



# MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA November 2017

## NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

Welcome all

I write this in the Range Club house half way through the World Bench Rest Competition.

All the competitors are here; the marquee is up and has survived the stormy conditions, albeit one of the trees beside it collapsed.

The Range is looking in pristine condition thanks to all the hard work by Graeme Smith and his team.

Just hopes the wind drops away for the rest of the week to help with those minuscule groups.

I am sure the visitors will go away with some great memories whatever the outcome, and we will share the results of the shoot next newsletter.

PS: results will be visible on the clubs web site if you would like a look now.

Cheers Warren



[www.nzdanelson.co.nz](http://www.nzdanelson.co.nz)

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### ***Next Club Meeting***

To be advised in the  
New Year

# Historic Deer Heads

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The club was recently approached by family members of Sir John Ingram, the son of the hunter Jock Ingram who took a big Nelson Red stag head in 1913 at Lake Rotoiti on the Travers Flats.

It's a true Nelson blood stag of course, and interesting with its form being typical of a number of others taken around that time. Big long almost palmated top tines and of course no bey tines.

It has been remounted and presented to our club for which we are very grateful, and will now hang proudly at Red Deer Lodge, returning to the district of its taking after 104 years. Hanging with the heads of the Jocks friends and fellow hunters of those early years, the Mcconnochie, Shuttleworths and Sutherland among others, a very fitting resting place.

A little more information from the family regarding the head follows.

There is information around this head in Charles Shuttleworth's "In Search of the Wild Red Deer." Interestingly Sir John's grandfather John Bannerman Ingram who came out from Scotland in 1883 was involved with the Acclimatisation Society of Nelson which introduced deer into the region.



Sir John's father's business was JG Ingram and Co which was in Bridge Street and it was where the head resided until our the Father received it .

He was very fond of it as it reminded him of his hunting trips with his father and his friends.

Jock Ingram started visiting Lake Rotoiti from about 1913 and his first whare there was built in about 1920 right by the lake shore.

He then built in a further one in 1925/6 on the first subdivision of crown land. Dad's "Ingram Story" has a lot more information about his father and his hunting and involvement at Lake Rototi if you would like any more.

# Hunting News

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*So how cold is too cold ? Well very cold is OK*

This winter I had promised mates Dean and Ben a wallaby hunting experience and we set aside a weekend with space each side free from work appointments to carry out the mission.

The dates we picked late July coincided with a big weather event in middle South Island with snow and floods so we agreed to defer for a week and that would be last chance.

Go hard or go home.

My emails to the farm manger and my mates had phrases like:

“The snow should have brought them off the tops eh?” and

“It will be cold, bring every stitch of clothing”...or

“Sense of humour essential”.....well got most of that right!

The weather report for the last weekend of July looked OK although a “bit of snow” in mid-Canterbury report from the station advised 23-3 inches on the ground sounded OK. We’re off!

A great run down from Nelson and clear skies and hills meant we had come to the conclusion we were in for a cracker. When a stop at Staveley for best coffee and egg and bacon rolls on whole route allowed a casual bystander to ask if we were headed for McKenzie and he laughed when we said “yes! wallaby hunting.”

Over Burkes Pass and oh my! It was a whiteout in the basin. If you have watched the movie Fargo you will get the drift.



Great White Land



I talked it up so as not to express too much concern after an eight hour drive but it was worse than I had ever tried to hunt in before.

Ben was coming from Christchurch and we sent him vaguely encouraging texts (like - the road's open!).

Arrival at station HQ and it was apparent that a lot of the area was off limits due to roads being impassable. Not to be thwarted we headed off for an evening hunt up a few gullies and slogged around in light dry powder up to or over knee height and cold! Anything in shadow was desperately cold. So we saw a few and fluffed a few as one can on first day of an outing but Dean learned about crawling under matagouri and through streams in sub-zero temps so gained something from the exercise and we found a wally curled up and dead from hypothermia so at least it wasn't just us feeling it!!

By the time we walked back down the long and cold road Dean had grape sized icicles on his neck from frozen sweat and was giving funny looks.

I was thinking about lighting a fire back at the accommodation and the Ute-load of wood we had transferred there before going out (wisest move of the day so far).

Ben had done better than us and shot a few before they died of hypothermia maybe.



When the sun went down the temperature plummeted to new depths.

We noted a neighbouring farmer flying around in his Hughes Fivehundy blasting rabbits while they were easy to see still some pricey rabbits we thought enviously.

Next day dawned calm and clear and very cold when I turned my ute over it would run till it hit the slush called diesel in the pipes and conk out this was new and unwelcome. Luckily Ben had a proper ute of the Crump variety and it was happy to eat diesel slushies so we were off.

Splitting up Dean and I hit a valley that I would normally drive right up while Ben traversed a big open hill face. And it was very cold. Tekapo failed to reach above freezing in the middle of a sunny day and if you don't believe me see here

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/95250738>



The creek was running just.

What all this meant for the hunting was interesting the scenery was breath-taking.

You couldn't stop walking cos you froze to the spot but it was hard slogging so we constantly wanted to stop, the water bottles and muesli bars were frozen in the pack and Dean's firing pin froze or he said it did after a muck-up.



It is always good to be able to see where you have been

We had hoped that the sun would bring out the wallies to soak up some rays as is often the case but this was too much for them they were hunkered down under the matagouri and obviously thought to see it out. Only the rabbits seemed to be happy scampering around and their tracks get mighty big in soft snow so it looked like herds of game had been around till all the trails converged on a small black and steamy hole in the ground. Dean did polish a few wallies off at long range which was good to see.

By mid-afternoon we were back at the ute and pretty tired and still carrying more live rounds than I was happy with. Ben had got a few too, but had also seen a few fallow that had entertained and outmanoeuvred him in the bright open country. Back to that fire eh? That night everybody was finding sheds to tuck utes up in as the weather promised to be very cold.

Anyone for a night shoot? Not really.

On our last day it was very cold, sunny and flat calm thank goodness and a ute given a proper stable for the night is a happier and more compliant one. We decided to go and attempt to turn the tables on the fallow Ben had seen. Helpful to be able to trace his footprints for a few kilometres (we could see where he got it all wrong!!!) and Dean did a good job spotting a buck camped up on a relatively snow free face.





The buck in his little snow free OP. It nearly worked for him

It was so bright and open, a long and arduous stalk was required to keep us in dead ground. During this I had a build-up of ice on the soles of my boots that caused me to trip over and I needed to use a knife to prise off as loudly kicking rocks was off the agenda. It was Dean's buck to shoot so I left rifle and pack a ways back and we slunk up to a small crest that lowered the range to about 100m. Bucky was not too alert briefly but the lie of the land meant that despite being only a few feet apart I could see him and Dino not.

A hissed exchange about this, and bucky stood up further hissed discussion and bucky started the fixed stare routine and I could see him stiffen, time to go. A quick handover and a hurried shot from me too hurried of course as it smacked the stone ridge between him and I and he was off fortunately the follow up was (unusually) a cracker through ribs into the engine room with a hearty thump, tho we didn't feel totally good about it till we found him a few hundred metres away where he had slid off down in the snow. At least there were no flies, I mean NO flies, during the clean-up and the meat chilled very nicely.

We stashed the meat in some bushes at the bottom of the gully and set off again. Several adventures not really for print later we started the long plod back thru the ice and snow to the ute. After about 7 hours plodding around in that stuff we were pretty tired. In fact so tired we realised we had pushed it a bit for two old-ish guys not too fit. When you start tripping or slipping over its telling you something!

That night the ute was tucked up in the woodshed (the shepherds were all back from the joys of Timaru and took all the good parks) hell even the tractors were in bed for the night!

And the meat froze on the clothesline it was very cold that night.

So we learned that even when a trip is very constrained in what you expected to be able to do a good time can be had. And in very cold weather allowances need to be made re gear, vehicles and generally being safe. But no flies eh!?

*This months article a tale from Richard Wells. Thanks Richard.*

## Bits and Pieces

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Member stories; I am always looking for members adventures to publish and share, so if you have something that you think shows just what a great country we live in , I would love to hear from you. Just send me an email at [plumstone@xtra.co.nz](mailto:plumstone@xtra.co.nz)

Molesworth Poison drop.

The large aerial 1080 drop has now occurred. By next newsletter I should be able to provide some initial detail on the monitoring being done post drop by a group of dedicated hunters interested in the area, supported in part by NZDA.

## Range News

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As already mentioned the Range is looking in top condition.

**It will be available again for casual weekend shooting at usual opening times from Saturday 18th of November.**

It has of course been unavailable for the weekends 4 -5th and 11-12th to allow set up, running and take down for the World event.

### **Just a reminder.**

When driving in the forest you need to obey the rules relating to speed (20k per hour) and lights on. Log trucks are using the road at any time of day and night, and on many corners there is not sufficient room for both the truck and a private vehicle to pass, which may require you to back up to some where you can pull of road.

## The Fraught Life of Hedgehogs

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Something a bit different; an item on Hedgehogs which have been hitting the news recently from the local conservation group newsletter. I was prompted by the sight of both a Weka and Hedgehog on the range last night.

How ironic is this? The first introduction of hedgehogs to New Zealand was a group of twelve from England, which were swapped for twelve wekas. Today DOC considers hedgehogs to be a serious threat to our native species, they are targeted by trapping groups throughout the country, and we are celebrating the proliferation of wekas after a long period when they were considered a threatened species.



The first imported hogs came to Christchurch, were bred there, and their spread was aided by railway guards who dropped them off at South Island stations. Today they are fifty times more numerous in New Zealand than anywhere else in the world, with stocking rates of up to 8 per hectare, fed in part by native wetas, skins, eggs and chicks of ground-nesting birds. Did you know September 10<sup>th</sup> is Hedgehog Day? The day when the first hedgehogs emerge from their three months winter hibernation. When they wake the first thing they do is shake themselves like a dog after a swim. (Remember this next September, you may be lucky enough to see it).

Because the jawbones stop growing during the hibernation period, layers of bone develop like rings on a tree. Scientist Bob Brockie counted rings on 50 hedgehog jawbones and found their average life expectancy is only a couple of years. Only about a third survive the winter. They starve or freeze to death, are drowned when water floods their nests, or are eaten alive by rats.

## Club Night

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Good to hear of some success following the talk by our guest speaker Simon Wyatt at our September club night on the benefits of using hearing enhancing ear muffs. I am aware of a number of members purchasing such items since the event, with a couple having some success. Also a very big thumbs up to Simon for since guiding one of our members present that night and guiding her to her first deer, a stag no less.

With the busy social season soon starting, we held our last Club night in October and the next won't be until the New Year. I will advertise prior to that event.

## Red Deer Lodge

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The working bee scheduled for the week end 25-26 November has now been deferred until 2018 due to unforeseen circumstances around volunteer availability.

### **Information on costs and bookings of the Red Deer Lodge at Lake Rotoiti**

Contact the Calders: [info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz](mailto:info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz)

Use the website at [www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz](http://www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz)

Saying you're a member

# 2017 Committee

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Greg Couper      **President:**   [terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz](mailto:terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz)

Richard Wells      **Vice President**

Lester Bowden      **Patron**

Warren Plum      **Secretary:** ph. 547 9143 [plumstone@xtra.co.nz](mailto:plumstone@xtra.co.nz)

John Noakes, Bill O'Leary, Neil Cliffe, Graeme Ching, Graeme Smith  
Immo Neumann, Rob Shuttleworth, Richard Wells

**Range:** Graeme Ching <[graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz)>

**Newsletter:** Any items for publication please forward to the secretary

**Membership:** Graeme Smith ph. 544 7138 [LVHVBR@gmail.com](mailto:LVHVBR@gmail.com)

**Hunting:** John Noakes ph. 0274464413 [noakesjc@gmail.com](mailto:noakesjc@gmail.com)

**New Members:**      Warren Plum ph. 547 9143 [plumstone@xtra.co.nz](mailto:plumstone@xtra.co.nz)

## Minutes: November Committee Meeting

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No minutes this month as committee meeting has been delayed until December with many involved with the World Bench Rest event.

## Websites of Interest

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### National Deerstalkers' Website

<http://www.deerstalkers.org.nz/>

Like the NZDA National Heritage Trust Facebook page for great historical deerstalking photos:

<https://www.facebook.com/nzdaheritagetrust?ref=bookmarks>

### Department of Conservation Information

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/>

DOC maps. You can select a Topo view and to have DOC hunting areas highlighted

<http://maps.doc.govt.nz/mapviewer/index.html?viewer=dto>

DOC hunting permits can be applied for at:

<https://huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz/huntingpermits/start>

### Game Animal Council

<http://www.nzgameanimalcouncil.org.nz>

### Walking Access

<http://www.wams.co.nz/>

### Walking Access Maps

[http://www.wams.org.nz/wams\\_desktop/index.aspx](http://www.wams.org.nz/wams_desktop/index.aspx)

### Walking Access Mobile Maps

[http://www.wams.org.nz/wams\\_mobile/index.html](http://www.wams.org.nz/wams_mobile/index.html)

### Kea Sightings

[www.keaconservation.co.nz](http://www.keaconservation.co.nz)

### South Island Kokako Sightings

[www.southislandkokako.org](http://www.southislandkokako.org)

### Wasps

<https://www.merchento.com/vespex.html>

### Falcon Survey

[www.nzfalcon.org.nz](http://www.nzfalcon.org.nz) Email [nativebirds@xtra.co.nz](mailto:nativebirds@xtra.co.nz)

[www.nzdanelson.co.nz](http://www.nzdanelson.co.nz)