

Wentworth Valley



INTERNATIONAL CARAVANNING FELLOWSHIP OF ROTARIANS (NZ) Inc.

22 Feb – 1 Mar 2013

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Organisers: Roger & Isabel Clotworthy; John & Jan Edmonds

Friday 22nd February. Bush Camp - Day 1

We arrived in sunshine after an easy drive from Takanini. You would imagine it would be easy to drive into a DOC Camp and set up for just one week in the Wentworth Valley. But no, someone had left their *car and caravan in the entrance whilst* they went off for a cup of tea! The wait was made short as several of the group came and greeted us and *made us feel* very welcome. We had a further wait as another member moved his bus *around the park* trying to find just the right spot. Eventually we were parked and *realised what a very* pleasant bush surrounded spot we were in. Apart from the usual camp sounds there was only birdsong to shatter the peace.

This was a luxury DOC camp with clean long drop toilets, basins with running water and two showers! If you chose to pay \$2 you could have a 5 minute hot shower and it is surprising how long that is for teenagers!

Soon it was Happy Hour and the group of about 35 was engaged in its favourite pursuit – chatting over a drink with the odd nibble or two. The Camp Commandant warmly welcomed everyone and said the theme for the week was that it be a friendly mix and mingle camp.



Roger was once again in charge of potatoes – where would we be without him? Then it was dinner time and small groups assembled to share mealtime together. This was followed by supper and for most, it was early to bed with the plaintive sounds of the Morporks calling.



Saturday 23 February - Day 2

This morning saw a group walk up to Wentworth waterfalls - about a two hour return walk. It was a very well benched track, almost like a main highway. En route there were the remains from the gold Mining era. What a tough breed of men they were in those days. Everything hauled by bullock train.

The track wandered beside the stream and gradually wound its way up to the waterfall. Here it was time for folks to catch their breath and enjoy the scenery. Ron Taylor, true to form, was one of the leaders and an inspiration to everyone.

Rest and relaxation was the order of the day until Happy Hour at which John talked about the area – gold mining, timber and interestingly enough the origins of the nearby Wires Track. So named, because it was made for access when the first telephone line was connected between Wellington and Auckland and it was routed via Gisborne to avoid the Waikato during the land wars.

Following Happy Hour, small groups once again gathered in the remaining sunshine, eating together. Eventually, bed was the final destination after a very pleasant day.



Sunday 24 February – Day 3

After a casual start to the day, rubbish collection was set for 9-ish, which included recycling of the usual selection of liquor containers of many types. Later on, John made a trip to the transfer depot just out on the main road south of Whangamata good one John.

At about 10.30am, quite early for some, Pétanque was on the agenda. 24 members were keen and were supported by a bevy of knitters. So we were divided into 6 teams of 4, and 3 games of 8 ends followed quite quickly. The pitches were anything but level so skill didn't count, but luck was definitely important. Eventually after much laughter, debate and



disputes settled by independent judges chosen at random from non-players, but equipped with steel tapes, a winning team was proclaimed. They were Joyce, Ian, Ron & Max with a winning score of 20 points. The other teams scores were 1 at 19, 3 at 17 and 1 at 15 – well done all! The winners were allowed two picks at a healthy pot, or a less healthy pot, of treats. Then all the remaining players were pleasantly surprised to be given a chance to pick one item from either pot.

By then it was lunch time followed by various activities such as exploring the locale, reading, chatting, or examining the insides of one's eyelids. These activities were followed by quite a bit of Solar showering in a variety of tents or the richer members wandering up to the shower block to expend \$2 for five minutes alone in a quantity of hot water. Here there was a slight problem as once you had

finished washing you had to wait until the water stopped flowing before you could dry yourself, there being no tap.

Later after four-thirties a "long dinner" was enjoyed by all. Their tables were spread across the field in a long row for the communal meal. Suppers followed in true ICFR tradition. Another day in God's own coming rapidly to an end.

Monday 25 February - Day 4

Today was '**Breakfast at Tiffany's**'. Our camp leaders has issued the challenge for the best laid table for breakfast. So in true ICFR fashion members embraced the event. So at 9am the paddock suddenly became an upbeat café/restaurant breakfast!

Tables sported tablecloths of all varieties, the imagination was endless! DOC would have been quite stressed on how much bush was used to enhance some tables. It is always amazing what emerges from members vans. Beautiful cutlery, fresh flowers and one bright spark decided a bottle of whisky was just the thing. What a job for the judges. In the end the Supreme Winners were Charles & Marg Spain who cunningly included on their table a hand-written menu. Other winners were:

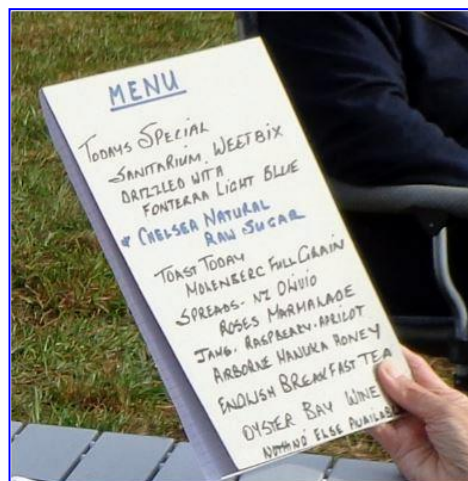
Creative award - Malcolm & Rosemary

Fancy Weetbix - Neil & Jean

Best cooked breakfast - Bev, Rob and Jean D.

Most original tablecloth – Judith & Bill

Best floral arrangement – Bev & Ian



[Menu photo: Andy Duncan]

Once the winners were declared it was time to enjoy a leisurely breakfast in the warm sunshine.

Later in the day many explored the two disused horizontal mine shafts which like Broken Hill had many cave Wetas of varying size and sex.

Happy Hour saw a warm welcome extended to President Robin & Graeme and the evening again concluded with the long shared dinner in the remaining sunshine. Another relaxing day.



Tuesday 26th February - Day 5



We woke up - hurray! Another great day in paradise.

Until the evening, nothing was organised, so there were groups having morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea together. Some of the later arrivals went off for a walk to the waterfall. Others explored the old gold mine shafts to see for



themselves the Cave Wetas. Susan and I took the path to the waterfall but just walked quietly looking for unusual native specimens and perhaps some birdlife. The bush contained a great variety of plants and trees with a lot of Tanekaha or Celery Pines. (*Phyllocladas trichomanoides*). These grow to about 20 metres with



leaves about 150 to 250 mm which together look a bit like Celery leaves. In the late 18th century the bark was exported in large quantities to

Germany as a source of red and pink dyes and to London for use as an organic mordant in the manufacture of kid gloves.

In addition young trees supplied straight, flexible rods, which in London were made into walking sticks.

The early Maoris used the bark also for a dye and as a cure for dysentery. There, I bet you didn't know any of that! Source: Andrew Crowes, 'Which native tree'.



At "4.30's", Isabel announced the evening activity. We all had to draw a slip of paper from a bowl on which was half a couplet, say '**Jack**' and then, on another, was '**the beanstalk**', after this we had to pair off by finding one's other half. Once this was achieved and it took some time as some couplets were a bit obscure, Isabel selected groups of three couples ensuring no husbands and wives were together. They then each had to decide who would host the others for supper later on.

At 7.30 after dinner, we assembled and complimentary beverages were available before we spent the evening in our groups without our spouses. The feedback after was, some got a word in much more easily than usual, so they pronounced it a great success.

Another lovely day over - we have been so lucky with the weather.

Wednesday 27 February - Day 6

The tradition of ICFR continues with one of our members dispatching a possum which was trapped overnight. There was an added bonus here though as the fur was plucked from the beast and eventually will be sold for manufacture into some of the lovely garments which now abound in the retail market.



Our good weather continues which was great as Diane along with her helpers provided delectable hot scones & jam for morning tea. Brian & Maureen T. must have smelt

it as they arrived as day visitors just in time to partake too! *[Susan apologises for the accidental and partial 'scalping'. Ed.]*

The rest of the day passed in a relaxed fashion finishing with Happy Hour, communal dinner followed by the traditional fruit salad, ice cream and Bev's perfect meringues, delectable.

Thursday 28th February - Day 7

The day started as usual, so by 10 a.m., half the camp was in sunshine and the other half still had an hour to wait due to the hills to the east. Some were anxious to leave for a variety of reasons while others stayed on. There weren't any arranged activities but that didn't stop members from exploring, walking, cycling and sleeping after lunch of course.

Happy hour at 4.30 was followed by a communal dinner, when the remnants of Wednesday's dessert disappeared.

A highlight for Barry and Kaye happened when their Isuzu engine part *[a diesel cylinder head]* arrived followed closely by their mechanic, who took it back to Whangamata for fitting to their horse, which they had broken on their way to the Bush Camp. We had kept this secret until now, not knowing the outcome.

Regrettably it all sounds very expensive, so perhaps the Sergeant will make Sunday's collection for their benefit. **Yeah, right!**

Bush camp was nearly over and the organisers made a plea for us not to line up in the morning for departure and cause a traffic jam on the narrow metal road back towards Whangamata.

What a great camp and special thanks once again to Life Members Roger & Isabel Clotwothy and particularly for Roger's great skill in cooking such tremendously mouth-watering potatoes for us night after night.

[Many thanks to Andy Duncan for additional photos – a selection follows to refresh your memory or enlighten those unable to be there. Ed.]





Resting & relaxing at Whangamata Inlet on the long journey from Wentworth Valley to Waihi Beach

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Beachhaven Hol Park - Waihi Beach



1 – 3 March 2013

Friday 1 March

About 75 members drifted in over a few days with the main core arriving in time for Happy Hour on Friday evening. The camp was very neat and tidy with excellent facilities. Our hosts were very friendly and helpful.

Happy hour saw meeting and catching up and it was good to see members attending who had been unable to attend for some time.

President Robin welcomed everyone and we were briefed by John on the weekend's activities. Shared suppers



followed, always a nice time to get to know members a little better.

Photo: [Andy Duncan]

Saturday 2 March

Our excursion today was to the **Waihi Academy of Learning and Conference Centre** which is situated off Landlyst Road. So at 9.30 sharp we all loaded into two Murphy's buses and proceeded to drive to our destination. We were taken by the scenic route which wound its way through Golden Valley Road (which lived up to its name, golden hills at every bend on the road) and eventually arrived at the centre.



[photo: Andy Duncan]



Impressive has to be the under-statement of the year! The complex is said to have cost over \$30 million and built by the Taiwanese! At present it is being run by The Flying Phoenix Trust.

Their Mission Statement is it be a viable international family and promotes human being's wellness in terms of body, mind and spirit.

The complex comprised of conference rooms/classrooms, dining areas, 2 accommodation buildings which had twin, four and ten bedded rooms! The main feature of the complex was the Grand Hall/Conference room which took your breath away!



Photo: Andy Duncan

Everywhere no expense has been spared with marble floors, beautiful timber finishing and top class bathroom and kitchen fittings.

Firstly we were taken into a smallish Conference Room and were welcomed by our guide **Jasmine Liu**. Afterwards we were shown a tourist promotion DVD about

Taiwan which was excellent.

The next segment of our visit was a vegetarian morning tea which was quite different and tasty judging by all the empty platters and plates. Then we were shown around the various



buildings. I think I speak for most folks, by saying we were stunned at the workmanship and the sheer size of the project.

At present it is totally under-utilised and our guide appeared to be a little vague on its long term use. Perhaps it was a language issue! I think most of us walked away from the complex wondering how viable an operation this could be in today's economic climate.

And so to Waihi where the group split, some to look at the Martha Mine and the relocated Cornish Pumpphouse.



The remainder swelled the coffers of the local cafe scene and then back to camp around 2ish!



We had the usual high class dinner at the RSA which was thronged with people on a lovely summer's evening. Another well run day.

Sunday 3 March

Another sunny day and quite early members drifted into the local Community Hall where tea and coffee were available. Isabel and Jan were taking orders for Fish and Chips but it was later discovered the local shop had closed and instead orders were converted to Pizzas.

The usual meeting format followed and at the close after all the thanks were justifiably spoken



President Robin raised her arms and said "now it can rain".
 Once back at camp for lunch - it did!! Wow! What power.
 That night too, the heavens briefly opened, but morning dawned fine once again and steadily members drifted off to their various destinations.
 So ended rally number 171.

[Many thanks again to Andy Duncan for extra photos – more follow. Ed.]



FUTURE RALLIES	
5 – 7 Apr	Whakatane Holiday Park
10 - 12 Jun	Miranda Hot Springs
2 – 4 Aug	Whangateau Holiday Park
24 - 26 Sep	Omokoroa Thermal Holiday Park
15 - 17 Nov	Opunake Beach Holiday Park
2014	
21 – 28 Feb	Pohangina Valley [Bush Rally]
28 Feb – 2 Mar	Himatangi Beach Holiday Park

*Left: Jasmine Liu holding them spellbound
 Below: Engrish as she is spoke*



Please keep the room tidy-up Thanks!

1. Please leave your shoes at the entrance. Do not step inside the Dormitory with the shoes.
2. Do not move any furniture. Please do ask the management staff before you move anything.
3. Keep the timber floor clean without any scratch.
4. Please turn the heater off when you leave the room.
5. Please turn off the light, gadgets and water taps before you leave the room.
6. Please use your own bed only even if there are any other beds in the same room. **Have a nice day.**

請保持房間整潔並遵守下列事項，感謝您！

1. 請脫下你的鞋子留在入口，不要穿入宿舍內。
2. 請不要移動任何家具，如果你有特殊的移動要求，請微詢

*Left: Spectacular Entrance doors – knock 3 times Joyce.
 Below: Group photo*





Websites to view
www.icfr.rotarysouthpacific.org
www.rotarianscaravanning.org.uk
www.rvfr-aus.org.au