

STEWART ISLAND NEWS

May 2005 \$2

Celebrating Stewart Island



Clampett Industry's new Agricultural Technician Hard at Work
(Looks like the handbrake on the van needs some attention, Jed!)

Editorial.

Last month, due to the lack of time I now find available for extra projects, I put out an appeal for a replacement editor for the News. It is the first time in my three years on the Island that I have had a full time job and an old fella like me finds it difficult to stay awake late enough at night to fit in the extra work of publishing this fair volume.

I am very grateful to Jessica Kany for coming forward and taking over the task of Editor. Jess has been hard at work in the Oban Library for many months so will keep up the good work restarted by Chris Visser (and previously carried out by many other community-minded souls).

Occasionally I will be re-appearing in the "hot-seat" when Jess takes some time to travel but, until then, I am sure you will all enjoy a fresh approach. I hope I have produced a slightly better issue this month (April's did not make me proud) even though it is a full week late. I blame that on computer viruses and empty water tanks (you can't edit when you stink!)

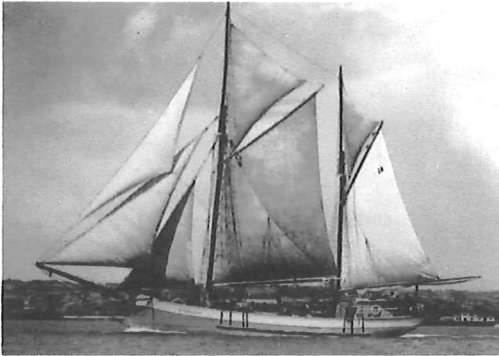
This month, Kari Beaven has won the prize for *most prolific* and the Museum page has changed into a new format where Merv has kept up the boat of the month feature and Lee Wadds has taken over responsibility for the Museum news. I hope you all enjoy the new outlay. See, not only the Southland Times can make changes! Many thanks to everyone who has been kind enough to pass on their comments about enjoying the News for the past two years. I'm sure it will be going strong many years from now. You can all help by contributing and celebrating our special Island.

The photo above shows a typical winter's day on the Island when the happy residents go about their hobbies in wonderfully bright sunshine. No mention will be made of the \$500 piece of electrical test equipment that accidentally fell out of the van and was rained upon for a week before being discovered by the caretaker. Sort of a Megger-blooper, I understand.

Boat of the Month. Readers will notice a change of format this month, as Secretary Lea Wadds has taken over compilation of the Museum Notes – leaving me to concentrate on the “Boat of the Month” feature.

ENDEAVOUR

This seems to be a very popular name for vessels that have plied our local waters – starting with Captain Cook!



ENDEAVOUR was built in Auckland in 1904 by Messrs Bailey & Lowe as a cargo vessel for the Wilson’s Portland Cement Coy. She was originally an auxiliary ketch measuring 81’ x 20’ x 6’6” and fitted with a single 30 hp engine which was replaced in 1934 by twin 50 hp motors. In her later life she was fitted with twin 160 hp D.A.F diesels.

Reports of the Auckland Anniversary Day regattas for the period 1906 – 1909 mention her as one of the fastest vessels in the Scow & Trading Vessel fleet, and she was first home in the 1909 race, skippered by J. Quinn.

ENDEAVOUR ~ 1909

Her early life as a coastal trader around the New Zealand coast was interrupted in 1925 when she went to Suva, Fiji, and worked as a cargo vessel until 1931, returning then to the cement trade out of Auckland. During World War 2 she was taken over by the Navy, and in 1952 put to servicing Hauraki Gulf and Northland lighthouses. In 1963 she was “demobbed” and sold to a Gisborne company for use as a lighter.

About 1968 she was bought south to Bluff by “Sonny” Johnson and for the next 17 years was used mainly as an oyster boat, with cargo work at times. With the growth of the salmon farming industry she was used more and more for carrying salmon feed from Bluff to Stewart Island, with return freight of fish etc. In 1985 she was bought by Rakiura Shipping and converted by Miller & Tunnage Ltd to a passenger and cargo vessel, capable of carrying bulk fuel as well.



She continued to serve the Island, carrying freight and fuel, and as relief ferry until the mid 1990’s when she was replaced by the **MARINE MAID**.

ENDEAVOUR was sold to northern interests, and is based once again in Fiji.

ENDEAVOUR 1985 - as she will be remembered by Stewart Islanders in recent times.

That’s it for now. Hope you like the new format! See you next month, Merv King.

MUSEUM NOTES by Lee Wadds

Some of you may have heard of a certain group of men who went “over to New Zealand,” in 2003 to retrieve a lathe from the Matura . This lathe (which could be the largest in the Southern Hemisphere) had been used at Whalers Base back in the days of milling and so it seemed right for it to be brought back to the Island. It was hoped that it could be displayed at the existing museum site.

Venture Southland has been meeting with groups to discuss the feasibility of the proposed Rakiura Information and Heritage Trust project. So with the possibility of a new museum, there was talk about where the lathe could be put on the new site and how best to display it to advantage.

As this could take quite a lot of man hours it was with great surprise a phone call was received from a gentleman who had visited the island, a retired engineer and a machine enthusiast. He had seen the lathe and was keen to offer his assistance with this project.

So all in all, part of the reward of working on the Rakiura Museum Trust is the opportunity to be involved in some way towards ensuring that people in the future might have an appreciation of all the different aspects of life as it was on Stewart Island.

STEWART ISLAND GARDEN CIRCLE

Sylvia Hughes will talk on HERBS FOR WINTER AND THEIR USES (culinary and medicinal) at the Fire Station at 2 o'clock on 9th June.
Afternoon tea will be served.
Everyone welcome.

Oban Volunteer Fire Brigade

I would like to congratulate all the men who received their service honours and to Neil Conner for his achievement in receiving the 25-year *Gold Star*.

Thank you to all Brigade members who helped make this a successful evening.

Special thanks for your support and help to:

OVFB member's partners and wives

Rug Rats
Liz Cave
Helen Cave
Shirley Whyte
Barry Rhodes
Lloyd Wilcox

CFO - David Valli

Secretary - Jayne Wilson

Hurunui High Country Track

By Margaret Hopkins



Bush Hut

The advertising brochure described the track as 'a three night pure New Zealand walking experience'. Lured by the promise of comfortable accommodation with beds guaranteed and the offer to have our packs transported each day we decided this looked promising for our girls' annual tramping trip. Since 1981 after a suggestion from storekeeper Merv Newton who had just done the Milford Track and described it as 'challenging, but you women could probably manage it,' we have done one of New Zealand's many tramping tracks each year.

Some, like the Waitutu track, have proved physically challenging and some have been just a series of day walks from a comfortable base. No matter the length or difficulty of the track the reward is the camaraderie and the chance to get away from the routine of work and home while enjoying New Zealand's beautiful scenery.

The Hurunui High Country Track is one of a growing number of tracks being developed on private land as farmers and landowners look to diversify their business and take advantage of an increasing market for outdoor experience. Opened in 2003 on Island Hills Station, a 7100 ha sheep and cattle station owned by the Shand family, the track is 30km long and passes through a variety of landscapes including farmland, beech forests and subalpine terrain.

Upon arrival at Island Hills Station we were greeted by track managers Mandy and Dan Shand who showed us around the Cookhouse, the comfortable old shearers' quarters which has been converted to provide the first nights accommodation. The introductory talk and safety briefing that followed made us realise that this was a well-planned venture catering to every need. These two friendly young people were so full of enthusiasm for the experience that we were about to undertake and had obviously thought about every little detail to make our stay in their huts and our walk more enjoyable.

Day one, the longest day although not difficult, was 14.6km over farmland through exotic and native forests with quite a bit of uphill walking. We had a photo session with the resident llamas before setting off. The weather was overcast so walking was quite pleasant until about 3km before the hut when it started to rain quite steadily just as we arrived at a small shelter where Dan and Mandy had recommended we stop for a rest. There, in this little clearing surrounded by beech forest, we found the first of several surprises that had kindly been left waiting for us.

Arriving at the Valley Camp an hour later looking like drowned rats we couldn't believe the wonderful facilities in the middle of nowhere. This delightful open-plan hut had a fully equipped kitchen with a fireplace and gas cooking as well as hot showers. Our packs and the food we had ordered were waiting there for us and we enjoyed a wonderful comfortable night.

Day two at 8.2km was a shorter distance but involved a lot more climbing over sub-alpine ridges with wonderful views. We enjoyed the abundance of birds in the surrounding beech forest now voluntarily protected under a QEII Trust covenant. Dan had explained that some of the income generated from the track would help them with pest control on the land.

That night we stayed at the Bush Hut, a quaint cabin built of red beech logs in 1932. Nestled in beautiful forest with mountain views this was a magical place. We were just unwinding with a nice cup of tea and another of the treats left by our hosts when we read a clearfile with the story of the hut. To our surprise there was a Stewart Island connection.

The woven mat on the hut wall had come from one of the men who had traveled on the vessel *Waterlily* which had worked around Stewart Island waters from the 1880s through to 1931. It was sold to a group of Christ College old boys who had a chequered voyage into the Pacific. (Featured in SIN in the October & November issues.)

Day 3 was an easy four-hour stroll through beech forest and farmland back to the Cookhouse where afternoon tea was waiting for us. We were shown through the small museum on the farm and purchased some delicious manuka honey. For our group, aged from 49 to 70 years, this was a wonderful three-day holiday which we would highly recommend. Mandy and Dan deserve a tourism award for the wonderful experience and facilities they provide.

Hurunui High Country Track is accessed off highway 7 just north of the Hurunui Hotel. The website for the track is www.walkingtrack.co.nz



**Left to right : Elaine Hamilton, Ann Pullen, Barbara Poynton,
Val Johnson, Loraine Hansen & Ivy Newton**



Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust

c/- Post Office, Stewart Island

Ph: (03) 2191 533

e-mail: habitat@glowingsky.co.nz

www.glowingsky.co.nz

Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project Offers Free Pest Control

Opportunity to give your Permission

SIRCET have been funded by the Biodiversity Condition Fund to co-ordinate this large-scale, long-term possum and rat trapping program. Thanks to the generous, ongoing support of many local volunteers, these funds can be put to their most effective use.

SIRCET are able to offer all landowners within the Restoration Area* an entire pest control set-up (traps + manpower + maintenance) absolutely free of charge. But, this requires you to give your permission. SIRCET will not access any areas without the permission of the land owner. We are also keen to meet with landowners to go through the safe operation of the traps and any queries landowners may have. Of course, if you too want to assist the project by checking some, or all, of the traps on your property, we would appreciate the assistance!

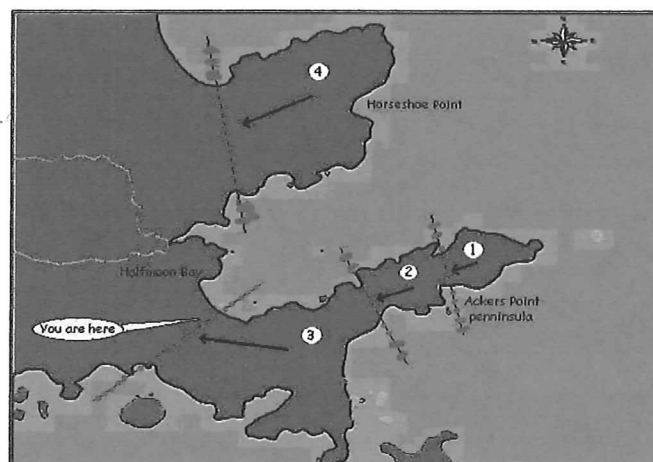
This month, we will be sending around a permission form for the project.

We are requesting your support to access areas of your land for trapping.

Please support us by returning the form via the post office. If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am more than happy to discuss our goals for creating a safe environment around our homes and gardens, for the survival of our native wildlife. If you have any comments of support, we value those as well.

Detailed information about the set-up is available in the Rakiura Environment Centre folders and on the website (www.glowingsky.co.nz).

Please help us protect Halfmoon Bay.



**Restoration area covers the peninsula from Ackers Point back to the Golden Bay rd, and Horseshoe Point.*

Kari Beaven, project manager SIRCET

What's new at the Stewart Island Community Library?

We have a terrific new collection of **audiobooks**, thanks to Pub Charity funds. With over 60 titles to choose from, there's something for everyone. From Shakespeare to Ruth Rendell to Winnie the Pooh.

Audiobooks are perfect for a person on the go – what better way to pass flying/ferrying/driving time? They're also an ideal educational entertainment for the bedbound. Subjects include maritime histories, military histories, romances, mysteries, comparative religion, music history, poetry, modern drama, contemporary fiction, classic literature, astronomy, forensics, self-help, comparative religion, armchair traveling, culinary memoirs and much more.

We also have audio courses in Italian, French and Spanish. The formats are divided between CDs and audiocassettes. A CD player can be provided for patrons who need one, along with a lesson in how to use it. If you know of anyone who might enjoy audiobooks, come by the library or contact Jessica (2191 367) for an audiobook "menu" listing our current selection. Here are a few highlights: *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson; *The Endurance* by Caroline Alexander; *Complications* by Gawande (notable book of 2004); *Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded* by Simon Winchester.

Our Easter weekend fundraiser was a big success. We raised \$1,200, every last cent of which will be spent on new books. Great thanks to Gwen Neave and S.I. Experience for significant donations, and to the Lions Club who sponsor our beautiful magazines "New Zealand Memories" and "New Zealand Geographic." Thanks to everyone who contributed. New magazines available are New Zealand Seafood, National Geographic, and The New Yorker (literary magazine).

Winter's upon us... anyone interested in a **book club**? A fellow in Winton started one a few months ago with an interesting premise: rather than choose a particular book for every member to read and discuss, the club chose a theme, and everyone chose their own book within that theme and then met once a month to share their thoughts with the group. Then there is the standard book club format: one book is assigned for all to read and discuss each month. If you have any book-clubby ideas or interest, please contact Jess.

Are you pregnant, or a new mom? The library has just received a sizeable collection of books relating to every aspect of pregnancy, birth, babies and motherhood, from morning sickness to nutrition to baby names and humorous anecdotes.

And remember that **Books on Wheels** is available: if you or anyone you know needs literature and cannot get to the library, call Jessica at 2191 367 and she will bring books/audiobooks/magazines to you! A big thank you as always to the wonderful library volunteers.

The library is open Wednesday 2 - 3:15 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to noon.

Hi there again,

We're back to the time where the locals pretty much have the town back to themselves. Still a few hunters around but no major dramas so far. No reports of major incidents at the Mutton-bird islands either.

Interestingly it also appears that the number of Search and Rescue callouts has been down this season. It probably coincides with DOC figures showing a reduction in numbers using the tracks. The weather in the early summer was likely a major factor.

Speaking of SAR, I have been updating the SAR plan for Stewart Island and I thank all those people who are prepared to contribute their time and making their experience and knowledge available for both Land and Marine aspects. This is invaluable and there is no way that the Stewart Island SAR group or police could offer any level of service in this area without the help from individuals on the island and some of the organisations, particularly DOC. We are arranging for our land SAR Advisers to attend some further formal training in June.

I mentioned that I would follow up the result of the Road Safety meeting held on the island on 19 April. The meeting co-ordinated by Jane Ballantyne and Chris Visser and was very productive. It was attended by approximately 30 people, which is a very impressive turnout. The tasty luncheon may have helped beef up the numbers!

A wide range of issues were canvassed with some sensible and innovative solutions. Much of the discussion centred on shared use of the roads by pedestrians and vehicles, pedestrian habits, driving habits, the increase in vehicles on the island, parking, speed in town and signage. Ideas for further development have been forwarded to council and community board.

It is worth noting here that drivers on the island must drive defensively. Most of us know this, but the real fact is there are challenges on island roads which are not part of everyday driving on the mainland. These include generally poor road condition, narrow/single lane roads, unmarked roads, poor street lighting, current road works and lack of footpaths for pedestrians.

We MUST ALL monitor our manner and speed of driving on the island. Although we don't like it we must also expect to come around blind corners to find visitors in the middle of the road taking a photo or studying a map. It happens frequently, I know. These people are in holiday mode and are simply not thinking about Mrs Miggins driving urgently to town to pick up the milk and paper. It is hard to educate visitors as there's a new group everyday. Some attention grabbing signage is being looked at.

Jane is setting up a Road Safety Group on the island. She has contact details for those who attended the initial meeting. If you would like to contact Jane, her e-mail is: jane.ballantyne@southlanddc.govt.nz


Other matters. This only effects a small number on the island but I will canvass it anyway. The new laws relating to smoking do not mean you take your stash of hooch out of your house and smoke it outside or (as I have had reports) outside the pub. Can I be very clear on this point; if you smoke cannabis in your home, you may at some point face prosecution. If you are smoking it in a public place, you will definitely face prosecution. Do not insult the law, law-abiding people and hotel management by doing this. Reports of drug use, selling, cultivation, etc will be taken seriously. The island does not want it.

Putting my R.S.A hat on, can I congratulate the excellent turn out at the ANZAC parade. I was quite amazed by it and it was really heartening to see that we as a community support it so well. I met some wonderful, proud old timers and listened to some incredible stories. Thank you Shorty for selling poppies this year. Ted tells me it was a record fund raiser. Remember, this money goes back into the community for very good causes.

The Toi Rakiura Arts Trust in conjunction with the Stewart Island RSA is arranging a photographic exhibition *Return to Monte Casino* by Marie Wilkes. There will be an official opening on the evening of Friday 27th May in the Community centre. All are welcome.

Lastly, Heather and I are taking some leave and going on holiday. We will be away for all of June and July. Duncan (my brother) from Invercargill will be relieving. Most of you know Duncan by now. Expect a continuing consistency in policing on the island. Please contact him with your issues/concerns (rather than taking a 'renta cop' attitude and leaving everything until my return!) He will be happy to help. Take care and we'll catch up again soon.

Constable Tod Hollebon
Half Moon Bay Police.



**STEWART ISLAND COMMUNITY
THANK-YOU
CHOCOLATE AWARD**

This month the chocolates have been awarded to Amber Leask & Vanessa Amanono for volunteering to tidy up & re-arrange the display area of the 2nd Chance Store at the Recycling Centre.

Nominated by the Staff at SIESA RRR with grateful thanks

Councils Unite in Condemnation of Petrol Tax Restrictions from the Southland District Council

Southland's political leaders have united to condemn the conditions that are being placed on the use of the 5c per litre petrol tax.

At today's Mayoral Forum, they fired a broadside at the Government for requiring local authorities to contribute funding to projects that qualify for funding from the new tax.

The targeted roading tax is meant to generate \$2.4 billion for roading over 10 years – and an estimated \$4.1 million a year of this money was supposed to be coming to Southland. However, Councils have now learned that the funding is conditional on Councils putting in a local share. This could only come from rating money and the Councils are crying foul because Southland ratepayers already pay more rates towards roading than any other part of the country.

Gore Mayor Tracy Hicks said rural Councils had “had enough” of being disadvantaged by national policies. “The rug has been pulled out from under us again in rural New Zealand in favour of the major metropolitan areas,” he said.

Environment Southland Chairman Stuart Collie said that the requirement for a local contribution was not just affecting Southland. When the issue was discussed in Christchurch at a recent combined meeting of all South Island local authorities, there was unanimous criticism from all Council representatives.

“It's not a parochial issue, it's a national issue and it affects all but the major metropolitan councils, because of the amount per head that rural councils contribute to roading through their rates, Mr Collie said.

“We are not getting what the community was promised. We were led to believe that each region would be able to decide its roading priorities and use this petrol tax for projects that would not otherwise be funded.”

Cr Geoff Piercy from the Invercargill City Council described the new tax as a “con”.

Southland Mayor Frana Cardno, who has already described the supposed petrol tax funding as “a charade”, said that Southlanders had been let down badly by the Government.

“The people of Southland trusted the Government to deliver what they said – millions of extra dollars for roading projects in this region. Now we see the fine print, and find that we are supposed to put in our own money, and we're just totally disillusioned.”

Mrs Cardno said she had already written to the Minister of Transport, Pete Hodgson, about the requirement for a local contribution, but had not had a reply. ■



Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust

c/- Post Office, Stewart Island

Ph: (03) 2191 533

e-mail: habitat@glowingsky.co.nz

www.glowingsky.co.nz

Stewart Island Flights see flightless bird return to Halfmoon Bay

It was hard to tell who was happier: the released bird or Raymond Hector of Stewart Island Flights as he set loose the first Stewart Island Weka to be brought back into the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project.

Despite a day's delay, due to difficult weather conditions, eighty people turned out on Sunday, 24th April to take part in this symbolic day. Many of them remembered weka being around Halfmoon Bay in very recent years. "Feeding weka on the back lawn" was a common theme of conversation.

"My earliest memory is of camping and hearing noises outside the tent. Petrified and opening the flap it turned out to be a weka, moving around making all the racket!" said Raymond Hector. "I'm just happy to be helping bring these guys back."

Five weka were caught from Bench Island on Sunday morning and flown by helicopter to Harrold Bay, near Ackers Point. With more birds moved over the next few months, hopefully this group will form the basis for a strong population in Halfmoon Bay.

The release into safe habitat was made possible by the pest control efforts of the Stewart Island community in the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project, and the financial support of Stewart Island Flights.

The Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project is a large scale, community trapping operation driven by SIRCET, which aims to control possums, rats and wild cats on 250 hectares of private land around Halfmoon Bay. The Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds and the Community Trust of Southland have provided the major funding for this project, which is also supported by our local businesses and community members. Our aim is to provide safe habitat for increasing our native wildlife and returning species which have disappeared from the area.

Stewart Island Weka are more endangered than kiwi. They have been drastically restricted over the last few decades, probably due to predators killing and eating them.

Their survival depends on our vigilance as a community, and our responsible care of pets.

Some of the released weka have radio transmitters attached. These birds will be monitored closely to see how they settle into their new home. Updates will be posted on the Halfmoon Bay Habitat Restoration Project website (www.glowingsky.co.nz), the Stewart Island Flights website (www.stewartislandflights.co.nz) and the Rakiura Environment Centre Notice board.

For more info, please contact Brent Beaven DOC, Stewart Island, (03) 2190007, email bzbeaven@doc.govt.nz; Dil Belworthy, Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust, (03) 2191249 habitat@glowingsky.co.nz; Raymond Hector at Stewart Island Flights, (03) 2189129





Stewart Island/ Rakiura Community and Environment Trust

c/- Post Office, Stewart Island

Ph: (03) 2191 533

e-mail: habitat@glowingsky.co.nz

www.glowingsky.co.nz

Islanders Vie for Rat Trap Record

Kari Beaven, SIN May 05

Squabbling over colours... loud commotions as someone *is beaten (!)* to the best "cut-out" of wire mesh for twining through their plastic trap-cover... the ceaseless "ka-chung" of a staple gun and the occasional "snap" (followed by peals of laughter) as a rat trap closed on its victim's fingers (or nose). These were the main sounds to be heard from the Clampett work-shed, as fifteen Islanders vied for the record of "fastest assembly of a rat-trap".

This fantastic rat-trap making day was held mid-month, leaving twenty-odd boxes bulging at the seams with 130 newly assembled rat traps. The rat-traps are assembled into tunnels to allow rats access while preventing any other birds or animals getting hurt. The tedious process of assembly normally takes one person quite a bit of time, however the team gave a marathon effort and achieved such a great outcome.



The day was a fabulous success and the Trust would like to thank everyone who helped. We would especially like to thank Chris for her amazing, energy-packed date scones and both Jed and Chris for risking their shed to hold the event.

The traps will be used in the Habitat Restoration Project, protecting another large block of Halfmoon Bay from these devastating pests.

Stewart Island News is usually published monthly as material permits. Contributions relative to Stewart Island are welcomed and can be sent by email to the new editor, Jessica Kany, at the following email address: jesskany@yahoo.com preferably as an MsWord™ attachment.

Short written articles can be posted to P O Box 156, Oban

The deadline for the June issue is Friday 17th June 2005

If you wish to have this newsletter posted to you or a friend please fill out this form and forward it with a cheque made payable to "Stewart Island News" to P O Box 87, Stewart Island. For ten issues posted to an Oban address, the cost is \$20. For a New Zealand address, the cost is \$25

Name of Recipient.....

Address.....