

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

## CELEBRATING RAKIURA

June—July 2015

\$3.00

The island's been in the news with the school's dynamic effort to entice new students here though Trade Me. The venture was successful and we have two new families coming down here so a BIG WELCOME to our new Island residents!

Our beautiful ANZAC dawn service, Phillip Smith's kiwi tour, and fishing charters Loloma and Southern Limits were featured on a recent episode of *Gone Fishing* — if you missed it you can find the episode on-line.

Radio personalities Lana Searle and Jason Gunn of More FM came down here in a much-hyped bid to beat Prince Harry's Quiz score. They posted videos and photos of their journey south to their FB page, the clip from the ferry ride was pretty funny. With the help of Mayor Gary Tong they DID beat Harry's score!

The petition to stop shark cage diving near Stewart Island has been sent to Parliament with over 750 signatures.

On a personal/editorial note, this issue marks TEN YEARS since I started wearing the hat of SIN editor. I stepped into Stu Dovey's shoes to edit this paper; before him many others have had turns at SINning including Margaret Hopkins, Chris Visser, and Sam Samson.

My first edition featured the very first *Oban Globetrotter* courtesy of Dan Young who had just returned from a fishing stint in Scotland; a congrats to Kyle and Jo on their sneaky Samoan marriage; and one of my all-time

favourite Halfmoon Bay Beats penned by Duncan Hollebbon (page 6).

This paper has recorded many events — tragic and glorious — and seen numerous changes over the past decade. The SIN itself has changed: It is still sold on the countertop at Ship to Shore, but no longer shares its patch with the shop cat (RIP Koru). The price has gone up a whole dollar, we have colour ink, and as of last month SIN can be scanned in with the rest of the stores so it's a coin-free transaction now. We have over 180 subscribers including a lengthening list of "eSinners". We have a brand-new website and email address (back page).

Of course, some things stay the same. We are closely bound with the natural world here and the SIN has reflected that timelessness: The June 2005 issue mentioned the arrival of Southern Right whales, and the locals' awe of auroras — familiar subjects today.

What makes the SIN job wonderful is this community full of people so generous with their stories, ideas, and art.

We have in our midst exceptional photographers and illustrators happy to share their pictures in these pages. And everyone here has a story to tell, be it a recipe for oyster soup, a book review, a eulogy for a deer, a poem about a potato club, an account of repairing a road slip or building a wharf or counting yellow-eyed penguins...

Some memorable moments in pages past: Barbara Wilson's beautiful

story of receiving her father's war medals; hilarious Purplette potato club updates; horrifying accounts of dog-mauled kiwi; Carolyn Squires' other-worldly mushroom photos; and the Johnson family's tribute to the *Secret*.

This little paper chronicles the story of our lives: celebrates births, announces marriages, and, of course, includes obituaries. Some of the best and most moving writing I have ever read was Sandy King's tribute to her father Merv, framed in the same format of the beloved Boat-of-the-Month column he wrote until his last days. (*SIN* archives March 2006.)

It has been an honour and a privilege to be at the helm of this inky little boat, and also a surprise to look at dates and count the years on my fingers (I only noticed it had been ten years while transferring the archives to the new website last week!) When I wheeled my bicycle off the ferry in 2002 I planned on going to the Pub for a beer, cycling around the island, and leaving within a week. But you know that saying about how to make God laugh...

If you want to make God laugh,  
*make a plan.*



Kylie Moxham, tree-hugger (and bus driving tour guide extraordinaire) explains to a visitor how to "date" a rimu. More on page 2.



Jan and Ali Eade celebrate after Ali was awarded the Queen's Service Medal in Wellington this month. Congratulations Ali!!!! *Photo from Country Calendar FB*



It's not a proper bus tour unless you pose with the rimu phone!

Have you ever wondered about those **bus tours**? I'm talking about the big green and blue Stewart Island Experience busses that lumber up and down our roads all day, pausing between the Mill Creek bridges and alongside the rimu phone. And yes, I'm talking to YOU, Island residents.

Until last month, like most Islanders I'd never been on one of those busses and never considered it! Even when I was an actual touring tourist here it didn't occur to me... I preferred cycling or running. Seeing a place from a bus seat held little appeal.

But over the years I've become interested in those tours. As a person who hosts visitors, I think it's useful to know what's on offer here so you can confidently recommend activities, and I've never known what to say

about the bus thing. And countless times during my runs I've raced a bus up Lee Bay Road (I always lose), or manoeuvred my way through a group of tourists huddled around the anchor chain sculpture. Plugged into my iPod, I have no idea what their guide is saying as they all stand there in rapt attention. And I started to wonder. I mean, it's an anchor chain with bullet holes in it. It's a phone nailed to a tree. It's a creek with ducks. Nuff said, right? And the tour is an hour and a half long! How can it possibly be that long, you could cycle every kilometre of paved road on the island in that time!

Last month, after more than ten years of growing increasingly curious, I finally boarded a big green and blue bus parked outside the red shed. My 3-year old Charlie was my seatmate, and long-time resident Kylie Moxham was our driver and guide.

Right from the start I knew I was in for a treat. It's special to be in the presence of a person who takes great pride in their work and their product. If you think about it, Kylie's "product" is Stewart Island itself! It's a pretty mind-boggling task she has, to "explain" to a bus-load of visitors every aspect of life here. But she tackles the subject with the gusto, warmth and integrity of a person who is clearly passionate about this beautiful place. With the perfect balance of banter, personal anecdotes, and humour, Kylie manages to weave together local history, natural history, island industries, flora and fauna, and Maori lore and mythology, all while pointing out landmarks, answering the curve balls of questions from the back, and navigating the big bus over our numerous hills.

It doesn't matter how long you've lived here: this tour is a fascinating, educational and entertaining hour and a half. Even if (amazingly) you already know every single fact and story Kylie imparts, I believe it's still eye-opening and instructive to see your home through visitors' eyes. Many visitors take this tour as one of their first activities on the island, and Kylie's presentation is an awesome introduction; I felt proud to know people are receiving such a beautifully polished, professional, excellent product upon their arrival. It took about five minutes on the bus for me to realise that an hour and a half was hardly enough time to fit in the entire rich narrative of our home (although by the time we got to Ob Rock, wee Charlie was done, snoring away on my lap!).

At one point, driving along Horseshoe Bay, I had a falling-down-the-wormhole moment looking out the window and seeing the beach again as I saw it many years ago, when I was a visitor cycling along the road for the very first time. I remember wondering what kind of fishing were the boats for, and what was that big building on the wharf, and who lived in those houses up the hill, and what did everyone get up to here, and that burning question so many visitors share:

***What would it be like to live in a place like this?***

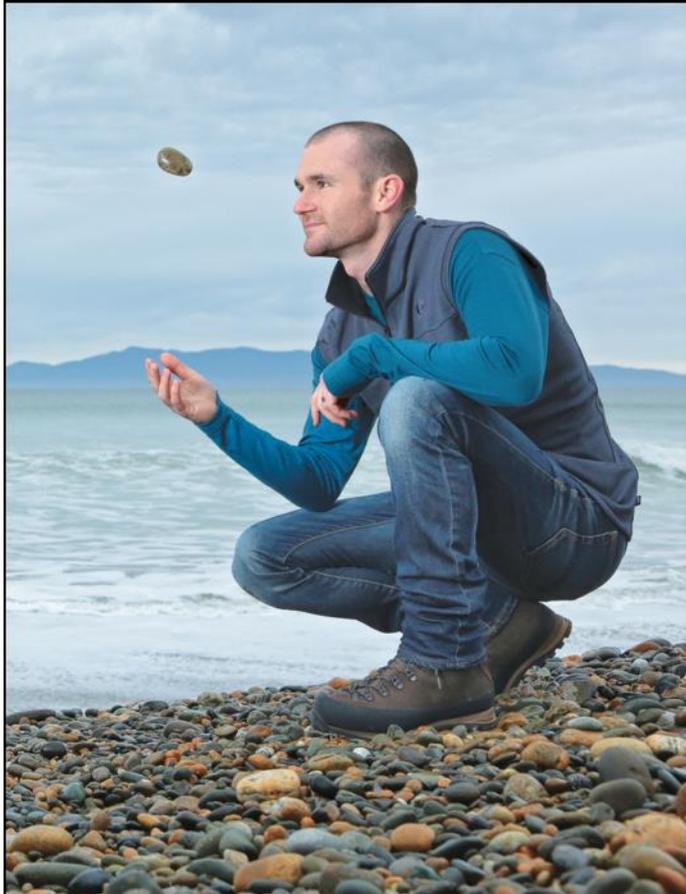
Now I know the answer to most of those questions, but the last is answered a bit differently every day. On the day I finally took my bus tour the answer was: *Brilliant!*

Thank you, Kylie.



—Jess

Village Centre, Oban : [glowingsky.co.nz](http://glowingsky.co.nz)



**Glowing Sky Merino. All You Need.**

# Stewart Island Ball Labour Weekend

## Saturday 24th October

Stewart Island Community Centre

7.30

the theme is B for Ball

Now is the time to start thinking of what you  
could wear that starts  
with the letter B

Butthead, Bob the builder, Beautiful Babe, Blackbeard

**Bountious Supper and Cash Bar**  
The Band is **Quantum** from **Invercargill** and we  
hear they are  
**bebopping beauts**

Courtesy Car will be available



### Church Hill Craft Brewing Festival 2015

**Are you a keen craft brewer ?**

**Are you keen to meet other brewers and  
celebrate the craft ?**

This is your chance; let us know you are interested

Saturday 3<sup>th</sup> October 2015 is the Church Hill Craft  
Brewing Festival, in association with

Invercargill Brewery

If you want to enter a brew or two then email:

**[brewfest@churchhill.co.nz](mailto:brewfest@churchhill.co.nz)**

Details updated on our website  
[www.churchhill.co.nz](http://www.churchhill.co.nz)

**Entry by September and brew ready by mid-  
September**



*Above photo from Sandra Whipp*

*Below photo from Carolyn Squires*



## STEWART ISLAND / RAKIURA LAND SEARCH & RESCUE

Our group was formally established in 2009 and currently we have 31 members. The Executive hold their monthly meeting on the last Tuesday of each month. Our agenda is extensive - covering training, searches, and a variety of administration requirements, including safety which is a hot topic for just about everyone. We have also taken responsibility for the administration and maintenance of equipment for the Stewart Island Marine Radio (VHF 65, ZLRZ) through a sub-committee.

Increasingly all our members are required to hold basic skills in order to participate in searches. Thankfully we have not had to deal with any major searches this year, but we are doing our best to ensure that as many of our members keep their skill levels current.

During the year our group has held in-house and external training both in Stewart Island and off-Island, including in places like Wanaka. Some of our training has included: a field refresher on search and tracking skills, skippers training in search methods, compass use, lost person behaviour, safety around helicopters, and safety management.

In May our group was represented at the Tautuku Cup and several of our members spent time training for this annual event to pitch their search and rescue skills against other South Island SAR (Search and Rescue) groups. Our group did extremely well, coming third overall.

Training is a big part of our efforts, but we are also required to keep our records up to date so that we can readily contact members when we need help in a live search, but in particular to ensure they have the competencies for tasks that need to be carried out in the field.

In March, Executive were given a presentation on the revamped LandSAR (Land Search and Rescue) website: [www.landsar.org.nz](http://www.landsar.org.nz) and an update on key matters throughout the country including membership, training, skills and ID cards. The website is a credit to all

the hard work that the administration team has carried out and provides useful information on what LandSAR does, tools for each group to manage their membership and for members to manage their own records and training.

Each year we are also required to review our plans for the group and work towards these aims during the year to keep the group effective.

Next month we will be holding our AGM on the 25th July 2015 at the RSA Pavilion, followed by a Pot Luck. All LandSAR members, their families and interested parties are welcome to attend. The AGM will commence at 4.30 pm and the Pot Luck at 5.30 pm. Please bring a side plate, salad or dessert (meat and fish will be provided). Nominations are also called for all positions.

We are always looking for new members committed to training, helping with searches, or general duties that do not require physical activity including monitoring radios / phones / secretarial tasks. If you are interested in learning more about LandSAR, or how you might be able to help, contact one of the Executive Members who will be happy to answer your questions.

Our current executive are:

Dan Lee (Deputy Chair), Dale Chittenden (Treasurer), Furhana Ahmad (Secretary), Andrew King (Training), George Nicholas (Training), Sandy King (Training Records), Phred Dobbins (SAR Representative), Garry Neave (Marine Representative), Deborah Dillon (Medical Representative), Dale Jenkins (Police Representative).

We look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

Furhana Ahmad  
Secretary - Stewart Island / Rakiura LandSAR  
[stewartisland@landsar.org.nz](mailto:stewartisland@landsar.org.nz)



Stewart Island LandSAR Team in Wanaka, competing for the Tautuku Cup in May 2015.



## SIRCET Update from Shona Sangster

Happy National Volunteer Week everyone!

National Volunteer Week (NVW) 2015 will be held from 21 and 27 June. NVW is a fantastic chance to celebrate the invaluable knowledge, skill and time contributions given by Aotearoa's past and present volunteers. This year's theme is "There is a place for you to volunteer" or "he wahi mohou hei tuao" which highlights the diversity of volunteer opportunities, volunteers themselves, and the impacts of volunteering. Throughout NVW, New Zealanders recognise the critical impact all kinds of volunteering have within communities. Volunteers should be appreciated, mobilised, motivated and encouraged during this week and indeed year-round. It is important to celebrate volunteerism and the place it has in keeping our communities strong and healthy. Through NVW we also want to encourage those who have not yet found their place in the volunteer community to seek it out and be aware that contributions can be both big and small. Regardless of how much or how little skills, time and experience one has to offer, there will always be a place to volunteer.

SIRCET are celebrating our wonderful volunteers with family fun event at the Community Centre at 2pm on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> of June. Open to current volunteers, trustees, former volunteers, former trustees, potential volunteers, family, friends or just anyone who wants to come along and find out what we are all about!

We also have a plea to make. Our volunteer numbers have dipped to a dangerously low level, and without more support our work could be in jeopardy. The trust acknowledges that we haven't always been as good as we could be at communicating with our volunteers and helping them feel connected but we are making a real effort to improve. So if you're able, please consider volunteering with us. It doesn't necessarily have to mean taking on a rat line forever. You could commit to trap for as little as 3 months, or help at the nursery, or become a trustee, every little bit helps! The trust needs new blood and new ideas to survive, please get in touch and get involved!

Keep an eye out for an upcoming SIRCET talk on pest control on the Antipodes Islands, and Macquarie Island on the 2nd July, it should be a fascinating event! Venue and time to be confirmed, keep an eye on the notice board

As a regular feature in SIN and in our newsletters we are featuring some of the interesting plants available at the nursery. This month's feature, and a reminder not to forget about us, is...

### Chatham Island Forget-me-not (*Myosotidium hortensia*)

A firm garden favourite as it is well suited to rugged island life with their thick, glossy leaves and spectacular blue flowers, Chatham Island forget-me-nots are one of the most attractive of New Zealand's herbaceous plants. It is not a true forget-me-not (*Myosotis* species), but was given the name because its flowers are very similar. There is only one species of *Myosotidium*, and in the wild it grows on exposed coastal sites in the Chatham Islands. In gardens the plant needs shelter from frost and some shade during hot summers. It prefers a well-drained, compost-rich soil.



# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

CELEBRATING RAKIURA

JUNE 2005

\$2

June has brought icy roads, frosted grass at Mill Creek, new buckets of muttonbirds, and some very large visitors.

Several Southern right whales have been fossicking about Paterson Inlet this month. One whale's venture included a nose right into Thule Bay!

*Whale tale continues on page 6...*



Emmon Ganely photographed this whale waving its tail off Iona Island.

### Island treated to two awesome exhibitions

#### Southern lights

How often do you find yourself sharing a profound minute of silence with a group of your neighbours? Once a week? Once in a blue moon? Never?

The island kicked off winter with at least two evenings that rendered large groups of residents properly shushed.

The magnificent Aurora Australis lit up the skies over Oban on 13th May.

Pub smokers looked upwards and called to those inside; long defunct telephone trees jangled into effect; one by one the population of Stewart Island gravitated outdoors.

The sky pulsed with reds and greens. Bars of white light rose upwards from the horizon to a neck-cracking point in the center of the heavens.

We'd hurried outside without jackets and it was cold so we hugged ourselves and stamped our feet. We fiddled with cameras and babbled words like "amazing" and "awesome."

Words failed to describe the light show, and our cameras didn't quite capture the colours.

So finally, we just stood together in rapt silence, transfixed, watching the sky.

#### Lights extinguished

On 27th May, Toi Rakiura Trust hosted the opening of the photo exhibition *Return to*

*Monte Cassino* in the Community Hall.

A full house enjoyed the lovely singing of the Stewart Island choir. Then the Associate Minister of Arts and Culture Judith Tizzard, and the photographer Maree Wilks, spoke about the importance of remembering.

More powerful than words was the imagery.

The photographs depict a group of veterans revisiting a WWII battle site 60 years after



Photo by Maree Wilks

Stewart Craig bugles during the Return to Monte Cassino ceremony at the Hall.

*Continued on page 3*

Thanks to all the people who keep SIN ticking along: Stewart Island Flights who brings it "hot off the press" across the Strait; "The press" Quantum print who does an excellent and timely job; Margaret Hopkins who handles the money; Ship to Shore who graciously sells SIN; Kari and Vicki who have edited when I couldn't; Vicki who scans the copy for mistakes before it goes to print; all of our contributors and readers and everyone who advertises with us.



### HALFMOON BAY BEAT: June 2005

Welcome to the June edition of the Halfmoon Bay Beat. As some of you may be aware, your permanent Constable, Todd Hollebon, has scarpereed to the warmer climes of northern Europe. I have taken his place, and will be relieving over here until the end of July.

Things have been fairly quiet on the crime front for the month so far, with just a few incidents requiring police attention.

I will be busy over the next few weeks doing firearms licensing and vetting enquiries. If you want to apply for a new licence, or have any licence related enquiry, please come up and see me.

#### Crime of the Month:

Some tweezer kicked in a glass pane of the public phone box on Main Street last Thursday afternoon (the 9th) at about 2pm. Does anyone know who it was? If you do, can you please come and see me, or if it was you, at least have the decency to take responsibility for your actions.

**NOTICE FROM SHIP TO SHORE:****The winter ferry timetable affects the Four Square's incoming goods deliveries.**

From 1st June to 30th September here's when our goods arrive:

Monday 5.30pm ferry - bread, milk, meat

Tuesday 10.30am ferry - chilled & frozens and fruit & veg

Wednesday 10.30am ferry - bread, milk, dry goods, beer, wine, coal

Thursday 5.30pm ferry - soft drinks

Friday 5.30pm ferry - meat

Saturday 10.30am ferry\* - bread, milk, fruit & veg

Some of our incoming freight loads are large and take us a while to get onto the shelves, please be patient!

\*Customers with bread ordered for Fridays, this will now be available on Saturdays.

**Need a Resource Consent?****... I can help!**

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**BADMINTON SEASON**

Children session 3-4pm Thursdays

Adults Session 7pm Thursdays

Need 4 to a team.

*The more the merrier!*

\$2 if not a gym member

Any queries ring Fern at 486

**Stewart Island/Rakiura Visitor Levy Allocations approved 2015:**

Stewart Island/Rakiura Community Environmental Trust

\$2,000

Costs for Nursery, vehicle, repairs & maintenance, administration.

Rakiura Heritage Centre Trust

\$50,000

Part of local share required for progressing the development of newbuild.

Stewart Island/Rakiura Community Board

\$25,000

Upgrade Horseshoe Point Track

Stewart Island/Rakiura Community Board

\$20,000

Upgrade of Main Road footpath from Rakiura Charters to the Gift Shop

Southland District Council – S I Jetties Subcommittee

\$20,000

Investigation, design and consenting process for Ulva Island Wharf rebuild

**Total funds allocated**

**\$117,000**

# Jed's Electrical

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- Domestic and Commercial
- New Connection Cables
- Temporary Power/Builders Box
- Freeview TV Installations
- Phone & Broadband
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- Loan Fridge available
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- Energy Efficiency Advice
- Alternative/Renewable Energy Systems
- Energy Efficient Light Bulbs
- Whiteware Repairs and Installation
- Water Deliveries
- Treefellas. Trees trimmed and demolished.

**Ph/fax 03 2191494 cell 027 4646147 jed.stewartisland@xtra.co.nz**  
**202 Horseshoe Bay Rd, Stewart Island**



## Voice of a Girl Mechanic *by Sharon Ross*

### Meet Ralph – our Quality Control Officer

This month I would like to introduce Ralph – our quality control officer. Like most local Stewart Islanders Ralph takes his position very seriously but is hard to pin down to regular hours in the winter – he has been absent for the last 2-3 months but has returned with a vengeance in the mornings only over the last fortnight. He became quite offended after Pete inadvertently sprayed him with Brake Clean about 3 months ago, after he was found sitting in the wrong place in the workshop. I thought we were going to have to replace him but last week I found him in my office on my chair looking at the invoices on the screen on my PC. He seemed quite pleased with the fact I had heeded his advice and got a Macbook laptop so should have no more virus issues with the PC.

Ralph would also like to volunteer as the Health and Safety officer but as some of the OSH regulations he has major issues with I have decided to continue with that position myself. Ralph can never understand my issue with his rather unsanitary practices of not using the provided toilet, and not helping himself to other peoples food without first asking, once he ate Bryan Cronin's carrot cake before Bryan had even sampled it himself.

Ralph has blotted his copybook though with Kirsten outside the Pavilion. Last night before the Promotions AGM he ripped the side of her plastic bag and helped himself to both the cheese and crackers she had purchased for the supper. Today although he has turned up for work, he is busy complaining of feeling very full and was last seen sitting on the roof of the Community Hall supervising from afar.

Ralph is of unknown age and parentage (and sex for that matter). He is always dressed immaculately in a black suit and seems to have withheld from the habit of streaks this year, last year he was sporting a very becoming grey streak in his tail, but not this year. We inherited him in his role from Island Transport and he is also known to frequent the Community Garden and South Seas Hotel backyard. He has been reported at the Ford's home also – probably overseeing Bruce and the tractor.

Quality control is always taken seriously here and Health and Safety – with the combination on site of both fuel and LPG we have to be very careful to always observe all the various regulatory bodies we are accountable to as well as provide a safe workplace for our employees. Ralph has seen many changes over the time he has been employed here, especially with the fuel regulations and is always keen to remind us if we are doing something that could be deemed wrong. He understands the importance of providing good service and standards, and is always cheerful and professional in the workplace. His lack of hours over the past few months have obviously left him a bit short of cash flow and therefore he is finding it difficult to feed his family (hence the raiding of Kirsten's goodies) so if you see a large blackbird skulking round your grocery bag be very wary, as much as Pete and I have tried. We have not been able to teach Ralph manners when it comes to food, and he has the habit of leaving wee white dots of thankfulness afterwards – not at all appreciated in my office!!

Look Jess I have done very well and not mentioned Prince Harry once !!

Hoping this finds all the readers well, warm and dry and enjoying our mild winter so far!

## Pete Ross Automotive

### Have Available for Hire

Rug Doctor  
 Lawnmower  
 Chainsaws  
 Waterblaster  
 Chimney Brush  
 Rotary Hoe  
 Spare Printer, Computer and Screen (New)  
 Laminator (New)  
 Clothes Dryer (New)

### Have For Sale

Hydraulic Hose Gear  
 9 kg Gas Bottles  
 Fire Extinguishers  
 Bicycle Tyre Tubes and Repair Kits  
 Weedeater Cord  
 CRC and Degreaser  
 Fuelite and Meths  
 Emergency Tyre Weld Kits (New)  
 Coal and Kindling  
 Wood - can order in fadge lots  
 Weedkiller  
 Jumper Leads  
 Funnels, Fuel cans  
 and plenty more!

### Winter Hours

(From May 1st)

Mon - Fri 8am - 5pm

Sat 10am - 2 pm

Sun Closed

**THE TRANS – PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT** by *Beverley Osbourne*

The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) is intended to create a free trading zone between 11 Asian and Pacific-rim countries.

Because the details and conditions are being conducted in secret, all we know about the terms of the proposed agreement comes from leaked documents and detective work. It can be signed and sealed without public debate or parliamentary vote and could, if it goes ahead, damage our health, our ecological safeguards, our cost of living and our ability to shape our own future. Some specific dangers are that:-

Overseas companies would be able to sue the N Z government for millions of dollars if they suspect a proposed law or regulation for our country might undermine the value of their investments. Examples would be NZ's ability to stop fracking, label genetically modified food, cap dangerously run-away pricing.

Medicines and medical devices, like heart valves, joint replacements and cataract lenses, would become much more expensive because big pharmaceutical companies could stop PHARMAC's ability to bulk buy and provide generic drugs instead of brand names.

Parallel importing would be banned, meaning that NZers would have to pay more for all sorts of ordinary products.

Foreign banks, insurance companies, money traders and overseas property developers would gain much more power.

We might no longer have control over the introduction of genetically modified crops or chemical sprays nor the right to maintain our present standards of unacceptable levels of toxicity in foods and other products.

Being bound by TPPA could mean we are unable to clean up our rivers or limit waste production if some big corporation thought that might affect their profits.

If a multinational corporation decided a NZ regulation threatened its potential profits, it could sue our government, not through a traditional, transparent judicial system, but through an Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), a private tribunal which routinely puts the economic interests of foreign investors ahead of a government's right to look after the welfare of its own citizens.

The average cost of defending an ISDS case is US\$8 million, but can easily exceed US\$30 million – as well as many more millions if the case is lost. In the last 13 years, the number of ISDS cases has grown by 460%. Individual cases make chilling reading. OceanaGold, the company behind 3 South Island gold mines, brought a case against El Salvador for not granting it a permit to put a gold mine into operation. The proposed mine would use thousands of tons of arsenic and hundreds of thousands of litres of water every day and the amount being sought by OceanaGold is equivalent to El Salvador's three-year budget for health, education and public safety. And Germany is currently being sued for 3.7 billion Euros by Swedish energy giant, Vattenfeld, for its decision to phase out nuclear energy.

Sometimes now, a multinational corporation's threat of suing is enough to cause a government back-down on environmental protections.

Though the terms of TPPA have been kept secret from the public, a number of large corporations have been able to see (and likely influence) its contents. This makes critics suspect the Agreement will be more favourable to certain deep-pocketed corporations than to the signing countries. When asked about the reason for the secrecy, Trade Minister, Tim Groser, said it was to avoid an "ill-informed" public debate about the issue. But surely keeping the terms of TPPA secret is the best possible way to ensure we ARE ill-informed!

There is a good deal of conjecture about possible hidden motivation behind TPPA, such as political power struggling between the two most powerful countries, China and USA. That is one good reason why the citizens of New Zealand should have the right to know the details of any plan that could affect the democratic principles on which our country is based. Another is the likelihood that the Agreement imposes a time limit, stretching towards the end of the century, which prevents a signatory country from opting out, even if the decision to join is later found to have been a regrettable mistake.

Google sites such as [itsourfuture](#), Jane Kelsey and TPPA, OceanaGold and El Salvador and many others will provide more information.

Green Peace, [itsourfuture](#) and several other sites have online petitions asking the government not to sign this Agreement without the fully informed approval of the New Zealand people and there is also a written form available for signing at Ship to Shore.

## Books Reviewed

*from Sue Ford*

Sam invents an on-line dating program so successful, he is sacked – no repeat business, you see! But he was the original guinea pig and met his soul mate, Meredith, inconsolable when her loved grandmother dies. So Sam invents another program: this takes all Grandma's details – every last little byte of on-line time - and builds an interactive 'screen Grandma'. Meredith's cousin, Dash, sees the business potential and the three of them build RePose, where the newly-bereaved give Sam all the data on their dead loved ones (DLO's), so they can continue to interact with them. The results vary! Hilarious in parts, full of one-liners that will leave you grinning, **“Goodbye for Now” by Laurie Frankel** also leaves you to contemplate our technological near future. The story becomes less lively in tone as it plumbs the depths of sadness and depression later in the book. RePose is, after all, everything to do with death, and Sam's technology can't transcend the grimness of reality. (P.S. Did you see the episode of 'Sunday' in which facial recognition and DLO's come together? This Frankel story seems even closer than ever now!)

**Peter James' “A Twist of the Knife”** is actually 30 short stories, some horror, some thrilling, some quirky, some quite funny, some with ghosties and ghoulies, and mostly with things that either go bump in the night or are bumped off in the night! Published in 2014, nevertheless, some of the stories seem 'old' to me – as if I've read them before, a long time ago. But enjoyable 'small bite' reading. And if you've used Trade Me, you might enjoy **“Trade Me – The Novel” by Geoff Vause**. jade24, daughter of wealthy parents, steals her parents' designer clothes to put on Trade Me. She doesn't know that her father is an industrial spy and the 'label' jacket (too big for him, never worn, sold to crystal66) holds a secret. But the jacket has a life of its own, creating lots of giggle moments.

Whilst the above is played strictly for laughs, **“The Soul of Discretion” by Susan Hill** is very different. Hill's portrayal of brutal, sadistic abuse and murder is too close to some factual newspaper stories for me. I can't recommend this to anyone who reads for a amusement or entertainment – too dark and disturbing, and not enough literary merit (even the ending is off-key) to rescue it from the label 'Distasteful'. You have been warned. And how to review **Fred Vargas' “The Chalk Circle Man”**? Jean-Baptiste Adamsberg isn't your usual Parisian detective: he's a dreamer, relying on intuition rather than fact. Mysterious chalk circles begin to appear throughout Paris, and J-B has the hunch that there is something evil about them – and his hunch is duly borne out. It's a good mystery story, with good clues – but it's sort of 'Hercule Poirot meets Inspector Clouseau'. I'm still thinking about it, and maybe that's what Vargas intended?

For something different, try **Steven Erikson's** fantasy series, starting with **“Gardens of the Moon”**. Published more than 15 years ago, this will be old hat to fantasy readers. It has elements of “Game of Thrones” - your loyalties are divided and there's a lot of blood, but with sorcerers! Complex, but fun. **“The Black Madonna” by Peter Millar** is complex alright but unintentionally funny - a sort of 'poor man's “Da Vinci Code” as histographer, Marcus, tries to help out his ex-girlfriend, archaeologist Nazreem, with a chase around Europe. They must avoid bible-belt Texan Protestants, fanatical Catholics and Islamic fundamentalists, all searching for the statue that Nazreem found in Gaza. How Marcus attained his degree with so few brain cells is the biggest mystery! Read for entertainment value only.

## Shop Talk *by Jules Retberg*

### A Choice Riddle

An African flower,  
as I am known.  
Stamen or petals,  
I have not one.

I float on the sea,  
near the California sand.  
The size of Texas,  
I've created a land.

Malaria and flood,  
I leave in my wake.  
Fill the bellies of creatures,  
yet their guts still ache.

Do you know what I am yet?  
Mostly virginal and white.  
Plastic bag, victorious,  
convenient and light.

Choose pollution, starvation,  
for convenience sake?  
Or carry a bag?  
Your decision to make.

I'm not generally a fan of poetry  
and my little ditty certainly won't  
win any prizes, but I couldn't think  
of a better way to impart the shock-  
ing facts I've learned about plastic  
bags.

I'll say nothing  
more, except:

One *trillion*  
plastic bags  
are used eve-  
ry year. *Al-  
most 2 mil-  
lion every  
minute.*

Plastic bags caught in trees are so  
common in South Africa, they be-  
came known as the national flow-  
er. Sad, but true.

A plastic island of floating rubbish  
in the Pacific Ocean measures  
twice the size of Texas and weighs  
about 3,175,146 tonnes. And it's  
growing.

Floods in Bangladesh, Cameroon  
and the Philippines were attribut-  
ed to clogged sewers ... stuffed  
with plastic bags. Discarded plas-  
tic bags in Kenya filled with water  
led to a malaria outbreak.

At least 267 different animal spe-  
cies have suffered from marine  
litter, either ingesting it or getting  
tangled up in it. Plastic is found



in the stomachs of  
94% of birds in the  
North Sea.

Even camels aren't  
immune; in the  
United Arab Emir-  
ates plastic bags  
have been found ...  
you guessed it, in

camels' stomachs. Sheep and  
cows in the US, Asia and Africa  
have also ingested plastic bags.

Plastic bags last for hundreds of  
years and do not biodegrade.  
They may **photodegrade** - with  
sunlight a large piece of plastic  
can turn into smaller pieces but it  
never disappears.

In the ocean, plankton feed on these  
microscopic bits of toxic plastic.  
Who knows what happens higher  
up the food chain ...

This month everyone with a post  
office box will have received a Four  
Square re-usable shopping bag as a  
gift from us. If you have enough  
bags, please feel free to re-gift it.

*Thanks to the Earth Policy Institute  
and Coastal Care for the stats.*

## The House Sitter

*by Jeff Hawkes*

I couldn't believe when my wife told me that there was a  
"House Sitting" job on Stewart Island! Seven weeks! Wow! I  
applied to the house owners, and having beaten off any con-  
tenders for the job (and there were a few) I got the reply I was  
hoping for. My lovely wife, who has been through a lot with  
me, though all my "ups and downs" encouraged me, as she  
always has, to come and do this "Sit." She knew how much  
Stewart Island meant to me. As born and bred Southlanders  
(Invercargillites) we have both been over here for family holi-  
days when we were young, but not for well over 30 odd years.  
This "House Sit" being a chance for her to come over at some  
stage, and join me.

I travelled here, arriving by ferry. (The last time I had  
crossed Foveaux Strait was on that awful ferry called the  
Wairua! That tells you how long it's been since I was here,  
doesn't it?) The ferry crossing seemed to go way too quick,  
only one hour! I think from memory, on the Wairua it took 3  
hours of misery.

So here I am, with 3 awesome dogs, a cat, and a house with  
180 degree views that are simply stunning.

Wow! What a greeting when I arrived at the wharf? Here was  
Brett Hamilton (The house owner for whom I am doing the  
House Sit) asking "whether I'm on, to come out and get some  
cod?" Of course I was! He said "that was to keep me going  
while they were away." Wonderful. What a start to my House  
Sit. It was a very nice "treat" for me and definitely something  
I didn't expect. They are lovely people, and I hope they are  
having a nice relaxing holiday.

I don't ask anything for House Sitting, I just like to help peo-  
ple, and I love animals. House Sitting gives me a change from  
my surroundings and also helps to take my mind away from  
my major pain issues. I have health and body issues that pre-  
vent me from being able to sustain physical work. By me be-  
ing able to look after pets, houses, and even farmlets, (as long  
as I have the ability, and there isn't too much physically de-  
manding stuff) I can gain a sense of self-worth.

I am over half-way through my "House Sit" now, and it has  
gone so fast. It won't be long and this "Sit" will just be ano-  
ther fine memory. It will also be another job, which I hope, has  
given the house owners a relaxing break, in the knowledge  
that their pets, house and possessions, have been kept safe,  
and well cared for.

If you would like me to do a "House Sit" for you then I can be  
contacted at [jeffhawkesnz@gmail.com](mailto:jeffhawkesnz@gmail.com) and ph: 0273342072.



# ban **G**lobetrotter *off-Island Adventures.*

*Thanks to Sarah Tranmer for sharing her adventures in Tonga.*

After four planes I landed on mainland Tonga, Tongatapu, about 11pm there was merely sleeping to be done.

However the next morning I was up early and off I went to adventure around Nuku'alofa which is the main township on the island of Tongatapu. There is a nice two hour long trail which takes you past the historical and most popular places like the palace, the main wharf which on the day I was there had a massive cruise ship tethered to it, also past several churches of different religions all beautifully maintained with immaculate gardens, past the tombs of the past kings and queens and also to the Talamahu Market.

The market was fun, in a large square, on the outer edges was stalls selling just about everything from shower gel to shoes to fruits from their gardens, on the inside were stalls with more souvenir products, woven mats and skirts along with Tapa (a paper made from the bark of the mulberry tree which is then painted). further down past the souvenirs were more fruit and vegetable stalls with all sorts of fantastic colours and exotic produce.

After spending a few pa'anga I was off on a tour around the island, was informed it would take about four hours so off we went in the mini 4x4. The first stop was to see the pigs in the sea — I was told by the guide 'William' that the owners of the pigs let them run wild and free in the daytime which included roaming around the beach and into the sea to eat the seaweed and small crustaceans, the pigs would be shouted off in evening, trotting home after a day of pigging out on the beach.

After being laughed at by his friends for showing me the pigs in the sea, William drove down roads lined with bananas plants, cassava plants, and huge palm trees full of coconuts. We made it to the blow holes which is a coral shelf with heaps of holes in it where the crashing waves are forced up through these holes to make a blow hole.

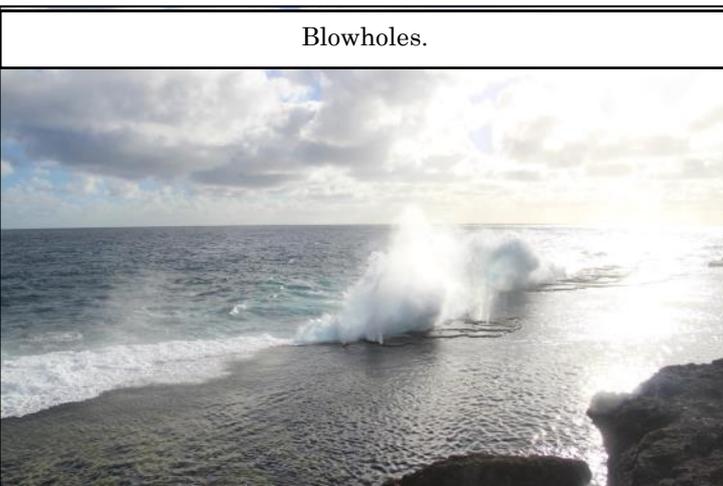
The stop at the blow holes was timed with the tide somewhere just before high tide was deemed best, it was late in the day and there was a stop which we had to get to before 6 pm because come 6 pm there was no chance of seeing this natural wonder just there hanging in the trees. Flying Foxes. *Pteropus tonganus* the Tongan Fruit bat.



Flying foxes.



Pigs in the sea.



Blowholes.

The flying foxes were just there hanging in the trees starting to wake up as dusk was coming in. There were hundreds of them and a strange squawking noise filled the air as you watched the tree move in funny ways.

The final stop on the tiki tour was the landing for Abel Tasman (jeez that man got around didn't he)

This concluded my first day it was pretty action packed and ended with food at Friends Cafe in Nuku'alofa.

The following day I was flying to the Ha'apai group of Island north east of Tongatapu

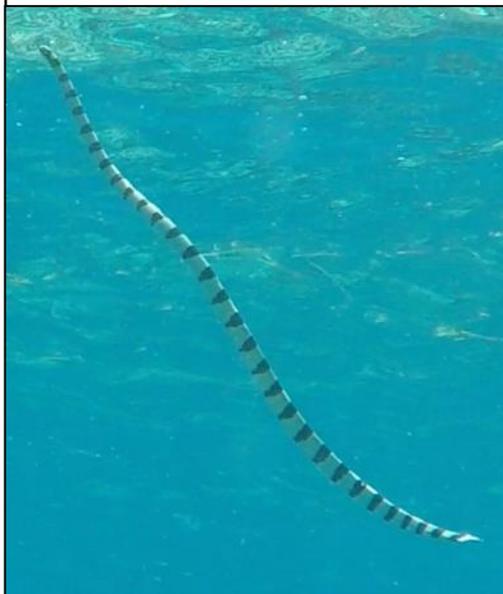
At the airport which made Stewart Island flight depo look somewhat like Christchurch domestic airport, I was weighed for the plane and got a strange reaction when I just jumped on the scales without being asked as if i had done this before. The plane was 'big' well 16 seats, 3 a breast the plane very nice and comfortable, still no inflight ginsie though. 45 minutes later we arrive at Lifuka which is the middle island of the Ha'apai group, I was picked up by my accomadation and taken to the next island Foa which is linked by a causeway, right to the very northern tip was my accommodation, Matafonua Lodge nicely recommended to me by Emma and Ty.

Its beautiful and perfect! unfortunately 2 years ago it was all destroyed by a huge cyclone anyway they have re built the 12 beach fale's and re opened on the 1st April.

It is a fantastic location you can very lazily snorkel from the Lagoon between the two islands where the current moves quickly then it deposits you on the west side of the peninsula. Lots of coral and anemones along with colourful fish to view easily.

I managed a totally of 8 Scuba dives only going to one dive site twice lovely warm water about 25C the highlights being finding a sea snake and also seeing leopard sharks.

The Leopard shark was about 2m long with a foot long Remora fish as a hat.



Banded sea snake.

The banded sea snake was about 1.5 meters long and beautiful. We followed it (at distance) from the sea bed all the way to the surface it even swam vertically up the coral wall.

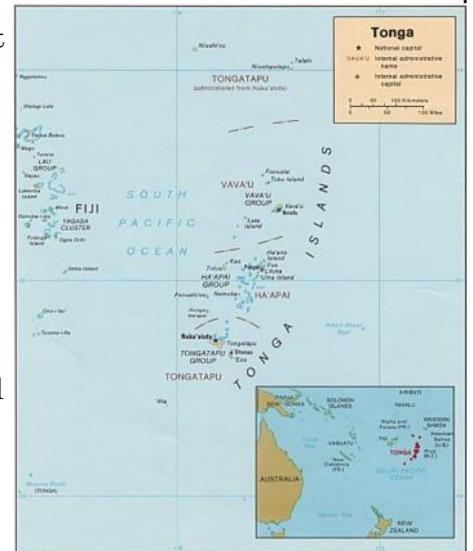
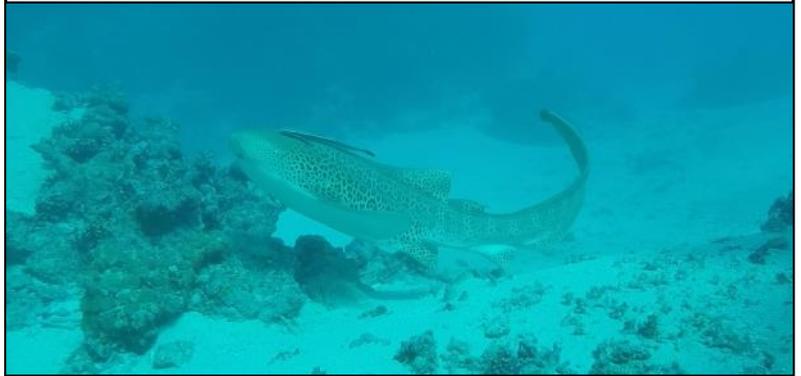
The rest of the time at Matafonua was relaxed with a little bit of snorkelling and some kayaking thrown in for fun!

The food was tasty with a special every night, cider was cheap and hospitality just fantastic!

Along with a fantastic sunset to finish off the day.

*All the photos are taken by Sarah Tranmer apart from the map of Tonga which was shared with love by Uncle Google.*

Leopard shark.





Department of *What's Up, DOC?*  
**Conservation** From Jennifer Ross  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

**Dale Chittenden's Trip to Antarctica**

They say it's the coldest, windiest, and driest place on earth...Antarctica. It's also a vastness beyond comprehension, a never-ending sea of ice and a strangely beautiful patterning of rock and ice. Dale Chittenden's February / March trip to Antarctica was aboard *The Spirit of Enderby* (Professor Khromov) vessel along with 50 passengers to undertake the "In the Wake of Scott and Shackleton" journey with Heritage Expeditions.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs & Trade and Antarctic New Zealand require every tourist vessel entering the Ross Sea from New Zealand waters to have a trained National Representative on board to observe and report compliance. Additionally, every tourist vessel to NZ's Sub Antarctic Islands is required to have a DOC representative for biosecurity & wildlife reasons. Dale was lucky enough to be able to fulfil both of these roles for the vessel plus get some work done on the Sub Antarctic Islands while he was at it. It turns out he volunteered to be a pot scrubber and kitchen hand for the entire trip too!

His journey began from Bluff and the first stop was the remarkable Snares Island Group with its large breeding sites of Snares crested penguins and sooty shearwater / tītī. The Auckland Islands were next as the group visited some of the historic sites, shipwrecks and witnessed large numbers of New Zealand sea lions and yellow-eyed penguin / hoiho. They travelled on to Australia's Macquarie Island which was one of the major highlights of the whole trip for Dale with the inquisitive King and Royal Penguins and the humongous elephant seals. From that point on it was day after day of sailing beyond the roaring forties, through the furious fifties and the screaming sixties and into what some refer to as the silent seventies with towering icebergs and the first views of the frozen continent of Antarctica. What a vast and amazing landscape! If only they had been able to land. Although they gave it a good try the sea ice was too thick to allow them to land at Cape Adare so they travelled further south toward the Ross Ice Shelf. They did manage to set foot on the actual continent and surrounding islands when they landed on Inexpressible Island at midnight (the light was similar to a stormy Stewart Island day) to see

large numbers of Adélie penguins and Weddell seals. The wildlife was incredible with inquisitive penguins, fin, minky and orca whales in abundance and many different seal species.

On Ross Island at the edge of the Ross Ice Shelf Dale was amazed with the effort put forward to preserve Scott's and Shackleton's huts and associated artefacts. "It was awe-inspiring to walk in and feel like the explorers had only just left when in fact about 100 years had passed," he said. It was



**Trucks with crawler tracks at American McMurdo Station, Antarctica**  
 Photo Credit: Dale Chittenden

also special to be able to see and experience the history rather than read about it in books. In Scott's 2<sup>nd</sup> hut there was a pile of whale blubber looking fresh and a box a ginger nuts dated 1918! If a hut of a similar age were on the Sub Antarctic Islands or Stewart Island it would be rotten after this period of time whereas in Antarctica everything is essentially freeze dried. There was also a penguin that was partially autopsied on one of the benches just as it had been for a century.

The regulations around visiting huts in Antarctica are also inter-

esting. Every visitor's boots were scrubbed prior to entry to the hut to ensure no organic matter was attached, the numbers in the huts were restricted to between six and eight people

at any one time and there were some off limit areas that were Antarctic special zones. "While it might seem excessive from far away, it was great to see that all the tourists were more than happy to comply having seen and understood the need for long term preservation," Dale explained.

**Dale Chittenden on Ross Island** Photo Credit: Unknown



They also visited American base, McMurdo Station on

Antarctica and New Zealand's Scott Base on Ross Island. While the New Zealand base blends into the landscape and has windmills nearby for power, the McMurdo base was entirely different. The landscape was carved up with roads, fuel tanks and was a very grandiose setup. Dale found it fascinating to climb Observation Hill and watch as the sea began freezing around and behind them. This signalled the end of the season, the air temperature dropped to -38°C and the pressure was on for the group to leave. The group Dale travelled with were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and final tourist vessel to land at the bases this season.



**King penguin checking out an Elephant Seal on Macquarie Island** Photo Credit: Dale Chittenden

The trip home was very rough and it took eight days to reach Campbell Island through big seas. While the trip was amazing, Dale warns "it is not for the faint hearted or sea wary." Dale shared some incredible experiences, heard some fascinating stories and lectures from various staff members aboard *The Spirit of Enderby* and is glad to have had the opportunity to partici-

pate in such an adventure.

**Air New Zealand Coastal Gem Winners**

Karen McKenzie was one of five winners of the Coastal Gem Competition run by Air New Zealand in partnership with the Department of Conservation (DOC) for Air New Zealand staff. Karen had a choice between 10 Coastal Gem marine destinations and her first choice was the Ulva Island / Te Wharawhara Marine Reserve on Stewart Island / Rakiura. Karen shared this experience with her partner Chris and daughter Elizabeth.



**Karen, Chris and Elizabeth McKenzie with Jennifer Ross at Flagstaff Point Lookout, Ulva Island** Photo Credit: Karl Sheridan

Klaartje's passions. She is out running the tracks and roads most days and sometimes even runs the full Rakiura Track in one day on the weekend! Her bike has seen every sealed road on the Island many times, she goes to circuit training a couple of times a week and volunteers for both the volunteer Fire Brigade and Search and Rescue.

The past two years working for DOC on the Island has boosted Klaartje's skill set immensely. Her trainee ranger placement is coming to an end and she will be moving to Palmerston North in June, where she has secured a permanent position with DOC. Here are a few parting words from Klaartje: "I like to thank to community for giving me so much support for my sport activities around the country and a great time living and working here on the Island. I am going to miss everything! Over the years I am picking up more and more NZ Slang and also created some myself: thought it was 'bushpashing' instead of 'bushbashing'. I am going to finish this article with my own created Slang: 'see you soon, table-spoon!'"

After a cold, wet, windy start (this was that wintery day on the 14<sup>th</sup> April I'm sure most people can remember) the group set out on a pelagic bird tour on a Rakiura Charters vessel from Halfmoon Bay with skipper Matt Atkins, guide Matt Jones, and DOC host Jennifer Ross to see what birds we could find around Acker's Point. Many mollymawk arrived and even one Royal albatross made an appearance! The itinerary also included a guided walk around Ulva Island where we spent the afternoon and saw many interesting birds and plants. One major highlight for our Auckland guests was when it started to snow/hail on Boulder Beach and Elizabeth was catching the snow on her gloves



**Mollymawk gathering near Acker's Point** Photo Credit: Jennifer Ross

By working in collaboration DOC and Air New Zealand are aiming to raise the profile of exceptional marine reserves across New Zealand.

**Staff Spotlight: Klaartje Van Schie, a.k.a Claire**

Klaartje is originally from Holland but has lived in New Zealand for 7.5 years. She arrived as a backpacker and fell in love with this stunning country and is now a permanent resident. Having always been interested in conservation, being accepted into the Trainee Ranger course



**Klaartje hanging out at Big Sand Dune, Mason Bay** Photo Credit: Gael Gordon

at Nelson Polytech was a real highlight in Klaartje's life. After finishing the one year course in Nelson, she applied and was accepted into one of seven 2-year placements and was very lucky to be based here on Stewart Island! She went to Codfish and Anchor Island for 2 months to work with Kakapo, has been to the Auckland Islands to help build a board walk and has worked all over Stewart Island itself.

Stewart Island is a great place for trail running, one of

gravel drop operation the following day. On the 27<sup>th</sup> May the freight boat arrived on site with 40 tonnes of gravel on board and worked with the helicopter operator to drop the gravel at specified points along the track. The gravel was spread evenly across the track following each drop and the job was completed successfully. Thank you very much to the team who helped with this operation: Dan Lee, Bridget Hunt, Michael Douglass, Jake Osborne, Joz Shepard, Cherie Hemsley, George Nicholas, Klaartje Van Schie and James Ware. There is now a little less mud along the Rakiura Track!

**Track Maintenance: Gravelling a Muddy Section on the Rakiura Track**

A team led by Dan Lee went into the North Arm Hut area on the 26<sup>th</sup> May to prepare the track and lay out 370m mat and grid along a 640m muddy section of the Rakiura Track to get ready for a helicopter



**The gravel prep team ready to go! From left to right: Dan Lee, Bridget Hunt, Michael Douglass, Jake Osborne, Joz Shepard and Cherie Hemsley** Photo Credit: Bridget Hunt's camera on self-timer

To Claire aka Klaartje: you will be missed dearly by your Island friends and colleagues, and even locals who didn't know you will miss seeing you zooming around our roads, you are a true running/cycling/fitness inspiration! All the best in your new endeavours and we hope to see you back here someday.  
*Aroha from Rakiura!*

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**Experienced, reliable handyman (ex Green Acres contractor) available for work on the island**

**Handyman Services**

- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| General repairs & maintenance        | General fencing                       |
| Lawn mowing                          | Building dog kennels, chook runs etc. |
| Line trimming                        | Building/assembling garden sheds etc  |
| Section maintenance                  | General carpentry                     |
| Weed spraying (certified applicator) | Gutter cleaning                       |
| Tree pruning                         | Moss and mould treatment              |
| Tree removal                         | Water blasting                        |
| Chainsaw work                        | Spider proofing                       |
| Hedge trimming                       | Rose pruning                          |
| Wooden fence and deck construction   |                                       |
| Wooden fence and deck repair         | And more - just ask                   |

**Office Services**

can also be provided

- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Bookkeeping           | Brochure, flyer & business card |
| Office administration | design & printing               |

If you want something done, and don't see it in the lists above, just give me ring. You may be surprised just what I can do.



Contact  
**Geoff**



**Stewart Island Handyman Services**

Phone 973 0959 (Local Number)      Mobile 027 253 3106  
 Email handyman@acadia.co.nz

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for current listings.

Ali Eade receives the Queen's Service Medal this month.  
*Photo from Governor-General website*



**Congratulations**

*New Parents  
 Kelly & Miguel  
 Welcome Baby Girl  
 Maya Laura Rodriguez*

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