

STEWART ISLAND NEWS

CELEBRATING RAKIURA

March 2018

\$3.00

This month Mary Chittenden and I have been working for Stats NZ distributing Census forms. We've really appreciated all the help and offers of tea and coffee we've had. I reckon we definitely have the best deal in the country despite all the steep paths and slippery stairs we've had to negotiate. This snapshot of the country affects decisions about funding and support in areas like health and education. Small communities like ours need all the help we can get. So if you haven't filled in your form yet you can still do it either on paper or online. And we might even get a new answer to that perennial tourist question "So how many people live on Stewart Island?"

*Gadget's National Geographic photo shoot.
Photo by Antonia Steeg*

The 'Deadly Feathers' book mentioned in last month's issue is also available at our Community Library.

Have a Go Sailing was here, giving Halfmoon Bay pupils the chance to try sailing, it looked like a lot of fun was had!

Stewart Island has been in the news... Rodent detection dog Gadget got a great write-up in the latest NZ Geographic magazine as a part of a feature on conservation dogs And Nate Lachmann stars in the latest Air NZ Airpoints for Schools video, great job Nate!

Rakiura Jade will be open until the end of April and everyone is welcome to stop by, they will also be open sometimes during the winter, if you see their car

parked outside the studio, go

For once I wish could make the Stewart Island News scratch and sniff, so you could fully appreciate the amazing scent of these Easter Orchids. Photo by Jennifer Ross



Have a go sailing lessons for the HMB students. Photo by Sue Graham

Running the Northwest Circuit

By Randy Richmond of Nelson, British Columbia, Canada

In 1985 I visited Stewart Island with my then girlfriend to hike the NW Circuit loop. We only made it to the Bungaree hut before we had to turn back as the conditions were too much for my partner.

Flash forward 33 years and I had the pleasure to visit Stewart Island once again with my partner (now my wife), but this time to run the entire 125km NW Circuit in one go. Of course my wife was smart enough to not want anything to do with the run except be there to pick up the pieces when I finish!

I recruited my Kiwi friend Ailsa, who had never visited the island before, to run the NW Circuit. We started at the trailhead at 5:40am, with the goal to head in a clockwise direction, making it back to Oban before dark the following night. Although we carried only the minimum amount of food (2 days' worth) and basic survival gear (rain jacket, spare dry shirt, down jacket and rain pants, our packs still felt heavy while running compared to what we are used to.

We made good steady progress to the North Arm Hut, especially along the old road, and quickly cruised with our fresh legs the more rugged section to reach Freshwater Hut. Because it was only one day after that huge rain event February 1st, I was nervous the next section out to Mason's Bay would be flooded, but it turned out just fine. We made quick progress and got to Mason's Bay Hut at 11:30am, just under 6 hours. After a quick 15 min refueling we set off onto the beach section to try and beat the king tide that was quickly coming in.

Unfortunately we were forced onto the high tide route, which easily added a half hour more time and a lot of energy.

We knew the easy part of the run was now over and the real work was only beginning, although, when we caught glimpses of the wild west coast of the island or ran on some of the beaches like Little hellfire, we became elated and re-energized with the beauty.

The next section from Mason's Bay through Little Hellfire to East Ruggedy was, like most of the



circuit, slow and technical. We rolled into East Ruggedy Hut just before 8pm, a 7hr50min run from Mason's Bay Hut. Although we wanted to take a well needed 30 minute rest here, we decided to maximize the little bit of light we had left and quickly moved on. This is when things started to get REAL slow, as the trail at night became very technical and challenging, coupled with our now tired beat up bodies, forward progress was mentally tough as we stumbled on into the night. The rock beach between East Ruggedy and Long Harry Hut was very slow and- well- not fun in the dark. Even finding the exit off the beach at night was not easy.

We did run into several Kiwi birds, one of them literally! I think our headlights must have confused one as he ran right into our legs, bouncing off us in a very confused state. It was quite comical- like a scene out of the Three Stooges. We also witnessed the biggest blood orange/red super moon just before it set over the ocean- wow, this is what I thought it's all about! Somewhere around Yankee River Hut at 4:45am I decided it would be prudent and strategic to rest for 45min before light and try and get over the nauseous stomach I had.

While trying to eat, my stomach would have nothing to do with it and I proceeded to "feed the animals". It was now drizzling as we both curled up in a ball on

the muddy trail where I actually slept for 15 minutes before being woken up by the cold wet chill penetrating my body. It was now 5:40 am, the signs of the early dawn light penetrated the forest and my stomach made a 100% recovery. With few words spoken, Ailsa was ready to rip and so was I. We ran for the first 10 minutes in our down jackets till our bodies got warm once again until we stopped quickly to strip down into our light running gear. I happily devoured a mars bar, excited my nausea was gone and off we charged.

The next 12 hours we charged hard and made great time with only a few 5 minute breaks. Other than our blistered sore feet from always being wet and gritty from the sand, we felt great. At 4:40pm we made it back to the Horseshoe Bay car park trail head- completing the loop in 35 hours.

Two hours later sitting in the South Sea Hotel for dinner and looking out at the rain squalls rolling through Oban, it felt like heaven, but also relief knowing I could finally stop thinking about finishing this loop after 33 years! Best of all though, It was a relief knowing that Stewart Island had remained that magical place I'd always remembered it to be.

If you're interested in actual or armchair running, join **Rakiura Runners** on Facebook for photos, stories and musings from island tracks.

Art in the Boatshed

The Stewart Island arts scene was enhanced this summer with an innovative pop-up gallery in Brian Anderson and Janet Malloch's shed on Main Road. Janet's inspirational 'Art in the Boatshed' came about after discussion with some of her Wanaka artist friends who had been contemplating a 'pop-up' style art show. Rather than have it in Wanaka which is already well catered for with galleries and shops Janet thought 'why not Stewart Island?' The idea caught on and very soon Brian was clearing out his shed to accommodate the temporary gallery.

A crowd of around 50 locals, visitors and artists gathered for the official opening on 15th January where Janet announced that all of the artists involved in the show had agreed that the 10% commission on sales would go towards the new Rakiura Heritage Centre. In thanking them for their generous gesture Chairperson of the Rakiura Heritage Centre, Margaret Hopkins said 'we are so happy that you have chosen to set up this lovely art show here on Stewart Island. It will add to the diversity of things for visitors

to do and provides a welcome outlet for local and off shore artists. Your support for our Heritage Centre is heart-warming.'

Open daily, 'Art in the Boatshed' ran for 2 months and saw many hundreds of people through the door, especially on cruise ship days. Some came to buy, some came to browse and many just stopped by to ask about Stewart Island and the community. The diverse art works included paintings, screen prints, lead lights, photographs, jewellery and crocheted art. The colourful display was beautifully curated by Janet Malloch who as an artist herself had several pieces in the exhibition.

Janet described the whole exhibition as extremely successful and is thankful to all of the artists who made the show possible. 'We started with mainland artists then found that there was big interest from Stewart Islanders who wanted to be involved which made for an exciting exhibition of interesting works. As time went by it was the



Photos by Brian Anderson

Stewart Islanders' art that became the main works that were being sold.'

Funds raised from the exhibition will be used to invest in a special significant feature within the Rakiura Heritage Centre.

Snap chat

We're trialling Snap chat as a new name for the ratting column, Rat Tales seemed a bit ho-hum and Snap chat seems, well snappier. Hopefully the social media giant doesn't sue SIN.

My house had a surprise surprising guest recently. Our old friend Eddie had been on the Navy ship at the Auckland Islands and they arrived in Bluff ahead of schedule, so he decided to pop over for a surprise visit before he went back home to Auckland. The surprising part came when we asked what he was doing on the Navy ship in the first place. He said it was for his new job as the PF2050 Ltd CEO. It took a few seconds to unpack that acronym... turns out our friend is now a bossman at Predator Free New Zealand 2050!

I've had plenty of visitors and house-guests tag along on my rat-line but this time it was a bit different to take someone who has such a major involvement in the BIG picture of our trapping efforts. SIRCET operations manager Willy Gamble accompanied us and he and Eddie got to chat rats and traps and pest control on Stewart Island. Conversations about these issues are a lot less theoretical when they take place "on the grounds" while we're oiling trap hinges, replacing plates and covers and flinging maggoty rat carcasses into the bush, all with Ulva Island in the background.

In other news, Willy has reported he caught a rat in one of the Trapinator possum traps for the first time.

Following is a tale from Sharon (not for the faint-hearted) and just to be clear on names, Sharon is Sharon Pasco, "Cruz" is her dog, and "Angelica" is a herb:

"I take Cruz with me when I do the golf course traps and when I got to Trap 49 there was a live rat feeding on the trapped rat - that fell out when I picked up the trap - Cruz grabbed it and shook it then let it go and when it started to run off I screamed at him to get it so he did the same thing - but I was ready for him dropping it the second time and that's when I stomped on it - so hard that its innards came out - luckily I had Cruz's ball thrower to scoop it up and fling it into the scrub away from the golf course. We actually got a third rat from that trap the next day as I went back to the golf course to get some Angelica and walking back down that fence-line, Cruz again expressed interest in Trap 49 & so I checked it and sure enough we had another rat!"



STEWART ISLAND - RAKUIURA COMMUNITY BOARD

STREET LIGHTING

All street lights on Stewart Island will be converted to Orange Tek Dark Sky approved LED lights over the next couple of months and the old lights on Ayr Street beside the school will be upgraded and replaced with bollard styled lighting at the same time.

SPEED BUMPS

Following a request from the young mothers on the island the Board has agreed to the installation of 2 further speed bumps on Elgin Terrace to help slow down traffic. A wide one will be placed on the paved crossing point outside the hotel and a further narrower version in the vicinity of the monument. Along with the new Stop signs recently installed at the intersection with Main Road, it is hoped that this will make this busy section of the foreshore area much safer for both motorists and pedestrians.

MILL CREEK – CEMETERY TRACK

A contract has been let to upgrade the pedestrian access to the cemetery. This will include new stairs/steps along with a handrail on the first section from the roadside and then a timber edged gravel path with steps where required from there to the cemetery.

Village Centre, Oban : glowingsky.co.nz



No Ordinary Sheila

"One of our most talented yet unsung New Zealanders."
RADIONOW.COM

No ordinary Sheila

A FILM BY HUGH MACDONALD

"An inspiring film about a Kiwi woman who wasn't held back."

"Fabulous film!
What an inspiration for living."

"It's a gorgeous film about an astonishing woman. Just loved it."

JESSIE LEEHAN

"The indomitable spirit with which Sheila approached life shines through."

STAGE DRAFT THEATRE

IN CINEMAS OCTOBER 19

(NZ Independent Documentary, Rated G) is screening 27th March to 1st April

This No Ordinary Sheila is Sheila Natusch. The film tells her life story: her upbringing on Stewart Island in the 1930s, her studies at Otago University in the 1940s, her teaching and writing career in Wellington thereafter, and her amazing adventures in the wild places of New Zealand.

Screening Times:

Tues 27th March at 7.30pm

Wed 28th March at 1pm & 7.30pm

Fri 30th March at 7.30pm

Sat 31st March at 7.30pm

Sun 1st April at 7.30pm

Special Matinee Session: Wednesday 28th March 1pm

Bookings Recommended.

Tickets: Adult \$15.00; Senior/Student \$13.00;

Children \$10.00



Predator Free Rakiura update

The Predator Free Rakiura Leadership Group is delighted to have received funding for one year from MBIE for a Project Manager, which was announced at a public meeting on 5th March. This funding will enable the Group to progress work with the community towards a Predator Free Rakiura via the Project Manager. The detail of the position is still to be decided but the topic dominates the agenda for the next Group meeting on 27th March. The Group is encouraged by the support for PFR which emerged from a series of community leadership planning meetings and consultations, and considers the appointment of a Project Manager a vital next step to progress this concept.



Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust News



Field work for the 2017/2018 yellow-eyed penguin monitoring project was completed at all three sites by mid-February. A quick summary of results follows:

	Codfish Island	Bravo Group	Anglem Coast
Number of nests	16	14	11
Eggs laid	31	26	21
Hatching success	97%	96%	90%
Chicks fledged	6	17	12
Chicks per nest	0.38	1.21	1.09
Average chick weight	4.60kg	4.73kg	5.20kg

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Results from Codfish Island were disappointing, the Bravo group and Anglem Coast were ok with the Anglem Coast producing slightly better quality chicks.

Other researchers have since visited Codfish Island and managed to attach a satellite tracker to two chicks before they fledged. Information from the trackers should provide an insight into where chicks disperse post-fledging which might help identify specific problems they encounter. We would be interested in any sightings of yellow-eyed penguins with a tracker attached to their back.

Always, this work would not be possible without help from volunteers and supporters. Thanks to volunteers Dave Houston, Thomas Mattern, Kath Johnson, Iain McCallum, Kerri-Anne Edge, Tabi Kime, Riki Parata, Annichje Riemersma, Bridget Hunt, Bec Baxter, Troy McDonald, and Matt Jones, and to the Department of Conservation (Murihiku and Rakiura), Rakiura Charters, Sanford (Stewart Island), the Southern Institute of Technology, Stewart Island Flights, and Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust members for their support.

Sandy King—For the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust



Stewart Island
RAKIURA | NEW ZEALAND

Island Inspirations

Rakiura Art Programme Stewart Island

26th—27th May 2018

Stewart Island Promotion Association presents

a weekend of writing, drawing, mixed media and printmaking art workshops with high quality tutors from around NZ.

Cost: \$150 including materials



Professional Yoga Workshop with Edit & Muna

- Connect with yourself with your body and breath
- Feel inspired and grow your yoga practice
- Cultivate strength and movement
- Gentle stretching, restorative yin yoga
- Guided meditation, savasana to assists a deeper and longer relaxation and stilling the mind

Bring a yoga mat, a cushion and a blanket. Some yoga mats are available.

Where: The Pavilion, Stewart Island

When: Sunday, 1st April from 10.30 to 12.30

Cost: Donation / Koha

Register: contact@professionalyoga.net



KIWI AVOIDANCE TRAINING FOR DOGS

Monday 2nd April 2018

Time: 8.30am - 2 pm

Location: Fern Gully Heli Hangar (Zane's hangar)

Please get in touch with Di or Sandy to arrange a time to train your dog:

Di Morris 027 759 9773 pete.di1@xtra.co.nz

Sandy King 027 867 9011 [sdk@kinect.co.nz](mailto: sdk@kinect.co.nz)



Te Papa botanists strike botanical gold on Rakiura/Stewart Island

By Heidi Meudt and Antony Kusabs

In December 2016, Te Papa Botany Researcher Heidi Meudt and Collection Manager Antony Kusabs visited Stewart Island for three days of botanical field work. Our goal: to locate and collect specimens of native forget-me-nots (*Myosotis*, Boraginaceae) for Heidi's taxonomic research project. In addition, we aimed to make collections of other plants currently being researched by our colleagues (such as ferns and orchids) or those lacking from Te Papa's collection.

We were fortunate to be accompanied by John Barkla (Department of Conservation (DOC) Senior Ranger, Community, Coastal Otago) and Mathew Rees (student, Kew Gardens, England). Before we left, we planned our trip based on where forget-me-not specimens had been previously seen or collected on Stewart Island. Based on our own previous trips to the island, as well as data in the herbarium databases at Te Papa (WELT), Landcare Research (CHR) and Auckland War Memorial Museum (AK), we knew that Stewart Island was home to at least three species of native forget-me-nots: *Myosotis pygmaea*, *M. rakiura* and *M. tenericaulis*, and it was the latter two that were the objects of our current search. To do this work we used a collecting permit issued to us for this research by DOC.

Our trip to Rakiura started early the morning of 13 December with a short flight with Stewart Island Flights across Foveaux Straight for a quick stop at Oban. Soon we were off again, and what an exhilarating feeling it was to be flying over the dense Rakiuran forests to finally land on the natural, sandy landing strip that is the beach at the southern end of Mason Bay. Watching the plane take off again was surreal, as we and our backpacks were left behind on the shore. We soon donned our packs and headed nearby toward our first stop, The Gutter. We were not disappointed: on open or shrub-covered rocky slopes and cliffs near the sea, we found a healthy, flowering population of *Myosotis rakiura* there, and stopped for over an hour to photograph and collect specimens of it. We also counted the number of

individuals in the population and the area it covered, which will help us more update its conservation status if necessary. *Myosotis rakiura* is currently listed as "At Risk - Naturally Uncommon", and in addition to being found on Stewart Island is also present on the Catlins coast and Solander Island. Back along the beach we spotted several birds, including what was probably a dead Fiordland crested penguin (another possibility being Snares crested penguin), half buried by sand. We also saw a (living) subantarctic skua, variable oyster catcher, pied oyster catcher and red billed gull. Sadly, we didn't see any kiwi, but we were hopeful we might see some later on the trip.

Next up on the field work agenda was Doughboy Bay, and that meant tramping through the bush along Southern Circuit, up and over Adam's Hill (401 m). We made slow progress (as botanists tend to do), as many species of orchid were flowering, and there were several other botanical gems to admire and photograph. We were also quite excited to hear so much bird song along the track, including kākāriki, tūī, grey warbler, bellbird, tomtit and fantail. We saw kiwi tracks, feathers, poo, and "probes"--where they had stuck their beaks into the ground to search for food--but still no sign of an actual kiwi... All of this amazing nature meant it was already quite late when we made it to Doughboy Hut. However, we still had one more site to visit before we could relax and eat our dinner. After a short walk (thankfully now without our packs, which we left in the hut), we soon found ourselves at another flowering population of *M. rakiura*, and then returned to the (now quite full) hut for our well-earned dinner and sleep.

The next day we had another tramp of similar length (c. 16 km) ahead of us along the Southern Circuit Track, up Doughboy Hill, and then following the Rakeahua River to Rakeahua Hut. After first admiring a thriving population of *Gunnera hamiltonii* (listed as "Threatened -- Nationally Critical"), we ventured along the beach to discover a large tuna head and what appeared to be an old marine mine.

Doughboy Hill was particularly interesting botanically, and we made several specimens of different plants there to be added to Te Papa's



Myosotis rakiura specimen WELT SP105596, copyright Te Papa

collection. These included two sundews (*Drosera arcturi* & *D. stenopetala*), *Halocarpus biformis*, a gentian (*Gentianella lineata*), *Clemisia alpina* and Ant's personal favourite, *Liparophyllum gunnii*. We were impressed to hear an even greater array of birdsong compared to the previous day, including kākā, kākāriki, tūī, bellbird, kererū, tomtit, grey warbler and fantail.

Near the end of this track we finally found the elusive *Myosotis tenericaulis*, which is a delicate, creeping plant with small white flowers. This was a really exciting moment for us all. We had not yet seen this species in the field, despite searching for it in other locations over the past two years. *Myosotis tenericaulis* is known from a handful of other South Island and North Island populations, and like *M. rakiura* is also listed as "At Risk -- Naturally Uncommon". We also found two different native foxgloves, *Oursia modesta* and *O. crosbyi*, both of which Heidi had collected 12 years ago when she visited Stewart Island for her PhD taxonomic research. But unlike last time, this time *O. modesta* was in flower, and we managed to get some great photos of it. Creeping foxglove, or *O. modesta*, is listed as "Threatened -- Nationally Critical", so we first had to assess the size of the population as being adequate before deciding to collect a specimen for Te

(Continued on page 11)



Book Review by Sue Ford

Books worth a read:

"Cambridge Black" by Alison Bruce, 7th in a series featuring DC Goodhew, but a stand-alone story. Goodhew is haunted by the circumstances of his grandfather's death; Amy is haunted by the possibility that her father is innocent of setting the fire which killed two people. What secrets connecting the two does alcoholic Lorraine hold?

"Without a Word" by Kate McQuaile

McQuaile: Orla is in London on Skype with her best friend Lillian in Ireland. Lillian leaves Orla on Skype to go and answer a knock on the door. Orla waits. And waits. Lillian never returns. Ten years later, Orla is back in her home town, and the mystery resurfaces.

"The Angel" by Katerina Diamond: the only character I felt was 'real' was Gabriel – sensitive, vulnerable teen Goth. He's imprisoned for setting fire to the disused signal box where – apparently - a homeless man was sleeping and thus died. But why is Ash, fellow inmate, so determined to ruin Gabriel? The other characters seem to be there to provide a plausible criminal backdrop to Gabriel's innocence. A twisted plot.

"The Evacuees Christmas" by Katie King, a simple and naively written tale of a group of London kids evacuated to Yorkshire. Could be an interesting 'history' lesson for our older kids: bullying, scrumping, lack of money, rationing, the way evacuee children were treated – bit of a wake-up call to our wee softies maybe? Nice.

Book of the Month contender:

"Magpie Murders" by Anthony Horowitz. Susan Ryeland is an editor at Cloverleaf Publishing, editor for Alan Conway's series of eight 'Atticus Pund' detective stories. She returns from a trip to read the MS for the ninth in the series, 'Magpie Murders'. We read the MS with her, a seeming accidental death in a

quiet English village, followed by a macabre murder. All the usual suspects with the typical village skeletons-in-the-closet, circa 1955, but as Susan nears the end of the MS, there's a surprise in store. And then Conway is found dead. Accident, suicide – or murder? Sue soon realises there is something written into 'Magpie Murders' that will lead her to a conclusion. You are implicitly invited to follow up the clues and red herrings with both Susan and with Atticus Pund. The final chapter is a supposed interview conducted with Alan Conway by Horowitz himself – and I am seriously annoyed that I haven't solved the mystery or spotted the clue in the Atticus Pund murder story they are discussing! Great fun.

Another contender is "**The Other Woman**" by Laura Wilson. Deal with the first 25% of the book as best you can as Sophie deals unrealistically with a poison pen letter. Then sit back and enjoy the ride as she deals with one farcical situation after another arising from the death of 'the other woman' – in which Sophie is implicated. Nothing in the reviews prepared me for laughing so long or so loud and I can't help but wonder if I somehow missed the point – surely I wasn't supposed to take it as seriously as the reviewers imply? The ending is a reminder to be careful what you wish – or pray - for, but for farcical genius with suspense and tension, Wilson is brilliant.

But the winner is: "**Keep Me Safe**" by Daniela Sacerdoti. Little Ava's Dad leaves her and his partner, Anna, and Ava suffers a strange bout of shock. When she comes out of her trance-like state three days later, she carries the memories of a little girl living in a place she's never been to. A touch of the supernatural, but it's not 'ghosties & ghoulies', just a rather lovely romance with heaps of tension and suspense. One of those books that you can't wait to get to the end of but at the same time you don't want it to finish! Ta-da!

Rakiura Mātauranga

Māori/Stewart Island

Māori knowledge

This project supports

Rakiura community

members who want to be more culturally diverse

and is part of a long term project for the Rakiura community to increase our cultural competency.

Every month in the SIN and on the Facebook page will be some pre-european information about the Island and her places. Also a point to note is the Ngāi Tahu dialect, the ng is replaced with a k, so Ngāi Tahu becomes Kai Tahu in the correct dialect.

Last month we looked at Halfmoon Bay or Oban and the Māori name for the main part of the bay Kairākau (said like Kai – raa- co) and Takirakau the Māori name for the head of the bay.

Rakiura and Māori occupation have been interwoven for at least 700 years. The Rapuwai people are thought to be the first to occupy this island somewhere around the thirteenth century, the Waitaha people came next then Kāti Mamoe in the sixteenth century and finally Ngāi Tahu in the 17th century. This month we will explore the Māori names for Horseshoe bay Horseshoe Bay:

Hautupe: Meaning charm of the winds

Tupouri: Meaning standing in the gloom or standing sorrowful and depressed.

Te one pai: Meaning the good sands

The NZAA (Archaeological association of New Zealand) has two site records on Hautupe, one is a Midden/Oven (A midden is an old dump for domestic waste which may consist of animal bone, human excrement, botanical material, mollusc shells, sherds, lithics, and other artifacts and ecofacts associated with past human occupation.)

The second site at Hautupe is a Burial/Cemetery/Urupa Burials reportedly a result of an early measles epidemic. It is also recorded as an early occupation site.

This information has come from the following sources;

Local Kaumātua Phillip Smith

Rakiura Heritage by Neville Peat

Place Names by Harold Ashwell

Archaeological Association of New Zealand



Letters

Stewart Islanders—you rock!

We'd like to convey our sincere and heartfelt "thank you" and appreciation of a wonderful caring and loving community. With Macca feeling like Bilbo Baggins letting in one knock at the door at a time as emergency crew arrived to Chris's aid, the night of Thursday February 22nd, my birthday, no less! From hospital visits, flowers, cards, texts, rose quartz stones and well wishes via Macca, all helped in my recovery from an 'exploding ovary' (Anita will get the joke)! So with extended arms a **HUGE HUG** to a wonderful community. To be a rock and not to roll!

From Macca and Chris McCarthy



The annual OSNZ (Birds NZ) youth camp will be held on Stewart Island 17 – 19 April. We have 22 keen teenagers all busy spotting birds and eager to help out with any bird-related or conservation activities. Any suggestions for us?

Thanks, Lloyd Esler

2130404 esler@southnet.co.nz

**Mission without Borders**

Any knitting would gratefully received including Hats Scarves, socks, Jerseys etc; also squares or better still strips suitable to make into blankets. This year all knitting needs to be in by the beginning of June. For any help phone Elaine 2191027 or Pat 2191156

Thanks, Elaine Hamilton



A pleasant weekend in late February was enjoyed when family and friends of Alison Hazlet gathered for the spreading of Bill's ashes at the Rankin Street property. The weekend began with dinner at the hotel on Friday night, then everyone gathered at Alison's on Saturday morning where the Rev Richard Johnson said a few words and family & friends shared the task of distributing the ashes. Following this everyone went to Miller's Beach for a picnic and shared memories and laughs of past days with Bill. Once everyone returned we all gathered for dinner at Anne & Jamie Sutherlands in the evening. Special thanks to Phillip & Diane Smith for the transport, and Jo Leask

for the catering.

Many thanks, Bev Cowie



Dear Stewart Island residents,

I just wanted to let you know that I am moving on from my position here at Venture Southland. I have really enjoyed working with residents on the Island – my contact with the Island has been a highlight of my time here in Southland. Tina Harvey is the interim contact for Stewart Island at Venture Southland until a new community development team leader is recruited. Tina's contacts are tina@venturesouthland.co.nz or 3211 1422 or 021 273 2443.

All the best, Amy Bird



Beverley Osborn is officiating a wedding on Thursday 29th March at Moturau Moana Gardens for a North Island couple who chose the island because they've never been here before. They need a hairdresser and a person who can be at the ceremony to take photos (and also serve as a witness). If you can help out, please get in touch with Beverley at 2191 506

Would you like to broaden your horizons with further learning?

Could your resultant expertise be used to benefit the Stewart Island community in some way?

The purpose of the Rakiura Education Trust is to:

Encourage and assist Stewart Islanders to access education opportunities through the provision of grants.

Both individuals and groups may apply for a grant for projects that will benefit the Island community

Current Trustees: Jan Keen, Peter Goomes, Belinda Dobbins, Debs Dillon, Cherie Hemsley

If you would like more information about eligibility criteria or to obtain grant application forms, please contact: Belinda Dobbins (Secretary) Email: dobbins@slingshot.co.nz



GRANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants for a grant from the Rakiura Education Trust must:

Have been residents of the Island for at least 3 months prior to the application and currently be residing on the island. Be seeking assistance to pursue educational opportunities that will develop or increase their skill level and knowledge with the intention of returning to the island to share their expertise with a group or other individuals. *Therefore there must be obvious community benefits to be obtained from the project.*

Please note that funding will not generally be provided retrospectively (for projects that have already commenced or been completed).

Only one application per project is accepted in any 12-month period.

This is a subsidy-based funding scheme. This means that individuals and groups may have to contribute towards the cost of their project.

Applicants must commit to providing a written report and any other supporting evidence once the project is completed or within 1 month of completing the project/course

Church Chatter by Jo Riksem*Left: Brenda Petrine Squires & Lorraine Squires**Right: Brenda Squires with Dennison Urban Smith*

A March wedding from long ago at our church, a union of love between two people.

Brenda Petrine Squires married Dennison Urban Smith 15 March 1954 at Oban Presbyterian Church.

The bridesmaid was Lorraine Squires and best man was Neville "Mick" Squires." Love is the answer and when we really try it, we find it works. There is no other way.

Speakers for April

8 April 2018 – Rev Anne Bennett – Anne is a good friend of Glenda Hicks from Bible College days in early 1980s and is here as part of the special Minister's Retreat. Anne is a recently retired Anglican minister, living in Palmerston North. She had a lot to do with Scripture Union in earlier days.

15 April – Rev Glenda Hicks – Glenda is here taking the Minister's Retreat and is well known to many and part of the big Hicks family that have been part of Stewart Island for many generations. She is an Anglican minister and has done a lot of work at Lincoln College as student chaplain.

22 April – Rev Brendon McRae – is the minister of a Presbyterian church, Flagstaff Community Church in Dunedin where he has lived for the past 3 years with his family. He spent 14 years in full-time youth work and originally comes from Gore. He is a fanatical fly fisherman and catches his own blue cod. On his bucket list is catching a blue cod from the shore in Stewart Island and is looking forward to being here.

29 April – Craig Allan – is the minister at Lakeside Presbyterian, married to Nadine who is a counsellor and social worker at Te Anau. He completed his theological training in Adelaide and became a Baptist Pastor and an Old Testament lecturer. In 2005 he relocated to Auckland where he ministered as a Baptist pastor. Since then, they have had the privilege of being called to Te Anau in December 2015.

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

RAD – Ride Against Depression

At the end of last month you might have noticed a guy dressed all in black riding his skateboard down the steep hills of Horseshoe Bay Road in the pouring rain. That was Blair Benefield, or "Captain Radness", starting a country-long skateboard journey to raise money and awareness about depression. The NZ former soldier is using a custom-built skateboard and rides with a massive pack of gear on his back. He suffered from PTSD and severe depression after losing a comrade. His cause is called RAD – Ride Against Depression and you can follow his adventures on his Facebook page. If you have some spare dollars click on the donate button. Money goes to the charities No Duff (supports NZ Vets), Youthline, and Good Neighbours. Blair's video updates are really uplifting and his positivity is contagious.

RAKIURA JADE with Master Carver & Sculptor Dave Goodin

Open from 10.30am every day upstairs in the water-front building next to the boat slip (caddy-cornerish from the Post Office)

Enjoy stunning views of Stewart Island harbour from the world's southernmost jade workshop.

Make your own jade treasure from your selected piece of beautiful New Zealand greenstone (from \$150/day)

Come browse the gallery of beautiful objects made by local artists: glass art from Norm Adams; flax weavings from Fiona Lord; carvings from Greg Northe and Sabine Witte

www.rakiurajade.co.nz

rakiurajade@gmail.com 021 025 93958

Time for "Players" Resurgence? By Sue Ford

People ask we 'mature' Stewart Island Players this question all the time: "When are Players going to do something else?" The answer is: As soon as you younger folks start it up! Chris pointed out recently that the Gwen's, Ali Eade's and Bruce's were in their 30's and 40's when Players – assisted by people both older and younger – first hit the Stewart Island stage. How many people in this age group, if they were helped out by younger supporters and older experience, already have enough flair to be able to put on one helluva show? The answer to that is easy: loads of you! We in that older category will willingly help out if asked. Wardrobe, lighting/sound, make-up, stage management, props, all waiting for you, and a bit of knowledge about stage craft if anyone needs a sounding board.... All the background is there. And so is your audience! Hassle Josephine, Johnny, Becky, Diddles, Jan, Sharon and the other amazing men and women who can organise and take part in those 'theatrics' like "Stewart Island's Got Talent" – because the Island does "got talent". So there's the challenge. Anyone up for it?

(Continued from page 7)

Papa, which has become the first and only specimen Te Papa currently holds of this species. We also found another small, normally elusive plant, *Ranunculus ternatifolius*.

We were exhausted yet buzzing when we finally made it to Rakeahua Hut, where we met DOC field ranger Mike Douglass, who was staying at the hut while checking predator traps to protect dotterel breeding habitat in the area. Mike was quite interested in our work as we talked about it while we organised our specimens and gear, and prepared and ate dinner. The next morning Mike even helped us to find other nearby populations of *Myosotis tenericaulis* and *Ourisia modesta* while we appreciated the background kiwi calls. He almost helped us spot our first kiwi too. We say “almost” because even though he saw it several meters ahead of us on the trail, by the time we caught up to him, it was long gone. Later that morning at high tide, the Rakiura Charters water taxi picked us up as scheduled and whisked us back to Oban. We had enough time for a snack and a short wander around town, before flying back to Invercargill, and eventually (the next day) back to Wellington.

Overall, we had an amazing and highly successful three days of botanical field work during our time on Rakiura/Stewart Island, and we do feel that we struck botanical gold while we were there. Although we didn't see any kiwi, that just means we'll have to come back again soon, which we would gladly do! Stewart Island is truly a special part of New Zealand, and we were privileged to have had this opportunity to do some of our field work there.

You may be wondering what we did with all the plants that we collected: Where did we put them? What became of them? During the trip, we kept the plants we collected in bags or boxes in our packs, or used a lightweight makeshift “press” made of corrugated cardboard and some sheets of newspaper. So, as we emptied our packs of the food which fuelled our long tramps, we filled them up again with the fruits of our field work! These plants were then carefully pressed in a proper plant press when we arrived back in Invercargill, dried in plant driers when we got back to Te Papa, and eventually databased, mounted and filed in Te Papa's herbarium. You can see all the collections we made (except for any Threatened species), here: <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/topic/10557> Heidi is already studying these specimens, using morphometric and genetic analyses, in her taxonomic research. You can keep up with the latest on Te Papa Myosotis research here:

<http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/Topic/3714> and also here: <http://blog.tepapa.govt.nz/category/plants/forget-me-nots/>

Thanks to DOC, John Barkla, Mathew Rees, Mike Douglass, Brian Rance, Hugh Wilson, Stewart Island Flights, and Rakiura Charters for their help and support before and during our stay. Also thanks to Te Papa, DOC and core funding for Crown Research Institutes from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Science and Innovation group, for funding this research.

RAKIURA RIDDLE

NO MATTER YOUR STRENGTH OR MY WEIGHT I'M LIGHT

I'M NOT BIG OR TALL BUT I'M AT QUITE A HEIGHT

THEY WOULDN'T BE LYING IF SOMEONE SAID

THAT I AM CLEARLY EASILY LED

I'M PERCHED UPON A POINTY HAT

WHICH HOUSES SOMETHING NOISY THAT

IS FEATURED IN A VICTOR-IOUS LIVRE

STARRING A QUASI-VERBAL ROPE-HEAVER

DON'T HAVE A HUNCH WHO I'M ON ABOUT?

WAIT THERE'S STILL MORE TO FIND OUT

YOU MIGHT THINK I'M A BATTY BEACON

SOME OF MY GUESTS ARE MOTH-EATIN'

MY PREDECESSORS WERE THOR-OUGHLY FRIED

HIT WITH BOLTS AND FORKS THEN DIED

I'M ONLY SEVEN BUT WHAT'S UNDER ME

IS TWICE THAT PLUS A CENTURY

MY BROTHERS ARE IN CONSTANT MOTION

ALWAYS MOVING ON THE OCEAN

BUT MY RED MAST IS CALM AND STILL

THE BRINY TRADED FOR A HILL

[Answer to last month's riddle: KIWI aka Apteryx]



Stewart Island Real Estate

For all local listings -
houses, cribs, sections and blocks of land.

See our website TODDCO.NZ
or contact our local representative
Jeanette Mackay on 027 681 8589
for all Island real estate enquiries.

Sarah Dowie's Rakiura Remarks

Figures released last week show that the Government will waste over \$38 million of taxpayer money a year on those who fail to finish first year of tertiary study under its misguided fees-free policy. This \$2.8 billion vote grab was unnecessarily rushed through in the governments first hundred days, avoiding all due process and scrutiny. They were in such a rush, no cost-benefit analysis was completed and, as we found out in Select Committee last month and to make matters worse, all indicators suggest that the concept is yet to have had any real effect on enrolments. As the 2018 academic year began, Universities New Zealand revealed that the policy has had no real effect on increasing enrolments. The Government's rationale for fees-free was that the cost of education was a barrier to entry for many prospective students, a notion based solely on anecdotal evidence that conveniently ignored the fact that tertiary education in New Zealand was already among the most accessible in the world. Money for fees could be borrowed interest-free and students from low-income families received weekly allowances that weren't required to be paid back. \$38 million of taxpayer money could have done a great deal better if it were directed towards investment in our most vulnerable and our community here in Southland – whether that be in our schools, hospitals, or roads. Given the Government's rhetoric about regional development, if there was real concern for Southland, there would have been greater consideration of the Southland Institute of Technology's (SIT) free-fees regime and the critical role it plays within our Southland regional strategy. Instead, we've seen a blanket policy that undermines the points of difference within our successful Southland economy without acknowledging the big impact it will have on our region. New Zealanders deserve better than to see their taxes frittered away on poorly executed policies.

Museum Matters by Jo Riksem**HOUSE OF THE MONTH****Greenvale Boarding House**

The original house on 40 acres with a shingle roof was built about 1876 for Mr & Mrs James R. Thomson. It bears no resemblance to the later one built and opened as a guest house in 1886, which included launches for pleasure cruises and dinghies for hire. It had rooms for 50 guests with 4 long drop toilets out the back, a laundry house, a gardeners cottage and two water tanks (built by John Eriksson). The Thomsons' ran this guest house for many years. Their daughter Barbara later became proprietress and her brother, Victor and his wife followed her. It was while they had the house that it was destroyed by fire on 12 March 1943. A Mr Fred Adams, an air force man, returning from the war in the late 1940s bought the land and built a house (Photo from P. Goomes below) and in 1955 sold land and house to Fred and Daphne Goomes. The 40 acres has since been split up into sections but remains with the Goomes family.

Acquisitions for February:

Digital images of Port Pegasus, Ringaringa and items relating to Ted Carrington, Digital images of the Eadie Family.

Searches for February:

John Jacky Lee; Boats: "Tutanekai, Stella, and Kekeno"; Hicks family; Husky dogs of Carsten Borchgrevink; North Arm Sawmill; Capt. Anglem and Joss family; Atkinson family, Potiki and Fife families; Hawke family & Mary Pi Acker.

Groups for February:

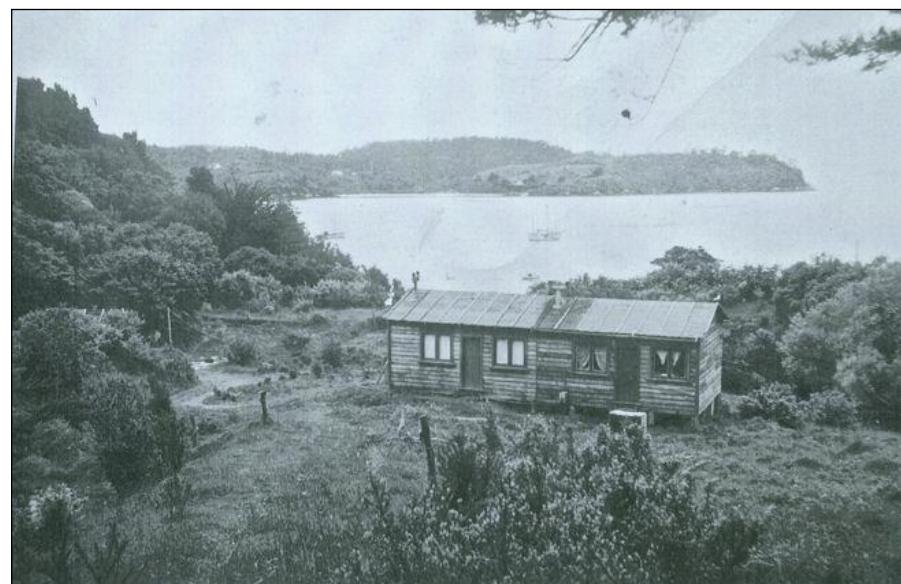
Cruise ship Pacific Jewel 8 Feb. - 1700 pax, Seabourn Encore 14 Feb - 600 pax, Crystal Symphony 22 Feb - 960 pax and Opportunity Travel 46 people.

A big thank you to Bunkhouse Theatre and Helen Bissland for their donations to the museum.

Summer hours now are: Monday - Saturday 10- 1:30, Sunday 12 - 2:00.

Make sure to stop in and see the Sheila Natusch exhibition.

See pg 13 for more pictures





GOOD NEWS FROM STEWART ISLAND EXPERIENCE

Following on from a very busy few months for all of us on the Island, you will be aware of the extra midday return ferry sailing Stewart Island Experience scheduled this summer, which ran from 27 Dec – 28 Feb, which has been a great success. So much so, that we have now confirmed this return midday sailing will operate again next summer, and for a much longer period, as follows:

1st Dec 2018 to 31st March 2019:

Stewart Island to Bluff

12 midday to 1pm

Bluff to Stewart Island

1.30pm – 2.30pm

However, the best news, which I am sure you will all be pleased to hear, is that we have also opened up our Winter Schedule. We have signed off on two return sailings – seven days a week from 1st May to 30th September each winter going forward – commencing this year.

1st May – 30th September:

Stewart Island to Bluff	Bluff to Stewart Island
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9.45am – 10.45am	8am – 9am
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4.30pm – 5.30pm	3pm – 4pm
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We have all seen the accommodation demand on the Island this summer. So many properties have been added to the Air BnB website and even with this increase in bed night availability, we have still struggled to accommodate all requests. Our Stewart Island Lodge will close 31 May but will reopen 1 August as we are confident demand for the shoulder season will only increase with tourism continuing to reach new heights in the south. Opening up our Winter Ferry schedule will hopefully encourage local operators to also extend their season. We all know the costs of business and to be financially viable to expand on the Island, one of the considerations is being able to operate for more months than in the past. So here's to a busy winter – but if you're anything like us at the moment, we're also looking forward to some holidays of our own to recover from what has been an exceptionally beautiful and busy summer.

Nga mihi Jane Grant

Operations Manager – Stewart Island Experience
jgrant@realjourneys.co.nz



400 Words By Beverley Osborn

It's that chocolate temptation time of the year again, when Easter eggs and bunnies abound. Have you ever wondered how they became Easter symbols?

Let's start with eggs.

In the Middle Ages, when fasting during Lent was obligatory, eggs were on the list of forbidden foods and so, on Easter Sunday, everyone delightedly ate eggs, rejoicing so enthusiastically in their return to the menu, that people began to decorate them to celebrate the occasion. An early method was to hard boil them using onion skins as dye. The addition of tied on leaves and string designs led to increasingly complex patterns and the pinnacle of that art was achieved in the elaborate jewelled eggs created by Faberge, originally for Russian tsars.

Games were invented. One of them was Egg Tap, a sort of hard-boiled egg duel, in which opponents each tried to break another's egg without damaging their own. The crack of the opening egg was seen as a reminder of the opening of Christ's tomb. The surprise of finding that tomb empty was later reflected in the hiding of surprises inside the egg. Faberge eggs were known to contain such astonishments as a ruby ring, a miniature clock, a gilded coach. Our Kinder surprise eggs stem from that tradition. So what about the rabbits?

In Germany, the hiding of painted eggs for a treasure hunt became customary and, because hares were often seen in gardens at that time of year, folklore soon had it that hares hid the eggs for children to find.

In long ago Europe, annual Spring festivals celebrated the end of Winter's cold and dark and those festivals centred round Eostra, the pagan goddess of fertility. Her symbol was the rabbit, chosen for its prolific breeding and the German hares were over-run by the rabbit symbolism. The pagan festival celebrated the new Spring life in the physical world of plants and birds and animals. Messages of hope and joy could be found in that belief system, but it had little to offer to victims of human injustice, abuse or indifference.

The Christian festival celebrates the Spring of life itself in all its fullness – body, mind and spirit. It celebrates the power of love which is the key to the building of right relationships between individuals, interest groups, communities and even countries.

That's a concept certainly worth celebrating with eggs, rabbits, surprises and definitely with chocolate!

Right: Barbara Thomson, Proprietress Below: Guest house built in 1886 Left: Original house with shingle roof



Salmon Tales

Here at Sanford, we've appreciated the generosity you've shown us by calling past our Island drop-in sessions and taking time to listen to our plans for working smarter at our salmon farm in Big Glory Bay. Thank you.

We have had some great questions from the community and we've taken your ideas on board, especially the acknowledgement that while in the last few years we're doing much better with our fish feeding regime there is a responsibility for us to look under those early farm sites and tidy up if we can.

Marine Farm Licence 279 was the site of our grower farm up until 18 months ago. The site is now in fallow, we won't use it again to grow salmon for at least another seven years. In the mean time we continue to monitor and investigate ways for speeding up the seabed recovery.

Fish Feeding Systems

There is no doubt that the modern feeding systems used today (brought about by innovation in the way the feed pellet is constructed and what it is made from), automatic feeding equipment and smart technology like underwater cameras have all helped to significantly reduce our environmental impact.

Long gone are the days when we stood on the edge of the pen and hand fed in a cloud of dust thinking the faster the feed goes in the fatter the fish grew. Today very limited hand feeding occurs and is often done to observe fish feeding response.

Feed is the most expensive item on the farm – we don't waste it. Feed is also the way that nitrogen gets into the water; via the protein contained in the uneaten fish pellets, expelled as fish poo and out through the gills of the fish as they breathe. As we explained at the meetings and drop-in sessions, Sanford has applied to Environment Southland to review our use of nitrogen and feed.

Nitrogen review

The nitrogen restriction in Big Glory Bay effectively 'caps' how many fish we can feed, it therefore limits our production on the farm. The science used to calculate the nitrogen cap is almost 40 years old. The nitrogen cap dates back to the 1980's, it was proportioned (allocated) across the 10 fish farm licences. To our knowledge it has never been reviewed.

Sanford employed international experts to update the nitrogen science. Scientists put in big data like many years of actual tide, current and wind and then compared the model's predictions against the data collected from our farm's actual monitoring programme. They worked out what could happen in the Bay if we increased our nitrogen use. There was a good match between the model's predictions and our base line real monitoring data. This gave Sanford confidence to go to Environment Southland and apply to vary our resource consents.

The model showed that we could safely increase the amount of nitrogen we used on our existing marine farm licences with no noticeable effect on the environment and the Bay's water quality, oxygen levels and the marine life

in the sea and on the seafloor.

Consent Variation

If the Council's independent experts agree with the international model and the science predictions (and we are confident they will), we will be able to farm more fish on our existing sites.

These are the sites our farm currently uses. In time, we will also run the model across our other sites – it may be that other site combinations show that we can use more or use less fish feed. Sanford will accept the outcome of the model and scale our farm's production accordingly.

Our aim is to work smarter within our consented space – we are not seeking any more water space. We want to work better with what we have.

If we are granted the variation to our consent, we think that anyone looking at our farms will barely notice a difference

The drop-in sessions that we have been holding on the Island, in Bluff and in Invercargill are to explain what we are doing, why and to answer your questions.

Our Commitment

Sanford only farms salmon in Big Glory Bay, so we want this area to remain healthy. We are incredibly proud of the amazing product that Jaco and Bevan are producing on the farm.

It is our absolute intention and commitment to farm Big Glory Bay with care, integrity and for the long term wealth and wellbeing of the Island and the people that depend on us for their jobs.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ring me or email me.

Ali Undorf-Lay | 027 293 7795 | aundorf-lay@sanford.co.nz



What's up, DOC?

From Jennifer Ross

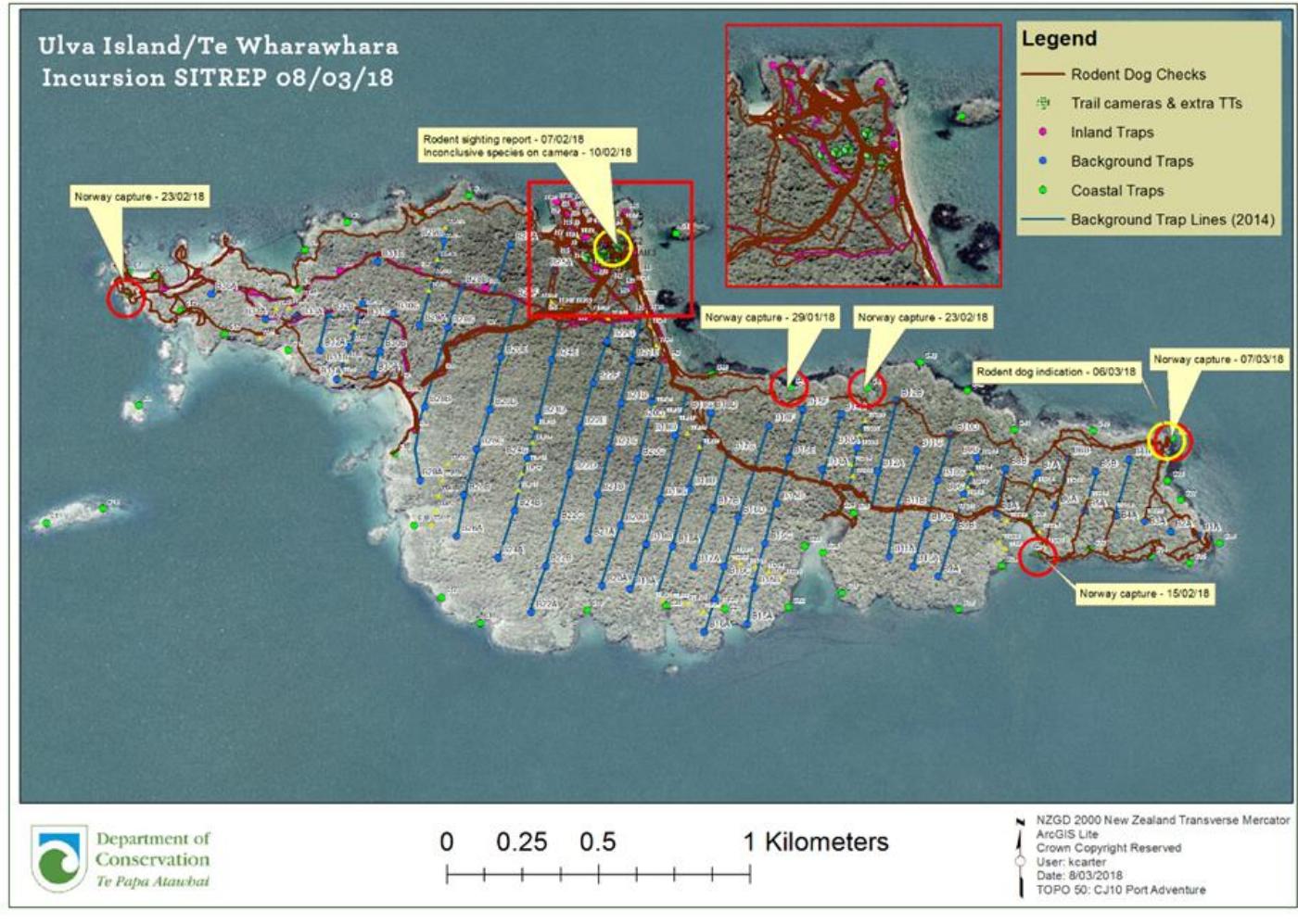


Rodent Incursion Response on Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara Update

Timeline

29 Jan 2018	#1 Norway rat caught in coastal DOC 200 trap
7 Feb 2018	Rat sighting from tourist on Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara Follow up rodent detecting dog Gadget check that evening with no rat presence detected
15 Feb 2018	#2 Norway rat caught in coastal DOC 200 trap
23 Feb 2018	#3 & #4 Norway rats captured in coastal DOC 200 traps
2 Mar 2018	4 Norway rats received by EcoGene laboratory for DNA testing
6 Mar 2018	Gadget indicated of rat presence near East end coastal trap – no rat found
7 Mar 2018	#5 Norway rat [young female] caught in coastal DOC 200 trap Gadget checked west end of island with no rat presence detected
8 Mar 2018	Tissue sample from new rat sent to EcoGene laboratory

As you can see above, five rats have now been caught in coastal DOC 200 traps around Ulva Island/ Te Wharawhara between 29 January and 7 March 2018. As a response to the number of rats captured and advice from the Island Eradication Advisory Group we have now moved into a Level/Tier 2 Incursion Response. This



means that most of our planned work for March has been either deferred or will be replaced with the Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara incursion response work. DOC Rakiura staff are currently completing the following work tasks:

- Daily checks of all **191 traps** across the island including coastal, inland, and background networks
- Trap box and trap maintenance to ensure all traps are working effectively
- Daily checks of all **80 tracking tunnels** across island
- Placing and regularly checking cameras, wax tags and other surveillance tools
- Keeping stakeholders updated

Rangers on the island being vigilant for and recording details of any further evidence of incursion.

****If you would like to receive weekly e-mail updates about the incursion please contact jross@doc.govt.nz****

A huge thank you to the Ulva Island Charitable Trust!

The Department would like to extend a huge thank you to the Ulva Island Charitable Trust for a \$1,500 donation to help with the Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara incursion response! This donation was used to pay for EcoGene laboratory genetic analysis to see whether the first four Norway rats trapped are related and a portion of Gadget and Sandy King's rodent detection work.

How to Apply for a Fire Permit on Stewart Island/Rakiura

Southern Fire and Emergency now issue all fire permits for Stewart Island/Rakiura. There has been a little confusion on this topic since DOC historically issued fire permits.

1. Check the 'Fire Season' map on www.southernruralfire.org.nz/fire-season/ to see what the current fire season status is on Stewart Island/Rakiura:
 - Open Fire Season is when a fire can be lit in the open air without a Fire Permit. Full responsibility is with the person lighting the fire to take all precautions and make sure any fire is safe and secure.
 - Restricted Fire Season is when restrictions are placed on some burning activities. You may still be able to have a fire provided you obtain a fire permit. To check if you require a fire permit for your fire, refer to the zone.
 - Prohibited Fire Season or Total Fire Ban is when no fires are permitted as the fire danger is too high. During a Prohibited Fire Season only gas barbeques can be used.

Stewart Island/Rakiura is currently in a Restricted Fire Season

2. To apply for fire permits for Stewart Island/Rakiura please visit <http://urban.checkitsalright.nz/check-fire-season-status> or call 0800 658 628.
3. Click on the 'APPLY FOR PERMIT' button, enter your Contact Information, Permit Details, Review and Submit and await a response (approved or declined). If approved, await permit delivery (by e-mail or post depending on preference).

Halfmoon Bay Weeds

Weeds are starting to form berries now so it's a great time to remove the plants before the berries are dispersed far and wide. We still have some cut and paste from Environment Southland to provide free to landowners for weed control on their properties. Drop into DOC and Letitia McRitchie can get a bottle for you.

A great resource for identifying weeds and finding out their control method is the Weedbusters website: www.weedbusters.co.nz. The 'Find That Weed!' section has great photos of weeds and a list of ways to remove the plant.

Bomarea (*Bomarea multiflora*)

Bomarea is a highly invasive vine that grows rapidly and forms large mats, smothering everything in its path. It produces lots of tasty seeds that birds seem to enjoy. Over the last two summers the DOC weeds team have found it at

24 sites and SIRCET has also been controlling it at several sites in its project area. It can be sprayed or cut and pasted. Please let Letitia know if you have seen it.



Spanish Heath (*Erica lusitanica*)

Spanish Heath quickly forms dense thickets and seeds prolifically. Seed survival seems to be good as we have been finding single adults surrounded by many smaller plants. The danger with this plant is seeds getting stuck in footwear and then being 'walked' into Rakiura National Park. Heather

Right: Bomarea vine with long green leaves and hanging flowers. Left: Spanish Heath with its white flowers. They brown off as the seeds dry out.



turned up on the Freshwater to Mason track two years ago and that is the most likely way it got there. Spanish Heath has invaded many other wetlands, including Awarua (in Southland) and it would be devastating to have it in our near pristine wetlands. Please report any sightings to Letitia.

Conservation Week 2017 National Photo Competition Prize Winners!

A Conservation Week 2017 “Love my Backyard” photo competition was run from 7 – 23 October 2017. New Zealanders throughout the country posted photos of them loving their backyard to the DOC Facebook page and included a short comment about how their photo showed them (and their whanau) showing their backyard some love. There were no limits on the number of entries and the grand prize was a conservation trip to Stewart Island/Rakiura! The competition was judged by Threatened Species Ambassador Nic Toki and the Parker family – Kylie, Paul, Oscar, and Stanley from Pirongia won!

Here is one of the Parker Family's entries:



Kylie Parker ► Department of Conservation
October 22, 2017 near Pirongia -

Earlier this week Oscar and a Stanley made this Tracking Tunnel from the DoC/Toyota Kiwi Guardians site. They were chuffed to find tracks on it today which with a bit of detective work they've identified as mice or maybe a rat looking forward to getting their Pest Detective Medal #LoveMyBackYard #ConservationWeek

Department of Conservation Fantastic work Oscar and Stanley! Thanks for taking part in Kiwi Guardians!
Like · Reply · 19w

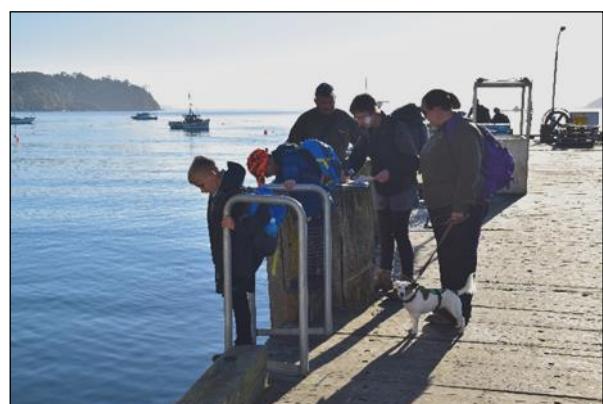
The Parker family traveled to the island by ferry on Tuesday 27th February. Their Stewart Island/Rakiura prize started with a pickup from the ferry, visit to the Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre, and a DOC truck ride around the township with Visitor Centre Supervisor Di Morris.

The next day the Parker Family were up bright and early (after having pre-quarantined all their gear) and met with Gadget, Sandy and myself at the DOC Rakiura Quarantine store. After Gadget checked all gear for rodents and DOC staff checked for weeds and seeds we were off to the Halfmoon Bay Wharf to meet Meadsy (Steve Meads) and the *Hananui* (DOC vessel). Sandy awarded the Parker family rat-free certificates signed by Gadget and we all got on the boat and headed to (normally) Predator Free Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara! We had an excellent boat ride which started with spotting a sea lion at Halfmoon Bay, a little blue penguin near Ackers Point, and pod of dolphins near Native Island! How exciting all of that was - and all before we even arrived on Ulva Island!

When we arrived at the Ulva Island/Te Wharawhara wharf we brushed off our boots with the boot brush in case we'd picked up any seeds between the DOC quarantine store and the wharf. After stepping off the wharf we were lucky enough to have Sandy King point out a kākāriki (red-crowned parakeet) feeding its chick! We walked all the way to West End beach where we said goodbye to Gadget and Sandy and let them get on with some work they had planned around the recent rodent incursion detection response.

From West End beach we zoomed along the track to Boulder Beach for lunch, hearing kākā and seeing mohua (yellowhead), and weka in the bush. After lunch Oscar and Stanley went for a swim before carrying on along the track. We got to the four way junction, had a look at the punui and it was time to start the Toyota Kiwi Guardians mission! We used the Kiwi Guardian map to navigate our way to the Kiwi Guardian post! The boys grabbed the

code and we were on our way to Sydney Cove! We had a great walk along the beach in the sun and a swing on the rope swing! We took a shortcut back to the wharf to meet back up with the *Hananui* and just like that our Ulva Island experience was over. As an added bonus, the *Hananui* brought us around to the back of Bench Island Nature Reserve.



This showed the boys the difference between predator-free Ulva Island which is run as an open sanctuary and Bench Island where no one generally visits. We stopped near a few rocky islands and spotted some adult and juvenile fur seals. As we were having a look at the seals one of the boys exclaimed "**this is the best day ever!**"

and I would have to agree! We made our way back to Halfmoon Bay Wharf where our day together ended.

On Thursday 1 March we started out exploring the Mill Creek estuary, looking at where the sea meets the fresh water, spotting a kingfisher, snails, and looking for crabs. It started to rain quite heavily so we decided a bush walk would be best with the rainy conditions. On our way to the Fern Gully Track we took an obligatory family photo in front of one of the island's kiwi crossing signs. Then we walked the Fern Gully track, looking at all the ferns, and listening for birds. We had a few stick races on bridges along the way and also found a DOC geocache! We came to the clearing at the end of the track and had a good look around for any deer - none were spotted. After our walk the Parker Family came into the Visitor Centre, where they received some parting gifts and said "goodbye for now"!



It was a fantastic trip all-around. All members of the Parker family were incredibly switched on and I could tell right away that they fully deserved to win the DOC Conservation Week Photo Competition prize. After the DOC prize portion of the trip, they took the opportunity to spend a few more days on the Island and stayed on until Sunday 4th March.

Paua Shells at Lee Bay and Restriction Reminder

At the end of January the Department received a query about why there were paua shells left at Lee Bay next to the chain link. When staff went and had a look they found 125 paua shells. All 125 shells were removed from the side of the track since they do not fit within the specific protocols we follow for DOC tracks. Additionally, this number of paua shells can give the wrong impression.

Two of the paua shells found were undersized so please remember the size restrictions:

- Ordinary paua 125mm
- Yellow foot paua 80mm

and shuck all paua above the high water mark.

The maximum daily limit per fisher is 10 and when daily limits are accumulated the maximum number or amount of paua that one person can have in their possession at any one time is:

- 20 paua or;
 - shucked weight (shell removed) of 2.5kgs of paua;
- this possession limit applies everywhere, including in the home (e.g. freezers).

Total of 125 paua shells found at Lee Bay lined up at the DOC workshop with two undersized.



Community Planning Meeting Held

By Shona Sangster

On the 5th of March a meeting was held to report the results of the recent community planning exercise undertaken by consultant Sandra James for the Southland District Council. The meeting was long and the topics were wide ranging. Various governmental bodies gave updates: the Ministries of Business, Innovation and Employment; and Primary Industries; Environment Southland; the Department of Conservation and Southland District Council.

The community planning exercise identified 4 main themes that were most commonly brought up by island residents who participated in the planning process. These are: Predator Free Rakiura, strategic leadership for the community, wharves and electricity.

Representatives from Predator Free Rakiura had some good news—they have been granted \$100, 000 from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to hire a Project Manager.

The MPI representative, Paul Cresswell told the meeting that they are investigating whether an area near Christmas Village may be suitable for aquaculture.

Abby Cheeseman from MBIE talked about the government's new \$1 billion a year provincial development fund and explained that, while Southland hasn't been targeted as a 'priority region' they are keen to support strong applications for funding from this area.

Many tough questions were asked by the audience, covering issues such as a perceived lack of transparency in funding for council projects coming from the Stewart Island Visitor Levy, community fatigue with a series of strategic planning exercises that haven't lasted, dismay at the suggestion that the Community Representation review would result in changes to how the community board operates, long term ownership of the Golden Bay and Halfmoon Bay wharves.

A final report will be presented to the council on the 27th of March and will be publicly available on the SDC website and submitted to the 9 April community board meeting so watch this space!

Big Glory Bay aquaculture growers came together in March and hosted a celebration of aquaculture starting with a science session in the school and on the salmon farm.



This was followed on Saturday by an Open Day in Big Glory Bay, a great opportunity for locals to reacquaint themselves with the some of the continuous improvements made over more than 37 years of salmon and mussel farming in the Bay. New stories mixed with old, and we think everyone appreciated the chance to tell a few yarns.



Above:
Visitors
watching as
mussel line is
seeded.

Left: Bevan
demonstrating
his filleting
technique to
Halfmoon Bay
Primary
School
students

*Photos by Ali
Undorf-Lay*

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A Thank you to Barry Rhodes

Back in 2002 when the Rakiura National Park was opened, the then Prime minister Helen Clark made a gift of \$10,000 to the people of Rakiura/Stewart Island in recognition of their support for the founding of the Park. A meeting of interested people founded the Rakiura Education Trust which was given the task of giving grants to anyone who would further the education of any locals, either by off-shore learning or bringing in teachers/facilitators. Barry was the chairperson from the beginning and almost made the 2017 AGM but for his sudden and unexpected passing. His efforts will be remembered by those who have been given grants, and the Trust wishes to acknowledge his dedication and his continued interest in education.

The Rakiura Education Trust, Interim Chairperson, Peter Goomes

Answers to February's Quiz & Pictograms:

1. Anchor
2. Gog
3. Piwakawaka
4. Orchid
5. Ulva Island
6. Ernest Islands
7. Paua
8. Stroppy
9. Smith

10. Rifleman

11. Toitoi River

ANAGRAM:

PORT PEGASUS

Pictograms

1: Long Harry

2. Bald Cone

3. Port Pegasus

4. Jackie Lees

5. Old Neck

6. North Arm

Stewart Island Handyman Services

General repairs & maintenance

Lawn mowing

Line trimming

Section maintenance

Weed spraying (certified applicator)

Tree pruning

Tree removal

Chainsaw work

Hedge trimming



Wooden fences and decks

General fencing

General carpentry

Gutter cleaning

Moss and mould treatment

Water blasting

Spider proofing

And more - just ask

Contact Geoff

Phone 973 0959 (Local Number)

Mobile 027 253 3106

Email handyman@acadia.co.nz

Calling all Hummingbirds!

Recycling centre clean up day
Saturday 24th March 9-4!

Help support the island pre-school Rakiura Rugrats and buy a copy of the children's book *Seaberry Stomp!* All proceeds go to Ruggies. Book available at Stewart Island Gift Shop, Ship to Shore, and the Bluff ferry terminal.

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