

STEWART ISLAND NEWS

May 2004 \$2

Celebrating Stewart Island

CAR JOYRIDING BECOMING A PROBLEM.



This Holden Gemini was stolen and then crashed at Horseshoe Bay beach.

Local police have been busy with a task that is quite common “on the other side” but is not so usual here. Car Joyriding. Last month the Holden Gemini shown above was taken from the ferry car park, driven around and crashed.

It was extensively damaged and looks to be a write-off. Then just last week another vehicle was taken from the same spot. This one had also been left with the keys in the ignition and almost ended up over the cliff at Kamahi Road “Dress Circle”. The driver had a lucky escape as the vehicle was found, with the engine running, teetering on the edge of a 30-metre drop onto rocks.

Clearly it is no longer safe to leave our cars in the traditional Stewart Island way, trusting they will remain in the same place. Relieving Constable, Jason Munro, has a message for all car owners in the police column on page four. Over the next fortnight Constable Jan Craig will be on the lookout for unregistered and un-warranted vehicles.

New Banner for Anniversary

Yes, it has been 12 months since I took over the editing of SIN so I thought a new banner was appropriate. The old one was using up too much ink anyway! Especially after it had to be reprinted several times to get rid of the spelling mistakes, etc.

I hope readers have enjoyed the newsletter as much as I have enjoyed producing it. Hopefully we will see it continue for many years yet. As always, your help in gathering newsworthy items is much appreciated. My function is editorial rather than that of a reporter.

Please let me know if you wish to see any changes or have ideas for new features, any feedback at all is welcome. Thanks to all our subscribers – 66 copies per month are now mailed out (52 of these to addresses off the island).

Stewart.

Major Boost for Community Trust Project

Over the past year or so the Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environment Trust has been developing the idea that some form of Pest Control project within the Halfmoon Bay area might bring considerable benefits to this Community.

You may have seen various articles in SIN covering our basic concept that, on a personal level, it would be fantastic to have Saddlebacks and Robins and other rare native birds around our homes. And in the wider scheme of things, what potential economic opportunities might such a unique feature bring to this Communities future?

During the past year this dream has had a practical start in the form of The Ackers Point Restoration Project. With the kind permission and support of Ian Wilson and Philipa Fraser-Wilson, The Wilson Family, much volunteer effort (particularly by Brent and Kari Beaven), and the generous donation of expertise and resources by D.O.C., the Ackers Point area pests have taken a hammering. The area is now fully trapped for rats, cats, and possums, with an ongoing plan of control and research, and data gathering programs in place.

The rapid success of this initial project encouraged us to dream of expanding the potential area of Pest Control across the larger Halfmoon Bay Urban area. Money being the major limiting factor to any dream, we decided to submit project funding applications to the Department of Conservation Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds. These funds are allocated by D.O.C. at a national level to suitable community based conservation projects.

The Trust is delighted to announce that our applications resulted in an agreement to provide our **Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project** with \$87,000 of funding over the next two years. This is obviously a huge boost to our plans. With this level of funding we are definitely talking about realities rather than dreams!

A brief summary of the project objectives is included below. The Trust will be mailing out a full information package to all Islanders regarding this project sometime soon. Our Environment Centre in The Bay should also be opening soon, and this will be the central point for community information and hopefully involvement in the project. We will be regularly printing updates in SIN, and of course you are welcome to contact any member of the Trust for any information at any time.

Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project: Objectives:

1. To increase the native bird population around HMB
2. To provide a safe habitat for re-introduction and survival for Stewart Island species threatened with extinction.
3. To educate and involve the community in conservation activities.
4. To increase eco-tourism opportunities on the island
5. To help our community feel proud of it's local environment
6. To help our children and adults learn about the environment and pest control.

The Trust would like to make a few points absolutely clear regarding the project.

Operations will only involve private land volunteered for the project by landowners.
Methods used will be totally consistent with approved best safe practice.

We will definitely not be targeting domestic pets. During control we will suggest nearby domestic cats are fitted with collars so that if they are caught in cage traps they can be promptly and safely sent home!

This is not a D.O.C. project. We warmly acknowledge D.O.C.'s substantial funding contribution, as we do their past and continuing support in the form of technical expertise and resources. However we have many other potential partners and sponsors that will hopefully assist us in our aims. Management of the project lies entirely with the Trust. This is all about Islanders taking control of a part of our own patch.

The Trust believes the **Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project** can make a huge positive contribution to the future of this Community and the environment we live in. We hope you all will get behind this project, and obviously will be thrilled to accept your involvement in any way shape or form.

Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environment Trust Members are:

Jed Lewis and Chris Visser (2191494), Sandy King (2191102), Fiona Hall (2191440),
Jim Barrett (2191040), Dil Belworthy (2191249).

STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE

Jenny Gell

On the 11th May the Garden Circle Meeting was held in the home of Raylene Waddell with everyone enjoying being inside in the warm. We discussed rats, wekas and even headless chooks before tackling the in-house competition which was won by:

First: Anita Geeson Second: Jenny Gell

Competition Results were:

Seasonal Treasure:	(1) Anita Geeson	(2) Raylene Waddell/Lil Skipper	(3) Jenny Gell
Egg Cup Posy:	(1) Jenny Gell	(2) Raylene Waddell	(3) Anita Geeson
Variegated Leaf:	(1) Anita Geeson	(2) Lil Skipper	(3) Jenny Gell

The June Meeting will be held on the 10th at the home of Wendy Hallett at 2pm.



New Zealand
POLICE
Nga Pirihimana O Aotearoa

Halfmoon Bay Beat



Jan Craig from Dunedin will be the relieving constable from the 16th May when I finish.

Of concern, there have been several motor vehicles taken over the last few months.

Firstly I would like to advise locals (and visitors) to lock their cars when they intend leaving them overnight which may help reduce the incidents of cars being taken by drunks for a joy ride.

Secondly, potential car takers – the maximum penalty is seven years imprisonment for taking a car for a joy ride. It is a crime under section 226(1) of the Crimes Act 1961. This legislation also includes boats (dinghies), aircraft and horses. So if it's not yours, *leave it alone* is the best message. You can expect to have the book thrown at you with any traffic offences added, (drink-driving, careless or dangerous use causing death or injury, etc). Most traffic offences will result in a loss of licence, fines and potentially imprisonment.

Two recent instances have been cleared with one outstanding – enquiries are continuing. A \$500 reward has been offered for information leading to the conviction of the offender.

The latest driver was lucky to escape with his life, another few feet and the car would have gone down the cliff along with anyone in it. Thanks to the fire brigade and Doc Marty for their attendance and for scrambling down the cliff to look for victims.

The potential for loss of life and serious injury is very real here on Stewart Island:

- narrow, uneven roads
- older model cars
- surrounded by sea and rocks
- poor lighting and very dark roads
- roads designed for 30 and 50 km/hr speed limits

If you add an alcohol- or drug-impaired driver behind the wheel of a stolen car then the recipe for disaster is complete. The driver does not know what is wrong with the car or even if the car is roadworthy and will drive in a manner that normal motorists would not even attempt.

Rob Fox had most cars up to WOF standard but it is now apparent some owners are letting their vehicles slip with outdated WOF and registrations noted around the place. A friendly reminder to get them up to scratch because they will be enforced.

Thanks to everyone for making my two weeks here enjoyable. The support from the community makes it easy to police my home turf.

Jason Munro, Relieving Constable, Halfmoon Bay

Rakiura - keeping it Beautiful

Stewart Island has become nationally famous in the NZ Waste industry.

An article published in a major waste industry magazine – Waste Awareness – promoted the achievements of residents on their new waste management service.

The article titled 'Rakiura – keeping it beautiful' highlights the unspoiled charm and natural beauty of the island. It profiles the new service and progress to date.

The Council has received positive feedback - for example, 'read the article and was



Sign visible at the intersection of Horseshoe Point Road and Horseshoe Bay Road's.

really impressed – congratulations', 'pictures are great'.

To view the article in full visit www.southlanddcwaste.govt.nz

More bags on the way

It's time for the annual allocation of Official Prepaid Degradable Refuse Bags. Each June the Council will issue ratepayers on the kerbside recycling collection service their allocation of 52 prepaid refuse bags (one per week).

Be on the lookout for your letter and TICKET allowing you to pick up your allocation of prepaid refuse bags.

As some will be aware there were issues last time with a) Ratepayers misplacing their letters and b) letters going to absentee landlords.

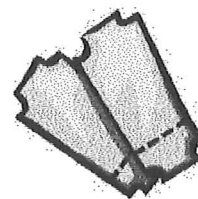
The Council requests that if tenants should be receiving the tickets, you will need to get the property owner to notify the Council in writing that the tickets should go to an alternative address.

Official prepaid bags will not be given out without a ticket. Please keep your tickets in a safe place and bring them with you when you go to collect your bags from the Council Area Office.

For further information contact
Donna Peterson, Waste Minimisation Coordinator
Southland District Council on 218 7259 or email
donna.peterson@southlanddc.govt.nz



**NO TICKET
NO BAGS**



Ayr Street
P O Box 187
Stewart Island
Telephone & Fax (03) 2191 477

Stewart Island
Stewart Island
Community Centre Trust
Community Centre Trust

Community Centre Newsletter – May 2004

As expected, things are starting to slow down a bit for the winter. Indoor Bowls continues every Tuesday evening at 7.30 when new members or casual bowlers are welcome to attend. If you have considered indoor bowls, please come along and meet the team.

Venture Southland has been holding a series of business workshops for the Oban community. These included webpage and email management. We had a visit from the Limousin Cattle Breeders Society and, for anyone who was not there, Helen and Mark Honess are now “wife and husband”. PC stuff here! It’s good to see all these different groups using the Community Centre and enjoying its facilities.

On a slightly less pleasant note, some children from the community have been going into the hall after school and causing mischief. While the hall is there for everyone to use, please bear in mind that all children under the age of twelve years must be supervised by an adult while they are in the facility. Would parents please ensure their children are aware of this and check they are not the ones creating the problem. Thank you.



The very deserving recipient this month is Colleen Dawson.

Colleen works tirelessly for the Council, the Promotions Association, SIESA, the Community Board, the Museum, etc. While doing this, she is always smiling and willingly helps anyone who comes into her office.

A shining example to the rest of the community.

Sue & Bruce of Seabuzz donated the chocolates with sincere thanks to Colleen.

Message for Crib Owners re Eligibility to Vote

From Jim Watt, Friends of Rakiura

As it is understood, ALL ratepayers at Stewart Island can vote in the upcoming elections. However you MUST BE on the new electoral roll that is being compiled.

You should be automatically on the roll if your residential address (as it appears on the Parliamentary elector roll) is on the Island. But if you are a crib owner this is not likely to be the case. You need to make special application.

Ask for an Enrolment Form for Ratepayer Electors from any of the Southland District Council offices. Or phone 03 218 7259 between 8.30am and 5.00pm weekdays and ask for Helen Hillis or Virginia Dillon. Do this before 6 July 2004.

Off-island ratepayers pay a very significant proportion of the total 'rate take'. Friends of Rakiura encourages all crib-owners that reside off-island to exercise their right.

"It is a little unjust that whereas ratepayers who live off-island are among the island's very best advocates, the right to vote is not automatic." Your comments are invited.

Replies received include:

"I agree that it is important for crib-owners to enrol so they may vote in the upcoming elections later this year. Many ratepayers who live off the island are indeed the very best advocates for the Island, as was evidenced by the furore over the Golden Bay issue last year. It may be that people who live here everyday don't truly appreciate the special character of the place and aren't as focussed on trying to preserve that character when they do things without careful planning. Obviously the Island cannot remain standing still as we all have to live and make a living here but too many things slip through the gaps and don't really provide long-term solutions to current problems. We need to encourage good candidates for the community board to support the few who are doing a good job there. We need people with sound business backgrounds; good advocacy skills; long-term vision and a real love of the special character of Stewart Island. There are major changes ahead for the Stewart Island community and we need quality people to deal with the many implications this will bring for us all."

"No problems with that. How about this for an idea. Ratepayers get a vote (first name on the rate demand). Residents get a vote (one each).

If you are a ratepayer (see above) AND a resident you get two."

**Stewart Island News is usually published monthly as contributions permit.
As a newsletter of the Oban township, the aim is to represent the ideas of the Community.
Please send contributions to the editor: Stewart Dovey, P O Box 87, Stewart Island.
Email sdovey@es.co.nz**



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Yellow-eyed penguins have poor breeding year on Stewart Island

Only 11 out of 42 chicks survived to go to sea on Stewart Island this season, with few of them expected to return. This is equal to the lowest survival ever recorded on the Otago Peninsula, where chick survival is usually 70-90%.

The Yellow-Eyed Penguin Trust has been working in conjunction with the Department of Conservation to find out what is happening to yellow-eyed penguins on Stewart Island. After the trust surveyed the island for nests two years ago, they expressed concern about the apparent decline in numbers, with some historical breeding sites no longer having any birds present.

The Trust monitored all the nests along the Northern Coast of Stewart Island, looking for evidence of cat predation. What they found instead, was that most chicks appeared to have died of starvation.

Stewart Island Biodiversity Programme Manager Brent Beaven, described the Trust's work with DOC as vital:

"The high rate of chick death was alarming. We don't know what is causing the deaths, but hopefully this will become clear over the next few years of monitoring. Of the chicks that go to sea, only a small fraction manage to return. We are unlikely to see many, if any, of the chicks from this year ever return. If the Trust had not been there doing this work, we would never have known this was occurring."

The Trust and DOC will continue to monitor these birds over the next few years to work out if this is a 'one-off' event or 'normal'. Identifying the cause of decline is the first step in finding a way to protect these penguins and making sure that they do not disappear forever off the mainland.

This work was funded by the Community Trust of Southland and Contact Energy Ltd's 2003 "Community Conservation Challenge".

The Yellow-Eyed Penguin Trust is seeking a sponsor for further year's work.

Toi Rakiura Arts Trust

Trustees will be discussing several ideas at their next meeting. A Stone Symposium is planned for Labour Weekend. This has yet to be fully explored but will include workshops on carving Oamaru stone and a variety of other related events.

Also a production similar to New Zealand Idol is to be discussed. If this goes ahead, it will be a mid-winter fun event for all locals with the emphasis on a light-hearted day.

More details next month when plans are more advanced.

Councillor's Column

Our innovative recycling scheme is up for two environmental awards.

The Council has nominated the Rakiura Resource Recovery Centre for the Green Ribbon Awards run by the Ministry for the Environment, as well as the Southland Environmental Awards.

Whether they win or not, the nominations are a significant endorsement of our community's environmental efforts and I know that the great majority of residents are right in behind kerbside recycling.

There are still some teething problems to be sorted out with the food scrap collection, but the volume of material being recovered is going to make a significant difference to our environment.

Stewart Island is leading the whole Southland District in our waste management measures.

Our next big issue is going to be the new sewerage scheme extensions.

This project will give almost the whole of the developed area around Oban a fully reticulated sewerage system.

With a 50% subsidy from the government, and a sixth likely to be met by the wider district, this is the best opportunity our community could have to get an affordable scheme up and running.

The council will be starting community consultation shortly, with full information going to everyone who would be affected.

Bill Todd

Some people are rather funny,
They spend what they don't have,
To buy things they don't need.
To impress people they don't like!

Anon

Reflections on Stewart Island in Winter

Kia Ora

It is an exquisite time of year to be here and to take stock of the unique solace of green, open spaces that is the essence of Stewart Island/Rakiura. While the rest of the world seems engulfed in conflicts of various forms, this island, and the nation that it anchors, continue to proffer a remarkable vision which much of the world looks to, almost as an ideal; not just some "Middle Earth" but a truly sustainable country with a vision – however difficult to achieve – of true ecological and cultural integration.

Jane and I had the opportunity recently to take part in the New Zealand Planning Institute conference in Invercargill and were, frankly, amazed to experience the professionalism and passion of planners from all over the country who are truly trying to make profound and creative differences within the statutory confines of the Local Government Act and the Resource Management Act. What was most impressive was the imaginative thinking; the emphasis on culture, history and sustainability; and, the outspoken willingness of those involved to share views, to listen to differing perspectives, and to try and work together to make New Zealand a better place for all.

There was great disappointment (among the planners) that the weather did not permit a visit to Stewart Island, which was one of the greatly anticipated field trips. But participants were deeply impressed by the preparatory materials, and all seemed to share a view that Stewart Island remains one of the great conservation and cultural jewels of this country.

Wishing you all well,

Michael Tobias and Jane Morrison
Dancing Star Foundation

Part two of the Australian Lawn Mowing Association article from last month.

"Apparently not, Chief. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it – sometimes twice a week".

"They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?"

"Not exactly, Chief. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags."

"They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?"

"No, sir. Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away."

"Now let me get this straight. They fertilise grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?"

"Yes, sir."

"These suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work."

You aren't going to believe this Chief. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it." Part three next month

