

# The Islander

Incorporating the *Dead Whale Bay Intelligencer* and *Uglets Advertiser*

June

## Editorial

### The white rabbits of Green Island

The debate about what to do with the rabbits on Green Island continues, while the poor island gets less and less green, and Council is doing nothing about the problem.

At least we cannot accuse them of fiddling while Green Island burns, because there is nothing left to burn, just bare earth, as far as anybody can see, except in the small fenced-off reserve created by Chuffer Harris and Peg Wilkins.

Surely this is a time when a bit of leadership is needed. Peg has suggested introducing several male snarks to the island, so as to ensure that there is no breeding population established there.

While this may not be a complete solution, it would at least keep the number of rabbits down until some better solution is found.

## Second editorial

### Boat pulling time

The time of boat pulling is almost with us, when another group of young people will leave their childhood behind them. This is something rare and special to our society, and the thought that we should sell tickets to it, or that we should stage special boat pulling events each month throughout the year is an appalling one.

We do not live in a theme park, and we should not be asked to behave like quaint natives for somebody else's commercial benefit. Even if we were offered a share in the takings, why would we wish to cash in on a simple custom that grew out of the everyday lives of our grandparents?

## Unusual disease outbreak reported

As we were going to press, we learned that the Ugly Islands have been affected by an unusual round of 'tummy bug' illnesses, and while no lives have been threatened so far, our medical sources all say they are puzzled, as most of the people affected use tank water, and this sort of illness usually comes from drinking contaminated water.

The disease has Jane Finnegan and John Wellington-Wells wondering if it is anything to do with the type of roof people have on their houses.

## Farming hairyoddities

The word is out that a large company is looking at faming hairyoddities, and will be seeking an export licence to take a number of pairs away. So far, there is no indignation of why they want to do this, and we suspect that either it is for food, or maybe for experimentation.

## Palm seed report

First reports of the palm seed crop indicate that there should be a bumper harvest all over. This should be excellent news to the young people wanting to get some extra part-time work in the next three months.

## Plughole Rush results

Antonio Garibaldi, in his last year that he will be eligible, has again won the Plughole Rush, though Limmo Lim came close, and must be the favourite for next year. The Williams twins came in third, a good effort, seeing that they were dismayed some distance from the finishing line, and had to stow their sails on board before towing the boat over the line.

## In council this month

This month's Council agenda includes the question of allowing a limited number of tourists to have permission to take out big-game hunting licences to hunt snark on Big Ugly, in designated areas of Gorgeland at times when nobody else is using the area. See the next page for some of your comments on this matter.

## Next month

The agenda for Council next month includes a proposal to establish one or more commercial hairyoddity farms on a location yet to be decided.

## Apologies and corrections

Last month's issue mistakenly referred to Barry Grey having a slug cast upon his character. This 'slug' was not intended as a reference to the grey mare, and *The Islander* deprecates those who suggested otherwise, and we meant to refer to him as a bottle-scarred hero, not a battle-scarred zero. And boat culling was not, as some have suggested, a reference to the state of his goat, but an error for 'moat pulling'.

The reference to a "nose like a carrot", three issues ago, corrected to a "nose like a parrot" two issues ago, was apparently the result of a corrupted computer disc, and should be ignored. The owner of the nose has asked that we neither mention his nose, nor apologise to him by name, as apparently the school children on Little Ugly have been getting out of hand.

Letters last issue: for seasoning, read reasoning, for spice read space, for serpent read servant. The fearless sinking ducks should, of course have been referred to as featherless, but given the context, we got off lightly.

## Letters to the editor

Sir,

If hunters are so keen to come here and shoot things, why don't we offer them licences to shoot the rabbits on Green Island instead? After all, there is nobody there to be hit by stray bullets, and they would be doing us a real ecological service at the same time — or would that be too non-macho for them?

Bugs

Sir,

Any fool can see that Jean Grey has to be behind the snark-hunting proposal. She wants to have some unusual activities around that she can offer to the customers at her crazy Cloudwalker Hotel. Either that, or she thinks that she can get this through, and then tell us we need some five-star accommodation for the hunters to stay at. When my grandmother used to go hunting snarks, she went out on her own, slept under the stars, and used nothing more than a spear made of ironwood.

Let the hunters know the meaning of fear, and give the snarks an equal chance, and that means they have to hunt the snark Islands-style, not with AK-47s fitted with telescopic sights!

Viator

Sir,

I notice that some friends of one of our power-brokers are planning to exploit the hairyoddity. Who do these people think they are, wanting to exploit our wildlife like that? If they want to make use of one of our few native mammals, they should do so in a way that benefits us here, by offering a continuing income.

If they want the hairyoddities, let them breed them here and export just the meat if these are to be a food item, or if they are for experimentation, let them export males only. Is it possible for the Council to take out a copy-right on the species?

Observer

Sir,

I am sure that by now somebody will have raised the question of taking out a patent on the hairyoddities, since it has been fairly widely canvassed in several bars, but there are some ethical matters to consider first.

For example, how would we like it if somebody had managed to patent wheat, so we had to pay for our flour, and how would we feel if somebody had patented cattle? It is a matter of chance that we have the hairyoddities here, so why should we exploit the animals just because we have the good luck to live in the one place where they abound?

We have no more right to the hairyoddity than anybody else.

Peg Wilkins

Sir,

You asked for comment on responsible tourism. Surely this is a bit like military intelligence, a contradiction in terms? Tourists by their very nature only want unspoiled places, and they will keep coming until such time as they manage to spoil it.

Anneliese Plurabelle

Sir,

Your information was remarkably good last month, when you indicated that somebody was building up a nice trade in rabbit carcasses from Green Island.

I am the party you referred to, although I have no knowledge of anything involving a goat and a sink plunger.

I did, in fact, recover a curious coat from a cave on one of the outmost Uglets, and some scrap zinc — did you mean a coat and some zinc plunder? No matter, but I would like to advise that I do indeed have a large number of rabbit carcasses available for those needing bait in the benderfish season.

Tim Finnegan

Sir,

I find it hard to see why anybody could be concerned at any proposal to wipe out those vermin the snarks. While I can see a case for letting them loose on Green Island to clean out the rabbits there, as Peg has suggested, the snarks have no use in the Ugly Islands at all, other than to amuse a few people with a minor amount of literary knowledge.

Hamish Lim

Sir,

J. P. Joule (not a real name, I suspect) has suggested that we might be able to draw serious amounts of energy from the currents in the Plughole, and this worries me, if only because of the risk that any sort of barrier that has one end on Green Island may offer a way for rabbits to escape from the island.

If we could ensure no problems there, the energy in the currents is quite remarkable, given that the average depth is about 15 metres, with a width of about 700 metres, and a current that averages 10.8 kilometres an hour. I leave it to the same clever students Joule was trying to enlist to work out how much energy that means is available.

Watcher

Sir,

Little Ugly has seen three power outages in the past month. and I understand there have been even more on Big Ugly. When is the Council going to find out what is causing these mysterious breakdowns?

Powerless

Sir,

As one who will no longer be involved in the Plughole Rush, may I be allowed to express the concern of the younger part of our population at the proposal to set up a barrage in the Plughole to generate power? We need our sporting traditions!

Tony Garibaldi