

## Sharing treasures and tradition

Suzhou Suqian Investment Promotion and Economic Development Bureau official, TONG YINZI, is visiting Invercargill on a five-week staff exchange. An experienced teacher, she is working with the students at ILT Enrich, introducing them to the Chinese language and culture.



**WHEN** I started work at Enrich, the first thing that I did was to introduce myself and my city to the children and teachers. I used the presentation to show the children's life in Suqian. The Enrich students are very interested in Suqian and Chinese culture. They asked a lot of questions, like "what's your favourite food in Suqian?", "what kind of sports do they play?" etc. I answered their questions and I also suggested they learn more by visiting Suqian.

Mandarin is the official language in China, I taught them some basic Mandarin like "hello", "thank you", "sorry" and the basic pronunciation system called "Pinyin" in Chinese. When they understood the basic pronunciation system, I taught them some Chinese children's songs, and they did well.

Chinese calligraphy using the writing brush is one of the four studying treasures (writing brush, paper, ink and ink-stone) in Chinese history. So I decided to teach them how to use the Chinese writing brush to draw pictures and write Chinese words.

I showed some Chinese ink and wash painting to them.

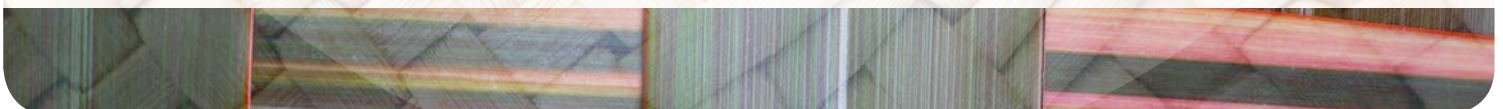
They said "it's beautiful, it's beautiful." Then we tried to use the Chinese writing brush to draw a plum tree.

Chinese traditional festivals are the main part of Chinese culture. I introduced the top five Chinese traditional festivals to the children, and talked about the origins, the folk customs and the activities people usually do during the festivals. We also did some craft related to the festivals - we made lanterns and did Chinese paper-cutting for window decoration.

The Chinese Spring festival is the biggest festival in China, and the traditional food for the festival is dumplings. So I taught the children how to make dumplings. We bought pork, dumpling pastry, and some Chinese seasoning. When they ate the dumplings they'd made themselves the children were very happy. Some of them said "I never tried dumplings before, it is very yummy, and I like dumplings."

After that, four children wrote four Chinese characters "Suqian, nihao" by using Chinese writing brushes, which means "hello, Suqian".

*This week is school holidays and Tong Yinzi will be working at ILT Kidzone.*





## Food Check South all systems go



BY JUDY CHRISTIE

**INVERCARGILL** City Council has joined with Gore and Clutha District Councils to set up Food Check South – a new way of inspecting food premises as required by the Food Act 2014.

Food businesses such as restaurants, cafes, takeaways, catering kitchens, butchers, delis and supermarkets now take direct responsibility for providing their customers with safe food, and they do this by setting up an individual Food Control Plan. These risk management plans cover such matters as risks to hygiene, the correct temperature of food, and pest control.

The Council staff formerly known as Environmental Health Officers are now called Food Verifiers, and are responsible for verifying Food Control Plans. They do this by visiting

premises to check that food is being prepared and handled properly, and then provide their reports back to the businesses.

Businesses which have a lower risk, like makers of jams, chips and confectionery etc, and retailers who handle food but do not prepare or manufacture it, may operate under what is known as a National Programme. Businesses under this programme must register with the Council, and can then choose to use our Food Verifiers or another recognised agency to verify them.

Our team of Food Verifiers play a vital role in making sure that Invercargill's residents stay safe when eating out or when buying prepared food.

**HERE'S ARI EDGECOMBE**, SMAG's Curator Visual Art, and artist Michelle Dawson judging the paintings to go to China for the Jiangsu International Painting Competition.

Special thanks and acknowledgement to Community Development Manager Mary Napper, who ran the competition in Invercargill in response to a request by our sister city Suqian.

Once judging was completed, Records Officer Tania Pope prepared the winning entries for delivery to Suqian where they will be entered into the international competition.

Those paintings that are not on the way to Suqian are part of a colourful display in the foyer of the Council building.







# Museum continues its kaitiaki role

BY KIMBERLEY STEPHENSON  
COLLECTIONS MANAGER

**MUSEUMS** are more than just walls, floors and ceilings. While the doors may be shut, the museum continues its role as kaitiaki (guardian) to a collection rich in stories about Southland and its people. It is our aim to continue maintaining and enriching the connections that these physical objects have with the communities for which they have ongoing meaning and significance: a role that is not bound or limited to the perimeter of a building.

One way in which we have been achieving this in the past few months has been through our Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom programme (LEOTC), which is funded through the Ministry of Education. Since the start of the school year, our educator Tara O'Donnell has worked with around 2500 children from all over the Southland region to provide them with a more in-depth look into the collections and exhibitions held at Niho o te Taniwha (Southland Museum and Art Gallery).

Since the closure of the museum building, Tara has taken this programme on the road. Among the programmes that continue to be popular are kaupapa Maori, where children get a hands-on experience using replica artefacts, and those focused on Southland's history, which delve into topics like

the Treaty of Waitangi, local built heritage, and the people of Southland. All of these programmes are designed to empower our young people, providing them with a sense of who they are and where they come from, and to foster a sense of pride in all those things that make Southland special and a great place to live.

For Tara, the best thing about being an LEOTC educator is the ability to facilitate engagement between Southland's history and local tamariki (children). As many of the activities that she runs are art-based, she is also proud of the way that the programme encourages an appreciation of our local artists and the mahi (work) that they do.

As a team, we are intensely aware that kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of a collection is about more than just maintaining physical objects and a site: it is about building and maintaining relationships with people in the community. Our education programme has long played a key part in that process, and Tara has done a fantastic job continuing this mahi in recent months.

**ABOVE:** Tara teaching a kaupapa Maori class at Riverton Primary School



# Volunteers partnering with Parks Division

**VOLUNTEERS** are stepping up to carry out projects and work to improve the environmental areas of our parks and reserves.

Over the past 12 months there have been 2060 hours of volunteer work undertaken for the Parks Division.

This has included schools, Southern Institute of Technology students, service clubs, corporate groups and the Department of Corrections.

Volunteer groups are beneficial as they assist the Parks Division with extra work we need help with, while also beautifying, maintaining facilities and restoring the biodiversity of our parks and reserves.

Pest eradication has also been very successful. The following pests have been captured in reserves and cemeteries in the last 12 months:

- 202 rabbits
- 880 possums
- 5 stoats
- 22 rats
- 71 hedgehogs
- 11 cats
- 4 ferrets
- 3 weasels
- 11 magpies



**IT WAS** great to see Councillor Toni Biddle expressing tikanga Maori at a staff farewell in the Council Chamber recently. Cr Biddle performed a waiata to show her love and respect for retiring staff member Jan Jennings and her whanau. The waiata was very moving and a beautiful way to end the farewell function.

