



October 2023 Editor: Mike Gray Email: ddda@xtra.co.nz



There is a massive programme on offer, with Duntroon and the local area featuring throughout the festival but particularly on Saturday Oct 28th.

For the full programme visit: <https://www.whitestonegeopark.nz/news-and-events/categories/geopark-festival-2023>

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Tokarahi Rural Women's Group invite all interested parties to a visit to the gardens at Elderslie.

When: 10 am Wed 18th of October.
Bring : snacks & a drink if you so desire, and some \$\$ for a love donation to Bev Rodwell, the owner of the gardens.
Afterwards : Lunch at Fort Enfield.
Contact : Liz Hutton,0273081101, or charleshope@orcon.net.nz. for an indication of numbers for lunch please.

Tokarahi Rural Women's Group are holding their Community Pot-luck Meal at the Tokarahi Hall on Friday the 27th of October from 6pm onwards Please invite your neighbours and those that are new to the district. BYO refreshments. Plates, cutlery, and glasses are in the hall. Queries to the above **contact details**.

Next DDDA Committee Meeting: Thursday 12th October 2023. 7:00 pm at Vanished World Centre.

Duntroon Wetland Report.

The past wetland working bee held on 16th September saw Geoff and Owen administer between them probably 30 wheel barrows of gravel on parts of the track, ramp approaches etc,. It was great to see Grant Neal from Anatini . He took care of the entire Foot-Loop with his weed-eater. Marvellous effort Grant. Really appreciate your time you gave.

Thank you Geoff as always in mucking in and getting the work done.

Leading up to the Big weekend coming up with the UNESCO Geopark Festival scheduled for the 28th October there is a Wetland working bee

Wetland Working Bee: at 10:00 on Saturday 14th October.

The plan is a general tidy up. A really good plant-release on the bank down from the Gaol is required.

Checking on recent plantings around the Foot-Loop and possible staking of some plants. Bundles of stakes are at Kowhai corner ready to go. Weed-trimming at sides of main track. Please bring grubbers, gloves.

Waitaki Citizens' Awards

On 21st September eleven Waitakians were presented with awards recognising their long-service to their communities at Oamaru Opera House yesterday. The Waitaki Citizens' Awards are given in recognition of substantial services, usually of a voluntary nature or beyond normal employment, benefiting the Waitaki District and its people.

Two of these award winners, Alison Simpson and John Hore, have spent many years voluntarily working for the benefit of our local community. I wish to acknowledge their valuable contribution by publishing a short summary of some of their contributions written by Karan Lawrence.



Alison Simpson.

Starting in a very young age, Allison has been involved with the Anglican Church in Kurow and Duntroon, being on the vestry committee.

Her work with Tokarahi branch of Rural Women's Division was rewarded with a "Branch Honour".

Alison's passion for irises and involvement with the New Zealand Iris Society was recognized by the Society with a life membership. Even while busy on the farm and bringing up a family, Alison made room in her life for a new venture. When Professor Ewan Fordyce discovered fossils on the Simpson farm Alison thought how appropriate it would be to have the fossils remain in the area and viewed by others.

Consequently, when the concept of the Vanished World Fossil Centre was mooted around the year 2000, Allison joined the group and hit the ground running, taking charge of managing the Centre. A job she has faithfully done up until the Waitaki Whitestone Geopark took over recently.

A Baleen whale fossil from the Simpson's farm is an exhibit at Vanished World to this day. Alison's innate sense of what the Centre should offer the public regarding merchandise has given the Centre an enviable reputation, to say nothing of helping to balance the books. The books, that have been meticulously kept, along with all the all-important visitor statistics. Some years back Alison had a bad fall at the Centre. After her recovery she moved from the farm to live in Oamaru. Yet she still drives out to Duntroon to volunteer at the Vanished World, this she does at 85 years of age! She is an inspiration to so many.

John Hore

Almost any activity or project undertaken by residents in the Duntroon community over the last sixty or more years has included John Hore.

Additional to his long years as a trustee or chairman on various committees, John's actions speak louder than words.

Always there with sage advice and/or with the equipment for the job, John will knuckle in and lead the charge. Whether that be shifting the bridge span from the old road rail bridge back in 1970s, the building of the boardwalks and bridges at the Duntroon wetlands, the planting of trees and removing broom, carving out the walkway to a fossil site at Anatini, or scrambling about at a lime quarry in the Hakataramea Valley to locate and transport fossil laden rock to Vanished World so visitors can dig their own fossils.

These are just a few activities John has been involved in.

Back in the mid 1970's, along with three others, John bought Nichols Forge to save it for posterity. He was the first chairman of the Nichol's Blacksmith Heritage Trust from 2006 to 2020. As if that wasn't enough, John was a founding member of the Duntroon and District Development Association and has contributed to that organisation too, involving himself in its varied activities, such as, working bees at the domain and installing picnic tables on the village green, and every other project the DDDA has embarked on, John is there at ground level doing his share.

John took part in all the planning discussions leading to the first Vanished World meeting in April 2000. As well as being chairman for nine years, John has spent thousands of hours as a volunteer at the Centre itself. He has talked to countless school groups in the field and at the Centre. At 80 years old, he still volunteers at the Centre. Further to all this activity, John and his ever-supportive wife Margaret have shared their own property with hordes of visitors, over the years, allowing the public to enjoy “Anatini” and the fossils that lie within.

Save this date - **2nd of December 2023**

Community Dance at the Duntroon Hall

7pm - 11pm - Bring a plate.

Live music - John McCabe

\$10 per adult. Children under 12 years \$5 and must be accompanied by an adult.

For more info contact Peter Thorn 027 4993406

The Great Wall of Ostler.

Tucked away above highway 83 on Racecourse Road is Ostler Vineyard. The rows of vines held up with wires and posts cover many hectares. A pump shed and a smoko hut are just inside the boundary. But it is the entrance and the wall on the western end of the vineyard that really catches the eye.

These stone structures were constructed by Roy Stringer in his 73rd and 74th years. A worker at the vineyard, Roy would drive past the piles of limestone rocks every day and dream about using them

to create a wall that would serve to keep the stock out of the vineyard and set the theme for the Ostler brand. Jim Jerram, founder of Ostler Vineyard with his wife Anne, bought into Roy’s vision and supported him all the way



It would be a major undertaking by anybody, but Roy was not just anybody. At 73, he was still fit and keeping up with the much younger workers at the vineyard.

Between tending to the vines Roy worked on building the wall, starting at the very top and all the way down to the roadside, approximately 250 meters (about the height of the Empire State Building).

He used a small Kubota tractor to pick up some of the big rocks. There were times when Ray Tait from Tait's Transport would supply shingle from his pit at Priests Road to be used on the top portion of the wall. A freestanding wall, it measures a meter at the base and 700mm (about 2.3 ft) across the top. Three quarters of the way down the hill Roy ran out of rocks and had to go about the vineyard looking for rock to complete the project.

Altogether the hours totaled six months of work through summer heat and winter cold. On the 17th of September 2009 two massive blocks of limestone were delivered and installed on either side of the driveway to augment the entrance.



Jim and Annie were so pleased that their support for the project was vindicated that they organized an official ceremony in 2009 to celebrate. This occasion was also a time to

dedicate a plaque installed in the wall Annie's mother Kath Sinnott who had passed away in 2006 and a plaque acknowledging Roy as the builder.

As we celebrate our local geology and the natural wonders around us, we can also marvel at what some people have created while utilizing those natural materials. The wall and entrance at Ostler vineyard being a case in point. Call up and take a look sometime.

Duntroon Photographic Group

The Duntroon Photographic Group took a drive up to the Ostler Vineyard on Saturday the 23rd of September. Although the weather was not ideal, for most of the group it was their first time taking in the panoramic views across the valley from this vineyard.



Plans are well in hand for the group stall at the Geopark Festival day in Duntroon on October 28th .

Before that date the group will be meeting at the Flying Pig on the 5th of October and will set out around Duntroon photographing some of the houses. The plan is to recreate a series of photographs that were taken many years ago.

It will be really interesting to compare the photos.

Of course it will be back to the Flying Pig afterwards for coffee.

Nicols Blacksmith

Nicols Blacksmith Historic Trust Labour day reopening for the summer season (21st and 22nd October), which is also the Waitaki district meet the maker Art festival. So come along and check out what's happening at the forge. We are always looking for new volunteers to help show case our unique historic forge, either demonstrating blacksmithing or chatting to visitors. It's amazing how many interesting people you get to meet as well as the fun of forging hot metal. The forge will be open Saturdays and Sundays from Labour Day till Kings Birthday so come and have a go.

Contact nicolsblacksmith@gmail.com - Jan 027 4979 006 - Judy 027 9366 225

Duntroon Digger

The Digger is published at the start of each month - except January.

Electronic edition:

There is an electronic publication that is sent out by email. It has colour and the print size is great! To receive this edition, send your email address to Mike at ddda@xtra.co.nz

Paper edition:

This is printed in Oamaru and approximately 350 copies are delivered courtesy of a couple of friendly NZ Post Rural Delivery drivers – we appreciate their support.

Wellness Matters - A regular health column from the Kurow Medical/Mackenzie Health Centre Team - October 2023

Daylight savings is upon us and how lovely to be able to enjoy longer days and warmer temperatures (apart from a few snowy blasts)!

Breast Cancer Awareness

October is breast cancer awareness month. Each day 9 Kiwi women of all ages are diagnosed with breast cancer. That's 3,500 women a year and 25 men too. Early detection with regular mammograms can save lives and women aged 45-69 years can have a free mammogram every two years. You can self-enrol BreastScreen Aotearoa by calling 0800 270 200 or registering online.

Screening recommendations for women outside of this age group vary and your healthcare provider can support you with more information or visit www.timetoscreen.nz

Self-examination is encouraged for all women from age 20 and is an important part of breast health awareness. Any changes like lumps, thickening, dimpling or nipple discharge should be reported to your healthcare provider.

Shingles (Herpes Zoster)

Many of us had chickenpox as a child, although there is now a vaccine for chickenpox which is delivered to children on the immunisation schedule at 15 months, and to some high-risk individuals or their close contacts. Shingles is caused by a virus called varicella zoster, which is the same virus that causes chickenpox.

Following chickenpox infection, the virus lies dormant in the nerves near the spine and can re-emerge later in life. Increasing age, some medications, certain medical conditions as well as emotional stress can cause the immune system to weaken which gives the virus an opportunity to reactivate as shingles. Symptoms of shingles usually start as a tingling or burning pain for two to three days and then a painful rash on one side of the body. This can be very debilitating and often lead to longer term complications.

People with these symptoms should seek advice and care as soon as possible. Clinicians can prescribe medication which is best started before the rash appears. This has been proven to reduce the duration and severity of shingles.

There is some good news on the shingles front however. A vaccine to prevent shingles is available and is free for anyone who is 65 years old (not older) and for some people with immunity problems. It is also recommended for other people aged 50 and over and a charge will apply. Find out more about vaccines at www.immune.org.nz.

Sun Smart

New Zealand sunlight can have high levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation which can cause skin and eye damage and cancer. Our ozone layer is one of the thinnest in the world and UV index level three is enough to cause skin damage. Although it doesn't feel like it now, being sun smart all year round is important and more so heading into the warmer months. NIWA has a UV index app you can access at www.niwa.co.nz which gives localised reports.

So, until next time, stay well and cover up, slip into the shade, slop on sunscreen, slap on a hat and wrap on your sunnies – even on the cloudy days as 80% of UV radiation can get through the clouds.