

# STEWART ISLAND NEWS

September 2004 \$2

Celebrating Stewart Island

## OBAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES 100 YEARS



**The Presbyterian Centenary Procession passes Oban War Memorial**  
A weekend celebrating the Presbyterian Church – full story on pages six and seven.

### Local Elections Well Under Way

Although the phrase "Election Fever" probably doesn't apply too much to Stewart Island, there are some serious issues at stake in these local elections.

Candidates have outlined their goals both in the election information booklet accompanying voting forms and in a special issue of Stewart Island News.

It had been suggested a public debate might be held where candidates would answer particular concerns of ratepayers. However, this idea was quickly rejected by most of the candidates.

If any voters miss out on a copy of SIN's election special, an electronic version is available by contacting the editor, Stewart Dovey, by email: [sdovey@es.co.nz](mailto:sdovey@es.co.nz)

Think about your vote – for all our futures.

### **In the October issue:**

1. Two staff members from DOC in Oban have recently spent time on Campbell Island involved in an important Teal relocation programme.

They survived very unpleasant conditions travelling to and from the island in our unsettled "spring" season, but will have fascinating stories to tell about their experiences in the southern ocean area.

2. Results and comments from the local body elections.

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### **QUIZ NIGHT**

**South Seas Hotel,  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October  
Great Prizes, Raffles.**

**Assemble your teams !!  
Stewart Island Bowling Club Inc**

## MUSEUM NOTES.

**GENERAL:** Interest in the Museum is still good, with school parties being the “big thing” at the moment. Ronnie Waddell is doing a great job with these, and seems to enjoy calling on his abilities as a school teacher to get his message across.

**A.G.M.** This will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> September, and will see some changes with the retirement of three Trustees. These are Ron Tindall, Nancy Schofield, and Merv King. However, there will be six new people taking on the job:- David Bolland, Peter Goomes, Phillip Smith, Jane Wilson, and Lee & Alan Wadds. We wish them all the best, and hope they enjoy the experience.

**ACQUISITIONS:** Further to last month’s item on *The Kettle*, we have been told that it first belonged to the Whaling Base at Kaipipi, and was passed on to Ferndale House when the Base closed down. George Fife with the MANURERE, and Hugh Pollock with KOMURI, used the kettle when they took picnic parties from Ferndale to the many beaches in Paterson Inlet. From early photographs, these trips were very popular and make one wonder if the tourist industry is really growing!

### **Boat of the Month:            TANFIELD LEA.**

Another of the boats which caught the eye because of an unusual feature was the **TANFIELD LEA**. She stood out amongst the moored craft in Halfmoon Bay because of her “sheep-crate” bulwarks aft of the wheelhouse, built of horizontal battens on the “hit & miss” principle.

She was built in the early 1900’s for a Mr Parsons, who ran the mails and stores to Dog Island. Her builder and location are not known, but probably was Bluff.

In 1919, when she was owned by Urwin & Roderique, she was involved as one of a fleet of small vessels in pursuit of a whale in Bluff Harbour. She is mentioned as having 25 people on board at the time – quite a crew! It is not known if the whale got away or not. (This information from the book “Saga of the South”, the story of the Nichol Family.)

Her later owners were Malcolm Adamson, and then Noel Broomhall who fished out of Halfmoon Bay for blue cod and crayfish.

That’s all for now – see you next month.            Merv King.

## Message from Bill Todd

As you will be aware I am not standing in the forthcoming Local Body Elections for the Councillors Position to represent the Stewart Island Ward on the Southland District Council (SDC), so this will be my last report.

Firstly I would like to thank you all for the privilege of allowing me to represent Stewart Island within the SDC. Councillors and SDC staff I have met with and enjoyed working with are a very dedicated group of individuals, which otherwise I would not have known.

I have enjoyed the interaction with many members of the Stewart Island Community and learnt that consultation with all concerned is the wish of interested parties.

Progress with the infrastructure of Stewart Island must be maintained and this is well supported by SDC Staff and Council. The funding involved is well in excess of the Local Rating take.

The latest decision to proceed with extensions of the Sewerage Scheme to outlying areas which you will all be aware of is subject to an acceptable figure being tendered by contractors, but is a further sign of progress and is a capital investment on the properties concerned.

There is a commitment to the Elected Members of your Community to maintain the impetus of improvement within the bounds of keeping Stewart Island's unique character, I am sure this will be done.

I wish all Campaigners in the forthcoming Elections good luck, your Chairman Bruce and Community Board Members during my term have put a lot of work into maintaining and improving the Island, which must continue especially with the direction Tourism is going.

Thank you once again.

Bill Todd.

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Again this month, *two* awards are being made. In recognition of 20 years continuous work for the Stewart Island Promotions Association, Leslie Gray receives chocolates from Ship to Shore.

Also Elaine Hamilton, for her work in the community with the seniors, the Community Board, Museum, etc. Chocolates kindly donated by Greenvale B & B.

Congratulations to both ladies and many thanks to the sponsors as always.

## Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust: predator trapping update

“Saddlebacks/ Tieke are resident in your gardens”; that is the vision the Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust has for Halfmoon Bay, and it’s been given a major boost in the last three months.

The exciting news that the trust had received a grant to launch the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project was published in the May edition of SIN. The article acknowledged the Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds, which are administered by the Department of Conservation in Wellington for the Minister of Conservation and the Minister for the Environment, and from which was awarded a combined sum of \$87,000 to the trust in June 2004. The article also described the objectives of the project and expressed the trustees’ desire for this to be a project run by Stewart Islanders for Stewart Islanders.

Since then, some key steps have been taken:

1. The first of four lump sums has arrived, allowing the major activities to begin.
2. The trust has employed Kari Beaven (myself) to be Project Manager.
3. The trust has purchased possum and rat kill-traps and cat cage traps using the grant money.
4. A website has been launched including information about the trust, about the project and aerial photographs of the area to be protected.
5. The first annual report of the restoration project has been completed

Meanwhile, I am well into writing a work plan and preparing information packages for everyone. Soon after that, I will begin visiting people who live within the restoration area to discuss the project in detail.

Whilst the trust has received a considerable sum to kick-start the first two years, the money does not cover the total expense of the project. More funding is being sought to cover things like transport (for traps and personnel), office supplies, a GPS, digital camera (for use in monitoring, reports, domestic cat ID and more), assistance for volunteers (accommodation on the island etc) and so forth. Over the first two years the trust will also be seeking ways to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project. Plans are being developed to attract both individual sponsors eg “sponsor a hectare” and corporate sponsors.

Again, I would like to make it clear that the trust does not wish to control people’s domestic pets in any way. The project will only be enacted on private land volunteered by landowners who live within the defined boundaries of the restoration area.

This is a wonderfully, positive project for Stewart Islanders, visitors and our local wildlife. Many people have already put in a huge amount of volunteer effort; the trust thanks you all and encourages everyone to get behind the project.

For more information or to look at the aerial photos, visit our new website [www.glowingsky.co.nz](http://www.glowingsky.co.nz) or phone the project spokesperson for the trust, Dil Belworthy. Regular articles will be submitted for publication in SIN to keep everyone informed of progress.

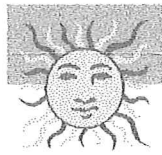
### **Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environment Trust**

are pleased to announce the arrival of their new web site (Sponsored by *Glowing Sky*):

go to <http://www.glowingsky.co.nz/>

The site will include more information over time, but at the moment you can see an overview of our Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project, and some aerial photographs of the project areas.





## School News

The Board have run two evening meetings recently: A big thank you to Dave Merton for returning to help us run a parents evening about cybersafety (safety on the Internet). There was a small turnout, but this enabled everyone who attended to make the most of the expertise available. Our public meeting to consult on the proposed closure of the school pool was attended by most of the Board and staff, plus two parents. There were three apologies from interested parties. We are very grateful to those members of the community who came along, and those others who have contacted us with ideas and comments. The Board will consider the outcome at their next meeting, which will be held on 19th October.

We were very fortunate in having Sue Graham come to the school with her Olympic Silver Medal and assorted Olympic souvenirs. The students all enjoyed putting a personal face to the Olympics and loved dressing up in her Tae Qwon Do outfit. We also celebrated the Olympics, and completed our Olympic studies, with our own Wacky Olympics. There was a good turn out by parents, and it was hard to tell whether the parents enjoyed watching the children's teams more than the children enjoyed watching the adults' events! Well done to Mrs Leask who organised the whole thing.

We have been visited by Kathy Willis, the National Director of PrEP. While Kathy was here she interviewed a selection of students, and was impressed with their knowledge of business systems and financial terms. PrEP Market Day took place on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September. We had a frenzied half-hour of buying and selling, with plenty of parents and community members to swell the numbers. All three ventures considered themselves a good success, despite the obstacles they had met along the way. The children ended up with a share each of their venture's profits, and were able to dispose of them at an auction during the

final week of term. Items up for grabs included left over materials from the warehouse and minutes of free time. Despite several requests, it seems that a day off school was not on offer! Some things you just can't buy.

Many other things have been finishing up with the end of term. KiwiCan has been rounded off: thanks to John and Sara-Lee for their work. Di Morris has been running an after school gymnastics club on Wednesdays. All the kids have really enjoyed taking part, and Mrs Leask was very impressed with the show they put. Thank you Di for making it all happen.

We have also completed our worm farm unit with Mrs Hall, and made a visit to Rakiura Resource Recovery to see a really BIG worm operation. On the same trip we visited the fish sheds at Horseshoe Beach and learned a lot about crayfish with Jan and Caroline. Then we had lunch at the picnic area by Horseshoe Beach, before Oban Tours returned to whisk us back to school. Next term we'll be looking at compost - with more bugs and creepy crawlies. (We think Mrs Hall might have a thing about bugs!)

For all the above we need to say a big thank you to Mrs Hall (Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environment Trust), Jan, Caroline and Helen (Southern Seafoods), David (Rakiura Resource Recovery), Jason and Sharan (Oban Tours).

It is with great sadness that we say farewell to the Breitenbach family. Both classes will be missing a student, the Board will lose its 'electrical advisor', and the Island will lose its favourite 'Nanny'. However, we wish them all the very best in Auckland, at their new school, and in their new business ventures.

As for next Term, we are making plans for a trip to Invercargill on 1 - 5 November (all things going to plan). This trip will focus on swimming, but include many other activities too. The school timetable will move to summer times, starting at 9.00am and ending at 2.45pm.

## Oban Presbyterian Church Centennial Celebrations 28/29 August, 2004

At 2.20 pm on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> August, celebration of the Centennial of the Oban Presbyterian Church, Stewart Island, began as the church bell rang out across Halfmoon Bay, to be answered in true Ecumenical spirit by the bell of St Andrew's Anglican Church. This was a special moment for the historically minded as the St Andrew's bell had previously hung in the steeple of St Matthew's Anglican Church in Bluff, and symbolises the close connection of the Bluff and Stewart Island communities.

Many of the 116 people who had registered for the celebrations gathered at the Post Centre and were led by piper, Trevor Morton from Invercargill and Sunday School teacher, Peter Cox, who carried the Centennial Banner, along the bay and up the hill to the Church, where they were welcomed by the Session Clerk, Lorraine Squires. Afternoon Tea was held in the Sunday School Hall, itself a historic building, having been shipped out from Norway in the mid 1920's as a prefabricated Mess hall for the workers at the Rosshavet Whaling Repair Base in Paterson Inlet.

The Centennial Dinner was held in the Community Hall on Saturday night. Toasts were paid to The Queen and then To The Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa NZ. The latter toast was replied to by the Right Reverend Michael Thawley, Moderator of the PCANZ, who then proposed the Toast to the Presbytery of Southland. This toast was replied to by the Reverend Murray Marshall, Interim Moderator of Oban Presbyterian Church, who then proposed the toast to Oban Presbyterian Church, to which The Session Clerk, Lorraine Squires, replied. Lorraine proposed the toast to Absent Friends and Predecessors in the Faith and the reply was given by Joan Buxton, the first female Session Clerk and now Elder Emerita.

A Scottish theme prevailed, reflecting the origins of the Presbyterian Church itself and of many of the Island's pioneer families. The Haggis was piped in by Trevor Morton and

Ronnie Waddell (who also served as MC). The menu devised by the Chef, Holger Lachmann, included oatmeal scones, smoked salmon and the intriguingly named clapsnot. This had many a guest wondering just what was being served until its contents were revealed as mashed potato, swede and leeks with lashings of butter. The Bread and Butter pudding was to die for - indeed the Chef has been implored to hand over his recipe. Holger hails from Germany and his assistant, Marie, is from French Canada so it was a truly international evening!

Entertainment was provided by the Guest Choir, Southern Sou'NZ, from Invercargill, conducted by Glenys Carson, and the local Community Choir, conductor Gwen Neave, accompanist, Ulva Amos.

Sunday morning saw the church full to overflowing. The Preacher, the Reverend Peter Carter, led the congregation in a service of joy and thanksgiving. The Right Reverend Michael Thawley, led the prayers of intercession and unveiled a commemorative plaque. Lorraine Squires read The Narrative of the Church's founding and subsequent history. The first lesson was read by Campbell Squires, grandson of Lorraine and Lindsay, also an Elder, and the second by Elder, Ewan Bethune. The walls of the church were decorated with the names of families who have played a part in the history of the Church and by a warp (strong rope) running right round the church and culminating in an anchor. Representatives of these families were invited to stand beneath their family names and grasp the rope in memory of those who had served the Community and the Church. The hymn "Will your anchor hold?" held special significance on this occasion! The gifts of a Celtic cross by former resident Cyril Hicks and of a piece of cross stitch, representing a stained glass window symbolic of the Island's colours and the Church's history, designed and made by another former resident, Erica Clelland, were acknowledged with gratitude.

After the service, two suitably named rhododendrons were planted to commemorate the centennial. Elder John Leask and his granddaughter, Tia, planted "Burning Bush", this being the symbol of the Presbyterian Church, and past Sunday School teacher, Janice Berney, and Chloe Squires, granddaughter of Lorraine and Lindsay, planted Alleluia, the latter shrub a donation from Myross Bush Rhododendron Nursery.

Sunday afternoon gave residents and visitors alike the opportunity to enjoy a further performance by Southern Sou'NZ and some took advantage of the generous offer of Peter and Iris Tait of a guided trip to Ulva Island on board their beautiful charter ketch "Talisker".

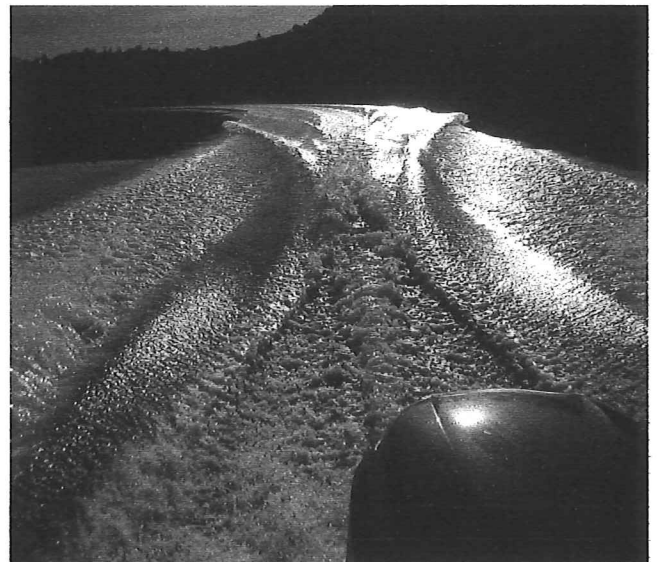
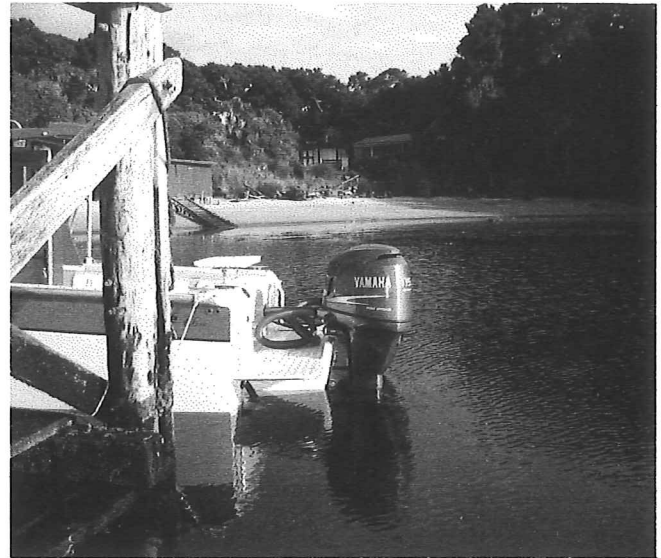
On Sunday evening a Ceilidh was held in the church, with laughter bursting forth frequently as the MC, John Leask, warmed up his audience and introduced a series of items. When time came for personal reminiscences, a proud father recalled how his son had responded to a Minister's question, "How do you get to Heaven?" with the forthright "You have to die first!" The high rafters echoed with the roar of laughter that followed that contribution.

The celebration concluded with supper in the Sunday School Hall, preceded by the cutting of the Centennial Cake by Joan Buxton. John Leask proposed a vote of thanks to the Reverend Peter Carter and his wife Olive who have spent the last 3 months here, helping a small congregation to prepare for this event. The singing of Auld Lang Syne ended the festivities.

A feature of the weekend was the obvious delight with which previous and present residents met, reminisced, visited old haunts and enjoyed the various activities. Many had travelled considerable distances, some across both straits. Truly, a good time was had by all!

- **NOTE** Copies of the Church History booklet are still available at \$20 each, plus postage of 90 cents. Please contact the Church Treasurers, Ronnie and Raylene Waddell, at P O Box 105, Oban.

## Photos from Paterson Inlet



Thank you to Stewart Island News and Stewart for introducing Heather and myself in the last newsletter.

I am pleased to be able to continue Rob Fox's regular article 'Half Moon Bay Beat'. Rob recorded his views in a 'no nonsense' style which I commend him for. I note that many of the things he discussed are still relevant and topical.

Well, it has been a busy first month or so since our arrival. I was told that I might find it quiet here. That has certainly not been the case.

I have had the opportunity to meet a lot of locals so far. Thank you to those who have been very welcoming. If we haven't met yet, I sure we'll catch up soon.

Thanks also for the efforts of those who shifted us in, no major breakage's from what was reported as 'quite a big shift'.

Workwise. We've come out of winter, which I understand is a good thing on the island. Some people get a bit ratty, "Islanditis" or something as it was explained to me. It's like hibernation I suppose and a grizzly bear coming out of his cave with a sore head. I hope that some of what I have witnessed is a winter ailment only and not normal island behaviour.

One common denominator in every call out incident I have attended thus far is booze.

Believe it or not, no ones behaviour actually improves when drinking, and despite what you may think you are not the "funniest man in the world" after two doz. Speights and a bottle of bourbon.

But worse, unfortunately it can get ugly as well, very ugly indeed. If you're not handling the booze, ease off it. You are responsible for your actions. If I do get called to an incident and offences have been committed; expect to have to explain your actions in court at some stage. The law is no different here.

Another aspect that has kept me busy is accidental, stupid, or malicious damage to property. An example is the D.O.C sign on Main Road. If you are responsible for causing some damage like this when a 'baboon' has momentarily taken over your body, please come and see me at the earliest opportunity when your brain has returned. You will get a more favourable response I can assure you than 'hiding' away and me having to catch up with you later.

With this event, like others, some people in the community obviously know what happened. You all live here and get the standard of community you deserve. I, like the majority have come here for a better standard of life. Don't protect people who are lowering the standard.

Well that's about all at the moment. Hopefully the weather will improve and we can all get out and do a bit more fishing. If you have any issues that you are concerned about, large or small feel free to come and see me and have a chat about them.

Regards  
Tod Hollebon  
Stewart Island Police.



STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE by Jenny Gell

The September meeting, which was also the A.G.M, was held on the 9th at Anita Geesons. We were all pleased to have Jayne Wilson join us.

Pat Bethune was re-elected as President and Anita Geeson as Secretary. Jenny Gell was elected as Vice-president and Peggy Wilson remained in charge of competition results.

The “Annual Prizes” were presented to: First: Anita Geeson with 74 points, Second: Lil Skipper with 53 points and Third: Raylene Waddell with 39 points. Jenny Gell was runner up with 36 points.

September Competition results were:

Spring Bulb:	(1) Raylene Waddell	(2) Lil Skipper	(3) Anita Geeson
Spring Shrub:	(1) Jane Wilson	(2) Raylene Waddell	(3) Anita Geeson/ Jenny Gell/Nancy Schofield
New Growth:	(1) Anita Geeson	(2) Raylene Waddell	(3) Lil Skipper

Diacks Plant Expo will be making their annual visit to the island on 5<sup>th</sup> November. Please check Notice Board for details.

It is hoped the Garden Circle will have Dorothy Finlay visit on 7<sup>th</sup> October for a Floral Art Display. Please check Notice Board for details.

The next meeting will be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> October at Lorraine Squires.

STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE – SECRETARY’S ANNUAL REPORT 2004

The 2003/4 year proved to be an active year for members. Highlights of the year are as follows:

- In October the Garden Circle hosted the visit of Catlin’s resident Kath Widdowson to the Island. As a conservationist and herbalist, Kath is well known for her Penguin Rescue work on the South Coast. An evening meeting for members of the public to hear Kath speak on conservation issues was held, as was an afternoon presentation on gardening topics.
- Diacks Plant Expo took place at Labour Weekend in conjunction with the Spring Festival Garden Stall.
- A Spring bus tour of island gardens, followed by afternoon tea, was held in November. Approximately 25 people, including visitors to the island participated.
- In December, a Christmas theme meeting was held with visitors invited along.
- Activities in April included both an Autumn bus tour and a visit from Denis Hughes of Blue Mountain Nursery. His plant sale and address on gardening with natives was well attended by members and visitors. Denis also gave landscaping advice to community residents while on the island.

During the year Garden Club members have, at various times, opened their gardens to visiting tourists. There is an increasing demand for garden visits from the public. Monetary donations have been forwarded to the community(library books, school projects). Presently, at the request of the Rakiura Recovery Centre, club members are participating in trialing vermicast as a garden fertiliser. The yearly clean up of the War Memorial was carried out by members. It is hoped that funding, to be applied for from the Southland District Council, will enable the Garden Circle to host a variety of activities in 2004/5.



## *Obituary --- James Robert (Bert) Walker.*

The recent death in Oamaru of Bert Walker, at the age of 83, ended a long link with Stewart Island.

Bert was raised in South Invercargill, learned the trade of carpet and lino layer, and worked for several firms during his lifetime. He served in the N.Z. Navy during World War 2, and later became a keen R.S.A. man.

As with many South Invercargill boys, he was attracted to the Waihopai Estuary and joined in the activities of the Invercargill Boating Club. He sailed in many different yachts, at one time owning the X class 14 footer "ROSITA".

He was a keen Club member, and always turned up for working bees, both on the Estuary and later when the Club shifted out to the Oreti River. He was Club Captain in 1952, 1966, & 1969, and Vice Commodore in 1980. When they shifted permanently to Stewart Island, Bert was instrumental in reviving the Stewart Island Yacht Club, which had faded somewhat.

Bert & his wife Ann bought Tui Dell cottage, on the corner of Golden Bay Rd and Rankin St, many years ago and carried out lots of improvements. On his retirement, in the 1980's, they bought the house next to O'Rourke's, and carried out a lot of work before selling it and moving back to Tui Dell.

Bert & Ann were both keen gardeners, and Bert was also very keen at fishing, home brewing, reading, painting (pictures), home handyman, and a fearsome snorer at times! They were friendly and hospitable to all, with passing tourists often invited in for a "cup of tea and a yarn". In the mid 1990's they decided to make a break, and shifted to Oamaru, which was more central to their family.

### R.I.P.

#### **Thank you from the Munros**

Ian and Sue Munro wish to say a big "thank you" to the Stewart Island community for your support over the last 14 years in our endeavours to provide the community with a good, reliable sea service.

Sue and I have had many memorable experiences along the way, especially the Valentine's Day charters to Colac Bay, local weddings, birthdays, Lions trips and fund-raising charters. When we reflect on the things that have happened over the years, we are really amazed at the great variety of occasions.

Thank you to our wonderful staff, each and every one of you should be proud of the contribution you have made to the ferry's success. Sue and I will treasure the lovely Koru for our garden; what a wonderful surprise.

Lastly we wish to thank our families for their loyalty and support.

**Sue and Ian Munro**

## **Stewart Island Promotion Association**

### **Visitor Numbers**

The visitor numbers through the VIN Centre door are down from 1851 on July 2003 to 1785.

### **Brochure**

Brochure sub committee is Holger Lachmann, Raylene Waddell, Sue Munro, Jill Skerrett, Lesley Gray and Helen Cave. The brochure sub-committee has had several meetings and a letter has gone out to all financial members with the proposed layout and charges, space etc. We have had some good comments and feed back already. We will be discussing these at our next meeting.

### **Winter Season**

Members are making the most of the winter season to do their annual maintenance and, for the lucky ones, a break away to warmer climes. We hope you all come back refreshed and ready for another busy tourist season.

### **Clearfiles**

Remember your pages for the clearfiles are required by 1 October 2004 please.

### **Southland Regional Tourism Strategy**

Sue Munro reported that the Strategy committee had met again and decided on a consultant to produce the strategy. A public statement will be made by Venture Southland announcing the successful consultant after they have reached agreement on the terms of employment.

### **Thank you**

Our thanks go to Bruce Ford, the outgoing executive member, for all his input over the past years.

### **Foveaux Strait Bi-centenary**

Bluff Promotions is putting their name to the celebratory auction on the 25 September for the aptly-named Foveaux Strait Bi-centenary. Sue Graham is trying to procure a band for a celebration dance on Stewart Island.

### **Web Site**

The hunting and fishing pages on the web site have now been updated. Several alterations and updates have been successfully done for members in the last two months.

### **Stewart Island i-SITE Working Party**

Greg Lind from DOC and Rex Capil from Venture Southland addressed the June executive meeting about this issue. Greg outlined the history and the costs involved in running VIN, also the building situation and the public preference for a stand-alone operation.

He said DOC did not wish to be the driving party but was prepared to take an active part and work closely with the working group. Rex Capil talked about the complexity of operations as far as the steering group was concerned and said there was plenty of professional assistance we could get from Venture Southland, also costs and funding.

The Promotions Executive decided to be the steering group to take the project to the next step of calling a public meeting with representatives from VIN Inc, DOC and Venture Southland to bring the community up to date with progress and options.

### **Visitor Centre**

Now is the time to keep the Visitor Centre staff up to date with your bookings and periods when you are closed. It makes the job so much easier and therefore keeps the visitor happier.

## **Book Reviews** by Margaret Rooney

The Girl in Times Square by Paulina Simons.

I took two books on holiday and have always enjoyed Paulina Simons' stories. They are always well written, hold the attention and have a good story line. I started to read and just could not get into this book, so I put it down and read the second book. That finished and nothing else to read I went back and persevered and ended up not able to put it down.

Lily Quinn moved to New York city, shared a flat with her boy-friend and a girl Amy, struggled to finish art college, pay her rent and find true love. Then Amy suddenly left without trace, and disappears, the boy-friend leaves & in Lilly's quest to find Amy, she becomes involved with New York Police Department Detective Spencer O'Malley. She inherits a huge amount of money, which she pretends to ignore, she has a problem Mother and a loveable Grandmother and then in the midst of all of this she has to start to fight for her life. In the search for Amy Lily finds herself questioning all she knows about her friend and her family, her own thoughts on immortality and her friendship with the detective. It is a great read about love and lies, life and death, and is sad and heart warming at the same time.

Amagansett by Mark Mills.

The second book is a mystery set in Amagansett, a small town on Long Island's wild coast on the East Coast of America, in 1947. A woman is caught in the nets of two fishermen, and at first it looks like an accident. Deputy police chief Tom Hollis is sent from New York to investigate and believes the truth lies in the lives of the small community.

There is the fishing community with a tradition of three centuries of working this coast after the Montaukett Indians were driven from the area, and the city people coming in with their money in search of a new playground.

In solving the mystery, a community whose way of life is disappearing with the emergence of people returning from serving in Europe during the second World War, and the wealthy coming in with their wealth and different lifestyles is revealed. A very well written first novel, it is a book that can be read by both men & women. The fishing background is most interesting.

Both these books will be coming into the Library so watch out for them.

### **WITH MANY THANKS**

So the day has arrived for us to say farewell/goodbye/see ya.

We would like to say a big thanks to all involved, for the most fantastic farewell and the lovely gift. We had a great time and really enjoyed the time with our friends.

Our time on the island has been so wonderful, we have learnt so much from the young and old. Our children have had such a fantastic experience that will always be with them.

Thank you so much for making our time on Stewart Island so enjoyable, one to never forget.

A huge thanks goes to the families that had so much faith in me, " the baby magnet" to care for their little ones.

Thank You,

**Johann, Eunice (oh my nerves) Mishka and Mikhaila.**

## Well, well, well! (by Sue Ford).

My siblings and I left school aged 16 to pursue non-academic careers. This hasn't stopped any of us from reading, though our literary tastes are not – perhaps - profound. We have, however, all remained interested in the English language. My brother has taken this one step further and has begun producing written words that even a publisher is not averse to reading. His modest success fired ambition, and as a very-mature student, he has embarked upon an English degree course. He outlined the subject matter of Year 1 in an email, and it left me stunned. I hadn't heard of half the words used and could only guess the meaning of half the remainder – and that was only the course headings.

It seems to me that English is not really a language in its own right, but a hodge podge of words taken from virtually every European source, beginning hundreds of years before the Romans brought the first written words to England. Once inhabited by tribes, the language of one was barely comprehensible to another tribe from a distance. (In fact, dialect and accent still cause problems: ask a London Cockney to hold a conversation with a Newcastle Geordie, then sit back and watch the fun.) The island was, over many centuries, invaded time and again by other tribes from across the water. Eventually, the Romans did come – and went again, and the Angles and the Saxons kept battling their way in, and in due course, the Normans. I am told that this is one reason why the English language is so much more expressive today than most modern languages: it incorporates so many words that mean the same thing, but each with a slightly different nuance, because of the origin of any particular word. Fascinating, eh?

It isn't only the history that is interesting though. The language is still evolving at an alarming rate, due mostly perhaps to scientific and technological advances. I wonder though – will there come a time when the word “slang” is considered to be an archaic word, there being no such thing as “standard English”? “Slang” is considered to be “language in informal use, but not accepted as standard English”. The speed with which the language is growing — is one thing, but the changes to the meanings of words in “standard” English is, after all, another.

I remember Nana disapproving of Mum's use of “O.K.” during the 1950's. Then there was “*hep*”, a state attained by “*a hep cat*”, who might also be “*cool*”, redolent of cellar jazz bars and “*beatniks*” dressed entirely in black, possibly the first generation known to wear sunglasses indoors and at night! But I was a teenager in the 1960's, and we were “*with it*” and things were “*fab*”. “*Fabulous*” has such a grand meaning: incredible perhaps, or marvelous, so wonderful as to be at the outer reaches of our understanding? *Fab*, however, came to have a less ecstatic meaning – more along the lines of “O.K.” now that I think of it – and was quickly followed by “*great*”. And that was only the beginning of my acquaintanceship with the changing language.

Nana lived to disapprove of “*groovy*” and “*trendy*”, not recognizing that “*spiffy*”, from her own youth, was a similar sort of word. Alongside, marched “*awesome*” – a survivor to this day to some extent, and owing some of its rise in popularity to four turtles, trained in the martial arts. (No comment.) Nana continued to describe that which was newly “*awesome*” as “*ripping*”, and couldn't see the correlation. The decades passed. “*Hip*” came around twice, as did “*cool*”, but via the *Yuppies* came “*marvy*” and “*t'riff*” (for marvelous and terrific, of course, themselves two words used in a somewhat more moderate context than their original meaning inferred). “*Brill*” is a more recent addition to the slang lexicon, but fading fast, even as I type.

Now, we have had staying with us a 20-year-old English nephew. I was flattered that Andy liked our menus, but amused that meals were pronounced “well tasty”. The wintry weather descended upon us and was pronounced “well cold”, but that the hot water bottles rendered his nights “well warm”. And so it was that the word “well” attained new status in our household. Whilst “fab” seemed straightforward, “awesome” had become familiar, and even “brill” was fairly obvious in its lineage, “well” was clearly a strange anachronism of a youth culture we couldn’t understand. Or was it?

I turned off the calculator, and announced: “We are well over budget.” We stopped and looked at each other a moment – no, it wasn’t really “well”, it was more “well over” – wasn’t it? A perfectly acceptable, standard English phrase? “He’s quite well-adjusted,” a professorial-type intoned from the T.V. screen – more standard English surely? And the word “well” began to jump out of corners: well-defined, well articulated, well-established. Sometimes hyphenated, sometimes not, always in phrases we well understood. Andy couldn’t see the wonder of it: “well”, in this context, was to him merely a word which, used before another, upped either the quantity or quality of the second word. In other words, we could be over budget or a meal could be tasty, and there is no indication of how *far* over or of quite *how* tasty. Well-over or well-tasty gave each state a degree – a flavour of “better than might have been expected”. And I think he might have more of a point than I had in trying to explain “fab” to Nana. So, yet another minor change to everyday language: could it be a passing slang phrase or perhaps, in this case, a boundary change? Was I witnessing a Language Event?

Then I was looking up “mephitic” in the dictionary the other day – as you do - and a couple of hours later, I came across rather an odd entry: “The word ‘well’”, the accepted authority on English language informed me, “is a meaningless word, contemporaneous with ‘actually’ or ‘incidentally’.” The entry proceeds: “The phenomenon (the use of meaningless words) is perhaps more suitable for the psychologist than the philologist.” Oh well, that’s put me in my place. But then I saw: “.....used in conversation, especially by the young.....” which I am not by any stretch of the imagination, and “.....change frequently, for they are soon worn out by overwork.” Ha ha! Got you! Wrong! Wrong, wrong! Not so! But then I read on, and my glee turned to resignation: “WELL is a permanent member of the class of words thus used,....” the Oxford conceded.

It has left me well thoughtful anyway.

Stewart Island News is usually published monthly as material permits. If you wish to send a contribution, please email to [sdovey@es.co.nz](mailto:sdovey@es.co.nz) preferably as an MsWord™ attachment. Short articles can be posted to the editor: Stewart Dovey, P O Box 87, Stewart Island. Deadline for October edition is Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2004.

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