

New Zealand Trip - 15 to 20 April 1997, Part 1

For a graduation present for our son, Micah Holroyd, when he finished college at Colorado State University, Gail and I decided to give him a trip back to Sydney, Australia, to show him where he was born in May 1974. My mother, Ruth Holroyd insisted on joining us. We spent two weeks throughout eastern Australia and then one week in New Zealand. We repeated our 1974 visits to Rotorua and Milford Sound, finding them quite different. We added some new locations. Time constraints meant that there was much that we could not see this time in New Zealand.

New Zealand mainly consists of two large islands - the volcanic North Island and South Island with its axis of Southern Alps with glaciers and fjords. Both have large agricultural areas. It's said that sheep outnumber people there about 40 to 1.



This map shows our travels on the North Island. The red dots are the approximate centers of photos taken from the aircraft flight from Brisbane to Auckland. The thin yellow line traces the roads on which we traveled by rental car.

Our first stop was the city of Hamilton where we stayed overnight. That evening I showed my exhibit of Biblical period coins at a church. As I recall, a local coin collector group joined the event. See www.EdHolroyd.info/biblicalcoins. The next day we drove to Rotorua.



aerial view of a bay north of Auckland



aerial view of fields near Auckland

As mentioned in the 1974 Trip Report, Rotorua is the third of three locations in the world with natural geysers, and is the smallest, about 800 meters across and easily explored.



sulfur in a steam vent



hillside hot springs and geyser area



geyser area



small "volcanoes" of mud



travertine terrace and warm pool

We spent only a little time in the Maori cultural village.



Micah viewing Maori boat



a Maori structure with bright shells



shells inserted into Maori woodwork

Ruth had taught loom weaving and bobbin lace making for decades and visited textile groups in several countries over the years. So we visited the Maori cultural arts building beside the Thermal Reserve.



Maori craftwork



demonstration



fern fronds as art inspirations

Then we drove through the agricultural countryside to the village of Waitomo, seeing "Middle Earth" scenery.

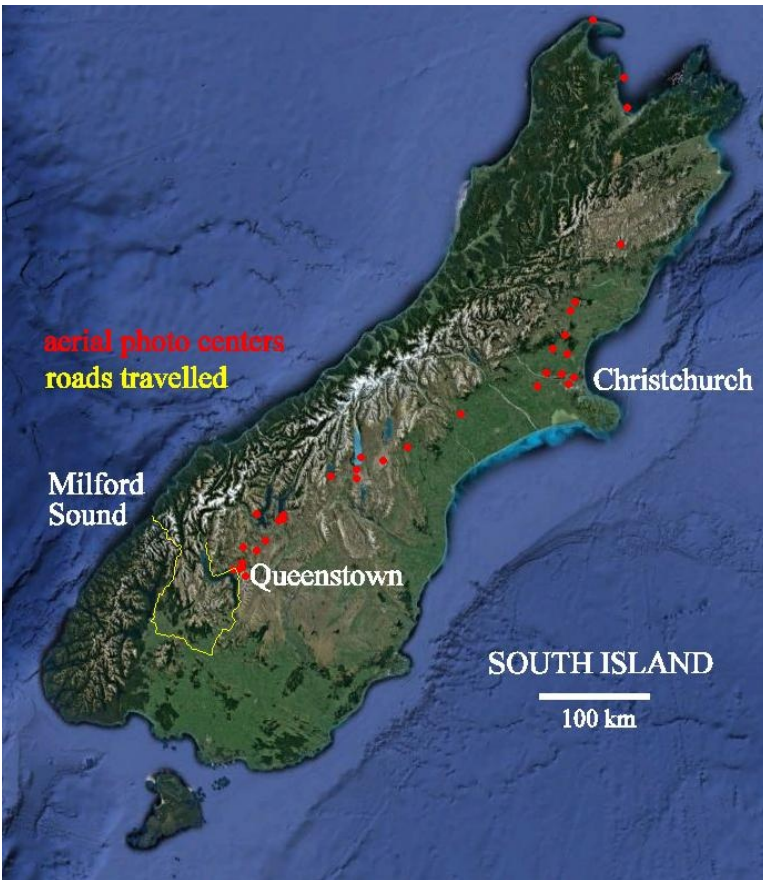




Road cuts provide cross sections of soil and rocks. At left are plants on top of a fresh gray layer of volcanic ash. Below is a dark brown old soil or peat layer on brown rock layers. At right is a road cut through two thick layers of volcanic ash with green plants starting to grow on the new surface.



We visited the Glowworm Cave outside Waitomo. It was a bit disappointing. We were likely not in the cave darkness long enough for our eyes to adjust. So the glowworm lights were dim to us. Time exposure photos have good results but not us. Micah and Gail are on the right as the group exits the boat.



We drove back to Auckland and flew south to Christchurch, then a different plane to Queenstown on the South Island. The map shows aerial photo centers as red dots. The thin yellow line shows our roads south and west of Queenstown.



Perhaps old earthquakes lowered the landscape, drowning former beaches and creating the double breaker waves on the west side of North Island.



The aerial photo to the left shows an intersection of 9 roads, near Christchurch. But there is minimal traffic there.



Braided river and fields north of Christchurch.



This shoreline and bay is on the northern end of South Island just west of the city of Nelson.