

You may be rural or remote, but you are not forgotten!



METH LAB FIND INVESTIGATION

About a month ago Senior Constable Russ Smith spoke to Top of the South Rural Support Trust about methamphetamine and how rural people are not immune to its impact.

Two weeks later, this happens

A Methamphetamine lab was discovered in a garage at a farm property about 40kms up the Wairau Valley. It was discovered as we executed a search warrant at the address.

Police took all precautions to ensure the site was safe and we had experts from the National Clan Lab Response Team come to Marlborough to deal with the lab.

Two men have been arrested in relation to the search of the address so far. One for dealing Methamphetamine and the other for Unlawful Possession of a Firearm.

The investigation is in the early stages. Police will be looking at all evidence gathered at the scene of the lab and decide what further action to take.

Rural properties are popular with people that want to carry out illicit activity undetected. Often the houses on rural properties they choose are well back from the road, hard to see, hidden in the bush or difficult to access. This allows them to go about their illicit business

uninterrupted and they can use their remote setting to conceal their activities from the land owner and the Police.

Please heed our previous warnings about renting properties and what you must do to protect yourselves legally and financially.

Be observant and report behaviour.



A Blenheim Police Officer guarding the scene of the Methamphetamine lab in Wairau Valley.

NUMBER PLATE THEFT

In the last month around a dozen thefts of number plates from parked vehicles were reported to Blenheim Police.

The first of these thefts was reported by drivers parked in the Countdown car park at Springlands, where several vehicles were found to have had number plates removed while they had been parked in the car park. Within a few days more thefts of number plates were reported from the Witherlea area of Blenheim.

Until now, the theft of number plates has been a rare occurrence in Marlborough, but relatively common in some parts of the North Island.

The Blenheim Community Patrol has a solution to this problem. It has a supply of anti-theft screws and fittings that make it difficult to remove number plates that have been secured with the specialist fittings.

A stolen number plate from Witherlea, Blenheim was recently found on a vehicle stolen from Christchurch. The vehicle was stopped by Police in the Okaramio area and was found to be driven by a man from Canvastown. Talk about mobile offenders and diverse geography.



Brent Laurensen of CPNZ and Sgt Mike Porter at the site of the number plate installation.

Blenheim Community Patrol staff were at Springlands Countdown car park on Saturday 8 September to secure number plates with the anti-theft fittings. (The cost was a gold coin donation).

UNLAWFUL HUNTING

Recently we've been dealing with poachers who were discovered in the Waihopai Valley – all three are from Southland.

They were discovered by a local land owner who himself was out hunting his own block.

The Southland hunters were hunting pigs in an area they had been given permission to be on, but moved onto adjoining land.

In addition to this we are investigating another hunter from the Nelson area who was also on land he had not sought permission to hunt on. The vigilant locals living in the area noticed the man acting suspiciously while hunting and let us know what had occurred and even discover the gut bags from the animals that he had taken. From this we were able to determine where he had been.



Senior Constable Leighton MacKenzie putting up more Unlawful Hunting warning signs.

Marlborough Police Crime Prevention team is holding an event at the Marlborough Boys' College soon. It's being arranged to address the young up-and-coming hunters that may make the mistake of being involved in unlawful hunting. We want them to know they must respect the land owners and seek permission to hunt on land, and 'no' means 'no' if when seeking permission they are turned down. We want them to develop good habits to carry through for the rest of their lives while they are involved in hunting. Letting them know the consequences and the impact on the rural community will be part of the information we will share.

In addition we will give them information about wearing Hi-Vis clothing and what to do to avoid becoming a hunting statistic, or the subject of a search and rescue operation. Blenheim Hunting and Fishing will have safety gear, map reading equipment and GPS devices on display as well. This is the first time it has been done, so we will be looking at feedback and hopefully develop it further if successful. **'Nothing ventured, nothing gained'.**

FIREARMS BURGLARIES!

Eight firearms have been stolen in the last week, two from one address in Havelock and six in Blenheim.

They include a 308 rifle, 3 shot guns, a 44 magnum rifle, a .22 calibre rifle and a slug gun taken in the burglary of the Blenheim address. A wooden safe was opened by the offenders.



The other burglary occurred in Havelock. The firearm licence holder had his firearms in a safe. Unfortunately the offenders took the whole safe as it was not secured to anything! What is the point of them being in a safe that isn't bolted down – may as well have just left them lying around the back door!

A female has been arrested in relation to the burglary of the Havelock firearms and goes to court this Monday. The offender has not revealed the location of the firearms yet, so Police are still looking for two .22 rifles taken on that occasion.

We can guarantee that all these firearms will be out amongst the criminal and drug fraternity. As firearms licence holders with firearms it is the responsibility of all of us to secure our firearms!

Police will pursue taking the firearms licence off the victim of the burglary on this occasion.

Secure your firearms!!!

SEARCH WARRANT

We were part of the team that carried out a search warrant in the Wakamarina Valley recently – a male is facing manufacturing cannabis oil charges.

Another commitment for our team was being part of the search warrant carried out at a Blenheim property last week. So we are certainly keeping busy. This related to drugs and stolen vehicles, a stolen motorcycle was recovered. The enquiries continue with the occupants of the address. One man was arrested on the day and there may be further arrests.

SUSPICIOUS VAN

Suspicious van Waihopai – all the neighbours shared information amongst themselves and the Police.

The residents saw a van they thought was out of place and had signage displayed that did not look official. It was stopping near driveways and slowly moving up the valley. They took a photo of the van and forwarded it to Police.

Enquiries revealed the occupants had been carrying out a lawful activity.

But what it demonstrated was the effectiveness of the community sharing information amongst themselves and monitoring the activity of those they deem are acting suspiciously.

Great work Waihopai Valley!

RURAL ADVISORY GROUP

Senior Constable Smith attended a Rural Advisory Group meeting at the Marlborough District Council on Monday 17 September. The group was keen to hear an update from Police on what the Prevention team had been dealing with in recent months and what initiatives the group was involved in that impacted the rural community in Marlborough.

There was a great deal of interest in and some robust discussion around the subject of poaching and people unlawfully on rural land. Senior Constable Smith told the group that the Prevention team was committed to maintaining its regular operations to detect and deter poachers and advised the group that Police had dealt with more than 90 poachers in the last few years, with the Courts taking prosecutions very seriously based on the last few sentences in which fines of \$4,000 to \$5,000 have been ordered.

WAIPAPA PATROL

Recently Senior Constable Sean Jones and Leighton MacKenzie carried out a Crime Prevention patrol in the Clarence Valley and the Waipapa area. They called in to see some of those living in the valley and followed up on enquiries.

Also, they delivered further Unlawful Hunting signs to land holders and assisted one with information about boundaries and the public crossing their land.



Sean crossing the confluence of the Wharekiri and the Miller stream near Waipapa. The people up the valley face this crossing every day they head to the main road. This is the crossing on a good day with low water.



Sean checking out the defunct bridge at the end of the Clarence Valley that has restricted the movement of the locals.

BURNT OUT UTE

Can anybody assist us to find an owner for this ute and have you any information that can help us with our enquiry into who did this?

The ute was set alight and dumped this Sunday 15 September at the parking area next to the bridge on Hawkesbury Road, near Renwick.



Do you know who owns this vehicle?

ON PATROL



Sean Jones drives slowly and carefully through a flock of sheep in the Wairau Valley.

Great work by those moving the sheep.

They had good warning signs and flashing lights ahead of the mob and behind.

It was clear to all approaching that this stock movement was occurring. We all know that people on rural roads should expect this at times and drive to the conditions presented to them and be patient!

SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM

Our SAR team was recently in the Red Hills west of Blenheim not far from St Arnaud. They were carrying out navigation skills training.

They also worked with the Royal New Zealand Navy helicopter crew in the 'Seasprite', honing their skills in navigation and co-ordination with the Navy crews.

This is part of the familiarisation Police SAR do with the Navy so that they can work together during emergencies and disaster response.



Some of the SAR team taking a break on Red Hills.

WRAP UP

It has been a busy past few months for our team. We expect more work as we head into summer and we'll also be out and about trying to catch up with people.

So a lot of ground to cover and things to do. But we will strive to keep supporting our rural community.

Have a great spring season and look after each other.

From the Crime Prevention Team – Marlborough.



Sgt Mike PORTER



S/Const Russ

SMITH



S/Const Leighton

MacKENZIE



S/Const Sean

JONES