

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

## CELEBRATING RAKIURA

APRIL-MAY 2006

\$2



Muttonbirders gather birds into a group tied by their necks, and carry this *hui* slung over the shoulder. p.10

Is the Earth wobbling, or did I just drink too much whisky? If you were a reveller the night before Easter, the answer was probably *both*. Yes, yet another earthquake has rumbled Stewart Island, registering a mere 5.4 on the Richter scale, and registering fuzzily with bonfire partygoers at Butterfields and Horseshoe beaches.

Speaking of rumbles, we are feeling rumbly in our tummies as muttonbird season commences and we anticipate greasy crackling golden-brown feeds of Rakiura's culinary treat.

The Island welcomed large crowds over Easter weekend, and welcomes back Duncan as the relief cop. There have been some farewells too: Farewell to our policeman Todd and wife Heather, and good luck to them in their new ventures in Te Anau. Farewell to Jaime who's off on an adventure; farewell to a bunch of armchairs at Jaime's farewell bonfire which ended up *in* the fire. Farewell to the old Acker's Point Lighthouse.

Our grumpy sea lion has visited the island so often these days that it would only be newsworthy if he *didn't* exhibit silly and aggressive behaviour toward visitors (but it's in the news anyway, p. 8)

Out with the old lighthouse and in with the new...Ackers Point has a brand new beacon. The replacement, a shiny and sleek tower with a big light bulb on top, seems much less "housey" than the familiar wooden building that marked the promontory for so long.



## ANZAC Day

...They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

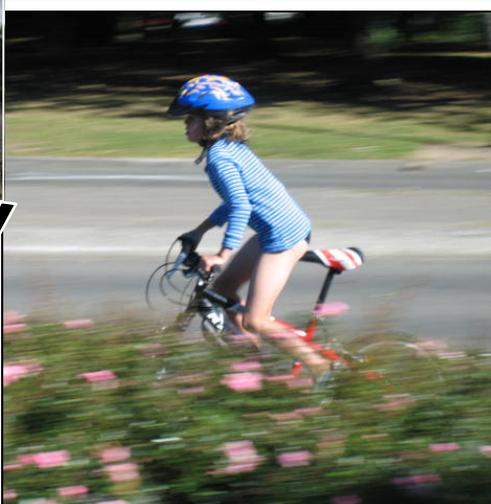
At the going down of the sun and in the morning We will remember them.

—Laurence Binyon



There has been another visitor who has not left us with warm fuzzy feelings. Instead, this as-yet-unknown villain left us a tub full of fish guts dumped into Mill Creek. Thumbs down on that clown...

**Please note: Jess will be overseas next month, so Kari will be editing the May issue of S.I.N.**



Islanders got into the spirit of Go By Bike Day, even the littlest Islanders hopped on balloon-festooned two-wheelers (and three- and four- wheelers) and made an adorable and delightful parade through Oban. See page 3



PHOTO: KATH JOHNSON

Foveaux Strait fish slayer Jahdan Sooalo poses with his conquest.

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## Boat-of-the-Month: **BRITANNIA**

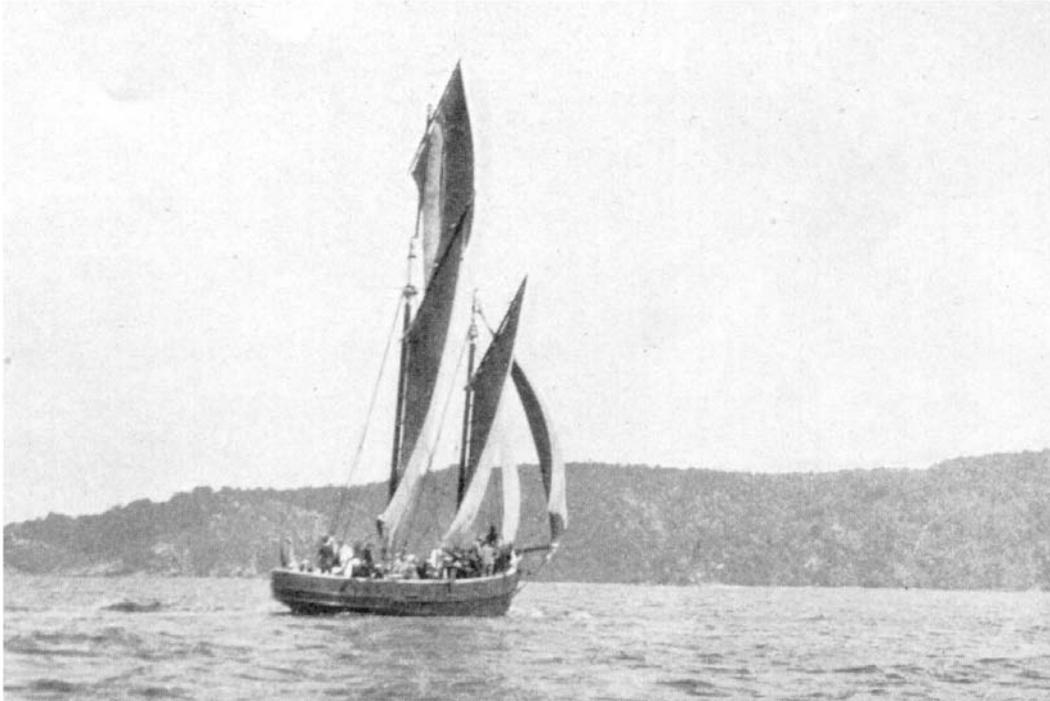


Photo: G.R.Curtis.

One of the best known vessels in the southern area, **BRITANNIA** was built in Barrow St, Bluff, in 1903 by Adam Donaldson and launched from Morrison's Beach.

She was 58' long, rigged as a two masted fore and aft schooner, and owned for many years by Dixon Bros. From September 1908 until April 1913 she fished into Dixon & Preston's freezer at Broad Bay, also carrying fish from there to Bluff.

In 1919, her crew found a W.W.1 mine ashore on Pearl Island opposite the Narrows, and bought a Navy team down to dispose of it.

With George Cross as skipper in 1933 she carried explosives from Bluff to sink the **TARAWERA** at the Neck.

Other well-known skippers were Carol Hansen, Jas Dawson, and Taare Bradshaw.

Over the years she carried parties of muttonbirders to and from the islands, many of them from Colac Bay.

She was sold by Dixon's to Otakou Fisheries and continued to carry fish to Bluff. Later, in June 1964, she was sold to John Gisby and skippered by Bill Bragg. On 30th September 1964 she took on water and sank in 60 fathoms, 8 miles off the Breaksea Islands. The crew were saved by George Fife in the **AWANUI**.

*By Merv King*

# Museum News

By Lorraine Hansen

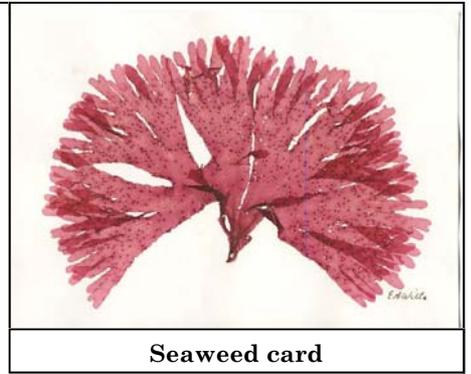
A new acquisition to the museum this month has been a set of letters cards uniquely decorated with the delicate and beautifully coloured seaweeds that are to be found in Stewart Island waters. The late Mrs. Eileen Willa, for many years the curator of the museum, made and sold these cards. Mrs. Willa was a world recognized authority on the seaweeds to be found in our southern waters, and three of our local seaweeds have been named for her. *Ptilona Willana* discovered in 1945 at Port Pegasus, then the big brown kelp *Durvillea Willana* and in 1960 at Ringaringa Mrs. Willa discovered the *Crouania Willana*.

Over her lifetime Mrs. Willa had identified and mounted over 300 species of seaweed and was associate author of the booklet "The Marine Algae of Stewart Island." Another honour was her inclusion in the sixth edition of the World's Who's Who of Women, which lists the achievements of women from all over the world.

As curator of the museum Mrs. Willa worked on many projects, one which continues to be a valuable resource for the museum was the compilation of many large scrapbooks of newspaper cuttings all relating to Stewart Island news items over many years. This project is continued today by our present curator Elaine Hamilton.

In the 1970s to early 1980s, Mrs. Willa took photographs of many of the older homes on the island and mounted these in albums complete with details of owners and any other relevant information.

We are in the process of updating these albums, and would like to have any photos of early Stewart Island houses to borrow for scanning and copying. Photos do not have to be in perfect condition.



Seaweed card



PHOTOS: NICOLETTE THOMPSON

**STARFISH** continue to have a wonderful time kayaking, wharf-jumping, bicycling the Back Road, and having many other adventures. Led by Kath, Liz, and sometimes Lucy, these youngsters have learned many outdoor skills, including fashion design. Yes, fashion design! It's known as *kelp couture*...

# STARFISH



PHOTOS: LIZ CAVE



# ban Globetrotter *off-island adventures*

*Rhonda Steel, the emerald-eyed employee of the South Sea Hotel, recently returned from a "dig" in Tonga. Following is the aspiring archaeologist's account of her trip:*

I found myself in Tong for four weeks of fieldwork after visiting there mid-last year for a Lapita archaeology conference. The 'working' holiday, which my friends claimed was just an excuse to lie on a beach on a tropical island (this may have some truth), allowed me to discuss Tongan archaeology with one of my lecturers, Geoff Clark, who emailed me at the start of the year wanting to know if I would help out with his latest Lapaha project.

He was studying the Lapaha site which consisted of the burial mounds of the early Kings of Tonga and was one of the early capitals of the Tui Tonga lineage. We ended up spending a month there using a range of techniques and machinery to study the site.



mossies, geckos and ants to keep us company.

The only other experience I had with centipedes was in the field. Tonga or more

specifically Tongatapu (the main island) is not a very picturesque place to arrive, for someone coming from NZ the dilapidated houses and rubbish everywhere is quite a shock. The idea of taking out the rubbish basically involves throwing it over the back fence. When we first started out at the Lapaha site we spent a large amount of time cleaning off tin, rubbish etc from the Langi. Centipedes love the damp, dark spots under the rubbish so the Tongans who worked with us would often come across them when clearing. One of their favourite tricks was to catch them pull out their large pincers and then throw them at each other. The innate fear, even though you knew they were no longer dangerous, meant we had a great time laughing at everyone screaming and running away as the centipede came flying.

The boys who worked with us were from the local Lapaha village and were really friendly and always a lot of fun.

Arriving in Tonga we were taken to Sela's guesthouse where we would be living for the next 4 weeks. The project was near to the main city of Nukua'lofa which meant that we were living in town – a large luxury for any archaeologist working in the Pacific where isolated islands and small village huts are the norm.

Sela's did however have its own unique features, the cockroaches grew to an impressively large size (I think they secretly feed them to frighten off palangis) and there were a number of dogs, chickens and pigs running around. While Tonga is reasonably safe in terms of poisonous animals with only the sea snake and stone fish which are actually dangerous the centi-

pede or molokou packs a serious bite and has been known to put people in



hospital with shock or allergic reactions.

While I nervously checked my room and shower each night (they are attracted to water and heat, generally getting people at night) another member of our team, Dave Burley, had the unfortunate experience of being caught butt naked in the shower with one on the wall. Now this was bad for two reasons; centipedes can move very fast and showers tend to lack killing devices like shoes or brooms. Luckily for Dave the creature seemed to be suffering the after-effects of the recent painting and renovations and was very sluggish and he was able to kill it with a bottle. We were never alone with

They basically thought we were crazy as they would knock off at 3 when it was getting too hot



and we would continue working. However they were always keen to teach us new things such as Tongan words like; faster, big, pig, stupid, slower, finish, eat, and my favourite *faka pu'puake* which means stupid and dirty like a pig; being the only girl on the project and the focus of a lot of practical jokes from the team meant that this word was a common part of my daily vocabulary.

Obviously the academic team had no problem with me but the Tongan men took a little longer to deal with it. A lot of the work we did was heavy lifting of machinery, digging and clearing, all of which are male jobs in Tonga. The fact that I was doing these as well meant that I would quite often be stopped by one of the boys and my job was taken over by them. Eventually I got them to realize that I would be doing work as well but just as we reached this agreement their supervisor, an elder male from the village, would come over and tell them off for not doing work while I was.



In the end they let me do it when I got bossy but the elders were a bit put out, though I have to admit that after digging a large hole in the heat of the day I wondered if maybe I shouldn't have been so adamant about the whole women's lib thing and instead build myself a shelter nearby from which I could drink coconuts and supervise...



The site itself was really large and consisted of Langi, burial mounds were the former kings of Tonga and other relevant people were buried. Because

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

of the issues of disturbing burials most of our work was done using GPR and conductivity machines. These were run by a crazy French geophysit, he is extremely tall, runs round in a large sombrero and has a habit of swearing in French at the machines and saying 'phhhh its stuffed' when they broke down, which happened a lot.

The GPR or Ground Penetrating Radar actually looked like it had been made up in a back shed despite being new technology in archaeology. It runs by having two antennae 50cm apart, one of which sends a pulse into the ground and the other retrieves it. Each pulse has a specific picture which shows if there are features in the ground.



Due to the delicacy of the machine and the rough work it was doing there were

a number of problems including Tongan downpours which generally don't go well with electronics and battery failure. Quite a few times three of us would be sitting in the pouring rain while all our coats and umbrellas were covering the machines.

The great part of working in the village was that we got to meet a lot of the locals, all of which were really excited when we came to visit and would make a big show of inviting us into their house and giving us drinks and food. One family in particular were really nice to me and would make me sit inside when it was hot, again because women in general and particularly white women don't work outside in the sun with the men. We also got to meet the local noble and his mother who is a princess in the Tongan system. The Tongan system is very hierarchical with the King at the top, around 33



around 33

nobles below him and then the commoners. It is quite difficult for commoners to marry into the noble families and the majority of the top positions in Tonga are carried out by nobles. One night out we were introduced to a top noble and all around him were men from his estate who would pour his drinks and others who were at his feet begging for money.



After finishing up all the work in one area we decided to do a days work out at Hakatea where the initial capital of the Tongan kingdom was believed to have been located. Unfortunately we had only the 4 of us and so spent the morning clearing bush so the machines would have a clear run. Hearing some more vocal yelling and abuse from the crazy Frenchman than normal I went to see what had happened. Apparently the area we were clearing was full of hornets who weren't too happy about being disturbed, he had been stung on the hand and it proceeded to swell up so much that we worried his wedding band was going to cause problems with his finger.

The guys got a little pissed off after this and were very excited to smoke out all the nests. The area was also infested with mosquitoes so it was time to pull out the Bushman. Bushman for those who haven't seen it is heavy duty insect repellent containing about 80% deet. The back of the bottle was very helpful suggesting that contact with eyes, mouth, glasses, cell-phones, soft plastic, vinyl and basically anything else you could think of was not recommended, neither was the use of Bushman by children under the age of 12.



It was also noted that you should not use it over large areas of your body for long periods of time, the bottle neglected to say how much was a large area and how long the period was before it became bad. At this stage though we were slathering it on with joy, though I couldn't help but notice the burning sensation after application, though not being mentioned on the

bottle I think it was probably the hairs on my body melting to my skin. It must be noted though that no mosquitoes came near me and those who were flying in the general direction would veer off once hitting the Bushman forcefield.

We continued clearing and I was feeling very macho with my Bushman power, swinging my machete with great abandon through the bush, unfortunately we had miscalculated the number of hornets nests and I managed to swing right through the bush of one. Apparently hornets don't care



how much burning Deet you are wearing. Much colourful yelling and running through the bush ensued and I spent the next four minutes abusing everything is site while my hand throbbed. Hornet stings are quite a bit more painful than wasps and last for 4-5 minutes, luckily I didn't have a reaction so my hand didn't swell up too much. I was quite grumpy after this and decided that Indian Jones style tricks aren't nearly so impressive in real life and hurt a lot more. The rest of the day was saved by finding a path down to the reef where we spent a few hours swimming, watching some locals fishing and looking at

(Continued on page 7)

## Halfmoon Bay School Te Kura o Rakiura

The children have been very busy this term not only on the island but also off the island.

In March all the school went off to participate in the Southern Regional Athletics Competition. All the children and parents who went had a thoroughly good time. The children did well with the following results:

1<sup>st</sup>: Caity Kenny: 7yr girl High Jump

2<sup>nd</sup> Jamie Adams: 10yr boys Long Jump

2<sup>nd</sup> Shane Adams: 12yr boys Long Jump

3<sup>rd</sup> Shane Adams: 12yr boys Shot Put

3<sup>rd</sup> Caity Kenny: 7yr girl Shot Put



PHOTOS: KATH JOHNSON



A BIG thanks to Kath Johnson for getting the children ready for the athletics. It is great seeing island children competing and enjoying themselves with other schools.

Then came the Fun Bike Day.....a competition aimed at testing the skills of the riders and then their speed over a

tough course. The children showed us their skills and ability and left us all glad that the adults didn't have to do it as well!! Overall winner was Shane Adams, 2<sup>nd</sup> Overall Zoe Flack and 3<sup>rd</sup> Overall Libby Bayne. Thanks once again to Kath Johnson for organising the event and also Grim for the obstacle course construction.



And then there was the Commonwealth Games.....well Stewart Island style and also re-named to the Crazy Wacky Games! Serious (!) competitions were held including Egg 'n ping pong ball racing and gumboot throwing. Mrs Leask showed great skills in dodging the odd flying gumboot (and she was on the sidelines!). No one was sure who the "official" winner was on the day but all participants received a golden pig (the official mascot!) for their efforts.

Due to various resignations on the Board of Trustees new elections were held to elect 3 new members. It was great to see parents and caregivers getting involved with this process and we are pleased to announce that the new school trustees are Pete Bayne, Kath Johnson and Paul Soalo. Congratulations! They join existing trustees Karen Adams and Grim Davis along with Cath O'Loughlin and Bonnie Leask.



Thanks to all parents, caregivers, friends and community for helping with events and activities this term. It helps our children to get the most of the events and also learn what being part of a community is all about: Great education!

School starts again on 26 April. Enjoy the holidays and stay safe.





**HALFMOON  
BAY POLICE  
BEAT: April 2006**

Welcome to the April edition of the Halfmoon Bay Police Beat. Todd has now left for Te Anau, and I will be relieving until the arrival of the new permanent Constable.

There's not too much to report on the crime front, so I thought I'd tell you about the North Queensland version of island policing.

Island Policing

Before I joined the New Zealand Police, I was a Constable in the Queensland Police force in Australia for 9 years. I have experienced the Queensland style of 'island policing', and I can tell you, it's a lot different to here!

In 2002, I was stationed on Palm Island, which is a small island about 50km's off the coast of Townsville in North Queensland. The island is an aboriginal mis-

sion with a population of about 4,000. The only white people allowed on the island were state police (there were 9 of us), teachers and hospital staff.

Palm Island was a very violent place, a mix of different aboriginal families and tribes. Alcohol and drug use was a huge problem, and led to much of the violence. Stabbings, rapes and serious assaults were a nightly occurrence. Often, there would be street riots and fighting. Our police 4WD vehicle was often pelted with sticks and stones, and even a waratah and on one occasion, a spear that narrowly missed my mate!

Living on the island wasn't much fun really. We lived in a barrack compound, surrounded by 8 foot high barbed wire fence. At night, our compound would be pelted with rocks and on occasions, unhusked coconuts would be soaked in petrol and lit, then thrown at our barrack buildings. Another trick used by trouble makers

would be to throw used nappies and condoms filled with pesticide onto our barracks roof (they thought we were on tank water).

Not long after I left, an aboriginal man died in the police cells on the island. As a result, the island went beserk. The courthouse and police station were burnt to the ground, and the police barrack compound overrun and ransacked.

So you can see, this little island is a wee corker compared to Palm Island!

Anyway, to finish, I know I am only seen as the rentacop in the absence of anyone permanent, but please, if you have any problems or concerns, come up and see me before they escalate - I'm only too happy to sit down, have a yarn, and on most occasions, potential problems can be sorted without drama.

Regards,  
Duncan Hollebon

*(Globetrotter continued from page 5)*

shells and starfish.

We didn't do a lot of traveling over the rest of the island as we were working so much but we did get Sundays off.



Tonga is a very religious country and so everything shuts down on a Sunday and you can't get much done. We generally took a

boat to an offshore island which was allowed to open on Sundays and spent the day on the beach or snorkelling around a large ship which had been wrecked just off the beach in a hurricane. I was a little dubious about sharks with the amount of fish around and a recent attack in the northern islands however one of the locals assured me that like the rest of Tonga sharks were at church on Sunday so I

had little to worry about. On the other nights we would either do work, go to the movies or drink at home or the local bar. The movies were a new feature in Nukua'lofa and at \$4.50 pa'anga were a little expensive for locals but very cheap for us. The other bonus of the movie theatre was that it was air conditioned and so on the really really muggy days we would go just for the bonus of being cool for a few hours. The drinks at Sela's were always fun as we ran out of duty free quite quickly and had move on to Bounty Rum, it is made in Fiji and is 56%, that and the fact that we always ran out of coke and had to have very generous mixes meant that it was very potent. This was safer though than drinking at the bars. The local beer Ikale was often frozen and then thawed or had been sitting in the heat for a while and tended to take on interesting colours and each bottle tasted different to the last. The general rule was that if you couldn't see

through it don't drink it. The other problem with the alcohol was that a lot of locals import the flavour and the alcohol and mix it themselves, you never knew what you were going to get. Despite this we had a great time at the Billfish bar which was really popular with both Tongans and Palangis and often had a band and very interesting dancing going on.

The other things the Tongans love is rugby, with nearly all of those who can watching the super 14. Each Monday the guys would come up and ask if we had seen the rugby in the weekend, all of them were very passionate and had a favourite team which was generally from New Zealand.

Overall I had a great time in Tonga, the site we were working on was amazing with 30x30m monuments made out of stone blocks, some as large as 20 tons. Sela treated us



*(Continued on page 8)*

**RELAY FOR LIFE  
25<sup>th</sup> February 2006**

*By Sue Munro*

Relay for Life is a 24 hour relay run bi- annually in Southland to raise funds for the cancer society. Money raised goes to funding cancer support services in southland.

The relay is an occasion of very mixed emotions from deep sadness and a sense of loss for all the people who have lost loved ones to cancer to great joy and fun at being able to make a contribution and help make a difference, The friendly rivalry amongst the teams to dress up and raise money is such fun. The local entertainment provided free was a wonderful line up of local groups and celebrities.

Highlights include the Survivors Walk, (a lap of honour for those that have survived cancer) the Candle Memorial Ceremony, ( you can purchase a candle to pay tribute to survivors or in memory of loved ones and place it beside the track ,after dark the candles are lit and make a very moving display as you walk past.)

This year the Foveaux Fighters a combined team of Stewart Islanders and

folks from the main land numbered 16 and they managed to raise at last count \$3297 with money still coming in.

The team would like to thank everyone on the island who gave money, bought raffles, purchased bulbs, supported garden tours ,supplied sea food for our seafood BBQ which raised approx \$800 on the day and supplier of the very important water to keep us all hydrated. Thank you also to friends and family who popped in to walk with us during the day and donate to the cause it was much appreciated.

We all walked 30 minute shifts day and night , some walked extra to keep others company throughout the Relay or just to enjoy the atmosphere of the occasion, but we all managed to get a catnap sometime.

Some of the team were seen struggling to put a tent up (early in the day) due to the strong wind even the circus couldn't put their marquee up, fixing a tent that fell down, one couple were spied dancing ,

some were heard snoring, some were heard singing, one went shopping for an extended period to shorten the walking time. In all it was a great 24 hours. We would welcome any person on the island who would like to participate in 2008.Loads of fun to be had.

**Foveaux Fighters won a prize for the team who had come from the furthest away the prize was a \$100 voucher from Easy Buy, we wish to sell this voucher to the highest offer the money will go to kick start our fundraising for the 2008 relay.**

Team members were:

- Anne Dickens
- Judy Eriksson
- Sue Munro
- Anita Geeson
- Jill Skerrett
- Karen Bowman

- David Squire
- Ian Munro
- Stephanie Clarke
- Peter Goomes
- Jenny Twaddle
- Lisa Wyeth
- Lorraine Bowen
- Bob Bowen
- Ruth Lieshout
- Peter Lieshout



*(Globetrotter continued from page 7)*

like family even putting on an umu and pig on the spit as a farewell dinner and all the Tongans I met were friendly and really interested in what we were doing. So far Tonga hasn't become too touristy and so people still enjoy meeting us and talking about their country and culture. It can be difficult to work in Tonga with things often taking a couple of days to get done, if at all and the person you need to talk to is most of the times the first

person you saw anyway, however it was a wonderful experience and I would urge people to visit before it becomes more commercialized.

The only warnings are to not worry things will get done eventually even if it takes 4 visits to the same office; if they tell you its tequila then 99% of the time it's probably not; and to carry Bushman, the ultimate defence.



A great website is [www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com) – this site contains an amazing recipe search engine. You simply plug in ingredients – whatever happens to be in your shelf and fridge – and the site will generate a list of recipes culled from *Bon Appetit* and *Gourmet* magazines that contain those ingredients. Many of the recipes are followed by other users' comments, insights and amendments to the original recipes. It's all free, and I've found many favourite recipes there!

**This tourist thought he'd look tough in his helmet, beep his little horn, and buzz straight from the rental place out to Lee Bay. He thought wrong.**



## Best laid plans of mice and men....

By Kari Beaven

Exploding fantails?? Not quite, but an exploding fantail *population* is not far off the mark!



For a long time fantails in Halfmoon Bay have been battling against invading rats. In that time of “war”, our friendly garden companions have been on food rations (rats eat both the fantails’ food and the food that fantails’ food eats). As if that wasn’t enough, fantail nests were regularly raided by the invading army, with many females and young perishing (including eggs). Some years were better than others, but in the end it would be a losing battle.



Rat attacking a fantail on a nest

All is not lost! Their cause has been taken up, thanks to our community, and for those fantails living with the “safety zone” the battle is drawing to a close (though of course they will always need protecting from ongoing invasion).

History the world over teaches us that what follows a war is a “baby boom” and these guys are no exception. Fantails were seen all over the Bay during summer, feeding young chicks and “peeping” noisily in search of food. These chicks have now “flown the nest” and are stepping into their own futures.

*But... to ensure the Project generates interest and funding in the future, we need numbers to show people who are not here, as closely as possible, the truth about rats and “sprogs” (chicks).*

“Bird call counts” are an April feature of the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project. They are a standard tool used New Zealand-wide (and every April in Halfmoon Bay) to measure bird numbers in a particular area. The most important aspect of bird call counts in this project is not the actual number of birds, but the *change* in number over time. For example, the best thing we could see is an increase in our native birds after the start of co-ordinated pest control.



Juvenile fantail

And it’s looking great so far!! As you may have guessed, the number of fantails around within the Project area looks like it has *doubled* from last year (a 100% increase!!) Added to that, tomtits also look like they have doubled their numbers in just this past year!

So far, I have only completed half of the 50 monitoring sites, so it’s hard to get any concrete indications in time for this SIN. I promise to keep you posted on the final results in the next edition.

*To find out how to support the project through sponsorship or to volunteer, or any other information, please contact Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust:  
PO Box 124, Stewart Island, sircet@callsouth.net.nz*



Welcome New Zealand writers! Our library is a "proud sponsor" of New Zealand writing: we feature dozens of books by

Kiwi authors. In honour of visitors from the contemporary NZ literary greats, our book "flavour of the month" is New Zealand writers. Tap into the goldmine that is New Zealand literati and check out Cilla McQueen, Janet Frame, Kerry Hulme, Alan Duff, Rene, Heather Heberley, and more.

Thanks to Ewan Gell for using his engineering genius to solve our shelving issues. I'm sending a big smile overseas to Ann Hennessy for the very lovely donation she made before her return to Canada.

If you are returning a book you thought was exceptionally good, let us know and after we check it back in we will put it on the new "Recommended Reading" shelf.

Thanks to Loraine, Pat, Donna, Helen, and all of the other donors of books to our library. Bruce and Sue Ford have given us VHS copies of the

past two Stewart Island Players productions, and Kath Johnson has given us some great new DVDs for kids. DVDs and Videos are \$2 per four nights.

As a librarian I've had a book "shocker" and I have been deeply ashamed of my bad book behaviour. Part of the healing process is all about confession so here goes: In the summer of 2003, Graham Oki was kind enough to loan a book about lighthouses to me from his personal library. *Lighthouses of Europe* featuring the incredible photographs of the Plisson brothers became my favourite borrowed possession, and weeks turned into months. Months turned into YEARS. To make a long story longer, last week, THREE YEARS after I borrowed Graham's book, I returned it to him. If Mr. Oki was in my librarian shoes, he might have charged me a \$486 overdue fine. But he's not, so he just smiled and said he was glad I liked the book as I scurried away in deep book borrower shame.

Anyway, I have overheard comments that I am a bit strident about collecting overdue fines, but I am here to say that I understand about not re-

turning a borrowed book. Life gets hectic, and also sometimes we develop a weird mental block about grabbing that book from our home and putting it in the car so the next time we pass the Community Centre we can drop it in the "return" slot. I get it. I've lived it. Which is why I am not really *all that* strident, and if you have a book that is absurdly overdue (like it was due in October 2005) just please bring it back and we will discuss your fine, and it won't be horrible. I want the books back in the library more than your money.

And speaking of coin, please remember I'm not pocketing your fines for a "big bott" of Speights at the Pub...the money goes into our precious library coffs and is used to buy NEW books, audio books, and DVDs for our library. Which I reckon is a wonderful and worthy cause.

Our hours are: Wed 2-3:15 and Fri & Sat 11-noon

I will be away for the next month and I leave the library in the capable hands of the excellent library team: Kerry, Jenny, Margaret, Pat and Liz. *Happy reading, Jess*

# Muttonbird season



Twinkling lights visible on Herekopere, mischievous kids

playing with the radio, and greasy fingers and happy tummies all add up to one thing: muttonbird season.

If you're the recipient of a gift of birds, consider yourself very fortunate. Titi chicks don't just jump from the burrow to a platter. Bird-



In the beginning of the season, known as *Nanao*, the birds are pulled from their burrows during the day. Later, during *Rama*, the birds are gathered at night by torchlight.

ing entails a tremendous amount of work, starting with cutting tracks and getting supplied up often steep and rocky terrain to the huts.



Birders work long hours over a hot vat of wax, dipping birds, plucking them, and gutting them.



Hand-plucking down from the bird is not one hundred percent effective. To remove the last layer of fine down, the birds are dipped into a vat of hot wax. Once the wax hardens, it is peeled off along with the remaining down.

Once extracted from the hole, the bird is quickly killed. The throat is squeezed to cause a rich oil to be regurgitated.



The birds are then gutted and prepared for eating. Muttonbirds can be stored in a bucket for many months -- these are salted birds. OR the bird is frozen: non-salted birds are known as "freshies." OR the birds are roasted right on the spot and served up golden brown and crackling.

Muttonbirders work up an appetite with all of that hard work!



**"BON APPETITI!"**



April day at Thule Bay

Need a parcel picked up from or delivered to the Invercargill Airport? Call Executive Car Service at 214 3434 or 027 221 6259



**Stewart Island humour**

Sam Sampson liked to joke that the rimu phone is to talk to the sap on the other side. Well, recently the phone was used as a prop in a rather ghoulish prank which only lasted two days (pranks involving rotting road-kill possum are not long-lived.)



**STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE**

**Invites you to the Fire Brigade Hall at 2.0 on 27<sup>th</sup> April to hear our Guest Speaker Sylvia Hughes on the topic "HATS"**

**You are welcome to wear an interesting/historical or favourite hat!**





**CONGRATULATIONS**

**Proud parents  
Kirsten and Glen  
and happy grandparents  
Herbie and Loraine  
Welcome Bella Kate !!**

*In* the beginning there were two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, and there was water. It moistened all manner of things, and it was good. No additives, no artificial sweeteners, no preservatives, no emulsifiers or flavour enhancers. Simple, pure and good. And apparently Stewart Island Rain bottled water is closer to that simple chemical bond than all the other boutique waters that were judged at the annual Putaruru Water Festival in Waikato this year. Yes, folks, puff out your chests, little old Stewart Island Rain, collected off the roof of the Stewart Island Community Centre, won best boutique water in the country for the second year running.



Started as a fund-raiser for the community centre, the water has sold well around the south, but the bright sparks who put our usually abundant rain into bottles for sale could hardly have hoped for such recognition. The judges were looking for taste, clarity, bouquet, flavour, body, smoothness and wetness. Stewart Island Rain bolted home on all counts. Cheers to that and congratulations to the Community Centre committee. —*Jim Flack*

Stewart Island News is published on a monthly basis as material permits. Contributions relative to Stewart Island are welcomed and can be sent by email (preferably as MS Word attachment).

**Jess will be away next month so Kari will step in as editor for the May issue. Send articles and enquiries to [editor@stewart-island-news.com](mailto:editor@stewart-island-news.com)**

The next deadline for the Stewart Island News is Friday 19th May

If you wish to have Stewart Island News posted to you or a friend, please fill out this form and forward it with a cheque made payable to "Stewart Island News" to P.O. Box 156, Stewart Island. The cost is as follows:

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