

Stewart Island news

Celebrating RAKIURA

September 2017

\$3.00

Our condolences to the family and friends of Sheila Natusch. Her many beautiful books have given so much pleasure to anyone who is interested in knowing more of the history of Stewart Island, and she has always been a stalwart supporter of the Stewart Island News. Kua hinga te totara i te wao nui a Tane. See page 2 for a tribute to Sheila.

Another group of folks who have given a lot to our community are the Moturau Moana Gardens volunteers. This group come here every year and, led by Elaine Hamilton and ably assisted by DOC staff, they weed, plant, fix fences and generally tidy up at Moturau. The volunteers will be here from Monday **16th to Friday 20th** and **they'd love to meet some of the locals** who enjoy the fruits of their labours—so feel free to drop by and say hi, or even pitch in alongside them. It would be great to show some love to these people who do so much to maintain this amazing treasure.

Come along to a public meeting on Monday 9th October about the Port Pegasus North Arm salmon farming feasibility project. More details on page 11, but if you are not able to make the meeting, you can come and chat **to me (Shona) before or after. And don't forget to vote** on Election day, the 23rd of September.

It was a pretty stressful day for Liz Allen when, with Heath in Australia, his boat Motuara came off its mooring and was threatening to go aground. Luckily Leeym Thompson saved the day, heading out in a dinghy to start the motor and steam the boat off. Go Leeym!

Our condolences to Mervyn and Carolyn and the family on the death of Marion Whipp (née Hicks).
Shona



Above: Uh oh, what happened there? There seems to have been some damage to the wooden post on the corner of Elgin Terrace and Main Road

Below: A rare moonbow captured by Sandra Whipp



S.W. Whipp Photography

Sheila Ellen Natusch – MNZM

1926 - 2017

It is with sadness that we learnt of Sheila Natusch's death within days of the film *No Ordinary Sheila* having premiered in Wellington. The documentary of her life was created by her cousin Hugh MacDonald and Christine Dann. We don't have an actual date yet but the film will be shown on Stewart Island sometime this year.

Sheila, daughter of Roy and Dorothea Traill and sister to Alex, was a real Stewart Island girl who grew up in Leask Bay where her Island childhood and early adult experiences helped shape the amazing person she was. Her curious nature and thirst for knowledge continued throughout her lifetime. Sheila attended Southland Girls High School then Dunedin Teachers College, completing a BA then MA with 2nd class honours in 1949. Sheila was married to Gilbert Natusch, a hydro-engineer (who died 2005) and lived at Owhiro Bay in Wellington, close to the sea and the coast that she loved. They lived a simple life without a television or car and Sheila spent a lot of time walking on the beach and swimming in the sea.

Sheila was a prolific writer, historian and illustrator who authored over 77 books, several of which were self-published in recent years under the name of Nest Egg Books. We are so fortunate that her interest and passion for Stewart Island has resulted in a legacy of amazing historical and natural history references.

Sheila has been a huge supporter of the Rakiura Museum corresponding regularly, donating photos, documents, books and research material from her writing. She was an avid reader of Stewart Island News which kept her up to date with Island issues, often sparking a flurry of correspondence. Her quirky letters were still arriving in the mail up until a few months ago.

Rest in peace Sheila - may your spirit float on the wind and waves of your Rakiura homeland.

Above: Sheila with a painting by her grandmother at an exhibition at Southland Museum and Art Gallery several years ago. Sheila, her mother and grandmother were all accomplished artists and their paintings featured in this special exhibition. *Photo by Jill McKee*
Below: Portrait of Sheila *by David Hamilton*



What's up, DOC?

From Jennifer Ross



Feeding the Stewart Island wildlife – more harm than good

Stewart Island/Rakiura residents and visitors are fortunate to experience some of the best wildlife encounters New Zealand has on offer. With kiwi, kākā, tui, kereru, bellbird, tomtit, oystercatcher, little blue penguins and morepork (among others) living in and around the Oban township, and with seabirds, fur seals, sea lions and dolphins in the surrounding waters, there is a high likelihood of a wildlife experience.

It can be tempting to offer food to wild animals, especially when they regularly visit in the hopes of being fed.

The Department of Conservation asks everyone to refrain from feeding wildlife.

Why?

Human food is generally not good for wildlife. It can lead to deformities and diseases, such as 'angel wing' in waterfowl fed white bread and crackers and the deformed beaks of kaka chicks fed nuts.

Feeding wildlife causes them to lose their natural fear of people, and can increase the likelihood of them being hit by vehicles or vessels. Wildlife may become aggressive, a nuisance or a traffic hazard.

Feeding wildlife can make them depend on people for food.

What can you do?

Resist the urge to feed or leave food for wildlife.

Rinse all recyclable glass and plastic containers to remove any food remnants and odours. Some birds can get their heads stuck in containers and wind up starving to death. Cut and/or crush plastic containers, and cut each ring of plastic six-pack carriers, so that our marine life doesn't get caught in the plastic.

Feed your pets inside.

Make sure plastic food wrap is rinsed and secured in a tied bag or securely covered garbage can.

When visiting parks and similar

settings, clean up after yourself and follow the rules regarding wildlife. Encourage others to do the same.

Provide natural food sources – plant native trees and bushes.

Southern New Zealand dotterel/tuturiwhatu recovery project

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Southern New Zealand dotterel/tuturiwhatu recovery project



Southern New Zealand dotterel/tuturiwhatu in its breeding plumage previously banded and spotted at Table Hill in October 2016. Photo by Ty Conner

Last year you were briefed on the situation faced by the southern New Zealand dotterel. The population had reached a low-point in 1992 with just 62 birds at the time.

Feral cat predation was believed to be the major contributor to the declining population. Toxic feral cat control begun in 1994 and was successful, allowing the population to climb to 290 birds in 2009.

The population recovery stalled and soon reversed with numbers falling from 288 in 2010 to 179 in 2015 at an average of 10% per year.

The decline rate accelerated to 29% the following year with the population at an estimated 126 birds.

During the six-year decline, studies and research were conducted to understand what had changed and why the feral cat control project seemed to be no longer working.

This research turned up evidence of new predators such as white-tailed deer, spur-winged plover and Australasian harrier.

Based on this new information and on a wide variety of technical advice we implemented an updated predator control programme which included targeting the newly identified predators and introducing new methods of targeting cats such as a new toxin called PAPP (PredaStop for cats), shooting and kill trapping.

Alongside the increased predator control, we also completed further monitoring and banding work in the field to understand whether adults were surviving,

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Stewart Island/Rakiura kākā Photo by Jennifer Ross

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

eggs were hatching and how birds move through the landscape. After a breeding season of the revised management approach, we were very happy to see that the population estimate had grown from 126 in 2016 to 153 in 2017.

We're now planning to closely monitor the dotterel population to get the most up-to-date understanding of their situation. We are hopeful that the recent 21% increase is the start of a recovery and will continue to do our best to give the dotterels their best chance. You'll soon hear from Senior Biodiversity Ranger, Kev Carter, with more information on what we're planning for the upcoming breeding season.

Mason Bay/Te One Roa dune restoration

Professor Mike Hilton and a team of geology and botany students from Otago University have been at Mason Bay/Te One Roa during the last week of August. The University team has been conducting the annual dune monitoring programme. This monitoring work will give us a clear picture of the progress of DOC's dune restoration programme that runs from Spring, Summer, and into Autumn each year.

Along with the University's standardised monitoring work the team will be conducting vegetation mapping of the extensive dune systems to establish some robust outcome monitoring (seeing how the threatened plant communities are responding to our restoration work). The team will also be re-surveying a *Gunnera hamiltonii* patch to gauge the colonies health and distribution.

Biodiversity Ranger Phred Dobbins joined the University team to help establish lupin management trial plots. The group has identified at least four lupin patches in similar terrain, will treat each one with a different herbicide, and one plot with hand pulling or digging. They will then use a low-level drone to photograph and map these plots then



Ranger Kristy Owens helping to dig out lupin at Mason Bay/Te One Roa last season

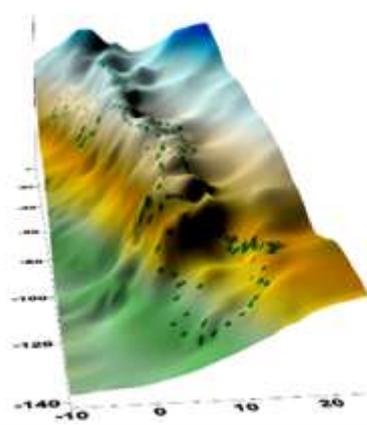
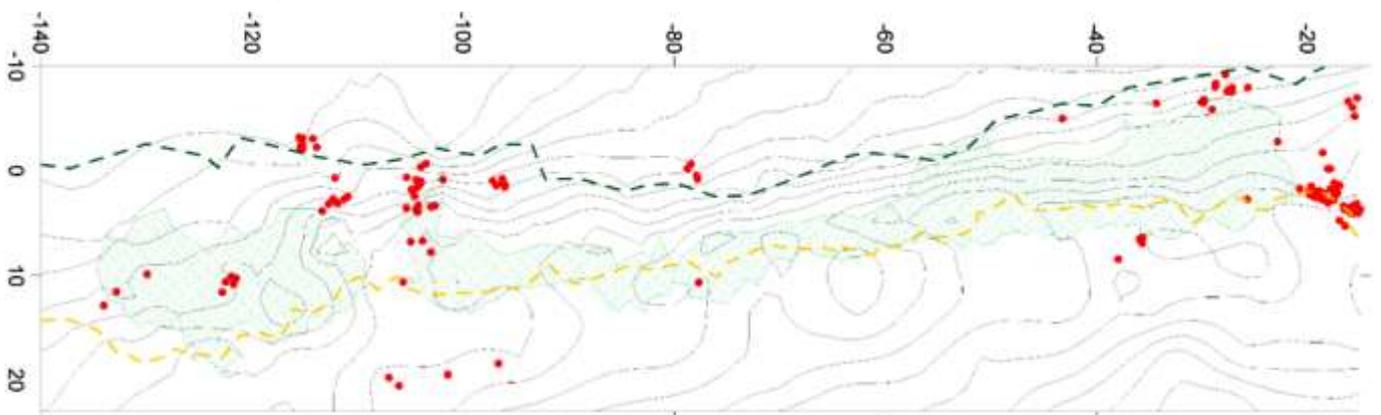
compare the results over a period of time.

We will also be resurveying our marram and lupin management unit boundaries. These management units are a network of virtual boundaries that are loaded into our GIS systems to help us systematically grid search large areas of dunes for weeds, manage resources such as chemical usage and application rates, staff hours per hectare and helicopter spray patterns and applications.

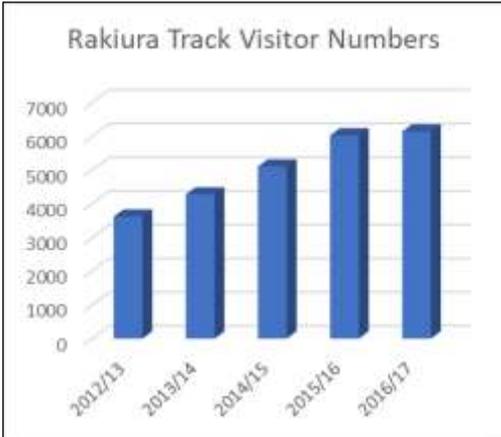
The landscapes around our management units have changed significantly in many places since the establishment of the management unit boundaries. These management units cover a very active dynamic dune system whose landscape is constantly changing.

The findings from this monitoring trip will help us model our methods of treatment and strategies for the upcoming season. We are looking forward to a great season with exciting challenges, enthusiastic staff and of course the **stunning back drop of some of the Southern Hemisphere's most fantastic dunescapes.** Recreation & Historic five-year plan and preparing for the upcoming season

Our team have put together a five-year plan in response to the recent announcement that the Government will invest



\$76 million through the 2017-2018 Budget on new and upgraded tourism infrastructure for DOC. The Rakiura strategy will include waste disposal, improving the Rakiura Track, and other maintenance and upgrades on our huts, tracks, campsites, and structures around the island.



Rakiura Track visitor numbers
By Dale Chittenden

A significant programme of work to address visitor hazards, improve the track quality (and therefore

visitor experience) to the Rakiura Track has been approved, with work to commence in October. This follows an increase in visitors to the Rakiura Track (now approximately 6000 visitors per year) and a particularly wet season last year that had a heavy impact on this popular track. January is typically our busiest time with over 80% of available spaces booked. 54% of users are aged between 18 – 35 years with 8% of users under the age of 15 years. 46% of visitors are Kiwis which is down 11% from the previous year.

Part of our plan to improve the Rakiura Track Great Walk experience includes a purpose-built hut facility and grey water management for track crews and hut wardens at North Arm. Our focus is also on improving campsites at Maori Beach, Port William, and North Arm to increase available camping space from four to 10 campsites, increasing day shelters in size and upgrading waste management facilities (to total containment).

We will be replacing Little River Bridge due to erosion issues undermining the structure. A contractor will undertake the work under Ranger supervision prior to our busy season, as we're hoping to reduce any impacts on visitors. We have also been looking into the use of the track between Mason Bay and Freshwater River. We think there may be approximately 2500 visitors walking this track now

Tramper on Mason Bay to Freshwater River track
Photo courtesy of Harriet Jones



and want to ensure we have the right balance between the type of track and expectations of visitors. We are seeing increasing day visitor use (i.e. where a visitor may fly in to Mason Bay and walk a section of the track) in this remote, back-country place which was originally set up for experienced trampers. We want to ensure visitors are safe and they know what to expect when walking this track.

Discovery Expeditions Rakiura Conservation Trip

DOC staff Dan Lee, Bec Baxter and Jennifer Ross joined Real Journeys aboard the Milford Wanderer to help deliver a Stewart Island/Rakiura Conservation Expedition. The trip ran from 12-17 July, and travelled as far south as Pikihatiti/Port Pegasus. DOC staff delivered conservation-



DOC and Milford Wanderer staff on the summit of Bald Cone, Pikihatiti/Port Pegasus
Photo by Dave McCluggage

themed evening talks, led a historic conservation activity, and gave passengers a 'behind the scenes' look at Te Wharawhara/Ulva Island after a biosecurity check from rodent detecting dog Gadget and handler Sandy King. They were happy to answer any questions passengers had and hoped to add valuable conservation context to Rakiura.

Staff Spotlight: Trainee Ranger Troy McDonald

We would like to welcome our new Trainee Ranger Troy McDonald! Troy was born and bred in West Auckland, and lived and studied in Nelson for a year as part of the DOC Trainee Ranger Course 2016/17. He will be working with us for two years and is hoping to work across all areas (Biodiversity, Recreation, Community and in the Visitor Centre) during his time here. Troy enjoys drawing, playing guitar, cooking, reading, tramping/camping, fishing, surfing, skateboarding, and mountain biking. We're stoked to have him join the team.





KHLEB DA SOL! Bread and salt is a traditional Russian greeting, and one of the oldest Russian traditions, harking back to the 5th Century. The word khlebosolny translates literally to bread-salty and describes a

person's hospitality. Bread is associated with hospitality, and salt used to be very expensive and a prized household item so to share it was a sign of generosity and respect. To greet a guest with round bread baked with a glass of salt in the centre is a mark of hospitality and welcome.

So, all that said, a big spasibo (thanks) to Shona for her khlebasony! She kicked off September with a Foveaux Foodies evening of Russian food, drink, and dancing. Personally I think she was rather khrabryy (brave) considering she has white carpeting and the Russian rumpus involved animated dancing, lots of red wine, and plenty of beetrooty dishes! Spasibo to Lairka for making the khleb da sol – this is a beautiful dish for its historic backstory and for the personal touch: the glass she used was her grandmother's. (Also an excellent dish for salt freaks like myself.) Lairka's old stomping grounds are Estonia, a Baltic state bordering Russia, so she shared her food and knowledge of that part of the world with us. The Russian answer to chasing tequila with lime... shots of vodka with pickle chasers! Lairka also made one of the most interesting dishes I ate that night. At first glance I thought I was piling ambrosia onto my plate...it was pink and fluffy and ambrosia tends to end up at most potlucks no matter what the theme. It turns out the dish is the very traditional Selyodka Pod Shuba which translates to the mouthful Herring-under-a-fur-coat. A unique mouthful indeed, particularly shocking if you're anticipating sweet berry cream and marshmallows! The dish is actually a busy layered salad which includes beetroot and mayonnaise and hiding inside is, you guessed it, herring!

Another unique blend of ingredients was Troy's okroshka. This is a cold cucumber soup. The base is a watery sour cream and ingredients include potatoes, hard-boiled egg, and bacon! These dishes are one of the things I love about Foveaux Foodies, sending your taste buds on a trip to someplace they've never been before. In some cases it's because I'm trying something for first time, and in these cases all

Left: The spread

Middle: Graham Cowley 'enjoys' a pickled mushroom as Laurence Edwards looks on.

Right: Jess Kany vs Ian Wilson: who wore it better?



of the ingredients were familiar, I just never had them all together.

Shona brought the cheese to the party with lots of cheesy Russian bread and string cheese which has the exact consistency and taste of smoked fish. Cherie and Kath both brought stroganoff. Foveaux Foodies events are



not competitions but there's a bit of an edgy "cook-off" feel if there are two similar dishes. Fortunately, Cherie's was beef and Kath's was mushroom and they were both excellent and I don't have to deal with the tongue-twister "stroganoff-off"! Same deal with piroshkis, Russian meat pies – Alasdair baked his with beef and I fried mine with pork. Lania brought piroshki's cousins – knishes -- filled with corned beef. She also brought chicken kebabs called shashlik (they were finger-licking good)!

Margaret made Russian comfort food shchi – cabbage soup and rye bread. Russians have been serving shchi for over a thousand years. Good soup and good Scrabble word. We got more cabbage from the lovely foodie Rachel who brought golubtsy: stuffed cabbage leaves. Philippa, Megan and Rosie made colourful yummy salads featuring potatoes, mayo, and all things pickled.

I'd say the star of the night was Daniel Lee's Chicken Kiev. This dish shows the influence of French haute cuisine on Russian cooking and can be made with a cutlet or minced chicken. Daniel minced his breast which made it that much more tender, juicy and flavorful, and the coating was perfectly golden and crunchy. Most of us agreed it was the best Chicken Kiev we've ever had!

Due to harsh long winters, Russian cuisine includes lots of fermented vegetables. Shona and I both ordered jars of fermented stuff from a Russian deli in Auckland (skazka.co.nz), including fermented garlic, mushrooms, eggplant, prunes, and squash.



And there was something else pickled... oh right...US. There was a large selection of Russian beers and wines (some from the shores of the Black Sea, some from the shores of aisle one at Ship to Shore). A Moldavian red that came in a bottle shaped like a jaunty waiter was my favorite because, well, because it came in a bottle shaped like a jaunty waiter. Shona provided the beverage kvass. I loved this fermented drink **made from rye bread. It's not easy to describe but if you've tasted kombucha you're in the ballpark.**

Russia is synonymous with vodka, and yes, vodka was flowing like the Volga. Most of us had dressed up in Russian togs and flair, even Monty the cat was sporting an ushanka at one point. **But we learned the hard way one can't be photogenic when one** is sampling weird fermented stuff from jars and doing shots of vodka.

It's amazing anyone had room for pudding: Rachel's and Philippa's sharlotkas (apple cake) and Bridget's now-famous-on -Stewart-Island Pina Colada ice cream. Maybe the Caribbean **flavor inspired the Conga line later...)** This was the first FF night which included dancing. There was lots of traditional Russian music and attempts at traditional Russian dancing. **With vodka's help this segued into non-traditional dancing to Russian music, and, in Kath's case, painful accidental couch-kicking.** Thank God nobody tried one of those big jumpy splits-in-mid-air things. More shots of vodka and shouts of nostrovia **and it didn't matter if we mispronounced nostrovia because turns out it's already a mis-pronouncement of Na Zdorovie.** The evening unraveled into even more non-traditional dancing to non-Russian music. One inebriated lass staggered around to 99 **Red Balloons, someone swayed and crooned to the Scorpions' Wind of Change** (Take me to the magic of the moment on a glory night!), and then there was the Conga line which I suspect was ultimately led by Comrade Monty.

You know that TipTop Trumpet ad where the guy's walking away from the beach and the voiceover goes: togs togs togs undies? So our messy conga line danced around the den, but then we made our way out of the room, and up some stairs, and halfway down a dim hallway away from the music, and then it was just sort of weird and we all stopped and trudged back. Voiceover: Conga conga conga awkward-collection-of-people-in-nonparty-zone.

Midnight was approaching and I was going to turn into a **thoroughly pickled pumpkin if I didn't get home so I left while** the party was still lively (thanks Aurora Cab!). I hear everyone **had a great time, Shona's carpet survived and her pantry thrived** (the upside to hosting is all the lovely leftovers).

To everyone who participated: Nostrovia, khleb da sol, and **spasibo for "the magic of the moment on a glory night!"**

--Jess Kany

The bread and salt tradition has long been associated with the space programmes. It is used to welcome astronauts to space stations, and also to welcome them back to Earth.

While researching recipes for pork piroshkis I came across a recipe for pork katsu piroshki, a snack which is from a Japanese anime episode and falls in the food genre Fiction Food. These are dishes that feature in books, tv and movies! Intrigued? Go to www.fiction-food.com for more, you might be inspired to host the next Foveaux Foodies dinner!

Right: Some of the more colourful outfits -Rachael Sagar, Pip Fraser-Wilson, Kath Johnson, Laira Purik, Al Burns, Jess Kany

Stewart Island Community Library



Zoe Learmonth, Zac Chittenden, Jon Spraggon (Lions President), Josh Chittenden, Ian Sinclair, Guy Learmonth and Shay Chittenden

We are delighted to receive a generous donation of Lego from the Stewart Island Lions. This will remain at the Library for children, big and small, to access. We have 3 boats (fully kitted out with H&S compliant life vest, rings, flare gun and inflatable dinghy). Also a coastguard station, helipad with chopper, general **components, 2 sharks and an octopus. Haven't spotted the MOSS documentation yet, but I'm sure it's there somewhere.** With Sarah's departure, the Saturday sessions were once again in question. However Shona Sangster, Rachael Sagar & Tash Lundin have put their hand up to keep this hour session going and will be wonderful helpers along with Pat. Thank you ladies.

Library/Area Office Hours

Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri

8.30am – midday

Wednesday

2.00 – 4.00pm

Saturday (Library only) 11.00am - midday



Stewart Island Community Centre (SICC) News

Over the past few years the SICC board of trustees have been focusing on making improvements to the great facility that our island is blessed with. The SICC is approaching the 20 year mark and as with everything in life; time takes its toll.

Over the past few years we have faced a number of challenges, namely the code of compliance for the building. Many items are now ticked off but a few more are on-going. A measured and steady approach to working through the issues has been taken, allowing us to address the issues in a sensible manner with the appropriate parties to ensure that we come out the other side of the process with REAL improvements. We have also kept the centre operational over this time which has always been our major concern. It is pleasing to be getting support from the SDC and some cost sharing is being utilised to ease the burden. To those involved at the pointy end of this process we are very grateful. Anyone involved in a building process will be aware our how confusing and exhausting working with codes, councils and contractors can be. We have also undertaken maintenance requirements, as well as making general improvements to the functionality and quality of the facility. These improvements include:

- New signage
- Updated gym and equipment
- LED lighting in the stadium
- Internal painting and exterior cladding repairs
- Security cameras and systems

Plus more currently in the pipework, including a new heating system, replacement of the carpet on entry ramps and drying out beneath the building. We are also restarting water bottling and will be undertaking a food plan assessment for the kitchen. Of course, all this has cost money and time, and the trustees wish to acknowledge all those individuals and businesses that have contributed to keeping these costs to a minimum. One of the great things about places such as Stewart Island is the way the community rallies to create and maintain the assets they have. As trustees it makes it so much easier when we have the support of so many we can call upon to get things done; it is all about getting things done when you are trying to make improvements and we take pride in the knowledge we are doing a good job on your behalf.

We acknowledge the great support of:

Funding: South Seas Hotel Quiz and Pool table funding (plus general on-going support in many areas), EEC and

Sanfords.

Gym assembly (using Chinese Manuals): Magic, Stu and Liz Cave and George Thompson. Deb B and Becca P for being a driving force behind the whole process.

Stadium lights: Steve Lawrence, Stu Cave, electrician Graeme Anderson (we can highly recommend Graeme 021 0834 6868).

Security Systems: Aotea Security gave us a great deal with equipment and labour (great service and people).

Compliance Issues: We are grateful for the cooperation of the Southland District Council, Skin Phillips, and the community members who have helped us with this.

Sorry if we missed thanking you but please know we very much appreciate your contributions.

As a board our focus is on seeing the facility being used by the community, after all, it is yours! We hope the work we have undertaken will inspire you to join in with organised activities, to improve your personal wellbeing through using the gym and stadium and supporting groups that host events within the facility.

Housekeeping specifics we want to highlight:

Waste Oil

We use waste oil for heating and for many years we have appreciated the contributions from the community to our supplies. However, we have a great volume of oil and due to health and safety issues we can no longer store any more oil on site and hence request that you no longer deposit your waste oil at the SICC. We will be upgrading the current heating system and it will be relocated to the area currently containing the bunker and oil store. Thank you again for your past support.

Gym and stadium usage

We will be introducing a new pricing structure that reflects the improvements to the gym and our desire to make the stadium more accessible to families. This will see a subscription reduction for a family membership for stadium use and a subscription increase for gym membership. We will finalise the new fee structure and publish details when available. We are confident this is a good model for our facility and a truer reflection on how the facility is used. We will also have a separate card access system for the gym to limit unrequired access which will mean the gym will be better maintained for dedicated gym users. We are also looking at having a credit card payment system for casual users. This will be great for visitors as there will be no need to get and return an entry tag from the pub. The new stadium lighting is faster to activate, brighter, and cheaper to run, therefore it will make evening sessions more enjoyable. We are reliant on

our community's honesty to keep the facility as available as it is, so please respect the work others put in, pay your way and report **u n w a n t e d** behaviour.

We are looking at bringing a personal trainer to the Island. We believe having a professional explain how to

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use the new equipment correctly would be a great benefit to users. They will also be available to put a personal training plan together for individuals. If you are interested in having an assessment, contact the centre manager. A 1 hour session will cost around \$50.

Security

We have a new security system that has improved security greatly and we have been able to utilise it to identify a **number of “concerns”**. **In the last school holidays a number of kids disappointed us with their behaviour within the stadium. This matter has been dealt with and we hope we won’t see a recurrence in the future. We are not wanting to be “big brother” but we do know what is going on so don’t embarrass yourself or inconvenience us. Please note that your tag or key is for your personal use and if you give it to others you are responsible for their actions and any fees due to the SICC.**

Activities

We have some great community members that give their time to organise and run group activities and everyone is welcome to participate. This is a great way to meet new people while improving your health and wellbeing.

Boot camp: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5.30pm, Sundays at 9am.

Everyone welcome to join (Free for Members, \$2 for Non-

Members)

Questions or Information for this contact Sue Graham (aka Diddle)

Taekwondo : Wednesdays 3pm for Kids 8 years and over.

Questions or Information for this contact Sue Graham (aka Diddle)

Youth session: There are kids under the age of 15 that are **keen to use the stadium but can’t find anyone to supervise** them and they are frustrated/bored/tempted to break the rules. We have these rules due to health & safety and to minimise damage, not to annoy people. To reflect our desire to make the SICC available to the whole community our centre manager, Carolin, will be introducing an initiative whereby the Stadium will be open every Saturday from 3pm - 4 pm from the 9th of September. Carolin will be there as adult supervision for everyone between 8 years and 15 years. If there is interest she will prepare games like Dodge ball, or you can just come and throw/hit some balls. Everyone under the age of 8 years is welcome when accompanied by an adult.

If you have any sporty skills and would like to share them with others or offer a class feel free to contact the centre manager or talk to one of the Trustees.

Thank you for your ongoing support in keeping the SICC a great asset, and all we ask is that you respect, enjoy and have pride in the equipment and building and maybe be available for the odd working bee. -SICC Trustees

Nau mai Haere Mai

Rakiura Maori Lands Trust

Hui a Tau Annual General Meeting

DATE: Sunday 8 October 2017

VENUE: Te Rau Aroha Marae, Cnr Bradshaw and Henderson St Bluff.

TIME: 11am to 3pm

Registration from 10am

Morning tea and Lunch provided.

Agenda:

Minutes from previous AGMs

Presentation of Trustees Report

Presentation of Financial Statements

General Business

Election of Trustees

Contact Secretary

Eliza Snelgar

Email: ess@rmlt.co.nz

Website: <http://www.visitrakiura.co.nz>

STEWART ISLAND SENIOR CITIZENS XMAS DINNER

Just a heads up concerning the Senior Citizens Xmas Dinner. This year it will be a week early , our usual date clashes with two cruise ships so we have moved it back to WEDNESDAY 6TH DECEMBER The theme will be RED & WHITE

If you have or know of anyone that has turned 60 since our mid winter dinner. Please let us know as we would hate to miss you out unintentionally. An official invite will come out in late November. I am off white baiting so if you need to get in touch you can email me at ismunro@xtra.co.nz or contact Riki Kershaw Cheers Sue Monro

Southland District Council

Grant Applications

Grant applications will close on

30 September 2017

for the following grants:

- Southland District Heritage Fund
- Community Initiatives Fund
- Creative Communities Fund
- Sport NZ Rural Travel Fund

Further information and forms available from

SDC Office/Library

8.30 – 12 noon weekdays, 2 – 4 Wed

or from www.southlanddc.govt.nz



Book Reviews *From Sue Ford*

“The Thirst” by Jo Nesbo – typical Harry Hole fare, lots of angst and fighting the demon drink, and an awful lot of blood.

There appears to be a vampirist on the loose (that’s a blood-drinking murderer) and even though Harry is no longer an active member of the police team, it’s up to him to join the dots as we career through multifarious clues. The trouble is, there appears to be a ‘brains’ behind the vampirist. I’ll admit I guessed from early in the book who the puppeteer was, and a threatened twist at the end didn’t derail me as I thought hard about ‘the monkey trap’. I was quite taken by the twist in the relationship between Harry and Katrine though... Harry Hole fans had better read it, the rest are warned that the violence is – as usual – graphic, and the police politics are wearing!

No idea how to review “Smoke” by Dan Vyleta. It’s a kind of modern, a-religious ‘Paradise Lost’, a political analogy. If I’d read that, I’d never have taken up the book, which would have been a pity as it is an oddly moving novel, very cleverly written, essentially about rebellion and revolution and the principles which drive them. The main characters are: Charlie, a kind, gentle young teenager, from a wealthy and well-connected background, at boarding school near Oxford; and Thomas, who comes late to boarding school from a mystery background but with a very ‘important’ sponsor. The period is very late Victorian, but in an unrecognisable England. According to the storyline, something happened in the mid-1600’s which changed humankind. Since that time (and since time began according to the revised history), all humans ‘smoke’ – that is, all emotions and passions are signalled by people leaking smoke and soot. The wealthy and gentle-folk are drilled into never having emotions so that

they smoke very little, whereas common-folk are deemed too wild to be expected to learn this discipline. **But where does the ‘wealth’ come from? There is a subtle humour to the description of banned technology, e.g. the locked cupboard that emits a ringing sound and causes the Headmaster such consternation, the glass globes emitting light which doesn’t flicker, and so on. The story might be slow to wind up, but gains speed mid-way through, and becomes compulsive reading soon after.**

“Good Me Bad Me” by Ali Land is a disturbing book, told in the first-person by 15-year old ‘Millie’ (or Annie as we find out she is called). She has been brutalised and sexualised by her mother all her life. But her mother takes children – substitutes for the son she has lost to the system – and there comes a day when Annie can take no more of the pain inflicted on these little ones. Having finally broken and told the police about the children, Annie is fostered by a child psychologist pending trial procedures. But getting her mother out of her traumatised brain isn’t as easy as her foster-father thinks. I guessed the ending, and despite the excellent writing, I can’t say I enjoyed this book.

If you can get your hands on a copy of “The Secret Life of Bletchley Park” by Sinclair McKay, do it. I read it whilst on holiday. It’s the true story of what happened at the base famous for its connection to the Enigma Code. Various people ‘employed’ there before, during and after WW2 tell of their experiences. Fascinating stuff.

“Buried in Cornwall” is vintage Janie Bolitho, and despite the existence of the odd mobile phone, is an oddly old-fashioned ‘who-dunnit’. Nice enough. Pity about the ‘typos’. Can’t wait to start on Roisin Meaney’s “The Street Where You Live” – watch this space!

Predator Free Rakiura – Community consultation event

Next weekend – Saturday 16 September – is the community consultation day event to share your thoughts on the Predator Free Rakiura concept (to remove possums, rats, feral cats and hedgehogs from Rakiura) and have your say on the social implications of the concept for the people and community of the island. It will be held at the Community Centre, Social Room from 10am to 4pm

The social research builds on the technical work undertaken by the Predator Free Rakiura Governance Group since 2014, and focuses on understanding the level of support for the concept and how removing predators could affect you, the community and businesses with an interest in Rakiura.

The work is being undertaken by the University of Auckland. The research is being conducted by Dr James Russell, Dr Nick Taylor and Katherine Russell. Further information on the project, including the participant information sheet, can be requested from Dr Russell on j.russell@auckland.ac.nz. This information will also be available on the day.

This research has been approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on 25 August 2017 for three years. Reference number 019877).





**Southland Regional
Development Strategy**
TE IWI ME ORANGA RAUEMI

Invitation to attend

Public Meeting

SoRDS invites the Stewart Island community to a meeting on the Port Pegasus North Arm salmon farming feasibility project. This is an opportunity to hear about the key findings and ask questions. Mayor Gary Tong will chair the meeting.

Date: Monday 9 October 2017

Time: 6.00pm

Venue: Stewart Island Community Centre



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Oban Presbyterian Church Chatter

By Jo Riksem

CARSTENSEN CHOWDER

Fry two large chopped onions in 2 tablespoons butter. Add 2 tablespoons flour also approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups milk. Season with a pinch of cayene and nutmeg. Add cooked, flaked fish. Place in a casserole dish, cover with grated cheddar cheese. Grill in the oven till the cheese is bubbly and brown. Serve with boiled rice. The addition of pineapple chunks gives this dish added flavour.

WAYS WITH OYSTERS

1. Oysters minced with added parsley and a dash of lemon and vinegar make a delicious sandwich filling.
2. Mince oysters and mix with breadcrumbs and egg for a forcemeat stuffing for leg of mutton.
3. A luxurious stuffing for muttonbirds.
4. Served raw with lemon juice and vinegar.
5. Garnish for steak meals.
6. Cooked in mild curry sauce.
7. Pin a rasher of bacon around an oyster, dip in egg and breadcrumbs, fry till golden brown.
8. Stuffing for pocket steak.
9. Dip in egg, then breadcrumbs, and fry.
10. Raw in sauce tartare.
11. Oysters in half shell (chilled) served with lemon wedges in a minute container of tabasco sauce. Garnish with parsley.



Carstensen Chowder & Ways with Oysters

Stewart Island Singing Circle

Many years ago the Stewart Island Singing Circle put together a little recipe book called "Stewart Island Festive Seafood Recipes For You" with illustrations by John Bradshaw. I thought this page in particular was something that would be nice to share with you this month. Thanks to Lorraine Squires for bringing it in.

We still have room for our One Day Retreat for locals which will be held on Saturday 30th September 2017 from 10:00 am – 3:30 pm at Lorraine and Lindsey Squires' home. BYO lunch and tea and coffee will be provided. \$10 per person. We do recommend this as a good opportunity for spiritual refreshment in the context of our beautiful island. Please contact me, Jo Riksem (2191-230 or jariksem@clear.net.nz) if you are interested as we will need to know numbers.

Speakers for September 2017:

1 October – Barbara Sampson from the Salvation Army in Christchurch is a warm, friendly lady who is wonderful to hear. If you missed her at the end of September here's a chance to hear her now.

8 October – Jill Kayser is the national Kids Friendly Coach and team leader. Jill has extensive experience in children and families' ministry and communications. She has a degree in Psychology and is a qualified Coach and Mentor. She is an elder of Saint Heliers Presbyterian Church and is passionate about sharing God's love with children and including them in a community of faith.

15 October – to be confirmed

22 October – Rachel Trevathan – doctor by day and speaker during the weekend, Rachel is one of our many regulars that we welcome back whenever she is available. She has a vibrancy you won't want to miss.

29 October – Nigel Crocombe - is a Northland boy born at Te Kopuru (Dargaville) and raised in Donnelly's Crossing and then in Pukenui. And is still amazed to find himself and his wife (a Waikato girl) working with the Presbyterian church here in Southland! When one serves God amazing things happen.

Services every Sunday 11 am. Prayer Circle Saturday 11:30 in the vestry at the back of the church. Church open daily to enjoy the peace and quiet.

Museum Matters by Jo Riksem

40 YEARS AGO



Halfmoon Bay School Room 1 1977

I notice on Facebook old school photos are being posted which has been fun to see. Above are the teacher and children from 40 years ago 1977. Can anyone identify the girl at the end of the front row? We don't seem to have her name.

Teacher, Laurie Anderson, outside Halfmoon Bay School, 1977, Room 1.

Children are back row L-R: Jane Osborn, Kim Whitiri, Tracy Neave, Jason Eriksson, Megan Jones, Richard Topine, Nadia Neave, Kirsten Hansen. Middle row L-R: Tony Dennis, Jan Skinner, Peter Leask, Jan Goomes, Elizabeth Poynton, Sharon Squires, Katrina Smith, Ian Worrall.

Front Row L-R: Peter Worrall, Mark Goomes, Alice Topine, Ann Kirtlan, Trevor Newton, Brett Hamilton, ?

Speaking of school, as we remember memories of Sheila Natusch, I have a fond memory of Sheila and my Mom (Coral Hotchkiss nee Jamieson) meeting some years ago and catching up on old school memories. They had been in Halfmoon Bay School together and had lots of stories to tell.

We've been busy again with the return of Jo Massey (our roving museum officer) as we work on the large Lockerbie collection. Thanks to Rosemary Taiaroa, Allan Wadds, Margaret Hopkins, Bev Cowie and Phred Dobbins who all helped while she was here. We always learn so much from her each time she is here.

Acquisitions for August:

Letters dated 1935 regarding the "Te Moana" asking permission to take Muttonbirders to the islands.

Typed memories - The Story of My Childhood 1929-1941 by Nam Simpson (nee Elizabeth Ann Michler) - a lovely insight into Stewart Island life in these years.

Dvd - Digging up the Past - old 16mm film by Basil Howard of the dig by Les Lockerbie at The Neck.

Photograph of Thule - This is before any houses were built there.

Searches for August were:

Guthrie and Larnach who had a business here and also had the salvage rights to the ship "Surat"
Goomes family

Special sale on 10 x Margaret Fairhall cards (5 varieties 2 of each kind) normally \$35 now only \$25. This is a good time to get these lovely Stewart Island paintings of Margaret's that can be used for all occasions.

Last of the winter hours now are: Monday - Friday 10- 12, Saturday 10-1:30, Sunday 12 - 2:00.

SIRCET update *by Letitia McRitchie*

SIRCET received funding from a DOC fund distributed to Regional Councils. Environment Southland talked to us about a barberry project and after a busy winter getting organised, work started this week.

Our team started on a sunny Monday, the 4th September and while the weather got **worse over the week, they continued on in the rain and cold!** We are concentrating on Darwin's barberry and some of the other Dirty Dozen weeds – Banana Passionfruit, Japanese honeysuckle, Buddleia and Old man's beard. **The area we are covering is around the township, from Main Road over to Golden Bay, and through to Kaka Ridge Road.** We have contacted every landowner in the area (approximately 180 sections and 140 landowners) asking permission to undertake weed control and the response has been fantastic! Thank you to all the **landowners who are supporting us to get rid of Barberry.** If you haven't yet replied it's not too late to contact Letitia McRitchie.

The team started up Whipp Place and found lots of barberry on the sunny side. They then dropped over into the mud and supplejack towards Rankin Street. Less barberry has been found there, but it still pops up.

The team this year is led by Rebecca Stevans. Rebecca is from Te Anau and spent the last summer here leading the DOC barberry team. Laire Purik, from Stewart Island wanted a change from inside jobs, and Barberry control is certainly that! Pauline Joy, from here to, also wanted a change from her day job and 2 months doing barberry is providing that.



**Stewart Island / Rakiura
Community & Environment Trust**
for people for environment



**Department of
Conservation**
Te Papa Atawhai



The team will be out and about for September and October. On a **sunny day it's wonderful to be out in the bush.** On a wet cold day, its not much fun and any encouragement is welcome!!



Sarah's Rakiura Remarks

The Government has recently announced some exciting policies that will have significant benefits for families and Stewart Islanders. This **is all part of the Government's** commitment to improving the lives of all New Zealanders including our most vulnerable.

National will extend Paid Parental Leave to 22 weeks as part of a Parents and Newborns Package designed to support families to grow and stay healthy, while also putting more money in their pockets.

This important package will share the dividends of a growing economy and is made possible only by strong government finances. It will make a huge difference for thousands of families across the country during a vital stage in their lives.

Paid Parental Leave will also be more flexible, by allowing both parents to take some of the 22 weeks off at the same time so they can be at home

with their baby together.

The Government has already made sure all children under 13 have free GP visits and prescriptions and around 1.4 million New Zealanders have the cost of visiting their GP capped at \$18.

However, the Government will extend even further the \$18 doctor visits to an additional 600,000 lower income New Zealanders. Access to the Community Services Card will also expand to an additional 350,000 people.

We want to support more low income New Zealanders to access the healthcare they need, when they need it. However, this can only be achieved with a strong growing economy that gives us the opportunity to increase services for our most vulnerable.

On the other hand, we have yet to see any opposition policies that will support our growing economy and at the same time expand social services. Something that really concerns me is

the Labour Party's ambiguity over introducing new taxes.

Labour will establish a tax working group after the election but not reveal to voters beforehand whether they intended to implement a capital gains tax or any other taxes.

Labour needs to be clear and concise on this matter because a capital gains **tax would unfairly hit Southland's** local businesses and small communities such as Stewart Island. Voters deserve the right to know how much new tax they will have to fork out.

National is offering instead a clear vision that will continue to see our economy grow and all New Zealanders receive the support they need. National is dedicated to **supporting Southland's growth and** giving us the necessary tools to build our own future.

From the Office of Sarah Dowie. MP



A few more pictures from the Foveaux foodies night!

Left: Jess having her taste buds ambushed by a fermented squash

Below: Right foot forward (or is it left?) Shona Sangster, Laira Purik, Jennifer Ross and Rachael Sagar attempt some traditional Russian folk dancing.



Yellow Daffy girls fundraising for Daffodil Day. This fundraiser occurs on 25th August and the funds raised go to the Cancer Society. Left: L to R Rosie Marchant (relieving police officer), Kate and Margo Hamilton, Sue (Dids) Graham, Jo Learmonth. Below left: Teddies for the raffle, Right: Margo Hamilton





ban **G**lobetrotter *off-Island Adventures.*

By Ben Hopkins

During a recent quiet period in my usual line of work, the opportunity arose to crew on the University of Otago research vessel *Polaris II* for their annual trip to the Auckland Islands to study Southern Right Whales. 11 of us (6 scientists, 3 crew, a cameraman and an amazing cook) set out from Careys Bay in Dunedin on the 26th July heading for the Southern Ocean. Given the relatively sedate 8 knot speed of the *Polaris II* and the absence of long periods of fine weather, we decided to head for Pegasus to wait for a decent weather window to tackle the last 200 nautical miles. We spent a day and a night there before the wind dropped and we headed south before daybreak, making landfall at the Aucklands in the early hours of the following morning.

Port Ross is the largest harbour in the northern part of the Auckland Islands and is where up to 200 of the estimated 2200 Southern Right Whales known to be in the region come to give birth and nurse their young each



Southern Right Whale calf playing. *Photo by Ben Hopkins*

winter. Female SRWs give birth approximately every 3 years and spend anything from weeks to months in this relatively small area, making it an ideal place to study them.



Above: *Polaris 2*, our floating home for the month.

Below: Rose Island, Port Ross. *Photos by Ben Hopkins*



Daybreak on the day of our arrival saw us all out on deck in our main anchorage in Laurie Harbour watching a dozen or more whales spouting, breaching and even coming right up to the boat to check us out, giving us a gentle nudge from time to time. As our stay at the island progressed, my hundreds of excited photos of vague dark shapes in the water were deleted in favour of better photos taken over subsequent days! After about a week it took a fairly exciting whale action for me to even look up from my book, but on still nights the sounds of the whales calling, spouting and slapping the water all over the harbour and echoing around the hills, was an unforgettable experience.

This trip is the 2nd year of a 3-year study into the whales by the University of Otago, where they are looking at the size structure of the population (size structure means the numbers of adults, subadults and calves) and the condition of the breeding females. The study of size structure assists in examining the recovery post whaling, which decimated an estimated population of 28,000 to 40,000 whales. The condition of the whales is being measured and is considered a kind of yard stick to which other populations of right whales worldwide are compared, particularly in the busy North Atlantic where only an estimated 450 right whales remain.

Right whales are known as “capital feeders” whereby they feed on small crustaceans called copepods for most of the year and then fast during the breeding season, so the change in condition of the adults during the breeding

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(Continued from page 16)

season is also being looked at as a possible indicator of the wider condition of the food chain within the Southern Ocean.



A whale checking us out - Photo courtesy of David Johnston, University of Otago.

The Auckland Islands data gathering was carried out with a mixture of standard photographic identification from two small boats and aerial footage from two state-of-the-art drones, one flown from the Polaris II and the other from one of the small boats. The identification of the whales is possible by photographing the white markings around the head, called callosities, which are unique to each individual. By careful prior calibration of the drones it is also possible to accurately take measurements of the whale from the aerial photos using especially-developed software, making them an invaluable tool for non-invasive monitoring. By photographing and measuring as many whales as possible during the three 4-week stays in Port Ross a good database of the population can be built.

For the crew of the Polaris II the whales were just a part of the voyage, with the novelty eventually wearing off! **Despite bringing plenty of books, there isn't a lot to entertain during the day, aside from a little maintenance and cleaning.** By the end of the trip we were fighting over

Mother and calf photographed from a drone - Photo courtesy of Prof Steve Dawson, University of Otago.



Drone used for photographing and measuring whales.

who was going to run the vacuum cleaner around! Therefore we were all glad to be able to leave the boat from time to time and fortunately our permit for entry to the Auckland Islands allowed us to go ashore at a couple of specified places to stretch our legs. We were asked to check on the condition of the field huts on Enderby Island following the earthquake at the beginning of July, which we combined with a walk across to the cliffs on the northern side of the island. From the boardwalk we were able to see albatross chicks sitting on their nests, standing out starkly against their windswept surroundings and the odd yellow-eyed penguin pair a long way inland.

We were also able to visit two other sites of interest on the main Auckland Island; the site of the former Hardwicke Settlement at Erebus Cove and the WW2 coastwatch station at Ranui Cove. Very little remains of the Hardwicke Settlement, other than a few indentations and odd paths, showing where some of the buildings were and a small cemetery with half a dozen headstones bearing the names of two children who died during the brief 2 year and 9 month existence of the town and some of the many shipwrecked sailors who perished at the island over the years. The remains of a subsequent castaway depot and boatshed can also still be seen along with a carved inscription on an old rata stump commemorating the visit of an Australian government vessel, the Victoria, on a routine search for castaways in the 1860s.

The WW2 coastwatch station at Ranui Cove was

(Continued on page 18)

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also an interesting site to visit. The original hut still stands at the head of the cove along with the remains of wharf piles and, up a long track, a cosy lookout post with commanding views over Port Ross, the northern approaches to the Auckland Islands and down past Green and Dundas Islands. This station along with one at Tagua Bay in Carnley Harbour and another on Campbell Island, was established following an incident where a German warship, the Erlangen, fled Otago Harbour in 1939 and called into Carnley Harbour at the southern end of Auckland Island where her crew cut 235 tonnes of rata as fuel for her boilers!

One thing that struck us when ashore on the main Auckland Island was the devastation caused by the wild pigs released there as a ready food supply for castaways. All through the areas where we landed the ground has been ripped up and the undergrowth destroyed where they have been rooting for food. We spotted several healthy-looking animals foraging amongst the seaweed along the shores of Port Ross. The contrast between the muddy devastation and large open areas under the rata forests of Auckland Island and pest-free Enderby Island is stark. It is great to hear that funding has now been made available for the eradication of these destructive pests.

We departed the Auckland Islands on the 18th of August with a window of weather allowing us to continue all the way back to Dunedin. A distance of about 330 nautical miles, which we managed in just under 42 hours. All in all, the trip was very successful for those studying and filming the whales. The enthusiasm and dedication of the team was great to see and even slightly contagious, even on the odd day when wind and driving rain kept the drones grounded and the small boats pretty close to the anchorage. The final evening even saw a few of the team stripping down to shorts and t-shirts and going for a quick dip off the boat, however with a water temperature of 7.5° c, **I had no intention of taking part! I'm sure I could safely say that most of us would love to get down there again some time, as the wildlife and rugged beauty of the place make it a pretty special part of the country.**



Top: Polaris 2 skipper, Steve Little beside the Victoria Tree, Hardwicke Settlement. Middle: Small cemetery at the Hardwicke Settlement. Bottom: Terror Cove, Port Ross. *Photos by Ben Hopkins*

Congratulations to Brett and Kate Hamilton whose home features in the most recent edition of NZ House and Garden magazine. Check out the article on line at www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/houses/95694391/a-stewart-island-home-decorated-mostly-sight-unseen.

Photo by Juliet Nicholas





Halfmoon Bay Primary School students performing at Polyfest 2017 in Invercargill. Well done!



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