



INTRODUCING OUR TWO NEW TRUSTEES

ANDREW WELSH, father of two and operations manager for the Milford Sound Development Authority, is one of two newly elected Milford Community Trustees. Mr Welsh, who has extensive experience in the emergency services sector, looks forward to working with the trust and ensuring Milford remains an iconic tourist destination and one of the 'Seven Natural Wonders of the World'.

Prior to his appointment in Milford Sound, Mr Welsh spent approximately ten years in the Army, owned and operated a business with his wife, Gaby, and worked for the Department of Conservation. Mr Welsh's main roles were emergency services and contracts manager.

For the past 15 years, Mr Welsh's involvement with emergency services has been vast and varied, having undertaken both voluntary and paid work. Sectors include rural fire, St John ambulance, the NZ Fire

Service, Search and Rescue, Civil Defence, and most recently, the appointment as controller for the Milford Sound Emergency Response Team (ERT).

Mr Welsh's love of the outdoors and helping people has worked hand in hand, enabling the chance of world travel and pursuing one of his many interests, mountaineering. While working for DOC, Mr Welsh was able to spend three summers in Europe, working with Air Zermatt in Switzerland as a member of their Alpine Rescue Team.

Mr Welsh looks forward to working with the trust to ensure both residents and visitors to Milford have first class facilities.



PAUL PHELAN, branch manager for Real Journeys, has wide-ranging experience in both the hospitality and tourism industries.

Mr Phelan, who was born in Ontario, Canada, has spent many years traveling the world as a chef, giving him over 30 years in the hospitality industry.

Moving to Te Anau in 1983, Mr Phelan has held manager and executive chef positions throughout the Southern Lakes region, and has also been involved in business partnerships in the Te Anau area.

Mr Phelan started working in Milford in August 2007, as operations manager for Real Journeys, and was later promoted in 2008 to branch manager. Mr Phelan is also involved on the Milford Sound Emergency Response Team Management Committee.

In 1984 Paul married D'Lice (a good Kiwi girl) and has since made the Fiordland region his permanent home. He enjoys visiting or holidaying with step son Kane and daughter-in-law Monique who now live in Australia.

Mr Phelan also takes pleasure from good wine, food and being with friends.

MILFORD EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM SET UP

More than 30 people applied to become members of the Milford Emergency Response Team (ERT), which operates under the Southern Rural Fire Authority.

The ERT assists a wide range of emergency incidents including fires, motor vehicle accidents, medical alerts, civil defence and marine spills. Team members have been busy learning the basics of the trade, undertaking emergency response driver training and basic fire fighting skills.

The ERT has already responded to two motor vehicle accidents and a medical emergency within the Milford village.

An event, such as the recent earthquake, also serves as a timely reminder of the isolated nature of Milford and how important it is to respond to those needs.

Further training in response and action at motor vehicle accidents is due to start shortly, along with other specialised training.

\$1 MILLION UPGRADE APPROVED FOR MILFORD SOUND

The Milford Sound Development Authority has approved a \$1 million upgrade for Milford Sound, although there are predictions tourist numbers will drop.

Three projects are included in the upgrade with the largest proportion of money, \$700,000, going towards a replacement floating berth at Freshwater Basin. The remainder of the money will be split equally between building a small-scale hydro-electric power plant at Knobs Flat, and resealing car parks at both Milford and Knobs Flat. The new power plant is to replace the existing diesel generators, and work on both the power plant and carparks was almost complete. Working on the floating berth would commence soon.

Board Chairman Jeff Grant said the upgrade would ensure Milford Sound continued to be a leading New Zealand tourist destination, as well as, retaining an efficient and maintained infrastructure. Numbers visiting Milford taking a scenic cruise has increased considerably over recent years, with figures growing from 213,887 in 1991 to 418,134 in the past financial year. However, the recession has started to affect these numbers, with Mr Grant expecting a drop by about 10 per cent during the next financial year.

The new upgrades are about maintaining “an infrastructure that is not only high quality, but also unobtrusive and cost effective” and, although upgrades are not intended as preparation for a tourist boom, meeting visitor’s high expectations of Milford is. Due to extreme environment conditions of Milford and the increased size of vessels at Freshwater Basin, “the existing pontoons are nearing the end of their useful life,” Mr Grant said.

WORK ON DEEPWATER BASIN

The working party has undertaken a couple of site visits from which a brief was drawn up for Blakely Wallace (landscape architects) and presented at the last Trust meeting on 12 May for concept plans on behalf of the working party.

The trustees agreed with the conceptual ideas that the working

party were putting to Philip Blakely and the Department of Conservation has contracted him to undertake this planning work. Mr Blakely made a site visit early in July and conceptual plans will be prepared and presented at the September MCT meeting prior to consultation with the community by the MCT.

The outline of the conceptual plans will identify areas for commercial storage and carparking, separation between industry (commercial fishing area) and recreational/eco-tourism areas and community recreational areas and areas identified for utility services.

PAKETE/BROWN TEAL RETURN TO FIORDLAND

Twenty of New Zealand's rarest water fowls, the pateke/brown teal, were returned to Fiordland National Park, making it the first major release of the endangered species in the South Island.

Thanks to successful captive breeding programmes throughout New Zealand, and support from Banrock Station Wines, the Department of Conservation Pateke Recovery Group were able to reintroduce the species back into Fiordland, a species that has been missing for the past fifteen years.

The birds were flown from Queenstown to Milford Sound by a flight sponsored by tourism operation, Real Journeys. Shortly after, the birds were flown by helicopter to their new home in the Arthur Valley, a site close to the world famous Milford Track.

DOC biodiversity ranger Andrew Smart, of Te Anau, said this was the first major release of the endangered pateke in the South Island.

"The site was ideal as it is within the Operation Ark stoat trapped area", Mr Smart said.

In addition to these efforts, an extra 100 stoat traps have been positioned to further protect the vulnerable birds from the predation of stoats.

"Stoats are their number one predator in Fiordland," Mr Smart said. "In other mainland areas, cats, dogs and cars are a factor".

Natural predators to the pateke in the Fiordland region include weka (for their eggs), eels and falcons.

"Each bird is wearing a transmitter so that they can be tracked. If survival rates are good, further releases are planned," Mr Smart said.



The Pateke/Brown Teal

There are currently fewer than 1,800 pateke living in a wild state in New Zealand, making them New Zealand's rarest water fowl species on the mainland. Over the next five years, more than two hundred pateke could be released into Fiordland.

OPUS APPOINTED PROJECT MANAGER

The Department of Conservation have recruited Opus International Consultants Limited as consulting engineers and external project manager for the Cleddau River Flood Protection project.

DOC's internal project manager, Jessie Haanen has been working closely with Opus since the engagement and said Opus has completed a review of the preliminary work carried out so far and has identified a small amount of additional work required before design and consenting work is tendered out.

A working party, made up of representatives from the Department of Conservation, Southland District Council, Environment Southland and the Milford Community Trust, has been meeting regularly with Opus.

Formal consultation and communication with stakeholders will commence very soon and completion of this project is expected to be in February 2012.

ENROL WITH THE TAKITIMU PRIMARY HEALTH ORGANISATION

The Fiordland Medical Centre is looking to expand their services to Milford by providing a fortnightly clinic in Milford for Milford residents in the near future. As a practice contracted to the Takitimu Primary Health Organisation, Milford residents will be offered the opportunity to enrol with the Fiordland Medical Centre in order to receive Takitimu Primary Health Organisation subsidised consultation fees and prescription costs. Prior to the first clinic Takitimu Primary Health Organisation information packs will be sent to all Milford Employers, alternatively you can access further information about enrolling with the Fiordland Medical Centre by calling them on **03 249 7007**.

TRUST ANNUAL REPORT

Jane Taylor - Chairwoman

The long term sustainability of the Milford Sound village and environs, which is located in a World Heritage area, is of the utmost importance to both the Milford community and all New Zealanders. In its second year of operation, the Milford Community Trust has continued to develop strategies and work with its key partners, the Department of Conservation and the Southland District Council, to provide leadership and governance for the Milford community. Effective communication is a priority for the Trust as it continues to actively seek the views of stakeholders and the Milford community to ensure it is aware of their needs. During the year we welcomed our new community representative, Allan Cosgrove, who has been instrumental in ensuring that the community has a voice in Trust matters.

Several major strategic initiatives have been progressed by the Trust during the year. The Trust has facilitated a comprehensive multi-party approach to an Emergency Response Plan for Milford, and members of the community who volunteered to be part of the Emergency Response team are receiving training and the equipment necessary to undertake their roles. The Trust is a member of the working party established to

implement the proposed Cleddau River flood protection measures. In addition, the Trust is working on a Waste Management Strategy to promote environmentally sustainable waste management at Milford and is developing an overview of the Infrastructural assets in Milford after consulting with infrastructure providers. This will look at what is required to support development in the area. The Trust has also commenced preparation of a concept plan for upgrading Deepwater Basin facilities in conjunction with the Department of Conservation.

The Trust has also been instrumental in lobbying for change on behalf of the Milford Community to enhance safety and wellbeing. Land Transport New Zealand has been approached about footpath development between Milford Lodge and Milford Village and about extending the 50kmh speed limit to the main entrance of Milford Sound Lodge. The Trust has worked with the Department of Conservation and Milford Sound Development Authority (MDA) on a signage strategy for the sound and has erected speed limit signs in the Deepwater Basin area.

The Trust has also supported the MDA in its joint application for funding from the Government's Broadband Initiative to install a fibre-optic link from Te Anau to Milford.

One of the more tangible community based projects is the development of a gymnasium at Milford, with two of the companies in Milford donating the space and some gym equipment. The Trust is in the process of applying for funding to maintain and increase the equipment and space.

Other community initiatives, including airport toilets, walkways and tracks are in the pipeline.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees, Jessie Haanen (Department of Conservation) and Graham Jones and Chris Dolan (Southland District Council) for their exceptionally hard work and commitment during the year; and, in particular, retiring trustee Roger Wilson who completed his term on 30 June 2009. Roger's contribution has been greatly appreciated by all.

The Trust looks forward to working with the community to progress the implementation of its strategy during the 2009/10 year.



MARTINS BAY HUT NOW OPEN

The upgrade of Martins Bay Hut, situated on the Hollyford Track, is now complete, bringing a successful end to five years of hut redevelopment on this popular walking track.

A total of 24 trampers can now sleep in comfort thanks to a hut extension, built by the Department of Conservation Te Anau Visitor Assets team in just 35 days.

The team made further improvements to the hut by adding a 3 metre verandah, renovating the fireplace and creating extra seating, tables, benches and sinks.

The work was undertaken in June to avoid the roar, whitebaiting and tramping seasons. However, this meant the building team had to deal with permanent frost and torrential rain – although it carried the bonus of keeping the sandflies at bay.

More than 40 tonnes of material was taken in for the project by the fishing boat “Southern Legend”, shuttling it from Milford Sound to Martins Bay across four trips.

With a digger on site and support from Hollyford Guided Walks, the track to the Longreef seal colony was also able to be upgraded.

The Hollyford Track is the only major track in Fiordland at low altitude and can therefore be walked in any season, making it a popular track. The scenery is spectacular as the track follows the Hollyford River on its journey to the sea and Martin Bay offers a special highlight with seals, Fiordland Crested Penguins and occasionally dolphins that can be seen along the coast.



The upgraded Martins Bay Hut

NEW ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM FOR WALKERS

The Department of Conservation (DOC) has launched an online booking system allowing walkers on the world famous Milford, Routeburn, and Kepler Tracks to book their tramps up to two years in advance.

Until now, bookings had only been available for the upcoming season.

The booking system was introduced to relieve visitor pressure on the tracks and to enable transport operators and tourism companies more forward planning opportunities. The decision also enables Kiwi families more time to plan how they will see their own back yard.

Anyone planning to walk the tracks between October 2009 and May 2010 or October 2010 and May 2011, can make their booking on the Department of Conservation website, www.doc.govt.nz