

inspiring his work.

Immersing himself in the ancient land, he could start to be touched by it.

"Ireland's culture stretches back generations. The priests would take me to the monasteries around the area at dusk. There is a certain light that flows onto the stones, illumination that gives them a life. Seeing that changed my art."

Inspiration from ancient stones combined with the relocation of village music.

"The pubs shut at 11pm, so I would go down after a drink before closing. The locals soon got to know me and said 'So you're the one looking after the school. Come with us'."

Anton was invited to the lockup, that place after closing for only the trusted and the honest.

"Then would come more Guinness, more music and more poetry," he says.

"It all made me feel real. It made my art real."

He says he is privileged to be on Waiheke and yet, Ireland calls.

"I have a family now so I won't be doing any travelling for a while. But when Ireland plays at home, the second anthem is *Ireland's Call*. It's calling me for sure. It never leaves you."

The feelings of home, call it homesickness if you like, touch other Irish on Waiheke.

Irish born Maire Burns and Kiwi partner Phil Judd run a yacht

charter business on Waiheke. Their 12-metre yacht takes tourists and locals around the Hauraki Gulf.

Maire hails from County Kerry in Ireland's southwest corner and came to New Zealand in 1995.

Thinking about homesickness, Maire jokes that she misses the rain off the Atlantic.

"If there was anything else, it would have to be siblings," she says. "I am one of five, a small Irish family. But to be quite honest, I love it here on Waiheke. I grew up in a seaside fishing village. Do I feel at home here? Absolutely."

She says her countrymen here fit all expectations for the sociable Irish.

"The craic is alive and well. There are colourful characters everywhere on the island. Lovely folk who like a Guinness and a good dance."

Maire says the island's community spirit was something that her countrymen always mention when talking about what they love about Waiheke.

"There is a feeling of community here. It's just fantastic. I am involved in a support group for women recovering from breast cancer and this is one of many who get around those who are sick and needy."

The schedule for this weekend reflects that community.

A variety of events and parties will fill the island air with the lilts of Erin washed down with litres of Guinness.



Penny whistle player and dance caller Trevor Sommers.

Celebrations begin on Saturday night at Rocky Bay Hall where the local community has taken hold of the St Patrick's spirit and will be staging its third annual celebration.

Given the name Rocky Bay St Patrick's Ceilidh (pronounced kay-lee) the event is a night of Irish dancing, music and song. Leading the festivities will be the Waiheke House Band, a five-piece group lead by Waiheke Radio DJ and retired schoolteacher Trevor Sommers.

Trevor will showcase his particular skill of dance calling on the evening. "It's something I observed years ago at a similar evening and decided to give it a try," he said.

The advantage of a caller is that it is a big help for the inexperienced.

"You could say it's a bit like an American square dance evening," Trevor says. "No dance experience is needed. You just do as the caller says."

"Take that, add some fun, and you have a good ceilidh going."

Event organiser Dave Malan says the hall is headquarters for dances every six weeks or so for the Rocky Bay community.

"Though St Patrick's is not strictly in that rhythm, we Rocky Bay people have always been known to bend traditions," Dave says.

"The St Patrick's Day ceilidh has always been popular for those wanting to get onto the dance floor and be led by the caller."

Tickets are \$15 and like many other Rocky Bay events, it's a BYO food and drink evening.

"In the best tradition of all our events, we will be having a supper break for a shared meal," says Dave.

The Rocky Bay event will not be Trevor's only St Patrick's



Another Guinness on its way for a thirsty patron. Ita Malone at her Surfdale pub. "People can dress up. We will have a prize for the best Irish costume and people can put their names in a draw to win a trip to St Patrick's Day in New York in 2014."

SeaLink Waiheke Island Summer timetable Valid from 29 January 2013

Car and passenger ferry

HALF MOON BAY SERVICE

Monday to Sunday

Depart Half Moon Bay	Depart Kennedy Point
* 5:00am	* 6:00am
** 6:00am	** 7:00am
SS ^ 6:00am	SS ^ 7:30am
* 7:00am	* 8:00am
SS 8:00am	9:00am
SS ^ 9:00am	SS ^ 10:30am
10:00am	11:00am
^ 12:00pm	^ 1:30pm
2:00pm	3:00pm
SS ^ 3:00pm	SS ^ 4:30pm
4:00pm	5:00pm
* 5:00pm	*** 6:00pm
6:00pm	SS 7:00pm

Regular sailing time is 45 minutes.
 ^ Sailing time approximately 60 minutes.
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 * Monday to Friday only. ** Monday to Saturday only.
 *** Monday to Thursday only.

CITY SERVICE†

Friday

Depart Auckland City	Depart Kennedy Point
7:30pm	6:00pm
	8:30pm

Saturday/Sunday Valid to 1 April 2013

Depart Auckland City	Depart Kennedy Point
8:30am	10:00am
11:30am	1:00pm
2:30pm	4:00pm

† City Service (Sailing time approximately 60 minutes).
 The City Service operates between 11 Brigham Street, Auckland City (Wynyard Quarter) and Kennedy Point, Waiheke Island.

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*Conditions: Return travel must commence from Waiheke Island. Passengers are required to complete both sectors of their return trip on the same day. If this does not happen an upgrade to full fare will be required.



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