

Espresso

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Rural Women
NEW ZEALAND
Ngā Wāhine Taiwhenua o Aotearoa

MARCH

Understandably, March was a month of two halves. The first half was very busy with meetings and events. There were a large number of local and regional shows, expos and field days and the RWNZ Toolkits had been put to good use. International Women's Day was celebrated around the country on Sunday, 8 March.

The Golden Shears celebrated its 60th anniversary in Masterton with a spectacular four-day event in early March. RWNZ sponsors two events at the Golden Shears which creates wonderful opportunities to promote and support women in the industry and the wool industry as a whole. RWNZ gained a huge profile following its support of She Shears and, more recently, the 40/400 World Record Shear by four women shearers.

The production, promotion and use of wool has been at the heart of many RWNZ projects over the decades. Recently, RWNZ launched Project Warmth which embraces and celebrates all our existing wool based endeavours while offering something new for those who wish to take part.

The second half of March has been impacted as a result of New Zealand's Level 4 response to COVID-19. RWNZ has been monitoring and reporting the recommended precautions and protocols. All physical meetings, events, gatherings and conferences have been postponed or cancelled for the next two months. Where possible digital and telephone alternatives have been arranged and there are a large number of people working from home.

NATIONAL OFFICE REPORT

On Tuesday, 3 March Chief Executive Liz Pennington and Manager: Government, Public Sector and Academic Relationships Angela McLeod accepted an invitation from the Office for Seniors to meet with the UN Independent Expert on older persons, Ms Kronfeld-Matte, to discuss older New Zealanders' experiences of access to and enjoyment of their human rights.

Liz also attended a forum on community involvement and participation with government in an Open Government Partnership later that day.

Liz met with Nicola Ngawati, the Director of the Mana Wahine Roopū at the Ministry for Women, at our National Office to hear about the recently formed team and its work programme on Tuesday, 10 March.

In 2015, the Waitangi Tribunal announced a comprehensive programme of kaupapa inquiries. Kaupapa inquiries deal with issues of national significance which will require a whole of New Zealand Government response. In December 2018, the Waitangi Tribunal formally initiated the Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry. The Crown's participation in the inquiry is being led by the Minister for Women Hon Julie Anne Genter and the Minister for Māori Development Hon Nanaia Mahuta as co-lead Ministers.

The Mana Wāhine roopū has three main focus areas:

- To form a collaborative approach to the Mana Wāhine

inquiry, in partnership with claimants.

- To lead and support the Crown's involvement in the Waitangi Tribunal Mana Wāhine Kaupapa Inquiry and its response to the issues raised.
- To work closely with other government agencies to help improve outcomes and focus for wāhine Māori.

If you would like to know more about the enquiry please visit <https://women.govt.nz/mana-wahine> or contact the Ministry at 04 915 7112.

On Tuesday, 10 March, Liz attended a discussion on ovarian cancer at Parliament Building. The two presenters, Tash Crosby and Jane Ludeman, have ovarian cancer diagnoses and spoke of their experience in getting a diagnosis and the lack of awareness and research into the five gynaecological cancers affecting women. It was a very alarming and moving presentation.

National Chair Penny Mudford, youth representative Corrine Prince and Manager: Government, Public Sector and Academic Relationships Angela McLeod attended a celebration of International Women's Day, held on Wednesday, 4 March 2020. The event was held in the newly refurbished Women's Select Committee room at Parliament Buildings.

Angela also attended a celebration of the World Health Organisation's International Year of the Midwife in the Grand Hall at Parliament Buildings on Thursday, 5 March.

Penny and Angela also attended a function celebrating International Women's Day at Parliament on Friday, 6 March. The keynote speech at this event was given by Minister for Women Julie Anne Genter.

BRANCH NEWS

Mid-Canterbury Provincial

Members of the Rural Women New Zealand Mid-Canterbury Provincial participated in the Positive Ageing Expo at the Hotel Ashburton on Thursday, 5 March. There were over 70 sites at the Expo which was very well attended. There was a good response to the RWNZ site and the organisers appreciated Members' involvement in the event.



Ngaire Brown with Sandra Curd

Otago Provincial

Friendship Day 2020 marked the 50th (Golden) Friendship Day in the Otago Provincial and it was a very special day for their rural women and friends from Women's Institute. They were hosted by the Henley Branch who had arranged for a wonderful presentation by Member Beth Daniell of six generations of wedding dresses from the brides in her family.

They also enjoyed an interesting and informative talk from Dr Jane Malthus from the Textile Department at Otago University.

Henley Branch President, Fay Taylor, attended the first Friendship Day in 1970 as a young Member of the Branch. She said that she had attended many Friendship Days over the years and joked that the number she had missed wouldn't fill two hands.

Wedding Frocks

For some time I have had this collection of Wedding Frocks in my possession, I have been waiting for the sixth generation of brides, descending from mother to daughter, so with the marriage of our granddaughter last November we now have six generations. I think as far as I'm concerned that will be as much as I will see.

The oldest one is of my great Grandmother Jane Hay who married Robert Hardie at Leith St Dunedin 24th February 1874. My mother told me she thinks the lace overlay was probably added later but I'm intrigued by the way the whole garment is lined. It has a separate underskirt but the actual frock is all lined and all sewn together, the material has a shot effect, very similar to what I recall as shot taffeta. The bodice of course is all boned and probably would have had a frilled jabot originally. There is a little pocket here, for a watch.

The next one is of Jane Hardie's only daughter, my Grandmother, Mina Hardie who married James Speirs of Water Park, Waiwera, at her home at Waiwera Park on 14th June 1905. This frock is silk and I think really beautiful, still in amazing condition. Like the previous one it is in two pieces, skirt and bodice, beautiful leg of mutton sleeves, Edwardian style. Both these frocks have gathers across the back of the skirt for a bustle. Both sets of parents are interred at Clinton, South Otago.

Next one is Mina Speirs's only daughter, Jean who married my father George Meikle of Danseys Pass, 28th March 1928, also at her home in Danseys Pass. This one sadly is in a very delicate state, possibly because it has been worn more. Beautiful embroidered lace, straight mid-calf length, pretty typical of the 1920's. James & Mina Speirs interred in Duntroon & George & Jean Meikle in Oamaru.

Next one is mine, Jean Meikle's daughter, Beth. I married Peter Daniell of Otekaieke, 28th January 1956 in St Pauls Church Oamaru. I originally wanted to wear my grandmother's frock but I



clearly remember my mother saying, "You're not wearing that old thing," so off I went and bought this French Chantilly Lace, taffeta and tulle and Peter's aunt, the local Bridal dressmaker crafted this for me.

Next is our daughter, Vicki who married Russell McDougall of Dunedin on 1st November 1980 in the Outram Presbyterian Church. Vicki chose this style from a picture, and asked me to create it! A real challenge and many sleepless nights later, this is the result. It is chiffon, bodice German lace, underskirt taffeta. I was always disappointed the veil was done by a professional and glued in place, whereas I had hand stitched all the motifs on frock.

Now to the last one Vicki's daughter Stephanie, married James Brickland of Auckland at Orchard Garden, Clyde, 23rd November 2019. Her frock of light crepe and lined with satin was designed and made by Boho Bridal of New Plymouth. Stephanie added her own attachments of the crystal and pearl belt and the detachable tulle wings.

So that completes this sequence of six brides, Jane Hay to Robert Hardie -1874; Mina Hardie to James Speirs -1905; Jean Speirs to George Meikle- 1928; Beth Meikle to Peter Daniell - 1956; Vicki Daniell to Russell McDougall - 1980; Stephanie McDougall to James Brickland - 2019, from mother to daughter, 145 years in total.

- Thank you to Beth Daniell for this story.

Golden Shears

What a wonderful 60th anniversary celebration the Golden Shears was this year. The organising Committee and over 200 volunteers presented a fabulous four-day event packed with excellent competitions, outstanding athleticism, heartfelt tributes and a birthday cake.

The normal three-day event was stretched to four to accommodate the record number of entries, events and special presentations that mark any self-respecting 60th jubilee. While there was recognition of the drive and ambition of the few who dreamed up the idea of a competitive sheep shearing competition all those years ago, there was also an eye to the future. This year had seen the highest ever number of entries in the novice shearing grade. When it was time to cut the cake on Saturday night, it was done so by one of the original organisers, one of the original finalists (who had, as an aside, competed in the Evergreen grade at the age of 86 years the day before) and the 14 year old winner of the novice grade this year.

All grades of the three disciplines that make up the competitive programme were fiercely fought. There was plenty of skill and strength on display in every event. The platform that the Golden Shears provides to nurture each coming generation is absolutely remarkable as is the interweaving of our country's history and heritage. There is also a strong focus on whanau and spectators can appreciate the familial dynasties in the world of competitive sheep shearing and wool handling. It is very special to see a father competing against his son in the final of an event or one set of brothers taking on another set of brothers in a wool pressing event.

Another special feature of the Golden Shears is that it embraces competition locally, nationally and internationally. Those at the start of their competitive careers have come straight from their local and regional competitions. To win any title in any grade is an outstanding achievement and you have to be the best in the country to do so. There is no doubt though that to win in the Open Grades of wool pressing, wool handling or shearing makes you one of the very best in the World.

There were two Trans-Tasman tests held over the weekend. In the first of these on Friday night, Pagan Karauria and Sheree Alabaster represented New Zealand in a wool handling challenge against the Australian team of Racheal Hutchinson and Aroha Garvin. As current World Champions, Pagan and Sheree were favourites to win. However, there was no doubt that this would be the result after an especially rousing version of our National Anthem. Pagan and Sheree absolutely smoked it and were much deserving winners.

The second test was a Trans-Tasman Shearing Test with three shearers from each country. This event had been held sixty-nine times previously with Australia winning 39 of those including the last five in a row. It was an incredibly tight competition. The shearers each had six merino, three long wool and three second shear sheep to complete as quickly as they could while not ceding points on the quality of their shear. There was an eruption of noise that almost lifted the roof of the Masterton War Memorial Hall



when it was announced that New Zealand had broken the long drought between drinks and had taken out the Test.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and Clarke Gayford attended their first Golden Shears on the final night. They were there to see the Test and premier events, the Open Wool Handling Final and the Open Grade Shearing Final. They would not have been disappointed as the excitement in the Hall reached fever pitch.

Wool handlers are amazing. It is magical to watch them and how different each is in style and strategy. In the end there could only be one winner and Joel Henare took out his 8th Golden Shears title.

The last event on the programme was the Open Grade Shearing Final. The final six competitors had passed through heats, quarter finals, semi-finals and were the very best of the ninety entrants in this class. Each finalist had 20 sheep to shear. In a pulsating final the lead changed numerous times. The TAB favourite and incumbent champion, Rowland Smith, had to chase to stay in touch at times before seemingly finding another gear and racing away on his second to last sheep.

President of the Golden Shears, Sam Saunders, said that competitive sheep shearing and wool handling gets in your blood and you never lose it. Looking around the packed Hall on Saturday night you could see, hear and feel that truth.

ADVERSE EVENTS RELIEF FUND

The Rural Women New Zealand Adverse Events Relief Fund (AERF) was established to provide assistance to individuals, groups and communities in need after adverse events and natural disasters.

To help grow this fund, there are two products for sale, the proceeds of which go directly to the AERF:

RWNZ's pure wool, New Zealand-made **Aftersocks**, available online at www.aftersocks.nz or from the National Office.

Our popular **peg bags**. Each peg bag is \$25.00 plus postage, available to purchase from the National Office, or visit www.ruralwomennz.nz

Alternatively, donations can be made directly into the Adverse Events Relief Fund by bank deposit to the following account:

Account Name: Rural Women New Zealand

Bank Account: 06-0501-0778590-00 Ref: AERF



Plant a Garden

First plant five rows of peas:

Promptness
Preparation
Purity
Perseverance
Punctuality.

Next plant three rows of squash:

Squash gossip
Squash unfair criticism
Squash indifference

Then plant five rows of lettuce:

Let us be faithful to duty
Let us be loyal and unselfish
Let us be true to our obligations
Let us obey rules and regulations
Let us love one another.

No garden is complete without turnips:

Turn up for meetings
Turn up with a smile
Turn up with new ideas

Turn up with determination to make everything count
for something good and worthwhile.

from "What's for Lunch" which was produced by
the Middlemarch Branch in October, 1982