

Painted bus shelters

Inspired!

Noakes' first bus shelter painting, located at Company Bay, was used by Dave Dobbyn on the cover of his *Loyal* CD.

Digging deeper...

The Otago Regional Council is responsible for funding bus shelter maintenance, while it is the Dunedin City Council's job to arrange contractors to carry out repairs. Should a John Noakes painted bus shelter ever be damaged by graffiti, the DCC will arrange for a painter to restore it.

What do spaceships, aliens, winged pigs and sailing ships all have in common? They've all been painted by John Noakes – onto the outside of a Dunedin bus shelter of course!

The idea for bus-stop art began 20 years ago, when Noakes was working as an exhibition designer for the Otago Museum. As the story goes, he was returning home from work one night in 1987 when he happened to notice a group of children huddling from the rain in a drab, graffiti-covered shelter. Disheartened by this dismal scene, he decided that something must be done.

After gaining the support of local community groups, Noakes painted his first bus shelter mural at Company Bay. This novel idea was a hit with Dunedin residents, and it didn't take long for requests to start coming in for him to decorate shelters in other suburbs. He painted three more free of charge before the Dunedin City Council offered him a contract to engage his talents on shelters all over the city. Over the following 15 years, some 60 shelters would be enlivened with John's unique artwork.

Sadly, John died in 2006, but his legacy lives on in the streets of Dunedin. The imaginative murals have not only brightened up local cityscapes, but transformed regular, everyday landmarks into community icons.



A bus shelter featuring Noakes' artwork



John Noakes poses alongside a completed work

