

STEWART ISLAND NEWS

CELEBRATING RAKIURA

March—April 2012

\$2.00

Our prayers and thoughts are with the whānau and friends affected by the tragic sinking of Easy Rider.

The Island has been besieged by boats this month. Glancing out the window I thought we were under attack, then I realized the armada was just a dozen keen oyster chasers celebrating the first of March. The following week, the SSANZ yachts racing around the country began to arrive. First in was *Surreal*, greeted by a HMB School haka at the wharf. The Navy came creeping around and boarded a boat full of oystercatchers for a look-see. Then the *World* came to the island — the enormous floating home for the super wealthy. Anyway turns out they were a fun group of folks who brought their “house band” to the Pub for a great night of music and canoeing. (www.aboardtheworld.com)



Two words: Oyster season.
Two more words: broken hauler.
Photo from Helen Cave

The SSANZ sailors stayed a week, hosted by various Islanders. They busied themselves fixing gear, mending sails, partying, and seeing the Island. They were awed by the hospitality extended to them: Stewart Island did itself proud. In turn the sailors made a generous donation to the school. The racers resumed their journey on 14th March from Halfmoon Bay. Good hosts to the last, dozens of locals on a flotilla of boats escorted our guests “out the door”. Track their progress at www.ssanz.co.nz via their yellowbricks. Or contact the Sailing Secretary Extraordinaire Sue Ford and she will send you updates.

The Stewart Island Promotions Bluff Oyster Festival Stall needs volunteers, both here preparing food and on the other side. Please let Vicki know if you can help.

Solar storms treated our skies to an aurora: Nicky observed it from Butterfield and was amazed by the show which lasted almost 20 minutes. The sun is particularly feisty these days and more solar storms and auroras are expected.

The Library has acquired another pile of books. Friends of the Library is seeking members. p6.

Vicki is taking Quiz on the road (p13).



The SSANZ yachts pass the start line in Halfmoon Bay. Page 14.

Search & Rescue needs you (p2). (This article was submitted prior to the recent tragedy.)

Congratulations to Julius Herzhoff who kicked épée at the Junior Commonwealth Games. (Find out what an épée is on p12)

A special thanks to Sandy King who has continued to amaze us with her reports from Macquarie Island.

Don't miss a page of this issue, we have YEPs, YHA, a fascinating article from Ben Hopkins, and much more.

Finally, HAPPY BIRTHDAY RAKIURA NATIONAL PARK. Our Park turns ten years old this March. (p6) —Jess

As this issue goes to print, boats and helicopters have been searching the waters around Saddle Point for the people lost from Easy Rider, which went down 12am 15th March. Nine people were reported on board. One body and one survivor have since been recovered. The muttonbirding expedition, skippered by Rewai Karetai, was headed to Rugged Islands when it was struck by a rogue wave and capsized just north of Stewart Island. The vessel was not reported missing until 2pm. The search has been round the clock: the Aurora, Foveaux Express and a Navy vessel spent all night 15th March looking; there has been a massive response from the community and many local boats joined the search the morning of the 16th.

The Shark Research Team is back!
The research will be conducted from the DOC vessel Hananui from 16 - 28 March around the Titi Islands located off Stewart Island's northeast coast and Ruapuke Island in Foveaux Strait as weather permits.

Divers and kayakers are advised to avoid the areas where the research is being conducted while the boat is on station and for at least 24 hours afterward as the team will be using berley (a mixture of minced fish and fish oil) to attract sharks. More on page 13.

And... Clinton Duffy will be giving a **shark talk** at 7.30pm Wednesday 21st March at the Community Centre. Gold coin donation please.

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Search and Rescue needs YOU!

Although most of us choose to dismiss niggling thoughts of plane crashes, boat sinkings and other such tragic events, the harsh reality is that when you live on an island these and equally appalling events could and have happened at some point in time and often it is the response time that determines whether or not lives can be saved.

Thoughts such as these are probably what has motivated most members who have joined the Rakiura / Stewart Island Search and Rescue Group, but how good this group operates comes down to how well prepared each individual within the group is for the particular emergency situation they are about to face. Although there was a good turn out at the March helicopter familiarisation training, some months the turn out for Search and Rescue training is quite low.

We know that there are a lot of people in our community with vast experience of the bush and sea and we really would like to encourage more of these people to attend our monthly trainings. By coming along and sharing your knowledge and experience, not only would training opportunities be enhanced, but also in the event of an emergency more people would have a shared understanding of the roles they may be asked to perform.

Monthly trainings are generally held at the Oban Volunteer Fire Station on the first Tuesday of the month, commencing at 7pm. Over the coming year we will be covering things such as: ropes, knots & stretcher bearing; search methods; Incident Management Team (IMT) support, team leader requirements; mapping & GPS skills; tracking and radios, as well as updating our pre-plans (basic plans that form the basis for different search scenarios – lost toddler, missing hunter, overdue boat, etc). Please think about attending SAR trainings - you never know, one day it may be your child - or brother - or father - or even you - who needs the assistance of the SAR group!

Rakiura / Stewart Island Search and Rescue Group is also very grateful to Vicky and all the quiz goers for the generous donation of \$780 towards a laptop computer and data projector package. These are a great asset for trainings and vital equipment for the Incident Management Team (IMT) when a search is underway. We are aware that a data projector (and speakers) is often required by other community groups and organisations when they wish to give a presentation and therefore would like to make this equipment available to others in return for a donation to Search and Rescue. Anyone wishing to book the projector should contact either Dale Jenkins (2190020), Dale Chittenden (2190012wk or 2191233 hm) or Sharon Pasco (2190004wk or 2191009hm).

Note: this article was submitted prior to the Easy Rider tragedy.—Ed

Stewart Island Community Centre News

from Margaret Hopkins

Hall Improvements

The Community Centre is now over 12 years old and our maintenance and renewal schedule needs to be updated and revised. The floor of the walk-in chiller has recently been coated in an easy clean surface which is a big improvement. Blinds have been made and installed on the high windows in the social room to cut out light when necessary. Look out for other improvements in the near future.

Working Bee

A big thankyou to the 20 people who turned up on Saturday for our working bee to give the Community Centre a spruce up. Gardens at the front and side of the building have been tidied, trees trimmed, rubbish removed, deck water blasted, windows cleaned, kitchen and bar tidied and scrubbed. A huge improvement all round so thankyou for your support. There are still a few other jobs that need doing so we will make a list and hope that those who wanted to help but couldn't attend today might have a spare hour to do some tasks.

Thanks

Over the years since the community centre was built we have purchased thousands of dollars worth of cooking equipment and utensils for the kitchen as well as crockery and glasses but unfortunately a lot of it just disappears over time. If you have inadvertently 'borrowed' stuff from the Community Centre kitchen then we are very happy for you to return it at anytime.

A big thankyou to Vicki and the Pub Quiz Teams for recently purchasing some new kitchen equipment, as well as a new fridge/freezer and microphone stands. Also thanks to Megan and Graham Cowley who sold excess cutlery and glasses from their wedding to the Community Centre at a heavily discounted price. All very much appreciated.

COMMUNITY CENTRE NEWS

The Community centre has plates bowls etc left from gatherings at the hall. If you would like to collect them the hall will be open for the next week then the items will be sent to the recycle centre.

Another clothes swap and any leftovers go to the Salvation Army at the Community Centre for the week April 16th through to 22nd.

**THANK YOU ...
from Anita and Ken ... and 'SEAVIEW.'**

Running away to sea is usually the provenance of wayward youths, or those escaping the long arm of the law. However, as with most rules, there are always exceptions. Fifteen years ago Ken traded chalk and blackboard for a life on the briny (or to be precise Paterson Inlet and the coastal waters of Rakiura) as owner/ operator of Seaview Water Taxi. For a former Naval Reserve Recruit this was, indeed, a dream come true. He has frequently been heard to remark that a bad day at sea is still far better than a day in the classroom

Our water taxi operator years have provided us with experiences, and challenges, we could have never anticipated – and do not regret - however it is now time to alter our direction in a more landlubberly way. As from April 1, 2012 we are transferring ownership of our water taxi business, Seaview Water Taxi, to Matt Atkins and Alina Thiebes of Rakiura Charters.

We would like to thank, most sincerely, the many members of this community who, initially, made

us so welcome and have continued to support us over the years.

In particular we would like to acknowledge the ongoing support we have received from the staff of Stewart Island Flights. Our partnership has grown into a friendship which we will always value.

We also deeply appreciate the extra consideration, and assistance, we have received from our fellow charter boat operators, and the staff of the Department of Conservation, over the last two months

While the decision to 'come ashore' may not have been easy we are happy to be passing Seaview into such capable hands – we wish Matt and Alina well as they take up the challenge of extending their charter boat business.

When asked, recently, if we would be moving to the mainland now we were rather surprised. Our reply was "Moving? Why would we do that? We live here." Relocating over the ditch is not part of the plan – we look forward to continuing our participation in community life albeit in a more relaxed manner.



**A Local's Tail
Coming Soon**

We are creating a short entertaining film for the tourists titled "A Local's Tail".

Check out our promotional clip on YouTube if you haven't already done so. The link is <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SECofUwfK2w> or search for *A Local's Tail Promo*.

A Local's Tail is an engaging and accessible journey through the community's story. The film features information about Stewart

Island; locals past and present, how they live love and laugh; glimpses of the island's spectacular natural beauty and rugged way of life.

The film provides tourists with an increased understanding of what there is to do on the island and answer their questions about the Island and the people.

If you want to assist and have your name up on the Big Screen you still can, as we are still in the process of collecting footage for the short film. So if you have any photos or film that has been gathering dust in the back of your cupboards which shows the history of the Island, the

lifestyle, or is just a bit quirky, then please contact us.

To assist with production costs we are also looking for sponsorship as well as selling advertising time. For further information please call.

The short film will commence in October 2012 and will be shown in the Stewart Island theatre.

Aussie Pete and Penny

Ph 03 219 1113
bunkhouseproductions@gmail.com



ban Globetrotter *off-Island Adventures.*

Following is another instalment from Sandy King's Macquarie Island experience.

Greetings once more from Macquarie Island, where the rapidly diminishing hours of daylight indicate that summer is coming to an end. It doesn't seem all that long ago that it never got completely dark at night and the sun was up at 3.30am, whereas now it is dark by 7.30pm and just getting light at 5am. The weather continues to be slightly warmer and drier than normal; the temperatures in February ranged from 2.9 – 10.9 °C, and rainfall for the month was a mere 55.4mm compared to the long term February mean of 85mm.

The wildlife is winding up its summer breeding season. Penguin chicks have almost all fledged and adults are moulting; male elephant seals have returned from their post-breeding recuperation at sea and are lying around moulting in big smelly burping heaps, and annual summer herbs are beginning to brown off and die down. Grass seeds and bidibids, or buzzies as they are known here, are ripening and are causing problems for the rabbit hunting dogs. It is now almost 10 months since the aerial baiting phase of the rab-



Moulting gentoo penguins

bit, rat and mouse eradication took place and the past summer has seen an obvious flush of growth. While this is a very positive sign it also means there is a lot more seed around with nothing much to eat it. The follow-up rabbit hunting team has completed the third consecutive month with no fresh rabbit sign, and the number of rabbits caught since the aerial eradication still stands at 13. There has been no sign of rats or mice either so things are looking good for the eradication being successful, although this won't be confirmed for some time yet.

The island's human population is preparing for an event which marks the beginning of the winter season – the annual resupply. This is when staff are changed over and the station is resupplied with food, fuel, gas, spare parts and equipment. Field huts will also be restocked with

food, fuel and gas, and rubbish will be removed. The Australian Antarctic Division ship *Aurora Australis* is due here in mid-April and already plans are underway for the 10 days expected to be

required to achieve everything. Much of the resupply is carried out using helicopters to ferry items from ship to shore, and backload a year's stash of non-burnable rubbish (anything burnable is disposed of in an industrial incinerator on the island) and recycling, plus personal belongings of staff coming and going. The ship will be bringing the helicopters and air crew, incoming station staff and rabbit hunters, a bevy of round-tripping scientists, and water craft operators. Including the 38 people already here, the island's population could rise to as many as 107! The logistics involved in moving and accommodating everyone, and getting all of the resupply jobs and science projects achieved, are horrendous and I'm glad it's not my job. Then there is the weather which may or may not co-operate on the day and really does have the final say in what happens. The chaos of resupply isn't due to start until mid-April and there is still plenty to be done between now and then.

A key piece of station infrastructure which must keep ticking along throughout this period, and in fact throughout every day on station, is the power house. Like almost everywhere else these days the station is totally dependent on a 24 hour supply of power. I couldn't be writing this piece on a computer and emailing it to Jess without power to run the computer and lights in the room! I also wouldn't be able to receive my monthly copy of SIN via email. I noted the discussion in the last issue about power generation on The Island, so thought I'd quiz Lionel, the station mechanic, about Macquarie's power supply. Bear in mind that the population here is roughly 10% of that on Stewart



Male elephant seals

The two power houses



Island and doesn't have to support an influx of tourists staying the night (resupply excepted!).

All of the power on station comes from diesel powered engines. There are 4 in total, in two separate power houses known as the MPH (Main Power House) and EPH (Emergency Power House). This might seem like an excessive number for 38 people, but there is a good reason. Each power house can operate on a standalone basis so if something goes horribly wrong in one the other can continue to supply power. This is the case for all stations operated by the Australian Antarctic Division on the Antarctic continent, as well as here on Macquarie Is. If anything did happen in these locations, for example a fire in the MPH, getting a replacement up and running could take as long as 18 months so having a back-up for the back-up is a wise move. Only one power house is in operation at a time, and one engine can generate enough power for the whole station. Every 10 days, or 250 hours running, the engines are swapped over to en-

able maintenance.

All four engines are Caterpillars, the MPH has new 6 cylinder Caterpillar C9 engines, and the EPH has 6 cylinder 3306 engines which are older and which are the same as the engines on the Antarctic stations. The average daily station load is 60-70kW

which peaks at up to 110kW around meal times. The kitchen is one of the biggest power consumers but the load fluctuates as the oven and bain-marie are turned on and off. Various science projects also consume a lot of power but the load is generally constant. The engines generate 3.3kW per litre of diesel, and the average fuel consumption is about 16,000 litres per month. Through a co-generation process the cooling system for the engines is used to provide heat for most of the buildings on station, and also pre-heats the hot water.

In contrast, power in the field huts where we spend most of our time can be either 12V or 240V and is provided by a RAPS unit – a Remote Area Power Supply. This comprises a 12 volt battery bank, wind generator and solar panel, and a portable petrol driven generator which is used to supply 240V power to the hut and to charge the batteries when the wind and solar can't keep up.

LPG takes care of heating and cooking.

One of the negative aspects of diesel is the potential for fuel spillage, and in the past less attention was paid to the environmental effects of fuel contamination than in

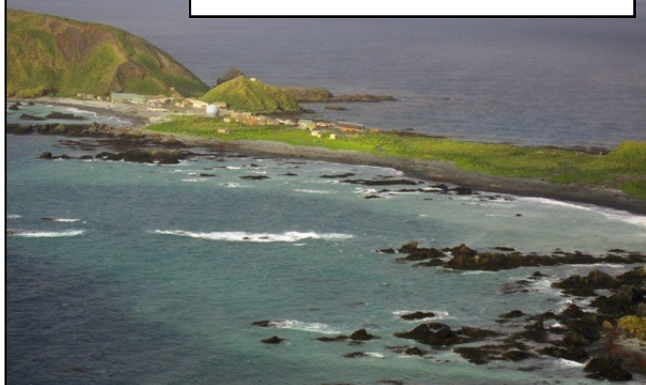


Lionel with the two engines in the MPH

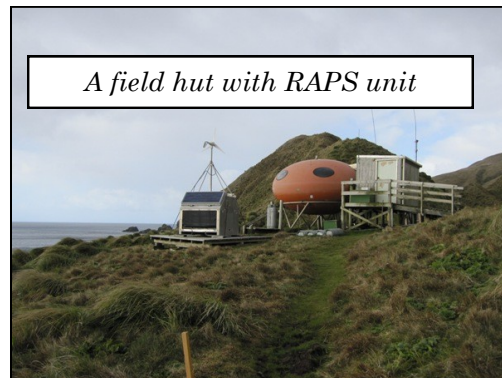
more recent times. The AAD station here has been in operation since 1948 and over the years the areas around the fuel farm and power houses have suffered a few spillages. One of the projects happening here now is looking at ways to remediate contamination in the soil. In the long term soil microbes will break down spilt fuel, but in this environment this process would take a very long time to occur naturally. The remediation project aims to speed up this natural process by continually injecting air into the soil, and in the summer adding the nutrients nitrogen and phosphate. Researchers then measure levels of contamination to determine the effectiveness of the treatment. Results will show how much of the treatment is needed to get the best result. In time these techniques could be used to further lessen the impact we have on places like this.

—Photos and story by Sandy King

The isthmus and AAD station at the northern end of the island



A field hut with RAPS unit



Rakiura National Park celebrates 10th Anniversary.

New Zealand’s southern most National Park celebrates its 10th anniversary this week.

Stewart Island/Rakiura National Park was officially opened on the 9th March 2002. The park covers approximately 157,000 hectares and makes up about 85 percent of Stewart Island/Rakiura. It is New Zealand’s 14th National Park.

National Parks have existed in New Zealand since 1887, when Maori chief Te Heuheu Tukino gifted to the nation the summits of Tongariro and Ruapehu as our first national park – Tongariro National Park.

“Giving the land National Park status means that it is maintained and preserved in perpetuity for the benefit and enjoyment of the public.

DOC’s task of preserving Rakiura National Parks’ special values has been a collaborative effort, with locals, national and international visitors, volunteers and

businesses all contributing to the many outstanding conservation achievements over the past 10 years,” said Southern Islands Acting Area Manager Sue Larson.

Although the island only has about four hundred permanent residents, the passion, dedication and commitment to the preservation of the island is evident in the number of active conservation groups. DOC works alongside more than 10 groups, each serving a different purpose – species monitoring and translocation, pest control, hut building and maintenance and hut wardening.

One of the groups, the Stewart Island Rakiura Community Environment Trust (SIRCET) has established a 210 ha pest control programme that includes about half of the township. With sponsorship they have organised a scoping study into the feasibility of eradicating possums, rats and cats from the whole of Stewart Island.

“This "in your backyard" approach has resulted in a high level of volunteerism and a real growth in understanding about

the importance and benefit of conservation work”, Larson said. DOC plans to celebrate the anniversary with a community event later in the year to coincide with the completion of the upgrade of the Rakiura Track Great Walk.

Background information

The park was opened by Prime Minister Helen Clark, with other dignitaries Conservation Minister Sandra Lee, Sir Edmund Hillary, Southland District Mayor Frana Cardno, and Te Runanga O Ngai Tahu Representative Edward Ellison.

Stewart Island has about 245kms of walking track

The Rakiura Track has the highest percentage of New Zealanders walking it than any of the other Southland Great Walks tracks. <http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/role/maps-and-statistics/visitor-statistics-and-research/>

Establishment of the Ulva Island - Te Wharawhara Marine Reserve and the Paterson Inlet - Te Whara a Te Wera Mataitai Reserve in 2004.

The Friends of the Library is still collecting suggestions for books and DVDs to purchase for the Community Library. The Library received a windfall through Vicki and Quiz money: many of the books on our recent shopping list have now been purchased! So Friends of the Library still has funds for MORE BOOKS. Let Kirsten, Pat, Jenny or Jess know what you’d like to see on shelf.

Do you love books? Do you want to help support your Community Library?

Then join Friends of the Library! This organization is dedicated to raising money to purchase books and goodies to complement the District Council provisions for our Library. If you would like to help us with fundraisers, if you have ideas on how to raise or spend money for the library, if you’re interested in *leading* this operation, or if you’re a bored bibliophile, contact Jess Kany at 367 or email jesskany@yahoo.com

BOOK NOTES

Did you know that the *Hunger Games* trilogy by Suzanne Collins is at the Library? I devoured these books: they are well-written page turners and it’s understandable they have been made into “the next big event” at the cinema.

Thanks everyone for your suggestions and THANKS Vicki and Quiz dollars for MIHing it: recent nonfiction purchases for the Library include books about chickens, handspinning, fabric dying, gluten-free cookery, flax weaving, how to quit smoking, the Pippa Blake biography, and new Lonely Planet Europe and Oz.

New fiction includes the mystery *A Fine and Bitter Snow* by Stabenow, and several fantasy novels. We also have many books from *The Listener’s Best Books of 2011*: *The Tiger’s Wife* by Obrecht, *Pigeon English* by Keham, *Open City* by Cole, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Egan, *The Wreckage* by Robotham, and *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes. Also by Julian Barnes: *Arthur and George*, an historical novel with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at its centre.

Another addition is *Small Holes in the Silence*, a collection of poetry by the late Hone Tuwhare.

—Jess



News from Stewart Island

by Antje Leseberg

Another yellow-eyed penguin season has come to an end here in the south with a mixed bag of results for Stewart Island and Codfish Island/Whenua Hou. On Codfish Island, the number of breeding pairs appears to be dropping, with the latest census carried out in October 2011, finding only 39 breeding pairs. In comparison, the 2009 census found 46 pairs and the 2001 census 61 pairs. The cause of the decline is uncertain but from now on an annual census is vital to understand what is happening. In total, the 39 nests produced only 40 chicks, giving a productivity of 1.02 chicks/pair, down from 1.37 chicks/pair last season. While there were fewer chicks this season, at least they were slightly heavier than last year with an average weight of 4.99kg.

On the Bravo Islands in Stewart Island's Paterson Inlet, the number of breeding pairs has also dropped from 20 pairs last season to only 11 pairs this season. A total of 11 chicks were produced this season, all of which were micro chipped and were healthy and of good weight. Five nests were found around Eastern Bay on the Neck of Stewart Island and produced 7 healthy chicks.

Periodically seabirds such as penguins will have bad seasons, where fewer pairs attempt to breed and fewer and/or less healthy chicks are produced. This is usually linked to large scale weather patterns and food availability and this may account for the lower success this season. We will have to see what next season brings but a close eye needs to be kept on the Codfish numbers.



Alina Thiebes and Karen Bowman releasing chicks at the Neck, Stewart Island (A. Thiebes)



Chick in holding bag. (A. Thiebes)

the GALLEY

Cod with a twang

from an anonymous Horseshoe Bay "Master Chef"

It's that time of year...cold bugs are making the rounds. Here's a dish to help clear those sinuses: Squeeze the better part of a tube of wasabi into dish, add a big slug of soy sauce, mix into a paste. Squidgle fish fillets around in this mixture until coated both sides, then lightly flour and pan fry.

STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE

WILL MEET AT THE HOME OF
NICOLETTA PRESSACCO ON
THURSDAY
12TH APRIL
AT 2.00 pm



Notes from an Offshore Supply Vessel

by Ben Hopkins

Following enquiries from a number of people on the Island as to what I'm up to now, I thought I'd write a wee bit for SIN and explain where I've been flitting off to in recent weeks.

Since January I have been doing relieving work as 2nd Officer on an Offshore Supply Vessel working from Port Taranaki in New Plymouth, doing anything from a few days to a couple of weeks, depending on the operations and who of the permanent crew need time off. During normal operations there are 3 Deck Officers, 3 Engineers, 4 Integrated Ratings (deck and engine room crew) and a cook on board, with a normal rotation being 28 days on and 28 days off. Although I'm not tramping all over the world on big ships any more, this kind of work is far more interesting and hands-on than tankers and is a part of the industry I want to ultimately become more permanently involved in.

The ship is a 4 year old, Chinese-built, Anchor-Handling Tug/Supply vessel called the Swiber Torunn and is 58.7m long and 14.6m wide with a large open working deck designed for operating around oil rigs and doing a variety of specialised tasks associated with this industry. With twin 2500BHP Nigata diesels she has a bollard pull of 65T and two large 200T towing and anchor-handling winches, meaning there is almost enough power when you really need it! Each engine drives a conventional controllable-pitch propeller and the twin rudders are capable of being operated independent of each other which, combined with the 500hp bow-thruster unit, allows us to more-easily maintain position and manoeuvre in close to the offshore installations.



The FPSO (Floating Production Storage and Offtake) Raroa.

The wheel-house contains both a forward and aft helm station, with the for-

ward one being used when steaming and the aft one when manoeuvring around wharves and offshore installations. It takes a bit of getting used to sitting in a chair looking aft over the deck with the engine, rudder and bow thruster controls all appearing to be installed back to front!



My latest ship, the AHTS Swiber Torunn.

The ship is currently on time charter to the large oil company OMV, which is the operator and part owner of the Maari Oilfield, roughly 70NM south of New Plymouth. Taking approximately 6 hours to steam to from either New Plymouth or Nelson, this is the southernmost of the operating offshore Taranaki oilfields and also New Zealand's largest, producing around 30,000bbls per day. The

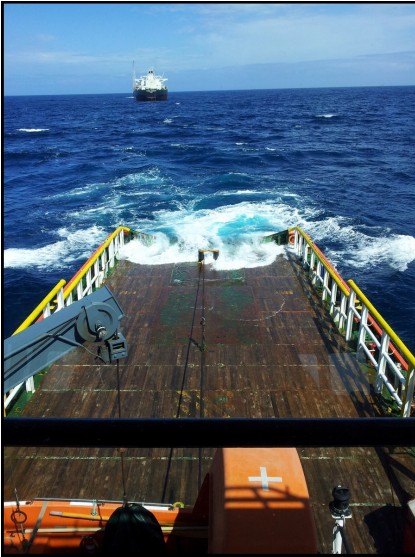
field operation consists of a well-head platform installation, which contains the drilling and pumping side of the production facility, and an FPSO (Floating Production Storage and Offtake) called the Raroa, which was converted from a tanker called the Andaman Sea by removing the propulsion machinery and installing a complex deck full of oil processing equipment. The Raroa is now permanently moored to a large multi-point mooring with a giant swivel, allowing it to swing with the weather and tide/current.



The Maari Well-Head Platform.



Manoeuvring the ship alongside the FPSO facing aft! Takes some getting used to!



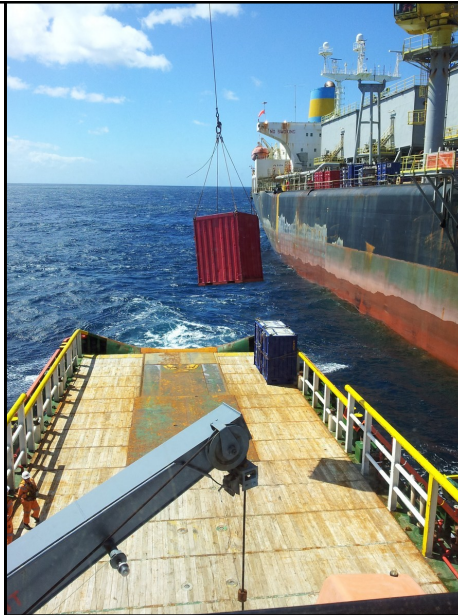
Performing a static tow for an offshore tanker.

Although approximately 1NM apart, the Raroa is connected to the wellhead platform via a network of subsea pipelines and umbilical power cables. It is through these that the oil is transferred for storage and processing on the Raroa, with

the water removed from the crude being sent back for reinjection into the well.

Due to the distance offshore, there is no pipeline like there is with the closer Maui-A and Maui-B rigs to bring the oil and gas ashore, hence the need for the FPSO to store the oil (As far as I know, gas extracted from the well is used on board the FPSO to power the operation with the remainder being flared off). Around twice per month a tanker will come and perform an offtake, which involves mooring astern of the Raroa via a large chain link and then the offtake hose is hooked up and connected to the ship's cargo manifolds. Oil is then pumped into the tanker via this hose. During the offtake our vessel performs what is called a "static tow" where we use 600m of our towing wire attached to the stern of the offtake tanker, providing between 20 and 40 tonnes of tension to prevent her from riding up onto the FPSO.

When not engaged in static tow operations, the ship performs general supply runs from New Plymouth out to the field and also between the wellhead platform and the FPSO, carrying anything from a deckload of drill pipes to boxes of machinery, containers of food supplies and rubbish skips to both installations. We also supply diesel and potable fresh water to the



Backloading cargo from the FPSO Raroa.

wellhead platform. This is performed with a flexible hose, much like the freighter at the wharf here, only our hose is suspended from the crane on the platform and we have to ensure we maintain position whilst connected and pumping, without getting the hose around the propeller!

As there is no ship's crane, we have to rely on the platform or the

FPSO to lift the cargo off our deck using their large cranes, which can prove challenging in some of the conditions out there. We aim to keep the ship steady while the crane lifts cargo on and off the deck, but sometimes when the FPSO is rolling and we are going

up and down 3-4m in the swell, it can be nearly impossible to get things in the right place or even on deck at all! Often the operation has to be aborted and we have to wait on conditions to improve before having another go, sometimes keeping us out there for anything up to a week at a time. The crew and operators of the offshore installations are flown in and out by helicopter.

The offtake hose provides a handy place for seals to sit and rest! Some have even been known to leap up onto our deck and chase the crew around!!



Worldwide there are enormous numbers of offshore installations and associated vessels like this, many of which are very complicated and highly specialised to perform different operations such as anchor-handling, dive-support, seismic research and general towing or supply work. For most Kiwis working on these sorts

of ships, Australia is the main destination with major projects along the Northwest Shelf, Timor Sea and Bass Strait regions. At the moment Taranaki is New Zealand's only offshore oil-producing region with only 2 supply boats working permanently and another couple on short-term contracts, but this may change over the next few years depending on the two main factors influencing the oil industry: Price and politics!



A deckload of different cargo for the two installations.

DOC Spot

By Sharon Pasco, Programme Manager Community Relations / Field Centre Supervisor

Productive trip south

In February Dale Chittenden and a team of DOC staff and volunteers travelled to Enderby Island in the Auckland's group with Jack Topi on the *Awesome*, where they installed 150m of boardwalk on the main tourist track across the island. This leaves just one small section to be done at some stage in the future to complete the project. The team had eight days on the island and completed a range of tasks in addition to the boardwalk, including hut and structure inspections, clearing of vegetation from the track, historic site inspections/maintenance and minor repairs to the huts. The team were picked up by the Navy on one of the new Offshore Patrol Vessels, the HMNZS Wellington. For those that haven't seen this vessel or her sister ship the *Otago*, they are 80m and designed to allow the navy to provide support to other government agencies such as MAF, Customs and DOC. The OPVs are ideal for work in the Subantarctics as they have extra accommodation to carry visitors as well as plenty of storage space for building materials, etc. Their smaller size and crew mean that they can be far more flexible (and cost effective) than the frigates used in the past and we are hoping that DOC will get a trip down south with them annually as they are also supposed to go to the Antarctic at least once a year. In addition to picking up Dale's construction team another team on the Wellington took the opportunity to complete the first survey of Rock hopper penguins at the Auckland's in 20 years



Surveying the coast of the Auckland Islands for Rock hopper penguins.

No, this is not some form of pole dancing - DOC staff member Thomas Wright from the Murihiku Area office (left) and Paul Waymouth, a volunteer from Winton Rotary Club, drive in a peg for the boardwalk extension on Enderby Island.



materials and carrying out weed control. The opportunity was also taken to get people closely involved with writing the new management plan for the islands down there, so they can see the issues first hand. Reasonable weather and a great crew made for a very productive trip.

Fire ban has now been lifted

The Southern Rural Fire Authority has now lifted the total fire ban imposed across all of Southland (including Stewart Island / Rakiura) on the 5th of January 2012. A restricted fire season is now in place, which means anyone wishing to light a fire in the open must first obtain a written fire permit. Fire permits for Stewart Island are issued by DOC on behalf of

the SRFA.

Blitz on barberry

Last month we employed six new staff members to help with the Darwins Barberry eradication project over the next few months. This team is currently concentrating on properties in and around Halfmoon Bay, so it is likely you may meet them as they work their way around the village. All property owners have been sent a form seeking approval for their properties to be checked for barberry and the team will only be working on properties where this permission has been given. They will however be door-knocking at these properties prior to commencing any work to talk to any tenants. Other weeds work around the bay recently has included checks for German Ivy, as well as Old Mans Beard (one active site found and treated). If you think you may have any of these weeds on your property then please give us a call and we can check them out for you. An excellent website for weed identification is www.weedbusters.co.nz.

and the first ever survey of shags in that area, as well as picking up old building



Five of the six staff currently working to eliminate Darwins Barberry around the village. Back row, from left: Ana Richards and Theo Dekker. Centre: Rachel Blackburn. Front: Brighde Penn and Scott Smith. Absent: Fiona Gordon.

Youth Hostel Association – Eco Lodge Project Update

by Margaret Hopkins

YHA New Zealand’s plans for a 54 bed eco-hostel and learning centre on Stewart Island are still in the pipeline. ‘YHA New Zealand remains committed to its Stewart Island project’ says Mark Wells, Chief Executive for YHA. ‘Our immediate focus continues to be the capital fundraising campaign. This has been affected by the Christchurch earthquakes - essentially we suspended the campaign while the earthquake appeal was in full swing as it did not seem appropriate to ‘compete’ against this appeal for the philanthropic dollar. However, the campaign is now fully reactivated.’

Mr Wells said, ‘We will not progress into the next phase of the project until we have achieved funding thresholds, and we are progressing towards the levels required. Conversations with potential major donors are progressing and I am optimistic of a number of positive developments in coming months.’



The new hostel is to be sited on land owned by YHA on the corner of Elgin Tce and

Excelsior road. YHA’s vision for this project is to provide accommodation and a resourced learning centre which reflects YHA's commitment to the environment while at the same time providing visitors to the island with the opportunity to explore its unique environment. The project is expected to cost in the vicinity of \$5 million.

WORTHY WEEDBUSTERS

Weedbusters NZ is calling for groups, organisations, schools and individuals tackling weed issues in their communities to be nominated for the 2012 Regional Weedbusters Awards being run throughout New Zealand. The awards recognise the efforts of those who get stuck in and deal with weed issues in their communities in a voluntary capacity. The awards were launched nationwide in 2006, and were run again in 2008 and 2010, with over 50 nominations each time.

Weedbusting efforts around New Zealand over the last few years have ranged from individuals working on their own properties to remove weedy species, to groups adopting natural areas such as bush remnants or wetlands and removing all weed species in that area. Joint efforts are often the most successful, with community volunteers working with schools, businesses, local and regional councils, and DOC to tackle weed issues.

There are five categories for the Weedbusters awards, all recognising weedbusting efforts: public land; private land; industry/organisation; education; overall excellence chosen from the previous four categories. Anyone can put forward nominations for these awards, even the weedbusters themselves! **Nominations are open until 31 March 2012**, and can be made online at www.weedbusters.org.nz.

Undaria harvesting exemption extended

Environment Southland has extended a diving company’s exemption to commercially harvest the pest seaweed *undaria* from Bluff Harbour but declined an application for its collection on Stewart Island.



The Council Regional Services Committee today approved the application by Emmett Diving Enterprises Ltd for a one-year extension to collect *undaria*, which is included in the Regional Pest Management Strategy.

The seaweed is harvested for human consumption.

However the Committee also declined the company’s exemption application to extend its operations to Stewart Island.

Biosecurity Manager Richard Bowman said work being done at Bluff was occurring in satisfactory manner but advised the Committee that little information was known about the risks involved in doing the same work at the island.

The company has been involved in the control of *undaria* at Bluff and Stewart Island for several years. Despite the pest’s presence in pockets on the island, it was not widespread, Mr Bowman said.

Research would be carried out in the next few months that would better equip the Council with science-based information about the exposure to risk, he said.

‘We’re concerned about the further spread of *undaria*, so until we get a better handle on that risk we feel it’s better not approve the application at this time.’

Mr Bowman said the operator was quite positive about the market demand for *undaria*, predominantly from abroad, and that this application could be the first of many. ‘So it’s best to get it right the first time.’

Councillor Nicol Horrell agreed that it was a sensible step to ensure the risk factors were covered off before expanding into new areas.



Congratulations to Tom and Vicky Jackson of *Sunstone*. They won First Place PHRF (Performance Handicap Racing Fleet) of Leg Two of the SSANZ Race. *Sunstone*, a varnished wooden vessel built in Scotland in 1965, has been the Jacksons’ permanent home for thirty years. Rounding Puysegur Point in big seas resulted in some redecorating... Read more about this intrepid sailing couple at www.sunstonesailing.com

Julius Herzhoff - Junior Commonwealth Fencing Champion



The Junior Commonwealth Fencing Championships are held once every 3 years for fencers under the age of 20. This February they were held in St Helier, Jersey and eleven young fencers from New Zealand including Julius Herzhoff who grew up on Stewart Island and attended Halfmoon Bay School, competed in this Commonwealth event.

Julius won silver in the team event and was placed 24th individually. 'Winning silver at this level was the biggest

achievement in my fencing career' said Julius who began fencing at the age of ten because his mother Ulrike thought it was a good idea! He is a member of the Christ College team and also competes for a club.



Julius first competed overseas in 2008 in Australia at the age of 12 years followed by competitions in Hong Kong and Singapore for the world cup where he was placed 10th in the under 17 section

at the age of 14. The following year he competed in Bangkok and at the beginning of 2012 he travelled to Europe where he trained in Germany for 6 weeks before competing in the largest world fencing tournament in Paris finishing 90th out of 243 entrants. Following this Julius took part in the Junior Commonwealth competitions in Jersey.

Winner of a 2011 Secondary School National Championship, holder of South Island and Canterbury titles as well as Oceanic under 17 teams champion Julius plans to continue fencing when he finishes school and hopes to travel to Europe to train and compete professionally representing New Zealand.

—Margaret Hopkins

InterIslander
AN EVENING OF CANTABRIAN WIT

McPHAIL & GADSBY

The long awaited reunion

8pm April 14th at the Community Centre
Tickets \$42 from Sue at the Hall



SSANZ boats crossing the finish line in Halfmoon Bay. Above: Surreal. Below: Danaide. Photos from Margaret Hopkins



White shark research in Foveaux Strait

A joint National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research (NIWA), Department of Conservation (DOC) and Auckland University research team is returning to continue their research on Stewart Island's / Rakiura enigmatic white shark population.

The research will be conducted from the DOC vessel Hananui from 16 - 28 March around the Titi Islands located off Stewart Island's northeast coast and Ruapuke Island in Foveaux Strait as weather permits.

Divers and kayakers are advised to avoid the areas where the research is being conducted while the boat is on station and for at least 24 hours afterward as the team will be using berley (a mixture of minced fish and fish oil) to attract sharks.

"Fragments of berley may settle to the bottom and continue to hold a shark or sharks at the site for several hours after berleying has ceased," says DOC shark expert Clinton Duffy.

The principal study sites for this trip will be Bench, Edwards and Ruapuke

Islands. The research team will shift between these islands and other sites depending on weather conditions and the presence or absence of sharks.

"We will relay the location of the study vessel daily via local fishermen's radio, to alert any divers or kayakers," says Mr Duffy. "This information will be updated each time the vessel shifts site."

The waters around Stewart Island have long been recognised as a hot spot for white sharks in New Zealand. This is the sixth year the team has travelled south to undertake photo-identification and tagging in an attempt to learn more about this now protected species.

Last year a total of 41 individual sharks were photo-identified around Bench, Edwards and Ruapuke Islands, including 18 that had been previously sighted in 2010. This included two large females that the team has seen every year since 2008, and a juvenile male nicknamed 'Grim' that was satellite tagged near the Bunkers Islets in March 2010.

In 2010 Grim undertook a much publicised migration from Stewart Island to Fiji. Last year he returned to the

Pacific Islands but this time he visited Tonga. His tag appears to have stopped transmitting but he has been re-sighted several times already this year at Edwards Island. In contrast one of the large females, made two return trips to the Auckland Islands from Stewart Island before migrating to the same seamount in the Coral Sea that she visited in 2010.

"The research team has also been collecting data from acoustically tagged sharks using an array of listening devices deployed around north-eastern Stewart Island and Ruapuke Island for the last year," says NIWA Principal Scientist, Malcolm Francis.

"Data collected so far confirms that most white sharks depart from this region in winter as they undertake long-distance migrations to the tropic. A data download in late January showed that at least four of the sharks tagged in March 2011 had returned to the region."

"Another download on the forthcoming trip will hopefully show whether and when the other sharks have returned. We will also find out how long each shark spends in each location, and how mobile or residential they are," Dr Francis adds.

QUIZ ROAD TRIP!

As some of you know, the Quiz Night is going on tour to raise money for the Cancer Society.

The dates so far are as follows:

- Mon 16th April Balclutha Rosebank Lodge
- Tues 17th April Palmerston Waihemo Lodge
- Weds 18th April Oamaru Fat Sallys
- Thurs 19th April Mosgiel Taieri Lodge
- Mon 23rd April Frankton Frankton Ale House
- Tues 24th April Wanaka Bullock Bar
- Wedn 25th April Arrowtown New Orleans
- Thurs 26th April Cromwell Cromwell Brew House
- Mon 30th April Dunedin Cableways
- Tues 1st May Omakau Omakau Commercial
- Weds 2nd May Alexandra The Middle

- Thurs 3rd May Milton White Horse Inn
- Tues 8th May Manapouri Lakeview Hotel
- Weds 9th May Queenstown Red Rock Café Bar
- Thurs 10th May Mossburn Mossburn Hotel
- Mon 14th May Matakura The Falls Hotel
- Tues 15th May Tuatapere Waiarau Hotel
- Weds 16th May Colac Bay Colac Bay Tavern
- Thurs 17th May Riverton Globe Bar
- Fri 18th May Winton Central Southland Lodge
- Sun 20th May Stewart Island South Sea Hotel

Please spread the word to anyone you know living in these areas to get a team together and come on down! You can also follow us on facebook.com/vickisquiz .

And I'll be back every Sunday for the regular quiz night here!

—Vicki Coats

I'm a novice to the world of sailing, and I learned quite a bit about the sport this month. (Note to self: if ever officiating a yacht race, bring a back-up airhorn. More on that later.) The first sailing lesson I learned is that sailors are on a wonky schedule. Don't invite them for tea on Tuesday, because these people are slaves to wind, tides, gear, fabric, and increasingly sluggish neurons, therefore specific small windows of time don't suit. Invite your sailors to tea sometime Tuesday through Friday and your guests might grace your wharf that week.

HMB School kids greet Surreal with a haka



Tizzy aka Michael Squires affixes the SSANZ flag to the mast of *Titan* at dawn, preparing to go out and greet *Surreal*. Helen Cave gamely went along to take photos for *SIN* because her daughter-in-law, *SIN* editor, said something like "There is no way I am leaving my



house at dawn." Anyway, *Surreal* was further out than expected, so Helen took some lovely pix, *Titan* motored home, and everyone anticipated the first yacht's arrival sometime close to noon. But the tortoise turned into a hare, and suddenly *Surreal* was turning into Halfmoon Bay, catching everyone by surprise. There was a mad scramble of greeters to the wharf, and Tizzy once again head out to do the meet and greet, and escorted *Surreal* past the finish line. The HMB

school kids performed a haka, champagne was opened sprayed into the tide... Then the crew threw the skipper into the drink. All good fun.



Aboard the *Arun*: Race officials, loved ones, hosts and fans watch the SSANZ sails disappear over the horizon



T-minus one hour. Sailors disembark from HMB wharf so they can ready their boat for the start.

HMB school aboard *Casteaux*

Dozens of locals boarded boats to create a festive flag-festooned flotilla which escorted the sailboats to sea. The *Arun*, *Titan*, *Wildfire*, *Southern Isle*, *Aurora*, *Barjona*, the HMB School aboard the *Casteaux*, and a little rubber ducky all saw the sailors off. Peter Goomes took his sailboat *Bravo*. "I'm here to make the last boat feel better," he said. In passing, yachties yelled *Thanks for the hospitality* to their Island hosts.



The countdown to the START of the race is nerve-wracking for the sailors, but also a jumpy time for race officials. There is protocol: a flag goes up the mast and horn sounds at five minutes out; then the horn sounds again and a blue flag is lowered to signal the all-important GO TIME. Aboard the *Arun*, race officer Steve



gave this guy the airhorn with explicit instructions including "Don't shake it."

Steve was on flag duty. But when it came down to T minus zero, wouldn't you know it, the airhorn just sort of squeaked like a crook mollymawk. Steve was so busy telling off the airhorn guy that he forgot to lower the flag. (I learned another sailing lesson: Sailing officers curse like sailors.) *Arun* captain Garry Neave ended up using his boat horn. (FYI I witnessed the whole thing first hand, and nobody ever shook the airhorn.) Anyway, no matter, all the sailboats were onto it and away at 2pm on the nose, and I learned something else about sailing: it's absolutely beautiful. When the wind fills the sail you feel like you've taken the biggest happiest breath of the day. **Thanks to Gwen and friends for all your work helping to organize this event.**



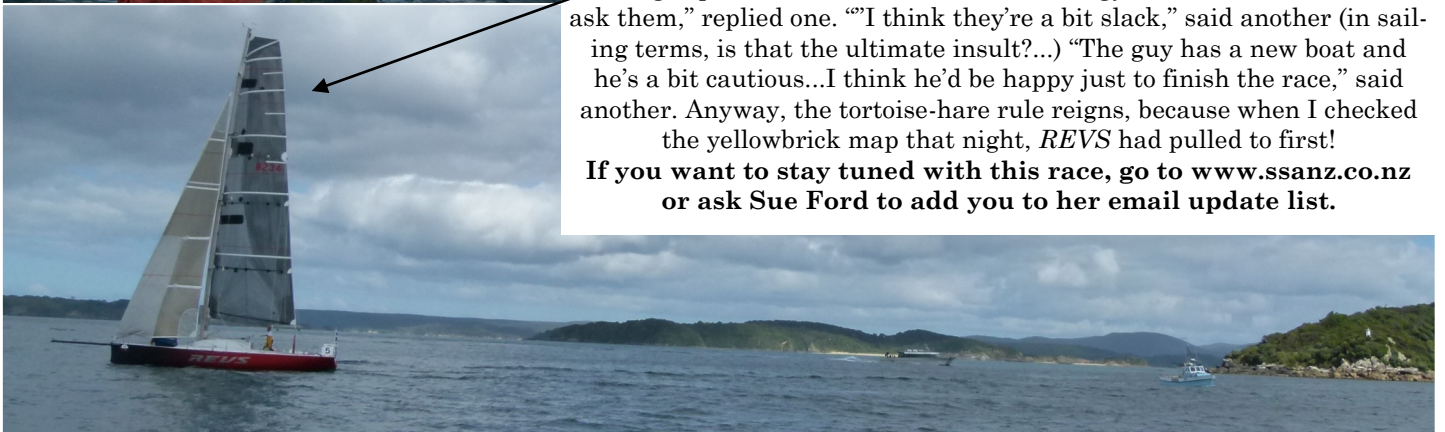
Photos from Jess Kany and Helen Cave



What's a yacht race without a bit of romance?
Surreal skipper Tim's wife surprised him with a visit on Stewart Island. They stayed at the Goomes, the hosts with the most, who gave them cheese and chocolates and the use of their hot tub.

Last but not least, the *REVS* heads out of Halfmoon Bay, leaving Acker's Point behind. The crew were just preparing to add another sail while their seven competitors were already far ahead. Curious, I asked the sailing experts around me what their strategy could be. "You'd have to ask them," replied one. "I think they're a bit slack," said another (in sailing terms, is that the ultimate insult?...). "The guy has a new boat and he's a bit cautious...I think he'd be happy just to finish the race," said another. Anyway, the tortoise-hare rule reigns, because when I checked the yellowbrick map that night, *REVS* had pulled to first!

If you want to stay tuned with this race, go to www.ssanz.co.nz or ask Sue Ford to add you to her email update list.



CONGRATULATIONS

New parents

Petra and Abel

Welcome

Ella, Ayla and Isla!!!

www.stewart-island-news.com



GREYMOUTH PETROLEUM

Greymouth Petroleum is a NZ owned oil and gas company. It holds an exploration permit in the Great South Basin. Greymouth is currently in the planning stage for the drilling of an exploration well in the permit. A preferred location for this well is Stewart Island. How can this benefit the local community? Join us to find out.

Greymouth Petroleum would like to invite Stewart Island residents to a presentation to be held at the Stewart Island Community Centre on Wednesday 11th April at 7pm. There will be time for questions and answers following the presentation. Refreshments will be provided.



PROUDLY KIWI

Please RSVP to: lara@greymouthholdings.com

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Clinton Duffy of the Stewart Island Shark Research invites you to a

SHARK TALK

7.30pm

**Wednesday 21st March
at the Community Centre**

Gold coin donation please



Maureen Jones watches the SSANZ sailors from aboard the Arun.

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