



Marie Haley with fellow early Akaroa settler descendant Steve LeLievre.

# Something to say about history and environment

by Phil de Frietas

**M**arie Haley and her tour company "The Seventh Generation" is starting to host tours of Akaroa and its environs for residents and tourists telling something of

the ongoing and rich history of the Peninsula.

"I would like to tell the story of a fabulous connection between the French Settlers in Akaroa and the French Revolution, as well as show all the beautiful sites around the Peninsula" she says.

The history of Akaroa, Marie says, is very rich and there is much that is easily missed by both visitors and locals.

"There are so many things to talk about!"

Marie's ties to this land and its history go back for generations.

Her great-great-great-grandfather Etienne Lelievre, was a pivotal member of the Akaroa French settlers group, and it was he who planted two "Napoleon Willows" in Akaroa.

The story goes that when Napoleon Bonaparte died, a willow tree was planted on his grave because of his love of resting under one on St Helena during his exile.

When the tree matured, sailors would pass by St

Helena and obtain willow cuttings that they could replant elsewhere.

Just so with Etienne who planted them to prosper in Akaroa.

This is merely one of the many stories exclusive to the town and Peninsula, and Marie is more than willing to delve deep and uncover all the mysteries that the Peninsula contains.

"I'm trying to promote history and especially our understanding of our natural environment" Marie says.

"If we understand how our landscape was, we can imagine what it can become again.

"Our historical places are all so close together and tell the story of the settlement of New Zealand, both Maori and European, with both national and international

connections."

Marie is interested in offering a unique tourist experience.

"Ultimately, I'm trying to establish a different connection for people.

"I would like them to gain a real sense of place and greater understanding of the special history of the area."

For those interested in the special two hour tour, or any other information about her company, Marie can be reached at <https://theseventhgeneration.co.nz/>

She suggests watching out for special locals discount tours later in the winter.

And yes, it is the same Marie Haley who coordinates the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust's 'Wildside' predator control project.



**The Akaroa Mail**  
*Established in 1876 and still the talk of the Peninsula*