



New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association

Wairarapa Branch Incorporated

Newsletter for **December 2016**

Next meeting Wednesday 14th December 2016
6:30 pm Amalgamated Helicopters
Chester Road, Carterton

Branch Christmas barbeque Wednesday 14 December 6:30 pm Amalgamated Helicopters, Chester Road, Carterton

Come and check out Amalgamated Helicopters new machine - an ex-sheriff MD600N all the way from Alabama USA. The bigger and more powerful 600N is one of only two currently being operated within NZ. It has the NOTAR system (no tail rotor) which enhances safety and reduces its noise signature. With an increase in lift capacity to boot, and a top speed of 152 knots (282 kph), JD and the guys at Amalgamated are looking forward to showing us their new machine.



Note the earlier date of 14 December and start time of 6:30 pm!

Barbeque to follow. Sausages, bread, and sauce will be provided by the club. Soft drinks available for purchase. Please bring salads or any other 'fancy food' to add to the mix!

There will be **no meeting in January** and no January newsletter. The committee wishes all members a safe and happy holiday season. Next general meeting will be Wednesday 15 February 2017.

Key Dates - Upcoming Trips and Events

15 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS BARBEQUE Check out the first page!

15 FEBRUARY First general meeting for 2017. Speaker to be confirmed.

25-26 FEBRUARY Summer fallow hunt to Wanganui. Please contact Andrew Wilkinson on 0274 381363. Dates will be confirmed in mid-January.

17-19 MARCH Subsidised Tararua fly-in trip. Please text your details to Martin Amos on 027 3671635 if interested. Numbers need to be confirmed by 3 March.

TINUI GOAT HUNT Now delayed until after the fire season.

SOUTH ISLAND ROAD TRIP The committee is trying to arrange a club trip to the South Island in 2017 to chase tahr and wallabies. More details next year ☺

QUAD/SIDE BY SIDE TRAINING COURSE Date still to be confirmed. If you are wanting to attend this course and get your competency certificate, please phone or text Martin on 027 3671635, or e-mail martin.tracy@xtra.co.nz Thank you to Lance Hare who gives his time to train us all!



Recent Events

12 NOVEMBER Firewood working bee. An excellent attendance of 24 members despite the wet conditions. A mountain of wood was split and this has raised over \$1800 to help subsidise hunting trips and other club activities. Great scones too!



16 NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING Johnny Mulheron gave a great talk on his role as a paramedic involved with mountain rescue and medicine. The turnout was disappointing, as all hunters would have benefited from Johnny's advice and experience which could literally save your life. We hope to get Johnny back for a practical first aid session at some stage. Thanks to Ian Kebbell for organising this.

News

PERSONAL LOCATOR BEACONS

The club PLBs purchased with a grant application from **Trust House Wairarapa** will be available for use from February 2017 once a register has been set up. Contact Aidan on 0274 323410.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

SAR were involved in the search for the two overdue trampers who were tragically found dead on Alpha Peak last month. Police have confirmed that the cause of death was hypothermia. If you are interested in joining SAR please contact Phil Gray on 027 474 0717.

PARKVALE HALL

Regular bookings are helping to raise funds for the club. The Parkvale community group will be using the hall for its Christmas function on 15 December.

HUTS AND TRACKS

Still no dates for re-piling of Cow Creek hut and replacing the deck at Herepai Hut. We will need volunteers once timing is confirmed with DOC.

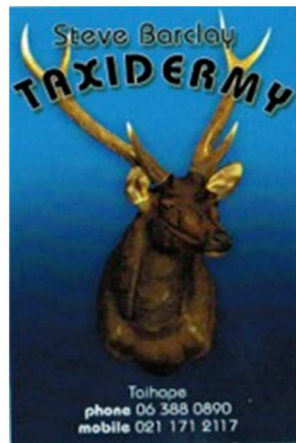
DEER PARK

Deer have been TB-tested. New handling race worked well.

LOWER NORTH ISLAND RED DEER FOUNDATION INC.

DAY IN COURT AJOURNED 6 December was down as the judicial review hearing over the 2015 WARO review outcome which saw openings to WARO in the Ruahines, Tararuas and Rimutakas. However there is a delay as the judge who has already read all the associated paperwork was concerned as to whether the WARO operators had been given adequate opportunity to be involved as they are an affected party if she reverses the decision. The concern is that they would otherwise have an appeal option and she wants a robust decision. As frustrating as this is it is not necessarily a bad thing for our cause that this concern exists. The north island operators (6 only) will have a few weeks to express an interest and pay for involvement if they want in. A new hearing is likely in mid-January 2017. Gordon George (GG), President, Lower North Island Red Deer Foundation Inc.





Hunting Reports

No animals were harmed in this month's story by Richard O'Driscoll. Surely you can do better! Contributions can be sent to the newsletter editor at wairarapanzda@gmail.com

Nearly and not quite

Richard O'Driscoll

I shot my first deer at age 36 - a late starter. I spent much of my youth fly-fishing. A somewhat backward outdoor development I have come to realise as dodgy knees and ageing eyesight remind me that hunting skills are best acquired when young and fit. Since joining the Deerstalkers I have had more opportunities, and met some experienced hunters, and my limited skills have grown sufficiently to keep the freezer stocked.

Most of my successes have been on private land. I have shot only a handful of 'real' DOC-land reds. Each one remembered. Earned. But just last week I had another Tararua trip for the memory banks.



This trip had a prequel. A couple of weeks ago - the big earthquake. I'd made a late start on Sunday night and got into a favoured Tararua spot late evening. In the gathering gloom I'd spooked two deer, and then camped with high hopes for a successful Monday morning hunt. At midnight the ground shook. I'd woken in the tent, thinking "that must have been a huge gust of wind, hope I'm not going to have to shift camp to get more shelter". But as I lay there listening, no further 'gusts' eventuated so I went back to sleep. Next morning, perfect conditions but no deer. Perhaps they'd been terrified back into the bush by the shaking?

Last week I was better organized. Good forecast, no moon, dropping river levels. I put in a leave application at work for Friday, snuck home early Thursday and headed bush. There were only a couple of cars in the carpark. Met the owner of the ute with dog box early on the track - a pig hunter and 3 dogs out for an evening hunt. I just hoped the owner of the other vehicle (a small hatchback) was a tramper heading for the hut.

After a 2.5 hour walk up and over I reached my campsite. Set up the tent amongst the manuka on a small flat, gobbled some dinner and headed upriver. I'd planned to hunt my way well up the stream, but as I approached the first lookout point on a bush terrace, a swirling breeze convinced me to stay put as it looked pretty good below me with signs of recent grazing. I settled in and waited (I think it's called 'still hunting') for 2 hours until it was too dark to see with the naked eye.

Walked back down the terrace towards the tent and had a look with binoculars as I came out on the top of the small flat. Spotted a dark lump against the lighter grass near a small tree only about 30 m from my tent. Initially I thought this might have been a pig, but as I watched it raised its head and I could see it was a yearling hind quartering away. She put her head down again and I tried to get set up to shoot, but all I could see through scope was a blur of the grass in front of me. Another check with binoculars confirmed the deer was still there only 100 m away. I tried to crawl closer and got within 80 m. By now the hind was alert and facing me, but I still just couldn't see it through the scope in the dark (and certainly not with naked eye). Good binoculars are amazing, but why hadn't I come back to the tent 5 minutes earlier.

I gave up. As I unzipped the tent I heard her bark from bush. My hunting ethics must be much more deeply ingrained than I realised, as it didn't even occur to me until much later, as I was falling asleep, that I could have (illegally) switched on my headlight!



Alarm set for 4:40 am. Snuck out of tent and even before I put my boots on I had a good look with binoculars - no handy ones. I walked straight back upstream to last night's lookout and had a good 2-minute look. Should have been a 5-minute look! I couldn't see far because of the morning fog drifting down the valley. It is a steep little climb off the bush terrace and back down into the stream, so I unloaded the chamber on the rifle. As I got to the stream, I pushed a .270 round back into the breech which clattered a bit. When I looked up, there was a hind staring at me from a gap in the manuka only 20 m away! She bolted as I raised the rifle and two more yearlings followed her across the doorway-size gap. I hurried to the left to see if I could get another glimpse, but they beat me to bush.

Carried on upstream with the fog still swirling. Hurrying to maximize the ground covered in the prime early light. As I rounded a bend and crested a small rise, the fog lifted enough to glimpse the rear ends of two stags walking back towards the bush about 300 m away - ephemeral shapes in the mist and long grass. I quickly ducked into the trees to close the distance, but by the time I came out of cover, two trails through the wet grass showed where they'd gone into the bush on the opposite bank.

I continued another kilometre upstream past more little slips and boggy flats with no further sightings, so turned round and headed back to camp. When I got back to the tent it was 7 am, and I decided to carry on

downstream to look at a big slip. Just maybe there would be a slow one catching the first rays of the rising sun? I carefully glassed the slip as it was revealed from the bush terrace opposite. Nothing. Then, as I broke out of bush next to the stream, a deer suddenly walked off 30 m below me in the toetoe. It wasn't going fast and I saw its back and bum bobbing along through the scope, but didn't shoot. I thought/hoped it was trapped between me and the stream, and raced along a parallel course hoping to head it off. Wrong move, as it must have heard me and run. Footprints in the sand showed where it had beaten me to the junction just upstream of where the trail dropped into the stream and gone up the bank into cover. Kicked myself. Probably should have fawn-called in hope it would stop, or crashed straight down through toetoe and had a bum on shot as it ran away. Should have, could have, would have! Should have been a gift, but not to be ...

So in a quick overnighter I'd seen seven wild Tararua deer only a few hours from the carpark, but through a combination of bad timing, bad luck, and wrong decisions didn't get a shot. A memorable trip all the same. I'm still learning, but now I go hunting, even in the Tararuas, with the expectation, rather than just a vague hope, of seeing animals. Having a healthy supply of Wanganui fallow venison in the freezer helped ease the pain of missing out. And my dodgy knees weren't that sorry that I didn't have the extra weight as I packed up camp for the climb out!

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Email: ross@outdoorsupplies.co.nz
Web site: www.outdoorsupplies.co.nz

Buy, Sell, and Swap

If you have hunting or outdoor related items that you want to buy, sell, or swap, then we'll include these in the Newsletter free of charge (better than TradeMe). Send items (with picture if you wish) to wairarapanzda@gmail.com

FIRESTONE FIREHAWK RMT TYRES

31x10.50R15LT.M.S Half-worn. \$50 each. Call Paul on 06 3770467 after 6 pm.

CAST-IRON POT BELLY and FLUE

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CHILLER/FREEZER COMBO

3.4M X 2.4M WIDE

Can be mobile, put on wheels

\$5000 phone: John 0274 460 924

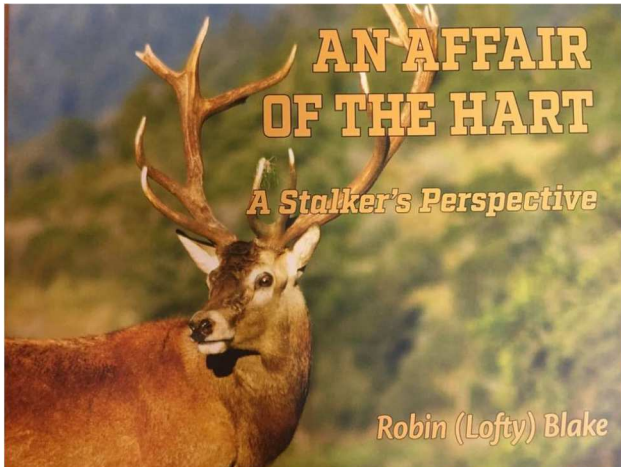
FIREARM FOR SALE

Parker Hale .270 No scope \$400 – also listed on Trade-me

3 x boxes (20 rounds) .303 ammo \$20 per box

Phone Sean 021 822 802

BOOKS



\$50 per book signed by the Author

Lofty has given our branch a great opportunity to sell these books and our Branch receives \$10 per copy

This would make a great Christmas present!!

Final Thoughts



Be safe be sure.
Assume it is a person not a deer.
No meat is better than no mate.
Identify your target.

A **big** thank you to the team at **Wairarapa Funeral Services** for your printing of our monthly newsletter this year – we really have appreciated your assistance.



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