

## NEWSLETTER 4 CABIN FEVER




This edition of our Cabin Fever continues in a historical vein – what would you expect with “third agers” who spend a lot of time while on enforced isolation, reflecting? Our President’s column will leave us all salivating when we read below about gourmet crayfish.

John’s mention of Preservation Inlet reminded me that our U3A member Joyce Gilbertson’s grandfather Captain Isaac Petrie (whose wife was Jessie Cruickshank) had once invested in 7 land titles at Cromarty in Preservation Inlet at the time of the gold rush. About 40 years ago, his two very elderly daughters Gladys and Charlotte still held title to two of them and they were finally sold. Later on Cromarty Lodge was built on those sections which were probably the only remaining private titles in Fiordland National Park. Captain Petrie’s obituary recounts that his seafaring life under sail took him to nearly every part of the world. “Through the workings of fate more than the ordinary share of adventure fell to his lot. Once he was wrecked on Guam Island and enjoyed the unique experience of being regarded as a king by half-civilized natives. The Island’s chief wanted him to marry his daughter! The natives on Guam also killed and ate the ship’s dog which caused some apprehension amongst the crew. On another occasion Captain Petrie was washed overboard from a sailing ship in a storm and was rescued after swimming after the ship for a considerable time....The crew promptly downed sail, came around, managed to find him and hauled him back aboard. There must surely have been a rum ration served that night to all hands. Captain Petrie was well acquainted with the Far East and because of his knowledge of Japanese Territorial waters he held a master’s certificate under Japanese commercial law.... Later he returned to the Old Country in the Christian McAuslan and entered the China tea trade in the days when crack clippers engaged in the exciting races to get to London with the first cargo of a new season’s tea. His father, Captain Alexander Petrie was a shipowner and his father’s family were all interested in shipping and the sea”. Southland Times Tuesday January 30, 1945)

No doubt quite a few of our U3A members will have visited Preservation Inlet on the Milford Wanderer. I have been there on several occasions aboard the Akademik Shokalski and Milford Wanderer with groups of seniors and one time while kayaking I hauled up an old rope festooned with seaweed and found the most perfect green lipped mussel which I cracked on a rock and slurped up the contents. Fresh definitely tastes best! – Liz Cruickshank.

### Contributions/Suggestions/Ideas

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### SuRi - A Super Yacht in Fiordland

A few years ago I was contracted to pilot the super Yacht SuRi in Fiordland over a four day period with a full complement of 14 guests on board who would participate in hunting, fishing and generally exploring the Fiordland Sounds.

Owners of super yachts do not generally advertise who they are however it was rumoured that it had to be Tom Cruise as he had a daughter named Suri and maybe he was looking for somewhere to film his next action movie! Thoughts of "a bit part" ran through my mind but to no avail as the reason for the two capitals in the name was for the owners Sue and Rick. No doubt very rich but not as famous as Mr Cruise.

The unique beginning of this adventure was that I was to contact the helicopter pilot who was staying at the Ascot Hotel and we would fly from the airport to Milford Sound where we would land on the vessel. First hitch was that rain and low cloud delayed us a few hours but once clear we flew as far as Five Rivers and with further low cloud we stopped there for a coffee.

We finally caught the Yacht off Milford after a great flight through the mountains and valleys. Guests were due the next morning but we dodged Milford and carried on to Poison Bay a further 10 miles down the coast. (Was told the owner wanted to avoid publicity). After we anchored I told the skipper if he dived at a certain rock area it would be crayfish for dinner. I was slightly guessing but some of the crew who loved diving soon came back with a feed and some extra for the guests tomorrow. I became very popular - eat your heart out Tom Cruise!

The guests joined the next day, there were a couple of Toms but they were only there for the cruise. We moved down Fiordland and cruised through Thomson and Doubtful Sounds and found an anchorage at the SW of the entrance to Doubtful Sound ready for an early start for Breaksea Sound. There was a problem as there was no accommodation for me or the helicopter pilot. The ship was not moving so what should we do - fly back home of course and as no accommodation available in Invercargill the young American pilot stayed with us.

Next morning I was introduced to a shopping list by the pilot that the Chef required so it was off to the supermarket for food and more food. My club card did ok. Then he said we have to get the mail which was being held by the Port Company at Bluff. I said I would drive to Bluff to pick but no we would do it air mail via helicopter! Then it was back to Fiordland to move the vessel to Breaksea Sound.

Some of the guests went by helicopter to go hunting with a guide whilst the rest enjoyed the Acheron passage in beautiful weather. A stop off at Astronomer Point to see where Cook and his crew watched the transit of Venus and brewed beer. Also I suggested the rocks again for crayfish and the magic happened making the chef happy.

We sailed deep into the Sound to Supper Cove to anchor for the night. Off the helicopter pilot and myself went to Invercargill and home for the night. I think we had fish and chips as a takeaway whilst the guests on board dined on venison, cod and crayfish washed down with French wine.

The next day dawned and off we went back to the vessel to head down to Preservation Inlet with the guests under escort with a walk to Puysegur Point and a view of the famous lighthouse. It was again a beautiful day which killed the theory that 80% of the time it was gale force winds and the other 20% was storm force!

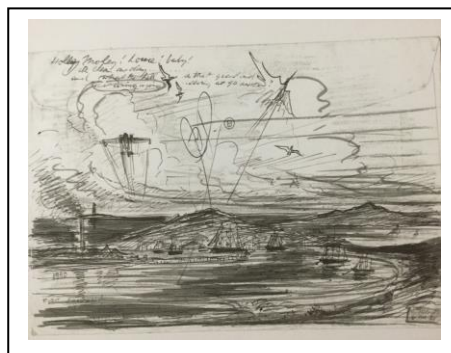
No helicopter trip for the final night as the chopper pilot, guide and myself stayed in the Preservation Lodge for the night which was a unique experience with all the history surrounding the area notwithstanding the large elephant seal which seemed to guard the path to the lodge.

The next morning the guests were taken off by a chartered helicopter and flown to Queenstown to continue their New Zealand experience. The SuRi was heading for Dunedin so I was dropped off at the Bluff pilot station and headed home to reality.

John Henderson

## Illustration of Bluff Harbour

Some envelope art depicting Bluff past and present - by the late Jon Francis Petrie.



## The Listener

Each week I devoured the "Listener" as I know many of you will have as well. With every copy I headed straight to "Wordsworth" and that will be no surprise to some. Flushed from seeing my name in print, in what turned out to be the final copy, I decided to take on the next weeks challenge:

"Write a brief letter to a fictional character about a world event, past or present. You can take any angle you like, for example, you could be seeking their help, writing in hindsight or simply writing to a friend."

This was what I came up with:

Ronald Gump  
President  
Ameristan

Mr President,

I have a school project to find out why Ameristan is such a great country and I have some questions for you that might help me to understand.

- 1 Is your country a democracy and if so what are the benefits of that?
- 2 Does going to war help your country in some way?
- 3 Does your country have more friends than enemies?
- 4 Is violence an important part of Ameristan culture?
- 5 Is our planet important to Ameristan and in what way?

Thank you in advance,

Greta Funberg 12yrs

Invercargill

New Zealand

As I was about to press "Send" the news came through that my favourite magazine was no more. In some ways that was as devastating as Covid 19 for this geriatric.

So as not to disappoint Greta you might like to answer on behalf of "Ronald Gump" the 5 questions she posed. Remember that any resemblance to persons living, or otherwise, is as likely as the demise of the "Listener". Copies, still in the house, have become heirlooms overnight.



## Good Health

A few months on, as Covid and the health minister fade from mind, David will have time to walk on and reflect that life is indeed a beach.

Daniel Phillips

Take care and stay safe fellow U3Avians.

Nola's garden – a place to pause and reflect.

