

# ◆ RAKIURA RAMBLES ◆

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## Titanic Exploration

Ever wondered what it would be like to travel to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean? Or to see the world's most famous shipwreck the *Titanic*? Over 3000 people have travelled into space yet less than 100 have travelled to these murky depths.

Last month Belinda Sawyer led a combination of 16 scientists, film crews, journalists and paying passengers to see for themselves. This is Belinda's story. Using the same Russian research ship and submersibles used for the Hollywood movie 'Titanic' set sail from Newfoundland for a position three-and-a half days into the Atlantic Ocean to the site of the famous wreck. It's an eerie feeling drifting on the exact same piece of water that 87 years ago held over 2200 people fighting for their lives. The Russian designed and built MIR I and MIR II submersibles are two of only five submersibles in the world capable of diving to depths below 5000 metres. They are the only two in the world capable of diving over 6000 metres. They are 36 feet long, weigh 18 1/2 tonne, have an outside tita-

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## Stewart Island National Park Proposal

The proposal to establish a national park on Stewart Island/Rakiura has generated some interesting and often heated debate. The Southland Conservancy of the Department of Conservation, which is managing the public consultation process, published an issues and options discussion document and has received around 450 submissions. There have also been five public meetings to discuss the matter as well as several meetings with special interest groups. Foremost among the concerns of island residents was a concern for their lifestyle and the impact on services if there was a dramatic increase in the num-



ber of visitors. There were also concerns about the effect of a national park on Maori land and private property on the island. Dave Newey, who is managing the consultation process, said most people were now aware that the proposal only covered land administered by the department and other lands would not be affected. The potential effect on the community will be assessed by a group of consultants. Mr Newey said he now has the task of summarising the submissions and writing a report for the New Zealand Conservation Authority, which meets in December. The authority will then make a recommendation to Government who will make

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## Refuse Site Hours

*M. Hopkins*

The recent request from the Stewart Island Community Board for residents' views on possible hours of opening for the Braggs Bay refuse site when it becomes a controlled tip, resulted in very few replies. The Community Board will decide at its December meeting on the hours of operation. The following letter that was received seems to sum up probable views on the idea of a controlled tip and all the implications for its operation.

**To Whom it May Concern:**  
**Restrictions on Access to Refuse Site**  
 Thank you for your mail drop notifying the anticipated restricted hours of the refuse site under the Resource Consent regime. I would like to suggest the following:  
 1. That the duly appointed esteemed attendant position be advertised nation-wide.

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## New Businesses

M. Hopkins

It is encouraging to see new businesses springing up on the Island. We hope these will lead to more employment opportunities. There are already signs that we are in for a good summer weather-wise and enquiries from tourists wanting to visit the Island continue to increase, so here's hoping for a bumper season all round.

**BAYVIEW APARTMENT**  
Bryan and Judy Cronin have established an apartment under their new home to rent to visitors. The fully equipped, all electric apartment sleeps 5 people and has a wonderful view out over Halfmoon Bay. Bayview Apartment will commence operating on 1st December.

**RAKIURA WATERWAYS**  
Mark Butler and Kylie Soalo's new watertaxi is the 21 ft, 'Kaian'. Surveyed to carry 8 passengers the vessel will operate as a watertaxi dropping off trampers, hunters and those looking for picnic destinations further afield. 'I can take people around Patter-son's Inlet, including Freshwa-ter, and as far afield as Christ- mas Village and Chew To-

bacco, catering for a mini- mum of 2 people,' said owner Mark Butler. 'I can also do diving and snorkelling trips and fishing with up to 4 peo- ple.'

**LETTUCE INN**  
Cathy Crockett has opened her fruit and vegie shop on her property at the corner of Main Road and Dundee Street. Specialising in fruit and vegies, the shop also has fresh meat, farm fresh eggs, bread, plants and a variety of other fresh foods nicely presented in the renovated premises. Open 7 days a week. Free home deliv- ery by arrangement.

**PHILLIPA & IAN WILSON'S BED & BREAKFAST.**  
Situating at Jensen's Bay over- looking Halfmoon Bay with spectacular views of Foveaux Strait, Ian and Phillipa Wil- son's beautiful new home has joined the list of Bed and Breakfast establishments on the Island. Friends have watched as Phillipa and Ian have laboured to complete their house with careful atten- tion to detail. Phillipa's flair for interior decorating will no doubt see the house make its

way into N.Z House and Garden magazine. Guests staying in this beautiful home will be in awe of the views, the lovely garden and the hospitality.

### SOUTH SEA HOTEL STUDIO UNITS

A further boost to accommoda- tion on the Island is the addi- tion of 9 studio units at the South Sea Hotel. Sited on the rear of the property these units have been built in keeping with the character of the old hotel, with wooden trims on the verandah. Each unit has a double and sin- gle bed, with basic kitchen facilities. One of the units is an ac- cess unit for disabled which sleeps 2. Work has begun on decorat- ing the interiors and the area will be landscaped. Project manager Chris Dillon said he expects the units to be operating by 27th November.

**THORFIN**  
Bruce Storey has brought his recently built new charter boat *Thorfin* to the Island. This

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WELCOME TO OUR PATCH



## The Right Procedure!

M. Hopkins

**ELECTRICITY**  
Please would anyone requir- ing electrical repairs would you please contact the Southland District Council office at the museum where Colleen will fill out a request form for your job. Please do not ring Peter or Gary at home and don't approach them in the street as they don't carry the work request forms. Some people seem to be un- der the impression that it is OK to waylay our electrical- workers and try to coerce



them on the spot to come straight to their job. There is a proper system in place and it should be used.

**TELEPHONE SERVICES**  
Telephone faults, connec- tions and requests for service can only be initiated through ringing Telecom. SIESA does these jobs on con- tract and they have to be is- sued with a work service form from Telecom, so please don't tell Peter or Gary all about your telephone woes when you

see them at the shop!

**SEWERAGE**  
For sewerage problems that do not occur on your property, i.e. overflows, blockages at the pumping stations or spills please phone the Southland District Council office on 2191-049. This is a 24 hour service as it is connected to SDC in Inver- cargill when our office is unat- tended. On-site sewerage problems are the responsibility of the householder and you should contact a plumber.

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**STEWART ISLAND TOURISM STRATEGY GROUP**

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## Book Launch

M. Hopkins

Labour weekend saw a crowd of 60 people gather at the Visitor Information Centre for the launch of Stewart Islander Leslie Pullen's souvenir photo book. The result of several years of work, the beautifully presented 34 page book will be popular. Not only will it give visitors wanting to take home a pictorial memento of their visit the ideal buy, but islanders will also enjoy having it on their shelves. Leslie has taken the photos himself and has written the text to accompany them. Shots of Pegasus, Masons Bay, the North West Circuit and other remote areas have been carefully laid out to take the reader on a visual journey around the Island. "This book will really fill a niche and I'm sure it will be a great success", said Lesley Gray, Chairman of Stewart Island Promotion Association. The book sells for \$14.95 and is available at retail outlets on the Island.

## Christmas Pageant

The Halfmoon Bay School pupils, the Stewart Island Players and the community will be combining to stage a Dickens- type Christmas pageant with items and carol singing. This will be held on a Sunday afternoon early in December. Please keep an eye open for further details which will be posted on the notice board.



## National Park Proposal

(Continued from page 1)

the final decision, Mr Newey said. "One thing is certain, the people of Southland and Stewart Island in particular, have a very strong interest in maintaining the unique character and lifestyle of the island. That has come through very clearly in the submissions. While they may have different opinions on how that should be done there is general agree- ment that the island is special and should be given proper protection," Mr Newey said.

## Southland Tourism Awards

M. Hopkins

It was a glitzy affair like the Academy Awards and a credit to the Southland Polytechnic Diploma of Tourism students who organised the event. Over 200 tourist operators from all over Southland re- cently gathered for the South- land Tourism Awards occa- sion at the Ascot Park Hotel to see the award presentations for

the 5 categories. There were more than 70 businesses and individuals who entered this year's Invercargill Licensing Trust Southland Tourism Awards. Stewart Island was well repre- sented with 4 finalists. **Foveaux Express** took the honours for the Transport and touring section of the Tourism

Experience category. **Goomes Bed & Breakfast** won the hosted accommoda- tion section. The other Stewart Island final- ists were **The Fernery** in the retail section and **Stewart Is- land Promotion Association** for the Stewart Island brochure. Congratulations to all concerned.

## Community News Items

### S.I. Promotion Association News

MAP  
There will be a reprint of the popular street maps due out early November.

CANTERBURY SHOW  
We will be having a Stewart Island stand again this year at the Canterbury show on 10th - 13th November and we are looking for anyone who might be in Christchurch at that time who could help man the stand. It would help if you have a reasonably good knowledge about our local product. Contact Sue Munro or Barry Rhodes for further detail.

**Farewell to Anne Pullar**  
Members of Stewart Island Promotion Association farewelled Anne Pullar at a luncheon on the Island recently. Anne has worked for the Southland District Council and Tourism Southland for many years and has been invaluable in helping our small businesses, the Promotion Association and the Stewart Island Tourism Strategy Group. She has provided advice and assisted many people producing

brochures, focussing their marketing and advertising. Anne has always been an ardent fan of Stewart Island and has promoted us vigorously at the many shows and promotion events she has attended in New Zealand and overseas. Anne will now be working as an independent consultant on tourism, marketing and management.

**Community Centre News**  
Julie Carter has been appointed Community Centre manager and has been busy establishing timetables and charges for the various sporting groups using the complex. A notice board inside the main doors at the Community Centre advertises club nights and fitness activities available. To date the following activities are scheduled:

- Tai Bo**  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 5.15 p.m.
- Indoor bowls**  
Tuesday 7.30 p.m.
- Badminton**  
Wednesday 7.30p.m.
- Tai Kwon Do**  
Wednesday 6.15 p.m.
- Volley Ball**



Thursday 7.30 p.m. & Sunday 3.15 p.m.  
**Basketball**  
Sunday 1p.m.

There is a booking system for squash and the sauna. The bookings board is inside the main door. A \$30 fee enables you to get a swipe card for access to the sauna but you will also need coins to operate it. For membership information, read the notice board or contact Julie Carter or Helen Cave. Bookings for the social hall or stadium can be made by phoning Julie at the Community Centre on 2191-477. If the office is unattended, leave your booking information on the answer-phone which is checked every day and someone will get back to you for confirmation.

### PLEASE BOOK YOUR TIMES



If the office is unattended, leave your booking information on the answer-phone which is checked every day and someone will get back to you for confirmation.

### New businesses

(Continued from page 2)  
10.5m passenger vessel built at Miller and Tunnage in Dunedin replaces his previous boat. Bruce said his new luxury boat will continue to cater for group and corporate charters specialising in nature orientated sight seeing and history tours. The boat is licensed to carry up to 20 passengers.

### Refuse site

(Continued from page 1)  
Such responsibility should have an appropriate environmental degree as the basic qualification (and possibly a law degree) to deal with recidivist offenders of green waste dumping.  
2. The District Council will have to ensure that the attendant's quarters are fully compliant with the Employment

and Health and Safety Act. Heating, toilet and showers, dressing room with appropriate environmentally friendly overalls and toxic-free wet weather gear; a commercial kitchen with food making facilities should also be made available, even if the employee is there for one hour only.

One cannot be careful enough  
(Continued on page 6)

## Wanderer Returns

In the last edition of Rakiura Rambles we gave you a taste of wanderer Wally Hockley's adventures on the Appalachian Trail. Wally has now returned, a shadow of his former self, and is busy sorting his way through 800 slides taken on the trip. He hopes to have a slide evening soon to share his experiences. In the meantime he has written the following account of his journey:  
After walking 3500 km on the Appalachian Trail I'm back home. I started in Georgia on the 18th April and ended in Maine on 4th October. During this period I experienced the extremes of weather. For a couple of months I was walking in 30 - 40 degree temperatures and some of the States I passed through de-



The Keldysh Rainbow

clared drought emergencies and closed off the trails to all but A.T.-through hikers. The springs and

streams we relied on for water were often dry and at times I was carrying 7 litres of water. Some people helped us out by leaving water at road crossings but this could not be relied on either.

The other extreme was being in the remnants of Hurricane Floyd. I managed to get into a town that day but anyone left on the trail found themselves stuck between creeks for at least a day and even longer for some. Of the estimated 2500 who started the trail only 500 or less are expected to complete it. 20% of those who start pull out in the first 150 kms, mainly through inadequate preparation. After the first month or so it becomes a mental battle rather than a physical one. Climbing 4-5000 ft day after day can soon get you down if you let it. Luckily I had no motivation problems at any stage and enjoyed it so much I would happily do it all again next year if I had the money and

the time. I wore out 2 pair of boots and those who have seen me since I arrived back may have noticed that I've lost some weight. When I get all my slides back and sorted I will have a slide talk and tell more about my trip. Hopefully this should happen before I go away at the end of November.

### Church Hill Cafe

Since opening its doors early this month, Church Hill Cafe has seen a steady stream of locals and visitors trying out the many delights on their menu. Those who were familiar with the old building cannot help but be impressed with the wonderful job that Deanne McPherson and Allan Booth have done of restoring Tenola. The restaurant they have created is going to be a great asset to the Island and patrons will enjoy the atmosphere, the view and the great food.

### Titanic Exploration

(Continued from page 1)  
nium pressure sphere and are worth \$100 million US dollars each. The overheads to run this submersible operation are set at US\$5 (NZ\$10) for every second the submersibles are in the water... not cheap, eh?  
Once the MIR's are launched from the RV Akademik Mstislav Keldysh (the mothership) the return trip to the wreck takes around 12 hours. The MIR's are capable of staying beneath the surface for 72 hours in an emergency, but it is the 500 kW battery life that limits the time of the

(Continued on page 6)

### Codfish Island

In response to a recent enquiry from Elaine Hamilton, the Prime Minister has challenged the Department of Conservation's use of the name Whenua Hou without reference to Codfish Island. Following the adoption of the Ngai Tahu Settlement Deed, Department staff began referring to Whenua Hou instead of Codfish Island. Elaine asked why dual names would not be referred to and felt that as well as losing the historic reference to Codfish Island there was the possibility of confusion in

Search and Rescue operations if the Island was referred to solely as Whenua Hou. It has now been stated that the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act has changed the name of the Codfish Island Nature Reserve to Whenua Hou Nature Reserve (with no mention of Codfish) but did not change the name of the island itself. The name of the island could be changed by the NZ Geographic Board, but must be publicly advertised before doing so.

### New Bee in his Bonnet!

You may have noticed a new, bright yellow boat, buzzing around the Bay just recently. That would have been "Seabuzz" being put through her paces by Bruce Ford.

"Seabuzz" is a 7m-long, Stabi-Craft designed and built, glass-bottomed boat.

Having explored some of Stewart Island's underwater life from the perspective of a diver, Bruce thought a glass-bottomed boat would open a window on our local undersea world for the many visitors for whom diving is not an option.

The most unlikely convert has been wife and business-partner, Sue. A confirmed landlubber, Sue is fond of muttering "Water belongs in a teapot", so offered to do the office work for Bruce's new venture. On 5 October, Bruce brought "Seabuzz" home to the Bay and Sue soon admitted to being fascinated by her new view of things marine. Since then, several locals have had the opportunity to agree with her new enthusiasm for the world beneath the water.

"Seabuzz" offers another, and somewhat different slant, on a trip to the salmon and mussel farms of Big Glory Bay. The glass-bottom turns an interesting trip into a unique and special treat.

Available for water taxi trips too, "Seabuzz", with her distinctive colouring and bee logo, will be seen buzzing around the Bay and Paterson Inlet quite regularly from now on.

Bruce and Sue hope Stewart Islanders will find time soon to see for themselves just how much undersea beauty there is around here - without getting their feet wet.

### Refuse Site

*(Continued from page 4)*  
these days with grievance claims in Employment Courts for inadequate care of employees. I would hope that a television and video be purchased as an educational training tool.

A good suggestion is the National Geographic nature study on 'Wildlife in a Dump' series. It would also allay anxiety on the employee's behalf as he waits anxiously for his first client to arrive.

3. That the District Council provide an exit road from the refuse site. As the entry road is one way, this is a possible solution to the inevitable traffic jams that will occur.

4. That, as another solution to the possible traffic jam scenario, a set of traffic lights be installed on the Horseshoe Bay road to help congestion.

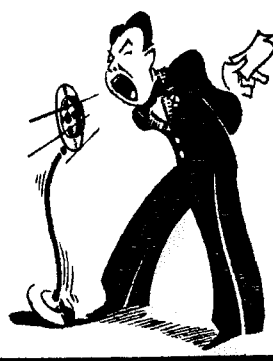
5. A community competition be run whereby the winner becomes 'Attendant of the

Day' and receives The Key to the Tip and has the honour of opening the gates AND wears an appropriate sash and tiara for the hours of opening that he or she chooses. The winner's photo should be front page news, with an interview on the Holmes programme. The resulting publicity would be cost-free to our community.

I would hope that you will discuss the options I have listed with the same sincere effort that I have taken in writing them down for you. I am sure that you will take all these issues into consideration in your tortured deliberations and come to a fair and equitable decision after appropriate discussion.

Regards  
Ulva Amos

Hear ye!



### Titanic exploration

*(Continued from page 5)*  
dives. With no toilets facilities on board there are many and varied ways to deal with arising needs but restriction of food consumption for the previous day is the best option! Hence the comfort of the pilot and two passengers in their tiny 2.1 x 2.1 metre cabin can also have a bearing on the dive time.

When the *Titanic* fell to its watery grave it broke up and plummeted into the bottom of the Atlantic at a speedy 50 km/hr. The wreck itself is broken into 3 sections (bow,

mid section and stern) with two large debris fields to the south of each section. The wreck is 12,468 feet below the surface and the pressure at this depth is 6000 pounds per square inch. A pinhole leak at this pressure this would cause a razor sharp laser of water capable of cutting a human body in half. It is some consolation that if anything were to happen to the MIR's they would implode (being the opposite to explode) and all you would hear would be a click

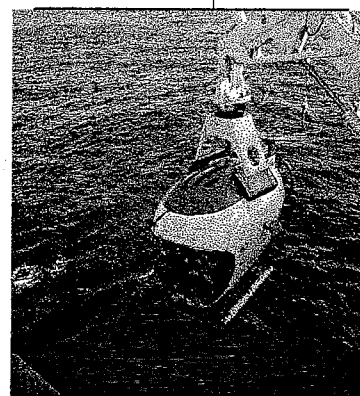
*(Continued on page 7)*

### Titanic Exploration

*(Continued from page 6)*

before you too would implode and your body would be pulverised into millions of small molecules. And then there is the realistic threat of a giant squid engulfing and dragging the MIR away forever.....and people still want to do this?

All traces of light are gone after 800 feet but once on the bottom with the four 1200 watt Halogen lights turned on a whole new world is seen.



The Andrey launching

The MIR's are able to fly up the leading edge of the bow then go under the stern to view the three 20 tonne, 23 foot diameter propellers.

They can enter the grand staircase and see the Chandelier in the foyer and see the rip in the

hull caused by the fatal iceberg. They can go into the forward hold to view suitcases, tea-chests and personal belongings, view the Captains bath and the highlight of the trip for many is having lunch on the Bridge. It is a well

known fact that our MIR pilots have in fact spent more time on the wreck of the *Titanic* than the original Captain E.H. Smith himself.

The wreck of the *Titanic* has now been ruled an International Gravesite so no artefacts can be removed or even touched.

Meanwhile the scientists are studying the abundant species and bacteria in what would otherwise be a desolate part of the Atlantic Ocean. The food chain begins with the bacteria eating away the hulk in the form of rust. Rust at this pressure forms 'rusticles' - they look like rust coloured stalactites but turn to dust on touching. All this activity brings in many algae, corals and blind rattail fish.

So, who would pay up to \$95,000 (NZ\$) to dive to the bottom of the Atlantic and risk being engulfed by a giant squid? Paying passengers included everyone from the Vice President of McDonalds to Astronauts to the Founder of Blockbuster video stores. From National Geographic film crew to one of Bill Clinton's young gun attorneys. Everything from a prostitute

one gentleman picked up the night before in Newfoundland to major airline Chief Pilots (wanting to join the 'Mile Low Club!'). Our lecturers on board include the US Navy Chief Nuclear submarine Commander and Don Walsh who in 1960 piloted the submersible *Trieste* to the deepest part of the Worlds Ocean at 35,820 feet.

After the *Titanic* diving we ventured over the Azores Islands in the East Atlantic and dived on the Undersea Volcanoes. These are only a shallow 7,000 feet dive! These volcanoes are called 'Black Smokers' and are caused by water from the earth's crust being forced out through chimneys on the Ocean floor. The temperature of the water in the Black Smokers coming straight from the earth's crust is being forced out at 350 Celsius. Once again the bacteria in an otherwise desolate piece of ocean causes a rich and varied food chain. Shrimps are at a concentration of 20 kg/square metre, mussels and sea cucumbers are prolific. This particular season alone two new species of deepwater fish were

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### Lords River Agreement

The Rakiura Maori Land Trust has agreed to protect the forest on their 3515 ha Lord's River Block. The land was one of several blocks granted under the South Island Landless Natives Act in 1906 when many Maori families became landless following the huge and controversial South Island land sales in the middle of last century. Most of the land was in remote

places like Stewart Island or the Southland coast and remained undeveloped and unspoiled.

In recent times owners, who have received no income or benefit from their lands, have considered milling the forests which, in many cases, are all that is left of the once extensive South Island native forests.

To protect the forest and com-

pensate the owners for loss of potential income, the Minister of Conservation and the Trust agreed to a compensation package which included a \$10.9 million payment and management of the forest as if it was a national park.

One of the oldest owners, 97 year-old Ellen Stuart of Auckland, flew down for the ceremony on October 25 and signed the agreement deed.

## Fire, Fire!

Do you want to burn some hedge clippings, that accumulating pile of rubbish, just some old newspapers; or are you having a hangi? Whatever reason, if you are thinking of 'lighting up', large or small, there are a couple of things you need to consider....

Where ever you live in New Zealand, and Stewart Island is no exception, there are certain times of the year when there is a legal requirement to get a Fire Permit. From the 1st of October every year we enter what is termed the 'Restricted Fire Season'. It runs through to 30 April. During this time you must apply to a local authority for a permit to burn. A further complication is that if you are within one kilometre of any public reserve land, you will need a permit all year round. On Stewart Island it is the Department of Conservation (DoC) that issues permits and burning without a permit when one is required, is illegal. This is not particularly to keep the bureaucrats in a job, but ultimately for the protection of life, property and from DoC's point of view, conservation values.

If you need to get a permit because you live close to public land, or if we are in a Restricted Fire Season, you may be issued with a permit to burn for a specific length of time. This may be limited to one day, or it may be for a longer period, depending on the current fire danger levels. As well as a standard set of conditions written into the permit, there often also 'special' conditions added at the time of issue. These may include things like '...not lighting up in winds of 10 knots or more, ...ensuring neighbours are not affected,



...fire to be kept away from boundaries or standing vegetation, ...contacting DoC on the day you are going to burn, etc. These special conditions are determined by what the Department knows about the burn site, the current fire danger levels, and what / how you are burning. Often a site visit is undertaken prior to the issuing of the permit. This is particularly the case when the fire danger levels are on the rise and a site visit may be insisted on as part of the permitting process.

Having a permit does not automatically exonerate a person from liability should their fire get out of control. The process does however ensure that they have at least considered all the hazards, and that if the burn does become a problem, fire-fighters have all the necessary information to respond directly. On Stewart Island, DoC has the responsibility to ensure that the conditions of a permit are adhered to and a warranted Rural Fire Officer has the jurisdiction to require a fire to be doused immediately should it be thought problematic or outside of the permit conditions. Should fire danger levels rise over any period of time, DoC can also revoke any current permits, either temporarily, or indefinitely depending on the danger levels. Another change that may take place within the Fire Season is an upgrade from the Restricted to a 'Prohibited' Fire Season. Last year was a fairly dry summer. So dry in fact, that around February we entered into a Prohibited Fire Season. During a prohibited season, all permits are cancelled and no new permits are issued. Of

course, that means that any fires that are lit over that time are illegal.

For a touch of the easy life, my advice is that you get all your burning, be it large or small, done outside the Restricted Fire Season. That is, from May to September. Check at the DoC office to see if you are within one kilometre of public reserve and get a permit if you are required by law to have one. While it is not difficult to get one, it does pay to plan ahead for your burn, as a site visit may be necessary before the permit is issued. DoC will write permits from Monday to Friday during office hours.

## Hull of the Titanic



## Titanic Exploration

(Continued from page 7)

discovered. A large vacuum cleaner mounted on the front of the MIR's allows the scientists to take samples. For all the rapers and pillagers out there... all this bounty has a very strong sulphur smell, tastes awful and is not recommended for human consumption!

Next year Deep Ocean Expeditions (who I am working for) are doing the same *Titanic* and Black Smoker trips and also taking the Keldysh up to the North Pole to land the MIR's down on the physical geographical North Pole - something that has never been done before. So, if anyone has a bit of pocket change to spend and wants to come with us next year, then let me know!