

A grant of £192 13s. 3d. was received from the Mayor of Auckland's Fund (Ruapehu Mountain Calamity) out of which £50 was definitely allocated for the erection of poles on the mountain route between the Chateau and the Ohakune Hut. The fund referred to was allocated by the special committee set up to deal with the distribution of the moneys as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Claims by searchers	270	14	4
Food	67	9	1
Medical account	18	4	3
Transport	79	0	0
Chateau staff	31	0	0
Payments to unemployed workers	50	10	0
Expenses of committee	9	15	0
Advertising	3	2	0
Exchange on cheques	0	16	7
Tongariro National Park Board	192	13	3
	<u>£723</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>

The Hostel Loan of £40,000, 1929, and the Hostel Loan (second) of £20,000, 1930, from the Public Trustee to the Board were secured by two issues of seventy-three debentures each, the last in each series maturing in 1965. On the 11th November, 1931, being the date upon which the Government assumed control of the Chateau and other buildings, only eight of the debentures had been redeemed and the loan liability to the Public Trustee then amounted to £58,925 1s. 1d. By the passing of section 13 of the Appropriation Act, 1931, power was conferred on the Minister of Finance to repay the loan out of the Public Works Fund, notwithstanding that the due date for the repayment thereof had not arrived. Financial provision was made on the Public Works Fund Supplementary Estimates of 1931 under vote "Development of Tourist Resorts," and the outstanding balance of the loan to the Public Trustee was duly discharged by the Treasury.

The taking-over of the Chateau by the Board involved the Board's executive officers in a large amount of additional detailed work in connection with accounts and correspondence, and it is desired to place on record the excellent services rendered by the Secretary and Treasurer.

EGMONT NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(T. C. LIST, Chairman.)

The continuation during the past year of the duties of administration and conservation of the area comprised in the Egmont National Park has been a source of anxiety to the Board, owing to the general economic conditions and the very drastic curtailment of its finance. The best work possible on the limited income has been done, but the position of the Board at the end of the year did not leave any funds available for work the Board consider necessary, and the uncertainty as to what revenue would be available for the following year necessitated a serious curtailment of the policy which the Board considers necessary to the carrying-out of its responsibilities in relation to the reserve.

Valuable financial assistance—£250—was again received from the trustees of the estate of R. C. Bruce, and contributions were also received from the local bodies which, as heretofore, were allocated to the various local committees. The other free revenue received by the Board was very small, and was absorbed in the general work of administration.

The restriction of finance has necessitated a serious curtailment of the work of destroying the goats in the reserve, which has had to be restricted to the amount of the special subsidy for this purpose, £81 4s. During the year, 840 goats were destroyed, bringing the total to date to 5,120 since this work was started four years ago. The destruction carried out has already resulted in signs of rejuvenation of the native forest, which was very seriously menaced when the work of destruction of goats commenced, and the Board is continuing its policy as far as funds permit, as until the goats are exterminated they will continue to destroy the young trees, and thus prove a detriment to the preservation of the native bush. A continuance of the war on goats is consequently looked upon by the Board as of vital importance.

Local Committees.—During the year the various local committees have again co-operated with the Board in every way in catering for visitors to the reserve and in the preservation of the bush and the maintenance of the roads and tracks.

North Committee.—With the assistance of unemployed labour the area adjacent to the accommodation-houses has been improved, and the tracks maintained in good order. The lower portion of the main road was also regraded and improved. The North Hostel has been kept open continuously throughout the year, and all visitors have been well catered for. Repairs to the buildings were carried out where necessary.

South Committee.—The road and tracks at Dawson Falls House have been kept in good order. The old accommodation-house has been demolished and rebuilt as a commodious camphouse. This, as well as the hostel, has been well patronized. Minor repairs were carried out at the Syme Hut, which has attracted an increasing number of visitors, and plays a useful part as an attraction to the higher slopes of the mountain.

With the assistance of unemployed labour a ski-track has been formed above Dawson Falls, and a small hut erected for use of visitors in the ski-ing season, which will be much appreciated.

A winter sports meeting was held by the Mount Egmont Club, and proved a great success, visitors being present from Ruapehu and other mountain clubs, as well as unattached parties, and the numerous entries in the various events showed the popularity of the meeting.