

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

## CELEBRATING RAKIURA

MARCH—APRIL 2009

\$2.50

The summer was a musical one: a two-day tipi-warming rave up the Inlet; bands at Wharfside, the Pub and the Hall; a BIG night of music raising funds for Search and Rescue featuring lots of local talent (p10), and a street party birthday bash for our very own Johnny Cash (aka Friday).

Oyster season is all go, and it seems everywhere we turn there's the crash of bush and a deer darting past. The shark team is returning for more white pointer tagging (p10).

830-930pm on Saturday 28th March is Earth Hour when "your light switch is your vote"—turn your lights off for one hour to vote for Earth. Last year over 50 million people participated in Earth Hour, this year a billion are expected, making it one of the largest environmental events in history. New Zealand will kick it off for the planet when the Chatham Islands switch off their generator. For more go to [www.earthhour.org](http://www.earthhour.org)



Sandy King gets lowered out of an Air Force helicopter during Search and Rescue training (p10)



Bloody velvet hangs in strips from a whitetail's antlers. [no deer was hurt in the making of this photo, but the photographer almost got shishkabobbed]  
For more on our local *Odocoileus Virginianus* see page 9.

### ATTENTION Stewart Island residents:

Our neighbours Irene and Ron Dennis will be leaving the Island soon. All residents are invited to a farewell party for them at the Community Centre on 23rd March. Potluck starts at 5pm.

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### Ronnie Report

by Jules Ratberg (Photos by Matt Jones)

How does a British birdwatcher living on Stewart Island get the thrill of going on a twitch?

I should begin by explaining the common misconception that all birdwatchers are 'twitchers'. They are not. Birdwatchers are a bunch of folk that like to watch birds, work out what they've seen, where they saw it, when they saw it, and some of them keep a record of it.

Twitchers are a different breed entirely. They are lunatics obsessed with finding rare birds and will go to extraordinary lengths to see them – in other words to get a "tick"!

Matt Jones, British birdwatcher, now living on Stewart Island was a borderline twitcher. At weekends he would get up at 4am to drive to a sewage dump, seaside nuclear power station, or even the occasional bird reserve to be there at dawn in the hope of adding a few more "ticks" to his list. I say list, I

mean LISTS! Many twitchers are serial "listers" with a mountain of data cross referenced in their world list, country list, local list, year list ...

Most twitchers would sell their

*(Continued on page 2)*

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*(RONNIE REPORT Continued from page 1)*

granny to pay for transport to reach some far flung part of the country to tick an innocuous rare little brown bird (for they inevitably are) before it flies away.

Matt has done his fair share of twitches. One such example saw him and a friend drive a distance similar to that from Stewart Island to Auckland, board a small plane and then rent a car to drive to a muddy ditch – all in one day. The joy and relief Matt and his mate experienced once they'd seen the bird was understandable. They'd both invested time and money, not to mention deserting family commitments to reach this muddy ditch. However, the dour Scots farmer that saw two grown men dancing around in his field didn't quite see it that way and steered his sheepdog well clear of the "mad Englishmen".

But back to Stewart Island. Matt would happily spend his every waking moment on Ulva Island with the birds, but the embers of a twitcher still glow within him. He just can't resist the chase, the thrill of searching for one particular bird.

And so when Kari Beavan asked if he'd be interested in tracking weka as part of a SIRCET project, he was delighted to help with such a fantastic community initiative.

In August 2008 a young male weka was caught in a humane cage trap in Margaret Hopkins' back yard. Un-banded, he was already a success story because it meant he had hatched in Halfmoon Bay, a healthy descendant of the birds brought over from Bench Island.

To help SIRCET understand more about a weka's life expectancy, reproduction, and territory range in Halfmoon Bay, the young male was banded and carefully fitted with a transmitter. This isn't as invasive as it sounds; the transmit-

ters are about the size of a matchbox and worn like a rucksack with the straps under his "wings". If the straps were to get caught on something they are designed to break and release the Weka unharmed.

The transmitter was allocated a frequency number so that he could be tracked regularly and data collected on his whereabouts and what he was doing. Known only as Number 82, a tuft of feathers protruded slightly from his back as evidence of his encounter with SIRCET.

A few weeks later, Matt and I went out with Kari to learn how to use the tracking device and GPS to find Number 82. To the untrained eye we may have looked like three fools trying to tune into TV2 with a big blue aerial in the middle of the bush but we were doing serious stuff!

Imagine yourself at the top point of a triangle. Establish the two sides of the triangle fanning out from you by moving the aerial slowly to your left and right and listening to the beeps change volume. The stronger beeps indicate you are close in direction and distance.

We started at Traill Park and the beeps were strongest in the direction of Kaka Ridge Road and so off we went, puffing and wheezing to the top of the hill. Seemingly the weka was in the tangle of trees towards Excelsior Road, so Kari took the opportunity to show us some trap lines as we dodged and weaved through the bush, slipping and slopping about in the mud.

Sadly there was no sign of Number 82 and we found ourselves back out on Kaka Ridge Road wondering where to try next. The signal was definitely moving so at least we knew he was alive and it was very strong towards Nicol Road. At last we located him near Coral Hotchkiss' house, feeding alone but seemingly content.

The next week Matt and I thought we'd try tracking him on our own and started at Nicol Road, assuming he'd be in the same place. Wrong! We tried Traill Park and Observation Rock, but found nothing. Petersen Hill rewarded us with a faint signal towards Ringa Ringa. As we walked through the Deep Bay Track the signal got stronger and led us past Bevan and Gary's house, David and Kerry's, Gavin's and beyond. The beeps were strongest somewhere between Gavin's and Nancy & Murray Schofield's. How often do you get disturbed in the middle of the afternoon by two rain-soaked English people carrying a bright blue TV aerial, asking if they can follow a Weka onto your land? Thank you, Nancy and Murray for kindly switching off the electric fence and allowing us to continue our quest!

As we got close to a trap line, the beeps became so loud and insistent we switched the machine off, he must be so close! We sat in the undergrowth; hearts pounding; rain spattering. As if he'd been drawn to us, Number 82 came crashing through the bush and seemed quite unsurprised to see us. We noted the location on the GPS, like coordinates for a treasure map as he walked around us, flicking leaves and twigs about before disappearing down a well worn track. It was three years ago to the day since Matt's Dad had died and he'd have been highly amused by our search for a chicken-sized dinosaur-like bird in the pouring rain. It seemed only right to mark this in some way, and so Number 82 became "Ronnie".

Keen to get into a routine, we decided to track him once a week and so our next search began at Ringa Ringa. Ronnie was anything but routine and of course was not there! We wondered if he'd EVER spend longer than a week in one place but reminded ourselves he

*(Continued on page 6)*



**The Starfish had a perfect day learning to row** and they all “got it” after rowing forward or in circles for a bit. Some of the kids were stand-outs, first-timers at the start of the afternoon and then heading for Ulva by the end (and would have out-paced the water taxis if we hadn’t called them back!) It would be good if anyone has dinghies they could loan to parents and kids for practice while kids learn about the strength of Paterson Inlet currents and wind patterns (with parents supervising). Thanks to Helen, Peter and DoC for the loan of dinghies and to Kyle for his power “rescue boat.” Kath took video footage of each child on the school digital camera, so that they could watch their techniques later and learn how to improve or solve the problems they might have been having. The day ended with the rowers taking us over to Thule for a jump off the wharf before hot Raro, dry towels and climbing into mum and dad’s warm cars.

—Kari Beaven

### Dead Man Beach question

John and Denise Bonn, who now live at Dead Man Beach (“Deadmans”), would be grateful to hear from anybody who can shed any light on the incident for which the beach is named. John’s research so far has found that the historian Basil Howard wrote in 1928 that “Simons Beach is named for Bob Simon who lived there in the 1870’s; it is also known as Dead Man’s Beach but that name is still unexplained”. Olga Sansom in her book “The Stewart Islanders” said of Deadmans that “a body once washed up there”. If anyone has any additional information or suggestions on the incident, particularly when it may have occurred, this would help John focus in on newspapers, coroners records etc. Contact John and Denise on [johnbonn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:johnbonn@xtra.co.nz) or Box 39 or 027 2358761.

**Walk for the Planet** kicked off here last month. The group planted four trees on the golf course and their Tuesday Pancake sale (sponsored generously by Ship to Shore) raised \$300 —100 each was given to SIRCET, YEP Trust and Ulva Island Trust, and a book of poetry was presented to our Library before they boarded the ferry, singing, and began their long journey north.



Cooze’s cauliflower ears

## RAKIURA HELICOPTERS

**You’ve endured busses, braved the ferry, and slogged through muddy trails... why not mix it up and treat yourself to a chopper ride?**

See parts of the country that most New Zealanders have never seen: the coast, islands, and primeval forest of Rakiura are awesome from the air.

Stewart Island now has its first Island-based helicopter company, owned and operated by Zane Smith. Born and raised on the Island, Zane is an experienced pilot who’s heli-mustered in Australia’s Northern Territory and flown anglers in Makarora. He’s now come home, built a heli-pad at Fern Gully, and is waiting to share the Island home he knows so well with you.

Find three mates and it’s only \$80 each for an Ulva Island scenic tour; for \$140 each get dropped off at Mason Bay.

**Rakiura Helicopters** also serves hunters and muttonbirders.

Contact Zane at tel 03 2191 155,  
cell 027 221 9217 or email  
[rakiheli@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rakiheli@xtra.co.nz)

<b>Rates (with 4 passengers):</b>	<b>Tramper drop-off</b>
Full island scenic 2240	Masons bay, duck ck 560
North scenic 880	Masons bay, the gutter 800
South scenic 1600	Doughboy 960
East scenic 800	Xmas village 500
Paterson scenic 560	Smokey 720
Ulva scenic 320	East ruggedy 800
Marine farms 320	West ruggedy 800
S muttonbird islands 1360	Hellfire 800



### Want some money from IRD??

Who doesn’t!! Well, two representatives from IRD and Working for Families will be visiting the island with the prime reason of trying to sort entitlements for people. They are not here to check up on things, they are coming to answer questions and do what they can to help out given the current economic climate.

So, if you have any Working for Families questions, childcare entitlement, kiwisaver or student loan questions or any other question regarding entitlements, visit Paul and Leanne for some friendly advice. They may even prevent a trip to town by signing off on ID verification needs etc.

**When: after lunch Tues 24th March to lunch Wed 25th March (including evening)**

**How: drop by the RSA hall or feel free to prearrange an appointment (although this is not necessary)**

For any questions please feel free to contact: Paul Howden  
Community Relationship Representative, Invercargill  
DDI 03 9484047 ext 78047 Cell 029 9484047 email  
[paul.howden@ird.govt.nz](mailto:paul.howden@ird.govt.nz)



# Globetrotter off-Island Adventures.

*Last November Gwen Neave participated in the New York City Marathon.*

“ ... These vagabond shoes, are longing to roam... Right to the very heart of it, New York, New York. . . ”  
—words of popular song.

*As I begin to write this I realise that it is the eve of the Presidential Inauguration ceremonies in Washington and my mind returns to the vivid memories I have of election night celebrations in New York. (I am late producing this account for Jess who had requested I write something in early December! However, I should start at the beginning when I had the – some would say crazy – idea of walking the 2008 New York Marathon which just happened to be scheduled for 02 November, three days before the American Presidential elections.*

In late 2006 I had a health ‘wake up call’ and was fortunately directed by my doctor to make some fundamental changes to my lifestyle, in particular my eating habits and .. my non-existent exercise habits. After some initial success in adopting her suggestions I realised I had to have a long term goal to keep me focused and challenged. The idea of walking the NY Mara-

thon with friends seemed challenging enough and the search was on for some like-minded walkers. Originally the prospect of a Stewart Island team seemed achievable but sadly all the women I approached were otherwise engaged and busy or just not interested.

However, four mainland friends rallied and we began walking in earnest in November 2007 with a 10k walk that was

part of the Riverton to Invercargill Marathon. Incidentally this is the oldest marathon in New Zealand. I’d talked to Mike Piper of Invercargill who had run 104 marathons and done the New York one four times. He was enthusiastic about our mission and very supportive. Mike spent an evening with us telling us all about the marathon, showing us race souvenirs, giving us training tips, advice on booking agents, and generally encouraging us without once questioning our abilities. He had pointed me to the official NZ marathon agent in Hamilton and I made early contact with Andy Gallo-way who was

an enormous help to us with travel and hotel bookings arrangements. Whenever I was in Invercargill my friends and I would

meet up for 5-10k jaunts, striding along the Waihopai river banks, the estuary lagoon loop track and on one occasion the Forest Hill track. When home I managed most days to do a local track slowly extending

the distance I roamed. Our group walked a couple of half-marathon distances and an official half marathon in Dunedin before attempting 32k a month

before leaving for the USA in October last year. After this last distance we felt reasonably confident about New York knowing that the 42k course was mostly flat and counting on being buoyed up by the huge support the NY crowds give marathon participants.



Makuini McKerchar (Inv), Jan Pfeifer (Inv), Gwen Neave (SI) Lynn Topi (Bluff). Four happy Marathon-walkers. (Note street rubbish in Queens).



This guy was amazing, he set a cracking pace and juggled!



The Bras! Yeah, we passed them, and the turtle.



Discarded clothes on route.

group to fly out leaving Auckland on 29 October on a direct flight to Los Angeles. There were other marathoners on board the flight and we made brief contact in the queue for immigration at the LA airport. We swapped plans for parties and breakfast meets before being separated by the relentless immigration machine that finger printed you, took a laser print of your eyes (!), and had you remove your shoes before passing through the X-ray machines. It was a looong process before we were penned again awaiting our next flight for John F Kennedy. Remarkably we arrived in New York on time but waited for another 90 minutes before our luggage was off-loaded. My daughter Nadia had thoughtfully arranged a driver and car from her firm to meet me so my trip to the city and our hotel on the corner of 42<sup>nd</sup> St and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue

I was the last of the

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

was event free. My first glimpse of the Big Apple was of a *HUGE* city of bridges and lights and concrete canyons.



The last minute pit stop.

tips we put ourselves to bed very early on the two nights preceding the race.

On Sunday 01 November we were up *before* the larks at

New York is an amazing city – it’s noisy (drivers love to express themselves through their car horns and a jack hammer machine on a building site opposite our hotel worked all day and every night); its dirty with rubbish and litter everywhere; its busy with tourists and N Yorkers jostling each other, buses and cabs lane hopping and – it is absolutely exhilarating! Times Square was just around the corner and a block from the hotel and Broadway shows beckoned from a few doors to the east of our home base. And the choices! Shows were not cheap (\$120NZ



The beautiful NYC skyline.

was probably the lowest price we could

find) but there was a great selection from old favourite “South Pacific” to newbies like “In the Heights”. Award winning West End plays were on every corner and it was hard to choose between seeing Katie Holmes and John Lithgow (of TV’s Third Rock) in “All My Sons” and Daniel Radcliffe (Harry Potter) in “Æquus”. (Katie won!)



Joan Sutherland tries to keep warm before the race.

Although we spent the first three days seeing as much as we could of the city the underlying reason for our visit meant we were always conscious of our need to adhere to our exercise regime and monitor our food intake. Carb loading was a given and pasta was consumed at regular intervals. As instructed by the Marathon Bible

3.00am ready in race gear to walk from the hotel to the NY Library building where bus transport would await all the inner city marathoners. The race started on Statton Island and it was a logistical challenge for the organisers to have all 39,000 competitors on the island before the Verazano Bridge (the main connecting link to the city) closed at 7.00am. It was an eerie experience being part of a silent moving mass of people striding purposefully through the dark and empty streets of Manhattan all heading for the same destination, laden with bottles of water, food packs, warm clothing (and in some cases sleeping bags), and all displaying race bibs on chests or thighs. People poured out of hotels and streets to where race volunteers had marked lanes with red cones that channeled us across the last intersections to where 100 or so buses stood. The volunteers I questioned had ‘started work’ at 1.00am that morning and were the first of the thousands we encountered that day who were willing and pleasant supporters of the race and its participants. The planning for all the facets of the race was exemplary.

We bussed to Staten Island and were directed to our holding zones

or Corrals as they were called. Here, in each section there were Bagel and coffee stalls with endless supplies of food and hot and cold

drinks. Because we were walking the course we were in the corral holding the runners with the slowest finish time projections and so were allocated the last starting time of 10.30am. This meant a 5 and 1/2 hour wait in freezing conditions in open marquees (if you were lucky) or lying on the grass under the Verazano Bridge approach. As the sun came up 6 helicopters appeared hovering over the complex of corrals, the men with machine guns became visible on top of nearby buildings



59th Street Bridge.

(!) and a buzz began amongst the competitors. The day promised to be fine – clear skies, sun and cool easterly breezes.

Competing teams wore a myriad of costumes, some of them very bizarre, and many sporting photographs of charities or individuals they were running for on their chests or backs. *It is said that the New York marathon is the biggest event in the world when thousands gather with one peaceful focus in common.* Saluting the first wave of elite runners to start at 9.00am was an extraordinary feeling. People cheered them on along with Frank Sinatra’s voice played on the PA system booming out the song ‘New York, New York’. It was a very emotional moment for us all.

Like clockwork we were slowly herded to the start line in our sections in time for the 10.30 Off. The Verazano Bridge has a nasty little incline which challenges the runner and walker straight out of



Waiting for off—and freezing!

the blocks. It’s a long bridge with great views of the harbour (the tugboats beneath with their water spouts playing) and the Manhattan sky-

(Continued on page 7)

**Halfmoon Bay School Board of Trustees by Election**

Nominations are invited for the election of one parent representative to the Board of Trustees.

A nomination form and a copy of this notice will be posted to all eligible voters.

Additional nomination forms can be obtained from the school office during school hours.

**Nominations close at Noon on 26th March** and may be accompanied by a candidate's statement.

The voting roll is open for inspection at

the school office during normal school hours.

There will also be a list of candidates as they come to hand for inspection at the school.

**The poll closes at noon on 9th April.** —*Iris Tait, Returning Officer*



**RIDDLE-OF-THE-MONTH**

I'M IN A POUCH AND MOVE WITH A BOUNCE  
BUT I'M NO JOEY AND I JUST WEIGH AN OUNCE

MY COMPLEXION IS A WAXY WHITE  
IT MATCHES THOSE WHO CLUTCH ME TIGHT

WHEN THINGS GET LUMPY IN THE STRAIT  
YOU AND I MIGHT HAVE A DATE

YOU CAN'T CONTAIN YOURSELF AND SO  
YOU GRAB ME AS WE CROSS FOVEAUX

OUR RELATIONSHIP IS INTIMATE  
I OPEN UP TO YOU MY PET

AND YOU WILL SPILL YOUR GUTS TO ME  
AND THEN OUR DATE IS OVER, SEE

YOU WON'T EVER SEE ME AGAIN  
I'M THROWN INTO THE RUBBISH BIN

GUESSED WHO I AM ? NEED ONE MORE HINT?  
AFTER ME YOU'LL WANT A MINT

*(RONNIE REPORT Continued from page 2)*

was a young male. Either this young buck had found a mate in two places or he was still looking for love. Two weeks earlier he had been near Excelsior Road and it seemed a good place to try. We pointed the aerial towards Coral Hotchkiss' house and the signal went off the scale, so we introduced ourselves to Coral and asked if we could try to find Ronnie in her garden. She was both delighted and amused to hear the story so far about Ronnie and we agreed to pop in for a chat afterwards.

Ronnie was sunning himself in a prime spot overlooking Halfmoon Bay in Coral's garden. Looking a bit subdued, we wondered if he was injured so we sat quietly and watched him for ten minutes or so. He gave a yawn and stood up to stretch his legs. Satisfied that he was OK, we spent a lovely afternoon chatting with Coral.

The week after that, Matt began the search for Ronnie near Coral's house but the radio waves were quiet once more. He drove straight round to Ringa Ringa and David Squire said he'd seen a young Weka in his garden. Ronnie was

seen briefly before being trumped by the sighting of a Southern Right Whale just off Ringa Ringa Beach. A crowd gathered to enjoy watching the young whale playing and slapping its fins before the wind and rain got the better of us.

As the crow flies it's approximately 1.2 kilometres between Excelsior/Nicol Road and Ringa Ringa and Ronnie had made this journey there and back, twice (to our knowledge). Of course, weka don't fly, which makes his journey in the space of four weeks even more incredible.

One week on and it appeared that Ronnie had finally chosen his spot. The transmitter was picking up a good signal from deep inside some flax bushes at Ringa Ringa. This was the first time he'd been at the same location for two continuous weeks. Perhaps Ronnie had found a mate and was on a nest. However, the transmitter signal wasn't moving. It could mean the transmitter had fallen off. Or worse, he could be dead.

Thankfully a week later that question was answered and Ronnie was seen walking up

the beach track at Ringa Ringa. He was alone but gloriously alive!

Tracking Ronnie has never been boring and his pièce de résistance came while Matt was leading a bus tour. Mid-sentence his commentary came to a complete halt as Ronnie strolled out of Ringa Ringa Golf Course with three chicks!

The chicks were soon dubbed "The Ronnettes" and we later discovered there were actually four of them.

Ronnie and his mate are proving to be good parents and have been seen a number of times with two chicks each. The smallest of the Ronnettes is called Runty and Bevan Mudie has been charged with leaving out extra rations to help Ronnie with his first family!

Ronnie and his family have a growing number of guardians and even though we know we shouldn't anthropomorphise the animal kingdom, it's hard not to be caught up



in the excitement – success for both the SIRCET weka tracking project and the continuation of Ronnie's genes.

—*Jules*

*(GLOBETROTTER Continued from page 5)*

line in the distance. The race is often called the Five Boroughs Marathon as it starts in Statton Island and winds through the four other 'burbs of Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx and Manhattan. It's also known as The Peoples' Marathon and New Yorkers embrace the race wholeheartedly and are on the streets offering passionate and loud vocal support. Along with the organisers and volunteers they offer practical support with tables of cold sports drinks, fruit and sage words of advice "You go Kiwi – this is your day" or "C'mon girl, you're looking good, step it out!" In the early afternoon we crossed the Pulaski Bridge which signalled the halfway mark. We all felt really good here until the police parked on each intersection began to pack up the barricades and the crowds began to thin. Walking through Queens brought new challenges – fewer competitors in sight and fewer supporters. The former situation makes one very nervous: were we still making good progress? Where was everyone? Then the little aches and niggles begin to register and you really have to keep the team chatter going as spirits flag. Hitting 'the wall' is a psychological factor every race competitor is aware of but even so it snuck up on us and each of us had to wrestle with various forms of the glooms. The 59<sup>th</sup> St Bridge (recognised in song by Simon and Garfunkel) is a beautiful old structure with high overhead steel portico and a nasty steep approach. I was too engrossed in putting each foot forward to fully appreciate its beauty which is something I regret. It is one of the race landmarks and deserved more acknowledgement. When the runners and early waves of competitors pass through its portals the PA system blasts out the S&G song and this must really lift their spir-

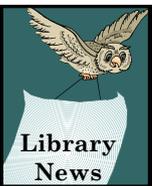
its. At this mark we were following (then passed) a trio of women from the UK who were dressed in coloured bras decorated with tinsel and fluffy feathers and track pants. They like many other participants were competing for a charity and their choice was Breast Cancer. It was amusing to notice the animated calls and support they received from spectators (even the usually dour policemen) along the way. We, just a pace or two behind them, were virtually invisible! Coming through Queens however their appearance was received with mixed reactions from Orthodox Jews who looked askance at their attire; some uniformed school girls too were clearly shocked! (An interesting reaction to note in a city where generally 'anything goes'.) Within six miles of Central Park and the finish line we picked our pace up again and on entering the Park itself were back on form and firmly striding out. Suddenly we could sense the end was near and we realised on seeing the last sign (400yds) that we'd made it! Joining hands we crossed the line together proudly hearing the PA announce the team of NZ women about to finish with "well done Kiwis". Our finish time of 7hrs.21mins disappointed us as we'd hoped to do the race in 6 hours, however we'd completed the marathon without major physical mishap (a bruised toenail and arch being my only complaints) and we 'floated' back to the hotel sporting our medals, to hot baths and a meal, almost oblivious of the suddenly cold air temperatures.

Wearing our medals next day earned us positive remarks from New Yorkers and smiles and acknowledgements from other competitors also sporting medals. New Yorkers openly gave credit to 'finishers' and were pleased that their city had hosted so many participants. The huge volunteer

army must have numbered in the thousands; the race clean-up would have been more taxing than the preparations as streets were strewn with race rubbish – plastic water cups, fruit and piles of discarded clothing (including some very expensive sportswear) thrown off by participants as they warmed up along the course. All of the latter are given to charities to distribute. Medical teams placed at regular intervals along the route, police cars and personnel at each intersection, news camera operators and reporters, bus drivers, route guides, UPS trucks conveying competitors clothes from the starting point to the finish line; the whole race machinery is massive. Now they've started the preparations for race day 2009 and New Zealand's small quota of participants is already filled. When I registered in May 2007 for the November 2008 race I was put on a waiting list until places were available – 2010 positions are already well filled. It pays to make early decisions to participate and commit to a 12 month wait.

Jack Frew asked me why I'd decided to do the marathon and my first response was 'why not?' However, I guess the real reasons are: because of my age and health I'll never be able to climb a mountain, swim long distances, *run* anywhere, or jump out of a plane. However, I can walk and enjoy walking provided there are not too many hills to test me. I needed a big goal to challenge and motivate myself. I also have a daughter in Connecticut (an hour north of NY) and it was an opportunity to catch up with her. Now I have the wonderful memories of a significant event and a medal to pass on to my grandchild!

*And the American election night? Maybe I'll tell you about that experience next month. It almost (in my mind) eclipses the marathon!*



Thanks to everyone who filled out a Library User survey. Some people asked me why they had to do one when they'd already answered Library

questions on the SDC survey, it's because the other questionnaire was random and may not have caught many people who actually regularly use the Library.

We received many constructive comments regarding our collection, space and hours which I will take on board. I'll address a few of the topics which arose:

### Hours

Did you know of all of the Southland District libraries we are one of three open on the weekend, the other two being large libraries with paid staff serving communities of thousands?

Many regular users find our hours adequate while others wish they were extended. We did add an evening hour last year: 630-730 Monday evenings, and we have the Saturday hour in addition to two weekday hours. Pat tried an evening hour after some demand in the past but it was stopped because the actual use of that hour didn't justify it. We are trying it out again... but there are weeks when the volunteers show up and serve only one or two people, and those weeks make me think we're open too long for such limited traffic! For those of you who ask for more opening hours I ask you to reconsider our present schedule: if you work throughout the week why not come in on Saturday midmorning or Monday evening? Those hours are for *you*.

Megan works all day at her shop, and then, instead of going home for tea or to the Pub for a grog, she goes to the Library and opens it for an hour *for you*. Just like most Islanders, the library volunteers juggle work, family, travel, daily responsibilities and personal projects, and they put all that on hold on Saturday to open the Library *for you*. If it's a matter of forgetting, grab a schedule magnet (\$3) the next time you're in and stick it on your fridge. And I don't know of another library that opens on demand...I have said it before and I'll say it again, I'm happy to open the Library for you between hours if your schedule makes a

library visit impossible. This is not to say we won't revise our schedule and lengthen hours again but I want to be certain it's truly justified. If we do add another hour I'm thinking it will be another evening hour during the week.

### Our space

Our Library is cold in the Winter and we are working toward a solution. Some direly worded letters have been written by myself and Bruce Ford to powers-that-be, and we are exploring Ali's great idea to siphon Community Centre heat into the library.

We have our Library boat but I agree that more comfortable seating would be great, it's a matter of getting some, and making room. While people do sit and read I rarely see people sitting and writing, so perhaps we could replace the wooden table and chairs for a comfy couch or something...

I have fantasies of a second floor mezzanine in the library with a circular staircase leading to a cosy area with more shelving, armchairs, beanbags, and a view of the Bay, as my fantasy also includes punching a hole in the upper wall and creating a big porthole window. In my dreams I am personally driving a window-making wrecking ball machine which is funny considering I've been in an accident involving a wheelbarrow and my legs. So if anyone has some building skills and equipment and a million bucks to spare, stop by and see me. Or you could just help me build a desk for our new computers. This leads me to...

### Our new computers

So far so good. We've heard rumours of mayhem in Te Anau with long queues of grumpy people vying for the internet. Many locals have their own internet access, so our new computers have primarily been used by visitors, who just seem really happy and grateful for the opportunity. Skype calls are a bit annoying, Mary suggested making an afterhours session for this which we might do when necessary. I don't mind regular chatter but skype calls, like cell phone calls, are irritating. As one library user said, "It's no good overhearing just half a conversation." If you don't have internet access or don't know how to use the internet but would like to, talk to me, I'd be

happy to sit with you and go over some basics.

### Our collection

*There were many comments about our collections, it seems that some users are confused about where the books come from and why we don't immediately acquire new books, so following is an overview of our system:*

Here's how it works: The books on our shelves are either part of our permanent collection (you'll notice an SI for Stewart Island on its spine) or part of the SDL circulating collections. We are part of the Southland District Libraries, and they have a budget for us which they spend on books for our collection. Ninety-nine point nine percent of that money goes toward popular new fiction, ie the latest Denis Lehane, Jodi Picoult, James Paterson, Kate Atkinson, Maeve Binchy etc., and the other percentage goes toward the very occasional Stewart Island-specific book that is published. *But those books are not new*, some of you lament, *they're old hat by the time they get on shelf*. Yes, that's true that our new books aren't brand new. When books are first published and hit the shelves of bookstores they cost a bomb. I'm keen to get the latest Julian Stockwin book, but the hardcover released in October 2008 cost \$56. So I'm waiting for the paperback which will be released in May which will cost \$25. Some popular authors are quite prolific: if we bought every book Daniell Steel or James Paterson writes a year we'd be in the poorhouse. So unless it's some sort of literary emergency to own a book, the SDL buyers and I sensibly bide our time and purchase the less expensive (\$25-39) paperback version of the book which comes out some months later. By the time that book is purchased and processed in Winton, packaged and sent to Stewart Island, unpacked and further processed and put on shelf, often times many moons have passed since you first heard it mentioned on a radio show and trotted down to the library and wondered why it wasn't on shelf. Libraries are wonderful in many respects but we're not always about instant gratification. If you can stand to wait for a book by a popular author, then the Library will likely eventually offer it to you for free.

Due to budgeted finances and space, we can't acquire every book in kingdom come, there just isn't space or money to buy every library users' desired books, so sometimes you might ask for a book and it doesn't materialize. That's what the Request system is for: if you really want a particular book, then pay \$5 and if that book is in the system it will be sent to you.

We also receive circulating collections through the SDL, these come by plane in lots of 10-20 boxes of books at a time. These have various colourful stars and stickers on their spines and they are a mixed bag, I believe the theory behind them is to ensure every library has a balanced variety of books, particularly non-fiction. It seems we are just packing up the last box and schlepping it to the flight centre when it's time for another circulating collection to trade. These books don't magically appear and disappear from the shelves, a volunteer spends hours of her time finding the hundred or so books from a certain collection, packaging them, then moving them all out to her vehicle, then unloading all again at post office, only to do the same in reverse when new collection arrives. Being a librarian is a workout!

We are also extremely fortunate to have some truly generous readers on the Island who purchase popular fiction, read it quickly, and donate it to us. We receive dozens of books a year by such donors — Loraine Hansen is a particular star for our library. So when you see a hot new book promptly on our shelves, more often than not it has been donated to us by one of your fellow readers.

The Stewart island Community Library also has its own budget, these are funds raised through our book sales and crayfish raffles and various donations. It's not a heap of cash but it's nice to have our own pot of spending money. I choose *not* to spend this hard-raised money on the latest James

Paterson because the SDL budget generally takes care of our popular fiction needs. I focus this money on developing the parts of our permanent collection that don't get any help from the SDL budget, and that includes non-fiction, children's picture books, contemporary literature, and classics. I've tackled our non-fiction section this past year and several of you have noticed, some asking for more new fiction, so I'll get on that! As we don't have lots of our own spending money I often relay your requests to the SDL powers-that-be and they send more boxes over which is great for our librarian work-out regime. If there are particular authors or genres that you feel we have been ignoring, let me know.

We've had a couple requests specifically asking for more "New Zealand and British authors" —in fact, 90 percent of our fiction is sourced through the SDL who purchase chiefly from British, NZ and Australian publishers. When I buy books with our own Island money, I look to see if it is well-reviewed, well-written, and if it might be well-received by our discerning and varied Stewart Island readership, but I admit it has not been my habit to pinpoint the author's nationality. Authors represented on our shelves hail from Czech Republic, China, Japan, Norway, North and South America, Sudan, Afghanistan...all over the show! However, in the future I will try to be more culturally aware and make sure we have even more Kiwi authors represented on shelf.

*Which brings me to my last comment about a comment...*

**The Librarian's not from here.**

Try to get past it. Trust me, there are more interesting reasons to dislike your Librarian. And loathing one of your Island neighbours is bad for your health, which leads to a shorter life, which means less books you get to read.

**New books** on order include *Nasty People* — how to deal with toxic human beings who thrive on putting other people down; Paulina Simons' *Tatiana and Alexander*; *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* by Swedish crime writer Larsson; Zusak's *The Book Thief*; Levy's *Small Island*; *The Savage Detectives* by Chilean Robert Bolano (who was imprisoned under the Pinochet regime); the latest Annie Proulx; and two novels that have become movies: Yates' *Revolutionary Road* and *Shumdog Millionaire*. I think fans of Lee Child's Jack Reacher novels will like the new Charlie Huston books.

We now have new books by Katy Fforde, Clive Cussler, Maeve Binchy, Lesley Pearse, Nora Roberts, and Jeffrey Archer. Other interesting fiction includes *Snow* by Nobel-prize winner Orhan Pamuk, *Everything is Illuminated* by Safran-Foer, *Pompeii* by Robert Harris, and *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie—this book is considered to be the "Booker of Bookers" — the best book to win the Booker Prize in 25 years.

We also have many new Young Adult fiction books, some of which are fantasy. Have you enriched yourself with a classic recently? New oldies include *The Canterbury Tales*. If you have the end-of-summer blues I promise that Kenneth Graham's wonderful *The Wind in the Willows* (with charming E Shepard illustrations) will cheer you right up. Our book flavour-of-the-month is SPIES.

**Thanks** to Loraine, Pat, Jenny, and all the other donors of books. A special thanks to Jenny for the cuddly new knit dolls in the children's boat!

And thanks again for everyone who took the time to fill out a survey or talk to me in person about the Library, your feedback and suggestions mean a lot. We are always working to make New Zealand's southernmost Library the topmost Library! —Jess

**Deer tidbits:** the only female deer with antlers is a reindeer. Whitetail deer were introduced to New Zealand in 1905. Deer have glands near their foreheads which they rub on trees to mark territory. The point from which the antler grows is called a pedicle. The antler is a spongy tissue covered in skin known as velvet. Before mating season the antlers harden, the velvet rubs off leaving hard bone antlers. Some now extinct species of deer had antlers that measured 3.5 meters across. If you want to see something interesting go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and type in "whitetail deer attacks hunter."



**DOC Spot**

**Water Tank auction**

As advised in last month’s DOC Spot, the Department has recently replaced a number of water tanks from huts and campsites around the island, resulting in a stockpile of 3000 litre black plastic tanks in the old deer pen area between the DOC office and Fire Station. Most of these tanks are still sound (although some have had holes drilled to allow the water to drain more quickly). These tanks will be auctioned by Bill Todd on behalf of the Department, on the Satur-

day of Easter Weekend (April 11). Each tank will be numbered and auctioned off individually to the highest bidder. Prospective bidders are welcome to inspect the tanks prior to the auction.

**Venue for the Auction:** Path on the North-East side of DOC office

**Date:** Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April

**Starting Time:** 11am

**Shark research to resume**

Clinton Duffy, a scientific officer with DOC’s marine unit in Auckland will be working from the Jester again this March on the Great White Shark tagging programme. This will be the third

year in a row that Clinton and his team have travelled to the island to fit satellite tags on Great White Sharks to try and determine more about these mysterious creatures. The tags are set to “pop off” and float to the surface after a pre-determined time (usually around 6 – 12 months). The data transmitted from the shark will tell where it has travelled since tagging took place and if the tag can be retrieved, it will also provide a wealth of other information such as dive times, depths and water temperatures.

—Sharon Pasco

**Stewart Island/Rakiura Search and Rescue**

February, March has been a busy time for SAR (search and Rescue) on the Island.

**Training**

Tim Dawson spent a week on a Marine Search Managers course at the Police college in Porirua. This course has up skilled Tim in current Marine Search Techniques and to show him how to calculate roughly where an object (boat, person, Kayak etc) will be in the Sea when affected by Time, Current and Wind. He also visited the Rescue Coordination centre and Maritime Radio Service at Avalon in the Hutt Valley.

Sandy King and Dale Jenkins went to the annual Southland Search and Rescue exercise (SAREX) this year it was at Nokomai Station on the weekend of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of February.

They were deployed in a search team which was dropped off by Air Force helicopter up on the tops and tasked to search for two missing hunters. Helicopter safety, search methods, radio procedures and management methods were up skilled as part of the exercise.

Training last month was on Marine search.

**SAR Management**

A special Meeting was held to vote in the Stewart Island/Rakiura Search and Rescue **Group rules**. The Group has now affiliated with Land SAR New Zealand, applied to be registered as a charity and applied for tax exemption.

**SAR Operations**

Two Searches were mounted over the last month:

- At midnight on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 Police were advised a 52 year old man had not return from

a walk to Ackers Point. Acting on this information 12 members of SAR were involved in a night Search of Ackers point Bathing beach to the Wharf. The search was completed at 5 a.m. The missing man at 9 p.m. on the 24<sup>th</sup> had decided to walk to Port William without informing his host. He arrived back at Halfmoon Bay at 7.30 a.m. on the 25<sup>th</sup> not aware that SAR had been looking for him.

- At about 6 p.m. on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March a 23 year old left the Chew Tobacco hut to go hunting. After not returning by Lunch time on the 15<sup>th</sup> his hunting companions informed Police. At 4 p.m. the hunter was able to make his way back to the Chew Tobacco hut as an aerial search of the coastline was being done.

Thanks to the SAR members and locals who attended these searches. —Dale Jenkins

Website-of-the-month from Vicki is [www.happyaslarry.co.nz](http://www.happyaslarry.co.nz) **Happy as Larry is about getting stuff and giving it away...** a non profit, anonymous, and word of mouth project, an experiment in random acts of giving, **a modern day Robin Hood, with whiskers.** **sign up now and you will receive the current issue #4, drawn 20th March.** Prizes in this issue include T-shirts, cufflinks, socks, plum jam, a mag sub and a cake.



# BARN DANCE

**Easter Saturday  
(11<sup>th</sup> of April)**



@



The Community Centre

**7:30 pm**

Featuring **THE POSSUM PICKERS**

**Light Supper "Full Bar" Dancing  
Country Western Attire REQUIRED**

**\$20 per ticket**

**Available for purchase at The Crafty  
Cod, Bunkers, Ship to Shore and  
The Community Centre**



## The Island Beat

### Crime

Over the last month there has been a number of thefts around the Island.

- Between the 20/02/2009 and the 25/02/2009 12 Bags of Coal to a total value of \$160.00 has been stolen from the end of the Wharf.
- Between the 06/03/2009 and the 11/03/2009 about \$40.00 of petrol has been siphoned from a utility parked outside the flight centre.
- Between the 05/03/2009 and the 06/03/2009 about \$20.00 of Petrol was siphoned from a Mitsubishi Pajero vehicle parked in Miro Street.

If you have any information in relation to these offences could you give me a call thanks.

### Found Property looking for an owner

- 1 x Sony Handy Cam found 18/02/2009
- Quantity of Money found Elgin Terrace 20/02/2009

### Traffic

I have had reports of some near crashes with cars travelling the wrong way on Rankin Street. (one nearly hit me as well) A reminder Rankin Street is 'one way' from Golden Bay down to Thule Road. The primary offenders appear to be some of the local residents who reside at the start of Rankin Street taking the 'short cut'. There are a few tourists in rental cars who get it wrong as well. Locals residents make sure you drive the right way down Rankin and be prepared to meet the odd tourist who gets it wrong.

*Senior Constable Dale JENKINS*



\$3,400 was raised for Search and Rescue during a night of music at the Hall where there was standing room only. Noel Couatts played and then local talent was on display, including Friday's Johnny Cash renditions and Jack singing Jeremiah was a Bullfrog as ladies threw giant knickers at him. Good fun!

### Economic Impacts of Tourism on Rakiura/Stewart Island

Research is being conducted by the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI) on Rakiura/Stewart Island this summer. The research, funded by the Ministry of Fisheries, looks at developing a better understanding of the economic impacts that marine tourism activities have on New Zealand's coastal communities. The local community's input into this research will be invaluable to help improve the visitor experience and tourism management in the future.

During the 2009 summer season, NZTRI is running three online surveys on Rakiura/Stewart Island. A visitor survey has run since January and is running until after Easter. Surveys of local residents and local businesses are now online and will be open for input until 17 April. NZTRI would like to learn from business owners how marine tourism affects their business and what local residents think about marine tourism on Rakiura/Stewart Island.

The surveys are available online at [www.visitorsurvey.co.nz](http://www.visitorsurvey.co.nz). Alternatively, paper surveys are also available at the Stewart Island Post Office. By completing the survey you can go in the draw to win petrol or book vouchers worth \$100.

Your views and experiences are an important part of this research which is being conducted to help your community. NZTRI will present the outcomes of the interviews and surveys back to the community and stakeholders of Rakiura/Stewart Island through a series of workshops in mid-2009. The focus of the workshops will be on building stakeholder awareness of marine tourism and its impacts.

If you would like to know more about this research, please contact NZTRI: Simon Milne, email: [simon.milne@aut.ac.nz](mailto:simon.milne@aut.ac.nz)



There is nothing—  
absolutely nothing—  
half so much worth  
doing as simply  
messaging  
about  
in boats.  
—Kenneth Grahame,  
Wind in the Willows  
(Ratty to Mole)

# Wharfside Casino Night Saturday 28th March at 7.30pm.

Come one, come all, in joining us for a night of pure extravagance. Dust off those top hats and shine up those pearl necklaces.



You could have a chance to claim one of our **marvellous prizes** kindly donated by the Wharfside Café & Bar, Rocks Café, Nu Dax

Southland, Bunkers Backpackers, Glowing Sky, Bean Around Coffee, ILT and Pernod Ricard.

All prizes will be auctioned at the end of the night.

**Also a prize for best dressed.**

For a small fee of \$30 you will receive your Wharfside casino dollars, a free glass of house wine / beer or choice of non-alcoholic drink and nightly nibbles.

*All profits donated to the Langley family*



Starfish had a wonderful afternoon learning to row dinghies in Paterson Inlet. See page 3 for more.

All the best to Ron and Irene in your new life off Island. We will miss you and hope you visit us heaps!



- + NZQA approved
- + OSH recognised courses
- + First Aid Kits

First Aid Training  
Stewart Island—20-21 April 2009

Venue: RSA Pavilion

P: (03) 218 4339

F: (03) 218 7595

E: [invercargill@redcross.org.nz](mailto:invercargill@redcross.org.nz)

W: [www.redcross.org.nz](http://www.redcross.org.nz)



## Halfmoon Bay School Fundraiser Order beautiful spring bulbs for the garden!

A great selection of beautiful bulbs - perfect to brighten up your garden.

The bulbs are supplied by NZ bulbs, growers of quality bulbs.

Catalogues and order forms are available from the school, or by contacting

Belinda ph 050 or Nicolette ph 511.

**Deadline for orders is: Thursday 2nd April**

## The Singles' Ball website

[www.singlesball.co.nz](http://www.singlesball.co.nz)

is up and running.

If you have any special offers for the ball such as cheap accommodation or if you have photos from past balls for the gallery please send to Vicki at [stewartisland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:stewartisland@xtra.co.nz)

# Congratulations

*Newlyweds* Robin and Emily  
*Newlyweds* Craig Littlejohn and Jenny

Stewart Island News is published on a monthly basis as material permits.

**Please send articles and enquiries to Jess Kany at Box 156, or to [editor@stewart-island-news.com](mailto:editor@stewart-island-news.com)**

**The next deadline is Tuesday, 14th April.**

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

- 12 issues to an Oban address or Internet address \$24
- 12 issues to other New Zealand address \$30
- 12 issues to international address \$54

Name of Recipient: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE

The next meeting of the Garden Circle will be at the home of Jenny Gell on **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April** at 2pm

Competition:  
An early Autumn Colour  
A Vegetable  
A Survivor

