

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

## CELEBRATING RAKIURA

June 2017

\$3.00

A catastrophe's unfolding as this goes to print. Last month many of us had never heard of bonamia ostreae; now its mention could make us cry. The parasite — deadly to oysters — was detected in two Big Glory farms in May. MPI has now ordered a cull of all farmed oysters from Big Glory, a logistically mind-boggling task. This will also affect the mussels, many of which share the same lines, so millions of "babies will get thrown out with the bathwater." The decimation of Stewart Island's farmed oysters and dismantling of mussel farms is awful enough to contemplate, but it could be much, much worse. If the beds of Foveaux Strait have been infected — and tests have not been done on the beds since February, so they may already be infected — the world could stand to lose its only wild flat oyster fishery. The ruin of the iconic Bluff oyster would be absolutely tragic and the economic fallout devastating. With so much at stake, oyster fishers and farmers are understandably freaking out and there has been serious concern that action to contain the situation hasn't been taken swiftly or logically enough. It took two weeks for a cull to be ordered, and with a ban being imposed on farmers' boats the cull cannot even begin at this stage! Officials have said the parasite is in the water column and it could have reached here naturally, but there is angry speculation that human error caused this. An awful, stomach-churning situation for everyone on both sides of the Strait. Removal of all farmed oysters, as demanded by MPI, from farms which have shown positive tests as well as those currently "in the clear", will take many months. More p10.

Nightmare on Conservation Street: The government got all Freddy Krueger on DOC, slashing its biodiversity budget by millions and crippling work meant to save threatened species. Discouraging and disheartening, to say the least. Oh, and it's also confusing, because despite the fact that local biodiversity projects have been adversely affected, the official line from "upstairs" (Wellington) is that all is well.

It's not all doom and gloom down here, on the bright side we *are* the bright side, the stunning Aurora Australis lighting up our southern skies in epic displays, morphing our evenings into dazzling dreamscapes. And hey, there's nothing quite like dolphins to get the endorphins flowing. The other day I watched a visitor at Horseshoe Beach run straight into the tide fully dressed, clearly excited by a pod that had come close to shore. For fun I'm



Sandra Whipp took this photograph of two little boys experiencing their first aurora with their mum on Horseshoe Bay Beach. It was a doozy on 28th May... more photos inside.

including my own recent dolphin experience in these pages, because if you can't write self-deprecating sea mammal ridiculousness then I don't know what ink is for. Page 13.

The High Court judge finally handed down her decision in the case PauaMac5 v. DOC v. the Foveaux Strait shark cage operators. See page 11 for details.

*Pegasus planners possibly pull pin due to pinnipeds!* (Say that 10 times fast.) A rare sea lion colony has been discovered near the proposed site of a salmon farm, throwing a spanner in the works of plans to establish aquaculture off our southern coast. Have your say regarding salmon farms at Pegasus: page 6.

Rat Tales is rated R this month, dipping a toe into a genre I'll call Rat Erotica. Not to your taste, skip it — otherwise gird your loins and head to p12.

One from the random

files: has anyone ever heard of venison tenderloin referred to as "fish" or, weirder, "catfish"? Apparently some butchers label it so, which would make things awfully confusing in freezers around here!

Don't miss the mid-winter Christmas potluck on 24th June, join Foveaux Foodies on FB or chat with me, Shona, or Megan Cowley and please RSVP if you're planning to attend!

Finally, a big congratulations to Rebecca-Lynn Cavanagh who won Silver at the Master Painters NZ Awards for outstanding workmanship, creativity and innovation (on Janet & Brian's house built by Jarrod & Pete).  
—Jess



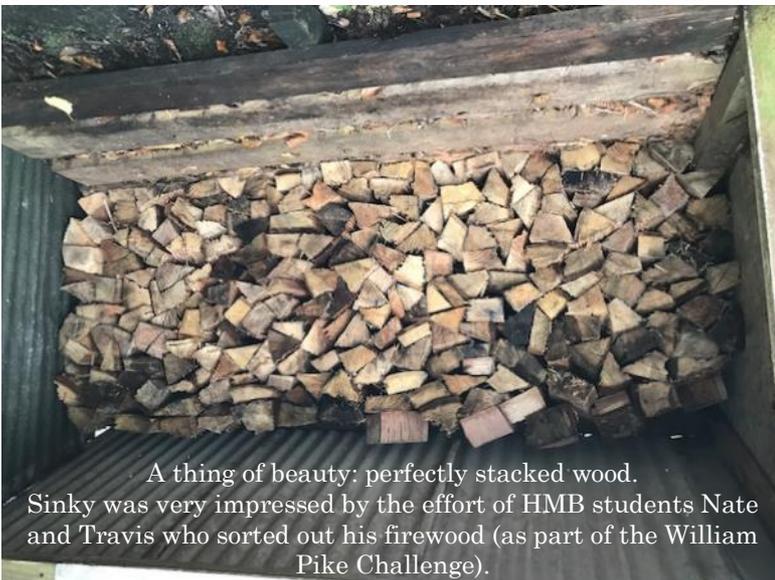
The community threw a party at the Fire Brigade to celebrate Sinky's 80th birthday. Here he is with the staff of the HMB School (where he works as caretaker). He scored FOUR cakes, one for every 20 years! Don't throw in the trowel Joanne Leask wrote in chocolate icing on one, a nod to his work as a bricklayer. Another cake, made by Steve Lawrence, featured Sinky (aka Ian Sinclair) playing golf, replete with a little fondant bottle of Speights and a Ringa Ringa kiwi.

## Stewart Island Hydro Possibility – from Bruce Ford

Further to recent media releases, it is important to understand that work continues to achieve improved and environmentally emission-free electricity. There has been work undertaken by a hydrologist that indicates hydro is a possibility. The initial cost ‘guesstimate’ is in the millions. However, we have Mr. Jeff Wilson of Tallaburn Hydro, Roxburgh, and Mr. David Inch of NZEnergy, owner/operator of Haast Hydro, coming to speak with the Community Board on 9 June. We’ll be sure to advise all what the outcome of that meeting is.

Jeff Wilson proposed hydro at the Energy Workshop in February 2012, and he has patiently persevered with us ever since. The Community Board of that time visited Tallaburn and was very impressed with the operation. As these gentlemen are private operator/generators, it is anticipated that commercial understanding will be an important part of their presentation to us. Whilst we are hoping that one or both might be able to pin down some costs for us, in view of the ‘estimates’ to date, it is imperative that all members of the community take every opportunity to speak whenever possible with Government agencies and politicians. We are entitled to a fair share of financial assistance (– and I have been told “You don’t ask for enough!”). This financial assistance now may well benefit residents in terms of reduced power bills eventually, but we are thinking long-term here and the small but significant and encouraging benefit to the country. It doesn’t seem right to pillory a world leader for pulling out of the “Paris Agreement” and ignore the possibility of us doing our little bit to champion the ideal.

Give it some thought, and look out for what Messrs Wilson and Inch, experts on the subject, have to say. And don’t hesitate to contact me or any members of the Community Board to talk about this (or indeed, on any Community matters).



A thing of beauty: perfectly stacked wood.

Sinky was very impressed by the effort of HMB students Nate and Travis who sorted out his firewood (as part of the William Pike Challenge).

### Eric Ayre, 21/09/1925 – 04/06/2017

Sue & Bruce want to say Thank You to all Island friends & neighbours who have offered condolences and sympathy on the death of Sue’s Dad in UK. The few Islanders who remember Eric probably best recall ‘the gentleman who wore a different tie to the pub every night’! He certainly remembered you – in one of his last coherent conversations he continued to express a wish to return to the Island. As he spent much of his last months in pain and very unwell, it would be selfish to wish him back, but our Dad will still be missed by his family, and we thank you all for understanding that.

### Stewart Island Community Library

by Kirsten Hicks

Things are running along nicely at your local library. Sarah Barr has volunteered to join Pat King to make the Saturday Library sessions happen. Last school holidays we had the loan of the SDC Lego collection, which kept various children happily creating. We are hoping to get this back again, or possibly start our own collection.

Friends of the Library, together with the Pub Quiz, have donated many classic books suitable for junior readers or bedtime stories. These include Treasure Island, Robinson Crusoe, Heidi, Gulliver’s Travels, The Borrowers, Dr Dolittle...

Also recently generously donated by Anita and Ian Herbert is a 2 year subscription to the Organic NZ Magazine. We are very fortunate to already receive NZ Geographic, courtesy of Stewart Island Lions.

#### Library/Area Office Hours

Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri 8.30am – midday  
Wednesday 2.00 – 4.00pm  
Saturday (Library only) 11.00am - midday



On 24th May the Garden Circle had a lunch to farewell our beloved Nancy Schofield before she headed off to her new home in Rowena Jackson. Good Luck Nancy and we hope you enjoy the subscription to *SIN*.  
—Jenny Gell



 A woman with long blonde hair is standing in a doorway, leaning against the frame. She is wearing a blue long-sleeved top and dark pants. To her left, there is a logo consisting of a circle with a dot in the center. Below the logo, the text reads: "Glowing Sky Tech Merino The ultimate protection. Womens Tech Hoody \$159". At the bottom of the advertisement, it says: "Between the Pub & The Shop. or at [www.glowingsky.co.nz](http://www.glowingsky.co.nz)".

Left: Pub Paparazzi Meg Kenny got this photo of *The Bachelor* host Dominic Bowden at the South Sea Hotel. Below: Iona Island & the aurora. Photo by Serena Dawson.





**PRODUCT UPDATE**

*Go your way...*

We have recently removed fishing from our range of products; this means that the Fishing, Classic, and Fish & Hike Tours are no longer available. We now specialise in:

- Pelagic Birding Tour
- Land & Sea Bird Tour (Pelagic + Ulva Island - guided or freedom walk)
- Whaler’s Base History Tour
- Marine Farms Tour
- Freshwater River Water Taxi and Scenic Cruise
- Ulva Island Connection on demand Water Taxi
- Ulva Island and Port William Guided Walks
- Many different Combo Tours available
- Coast to Coast with SI Flights
- Port William water taxi
- Rakiura Track, NW Circuit and Southern Circuit taxi
- Hunting Group transfers and gear/ dinghy hire
- Gear and Kayak transfer



**Big Glory Bay Marine Farms Tour**

Explore our local salmon, mussel and oyster farms on a cruise around Big Glory Bay with an opportunity to spot dolphins and yellow-eyed penguins. 1hr, \$60pa



**Whaler’s Base History Tour**

‘The Whaler’s Base’ was used to repair the Ross Sea Whaling Company’s whale chasers in between whaling seasons from 1923 to 1933. Explore the relics still to be seen: the old rusty workshop boiler on the beach and the foundations of the slipway. Optional walk through to the beautiful Millar’s Beach. 1 hr, \$60pa

**Freshwater River Scenic Cruise**

Jump aboard our daily water taxi through Paterson Inlet and up the winding Freshwater River; the perfect way to explore a unique part of the island without the tramping. Learn about historical and geographical highlights including the Rakiura National Park, Ruggedy Ranges, Freshwater Inlet and Mason Bay. 1.5 hrs, \$70pa



**Our most popular Combos:**

- Whaler’s Base + Ulva Island \$85pa
- Marine Farms + Ulva Island \$85pa
- Freshwater River + Whaler’s Base \$95pa



**Website:** [www.rakiuracharters.co.nz](http://www.rakiuracharters.co.nz) and [www.rakiurawatertaxi.co.nz](http://www.rakiurawatertaxi.co.nz) are currently undergoing an overhaul. The two sites will be combined, mobile-friendly, and feature new filter and mix & match options. The websites remain accessible during the upgrade, and we’ll let you know when the new look is available for perusal!



**Booking Office:** 10 Main Road, across from the Department of Conservation Office. Re-opening for Labour Weekend Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017. We are operating as usual all Winter, please call for enquiries:



**Phone: (03) 219 1487 | Email: [info@rakiuracharters.co.nz](mailto:info@rakiuracharters.co.nz)**

## OBAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHATTER

by Jo Riksem

Going through a box of photos the other day I came across this lovely photo of four wonderful ladies who were not just part of our church but a very real part of our community. Many of you will have fond memories of all of them. For me there was always cuttings from Myra's garden, Joan (Mrs B) showing me the ways of the coal range when it backfired on me, Ellen (Mrs C.) with warm council over a cup of tea and Daphne with all her stories of days gone by. Our good Lord was good with stories too, that made people comfortable in his presence wanting to hear more. Come and hear our speakers next month who also have their stories to share.

Speakers for July 2017:

**2 & 9 July** – To be confirmed

**16 July** – Rachel Trevathan – A doctor in Gore, Rachel knows people and recently travelling to other parts of the world will have stories to tell.

**23 July** – Combined communion service at St Andrews 10:30 am – Richard Johnson with a background in South Africa and minister at All Saints Anglican Church in Gladstone. Richard is a regular to our Island and a lot of fun.

**30 July** – To be confirmed

Services every Sunday 11 am except when combined with St Andrews which is 10:30 am.

Prayer Circle Saturday 11:30 in the vestry at the back of the church. Church open daily to enjoy.



Myra Leask, Joan Buxton, Ellen Carstensen & Daphne Goomes

## Stewart Island Health Committee

At our A.G.M. on 12 April the following were elected to the committee: Mary Chittenden, Debs Dillon, Belinda Dobbins, Elaine Hamilton, Kirsten Hicks, Ricky Kershaw, Sharon Pasco, Sharon Ross, Ron Morrison (Treasurer), Sue Munro (Secretary), Raylene Waddell (Chairperson).

One of the main roles of the Health Committee is to represent the views of the community to Southern District Health. Feel free to contact any one of us to express your concerns.

Our nurses are ex officio members of the committee and we rely on them to let us know what they would like done. They do!

Nurse Lisa Harkness resigned effective from May. The committee thanks Lisa for her time here and wishes her well.

Emma Dillon, Rural Nurse Specialist, has been appointed in her place. The committee had emphasised to Southern District Health our concern that nursing coverage on the Island be maintained 24/7. We have been assured that, with Emma's appointment and that of 3 other nurses, who will provide regular cover, this will

happen.

As a community we value enormously the health care provided by our nursing team. Let's each one of us do our best to make their job easier:

**Take responsibility for your own health and that of your children.**

**Get your 'flu jab!**

**Don't hang about with a problem, get it checked sooner rather than later.**

**Do your best to go to the Clinic in the morning, during regular clinic hours.**

**Ring 111 for emergencies only!**

As ever, huge thanks to Marty Peppers and all our relief nurses and a very special thank you to Nurse Manager, Cherie Meulenbroek, who has responded so professionally and effectively to our concerns about nursing coverage.

*Raylene Waddell*

**The Southland Aquaculture Reference Group** will hold a public meeting on Stewart Island on the **12th of July**. This is your chance to have your say and to hear from members of the group. The meeting time will be confirmed closer to the date. I'm the Community Representative on this group and am very keen to get the views of the community to take back to the group at our next meeting in July. If you'd like to get in touch my contact details are: [shona.zvezda@gmail.com](mailto:shona.zvezda@gmail.com), or 02102488020 or 2191400 or PO Box 86. *Shona Sangster*



"The Stewart Island Promotion Association (SIPA) Executive Committee would like to thank all those who participated in the Island Inspirations Event. The assistance from the community, SIPA members and course participants helped make the weekend truly inspirational. We would also like to acknowledge funding assistance from the Southland District Council Creative Communities Fund which enabled the workshop vision to become a reality. The funding assistance enabled us to engage Lynn Taylor (cyanotype print making) and Graham Dainty (photography) as tutors. These two artistic people shared their talents with all involved in the weekends activities and we are grateful for their generosity."

Anita Geeson, SIPA Chairperson



Cyanotype prints by Shona Sangster

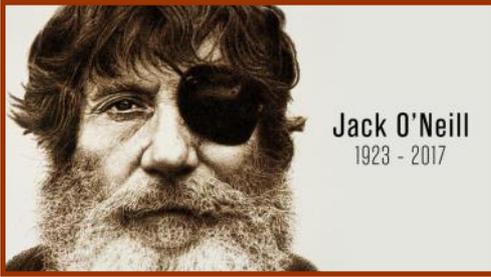
Lynn Taylor – Cyanotype Printmaking

It is becoming somewhat of a yearly tradition to have Lynn Taylor down to Stewart Island for art weekends. And for good reason – she brings with her a wealth of knowledge, numerous skills, and a can-do attitude – one that seems to transfer to everyone in her classes. This year the artwork produced looked like it came from Picasso's Blue Period. That's right – it was all in blue – or Prussian Blue to be perfectly correct. They used a process called cyanotype to transfer images using chemicals, the sun, and sometimes UV light for exposure. There was quite a bit of sunlight, which meant that a large majority of prints were exposed by pure Stewart Island sunshine! I stopped by the Pavilion on the last afternoon to see what had been produced and the prints were excellent! They were interesting and engaging, well-composed, and used a variety of different mediums to print on.

Thank you to the museum for the source images, the Chemistry Outreach Group from the University of Otago for sending Tallis, and Shona Sangster and Ulva Goodwillie for providing Tallis and Lynn with accommodation.

Cyanotype prints by Shona Sangster





Jack O'Neill  
1923 - 2017

**Dogs can kill kiwi and penguins.  
Please do not let your dog  
wander.  
Report wandering dogs to  
0800 732 732**



Nancy & Bid at Nancy's  
farewell party

Graham Dainty – Photography



Photography workshop group at Golden Bay Photo by Raylene Waddell

It was the first time Graham Dainty had stepped foot on Stewart Island for 30 years. And boy are we glad he did! Graham ran a photography workshop and the images produced were superb. Participants photographed some incredibly familiar Stewart Island places with such skill that they were presented in new and imaginative ways.

"It was most enjoyable and the buzz for me, the complete novice, was watching really talented Stewart Island photographers choose their photo shots with such originality and flair. The tutor, Graham Dainty from Te Anau is very encouraging, practical and patient. He got us thinking inside, outside and through the square, the triangle, the circle and the lines!"  
-Raylene Waddell



Photo by Raylene Waddell

Thank you to Diane Smith for providing Graham with accommodation.

Pot Luck and Pecha Kucha

The finger food pot luck and pecha kucha dinner was great fun. It allowed participants, tutors, locals, and non-locals to mingle, talk about the weekend, and show off what had been produced. Graham started out the evening presenting a slide show of a mix of participant photography and photography of his own. He also shared observations from the workshop including how impressed he had been with our local photographers pre-existing talent.

We were then treated to a nautical themed pecha kucha presentation by Lynn Taylor. Pecha Kucha is a concise and fast paced Japanese presentation style where 20 slides or images are shown, each for only 20 seconds. This was a real highlight and many Lynn's images will stay with me for some time. What a wonderful weekend.

A huge thank you to Jo Learmonth for doing a fantastic job organising and promoting this inspirational weekend!  
*by Jennifer Ross*

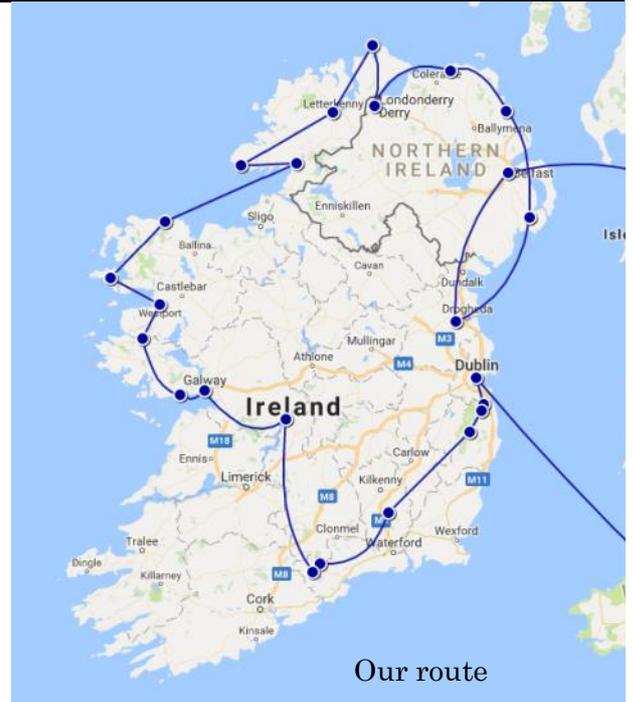
**Simply inspiring**



## ban Globetrotter off-Island Adventures.

Despite having no Irish blood in my veins and never having stepped foot in the country I am the holder of an Irish passport. For a while I've been aware that this is not just odd but possibly downright rude. So to make amends Ben and I set off on holiday for Ireland. But which one? Ireland is one island but two countries, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which is one of the 4 countries that make up the United Kingdom. In the interests of fairness we decided to see them both. Fairness seems to be an important concept in both Irelands.

We started out in Dublin, capital of the Republic of Ireland and also named Baile Átha Cliath. This double name thing was our first clue that we were in a bilingual country. Almost all the road signs, building names etc were in both English and Gaelic. This took a while to wrap your head around as there is not much of a resemblance between the two names. I soon got used to it and quite enjoyed musing on how you might pronounce some of the Gaelic names. I'm informed that Taoiseach (the Gaelic translation of prime minister) is said Tee-shack, which demonstrates the difficulties I think. Luckily, I was never tested on my pronunciation and all the locals seemed to have a firm grasp of the language so all good. It certainly made you feel you were somewhere a wee bit more exotic than England. Later on we visited some of the rural areas where Gaelic is spoken in everyday life and it made me reflect on NZ's debates on teaching Te Reo in schools. Compulsory Gaelic in schools certainly didn't seem to be causing many problems for the Irish.



Our route



Picnic lunch at Portumna. Check out the huge chimneys!

San Francisco) so we got to enjoy more pints in less crowded surroundings. Dublin was a delightful city, with beautiful Georgian architecture, parks like St Stephen's Green (thronged with sunseekers on the days when the temperature hit 20), fascinating museums and galleries (including a Whiskey museum), and great shopping especially on Grafton St. A particular highlight was the Archaeology museum, with magnificent gold objects and even a few bodies, all found perfectly preserved in peat bogs.



The lake at Powerscourt Gardens

First order of business was to get a pint of Guinness, the first of many over our stay. It's clichéd but true, the dark stuff really does taste better over there. A highlight of our time in Dublin was visiting the Guinness Factory, which is a slick tourist experience taking you through the brewing process, tasting and pouring pints, and finishing with a pint on the top of factory with panoramic views of Dublin, shared with what felt like 50 million other tourists. Luckily Dublin was loaded with cute old pubs (this must be where they got the template for every cheesy Irish pub from Shanghai to

After a few days in Dublin we picked up a rental car and hit the road. In general driving in Ireland was pretty relaxed, in fact it was so relaxed that some roads didn't appear to have names. And once you got out of the towns street numbers were a foreign concept. Full credit to the GPS unit for saving us from many map reading arguments, and giving us someone else to blame when the navigating went pear shaped.

We headed south via Powerscourt Estate - amaz-

ing gardens, and Ireland's highest waterfall (tip: it's not very high by NZ standards), visited a 6<sup>th</sup> century monastic complex at Glendalough and a 12<sup>th</sup> century Cistercian abbey at Jerpoint. It seems like you can't turn around in Ireland without tripping over a castle or religious ruin or something else that is mind bogglingly old. If you're at all interested in history or gardens Ireland is a fantastic destination. We visited castles built by pirate queens, passage tombs that were more than 5000 years old and natural wonders like Europe's highest sea cliffs (at Slieve League) and the famed Giant's Causeway (which managed to exceed its much hyped reputation). We even visited a beach on Achill Island where all the sand had only just returned after being missing for 40 years!



The Giant's Causeway

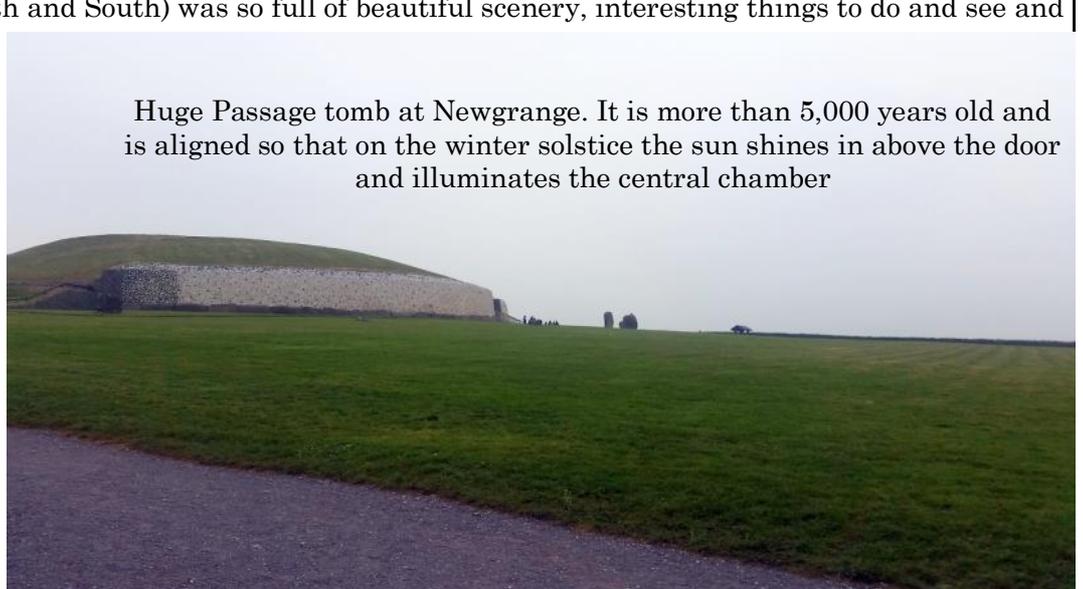
Ireland has also been quietly building itself a reputation as a foodie paradise with a focus on locally sourced ingredients and I can see why. The butter, the Irish breads and the bacon and potatoes were delicious everywhere we had them. And I was astonished at the range of beautiful local cheeses that deserve to be as well-known as the French or Italian cheeses are. In Belfast we ate at Ox, a Michelin starred restaurant which serves a set menu based on seasonal availability. Being spring we had delights like asparagus with Coolattin cheddar and lamb from the nearby mountains of Mourne. I was in 7<sup>th</sup> heaven but Ben felt the portion sizes could have been a bit bigger.



Glenarm Castle

Everywhere we went, the people were friendly, chatty and helpful. They weren't too hard to understand though I found the Northern Irish accent a bit more difficult than the soft southern accents. Luckily, having been to a fair few of Cathy's pub quizzes helped with that! We checked out local musicians having a traditional music night at a pub in Galway and ended up making friends with the locals at the next table, including some older blokes who'd burst into full song whenever something they knew was played.

All in all Ireland (both North and South) was so full of beautiful scenery, interesting things to do and see and charming folk that I could go on for ages. Given this, I was astonished that it wasn't more over run with tourists. I guess people still associate Ireland with the Troubles and political turmoil, but we felt totally safe, even when we ended up staying in a rougher area of Derry. My advice? See it now, before everyone else finds out about it!



Huge Passage tomb at Newgrange. It is more than 5,000 years old and is aligned so that on the winter solstice the sun shines in above the door and illuminates the central chamber

**The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has confirmed the detection of *Bonamia ostreae* in 2 oyster farms on Stewart Island.**

*Bonamia ostreae* is a parasite that can be fatal for flat oysters. It has been in New Zealand since at least 2015 in the Marlborough Sounds and Nelson, but this is the first time it has been found in another area of New Zealand.

There is no food safety issue from eating oysters with *Bonamia ostreae*. Fresh, good quality New Zealand oysters continue to be safe to eat.

"*Bonamia Ostreae* is a naturally occurring parasite and is difficult to contain and eradicate as it spreads easily through ocean currents and on vessels," says MPI Biosecurity Surveillance and Incursion Manager Brendan Gould.

"This particular strain of *Bonamia* has been in New Zealand since at least 2015, however strains have been here since the 1960's and are present in the marine environment."

MPI's priority is determining the extent of the issue and limiting further

spread.

Extensive sampling to date has not found *Bonamia ostreae* in Bluff oysters in Foveaux Strait.

MPI has reissued a Controlled Area Notice legally restricting movements of some shellfish species, including their spat, into and out of Nelson, Marlborough Sounds and Stewart Island. It also legally restricts movements of farm equipment and vessels out of Stewart Island to limit further spread.

"We are concerned that *Bonamia ostreae* has been found in Stewart Island, and our priority is on determining the extent of the problem and limiting further spread," says Mr Gould.

"The new detection on Stewart Island was made as part of an MPI surveillance programme for *Bonamia ostreae*. Extensive sampling to date has not found *Bonamia ostreae* in Bluff oysters in Foveaux Strait, however, we are continuing our sampling and have increased our surveillance."

Internationally, *Bonamia ostreae* has had an impact on flat oyster stocks, and it has also impacted farmed flat oyster stocks in Marlborough and

Nelson since it was detected in 2015. Seafood species such as Greenshell mussels and Pacific (rock) oysters are not affected by *Bonamia ostreae*, however, they may carry and transmit it to flat oysters.

Mr Gould says that *Bonamia ostreae* is an infectious organism and because it is in the marine environment, there are number of complexities and variables that must be considered in managing spread.

"Because *Bonamia ostreae* is in the marine environment, it makes it particularly tricky to control, as water currents and other factors can affect spread. It is also difficult to detect in the environment and it is unclear how *Bonamia ostreae* made it to Stewart Island."

"We're committed to doing everything we can to limit the spread of *Bonamia ostreae* to other areas," says Mr Gould.

"While it's still early days, I would like to acknowledge and thank the flat oyster farming operators on Stewart Island and others in the industry for their cooperation and help in responding to this latest *Bonamia ostreae* find."

**STEWART ISLAND/RAKIURA COMMUNITY BOARD**

**ALTERNATIVE ENERGY REPORT**

It was always envisaged that Government assistance would be required in order for the Island to move towards alternative generation and it is regrettable that due to the destruction of the solar installation and errors in the information collected from the hydro site, only part of the data from the last round of alternative studies is suitable for peer review which would be required for such assistance.

For our generation system to operate as an effective utility it needs to be safe, reliable and affordable. The Community Board would like to reaffirm its commitment to achieve these goals and we will continue to lobby our representatives and keep a close watch on developments in other small communities in a similar situation.

As always we are open to, and appreciative of feedback from the community as to possible ways forward. We look forward to hearing your thoughts on these matters.

This is a dive-suit sort of place so a respectful RIP to **Jack O'Neill** who passed away 2nd June

at the age of 94. The founder of O'Neill wet-suits opened one of California's first surf shops in San

Francisco in 1952. He wore an eye patch after losing an eye in a surfing accident in the 1970s.

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Books Reviews  
from Sue Ford

**“Disappearing Home”** by Deborah Morgan

is evocative of a time

and place (early ‘70’s, Liverpool, England). It depicts casual domestic violence as seen through the eyes of an 11-year old. Brilliant writing, just not my cup of escapism – give it a go. **Sam Hawken’s “Walk Away”** – do as the title suggests and walk away! Violent Jake is classed as a ‘petty criminal’ - he beats up women and steals their savings. His brother is a ‘cop-killer’ – absolutely terrible by comparison (?). A ‘heroine’, billed as the deadliest female since Lisbeth Salander, points a gun at him a few times, chats to him to give him opportunity to escape until the end of the book. Yawn! That’s the story and now you don’t need to read it... J

**Noah Hawley’s “Before the Fall”** is something different altogether. It’s the story of eleven people and what brings each of them to a time and place. These are a routine evening private jet flight from Martha’s Vinyard back to the city. Then something happens to the plane... Often annoyed by Scott’s naivety and lack of gumption, and his ability to ‘open his mouth and put his foot in it’, it’s still

a moving drama of lives cut short, and what happens to survivors. Very tense, effectively a thriller, it has shortcomings but is still an excellent read.

**“The Sealed Letter”** by Emma Donoghue: she takes a real-life, mid-1800’s scandalous divorce case and spins a good fictional drama around the facts. Emily Faithfull is a young woman who runs a printing press. Her friend Helen is unhappily married to an older, conventional, conservative man. As if Emily didn’t have enough prejudice to cope with, she is drawn into her conniving friend’s divorce case. The closing pages are a stunner.

**“Hester & Harriet”** by Hilary Spiers is likely to be my ‘Book of the Month’ – giggled aloud several times a chapter. Hester & Harriet are sisters, ‘mature’ widows who live a quiet life together in an English village. Hester, retired civil-servant, is a brilliant cook, and Harriet, retired teacher, is a terrifyingly incompetent driver. In the next village live their truculent 15-year old son, Ben. Reluctantly, on Christmas Day, the two leave the comfort of their home – and the delightful contents of their fridge – to attend festivities at the cousins’ home (Isabelle is an atrocious cook). On the way, they find a distressed girl with a baby. Sud-

denly, their lives are changed from being comfortable and cosy to being rather more exciting than they are happy about, as contemporary slavers, emigration laws, drug cartels, incomprehensible teenagers and the ‘gentleman-of-the-road’ Finbar, rail-road them into adventures. Fun.

Good reads: **“A Simple Favour”** by Darcey Bell. More twists than a corkscrew as weirdo Stephanie meets ‘psycho’ Emily. At the end of each chapter, you think you have it, but ...! And **“The Couple Next Door”** by Shari Lapena which deserves a full review but I didn’t want to miss the opportunity to highly recommend this tense drama. A couple go next door for dinner, leaving baby Cora at home – but she disappears. Excellent plot and characters. Not such a good read: **“The Moment She Left”** by Susan Lewis – a gentle mystery story with lots of backstories and sub-plots. And a confusion of characters.

**“The Grand Electrification of the South”** by Gay Buckingham – look, I can’t say this from reading it myself, but Bruce reckons it is excellent, with a heap of info from Johnny Warren incorporated. Bruce’s final comment: “Bureaucracy hasn’t changed at all.” Go figure!

**Sarah’s Rakiura Remarks**  
From the office of Sarah Dowie, MP

The Government is wholeheartedly committed to helping Kiwi families get ahead. That’s why Budget 2017 builds on a record of achievements put already in place by this Government and takes significant steps to ensure all families are getting the benefits of a strong and growing economy.

We have been investing in our preschool education making it easier to get into education with our free 20 hours subsidy and we have more than doubled our investment in the sector. This includes over \$40 million to support more children with behavioural and communication issues.

The financial burden on families has also been eased with free doctor visits and prescriptions for under 13s. For our most vulnerable, families also receive an extra \$25 per week, the first real increase in benefits in over 40 years.

More and more students are achieving NCEA with 87.6% of Southland 18 year olds achieving NCEA Level 2, up from 71% in 2008. Our growing economy is also making it easier for parents to move into work with over 200,000 jobs created in the last three years and over 1500 jobs created last year in Southland alone. That’s why we have the lowest proportion of people on a benefit in 20 years and today there are more than 50,000 fewer children in benefit dependent households than five years ago. That’s on top of normal pay increases – with the average annual Southland wage up \$13,500, more than twice the rate of inflation since this Government came into office.

The Budget’s \$2 billion Family Incomes Package will provide extra support through tax reductions and increases to Working for Families and the accommodation supplement.

This means for example, a family with three children, where both parents are on the minimum wage will benefit by \$20 a week from the tax threshold changes and \$24 a week from the increase to Working for Families. \$44 in Southland goes along way and these changes mean that an extra 60,000 children are raised above the hardship line.

The Families Incomes Package allows Kiwi families to spend more of their own money to make the decisions that are best for them. This package is another prime example of this Government helping to improve the lives of all families.

**Shark Cage Diving Controversy update**

The High Court Judge Karen Clark finally handed down her decision in the case PauaMac5 v. DOC v. the Foveaux Strait shark cage operators.

She sided with PauaMac, agreeing with their contention that DOC had no right to ever issue permits. The decision opens a jar of question-mark-shaped worms. *Now what steps will DOC take to ensure the safety of the sharks? Who is responsible for public safety? Will someone finally take twink and ink to the Wildlife Act and amend it to address the protection of great white sharks and the issue of shark cage diving?* The legislation around this issue needs to be clarified because now, as PauaMac chairman Storm Stanley points out, the deep south could become the Wild West as far as shark cage diving goes.

The judge’s decision is available on-line at [www.courtsofnz.govt.nz](http://www.courtsofnz.govt.nz) — just do a keyword search for PauaMac5.

You can keep up to date with this issue by following the Facebook page *Stop Shark Cage Diving Near Stewart Island.*

## Rat Tales “Interesting roots”

by Jess Kany

Words with double zeds tend to make me smile. *Dazzle. Fizzing. Grizzly bears. Puzzles. Pizza with extra mozzarella!*

Here’s a nifty new double-zedder for you: *karezza*.

The more clinical term is Coitus Reservatus, and it refers to the Tantric sexual practice of “male continence” where the guy doesn’t ejaculate and keeps things going and going in a sort of pleasure plateau.

Wait, what on Earth does this have to do with rats? Surely nobody’s suggesting we hold tantric sex seminars for our pests so they stop breeding?

Of course not!

The word *karezza* is just a tid-bit of what I learned when I delved into the fascinating history of the good old Victor rat trap. Turns out the Victor rat trap has its roots in

a 19<sup>th</sup> Century religious commune that strived to create a Utopian society in upstate New York. The Oneida Community was a Perfectionist religious community which practiced – long before the 60s -- Free Love. They were also into complex marriage, stirpiculture (selective breeding program), and for birth control they practiced *karezza*.

Their society was funded by various enterprises: canned fruits and vegetables; chains; traveling bags, straw hats, mop sticks, sewing silk... one of their most successful businesses was traps. It humbly began with Oneidan community member Sewell Newhouse, a blacksmith who famously forged traps which the company used as a prototype in its factory. These early traps were known as Newhouses. By the 1870s the Oneida Community was churning out over 400,000 Newhouses a year. In 1886 they introduced a slightly less expensive version named... drumroll please... the Victor.

From “The Story of Oneida Traps” by Edward Knobloch: *In the early*

*1900s, two of every three traps around the globe came from Oneida’s Hardware Department building in Sherrill. The Oneida Community, Ltd. expanded from game traps into mouse traps with the acquisition of the Animal Trap Company of Lititz, Pennsylvania, in 1906. Thereafter, the classic wooden snap traps for small rodents became Victors of the Oneida Community, Ltd. In 1910, Oneida enjoyed record sales of more than seven million traps. That same year, however, traps ceased to be the most profitable product. The company had already begun to phase out traps in favor of high quality silverware — a product with a better future.*

The Oneida “Free Lovin” Community dissolved in 1881 and the Oneida company sold its trap business in 1925. Oneida has carried on, to this day, as a dinnerware company.

And if you take a look at your Victor rat trap and read the red inked words, you’ll see that the Woodstream Corporation’s factory in Lititz, Pennsylvania is still churning them out!

## New rules for Fiordland

Vessel operators entering the Fiordland Marine Area will now be required to comply with new rules and hold a Clean Vessel Pass, following the recent launch of the Fiordland Marine Regional Pathway Management Plan.

With its pristine waters and unique ecosystems, Fiordland is one of the most beautiful and dramatic natural areas of New Zealand. However, it is also at risk from the many marine pests lurking in the waters, throughout New Zealand and internationally. The development of the Fiordland Marine Regional Pathway Management Plan is a major step in reducing these risks and it’s the first of its kind in New Zealand.

The plan sets out a number of rules and standards that must be met by all vessels entering within one nautical mile of the landward boundary of the Fiordland Marine Area and requires vessel operators to obtain a Clean Vessel Pass.

The rules apply to all vessels, regardless of their size, but obtaining a Clean Vessel Pass is a simple process. Passes are free and valid for one year. You can apply or renew a Clean Vessel Pass online through the Environment Southland website [www.es.govt.nz](http://www.es.govt.nz), or by emailing a completed application form to [service@es.govt.nz](mailto:service@es.govt.nz), or posting a completed application form to Environment Southland, Private Bag 90116, Invercargill 9840.

You will need to be aware of the standards required and ensure your vessel meets them all before heading to Fiordland.

You can find out more about the plan and how it affects you at [www.es.govt.nz/fmpp](http://www.es.govt.nz/fmpp).

**Tania McCann**

Communications Co-ordinator

Environment Southland *Te Taiao Tonga*

**“Magical moments”: almost getting T-boned by a marine mammal**

So, I’ll set the scene: a lovely Sunday on Horseshoe Beach with the boys and three of their friends. We’re all in wet-suits boogie-boarding. There aren’t really waves to catch, just sort of gentles rolls, but this doesn’t stop me from screaming out lines from Point Break (“Hey Moby, One Hundred Percent Adrenaline!!!”) and The Perfect Storm (“For Chrissakes Charlie, YOU’RE STEAMING INTO A BOMB!”) Stu shows up and builds a fire so we take a break, and we’re standing around roasting marshmallows when we notice... dolphins! A raucous of shiny black fins and tails and splashes and they’re zigzagging across Horseshoe Bay right toward us!

I hand my marshmallow to Mo and grab my boogie-board and run straight back into the water and paddle as hard as I can out so I can –

-- so I can WHAT, exactly?

I’ve had days to mull this and it’s still unclear what I was thinking. Did I truly think I was going to swim with dolphins? I suppose I must have had some sort of interaction in mind, why else would I have moved as quickly as possible to put myself in the frenetic trajectory of huge fast-moving sea mammals? Surely I had a plan?

By the way, let’s be clear: I’m not a good swimmer. Not strong, not elegant, not efficient. I can stay afloat with a spluttery splashy doggy-paddle but I don’t like it if my feet can’t touch the bottom and I have little interest in anything touching me when I’m in the water. (The first time I ever snorkelled I shot out of the water screaming because something had suddenly floated into my field of vision and touched my cheek ... which turned out to be my own ponytail.)

But... “Swimming with dolphins.” There’s such a mystical, mythical ring to those words. It’s actually a sanctioned tourist activity advertised in other parts of the country. People pay big money for an opportunity to go swimming with dolphins! It’s a THING. A thing people talk about reverently, happily, goo-ily. One of those life experiences that is supposedly Amazing and Awesome with a capital A. Did I rush into the water because I wanted to tell people later about how I swam with dolphins and it was AMAAAZING and AWESOME? In this age of selfies and oversharing and creating personal mythologies on social media, was I trying to create a perfect memory just so I could have it in my file of awesome stuff to mention? Did I do it because I’m a writer and I feel the need to collect experiences as fodder for the keyboard? Or was it a knee-jerk human reaction, one sentient supposedly-intelligent being drawn to another, an opportunity for a once-in-a-lifetime communing-with-nature moment? I mean, what kind of jerk is going to pass up an opportunity to SWIM WITH DOLPHINS? Not this lady! Kick, kick, paddle, paddle. It’s going to be AWESOME! Splash, splash, pant, pant.

I’m not sure how far out I was, probably just a few yards, when I saw, to my alarm, that I had succeeded in

getting near the dolphins and they were REALLY CLOSE and they were HUGE. And I was watching them with a growing feeling of discomfort, because they looked just super herky-jerky-jumpy, not to anthropomorphize and criticize these lovely creatures but they seemed suddenly sort of psycho and way too hyper, like I’d found myself at a kid’s sugared-up birthday party except the kids turn out to be unhinged aggressive giants, and then, out of the corner of my eye I see something which turns my discomfort to sheer terror: a wake created by something huge and powerful moving at incredible speed toward me. MORE dolphins zeroing in from another direction. Sorry for using the obvious movie reference but seriously, exactly like a scene from Jaws. This is when I start to scream.

The stuff of nightmares, I mean I TRIED to scream, but quaffed a mouthful of seawater and managed a gaggy seal bark. I made all sorts of noises as I whipped a sh-tty\* and pointed my boogie-board back toward the beach. Squeals, squeaks, more gaggy seal barks. Some sort of squawky prayer peppered with F bombs. Trying to catch a wave back to the safety of shore but there weren’t any waves, so flailing my arms and kicking my legs spastically and it didn’t help my balance or speed that I kept looking behind me expecting a killer whale (at this point this is what my insane brain had convinced me they were) to make a snack of me. Of course, in the relative reasonable calm of retrospect I know they were not killer whales and they would not have eaten me, but, to be fair, as a friend pointed out later, “When it came to their idea of fun you probably wouldn’t have been on the same page.”

At any rate, it was a feeling of severe discombobulation to go from thinking I was about to have a magical encounter with beautiful beloved sea creatures, and then a few seconds later thinking I was doggy-paddling for my life. (The entire episode, by the way, lasted about four minutes.) What’s it called when you think something’s going to be one thing and it turns on a dime into something totally ELSE? Like the sweet smoothy I promised my kids yesterday which accidentally turned out to be a cement mixer (don’t mix citric juice with dairy, duh!). Like thinking you’re going to camp on Stewart Island for a couple days and move on. You reckon some of those people who thought themselves clever voting for an orange reality tv star are feeling a bit oopsy-doopsy? I guess sometimes you just have to experience something to figure out “Oh, bad idea.” Even in our dotage, we can still learn things the hard way.

I walked back to the bonfire where five children stood with their marshmallow-sticky mouths agape, probably storing what they’d just seen into their ever-growing files of Grownups Behaving Like Crazy A—holes. My husband had his arms folded, was shaking his head and laughing. “Well,” he said when I reached him and stood catching my breath, “You missed your moment.”

“Oh, I had a moment,” I said. “It just wasn’t the moment I thought I was going to have.”

\* “whipped a sh-tty” is slang for U-turn

—Jess

## Power to the People?

"If you want to know where you are going, it's good to know you have been". Here is a quick overview of where we have been in the struggle to achieve affordable power, taken from anecdotal conversations, press cuttings and Rakiura museum archives.

**March 1946** The Chairman of the Stewart Island County Council (Mr. T Bragg) informs the members that an engineer's report on the proposed hydro power scheme from Rakeahua was unfavorable due to the large cost involved and the difficult terrain that needed to be traversed, they would however return to explore possibilities in other directions.

**Circa 1970** The concept of a cable across the Foveaux Strait and a hydro scheme damming the Toi Toi Flats are explored but neither is progressed on the grounds of cost.

**December 1971** Consulting engineer (Mr Veitch) addresses the Community at a public meeting of over 100 people with a proposed power scheme that would see four diesel generators installed at Deep Bay. Nobody would be compelled to join the scheme but if enough people guaranteed to buy power, the line charge would be \$18 a month and the tariff would be 3c domestic and 2.5c for commercial users. Mr Veitch said it would be 18 to 24 months before the plant could start operations.

**November 1982** Mr W R Austin, MP for Awarua puts forward a proposal to the National Government that could lead to the development of the Island's own hydro scheme, based on the belief that off-shore communities ought to receive compensation for the added costs and disadvantages suffered through not being linked to the national grid (Hands up those who agree).

**1985** With the help of SEPS, questionnaires were circulated to potential power users on the Island to establish if there was sufficient support to proceed with a diesel generating scheme.

**May 1987** The Council receives the first \$100,000 of a \$800,000 grant provided by the Rural Electrical Reticulation Council. This then required an additional loan of \$1,000,000 the financing of which would be built into the power charge, and a voluntary contribution of \$2500. It is easy now to overlook what an important milestone it was for this project to be underway and tribute should be paid to those who helped make it happen, including Bruce Ford, Harry Slingsby, Johnny Warren and many others.

**December 1987** The first power pole is erected on Horseshoe Bay Road.

**June 1988** Generator 1 delivers its maiden power. The first appliance reported as being connected and running on the new scheme is Ted Rooney's fridge! Initially power is 40c a unit with the profits being used to pay off the outstanding loan, however according to the September 1987 Stewart island News, Jim Bissland measured his gen-set output and calculated the average cost of home produced power at \$1.09 a unit (1kWh) so the possibility of 24 hour power at 40c a unit was not quite so bad and it also meant Ted could keep his cold-smoked blue cod chilled for less than half the previous price.

**December 1990** McConell Dowel propose the installation of a tapered channel wave generation system "The Tapchen Power Plant" manufactured by the Norwegian company Norwave, subsequent data sourced from Electricorp showed that the wave energy levels quoted by the Norwave were grossly over-estimated and the project never progressed.

**Circa 2005** Energy 3 say they are confident that a wind powered generation solution including a buffering system, which they would finance and construct, would be the way to go, however due to contractual concerns the idea is never progressed.

**August 2007** Venture Southland publishes "A proposed way forward to deal with electricity supply at Stewart Island" the summary of which concluded "a wind generator with either hydrogen, or battery storage, at a cost of \$1.9 million would be effective. The report also recommended that VS seek funding of \$138,400 for studies and trials.

**December 2008** Elemental Energy in association with Right House put forward proposals for various power system upgrades, Elemental installs 2 grid tie solar PV systems on the post office (facing due east!) and DOC buildings to assess solar generation potential. Elemental also installed a 2.4 kW wind turbine which should have been sited at Ringaringa point but after encounters with difficult terrain it was installed adjacent to the Schofield residence. Corrosion problems on the turbine head and the noise the unit produced meant it was soon taken out of service. Other suggestions from Elemental included changing to more expensive biofuel (always a good way to save money) and installing turbine driven combined heat and power units, which we were told could heat and power an office block simultaneously. Perhaps all we needed then was a friendly office block which would like to spend some time on the Island! Meridian energy sold off Righthouse, including its interest in Elemental Energy in 2011 to the Mark Group and the NZ branch of the same went into liquidation in 2015.

**April 2011** Tangaroa Energy proposes to install a wave generation device off the east coast of the Island utilizing Langlee Wave Power's Norwegian technology. Interesting to note that the Aotearoa Wave and Tidal Energy Association list the chosen location as having one of the lowest wave energy profiles in New Zealand. The proposal would seek funding from ECCA's Marine Energy Deployment Fund, however none of the milestones set were ever met and the idea was never progressed. Neither Tangaroa Energy or Langlee Wave power appear to be in business now and none of the six applicants for the ECCA's marine grants managed to progress their schemes.

**February 2012** With the help of SDC, "Stewart Island Energy Futures Workshop" takes place at the Community Centre with a large section of the community in attendance. In a well-organized event, various speakers put forward their ideas and opinions on alternative energy options including wind and hydro, ECCA were going to give a talk on how they could assist remote communities but could not make it (too remote?) and there were some quite radical ideas presented based on hydrogen production and storage, the only fly in the ointment being the electrolysis of water to hydrogen requires lots and lots of cheap electricity! Tangaroa Energy also re-surfaced briefly with a plan to buy the S.I.E.S.A. power network and begin attaching their wave machines. That meeting

led onto Venture Southland's **July 2012** "Work Packages to Evaluate Electricity Generation Options for Stewart Island" which became the basis for the last round of alternative studies to date.

**2012** Taranaki's Greymouth Petroleum holds out a carrot to the community with the prospect of gas fired turbine generation plant powering the Island if their drilling is successful, but unfortunately as far as we know, it was not.

**2014** Venture Southland and Energy 3 install a wind monitoring tower. Garden Mound is selected as an ideal site but because of unforeseen issues with difficult terrain it's finally installed at Horseshoe Bay. The solar panel array is installed at the sewerage ponds but unfortunately the installation is wrecked by "freak" wind gusts in July 2014. Luckily no other damage occurs anywhere else in the township. The North Arm hydro monitoring installation takes place but installation errors lead to the data collected being compromised and attempts are being made to correct the data retrospectively.

**October 2014** In her maiden speech our MP Sarah Dowie states "I will assist and support those who have innovative new ideas and I will be vocal on the delivery of effective essential services across the region". Sarah has said when speaking with locals on the Island that the cost of power has been a major concern.

**March 2014** "Power to the People" is published by First National MP Andrew Williams and appears in Stewart Island News. It compares the Government funding given to Tokelau and Tuvalu for solar power initiatives to the plight of Stewart Island. Still worth reading and although it seems to have disappeared from the First National web-site you can find it at [www.stewartislandnews.com](http://www.stewartislandnews.com) – check the archives for the March 2014 issue.

**April 2105** Southland District Mayor Gary Tong says "After years of delays for investigations into wind, solar, and hydroelectricity, he wants Island residents to be able to switch on with alternative energy by 2018".

**March 2017** Southland District Mayor Gary Tong says "Stewart Island residents will have to wait for advances in technology and millions in funding before they will be able to get an alternative power source for the Island".

**April 2017** The "McCutcheon Report" aka "Stewart Island Future Power Supply" document is released to the community.

After 71 years of studies, reports, proposals, trials and significant financial commitment, we may know where we have been, but do we have any idea where we are going?

*Editor's note: this information isn't totally comprehensive (not enough ink!) but hopefully gives the readers an overview of the island's history of power. Thanks to the various community members including Steve Lawrence for putting this together and to the Rakiura Museum for aiding everyone's memories!*



## Predator Free Rakiura update.

The Predator Free Rakiura Governance Group met for the 9<sup>th</sup> time on 6<sup>th</sup> June in Invercargill. Given that is has been some time since the last meeting, and that there were several new faces around the table, much of the meeting was spent re-capping and reviewing progress since the Group was formed in 2014. The Group also discussed the governance, advice and support roles and how these might best be structured. At the next meeting, we'll look at group structure proposals following research into structures functioning well in other eradication projects.

The Group agreed that the removal of rats, feral cats, possums and hedgehogs from Stewart Island is still the end goal, and with Predator Free 2050 gaining momentum nationally, now is the time to consider next steps. The Group considered that an important next step is to improve understanding of community and stakeholder aspirations and concerns over the project, and approved DOC to engage an independent research organisation to design and undertake a survey on its behalf. It is hoped that this survey will be completed by the end of 2017.

Another step the Group considered important is to come up with project options that may be acceptable to potential funders, the community and stakeholders. These project options may be less ambitious than initial proposals but would be a step along the way to a predator free Rakiura. The very first step is to secure funding to develop these project options to an "investment-ready" stage – so that they can be presented to potential funders.

Community input and engagement is considered by the Group to be a key driver throughout the process and we are keen to hear from anyone who wants to share their thoughts or voice concerns. For those who need a refresher, the Predator Free Rakiura website <http://predatorfreestewartisland.org.nz/> contains previous reports and lots of information about the progress of the project over the last few years. Local members of the group are Jill Skerrett, Garry Neave, and Sandy King; all of whom are eager to hear the thoughts of community members.

Other Group members are Bridget Carter (DOC), Richard Bowman (Environment Southland), Bruce Halligan (SDC), Gail Thompson & Tane Davis (Iwi & titi islands), Paul Norris (Business), Leon Fife (Rakiura Maori Land Trust), and Ray Phillips (Hunting).

The next meeting is tentatively planned for early August.



### Stewart Island Real Estate

For all local listings -  
houses, cribs, sections and blocks of land.

See our website [TODDCO.NZ](http://TODDCO.NZ)  
or contact our local representative  
**Jeanette Mackay on 027 681 8589**  
for all Island real estate enquiries.



# Stewart Island / Rakiura Community & Environment Trust

for people for environment

## SIRCET Update—by Shona Sangster

We're thrilled to have been selected as a finalist in the Protecting our Biodiversity Category of the Green Ribbon awards. These national awards are held by the Ministry for the Environment to recognise outstanding contributions by individuals, communities and organisations to protect and manage New Zealand's environment, so it is a real honour just to get into the finals. Special thanks to Real Journeys, Stewart Island Flights, Rakiura Water Taxi and Anita and Ian Herbert for help in sending trustees Di Morris and Al Burns up to the formal award ceremony in Wellington.

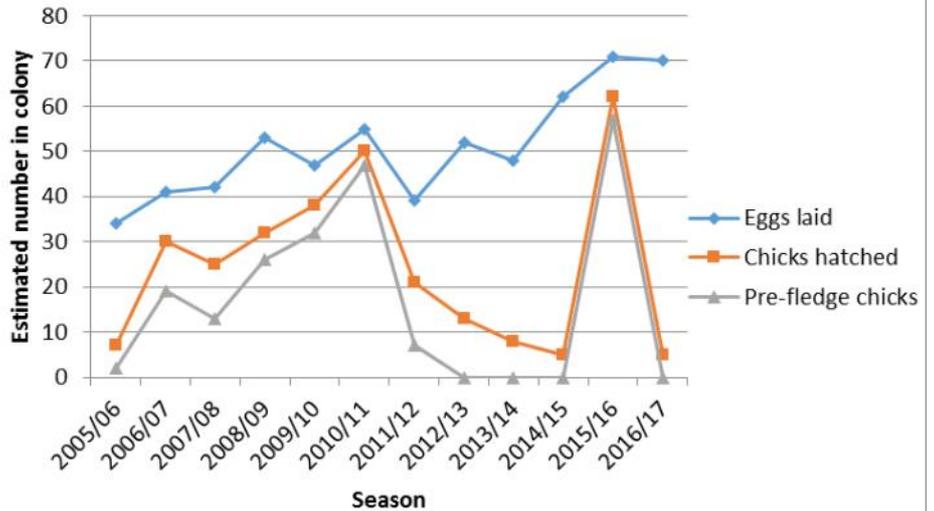
We have been undertaking our regular rounds of monitoring and while we had an exceptionally good result in terms of rats (down to 5%) in the Core Zone, the news for Titi/Sooty Shearwater wasn't so good. Thanks to Sandy King for doing the Titi/Sooty Shearwater monitoring for us. Matt Jones also undertook our 5 minute bird call count monitoring which showed a slight decrease in the number of calls recorded from last year but still a significant difference between to numbers of birds heard at Acker's point and in the control area at Ryan's Creek.

Our annual report is now available in the Environment Centre or on our website, and we have revamped our website – it is the same address ([www.sircet.org.nz](http://www.sircet.org.nz)) but it has had a total makeover! Go and check it out! Just a reminder – we still have some rat lines free in the Deep Bay area that need volunteers. If you'd like to take one on, please contact Willy: [willy@sircet.org.nz](mailto:willy@sircet.org.nz) or 0274694504.

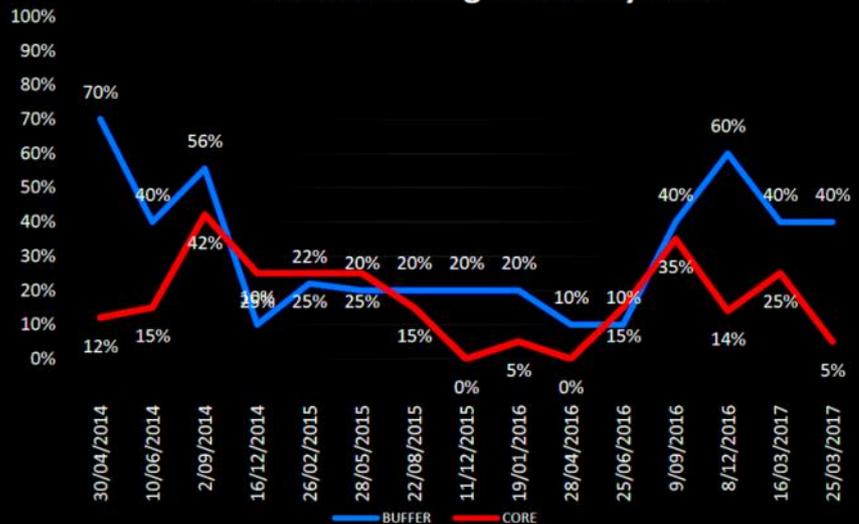
Estimated results at Ackers Point titi colony 2005-2016 based on extrapolation from study plots

The results of the recent rat monitoring were: Core Zone = 5% Buffer Zone = 40%. This gives us a combined result in the Core and Buffer of 16%.

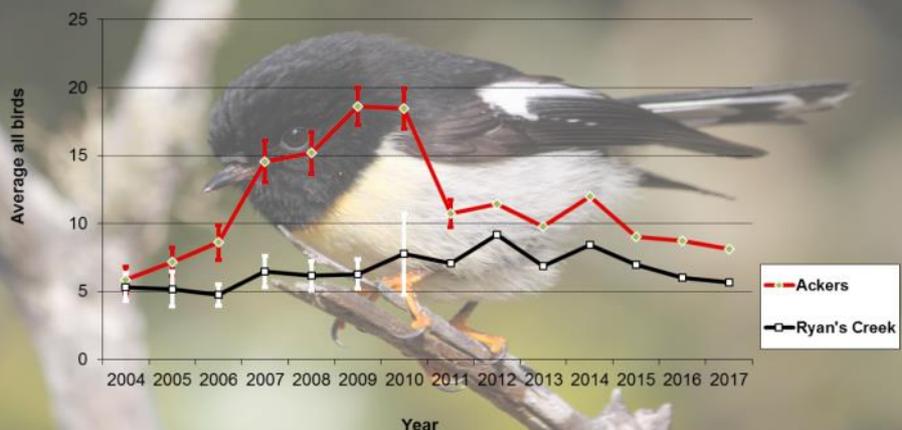
### Ackers Point Titi colony breeding 2005-2017



### Rat Monitoring Results by Zone



5 Minute Bird Call Counts 2004 - 2017  
Comparison between protected (Ackers) and non-protected (Ryan's Creek) areas



# RAKIURA HERITAGE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



## FUNDRAISING UPDATE

We are really delighted to be able to share with you that we have been awarded a grant of \$300,000 from the Lotteries Environment & Heritage Fund. This was the full amount we applied for and are excited about what this means for the project.

This grant brings the total secured funding for the project to: **\$1,612,000**

We still have 2 large funding applications to the Lotteries Special Projects Fund and the Ministry of Culture & Heritage Regional Culture & Heritage Fund outstanding but we expect decisions on these in the next 2-3 weeks. With both of these funds you never really know if you are in with a chance but we are quietly optimistic. If both of these applications are granted, we will have 93% of the money required to complete the project.

If you have concerns or questions, or wish to voice your support, please feel free to discuss this with us directly. We see this as a community project and value your input and discussion.

**CONTACT:**  
Margaret Hopkins (2191-126)  
or  
Jo Learmonth (2191-555)

Email:  
[rakiuramuseum@outlook.com](mailto:rakiuramuseum@outlook.com)

## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED:

Over the last 15 years and especially in the last 18 months we have had enduring support and encouragement for this project from residents and members of the Islands' wider community and this is evident in the financial contributions and letters of support that the project has received. The regional and national heritage, tourism, and community development industries are also excited and in full support of this project. It is therefore disappointing to hear at Community Board level that the community does not wish to support this project and the amount of mis-information that this is based on. To answer a few questions:

**Q: *Why do we even need a new Museum?***

**A:** The existing Museum doesn't have enough room for exhibiting or storing the collection, a suitable workspace, nor is it climate controlled to protect the collection items long term. The new Heritage Centre will have 60% more exhibition space allowing for 40-50% more of the collection to be displayed, 35% more storage space but a special storage system allowing for more items to be stored in a smaller area, dedicated workspace and offices, as well as the display of the carved Millennium Log in an open and friendly foyer, and rentable meeting and business spaces.

**Q: *Is the proposed site the right place for it? The local Fire Brigade don't seem to be very happy?***

**A:** An independent feasibility study, and subsequent in-depth reviews all confirm that the proposed site is the most viable site in terms of size and location. The site which sat derelict until the 1980's was owned by the St. Johns County Council until it was given to the NZ Fire Service to build the new Fire Station. The remaining area was used as a deer park by NZ Forest Service, later DOC, then fell into disrepair again. In effect, it has always been a 'community' space. The NZFS have no planned future for the site and so have agreed for it be used for the new Heritage Centre. We are conscious of the impact that the new facility will have on its neighbours and will work closely with DOC and the Fire Station particularly to ensure where practicable that all issues are mitigated.

**Q: *Wasn't this supposed to be a combined building with the SDC and Visitor Information?***

**A:** Yes, originally the concept involved a Visitor Information Centre, however, given the demise of the previous local VIN a review of the financial model and its specific operating conditions showed the risk of failure was too high. Brochure display and tourist information will still be available at the new Centre. It is disappointing that the SDC decided not to be part of the new Centre but this decision was based on regional priorities and outside our control. With an increased door charge and longer opening hours, the Centre is still financially viable and now provides additional opportunities for the community.

**Q: *Is this going to end up being a money drain on ratepayers?***

**A:** The existing Rakiura Museum has been operating under excellent financial management since 1960, not once asking for rate payer contributions. Surviving on income from door charges, fundraising, retail sales, as well as small grants and donations the Museum has managed to operate efficiently and save more than \$230,000 towards the new Heritage Centre. With increased income opportunities in the new Centre, a building designed to be energy efficient, and continued excellent financial controls, we are confident the Centre will remain independently viable.

# What's up, DOC?

From Jennifer Ross



## A huge thank you to volunteers

What better time to recognise the great conservation work achieved by Rakiura volunteers this year than during National Volunteer Week (18 – 24 June)! We are so lucky so have a well-established and over-subscribed volunteer programme here on Stewart Island/Rakiura.

Volunteer activities featured in SIN so far this year:

- Annual Hut Maintenance (Christmas Village, Bungaree, Fred's Camp, and North Arm)
- Mason Bay Homestead Maintenance Volunteer Trips
- Port William/Potirepo Haulers and Sawmill Site Maintenance Volunteer Trip

*Thank you to all volunteers involved with these trips. A special thank you to the Winton Rotary Club for its volunteer support on Rakiura over many years.*

Here are a few of other volunteer programme gems from the year:

### Moturau Moana Historic Native Garden Maintenance

October saw the annual volunteer activity to tidy up Moturau Moana gardens; a collaborative project between Southland District Council, DOC, and a local Rakiura resident. All volunteers worked very hard under the leadership of DOC Ranger Aristya Marzuki and the gardens look great!

*A sincere thank you to Elaine Hamilton for her ongoing support and coordination of this project over a number of years!*



Alpine gardens at Moturau Moana historic gardens



Ulva Island Volunteer Ranger checking a trap  
Photo by Zoe Caals

### Ulva Island Rangers

The Ulva Island Ranger programme is our most popular volunteer activity and runs from December to the end of April each year. Volunteers stay on the island for at least two weeks and do a fantastic job checking traps, maintaining visitor facilities, cleaning toilets, providing biosecurity advocacy and monitoring visitor behaviour.

*A massive thank you to the Ulva Island Chairtable Trust for providing food and other vital items for the Ulva Island volunteers. A special thank you to the Ulva Island Ferry for transporting volunteers and gear for the programme. Thank you to Real Journeys for regularly transporting food and gear.*

### Long Term Volunteer Programme

We had three fantastic long term volunteers this year. Laura Cranston, Harriet Jones, and Robbie Eisler joined the team each volunteered with us for three months between November and April. They worked with DOC Rangers to help with weed eradication, threatened species work, animal pest control, and track maintenance. These volunteers can add practical fieldwork and remote living experience and to their resumes.

*A huge thank you to our long term volunteers for giving so much of their time to conservation on Rakiura.*



Long Term Volunteer Harriet Jones scrub barring Rakiura Track at Lee Bay



Volunteer Cathy Harron with DOC Ranger Cherie Hemsley

### Community Volunteers

This year we have had a growing interest from community members to be involved with our daily work including Ulva Island coastal trap checks and Barberry weed control.

*Thank you so much to Jess Kany, Iain McCallum, Cathy Harron, Saff Larvin, and Thea Hamann for volunteering to help.*

If you are a community member interested in volunteering with us please contact Community Ranger Jennifer Ross [jross@doc.govt.nz](mailto:jross@doc.govt.nz) for more information.

A massive thank you from Bridget Carter, Operations Manager based on the island, “not only for the incredible volunteer effort this year, but also to the dedicated DOC Rangers who supervise, mentor and encourage our volunteers. I am so proud of the team’s positivity and generosity to see others grow and to get more conservation achieved”.

### Rakiura nationally critical botany field trip

A team of four botanists led by DOC Technical Advisor Brian Rance visited the Tin Range and Table Hill on Rakiura in March to search for data deficient and Nationally Critical plants. The team had fantastic weather and found most of the plants they set out to find including the extremely rare *Ranunculus viridis* (rare type of buttercup) and *Aciphylla stannensis* (rare type of speargrass). A few of the plants were collected for cultivation at the Dunedin Botanical Gardens.



Left: *Ranunculus viridis* (rare type of buttercup) Photo by Cherie Hemsley DOC; Right: *Aciphylla stannensis* (rare type of speargrass) Photo by Cherie Hemsley DOC

### Kath Johnson placement with DOC as part of Science Teaching Leadership Programme

Halfmoon Bay School Principal Kath Johnson has been awarded a placement in the Royal Society’s Science Teaching Leadership Programme (the Programme) and has chosen DOC Rakiura as her host! The Programme aims to develop science curriculum leaders and enhance science opportunities and outcomes for students. So the overall goal will be to enrich the Halfmoon Bay School science programme, and expand the engagement of students in science by providing Kath with a range of work experiences leading to increased science knowledge, understanding, and skills.



Kath exploring the Gutter Photo by Jennifer Ross

Kath will be working with us at DOC during school Terms 3 and 4 this year (with a little flexibility to trade some time to be able to work during our busy summer period). The programme will be broad across much of the Department’s conservation work including ecosystem protection, animal pest control, island biosecurity monitoring, dune restoration, weed control, threatened species management, facilities maintenance, site restoration and working with the community and volunteers.

Kath, Emily Joy, and Jennifer Ross will be attending an Induction Symposium in Wellington on the 26th July to get the Programme started. We’re really looking

forward to having you on board Kath!

### Congratulations to SIRCET

The Green Ribbon Awards are held to recognise exceptional environmental and conservation initiatives throughout New Zealand. A huge congratulations to the Stewart Island/Rakiura Community and Environment Trust (SIRCET) for being nominated as a finalist within the ‘Protecting our Biodiversity’ category. The awards ceremony was hosted by the Ministers for the Environment and Conservation at a formal awards ceremony and dinner at Parliament on 8 June 2017.



### Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara marine reserve report card

The first draft of the report card for Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara Marine Reserve is now open for feedback. Led by the Department of Conservation’s Marine Ecosystems Team, this work is helping DOC to report on the state of New Zealand’s marine environment. The goal of a report card is to provide a visual summary of the status of, and trends in, ecological integrity or the health of a marine reserve.

(Continued from page 19)

Similar report cards have been completed for Cape Rodney-Okakari Point Marine Reserve near Auckland and neighbouring Tawharanui Marine Reserve. Both report cards are now finalised and are available

on the DOC website and in brochure form: [www.doc.govt.nz/report-card](http://www.doc.govt.nz/report-card)  
Research in Ulva Island-Te Wharawhara Marine Reserve was undertaken in 2014, building on previous monitoring and research in the area. This information has been included in first draft of a report card for the marine reserve and now

DOC is looking for local knowledge and feedback on what has been included in the draft so far. For more information on how to have your say, or to read the draft, contact DOC Marine Ecosystems Team Technical Advisor Laura Wakelin on 027 2017433 or email [lwakelin@doc.govt.nz](mailto:lwakelin@doc.govt.nz)



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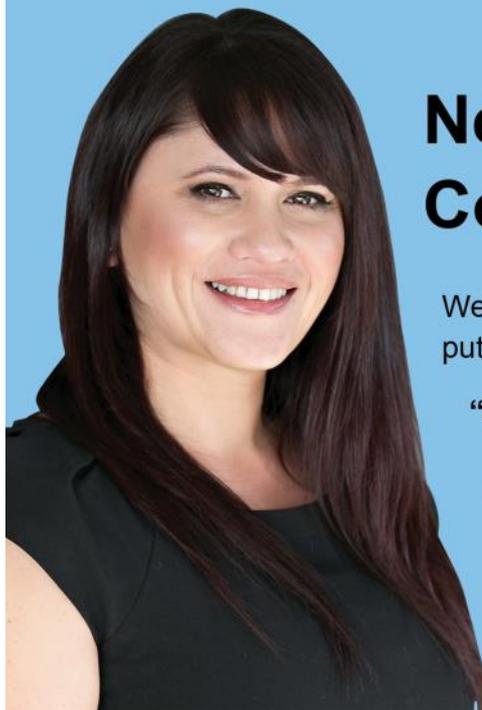
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Authorised by Ria Bond,  
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## Rakiura Team in Tautuku Cup 2017

By Jennifer Ross

Each year teams from Search and Rescue (SAR) throughout the southern South



First Aid challenge Photo credit George Nicholas

Island compete in a competition to test their skills, teamwork, and overall ability. This year the competition returned to where it had originated: Tautuku in the Catlins.

Representing Rakiura SAR this year were Team Leader George Nicholas, with team members Dan Lee, Jake Osborne, Rachael Sagar, Kath Johnson, and me (Jennifer Ross). We took part in several challenges including first aid, gear check, observation (my favourite), tracking, ropes, stretcher carry, and navigation while communicating our progress constantly with SAR base over the radio.

For a team of relative newbies (except for Dan and George) we did great! We worked together well as a team, and pulled together when necessary (like during the navigation challenge) to support one another. We knew we were lacking in ropes skills so took that challenge as a learning opportunity.

Because I'll bet you're dying to know...we came in fifth place (out of ten teams). Not too bad if you ask me! We had a lot of laughs, learnings, and grew our competencies for next time. Watch out for next year's results. I have a feeling it might just be our year...



Tracking challenge – Finding the campsite!



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**LETTERS**

I was shocked to read about the proposal to stick salmon farms down at Port Pegasus.

We have always considered this a fantastic get away to an even more untouched part of Stewart Island. We've got down to Pegasus a few times now with our kayaks and spent a week or so each time exploring the place for our selves. Yes, there is the odd boat around, but otherwise, particularly on land, we have the landscape to ourselves. What a feeling.

Salmon farms will mean that valuable sense of isolation would be smashed. Workers living down there, the pens, increased boat traffic, the unseen pollution from the unnatural concentrations of fish. I truly believe this would be a tragedy.

Big Glory Bay is gone as far as that natural feeling goes with the salmon farming there. Why not just concentrate the action there. Please don't let these commercial enterprises with their growth mind sets ruin beautiful Pegasus.

*Neil Sloan*



The recent detection of *Bonamia ostreae* in two oyster farms on Stewart Island is of grave concern to Southlanders, especially those local businesses and families which rely on this shellfish for their livelihoods.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is working hard to determine the extent of the issue and limit any further spread.

Many Southlanders will know aquaculture, particularly salmon farming, is a key focus of the Southland Regional Development Strategy (SoRDS) Action Plan.

However, the misinformation circulating about the impact of *Bonamia ostreae* on aquaculture is a concern so it's important Southlanders understand the facts.

The disease is limited to oyster species and has no negative impact on potential aquaculture opportunities such as finfish or mussels.



His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

*Stewart and Ulva Islands Visit*

My wife and I were privileged to visit Stewart and Ulva islands and to see the great natural beauty of the place in which you live.

What an extraordinary part of the world and we feel that not only the people of New Zealand who visit, but also the many thousands of visitors from overseas, are so fortunate that you take such wonderful and loving care of such a unique landscape.

I hope Lynne and I have the opportunity return (in retirement!) to spend more time on your magnificent islands and we may even have a little more of what is surely some of the best seafood in the world—that won't be too hard to take either!

MPI has advised other bivalves, in particular, Pacific oysters, green-lipped (Greenshell) mussels and geoduck, are not susceptible to the disease caused by *Bonamia ostreae* although they may be able to carry the parasite and transmit it to flat oysters.

As the independent facilitator of the Southland Aquaculture Reference Group (SARG), I'm committed to helping ensure all stakeholders are involved and kept informed.

The process to explore the environmental, cultural and commercial feasibility of salmon farming in the north arm of Port Pegasus at Stewart Island is progressing as planned.

Detailed scientific data is being gathered to understand the environmental, cultural, social, and economic suitability of aquaculture and will in due course be published.

*Graeme Todd*

Independent facilitator

Southland Aquaculture Reference Group

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Above: the South Sea Hotel chalkboard.

Below: stunning aurora photo by Jen Ross, taken at Twilight Bay (back Thule Bay)



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