

On 11 May there was a wonderful turn-out of Hawkes Bay branch members to hear an outstanding Speech and PowerPoint about an adventure on the ice at Antarctica, by a well-prepared group of New Zealanders. The speaker, Les Appleford, who worked for NZ Aerial Mapping, gave us a talk on life in the Antarctic in October/November 1993. A crew of three men flew an Aero Commander over the continent taking over five hundred black and white photographs, which were to be made into maps. Safety was essential, they wore special survival suits and the plane was painted orange, so it was visible in the white environment. Fourteen hours of fuel was carried because distances were so vast and there was nowhere to land if they were lost.

Antarctica is the coldest, windiest place on Earth, -89 degrees C has been recorded. It is the world's largest desert, and it grows twice the size in winter, when the sea freezes into ice. Fire is the biggest danger at Scott and McMurdo Bases. There are no polar bears in Antarctica and no penguins in the Arctic.

The New Zealanders were In Antarctica for thirty days and returned home safely on 29 November 1993.

We then had a fantastic afternoon tea with fine china and the trimmings of High Tea.

There was also the option of viewing the trains at the train station and Tony gave an interesting talk on how the signal box operates.

It was an exciting afternoon, and we would like to thank Faye, the speakers and all the helpers.

Don Gibson

