

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

## CELEBRATING RAKIURA

October 2023

\$4.00

### Thankyou from Elaine Hamilton

A big thank you to our small group of ladies who continue to knit for the "Mission without Borders." This year we had another three large bags which included blankets, jerseys, hats, scarves, socks, etc., which are always very much appreciated. A special mention to Jenny Gell who passed away recently. Jenny was one of the founding members of the Knit & Knatter group. She was a beautiful knitter and provided many garments for the baby bags and sale stand at the Flight Centre. She will be missed by us all. Anyone wishing to help phone Elaine Hamilton 0272225504 or Pat King 032191156



The wonderful "Daffodil Ladies" raised \$1131.90 for Daffodil Day this year. Funds help those affected by cancer.

Our condolences to the families and friends of Irene Dennis, Jenny Gell, and Judy Eriksson

### Palmerston Island Rat Eradication by James Ware

During August and September, I spent 6 weeks in the Cook Islands helping with a rat eradication on one of the Pa Euna, Palmerston Island. Palmerston Island is a coral atoll comprised of 5 larger motu some 470 km to the Northwest of Rarotonga and is the most remote of the inhabited Cook Islands.

After 48 hours onboard the research Vessel Anuanua Moana we reached the Island and were ferried ashore with our gear through the reef by dingy. There, the community of 28 welcomed us and we were taken to our accommodation, the cyclone shelter where we would be looked after exceptionally well; I don't think I have ever eaten fish (and coconut) prepared in so many different ways on a daily basis! Parrot fish is the local delicacy but also wahoo, coral trout, and tuna.

Rats were targeted for eradication as they are a threat to food supplies of the community as well as sea turtle nesting sites, young coconut crabs, and an array of native birds such as red-tailed tropic birds, curlew, and the kid's favourite: boobies. During feasibility studies last year, rats were only found on two islands in the group, kiore on Cooks motu (32ha) and kiore and ship rats on inhabited Home motu (40ha).

The Rat Team was comprised of 4 staff from NZ and 4 from Rarotonga we also had assistance from community and usually worked in teams of 10 -12. We hand laid rat bait in 3 applications from over 2000 marked points on a 20x20 metre grid. Setting up the grid was hard work; cutting tracks with



Transporting bait between motus

machete often through thick bush, the final marked grid was nearly 40km of track.

There were 109 buildings which also required baiting. Bait was placed in over 500 small trays in strategic locations, like ceiling spaces and kitchen cupboards.

### The local school putting on a show



Including contingency, we had 6 tonnes of bait in 10kg buckets, these were distributed by tractor and dingy, then carted to site by hand in preparation for baiting days.

In down time, volleyball and swimming were

(Continued on page 4)

**FUTURE  
RAKIURA**



## MH101® - mental health workshop

➤ Free workshop

### About the workshop

Supporting someone experiencing mental health challenges can make a big difference to their wellbeing and recovery. Learn how to recognise signs of mental health challenges, and gain practical tools you can use to support people when they need it most.

Our experienced facilitators bring professional and personal experience to the workshop, running interactive activities and stimulating conversations that bring the learning to life.

Participants will receive a workbook with MH101® notes, additional reading, a directory for support and assistance, plus access to an interactive e-learning to apply what you learn.

### Learning outcomes

After attending MH101®, participants will be able to:

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of mental distress.
- Get an overview of some major mental health challenges, including depression, anxiety, psychosis and substance use disorder.
- Learn strategies and get tools for maintaining your mental health, and the mental health and wellbeing of others.
- Understand how your reactions can impact on other people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours.
- Learn how to use supportive language and perspective to build connection.
- Learn how to respond wisely in any given situation, including the risk of suicide or self-harm.
- Understand where, when and how to get personal and professional help.



*"I came away feeling encouraged and empowered. There is hope and I don't have to be an expert to make a difference"*

### Workshop details

Thursday 9 November, 9am - 4.30pm

Oban Fire Station, Argyle Street

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/MH101StewartIsland>

Scan QR code to register



[www.blueprint.co.nz](http://www.blueprint.co.nz)

**Te Whatu Ora**  
Health New Zealand

## Safety Reminder: Your Electric Blanket

A faulty electric blanket can be a fire risk. If you sense hot spots or it's older than 5 years, it's time for a replacement. To keep yourself safe, follow these safety tips:

- NEVER sleep with an electric blanket on.
- ALWAYS turn electric blankets off before leaving the house.
- ROLL electric blankets to store. Do not fold.
- TEST electric blankets each winter with a certified electrician.

Remember – if in doubt, throw it out!

Let's ensure a cosy night's sleep without any worries.

Stay safe!

*From Kirsten Hicks, on behalf of Community Readiness & Recovery Team – Southland*

**CHECK THE HEAT BEFORE YOU SLEEP**



56°C  
210°C



# 2023 Fundraising for Gumboot Friday

## Bake Sale

Friday 3rd November Noticeboard Shelter  
10am-1pm

Donations of baked goods warmly welcomed. Contact Julie Asher, Laura or Sarah Baird or HMB School, thank you.

## HMB School Gala

Friday 3rd November at School 1.30-2.30pm  
Jumble Sale, Books, Gifts, Silent Auction, Raffles, Fun Activities, Sweets and Treats - come and do your Xmas shopping early! Contact Emily or HMB.

### What is Gumboot Friday?

Gumboot Friday is some light relief in a dark space. It's a fun way for kiwis to join in the kids' mental health conversation and raises money to provide free and timely counselling for any young person in need.



**NEVER SLEEP WITH AN ELECTRIC BLANKET ON**

# For sale by deadline treaty – 94 Main Road



Situated at 94 Main Road, this north facing villa has 3 double bedrooms, 2 showers and toilets, a large basement and a veranda/deck on 3 sides. Set on 0.5813 hectares, this secluded property has established trees, an 8.4 metre tunnel house and outbuildings.

The house has been insulated (ceiling and majority of underfloor), double glazed, re-piled and has diesel heating. It

has approx. 50,000L water storage and an LPG califont for water heating.

Sale is by deadline treaty, due 10 December 2023.

For more information contact Kirsten Hicks (phone 027 325 1721 or [kirstensi@icloud.com](mailto:kirstensi@icloud.com).)

It's hard to rhyme Rakiura with anything, but you can have a good time trying..

## Rakiura Rhyme Machine

A few pictures from events earlier this month



Winning entry in the Rakiura Bake-Off (on right): Caramel mud cake made by Tam Austin and James Ware. Cake on the left is Bella and Sayla's entry. The caramel mud cake recipe can be found online if you want to try it: <https://sweetnessandbite.com/rich-caramel-mud-cake/> Thanks for sharing the photo and recipe, Tam!



Above: Album Party at the community centre  
Right: Kids' sandcastle competition  
Photo credit: Emma Hopkins



(Continued from page 1)

favourite activities and the Palmerston “Lucky” school (9 students aged 5 – 18) put on a show for us as well as helping with bait monitoring and even watched the rugby one morning with us for PE lessons! Sunday was church and recovery for some after Saturday night pool tournaments.

The return journey was aboard the traditional sailing canoe Murumura Atua, a 22m double hulled traditional voyaging vaka. Despite the size, it was very comfortable for the 16 of us, everyone was assigned watches, helping with sailing, cooking etc. Sailing was fun and quite physical at times, steering being achieved with a great big steering paddle (hoe) and navigation was by sights e.g., the sun or stars, or calling out compass bearings on dark nights! We spent 3 nights aboard her en route to Rarotonga. However, as we were heading into the squally weather conditions, progress was slow. With worse weather expected, the decision was made to head to Aitutaki where we flew back to Rarotonga rather than wait it out for another 5 or so days.

The rat eradication project was funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade with the planning and delivery led by the New Zealand Department of Conservation, in collaboration with the Cook Island’s National Environment Service, Ministry of Agriculture, Te Ipukarea Society, and the Palmerston community.



Marumaru Atua



The main street on Palmerston Island

### Vote for Rakiura's very own Southern NZ Dotterel for Bird of the Century

by Daniel Cocker

The real New Zealand election is just around the corner: The 'Bird of the Year' competition is back! The annual event raising awareness for our amazing bird life run by Forest and Bird is taking a different spin this year to celebrate the organisation's 100th anniversary. To celebrate, they have rebranded this year's competition to crown the 'Bird of the Century'! This means several extinct bird species that have disappeared over the last 100 years have also been included in the competition this year. Last year, for the first time ever, Rakiura's own Southern NZ dotterel was included in the competition and finished 11th overall out of more than 70 species! Not bad for a lesser-known Southland bird! This year, however, it is more important than ever that the Southern NZ dotterel gets a top finish with now less than 126 birds left in the world. The population has more than halved since 2010 and is on the brink of extinction! Time is running out to save them. Help raise awareness by voting for the Southern NZ Dotterel for 'Bird of the Century' this year. Voting opens Monday 9am October 30th and closes Sunday 5pm November 12th. The winner will be announced on the morning of Monday November 13th. Head to

<https://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz/> to vote. If you would like to donate to the Southern NZ dotterel



Southern New Zealand dotterel on Mt Rakeahua  
Photo credit: Harrison Talarico

project, head to the NZ Nature Fund website and find Southern Dotterel in the 'projects' tab. This helps fund predator control efforts and research.

Stewart Island News archives and contact information can be found at [www.stewartislandnews.com](http://www.stewartislandnews.com)  
Keep up with island news on our Facebook page  
Find subscription information for SIN on the back page

### Rakiura Slipway charges 2023

Contact Steve 021 204 6125  
Email [4spect@gmail.com](mailto:4spect@gmail.com)

#### Slipping Fees:

65.00 + GST up  
65.00 + GST down  
100 + GST daily charge  
100.00 + GST water blaster charge

Forms: Owner and vessel detail forms must be completed and signed prior to vessel being slipped. Steve has these forms.

#### Storage Units

Lockable storage units are available for hire at the slip building, cost 35.00 per week.  
Contact Rastus 027 4387995

### Rakiura Marine Guardians Inc.

Bill Watt – Chairman,  
Phone: 027 495 9288  
[williamwatt@outlook.co.nz](mailto:williamwatt@outlook.co.nz)



Rakiura Marine Guardians Inc (RMGI) Is a voluntary organisation dedicated to advocating for the protection, enhancement, and sustainable use of the marine environment of Rakiura (Stewart Island). Membership is open to individuals who live on Rakiura and/or who have an interest in the marine environment.

Notice of:

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of Rakiura Marine Guardians Inc (RMGI) will be held on Thursday 30 November 2023 at 5.00 pm at the meeting room, Stewart Island Museum.

Agenda to follow.

Please let me know if you have anything you wish to raise at the AGM.

#### OTHER MATTERS

People have contacted me with concern about possible flow-on effects from changed fishing regulations affecting the Ruapuke area. Their concern is, reduced 'take' limits in this area may lead to increased pressure on fisheries elsewhere, especially Rakiura.

Comment: Last year, increased pressure on the Te Whaka a te Whera (Paterson Inlet) from large trailer boats not normally seen here, and also more charter boats, was obvious from my window. This year, the rahui on fishing around Ulva seems to be generally observed and whatever else we think of the El Nino weather, it is at least giving the local fishery a rest. Whether we wish to advocate on this could be discussed at the AGM.

We have been identified as an 'affected party' to the appeal by Hananui Aquaculture against the decision by Environment Southland NOT to grant permission for the proposed offshore salmon farm off the north east coast of Rakiura.

Comment: Locally, opinion is divided on this application but what (technically) we can submit on, and whether we should submit, could be discussed at the AGM.

Moorings. Environment Southland is now inviting owners of moorings to register them with the Council. Comment: Inevitably, this will lead to a regulatory regime probably involving mooring charges. The numbers of new moorings being laid, what appear to be numerous 'dead' moorings, and my own personal experience over the years of trying to maintain a usable mooring despite others who have dropped moorings far too close, or had derelict moorings nearby, lead me to the view that this move by Environment Southland is welcome and it's high time that body did its job. We don't want more of our lovely bays and inlets cluttered up with more moorings, old boats, barges and marine junk. But – as always – there may be other views on this!

### *Advertise in the* **Stewart Island News**

This little paper ends up in most island households and is sent to over 150 crib owners, former residents, and other subscribers around the country and the world. Dozens of visitors see this too. So tell all of those people about your business!  
Contact editor for rates at [stewartislandnews@gmail.com](mailto:stewartislandnews@gmail.com)

# FUTURE RAKIURA

Our vision is ensuring a bright, sustainable future with the purpose to connect and support the Rakiura community to navigate towards this.

## Community Calendar

Check out what's on for Rakiura with the Community Calendar. Stacks of events are loaded up including community events, music, food, arts, volunteering, even the cruise ship schedule. We're now integrated into Stewart Island's main tourist information website [www.stewartisland.co.nz](http://www.stewartisland.co.nz) so our visitor numbers have skyrocketed. If you want to get your event out there and noticed by lots of visitors, then the Community Calendar is a great option. We've had nearly 2000 views, from over 800 people, from over 10 countries since our launch and it's growing rapidly. If you have an event to share, you can enter details via the form on [www.rakiuracalendar.com](http://www.rakiuracalendar.com) or email [rakiura.future@gmail.com](mailto:rakiura.future@gmail.com).



Number of visitors over time. The big increase follows being integrated into the SIPA website.

## Future Rakiura AGM

Our AGM is scheduled for 14th November, 7:30pm at the Oban Fire Station and all are welcome to join. We are always seeking additional support and ideas and would love to hear from you. You can join our committee, monthly meetings, or help out with activities to better connect our community. Send us an email or message us on Facebook for more information.

## Stormwater Litter Traps

A community member approached us with concern of litter going into stormwater drains that empty directly onto the beach and into the ocean.

With the help of the Community Board, SDC and Fulton Hogan we have successfully initiated a trial of storm water sump litter traps. We are now in the process of documenting the

litter that is caught via Litter Intelligence surveys. This can inform us which items are commonly found in our litter traps, how this compares nationally, and assistance to make improvements to prevent the litter making it to the drain. Check out [litterintelligence.org](http://litterintelligence.org) for more information. We will keep you updated with the survey results.



Simon with the litter trap installed near The Bus Shelter

If you're new to the island Please get in touch with us if you're new to the island and want information or to be connected with like-minded folk. Check out our community calendar as a starter! This highlights a range of local community volunteer groups, general interest groups and events.

If you're interested to hear more, to help out at an event or join Future Rakiura, please contact [rakiura.future@gmail.com](mailto:rakiura.future@gmail.com) or message us on Facebook Messenger and one of the team will get back to you.

## Rowing for Life Aotearoa

by Anita Geeson

After a chance meeting on a southern beach in 2020 between Ian Hamilton of Invercargill and Lions Club member Colin McDonald, of Tokonui, a partnership was formed to raise money for four charities – Child Cancer Foundation, Starship Hospital, Surf Lifesaving NZ and Lions Skin Cancer Screening Trust. Ian Hamilton wanted to row the east coast of NZ to raise money for Child Cancer and Starship because of a family connection with both and Surf Live-saving NZ because of their support during other fund-raising rowing events that he had participated in. Lions were raising money for all those organizations in addition to Lions Skin Cancer Screening Trust so Colin McDonald suggested that they pool their efforts with all money raised to be divided between the charities.

The row will begin from Port Pegasus, Rakiura, on December 2 and finish up at Cape Reinga in July. Lions Clubs throughout the country will support the rowers along the way while holding fund raising events to boost the total raised while the rowers are in their communities.

Ian Hamilton and his rowing crew will arrive in Port Pegasus on December 2 before rowing S. Cape to North Arm Port; Port Pegasus to Lord's River; Lord's River to Oban arriving on December 5. On December 6 they will be out and about collecting money for their project before departing for Bluff on December 7.

Stewart island Lions ask that you join them in offering hospitality to the team of mainland Lions Club members who will be visiting the island to welcome the rowers ashore as well as giving generously to this awesome cause.

### Rowing For Life



### 400 Words by Beverley Osborn

As I write this article, war is raging in the Middle East. Thousands of Israelis and Palestinians have died and, by the time this edition of SIN is published, there will be an even more enormous death toll. And the destruction affects the fabric of life as well. The injuries, loss of homes and livelihoods, lack of food, water, electricity and medical supplies, the terror and trauma will alter forever the lives of those who physically survive and will breed even more hatred and desire for revenge. Hamas is a terrorist organisation and, though it spawned from the Israeli treatment of Palestinians, it definitely does not represent all Palestinians. How could it, when its actions have caused them so much suffering as well?

It feels incomprehensible that increasing areas of our world are battlefields – a waste of lives, time and resources, a misuse of the food and fuel, skills and strengths which are building blocks for the future. When they become, instead, tools for destruction and extortion, the future looks bleak indeed.

Our distance from the war zones is a blessing of huge value and one we should see as opportunities both to analyse why violence is increasing round the world and

to look for creative instead of destructive ways for solving disputes and injustices.

Bad things do happen to good people and the only thing we CAN control in such situations is the way we react – in national or domestic situations. If we allow the harm we have suffered to change us from happy and caring individuals into bitter and resentful people, intent on retaliation, that corrosion of our own personalities will decrease our ability to be happy and increase the spread of misery in our communities.

I belong to a generation which was reared on precepts like “two wrongs don’t make a right” and there’s that verse in the Bible about the sins of the parents punishing their descendants for generations. I wonder if people like Putin ever consider the effects on the children and grandchildren of soldiers ordered to harm and kill ordinary people he dubs “enemies”.

It would be good to feel that the world is a slightly better and happier place because we have lived. That can only be achieved if our children learn from us to look forward to plan and create good rather than backward to dwell in bitterness.

## Completion of the SIRCET Jobs for Nature project - Restoring Rakiura -

Jobs for Nature (JFN) was a government initiative in response to COVID-19, aimed at supporting and upskilling people into conservation based work. SIRCET was successful in gaining this funding for two years to do a concerted effort in removing Darwin's Barberry, and increasing and upgrading our trapping area. Over 45 staff were able to find fixed term employment during this time. There was an emphasis on providing training for staff for both the project, and for future employment, and our staff attended many courses that were brought to the island for this.

For our predator control part of this project we were to upgrade our existing trap network and expand it. Many of the Victor traps in corflute tunnels have been replaced with DOC/BT200 box traps, tree-mounted D-Rat Supervisor Max, and Goodnature A24 self-resetting rat traps. We will continue phasing out corflute as it flakes with age and contaminates the environment. A huge success for the project has been expanding the trapping area to include a large part of Horseshoe Point. 80 possums and 952 rats have been controlled in this area alone, out of the 145 self-resetting A24s, and 76 Trapinator possum traps. It adds to the other peninsulas that both SIRCET and other groups protect - Mamaku, Acker's and The Neck - where predators are being controlled for the benefit of our flora and fauna. Our staff also installed the Celium wireless network to enable us to set more live capture feral cat traps, as this sends an alert when the trap is triggered. This saves lots of time and allowed for more intensive feral cat control to be done last summer.

While we would have loved to have targeted more weeds, our weed control milestone was to search to 1,280ha of land for Darwin's Barberry. A grid search method was used where teams of three to five searched an area using compass in a line, searching 5m apart. Each team member was tracked to ensure all the area was covered. Each plant found and controlled was also logged. We reached 95% of the milestone which is a really great effort. It would have taken SIRCET 10 years to search this area without the JFN funding! Other weed plants found were logged for future reference but if we had controlled all of these, we wouldn't have been able to cover all this area.

Many thanks to DoC for their support throughout the project, RealNZ for supporting travel and allowing us to borrow their shed to build traps, RMLT and the community for allowing us to work on their land, Environment Southland who funded some new traps, and Goodnature Cahoots programme for giving us 1 A24 trap for each one we purchased.

### What we have removed from our local ecosystem





## How you can help SIRCET look after our Environment

SIRCET no longer has funding to employ full time employees . While we continue to search for funding, we want to keep the gains from our JFN project. Here are some ways that you can help us to look after the local biodiversity :

- Adopt a trap
- Volunteer to check a trapline
- Sponsor a hectare
- Join us at Plant & Plot to help propogate native plants
- Donate to our givealittle via our website
- Help us build trap boxes
- Get in touch if you can volunteer expertise that may assist us
- Volunteer for seasonal projects and species monitoring



Many thanks to all our past and current volunteers. We appreciate you so much!

### Rakiura Māori Lands Trust Update

So much has happened with the Oneke Project that it's hard to know where to start, but with the appearance of barges and big diggers we are very much in the "doing" stage.

Due to continual delays with consenting issues with DOC we are about 2 years behind where we should be. It should be noted that senior DOC officials came and apologised to us for the way, we as a Trust, had been treated and we acknowledge that apology. We have a fantastic working relationship with local DOC staff, but when it comes to the decision makers it has been hard and expensive work.

So, we will have a wharf and a whare built in the next few months. Neither are big or complex but getting materials and labour to and from the Neck is challenging and we are grateful for the help and assistance of many local contractors and suppliers.

We are really excited by the opportunities we will create which will enhance our predator free work with deer, cats, rats, and possums, and see the development of some new trips and experiences for visitors.

We have strengthened the predator fence at the north end of the Old Neck beach, but we will always get deer coming ashore as they can swim. We also have our AGM scheduled for March 22 – 24 2024 on Rakiura. This is always a popular event with between 150 to 200 of our owners arriving to visit their whenua, meet each other and learn about how things are going. Some will spend a week here and there are whanau who will be travelling from as far away as Australia for the occasion.

We are thankful for all the support we get from locals.

Finally, we are very lucky and privileged to have Shane Anderson as our conservation manager for the Neck. He is a real dedicated man of the land and a huge asset to the Trust. He arrived at our board meeting on the island to say he was a bit tired as at 2.30am one of his bush sensors went off and woke him up. He got up – went out and shot a big stag. He has many cameras and sensors which let him know of any incursions. He was also invited to visit the work that the Zip Foundation is doing in South Westland where they are using a lot of new technology to eradicate possums rats and stoats. They have given Shane some new kit to trial on the Neck. Shane is also the master of understatement so when he told me that he had caught a big cat – we knew it would be very big. It was 8.5kgs of mature Tom cat.



Again, thanks to the island community for all your support and if we don't see you before, we will see you in March for the AGM. If you have any special deals, trips, or products you want to offer our visitors, please get in touch with Jill Skerrett.

Nga Mihi,  
Tina Nixon

**Titi Islands Trip** by *Bella McRitchie-King*

Ugh, Just another day of boring old school, wait I almost forgot I'M GOING TO THE TITI ISLANDS!! I'm going here because I won a rat-trapping competition so my prize was a helicopter trip to a predator-free Muttonbird Island. I was going to go last year but I was tragically SICK... Luckily they invited me there again. The day before I leave there are gale force winds and rain, I crossed my fingers that it would be nice weather for tomorrow.



As I nervously wait for the helicopter to arrive I think about the fun I'm going to have today... Oh, there's the helicopter coming now I better get my bag ready! This is the start of my awesome adventure. Yay, I get to sit in the front of the helicopter, as the doors close I'm a little nervous but mainly excited. 10 minutes later we landed on Rukawahakura/Joss's Island. The helicopter ride was really calm but when we

landed on the Island there were lots of fallen trees, recently there had been super strong winds that had caused lots of damage.



Time to start trapping. I found it really interesting that they drop Jumbuck's (the pony) old girth onto each trap to set it off. It is the perfect weight to set off the DOC200 traps so they can put bait in them. Watch your fingers! The Mutton birders also use good nature traps. It's fun to set them off with a small stick to press a bar and if there is enough gas it should activate a larger bar. Doing these traps was really fun and I saw so much wildlife like a group of five saddlebacks and lots of cute and curious robins. At the end when we finished all the traps I sat in a hammock that overlooked the ocean. On the edges of the Island, there were lots of rocks and there was a cave. Behind a rock wall there was a small gap and we could see a little seal nose poking through. Sadly my trip was over and it was time to take the helicopter home.

Goodbye, Titi Island!



**Church Chatter** by *Jo Riksem*



We certainly have had a variety of spring weather lately with rain, stormy winds, hail and sunshine but with this we get our beautiful rainbows, something other countries rarely see. When the clouds clear we have spectacular dark skies where the stars are crystal clear and you feel like you can reach out and touch them. Our floor in the back of the church as you enter has had two finishing coats and shows the beautiful grain of the old timber milled on this island many years ago with the saw marks clearly visible. We now move back to services every Sunday through April. If you would like to view the inside of the church and there is nobody in the manse (building next to the church) please contact me at 027 455-2191.

**Our speakers for November are:**

5<sup>th</sup> - Rev Duncan Graham – Duncan is new to Stewart Island. He has served in churches in Gore and other churches through New Zealand and overseas over 60 years. He says he is not retired but “retreaded.”

12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> – Rev Alan Bennett - Alan Bennett, with Averil his wife, has part-time ministries in Gore and Edendale, after 42 years in Thailand with OMF International. Alan enjoys amateur radio, both operating and fixing; and pastoral visiting. Averil's academic career began as a new entrant in Oban School!

26<sup>th</sup> – Rev Richard Aitken from Invercargill, well known to many on the island, and a welcome return to our shores. Communion will be served.

We now have dates for our Christmas services which will be Community Carol Service 15 December 7 pm, Christmas Eve 24 December 10 pm (there will be no morning service that day), and Christmas Day 25 December 10:30 am. Christmas Eve and Day will be lead by Rev Barbara Walker who was with us last Christmas, and is a retired midwife and has served in many refugee camps.

All are welcome.



'April is the cruelest month ....' This line from Thomas Eliot's *The Waste Land* is a haunting reflection on the horrors of the First World War. That war ended November 11<sup>th</sup>. Eliot wrote of the painful paradox that the following spring brought; after so much loss and destruction the signs of new life springing forth were fraught with a sense of futility for many of the survivors and their families. For us in the southern hemisphere April equates to October, where we are enduring the fury of equinoctial gales, currently wreaking havoc on fragile spring growth. Those who have lost friends in the bleak days of winter may find it particularly hard to see the world moving on, new life emerging, the feeling that with the change of season they are being ever further separated from the warmth and laughter of departed friends.

That warmth and laughter, as well as knowledge and – let us not forget – a competitive gardening spirit - in good times and bad were the strengths of The Stewart Island Garden Circle, founded in 1968 and winding up in 2010. There are still a good number of Islanders who were members of the S.I.G.C. So it was with particular sadness that we learnt of the deaths last month of Irene Dennis and Jenny Gell, both longtime supporters of the Circle. Jenny and I came to live on Stewart Island about the same time in the late 1990's and were welcomed into the Garden Circle where Irene was a long-standing member. The earliest mention I can find of her in the S.I.G.C. minutes is February 1971. The ladies welcomed us with generous gifts of plants and ready, often trenchant, pearls of gardening wisdom. I can remember Jenny hesitantly asking advice on how to grow good rhubarb. There was a ruminative silence. Then Peggy Wilson, one of the Old Guard, opined: 'Bury a sheep.' Yes, well, first acquire one in a suitable state for burial.

The Garden Circle offered newcomers to the Island the opportunity to meet a variety of people ranging in age but all passionate about gardening and knowledgeable about the Island's climate and conditions. Meetings were held in members' homes. A long line of secretaries wrote up the minutes, the earliest of which were notable for the formality of expression and the naming of the predominantly female members as *Mesdames George Leask, Allan Johnson etc.* The District Nurse of those early years, a regular attender, was always recorded as *Sister Perkins*.

New Zealand had just converted to decimal currency. The first subscription was set at the new-fangled 10 cents, worth a lot more than now. In its first year the Circle spent considerable time debating the day-of-the-week and timing of meetings. Ferries did not run every day. Ferry Day was to be avoided at all cost. 2.00pm start or 2.15pm? Perhaps this reflected the timetables of busy housewives caught between lunch and evening meal preparation. And of course many would have had to walk to the meeting, carrying their competition blooms and plate of afternoon tea. Not nearly as many cars on the Island in those days. 'Ladies a plate' was the order of the day but perhaps to avoid overly competitive baking afternoon tea offerings were restricted to 4 servings only. Tough if you missed out on a luscious something or other!

This rule must have been relaxed at some point. By Jenny's and my time the afternoon tea offerings were plentiful and the baking skills sublime. The monthly competitions were hotly contested and the tour of the hostess's garden a particular joy to us newbies. We could see possibilities – what that great garden designer, Capability Brown, called *capabilities*, hence his moniker. We could dare to aspire to greater things and were enabled and encouraged by the cuttings, bulbs, seeds and whole plants we were so generously offered.

Irene and Jenny were both elected president of S.I.G.C. and were fine leaders. They presided over great years and even when numbers dwindled and the club decided to stop regular meetings, Jenny continued to organise luncheons at the South Sea Hotel to enliven the winter months. Just how enlivening could sometimes be seen reflected in the bemused, startled even, expressions on the faces of other diners!

We offer our sympathy to Irene's and Jenny's family and friends. May you find many sweet reminders of old friends in your gardens. - Raylene

Garden Circle members at Nancy Schofield's some years ago. Left to Right: Ulva Goodwillie, Isobel Broughton, Irene Dennis, Jenny Vick, Raylene Waddell, Lil Skipper, Nancy Schofield, Jenny Gell, Iris Tait, Peggy Wilson, Mavis Tait.



**(Voluntary) Swimming in the Sea** by *Bill Watt*

It doesn't always happen. But is always rewarding when it does. The decision to go – sometimes the hard part unless the weather is perfect. Don't over think it. Just do it. At the water – no turning back. The deliberate walk into the sea. Pause, with the water 'midships'. A deep breath or two – and under. Yes, it's cold. Swim a bit. The cold is powerful and intense – after the first 'cold shock' it arrives in waves, bites, hurts. Try to relax into it for just a little while, steadying the breathing. Focus on the present, fight that urge to get out. But not too long. Walk out. Towel down and get some warm gear on quickly. Then back up the hill, feeling cleansed. Back home. Skin glowing now. Mood lifted. Always feeling better.



The swim is best if one wears 'minimal', grounding and 'feeling' the 'place' with no barrier between you and it. It connects us more intensely to things: the beach, the water, the natural world, our bodies. There's a feeling of freedom.

We are 80% water. Salt water. So what is surprising is not that we feel this relationship so intensely when we are in it, but that we have trouble expressing it.

Cold ocean swimming and cold exposure training has always been a feature of Scandinavian life. Its popularity spread as people found ways to kick back at and get around Covid restrictions. The benefits of cold-water immersion have been popularised by people like Wim Hoff. Ice baths have become a feature of elite sports. 'Cold plunge' can be a good a way to address post exertion muscle soreness.

Sea swimming year-round is part of our Rakiura culture. Regular sea swimming seems to have been part of the early Māori way of life. Basil Howard comments about the inhabitants of Native Island (Te Wharawhara), and the effect of a measles epidemic "aggravated by the method of treatment ... sea bathing!" (Reference below). Sea bathing would have been a cleansing and healthy activity before the Europeans brought new diseases. At the Kaipipi shipyard, I understand that fit young Norwegians started their day with calisthenics (gym rings were set up in the workshop), followed by a dip in the bay. The Museum has a photo of someone who I think is George Turner skinny dipping at Mason Bay probably in the 1930's. I recall from the 1950's and 60's that local stalwarts like Eunice Leask, Eileen Willa, Sandy Middleton, Mabs Prentice, Mrs Buxton and Duncan McPherson swam regularly. I'm aware that several young-at-heart people currently swim here regularly year-round.

It is surprising, given our partially Scandinavian roots, that there is no culture of sauna use. A traditional Finnish Sauna is wonderfully refreshing and invigorating.

In writing this, I am keenly aware that for many on the Island, regular immersion in cold seawater (and the cold shock before the wetsuit kicks in) is part of their daily work. I 'doff' my hat/beanie/swim cap to them.....

Reference: Stewart Island – Its Place Names. Dr B.H. Howard. Southland Times weekly column 24/12/1927 – 17/3/1928. Assembled by J.P.C. Watt 1980.

**COMMENT****Letter to the editor** by *Paul Peychers*

I refer to the letter from John DeLury in the June newsletter.

With regard to animal numbers, I disagree with Lou's comments. I've been visiting the Lords river area for around 25 years with a group of friends, some who are accomplished whitetail hunters. The last trip was in April/May this year & I was shocked at the low numbers where I frequent. It appears the use of thermal imaging equipment by hunters is the reason behind the drop in animals plus the fact that some groups treat the area as an opportunity to fill their freezers at home. I would say the numbers in the past were arguably too high but that situation is long gone now and very unlikely to return with the current pressure.

What is concerning is the number of wild cats roaming the blocks. I kill as many as I can and the others harvest a few as well. We usually get 5 or so and the vast majority are starving. Virtually every sandy beach has cat prints on it above the high tide mark and this suggests there are big numbers of cats on the island. The occasional dead one is seen around beaches, starvation is the likely cause of death. This is not good for wildlife conservation or cat welfare.



**Paradise living costs***by Sue Ford*

In Canada and the USA in August in the NW, I was looking at prices in supermarkets and decided to make notes on costs in both countries then compare them with New Zealand. Prices were volatile because no matter how you slice it the world is caught up in recessive tendencies. They varied by several dollars from shop to shop and from day to day in any country. An added problem was a seasonal one: it was inching towards summer's end in the Northern hemisphere and there was a glut of fresh produce whilst NZ was in winter, the most expensive time of the year for fresh foods. This makes a huge difference to prices. Then, as one of my granddaughters pointed out: America is such a big country and goes such a long way north and south that most fruit and vegetables are 'in season' all year round. Canada and New Zealand don't have that advantage. I didn't look for Specials, home brands, shop with loyalty cards or look for cheaper items as real shoppers do. And a loaf of bread may look the same in all three countries, but is it really? Egg sizes were obviously different. And how do you measure a head of broccoli weeks and miles apart? The exchange rates to NZ dollars changed too. What I'm saying is that it is impossible to make a fair comparison, but such as it is, these are some prices I collected, all quoted in NZ dollars in September:

**Plain white bread:** Can \$5.32, US \$3.89, NZ \$2.99; **Spuds/kg:** Can \$5.33, US \$3.31, NZ \$2.99; **Carrots/kg:** Can \$3.68 (hmmm), US \$5.01 (yuk!), NZ 3.06; **Capsicum each:** Can \$3.68, US \$5.00, NZ \$1.99; **Frilly Lettuce:** Can \$2.04 (double yuk), US \$1.67 (nah), NZ \$5.59; **Iceberg Lettuce:** Can \$5.16 (wow!), US \$1.61 (solid as!), NZ \$6.00; **Broccoli/head:** Can \$2.86 (wouldn't have bought at any price), US \$2.00 (iffy), NZ \$1.89 (yum); **Beef Mince/kg:** Can \$12.63, US \$10.63, NZ \$18.00; **Frozen Chicken Thighs/kg:** Can \$18.05, US \$6.64 (freezer burnt), NZ \$11.69; **Milk/2litre:** Can \$6.14, US \$1.74, NZ \$3.59; **Eggs/10:** Can \$2.80 (must be little chickens), US \$1.90 (perfect), NZ \$10.75; **Cheddar Cheese/kg** in Can \$13.04, in US \$7.98 and **Tasty in NZ** \$19.78;

**Margarine/spread olive oil base/500 gm carton:** Can \$4.50, US \$3.54, NZ \$4.25. I couldn't get over the poor quality of the fresh food, particularly in Canada, compared to our supermarket produce.

I checked on more "luxury" groceries: **Fresh, packed salmon/kg:** Can \$39.26, US \$29.26, NZ \$47.99; **Pork Shoulder Roast/kg:** Can \$49.18, US \$3.31, NZ \$10.99; **T-bone Steaks/kg:** Can \$49.18, US \$19.94, NZ \$33.49 – USA steak pre-cut wasn't much over 10mm thick, and I always thought of it as the home of a nice juicy 30-50mm thick steak. Oh well...

I wouldn't have bought either Canadian or US frilly lettuces, but iceberg lettuces in both countries were superior to NZ's offering; Canadian broccoli wasn't fit to eat – yellow and seeded, and the American carrots that day had thick, scarred skins that would have to be peeled but were so skinny you wouldn't have needed to julienne; Canadian eggs were tiny and two days after I checked NZ egg prices, I found they had dropped by \$2.00+ per 10 carton, down to \$8.65 for 10. But the real kicker? That came with **toilet paper:**

3-ply "Luxury" toilet paper, seemingly similar in size to ours in both other countries but in different sized packs, so I broke the price down to a "per roll". **Drum roll please!** In Canada: 91 NZ cents each roll; USA: 95 NZ cents each roll; NZ \$2.07 each roll! I know! Weird!

I made up a grocery list from this lot, excluded my list of "luxuries" and only used frilly lettuce, and the bill came out: Canada NZ\$72.77, in the USA NZ\$58.01 and at home \$98.99 – maybe I should have missed toilet rolls off my list? New Zealand prices were higher based on this very approximate and non-scientific survey. But the value-for-money quality in NZ was off the scale (except for toilet rolls!), and there was some stuff I wouldn't ever have bought.

Some price differences may lie in distribution costs or economies of scale. Both N. Hemisphere countries have amazing rail freight with double-height containers 150-200 wagon beds long not at all unusual, but does petrol play a part too? Up and down

throughout our stay, in Canada the cheapest petrol noted was at NZ\$1.25/litre and in USA approx. NZ80c./litre but prices changed dramatically, place to place, day to day. The freeway systems are exceptional. The price of our Mainland petrol was hovering below \$3/litre.

Mortgage rates were highly dependent in both countries on circumstances but averaged 6 – 7%. House prices varied enormously too. An average NZ\$500,000 in Canada (more in US) to NZ\$1.5m plus – and was difficult to see what the extra dollars were for. More sought-after neighbourhoods perhaps? In USA there are considerations like: the water bill and other utilities, often extra charges for sewerage attention and rubbish collection, and is there an HOA? All the above could be on top of housing rate of 1% of GV p.a. Generally, the cost of housing and attendant housing expense is higher than many parts of NZ.

How do they pay for this? I thought about lower paid "worker bees" and talked to waitstaff. In Canada a waiter can earn NZ\$18.90-\$22.50 per hour but earn more in tips (15-35% of the bill is common). In the USA, the minimum Federal wage is pitiful but individual states seem able to set their own minimum wage. Locally in Washington state it appeared to be almost NZ\$25/hour, but exceptional waitstaff could earn extra from 15% of the bill upwards in tips. You have to sell a lot of cups of coffee with a \$1 tip per order (standard) to enhance your wages! This compares favourably with our min. wage of \$22.70/hr and our Living Wage recommendation of \$26/hr. I didn't ask about the personal income tax situation, nor what products were taxed in the shops, but in Canada, "plus plus" was standard, a two-tier tax rate on goods that has to be taken into account when you are looking at price tags. So, based on waitstaff, wages at the lower end of the scale are equivalent to NZ.

Overall, NZ cost of living is high if taken at face value and using my pitiful shopping list as a rough guide but think about other factors: the nearest supermarket maybe miles away, or a cheaper supermarket being

*(Continued on page 17)*

## Stewart Island-Rakiura Community Board Update

### ULVA ISLAND

Restrictions on the use of the Post Office Bay wharf are now in force to protect the present structure from further damage. Further discussions have been held with the Department of Conservation, and a route for a new track linking the present Ulva tracks to the site of the proposed new pontoon wharf is being developed following a site visit by Council and DOC staff recently.

### SIESA

Board members are keeping a close watch on the price of diesel and the effect this has on the operation of our electrical supply facility. If the diesel price continues to rise then it is likely that the price per unit of power will need to be reviewed as even at the present price of 81c per unit some reserves are being used which is unsustainable in the future.

### REQUESTS FOR SERVICE [RFS]

Community members are reminded that if they want potholes filled or to report things that require fixing and or repairing, then they should complete a 'Request for Service'. They should not ask the contractor to do the work directly as requests of this nature are not recorded and followed through on while all RFS are recorded and must be followed up on within a set time period. There are several methods for recording these into the system.

By phone - 0800 732 732

Via the council website at [southlanddc.govt.nz](http://southlanddc.govt.nz) and then selecting the 'Do it online' option on the left hand side of the screen, select the area you wish to report a fault in and then complete the form and submit it.

### STEWART ISLAND/RAKIURA ENERGY SOLUTIONS

The Steering Group is presently waiting for the signed funding document from MB. The Registration of Interest document outlining the requirements for any renewable energy projects on the island is ready to go out to the market for interested parties to consider and then to reply to the steering group with their ideas.

### DRAFT SPEED-MANAGEMENT PLAN

Submissions are open for comments on the draft speed management plan with particular emphasis on the roading network around schools. Use the link below to access:-

<http://www.makeitstick.nz/draft-speed-management-plan-2024-2/>

Submission forms also available from Kirsten at the council office.

### TRADING IN PUBLIC PLACES BYLAW

This bylaw is presently open for review and you are encouraged to make a submission if you have concerns or support for this policy. Submissions close

on November 13 with forms available from Kirsten at the council office or by the following link.

<http://www.makeitstick.nz/policy-consultation/>

### HALFMOON BAY WHARF

Board members have received complaints about the condition of the pedestrian crossing point at the main wharf. The tar seal turning circle is constantly being broken up and with wet weather becomes an area of large pot holes causing trip and health and safety concerns for those pedestrians having to move across this area. Approaches have been made to council to alleviate this problem by concreting the area but this will take time. In the mean while, please put in a RFS whenever you encounter potholes in this area.

### PARKING

Thanks to all those people who sent comments to the board. Members have considered your responses and developed a proposal which will be sent to the council as part of our submission when the relevant bylaw is finally opened up for consultation. This has been listed on our Facebook page or can viewed on the noticeboard or at the council office.

### ONE WAY SYSTEM

The proposed one way system is currently delayed. We expect to have more to report next month as to when this bylaw will be opened up for submissions.

### REPRESENTATION REVIEW

The 6 yearly review of how the Southland District is governed, how many representatives there are, and how that representation is set up is currently underway. Presently we have a Community Board with 6 elected members and 1 elected councillor on the Southland District Council. The community needs to start thinking about how they want the island to be represented in the future. As details of proposals come to hand, we will ensure that these are circulated within the community for your consideration.

### GENERAL

The annual Motorau Garden cleanup has been completed and the board thanks the Stewart Island Lions for their continued support with paying the fares for the gardeners who came from the mainland for the week and to the Pub Quiz for donating much needed gardening equipment. Final design details for the Horseshoe Bay Road track have been agreed to and work should get underway early next month. This is funded from an external source and not from your rates. SDC Holiday programme will be on the island on Friday February 02, 2024.

**Albatross Rescue - by Anonymus**

It was a gusty morning in early October when young Jeremy the Albatross first took flight. He had been sitting patiently on Solander Island for 11 days without his parents returning to feed him. With the grumble of his tummy, he stretched out his wing and took to the sky.

"Wooooo hoooo!" Jeremy screeched, as he flapped awkwardly across the tips of frothing whitecaps. The sea was wild, and although he wanted a big feed of squid, he was terrified that if he landed in the ferocious wild ocean, he'd get seasick. He gained some elevation and spotted a windswept island in the far distance. With the hope of some calmer waters and some fish, Jeremy began making his way towards Rakiura.

The surface below soon changed from dark blue and white, to green, as he flew over Doughboy Bay towards Paterson Inlet. With his tummy grumbling more and more, and the Sou-West Arm looking so lovely and calm, Jeremy decided to swoop down and look for some slippery salty friends to consume. He was unsuccessful. He tried to take off to go to a new spot, but he couldn't. There was simply not enough wind.

His tummy now shrivelled up like a raisin, Jeremy knew that if he didn't eat soon, he would soon become hangry. "Plop". He glanced into the water to see three tiny Inanga (whitebait) swimming frantically towards the river mouth. "Sploosh!" Jeremy frantically slammed his beak into the water in a last-ditch effort to get a week snack. The wee fish flicked their tails quickly and got away unscathed.

Jeremy, now getting hangry, squawked loudly "get back

here ya slippery wee rascals!". The chase begun. Three whitebait, and Jeremy paddling frantically behind, making their way up the Rakeahua River. Twenty minutes went by, and Jeremy, while huffing and puffing, was right on the tips of the fishes' tails. Then suddenly, "Splash!". He stunned all three with one swift slap with his wing and immediately scooped them all down.



Feeling absolutely shagged from the chase, he awkwardly climbed up the riverbank and immediately fell asleep. A few hours passed, before he was frightfully awoken by an unfamiliar sound "what the flip!". It was a man. The man, equally as shocked, ran away. A few minutes later, he came back with a box and said, "you're not gonna find any squid up here Mr Albatross". The man carefully placed the large bird in a box and on a small dingy, then took him back out to the big blue. Once out in the wind and the waves, Jeremy, carefully climbed up the side of the vessel, stretched his wings and off he went. Never to be seen again.



**Ryan's Rakiura Run**

*By Letitia McRitchie*

Ryan was super keen to do the whole run ever since he ran two portions of it last year as part of the school team.

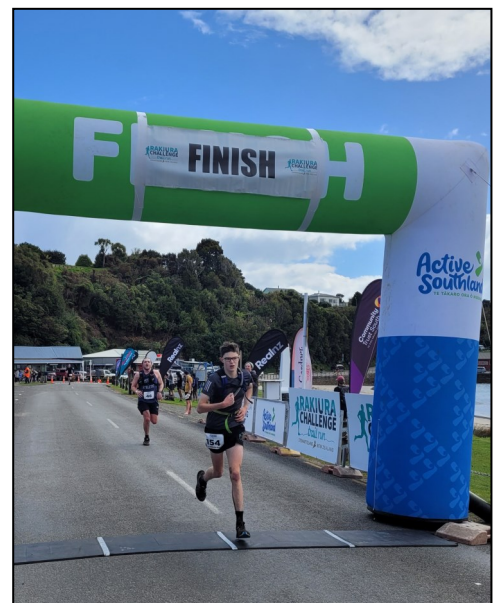
His training has been going for runs after school over in town and generally keeping fit with mountain biking, tramping and sports. He's had a few illness's this year but stayed well for the month before the race.

On the morning of the race he was up early to have a good breakfast and then around to Horseshoe for the nervous wait for the start. He felt good and ready to go.

He enjoyed the middle bit as the mud took his mind off the pain! The worst bit was the last piece on the road, the last couple of little hills were not good. He said it was great to have everyone cheering him on at the end and it gave him a burst of energy to get over the finish line. He also said it was awesome to have the marshalls cheering him on and seeing those that decorated their stations was fun.

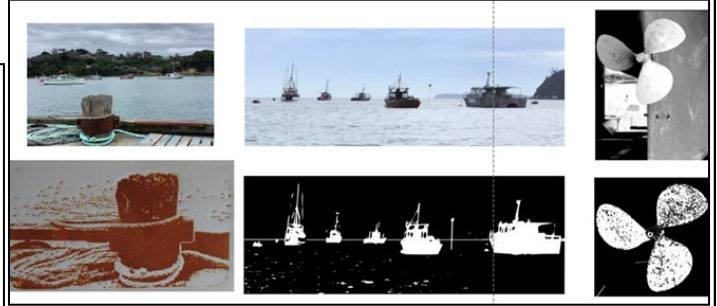
He was rather sore the next day and wasn't happy to go back to the hostel, but was fine a couple of days later!

Thank you to the awesome event organisers and volunteers who made this event possible, Ryan had a fantastic time and is keen to run again next year.



### A modern midden of Rakiura’s coastal heritage

On a wet and windy weekend in mid-Sept many Rakiura residents holed up with ink and a printing press in the Community Centre. Combining images from over 50 pre-made printing plates, and experimenting with other print methods, people depicted what they appreciated most about their connection to coast.



After the workshop we layered the art artefacts into a midden and fixed it to a wood framed screen, to reference back to archaeological methods. The soil layers, intermixed with charcoal layers and oven stones, we coloured to match the beautiful colour/ texture of Rakiura soils we saw along the roadside.

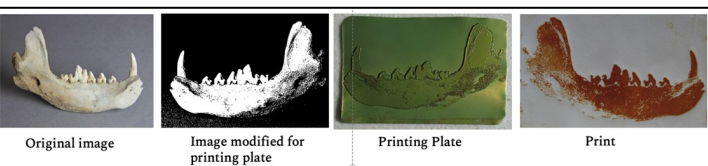
Earlier in the week we worked with the Half Moon Bay School on a similar theme. We extended our July work with them, which looked at coastal heritage from an archaeological perspective, exploring the idea of middens and how artefacts within them show what people did, and what they valued in a time and place. We widened this to explore coastal heritage through the years, across whaling/sealing settlement (etc!), to now. We talked about what is remembered, what is still practiced and what is most important to maintain of Rakiura’s coastal heritage.

Many students came on the weekend with their whanau to do more coastal heritage printmaking. Everyone’s work combined to make a community ‘midden’ – layers of visuals that serve as ‘artefacts’ representing people’s connection to coast. These connections encompass past, present and future, and embody a rich coastal heritage to pass on.

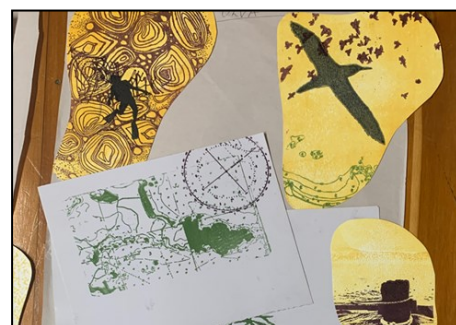


The community artwork work is exhibited at the Rakiura Museum until mid November – go have a look!. We will be reviewing all the artwork and stories shared about coastal heritage and summarising what we saw and heard. We’ll feed this research back to you in November in a ‘community showcase’, touching on how this can feed into heritage preservation and community planning. Watch this space (and come reclaim your great artwork then)! Questions? Jenny Rock jrockmail@gmail.com

We’d spent a lot of time this winter researching the visuals for making into printing plates for people to use. Working with the Museum, talking with locals, reading back issues of SIN, we sourced lots of local images. Some were photos taken by the school kids, some were from their mural artwork, some were historical photos you see on the pub walls, and others were of artefacts held in the Museum. Here’s an example of a sea lion jaw the museum holds from a midden on O Neke – that became a printing plate.



Here are examples of photographs the students took that became ‘printable’...



This work was enabled by collaboration between Coastal People Southern Skies (<https://cps.org.nz>), Half Moon Bay School, and the Rakiura Museum, with support from The Pub Quiz Fund, Real Journeys, Toi Rakiura, and friends...



## Coastal Heritage Community Showcase

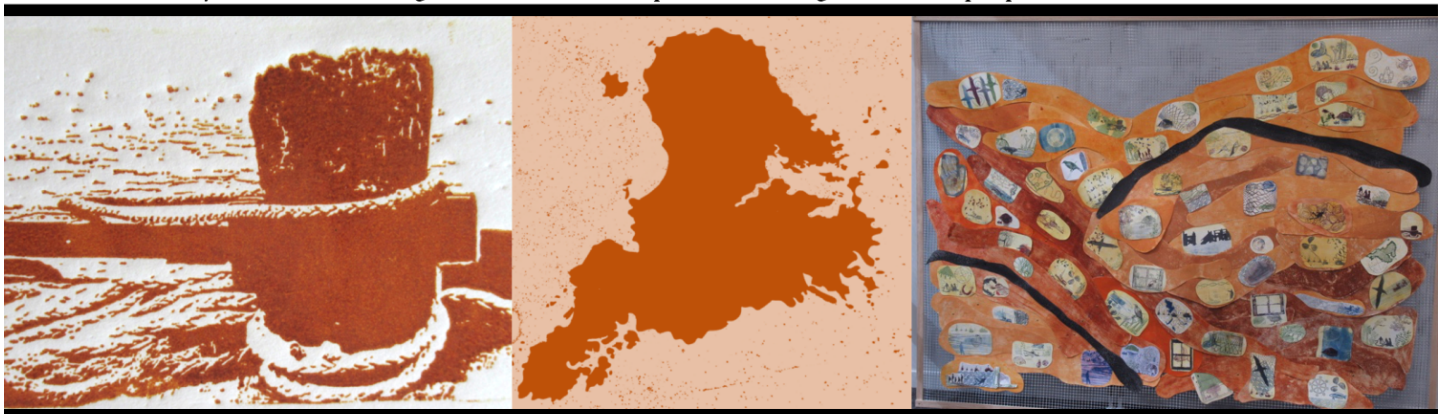
18 Nov 3-4:30 Community Centre

Come to a public showcase exploring Rakiura’s past-present-future coastal heritage:

- 3:00 – social mapping activity using 'ARTeifacts' from the coastal heritage midden (come claim your prints from Sept workshops)
- 3:15 – round-up of coastal heritage ideas expressed by community printmaking
- 3:30 – initial sea level rise mapping for the township of Oban
- 3:45 – work of Half Moon Bay School on Storymapping for maintaining coastal heritage
- 4:00 onwards with a cuppa – look at/chat about all the above & talk over/visualise (map) future planning around Rakiura's coastal heritage

Feel free to come for all or parts of the event.

\*Everyone reclaiming work from the printmaking workshops please come for 3:00 \*



Facilitated by [Coastal Connections \(https://cpss.org.nz\)](https://cpss.org.nz) ?'s email/txt Jenny Rock [jrockmail@gmail.com](mailto:jrockmail@gmail.com) 0220236830

*(Cost of living comparison by Sue Ford. Continued from page 13)*

further away still – distances in both Canada and USA are enormous and taken for granted and despite a proliferation of electric vehicles there are a lot of petrol vehicles still. There are factors like the “economies of scale” – the unimaginably large tracts of forested land for logging (for toilet paper?); farming - agriculture, viticulture, orchards, horticulture, etc.; enormous cheese-making facilities; acres of blueberries seemingly without boundary fences; when you see unending trains of massive containers lumbering across the prairies and winding through impossible gorges and mountain passes; and the population of metropolitan Los Angeles is more than twice that of the whole of New Zealand - think of the tax-take, the rate-take! Now those things are scale for you.

And remember you pay a little more at a Boutique than you do in a Chain Store, the original rather than the mass-produced. We had an amazing holiday and fed royally, but even if we hadn't, it was worth going away just so that we could appreciate our more exclusive and, *perhaps*, marginally more expensive boutique existence when we arrived home.

# THIRD ISLAND GIN

## STEWART ISLAND

Try, buy and take away at the South Sea Hotel

Available online for local pick up and nationwide delivery at [RAKIURADISTILLING.CO.NZ](http://RAKIURADISTILLING.CO.NZ)

RAKIURA RAIN  
RAKIURA BOTANICALS  
RAKIURA BOTTLED

# What's up, DOC?

## Observation Rock platform



Photo credit Dale Chittenden

Work on the Observation Rock viewing platform is nearing completion despite the challenges with the weather. Once the platform is completed work on the track will be undertaken to ensure a smooth transition onto the platform. This will include edging repair and replacement, and track resurfacing. The site will re-open on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2023 and we continue to ask that people stay clear of the site until the work is completed.

## Southern New Zealand Dotterel Tūturiwhatu Recovery Project

Predator control fieldwork is underway with at least 14 feral cats removed since 17 August which is roughly when the birds enter their most vulnerable stage and initiate nesting. With the external funding and sponsorship mechanism set up through the New Zealand Nature Fund, donations have already been received which will go towards the highest priorities on our Investment Portfolio. A technical review of the Operational Plan is underway utilising the skills and experience of our independent Technical Advisory Group to ensure that our predator control is optimised.

## Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara Biosecurity Update

We have now operationalised our new biosecurity system on Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara to support the Norway rat eradication. There is a dedicated Ranger who is assigned full time to implement key areas of the updated Biosecurity Plan. This plan is still in review but is mostly finalised. This work will be completed by end of December. Key changes



Photo credit Letitia McRitchie

include new monitoring devices such as cameras and adjusted device placement to favour the coastal edge. A community consultative body is planned to help engage locals, iwi and stakeholders more directly into biosecurity work on Ulva. Later this year we'll initiate scoping work of a pest-free warrant system, similar to what has been successful in the Hauraki Gulf and elsewhere. Our focus right now is to ensure that rodent surveillance is being delivered to the highest possible standard.

Furthermore, a team will be heading out to Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara in the week of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023. They will complete the next round of night-based weka call count monitoring as part of the post-eradication population trend monitoring plan. We will share results in due course.

## Bed Bug treatment

In September our team closed the Rakiura Great walk huts overnight to undertake our 6-monthly bed bug pretreatment. This is a precautionary approach leading into the busy season. With reports that bed bugs are a major problem overseas we all need to be vigilant. Our hut rangers will undertake regular checks and we will continue to monitor our huts throughout the season. There are bed bug sticky traps available for any accommodation providers who are interested. Please call or see Dale Chittenden at the Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre.



Photo credit Dale Chittenden

## Dune Restoration Programme

Field operations are set to start in early November with teams starting work at Mason Bay. The focus is on the strategic reduction of marram and tree lupin to consolidate work from the last 20 years. Tree lupin is a growing issue, and we need to balance the priority between marram and lupin work more so than was previously required. A Dune Restoration Advisory Group

meeting occurred on 13 October 2023 to review the 22/23 season's work and set priorities for the upcoming season. Key to this is our relationship with University of Otago via Dr. Mike Hilton. In January the team will move to Doughboy and then onto East and West Ruggedy in February.

### **Whitebaiting season**

Just a reminder that the current whitebait fishing season runs from 1 September 2023 to 30 October 2023. The season length was reduced in 2022/23 to reduce fishing pressure on the most threatened species of whitebait during their peak migration period. Other regulation changes included a reduction in the width of fishable area to ¼ of the waterway. For further details please visit the DOC website and/or see the signage posted at Mill Creek.

### **Rakiura Challenge run**

The Rakiura Challenge successfully went ahead on 7 October 2023. Our team were busy clearing the track beforehand, with several trip hazards identified along and some rather large windfalls to clear.



Photo credit Dale Chittenden

Impact monitoring using photo points were setup in 20 locations around the track before the race. They were then checked the next day. The track was relatively dry for the run and preliminary assessment suggests considerable mud was displaced with no obvious damage to the track. A report will be completed on the monitoring results and will soon be made available to race organisers and the public.

### **Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara Visitor Monitoring**

We are looking at a bumper year for visitors to Rakiura this season with cruise ship visits up 25% and strong bookings on the Rakiura Track. Every 10 years we run a visitor survey on Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara and we hope to do that again this season. This provides valuable information on what the visitor experience is and where we may need

to focus our efforts in the future. The survey will be undertaken online via a link (QR code) shown on posters which will be located at key sites. We will also make paper surveys available at times too. There will be incentives to fill in these surveys as the greater the numbers of survey responses the better the quality of information collected.

### **Introducing our Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre Site Lead**

We welcome Letitia McRitchie into the role of Visitor Centre Lead for the Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre. Letitia has worked on a variety of roles with DOC here on the island and is



looking forward to settling into this role. "I'm enjoying meeting the trampers who are heading out to explore the National Park and making sure that they are aware of the conditions, the Southern Circuit will be very muddy and wet at this time of the year!!". The photo is of Letitia with her daughter Bella during a recent trip to North Arm. Her son Ryan ran out earlier in the day!

Our interpretation room in the Visitor Centre has undergone some changes recently with some space created to provide desks for our expanded ranger team. There are plans in the future for a redevelopment of this space but in the meantime the majority of the interpretation is still there, and the TV and Rakiura/nature focussed DVDs are set up for anyone who wants to come in and watch them. We are busy with visitors and hunters and we will be looking forward to summer, with strong bookings on the Rakiura track.

### **Recent kiwi deaths**

In the August edition of SIN, we reported that there had been kiwi found dead in the township. We also reported that the kiwi would be sent away for necropsy to determine their cause of death. Findings have come back which identify that two suffered blunt force trauma consistent with vehicle strike, one had signs consistent with Toxoplasma infection and the two others were unable to be confirmed, one due to decomposition and one had an injured leg but its cause of death remains unknown. This calls for a timely reminder to please take care when driving around our township. Keep an eye out for any precious kiwi who might be wandering around on the roads.



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

### SEA KAYAKING WITH BILL



The bays, islets, and inlets between Golden Bay and Ryans Creek or Te Wharawhara (Native Is). 2 – 2/12 hr on the water. 1 – 4 people. \$90.00 each. We can get lovely settled, calm, ideal paddling weather over winter.

Bill Watt 027 495 9288  
Or (if I'm paddling) Jo (027 455 2191)

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#### How to contact the editor

I (Freya) welcome questions/comments/chats about the SIN, however I am working full time elsewhere. If you want to talk about anything SIN-related with me, please contact me by email [stewartislandnews@gmail.com](mailto:stewartislandnews@gmail.com) in the first instance, or text 02041796127. I will respond to you out of hours when I am available. I appreciate your patience and understanding.

Congratulations to Lizzie Anderson and Johnny Rabbitt on the birth of their little girl, Phoebe Margaret Rabbitt



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