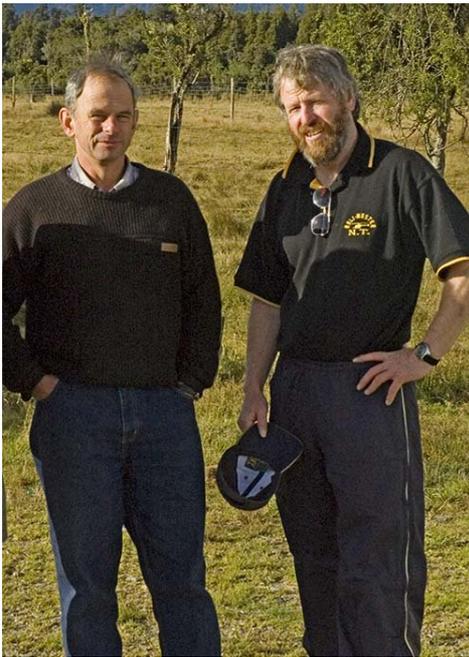




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Dave Asher and Dave McCarlie want to hear from the older folk of the land to document New Zealand's farming heritage.

demanding project – recording farming heritage.

They have produced several documentaries and have plans for many more but need help.

They have a call out for the older folk of the land to come forward and share their stories.

“Without outside funding several unique stories have been told and captured before they are lost forever.

“We are keen for the older folk of the land to help us with more. If we don't get them now they are gone forever,” Asher said.

The great New Zealand Deer Story, a series of three DVDs is the only complete story of the industry.

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Telling tales of farming folk

by Annette Scott



Recording the heritage of farming and high country activities is something Dave Asher says needs urgent attention.

So he and fellow Southlander Dave McCarlie set up South Coast Productions to pursue their passion to tell stories of the early days on the land.

Working together over the past 10 years the two Daves have recorded and produced unique stories of the landscapes and people of Southland, the early days of the deer industry and now moved on to what Asher says is a more



THE VENISON HUNTERS documents the beginning of the venison industry by a bunch of ingenious Kiwis then The Last Great Adventure captures the techniques that enabled the establishment of deer farms.

“These three historic films capture the Kiwi spirit and an era that has gone forever,” Asher said.

South Coast Productions moved onto farming heritage, documenting the story of the pioneering Nolan Family who farmed for more than 100 years in the Arawhata Valley in south Westland.

“They have overcome the hardships of isolation and flooded rivers to become part of the folklore of Westland.”

More recently, The Snowline was Their Boundary documents why for 150 years the high country has attracted a special breed of men and women captivated by the mysterious attraction that no one quite understands.

“This is the story of earlier times in the high country, a story of pack horses, cooks, musterers and the dogs that made it all possible.

“It’s a story of time when the rivers and the snowline was their boundary.”

The newest, From Forest to Farm is the story of early pioneers arriving in a land covered in forest or tussock, a challenge only the hardy could survive.

Asher said it highlights how women were often the key to farming ventures.

“They worked like galley slaves carrying water, cooking, initially living in tents until a suitable cabin was found.

“Doors were never locked, honesty was part of their culture, as was pride in working the land”.

From Forest to Farm follows land development from manpower to horsepower and the arrival of tractors and modern farming.

“Where to now for the sons and daughter of those pioneers, what future will farming hold for them, if they can get a start,” Asher asks.

“Although the pioneering life was one of hard toil it was a life of achievement and working together, perhaps a lot simpler and happier than for the people of today.”

Asher said the stories of hunters, farmers, musterers and fishermen are building a library of documentaries that South Coast Productions wants to grow.

“We want to do more and we need to do these stories with some urgency.

“None of us is getting younger but we all have stories that are part of NZ’s farming and rural heritage.