



August 2017

Feels like winter!

Surprise, surprise it has been cold and wet. That's winter for you! Even with the cold we have still been out and about.

Here's a great example of how working together in a rural area can benefit those living there, assist Police, and give the victims the results they deserve.

The other day while down near Clarence I was approached by a member of the public and advised that there may have been a poaching incident in the area. I spoke to some locals and found they had been working together to help track down of the unlawful hunters.

It all started with a farmer who was moving sheep along the road who noticed a fair amount of blood on the road. He checked the area and found two distinctive fallow deer down the bank with their heads removed. The carcasses had been recently dumped.

He contacted the owner of a trophy hunting farm up the valley, who he knew had fallow deer. The farm owner then discovered two of his prize stags were no longer in his paddock. He checked the carcasses and identified them as his. Everyone in the valley became aware of the incident and pooled their resources and information.

It was established that in the early hours of the morning the two deer were shot on a farmer's property. There was no doubt they were farmed deer as they were behind a deer fence on a farm.

A picture started to emerge as the locals pieced together what had occurred. Two areas in the paddock revealed concentrated patches of



Sergeant Mike Porter in the Clarence area.

blood and hair. From there boot prints and drag marks were left in the mud, clearly showing the path the offenders had taken to move the carcasses to a vehicle. The discovery of the two carcasses about 8kms further down the road towards the state highway led to everything unravelling for the poachers. I was in the area that day and was given information about who was in the valley and who may have had knowledge of what occurred.

Along with all the evidence gathered by the victim and others in the valley, I was able to begin enquiries.

The first place after the scenes I went to was still further up the valley.

I spoke to two young men there. Both acknowledged they had been working in the area and one of them for the past 7 weeks. They had driven past the deer many times before they were shot.



There was the usual to and fro when questioned about their activities however, when confronted with evidence gained at the scene, in their vehicle, on clothing and other items in their possession, they admitted they were involved in killing the two deer that morning.

As a result I was able to recover the hunting equipment used by them that night and the two stag heads in antler. Surprisingly the two stag heads and the firearm used were 110km away in Spring Creek, near Blenheim. I dispatched a patrol to retrieve them.

To identify the hunters and deal with them took the day, and the prosecution and follow up will take many, many more hours. But due to the manner in which the farming community in this valley came together and all helped to resolve the puzzle, a result was achieved by them very quickly.

A 26 year old man from Blenheim is facing a charge of Unlawful Hunting and Possession of a Firearm without a Licence and a 15 year old from Springfield is being reported to Youth Aid for Unlawful Hunting.



Two fallow stag heads recovered

It just reinforces what we keep saying – we can't always be there, the community must take measures to ensure their own safety and work together to reduce rural crime.

I can assure you since that incident my phone has rung hot with people from throughout our province, from Nelson and Christchurch passing on that they heard about how this was resolved and that the message is out there; if you venture into that area and do

something wrong the community is going to take all steps to identify you and report it.

What a message to those that prey on rural communities! We are watching, we will react and the chances of being caught are very high. If you are a good person and contribute to the community we welcome you – if not, you better be on guard or move on!

Update - A man was convicted in the Blenheim District Court for poaching. He was ordered to pay \$4500 reparation to the victim, received 40 hours' community work and the firearm was destroyed.



Still out there doing it..... we are not always working but we get out in the rural areas. **Constable Jenny Buck** tells us about one of her recent challenges.

When faced with the dilemma of getting a horse to Kaikoura recently I realised I had two choices – either drive or ride.

To be honest, the thought of a 9-10 hour slow drive with a horse float didn't appeal to me much, so a friend and I hatched a plan to ride from the Clarence into the Puhipuhi Valley, Kaikoura.

There was a certain element of danger due to the terrain, not to mention time pressure to be into the Puh Valley in time for the winter setting sun. Nothing like a challenge!

We set off on 29th of June and with bad weather looming ahead, time was of the essence.

My friend Helen and I rode a horse each and the young horse that was going to be left in Kaikoura

trotted along behind us.

Loading horses at dawn, we headed down to the Clarence. Rick Milton from Middle Hill, kindly let us on to his land and showed us on the map the best way up over the top into the Puh. We were packed and on the horses by 10am.

Trekking solidly uphill for a couple of hours, we then





left the safety of the farm track and headed up onto the saddle where Middle Hill boundary met Puhi Peaks Station.

By now we all had a good sweat up, taking in great views looking down onto the Clarence and out to sea. We had the perfect day, sunny with no wind.

We went up over the saddle and sidled round down into a better position to get through the boundary fence where Rick had suggested. We untied a previously cut section and using a raincoat over the bottom few wires jumped the horses over.

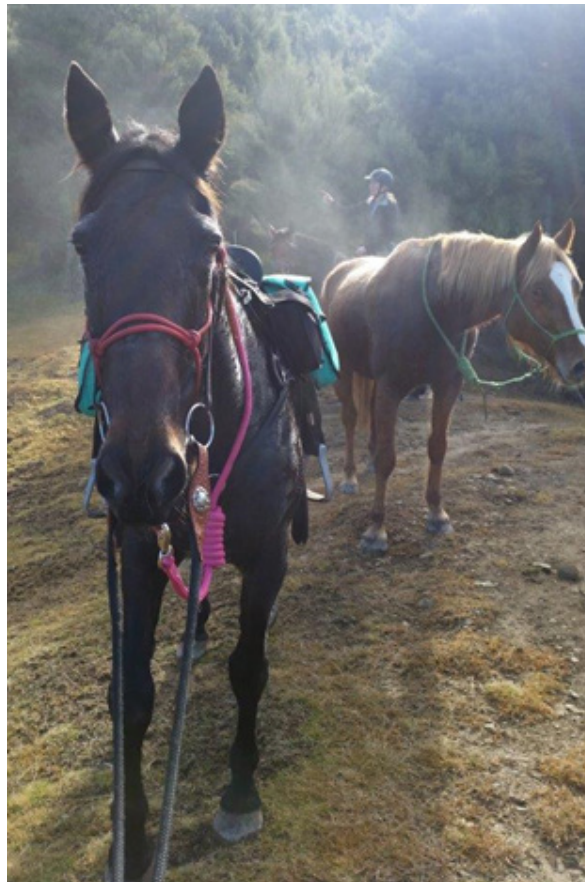
We fixed up the fence and carried on. So far, so good.

We were now standing on part of Puhi Peaks station, on a steep southerly face covered in scrub and rocks. We stood at the top and looked down; we knew from the start that this would be our most challenging section of the trek.

Horses are fine on steep country, except this was steep AND rocky. We led the horses down, trying to avoid the scrubby sections and sheets of rock as best we could.

We often made it down a few metres only to have to back track looking for an alternative route. Helen and I had 12ft lead ropes and had the horses out on the end of the rope well away from us as we didn't want to get taken out by them when they slid past. They lost their footing a lot on that steep rocky terrain and so did we.

We pushed the horses on even when they didn't want to go. At one point my young horse Jed had frozen with fear on a very steep section of hill and rock, he couldn't move up or down. I climbed back up to him, he was so pleased to see me but I could see he was terrified. I think if he could have climbed on to my back that day and be carried down



Steam coming off the horses after a big climb.

he would have! I led him down to Helen and the other two horses and we pushed on, we did not have much daylight left.

After more slipping and tripping we eventually got to the bottom and linked up with the farm track on Puhi Peaks. It was a big relief to be off that hill and making progress again.

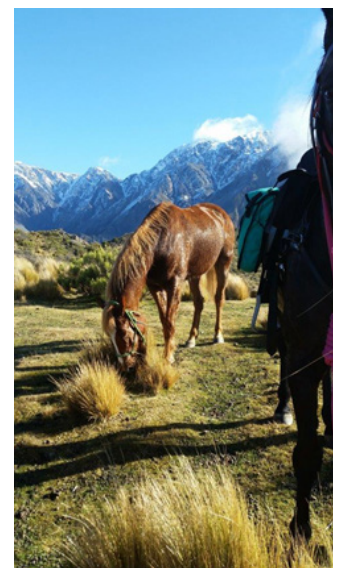
At about 4pm we made it to the Puhi Peaks homestead. We unsaddled the horses and gave them the rest they so deserved. We were then revived by a hot cup of tea and a hip flask of Glayva that Helen had wisely packed into her saddle bags.

Unfortunately my mare had a swollen leg the next day so Helen and I made the decision not to ride home again as originally planned. That wasn't

the end of our adventure though. After we dropped Jed off, and organised grazing for the other two horses, we managed to secure a ride home in a helicopter. It was a great chance to see where we had ridden the previous day. A 6 hour horse ride turned into a 6 minute helicopter ride back to our start point! So easy!

Luckily we were able to get back down to Kaikoura a week later to pick up our two horses and bring them home before the first lot of snow arrived and closed the road.

I'm glad we gave it a go, to put ourselves out of our comfort zone, just for a day. And yes we are already planning the next adventure....off the beaten track of course!





Another Officer out there doing it - **Constable Shaun McGillivray**



I moved down to Blenheim last December and one of my many hobbies is paragliding. I'm fairly new to the sport but I've meet up with some of the locals from the Paragliding Club here and we've been having a blast flying some new sites around Blenheim.

Winter flying can be a bit hard because there aren't as many thermals around and the days are fairly short. As you can imagine flying above snow-capped mountains and hills is a magical but fairly chilly experience.

So far this year I have flown out of Picton, Cape Campbell, the cliffs near the salt works and Black Birch.

Recently got access to Vernon Station by Vernon lagoons so a Big thanks to Paul Leedom who allowed us to fly over his farm on Vernon Station. It's a great flying site really close to



Over Vernon Station

town. The pictures you see are from his farm after a great day of flying.

The big challenge for spring is to see if we can fly from Blackbirch to Hanmer Springs in one day (I apologise in advance to search and rescue if you ever have to come and find me, but fingers crossed and with proper planning that will never be an issue). To do this well we have to cross several ranges and the conditions will have to be just right. It will also involve multiple days of planning and flying separate parts of the route to become familiar with it. Some of the more experienced pilots from Nelson have agreed to come over and get involved.





Earthquake recovery

Back in November when the earth moved beneath our feet – it left us all shook up – literally. Even as adults knowing exactly what was happening it was terrifying. And each aftershock just reinforced the feelings of helplessness. For months we couldn't think straight. It's even been given a name – "earthquake brain". Now months later the rumble of a passing truck or a creak caused by a gust of wind can set off memories.

Imagine the effect on children, many of whom can only rationalise the earthquakes as "monsters under my house". Actually, we don't have to imagine. We know from the Christchurch experience. Unmanaged, it results in behavioural issues and learning difficulties.

Already the Rotary Club of Blenheim South has raised \$35,000 for classroom therapy and support for South Marlborough school children.

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SHUT THE GATE ON RURAL CRIME

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I am aware that we have had quite a focus on unlawful hunting/poaching stories recently, however it is of major concern in our rural areas and we are working hard to change behaviour of the errant hunters.

Our Havelock officers have also been proactive and have been dealing with an man who was caught shooting sheep on a farmer's property with a compound bow in Waitaria Bay.

He has been charged with unlawful hunting, cruelty to an animal and possession of cannabis.

Also under investigation in the Havelock Area:

- Firewood theft from woodsheds Waitaria Bay
- Report of wilful damage to the St Omer Lodge, windows doors kicked in. This occurred over the school holiday period.
- Fallow Deer shot and taken from a farm in Four Fathom Bay.

Keep your eyes and ears open and give us a call if you see anything that doesn't look right.

Sergeant Mike Porter, Blenheim Police