



Some of the campers grouped outside the Rotoiti Lodge.

R. Anderson photo

One of the bus drivers provided some unintended light entertainment when he accidentally perched the tail of his bus on a bank. Help from Gary's tractor and the arm muscles of some of the campers finally freed it.

The Howard has an interesting gold mining history. Ray Clarke, an old identity of the area, demonstrated how to pan for gold, at which he is adept. Many campers tried their hands at this in the Louis Creek, a tributary of the Howard River. Some, who were really keen, continued gold panning while a group headed further up stream with Ray, who knew just where gold was to be found. Many saw the Miners' Monument and tailings from past gold

Ray Clarke preparing to pan for gold.

N. Smith photo



mining operations near the head of the creek.

A mid afternoon return to Rotoiti Lodge enabled campers to have time to swim or walk.

That evening Guy Salmon (NFAC) gave a slide show on Waitutu Forest and told us of the urgency of saving this forest and having it joined to the Fiordland National Park. It is a lowland wilderness area having a unique series of forested marine terraces and is one of the few remaining habitats of the yellowhead bird. Some of the most beautiful slides were taken on the Maori land, where the forest meets the shore, and showed coastal scenery too wonderful to be destroyed.

The lack of Maori membership in conservation groups was commented on and broader, outreaching strategies were suggested.

During question time a resolution was unanimously passed that the Forest Service uphold its definition of forests by acknowledging manuka and kanuka of 6 m and more in height when applying their indigenous forest policy. This resolution was sent to Mr Jonathan Elworthy, Minister of Lands and Forests, who has acknowledged receipt.

Thursday

This was another free day and though the weather was showery, it was possible to go for walks. The ranger kindly had two showings of several interesting films in the Deerstalkers Lodge.

That night Nancy Mason and her troupe initiated us into the enjoyable art of folk dancing, aided by the local Bush Band and interspersed by concert items from members. In the Deerstalkers Lodge Frank Alack also had a showing of slides entitled, "From Farewell Spit to the Bluff".

Friday

On this day came the parting of the ways after a good clean-up of the Lodge.

Credit must be given to the three cooks who did an excellent job of providing meals with a smile; Sue Harris and Jean Espie, who arranged all the trips, provided speakers, and made sure that we all had the relevant papers and information for each day; all those who had a hand in the arrangements of the camp and the day-to-day running of it; and all those who attended the camp and by their presence made it an enjoyable one.

—J. E. Hudson,
Nelson Branch