

STARS ALIGNING FOR MATARIKI

Collaboration means this year's Matariki Festival in Esk Street is set to be brighter than ever.

A new group, Murihiku Matariki, approached Council earlier this year to offer guidance and assistance in planning the festival.

Murihiku Matariki's members include community and culturally-minded people from a wide range of organisations within Southland, including Arts Murihiku, Venture Southland, Invercargill Public Library, Sport Southland, and Invercargill Public Art Gallery.

Group member Jay Coote said Murihiku Matariki first came together in October last year, with the focus on collaboration to ensure Matariki celebrations in Southland were consistent, and represented Maori in a fitting way.

"We're working alongside the four Southland runakas, talking to our kaumatuas, our elders, getting their blessings ... and making sure everything we tell people about is consistent," Jay said.

Previously, there have been many different stories of Matariki, the cluster of stars which herald Maori new year.

However, Murihiku Matariki has identified with the research and teachings of Dr Rangi Matamua, now widely accepted as the true korero of Matariki.

According to Dr Matamua, there are nine stars in the Matariki constellation.

Jay said Murihiku Matariki would be focussing on the Matariki star itself for this year's celebrations, which represents wellbeing.

"It seems to align really well at the moment with a lot of things going on in Local Government and Government – you could say the Matariki stars are aligning!"

Murihiku Matariki are this year hoping to educate the community on the true Matariki story through multiple events planned from mid-June until early July.

The first main event will be a light festival in Queens Park, representing new beginnings, featuring lanterns and stars made by Southland children, to be held on June 22 and 23.

"It will tell the story of the creation of man through the Maori world view, and also talking about the creation of Matariki."

Council has been supporting Murihiku Matariki group member Sharne Parkinson, who has provided several schools and a scout group



ABOVE: Children Lexi Parkinson-Knight, 6, left, and Zanthie Parkinson-Knight, 7, right, with Invercargill City Council City Centre Co-ordinator Shru Shrivastava, centre, and members of Murihiku Matariki, from left, Lisa Tou-McNaughton, Jay Coote, Sharne Parkinson, and Gemma Baldok.

with craft packs to make the stars.

The stars will then be used to decorate Esk Street for the Matariki Festival market day, to be held on June 29.

Sharne will also be providing weaving workshops on the day, where people can have a go at making their own poi or tipane – headbands.

Murihiku Matariki has been instrumental in helping to organise this year's Festival, providing cultural guidance and advice, and recruiting volunteers and artists to contribute to the celebrations on the day.

Jay said Matariki provides the opportunity for everyone to connect to culture – whatever that may be.

"If they're not familiar with Matariki, being involved in a new culture, if they've lost their connection, they can find their connection through Matariki if they want."

Murihiku Matariki has been involved in organising and supporting many Matariki celebration events throughout Southland. To find out more, contact them at murihikumatariki@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/murihikumatariki

On the MOVE

Keep up-to-date on where your favourite shops and businesses are located!

KEY-WEE LOCK SMITH
118 YARROW STREET

BEAUTY & BEYOND
34 KELVIN STREET

SIMPLY SPECIAL
89 DEE STREET

FIX & STITCH
22D KELVIN STREET

SKELTS JEWELLERS
50 ESK STREET

CREATIVITY PLUS
86 DEE STREET

DROP IN SESSIONS



Pop along to any drop-in session to learn more, pick up a consultation document and grab a submission form.

- Pak 'n Save - Thursday, 6 June, 3pm - 6pm
- Bluff Service Centre - Wednesday, 12 June, 11am - 1pm
- Farmers Market - Sunday, 16 June, 9.30pm - 1pm

PLUS, look out for us at various sporting and cultural events.

Remember, you have until 5pm Friday, June 28, to make a submission.

You can find out more and make an online submission at www.icc.govt.nz/cityblockconsultation

Follow our Facebook page for the latest information and events: www.facebook.com/cityblockconsultation



YOU MIGHT HAVE SPOTTED ONE OF THESE NIFTY POSTCARDS IN YOUR LETTERBOX RECENTLY!

We wanted to make sure businesses didn't miss out, so our City Centre Co-ordinator, Shru, has been hand delivering them to shops in the CBD.