

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

## CELEBRATING RAKIURA



May 2019

\$4.00

“They’re coming.”

Sounds very *Game of Thrones*, but I’m talking about rats. You’ve probably noticed your traps are busier, heard more trackside scurries, and seen more retchy matted gray pancakes in the road. There are heaps of rats around and more on the way. *Plague* and *rat* are words humans don’t like to see in the same sentence but sorry, people, a rat plague is expected this winter. Inside this issue are reasons why and how we can be ready for it. See pages 4 & 11 for trapping tips and more information.

This edition is packed with some great anecdotes, histories and stories thanks to the wonderful writers in our midst. You’re in for some treats starting with Jules’ stamp story below. Peter Scho and Bill Watt have shared more glimpses into the island’s unique past, and we have another beautiful gardening column from Raylene. BIG thanks to Sandra Hoelz for contributing a fascinating article about the island’s busy BEE community. Well worth the read (p3). Congrats to Les Pullen who has a new Stewart Island book out!

Lania shares her inspiring health & diet



Visitor Mackenzie Root enjoys a paddle at Lee Bay on a summery May day.

journey on page 5. I can recommend a great fitness regime: rat trapping! Contact Willy Gamble and get yourself a rat line to walk this winter.

Anyone keen to compile a literary/arts magazine featuring local poets/fiction writers/artists ... maybe produced twice a year? Let me know if there’s any interest. —*Jess*

### Stamp of approval

by Jules Retberg

My heart sank and stomach lurched simultaneously.

“Hello, I’m calling from New Zealand Post – I’m trying to *track down* a Mr Matt Jones. We got his name from the New Zealand Defence Force.”

Static purred on the otherwise silent phone line as “*track down*” bounced around in my head. Track down as in *investigate*? Hunt? CAPTURE?!

*What has Matt’s Mum sent through the post now, was my first thought (sorry Jill) and then New Zealand Defence Force? Is Matt a spy? Has he been leading a double life all these years? Is bird watching just a cover for being able to travel around the world with a pair of binoculars?*

Visions pop into my mind of an angry red customs sticker slapped across a parcel sent from the UK in 2008 instructing “DECLARE ALL CONTENTS OR RISK DESTRUCTION” that contained

undeclared items from the lovely Mrs Jones when we first moved out to New Zealand. Teabags. Removed from the box and wrapped in plastic. You can imagine the guy at Auckland International Mail Room, sitting at the x-ray machine watching rectangles of nothingness swim past his eyes when a bunch of tightly packed herbs appear and he splutters his flat white all over the screen ...

But I digress. Back to the phone call from New Zealand Post.

Gulp.

I began nervously, “He’s away for a month, is there something I can help with?”

“We want to use one of his photos. For a stamp. The 2019 Anzac Dawn

Service commemorative stamp issue.”

“Oh thank fuh-a-a stamp? His photo? Wow! New Zealand Defence Force – how are they involved?”

The nice New Zealand Post man went on to explain that a photo Matt had taken of the Anzac dawn service here on Stewart Island was posted on the New Zealand Defence Force Facebook page. New Zealand Post had seen the photo and were requesting Matt’s permission to use the image on a stamp!

I got in touch with Matt, told him the story, he agreed they could use his photo, and Bob’s your uncle: Stewart Island’s glorious sunrise at our Anzac parade is featured on a \$1.20 stamp, one of a set of six commemorative stamps.

What a huge privilege.

<https://stamps.nzpost.co.nz/new-zealand/2019/anzac-dawn-service>  
[www.mattjoneswildlifeimages.com](http://www.mattjoneswildlifeimages.com)



**Stewart Island kiwi research update** by *Emma Feenstra*

It's May already! And after another successful catching trip, we now have 44 Rakiura tokoeka with transmitters, 20 on Ulva Is. and 24 at Kaipipi. We were able to take our lessons learned from the February catching trip and so were a lot more successful on Ulva this time round (going from 5 to 16 caught). Night work for catching kiwi involves going out as a small team just after dusk, picking a reasonably clear spot in the bush, and usually establishing a circle of people with one in the middle. The one in the middle was usually me, I would whistle a male kiwi call, inciting their territorial response, and we would attempt to catch them by hand (grabbing a strong leg, never the body) when they came close. Not all kiwi respond the same, some storm right in to the call to see who dares to infiltrate their territory, some will sneak around the outskirts of our human circle, investigating but in a discreet (and frustrating for the catchers) way, and some will simply turn tail.

During the day, we track the kiwi wearing transmitters and can often find them with their partners or other birds (assumed family members), which we can then



**Malin & Aurelie tracking transmitted kiwi**

process as well. As we head into the breeding season, it will be very interesting to see how these family members assist with incubation of eggs – which is believed to be a unique to Rakiura behavior among kiwi species. The most special moment I had on this last trip was by spying on a kiwi pair. I had spent a long, slow time creeping in on a transmitted male, to see if he might be with his partner (who we had heard but not caught the night before). He was near the Ulva coast and under some noisy scrub. Finally, when I was about 1.5m away I could see him, he looked massive! I thought perhaps we had it wrong, and he was actually a she... then he/she moved, and I saw it was really two birds that had been huddled together. I stayed still and watched, and they started grooming one another! The female closed her eyes as the male

picked away at her neck with his long bill. I couldn't bear to disrupt this harmonious scene, and so crept away again. Some things are more important than Biologists and their pesky transmitters.

The purpose of the transmitters is to learn about Rakiura tokoeka breeding behavior and success, and the survival of their chicks. Every ten

minutes, the transmitter emits a coded signal which we can pick up with our telemetry equipment (using radio waves and an aerial). This signal tells us about the birds activity, and from this we can judge when their activity changes to a pattern that might be incubation. For other kiwi species, we know that it is always the male incubating, or have a predictable pattern established between males

and females changing shifts. For Rakiura tokoeka, it's all new and exciting... and we will be establishing 'the norm' for these birds as we go along.

There is a lot of tracking and 'coded signal taking' to be done over the next few months, and likely until early next year. If any locals are interested in taking part there are opportunities for training and shift sharing, so the time commitment can be flexible. Locations are Ulva Island and Kaipipi J I will be back to Rakiura towards the end of May for some more tracking and to put my last 6 transmitters on birds, so this could be a great time to touch base about helping with the breeding season.

Follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/Rakiuratokoeka/>, (I'll post a video of the male and female grooming soon!) and contact me with any comments, questions or just to say hi! [emmafeenstra@gmail.com](mailto:emmafeenstra@gmail.com)

This work would not be possible without a lot of local help (best community EVER!) – a big thank you in particular to Stewart Island flights, Stewart Island Backpackers, Aurora Charters, Rakiura Charters, Rakiura & Ulva Island Ferry, Cherie Hemsley, Mike Douglass & the Mu.

*Emma & the Stewart Island kiwi Research Team*



**A chick found on Ulva Island**

## Bees ABCs by Sandra Hoelz

As you all know by now we have a lot of honey bees here on Stewart Island. To be exact there are currently 31 beehives on 20 different sites, reaching from Horseshoe Bay to the Ackers Point area.

Bees are not only an amazing, fun and interesting little creature to watch. They are also very important for the future of all of us. So we all want to do the right thing to keep our bees going.

Here are a few do's and don'ts that all of us can help with:

### Do:

Plant lots of bee friendly flowers and herbs such as lavender, sunflowers, sage, pumpkin, mint etc. Also wildflowers and clover all over our lawns are popular.

Bees are thirsty, put a small container of water (with stones in it for bees to crawl on) in your garden.

Understand that bees aren't out to get you. Honey bees are vegetarian. They are generally only out and about minding their own business of finding pollen and nectar. Bees only sting if they panic (such as accidentally getting stuck in your hair) or feel attack. They can only sting once and will die afterwards. To avoid getting stung try not to stand in their flight path (popular flower or in front of a hive entrance).

Keep calm if a bee flies around you. Usually they only check out the area. Sometimes they sit on you for a rest and fly off again peacefully.

Share the love and importance of bees in your community.

Buy local honey to support your local beekeeper (hopefully possible next year).

Sponsor a hive – help fund more beehives (not on Stewart Island).

### Don't please:

Don't spray your garden with chemicals. If, only with bee friendly spray. Chemicals can kill beehives!

If you find a wasp nest, kill it. Wasps can kill small/weak beehives. We are happy to help with that.

If you see a big amount of bees "swarming" – ring us!

**Most important: NEVER EVER bring any bees or used gear from the mainland.** Stewart Island and the Chatham Islands are the only places left in NZ without the "Varroa mite" and other diseases. Any new bees coming to the island have to be from the Chatham Island itself without any contact to other bees on the way. We are happy to assist with that if you are interested! Bee gear has to be brand new without any contact to mainland bees before it gets here. A single bee or piece of gear infected can bring diseases here. So please help us to keep Stewart Island disease free J

Just for the fun, here are some interesting facts about honey bees:

Bees can fly at a speed up to 25km per hour and beat their wings 200 times per second.

An average worker bee lives for just 5-6 weeks and produces about a twelfth of a teaspoon of honey in that time.

To share information about best food sources worker bees do their "waggle dance" when returning to their hive.

A honey bee visits 50-100 flowers during a collection trip.

One bee colony has 20.000 – 60.000 bees and one queen.

Male bees (drones) have no stinger and don't work. All they do is mate and eat honey.

Honey bees have 5 eyes.

Bees have been producing honey for at least 150 Million years.

Bees never sleep, no wonder they have such a short live span!

Honey and bees way form the basics of many skin creams, lipstick and hand lotions. *Photos by Sandra Hoelz*



## Over the Tea Cup

by Peter Schofield, Stewart Island  
Marine Farmers Association

“Well I’ll be jiggered. You’re telling me the *Stewart Island News* is a monthly, not an annual.”

Denise gave me that look of 40 years of marriage which said, has it really been 40 years?

“Yes,” she said, “so you have to write another story.”

“Hell,” I said.

“Write about the eggs,” she said.

“Hell,” I repeated.

The margins in salmon farming were small in the 1980s so we did all we could to keep the tram lines apart. One idea was to collect the dust from the food bags by running the pellets across a sieve. Initially pellets came in 20 kilo bags so we had to hand lift these bags across a homemade wooden table, which was back breaking, dusty and unpleasant work. The idea was to then send the powder back to the factory for re-glueation.

“Re-glueation is not a verb,” Denise said.

“Hell,” I said.

This was one of the industry’s more peculiar ideas and it soon stopped as the cost of freight and labour outweighed any benefits. The idea was right but the application was the problem. The result was we were left with huge quantities of 20kg bags of salmon food powder. Modern pellets don’t crumble, but back then it was waste not want not, so we took them home and fed them to the poultry. At certain

times of the year carotene is added to the food mix. Carotene is the natural ingredient that gives the carrot its orange colour. A different kind of carotene is present in krill, which gives the salmon their natural red colour. The more krill the salmon eat, the redder the flesh, with increased levels of omega 3, which we all know is good for us. However, if you feed it to chooks, the yolks also go a deep red. This is not a problem until you add to the mix my mother Nancy.

Nancy was born just before and lived through the Great Depression of the 1930s. Additionally, living for part of the year at their farm at the distant Mason Bay sheep run, the Traills soon learnt to be thrifty. Nothing gets wasted and everything gets recycled, so the lure of free chook food was just too irresistible. Not an issue to some, but a typical Murray and Nancy Schofield breakfast consisted of a piece of bacon (not too large), one piece of toast, and two blood red eggs staring up at you like eyes from hell... regardless there were some benefits.

The benefit were the ducks. Ducks were a different story. Feed fish meal to a duck and you get a bird that looks and tastes every bit like a muttonbird. Consequently, the ducks too were not wasted. This combination of fishmeal and duck, unlike the eggs, was a combination made in heaven.

I asked Denise to proof read this and she returned with a list of people I need to apologise to.

First to her for supposing I know what she is thinking.

Second to my mother for not highlighting that thriftiness is a gift.

Third to my Sunday school teacher for using the ‘H’ word as an expletive. When the teacher used the word it was a destination for children who did not pay attention to her.

### Rat trapping tips from Denise Hayes

I have been running Rakiura Pest Control for around 8 months and now trap at many properties including private homes, holiday homes, cribs and various businesses. Like SIRCET, I have seen a dramatic increase in the number of rats being caught at nearly all properties over the last month with juvenile rats especially noticeable. One area I trap with around 100 rat traps illustrates this sudden increase well with the catch rate going from an average of 6-8 rats per week over the summer period to 50-60 rats per week over the last month. I have started checking those traps twice a week and am still getting 25-30 per check!!

The rats are experiencing a surge in breeding due to the heavy fruiting of trees and bushes and are likely to reach plague proportions this winter. As the berries and seeds rot, germinate or get eaten, the rats become hungry and will switch to eating our native wildlife - birds, lizards,

insects etc as well as searching out food in and around your property.

As the weather continues to cool, rats will be looking for somewhere warm and dry to nest and will attempt to enter buildings including homes, garages, sheds etc. Once inside, they can do a tremendous amount of damage including chewing electrical wires, plumbing work and appliances. Some insurance companies don’t cover vermin damage as we unfortunately found out when we had a rat chew our fridge workings while away a few years ago.

Now is the time to get on top of them around your property. If you already do your own trapping around your home or business - that’s great. To ensure you catch as many as possible, it really pays to ensure your traps are in good working order - a quick go over with a small wire brush to remove surface rust and a light coating of non-petroleum based oil - muttonbird fat works a treat. Change the lure frequently (peanut butter or nutella both

work well) to keep it fresh and the rats interested and check and clear the traps regularly - at least weekly (I do the ones around my home nearly everyday). You may want to increase the number of traps around your property as well.

Please consider other wildlife, pets or children and securely cover any traps placed outside to prevent accidents. Covers should be long enough to prevent kiwi and weka from accessing the trap placed at the back of the cover. If you use poison please consider the impact this may have on our native species such as weka and ruru, and any neighbourhood pet cats or dogs that may prey on the sick dying rats and get secondary poisoning.

If trapping is not for you, I offer a full trapping service where I will supply the traps and check them weekly (or more often if you wish) at an affordable rate. I also trap possums and feral cats. Please contact Denise on 0273 913215 to discuss your requirements.

**NO EXCUSES** by Lania Edwards

It's almost 4am as I head up the hill to our main manu on Rukawahakura Island. I'm currently harvesting titi with my whanau about an hour and half from Halfmoon Bay. As I walk, I think about how much harder it would be if I had to carry the weight I had lost in the last year in a backpack. Nineteen kg in a backpack while birding ....how tiring! But that's how it used to be for me, I would tire easily and never felt like doing physical activity much, I didn't realise it then but I ate a high sugar diet (more than I care to remember) it's hard when all the packaged foods are usually high sugar, fat & salt....even though I'm a good cook I tended to cook too much of the treat foods.... I decided I'd had enough of feeling like I did and after seeing the success my friend Paula Brown had in losing 20kg + I decided to join the 8 week No Excuses program that she had done designed by a lady named Kim Beach.

I liked the fact it was all just real foods, no supplements or cabbage soup to gag down... (who can forget the cabbage soup craze)! This was five small meals a day every 1-3 hrs apart keeping your blood sugar level and fuelling your body with lean proteins, good carbs and veggies, the greener the better. I found all the small meals hard to eat at first as I usually wouldn't eat until late morning. I'd just consume coffee... but after 2 weeks my metabolism kicked into gear and it became a fat burning machine. It's amazing how fuelling our bodies with the right foods can work for you instead of against. It was that simple: good fuel = fat burning machine which brought me more energy and weight loss. I did the program twice and then joined the Kim Beach Life app when Kim launched it. I was in heaven! So many food choices to mix up my stricter eight-week program. Kim wanted to move away from the diet mentality so that's how the app was born, she poured her heart and soul into it, she's just so down to earth and caring. I had the pleasure of meeting the lady herself and her amazing team last year in December when I was asked to attend a lunch in Sydney. She paid for me to fly over and stay and a team of ladies and myself were treated to lunch to celebrate our success. She calls them her superstars luncheon, and it felt great to be a part of it.

Kim started a health retreat last year and this year I'm lucky enough to be attending next month in Bali going as a mother-daughter team, putting our health & well-being first. I think that's one of the hardest hurdles for a lot of woman to overcome is the guilt they feel for putting themselves and their health first. Strange isn't it? We are so good at looking after others, a lot of us forget about themselves. Especially if you have kids then time is precious... I took that time for myself and haven't looked back. I totally love & embrace Kim's private support groups, you get access to on her app or 8 week programs. You get support from Kim herself & the team plus other wonderful women sharing their highs and lows, recipes & success from all over the globe. It's just magic.... if you're thinking of giving it a go look her up and check out all the real life success stories .... you will even find mine ☺ and I'm always happy to chat about my journey to anyone interested or needing help to get started. I want everyone to feel as good as I do.



**Parking issues on Stewart Island**



It appears parking congestion has become a reality on Stewart Island.

The number of vehicles may be limited on our slice of paradise, but so too are the parking spots.

Please remember to be courteous to other residents by not exceeding the 30-minute parking limits in certain zones.

Constable Rosemarie Marchant is concerned some residents are failing to comply with local bylaws regarding parking, particularly in the Halfmoon Bay business area.

Elgin Terrace, from the wharf towards Horseshoe Bay Road, is proving problematic, while Ayr Street, between Elgin Terrace and Dundee Street, and Main Road, between Elgin Terrace and Morris Street, also suffer from parking congestion.

Police have legal authority for parking enforcement on the island and, together with Southland District Council

**Island Inspirations Art Programme**  
25-26 May 2019

**SIPA are pleased to present this year's programme. We have four courses running:**

- 1. Textile Printing with Katie Smith**  
2 days \$150 + \$88 material cost
- 2. Singing Together for Fun has been changed to Drawing with Robyn Bardas 2 days \$150**  
Robyn Bardas returns for 2 wonderful days of drawing. Get better results with new techniques and free up your work. A skills based fun course to push past old habits, or just start some new good ones. All levels welcome. Newcomers and more experienced well catered to.
- 3. Harakeke with Amber Bridgman 2 days \$150**
- 4. Astrophotography with Les Ladbroke 1 day (plus evening if weather permits) \$75**

**For more information or to enroll pick up a brochure from the SDC Council Office/Library.**

**Church Chatter** by Jo Riksem



**Fuschia Walk**

There always seems to be lots going on in our community in one way or the other, and it is lovely to see people working together as a team to make things possible. Togetherness and helpfulness is what gives our island strength, just like building a bridge helps to get to a place not possible before. We must never lose that. We might be short of visiting speakers in the upcoming months but never short of folks who have something to share with others. It is not only the person who speaks up front but the folks who do flowers, clean, morning teas, welcome people at the door, to name a few, that are just as important and part of the Island team of helping. Pop in on a Sunday and meet some of these people.

**Speakers for June 2019**

2, 9, 16 & 30 - Interesting Islanders. - Come along and find out which ones.

23 June – David Monteith – Assistant pastor at Harvestfield Church, Invercargill, David is welcomed back to our church for a return visit.

Services every Sunday 11 am. Church open daily to enjoy the peace and quiet.

**400 WORDS** by Beverley Osborn

This month’s offering is the result of connections between lines from a birthday card, an autobiographical statement by the author of a magazine article, a television programme and a poetry memory. I’ve labelled them “Q” statements.

The birthday card was a fun one I sent to a friend who is even older than I am. The outside read, “I asked the old man of the mountains the secret of living to a good old age.” Inside was the reply, “Just keep on breathing as long as possible.” That’s quantity of life.

The author of the magazine article described his way of living as “breathing intentionally on a daily basis.” I admire that deliberateness. He’s not content with anything less than full appreciation and gratitude for being alive and there’s a determination in there to make each moment count. That’s quality of life.

The television programme was about a house and garden makeover for a family with a very disabled child. The daily demandingness of total care for a child with severe physical and communication difficulties could easily be overwhelming, but the parents considered their own attitudes to the on-going challenges and chose to live celebrating the positives rather than becoming mired in the negatives. That self-questioning led to choices that built happiness as well as endurance.

So if one figures that keeping on breathing is necessary to the quantity of life, that intentional breathing enhances quality of life and that querying one’s own attitudes and actions is a contributing factor to happy living, where does my fourth “Q” fit? I think it is to do with balance. Determination to make every moment count is not all about constant action for good. It’s also about wonder and appreciation, about stillness and awareness. That’s finding the right quotas of action and reflection. I remembered lines from a poem by William Henry Davis –

*What is this life, if full of care  
we have no time to stand and stare;  
no time to stand beneath the boughs  
and stare as long as sheep and cows;  
no time to see, in broad daylight  
streams full of stars like skies at night?*

Here’s to looking after our health so we keep breathing, living with purpose so those around us can be thankful for us, figuring out how to be our best selves, and finding the balance between action and appreciative wonder!

**Last month’s crossword solution:**

**Across:** 4 Caspian, 7 Kilbride, 8 Natural, 10 Astute, 11 Sat, 13 Repeal, 14 Scree, 17 Mug, 18 Polyp, 19 Tick, 21 Uluru, 22 Latch, 23 Dee, 24 LOC, 25 Ike, 26 Hi, 27 Convey, 30 Eat, 33 Spine, 35 Pa, 36 Gin, 37 Ode, 40 Kid, 41 Despot, 43 Lauras Leg, 46 AFL, 47 Gels, 48 Ebony, 50 Cat, 52 Needle, 53 Strop. **Down:** 1 Miniscule, 2 Oblate, 3 Girth, 4 Cent, 5 Paua Patties, 6 Avalanche, 9 Aeroplane, 12 Argue, 14 Smudge, 15 Epulis, 16 Flaccid, 20 Icky, 28 One, 29 Wattle, 31 Agile, 32 Tidal, 34 Podal, 38 Lego, 39 Spay, 41 Debt, 42 Of, 44 Used, 45 Lead, 47 Gun, 49 Nit, 51 Go.

**Highlighted words:** Glowing Sky

**DO YOU WANT TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE HALFMOON BAY HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT?**

Stewart Island/Rakiura Community and Environment Trust (SIRECT) undertake a habitat restoration project in Halfmoon Bay, Stewart Island. The aim of the project is to protect vulnerable bird and plant species unique to New Zealand and to Stewart Island.

The project needs help to achieve its goals and we are currently looking for **NEW VOLUNTEERS** to help check, clear and reset rat traps placed along well marked tracks in the bush.

- **Experience is not needed** as traps are easy to check and reset. However, you must be comfortable dealing with small dead animals (we provide gloves etc).
- Some walking fitness is required. Track lines follow well marked paths through the bush. There are a variety of different difficulties to suit most people, so you need not be super fit but be comfortable walking off the main track.

To become involved or for more information, please contact:



Willy Gamble  
Ph: 020 4167 4160  
pest-manager@sirect.org.nz  
P O Box 124, Stewart Island  
www.facebook.com/SIRECT





Les Pullen and his new Stewart Island book!



Glowing Sky Merino  
 Between The Shop  
 & The Pub. Rakiura  
 glowing-sky.co.nz



**COMBAT that RAT ATTACK!**

Victor rat traps for sale, complete with wooden base and corflute covers.

Poison free and easy to use.

\$20 per trap.

Funds raised go towards trapping at Ackers Point.

Available at Glowing Sky or contact [administrator@sircet.org.nz](mailto:administrator@sircet.org.nz)

They work!



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✓ Computer and technology support for home and small business

Our qualified technician will be coming to Stewart Island regularly and is available for remote visits any time.

03 217 0477 or 021 842 850 | [needanerd.co.nz](http://needanerd.co.nz)



In early May Sanford hosted the families of our farming staff to the Island for a weekend. It was a great chance for the children to see where their parents work. *Photo by Alison Undorf-Lay*

# What's up, DOC?

## From Jennifer Ross



### Another Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara Incursion Response

[A female Norway rat was caught in a DOC 200 kill trap on Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara on Wednesday 1 May 2019.](#) The rat was found in an inland trap (I1) behind the shelter at Post Office Cove and so fresh that it was still warm when Biodiversity Ranger Si Taylor found it!

[This is just a few weeks after the island was declared rodent-free after the incursion response that ran from January to March 2019.](#) Rangers have once again stepped up to a Tier 1 response monitoring intensity with weekly checks of tracking tunnels and all 197 DOC200 traps for four weeks. Sandy King and rodent detecting dog Gadget went over to Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara on 7 – 8 May 2019 as part of a regularly scheduled monthly check that just happened to be planned for right after the incursion was discovered.



Female Norway rat caught in DOC 200 inland trap (I1). *Photos by Si Taylor DOC*

### A huge thank you to the Ulva Island Charitable Trust for its ongoing support!

If you have any questions, please contact Kev Carter on 027 201 3543 or [kcarter@doc.govt.nz](mailto:kcarter@doc.govt.nz).

### Southern New Zealand Dotterel Flocking Season

The final numbers are in from the 2019 Southern NZ Dotterel flock count with a total population estimate of 170 birds. While this is only a slight increase on the 2018 count of 167, we're pleased to see that the population has remained stable over the last year. The counts can be very variable depending on weather conditions and bird behaviour, so the total figure is an estimate only and gives us a picture of the population trend over several years.

Bird banding work has wrapped up for 2019 with 48 new birds banded. A unique metal identification band is added to the birds left leg with one plastic colour band and another two colour bands added to the right leg. This helps us identify individual birds in the field so that we can get a more accurate population estimate, better understand adult survival rates, determine mating pairs, movement and much more. Getting sighting records of banded birds is just as important as the banding itself and we are pleased to have added 216 sightings so far this season. If you spot a banded bird please record the details of the band combination, date, time, location and report it to Kev Carter so that we can add it to the DOC database. If you'd like any information regarding banded SNZD please get in touch and we can give you the history.



Banded Southern New Zealand Dotterel at Awarua Bay estuary during 2019 flock count. *Photo by Kev Carter DOC*

*(Continued on page 9)*

## Rakiura National Park Pest Monitoring

Rangers will be heading to the northern slopes of Mount Anglem/Hananui later in May 2019 to undertake possum density monitoring. This will be done with a new method which uses wax tags rather than raised leg hold traps. We aim to get an updated estimate on possum populations to aid in planning for future possum control operations in that area.

Rodent monitoring lines are being established on the Tin Range to help us understand local rat dynamics as part of the Southern New Zealand Dotterel recovery programme. Rangers will be heading onto the range later this month to lay out wooden tunnels with traps inside. We're also aiming to finish the temporary repeater unit installation just north of Mount Allen to improve radio communication south of Blaikies Hill and in the Doughboy catchment.

## Lucky the Kakariki

A young kakariki chick was handed into the DOC office after being found on the Horseshoe Bay to Braggs Bay walk. Bridget and Kev Carter hand raised the chick and are pleased to report that Lucky fledged successfully. Lucky was initially syringe fed bird formula before being introduced to native fruits and vegetation. It was a proud moment to see Lucky nibbling on Rimu fruit he had found himself.



Lucky the kakariki on day one of hand rearing.  
*Photo by Bridget Carter*



Lucky the kakariki recently fledged and perching in a fuchsia. *Photo by Kev Carter DOC*

There are wild kakariki in the vicinity of Bridget & Kev's house and so we're hopeful that Lucky has joined up with his fellow wild birds. The feasibility of hand-raising birds successfully depends heavily on the species. Many birds require socialisation with birds of their own species so that they learn the right behaviours that will help them survive in the wild. Kakariki are known to have a high likelihood of successful release back to the wild and are easier than many other species to hand feed.

## Come Chat about Stewart Island/Rakiura's Biodiversity Programme!

If you'd like to discuss the DOC's biodiversity programme on Rakiura please get in touch with the Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre and we can organise a catch up. We're really happy to answer any questions or discuss any ideas you might have. Remember that you can also organise a time to get a possum trapping permit for Public Conservation Land. It's an easy process and once we have you on file re-issues don't take long.

## Mount Anglem/Hananui Track Trim & Christmas Village and Yankee River Hut Clean

In April the Rec Team were at Christmas Village Hut, giving it a good clean, repairing some decking and relocating the toilet. Yankee River Hut also received a good clean out and maintenance including window repairs in the same week. The team also spent a day working up on the track to the summit of Mount Anglem/Hananui chain sawing windfalls, cutting through thick scrub and manuka, and clearing the debris off the track.

## Rakiura Track Great Walk Season FINISHED!

The Great Walk Season officially finished on the 30th of April and DOC would like to extend a big thank you to our Hut Wardens Meg Evans, Pattern Reid and Josie Savage who have now finished up their good work on the Rakiura Track. Visitor numbers have continued to increase over this season, keeping with the trend of being one of New Zealand's fastest growing Great Walks. We also have had good feedback from our visitors regarding the accessibility of the track, bird life and facilities.

Over the season the Rec Team have also been focusing on improving the track standard and have managed to lay a total of 274 tonnes of gravel over 1,653 meters of the Rakiura Track. Sections that were focused on were Lee Bay to Little River, North Arm to Kidney Fern and a substantial muddy section between North Arm and Port William.



Rangers Michael Douglass and Pattern Reid track trimming Mount Anglem/Hananui track.  
*Photo by Christina Paterson DOC*

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
conspiring with him how to load and bless  
the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ...*

I've always loved the poem *To Autumn* by John Keats.

And this autumn has been so kind, sunny and warm. Even so, here on Stewart Island we need the help of glass or tunnel house to coax grapes to ripen. This year there seems to be such an abundance of seeds and fruit on native plants that the rats have not, as yet, made it their business to raid my glasshouse and devour tomatoes and grapes as they did last year.

One plant of which neither rat nor possum nor deer takes any toll is the hydrangea. Well, I wrote that bold statement before Ricky Kershaw shot it down in flames today with her tale of deer devastation in her Horseshoe Bay garden. Ricky's hydrangeas are delicious to deer, chomped within an inch of their lives. Has she introduced a superior tasting cultivar? Are the palates of Horseshoe deer more refined than elsewhere around the town?

The following will be bitter/sweet grapes for Ricky, I fear. My original article went on to extol the virtues of hydrangeas. What a wonderful, giving plant this is, I enthused, and how well it does here, enjoying our moist and temperate climate and rejoicing our eyes and hearts with sustained bursts of colour from summer through to winter. How many photographs, I bumbled on, have tourists taken this autumn of that glorious expanse of hydrangea hedge on the Barnsdales' property at Butterfields Beach?

Hydrangeas comprise some 70-75 species and originated in southern and eastern Asia and the Americas. Their European name was given them in 1739 by a Frenchman, Grovoni, possibly because the flower shape reminded him of a water jar (Greek hydr- water; angeion jar). They certainly like water.

There is an excellent article "How to grow Hydrangeas" by Fiona Rae which appeared in the 28 January 2012 edition of *The Listener*. Just Google it. In it she explains why and how hydrangea flowers turn from pink to blue and vice versa in different soils. What remains a mystery – to me at least – is why here on Stewart Island you can find colours ranging from green-blue to darkest red-purple on the one bush.

For all the sumptuous grace of their flowers, hydrangeas are tough plants, surviving in deep shade or bright sun. The foliage of the oak leaved hydrangeas turns a rich gold/umber in autumn, setting off their predominantly creamy white flowers. Hugh Wilson, the author of *Stewart Island Plants*, used the term 'garden escapes' to describe plants which had established themselves outside of household gardens. Hydrangeas appear to be great escape artists, thriving in the wild and scrambling up and down banks in several places on our roadsides.

A great joy to the flower arranger, hydrangeas also dry well and keep their colour for a long while. However you intend to use them, it is best to wait till the flower head is mature with its tiny central 'flower' fully open - otherwise the flower head wilts quickly.

Happy gardening! *Raylene Waddell*



The Barnsdales' glorious hedge of Mopheads (Hydrangea Macrophylla) at Butterfields Beach



Why I love hydrangeas!



Lacecap Hydrangea macrophylla *Rotschwanz* in Kirsten Hicks' garden. *Rotschwanz* (Red Tail) is a small European bird, a passerine, named for its bright red tail.

RATS! They are coming! With mild temperatures and lots of food (foliage, fruit and seeds) we can expect some serious rat numbers. Here's some ideas on how to respond the increased rat numbers we're all seeing. Thank you to everyone who shared their tips and tricks...



On your property:

1. Increase the number of traps. Try traps around food, rubbish and storage areas.
2. Check your traps and bait stations more often. Bait can be put inside a plastic pipe to keep it dry and out of harm's way.
3. Start earlier – set and clear your traps and stations earlier in the year than you normally start.
4. Cover the traps and bait stations – this way they're more attractive for rats, are protected from the elements and safer for children, pets and wildlife. Bait can be put inside a plastic pipe to keep it dry and out of harm's way.
5. Trial a different bait / lure. What about peanut butter / hazelnut spread / fish oil / fish frames / commercial cat food / rabbit / bacon / cheese / white chocolate buttons? Less (bait on the trap) is more!
6. Identify entry points into your house and seal them. Rats can squeeze through half inch gaps! Try mesh on vents. Try steel wool to plug gaps, as this can't be chewed through.
7. Remove vegetation that overlaps rooves, which rats could use to enter your buildings. Clear gutters and vegetation near foundations. General clutter is attractive for rats to set up shop.
8. Ensure no food scraps are about that would attract rats. Keep rubbish bins away from buildings; lids must fit tight. Deal with leaks and provide an alternative water source.
9. Busy? Bach owner? Employ Denise from Rakiura Pest Control who can assist you.
10. Volunteer – e.g. pick up a trap line with SIRCET.
11. Mix it up – try a new type of trap / bait station. SIRCET have a community trap library so it's easy to try something new.
12. Be careful you don't accidentally trap or injure a kiwi or other treasured wildlife, check you've set it up correctly. Ask DOC for help and if you do accidentally trap a native animal let DOC know and hand in the injured animal or carcass.
13. Look for droppings and chew sign. Trial some ink cards or sprinkle some sand to look for footprints. Can you guess what you've tracked? Check out Pest Detective (<http://www.pestdetective.org.nz/>).
14. Rats also like to chew electrical wiring / get under the car bonnet etc, think about traps in the garage / near vehicles
15. Maintain your traps – wire brushing and oiling can help rusted traps. Say no to mouldy bait.

#### Vessel-related tips and tricks:

1. Look for signs – rat scat or evidence of chewing.
2. Try a combination of snap traps, sticky boards and bait stations.
3. Remove food and water sources. Keep rubbish and food in metal, rat-proof containers, up high.
4. Check cargo for rat sign. Keep onshore sites as clean as possible, consider rat control where your vessel / trailer / gear is stored.
5. Check rats can't get directly onto the stern. Use line guards on ship-to-shore lines.
6. Try aluminium sheeting halfway between your mooring and cathead, held on with hose clamps. The will stop the rats climbing up the mooring line. Can do this on the stern line too.
7. Try a half teaspoon of mutton bird oil on the wood of the rat trap (use additional bait on the plate). Moist dog-roll or fragrant salami work a treat for bait.
8. Shut the wheelhouse door when you can. Ensure ropes not left hanging overside. Low scuppers closed.
9. Having folded up chicken mesh in ventilators. Try thin mesh in your dorade boxes.
10. Hawse pipes into anchor chain locker.
11. Trailer boats: ensure control conduits are sealed up with wire mesh or similar. These can be an entry from deck into otherwise closed cabins.
12. Consider asking Detector Gadget for a check over of your vessel, trailer or facilities. Especially if you've seen sign but are not sure if you've got the rat.
13. Remember a rat overboard isn't a goner, as they are excellent swimmers.



Photo: Robin with rimu bonanza on Ulva Island. Care of Sails Guided Ulva Island Tours [www.sailsashore.co.nz](http://www.sailsashore.co.nz)



We want to hear from you! To share your aspirations, ideas, questions and concerns please contact Bridget ([bridget.carter@southlanddc.govt.nz](mailto:bridget.carter@southlanddc.govt.nz) / 027 212 7809), Sandy King, John Cushen or Garry Neave.

- |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Across</b></p> <p>1. Famous Kiwi dessert (7)</p> <p>6. Aquatic mammal (7)</p> <p>10. Island in Paterson Inlet (6)</p> <p>11. DoC house, once the home of George Turner (5)</p> <p>12. Spirit measure (3)</p> <p>13. Ornamental shoulder pieces on an item of clothing, portraying rank (10)</p> <p>15. Mass meetings for political protest or supporting a cause (7)</p> <p>16. Small pointed tool used for piercing holes, especially in leather (3)</p> <p>17. Equipment (4)</p> <p>19. Paddle (3)</p> <p>20. Having the same meaning (10)</p> <p>24. Earnings Per Share (1,1,1)</p> <p>25. Pair (3)</p> <p>26. Solidifies (4)</p> <p>27. Turned or whirled around quickly (4)</p> <p>28. Thanks (2)</p> <p>30. Tramping route (5)</p> <p>31. Location where mineral-rich spring water is used to give medicinal baths (3)</p> <p>34. Blackthorn or <i>Prunus spinosa</i> (4)</p> | <p>(4)</p> <p>35. Top fighter pilot (3)</p> <p>36. Very pale with shock, fear or illness (5)</p> <p>38. Californian wine-producing valley (4)</p> <p>42. Consumed (3)</p> <p>44. Forming into a bent, curling or distorted shape (8)</p> <p>46 &amp; 61. Two boats providing Foveaux Strait ferry and cargo services in the late 1980s (7 &amp; 9)</p> <p>47. Pastry-encrusted baked dish (3)</p> <p>48. Light utility vehicle (3)</p> <p>50. Stump (4)</p> <p>52. Frozen water (3)</p> <p>53. To manufacture a material in multiple layers (8)</p> <p>56. Solely (4)</p> <p>58. Belonging to an earlier time (6)</p> <p>59. ___ cold ___ 52 across! (2)</p> <p>61. <i>See 46 Across</i></p> <p>63. Multi-layered unleavened pastry used in the Middle East (4)</p> <p>64. Sheltered side (3)</p> <p>65. Dependence on or trust in someone or something (8)</p> <p>66. Lasting or existing forever (7)</p> | <p><b>Down</b></p> <p>1. Sheltered harbour in the north of the Auckland Islands (4,4)</p> <p>2. Bitterly hostile (8)</p> <p>3. An enthusiastic public reception of a person (7)</p> <p>4. South American mountain range (5)</p> <p>5. Red pine, <i>Dacrydium cupressinum</i> (4)</p> <p>6. Repellent (9)</p> <p>7. Bugle played during ANZAC Day services, The ___ (4,4)</p> <p>8. Official record of Parliamentary proceedings (7)</p> <p>9. Famous French emperor defeated at the Battle of Waterloo (8)</p> <p>14. Breed of small beef cattle native to Aberdeenshire, Scotland (5)</p> <p>18. Particularly (10)</p> <p>21. US National Park atop a volcanic hotspot (11)</p> <p>22. Stated or appearing to be true, but not necessarily so (10)</p> <p>23. Tradesman who uses tools to build or repair machinery (8)</p> <p>29. Fire residue (3)</p> <p>32. Common legume crop, also known as the <i>groundnut, monkey nut or goober</i> (6)</p> | <p>33. Insect of the family <i>Formicidae</i> (3)</p> <p>37. Peaceful (6)</p> <p>39. In a place (2)</p> <p>40. Commonly-eaten bivalve mollusc endemic to New Zealand (4)</p> <p>41. Type of cancer treatment [Abbrev] (5)</p> <p>43. The night before (3)</p> <p>45. A mild expression, typically of surprise, enthusiasm or sympathy (3)</p> <p>49. Small freshwater duck. Also a bluish-green colour (4)</p> <p>51. Beneath (5)</p> <p>54. Jelly-like substance obtained from red algae (4)</p> <p>55. Having or showing no skill (5)</p> <p>57. Fore-and-aft rigged ketch with the mizzenmast stepped far aft (4)</p> <p>58. Knick knacks, ___-à-brac (4)</p> <p>60. Dirt (4)</p> <p>61. Moose (3)</p> <p>62. Eggs [Latin] (3)</p> <p>63. Type of evergreen coniferous tree of the pine family (3)</p> <p><b>Find the circled letters to spell a strongly-scented native flower.</b></p> |
|---|--|--|---|

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		65									66					

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### Sarah's Rakiura Remarks

Five months into the new year, and three weeks from this Government's second budget, it is as good a time as any to reflect on what this Government has delivered in its so-called 'year of delivery'.

Instead of 'delivering', it has given New Zealanders a raft of ill-thought out policy. This includes \$2.8 billion for fees-free tertiary education which has failed; an ideologically-driven ban on oil and gas exploration that fails to reduce emissions, but puts electricity prices on an upward curve; \$3 billion for Shane Jones' slush fund which is heavily weighted toward projects in Northland, and \$2 billion on its inadequate KiwiBuild scheme.

The proposed SIT mega merger and Tomorrow's Schools recommendations continue to be major local concerns for me. Both reviews seek to take autonomy from the regions and centralise decision making in Wellington or further afield. This fails to recognise that local educators are best placed to respond to community needs in real time. And, furthermore, the Government has eyes on SIT's \$36 million in reserves which would be siphoned north to prop up institutes with large deficits.

The economy is starting to bite with GDP decreasing from 4% when we were in government to now where it is 2%. This is due to archaic changes in our labour laws. The stifling of investment opportunities in this country has also put business expansion on hold, meaning that our employers are less likely to take a chance on that extra person or part-time student. Ultimately, it's getting harder for families to provide for themselves and get ahead.

Further policies that, on the face of it, seem kind and well-meaning have had the opposite effect. Here in Invercargill the universal winter energy has seen landlords put up their rents to capture that benefit. The result is that our most vulnerable are out of pocket during the summer; in other words for six months of the year.

This Government is all rhetoric and no delivery—the budget in three weeks will be a telling time. National left this Government with a growing economy and a nest egg which could have been used prudently; to continue to strengthen our economy, generate revenue and invest in social services to enable all New Zealanders to get ahead. But Instead we see a diminished opportunity and hardship—something that this Labour-led promised to eradicate.

*From the office of Sarah Dowie MP*

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**THE ERA OF THE ‘CAR CASE CASTLE’**

*by William J (Bill) Watt*

*“We’re off to ‘The Island’ at Easter.”*

*“Got a place there?”*

*“Yeah, lovely site, but the crib is just a car case castle”*

That was the kind of conversation ‘cribbies’ frequently had with others in the 1950’s and even into the 60’s. But what did they mean by ‘**car case castle**’?

During WW2 and for several years following, building materials were in very short supply. You had to make a very strong case to a government department to be allowed to purchase new building materials (a bit like getting resource consent today). Cars were in short supply too because of import restrictions (unless you had ‘overseas funds’). The new cars that did come into the country arrived fully built-up. Invercargill firm P H Vickery Ltd had the southern import licence for ‘Austin of England’, and the Austins were imported through Bluff, fully built up, complete with their own fitted set of leather luggage, and enclosed in a wooden ‘car case’ (like an early form of container). These were the round Austins of the early 50’s – Austin Devons, Herefords, and Somersets.

I’m not aware of any of these Austins that made it to Rakiura (though there may be one rusting in peace somewhere). On the mainland they came and went, but the wooden car cases they came in have lasted rather longer. The cases were Baltic Pine. Dismantled into ‘flat packs’ for transportation, they were re-erected to form the basis for numerous garages in Invercargill and cribs and sheds throughout Southland – Including Stewart Island. These became known as ‘Car Case Castles’. Alfred Walmsely, managing director of P H Vickery and a prominent Invercargill citizen (who represented Stewart Island on the Southland Progress League) and his wife Bessie themselves had a ‘Car Case Castle’ at Leask Bay before they bought the old Lonnekens homestead on the site that is now Brit Moore’s residence. So, Car Case Castles were quite respectable.

The ‘crib’ reflected the social and economic climate of the time. New Zealand was emerging from the privations of the 1930’s depression and the horrors of WWII into an era of comparative prosperity. New Zealand families could aspire to a ‘family’ car – even if it was a pre-war Morris 8 – and horizons beckoned. A place to go for weekends and holidays was the goal of many, land was cheap and it didn’t matter if the crib was ‘basic’ – kerosene lights, Primus stoves, and can or long-drop ‘dunnies’ were the norm.

My place at 10 Leonard St started as a ‘Car Case Castle’. The considerable ingenuity required to build a ‘crib’ based on modules of car cases became apparent when we dismantled the original building. For example, the roof ‘structure’ was a simply a couple of car case sides, propped up in the middle, with roofing of (no doubt second hand) corrugated steel over them. And when we took up the floor, there under the lino was “Austin of England” stencilled on the car case floor-

ing. I still marvel at the ingenuity – and industry – of Norman Sansom who built it. Getting flat packs of car cases over to the Island on the Wairua and up the rutted cart track that was the newly formed Leonard St would have been a ‘mission’ in itself. Then the heavy modules had to be lifted manually into position. (No Hi-abs in those days).

The car cases lasted surprisingly well. What let the ‘castles’ down were the untreated rimu pile foundations, which rotted. So, most of the ‘cribs’ have been rebuilt or replaced but you can still find examples of ‘car case architecture’ if you look around for it. One is my brother’s and my

boatshed at Golden Bay – the west wall clearly shows its car case origins and it is still in quite serviceable condition. (If Environment Southland makes it difficult to renew our resource consent then maybe we can claim that the shed is a ‘heritage structure’ because of its car case origins...)

People like Peter Goomes have been very creative in finding new and creative uses for ‘car case’ wood. Peter created my bathroom door (pictured) and many other things besides – but that is his story to tell.



**RAKIURA RIDDLE**  
**INSIDE I HAVE HUNDREDS OF**  
**LITTLE BONES**  
**AND DOZENS OF WINGS THAT’VE**  
**NEVER FLOWN**  
**MY SHAPE IS CYLINDRICAL**  
**ACROSS MY TOP’S A VIVID SCRAWL**  
**POHA IS AN ANCESTOR**  
**MY CUZZY IS A CANNISTER**  
**ONE MORE CLUE I’LL LET**  
**YOU KNOW**  
**I SHARE A NAME WITH**  
**GRANDPA JOE**

**MUSEUM MATTERS by Jo Riksem**

**HOUSE OF THE MONTH: Pullar to Pullen Home**



**House when it belonged to Bill Pullar**



**House as it was in 1969 (top) and now (bottom)**

This house initially belonged to Bill Pullar, a sawmiller at Horseshoe Bay, whose family was at school in Halfmoon Bay 1896. The next owners were William and Elsie Martin. William was a wood and coal merchant from Invercargill. During World War I his grandsons would come over and spend their holidays with him. (This was told to Eileen Willa by a Dave Martin who married into the Donaldson family.) Other owners were Cedric Smith, our first museum curator, and Jim and Mary Simmers who made extensive alterations. Fred and Daphne Goomes rented the house off the Simmers in 1955. Peter remembers the hydraulic ram that pumped water up from the gully. Later, on 11 April 1968 Johnny and Ann Pullen bought the house and reroofed it about 1981-1982. It is still owned by Ann and is now surrounded by a beautiful garden. (Most of this information came from archives of Eileen Willa and Merv King along with information from Ann.)

**Acquisitions for April 2019**

More archaeological specimens and information on pen drive from the Lockerbie Collection  
 DVD of Moturau Moana which aired on TV1 in November 2018  
 Further information of Les Lockerbie on pen drive  
 29 photos, some in black and white some in colour from holidays on Stewart Island in 1961 and 2001

**Searches for April 2019:**

Greg Lind, John Emanuel von Tunzelmann, Stewart Island flags, Joss family, Constable Irwin, G. Duncan artist, Renkie family, Johann Gilbert, Henri Te Marino, Rev David Jamieson, Cross family, Muttonbirding, WWI & WWII soldiers, Dawson & Bragg family, Arthur Goodwillie, Brown family of Codfish Island, oil dredging, Jacky Lee and Durant families.

**Groups for April 2019:**

Lochiel School  
 Limehills School

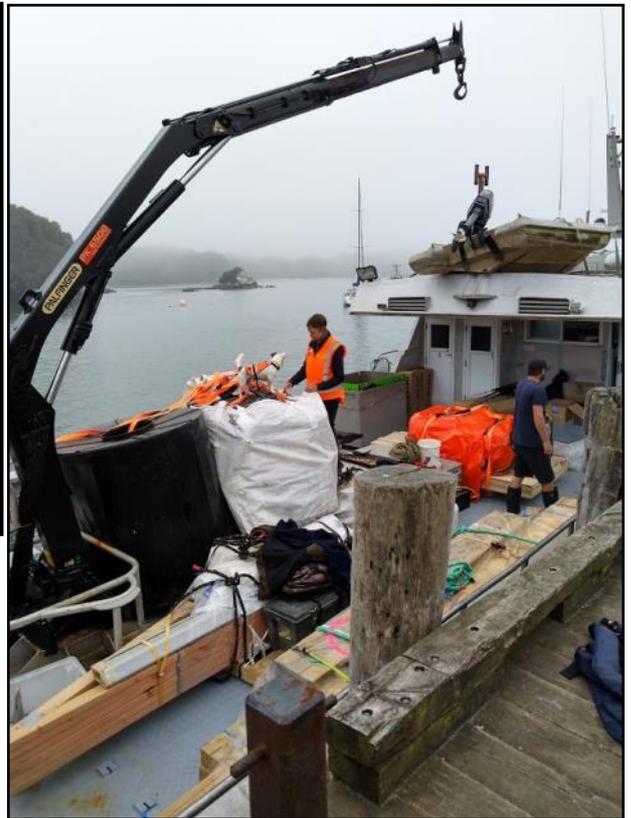
**Snippet:** In the Rakiura Herald produced by the Halfmoon Bay School in October 1969, Ross Bailey and Andrew Leask wrote this about Oban Hotel - "It has had a licence for 14 years. Each year there are approximately 3,000 boarders. Rooms are \$7.50 a day. Breakfast .70 cents, Lunch \$1.30, Dinner \$1.50. The hotel uses 5000 gallons of diesel a year. The engine is a 24 kilowatts. There is a fire escape and they can seat 50 people. The bar supplies come from Dunedin in barrels. The bottles come from Riverton. The hotel was booked for Labour weekend and is booked for Christmas."

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 Sunday 12 pm - 2:00 pm.

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Sandy King and Gadget checking muttonbirders' gear for rats last month. *Photo from Raylene Waddell.*

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| Chainsaw work                        |                          |
| Hedge trimming                       | And more - just ask      |



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