

THE SOUTHERN HUNTER

Southland Branch NZDA Newsletter

December 21



Mararoa Valley Mt Hamilton in the distance, Kiwi Burn clearing right centre

Branch email is: enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz
News Letter douglasgordon@xtra.co.nz
Branch website <http://www.southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz/>

Monthly Meeting

Xmas Meeting is a Working Bee followed by a BBQ
Saturday 11th December. Article in this Newsletter

FACEBOOK:

HAS MOVED WITH THE TIMES AND NOW HAS ITS VERY OWN FACEBOOK PAGE
FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE ON FACEBOOK, CHECK IT OUT, YOU WILL FIND HELPFUL INFO ON THERE
AND IT WILL HOPEFULLY ENCOURAGE NEW MEMBERSHIP AND CLUB INTERACTION. WE ENCOURAGE ALL
MEMBERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT

NEW MEMBERS

New Members please welcome them

Alun Griffiths, David Scobie, Calum Mclean, Iraah Mcdonald, Tim Cook

Club Hunts

Looking at having some again come New Year (Covid dependent) any will be advised.

All hunts for Southland Branch NZDA Members (with full NZDA membership)
as Public liability Insurance required).

Office Bearers

Club Office Bearers

President: S McKelvie 027 635 0490 **Vice President:** T Caldwell

Secretary A Nesbit : **Treasurer** T Mead

Magazine Editor: D. Gordon 216 6383 **Immediate past President**

Membership A Nesbit **Huts** N Miller

Executive: W Ashmore, N Dawson, E Garrick, D Howden, J. McCallum,
L Payne, R. Phillips.

Sub Committees

Hall	Luke Payne
Young Hunts	Nathan Dawson – (Need to confirm this)
AGM	Shaun McKelvie & Andy Nesbit
Trophies	Tony Caudwell & Luke Payne
Pistol Range	Doug Gordon
Rifle Range	Andy Nesbit
DOC Liaison	Ray Phillips & Shaun McKelvie
Library	Shaun McKelvie & Tom Mead
Club Hunts	Shaun McKelvie & Tom Mead
Guest Speaker	Shaun McKelvie & Andy Nesbit
Photo Competition	Doug Gordon
Social Media	Erin Garrick, Tony Caudwell & Shaun McKelvie

Wanted

Stories, ads, letters to the editor, or whatever for the newsletter, send to or contact the editor. Guest Speaker's needed, Ideas wanted, who do you want, and names needed, suggestions to Executive.

JM WILKINSON CUP POSTAL SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP

The Southland Branch intends to run a shoot to be part of this postal championship on 19th February at the Invercargill Full-bore Range (Cobb road which is on the left going to Otatara past the turn of to the airport on the right.) starting 1pm. One will need 20 rounds of ammo plus 1 sighter if desired.

Shoot is over 4 positions at 100 metres

If interested and or desire more information contact Andy Nesbit 021 917 808 or Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490



Presidents Report December 2021

Merry Christmas

Xmas is nearly upon us the nights are long And there plenty of time to get out after work or on the weekends too chase some venison around hopefully you've been more successful in finding time to get out then than me.

It's going to be very challenging times ahead with the new traffic light system and I'm sure your all watching the news or social media to keep up with the latest, all I can add is be kind to others everyone is entitled to their own view weather it is the same as yours or not, like my old man always told me if you aren't got anything nice to say don't say anything.

It would be great to catch up at the working bee/ Xmas do, if not all the best for the holiday season.

Merry Christmas from myself and the Executive

Hot barrels and stay safe



Cheers Shaun



Editorial

December the year is all but done, time to look forward to the New Year. Something that comes from up north, where the New Year starts mid-winter and one has spring, summer then autumn to look forward too. We only have two thirds of summer then the autumn, the hunting season to look forward too before winter.

What to look forward too? These are changing times on steroids. One hopes that covid will in time fade!! Those who have good access and some farmers who won't allow access tell us there are plenty of deer. So if you get the chance fill the freezer and give some to those you know who will appreciate some good red meat.

As the restaurant's reopen (in time) world-wide as covid eventually wanes, venison recovery will pick up pace again. It hasn't stopped just slowed down. This will hopefully take some pressure off the green movement demands to kill all deer.

Rabbits have been in the news up Central Otago eating vineyards and life style blocks. Some of this they have brought on themselves, with conditions like not being able to discharge firearms at all in lifestyle subdivisions. Rabbits love to live where they are not able to be hunted. I wonder if there could be openings where the branch could help as a responsible hunting organisation, in control of rabbits and deer where they are too numerous. Perhaps we should put an add in the newspaper?

All things to think of once resting in a comfortable chair full of Christmas dinner. Have a good festive season catch you next year. Be safe in all things out there.

Doug Gordon

Sponsors

Southland Branch would like to thank its regular sponsors and recommend them to its members.



SOUTHERN ADVENTURE

THE IN STORE FOR THE OUTDOORS



Southland Branch Polo Shirts



The following are in stock and available for purchase @ \$35 each

5 x Medium

5 x Large

5 x Xtra Large to arrange payment

5 x XXL

Available at Branch Meeting or by emailing

enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz

Subject line Polo Tee Shirts

Payment prior to delivery by online banking to the Branch Account
06-0925-0270758-000 with details of *your name Polo Shirt and Size*.
(If unable to do online banking contact Tom 0278471882)
First in best dressed

2021 National Literary Competition

Southland Branch gained 3rd place, in the Rotorua Branch Trophy for Branch Newsletters.
At the November meeting (Branch President) Shaun McKelvie presented the Certificate to
Doug Gordon Branch Newsletter Editor.



Xmas BBQ & Hall working Bee

Working Bee



11th December 1pm at the Longbush Hall 24 McKercher Road

Working bee to tidy up around the Hall, BBQ and refreshments to follow.

Work to do includes removing mildew from south wall, remove weeds etc.

So bring some working clothes, a bottle (or two), and something for the BBQ.

A great chance for those who can't make Club nights to meet fellow members.

Anybody with equipment that they think may be useful for the Working Bee,

Give Shaun a ring 027 6350490

STEWART ISLAND HUNTING MAGIC

CHASING WHITETAIL BUCKS



JOHN DELURY

New Book

“Chasing Whitetail Bucks” By John DeLury.

Stewart Island Hunting Magic

I am a Life Member of Southland Branch and was a past secretary and later treasurer for 15 years. I have been a member since of NZDA since 1973. I have hunted whitetail deer on Stewart Island for 43 years.

This book has 320 pages, over 200 photos in full colour. Published 2021. It deals just with hunting whitetail deer on Stewart Island. Included are the hunts of many of the great Stewart Island trophies including the new #1 shot in 2021 Douglas Score 192 (which has red deer equivalent DS 420) as well as historical information relating to hunting whitetails. Included is a chapter on the Safari Operation that ran at Mason Bay for over ten years. Hunting tips and the complete list of Stewart Island Whitetail Record Book

27 Chapters: No Big Bucks on Stewart Island. How to hunt whitetails. Pegasus. Big Kuri. Let's be careful out there. Toitoti Flats. South Lords River. The North Side of the River. Tikotatahi. Port Adventure. Pikaroro. A short history of poison operations. Chew Tobacco. The Neck. Glory. Paterson Inlet. The Local Hunters. Murray River. Christmas Village. Smoky Beach. Long Harry. East and West Ruggedy. Hellfire. Homestead. Martins Creek. Doughboy Bay. A New Stewart Island Number One Record Buck in 2021. Included are appendix of gear and food hints.

My first book (Chasing Whitetails. 2019) sold out quickly and is now a collector's item. I am selling this book myself and it will not be available in bookshops. Cost is \$40 plus postage. To secure a copy, email me at wtd243@gmail.com with your address or txt 0276925338

Daryl Crimp wrote a review for The Fishing Paper & Hunting News.

“Chasing Whitetail Bucks is a classy book, one to pour over and one that will withstand rereading... and rereading. My pick is it will quickly sell out so don't dally if you are in the mind to purchase a copy.” Full review at:- <https://thefishingpaper.pdfmobile.nz/the-fishing-paper/november-2021-issue-194/hunting-news/book-review>

Freeze Dri



Purchase Back Country Cuisine freeze-dri meals direct at special prices, email Tony on info@bcfoods.co.nz to order or find out more information.

JOKES FOR THE MONTH

HOW TO STAY HEALTHY:

- 1. THINK ABOUT DEER**
- 2. SCOUT FOR DEER**
- 3. HUNT FOR DEER**
- 4. SHOOT DEER**
- 5. EAT VENISON**
- 6. REPEAT.**

**Dear santa,
This year all I ask is a
Big Fat Bank Account
and a Slim Body.
PLEASE, don't mix up
the two like you
did last year.**



Be Happy
Enjoy Life





ScatteredThoughtsCartoons.com

WHITE DREAMS

Jack O' Connor, that doyen of outdoor writers, who produced tales depicting his hunts in the monthly editions of "Outdoor Life" throughout the 1960's started it – the desire to hunt sheep. It had been with me for years, while hunting Chamois, Tahr and Red Deer in the

local mountains of Canterbury, while slogging through the soaking forests of Fiordland seeking a Wapiti Bull and more strongly now, as I had spent some years in the “Safari Industry”. The time as a professional hunting guide had especially increased my desire, as sheep seemed to be the high point of most modern hunter’s career.

Several trips to the Safari Club International conventions in Las Vegas and Reno had made me aware that my education regarding sheep had been severely lacking – O’Connor had spent almost all his time hunting in the Americas or Africa, it appears that he did not appreciate the variety of sheep and sheep-like trophies that are available in Asia. A whole new world opened! Marco Polo, the three species of sheep that hail from Mongolia, Blue Sheep from China, Snow Sheep from Siberia, Red Sheep from Iran, plus other mountain game such as; Tur, Ibex, Urial, and Markor – the list seemed endless and the dollar requirements impossible to conceive for a Kiwi.

Of the species that are available only Dall Sheep, from the top of North America, seemed remotely feasible financially and even these were increasing in price every year – so if I was to get a sheep, then a Dall it had to be. This suited me fine as Alaska was high on the list of places I wanted to visit.

Several preliminary enquiries came to nothing, as I talked to outfitters at the various conventions I attended – most wanted to swap a full list of New Zealand trophies for a sheep hunt and many did not appear to me to offer a good chance of success (we will do the New Zealand hunt this season and you come to us the year after). Finally a good friend in Anchorage (Rusty Reed of Alaskan Hunting Consultants) suggested I talk with one of his mates – Gereth Stillman. This I did and what a pleasant surprise it turned out to be.

Gereth is an interesting character, having grown up in the eastern New England states of the USA and graduating from West Point, he was sent to Alaska by the Army and never left. To remain there he resigned his Army position and became a cop with the Anchorage police. His passion, other than being a “street cop” is hunting and to indulge this Gereth did taxidermy work as a second job. The lower floor of his house is equally divided between the storage of hunting gear and a taxidermy studio – moose, sheep, bear and caribou mounts in various stages of completion are scattered about, but the finished results are of high standard. The upper floors are testimony to Gereth’s hunting abilities, his trophy room boasts: Moose, Dall Sheep, Caribou and a range of African species too wide to list.



A portion of Gereth's African trophies.

Anyway it did not take long for us to put together a program that would see me hunting in Alaska and Gereth in New Zealand – the slide down the slippery slope of overseas hunting was gathering momentum!

Late August 2000 saw me aboard an Air New Zealand flight to Los Angeles and then on to Anchorage – Alaskan Sheep hunt prototype one, was in launch mode. These were pre 9/11 days and travel with firearms and the security in airports was still relaxed – customs in LAX were not interested in the fact I had a rifle – just welcome to Los Angeles / USA and have a nice day!

After a couple of days of rest in Anchorage getting over what is a hell of a flight, buying tags, a hunting license and food for the adventure, all that remained was to meet Mike Meekins of Meekins' Air Service, for insertion into our hunting area. Mike has a strip and hangar on the side of the Anchorage / Fairbanks highway at a point appropriately named "Sheep Mountain". He flies the Alaskan work horse – a Super Cub on "Tundra" tires – huge, low pressure units that allow the plane to "land" on terrain which defies description. Thank god that New Zealand is a technologically advanced country and that we have helicopters.



In the background a typical Alaskan Super Cub complete with “Tundra Tires”. The guy in the foreground had just come out when we arrived, the sheep was 40+ inches.

The area Mike had selected for us bordered the Tazlina Glacier and the plan was for him to land on the glacier and for us to set up a base camp. We were then to travel up the glacier and into a side valley. The glacier landing went off without a hitch and packs loaded we set off, phase two and mistake one complete! (Never start out for a fly camp in an unknown area late in the afternoon).

This side valley had previously been filled by a glacial lake, but was now dry as the lake had emptied out under the main glacier, what remained was a boggy plain with large stranded ice bergs, that stretched some 4 miles beyond the moraine. Travel on the flat was impossible due to the bog and danger of collapsing ice bergs, while travel on previous shorelines was difficult due to the steep nature of them. This valley was a typical “U” shaped glacial gut, probably carved out during the last Ice Age, its sides in many places were almost smooth bare rock.

Finally, having pushed about one third of the way along the dry lake shore we camped below the entry to a hanging valley leading off the original “lake” area. This valley was said to produce sheep on a regular basis. We were tired, the campsite was poor – rocky, uneven and no running water, but damn glad to dump our packs and have some food.

Early morning saw us drinking coffee brewed from glacial ice and eating instant meals. These were an Alaskan concoction and not to be recommended, I was to take my own food from NZ on subsequent trips. It also gave me my first sighting of a Dall ram – something like a mile up the valley a ram grazed amongst some rocks high on the valley wall. What a thrill and what a mistake – number two! Mike had indicated that the hanging valley was “The Place”, so against all instincts and good judgment in hindsight, we set off to scale the rocky slope to enter the valley.

Our plan was to climb into the valley, check it out, then if nothing of interest was there traverse back up the main valley and check out our “morning sheep”. The plan was good in theory but the climb through rocky bluffs separated by dense Alder was energy sapping. Arriving on the lip of the hanging valley we were presented with a huge open rocky basin and far on its back wall a group of sheep, all Ewes and Lambs.

Intensive glassing finally revealed some rams but no matter how hard we tried we could not grow them to legal rams. Just to taunt us they walked slowly down the basin and entered a creek some 500 metres away. An easy kill!

Abandoning the basin we started the long traverse to view our morning ram, however the further we went the more obvious it became that the back packing of the previous day plus our climb of that day had emptied our tanks. There was no way that we were going to make the ram and return to camp. Decision made we dropped back to the camp with hopes for the “Morning Ram” next morning. Mistake three.

Camp was good – rocks and all. Three rams now grazed where one had been that morning – why the hell didn't we just go straight up there this morning!

Day two early up, coffee, instant breakfast and no bloody sheep to be seen anywhere.

A small band of Rocky Mountain goats continued to taunt us, grazing peacefully on the near vertical rock wall opposite our camp, but as this was a limited goat tag area and I had none, their presence was just a distraction. The band contained one larger animal, which I assumed was a mature Billy – what a greatly underrated trophy those goats are!

Our plan was to travel up valley in the hope that, while we could not see any sheep from camp, the band observed the previous evening was bedded out of sight amongst the large glacial rocks.

Traveling without packs we covered the distance from camp to a position below that occupied by the sheep the previous evening in short order – no sheep. Tracks leading across the lake bed towards that area showed where at least three large rams had traversed the valley during the previous 24 hours. No amount of glassing could produce a sheep and we concluded that this band had continued on their way during the night and probably entered the valley we hunted the day before. A couple of dejected and increasingly weary old hunters returned to camp with their tails between their legs.

After taking stock of our position the next morning, weary muscles and a dwindling food supply decided us on a return to base camp. Highlight mistake four – take sufficient food for at least 6 days even when the locals suggest certain success in 2 days.

Base camp, sighted on the main Tazlina glacier, was not the Hilton, the only shelter from the wind was behind some avalanche debris, our sleeping bags settling into the snow pack as it melted under us. Thank God for a good NZ “Fairy Down” sleeping bag and a “space blanket” ground sheet!

With some intensive glassing it soon became obvious that this area around the landing spot had experienced significant hunting pressure during the earlier part of the hunting season and that any game (read Sheep) had long since left. In the face of deteriorating weather and the lack of enthusiasm in returning to the previous hunting area we decided to pull out when Mike checked on our progress.

My Alaskan adventure continued with several days hunting on the Alaskan Peninsular hunting Caribou – enjoyable, interesting, but not Sheep!

John Berry

Rakiura Hunter Camp Trust Hut Inspection 2021.

Rakiura Hunter Camp Trust owns and manages eighteen huts that the Trust built for hunters on Stewart Island. The first official meeting which led to the forming of the Trust for the Huts was held in September 1999 on Stewart Island. By interested parties who hunt whitetail deer on the Island including Southland Deer Stalkers. Their DOC concession requires that each hut must be inspected once a year.

The day started when I was picked up about 7.45am, by Ray Phillips, the trust Secretary/treasurer, next stop the Airport to collect Trust chairman John Delury, then to Orawia to the Fiordland Helicopter base. Where gear and supplies were loaded into Dale Green's Squirrel Helicopter. There were spare grates, broom's and shovels, all sorts of things needed for ongoing maintenance of the-Rakiura Hunter Camp Huts. Gear including a ladder, Chimney sweeps brush and hammer and drills.

Loaded we were off to the first hut at Christmas Village Bay. Where I was shown the finer points of operating a telescoping ladder. Then it was up onto the roof for the first of 18 times. Lift the top off the chimney, put the assembled brush down the chimney. Then replace the cover. Next it was clean the spouting. Take a couple of quick photos as I had none of this hut, more of scenery then back to the helicopter. While I was doing this Ray and John were checking out inside and outside the hut, checking water and gas warning signage is in place, hut and information books are present, and the general hut condition as well as cleaning out the ash I deposited in the fire place and checking deposit levels in the toilets. No time for sightseeing. We had the tide to keep pace with, and helicopters don't come cheap.

All too soon we were at Murray River reassemble and back up the ladder, chimney then spouting, back down the ladder, the odd photo then back in the helicopter.

Patterson's inlet was next five huts in quick succession, getting more into the routine of the job, which is broken by some huts having pot belly stoves which don't need a Chimney swept. Seeing some new to me scenery around Big Glory, more photos to take.

Then a decent flight to Port Adventure three more huts there. Had to watch it on my knees at the, Bosom hut is not the standard design, roof has more pitch and old fashioned iron, which did not agree with the compression leggings I wear under my shorts. Two spouting's too so more work. At Kelly's we encounter a hunting party. A quick handshake then on with the job, time keeps going and the tide waits for no man. More quick photos are taken as I go. North- Tikotatahi is next, the roof spouting is clean except for some sand, boy this place gets sand blasting, hard on the paint but will it rust no sign of any!

Then it was cross country some more interesting scenery also new to me, taking us to Upper Lords. Different country. Here the chopper was shut down and we took our time briefly to have lunch.

Now south we go again to Port Pegasus, Toi Toi flat then some rubbish country on the way. Then we arrive at this southern gem of the Island. Two huts quickly checked and cleaned, and in under half an hour we were off back north. With views of Gog and Magog to the west, with yours truly trying to get a decent photo of them as strong winds buffet the helicopter.



Gog & Magog through the haze

Doughboy bay is passed and on to Mason bay with its three huts. There is a party at Martins creek regular users who have volunteered to dig a new toilet hole, they are given guidance as to location and thanked. More quick checks and cleans, then over the hill to Little Hellfire. Located in coastal scrub, another clean spouting. Up the coast and across the top of the Freshwater we land at Smokey. The spouting has heaps of wet muck, about the worst saved to last. It is dealt with, then back in the Helicopter for the trip home. Overall the huts were found in good condition, a credit to the hunter/users who have kept them clean and tidy, with little rubbish being found. Another check completed for Ray and John, back to civilisation in time for John to catch his flight home. It was a different and unique day that ticked another part of New Zealand that I had not seen off the old bucket list.

Doug Gordon

Invercargill Rifle Club
Cobb Road Rifle Range

As honorary members of the Invercargill Rifle Club, Southland Branch members now have the opportunity to use the Cobb Road Range for sighting in of rifles and also participating in programmed Invercargill Rifle club events.

You will need to bring

Firearms Licence and Deerstalkers membership card.

Ear and eye protection

Target capable of being stapled to the target frame

Rifle (bolt out) + ammo – Up to and including .308/7.62 calibre

Bipod or other front support and rear support.

The range will be operated by a designated Rang Officer who will make themselves known at the range.

General format will be

Allocation of target frame

Validation of rifle being able to hit target at 100m

Shooting 200m and beyond after validation

Dates: The range is not for casual use but is available for use on the following dates:

Currently over the Summer Range is available Sundays (except over Xmas) 11am to

1pm, 100yards to 200 yards After which there is a NRA style shoot at longer ranges Range

fee is \$10.00

If you are interested in attending and for further details please first contact

Andy Nesbit 021 917 808

Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490

Rifle Sighting In At Invercargill Pistol Club

With the start of daylight saving the Invercargill pistol Club range will be again available.

To Financial Members for the sighting in of Rifles on Wednesday nights from 5.30 pm finishing 7pm. At the cost of \$10 per person. Ear & Eye protection required

Please Note with the changes to the Law NO Semi Automatics allowed. (Other than .22R)

To use this facility you **MUST** contact the roistered person in charge **no later** than the previous Sunday night.

10th November Doug Gordon 03 216 6383/ 027 637 2206

24th November Andy Nesbit 021 917 808

1st December Nathan Dawson 027 235 8063

8th December Tom Mead 027 847 1882

15th December Doug Gordon 03 216 6383/ 027 637 2206

22nd December Andy Nesbit 021 917 808

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Wapiti Lodge, Thicket Burn Hut & Red Stag Lodge Mavora



Bookings to Neville & Carol Miller Phone (03)216 8654
cell 021 08219528 email nandc43@gmail.com or
43 Bain St Invercargill

Please Note the Red Stag Lodge is on Doc land a hunting permit is
required to have firearms at the site. **Deposits for any bookings to be
Received within seven days or bookings will be cancelled.**

. Wapiti Lodge still available over summer due to no takers for Christmas ballot

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