Citation: The Medway Hills clip is shorn in two different wool sheds on neighbouring farms owned by two brothers so this can take several weeks to finish. In this situation the classer has to be focused on keeping the lines the same between properties. Phillipa did an excellent job maximising the farmer return by classing as many bales as she could into contracts. Additional comment from another wool rep: Pip has consistently been one of the best classers in the Marlborough area for decades.



Mid Micron merit award winner Pip
McConway with sponsor rep Milton
Hulme of Wools of New Zealand

Commendations:

A2047 Lavene Paul for Five Mile Farm

A2129 Tina Elers for JN/Matakanui (Spennymoor Farms)



Mid Micron classer commendation recipient Tina Elers
with Milton Hulme of Wools of New Zealand

Merino sponsored by NZ Merino Company



Merino merit award winner
Bridget Speight with sponsor
rep Blair Davies of NZ Merino Co

Merit – A1040 Bridget Speight for Mt Nicholas

Citation: Bridget's leadership and resilience in challenging conditions makes her deserving of this recognition. The wool was classed perfectly to meet four different contracts. Managing 1300 fleeces a day Bridget maintained accuracy and quality, despite having a novice presser not following the system on the second press, the yards flooding and having to remove wet wool from main lines as some sheep were wet.



Commendations:

D1647 Phyllicia Jorgenson for The Gorge

A1864 Phillipa (Pip) McConway for Richmond Brook

M2103 Rebecca Braddick-Tohiariki for Olrig

M2140 Cedric Aramoana for Glen Cary and Bendhu

Merino classer commendation recipients Becks Braddick-Tohiariki (at right)
and Pip McConway with Blair Davies of NZ Merino Co



Awards Confirmed 22.03.2025

Terence Mulcahy D1473 (NZWCA Board)

Marg Forde A1260 (NZWCA Registrar)

These awards would not be possible without the category sponsors and the wool brokers and buyers who make nominations. We acknowledge and thank you, very much.

CRITERIA FOR NZWCA CLASSER AWARDS EXPLAINED

The following is the explainer for wool broker reps and wool buyers when considering nominating a classer or grader's work for award consideration.

The process was reviewed and documented as part of adding an online form for nomination, via the NZWCA website.

As always we are looking to recognise and encourage people whose work is consistently of the highest quality, however going forward we'd also like to hear about classers/graders who had challenges (eg: short staffed/inexperienced staff, poor working conditions or shed design etc) but rose above to present well prepared wool for auction and contracts met.

The following criteria should be used for a nomination

- 1 Clips are well classed for micron divisions, style, length, strength and colour
- 2 High level of acceptance into any contracts in place for clip
- 3 Oddments are prepared well
- 4 Wool shed is well organised
- 5 Documentation is carried out to a high standard
- 6 Any challenges faced

SECTION 2 - NZWCA judging panel criteria: nomination to commendation status: commendation to one Merit Award winner per category

1. Nomination by a wool broker or wool rep who, if requested, can supply test results/catalogue/other relevant and technical information, wool grower's contact details and the name of the shearing contractor.
2. Status of nominated classer or grader's registration validity to be determined by Registrar and made available to all judging panel. NO VALID STENCIL, NO PROGRESS TO COMMENDATION, NO EXCEPTIONS. Registrar to communicate with broker and (if possible) classer/grader if the nominated person's stencil is not current and valid for the season they were nominated - this is seen as a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of registration validity and use to both the broker and the classer/grader.
3. Progress from nomination to commendation dependent upon but not limited to: Attendance record at Industry PD Days (records kept by NZWCA Registrar and Secretary), commitment to professional development, engagement with NZWCA, contribution to the industry, personal integrity.
4. Once confirmed commendation and therefore in consideration for Merit Award, in addition to revisiting NZWCA in 3. (above) the panel may also seek feedback or input from wool grower and/OR contractor involved in the clip for which the classer/grader is being nominated.



Struan Hulme, a lifelong passion for wool and the outdoors



Tribute to Struan Hulme A525

1-5-1958 - 26-5-2025

NZ Wool Classers Association Life Member and former Board Member

Written by NZWCA Patron Allan Frazer

Wool classing was an underpinning skill to the many roles that Struan took on in a distinguished career. Perhaps one of the highest personal qualities of a wool classer is the willingness, and the ability to pass on their knowledge to those entering the profession and building up their skills. Struan achieved this in spades, but he also possessed many other admirable qualities.

At his recent funeral service among the many tributes paid to Struan, of a life well-loved and lived, were two that stood out to me.

Firstly, that enthusiasm for the wool industry was a lifelong passion for him and secondly that Struan's face would light up in any conversation about wool.

Struan grew up in Tinwald near Ashburton where he gained a passion for sport and living and exploring in the great outdoors. He excelled at hockey and skiing and took on many tramps sharing these passions with his wife Jane and daughter Millie.

Among other compliments paid at his funeral service, were that he was a bloody good bugger and a genuinely good guy. Never a bad word was said about him, he always looked on the bright side. He was patient, a great listener, honest, caring, showed humility, kindness and had a great sense of humour. Many of these fine attributes were shared by more than one speaker.

Apart from his work roles, Struan gave significant wider service to the wool classing profession. In particular, his service to two organisations that have worked to set standards and to oversee them. This included time with the NZWCA predecessor body known as the "CRAIG Committee" (the Classer Registration Advisory Registration Group which operated under the auspices of the New Zealand Wool Board). For a period, Struan worked as the Registrar managing the registration of classers and administration of the standards including providing input to the CRAIG committee deliberations and implementing any changes accepted by the Wool Board.

More recently he became a board member of the New Zealand Wool Classers Association as a representative of the wool processing sector, although he maintained his wool classer registration and stencil A525 to the end. In this role he provided valuable input, particularly as the thrust of the NZWCA purpose is to ensure that clips are prepared to a high standard reflecting the needs of those businesses working further along the value chain. His wise counsel and hard work were recognized in 2024 by being made a Life Member of the association at our AGM held in Mosgiel.

Struan Hulme started in the wool industry over 50 years ago, his father was a wool merchant based in Ashburton, so Struan (known to many as Stru) had an early introduction to the industry spending time in the shed during holidays.

He attended Massey University in the mid 70's and graduated with a Diploma in Wool and Wool Technology. He became a wool lecturer at Lincoln University but only for part of the year as he had a real passion for snow skiing and became a qualified instructor,

Struan's hands-on classing career began in the Mid Canterbury area where he classed several Mid Micron sheds. His first big shed was Glenmore, owned at the time by Jim Murray. He also spent time in the Mackenzie Country as a private buyer but spent more time classing than buying.

Struan joined the NZ Wool Board and was a key member of the commercial division later becoming a senior valuer. This was in the days of price intervention. Struan was also the classer registration officer and farmer liaison officer. John Paton, a former Wool Board South Island based senior wool valuer, commented that Struan was likely the longest

serving member of the CRAIG committee. He added that Struan was always willing to support and encourage those entering the industry, backed up by his past participation in-shed, handling training and his experience of interfacing with the many aspects of the industry.

Struan started with Canterbury Woolscourers (Now WoolWorks) in 2007 in the newly created production coordinator role. He had the responsibility of ensuring that all scouring documents were delivered to the staff for each line, including any special requirements. Struan also liaised with clients, inspected their greasy wool, gave feedback on quality, and viewed, appraised and sent away the scoured samples for each line.

Struan had a keen eye for detail and was skilled at detecting any abnormalities or faults with the wool quality, both greasy and scoured; this information was relayed back to the client, a recommendation was made, and a solution was found. He spent hours and hours looking at bales for clients determining if they could go into lines or if they needed to be left out. He was held in such high regard by the clients for his classing skills that not once did they disagree with his assessment.

He also had a passion for teaching and passing on knowledge. Struan spent time with new staff and made time to support existing staff asking for advice. Those who worked with him said he had a great way of demonstrating tasks and ensuring that you understood each time. His passion for the industry was strong and he was determined that the next generation coming through should have the same knowledge that others possessed who came before them did. Struan spent hours mentoring staff through the Certificate in Wool Technology course and he had great pride in presenting them with their certificates when they had completed the course.

Struan spent 16 years with Canterbury Woolscourers until he stepped back to focus on his health. Such high regard Struan was held in by his colleagues that there was clear emotion in the room when the news of his brain tumor diagnosis came through. His volume and quality of work was so high that it took multiple staff picking up different pieces of his role to carry it on.

Don Urquhart, speaking on behalf of the NZWCA, at Struan's funeral, said that he first met Struan about 30 years ago and said from their very first meeting, like a lot of you here today, I realised that here was a very special person. He spoke quietly but his words came from someone who knew his subject and his desire to pass on his knowledge was evident. When Struan spoke, he always had something constructive to say and people listened and took notice Don noted. Don and fellow NZWCA Board member Terence Mulcahy read out the citation for Struan's NZWCA life membership.

Struan was farewelled at a large funeral in Timaru. Fittingly, Jane and Millie chose a wool coffin for him, and it was draped with an award-winning Merino fleece given by Ben Omar Station. Wool staples from Banks Peninsula were available for funeral-goers to place onto Struan's coffin as a final tribute.



Struan Hulme received his NZWCA life membership at the 2024 AGM, with his wife Jane and daughter Millie present.

Classer Profile
Graeme Goodger
A1883



Where are you based? Waitohi, Pleasant Point

When did you begin working in the wool industry?
Wrightsons Wool, Timaru, 1978

And how did that come about? Left school and got a job
in the wool classing and binning department

In what area of NZ do you mainly work? South
Canterbury

How long have you been classing? 45 years

What/who made you decide to become a NZWCA
registered stencil holder? In 1995 when I left Wrightson, I
had to obtain a shed stencil as wasn't allowed to use
broker stencil in the sheds

With regard to classing, what are your future aspirations?
To wind down in a few years

What do you enjoy most in the shed? Meeting and
working with nice people and lovely wool

What annoys you the most in the shed? Messy shed and
dealing with people that don't want to be there

What wool related event/achievement are you most proud
of? Classing the ultrafine Mt Cook Station clip in the
1980s and 90s and receiving a record price for a 13.1
micron bale. Also receiving several classing awards for the
Grays Hill Station clip

Have you worked in any other areas of the industry, or
overseas? If so where and doing what? Wrightsons Wool
Timaru for 17 years – Head classer, grouping and
interlotting, typing and yielding grab samples and
attending wool sales

Are you involved in any other activities (shearing, hobby,
sport etc)? Worked part time for shearing gang for the
last 23 years

What is the best thing about being a registered classer?
Gaining satisfaction for a job well done

Top 2024 graduate of NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing presented NZWCA Perpetual Cup



Other awards:

July 2024 Completion

Top Practical – *Richanna Clarke*

Top Theory – *Richanna Clarke*

November 2024 Completion

Top Practical – *Lewis McLellan*

Top Theory – *Kelly Harvey*

Overall top wool student Kelly Harvey (at right) was presented with the NZWCA Cup at the 2025 Industry Professional Development Day/AGM by NZWCA chair Tracy Paterson.

Congratulations to all 12 students who completed the two-year distance learning NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing course in 2024. We look forward to your contribution to the NZ wool industry workforce. Holders of the Cert Wool Tech are able to pursue a range of wool sector opportunities, including being able to apply to NZWCA for their Provisional Wool Classing stencil registration by going to our website <https://woolclassers.org.nz/> and clicking on the “Join” tab.

RECENT NZWCA CLASSER AND GRADER REGISTRATIONS AND UPGRADES CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING:

Provisional classer stencil applications approved:

Susan Simpson P2247
Lacey Roussel P2249
Paige Pulman P2251
Kristan Tuinder P2252

Provisional store classer stencil applications approved:

Richanna Clarke SP2250

Owner classer stencils approved:

Jessica Murray FM 2243

Classer stencil reinstated:

Peter Philpott A1212
Rose McGee H2130

Explanation of registration prefixes here:

<https://woolclassers.org.nz/members-area/registration-prefixes/>

FLOC – FROM NZ SHEEP BACKS TO WALLS OF THE WORLD

Tom O'Sullivan travelled to Lincoln from the North Island to speak to the 2025 NZWCA Industry PD Day/AGM about FLOC Wool Acoustic Interior Surfaces. FLOC is a unique strong wool product which has had a lengthy and thorough development and an exciting future.

Tom, former head of Campaign for Wool NZ, brought his trademark positivity and enthusiasm, his presence always appreciated. He laid out the journey for FLOC, taking NZ crossbred wool from sheep backs to NZ's Beehive and the walls of the world, and showed the company's "cool new video" which can be viewed via this link <https://www.floc.nz/media/from-farm-to-floc> Fittingly, he spoke about his student days at Lincoln University and the full circle with Lincoln University choosing to use FLOC product, as detailed in the case study on the video.

For more information go to www.floc.nz



Cassie Johnston H2182 was the NZWCA Board member designated to thank Tom O'Sullivan for speaking

Sarah Graham P2230 was the lucky winner of the Bremworth wool rug in the draw for attendees at the 2025 NZWCA Industry PD Day/AGM at Lincoln University.

That's Sarah on the left, understandably pretty happy about scoring an \$800 rug generously donated by Bremworth.

Thanks Bremworth!

NZWCA chair Tracy Paterson M2133 took special pleasure in presenting Sarah the rug voucher. Sarah is a former shepherd at Matakānui Station, which Tracy and her husband Andrew farm, but it should be pointed out the draw was set up and conducted by NZWCA secretary Annette Gamble, in full view, using an online Number Picker Wheel.





THINGS THAT AREN'T WOOL FOUND IN WOOL BALES!

These items supplied by WoolWorks were on display in the wool exercise room at the NZWCA Industry Day/AGM in May, a stark reminder of the serious and costly problem of contamination that all involved in wool harvesting need to be addressing every day in the wool shed.

- AVOIDING BALE CONTAMINATION -

Prior to shearing:

- Wool growers consider how they are using wool shed for storage – ensure wool room is clear prior to shearing and appropriate hooks and storage areas are provided including personal hook for Presser close to wool press
- Rubbish bins provided and easily accessible
- Shearing board and wool room is washed and cleared prior to shearing
- Classers, pressers and woolhandlers check all fadges before putting wool in them, especially those that may have been sitting partially full before shearing begins, confirm with grower on partial bales
- Count press bars at the beginning and end of each shearing – there should be four!

During shearing:

- Remove all rubber rings and lambs purses from wool
- Rubbish bins readily accessible, used and emptied when necessary
- Designated storage area (hooks, shelves or large containers) for personal belongings of shed staff are used, including personal hook for Presser close to press
- Only work equipment (eg: fadges, brooms) in the wool room
- No drink bottles, clothing or towels stored near oddment fadges
- Wool shed staff check all open fadges throughout the day for clothing and any items other than wool
- No smoking (including vaping) in woolshed
- Count press bars before pinning each bale, there should be four!
- No food consumed in wool area – separate eating area is the ideal
- Supply newspaper for Bin bales – don't use wool packs as bale dividers
- Refer to "Clip Preparation – Best Practice Guideline" on the NZWCA website Or scan the QR code below

Credit: Samantha Harmer - P2214





A REMINDER FROM NZ MERINO COMPANY

Correct bale labelling

MERINO CLIP	
Brand	
4AM	1
Classer No.	LN100

QUARTERBRED CLIP	
Brand	
4AM	2
Classer No.	LN400

HALFBRED CLIP	
Brand	
F$\frac{1}{2}$AA	3
Classer No.	LN600

[illegible]

Particulars of bales

FOR COMPLETION ON SPECIFICATION

[illegible]

8

9

Associate membership gifted to Prof Hickford



The staging of this year's NZWCA Industry Professional Development Day/AGM at Lincoln University was a successful first.

It was almost singlehandedly made possible by the support and enthusiasm of sheep and wool stalwart Professor Jon Hickford of the University's Department of Agricultural Sciences.

Jon was also a speaker at the event, and with Don Morrison of Pastoral Measurement Ltd, set up a popular fibre measurement workshop for attendees.

The NZWCA Board acknowledged their deep appreciation to Jon by announcing on the day another first - the gifting of NZWCA associate membership to him.



WOOL EXERCISES CHALLENGING

There were four wool exercises for 2025 Industry PD Day/AGM attendees at Lincoln University to test themselves and learn from. Micron estimate; oddment and wool type identification; merino hogget classing; merino contracts.

Creating wool exercises that stretch professional classers and don't overwhelm students and wool handlers is always front of mind for the creators, who, as in 2024, were Kevin Waldron D984 (PGGW wool rep and NZWCA Board member) and Marg Forde A1260 (NZWCA Registrar).

Kevin collected some excellent merino hogget samples while classing The Bend last season. This is the clip which broke a NZ sale record of \$155 per kg greasy: <https://www.pggwrightson.co.nz/news/ultra-fine-wool-fibers-record-price>

This is how this exercise was devised, with the actual wool sale catalogue page supplied: **Exercise 3:**

Merino Hogget Classing – Each sample represents one bale of wool in a line. There are 15 samples that represent 15 bales to be classed into 8 lines. Using the catalogue entry details (arrowed) match each sample to the line catalogued below. Using the grid at the bottom of the page write the box number(s) containing the wool samples that you think correspond with the line name and catalogue description

The merino contract exercise looked like this, with the contract descriptions a handy take away for classers: **Exercise 4: Merino contracts (self marked – answers put out at lunchtime)**

Instructions: From the merino contract specifications below, identify and write in column which contract each sample fits. NOTE: A sample may fit more than one contract, and some samples may not fit any of the contracts.

REDA: Generally buying spinners and best top making style. Must be traditional soft crimp (similar to Saxon type) with minimal if any bolder type. Full skirting including flanking. Past contracts have been 16.8 - 19.2 micron. 70-95mm max; 40NKT minimum, weakest 25% staple strength of 25NKT (this is part of the test); VM 1.5% max

VBC: Generally buying spinners and best top making style. Must be traditional soft crimp (similar to Saxon type) with minimal if any bolder crimp. Full skirting including flanking. 15.5 - 18.5 micron; 70-85mm; 40NKT minimum; VM 1.5% max

AUTHENTICO: Generally spinners and best topmaking style. Prefer traditional types but will buy bolder types as well. A full skirt to remove pieces. If flanks under 70mm they should be removed. 15.5 – 19.5 micron; 70-95mm; 38NKT minimum; VM 1.5% max.

ICEBREAKER: Best/Good topmaking, strictly no hard yellow. Skirting, remove pieces especially sweaty ends. Remove necks and backs where heavy VM (birds nest). 17.7 – 19.8 micron (contract is 18.9); 85mm (75-95mm); 36NKT.

DEVOLD: Spinners/best topmaking style. Remove pieces, necks and backs. 17 – 19 micron; 80-100mm with premium for wool longer than 100mm; 38NKT minimum.

Thanks to wool experience and some great backroom teamwork by Board members **Karen Wilkins-Duff, Sonya Johansen and Cassie Johnston (pictured happy in their work, thank you ladies)**, the huge number of entries in the wool exercises were marked, announced and returned to participants by afternoon smoko.

Here are the top scorers acknowledged on the day:

Oddment and wool type identification exercise:

Student or woolhandler top equal - Gregory Ferguson and Erin Chittock (2nd Crystal Newton)

Classer or wool trade top - Richanna Clarke (2nd equal Pip McConway and Donald McKenzie)

Micron estimate exercise:

Student or woolhandler - Bonnie Fogarty (2nd Greg Ferguson)

Classer or wool trade rep - Juliet Jones (2nd Emily Jones)

Merino Hogget (The Bend) classing exercise:

Student or woolhandler - Suzanne Webby (2nd Kate Stewart)

Classer or wool trade rep - Graeme Goodger (2nd equal Kate Campbell and Donald McKenzie)

Merino contracts exercise, this was self marked with answers put out at lunchtime



The top scorers Richanna Clarke and Gregory Ferguson, who both work at the PGW Christchurch wool store



Bonnie Fogarty and Erin Chittock, both current NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing students



The NZWCA Board marking team from left Sonya Johansen A1099, Cassie Johnston H2182 and Karen Wilkins-Duff A871.



Classers Available for Work

On the NZWCA website there's a search facility – Classers Available for Work

Wool growers, wool brokers, shearing contractors and others can use this search to find a range of classers who have opted into inclusion by a tick box within the “Full Members” tab. Appearance of a classer or grader's name in the Members part of the website confirms that classer's registration is current and valid. When you do your search, make sure to tick “Yes” under the heading “Show Members Available for Work”. The initial search gives a classer's name, registration details and a phone number. Clicking on the classer's name gives the area(s) that classer is available to work in (unless they opted in some time ago, before the addition of the preferred areas information, we are working on updating this, see Point 1 below).

All classers with valid registration can include themselves so their name shows up if a searcher ticks “Yes” to “Show Members Available for Work”. Two points to note here though:

1. **If you have already done this, but it wasn't recently, please revisit your profile and you will find there has been an option added for you to indicate areas that you can work in.**
2. **If you haven't identified yourself as someone looking for clips to class or grade, but you would now like to, you can do so, and don't forget to list your preferred areas to work.**

Regions ^ v ▲

All Regions Most Used

<input type="checkbox"/> North Island	<input type="checkbox"/> MacKenzie	<input type="checkbox"/> Southland
<input type="checkbox"/> Nelson/Marlborough	<input type="checkbox"/> Otago	<input type="checkbox"/> Te Anau
<input type="checkbox"/> West Coast	<input type="checkbox"/> North Otago	<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Southland
<input type="checkbox"/> Canterbury	<input type="checkbox"/> South Otago	<input type="checkbox"/> Southern Southland
<input type="checkbox"/> North Canterbury	<input type="checkbox"/> West Otago	<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Southland
<input type="checkbox"/> Mid Canterbury	<input type="checkbox"/> Central Otago	<input type="checkbox"/> Western Southland
<input type="checkbox"/> South Canterbury	<input type="checkbox"/> Queenstown/Lakes	

Available for Work

Choose “Yes” if the member is available for work. This will cause the Working Regions selector field to appear in the Edit Profile form on the Dashboard.

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

In both 1. and 2. above, all you need to do is log into your profile to make those changes. And if you can't recall or

**don't know how to log in, get in touch with our superwoman secretary Annette Gamble
secretary@woolclassers.org.nz and she will help. Please be aware though, Annette has a full-on full-time
job, in addition to helping out NZWCA. So yeah, Superwoman!**

NZWCA ADDS ONE YEAR CLASSER REGISTRATION TO WANAKA SHOW AWARD

The winner of the Classer Award in the annual NZ Fine Wool Supreme Fleece competition at the Upper Clutha (Wanaka) A & P Show will in future have a year's NZWCA registration as part of their prize.

The NZWCA Board recently voted to make the gesture from 2026, in recognition and support of the only fleece competition in New Zealand that includes an award for classers. The Wanaka Classer Award goes to the currently registered shed classer whose name is included on the entry form for the highest scoring fleece in the competition. Explained NZWCA Registrar Marg Forde: "It's often the classer who picks out fleeces for entry in competitions and goes the extra mile to do so. We wanted to show our appreciation to the Wanaka show wool committee for recognising this, and to the classer for their skill and time taken."

In March this year the award was won by Tina Elers A2129 for a fleece exhibited by R&G Naylor in the Polwarth or Quarterbred Woolly Hogget category.



*The fleece (pictured) scored 99.5 points.
The fleece also won the Grand Champion
Flock Ewe (excluding Merino) category.*



The Supreme Champion Fleece at Wanaka this year (pictured) was exhibited in the Fine Merino Ewe category by Armidale Station – Simon and Allan Paterson FD713. The 5.2kg fleece scored a near perfect 99.8 and also won the Champion Stud Merino Ewe Fleece and Grand Champion Stud Fleece categories.



Also pictured is Terence Mulcahy D1473 with the winnings from a Hays Station fleece he chose for the Bowmar family to exhibit. The fleece scored 98.0 and took out the Champion Flock Hogget Fleece (excluding Merino) category.



For the third year running and thanks to the welcome of the show wool committee, NZWCA had a space there immediately adjacent to the fleece competition building. NZWCA Chair Tracy Paterson M2133, Board member Terence Mulcahy and Registrar Marg Forde A1260 were on hand to represent the association.

Picture shows Terence on the NZWCA stand with one of the

wool growers who stopped by for a yarn, Terence's client Gundy Anderson of Bog Roy Station.





Tom Bryant A16

21.01.1941 – 04.01.2025

“Wool was his life.....his stencil was atop his coffin” - Barbara Newton

At the time of his passing early this year, Tommy Bryant held the oldest NZ classing stencil, A16. Barbara Newton wrote the following profile of Tom for the December 2019 NZWCA newsletter:

Many young people find approaching 60 a scary prospect, but not so for Tom Bryant who is nearing his 60th year of continuous active shed classing. A truly momentous milestone!

The Bryant family had no previous connections to wool. His father was a builder who had an interest in horses, and with Tom being shorter in stature, had his future marked as a jockey. His mother however (a rabbit fur grader in Wellington) wasn't having a bar of it.

So after a stint working at Wright Stephenson Wellington wool store Tom (18) was duly enrolled in the wool course at Massey Agriculture College, Palmerston North and thus began his career as a classer in the wool harvesting industry.

After completing the course he began work, initially for Allan Lambert of Masterton and later with Bill Meech, based in the Wairarapa/Hawkes Bay regions where he worked for 15 years.

Tom classed his first clip of 1200 hoggets in 1962, at “Pigeon Bush Farm”, part of the run known as the “Riddiford Run”, one of a number of properties owned by Richard Riddiford, in those days the largest landowner in New Zealand. The properties at the time stretched from Wellington to Martinborough, and included White Rock and Orongorongo Stations. He classed at Orongorongo for 16 years, a 9 stand overhead board, where they ran a wide range of stock: goats, Romneys, Perendales. Included was a flock of 3,000 merino wethers that were driven along the beach between Martinborough & Wainuiomata.

He also classed at properties such as: Brancepeth Station in the Wairarapa, Oruri in Wairora, Erewhon in Taihape, with 90% of the wool he classed sold via London Wool Brokers.

There were 42 in his class at Massey, among them Dave Anderson (A2) with whom he was to develop a close lifetime relationship. For 6 years in the off season they worked together at the Seaview (where Bruce Abbott was Assistant works manager at the time) and JJ Burkes wool scours in Lower Hutt sorting and blending wool.

In 1970 he was encouraged by Dave to come to the South Island, and from 1973 he began working for Snow Quinn & George Potae Enterprises in Milton. During this period with Potae Shearing, he worked alongside some legendary shearers such as Des Downs, Danny Holland, Eddie Reidy and Monty Searanke.

Much of his classing in Otago was around; Millers Flat, classing at Beaumont Station for 9 seasons; in Middlesmarch, Moonlight and East Otago where Potaes had all the sheds in the Pig Root. This included Shag Valley Station where he met his now wife, Margaret who was cooking there at the time.



Tom Bryant A16 continued

After his marriage he shifted permanently with his wife to Milton, although still travelling to the North Island for the run up there for a few more years, and apart from a couple of stints with John Stringer in Ranfurly, Tom remained working for Potae Shearing until the business was sold in 2011.

These days his sole classing job is for the Tucker family, at "Springburn Station", situated in Becks, and with whom he has a long association. Not for the faint hearted they shear 25,000 fine woolled $\frac{1}{4}$ - & 1/2bd sheep in a modern well-appointed shed, 10 shearers shearing 2100 a day, fleeces prepared over 3 tables, classed into 5 contracted lines and pressing 13 bales a run.

In recent years his daughter Liana has accompanied him while he is away, lending a helping hand and being responsible for writing up all the bale label descriptions, and ensuring the specifications are accurate.

Tom believes the doom of our national crossbred clip, of which we have the best in the world, and its down fall can be blamed on Landcorp who introduced composite sires, resulting in more medullated and pigmented fibre throughout the NZ clip.

During his career there are a number of innovations according to Tom that have stood out and made a big difference to the shearing industry:

1) The biggest innovation were covered in yards, enabling a more continuous supply of sheep at any one shed to keep everyone working for decent periods of time in inclement climate of the south. George Potae used to give a 2% discount for those growers who had covered in yards.

2) The replacement of the heavy straw brooms with the plastic blades in the 1970's that are used nowadays by the wool handlers, and

3) the hydraulic no tramp press.

However he is not quite yet ready to embrace electronic specifications!

Not surprisingly the one thing that annoyed Tom most in the shed was forty years of 5am starts! During his career he has only ever attempted to shear one sheep, and where the fleece ended up as locks!

Despite a bit of a hiccup 4 years ago when diagnosed with Prostate Cancer, and after 38 visits to the hospital for radiotherapy treatment, he has since been given a clean bill of health and looking forward to the 2020 season.

His Dr told him the reason for the high prevalence of prostate cancer in NZ was attributable to all the beer that NZ'ers drink, and in particular the yeast that is used here in the brewing process- food for thought. As a consequence Tom has given up drinking beer and replaced it with an occasional cider.

Toms interests revolve around family (they have 2 children, 6 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren- none of whom are involved in the wool industry), visiting a daughter in Tauranga and partaking in a bit of surf casting.

As a first five -eighth he played rugby for Wellington in the lower grades (while at Massey marked Murray Ball, of Footrot Flats fame, in the wool v dairy game, where he scored 3 tries), and still has a close interest in the local rugby scene as a keen Highlanders supporter.

There is always a bit of gardening to undertake and of course he follows a lot of slow race horses!

The 2020 season will mark two milestones for Tom; the first the most significant is the incredible milestone of active classing for 60 years, and the second is 20 seasons of classing for the Tucker family.

Fit and in good health the rising 79 year old doesn't look like ringing the bell on his classing career anytime soon.

Enjoy your cider and durry Tom, you deserve it!

- Dec 2019 NZWCA newsletter

**Described as a "devoted grandfather" Tom is survived by his wife Margaret and children Shannon, Llana, Wayne, Maurice and Wendy.*

LATEST WRONZ SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED AT 2025 NZWCA INDUSTRY DAY/AGM AT LINCOLN

Congratulations to the following NZ Certificate of Wool Technology and Classing (NZCWTC) students who are the most recent recipients of WRONZ Scholarships:

Bonnie Fogarty – Roxburgh; Crystal Newton – Rotorua; Latisha McMurray – Te Anau.

*Bonnie and Crystal are **pictured here** at the announcement with WRONZ General Manager Tim Lonsdale.*

These students were in their first semester of NZCWTC study at the time of announcement at the NZWCA 2025 AGM/Industry Professional Development Day at Lincoln in May.

NZ Wool Classers Assn administers the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) scholarship which is valued at \$1000 per recipient.

This is paid in four instalments as the recipient passes stages in their course. But it represents more

than cash to help with study and living costs for the two-year distance learning course. NZWCA suggests to recipients that they can maximise the scholarship by using it as an opportunity to network and connect with wool industry organisations and people.

The presentation letter to the three recipients announced at the NZWCA Industry Day read: “One way you can do this is by communicating with



WRONZ and NZWCA giving progress reports on your study, things you have enjoyed learning or aspects of the wool industry that particularly interest you. Additionally, you can share information about how you are using the money, and how it is helping you.”

There are typically two intakes each year for the Cert Wool Tech, with the Semester One intake being the largest. We announced three recipients at our event at Lincoln in May and in the December 2025 NZWCA newsletter





we will announce any remaining recipients, chosen from applicants who commenced in both Semester 2 and Semester 1 2025.



Registrar's report - NZ Wool Classers Association AGM 09.05.25

It's genuinely an honour to be presenting my **fourth Registrar's report to a NZWCA AGM**. Thank you for the solid support this past year and for your trust in me in the role.

Passion for wool, collaboration, showing up with integrity and commitment, putting in the mahi, always learning and being open to seeing things from more than one perspective; these are the things that are my focus. I'm grateful to have recognised the same in people I have come in contact with in the past year in my work for the NZ Wool Classers Association. In my experience there's a lot of goodwill out there in our wool industry and we are all better off for this.

In no particular order here are (I hope) **most of the things that have kept your Registrar busy**, and your Board involved since the 2024 NZWCA AGM.

Dialling back to **May 2024 and our AGM/Industry Professional Development Day in Mosgiel**. It was heartening to have healthy attendance numbers from a wide range of wool industry people and a varied line up of willing speakers. Feedback on the day was very positive. I can assure you these events take a lot of pulling together prior, and also work setting up and on the day, thank you to all. Special mention to Kevin Waldron and Allan Paterson for wool exercise samples and to the shearing contractors who recognise the value in getting their wool harvesting staff to participate, filling their vans up with attendees. It's a given that Classers and Graders take responsibility for keeping themselves engaged and informed by attending such events, but we can't underestimate the value of having wool handlers and pressers grow their knowledge and confidence too.

At the time of writing (mid April), since our last AGM **we've welcomed nine new stencil holders**. Six Provisional Classers, two Owner Classers and one Grader. Four Classers have done what it takes to get off their Provisional prefix status to either M (merino) or H (Mid Micron) and one Classer passed their final clip inspection to upgrade from C (Crossbred and Merino) to A (all breeds). I'm really pleased to see this progression and upskilling. We have the systems in place, but the motivation to do it can only come from the individual Classer/Grader; I do all I can to support this. A reminder to those on a Provisional stencil, there is now a three year time limit on this (as passed at our AGM in 2022), though extensions may be considered on application to the Registrar.

The Young Farmer of the Year final was in Hamilton in July 2024 and included wool for the first time for many years. Earlier in the year a Young Farmers Club organising committee member contacted my husband Edsel and I enquiring about using our mobile shearing plant as they wanted to include shearing on the practical module final day. I pushed to include wool and Edsel and I ended up working with them to design a module that incorporated shearing and wool, and we were module hosts and judges on the day. A win for wool – lucky I just happened to have a bunch of merino, mid micron and crossbred wool samples at our North Island home to use! And of course I made sure the NZWCA logo was visible and pushed the quality message on the day.

In March we were once again able to **fly the NZWCA flag at the Wanaka A&P Show**, thanks to the show's wool committee making us welcome and finding us space right beside the door to the building housing the NZ Fine



Wool Supreme Fleece Competition. Thank you to Ian Bagley and his wool committee, you do great work for wool. It was third time at the *Registrar's report continued*, for Terence Mulcahy and I. We agree there is huge value in

NZWCA having a presence there. We had two days of many conversations with a wide range of people about what NZWCA stands for, supports and our role in the industry. There were people who came to our stand who didn't know anything about wool (and just wanted to talk about our wool samples and wool as a consumer item) and wise and experienced wool growers, buyers, exporters, and many in between.

At our AGM/Industry PD Day on May 9 we will be announcing the next round of recipients of **scholarships provided by the Wool Research Organisation of NZ**. WRONZ gives \$5000 a year for NZ Certificate of Wool Technology and Classing students (\$1000 per student) and the scholarship is administered by NZWCA. We now have split the scholarships into two time periods as there are two Cert Wool Tech intakes each year, it only seemed fair. The payment of the scholarship is in increments and conditional on a student passing. There is also a requirement that the scholarship student won't get paid their last \$250 increment unless they furnish proof they have acknowledged WRONZ and connected with the organisation. From the outset the successful scholarship recipients are encouraged in their scholarship advice letter to "maximise this scholarship by using it as an opportunity to network and connect with wool industry organisations and people". Thanks to WRONZ for the support of tertiary wool education, and WRONZ manager Tim Lonsdale for his collaboration on this.

Driving our Board objective of **transparent, timely and operable documentation and processes** has continued for me this past year. I have worked with the Board to update the Roles and Responsibilities of Board members document and there is now a requirement for anyone accepting nomination for the Board to confirm they have read and understood this document. The Classer Code of Conduct and Ethics has also been updated, and a link to it included in the registration invoices sent out in February. A Store Classer registration description relevant to current conditions has been created. All these documents are on our website. The creation of a new NZWCA Constitution to ensure compliance with new Government regulations around Incorporated Societies has been a huge piece of work for your Board and myself. The draft is on this year's AGM agenda for consideration and adoption. A work in progress document is a pre-shearing checklist of agreed responsibilities for Classer, Farmer and Shearing Contractor.

Communicating with members and ensuring NZWCA is positioned visibly where we need to be, where our input and advocacy is helpful or required, are tasks that require a deceptive amount of time and resource input from me. Online meetings via Teams and Zoom allow affordable participation, I've taken part in many this past year, in a wide range of wool industry related areas. I'd always like to have the time to communicate more with our members, and to network more. On the plus side I was glad to be able to circulate a reminder during pre-lamb 2024, prompted by feedback from two wool reps, around the ongoing importance of protecting the reputation of our industry when making online social media posts. That reminder remains firmly in place! Regarding my time input, as I have previously stated I see a balancing act between doing the role of Registrar justice, whilst being mindful of what can be realistically achieved with the limited resources NZWCA has. I am consciously attempting to stick to what I see as core business, to ensure the role of Registrar that I ultimately will pass on to someone else (always the goal) will be one that does not rely on goodwill and voluntary hours to function.

Definitely an area that's taken up a big portion of time for me in the past year has been **input into wool harvesting training and wool education**. Allan Frazer and I, on behalf of NZWCA, made a comprehensive submission to the new Government's Vocational and Educational Training Reforms. Sonya Johansen and I continued the work begun in 2023 with the wool harvesting microcredential working group, facilitated by Muka Tangata, the Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council. The new microcredentials were signed off in 2024. The work was done to replace the defunct unit standards, with the aim being to cut through some of the blocks to funding and delivery for wool harvesting training. Time will tell if this will happen. I have ensured a good working



relationship with the wool tutors appointed last year by the Southern Institute of Technology, Rebecca Braddick-Tohiariki and Emma *Registrar's report continued* together to make sure the 2025 NZWCA AGM/Industry PD Day

at Lincoln University on May 9 was timed to allow NZ Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing block course students to fit attendance into their block course week.

One thing I didn't do that I should have was run the intended **North Island Industry PD Day in 2024/first half of 2025**. I had to have surgery in October and this knocked me sideways a lot more, and for longer, than anticipated. My recovery is still a work in progress. While I was able to keep on the job with admin online and by phone, the mobility required to put on an Industry Day was literally a step too far. My apologies, and my thanks to our Board members for their understanding.

To close, my heartfelt thanks to all the NZWCA Board members and our Secretary It is a pleasure to work with you all on our shared purpose of ensuring there is a solid platform to enable achieving highest quality standards of wool preparation and presentation. Our association is fortunate to have such a committed group of people who hail from across the wool sector giving their time and experience. Special mention to our new Chair Tracy Paterson, who despite already being a busy woman with multiple farm, family and community leadership balls in the air has caught the NZWCA one and run with it. And as always, Secretary Annette Gamble, who knows I couldn't do what I do without her rock solid efficiency, wisdom, commitment and most importantly humour.

Acknowledgement and appreciation is also due to our Classers, Graders and Associate Members, and our Sponsors, for recognising the value of a wool classer registration system and putting their money where their mouth is to do so. Administering the NZ Wool Classers Registration system and our advocacy for quality in wool preparation/presentation and wool education simply would not be possible without this support.

Ngā mihi, nā

Marg Forde A1260

NZWCA Registrar

14.04.24



Experienced Marlborough owner classer Sally Smith (in green) shares her knowledge during the wool exercises at Lincoln

