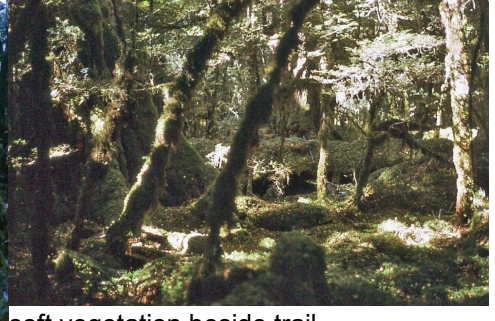


Swirling gravel carved potholes in rock

Lichens cover branches near tunnel

Blue-green rocks in creek

Cascade Creek provided secluded beauty where we camped overnight and had leisure time in the morning.



Cascade Creek

forest trail

soft vegetation beside trail

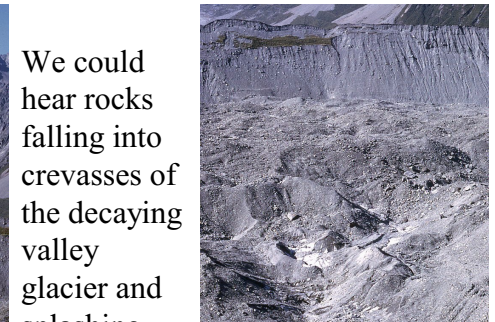


Gail and our tent at Cascade Creek

ground fog at campsite

pond at Cascade Creek campsite

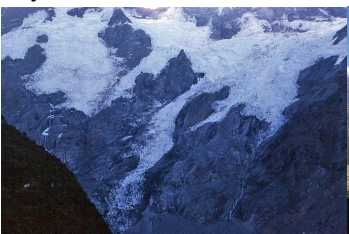
We had all of this restful beauty to ourselves that overnight and morning. Then onwards to Mount Cook area.



Dry tree-less eastern foothills

Mount Cook and glacial moraines

We could hear rocks falling into crevasses of the decaying valley glacier and splashing into water.



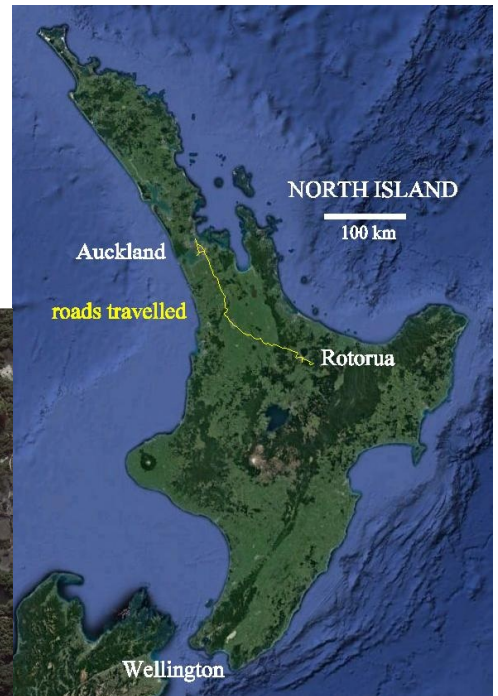
We camped here overnight. But warm chinook-like winds partly collapsed our tent with us inside it. During the night Gail had morning sickness and vomiting, so it was not a good night for her.

small alpine glaciers

view down valley from camp

dirty decaying glacier

We then drove back to Christchurch and flew to Auckland with a stop at Wellington. Our destination was the city of Rotorua on the North Island. There are only three places in the world where there are natural geysers. The largest is Yellowstone Park, followed by Iceland. Rotorua is the third and very special for visiting. All features are compact and easily walked around within several hours. The maximum extent across the area is about 800 meters, shown in this 2016 Google Earth aerial image.



The area also includes various Maori cultural exhibits and demonstrations which have been improving over the years.

geyser eruption sequence:



travertine terrace, steam vent

bubbling mud patch

small hot pool

Area vegetation:



hillside hot spring



tree fern cluster



tree ferns on hillside

These are some of the Maori exhibits in 1974. Some may have since been moved and improved.



house



house interior



village layout



church interior



spare poles



hillside vegetation

We were impressed enough with New Zealand that we chose to return in 1997 with our son and my mother for a week after a 2-week visit to eastern Australia. (*see the 1997 Trip Report for New Zealand*) Later in 1999-2000 the New Zealand scenery was photographed and interpreted as “Middle Earth” for the Lord of the Rings trilogy of movies. More than 150 locations were used, making it challenging to visit them all. On neither trip did we visit the far north beaches nor the volcanoes of North Island because of time constraints.

(This report was written in November 2020 by Dr. Ed Holroyd)