

## THE ALTMANN STRIPPER and CHAFF CUTTER

The AHMRC is indebted to the Altmann family (Eric, Michael, Norm and Ray are long-standing members) for their generous donation of two significant Mt Barker manufactured agricultural items:

- (1) The first is a Ridley-type Stripper made by J. G. Ramsay and Co of Mt Barker in the 1870's or possibly earlier. It closely follows the design of other "improved" reapers and was originally horse drawn with a team of usually two. Ramsay's were able to copy the design without fear of patent infringement because of the generous foresight of John Ridley who, in 1843, lodged a caveat with Governor George Grey preventing anyone (including himself) from holding patent rights to the reaper. The unit makes an interesting comparison with the club's replica Ridley Stripper which was recreated by students at Mt Barker TAFE and is on permanent loan to us. The replica needs to be pushed by a pair of horses and steered by wheels extending at the rear. The replica has a chimney to discharge dust and chaff as Ridley hoped that the action of his beaters would strip the wheat ears, thrash them, and winnow the product! Another improvement from the prototype was to change from a gear externally driving a flywheel to an internally driven gear. This allowed the belt drive to the beaters to be uncrossed. This improvement was developed by Walter Paterson whose grandson Roy was a member of AHMRC for many years. Roy was well known for his inventive POP displays.

Our Ramsay Stripper was delivered to the Chookshed on 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 and is in wonderful, original condition because it has been shedded at the Altmann property "Blackwood Park" since it was last used in the late 1930's! (see Figures 1, 2 and 3).

Blackwood Park is a well known Balhannah property which was described enthusiastically as a "model farm" in November 1932. This article can be seen at the club's library or on the internet at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article90632385>.



Figure 1 Stripping Wheat 1936 at Blackwood Park



Figure 2 Ramsay Stripper generously given to AHMRC by the Altmann family  
(photo Paul Maloney)



Figure 3 Nameplate on the Ramsay Stripper, cobwebs are real! (photo Paul Maloney)

- (2) The second item donated to the club is a No 4 Chaff Cutter made by Salman Bros of Mt Barker. This machine is a valuable addition to the club and it may be displayed in the future as an “as found” item compared to other restored Chaff Cutters. Club members are currently working on a Salman Bros No 4 including completely replacing all of the timber work. A new chaff elevator has also been constructed. Work on the metal components included welding (“spraying”) iron on worn out bearing and then turning them down to size. Ray Bailey is working on his Dutch Bros Chaff Cutter which he says may never go home i.e it may become a Club asset by default!

Mark Randell