

COASTLINE

SUMMER 23/24

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Perennially Popular Summer Destination

27 years after opening, Riverton Environment Centre and the South Coast Environment Society have a long and unique history. Nearly every day people come into the Centre and say they have finally got to visit us after reading so much about us over the years; they might be passionate about seed saving, organic gardening or self sufficiency. They may love the Heritage Orchard Project or want to know more about the resilience project - Longwood Loop. They may have read about the Harvest Festival or our new Bountiful Backyard Workshop Weekend. They could be interested in forest gardening or a NZ Gardener reader who is following Robert Guyton's stories.

These people aren't just from NZ - some of our projects are internationally known. We are often surprised when an overseas traveler comes into the Centre and knows something about us, and even may have come to Riverton especially to visit the Centre. For some it has been even the reason they came to visit NZ in the first place!

On the other hand sometimes we also have long-time locals come into the Centre for the first time, not having previously realised what a busy and interesting place we manage.

So this summer we are expecting to be very busy welcoming people from near and far to the Centre and no doubt many of them will be booking for a Forest Garden tour while they are here. When someone says 'what an amazing shop you have', our volunteers smile and say thank you and are proud that they are part of something so cool and enduring.

We are not a typical business, as we are a registered charity: any profits we make go right back into our various projects and community services. So this summer do come and visit us and bring your visitors; they are sure to be impressed. If you like what we do and can offer a little of your time, put your name down on our volunteer roster and join our friendly team.

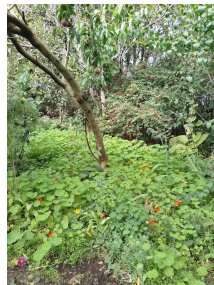
Seasons Greetings and Happy Holidays from our team at Riverton Environment Centre and the South Coast Environment Society!

DATES TO DIARY:

January - March	Regular Forest Garden tours (see our website for details)
20 January	Riverton Repair Café, Senior Citizens Hall, 10am - 2pm - just drop in.....
23 & 24 March	15th annual Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival, Aparima College

Raumati (Summer) Gardening with Nick

It's all about resilience this season! We are expecting a windier, wetter (or maybe drier?) summer, so our gardens need to be able to cope with these conditions. How? Well, number one on the list has to be mulch - it protects the soil from excessive sun as well as the effects of intense rainfall, plus it maintains steady soil temperatures, avoiding fluctuations that can freak out some plants, leading to 'bolting' (prematurely going to seed). You don't have to rush out and spend money on mulch material - any organic matter will do - straw, hay, woodchips, or grass clippings are great, as they allow rain to pass through (as long as they're not too thick) - impermeable mulches like plastic or sheets of dry newspaper can't do this so will lead to dry soil and runoff.



Left: These cabbages are appreciating a mulch of grass clippings; compost is great as mulch; this peach tree has a 'living mulch' of nasturtiums.

Above: Lovage with wood chip mulch.

Other things that boost our gardens' resilience include: making sure you have good shelter, as wind not only batters delicate plants it also sucks moisture from the soil; adding good 'living' compost and minimising digging, which help build soil structure and enable better water infiltration and storage; planting a diversity of crops, so that if something doesn't do well, something else (hopefully) will; and mowing the lawn less, or even not at all (horror!), as this will absorb heavy rain better, reduce the impact of surface flooding and provide cool sheltered conditions for beneficial creatures.

Raised beds and tunnelhouses are very vulnerable to drying out over summer, so consider using some kind of drip irrigation (as well as plenty of mulch!). Evening is the best time to water all gardens, as it can soak in during the cool of the night. Make sure you are using good homemade living compost in your raised beds and greenhouses, as your plants can't easily access soil microorganisms and are effectively growing in 'islands'. Plants growing outside in the ground will probably be fine (if you are following good practice) but bought bags of garden centre compost (even 'certified organic') don't add the beneficial biology that you get from a well-made properly alive compost. Insufficient water and poor soil biology are two key reasons people struggle with greenhouses and raised beds, especially in summer.



With water restrictions already in place in Southland District, it is worth remembering the advice of Bill Mollison, co-founder of Permaculture: **"If you only do one thing, collect rainwater"**.

Left: This 200 litre water barrel also doubles as a frame for growing loganberries;

Right: 1000 litre IBC tanks are fairly cheap and very easy to connect to even a small shed roof (one square metre of roof will collect one litre of water from one millimeter of rain).



Peat Eats Peas



Peas are like tiny emeralds resting in their armored shells.

I personally prefer podding peas, but that is only my opinion. In general peas are a great snack during summer. They are refreshing, sweet and crunchy. Flower peas (Sweet peas) are also a beautiful addition to the garden as they have colourful sweet smelling flowers. Most nights I like to gather a few peas while I read, usually a mix of eating and podding peas. Peas are a very versatile vegetable, you can put them in a soup or stew, a salad or starter, or just enjoy them on their own. If you have garden space or even just a pot consider growing some peas; you won't regret it!

When I am peckish I prefer a platter of peas to a lump of cheese!

Peat Kidney

OUR COMMUNITY

Community Gardening Connections



Having left school feeling fairly disinterested in what life seemed to offer, I serendipitously ended up at Waimarama Community Gardens in Nelson. Very quickly, thanks to the enthusiastic, knowledgeable mentors I started working alongside, I found that organic gardening was what I had been missing in my life to that point! The rest, as they say, is history.

We are so lucky in Southland to have so many people who are keen to share their time and knowledge in supporting others with their gardening. Through our work here at SCES, we have made many connections with some of the awesome community gardens around Southland; over the last couple of years our education team has been invited to run workshops at community gardens in Invercargill, Te Anau, Winton, Riversdale, Matura and Riverton. The gardeners in these places are doing such wonderful work!



At next year's Heritage Harvest Festival we are planning to bring together representatives of as many community gardens as possible, from around Southland, but also Central Otago (and anywhere people are keen to come from!), with the aim of building stronger connections, finding out what everyone is up to and what they hope to achieve and seeing if there are ways we can all work together to boost our mahi.

We are also hoping that soon some funding will be granted to kick off a 'community composting' programme, to start early next year, which we see as being a perfect fit with community gardening. It will be great to be able to find out who is working in this space and what they are up to.



If you have a connection with any kind of 'community garden' (we know they come in all shapes and sizes!), please get in touch with us - we would love to meet you at the Heritage Harvest Festival next year!

Nick Kiddey

Community Connections: Revitalize!

Set on the foothills of the Takitimu mountains at Blackmount is Tim and Helen Gow's farm which has been fully BioGro certified organic since March 1989. They now also use electric farm vehicles!

Camp on site and enjoy the live music, food trucks, family-friendly play areas, walks and animals. Or book a hut at the Monowai Camp only 12 km away.

Day Tickets are also available so there is no excuse not to add a bit of culture to your summer!

Check the website here: www.revitalize.nz/

For more information about their farm:

www.organic-rams.co.nz/

MOUNTAIN VALLEY ORGANICS® PRESENTS

REVITALIZE
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MUSIC • WELLBEING • REGENERATION

2 - 4 JANUARY 2024

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"THE COOLEST LITTLE FESTIVAL IN NZ"

FARM FESTIVAL

TUESDAY 2nd JAN JULIAN TEMPLE BAND • LEFT OR RIGHT
• TODD'S TRIBE • THE ENTIRE ALPHABET • SOULFISH • KING LEO • OPEN MIC

WEDNESDAY 3rd JAN HELENA & LE FEEL (International) • SAM CULLEN & HIS BAND
• RUBY FUSION • AART SMITH • KING LEO • SOULFISH • BRAD MACCLURE BAND
• ANNA VAN RIEL • CARLA LADSTÄETTER

THURSDAY 4th JAN JAMMIN' SESSION • HEALING & WORKSHOPS: GROUNDING • EVS • SINGING IN PARTS • DADGAD GUITAR TUNING • ORGANIC FARM WALK/TALK
• PLUS HEAPS MORE HAPPENING AROUND CAMP ...

AND ROSALIND THE RAINBOW FAIRY EVERY DAY

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Music, Mountains, and Memories

TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT humanitynz.org

ALL THE DETAILS AT www.revitalize.nz

Saturday 20 January
Senior Citizens Rooms, Riverton
10am - 2pm
Let's Repair Together!

- small household appliances
- simple jewellery fixes
- zips replaced, hemming, darning
- bike repairs

Riverton Repair Café

EDUCATION - Looking Back

Bountiful Backyards Workshop Weekend leads to lots of lively learning

175 tickets, 15 different workshops, 14 hours, 8 tutors, countless questions and answers and copious cups of tea and coffee - what a weekend!

A HUGE thank you to all the wonderful people who visited Riverton from as far afield as Te Anau, Glenorchy, Queenstown and Dunedin to make the most of our inaugural Bountiful Backyards Workshop Weekend. Adults and children alike had a great time.

Our knowledgeable, experienced tutors really enjoyed supporting people's learning across a range of topics and according to the feedback, everyone who came along would recommend us to others, with the range of children's workshops being especially popular.

All in all, it was counted a great success and now plans are underway for our next cyclical seasonal celebration, the Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival - see you there on the 23rd and 24th of March 2024, if not before!



All the wonderful things our hands can do!

Riverton Organic Food Co-op - looking for volunteers

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who come in help us in all sort of ways.

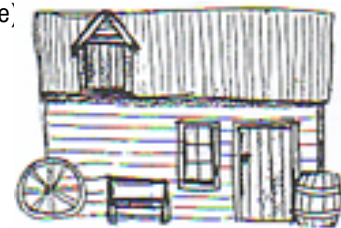
- Serving customers and meeting both locals and travelers.
- Bagging up bulk goods into paper or cello bags (so we can all get the cheaper price)
- Ordering and managing stock
- Unpacking and pricing items
- Stocking shelves

This means that our prices for an organic food shop are the cheapest in NZ according to many travelling visitors to the Centre.

**What area would you like to help with?
(2 hours a week / fortnight or month)**

We have a flexible roster in the office so if you can share a little of your time, put your name down.

You will enjoy being part of our friendly team 😊



Est. 1991

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.

www.sces.org.nz/about/donate

Ph 03 234 8717

EDUCATION - Looking Forward

The 15th Annual Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival!

Our 15th Heritage Harvest Festival is coming up quickly!

Join us on 23 & 24 March 2024 for another wonderful weekend of workshops, demonstrations, good food and brilliant company. Put the dates in your calendar now! Choose your preserves and recipes to enter in festival competitions! Start training for the Champion of the Harvest Competition!

Workshops

We are excited to welcome back some of our wonderful tutors from previous years, and to introduce some new tutors to the festival from near and far. The 2024 festival will include workshops on planning and preparing for your home harvest, crafting with natural materials, harvesting from the wild world, cooking, preserving and fermenting your harvest, and more!

We will be sharing our full festival line-up in January with bookings opening early February. SCES members have an opportunity for early workshop bookings (and a discount!) - so if you would like to get the chance to choose your workshops first, become a member now! Just follow this link: www.sces.org.nz/membership

Volunteers

Would you like to be a part of our Festival volunteer team? Please get in touch! We need you! There are all sorts of opportunities to get involved, and roles behind the scenes as well as roles interacting with festival goers. Festival volunteers receive free workshop passes and are so appreciated - we couldn't have our festival without our wonderful volunteer team! Get in touch with us to volunteer.

Stallholders

We are welcoming applications now from potential stallholders for our 15th harvest festival!

Each year, hundreds of visitors travel to the Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival to learn new skills, exchange knowledge, eat good food, and shop with our small vendors. We invite vendors to begin preparations with us, apply for stall space and plan any demonstrations or activities. For more information on being a stallholder, go to our website page: www.sces.org.nz/heritage-harvest-festival-2024

For any more information, go to the website or get in touch.

You can also follow the Riverton Heritage Harvest Festival on Facebook: www.facebook.com/rivertonheritageharvestfestival



Poetry

Do Not Impede The Thoroughfare

Don't dismiss. Pause. Allow your view to freshen.
Look past, 'how untidy'.

See these plants rejoicing. Being allowed to live
in this Spray Free Zone.

For, it is only, imbedded attitudes, that will
Impede, their thoroughfare.

Teoti Jardine 1/12/2023

Teoti's Garden

I popped around to Teoti's to drop him off a nasturtium plant. He showed me around, and as we wandered the lovely mown paths I appreciated the beauty of the unmown grass seed heads - such a diversity of grasses! There are flowers everywhere, either intentionally planted or intentionally unremoved, and vegetables tucked into sheltered spots. I particularly admired the planting of crimson-seeded broad beans with buckwheat and painted mountain corn - productive, attractive and a magnet for beneficial creatures! We admire and respect Teoti's sustainable landscape management approach.

Nick



*Teoti took me for a tour
of his 'rewilding'
garden. My
thoroughfare was not
impeded.*

*Crimson broad beans,
painted mountain corn
and buckwheat - what
a combo!*



Our Website

We are very proud of the work we do and the reach we have throughout Southland, New Zealand and the World.

Our website features high-quality information that people are able to access for free, wherever they live! Looking at our statistics tells us a lot about who in the world is checking us out.

Over the last 365 days, we have had over 10,000 site visits, including 200+ from the United States, 125 from Australia, 68 from the UK, 52 from Germany and 32 from South Korea. Of the 9,000+ visits from within New Zealand, 2,500 were from Christchurch, 1,800 from Auckland, 1,000 from Invercargill, 470 from Dunedin 338 from Wellington and 293 from Queenstown!

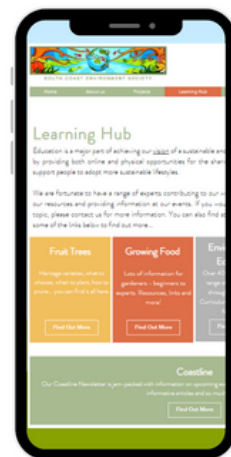
The most popular pages on the website tend to vary depending on what we are up to - leading up to the Harvest Festival, this was the most popular page; the same for the Fruit Tree Sale and our Bountiful Backyards weekend. Of course the Forest Garden page is always very popular!

We also generate a significant amount of income from the website through sales (and to a certain extent donations). Since moving our Annual Fruit Tree Sale online we have seen revenue increase, and selling Moon Calendars (always highly sought after), Heritage Orchard Handbooks and Beginner Organic Gardening booklets has seen our online sales top \$29,000 this year - the profit of all these sales goes towards our community-focused, not-for-profit work and is helping us achieve our goal of being more financially self-sufficient.

If you haven't taken the opportunity to peruse our pages or purchase our products - what are you waiting for?! We highly value your support.

You can also sign up as a Member of SCES and get all the benefits that entails...

www.sces.org.nz



Part-time Paid Roles

We have opportunities for one or more people to join our team: A mix of project management, garden management, community outreach, and staff relief, to suit the successful applicant/s. Email robyn@sces.org.nz for further details.

Our People

Remembering a NZ Pioneer in Healthy Living by Robyn Guyton, Manager, Riverton Environment Centre

Val Parker established the Sunflower Café in Fairlie many years ago. Rob and I discovered it on a biking trip in the area one summer holiday back when we were students.

Subsequently Val came and spoke about 'staying healthy' at the Soil and Health conference in Invercargill in 1990. I could tell she was a very knowledgeable person who I would like to learn more from. I asked Rob if we could go and visit her in Fairlie; he wasn't interested as it was too far away and we had a lot to do as we had just shifted into our new house. I mentioned it a couple of times over the next couple of years in case he changed his mind; he hadn't.

The following year we joined Willing Workers On Organic Farms (WWOOF) to enable us to get help with our gardens and tree planting from the 'woofers'. These are usually travelers who come to work and learn in exchange for a bed and meals. And who should be in the WWOOF book? Val Parker! I immediately thought we could go as Wwoofers and help her! Rob said sure if she would have us with two pre-schoolers in tow. I took that as a yes!

The **very next morning** the phone rang. To my very great surprise, it was Val Parker - she had heard we had a strong Organic gardening group down here and wondered if we were interested in her coming down and running some workshops for us!

So we didn't have to go to Fairlie: Val came to us! She stayed several weekends over the next 3 or 4 years while she ran a plethora of workshops; vegan cooking, therapeutic massage, acupuncture, meditation, dowsing, herbal remedies and more. Val enriched our community with all she knew then went on to do the same in other communities. She was a treasure!



Sadly, Val passed away in April this year, aged 93 years. We will be forever grateful for her willingly sharing her valuable skills and knowledge and I feel privileged to have had Val come and stay with us.

Our Recipes

Some healthy homemade treats for summer from Val Parker's 'Sunflower Cook Book' and café menu:

Cashew Nut Cream Delight

- ½ cup raw cashews
- 1 Tablespoon honey or 3 dates
- ½ teaspoon of vanilla essence
- 1 cup of water

Blend together until very smooth.
Freeze to set the dessert.



Carob Sesame Balls

- 6 Tablespoons warm honey
- 2 Tablespoons almond or peanut butter
- 6 teaspoons of carob or cocoa powder
- 3 cups of sunflower seeds
- ½ cup Sesame seeds

Blend the first 4 ingredients, roll into small balls and coat with sesame seeds.
Store in the fridge



Nutty Chew

- 1 ¼ cups sunflower seeds
- 1 cup honey
- 3 cups coconut
- 1 cup flour of your choice
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup dates
- 2 beaten eggs

Mix all ingredients together and press down well into a lined baking tin. (Approx. 1.5 cm thick)
Bake at 140 degrees for 20 minutes. Slice when warm and store in an airtight container.

Note the last two recipes can be halved if less is preferred.



Vegan Chocolate - only 3 ingredients

- ½ cup coconut oil
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup

Melt coconut oil in a double boiler (In a bowl inside a pot with boiling water)

Once melted remove from heat and add the other two ingredients stirring as you go until it is completely blended.

Pour onto a baking sheet.

Freeze for 60 minutes then break up into pieces. Store in the freezer.

Can add chopped dried fruit or nuts



Riverton Forest Garden Stewardship by Dylan

A Forest Garden has many layers - some say seven, some even say nine or ten. This article will focus on the ground cover layer at Riverton Forest Garden (behind the fire station).

Nature doesn't seem to want to be naked i.e. have exposed soil - have you noticed this? Perhaps you will now. We humans often make the soil bare and then nature tries to cover it with "weeds", grass, moss, etc as soon as possible. Often, we use various types of mulch to cover the soil to prevent this. Examples are weedmat, stones, woodchips, sawdust, wool, straw, and so on. Living mulch or green mulch is another option and one that allows photosynthesis to continue.

Photosynthesis means that plants take in carbon dioxide during day with sun energy and water in order to grow cellulose for their stems, leaves, etc. This is a complex process that I have oversimplified somewhat, but what happens is that plants share some of the carbohydrate sugars also produced with fungi and bacteria in the soil in exchange for minerals. This feeding of the soil life is important and something negated with many other forms of mulch.

In the Riverton Forest Garden, the two predominant green covers are Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) and Alexanders (*Smyrniolum olusatrum*). Both have tap roots, are biennial, and belong to the carrot family. They have outcompeted the grasses to a large extent and can be more easily managed than grass.

Cow parsley looks very similar to poison hemlock - a distinguishing difference is that hemlock has patches of purple on its stems. Alexanders has a long and interesting history, being an important food plant because it's best to eat in late winter when there are few other vegetables available and was used as a cure for scurvy.

A Forest Garden benefits from human interaction as this mimics what may have occurred in nature but is now missing. For example, the movement of large individual or herd animals such as moa moving through a landscape. Human interaction or disturbance event causes a cascade of subsequent events.

In the case of the Riverton Forest Garden the human disturbance is Robert and I either doing chop and drop and/or squashing down living mulch by walking around the fruit trees intentionally squashing down the Alexanders and Cow Parsley. By mid November the Cow Parsley is 5 to 6 feet tall! Amazing biomass accumulation in a short time since the start of Spring and multitudes of tiny white umbellifer flowers. Quite pretty!

So, what happens when this biomass is put down on the ground? Well, it continues to shade the soil and prevent erosion, but as some of it dies it feeds a plethora of bacteria and fungi and other decomposers. This cascades to ultimately feeding the soil. Healthy alive soil then feeds all the plants and trees again, in a cycle. A cycling of nutrients.

This will still happen without our intentional disturbance, albeit at a much much slower pace (the plants would seed, then die, and then the hard dry stalks would take a year or three to eventually break down, probably more through slow oxidation than anything else). Some of the plants we squash or cut will regrow and the process can be repeated multiple times through the growing season. It takes about 4 hours of disturbance to complete the quarter acre area and allows access to enjoy the garden and also to do other maintenance tasks.



Left to right: Cow Parsley starting to flower; Alexanders with yellow umbel flowers that insects love; Before human disturbance. Uncountable white flowers.

Other Summer 'jobs' or interactions to do in the garden include observing fruit production on each tree. While doing this one can uncross any branches, prune to thin overly dense areas on a tree, and prune off any suckers (new shoots down near the bottom of the tree trunk).

When the fruit is getting towards the size of a large marble or golf ball size, one can make the call whether to thin the fruit or not. If a tree is overloaded with fruit, it risks branches breaking and the fruit being really small. Prune by snipping off the extra fruit - often this means taking a bunch from 3 or 4 down to 2. These small fruit can still be used in various ways - fermenting or pickling for example or just left on the ground.

Paid informative tours are available: book through the Environment Centre. Or pop in to the garden any time yourself and explore.

Seasonal Ungulates in the Midst

Invasive organisms that threaten Southland's indigenous flora and fauna, both terrestrial and aquatic, are legion and growing in number and type as the climate changes.

Feral pigs and deer are on the rapid increase and making their presence felt in forest and on farm. Other ungulates have been sighted in Southland, though some are causing less concern than others. Only this week, during a meeting at Environment Southland, a quick scan of the chamber revealed at least 4 reindeer sitting boldly at the table, hardly causing a disturbance. It was fun, I suppose, for some councillors to don felt antlers for the end of year, pre-Christmas meeting, but it showed that eternal vigilance is needed at all levels if we are to rein in these seemingly benign organisms. I hope your Christmas is / was an enjoyable one.

Robert

Seasonal Herbs with Hollie: 'Rue' (*Ruta graveolens* & *R. chalepensis*)

Common Rue is a pretty plant, with little silver-green-blue leaves, and dainty yellow flowers. It is often planted in gardens in Aotearoa as a gentle attempt at deterring neighbouring cats and dogs, with its bold scent.



Common Rue is not often used in cooking, but when it is, it must only be used in small quantities as it can cause stomach upsets and other more serious problems! However, Common Rue has a delicious and much more edible cousin that I encountered in an Ethiopian Café in Wellington earlier this year - Fringed Rue.

My cup of coffee served in this café came along with a small green leaf floating in the cup, and a wonderful taste. This was Fringed Rue, which has widespread use and enjoyment in Ethiopian culture, and the flavour is delightful! Fringed Rue is called Tena Adam in Arabic, which was translated by the Ethiopian man who served the coffee to me as 'The Health of Adam'. He described many health benefits of the herb, including blood and heart health, and said that it should be taken daily.

In Ethiopian cuisine this herb is used often in the Berbere spice mix, a staple in Ethiopian curries, and flavours coffee and honey drinks. My server said that he grows Tena Adam in his back garden easily and he stated that it enjoys the climate in Wellington. I have yet to come across seeds, or better yet a Fringed Rue growing in a back garden, but I am very much looking forward to the day I do!

ROBERT'S PLANTS - Sub-Tropical Delicates

There are some very exotic plants out there and I want all of them!

Collectors of sub-tropical plants become obsessed with any and every arrival on the difficult-to-grow-plant scene and I'm no exception.

Lately, there are new arrivals galore; at the various plant-barns and across the internet where enthusiasts are swapping and selling plants like they're going out of fashion.

Recently, I found a yellow-fruited tamarillo and a new-to-me fruiting sub-tropical called "Casana", which promised tamarillo-like fruits tasting like banana passionfruit. I bought it, naturally. Both should do well under the cover of my tunnel house, providing I can find room to plant them in there: I've collected so many different sub-tropicals over the past couple of years, that despite the 20 x 10 x 5 meter dimensions of the tunnel house, I'm scrabbling for room for new plants.

Taking up the most space at present, are the seedlings of plants that fruited last year and I want to have more of; cherry guava, red and yellow, tamarillo and passionfruit seeds have struck well and I have dozens of each to be planted out, this time into the open garden, where they'll take their chances with the weather which this season is not looking especially supportive of sub-tropical delicacies, such as bananas. Despite the wind and colder temperatures, I'm planting banana pups out as if it was Samoa. They have all transplanted well and time will tell whether it was worthwhile moving them away from their parent.



Above: Passionfruit flower;
Below: ????



Henry was a dedicated, long-time seed-saving master who retired to Ohai. Before Henry passed away in 2010 he recorded his experiences of living through the Depression Years, when recycling was simply the way of life. We are sharing sections of his writings over several Coastline issues. Thank you Henry Harrington. (Full Intro in June/July 2022 Coastline).

Everything that could be repaired was repaired, gumboots had patches on them, oil skin wet weather coats and leggings were repaired. It was common to see an extra-large cape on the shoulders of oilskin coats that had been badly worn out; this gave the coat a new life.

They used cast iron pots, pans, kettles and when they sprang a leak, the hole was drilled out to the size of a bolt they had to repair it. First a small washer was put onto the bolt, then a piece of cork, then the bolt was put through the hole, another piece of cork put on then another washer and the nut was put on and tightened up to compress the cork on each side of the pot, and the end was sawn off the bolt and the edges were tapped with a hammer to keep the nut from shifting.

They made their own soap from fat collected and purified from when they cooked meat. If they kept a cow, cheese was made at the peak of the season and the whey off it used to feed a pig to be killed off during the winter for bacon. They made their own bread and as everything was done by hand, they lived very busy lives.

These skills weren't learned at school or university; they were handed down through the family or learnt from friends in their community. When my great grandparents were born, their parents weren't capable of signing the birth certificate even or reading it. Even though they were illiterate they knew how to do everything necessary to be good managers and thrifty people who could repair or make their own clothes and footwear, erect fences, build their own houses, and had a good knowledge of managing livestock.

Most of them were very observant and could detect stock health problems before they became a real problem. They didn't have access to a vet as we do today, but they knew the first signs of health problems in their livestock and treated it before it became an epidemic. I sometimes feel that the trait to be observant has been bred out of a lot of today's stockman.

A cross cut saw was used to cut down trees and to cut up firewood. It took one person on each end of the saw to work it and often the woman spent as much time sawing up firewood as the man did. An axe and crosscut saw were the only tools for cutting firewood.



ORGANIC NZ MAGAZINE



For a couple of decades the Environment Centre happily stocked and sold Organic NZ magazines. A few years ago they were switched to be managed by a national distributor and due to our small size we were unable to order the minimum required to be a stockist.

But now Organic NZ are back distributing themselves and we can stock them again. Yay!

They are fabulous bi-monthly magazines and we have a 'welcome back' special: latest issue only \$10 and \$5 for back issues. RRP\$12.90

VISIT THE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

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

Phone: 03 234 8717, Email: office@sces.org.nz

Opening hours are:

Monday - Friday: 10:00am - 4:30pm

Saturday: 10:30am - 4:30pm

Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:30pm

