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COASTLINE

April
& May
2019

Longwood Loop Gaining Momentum

Interest and excitement about this re-localisation and resilience project, is increasing.

When presented at the Harvest Festival and the Hui it really caught people’s attention. Responses included people looking to move to live around The Loop, and thinking how they can instigate a similar project in their own area of NZ.

Trading locally means our money stays local, to be re-spent locally repeatedly. Locals will need to make fewer trips to the city saving on running costs, carbon footprint and time. The Longwood Loop certainly has the potential to rejuvenate the small towns on and near The Loop.

After the Festival and the Hui, a group did an overnight road trip around The Loop to share the picturesque area. They imagined and discussed development opportunities possible in each town. It generated great discussion and excitement!

An offer of an electric car and a trailer has been received already, so The Loop trips can begin while we seek funding for a larger electric passenger and freight vehicle.

Our SCES Loop bank account stands at \$500 plus dollars due primarily to one generous donation. As the SCES is a registered charity, all donations are tax deductible. The Longwood Loop bank account number for donations is SCES 03 1355 0724408 02.

The next steps include: writing funding applications, surveying residents about ways they would like to contribute and/or benefit, setting up a website and finding a “trading post” in each town.

If you would like to know more, or become involved, email Robyn on, robyn@sces.org.nz Together we can make this happen.

Dates to Diary:

30th April	Organic Gardening meeting at Enviro Centre 7pm Tues
15th May	SCES committee meeting at Enviro Centre 7pm Wed
28th May	Organic Gardening meeting at Enviro Centre 7pm Tues
11th June	SCES committee meeting at Enviro Centre 7pm Tues

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Autumn is Busy for SCES

It's been a hectic period for the SCES. The March Heritage Harvest Festival is a major event on the SCES annual calendar, and combined with the very successful 2019 National Permaculture Hui, a super-major event, personnel resources have been stretched++. Hence our joint April & May Coastline with pics to share these two major events. See pages 4 to 7.

We are delighted to have Rachel Rose as our Guest Writer for this Coastline. Rachel is a very experienced journalist, including formerly for the NZ Gardener, who now works independently. Read her article on the right.

Robyn Guyton outlines the excitement and challenges of her new experience of fulfilling the shopping list for an organic meal for 90, on page 5.

And we have part 2 of Nathan Macnamara sharing his family journey establishing their large home garden, including trialling various tools and technologies.

On page one you'll see the update about the ongoing major project, the Longwood Loop. Please do get in touch if you want more information or are able to support this community-focused project.

If you know of someone or you yourself are doing something relevant to our SCES vision, then let us know so we can share it in the Coastline for others to learn from and enjoy.

Wendy Joy

**Coastline Production Co-ordinator
The South Coast Environment Society Incorporated**

is a NZ registered Charitable Trust (Reg. No. CC41561).

The Society vision is of a sustainable, resilient community of good leaders, resources, systems and examples available to assist and support people to adopt sustainable lifestyles and care for and about our environment.

The Riverton Environment Centre is one project operated by the Society. Volunteers open the Centre for the public 40 hours a week. The displays, information and resources are inspiring and enabling, incorporating a blend of traditional ways and new concepts showcased to give people more earth-friendly options in their daily lives. The Centre also retails organically produced goods & produce.█

Impressions of a Visitor

by Rachel Rose

I made my first visit to Riverton for the Heritage Harvest Festival last month, travelling down from Whanganui.

My focus was split: I was being a journalist, knowing I was in the middle of a great story, and trying to find which story to tell. But I'm also a steward of land and grower of food and forests, so I was dashing between workshops and conversations, taking in new ideas I could carry home and use.

It was easy to love the event. I was also well impressed when I learned about the thinking that underpinned its structure. For instance, having a market green and open talks in the tent, so as to encourage more (and more diverse) people to visit for the first time? Brilliant.

The invisible structures that are being patiently and lovingly created in Riverton are at least as impressive as the physical structures like the Environment Centre and the heritage orchards. Indeed, it's hard to separate the spirit and the material; several people told me about how Robyn's work on the heritage orchard project is building connections between diverse parts of the community. Growing more than apples here...

Dieter Proebst's workshop was superb. His experience as a biodynamic nurseryman and orchardist is so extensive and grounded in his own keen observations. It's also meticulously recorded and his Excel spreadsheets detailing the characteristics of scores of apple varieties made my jaw drop. His offer to share this information is exceedingly generous.

I also loved that some workshops were hosted by people who weren't experts. They were willing to share what they did know, and what they knew was valuable. It seems evidence of a friendly, supportive community — and a resilient one, making good use of the resources it has.

I read, a lot. Occasionally, I watch videos, like the documentary on the Guyton's forest garden. But the learning from being in conversation in the same room—or knee deep in the sweet cicely—is of a different order.

Thanks for having me, Riverton. I'll be back just as soon as I can.



Autumn Gardening with Robert

Clear withered weeds and spent vines from your tunnel house floor and add compost in readiness for next season. Don't wait till spring though, to get planting in there. Leafy vegetables, especially those of Asian origin, planted now will grow quickly enough to produce fresh leaves for salads and stews over winter. A Southland tradition is to plant broad beans around ANZAC day. Even if you don't like to eat them, they are a great winter green crop to nourish and protect your soil.



If you are a dead-header, do that task now in order to tidy up your garden and reduce the number of apartments available for earwigs and slaters to live in. Compost all materials you have clipped from the garden and recycle them back through the system.

Frosts will have felled the last of your potato tops, so when you need them, dig up the tubers and consign them to the pot, or the sack (unwashed) if you are wanting to store them through the winter, eating them at will.

Yams too will need to be lifted if their tops have been frosted. Don't pull them up too soon though, as they hold off swelling up till the last moment.

Robert Guyton

Get to Know More About Our Southland Community

Robyn Guyton was invited to be part of the Southland District Council, Our People, Our Places – My Southland Story series the SDC is producing in conjunction with James Jubb of Jubb Studios, Invercargill, celebrating inspiring Southlanders.

Each Sunday night, a new video, about a Southlander(s) who is doing something innovative or is the heart and soul of their community, is available to watch on the SDC website. The SDC is thrilled to make the series available as an acknowledgement of the great things happening in our communities and the SCES is thrilled that Robyn is part of the series.

Check out these links for more information and to watch the individual videos;
Homepage;

<https://www.southlanddc.govt.nz/my-southland/our-people-our-places-my-southland-story/>

Robyn and the Orchard project video. It is a wonderful summary of the project.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcyLDTPv1-0>

Mike and Jen Ryder, Straw Hat Gardens video. They are one of our new organic vege suppliers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLP8g068PH>

My Southland Story Farm Fresh South – Raw milk now available in Woodlands

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ngu2PDDXsE>

Living Water Waituna Creek rehabilitation project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eb777t1PUHM>

Bat Spotting Expedition

A sizeable group met at the Environment Centre warmly dressed and ready for an evening of exploration in the Pourakino Valley.

Bat expert from Dunedin, Catrina, provided an introduction about bats and what to expect being mindful that it was a venture into bats' natural environment, so there were no guarantees.

And, unfortunately, the group did not manage to see any bats that particular evening but everyone certainly learnt more about the elusive little creatures that covertly inhabit our local environment without most of us ever encountering them.



We will try to spot the little creatures again in spring - check the Coastline or our website for details.

Heritage Harvest Festival

Just Gets Better and Better!

This years' Heritage Harvest Festival was as successful as ever; in fact, even better than previous years, if the measure is community involvement and that is how the organizers of the festival weigh-up the weekend. It well-attended by locals and there were locals involved at every level.

The number of visitors to the festival grows every year, as do the number of stallholders. The food stalls in particular, get better and better annually and now provide a range of taste experiences as wide as can be found anywhere else.

Our workshop presenters and speakers were all well supported by listeners and participants and the new forum; a speakers' marquee, was entertaining and somewhat provocative. Interactive talks took place, involving everybody there in discussions on a range of topics.

Children enjoyed the chance to play in the well-provisioned "childrens' tent" as well as play-shopping at the Country Mouse Market where they bought, sold and traded such romantic articles as acorns, rosehips, hazelnuts and dried flowers.

The apple press spun 'til it had extracted every drop from the apples brought in to feed it and happy orchardists headed home with bottles full of fresh apple juice.

Vegetables of remarkable size and health weighed-down the display tables and showed how clever Southland gardeners are at providing food from the garden for the table. The childrens' "vegetable creature" display drew praise and laughter from everyone who saw it.

The Heritage Harvest Festival was an absolute cracker and congratulations go to everyone who helped make it that way.



THANK YOU to All

Such a Great Team!

What a wonderful harvest festival we had this year! Beautiful vegetables, fruits & preserves from gardeners across Southland, good food made by amazing local bakers & cooks. Everyone enjoyed shopping at the festival farmers market out in the sunshine, and the workshops taught and inspired many!

Thank you to all of the lovely hardworking people who made our festival possible. We couldn't (and wouldn't want to) do it without you! Karla, Sam, and Robyn for all of your work behind the scenes making it all possible; our Organic Group volunteers who put in countless hours in the food co-op and setting up, manning stalls, packing down, and for making sure everything was kept running back at the Environment Centre; special thanks to Lynore, Jude, Andrea, Tanya, Anna & Hannah, Dave, Geoff, and Reegan. Thank you to Robert, Rebecca, and Terry for getting up early and running around all day making sure everything was there and in its place. Thank you Nick for taking amazing Forest Garden Tours & for the work you and Josie did making the awesome Seed Saving Display! Thank you to the lovely Gaylene & Margaret for making beautiful Devonshire Tea scones & warm drinks and for the cheerful & helpful environment you had in the kitchen. Thank you to Charlotte, Maxime, Angela, Rut & Simone for coming from so far away to help so much! Thank you to Mary Jane, Tamsin, Carrie, Christine & Lynne for putting together the beautiful harvest feast and ceilidh evening - they were both beautiful & lovely. Thank you to all of our knowledgeable and inspirational tutors and speakers, to our talented growers & producers, and thank you to all the lovely folk who came along to be a part of our festival and make it really special!

What a great year; thank you everyone!

Hollie Guyton, Festival Organiser

Robert





Apple man: Leo

Seal and unicorn: Rawinia

Dolphins: Mennel family

Country Mouse Market

Photos above: Heritage Harvest Festival 2019

Organic Supplies for 90 Meals Please!

Can we do it?

40 organic dairy farmers from the USA Organic Valley Co-op <https://www.organicvalley.co-op> visited Southland in March. For the Tuesday night organic meal in Invercargill they were joined by 50 others; supporters of the NZ tour, the Southern Organic Group and the Open Country sponsors. For a link to a blog about the South Island leg of the tour - <https://organicfarmsystems.co.nz/blog/>

The Kelvin Hotel in Invercargill was not used to preparing full organic meals. Their suppliers couldn't guarantee either the types or quantities of organic goods that would be available when required. Chef Brendon was given the contact details of the Riverton Organic Food Co-op with the suggestion that we may be able to help. Liking a challenge and always keen to prove things are possible, I accepted the challenge of supplying all the organic produce the chef required to cater for the hotel evening meal for 90 people, with fingers crossed behind my back!

I gave the chef a comprehensive list of what would be available in 3 weeks' time to compliment local organic meat and the prices. He said an organic dessert would be way too hard until I suggested traditional apple crumble and a fresh seasonal fruit salad; he agreed!

Then the real challenge began when he sent me his 'shopping list' 10 days ahead of date required! Some ingredients were easy such as salad greens and fresh vegetables available from Lora River Farm and Straw Hat Gardens. Tanya could supply the eggs, Michelle had 40 kg of cooking apples of all the same variety off a huge old tree at Waimatuku. We had the dry goods in stock on our Food Co-op shelves, most other bulk fruit and veges could be sourced by our national suppliers and Taste Nature in Dunedin could supply the tricky things that much bigger shops can stock, e.g. 700 gms of sliced almonds and 1 kg of organic feta cheese.

Only bulk basil proved most elusive, so I put a plea out on Facebook and fortunately Robin from Lorneville had an over-supply in his tunnel house. He said, 'help yourself to a shopping bag full', which we did as we headed into Invercargill with the 'Must deliver on Monday' list. Yippee, We did it!...all delivered! Such a relief!

Then nervously, I awaited the results. I was invited to the meal along with husband Robert, as he was guest speaker. The meal was wonderfully presented; bright, colourful and delicious. The Chef came over especially to thank me. He really enjoyed the quality and taste of the foods and was happy with the prices. He looks forward to doing business with us again one day!.

Robyn Guyton

2019 National Permaculture Hui



The National Permaculture Hui 2019 held in Riverton based in our food forest garden was a great success by all measures, which seems a bold thing to say but that's certainly how it seems to us organisers. We were well aware of the many things that could have gone wrong; the plastic roof of the tunnel house dining room not installed on time, gas califonts for the showers not arrived on time, cable for the Chefs 'kitchen' not stretching the distance, hangi pit not dug in time, clear roof for the yurt not installed before the powhiri began, but no such dramas! All went off very well!!!



Above all, the main worry was, the weather! What if it rained the whole time and turned the paths to mud? What if everyone was wet and sitting for 3 days in an enclosed space; wet wool has a particular fragrance that builds and builds in a closed space. But the weather was perfect; the sun shone, the skies remained stubbornly blue and Riverton showed her very best face. Sure, the mornings were chilly and those sleeping in tents felt the pinch of the South, but no one complained and the early-morning brazier was lovely and warm to sit around.



Photographs of the event showed cheerful faces against a backdrop that looked more summer than autumn. All of the systems worked well; the caterer 'The Green Cuisine' produced amazing food, tents stayed up, paths stayed firm. A great many conversations took place, in the spaces provided for audiences to listen in, and just about everywhere else in the garden as well.

Our keynote speakers built understandings about land use, water care and community building, to very appreciative audiences who contributed freely to the discussions. Workshops on topics diverse, popped up in every available space; under the linden tree, in the tipi, on the veranda; everywhere a half-dozen or so people could sit and talk.

The pecha kucha talk-with-pictures was very entertaining and popular, as were the 'blackboard' lectures from the more philosophical attendees; food for thought indeed! The depth of experience and commitment to living fairly and well was a feature of those who hosted and attended the 2019 permaculture hui and most will have felt that they weren't able to talk with as many people as they would have liked to, in the 3 short days; I know I wished I'd been able to talk longer and more often with more of those interesting, generous folk who were out and about in our garden.



Hoss Seeder

Broadfork

Two wheel tractor



Our Family Homestead Adventure

Part 2; The Good Life - 21st Century Edition

by Nathan Macnamara, SCES Member

Because of the May delivery timing of our new two wheel tractor I felt we were going to be a bit late to do any serious growing. We had many cold months ahead and the ground would be too cold and wet for any real restoration to the soil, so I thought.

But after plowing a 30x15m patch, we let a good rain soak the soil then covered the entire bed with a silage tarp to keep the soil covered and regrowth at bay. At random spot checks through winter it surprised me how many worms were up at the surface doing all their amazing work when I thought they'd have gone deeper.

We decided to stay away from using a rotary tiller attachment early on. I wasn't sure if it would be successful as so many of the farmers we were taking our cues from had employed them. I thought it would slow us in the first season - not having the pasture we'd turned in, all chewed up. However the clincher was seeing Joel at Earthtools describe how using a tiller might well fine up soil above its rotation line, but could also create a hard pan on the underside of the tynes and the issues that creates over time.

I also didn't subscribe to the idea of constantly mixing soil layers. Our goal is to be as low till as we can eventually – possibly even dropping out the use of the broadfork once we get our soil health where it needs to be. But that's a work in progress and I'm happy to be patient for several seasons and monitor soil health progress over time. Our main tool to this end will be adding compost mixed specifically as required.

The attachment for the walking tractor that has shaved off potentially dozens of hours is the power harrow. Instead of rotating tynes which invert soil layers, it has forks on a vertical axis which mix the soil from a depth between 1/8 and 4 inches as desired. It has been incredible for mixing compost with the top layer of soil and for creating fine seedbeds for direct sowing.

With our seemingly turbocharged start, it felt a good idea to just begin planting whatever we could and see what would take. So we got into planting mode without a plan, but rather as time allowed.

With minimal hand weeding we were able to get carrots sown early October via a Hoss seeder shortly after we had transplanted ¾ of a bed of strawberries (which have been amazing). A bit of trial and error with some successes and failures, rewards and challenges but personally therapeutic compared to sitting behind a computer screen so much! ⁷

Community Network

Is there something you would like to Buy, Sell, Swap or you have a Service to offer? Any burning questions? Maybe a Hint, Tip or Idea to share or Feedback on a previous article?

If relevant to our local community / environment / sustainability and space is available, we will be happy to include your item. If Selling goods or a service and you make a sale, a donation to the SCES would be greatly appreciated.

Riverton Saturday Markets - Flecks Hall

Beside the Environment Centre:

27 April 9am - 2pm

4th May 10.00am-2.30pm **11th May** 10.00am-2.30pm

18th May 10.00am-2.30pm **1st June** 10.00am-2.30pm

Come along to buy or to sell anything locally grown or locally made.

For Sale Traditional Straw Bales \$10 each, in Riverton, **Text** 027 3683 831 for details.

Co-op News

Pumpkin Special

This years harvest is in. Only \$3.50 kg for April and May. Buy and store for winter and spring in a cool dark place



New Product - Pumpkin Seed Oil



- Supports prostate health
- Great tasting nutritious oil
- Rich in essential fatty acid
- Supports hormonal balance
- Good source of vitamin E

\$18.50 for 250 ml

Please send in your Readers Patch contributions by the third Friday of each month to:
coastline@sces.org.nz

Support the South Coast Environment Society

Community support enables the South Coast Environment Society to continue to operate the Riverton Environment Centre and manage several successful projects throughout Southland.

If you like what we do, and want to help us to do more, please consider; donating money, volunteering time, becoming a member, and / or sponsoring a project. <http://www.sces.org.nz/about/donate>

Ph 03 234 8717

Visit the Environment Centre

The South Coast Environment Centre is situated on the main street of Riverton on the Southern Scenic route.

Phone: 03 2348 717 Email: office@sces.org.nz

Opening hours are:

- Monday - Friday: 10:00am - 4:30pm
- Saturday: 10:30am - 4:30pm
- Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:30pm



www.sces.org.nz



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