

Peninsula community news

QUARANTINE ISLAND

The Forest and Bird Society is introducing the native rifleman to the island.

About 18 months ago a dozen or so nesting boxes and a rain-fed water trough were placed in the bush on Quarantine Island in readiness for their new tiny tenants.

A well-established group of riflemen live and nest on the farm of Hendrik Koch near Portobello and this season saw a good production of fledglings so conditions are right for transferring some of the flock to the island.

Ken Mason and his team met on the farm on January 28 with the birdsong of the rifleman on tape to lure the birds and mist netting to catch them when they emerged from hiding.

Unfortunately only one bird emerged and was trapped. The procedure will be repeated this month, with a new tape. This time it won't be just any rifleman but a recording of the local birdsong.

Relocation of rifleman ^{O.D.T.} _{26/03/01} from city bush

By Gail Goodger

Several small birds will fly across Dunedin Harbour today — in a helicopter.

The riflemen will be taken to Quarantine Island, near Portobello, after being removed from City Forest exotic trees on Dunedin's edge near Ross Creek.

Speakers playing recordings of the birds' calls would be used to lure them into 15m by 3m mist nets — "fine like Ena Sharples' hair nets" — suspended on poles, co-ordinator Sue Heath said.

If the birds appeared to be veering away from the nets, an infrared speaker activator would be bought into play.

If it was pointed at one of two speakers behind the nets, a bird call would sound from that speaker and the riflemen would head that way. If the birds went too far in that direction, the pointer would be used to set the other speaker going instead so the birds headed the other way.

The birds' planned home on Quarantine Island has been revegetated during the past 10 years, has no possums to eat the vegetation and was free of bird predators such as stoats and ferrets, Ms Heath said.

Several groups with conservation interests have banded together with the aim of introducing riflemen to the island and hoped to capture six of the birds today.

Other riflemen will also be transferred to Quarantine Island from Harbour Cone, near Portobello, in the future. The conservation groups have been monitoring the riflemen on Harbour Cone for three years.

Groups involved in the two projects include the St Martin Island community, Dunedin Team Greens, Royal Forest and Bird Society Otago, Nature-Works Otago, Students for Environmental Action, Te Runanga Otakou, the Otago Girls High School Green Group and the Department of Conservation.

Peninsula con

24/03/01 QUARANTINE ISLAND ^{STAR MIDW}

A new landmark on the island is a large tepee in the North American Indian traditional design. The tepee, standing five metres high, is erected on the south side of the island, beautifully situated against the backdrop of hills and harbour. The centre top of the tepee is designed with air vent and smoke flaps allowing a fire to be lit inside. The resulting smoke is drawn up by the draught.

The present island caretakers had the tepee built at their own expense. They see it as a symbol of peace. It is for their own personal use and something to be shared with groups or single-person retreats. Children just love it.

Following the failed initial attempt to introduce the native rifleman to Quarantine Island there has been no further action. However, the forest above the Ross Creek Reservoir, which in some areas is to be milled, has a rifleman population which will be in search of a new locality once tree felling commences.

There is a possible chance to transfer some of the birds to Quarantine Island providing circumstances are favourable.

Clean-up on Quarantine



Dunedin Star Midweek. MARCH 13, 1991

Quarantine Island got some conservation treatment last weekend when the Kiwi Conservation Club went to stay.

The youngsters, aged between 7 and 16, cleaned up two beaches and noticed less rubbish than on their previous trip to the island 18 months ago.

Members also cut down gorse and poisoned the stumps. Gorse was attacked on the steeper, more difficult slopes by putting older children on a climbing belay.

A particularly nasty invading plant called the Apple of Sodom was isolated by cutting, poisoning, hand pulling seedlings and removing fruit.

As well as getting rid of nasty plants, ngaio seedlings and kowhais were collected and bagged for further growth in the island's nursery.

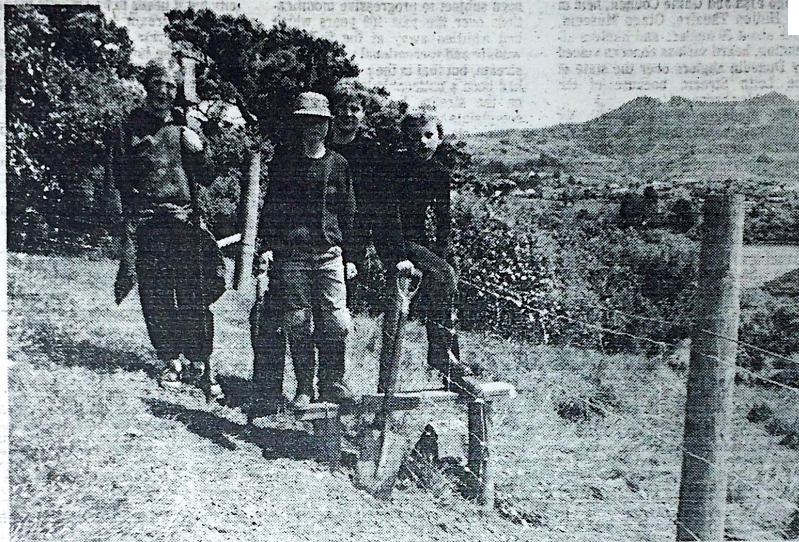
It wasn't just all work and no play for the keen-Kiwis, though. While on the island they made a 40m "head first" grass slide and some children swam out to the inner harbour mud flats at low tide to explore.

Twenty-one children attended the weekend trip accompanied by seven adults.

ABOVE: Kiwi conservationist, Cable Garlic (16) on a belay attacking gorse growing on a steep slope above the beach.

Access News Dunedin Star Midweek. Wed. Dec 4, 1991.

Conservation work on island



The Kiwi Conservation Club recently spent a weekend on Quarantine Island, the fourth weekend there since the club started. The party consisted of 20 children (7-17 years old) and seven adults.

On the Saturday they alternated between fun activities inside, and out-

side conservation work. This was arranged to fit between thunder and hail storms.

The Sunday was fine and activities included pricking out seedlings in the shadehouse, beach clean-ups, exploring sea caves and watching resting black-backed gulls, removing broom seedlings (hand pulling small ones

and cutting larger ones), track cutting, and putting in a stile to give access to the western end of the island that is being revegetated in natives.

ABOVE: Having a well-earned breather on their completed stile are (from left) Ian Goodwin (12), Ben Knight (8), James Goodwin (17), Brett Mason (9). *Picture contributed*



Conservation club visits Quarantine

More than 20 children spent Anzac weekend on Quarantine Island as part of the Kiwi Conservation Club's sixth official visit.

As well as exploring and games, members of the group planted and maintained native trees, put a top wire on a fence, removed broom and put in steps on a steep section of track.

Kiwi Conservation Club co-ordinator Ken Mason said the group also took the opportunity to reintroduce two species of tree fern to the island which had been eaten out by goats some 15 years ago.

Pictured at left are some of the girls helping to put in steps on the bush track. From left are Erika Blackmore-Rawlings, Anna Wallace, Lise Cooper and Sonia Blackmore-Rawlings. At right, younger members help to put a top wire on the bush fence. From left are Mr Neil McNaughton (helper), Anna Wallace and Aimee Lewis. — Photographs supplied.

QUARANTINE ISLAND - A SHORT HISTORY.

- Maori name for Quarantine Island was Kamaautaurua - northern cliffs were a favourite fishing place - lack of fresh water restricted camping.
 - Goat Island was Rangiriri. In early 1880's goats put on I for (military) firing practice.
 - first European name Half-way or Mid Way Islands - by 1860's commonly called Rabbit and Goat Islands. Rabbit gave way to Quarantine I. Quarantine Point at north end of Beaconfield Peninsula.- shops held off here in quarantine 1848-1858.
 - 1859 a hulk was in use on Island as a lazaret.- 2 buildings for isolation purposes.
 - 1860 moorings authorised - 200 people capacity.
 - pre 1848 some stock kept on Island after decline of whaling - islands were fairly densely bush covered.
 - first quarantine purposes July 1863 - smallpox case - Victory ex Glasgow (the 3rd ship with this name to come to Port Chalmers. (In all 21 ships used the Island.) A yellow flag flown during quarantine. 60 young men put on a hulk moored off Goat Island. Q.I. - nearly 400 men women and children - 2 building in clearings in bush - in quarantine for 5½ weeks. During this time the cemetery was cleared and used for the first time. A hospital with 16 beds and 3 small rooms built by passengers of the 'Victory.'
 - track uphill behind woolshed cut out of thick bush in 1874 to second hospital(1873) which held 24 patients. Hospital consisted of two wards 26 feet by 18 feet and 16 feet high, each with a fireplace. Also offices, dispensary, doctors' and nurses rooms, a surgery and a kitchen. Water had to be brought on occasions from Port Chalmers. A considerable amount of bush had been cleared. Use of Island ceased by end of century.
 - Cemetery has 78 people buried, over half being children - name boards have rotted away.
 - Goat Island used for quarantine until 1891 and for a only a year turned over for stock quarantine.
 - 1914-1918 war the Quarantine Station was used as a hospital.(V.D.)
 - Quarantine Station officially closed in early 1920's and there were several changes of leases. 1946 report stated the island could carry 70 ewes when the lease was put up for sale again.
 - 1958 - St.Martin Island Community took up the lease. Has a right of renewal in 2005.
- 1874, the new blocks. Two two-story buildings joined in the centre by a kitchen and with a dining block at right angles, forming a T. Only the married quarters stands today. The single womans' quarters and the dining block have their foundations visible today. In 1874 the single mens' quarters were nearing completion on Goat Island.
- a wooden jetty of 110 feet was added to the stone causeway in 1874. On East side the Waikana (800 passengers). Built in Port Chalmers in 1909 and dismantled in 1930 was one of largest ferries on harbour. On West side th Oreti, a 174 ton wooden steamer that carried timber and was dismantled in 1932.
 - channel between the two islands called Nicol's Passage. Submerged reef in channel blasted away 1931. Early 1950's E tip of Goat Island removed - channel widened by 100ft.

Dunedin Forest & Bird, 9/07/2010, Quarantine Island and SEA weekend

To: Dunedin Forest & Bird
From: Ken Mason <kdmason@xtra.co.nz>
Subject: Quarantine Island and SEA weekend
Cc:
Bcc:
Attached:

Hi all,

Two weeks ago I had a lovely day on Quarantine Island with 18 Queens High School girls. After exploring the Island, its history and studying the ecological restoration sequences, a planting was undertaken to enhance the Little Shag nesting area.

On July 17 I will be assisting DoC in their open day on the Island by explaining to members of the public the restoration techniques being developed and doing associated planting with those interested.

I will be doing much the same, and enjoying an Enviroschools contingent the following Saturday. The last weekend of July will be with SEA. Working with young people is inspirational to me and feedback is that many have subsequently rallied to the cause in later years.

The last Dunedin F & B Management meeting was far from inspirational or enjoyable. Essentially I felt I was being called a liar surrounding my having obtained DoC's permission to do my current official role of overseeing the Islands ecological restoration. DoC staff were officially involved in putting together the Enviroschool grant application for funding in conjunction with myself and Quarantine Island committee representatives. My attempts to explain the process undertaken were shouted down. I was subjected to a raised voice two person team 'stand over' attack. This was unnecessary, unprofessional, and very non-productive behaviour. On reflection I have witnessed this type of behaviour exhibited many times in meetings. It is not surprising that SEA members and others invited on to the committee, who initially join full of enthusiasm, become disillusioned and leave. This is an ongoing issue that has never been addressed.

For over 20 years I have developed a good working relationship with the St Martins Island Community, and many hundreds of young people. While developing this relationship I have kept involving Dunedin Forest & Bird in order to help F&B profile maintain an active community profile. Over the years the project has gained much kudos which has also reflected positively on F&B. A weekend on the Island was the start of our 10 year liaison with Students for Environmental Action. Although I'm exceedingly grateful for past Dunedin F & B support for the Island project, the recent behaviour at the committee meeting is making me question why I am involving a group which in reality and by ongoing aggressive action is showing me little respect and support.

Dunedin Forest & Bird has a choice (keeping in mind that I have permission and regularly keep in contact with Doc). I am currently planning to take SEA for a weekend work on Quarantine Island without any F&B association. At the moment we have more than enough plants (per Doc grant), tools and materials to do this without any need for F&B involvement.

If Dunedin F&B wish to continue being mentioned as associated with the project this year (especially to the public) I expect at the very least an apology for the way things were handled at the last meeting. I believe that with my previous track record involving hundreds of hours of voluntary work, fundraising, developing and undertaking many successful ecological restoration

Printed for Ken Mason <kdmason@xtra.co.nz>

Dunedin Forest & Bird, 9/07/2010, Quarantine Island and SEA weekend

projects throughout Otago and wider New Zealand whilst maintaining ongoing successful working relationships with many stakeholders and community groups (SEA, DCC, private landowners, Quarantine Island to name but a few) it is time I was accorded some respect and support. As such I expect to be able to continue to work on conservation projects with a degree of trust based on my track record. That is I expect to be able to work effectively as in the past, without my honesty and integrity being questioned and needless strings attached.

I will not be attending the next management meeting as, over the years, I've grown weary some of being either attacked as the whistle blower or the messenger.

Forest and Bird have a choice, address the issues raised and execute an apology or I will consider continuing my work on Quarantine Island with DoC and the Island community without F&B involvement in the future.

Yours etc
Ken Mason



KCC Cove
BEFORE and AFTER

KCC Cove Microclimate
(below) Pruning and stem removal since 1996 has produced a tall mixed forest of reintroduced species and a developing whole forest structure

QI/KTC (KDM '16)



Restoration Technique



The island is a refuge from invading exotic plants and non local natives. Rare local plant forms are being planted

QI/KTC (KDM'16)

Spring Bay Microclimate
Planted hardy species block wind out of the island's only year round moist site. Here missing canopy trees, forest floor species and bugs are being returned

QI/KTC (KDM '16)

Plants compete for light and resources. It's either kill or be killed, or find a place no other plant wants.

QI/KTC (KDM'16)

Increasing shading weakens the grass allowing native plants to move in.

QI/KTC (KDM'16)