

the line of Kauri seedlings planted by the Forest Service, some now over a metre high, and looking very healthy. One rare tree seen, was *Dacrydium kirkii*, just commencing its adult foliage.

Just before reaching the mine entrance, we descended into an old crater, now overgrown with grasses and shrubs, and were fortunate to hear the call of the shy fernbird. Doug had provided us with hard hats, so entering the mine shaft was no problem. Before long we were able to see the glow-worms above our heads, and see the rocky cavernous chambers, opening before us. At an old well shaft, leading to an opening far below, Doug demonstrated the distance by heaving a rock downwards, and by counting seconds (varied, 17 to 20) we could hear it banging and thumping its way to the bottom. Lunch was had by the river, where we were joined by tuis and bellbirds and rosellas. Doug introduced to our diet: totara berries, curled fern-fronds, and delicious billy tea. On the return, we visited the site of some old batteries, and some remains of early miner's dwellings. Along the bush walk, there were masses of *Dawsonia superba*, almost 60cm high.

In the evening the judging of the Moira Cox Memorial Slide Competition, and the Society's Bird Slide Competition took place. The standard of photography was very high. Following this, a film from the National Film Library, on the Kauri was shown, a very moving and historical documentary.

Friday. Trip one: Firth of Thames and seabirds; two Waiomu Valley.

On this particular day several of us played "wag" and went into Thames, for my part, I visited the local Thames Museum in the old Methodist Church which held much of the area's early history.

Evening. Mrs Mary Barry and Rod Aldridge, from Tauranga spoke on the Kaimai-Mamaku State Forest Management Plan covering the past 10 years of struggle to obtain protection for the narrow strip of remaining forest separating the cultivated area of the Bay of Plenty, from the deforested expanse of the Waikato. Moisture is retained in the mosses covering the forest floor, and should the forest be removed, agricultural "drought" could follow. Also discussed, was the Government's Kauri Policy Plan, and members were urged to have their submissions on this important issue sent to the Conservator of Forests by the end of February. Interested discussion and questions followed.

Saturday, our last day of trips. After breakfast, the Camp photograph was taken by George Braithwaite.

Trip one: Dickie's Flat and Waitawheta; two: Firth of Thames and the Mangatangi Dam.

There was a slight drizzle, which soon cleared. The journey to the mud-flats, presented a contrast in scenery to that of previous days. The chairman of the Miranda Trust had already set up his telescope, and we had fine views of many waders, godwits, pied oystercatchers, gulls, terns, wrybills, knots, pied stilts, shags and white-fronted heron, some of the godwits were developing breeding plumage. We also watched a skylark descend gently to her nest on the field

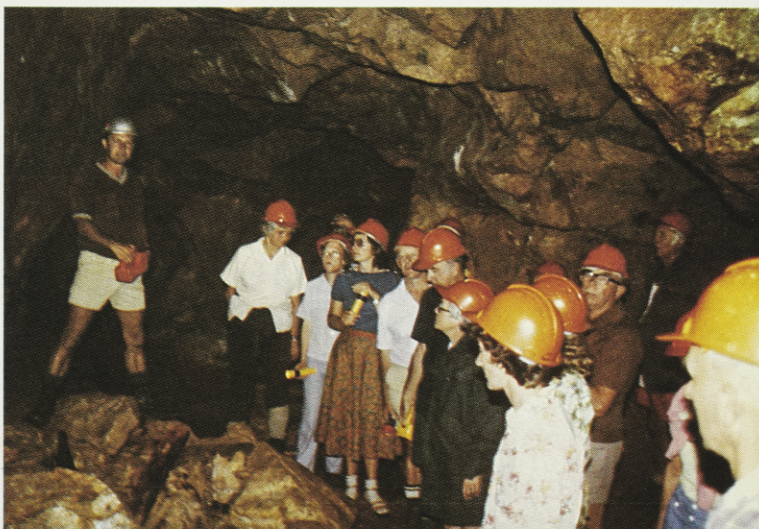
beside the bus, and swallows flying to and fro. Lunch stop was made at Waharau Reserve with a short nature walk afterwards, mostly ferns, some fine specimens of *C. medullaris* and *C. dealbata*. Then on to Mangatangi to view the large earth dam constructed for the Auckland Region. This man-made dam was about 3m below normal level. From the look-out we could see a fine stand of kauri planted about 60-70 years ago.

In the evening, campers combined to produce a concert of great enthusiasm, and variety, to bring the week to a very happy conclusion.

Campers cross the Kauaeranga River to reach views of the Billy Goat Falls.

The working model of a ricker dam by Park HQ. When the gate was released, the built-up water carried the Kauri logs downstream.

Inside the Broken Hill Goldmine, Doug Johansen describes features.



Photographs by George Braithwaite