



# Weddel's World

★ WESTFIELD  
★ TOMOANA  
★ KAITI  
★ - in conjunction with  
Gisborne Sheepfarmers  
Freezing Co. Ltd.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER  
ISSUED BY  
W. & R. FLETCHER (N.Z.) LTD

SEPTEMBER, 1982

## Weddel lamb wins double honour

**A WINNING** show of Weddel lamb from New Zealand was admired by Her Majesty the Queen Mother who visited London's Smithfield Market during Frozen Meat Export Centennial celebrations.

Weddel's display, supplied by W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd, also won the wholesale display competition held by the New Zealand Meat Producers' Board at the height of the celebrations.

All the carcasses exhibited were shrinkwrap production and their appearance amply illustrated the superior turnout of this style of wrapping. They drew many favourable comments from those present, especially when compared with the usual storage bleached effect exhibited by other marketing companies.

The New Zealand stand was one of the most popular at the show, which celebrated the first cargo of this country's lamb to Britain in 1882, and the Weddel stand alone featured well over 100 carcasses of lamb, and packaged boneless mutton.

**TOP right: Her Majesty the Queen Mother pauses during her visit to London's Smithfield Market to speak to the, since retired, European Director of the New Zealand Meat Producers' Board, Mr Harry Douglas (centre back) and Weddel's Smithfield Market Supervisor, Mr Roy Andrews (far right).**



**ABOVE:** The popular Weddel stand featuring mutton supplied by Weddel's New Zealand company W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The show of lamb carcasses supplied by W & R Fletcher which won the wholesale display competition during the export centenary celebrations.

## AMC changes premises

**AUCKLAND Meat Company staff have a new home — at the Westfield Freezing Company premises in Great South Road.**

The Meat Company's General Manager, Mr George Stewart, said the move was made because offices at Westfield were vacant and it was more centralised.

With Mr Stewart in their new surroundings are the Company Accountant, Mr Peter Froud; Shop Supervisors, Colin Clark and Stephen Sell; Miriam Atkins and Debbie Butterworth, who are involved in wages and moni-

toring results from the abattoirs, retail shops and the hospital. Working with Miriam and Debbie is Oscar Westlund, who joined the Meat Company after the premises changeover.

Associated with the Company at its depot is Manager, Michael Gray, and Mrs Joy Davis who is the AMC's longest serving female staff member after 15 years.

The depot is the processing centre and the intermediate step after the meat is purchased by W & R Fletcher buyers, and before it is supplied to AMC retail stores and the hospital.

## Venture marks new era in canning

**A NEW era in canned meat production has begun for W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd following a joint venture with McCullum Industries in Auckland.**

Although W & R Fletcher and McCullum Industries have been in partnership since 1974 following the closure of the original Westfield Cannery in 1972, production at the small McCullum Cannery at Waitakere has been limited.

Now, the opening of new and larger premises in Henderson, Auckland — equipped with a 340-gram can line boasting a capacity of 40,000 cans per day — means an assured repeat of orders from established markets and the promise of new ones.

When the Westfield Cannery ceased production, 45 years of manufacturing legion types of canned meat came to an end.

The "W & R Fletcher-McCullum Industries" partnership began operation by reintroducing the previously popular Palm Corned Beef brand name into the Pacific Islands. The canning process was initially a hand-filled one but was still able to produce an average of 3,500 cans a day during the first year.

Product confidence in the market place eventually brought about the installation of more sophisticated equip-



**THE smart new premises at Henderson, Auckland, provide a sharp contrast and a vast improvement on the previous cramped factory at Waitakere.**

ment with a daily output of about 17,000 cans.

Nearly 19 million cans of variety foods were processed between 1975 and 1982, and

sent as far afield as Muscat and Iran. Maintaining that level, however, pressured the small cannery enormously.

But with the capacity levels

now attainable and space options available for ancillary lines and ready expansion, the joint venture has a lot going for it.

## Casings market improves

THE world wide casings market is showing signs of limited recovery according to the UK Manager Casings and Tennis Strings Division, Mr Dennis Frederickson.

Interviewed in January, Mr Frederickson noted that the market situation has been very difficult over the previous 12 months with prices down 25 percent on some items. The problem had been caused in the main by the general recession, compounded by fluctuating exchange rates and high interest rates, and a large carry over of product from the 1980/81 season.

"As a result of these market influences, buyers were not

prepared to speculate in committing their finances to high value, slow moving stocks; and have also become very particular about the quality of the product and related conditions of sale", Mr Frederickson commented.

Recently, however, Mr Frederickson told Weddel's World that the market appeared to be showing signs of limited recovery "after going through a most difficult period".

After early season price reductions the market appeared to have bottomed, he said.

"The carry over of product also appears to have been moved, and buyers are now

buying in a more regulated manner, putting the onus of stock holding back on the producer. This has brought some stability to the market".

Mr Frederickson said he expected this trend in buying to continue for some time.

"However, should the rumoured stock holding by some New Zealand producers of current season's product be correct, there is every possibility of further significant price reductions", he added.

New Zealand's first cut sheep and lamb casings are exported to North America, Germany and Holland for sausages. The bottom end of the market goes to the UK, Italy and Spain.

## Law of supply and demand essential

**CONDITIONS affecting New Zealand's stake in the international meat market were outlined recently by the General Manager of W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd, Mr Peter Johnston.**

"New Zealand is having a difficult time with meat due mainly to factors such as:

- the general world recession tightening housewives' purse strings;
- inflation costs in New Zealand rising faster than in customer countries;
- instability in the Middle East — a large sheepmeat eating area;
- record levels of local production," Mr Johnston said.

"In hard times there is a tendency to look for dramatic 'zip fastener' type solutions, or as someone said recently — 'in good times farmers are capitalists, in bad times they swing to socialism'.

"Hence the recent arguments over moves to change the selling system for lamb, despite the fact that overseas receipts

prices seem to have risen in excess of customer countries' inflation rates.

"A sad feature of some approaches has been the tendency towards monopolist thinking, ignoring the supply and demand factors.

"Such thinking ignores the fact that lamb is meat and apart from not having a total monopoly on lamb, New Zealand most certainly does not have a monopoly on meat. The housewife's purse will decide which of the many choices she will buy.

"Meat is a perishable product, currently facing some decline in buying power and the not inconsiderable factor of health fads — however unsoundly based.

"Meat is not diamonds, nor oil — and even the latter is facing price resistance from alternatives — so we need to think long and hard before we dump a free enterprise system responsive to the law of supply and demand and replace it with bureaucratic alternatives which will not alter the underlying problems.

"Perhaps even more important, the New Zealand farmer will find himself with no free enterprise choice or competition, and that he will ultimately regret.

"But perhaps by the time this article goes to press common sense will have prevailed!" Mr Johnston added.

# New systems evaluated

**W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd is evaluating new handling and packaging systems designed by two New Zealand companies especially for the meat industry.**

Both UEB Industries Ltd and AHI Hygrade Packaging Company have produced competitive systems to cater for the trend towards the use of cartons in the industry.

Group Quality Control Manager, Mr Dennis McClenaghan, attended a UEB Industries' seminar held in Auckland recently and said it was a useful opportunity to see the equipment in operation.

The machines are already in use in New Zealand, and Mr McClenaghan said the industry is ready for the improvements the technology will bring.

He said they will increase efficiency, cut costs and improve standards.

A conveyor transports the erected cartons through the packing room, to the weighing station. There, a digital readout must register the weight as correct to within 100 grams, or the carton will not progress. This enables the operator to adjust the meatpack to the correct weight.

Mr McClenaghan estimates the savings through this weighing system, at Westfield alone, to be around \$40,000 a year.

A code entered at the scale identifies the contents of the carton, before a printer codes and records the weight,

packing date, product description and Standpack code.

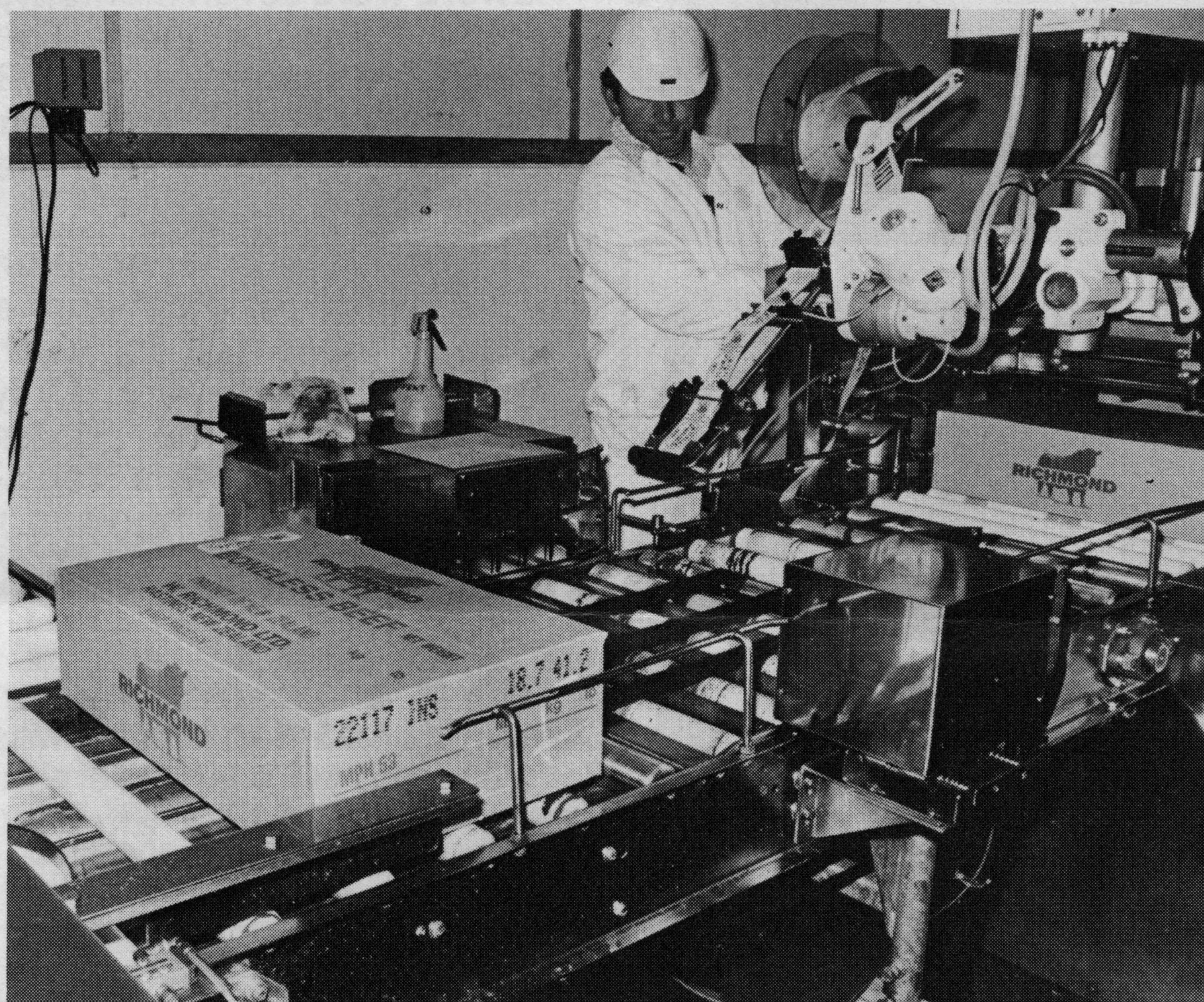
This is another major plus. With the present system all cartons must be pre-branded with descriptions of the contents. The one-carton system allows not only standard cartons for all cuts, but branding and packaging can be done in one operation. The cartons can also be branded in Arabic!

The coding system can be directly linked to a computer for continuous process and

inventory control — a big efficiency factor.

Closing and sealing follows on a bi-directional sealer using hot melt glue. This eliminates bulgy cartons. A conveyor then carries the sealed cartons to the freezers.

And Mr McClenaghan said W & R Fletcher will be using specially lined cartons in the new season. Exhibited at the seminar, the boxes have a plastic coating on the inside, which, especially for contents such as inedible offal, eliminates the use of polythene liners. — Photo courtesy of Hawkes Bay Herald Tribune.



**AMC wins  
\$1m  
contract**

**PATIENTS in the 15 hospitals administered by the Auckland Hospital Board are dining on Fletcher meat following the successful tender by the Auckland Meat Company for the \$1 million, year-long contract.**

The Meat Company's General Manager, Mr George Stewart says the contract is an "extremely important one".

"It helps the profitability of our abattoir department by the increased volume. We have served the hospital for the past 10 to 15 years, sometimes with the complete contract and sometimes with part of it," he says.

Last year was the first time the Company lost the contract to a competitor but Mr Stewart says he is "positive" the Company will retain it when it again goes up for tender in April next year.

"The young lady in the depot office, Judy Vincent, had remained in contact with the dieticians at the hospital and received congratulations from them when we won the contract. They said they were 'pleased to have the Auckland Meat Company contract back again'," Mr Stewart said.

The Company supplies the hospitals with both meat and a variety of offal. The weekly volume, apart from veal, lamb and pork, is 30 carcasses of beef and 100 to 120 of mutton. The offal includes ox heart, liver, kidney, sweetbreads, tongue, and tripe.

But just as important to the Company are the spin-off benefits for supplies to its retail outlets throughout the Auckland area.

Mr Stewart explained: "By having the hospital contract and retail shops, it makes the very most of our resources. Say the hospital orders 30 carcasses of beef — they do not order any rump or sirloin so we sell it through our retail outlets and this spin-off allows us to compete with local competition at the same time."

The Hospital Board's is the only major contract the Auckland Meat Company has had but Mr Stewart said it has almost always had the contract and it is sufficient for viability.

And what better to tempt the palates of Auckland's invalids than W&R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd meat?

## Tomoana sponsors jumping classic

**SOME of New Zealand's finest showjumpers took to the ring at the Hastings Highland Games in the Nelsons (NZ) Ltd invitation showjumping classic — this**

**country's third richest showjumping competition.**

Tomoana was well represented as a sponsor, contributing to the \$2000 worth of prizes. The event was run in

two parts — the speed section, which required the horses to jump a course in the fastest time possible and the puissance in which height and width of the six jumps was progressively increased.

The speed event was won by Ho, ridden by Tom Cruse of Waikato, but when the puissance points were added, the overall winner was Doug Isaacson of Danvirke on Chicago Peace, who was the only one to clear the final jump of six feet eight inches. He also ran second in the speed event.

Pictured is Calico Joe, ridden by Ian Campbell, clearing the highest jump during the speed section, in which he was later placed third.



# STAFF NEWS

## Transfers

BEST of luck to Robert Dockary, previously Freezer Supervisor at Tomoana who has transferred to Westfield and his new position as Industrial Manager.

## Appointments

THE Head Office communications centre has had a few changes recently. John Thorne has become the new Supervisor and Karen Tapp, formerly an office junior has joined the staff. Kathleen Ahern is the newest face having previously been a telex operator from a banking background. Best wishes to you all in your new positions.



## Long service recognised

SERVICE to the Patea Works Fire Brigade totalling 185 years was represented at a presentation at the Hawera Fire Station recently.

Receiving their Royal New Zealand Fire Brigade Long

Service and Good Conduct Medals from the Mayor of Hawera were seven members of the Patea brigade. The General Manager of W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd, Mr Peter Johnston, also attended the presentation.

Many people attended the function including representatives of the Fire Commission, Gold Star Association and the Westfield and Tomoana brigades.

## 25 years' service

**MISS Shigeko Shimano celebrates 25 years with Weddel in Osaka, Japan, this month and this achievement celebrates a long and successful career.**

Anyone who has travelled within Japan will know the extent of Shimano-san's involvement in many years of trading, including meat, by-products and marine products. It is difficult to imagine sales continuing in the future without Shimano-san being involved somewhere, says the "Weddel's World" roving reporter.

In an exclusive interview Shimano-san said her interests include travel and sightseeing and that she has

a particularly soft spot for birds. Pride of place goes to "Kyu-chan", her mynah, which on good authority has an extensive Australian-Japanese vocabulary.

Congratulations and good health for the future are extended to Shimano-san by all her friends in New Zealand.

The medal is in recognition of 14 years service and a clasp is presented for each additional seven years. (Only service since the Patea Works Brigade was registered in 1954 is recognised.)

## Farewelled

AND in another celebration recently Mr Brian Minton was farewelled on his retirement from the brigade after 40 years' service.

**PICTURED** back row (left to right) are: ex-Fireman, Graham Hamblin (14 years' service); ex-Fireman, Doug McLellan (31 years' service); Patea Works' General Manager, Alan Parker; ex-Fireman, Dan Hickey (25 years' service). Front row (left to right); Fireman, Les Anderson (20 years' service); ex-Chief Fire Officer, Brian Minton (40 years' service); Chief Fire Officer, Barry Wills (27 years' service); Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Hughie Katu (28 years' service).

## New blood for "Weddel's World"

"WEDDEL'S World" has had a change of face behind the scenes.

Now, when items come in from staff for publication, they will pass through the hands of Head Office receptionist/telephonist, Gerry Borrett, who has taken over liaison for the magazine.

Sadly, however, W & R Fletcher and "Weddel's World" have bid farewell to Barbara Pickett, formerly secretary to W & R Fletcher's Assistant General Manager, Mr Brian Browne. Barbara has returned to Radio New Zealand after almost five years with W & R Fletcher (NZ) Ltd.

Thanks to Barbara for all her hard work on "Weddel's World", and best wishes and many great stories to come, to Gerry.



LIAISON for "Weddel's World" is now in the capable hands of Head Office receptionist/telephonist, Gerry Borrett (right), following the return of Barbara Pickett (left) to Radio New Zealand.

