

Hello Members,

I see in the NZ Farmer of 10<sup>th</sup> April an article about a Lincoln breeder in Hawke's Bay, Patrick Worsnop. He runs 2,000 commercial Lincoln ewes. The article mentions that for the past eight years he has mated his hoggets to polled Pitt Island Merino terminal sires as the lamb survival rate is phenomenal. I note this, as we had the item on Pitt Island Merinos in the previous newsletter. Mainstream breeders are often dismissive of minor and heritage breeds, but as this item demonstrates, one never knows when those genetics will have a future role to play.

This time our feature breed is the Shropshire sheep, one of NZ's earliest terminal sire breeds. They have made a slow but steady recovery from 39 registered ewes (also around 60 purebred but no longer registered ewes) in the very early 1980's to the 380 odd (+ youngstock) today. It is really only due to the passion of 1 breeder, John Green, that any remain in NZ today.

I have been reading a book by James Rebanks called, **"The Shepherd's Life"** ISBN 978-1-250-06024-2 (hardcover) or ISBN 978-1-250-06025-9 (e-book). Published in 2015, UK. A book of interest to any sheep breeder. I do recommend it.

James grew up on a small sheep farm in the Lake District. He writes of the way the locals have lived their lives, in many ways unchanged, for over 500 years and how his school teacher (mid 1980's) wanted pupils to "go somewhere" with their lives and could not understand the tie to their land. She spoke of their surroundings in terms that were completely alien to him and his family, I quote – 'the Lake District in her monologue was the playground for an itinerant band of climbers, poets, walkers, and daydreamers... people who unlike our parents or us, had "really done something." She would utter the name Wordsworth in reverential tones and look in vain for us to respond with interest - I'd never heard of him.'

It seems to me there is analogy here with our NZ high country where our farmers just want to get on with farming the way their families have done (in many cases for 150 years or more) and they are up against a wall of hikers, nature "lovers" and others who consider they have a greater claim without actually living fulltime in that environment.

*Helen McKenzie*  
**Editor**

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Email [rosemarkie@wise.net.nz](mailto:rosemarkie@wise.net.nz)

## ASSOCIATION NEWS & VIEWS

### From The President

I have to report the fish aren't biting in Owaka.

Many thanks again to Helen for organising this newsletter, as members do talk about them when I'm travelling around the country. I also take this opportunity of thanking our sponsors for their continued support.

Regarding the meeting at the Christchurch A & P Showgrounds about the direction of SIL, I have received a reply for Beef + Lamb Genetics and they have since had their series of road shows throughout New Zealand. I also understand they are only too willing to attend breed meetings if requested. As NZSBA represents numerous breeders, I have taken the stance of waiting for feedback before any further action can take place. Some breeds are working with Beef + Lamb Genetics which is commendable. We will discuss this item on our July meeting.

*Jim Berney*  
**President NZSBA**



### From The General Manager

I'm basically in the middle of Breed Conferences as May continues to be that small window where all breeds want to meet. Breed conferences are tremendous opportunities to meet up with fellow breeders, look at stock, and local points of interest, eg....whiskey tasting at Cardrona, Danseys Pass Hotel, Earnsclough Station, viewing Mount Taranaki, Heartland potato chips, Richie Gould's museum of shearing memorabilia.....

It's great to see new faces attending Conferences for their first time. The mood amongst breeders is optimistic this year, so we will wait and see.

I have been liaising with our Accountants regarding our end of year financials and our result this year is encouraging. I will discuss this more in the Annual Report.

**The NZ Ewe Hogget Competition Presentation Dinner is on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June at Cromwell. If interested contact the office for tickets.** Thanks again to the many volunteers behind the scene. Your support is most welcome.

All Annual Returns should have been sent by now, and if there is problem, please contact the office.

If you have an email address there is a good chance you will be receiving invoices online. Some breeders have informed me they aren't receiving some emails - please check your junk mail as emails from the NZSBA may be blocked.

Let's hope for good lambing weather.....

*Greg Burgess, General Manager, NZSBA*

# Feature Breed

## SHROPSHIRE SHEEP

### ORIGIN & HISTORY



The Shropshire breed emerged in Britain in early to mid - 1800s from improvements to the native heath sheep of its home county and north Staffordshire to become the supreme meat breed of the late nineteenth century.

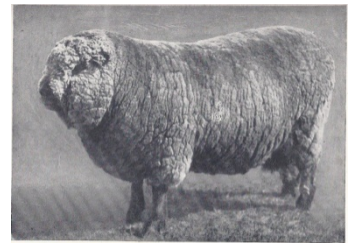
Breeds thought to be in the background (differed slightly between two main foundation breeders) are the Long Mynd (black faced); the Cannock Chase, grey faced, and Morfe Common (small horns and a black or speckled face), all “native” breeds; slow to mature, with good quality but light weight fleeces; as well as the improved Leicester, the Southdown (Sussex), with possibly the Ryeland and Hampshire.

As far as I can ascertain, the first deliberately developed “composite” (as opposed to “improved” as in Bakewell’s Dishley Leicester) the Shropshire was to be of good weight, with quality mutton and wool; and early maturing. The breed was now to have a “soft black” (as opposed to the anthracite coal black of the Suffolk) face and legs.

In 1882 the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association and Flock Book Society was established in the U.K. In the following year the society became the first to publish a Flock Book of its rams, making the Shropshire the oldest recorded sheep breed in the world. Over the years information collected earlier meant a number of retrospective entries were possible, and these began with a ram of 1836.

First imported into New Zealand in 1864, Shropshire flocks were among those recorded in Volume 1 of the original New Zealand Flock Book in 1895. Shropshires increased rapidly during the nineteenth century to become the most numerous down breed during the early development of the export lamb trade. As noted in Gordon McLauchlan's book *The Farming of New Zealand*, a Shropshire-cross was the first Canterbury lamb eaten in England.

*This photo is from “Sheep Farming in New Zealand” by William Perry c.1930. This sheep is comparatively clean in the legs. Not sure why they wanted such woolly faces.*



Shropshires were the most popular terminal sire in the world for several decades from the 1860’s. From 1900-1920 no fewer than 6,700 rams were exported around the world – USA, South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

Undoubtedly, they suffered from the “fad effect” whereby every man and his dog begins to breed them because they are seen to be making money from ram sales. Consequently the selection pressure on the breed is not so heavily applied. The British farmer began to move away from them when the American market that they exported to, demanded more and more wool on the faces and legs – describing Shropshires as “wool from their nose to their toes”. Originally Shropshires had fairly open faces with wool on the poll.

*(See picture at beginning of Feature.)*

The trend for woollier faces and smaller sheep began in the early 1900’s in America. Many people were breeding to emulate the smaller framed Southdown that was beginning to prevail. Prior to that, the Shropshire was considered a medium framed sheep, with good wool, great constitution and leaving crossbred progeny that grew and fattened quickly and well. In Australia, particularly, the crossbred progeny thrived in the dry.

World War I saw the interruption of shipping livestock abroad from the UK. The last straw for the major export of Shropshires from Great Britain was the outbreak of Foot & Mouth disease in the UK in 1922, with occasional outbreaks up until 1930. Other breeds were also evolving into a better type of sheep and the Shropshire lost favour globally.

### BREED DESCRIPTION

The Shropshire breed is now primarily used for crossing to produce prime lamb for slaughter. The down wool is used for hand knitting yarns and hosiery. Docile and hardy, naturally polled and with a sound constitution, the Shropshire adapts well to organic systems.

A major attribute is the breed’s ability to graze reliably amongst conifers without damaging the trees. Its value as an eco-friendly, cost effective weed suppressant is increasingly born out on large plantations in Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia and Europe.

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“Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry.”



*Highley Stud Mixed Age Shropshire ewes, 2012.*

Breeder: Lucy Burrows

**Photo:** Tom Burrows

Shropshire rams are robust with good conformation. They sire strong, active, early maturing lambs with carcasses of 16 – 18.5kg +.

Shropshire ewes make excellent mothers. Generally long-lived, milky and prolific, they can successfully rear multiples, producing lambs over many years.

### BREED CLASSIFICATION

The Shropshire is a medium sized sheep. They are active and alert with a free action. Shropshire sheep have a naturally clean soft black face, with a good covering of wool on the poll. No black fibres should be found in the fleece. Skin should be cherry pink, not blue.

**Location:** On all types of country throughout New Zealand in stud, commercial and lifestyle flocks. Excel in producing prime early lambs in dry or drought prone areas such as Hawkes Bay and eastern Wairarapa. One of the most successful crosses is with Merino, where the lambs retain the finer fleece of the Merino whilst growing out quickly in the Shropshire tradition.



Photo above is of a group of modern Shropshire two tooth rams at *Highley* stud in Canterbury. With the smaller genetic base in NZ, sheep with both open and woollier (not excessively so) faces have been retained, to enable the broadest genetic base. This has been aided by the imports of the two Australian rams in more recent times as well as imports in the early 1970's of two rams.

### Bodyweight

**Ewes:** 50-65 kg

**Rams:** 80-110 kg

### Meat

High yielding carcass, ideal for further processing.

### Breeding/Lambing

120-160 percent

### Numbers

A minority breed in most of the world. Currently fewer than 380 registered ewes in New Zealand, although this is up from a low of 39 registered ewes in 1981. About the same number in Australia. Now about 5,000 registered ewes in UK. Several thousand in the USA.

### Wool

Dense, fine quality wool of good staple. Down type.

Second longest wool staple of all the down breeds.

**Fibre diameter:** 27-33 microns

**Staple length:** 65-75 mm

**Fleece weight:** Average 3.5kg

**Uses:** Knitting yarns and hosiery



## History in New Zealand

Shropshires arrived in New Zealand in 1864 (rumour has it there may even have been one or two before that). At that time they were referred to as Shropshire Downs and were considered a dual purpose breed. Of course these days the black points mean that most wool buyers discount the wool. According to an article in an old "Ark" magazine (Rare Breeds Survival Trust, UK) they are supposed to have the second longest fleece of any of the Down breeds, next to the Oxford Down.

The #1 flock in the NZSBSA Flockbook (South Island) Vol. II, 1906, is listed as being registered in 1894. It was owned by Mr J C N Grigg of Longbeach, Canterbury. The flock was founded in 1872 by the purchase of some Shropshire Down ewes, imported from England by Mr Williams, of Prebbleton. Five ewes imported from the flock of Lord Chesham were added in 1876. The same year J Griggs imported two rams from Lord Chesham, in 1891 purchased a ram from Mr Borton, Oamaru; and in 1892 one from Mr Kinross Whyte of Napier. In 1906 he had 722 ewes in his flock and he sold 150 two tooth rams.

In this 1906 South Island Flock book there were 9,420 registered Shropshire ewes. Registered breeders in the South Island sold a total of 1,647 x 2 tooth rams, 80 x 4 tooth rams and 414 ram lambs in 1906.

That the breed has remained in NZ is really down to one breeder, John Green, who bought sheep from the last few flocks as they withdrew from the flock book in the 1970's. They did not get down to 1 flock however, as Sydney McDonnell founded his *Cannock Chase* stud in 1978 the year *Beech Grove* stud of Wratt's withdrew.

In 1982 Helen McKenzie established the *Rosemarkie* flock. The Wratt flock re-entered the book within a few years as son, John Wratt, founded the *Te Mahara* flock. His brother, Keith, now has *Turoa* stud from their father's bloodlines at Beechgrove and John's son, Chris has just registered his own stud, *Ovca* from some of Keith's ewes in the last few months – the third generation.

Along with some more recent flocks of some size there have been several disappointments along the way with small holders buying good ewes and then not registering. However this is the same no doubt in all the registered breeds.

Along with Chris Wratt's new stud we also have a committed new breeder in Tammy Hendra, *Somersal* stud. She bought Sydney McDonnell's ewes when he retired.

## STUD PROFILE # 1

**Rosemarkie Stud, Flock # 287**

**Established 1982**

**Owned by Helen McKenzie & Warwick Potts**

The stud was established by Helen, in 1982. Since 1986 the flock is jointly owned with Helen's husband, Warwick.

Shropshires were chosen, initially in order to support the breed, as Helen was co-founder of the NZ Rare Breeds Conservation Society in 1987. At that time there were only 39 registered ewes left in NZ plus about sixty from Wratt's *Beechgrove* flock, not long withdrawn. Thirteen ewes and two rams were purchased from John Green's *Mamaku* stud, which was then situated at Tikokino, Hawkes Bay.

In 1987, Helen & Warwick imported the ram, Penola 16, from Mr Ron Maidment of Capel, Western Australia. This ram played a big part in the stud's future although there are still a small number of sheep without his bloodline. This has been aided by the joint purchase of semen from a ram from well known Southdown & Shropshire breeder, Mr Geoff Baker, in Victoria.

We were very grateful to fellow breeder, Keith Wratt, of Te Puke, for joining us in the semen importation as it cost a lot and Shropshires, although a very commercial breed, were not selling like hot cakes at that time, although that is changing rapidly, with the demand for terminal sires for hogget mating for which they are ideally suited.

We currently run about 80 ewes of our own (have had up to 140 when still on our previous farm) and about 20 for our youngest son, Alistair (29), who is working as stock manager on a cattle station in Northern Queensland. He has his own stud, *Stirling*. Along with the local *Rangitukia* Stud of Nan McDonald and Sue Kingsford we compete in the local shows with both ours and Al's sheep, with quite often over 20 Shropshires forward at the Shows.



*Rosemarkie G98-12 & ram lamb K23-15*

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## STUD PROFILE # 2

Rangitukia Stud, Flock # 301

Established 2005

Owned by Nan McDonald & Sue Kingsford



Nan, with Shropshire ewe and newly tagged twin lambs

The Rangitukia Stud was established in 2005 after moving to the Wairarapa from Wellington. We are based in Gladstone, 12 km east of Carterton. We graze about 12 hectares, with a mix of sheep and Red Poll cattle. Our Rangitukia Shropshire sheep stud was started off with Rosemarkie genetics.

We mated about 45 ewes this year, but do not mate our hoggets. We purchased some Mamaku ewe lambs when that stud was being dis-established.

We wanted to conserve and strengthen a breed that was one of the earliest introduced to New Zealand, is naturally tolerant of the very dry conditions found in the Wairarapa summers, and is growing in popularity in Europe for its unique attribute of not eating young conifers and other trees.

All of our sheep are recorded with a weaning weight. Our early focus on culling any animal requiring treatment for feet, or fly-strike has resulted in a low-maintenance flock. More recently, we are actively selecting for temperament and mothering abilities.

Our focus is on producing sheep that meet the needs of small farmers, particularly those looking to have two crops from the same area of land, with many of our sales going to owners of olive groves and cider apple orchards throughout the Wairarapa.

Customers who have bought rams as terminal sires have commented on the ease of lambing, how quickly the lambs get up after birth, and the great carcass.

We think that this makes the Shropshire great!



Rangitukia ewe & lamb

**HOW TIMES CHANGE** - this extract from The Press of 14 March 1902 (*National Library Papers Past*)

### Ram Fair Canterbury A & P Association

Rams forward for sale: -

English Leicesters, 1910; Border Leicesters, 345; Lincolns, 203; Romney Marsh, 25; **Shropshires, 954**; Southdowns, 110; Other breeds 146.

Now Romneys and Southdowns would probably predominate.

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### STUD PROFILE # 3

**Highley Stud, Flock # 303**

**Established 2008**

**Owned by Lucy Burrows**

Lucy started the Highley Shropshire Stud in 2008. This was done to coincide with the Sheep genetics study she is pursuing at Lincoln University which has led her to working on a PhD in fly strike resistance in sheep using DNA technology.

The stud was founded on ewes bought from Rosemarkie and Waitangi studs. From modest beginnings, Highley stud this year, mated 104 ewes. The stud is aiming Shropshires at the hogget mating market. Shropshires are ideally suited for this, as their low birth weight and quick maturing attributes are ideal for hogget mating. The stud sold 55 ram lambs for hogget mating this year.

Showing is a big part of the stud's success, entering sheep in all shows that offer classes for this once popular breed. Two highlights being the Supreme Champion Shropshire at the 150th Canterbury A & P Anniversary Show and then gaining the New Zealand Shropshire Sheep Society's Trophy to mark the breed's 150 years in New Zealand

Highley was chosen as the studs prefix as it was the village in Shropshire, England that John Burrows and his family immigrated from to New Zealand in 1851.



Photo: Burrows family  
Lucy Burrows with her Supreme Champion Shropshire ram Highley 507/15, at the Canterbury A & P show November, 2016.

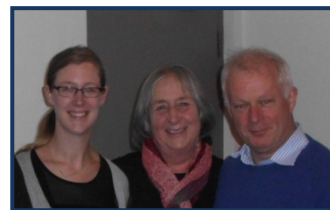
### STUD PROFILE # 4

**Saddle Hill, Flock # 311**

**Established 2013**

**Owned by Jimmy, Sandra & Moira Suttie**

*Right: Moira, Sandra & Jimmy Suttie.*



The Saddle Hill Shropshire flock is founded on three key blood lines; Waitangi, Rosemarkie and Aberchirder (via Adrian Rackley). We put 23 ewes to the ram in 2017, 7 of which were 2-tooths bred on our farm. We have 40 acres on the side of Saddle Hill about 220m above the Taieri plains immediately to the south of Dunedin. A lot of the property is in native bush – we have a 16 acre QE11 covenant on part of the property – but we have about 10 acres effective steep grazing. The adult Shropshires thrive on the hill, but we need to look after weaned lambs carefully on the better ground to get acceptable growth rates in late summer and autumn. We are in a snow zone so choose to feed hay and nuts from about mid-June to mid-August. This year we expect to start lambing on the 21<sup>st</sup> August, which is a little earlier than previously as winters seem to be becoming shorter and less severe. The early-born lambs always seem to do better than the later born, in any case.

Like a lot of New Zealand we have had a fairly cool but very wet summer and autumn. The grass has never stopped growing and we have managed to grow up 12 lovely ewe lambs to add to the flock as we build up numbers. Until a few years ago we ran a Perendale flock as well, but found that the breeds did not mix well and we sold out of Perendales in favour of the Shropshires. We find the Shropshires easy to care for – no bearings (touch wood) or foot trimming needed; easy to handle in the yards and easy lambing. They are a smaller breed but that suits our small paddocks and frequent handling and stock movement.

We are planning to build up to about 40 ewes and replacements, which we should more or less reach about 2019. We are mixing the bloodlines – our top sire now is Kuehn/Rosemarkie, and we hope to have most crosses in the flock before too long.



**PGG Wrightson Livestock**



*Shropshire NZ Chairman, Tom Burrows awards Lorne Kuehn his Life Member's badge in recognition of his contribution to the retention of the breed in New Zealand.*

Lorne has now retired from farming and his Waitangi flock (#296) founded in 1997 was withdrawn from NZSBA in 2014.

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## EW E HOGGET COMPETITION, 2017

The judging of the 2017 New Zealand competition has recently been completed. This proved to be a daunting task for the three judges - Adrian Arnold (Napier), Blair Robertson (Gore) and Andrew Craw (Banks Peninsula).

Once again, the object of the competition is for the judges to identify the most productive and profitable flock replacements, during their lifetime, in their environment .

The judges spend one hour on each property which includes assessing and evaluating the hoggets as well as interviewing the contestant about their business - past, present and future. The process is completed when the judges share their opinions (and advice when necessary). Positive critique is always appreciated.

Both Adrian and Blair judged last year's competition and were quick to realise how much more difficult this year's competition was in comparison. There were several hogget flocks who would have been worthy winners in previous years.

The standard of entries is constantly improving with some lambing percentages now over 180% with minimum wastage between scanning and docking. Mean kill dates, lamb weights, hogget liveweight and ewe efficiency scores are all statistics that also continue to improve .

I firmly believe that this competition is having a positive impact on the New Zealand sheep industry by identifying excellence and promoting optimal feeding and breeding regimes. I acknowledge the commitment and support of our sponsors allows this to happen.

Over 150,000 hoggets were presented for judging at district and regional level with flocks ranging in size from 200 to

6500. It is no wonder that the judging of national finalists is an enormous task that took seven days and 4,000 kms to complete.

Judges also have to take into account the different classes of land as well as environmental challenges for example climate, topography and animal health threats.

The majority of points are awarded for Flock Production (50) as well as Phenotype(20),Breeding objectives(15) and Wool quality(15).

This must really be regarded as the premier sheep competition in New Zealand with approximately 250 farmers entering and usually 250-300 attending the field day at the property of the overall winner.

The many hours spent helping to organise this competition is both rewarding and fulfilling.

*Stephen Rabbidge*  
**Convenor**

## Breed Finalists for the 2017 NZ Ewe Hogget Competition.

(In no particular order of placing)

Coopworth - Tom & Richard Whitford (Tuakau)  
Evans Partnership (Poolburn)

Composite - Mike & Banff Power (Ettrick)  
John & Sally Andrews (Waipiata)

Crossbreed - Raywell Farm (Leeston)  
Simon & Allan Paterson (Ranfurly)

Perendale - M McElrea (Edievale)

Romney - Andy & Campbell Denham  
(Palmerston)  
Richard & Mez Power (Hawarden)

Fine Wool - Jeremy & Julie Cameron (Hyde)  
Simon & Allan Paterson (Ranfurly)

Supreme Champion Flock and Special prizes, including Phenotype, Production, Wool Quality, Large Flock and Young Achiever to be announced at Awards evening.

Awards and Presentation evening to be held at the Gate and Harvest Hotel ,Cromwell,Thursday 8th June starting at 5.30.

**Tickets available from:**

[greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)

**or by contacting: (03) 358 9412**

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*"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."*

2017 New Zealand Ewe Hogget Competition

'21 Years'



PRESENTATION DINNER



PRESENTATION DINNER: *Thursday, 8 June 2017*

VENUE: *The Gate & Harvest Hotel, 6 Barry, Avenue, Cromwell*

TIME: *5.30 pm*

MC: *Craig Wiggins*

As well as special awards the *Overall Winner* will be announced  
at the end of the evening.

During the evening, the Breed Winners will be interviewed live by our MC, whilst a panorama of photographs  
of their farm and stock is being screened.

ENTRY COST IS \$65.00 (GST INCL) PER PERSON  
(Tables of 10 will be reserved)

ANYONE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT NZ SHEEPBREEDERS ASSN WITH NAMES  
OF THOSE ATTENDING Ph 03 3589 412; Email [greg@nzsheep.co.nz](mailto:greg@nzsheep.co.nz)  
[NUMBERS REQUIRED BEFORE 31 MAY 2017 PLEASE](#)



*All most welcome, so come along and support excellence in farming and acknowledge the Breed Winners  
efforts, culminating in the announcement of the Overall Winner. This competition is now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year.*

If you require accommodation please contact The Gate & Harvest Hotel  
website- <http://thegate.nz/> - ph 03 445 1777 (mention the ewe hogget competition)

\*\*\*SPECIAL RATE: \$165 PER PERSON AND \$185 FOR TWO PERSONS WHICH WILL INCLUDE COOKED BUFFET BREAKFAST ON 9  
JUNE – ACCOMMODATION BY ITSELF \$145 A ROOM\*\*\*



***All the sponsors of the NZ Ewe Hogget Competition are proud to be part of this great competition.***

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"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice  
has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."





Mixed age Shropshire ewes, 2009 Breeder: John Green, Feilding Photo: Sue Kingsford

## STRONG EXPORT DEMAND FOR SHROPSHIRE FROM THE UK

By Pippa Sellwood

**Pippa has been greatly involved in the running of the UK breed society, holding the post of Secretary for four years, including the SSBA's first World Congress in 2007. She was the Publicity Officer for 12 years and President from 2010 to 2012.**

Over the past decade, the Shropshire Sheep Breeders' Association in the UK has seen a marked increase in export demand for pedigree livestock and ram semen.

Ewes and rams have been sold mainly to Northern Europe, where the breed is popular for grazing in Christmas tree plantations. Exports have been made successfully to Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Denmark, where the sheep are sold to flocks that are grazing in conifers. More recently, large orders have been received from France, with smaller consignments going to Belgium, the Netherlands and – for the first time this year – Spain. In these countries, Shropshires are in demand for grazing in fruit tree plantations and cider orchards.

Most of the exports are managed by the breed society, with sheep going in one large transporter from a farm in Herefordshire that is a Government-registered Export Assembly Centre. The farm concerned is owned by the SSBA's export officer, Sue Farquhar. There is a lot of paperwork involved in sheep exports and all Shropshires have to pass a breed society inspection before being accepted for society-led overseas sales. Sue is assisted by the society's sales officer, Claire Jakeman and a small team of export inspectors. Private export sales are also made, where sheep selected by the buyers themselves move straight from breeders' farms to the buyers' holdings.

In both types of export, a levy of around 5% of the sale price of the sheep is paid to the breed society. Export prices are set annually by the SSBA and are generally higher than home market prices to take account of the extra vets' fees involved and the high health status required for livestock destined for export.

Shropshire ram semen has also been sold to breeders in Canada, the USA and Norway. Individual countries generally have their own specific health requirements for ram semen collection, but these can usually be catered for.

Over the past eight years, the value of export sales of live Shropshires has amounted to nearly £164,000. Export orders for 2017 are around the £15,000 mark so far.



*Shropshire sheep arriving in Switzerland in 2012*

**Below:** They start handlers young in the UK; Shropshire Classes in the RBST [Rare Breeds Survival Trust] Section at the Royal Three Counties Show 2016



*Left:* Archie Dorrell leads Stonegrove Livestock's two shear ram - Reserve Champion

*Right:* William Dorrell & Stonegrove Livestock's ram lamb – Champion; also Interbreed title winner & Inter-Species Champion.

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**THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL**  
Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

### **MINISTER GUY GETS IN BEHIND WOOL IN SCHOOLS**

Hon Nathan Guy, Minister for Primary Industries will join students at Wa Ora Primary School in Naenae Wellington this Thursday as they explore The Wool Shed (a converted shipping container) and learn all about the merits of homegrown New Zealand wool. He will be joined by Chair of the Campaign for Wool New Zealand Trust, Renata Apatu and the Campaign's Wool in Schools' partner, Cedric Bayly, General Manager, PGG Wrightson Wool.

Wool in Schools is a flagship initiative designed by the Campaign for Wool New Zealand Trust to educate Kiwi kids about the many benefits of wool grown right here in our own backyard. The project has two key components – a portable shipping container branded 'The Wool Shed' and a supporting website to engage and educate New Zealand children.



Hon Nathan Guy commented "I had a great visit to the 'Wool Shed' at Wa Ora Montessori School in Wellington, helping show students the amazing story behind wool. Wool is hugely versatile and has a wide range of uses. It's flexible, comfortable to wear and fire resistant. There is also great potential for new high-tech uses of wool products which will help create new markets and higher returns for farmers."

Chair of the Campaign for Wool New Zealand Trust, Renata Apatu, who is part owner and manager of one of the North Island's pre-eminent sheep station, Ngamatea, understands the importance of wool within the context of future-proofing New Zealand's primary industries and the wider economy. "The Wool in Schools project aims to help students

understand wool's place in our lives, and how and why it is part of our future," says Mr Apatu.

The Wool Shed container is jam packed with a whole raft of woolly experiences to engage children of all ages. The contents range from raw wool samples to end products showcasing the innovative uses of wool in everyday and specialised products. The container was the brainchild of Cedric Bayly, General Manager, PGG Wrightson Wool. It can be transported from school to school and forms the hands-on interactive component to the education programme.

The other component involves a complementary educational website offering teachers an excellent learning resource about wool relating to science, mathematics, economics, history, technology and art. Ongoing publicity in the Education Gazette has seen teachers flocking to the website to download the curriculum-friendly Wool Academy 101 and Woolly Workbooks. Campaign partner, Adair Eady, who initiated the workbooks, and Wool in Schools Project Manager, Vicki Linstrom, will also attend Wa Ora on Thursday to offer insights into how the in-class kits link the hands-on experience in the container back to the classroom and homework activities for year 7 and 8 students.



*Pukekohe Intermediate pupils working with a rep from PGG Wrightson*  
Photo: PGG Wrightson Wool

"The value of educating children of this age is that they will carry this knowledge through into their adult years, influencing their lifelong consumer decisions and potentially affecting their future career choices," explains Cedric Bayly, General Manager, PGG Wrightson Wool.

The global Campaign for Wool is hugely successful in the northern hemisphere where the bulk of the world's population lives, and where New Zealand's key markets for wool exist.

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*"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."*



The Campaign was initiated in October 2008 by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who had observed that the wool industry was facing enormous and unprecedented challenges. The Prince convened experts from across the agricultural, wool textile and retail sectors to discuss how to reverse the trend towards petro-chemical fibres. His Royal Highness is now the global patron of The Campaign for Wool and remains actively involved in spreading the message that wool is a precious natural, renewable and biodegradable resource that offers many technical and ecological benefits.

During his visit to New Zealand in November 2015, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales participated in the inaugural opening of The Wool Shed at Tawa College in Wellington. The Prince shared his passion for wool with a group of year 8 students and it was a huge success. The students were understandably very excited to meet His Royal Highness and enjoyed studying everything inside The Wool Shed, especially in view of it having been given the royal seal of approval.

The process of growing wool naturally, on the back of sheep, weaves its way back in time through the early days of New Zealand settlement. But the complexity and versatility of wool's unique fibres have led to an amazingly broad range of uses from clothing and carpets to health and safety, without placing a burden on the planet.

Wool in Schools is aimed at teaching New Zealand children about this amazing natural, sustainable and renewable resource. It knits together students and wool knowledge to create a legacy for the future of New Zealand wool.

#woolinschools #woolwise and join in the conversation on social media

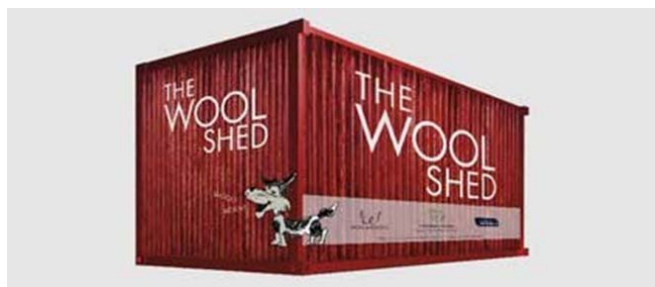
(Facebook/Instagram/Twitter) or visit

[www.woolinschools.nz](http://www.woolinschools.nz) / [www.campaignforwool.co.nz](http://www.campaignforwool.co.nz)

**For more information contact:**

Philippa Wright, Campaign for Wool NZ, Trustee, 027 242 2033

Renata Apatu, Campaign for Wool NZ, Chair, 021 669 799



## A BIT OF HISTORY

Taranaki Herald, 29 December, 1883  
[National Library, Papers Past]

### THE BREED OF SHEEP

#### TO THE EDITOR

Sir, - I am surprised that some of our practical sheep farmers have not taken "Farmer Bill" to task for his very unsatisfactory critique of your article on the best breed of sheep for the district. "Farmer Bill" appears from his letter to be more distinguished by the capacity for pulling down than for building up, and I think he is calculated to shine brighter in parish politics than in practical farming. He tells us that he likes to see a square-built sheep. So do I, but as there are many varieties of square-built sheep, some of which are not suited to our soil and climate, he about leaves the question exactly where he found it. Now, in my judgement, what we require is, which of these square built sheep is suited best for the temperate wet climate of Taranaki.

Sir, I take it the Cotswold, the Leicester, the Lincoln, the Romney Marsh, the Oxford Down, and other varieties are all square built sheep; but it is evident that one of these is the best under all conditions for some parts of our district. I agree with you that the merino can be crossed with advantage for a crop of lambs to sell off at maturity, but not for keeping; and if the ram is thoroughbred he will produce good stock with coarse ewes. The produce may not mature at fifteen months, but will make good mutton at two years, and produce two fleeces, which will realise in the London market from 2d. to 3d. per pound above the coarse longwool sheep of this district.

The Romney Marsh has a good reputation as a hardy sheep that will thrive, in a wet district, where the more tender Leicester would not be satisfactory. But as I have had no practical experience with this class of sheep I cannot speak with any authority.

I have found the Leicester do well, but the wool degenerates. The fleece is too open and coarse in fibre, but the cross with the merino produces a fleece which is full, fine, and compact, and calculated to keep the animal dry and warm during the wet, winter months. It is to my mind the perfection of an ordinary medium length of wool.

If the Shropshire Down will produce a fleece like the half-bred merino, and mutton like the South Down, and will stand the heavy rains of our district without scouring when young, I do not think anything better can be had. Perhaps some of our agricultural friends who know everything about sheep will enlighten people like myself, who thirst for information for the purpose of practical use. -

I am, & etc.,  
SHEEP FARMER





## SHROPSHIRE IN AUSTRALIA

Photos courtesy of "The Muster" magazine



Photo: Wayne Jenkins Photography (Australia)

The winning Shropshire group was shown by Marilyn Mangione (centre), Strathbogie, with the support of Tintern students, Audrey Middleton (left), Laura Mitcham (2nd left) & Chelsea Regan (right), while the Judge Colin Taylor (2<sup>nd</sup> right) looks on.



Photo: David Rizzoli, Rural Media Services (Australia)

Marilyn Mangione's 2 ewes at the country town of Clunes show last November. This is the first time in their memory that Shropshires have been shown there. Marilyn's stud is 'Clarendon' stud, based at Strathbogie in Victoria.



## Shearwell New Zealand Ltd - Advertorial

The best-selling RFID sheep tag in Britain and Canada, known as the SET tag, is now available in New Zealand.

Shearwell New Zealand supplies direct to farmers and offers livestock tags, EID readers, software, weigh crates and drafters.

The one-piece sheep tag has a wrap-around design that's light enough to be inserted into new-born lambs and strong enough to last for life. It was designed to give the best possible retention. The latest trial work in Canada shows 99% retention in 50,000 tags over a 3-year period. With these exceptional retention rates, SET tags are gaining popularity in Australia, Brazil, USA, Canada and now New Zealand.

Shearwell's revolutionary tag design allows this lifetime tag to be used as both a visual identification tag and a low-cost method of electronically identifying sheep. The tags can be applied to sheep at any age, and are also suitable for identification of other species. They are available in 11 colours (yellow, green, white, orange, grey, blue, purple, pink, black, red and brown).

Another useful tool is the Shearwell Stick Reader which has been developed for speed of use and accuracy. One of its helpful features are the green and red lights, green to show the animal is being read for the first time and red if it has already been scanned which is a real plus when pen reading.

This is the ultimate farmer-friendly tool – simple to use, rugged and versatile. It reads all types of EID ear tags and boluses, and can hold up to 16,000 records! It links by Bluetooth to mobile printers and weigh-heads. Another unique feature is the ability to interface with both android and iOS apps, which means it will greatly assist farmers to meet their NAIT requirements.

The Shearwell Weigh Crate or Automatic Drafter takes the pain out of handling large groups of sheep. The race reader and digital weigh-head are linked to a handheld stock recorder so data collection is easy, fast and accurate.

Knowing the pressures on costs, Shearwell is committed to bringing value for money to the marketplace. Talk to us about the best solution for your farm.

For more information go to [www.shearwell.co.nz](http://www.shearwell.co.nz) or call 0800 79 99 89.



## Leaders don't need titles, just passion

March 14, 2017 by Nathan Scott

*Reprinted with permission, from Achieve Ag Solutions, an Australian company.* (This article was drawn to my attention by one of our NZSBA members who thought readers would find it of interest. Editor)



How often do you hear someone quoting the latest benchmarking results and telling you the type of enterprise you should run to be most profitable? Don't get me wrong that stuff is important, but just how important is it?

I am here to tell you that the last thing you want to be is a commodity chaser. That is, the person that changes their enterprise because someone said there is more money in this other one over here. At the same time you don't want to be the stick in the mud that is so stubborn that "change" isn't even in your vocabulary.

So what should you be? The best bloody version of you that you can be. Doing something that you are passionate about. Something that you are good at. Something that you love.

We see it every day. If someone is trying to manage an enterprise that they aren't passionate about, it just doesn't perform as well as it should. At the same time we see enterprises that according to benchmarking aren't as good as the others, but the sheer passion and drive of the individual makes it a profitable option.

So my question to you is "why do you do what you do?" Or more to the point, what gets you out of bed each morning? Are you trying to be in the bottom 20%, or maybe just aiming to be average? I highly doubt it. A man once drowned while trying to cross a river with an average depth of just six inches. Don't be average.

I saw a quote recently that suggested that 80% of farmers believe they are in the top 20% (sorry to whoever's quote that is, I can't find it now!). That's far from ideal, and suggests that there is a clear role for benchmarking to tell you where you sit.

That's great for where you are now, but in setting goals for the future you should understand what is scientifically and practically possible, and set your own goals. Aim big, achieve big. An industry achieving mediocrity is not something to base your own future on.

So, back to what you do. There is more change happening right now than I have ever seen in the industry. Merinos changing to prime lamb operations, croppers bringing sheep back into the mix, cattle leaving mixed operations, while re-entering others.

There is real fear for the Merino due to the mass exodus that has been happening in recent years. And I suspect plenty in the industry will be relaxing with the thought that the recent jump in prices will help drive people back to the Merino. I am here to tell you that, while it might help, I doubt it will actually stem the flow.

Put simply, many people are just sick of Merinos. It's not a money thing. It is a personal achievement thing. How much can you achieve with an animal that has been bred for 100+ years for traits that are antagonistic with survival, growth, fertility, and general do-ability (a word I hate, but that actually does appear to mean something in the case of the Merino).

If the Merino industry wants to stem the bleeding, then stand up, take some ownership and make the progress required to breed a strong, robust animal that doesn't require mulesing, that marks plenty of lambs, and gives its owners genuine satisfaction rather than lingering despair.

Obviously there are some out there doing just this, but it is a lonely few, not an industry. Our industry needs leaders, and plenty of them. Leaders don't need titles, just the ability to inspire others through their actions. This isn't just a crack at the poor merinos, but our industry as a whole.

Stand up. Show some leadership. Take some ownership. Forget Tradition. It's time for change.





## POLL DORSET AGM & FLOCK TOUR, 2017

*Report by Barrie Rae; Photos I W McCall*

More than 40 breeders and supporters gathered in Queenstown earlier this month (May) for the 2017 Poll Dorset and Dorset Horn tour.

The tour kicked off with a trip to the heart of Central Otago, via the Gibbston Valley wine country, where the grape harvest was finally under way due to the lateness of the season. The benefit of this was plenty of Central's famed autumn colour, contrasting to the harsh schist landscape.

First stop was Poolburn in the Ida Valley and a visit to Poll Dorset breeders Sam and Deb Stevens, from the Cairnlea stud. After enjoying morning tea, we viewed the stud ewes and hoggets - which were in magnificent order - in the yards. The stud was founded by Deb's father, George Paterson, who joined the bus tour and provided a great commentary on the area. Sam and Deb farm the stud alongside dairy heifer grazing. A skillful bus driver took the bus to a vantage point on the farm, allowing great views of the Ida Valley, and the farm development.



*Cairnlea Poll Dorset ewes*

Lunch was at Black's Hotel, an historic art deco building, at Ophir - famous for having the second lowest temperature ever recorded in New Zealand.

After lunch, we headed to Alexandra and a visit to the Campbell family's Earnsclough Station, a vast 21,000ha property which ranges from 170 to 1850m ASL, and running 26,000 stock units, including Merino and Poll Merino studs, Angus, Hereford and composite cattle studs. Alistair and Duncan Campbell were busy AI'ing sheep but Alistair took the time to outline the impressive operation, within the magnificent new woolshed and covered yards, which boasted views from the smoko room showing the harsh environment. Rabbits used to be a major problem at Earnsclough but numbers are under much better control these days. It was incredible to see a property of such scale in such close proximity to town.

On the return trip to Queenstown, there was a stop-off in the quaint retail area of Clyde, near the hydro-electric dam. We

were fortunate to have on the bus Lyall McMillan, of McMillan Drilling, who outlined his company's involvement with the hydro scheme.

The second day of the tour saw a trip across Lake Wakatipu on the historic steamer TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station, for a barbecue lunch and an amusing sheep dog trialling and shearing demonstration.



*The Poll Dorset breeders enjoyed a great trip to Walter Peak station and a fantastic BBQ lunch which included lamb ribs.*

It was a great crew of people and great weather in a spectacular part of the country. The next tour will be in Southland.

At the Poll Dorset breed committee Annual Meeting in Queenstown, Rick Lee, from Elsthorpe, Hawkes Bay, was elected president, replacing Speed McIlraith who stood down.



*The newly elected chairman of the Poll Dorset and Dorset Horn breed committee, Rick Lee, inspecting Cairnlea ram hogget's of S.G & D.J Stevens Ida Valley, during our conference at Queenstown.*

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*"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."*



## THE SHEEP SHOW

By Editor

This beautiful greeting card (from an original wood engraving) was found in our local bookshop. It sat on our family notice board for a couple of years and I got it down to look at properly again the other day and thought, "wow", this would be a great item for the Sheep NewZ. I got in touch with Hilary and she kindly gave me permission to use it and even sent me a high quality email copy to reproduce.

She says, "The edition was 200 - quite large but quickly sold out. I have a few artist's proofs left priced £150 (I use PayPal)" . *(If you decide to purchase a proof of the above print please mention you saw it in the Sheep Newz!)*

Her books are fairly heavy and Hilary offers a discount to help offset postage costs should you see one on the net that you would like.

Hardback: £34

Paperback: £25;

Slow post will be about £15 and Airmail could be as much as £23.

Hilary also has several books for sale (not sheep related) and has a website with some of her other work. Her prints are absolutely stunning with very fine detail. Just "google" Hilary Paynter and her site will come up.

Below is her abridged CV: -

### **HILARY PAYNTER Wood Engraver**

President, Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers: 2006 - 2011

Chairman, Society of Wood Engravers: 1999 - 2006

Monograph **Full Circle**, with 600+ engravings, published in 2010

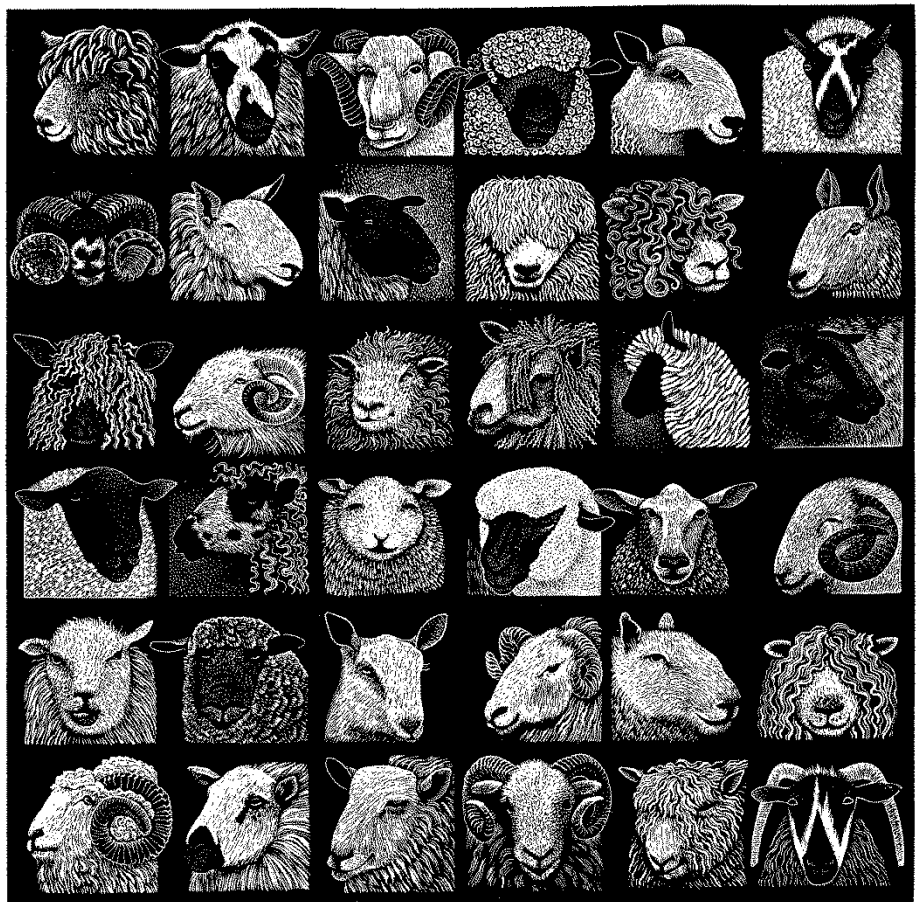
Born 1943, Dunfermline.

NDD Portsmouth College of Art: Sculpture and Wood Engraving.

MA and MSC in Psychology.

Parallel careers in wood engraving and Special Needs education for 30 years, fulltime artist since 2000.

Revived the then moribund Society of Wood Engravers in early 1980's.



Wood engravings in collections of V&A, Ashmolean, Fitzwilliam Museums; Laing Art Gallery, Hereford and Durham City Art Galleries; Universities of London and Northumbria

### **Artist's Statement**

I always have more ideas than I can use and these range widely to include socio-political comment and landscape. I normally work directly onto end-grain wood with rudimentary drawings from ideas that I have been refining mentally and this allows development of the engraving on the block.

Brunswick House, Torridge Hill, Bideford, Devon EX39 2BB

Email: [hilarypaynter@yahoo.com](mailto:hilarypaynter@yahoo.com) Tel: 01237 479679  
[www.hilarypaynter.com](http://www.hilarypaynter.com)



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**Callum McDonald**  
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Southland  
027 433 6443



**Callum Dunnett**  
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Mid/South Canterbury  
027 590 8612



**Cam Heggie**  
Livestock Genetics Rep  
King Country, Waikato,  
Northland, Bay of Plenty  
027 501 8182



**Graham Sidey**  
Livestock Genetics Rep  
North Canterbury,  
Nelson, Marlborough  
027 432 1384



**John McKone**  
Livestock Genetics Rep,  
Auctioneer  
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**Roger Keach**  
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**Bruce Orr**  
Senior Genetics Advisor  
027 592 2121

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*To wool the world!*

#### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

Free advertisements are available for member breeders with surplus stud ewes for sale.

Let others know that you have spare ewes. Maybe enable a new flock or two to start.

Remember the "Sheep NewZ" goes up on the website, available to be read by anyone with an interest in sheep!!!

Email adverts to the Editor or [nzsheep@clear.net.nz](mailto:nzsheep@clear.net.nz)

**Wallplanners & Sheep Breeds posters  
are available at the Office. Contact  
[nzsheep@clear.net.nz](mailto:nzsheep@clear.net.nz)**

The closing date for next issue of the newsletter will be 20<sup>th</sup> August for the September 2017 Newsletter.

THE NEXT "FEATURE BREED" WILL BE TEXELS

If you would like to be part of this section, **photos and stud histories of all breeds are accepted at any time.**

Email or post to the Editor – see front page for address details.

**Published by NZ Sheepbreeders' Association**

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