

Stewart Island News

November 2003

\$2

Celebrating Stewart Island



Westerly storm-force winds batter Halfmoon Bay.

Springtime made a seasonal statement on Sunday 16th November. Storm-force westerlies hammered the Island with local estimates of 50 knots possibly gusting to 70 knots in Halfmoon Bay.

A new house under construction at Lonnekers Bay suffered a significant setback when the newly erected framing was blown over and damaged.

Most other serious damage seems to have been confined to trees, greenhouses and some roofing iron. No damage reports have been received by the Council. South Cape residents encountered 71 knot winds and across the Strait, Puysegur Point reached 66 knots.

Kamahi Road house devastated by fire.

Late in the evening of the 1st of November, Paul and Keri-lee faced one of life's most challenging events - a devastating house fire with the very real possibility that their only child, Jahdan, was trapped in the house.

Rhys Leask and Fiona Hall have written a story on the fire and the lessons learned. Paul's family has also sent in a letter of appreciation to the community which appears on page 3 of this issue.

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Stewart Island News

A newsletter published monthly by Stewart Dovey. Contributions from readers and members of the Stewart Island Community are actively sought. This is your window on the world. Please take advantage of this opportunity. Cheers, Stewart.

Fire at the Nunnery – by Rhys Leask & Fiona Hall. Halfmoon Bay School

On 1st November, at around 10.30pm, Stewart Island had its first major house fire in many years. It almost destroyed the house known as the Nunnery on Kamahi Road. Usually the Oban Volunteer Fire Brigade get the call out quicker, and so get to the scene earlier, but this time the fire had got a good grip.

Tenants Paul Sooalo and Keri-Lee saw Fire Brigade members head up towards their home and decided to follow just in case.

“I actually didn’t think it would be my house,” said Paul.

When he got there he felt shocked, and then very, very sad. Paul and Keri-Lee thought that their son Jahdan and good friend John were inside.

Deputy Fire Chief Jed Lewis had the role of driver / pump operator for the big fire truck when the Brigade arrived at the scene of the fire. Mark Donald (Mad) was ‘Officer in Charge at the Scene’, but he saw that they were short on manpower, and decided to put on protective gear and join the men in the fire. He made Jed ‘Officer in Charge’ from then on. Jed said it was a stressful time because he thought there were people in the house.

However, the Fire Fighters’ training paid off, and they worked efficiently as a team to have the fire under control in five to ten minutes. It was only when the fire was almost out that everyone found out that John and Jahdan were safe at a neighbour’s house. They had been unable to telephone from their home, and this had caused the delay in raising the alarm. Jed said, “As soon as it’s only a fire, it’s a lot easier to deal with”. Everyone was very relieved the people were safe.

Paul, Keri-Lee and Jahdan managed to save just a few personal belongings: some antiques, a few clothes, and some jewellery. The thing that has made them feel much better is all the support from the people of

Stewart Island. You can’t under-estimate the importance of community spirit in this place. A temporary home and all the day-to-day things have been found. The family hopes to stay on the island and are on the lookout for a new home. John has been staying with friends.

When asked how it had changed his life, Paul said, “You don’t think it’ll happen to you... but it **can** happen, and so quickly. You have to be so careful about fire.” The family had smoke alarms, but had taken them down to replace the batteries. When a house has a fire, any occupants who are sleeping at the time will not be able to smell the smoke as your sense of smell shuts down when sleeping, therefore smoke alarms are essential to wake the occupants in order for them to get out safely.

“It made me think about fire prevention and awareness.” In particular Paul recommends ensuring you have smoke alarms up with fresh batteries; make sure you have two escape routes planned from your house and that they do not become blocked; and keep in good contact with your neighbours so that they know your movements.

The many decisions the Fire Brigade had to make on arrival at the fire were compounded by the fact that the information they received on arrival indicated that there were people trapped inside the burning house. No-one was outside the property to meet and advise the Fire Brigade that the people had got out of the house safely (this is the most important information they can get). Every property, especially with children, should have an escape plan and assembly point. (Families with school age children will have made these when the school last ran a fire safety unit). All occupants and baby sitters should be aware of the escape plan and assembly point.

Two days after the fire, the NZ Fire Service Inspector arrived to take stock of things. A report will be published at a later date, and as yet no exact cause of the fire has been established - it could have been caused by a

lot of things. As for the Fire Fighters, Jed says, "It's an important role I don't find hard to do." Here on Stewart Island we rely heavily on the members of the Oban Volunteer Fire Brigade, without whom there would be no-one to put out house fires and save people from serious harm. We should not take them for granted.

Thanks to Paul & Keri-Lee, and the Oban Volunteer Fire Brigade for their assistance with this article.



The badly charred door of the Nunnery

Thank you, Stewart Islanders

On Saturday 1st November our house went on fire. Although we lost almost all our material possessions, the most precious things were saved – Jahdan's and John's lives.

We are sure this message has raised everyone's awareness of fire safety. It all happened so quickly that what we see as a miracle could easily have been a tragedy. It is just so important to have smoke alarms, two escape routes, close contact with neighbours and insurance! (A lesson learned the hard way)

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to everybody for their wonderful support and generosity on the night and every moment since then.

The quick action of the Fire Brigade boys, Marion, Marty, Jo, John Timpany, John Spraggon, and family and friends, made those first few hours so much easier for us.

The ongoing support of clothes, bedding, toys, food, linen, money and so many other things makes us humble and very grateful. Thank you so very much.

We feel privileged to live in a community that cares so much. We live in a special place, made so by the special people who live here.

Arohanui, Paul, Keri-Lee and Jahdan Soalo

Our next issue will be printed just before Christmas. The deadline has been brought forward by a week to ensure McDowall Print in Invercargill have enough time to comfortably fit our publication into their pre-Christmas rush.

I would like to thank the management and staff at McDowall Print (especially Amy and Melissa) for their prompt and cheerful service. I think it is a special part of living down here in the "far south" that people go out of their way to be helpful.

Book Review by Anon

A Civil Campaign by Lois McMaster Bujold

Available at the local library

I'm a long time fan of Lois Bujold's, and having read the previous books in this series, I find it difficult to judge how it would read to someone coming in, new to the story. If you are new to the series, it would be best to start by reading the timeline given at the back of the book, that gives a brief synopsis of the story so far, BUT - don't let this put you off the book, though!

Lois has won awards for her writing, and this is one of her best, and screamingly funny. She's dedicated it "For Jane, Charlotte, Georgette, and Dorothy – long may they rule" [Austen, Bronte, Heyer and Sayers] and they all are reflected in her work – which is pretty amazing in a hard core, science fiction series. It deals with a soldier, Miles Vorkosigan, whose brilliance, manic energy, and unstoppable determination make him a larger-than-life hero despite his stature -he's 4'10", hunchbacked, and has brittle bones, in a world that is violently allergic to anybody falling outside normal physical appearance.

He's also hyper, a strategic genius, and has a subordination problem. His father is a planetary Viceroy and ex-Prime Minister of Barrayar and his mother is an off-worlder who thinks all Barrayarans are delusional. His homeworld Barrayar is centre of a small and much beset Empire, whose semi-feudalism, rigid codes of honour and lords-and-ladies social pyramid are considered uncouth, almost barbaric, by larger galactic society.

While Miles is an unfailingly likeable viewpoint character, Bujold takes pains to show him also as a near-monster of pushiness and overcompensation who doesn't hesitate to use trump cards of lordly status, charisma, and even the exploitation of his own vulnerability as weapons in personal as well as combat arenas Miles, forced by ill health to give up his military career and having embarked on a second career as an Imperial Auditor (a kind of wandering judge and ambassador), is madly in love with the beautiful and brilliant Ekaterin Vorsoisson .

The writing is excellent: the books are addicting, fast-paced, and will even make you think: sort of space opera crossed with the psychology of Minette Walters or Elizabeth George.

The book opens with Miles determined to court Ekaterin. Unfortunately, his approach is described as "General Romeo Vorkosigan, the one-man strike force." By his *father*. The potential for comic disaster increases when Miles's clone brother Mark, who was initially produced and raised by terrorists to be a programmed assassin (and still struggling to marshal a "Black Gang" of resulting subpersonalities: Howl, Gorge, Grunt, the suppressed Killer) arrives. He's brought a brilliant but scatterbrained scientist who's created a bug producing a perfect food: bug butter.

They set up a lab in the basement of Vorkosigan House. Mark has also found a nice Barrayaran girl--she even likes the bugs--with whom he got together on the sexually liberated world of Beta. But now Kareen's living at home. Naturally, disaster strikes, repeatedly and on all fronts. The scientist, a fugitive from rough justice on planet Escobar, is developing a dotty but plausible scheme for solving food problems with the delectable exudations of his pet "butter bugs" -- despite a measure of irrational opposition from early tasters revolted by these insects' pustular appearance:

continued....

"Bug vomit," said Miles, working through the implications. "You fed me bug vomit." [...]

"It's just like honey" Mark said valiantly, "only different."

Meanwhile, the colossal state marriage of the Barrayaran Emperor Gregor to an outworlder from Komarr is fast approaching, with ripples of tiresome protocol expanding in all directions. "I've seen planetary invasion plans less complex than what's being booted about for this Imperial Wedding." Meanwhile, on woman-starved Barrayar, the hoped availability of widowed Ekaterin provokes a buzz of interest that worries Miles no end. Meanwhile, our hero's friend and rival Lord Ivan Vorpatril is wistfully fancying reunion with one of his old mistresses, an encounter which thanks to Betan biotechnology is an awful shock. Meanwhile certain members of Ekaterin's Barrayaran family feel they could do a far better job of raising her nine-year-old son Nikki. Meanwhile, the rumour that Miles himself was responsible for the death of Ekaterin's unloved husband -- a rumour which like all the best lies has one faint toehold in fact -- is being eagerly milked for political blackmail. Meanwhile, various more or less dirty tricks regarding succession and inheritance are timed to detonate at a climactic session of the Chamber of the Council of the Vor Counts. The Meanwhile list goes on and on...

The subplots, all woven into a whole, come to a shattering climax in the disastrous dinner party – it's worth reading the book for this scene alone:

"My dinner party," Miles grated. "It's just breaking up". *And sinking. All souls feared lost.*

but be warned – you have to read right from the start to catch all the humour!

Lois Bujold unfolds her comedy of manners while continuing to explore themes familiar from earlier books: the difficulties in living with physical handicaps, the difficulties in becoming a strong adult woman in a patriarchy, the need for trust and honesty in relationships between the sexes, the difference between appearance and identity, and the impact of advanced biotechnologies on society.

Thanks to all those other Bujold fans on the Net, who helped with the review.

STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE by Jenny Gell

The November Meeting was held on the 13th at Jenny Gell's, where we had fun telling of our "garden disasters" which were very varied.

The Competition results were:

Red Flower	1. Anita Geeson,	2. Raylene Waddell	3. Nancy Schofield
3 Herbs:	1. Anita Geeson,	2. Lil Skipper,	3. Raylene Waddell
Ground Cover:	1. Myra Leask,	2. Anita Geeson,	3. Lil Skipper/Nancy Schofield

On Wednesday 19th Garden Circle members, locals and visitors enjoyed a bus trip to view some of the islands gardens. First stop was at D.o.C. Nurseries, a first for many of us, then we visited the gardens of Helen Cave, Jan LeQuesne and Irene Dennis, finishing off at Raylene Waddell's for a much needed afternoon tea.

The next meeting will be held at 2pm on 11th December at the Anglican Church Hall, this being our Christmas meeting everyone is requested to bring a Christmas table decoration, a Christmas gift for a Lucky Dip and a Christmas memory to share. ■

Councillor's Comments

Kerbside recycling is upon us so we're all going to have to get used to being a bit more careful with what we do with our waste. Judging by what's happened in Invercargill, it will be well received, as it makes good sense to separate out what can be recycled. And it really couldn't be made much easier as everyone has a separate recycling bin and a compost bucket

The set up and running costs are covered by the Council's overall waste disposal rate. The Stewart Island Electricity Supply Authority has won the contract to handle the island's recycling and waste disposal, and this will be run as a stand alone operation.

It will not be subsidised through your power account in any way.

Efforts are continuing to get special government funding for improvements to our Island's infrastructure, especially roading and sewerage extensions.

Mayor Frana Cardno is using all her political influence and CEO Michael Ross is great at following up our Mayor's contacts with the facts.

We recently met Chris Carter, the Minister of Local Government and Conservation, with regard to Stewart Island and its requirements, and what we see as the Government's responsibilities. This was endorsed at a meeting between your community board and the Minister.

Some of the issues discussed were the possibility of our roading being declared special purpose roads with a substantial subsidy available, similar to what is being negotiated for the Chatham Islands.

We also asked for confirmation that the sewerage scheme extension had qualified for special subsidies. We have passed every hurdle so far and I trust this subsidy will shortly become a reality.

I would like to think we could get a similar subsidy for a water supply, especially for commercial premises, which have to meet strict health standards.

I am pleased to see the boat park area getting established opposite the community centre. Colleen at the area office informs me there are 12 so far, with the \$250 fee going back to the community.

Finally, the busy season for visitors is nearly upon us again and no doubt many visitors will wander the roadways, forgetting their normal pedestrian responsibilities.

Don't get too frustrated with these casual guests, as they all add to the success of various island-run businesses. ■



Locked the car keys inside again !!!

Birth notice

Margaret & Ted Rooney welcome Campbell,
born 11th October 2003.
Weighing in at 9lb 1 oz , proud parents Sally
(Rooney) & Bradley Kidd.

Bin, Bucket and Bags - on their way!



From Monday 24 November residents will see green recycling bins and clear buckets being delivered about town and people going into the Southland District Council Office with a letter and coming out carrying a bundle of bags. What's it all about?

The Council is beginning a new waste collection service. All properties rated for this service will receive one green recycling bin, one clear bucket (with lid) for food scraps and 30 prepaid refuse bags to take residual waste. Collections start on Tuesday 2nd December. All you need to do is put the bin, bucket and bag out on the roadside and they'll be collected (bins and buckets will be returned to the location where they were picked up).



As well, there will be two public drop-off centres. The yellow, green and blue sets of wheelie bins will be located at the end of the wharf (opposite the skip bins – which will be removed) and in the reserve opposite the South Seas Hotel. These bins will be for glass bottles, aluminium cans and plastic 1 & 2 bottles.

All the waste that the Council's contractors collect will be sorted at the new Rakiura Resource Recovery Centre (RRC). You may have seen a flurry of activity there over the last month, as contractors have been busy setting up for the opening. **Everyone is welcome** to attend the official opening of the centre on **Monday 1 December at 11am** - 28 Horseshoe Point Road. Please come along and support the centre.

As the RRC opens the Braggs Bay site will close. To mark the closure, there will be a refuse amnesty from now until 7 December where you can bring any rubbish to the Braggs Bay site for **FREE** during normal opening hours.

"Support the cause" is the message from Brian Cronin (Operations Manager for the RRC).

Do your bit for the Environment – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.



MUSEUM NOTES.

Once again I must apologise for the “no-show” last month – due to events out of my control! However, we’re back again fit and well, and rarin’ to go, as they say.

Perhaps we could go back to Tuesday 30th September when at our Annual General Meeting the current Trustees were re-elected as follows:-

Patron: Mr Ted Rooney.
Chairman: Ron Tindall.
Secretary: Margaret Rooney.
Treasurer: Kerry Squire.
Curator: Elaine Hamilton.
Committee: L. Hansen, N. Schofield, F. Ahmed, & M. King.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman made a presentation to Nancy Schofield in recognition of her many years of commitment to the Museum.

Nancy took over as Curator on the retirement of Mrs Eileen Willa in 1986, and held the position until recently when she asked to step down. Her knowledge is one of our greatest assets, and we hope to have it available for many years yet!

SCHOOL PARTIES.

We are still having trouble with some school parties not turning up after making arrangements to do so. Tweedsmuir Junior High is one which didn’t even have the good manners to let us know they wouldn’t be there, which wasted the time of two of our people. Dipton was another school that failed to show, while only one group of two booked from Fairfield School showed up and tore through the place in just 15 minutes! Makes you wonder, when some are very interested, have obviously done their “homework” before coming over, and are a pleasure to deal with. We **would** appreciate advice from those groups who find they can’t make it!

ACQUISITIONS:

Mrs Marjorie Riley, a daughter of Mr & Mrs Ian Gough, presented us with some flags from the TAMATEA, which she found while having a clean-up at their crib. Thank you, Marj.

We have also been given some small items of “memorabilia” from Noeline Baker’s days at Moturau. These had been in the care of Sheilah Natusch – thank you as well.

“CHAMPION” – this month’s boat.

A vessel with a most interesting history, **CHAMPION** was a ships boat on the clipper ship “Champion of the Seas”, which was built by Donald Mackay of East Boston in 1854. **CHAMPION** appeared in the south after the clipper called at Port Chalmers in 1863, and she spent a short period as a cargo carrier before she was bought by Coleman Burke, owner of a brewery on the shore of Otago Harbour at a spot now named Burkes-St Leonards. He sailed her as a private yacht, and competed with some success at the Port Chalmers Regattas. She was laid up in 1870, to be sold to the N.Z. Government in 1874 for use as a Customs Dept. Revenue Cutter in the south, under the command of Capt. J.B. Greig. She suffered some damage before being shipped south, and repairs made proved unsatisfactory so in December 1874 she was placed with Tom Leask with instructions

Museum (continued)

to sheath her in tarred felt and put another layer of planking over it. This proved satisfactory, and **CHAMPION** was then used by Capt. Greig in his work around Foveaux Strait and Stewart Island until he was given command of the **KEKENO** in 1884.

CHAMPION was laid up in the creek at the western end of Maori Beach for a period, and when it came for Capt. Greig to arrange for her sale, she was fairly sodden and Greig placed her once more with Tom Leask. She was repaired and sold by auction “as she lay,” on 17th March 1885 to Mr L.G.Roope, fetching the sum of 8 pounds -- which after expenses left 4 pounds 15 shillings for the Government!

She was reported missing on 26th August 1885 after leaving Papatiki for the islands outside Paterson’s Inlet the day before. No trace of her or her crew was ever found apart from a rudder, believed to be hers, found later on Bullers Point.

Well, that’s my lot for another month – hope you found something of interest.

Merv. King.

**Halfmoon Bay School Show
KEEPING IT GREEN**

**Friday 28th November 2003
Community Hall**

Matinee and evening performances
(times to be advertised on the noticeboard)

Hear how a world that used to be green and beautiful becomes a metal junkyard, and how the man who caused all the problems resolves to find a solution.

There will be songs from Rugrats to introduce the matinee show.

Thanks very much to Stewart Island Electrical Supply Authority (SIESA) / Rakiura Resource Recovery, and to William Todd Ltd, for their sponsorship. Thanks to Stewart Island Community and Environment Trust for their support.

Ship to Shore

Orders are now being taken for Christmas hams (Verkerks) and turkeys. Please order as soon as possible. They will be available the week before Christmas.

Come and see our ever-increasing Christmas range of products – from small gifts, boxed wine, children's gifts, chocolates, Christmas cakes, etc.

We are now selling along with the Kai Kart locally harvested green lipped mussels. Fresh on a regular basis and only \$4 per kilo. They will be made up in random weight bags (approx 1 – 2 kg). Order will be taken for larger quantities.

We will be running an in-store draw each week for the three weeks prior to Christmas. We have some great prizes. These will run for the weeks of:-

1 st to 7 th December	drawn on 7 th
8 th to 14 th December	drawn on 14 th
15 th to 21 st December	drawn on 21 st

So each time you come in and shop, you will be eligible to go into our Christmas draw. (One entry per shopping visit).

We have finally got together a list of the packed lunches we are offering on a daily basis for holidaymakers and boat trips, etc. I will be endeavouring to get these out to all the people I think require a copy. However, lists will be available from the shop – please ask if you require one.

SHOP HOURS:

We are now open from 7.30am to 7pm, Monday to Thursday
 7.30am to 7.30pm on Fridays
 7.30am to 7pm on Saturdays and Sundays

We will be open on CHRISTMAS DAY from 8am to 11am
 BOXING DAY from 9am to 6pm

We are looking forward to the challenge of the busy season. We hope you all have a happy and safe Christmas holiday time with your family and friends.

Merry Christmas to you all from Jill, Richard, Wendy, Wayne and the team at Ship to Shore.

Basin Award

This month's basin award is willingly presented to Anna Wright for delivering the wrong car to the wrong house. After all, a Mazda 121 looks exactly like a Honda City, doesn't it?
(Under certain circumstances, that is!) Good on ya, tea leaf!



Halfmoon Bay Beat

There are still a number of petty thefts happening around the Bay area. Recently one of the boats parked adjacent to Island Transport had an Am/FM radio stolen out of it. There also have been reported thefts of gas cylinders and coal. If you see any suspicious activity or have any knowledge of what I have previously mentioned please let me know.

From what I hear there is a large amount of opinion and hearsay as to the actions of your local Police in how they deal with complaints here on Stewart Island.

What I can say is that if the minority here has a problem with local Police actions then instead of subjecting yourselves to hearsay and opinion come and directly ask me. If possible and within reason I will give you the FACTS, not hearsay or opinion that so many here like to thrive on. There are always two sides to a story.

There is a lot of discretion here with Policing, some have the thinking that when they have been apprehended breaking the law then all others who may be driving without a licence or doing similar things outside the law should be dealt with directly the same at that time and place. Sorry I am unable to be able to deal with every perpetrator at the one time, however rest assured over time I will catch up with those who have so far escaped the net. If you are complaining then please come and see me and let me rectify the situation to be fair. Remember those who have been apprehended and dealt with have done so because of their behaviour and actions.

Everyone is responsible for his or her own actions; I am not responsible for actions of others. What I am responsible for is to see a complaint through in the fairest manner for all parties. I will not place myself in a situation that might see a lack of action complaint be drawn against me due to someone else's irresponsibility and or offending by not doing the job properly.

If the moaning minority wish to see a full force of city Policing including drug and traffic Police please let me know and it can be arranged.

For the rest of the community thank you for your ongoing support.

Rob Fox
Stewart Island Police

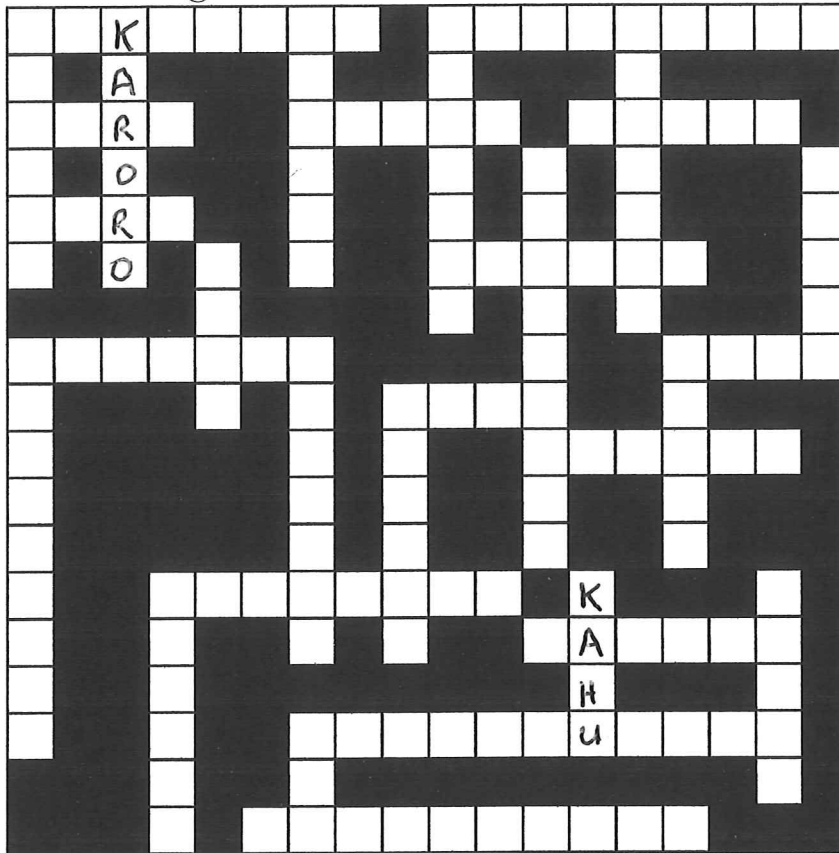


This month dual awards go to Debs Kennett and Marty Pepers, our highly valued community nurses, for their dedication and expertise.

The chocolates were kindly donated by Digger Dave and the Kai Kart.

**Stewart Island News - Prize Crossword
November 2003 - 1st prize \$50 meal voucher**

In conjunction with
Church Hill Restaurant



The crossword solution has a very focussed group as a theme, (hence the large blank areas). Once you have determined the direction in which it is heading, the rest is just some research and concentration. Remember to cross check and think ahead.

The first correct solution handed in to Church Hill during normal opening hours will win a \$50 meal voucher for use at the restaurant.

Please put your name and phone number on your entry and the date/time of receipt will be noted on the sheet by Church Hill staff. Judge's decision is final. No correspondence or debates will be entered into. If no correct solution is received, the next closest will win the prize.

Good luck!

Entries from off the Island will be accepted with the date and time on the postmark taken as when the entry was received. Staff (and their immediate families) of Church Hill Restaurant and Stewart Island News are ineligible to enter. Winner will be notified and prize awarded as soon as possible after the first correct entry is received

David Gideon Plays the Church Hill Restaurant

Daily three-hour lunchtime concerts featuring David's repertoire of classical folk and blues music. Then another evening concert each day with rockin' blues, modern rock and foot-stomping Irish music. Something for everyone!

Sunday 14th - Monday 15th - Tuesday 16th December 2003
No cover charge - diners are strongly recommended to book a table.

Church Hill Cafe, Bar and Restaurant
36 Kamahi Rd, Stewart Island. Phone 03 219 1323
New Zealand's most southerly Stonegrill™ franchise

Clampett Industries LTD – Jed's Electrical

Thanks to all our clients over the past year – and we wish you a Happy and Safe Christmas!

Specials

Fisher and Paykel Stainless Steel Double Dish Drawer \$1599 incl GST .

Also 2 x top quality garden lights including poles, 22w fluorescent, black with resin poles.
\$170.00 incl. GST each.

Stuck for a present idea?

A good one is a power saver light fitting – 32w attractive circular fluorescent fitting with a wide range of surrounds to suit all types of décor. DIY kits fit to standard batten-holder light fitting. These lights are a great idea for lights that are on all the time e.g. kitchen / lounge. \$70.00 inc.GST. I've installed these in a few people's houses recently and they have proven popular.

Jed on Whiteware...

Modern whiteware has become very technical and repair has become beyond the capabilities of most electricians. Jed's Electrical has set out to provide a quality service in this field. It is not possible or economic to carry the stock and equipment required to repair all brands – so I have chosen Fisher and Paykel as a quality New Zealand product with an unequalled after sales support service.

F and P products are available through me – I can match town prices on single items and can get discounts for bulk lots. I'm an authorised F and P service centre – so if you buy F and P I can fix most products here on the Island (under warranty if applicable).

I really don't care where you buy your whiteware – but I recommend you buy F and P. I can offer an excellent repair service for F&P but not other brands.

Safety Message – Xmas Tree Lights

In the good old days Xmas Tree lights were supplied via a transformer at 12 Volts and hence very safe. There is a range of very cheap Christmas Tree lights that look like the harmless ones but they plug directly into the mains. Should they get damaged a lethal voltage is present.... I suggest that if you are using this type of light you make sure you use an R.C.D device, especially outdoors. I can supply these for \$40.00. You may be able to get a cheaper variety from any hardware store.

We are happy to continue to support Stewart Island News by paying the mainland freight costs associated with its production – keep up the good work Stew!

MERRY XMAS

Jed.

Stewart Island News, on behalf of the community, would like to thank Clampett Industries for their ongoing support. Cheers Chris and Jed.

Wildfire

By Stewart Dovey

Phillip Smith has recently traded *Volantis*, locally a well-known vessel, for a new hull named *Wildfire*. The *Volantis* was built in the Marlborough Sounds and performed a variety of work in that area including a number of years in Wellington. Phillip purchased *Volantis* in 1985 since when she has been gainfully employed around Stewart Island.

Wildfire was built by Miller and Tunnage of Port Chalmers in 1993 for a Carey's Bay crayfisherman. Originally fitted with two V8 Scania diesels, twin jet units and double pot-haulers, she was a real speed machine. However, economy dictated a change. One engine was removed and the hull reconfigured to a conventional keeler with a single prop. The hull is constructed from double, diagonally laid kauri, a layer of ply and then fibre-glassed. This makes the hull very low maintenance and extremely strong.

Phillip is really pleased with his new acquisition. It is ideally equipped for the kiwi-spotting business, is faster and more comfortable. Many of his clients travel from Europe especially to view kiwi so a high level of service is essential. The trip around Ackers Point to the small jetty in Glory Cove where the party is landed is only undertaken in favourable conditions. Westerlies driving down Pattersons Inlet can make conditions unpleasant, especially on the return trip in darkness. This is where the better facilities aboard *Wildfire* make all the difference.

Specifications:

Length 17m Beam 5m Draught 1.5m
Main engine - Scania 670 HP diesel.
Auxiliary power 230v AC
Navigation: 72 nm radar, Plotter and Sounder
Comms: SSB, VHF

Stewart Island is steeped in a rich history of maritime families. Phillip, who can easily trace his background to "Yankee" Smith of

Bravo Island, is a well-respected member of our community. He has a philosophical approach to the many changes he has witnessed over the years. While many people dislike change, Phillip accepts it as a normal part of life and deals with it accordingly.

Starting school in Halfmoon Bay at the age of five years, he recalls a role of around 90 pupils. With today's school role around 20, he doesn't regard this particular aspect of change as very encouraging. However Phillip believes Stewart Islanders have a very strong sense of community spirit and will continue to survive if we can all pull in the same direction at the same time.



Wildfire on her mooring.

Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat. Please put a penny in the old man's hat.

Traditional nursery rhymes such as this were a very important part of Christmas when I was a boy. (What a long memory I have!)

Christmas has always been a time of generosity and understanding.

A Lot of Fuss over Nothing?

A man living in Kandos (near Mudgee) in Australia received a bill for his, as yet, unused gas line stating that he owed \$0.00. He ignored it and threw it away. In April he received another bill and threw that away too.

The following month the gas company sent him a very nasty note stating they were going to cancel his gas line if he didn't send them \$0.00 by return mail. He called them, talked to them, and they said it was a computer error and they would take care of it.

The following month he decided that it was about time that he tried out the troublesome gas line figuring that if there was usage on the account it would put an end to this ridiculous predicament. However, when he went to use the gas, it had been cut off.

He called the Gas Company who apologised for the computer error once again and said that they would take care of it. The next day he got a bill for \$0.00 stating that payment was now overdue. Assuming that having spoken to them the previous day the latest bill was yet another mistake, he ignored it, trusting that the company would be as good as their word and sort the problem out.

The next month he got a bill for \$0.00. This bill also stated that he had 10 days to pay his account or the company would have to take steps to recover the debt. Finally, giving in, he thought he would beat the company at their own game and mailed a cheque for \$0.00.

The computer duly processed his account and returned a statement to the effect that he now owed the Gas Company nothing at all.

A week later, the manager of the Mudgee branch of the Westpac Banking Corporation called our hapless friend and asked him what he was doing writing cheques for \$0.00. After a lengthy explanation the bank manager replied that the \$0.00 cheque had caused their cheque processing software to fail. The bank

could therefore not process ANY cheques they had received from ANY of their customers that day because the cheque for \$0.00 had caused the computer to crash.

The following month the man received a letter from the gas company claiming that his cheque had bounced and that he now owed them \$0.00 and unless he sent a cheque by return mail they would take immediate steps to recover the debt.

At this point, the man decided to file a debt harassment claim against the gas company. It took him nearly 2 hours to convince the clerks at the local courthouse that he was not joking. They subsequently assisted him in the drafting of statements which were considered substantive evidence of the aggravation and difficulties he had been forced to endure during this debacle.

The matter was heard in the Magistrate's Court in Mudgee and the outcome was this:

The gas company was ordered to:

- [1] Immediately rectify their computerised accounts system or show cause, within 10 days, why the matter should not be referred to a higher court for consideration under Company Law.
- [2] Pay the bank dishonour fees incurred by the man.
- [3] Pay the bank dishonour fees incurred by all the Westpac clients whose cheques had bounced on the day our friend's had been.
- [4] Pay the claimant's court costs; and
- [5] Pay the claimant a total of \$1500 per month for the 5-month period March to July inclusive as compensation for the aggravation they had caused their client to suffer.

All this over \$0.00. True story!

And they beat us in the Semis!

KAI KART KETCH UP

By now most of you will be aware that the Kai Kart has opened its doors again.

Currently we are open daily:

12noon to 2pm

6pm to 8pm

From the 1st December our daily trading hours will be:

11am to 2pm

5pm to 9pm

We have extended our menu with toasted sandwiches, mussel chowder, mussel patties etc. but still have the old favourites like Pita breads and burgers.

We have a new addition to our team in the fishy chipper and that is Vanessa. All the other familiar faces are still there, some changed their hairstyle beyond recognition.

Great to have your support and thank you for all the nice comments we have had regarding the new roof. There is more to come.

IN CONJUNCTION WITH SHIP TO SHORE

WE ARE NOW ABLE TO OFFER YOU FRESH GREEN-LIPPED MUSSELS.

ORDERS ARE TAKEN AT EITHER PLACE FOR PEOPLE THAT REQUIRE MORE THAN "A FEED".

Hilli, Ag, Yve and Vanessa

"Yeah Stewart Island "

This was the cry from the lips of anyone who could read, 5-90 years of age.

For the last few years Stewart Island Promotions has supported Venture Southland at the Christchurch A&P Show during Cup Week in Christchurch. This stand included all Southland except Fiordland who had a defined area for themselves. Having experienced the response when Stewart Island did it alone, prior to the joint venture of the last few shows, we decided to take the plunge once again.

The executive, knowing that it would cost more, thought we should go back to stand alone and still be attached for uniformity. Without doubt this decision was great. It inspired us to update the photo library and this has provided us with a range of images available at any time, through the executive, for promotion of the Island.

So the game is on. Buy a stand in the tourism tent for this coming expo! Make it as attractive as possible, deal with providers of plants, sand, computers, screens and projectors and make it work. We can go alone. The areas that were promoted were the National Park, Ulva Island, walking tracks and the tranquillity of the Island.

Helen Cave, Sue Munro, Jo Leask, and myself were the team. Statistically in excess of 850 people entered the draw for a trip to Stewart Island leaving from Bluff. Over 550 generic brochures were given out and, with variable weather at the show; the effort to get into the domestic market was well worth it. The words on everyone's lips were "Got to go to Catlins and Stewart Island "which must be good for local operators. Contact Barry Rhodes now!