

# RAKIURA RAMBLES



A STEWART ISLAND NEWSLETTER

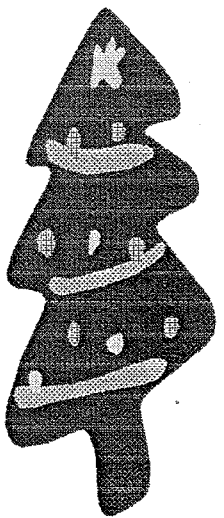
Volume 1, Issue 5

\$1,00

December 1998

*The Stewart Island Tourism and Strategy Group and the Editor of Rakiura Rambles wish you all*

### SEASON'S GREETINGS



**HAPPY CHRISTMAS**

AND A

**PROSPEROUS 1999**

**EVERYONE**

## S.I. AND THE ROCK LOBSTER INDUSTRY

by Belinda Sawyer

A meeting of The Southland Rock Lobster Industry was held on 30 November 1998.

Most of us on the Island are aware that this rock lobster season has been fairly grim. Catches since the season began on April 1st 1998 have been minimal, and as of October 31st 1998, the entire CRA8 area has only caught 318 tonnes from its allowable quota of 888 tonnes.

Stewart Island is the southern part of the CRA8 Management area and in the past has produced a large proportion of the rock lobsters caught in the entire area. The western boundary of CRA8 is just south of Hokitika around to the eastern boundary at Nugget Point on the South East Coast. It includes Stewart Island, the Solander Islands and the Snares group. At present there are 20 lobster vessels working around the Stew-

art Island coast.

Those that are involved in the lobster fishing business know the ups-and-downs that you must go through when trying to catch these elusive little devils. Yet, despite these natural highs and lows, the amount of effort required to catch lobster quota is ever increasing. Have you noticed more pots on the wharf at the end of the season and how many days you bump into fishermen down in the Bay? To catch the fish now, the guys are working more pots, bigger pots, more days, longer days ... etc., etc.

All this has prompted the CRA8 commercial stakeholder group, the CRA8 Management Committee, to attempt to initiate measures to rebuild the current stock levels and basically make the Lobster quota easier and more economical to catch.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## S.I.'s Glorious Gardens

by Donna Hamilton

What do you get when you cross fifteen young Stewart Island ladies, one male escort and a bus? The Garden Circle's social event of the year: **The Garden Tour**. Let me not forget to mention that it was a great afternoon with a lot of laughter, which I might add, seemed to stem from a certain *Three Musketeers* in the back seat. Alcohol was certainly not needed on this trip!

The tour visited seven of the island's fantastic gardens. These gardens are a tribute to the ladies who, seemingly, devote endless hours to making these stunning sanctuaries.

For the rest of us, they were a reality check on just how far we had to go! Depression aside, the laughter continued and continued! Advice and knowledge was freely exchanged, along with a few clippings, thanks to our intrepid mus-

*(Continued on page 3)*

CONTENTS		CONTENTS	
S.I. Promotion	2	Atiu's needs; Ulva Island sanctuary	7
Bernie's backchat; S.I. Gardens	3	DoC faces the Dong Won 529 challenges	8/10
Library news; Wharf watch	4	Obituary: Bruce Nilsen	1
The Whisperer; Nuisance Magpies	5	From the Museum	1
Health; R.S.A notice; Christmas services	6	Public Meeting;	10

## THE ROCK LOBSTER INDUSTRY

(Continued from page 1)

At present the CRA8 fishery operates under what is called a Decision Rule. This came about after CRA8 negotiated with the then Minister of Fisheries to avoid a quota cut. The Decision Rule basically averages the catch of the last three seasons and is assessed every year. The reason it is averaged over a three-year period is to take account of the grim years and the excessively good years like in 1993/94. If the catch rates fall below a certain level, the quota must be reduced. Unfortunately, the CRA8 catch rates have continued to fall below the level and a 20% cut will now occur on April 1st 1999.

This week, the CRA8 Management Committee held a Public meeting for all fishermen and interested people. The high level of attendance indicated the level of concern from the guys out there on the water. In addition to this unavoidable 20% cut of quota there were also other suggestions to hasten the stock rebuild. Some of these suggestions included:

- \* imposing pot limits, i.e. a set number of pots be allowed

per vessel;

- \* imposing a closed season to ensure areas are not exhausted over a 12 month period;

- \* imposing a maximum legal size on all large lobsters - this move would be to ensure the breeding stock is protected from removal so as to increase the number of eggs released into the water for the future years;

- \* increasing the Quota cut from 20% to 30% to speed up the rebuild process; and,
- \* subdividing the CRA8 area for management reasons.

The CRA8 region is significantly larger than all other lobster management areas both in tonnage produced and geographically. Because of this sheer size, any decisions made on these above management measures affects different areas of CRA8 in different ways. For example, Fiordland would like to introduce pot limits, but Stewart Island fishermen were more supportive of having an upper size limit.

Due to the diverse opinions, most motions were defeated but the CRA8 Management Committee now have some directives to pursue. In the

meantime, the 20% cut will occur next year, but stay tuned for more news on other measures.

All this doom and gloom will have some impact on the Island. Despite this, we are luckier than other areas because we have other fisheries such as paua and blue cod to diversify into.

So, next time you see or hear a lobster fisherman grumbling and groaning, remember he has every right to. In many cases his bills are piling in, and, as hard as he tries, he cannot catch the elusive little lobsters he needs to keep the boat and business going.

Stewart Island has three representatives on the CRA8 Management Committee:

Brett Hamilton, Joe Cave, and Belinda Sawyer.

Should you have any questions or issues you would like to discuss, please do contact one of us.



## Stewart Island Promotions Association

by Nikki Davis

Our most recent promotional push was at the Christchurch A & P Show where Sue Munro, Gwen Neave and Barry Rhodes were working on the Southland stand.

The stand looked fantastic with several outdoor activities highlighted as well as the famous Hokonui Whiskey Still. The members were working with others from Riverton,

Bluff, Catlins, Tuatapere and Invercargill and Gore to show the Cantabrians the wonders and beauty of our province.

Pete and Nikki Davis were also there as the "Gumboot Theatre" to give visitors a light-hearted taste of the various characters one may meet while enjoying Southland.

The stand was in a great

location in one of the Feature Marquees, and the response was very positive.

Let's hope it translates into a successful summer for all the tourist operators. And, once again the Stewart Island brochure proved incredibly popular as an informational booklet. Many of the over 100 000 visitors received a copy.

## BERNIE'S BACKCHAT

During the past few weeks a number of stupid and potentially dangerous incidents have been brought to my notice. Neither of the two I refer to caused any physical harm, but the potential was definitely there.

To make my point: people must be held responsible for their actions, therefore if someone does something stupid, they are, in most cases, accountable for the results.

EXAMPLE 1

For some unknown reason, it has become fashionable to ignite tuna bombs at parties. This "joke" has backfired in the past, and I can assure you that if the Armed Offenders Squad is called to the island because of tuna bombs, the squad will not be the only people return-

ing to the mainland.

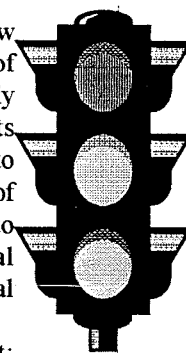
EXAMPLE 2

Someone has damaged seating at the Presbyterian Church.

Without getting into the religious significance of causing damage to a church, this behaviour is just not acceptable in any civilised community.

I am at a loss as to why someone would do this. If anyone in the community has a problem with the church or any of its members, feel free to contact me. Please don't take the law into your own hands. This type of behaviour has a habit of backfiring. This example is extreme, but if someone had sat on the seat and been injured, the offender would be held responsible. This could fit into the manslaughter category! The jails are full of criminals and stupid people. Worth thinking about!

Catch ya later  
Bernie



*A lovely thing about Christmas is that it's compulsory, like a thunderstorm and we all go through it together.*

Garrison Keillor  
Leaving home 'Exiles'

## Stewart Island Gardens

(Continued from page 1)

keteer and her ever faithful "Leatherman". Her husband should be proud of her.

The gardens were all unique and all had their own style and appeal. For the two beginners in the group, the knowledge of the ladies, their casual use of plant names, growing advice and history was overwhelming. Maybe this was why the bus was always waiting for one or two of us? The garden tour included:

- \* Ann Pullen's magnificent bush retreat;
- \* Helen Cave's dream garden complete with babbling brook;
- \* the Le Quesne's idyllic

setting among carvings and enviable green houses;

- \* the Dennis's well talked about gardens with the unique fernery;

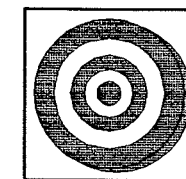


- \* the Lodge's flowery retreat surrounded by the awesome array of native birds. Then there was

- \* The Nest which impressed with the beautifully maintained gardens and impressive lawns, and the finale of

## STEWART ISLAND GUN CLUB

The Stewart Island Gun Club shoot at The Range on Main Road on the first Sunday of each month. Starting time is 1.30 p.m.



Ammo / Firearms and Coaching available  
Please feel free to come along  
CONTACT: Bernie  
2191020

the tour was the "Jo Seagar" of gardening -

- \* Margaret Hopkins and her awesome gardens that boast a view to die for.

Our thanks go to our ever patient male escort - Dave of Oban Taxis and Tours. I'm sure a bus load of rugby fans would have been easier to round up and keep on schedule than these greenies. However, we managed to maintain our pace and the coffee and scones at Irene Dennis's were a welcome sight.

Thank you to all the people who participated, and especially Irene Dennis for organising the day.

We look forward to the "1999 Series".

Library



**News**  
by Pat King

On Tuesday 3rd November, Lynda Hodge, Head Librarian of the Winton Base Library and Margaret Bullmore, book mender extraordinary, visited the S.I. Community Library. Lynda inspected the site of the new library, and had discussions with some members of the Community Hall Trust to sort out some of our requirements. Margaret demonstrated some book mending techniques. I now have a little band of helpers with the skills to mend and improve the presentation of some of our older books. We also managed to acquire some of the more expensive equipment needed to mend the books. Does anyone have any of the large clips used on clipboards, surplus to their requirements? We could put them to good use when mending books. There have been a few books purchased or donated to the Library in the last month, some of which are:-  
FICTION:  
*Tara Road* by Maeve Binchy  
*The Loop* by Nicholas Evans  
*The Chaos Balance* by L.E. Modesitt Jnr  
NON-FICTION:  
*Palaces in the sky* by Ted Reynolds  
*Into thin air* by Jon Krakauer  
*Miniature quilts* by Deborah Brearley  
HAPPY READING!

**BOOK REVIEW**  
Books from S.I. Community Library

**TARA ROAD**  
by Maeve Binchy  
This latest book by Maeve Binchy portrays small town life and the gossip that often goes with it. Ria Lynch and Marilyn Vine have never met. Their lives have nothing in common. Ria, who lives in Dublin, is a warm, friendly person who always has a house full of family and friends. Marilyn lives in New England and is a private, independent person. A chance phone call and a decision taken alters the course of their lives forever. They decide to exchange homes, both trying to escape from crisis and tragedy in their lives. How they come to terms with the problems in their lives makes interesting and absorbing reading. Another bestseller by a popular author.

Reviewer: Loraine Hansen

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
The Library will be  
**CLOSED**  
on  
**25/26 December**  
and  
on  
**1/2 December**



**Wharf Watch**

by Jo Riksem

**A message for all Boat Owners, Tour Operators, Recreational Boaters, Fishermen, etc.**

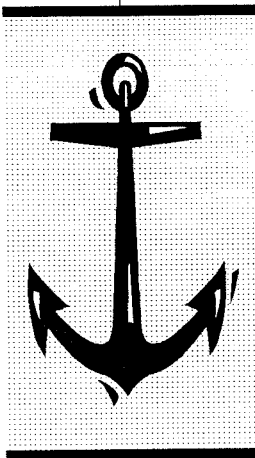
It's been pretty busy down at Halfmoon Bay Wharf with all the comings and goings of boats during the clean up of the Dong Won. Thanks for the patience and support of all boats involved. The Navy boats have been regular visitors, and it's been nice to see them taking a little time off and getting to know the locals. As the busy season is now upon us, here are a few things to make life easier for everyone:

1. Please do not leave unattended boats tied to the wharves without permission.
2. Always give way to boats that have passengers embarking or disembarking, especially near the steps.
3. Please report any damage to the wharves to me as soon as possible.

If you need berthing at the wharf at anytime, I can be contacted through:

- \* Maureen and Ted Jones using the Stewart Island Marine Radio,  
or
- \* by phoning me at home on 2191230.

It is only through the co-operation of everyone that we can have a safe and happy season.



*Character is like a tree and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of; the tree is the real thing.*

Abraham Lincoln

**SUNKIST** One wonders about off-island weddings! After all we are known for our decorum here! But a certain couple have dispelled that myth while away for a friend's nuptials. They spent the following day sunbathing (dare I say?) nude and proceeded to fall asleep in the sun. She now has an all-over tan while he is now promoting sunroasted (maybe for ETA). The size of the white

patch is debatable.

**MISSING STUFF DEPT.** The funniest things that people pinch these days. Missing from a residential construction site... no, no, not timber or nails or anything useful - just a large container of liquid manure. The builders swear they didn't see it "drain"

off the property, but I bet they really are enjoying those tomato sandwiches for morning tea.

**DOG-GONE-IT** A story heard at the pound ... A few years back my local gem of a friend had it suggested that exercise would be good for his health. "Oh, joy," I

**The Whisperer**

thought. "walkies for Zoe! Well, I suppose I can run along beside the car - it takes a lot of energy for my friend to move the pedals up and down and turn the steering wheel. But, I do draw the line at playing golf when he doesn't realize he's 'over-the-hill' and I'm expected to retrieve the ball. What next? He can retrieve his own clay birds!"

**JUST ASK AN EXPERT...** Our resident whitebait expert was showing a new net-owner exactly how NOT to do it the other day. The first wave of whitebait: who forgot to put the knot in the end of the net? The second wave of whitebait got to make it from the net to the bucket - only to be knocked back into the tide. Slippery banks, hey? The third wave went from the net to ... no, darn... missed the bucket altogether. Poor Betty Spencer got a little whitebait in her grass fritters that night!

**THANKS FOR THE ADVICE** The new net-owner sneaked back to said white-baiting spot the next day (ahead of Frank) to practice. Obviously he was so overcome when his teacher arrived unexpectedly he tried to

hide - under the bridge - in the wet part!

**SATURDAY NITE FEVER** 'Staying Alive' is the name of the song, 'Staying upright' is the name of the game at this grand 'old' party. It started out a truly delightful evening of fine food, cold beer and interesting conversation. Then the entertainment arrived! 'Fred Astray' should invest in a more comfortable size of underpants if he's going to TRIP over the light fantastic with Ginger.

**ALL FALL DOWN** The continuing saga of 'The party on the Hill'. What's growing in the grass verge by the local surveyor's property? A stump? A Leek? A giant strawberry? No, just a co-op worker who's only used to negotiating UPHILL obstacle courses on his way home of an evening. Maybe he needs a belt for his pants as gravity works adversely on the downhill runs and it ain't too warm when the clothing's around the ankles and you don't know which way is up??

**HOW TO MANAGE YOUR STAFF** The example of Stewart Islanders adopting their own unique management practices. (Honestly, (Continued on page 10)



Magpies are notorious for their predatory, scavenging and aggressive behaviour. They are conspicuous, black and white birds with strong, whitish black-tipped bills. The numbers of these introduced Australian birds ap-

**Magpies becoming a real nuisance**

by Greg Lind

pears to have increased substantially over the last years. Because they are such large birds, they are pretty much at the top of the "pecking order" of birds. Their aggression also results in them displacing native species such as pigeons, bellbirds, etc. through physical attack and harassment. Magpies are unprotected

species, and the Department encourages locals to actively control them where possible. The best technique is to shoot them, but DoC is concerned about the need to be mindful of firearm safety. Magpies are canny birds, and you will only get one opportunity to shoot at them! No permit is required to shoot them other than landowner's permission.

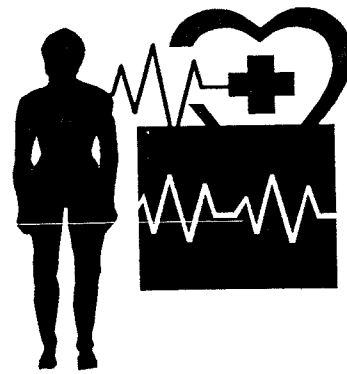
## S.I. Health Committee

On the weekend of 7 - 8 November, a Victim Support training course was held at the Stewart Island Fire Station.

Two counsellors from Victim Support presented the course with some input from local policeman, Bernie Nolan, who stressed the importance of confidentiality at all times when counselling.

The skills learnt by the participants will better equip them, if called upon, to help anyone in the community in times of stress.

Because of the enormous interest shown in taking part in this course, a further training weekend will be held after Easter 1999. Numbers are limited to 18, so if you interested, please contact Pat King, phone 2191156 as soon as possible. Refresher courses will be held every six months. A special thanks to the O.V.F.B. who made the hall available, and to the committee members who provided morning and afternoon teas.



## DOCTOR'S DAY

Dr S. Talwar is holding a Clinic Day on Saturday 19 December. Please phone the Clinic for an appointment.

## SUMMER DAYS

We've been having some really great weather recently, and it would be just as well to take note of the pamphlet and tips put out by the Cancer Society. Remember this: The summer sun's fierce UV rays can soon turn you pink. Especially with the thinning ozone layer screening out less than it used to do. Sunburned skin now can lead to melanoma and other skin cancers later. New Zealand has the highest rate of melanoma deaths in the world, so don't make a pig of yourself in the sun the summer.

## HEALTH NEWS

From Marty and Sharron

*When out in the SUN Remember to SLIP, SLOP, SLAP, WRAP.*

\* **SLIP** into some shade, especially in the hottest part of the day between 11a.m. and 4 p.m.

\* **SLIP** into cover-up clothes  
\* **SLOP** on some sunscreen before going outdoors. Put sunscreen on any skin not covered by clothes.

- Choose a sunscreen which has the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 604:1993.

- Use an SPF15+ Broad spectrum sunscreen. Wipe it on thickly. Don't rub it in too hard.

- Put on more sunscreen often, especially if you sweat or rub it off.

- Sunscreen will protect you for only about two or three hours. After that you can start to burn, even if you put on more sunscreen.

\* **SLAP** on a hat with a brim or cap flaps.

\* **WRAP** on a pair of sunglasses.



**TAKE CARE!**

## Stewart Island R.S.A. Club

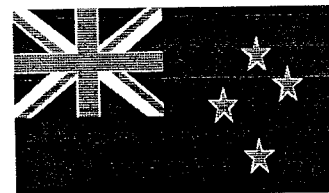
The Stewart Island R.S.A. Club meets on the last Sunday of each month at the Pavilion  
**MEETING TIME**

**4.30 p.m.**

Everyone with an interest in the R.S.A. is welcome to attend our meetings.

The meeting follows a standard procedure, but there is a social hour which follows the business section for us to get together. As usual, there is

more business discussed during the social hour than during the meeting!  
Any further information can be gained from Ted Rooney at 2191012.



## Carol service

There will be a Christmas Carol service at the Presbyterian Church on 20 December at 8 p.m. All welcome.

## Christmas service

The Christmas Midnight Service will be held at the Anglican Church on Thursday 24 December at 11.30 p.m. Do join us.

## ATIU ISLAND - A COMMUNITY IN NEED

by Iris Tait

The "Save the Children" television promotion asks "What can we do, the problem seems too great?" My daughter Anne and I had that thought in our minds as we flew out of Atiu at the end of October this year.

I have never been exposed to problems such as those experienced by the Islanders. Sure, during my student nursing days in Auckland, I would see overcrowding in houses and associated problems, but there was always help available.

Atiu, part of the Cook Island group with a population of about 900, lies to the north east of Rarotonga, and is a 45 minute flight in a twin engine Bandeirante. First impressions of the 4 km x 3 km raised coral (Makatea) atoll is one of an Island covered in lush tropical vegetation sitting in an azure ocean, and, instead of a sandy lagoon fringe that

makes atolls beautiful, we looked upon razor sharp, raised, dark coloured coral. Atiu is known for its limestone caves and its tiny, fledgling coffee and textile industries. The coffee and textiles industries were resurrected by an expatriate German couple, Andrea and Jurgen who have lived at Atiu for 15 years. The Atiu Islanders, once proud warriors, tend their plantations and subsist. The soil is not as fertile as some other atolls. Locals sell carvings or tend coffee trees growing on their land. Income is augmented with gifts from family working overseas. Like all Polynesians, the Atiuans are Christians. To hear them singing in church is an experience never to be missed.

On 3 April 1777 Captain Cook visited Atiu and today it is visited by 400 tourists a year. Visitor numbers are increasing due to a more regular plane service instead of the erratic sea service. Only five other European tourists

were there when we arrived. A tourist can either stay at the motels a kilometre from Areora Village, or in a small guest house in the middle of the village. Anne and I thought the village compound sounded like us. We were right in the middle of village life with four small houses surrounding the guest house. Each house had at least three or four generations under its roof. Anne and I witnessed the comings and goings, celebrations, arguments, and the cheerful chatter of children. You certainly don't need television or radio to be entertained, and I guess we kept the locals amused as well. Among the touristy things we were able to do while on Atiu was a visit to a Tumunu: the traditional bush beer school where we joined the locals in "a joyful gathering, tasting bush beer and singing along with our hosts accompanied by guitars and ukulele". No local women are allowed - this follows a two hundred

*(Continued on page 8)*

*A cry for*



*Help!*

## ULVA ISLAND OPEN SANCTUARY

By Dave Howell

Anyone who has been to Ulva Island will have enjoyed the wonderful peace and tranquillity of the island. The numerous bird calls echoing through the forest canopy ensure a memorable outdoor experience.

Just as Ulva island has a special place in the hearts of Stewart Islanders, so too it is a special place for the Department of Conservation. It has long been a dream to create an open sanctuary on Ulva; an easily accessible place

where visitors will encounter the New Zealand of old, before animal and plant pests were introduced.

The translocation of South Island saddleback, and mohua, and possibly other species will definitely complement the special species of plants and animals currently on the island. DoC has produced a draft open sanctuary proposal, which will be used to initiate the process and encourage discussion and debate.

Broadly speaking, the draft proposes the following:

- \* the translocation of South Island saddleback, mohua and possibly other species
- \* improvement of the tracks and facilities on the island
- \* to provide information to visitors so their experience on the island is enhanced
- \* consultation with stakeholders

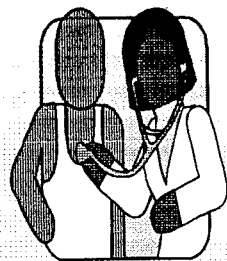
For more information in this regard, please feel free to contact the Field Centre on Stewart Island.

### Atiu - a community in need

*(Continued from page 7)*  
 year tradition, and I am sure some folk here who would think that it was a good idea! At the Tumunu we discovered we were related to half the men there and that we owned the overgrown tennis court in the middle of our village. My great grandmother was Atiuan. We were no longer strangers on the Island. In the short time we were on Atiu, Anne and I were invited into the homes to share family history, a meal and gifts. While we were on the islands, the locals were distraught because the Doctor had just resigned, probably due to frustration at not having the resources available to treat her patients. Ministry of Outer Islands, Rarotonga, supplies the medical/dental needs for the Islands, but very little is forthcoming. Rarotonga has a population of 2000 with a health budget of \$NZ 5 million. Its own hospital needs upgrading and outer Island hospitals stay open only because of the efforts of groups and persons such as the Rotary Club from Nelson and a Catholic Priest, Father Don, now living in Auckland. They look after

Aitutaki Hospital, supplying medicine - both current and expired, holding working bees to paint and maintain the hospital, and fundraising for equipment. This means the hospital is able to attract student doctors and dentists for N.Z., Australia and England and keep their permanent doctors. In Atiu, the cupboard is bare. We heard that a chap broke his fingers, and with no bandages at all, the doctor found a further use for sellotape. We met an elder with probable congestive heart failure and surmised that his treatment, if any, would be erratic. The same elder was suffering from gout and needed an anti-inflammatory, but it was with resignation that he said that the hospital had no supplies. Children with sores go untreated: there is no ointment on the Islands. Tooth decay is rampant, and the beautiful, dusky maidens aren't so beautiful after the age of about 28 because gum and tooth decay becomes evident. A small tube of toothpaste in Rarotonga costs about \$4.50, and is probably twice as much in Atiu. Several tribal elders (our relations) quietly pleaded with Anne and me to help the young

people, but what can we do? I have opened my garden to the public for a gold coin donation per person. The money will be spent on medical and dental supplies such as toothbrushes and paste for the 200 children at Atiu school. I would appreciate any current or expired medicine you may have in your cupboard. I will pick this medicine up and Rotary Nelson will help me get them to Atiu. Don't forget the animals. I will take any animal remedies your pet no longer needs. I also hope to encourage other Rotary clubs in New Zealand to adopt an Island. I intend to revisit Atiu in June. Atiu ground coffee or coffee beans, medium or dark roast, can be purchased from any Trade Aid Shop. The Local Trade Aid stockist in Invercargill is situated in Tay Street. The 250 gram pack of Atiu coffee retail for about \$11.00 and is very popular. We all can help in a small way. *If you would like to do something for these people, please contact Iris Tait at 11 View Street, Stewart Island. Phone 03 - 2191151.*



Let's make a difference!

### DoC faces the Dong Won 529 challenges

by Ros Cole

When the Dong Won 529 hit the rocks on the Breaksea Islands group, most of us were sound asleep. A ship getting wrecked on the rocks at night is the worst time for rat invasions because they are naturally more active at night. Initially very little information was available other than that it was a Korean trawler. DoC was concerned that an

Asian variety of the ship rat (black rat), thought to be more aggressive than the Pacific form, may have been on board and that it would get ashore onto the Breaksea Islands. If this happened, it was only a matter of time until it got to Stewart Island. To add to this, the local birders had eradicated rats from Te Wharepuatiha. After dis-

cussions with various experts, about the Asian form of ship rat, it was decided to spread poison over the island and also neighbouring Kaihuka and associated islets. Left over talon rat bait from Codfish Island (Whenau Hou) kiore eradication was used. Subsequent information - that the ship had been in New

*(Continued on page 10)*

### OBITUARY

#### BRUCE NILSEN

James Bruce Pakika Nilsen passed away at Kew Hospital, Invercargill, on 15 November, 1998. Bruce, born in Bluff on 26 February 1919, was the twin brother of John Wallace Riwaka Nilsen. The twins had two elder brothers and were the sons of Hans Christian Nielsen of Norway and Caroline Margaret Joss of the Neck, Stewart Island. Bruce and Wallace went to school at Halfmoon Bay and finished with correspondence lessons, helped by their parents, while living at the Neck. Bruce began fishing at the age of 14 soon after the death of his mother. Some of the fishing vessels he was on were: *Rawhiti; Pegasus; Stina; Rakiura; Glennifer; Victor Hugo; Capricorn; Miss Stewart Island; Manurere; Hakaturi; Shirley Maree and JayBee.* He skippered most of them, but owned the *JayBee, Shirley Maree, Capricorn* and the *Miss Stewart Island.* Bruce served for some time

*Trouble is part of your life, and if you don't share it, you don't give the person who loves you a chance to love you enough.*

Dinah Shore

in the army in New Zealand during the last war. His first marriage was to May Theresa Bradshaw of Invercargill. They lived for a few years at Halfmoon Bay, then moved to Pegasus while the Fish Freezer was in operation. They had three sons. The eldest died at birth, and then came Ross and Olaf. Mrs May Nilsen died as a result of a car accident in 1967. Bruce loved his muttonbirding trips to Big Moggy Island. It was there that he spent nearly every season with his family for most of his life catching muttonbirds for the table. In 1974 Bruce married Olive Leask from Leask Bay, a member of another early Stewart Island family. They fished together on the *Miss Stewart Island* at Broad Bay, along the West Coast Sounds and also along other parts of Stewart Island. In the early 1980's, they started what was to become almost full-time farming of the Nilsen family farm at The Neck. This continued up to the present. Bruce was an excellent seaman and fisherman, a quiet, friendly and humble man who hadn't a bad word for anyone.

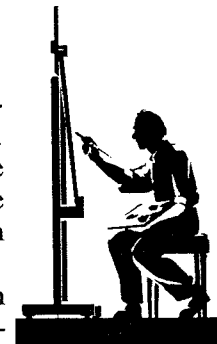
He liked a good yarn, and after a few tipples, he would keep the younger ones enthralled with his early fishing, birding, eeling, hunting, camping - you name it - yarns. Another love of his life was a good game of crib. Many a hilarious game was played with family and friends, and he was a clever, hard man to beat at this game. He was thoughtful, placid and calm, and was never one to rush or panic. There was never need for Olive and family to worry or be concerned while Bruce was at the helm. He was a pillar of strength as the head of a very closely knit family who looked to him for advice, strength and support. Bruce was very dearly loved by his two wives, May and Olive, as well as his sons, Ross and Olaf, daughters Alwyn, Brenda and Iona, their spouses and children. For some of the grandchildren, he was the only granddad some of them knew. Bruce died during his eightieth year and his presence in the community will be sadly missed by all who loved and respected him. The large turnout for the service and his burial at The Neck on 18 November 1998 stood testimony to this fact.

### FROM THE MUSEUM

by Margaret Hopkins

The recent visit of Edward and Ludmilla Sakowski from Art Care and Conservation in Dunedin was of real interest to staff at the Rakiura Museum. During their visit they looked at all the paintings and paper archives in the museum and will write up a conservation plan prioritising restoration

and conservation work required on these exhibits. They gave a public slide show and talk about the work they undertake on paintings, maps, plans etc. Their meticulous attention to detail and the painstaking work they carry out on badly damaged works of art is a real tribute to their skill.



Rakiura Museum has already had five paintings restored by them, and as a result of their public talk, several other important works held in private collections here were assessed.

**PUBLIC MEETING**

at the  
**DoC**  
**Visitor's Centre**  
 on  
**Wednesday**  
**16 December**  
 at  
**8 p.m.**

Stewart Island property owners and residents are invited to a public meeting to discuss the problem of Darwin's Barberry.

This is an introduced shrub with prickly leaves and which bears orange flowers in October and November. It has the potential to affect a number of native plant communities.

**Contact person:**  
 Murray Niewenhuys  
 Technical Services Officer  
 Dept. of Conservation  
 phone: 2144589.

**RAKIURA RAMBLES**  
 IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY UNDER  
 THE AUSPICES  
 OF THE  
**STEWART ISLAND  
 TOURISM STRATEGY  
 GROUP**  
 COMPILED AND EDITED BY  
**M. HOWELL**  
 P.O. BOX 86, STEWART ISLAND

*DoC faces the Dong Won challenges*

*(Continued from page 8)*

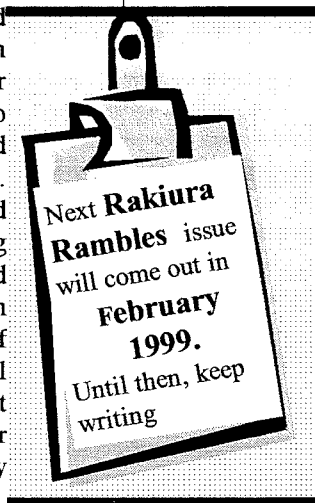
Zealand waters for the past two years and had been in dry dock last summer, suggested that the chances of this particular rat being on board was very remote. However, the poison operation was worthwhile to protect the rat free status of the titi islands. Subsequent checks have found no evidence of rats.

DoC was given a further challenge when the Dong Won sank. The Marine Safety Association who were responsible for the whole operation, subcontracted the wildlife response to Massey University, who subcontracted the field response to DoC! We were initially unaware of the extent of adverse affects diesel has on wildlife. We thought it was the heavy oils that caused the biggest problems. While heavy oils are serious and can cause a lot of deaths in wildlife, diesel appears to have more serious implications. It is absorbed through the skin and can poison birds. Diesel on the feathers of incubating birds such as Yellow-eyed penguins, etc., can be absorbed through the egg shell and into the developing embryo. The Southland Re-

gional Council is currently responsible for the ongoing monitoring of Yellow-eyed penguins.

Each day after the Don Wong ran aground, the *Jester*, *Pigfish* and two stabi's headed down the coast. The coast from Lords River to Bench Island was searched with most of the effort concentrating around Lords River to Port Adventure. DoC staff searched the shoreline and known penguin colonies for sick or dying birds. No oiled or diesel birds were found. Steve did find Santa's had floating in the water, and Shorty searched in vain for the sack of presents! We will just have to wait and see whether or not Rudolf actually rescued Santa!

A word of thanks to those fishermen who handed in dead birds and the seal (all died of natural causes) and to the pub staff for those wonderful lunches. Thanks too to all those other individuals who offered help in many various ways.



*The Whisperer*

*(Continued from page 5)*

how difficult can baby pauas be to wrestle?) I saw the boss getting around with broken fingers and the staff hobbling around with broken ribs. You wouldn't want to be a fly on the wall at their staff meetings - they probably own a flyswat! **FOR HE'S A 'JOLLY' FELLOW** When I was seven I had a lovely wee birthday party. Everyone wore party

hats, drank lots of fizz, played with toys and there were lashings of silly games. Nothing's changed. The Bad Man's party had hats, loads of fizz and games, and everyone got to arrive in "big toys"! The only Sad note was where the shaving cream was put. He may have been a tad stressed over the organizing, but very quickly got abreast of the day!

**A SCARLET WOMAN** A sensible lass, our statuesque arm-wrestler. Only 2 colours in her wardrobe - white for work and black for the pub. So, imagine my surprise to see her in ... RED (gasp). And topped off with magnificent cleavage! Pass me my smelling salts! Could this be a new Knight of change - or was everything else in the wash?