

STEWART ISLAND NEWS

CELEBRATING RAKIURA

MARCH-APRIL 2006

\$2

Groups of unfamiliar men in wetsuits have been observed storming local waters, dragging inflatable dinghies down the beaches of Halfmoon Bay, tinkering with motors and dive gear and conferring over rumoured underwater marks. Oyster season is upon us. Islanders take to the water too, returning to favourite patches and trying their luck dredging new paths. No Weet-bix for keen oyster-men: the breakfast of champions these days is cracked straight from its shell, dipped in malt vinegar and washed down with a gulp of cold beer. The oysterseeker who finds a good bed may boast he has a shrewd knowledge of the grounds, but the truth usually is that he's just plain lucky.



PHOTO: LIZ CAVE

"Starfish" on Native Island. See page 10.



PHOTO: LAURA CAVANAUGH

Ship to Shore shamrocks

Recent social gatherings in Halfmoon Bay have celebrated *Luck*: A big green-clad crowd toasted the Luck of the Irish at a St. Patrick's Day party at the Pub (see page 4).

Several weeks ago saw back-to-back farewell parties for friends heading off-island. *Good Luck* to Russell Salter and to Dan Young on their new ventures.

Dozens of fans rocked to the music of *Luck* (ex-Exponents Jordan Luck's band) at the Community Centre

in February (p. 6).

Beware...it's not just oyster season; it's wasp season too. One *unlucky* Oban citizen found out the unpleasant way, when an angry wasp got into his trousers and stung him twice. You may have experienced ants in your pants or a bee in your bonnet, but hopefully you won't ever have to endure a wasp in your Y-fronts!

Speaking of hot cross buns, the Easter bunny is on our horizon! AND on 23rd April a group of New Zealand writers will give a reading at the Community Centre thanks to support from Toi Rakiura Trust (p.3)



Yellow-eyed penguin team member Julie McInnes describes her experiences studying penguins in the field on page 8. She is also pictured engaged in social sciences on page 4.

Inside this issue:

Boat-of-the-Month	2
Garden Circle	6
Habitat Restoration Project	8
HMB Beat	5
Library	10
Museum	3
Music	6-7
Yellow-eyed penguins	8-9

And much more!!

Oyster dear to the gourmet, beneficent Oyster, exciting rather than sating, all stomachs digest You, all stomachs bless You. —Seneca (4 B.C. -65 A.D.)

In honour of oyster season, this issue contains some pearls of wisdom, lyrics, and lore celebrating the beloved bivalve.



Editor's Note: Merv King's wife Pat has kindly allowed the *Stewart Island News* to access Merv's unpublished Boat files, so we are able to keep the famous Boat-of-the-Month pages "afloat" for a while longer!

BOAT-of-the-MONTH: **CORDELIA**



Photo: Ross Williamson

Built in 1889 at Sunshine Bay, Sandy Point, by the Franks brothers. She was a wooden kauri hull, 37'6" x 9'6" x 6'3", and was a fast sailer. At one time she held the sailing record between Bluff and Stewart Island.

Her early history is not clear, but before World War 1 Joe Bragg fished on her. She was owned by William Dawson around 1918 and fished the Island waters for many years. When the **HELGA** was stolen from Bluff by two Borstal escapees, **CORDELIA** was at Mason's Bay crewed by Frank Williamson and Bill Hansen, who assisted the Police operation and returned the **HELGA** to Bluff.

After a period lying derelict against a wharf at Bluff, **CORDELIA** was "given" to "Sharkey" Wilson by Stan Jones and taken to a shed in Crinan Street, Invercargill, where rebuilding was commenced. In 1967 she was bought for \$600.00 by Stuart Macdonald, who completed the restoration work, installing a 4cylinder Perkins diesel engine and freezer before fishing the Port Pegasus grounds from his home base of Riverton.

In 1969 she was sold to Patu King, who worked from Riverton down the west coast of Stewart Island and along to Preservation Inlet.

Her working days ended when her next owner converted her to a pleasure craft by building saloon accomodation in place of the freezer. **CORDELIA** disappeared from the scene after making the odd appearance at Stewart Island, and eventually showed up at Levin owned by Ross Williamson – son of the Frank Williamson mentioned above. He has her ashore for further restoration work, and on a recent visit south he called and passed on the photos used here. Small world?

CORDELIA ashore at Levin



Museum Notes

A recent donation to the museum is a carved and painted lancewood cane from Penang, a house with a rich history. The handle of this charming cane looks like the head of a red-billed bird.

Another donation is this object:



No, it is not the elusive Giant Squid. This acquisition has a dubious history and those who came in contact with it don't have the fondest memories of it. Have you guessed yet? The Stewart Island schoolmistress used this strap to make her point with unruly students. Yes, this short bit of leather has gotten in touch with many naughty sides. The tassels are a bit chewed, and its donor, Nan, the schoolmistress's daughter, recalls once hiding it from her mother.

Visit our local museum and get in touch with your ~~naughty~~ historically curious side!



Pictured in the foreground is "Penang," built about 1910 by Percy Macdonald



of Invercargill and used as his house while surveying in Stewart Island. A family named Double occupied it for some years, as also did the Wilkinson family. In 1918 it became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Heaton. He was the local carrier, with his horse and dray, and she was the District Nurse till 1924. During the 1930s it was bought by Edgar Jensen, and was occupied by his mother for some years. It had other owners and tenants.

Ron and Madge Bray were also owners and after them the DeHamils. Present owners Hugh and Isabel Broughton have dismantled and removed the house to make way for a new one. This photo was taken between 1920 and 1924.

WRITERS TO RAKIURA

Have you ever wished you could write a blockbuster, a Booker winner or even just a short story that would knock the socks off anyone who read it?

Well, perhaps the visit to Rakiura of 20 poets and writers from all parts of Aotearoa might serve to inspire you. These visitors have been organised by Cilla McQueen of Bluff herself a nationally recognised poet and artist and David Howard from Dunedin. Along with support from Auckland based Michele Leggott they have

arranged for the writers to be based at Te Rau Aroha marae in Bluff during the Oyster and Seafood Festival on 21-23 April. Late on Sunday 23 they will de-camp to Oban and hold a 'reading' in the Community Centre. Although some will have to return to Bluff on the following morning other writers are happy to conduct workshops for locals on the Monday before returning to the Mainland.

Toi Rakiura Arts Trust has been granted funds from the Community Trust of Southland and the Southland District Council's

Creative Communities Committee to assist with the group's travel costs to the island. Not one of the writers is charging a speaking or workshop fee so entry to their public forum will be a reasonably priced charge to help cover venue costs.

So, don't miss out! The readers/writers will be very funny and inspiring **and**, they would love to hear from **YOU**. If you have any original poems or stories please bring them and share them with a non judgmental and supportive audience.—Gwen Neave

Oban was given a nice mention in a recent *On Location* magazine article about two men who jet skied around New Zealand to generate interest in the Cancer Society's Sunsmart promotion.

Following is an excerpt:
Approaching the most southerly point of New Zealand, the pair crossed to Stewart Island where they took rest in the fabulous

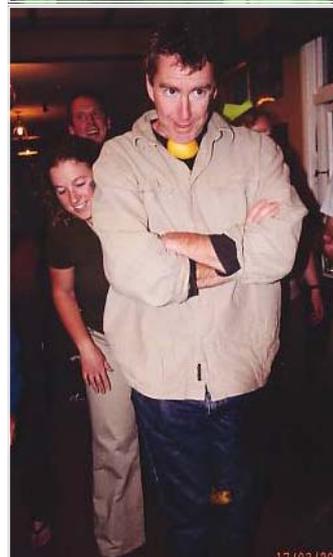
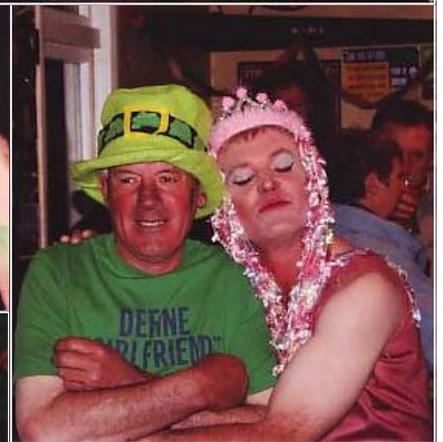
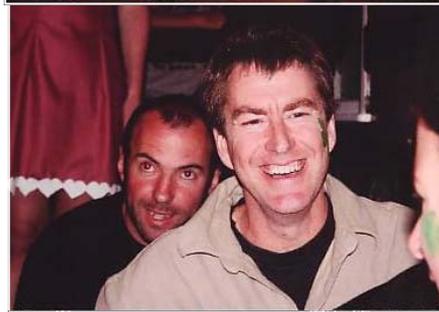
Deep Bay Apartments at Oban. Brad and Jeremy are unanimous in awarding Oban's South Seas Hotel best pub and friendliest locals. "The Stewart Islanders were just incredible to us and even refuelled us for free on the way out." With a fuel bill of more than \$8,000 being footed personally by the pair, this donation was received with much thanks.

The food of thy soul is light and space; feed it then on light and space. But the food of thy body is champagne and oysters; feed it then on champagne and oysters; and so shall it merit a joyful resurrection, if there is any to be.—Herman Melville

I do not weep for the world — I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife.
—Zora Neale Hurston



St. Patrick's Day



PHOTOS: LAURA CAVANAUGH



HALFMOON BAY BEAT: MARCH 2006

Autumn greetings islanders, new 'locals' and visitors,

Things have been steady from a policing perspective but without too many major incidents thankfully with little in the way of reported crime and search and rescue.

The theme of the island so far this year unfortunately appears to be the passing of some long term locals. We had a 'cup of tea' for Merv at Pegasus recently. It reminds us that the senior members of our community are very valuable and we must not forget any of them.

Thanks for those who took a recent interest in the foolish behaviour of some visiting boatees. It really is a case of locals know best when it comes to nautical matters down here and in my view it takes a high level of ignorance to refuse the good advice offered by our experts.

Issues of suspected seafood poaching was also brought to my attention and although my investigations did not show anything in this regard, it is excellent to see that the island public will not tolerate a hint of this.

It has been good too, to see some of the less desirable vehicles being crushed and taken off by barge. Well done Dave and the team at the Recycling centre. There are still a few vehicles on the island 'living in the past'. Current WOF and regos are required on all vehicles. Please attend to this if it has lapsed. 'Farm warrants' are a thing of the past here and I'm not sure if most of the farms down here ever qualified... mussel, salmon??

On road safety matters, it is pleasing to see that attitudes are starting to change regarding drink driving. Believe me, this issue will not go away. The drink driver on the island still remains one of the main local hazards.

Jane BALLANTYNE (Road Safety Southland) is organising some road safety signage, local promotions and defensive driving this year. I know she is updating some of you directly over these issues.

Well done to Sinky and those who have volunteered their time to the Civil Defence evenings. You never know when you may be required.

I am concerned about reports of drug use still circulating. The island will not become a haven for drug users. Drug use is very detrimental to this community and it does not need it. Expect enforcement of drug laws.

After a few island rumours, I can confirm that Heather and I will be leaving the island soon. I have taken up a promotion position as Officer in Charge of Te Anau (Sergeant).

It was a difficult decision to leave at this time, but looking further out a positive one for us.

Thank you for being such an amazing community to be involved with. Policing here certainly offers challenges at times, but the close knit nature of the community means working and living here is very rewarding. Few places would offer the array of experiences that the island does and we will continue to enjoy returning as visitors.

Bye for now and take care of each other.

Senior Constable Tod Hollebon
Half Moon Bay Police.



NETBALL!

Netball is on again at the Community Centre at **7:30pm Thursdays** and **3 p.m. Sundays** (except 26th March—come at 2pm) Visitors and all levels are welcome; a \$2 fee is asked of non-gym members.



Let there be you,
Let there be me.
Let there be oysters
Under the sea.
—Nat King Cole

A poor man
wants the oyster
A rich man wants the pearl
But the man who can sing
when he hasn't got a thing
He's the king of the
whole wide world
—Elvis Presley

I wanna go back
to the island
Where the
shrimp boats tie
up to the pilin'
Gimme oysters
and beer 🎵
For dinner 🎵
every day of
the year and I'll
feel fine
I'll feel fine
—Jimmy Buffet



LUCK PREVAILS

by Jim Flack

Jordan Luck and his merry men put on a great performance in the community centre in late February despite prior concerns their jovial nature may mar the performance. The band are known as 'Luck' in reference to their front man who was the vocalist kiwi in pop sensation the Dance Exponents in the 1980s and, later, the rockier Exponents in the 1990s. There is no doubting Jordan could get a crowd jumping in his prime as an Exponent and "his band" was no different. They tore through a couple of hours of kiwi classics that had the dance floor full by the third song and bopping for the rest of the gig. When you consider who else is in the band this is hardly surprising. Lead guitarist Mark Bell has 25 years as professional musician under his belt, hitting the national spotlight in the 1980s with Blam Blam Blam and Coconut Rough. Other band members have gigged at home and abroad with Bic Runga and Tim Finn.

The crowd and the dance floor was conspicuously made up people mainly in their 30s and 40s and this reflected the era that most of the music came from. After the response to the Dance Exponent's 1980s hits 'All I can do', 'Victoria' and 'Christchurch' you could certainly tell who was shaking their booties in the pubs around New Zealand 20 years ago (Jed, Chris, Jan, Lance, Leanne, Tod, Heather and Kath to name a few).

Other songs that raised the crowd tempo were Exponent's 1990s hits 'Why does love do this to me' and 'Who loves who the most', Blam Blam Blam's 'There is no depression in New Zealand' and the Dudes 'Bliss'. In short it was an inspiring show from an experienced working band.

But it didn't always look like it was going to be a successful night. Apparently Jordan was a bit under the weather the last time he played on the island and there were a fair few people who walked away from that gig wishing the singer sang more than he drank. This probably affected the turnout. About 90 people paid to get in, which left the hall a little airy, but with plenty of room to pull off those funky dancing manoeuvres. The show came about when Toi Rakiura seized an opportunity when a visiting wedding party hired the band to play at a private party on the Friday night. It made so much sense to have the band play for the locals on the Saturday night for a much lower than usual cost. It's not very often a band of this calibre comes to the island, particularly with members that have made a substantial contribution to the country's culture over the past 25 years - albeit pop culture. Top marks Toi Rakiura. It was a great finish to my summer.



WRITING COMPETITION

The Dan Davin Literary Foundation is an Invercargill based trust that holds annual creative writing workshops for secondary students and the public each year. The Foundation also runs a short story competition for Year 12-13 pupils that are judged by the year's workshop leader.

Workshop leaders have included: David Hill, Tessa Duder, Owen Marshall, Sue Macauley and Kate de Goldi. This year Kate returns to conduct workshops in Queenstown, Invercargill and Winton and judge the students' competition.

To mark Southland's sesquicentennial year the Foundation has decided to host an adults' competition and has chosen a panel of three judges. The competition was launched on Friday night at the Southland Museum and Art Gallery. As it was St Patrick's Day it was held to be a fitting date for the launch given Dan Davin's Irish background.

Daniel Marcus Davin was born at Makarewa educated at Marist Brothers School in Invercargill and Otago University where he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship. The latter gave him entrée to Oxford University England where he lived for

the rest of his life. He became an Oxford Don, served in the British army and was awarded a military MBE. His short stories portray the Southland society and countryside of the early 20th century with acerbic detail.

The Foundation was originally formed when the Trustbank Southland Community Trust (now the more familiar Community Trust of Southland) purchased a bronze bust of Davin from sculptor Anthony Stones. It was hoped that through the writing workshops and competition hosted by the Foundation Southlanders would learn more about one of its most honoured sons.

The competition launched on Friday is for historical stories (fictional or based on fact) that will celebrate the province's history and this special year. Entry forms and competition guidelines are available from the CToS and the Invercargill Public Library and stories must be returned by the closing date which is 31 June. The winner will be announced along with the names of the successful student writers at a special function to be held on Friday 11 August.

Gwen M Neave
Chair, Dan Davin Literary Foundation

A Diva meets a Grand Old Lady

by Gwen Neave

When I was in my seventh form year at Queen's High in Dunedin my Aunt Isobel, with whom I boarded, took me to the final competition evening of the Mobil Song Awards. This was regarded as New Zealand's premier award for classical singers and a good launching pad for anyone with serious career aspirations in opera.

One of the contestants that night was a striking young Maori woman who strode on to the stage of the Dunedin Town Hall wearing a strawberry pink heavy brocade evening gown that was daringly slit from the front waist to the floor and parted as the wearer walked to reveal strawberry pink pedal pushers underneath! Such daring haute couture was novel in the conservative city of Dunedin in the mid-sixties and in stark contrast to the more subdued gowns of the other singers.

The judges for the competition were not in the Town Hall's auditorium but segregated to a room elsewhere in the building so that their decisions could be made on the quality of the voice production they heard and not influenced by any visual impact an artist might make.

Well Kiri te Kanawa's auditory impact that night resulted in her winning the prestigious competition. Her dramatic and fiery rendition of Habanera from Bizet's Carmen was unforgettable. After this national debut she left to study in London armed with the cheque that was

her part of her prize and the experience of years of hard work under the famed singing teacher Sister Mary Leo in Auckland.

Her life is the stuff of legend. She became a familiar figure in opera houses of the world and at specialized venues such as Glyndebourne, the Hollywood Bowl and Verona and festivals throughout Europe. She has honorary fellowships with many universities and was created a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 1982. She was invited to sing at the wedding of Prince Charles and Diana, Princess of Wales in St Paul's Cathedral, an engagement that ensured her an audience of some 600 million people.

Kiri had never sung in Invercargill until the end of last month although some lucky Southlanders (and Stewart Islanders) got to enjoy her at Millbrook when she gave an outdoor concert there 10 years ago.

The Invercargill Civic Theatre was built 100 years ago and has recently been completely refurbished and restored to a grandeur that possibly surpasses its former beauty. It seemed very fitting that the theatre's transformation should be saluted in a special way and "An Evening with Dame Kiri" was a popular solution.

The theatre was full to capacity — even the four boxes flanking the stage were put to use. The stage was simply but handsomely dressed with the concert Steinway and stool and lowered chandelier decorated with greenery and flowers. Dame Kiri herself was elegant in a red evening gown and matching wrap.

Her opening words of greeting following Mayor Tim's welcome included the announcement that she had agreed (unofficially) to become the Patron for the Southland Museum and Art Gallery. This was greeted by prolonged and enthusiastic applause.

The concert programme offered selections of works by a vast array of European composers from Mozart, Handel, Vivaldi, Debussy, Faure and Strauss in the first half to American folk spiritual and arrangements of Emily Dickinson poems alongside of Tosti and Puccini in the second half. Hearing Dame Kiri's voice accompanied only by the piano allowed us to appreciate her pure sweet head notes and the true quality of her voice. Her rendition of Dickinson's "Why do they shut me out of Heaven?" put to music by Aaron Copland was ethereal and whimsical. Rosemary Barnes is an exceptional musician and as accompanist her playing was sensitive and assured. Much of Dame Kiri's programme was unknown to me but the sheer exquisiteness of her voice was always enthralling. Her two encores were in answer to a standing ovation and included the moving lullaby 'Hine, e Hine' which was absolutely magical and was delivered to a spellbound, breath holding audience.

The glittering theatre with its new drawing room, sweeping staircase and elegant Victoria Rooms is a real Southland jewel and its centennial year of birthday celebrations was begun in fine fashion with this evening of music with one of New Zealand's finest Diva.

STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE

The next meeting of The Garden Circle will be held on 20th April at 2.0 o'clock at the home of Wendy.



An oyster is a fish built like a nut. — Anonymous



Notes from the penguin trail

by Julie McInnes

I knew I had to get away from the hectic rush of Melbourne, but little did I know that it would lead me to the land of the glowing skies. I had been working on little blue penguins back in Australia until I met Sandy King at a conference in Oamaru last year. She spoke of a job that would pay me to walk along picturesque beaches, through immaculate ancient forest and monitor the world's most endangered penguin.... there had to be a catch! She did mention that it was muddy and often the weather could be inclement, but I could cope with mud and a little rain never hurt anyone... did it? So I said goodbye to my little blue friends and up-sized to yellow-eyed penguins.

After a day of meeting people, it was straight into the field for eight days nest searching. I thought I was relatively fit, but I soon realized that there was walking fitness - which wasn't too bad, and nest searching fitness - which I completely lacked! If only I was 60cm tall, nest searching would have

been easy. But instead it was down onto hands and knees and often tummy to crawl and slide through bush lawyer, cutty grass and penguin poo. I was starting to see the catch. However, all self pity was lost in a second, when I climbed over a log to see my first yellow-eyed penguin up close. I gazed awestruck at one of the golden faces that would become part of my life for the next 5 months. I had made the right decision; this was going to be a fantastic summer!

For three weeks a month Bungaree, Yankee River and Long Harry huts became my home and several of the beaches my office. Each day there were nests to check, beaches to walk and mud to get lost in. There was

always something new to see and ever changeable weather to keep you guessing. Bungaree knew how to impress with its spectacular sun rises, long patterned sands, and crystal clear water. Even when the weather turned wild, it was breathtaking. I learnt to embrace the mud, dance in the hail and sing into the wind. This was my home. A place where, at the end of my working day, I could sit back with my guitar and watch the peak hour traffic go past - usually in the form of Fiordland crested penguins.

When I wasn't working, I spent my time exploring the Inlet, embarking on a journey to Port Pegasus and walking the NW circuit. Back in Halfmoon Bay faces soon started to become familiar, with someone always up for coffee and a chat. But as always seems to happen, just when you get comfortable it's time to move on. Back to the hectic rush of Melbourne, for just long enough to realise that city life isn't for me and that an island life calls my name. Thanks to everyone who helped make Rakiura my home. The memories that this island has given me will last a lifetime!



Key to Long-term Results

by Kari Beaven

“Rotational trapping” is the key to controlling possums, rats and wild cats long-term within the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project.

Rotational Trapping means “dividing” the Project area into 4 sections, one next to the other from Ackers Point back to the Golden Bay rd (see photo). Each of these sections has been trapped by community volunteers over the past 12 months, generally keeping pace with the set-up of pest-control traps moving down the peninsula.

Now that the entire trap set-up is complete along the Ackers Point Peninsula, and

that first initial knock-down of pests is nearly complete, it is time to move to a method which will ensure the Project can be carried out in the long-term, using our valuable volunteer resources. There simply are not enough hours in the day to run every possum and rat trap all at once, along the whole peninsula and keep them running long-term. And it's also not necessary.

The answer is to trap one section at a time, starting at Ackers Point, leading outwards to each next section monthly until the border of Golden Bay rd is reached.... then start over again at Ackers.

Of course a “border-control area” of traps will always be

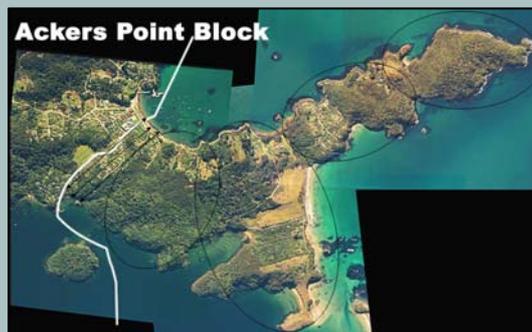
operating near the border of the project area (in from Golden Bay rd), as any new rats or possums will have to pass here to get into the main area.

In this way, pest control is achieved over the entire area three times each year, and any remaining pests (one or two are expected to escape traps the first times through) will not have sufficient time establish a new population. The major effect of this will become even more evident as the years go by.

So for anyone living in areas through which the Project has passed earlier

in the year, and for anyone who has seen a new possum moving in to Ackers Point, we expect to be back out there soon.

Thank you to everyone who has given their support for the Project to occur on their land. We look forward to beginning the “first rotation” soon. Even more than that, we look forward to watching the dramatic response of wild life around Halfmoon Bay over the years.





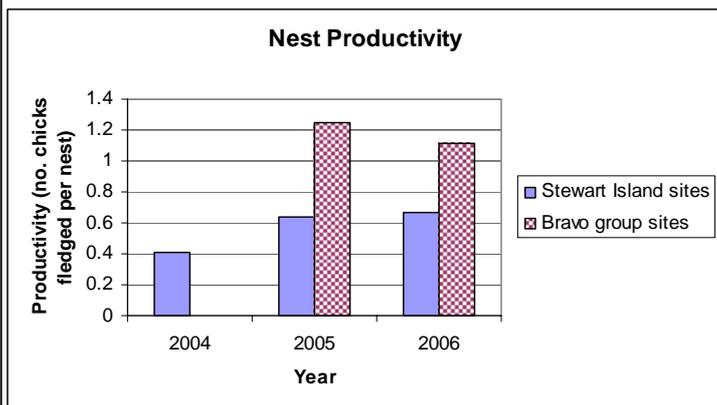
Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust news.

Finally our penguin chicks have fledged and field work has finished; just in time too as the days are becoming notably shorter and the weather has that cooler autumn feel. Being chained to a desk analyzing the season's data and writing reports isn't such a bad thing when it's blowing a gale and the windows are wet with rain.

So how did our birds do this season? Well, we found fewer nests than last season, but those pairs that did breed collectively produced proportionally more, and heavier chicks on average, than last season. The easiest way to illustrate this is graphically; see the graph below.

"Nest Productivity" is the *average* number of chicks produced per nest. The theoretical maximum could be 2, which would be the case if every nest produced two chicks. However, in reality only some nests produce two chicks, some produce one and some fail completely and produce none, thus the productivity figure is the average of all these – obviously we can't have 0.6 of a penguin!

You can see from the graph that the productivity for the Stewart Island sites has increased since 2004, while that for the Bravo group has dropped slightly over the last two years (we didn't monitor the Bravo group in 2004, hence no figure for Bravo for that year).



These changes may or may not be significant, but what is really intriguing is the vastly different productivity between Stewart Island and Bravo sites. Why the difference? The simple answer is that we don't know, which is why we decided to carry out this study in the first place. The study has two more seasons to go, and by the end of it we may have an answer!

This is an appropriate time for my co-worker Julie and I, on behalf of the Trust, to thank our friends and supporters, without whom this project may not have been able to go ahead. While there are some organizations that support the Trust in general (remember those TV ads for Mainland cheese with the old guy and the penguin.....), there are several organizations, businesses and individuals who have supported this project in particular and deserve a special mention here. These are the Department of Conservation (Southland Conservancy), the Community Trust of Southland, the Southland Locator Beacon Trust, Stewart Island Flights, Stewart Island Water Taxi and Eco Guiding, Debs and Chris Dillon, and volunteers Jim Barritt (not the mussel farmer!), Meghan Spratt and Annett Eiselt. Also thanks to PJ and Nick, and to the community in general for your support and interest shown, and especially the friendly, helpful service our Trustees and staff received when they visited last November.

Sandy
Sandy King
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The penguin team weighs each chick, and obtains a mouth swab and feather samples. The samples are sent to a laboratory to help determine the health of the chick.



PHOTOS by J. McInnes



Oysters are more beautiful than any religion. There's nothing in Christianity or Buddhism that quite matches the sympathetic unselfishness of an Oyster.—Saki (H. H. Munro)





I must sound like a broken record but we have NEW-BOOKS! Circulating collections have brought us all sorts of self-help books so come in and help yourself.

food and fishermen. There are some true pearls in the collection, including *Consider the Oyster* by MK Fisher and of course, Steinbeck's *The Pearl*.



Volunteers Nancy Peltola, Steven Henke and kids

their vacation to volunteer at the library! Our library is stretching...the adult fiction section now wraps all the way around the centre shelving units.

We also have some lovely new picture books and board books for the little ones.

Thanks to Jill Skerret, Pat King and Roger Hicks for their kind donations of books. And a big thanks to visitors Nancy and Steven who donated four hours of

This past month set a record for issuing new library cards. We welcome new users. Come see us from 2-3.15pm on Wed or from 11-noon Fri and Sat. *Happy Reading, Jess*

In honour of oyster season, our book flavour-of-the-month is sea-



Island kids will be more bush-and sea-savvy (and jumping-off-the-wharf-savvy) thanks to a new club. Kath Johnson and Liz Cave have started *Starfish*, a group devoted to teaching outdoor skills to local youth aged seven and up. Our sparkling waters and lush forest serve as a classroom for these lucky "star students."



starfish built a "bivvy" up the Back Road, and learned to tie bowlines. Week Three was a favourite: the Starfish travelled to Native Island (thanks to Ian and Philipa Wilson) and had a marvellous time sand-boarding and observing the resident enormous sea lions. On Week Four they played kayak games and paddled in relay races at Halfmoon Bay, and...they jumped off the wharf!

PHOTOS: LIZ CAVE

Week One of the project saw the kids jumping off the wharf to cap



off a day of kayaking in Horsehoe Bay. Week Two the

Ideas for future adventures include trips to Mason's Beach and Bravo Island; a kayak excursion at Little



River; and learning skills such as fire lighting, wajax, snorkelling, outdoor cooking, and bushcraft.



Volunteers

by Margaret Rooney

12 - 18 March 2006 was volunteer awareness week and it set me thinking. What if all the volunteers on Stewart Island decided that they really were not needed and worse did any one realise that they were there?

So who are volunteers? They are people who give freely and generously of their time to run a Community service: they are people who got conned by their friends

into helping with something and found they actually enjoyed being part of a group, made friends and were needed; they are people who saw a need and stepped into make a difference; they are not paid and sometimes they are taken for granted .

What is run by volunteers in our Community? The Museum, the Community Centre, the Pavilion Rooms, the Library, Toi Rakiura, Rug Rats, Sports Clubs, the Health Committee, Promotions, the Fire Brigade the Churches, Yoga, Sea Scouts,

and many more activities. Most of these groups are run by a Trust or committee and people faithfully attend meetings, working bees, are Chairpersons, secretaries, treasurers, and carry out the work so that these services run. There are other people volunteering help to older people, young mothers, some-one who is ill, or a visitor who seems lost.

So to everyone out there, past and present: a big Thank-you for the hours you have put in as a volunteer to make this Island a special place to live in.

Profile: WILLIAM FLACK, comic book artist

by Hilli Maass-Barrett

Have you heard of Captain Underpants or Hedgehog, yet? If not you are missing some great adventures written by local author William Flack. His comics are read by people from, Canada, England, Germany as well as New Zealanders, and not just in the Kai Kart. They are in high demand and people expressed their disappointment by not being able to buy a copy, once sold out. Ten-year old William agreed to give an exclusive interview for SIN magazine. I was privileged to visit him in his spare time at his home in Dundee Street on Stewart Island, where he lives with younger sister Zoe and parents Jim and Leanne. I started off by asking him if he started writing before he came to Stewart Island.

William: No, I just started after I got here. I got some Captain Underpants books as a present for my 9th Birthday. That gave me the idea. The books are written by Dave Pilkey. They are my favourite books. I have 7 of them. I started drawing pictures of Captain Underpants and few of the bad guys, like Professor Poopy Pants, he was one of the Super Heros...and the Wedgie woman.

Hilli: Yes, I know the Wedgie woman from your comics, I think she is my favourite.

W: Yeah, I kind of like the Wedgie woman, too

H: In most of your magazines, the bad guys are teachers, did you have a bad teacher?

W: No, I just got that out of the Captain Underpants book. It is always the gym teacher that gets the flack.

H: All your magazines are lovingly created by hand. How long does it take you to do one magazine?

W: It takes me about 2 to 3 hours. Normally I write the words first and then draw the pictures. It takes me a long time to figure out what I am going to do or who the bad guy is.

H: I see in your latest comic you got your sister Zoe involved, was she interested?

W: She made up some stories herself about our principal at Okiwi school, that is our old school. Sometimes I get her to make up a story and I write it down and draw the pictures for it.

H: How come you changed your hero from Captain Underpants to Hedgehog?

W: I decided to change the Super Hero every year, I thought it would be boring after a year, so I changed it.

H: So you came up with Hedgehog, that is pretty neat. What made you think of him?

W: I have 3 favourite toys, Donald Duck, his eyes look a bit funny now, Hedgehog and Lammy, he is a bit worn, too. He will be my next hero, I think.

H: The line "faster than a marble" is pretty clever, did you invent that?

W: No, it followed Captain Underpants once in one of Dave Pilkey's books, but I made up all the stuff with Hedgehog.

H: Have you thought of putting all your booklets together and bring them out as one big one? Like adventures of Captain

Underpants and Hedgehog or something?

W: No, not really, I started thinking about that,...but I lost some of them, and some of them got pages missing....

H: Your comic drawings are pretty neat, so much detail. Do you do drawings at school as well?

W: Not really, we get awards for creative writing, and also mathematics, so I kind of got extra marks for that.

H: Is mathematics your favourite subject? Do you like it better than drawing?

W: No, not really. I like singing. I know heaps of songs in Maori. We learned that at our old school.

H: Do you play an instrument?

W: Yes, I just had my second piano lesson with Mrs. Shepherd. She is kind of nice. I have my own piano downstairs, unfortunately the black keys have been taken off. Lance Le Quesne is doing some carving and he needed them. [It's a very old piano and none the worse for the removal of some keys according to Leeann--ed]

H: Have you thought of what you would like to be?

W: Yes, there are two things I want to be, one is an artist and also a geographer.

H: What would you do as a geographer?

W: I like to study animals and other stuff around the worlds.

H: Well, thank you very much for your time, William. We are looking forward to more adventures of Hedgehog or Lammy. Good luck and keep up the fantastic work.



"An Oyster may be crossed in love,"—
and why
Because he mopeth idly in his shell,
And Heaves a lonely
subterraqueous sigh.
—Lord Byron (Don Juan)

The world is an oyster,
but you don't crack it
open on a mattress.
—Arthur Miller

He was a bold man that first
ate an oyster—Jonathan Swift



This month the
CHOCOLATE AWARD
 goes to
 Liz and Kath for their
 STELLAR efforts in
 creating STARFISH
and 
 to Vicki the Leprechaun
 for an excellent job running
 games at the Pub on
 St. Patrick's Day. 

**THANKS to the
 great
 people at Ship
 to Shore for
 supporting the
 Stewart
 Islands News,
 and making sure
 you are all
 paying for
 your S/INs!**

**Just a note from the par-
 ent committee at Rugrats:**
 We have decided to ask for a dona-
 tion when lending out equipment
 to Non-Rugrats families. Whilst
 we are more than happy to loan a
 highchair etc. when you have fam-
 ily and friends visiting, our equip-
 ment is for RUGRATS use first
 and foremost (Tuesday mornings
 through Thursday afternoons.)

Island Women attend Masters Games



In February, Sue Graham, Jan LeQuesne, Belinda Dobbins and Helen Cave travelled to Dunedin and represented Stewart Island in netball at the New Zealand Masters Games.

The women joined a group of athletes from Palmerston North to form a team. The ladies didn't come in first, but they didn't come in last, and they had a wonderful time.



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