

St Martin Island Community



Rebecca Vella-King

From the Chair

Since our last newsletter we have had a number of changes in the Community. With change has come both sadness and light. In all, I think as a community we have learnt how to work together better and will continue to do so as we journey on with aroha in our hearts for each other and the Island.

At our AGM we honoured and thanked Kathy officially for her years on the Island. Of course, we also honoured and remembered both Douglas and Bryony, with Lyndall recalling some of Kathy's history on the Island.

Kathy was given two special gifts - a book of memories (secretly and lovingly compiled) and a beautiful sculpture by Pav, using wood from one of the wrecks. Though Kathy is no longer the Keeper she continues to stay involved in the key role of Treasurer and as overseer of the Married Quarters project.

We also officially welcomed

Graeme Furness and Anna Wiles as our new Residents on the Island. We are delighted to have found two people who are such a good fit for the Island. Already we have seen lots of practical jobs undertaken - repairs to the boat ramp, a new bench seat installed along the sunny side of the lodge, outdoor table and bench seats by the tree hut....

Another change has been that Douglas felt it was time to step down as Chair. I have the privilege of taking that role on in the Council. I would like to honour Douglas by expressing gratitude for his steady hand at the helm during his time as Chair. I am thankful that Douglas will continue to be a member of the Council. The community is indeed in good heart.

Francine Vella

Chairperson

The Next Month in the Community

Sunday 18th October. Next Council meeting and work-day. Boat from the Aquarium jetty at 9am.

November date
(TBA)

Christmas get together. Friday 18th –
Sun 20th Dec.

Visioning

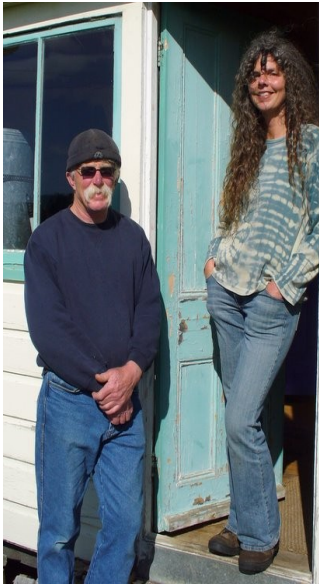
In our 'Revisioning' meeting in March, the Community reaffirmed that the following things are important to us:

*~conservation ~ sustainability ~
heritage ~ spiritual-
ity ~ welcoming ~ looking after
the Island community & the
wider community*

We had some great ideas... taking time to nurture ourselves; stepping back to take a governance role more often.

We decided to trial a new structure in which Community members took greater responsibility for furthering our work in particular areas.

Graeme and Anna



Oh, and did I mention wind?



Sundance enjoys lots of attention from visitors. She isn't happy that Graeme warns visitors she's on a diet though, nor his reminders to shut the gate so she can't eat the flowers. So far, Graeme says she isn't very keen on the new halter either...

From the Cottage

Halfway through my fifth month on the island, it feels like it could have been five years. Being in charge of an island and those who come and go is not so straight forward.

Life here revolves around the weather and the tides. There has been rain, hail, wind, floods, a decent snow dump, sunshine, calm placid sunny days, freezing winds, gales that blow down huge trees, frozen water troughs and early September nights where I get up and check the boat at 2am cause the winds gale force, but I walk down to the wharf in a tee shirt cause it's 24 degrees.

Oh, and did I mention wind?

I don't know what's happening to the earth, with the present focus on the climate, but out here on the island, even with the rumblings of the port over the water, you do feel removed from human activity.

I feel fortunate to witness so many mind stopping scenes. Stunning vistas, little pearls of scenic wonder, animal intricacies and weather wonders. These images in my head I know will stay with me always.

I enjoy the animals. I talk to them a lot. There is some kind of order being established, but I'm not sure that I'm in charge.

I have also talked to the odd inanimate object like stubborn shed doors and rusty bolts, but I wouldn't worry too much yet.

Now that it's very dry, all the wild life from miles around visit the water trough near the cottage because there are no puddles anywhere.

I'm having to chase some away, like, ducks that poo in the water, and the rats that, well, they're rats

Whilst I make petty decisions about who stays and who goes, the environment around me seems a lot bigger than that and goes on despite me.

Anna's town job has been taking up extra time and so she hasn't been able to get out as much as she would like, but she has been tackling the weeds and junk on the men's urinal. Now that the old porcelain squat toilets have been exposed, it's an interesting site and attracting visitor interest. Not bad for an old dunny!

I enjoy the people who come. They bring fun, and balance out the isolation of being here alone.

Sometimes getting people off again has been touch and go when the nor'easter sets in, and it's a relief when finally everyone is off in one piece.

Despite anxious times like that, I am very happy I have this opportunity to experience this wonderful place, and I feel I can contribute something for it's future in return.

Graeme Furness

Revegetation project

The big focus at present is the planting of over 800 trees this winter and spring, made possible by a successful bid to the Community Conservation Fund.

The programme is well underway with the majority of the 800 plants already on the Island and over 200 trees already planted, with the help of young people from EnviroSchools, the Kiwi Conservation Club, Students for Environmental Action and the scouts.



Ken Mason is providing guidance, based on his successful revegetation in the past, and enviroSchools and other local schools and groups will be participating in the planting programme.

The Island has registered for a “350 event” in the lead up to the Copenhagen climate summit (see 350.org) and one of our plans is to plant 350 trees by October 24th.

If you would like to be involved in the planting and caring for the trees, contact Judith or Kristen and we will let you know about upcoming working bees.



Quarantine Island / Kamau Taurua
(ST MARTIN ISLAND)
A Short History
OVER 200 COPIES SOLD!
by
LYNDALL HANCOCK
2008

*Ring Kristen to order a copy on
473 9535, or send your order
to the St Martin Is. Community,
PO Box 5478, Dunedin
\$35 + \$2 postage*



Special greetings to older members of our Community, who can't make it out to the Island now.



On October 3rd Steve Broni and Sharyn Hellyer celebrate their wedding. We wish them, and their daughter Virginia, so much continuing happiness in the long, creative, committed life they plan to share together.

Belonging

On this soft-shining radiant day
 Grey-silver seas,
 Beneath a massive sky;
 Light elbowing out the gloom.
 A flirting sun caresses distant hills
 And teases awkward trees.
 Precisely fashioned drops of rain
 Are measured one by one
 On tarmac road.

I walk-it's second nature now –
 The rim of land and sea;
 Left to my hand
 The zestful quietude of waves;
 A curious seal ups periscope
 Then dives again;
 Click-clacking starlings sigh,
 Acknowledging the crunching surge
 Of Aramoana's surf.
 Here I belong.
 I swim the land
 And walk the sea,
 I breathe these hills
 As they breathe me;
 My weightless feet
 Touch covenanted soil,
 On this soft-shining, radiant winter's day.

A quick lesson



Delicious miso soup



Joe's magic



Open day on the Island

The DoC/ SMIC Open Day on the Island, Sunday 12th July was a great day - the weather was a little showery and cold, the ground was muddy and slippery, but more than a hundred and fifty people visited the Island, whisked to and from our jetty on the DOC boat. The Open Day was a real team effort -

Thanks to Kuini for updating the pamphlet about the Island and the Community; David Mules (DOC), Graeme and Lyndall for welcoming visitors and telling them a little about the Island and our history; Miriam, Rosina, Tania, Grant, Elle-Rose and Steph for guiding groups around the Island (and bringing them back to the lodge muddy, but satisfied); Jimmy for diving for underia so we could offer delicious soup and Meghan for making the soup; Joe for turning out batch after batch of

delicious scones while chatting warmly to everybody and making it look so easy :)

Anna for getting extra supplies before we ran out and being kitchen assistant, Alex for providing transport for some of the young people to and from Port Chalmers; May, a volunteer coastguard for helping get visitors in and out of life jackets...

Many visitors were locals but had never been to the Island before. They took the challenges of navigating and sometimes falling over in the mud in good spirits and many said they would like to come back, especially to help with the tree-planting. Sundance got lots of strokes, Lyndall sold and auto-graphed a couple more books, and we were kept busy all day, but in a manageable way.



We would like to update our mailing list

Do you still want to receive this newsletter?

Would you prefer to receive it by email?

Would you like to receive an email or phone call about upcoming working bees and events on the Island?

If so, please contact Judith on 466 7744 or email Kristen at

bracey-browns@clear.net.nz.

Donations

We are grateful to have received funding from Lotteries Environment and Heritage, COGS, the Community Trust of Otago, the Conservation fund and Lotteries. This has allowed us to preserve the historic Married Quarters, boost revegetation work and pay a small salary to our resident.

We gratefully accept other donations and use them to maintain the Island boat, buildings, for ecology projects

If you are able to make a donation, please send this to SMIC, PO Box 5478 Dunedin

| Council members | | | |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Francine Vella | Chair | 473-1637 | francine@king.net.nz |
| Chris Brown | Vice-Chair | 473 9535 | bracey-browns@clear.net.nz |
| Kristen Bracey | Secretary | 473 9535 | bracey-browns@clear.net.nz |
| Kathy Morrison | Treasurer | 487-7445 | grannyisland@yahoo.co.nz |
| Joe Hunter | | 472-7007 | wicked.carvings@xtra.co.nz |
| Judith Ellis | | 453-4460 | o-ellis@xtra.co.nz |
| Douglas Black | | 487 7445 | Douglasblack47@yahoo.com |
| Anna Wiles | | 476 1955 | anna.wiles@stonebow.otago.ac.nz |
| Jim Fyfe | | 473 8414 | scotfyfe@es.co.nz |
| Kuini Scott | | 473-8414 | kuini.scott@gmail.com |
| Lyndall Hancock | | 454-4757 | 10 Shandon Rd, Waverly |
| Youth members | | Including | |
| Tania Bracey-Brown | | 473 9535 | himbeere_ice_cream@hotmail.com |
| Rosina Scott-Fyfe | | 473 8414 | rosina23@gmail.com |

Recent visitors

The Kiwi Conservation Club came over with their co-ordinator, Julie Tolsen.

Tania and Rosina, both SMIC Community members and former KCC kids themselves, were on the Island to help welcome them and show the group around.

Highlights were planting trees, patting Sundance, the cave, the tree house and the bushwalk.



From Kathy

Arrowtown has been a wonderful place to downwind from the Island. Cherokee and I got up out of our snugly beds at 7am to race through the frost to the woodburner lit by Gordon before work. I put on warmed gear and off we would head into the breathtaking early awakening morning; down along the river track meeting dog and people familiars. I loved the silence, the red rowan berries sparkling with frost, white mountain tops catching the first sunlight, the river clear and cold still inviting enough for Cherokee to chase into after sticks. And then home through the village past my favourite cafe, Bonjour, where I often got to stop for a fairtrade soy latte and the so friendly staff would spoil both of us with wee treats and warm rugs for sitting outside even though by now the sun was up. The days became hot, no wind and very little rain the whole time that I was there.

Home in time for Fritha to go to work on her days or to go into Frankton to the swimming classes or whatever else was on. Cherokee loved Kate and Angus getting up and would greet them with a mouthful of toys or a ball and they would play throwing things for her to endlessly fetch, feed her their leftover breakfasts while nobody was watching and ride her like a horse if they could.

I like getting outside and, as Judith well knows, had lots of fun sliding down the monument hill with Kate usually on or beside me. Two pairs of pants have had to be mended and another pair thrown out. We blew bubbles, we threw piles of leaves over each other, we picnicked, paddled, and played in the stunning weather including a fun day up at Coronet Peak with Fritha's Adventure group, sledding and making snowmen.

Fritha, Gordon, Kate and Angus have given me and Cherokee and Douglas when he came up a Winter of fun and happiness. They have been generous in every way and I've loved it up there, with them all in such well known surroundings. Been coming here for holidays since 1967.

And now they are in Scotland and I'm back in time to see the ventilators go up on the roof of the Married Quarters this week. The roof can now be completed and gutterings and downpipes installed, all painted over the Summer and then the next stage embarked upon. Yes! Watch this space. We should hear from Lotteries about how much they have given us towards Stage4 very soon.

Upcoming bookings

School students, doing extension study programmes at the Aquarium

Students from local schools and Alexandra primary – all helping with the revegetation programme on the Island

The Zen group

During the September/October holidays Otago Girls High School will be continuing their Undaria monitoring programme with a focus this year on how this adventive weed might be managed to protect the biodiversity of the adjacent reefs at the same time as utilising it as a sustainable resource for the Island.

DoC volunteers—also helping with the revegetation programme.

Community Working bees are a good time to meet other Community members and find out a little more about us. We usually work for a few hours, then have a delicious pot-luck lunch. We take time to talk together, walk around the Island, enjoy the peace and beauty. If you want to know when the next working bee is, contact Judith or Kristen.

To book the lodge or visit at other times, contact Graeme on 478 0874 or 027 476 0874

