

1939.

NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEY.

PUBLIC DOMAINS AND NATIONAL PARKS OF NEW ZEALAND

(ANNUAL REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

Department of Lands and Survey,
Wellington, 1st August, 1939.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit herewith a report on the public domains and national parks of the Dominion for the year ended 31st March, 1939.

I have, &c.,
R. G. MACMORRAN,
Under-Secretary for Lands.

The Hon. Frank Langstone, Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

PART I.—PUBLIC DOMAINS.

At the 31st March, 1939, the total number of public domains administered under the provisions of Part II of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, was 799, covering a total area of some 76,500 acres. Fifty-three of these domains are controlled by the various Commissioners of Crown Lands, 261 are controlled by local authorities acting as Domain Boards, and the remaining 485 are controlled by local Boards appointed from time to time.

During the year twelve new domains, with a total area of 323 acres, were reserved and brought under Part II of the Act, and arrangements made for their control. Additions totalling 470 acres were also made to twenty-seven existing domains.

The new domains comprised the following :—

- (1) Three small reserves at Takanini, containing together an area of 1 acre 3 roods 11·84 perches. These reserves became vested in the Crown on the subdivision of private property for residential purposes. The Great South Road Beautifying Council of Auckland undertook to assist in beautifying the reserves, and arranged for the holding of a public meeting, at which nine gentlemen were nominated for appointment as a Domain Board. The assistance of the Council in this case is much appreciated by the Department. The reserves are suitable for development as small ornamental parks, with possibly some provision for a children's play area.

- (2) An area of 7 acres 3 roods 34 perches at Mount Maunganui. This area was vested many years ago in the Tauranga Harbour Board in trust for signal-station purposes. It has not been used for the purpose for which it was originally set aside, and the Harbour Board agreed to hand the area back to the Crown so that it could be made a public domain. The reserve, which is known as Mount Drury, consists of a low but prominent hill with a terraced formation. It has historical associations, and its easy contour together with its proximity to an exceedingly popular beach, renders it particularly desirable for a recreation reserve for public use and enjoyment. It has been placed under the control of the Mount Maunganui Town Board.
- (3) An area of 15 acres, known as Donner's Bush, and situated about four miles from Gisborne. It contains some nice bush and is a favourite picnic resort. This area was private land which it was decided should be acquired in the public interest. The purchase-price was £5 per acre. Arrangements are being made for the appointment of a Domain Board comprising five private members, together with representatives of the Gisborne Borough Council, the Cook County Council, and the Department.
- (4) An area of 180 acres 0 roods 4·5 perches near Puketitiri, Hawke's Bay, comprising the open portion of the land donated to the Crown in 1937 by Mr. F. Hutchinson, of Kissington. A strongly representative Board has been appointed, and it is hoped to develop portion of the area as a general sports-ground for the district.
- (5) Three areas containing together 62 acres 2 roods 15 perches at Carter's Beach, Westport. The new domain extends along the beach, which is a very fine one, for about two miles, and its development and improvement should prove of great benefit to the Westport district. A strong Domain Board has been appointed, including representatives of the Borough and County Councils.
- (6) An area of 4 acres in Murchison, now known as the River View Domain. This area has been placed under the control of the Murchison County Council, which is developing it as a camping-ground.
- (7) An area of 7 acres 3 roods 25·09 perches at Wataroa. This area was portion of a block of land acquired by the Wataroa Aero Club, and was transferred to the Crown during the year in order that it could be made a public domain. In consideration of such transfer the Department made a grant of £50 for improvements. The Department also arranged for the survey of the recreation area. A local Domain Board has been set up to control the reserve. Wataroa had no suitable recreation-ground, and the people of the district are to be commended on their enterprise in repairing the deficiency.
- (8) An area of 3 acres 2 roods in the Town of Taylorville. This area was owned by the Canterbury Education Board, but had been leased for many years to the Brunner Borough Council for use as a recreation-ground. At the request of the Department the Education Board executed a transfer to the Crown, and the land was thereupon reserved for recreation purposes, made a public domain, and placed under the control of a local Domain Board. The reserve has been very considerably improved by the efforts of the local people.
- (9) An area of 9 acres 3 roods 35 perches at Ouruhia, near Christchurch. About 6 acres was purchased by the local people from the Railways Department for the sum of £156. The remainder was also acquired from the Railways Department, but in this instance the Lands Department found the sum of £125 to enable the transaction to be completed. Considerable improvements have been carried out, and the people of Ouruhia deserve great credit for their enterprise in acquiring and developing the land as a public park.
- (10) An area of 10 acres situated at the mouth of the Waitaki River and known as the Waikakahi Domain.
- (11) An area of 14 acres 3 roods 31 perches at Mount Aspiring Bay, Lake Wanaka, now known as the Glendhu Domain. This area is exceedingly popular with the general public as a camping-ground. It was formerly portion of a pastoral run, but the licensee agreed to surrender the area from his license, and the Lake County Council expressed its willingness to control the land as a public domain so that camping could be properly controlled and adequate facilities provided. The Department was therefore pleased to arrange for the survey and the surrender of the land from the pastoral license, and for the appointment of the Council as the Domain Board.
- (12) An area of 5 acres 0 roods 14 perches in the Town of Niagara, Southland. This land had been withheld from disposal with a view to its being utilized for recreation purposes, and on the residents expressing their desire to control and improve the land the Department was pleased to arrange for its reservation and for the appointment of a local Domain Board.

During the year arrangements were made, with the co-operation of the Hutt County Council, for the acquisition for recreation purposes of an area of 30 acres 1 rood at Paremata Bridge, on the Porirua Harbour, but the land has not yet been constituted as a public domain. The necessary arrangements are, however, in hand, and it is proposed to place the reserve under the control of a Board comprising representatives of the Council and the Department. The purchase-price was £1,500, half of which was contributed by the Department and the other half by the local body.

Additions to existing domains were made as follows:—

Land District.	Domain.	Area added.		
		A.	R.	P.
North Auckland	New Lynn	19	1	16
"	Okaihau	1	1	11
"	Ahipara	0	1	35·2
"	Kopuru	10	2	2
"	Mount Roskill	1	0	24·1
Auckland	Ohinewai	0	1	13*
"	Mount Drury	13	2	31·2
"	Taupo	1	1	19·7
Hawke's Bay	Hampden Bush	2	1	24
"	Woodville	24	0	16
Taranaki	Mania	0	2	0
"	Opunake	4	0	7
Wellington	Paraparaumu Beach	3	2	37·57
"	Owhango	0	2	0*
"	Wanganui River Trust	10	0	25·1
Nelson	Pohara	6	3	17·3
"	Kaiteriteri	43	0	11
Marlborough	Kaikoura	10	0	0
"	Koroniko	1	3	2
Westland	Rananga	1	0	26·6
Otago	Tuapeka	0	2	30
"	Taieri Lake	1	0	0
"	Poumawaia	18	3	31
"		12	0	20*
"	Wanaka Islands	0	1	0
"	Karitane	1	3	30
"	Roslyn	10	0	11
Southland	Croydon Bush	264	1	39
Total area added to twenty-seven domains		470	3	39·77

* Closed road areas.

The areas added to the Mania and Opunake Domains were dealt with by special legislation. Section 36 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1938, vested Section 13, Block XIV, Town of Mania, in the Crown as an addition to the Mania Domain. Section 13 contains an area of 1 rood, and was acquired by the Town Board in 1925 as a site for a public library and as an endowment for town purposes. It was desired to construct public swimming-baths in the town, and Section 13, together with the adjoining Section 12, was decided upon as being the most suitable site. Section 12, which also contains 1 rood was vested in the Crown as a reserve for police purposes. It was not required by the Police Department and arrangements were therefore made to change the purpose of the reservation to one for recreation purposes and to add the area to the Mania Domain. That action was taken under existing statutory authority, but special legislation was necessary to deal with the Town Board's section. In the Opunake case two harbour endowment areas of 2 acres 2 roods and 1 acre 2 roods 7 perches respectively were vested in the Crown as additions to the Opunake Domain by section 7 of the Opunake Harbour Act, 1938. The larger area of the two is situated on the beach and is admirably adapted for reservation for public-domain purposes. The smaller area is situated on the top of the cliff behind the beach and is to be planted in trees and generally beautified.

Brief mention may be made of some of the more interesting of the other additional areas dealt with during the year:—

Areas totalling 13 acres 2 roods 31·2 perches were added to the new Mount Drury Domain. The additional areas comprise, first, a block of 4 acres 2 roods 32·7 perches situated on the corner of Salisbury Avenue and the Maunganui Road; secondly, a block of 8 acres 3 roods 38·5 perches bounded by the Main Road and Oturoa, Omanawhiri, and Matapihi Streets; and, thirdly, a strip of closed road along the Ocean Beach comprising an area of 1 acre 0 roods 25 perches. It is considered that the development of these areas, together with that of the Mount Drury Reserve, will be of great advantage to Mount Maunganui. Control of portion of the foreshore at the Ocean Beach has also been vested in the Mount Drury Domain Board.

An area of 2 acres 1 rood 24 perches in the Town of Hampden was transferred to the Crown by the Waipawa County Council and added to the Hampden Bush Domain. The Council had held the land for the purposes of a public park and recreation-ground for the inhabitants of the township, but as the local Domain Board desired to control the area the Department was asked to make the necessary arrangements.

Some fourteen small reserves which had become vested in the Crown for recreation purposes on the subdivision of private properties were added to the Paraparaumu Beach Domain. The reserves extend at intervals along the beach between Paekakariki and Paraparaumu. Control of the domain has been placed in the hands of the Hutt County Council, which is keenly interested in all reserve matters in its area, and it is proposed to add further reserves from time to time as additional areas become vested in the Crown.

Arrangements were made to add an area of 10 acres 0 roods 25·1 perches to the Wanganui River Trust Domain. The land was portion of a Crown leasehold, and the transaction payment of the sum of £50 to the lessee as compensation for improvements carried out by him on the area. The Department found the compensation-money and also surveyed the area and arranged for its surrender from the lease.

The Pohara Domain, on Golden Bay between Takaka and Tarakohe, originally comprised an area of 4 acres 0 roods 1·8 perches, and was controlled by the Takaka County Council acting as a Domain Board. About the end of 1937 the Council bought an area of 6 acres 3 roods 17·3 perches adjoining the domain for £150. The Department contributed £50 towards the purchase. The purchased area was transferred by the Council to the Crown and was added to the domain during the year. The domain has now, with the approval of the County Council, been placed under the control of a local Domain Board, and the Department has made a grant of £100 towards the cost of levelling portion of the reserve. This domain is a valuable recreation area, as the beach there is an excellent one and a popular resort of the public.

In 1936 a Domain Board was set up to control an area of 2 acres 0 roods 8·4 perches at Kaiteriteri, in Tasman Bay. Just across the road from the domain there is a magnificent and most popular beach, and ever since the appointment of the Domain Board the Department has had in view the question of acquiring additional land for the domain so that adequate facilities might be provided for visitors to the beach. The matter was completed during the year under review by the acquisition of an area of 26½ acres at the price of £700, and the purchased area has been added to the domain. The Department found £600 of the purchase-money, the remainder being raised locally. Special attention was given to this case, as it is realized that wherever possible adequate provision should be made for recreation areas at beach resorts and that where the Crown does not possess any available land an endeavour should be made to acquire suitable areas. The beach at Kaiteriteri is a particularly fine one, and now that a good road is available the locality must develop into a most valuable playground for the general public. The Domain Board has been reconstituted by the appointment of representatives of the Waimea County Council, the Motueka Borough Council, the Nelson Automobile Association, and the Department.

A small section in Block XVI, Town of Pembroke, was taken for recreation purposes under the Public Works Act and added to the Wanaka Islands Domain. The section was the only privately owned one in Block XVI, and, being situated alongside the camping-ground on the domain, its addition to the domain area was most desirable. Owing to certain title difficulties it was necessary to take the land under the provisions of the Public Works Act. Any compensation that may be awarded will be paid by the Department.

Two unformed road areas at Pounaweia, one of 3 acres 0 roods 20 perches and the other of 9 acres, were closed by the Department with the consent of the Clutha County Council and added to the local domain. This action was taken at the request of the Domain Board, with a view to the preservation of the attractive native growth on the areas and in order to prevent unauthorized camping. The residents of Pounaweia have shown commendable interest in the preservation of the natural amenities of that very charming spot and have raised considerable sums for the purchase of bush areas, domain improvements, &c. The Department felt that their efforts should be supported and every endeavour made to prevent vandalism on the part of some irresponsible visitors to the resort. It was therefore decided to close the unused road areas and to add them to the domain so that they can be adequately controlled and safeguarded. A suitable portion of the domain has been set apart for scenic purposes, and it is proposed to confine camping to the recognized area. Other areas totalling 18 acres 3 roods 31 perches were also added to this domain during the year.

The Croydon Bush Domain, near Gore, was extended by the addition of areas totalling 264 acres 1 rood 39 perches, comprising an area of 50 acres 0 roods 19 perches of unoccupied Crown land and a block of 214 acres 1 rood 20 perches of State forest land made available for the purpose by the State Forest Service. This domain now contains some 2,124 acres, the greater part of which is in bush. It is a favourite public resort and is a very valuable area from the botanic point of view. The control of the reserve is in the hands of the Gore Borough Council. An application was made by an adjoining owner to acquire most of the additional area for farming, but it was decided that the value of the land for reserve purposes far outweighed any value it might possess for settlement.

An area of 2 roods 8·2 perches of the Taupo Domain was declared to be a reserve for public buildings of the General Government. The area is required as a post-office site, and in exchange an area of 1 acre 1 rood 19·7 perches has been relinquished by the Post and Telegraph Department and added to the domain.

In 1901 an area of 27 acres on the Mahurangi Harbour described as Allotment 82A, Mahurangi Parish, was set aside as a recreation reserve, and in 1907 was constituted as the Pukapuka Domain and placed under the control of the Rodney County Council. The area is accessible only by water, has no sand beaches, and has never been used as a domain. The Domain Board has not at any time spent any money on the land, which has remained unfenced and has been farmed in conjunction with adjoining land. It was recently discovered, as a result of certain title investigations, that the so-called domain area had been sold with other land by the Crown in 1857. The reservation of the area for recreation purposes was therefore null and void, and in order to correct the position all documents of reservation, &c., issued in connection with the land have now been revoked.

At the request of those concerned the appointment of the Puketitiri Domain Board was revoked during the year. The domain area is not very suitable for recreation, and as the new Hutchinson Domain referred to earlier in this report will meet the recreation requirements of the locality it has been decided that there is no need to retain the Puketitiri reserve. The domain reservation will therefore be cancelled in due course and the land disposed of to the best advantage.

In 1930 an area of 1 acre 3 roods 36.5 perches at Ohope Beach was purchased for recreation purposes out of funds contributed by the Bruce Trustees and the Whakatane Borough and County Councils, and by arrangement with the contributing bodies the Borough Council was appointed as a Domain Board to have the control and management of the area. During the year the Borough Council suggested that the County Council should take over control of the Domain, and the necessary Order in Council was accordingly issued. Important additions are being made to this Domain. An area of 143 acres 1 rood 27 perches of the Ngatiawa Native Land Development Block has been acquired by this Department from the Native Department at the price of £179 15s. for land and fencing so that it can be reserved for recreation purposes. This area is mostly bush-clad, and the decision to acquire it as an addition to the domain land in the vicinity has given general satisfaction. Thanks are due to the Native Department for its ready co-operation in the matter. Another area of 42 acres 0 roods 35.1 perches lying between the original domain and the native area has been transferred by the Council to the Crown and is also being added to the domain, which will thus finally comprise a total area of 187 acres 2 roods 18.6 perches. The County Council's action in transferring its land to the Crown so that the whole area can be administered as public-domain land is greatly appreciated by the Department.

Orders in Council were issued appointing sixty-two Domain Boards to control domains for further terms, while eighty vacancies on various Boards were filled by the appointment of suitable persons. In a number of cases additional members were also appointed to Domain Boards.

The Westport No. 2 and the Westport North Beach Domains were united to form one public domain.

Permission was granted in fifteen cases for Domain Boards to increase the charges for admission to their domains on special occasions during the year. One set of by-laws was approved, and permission given in two cases to the setting-aside of camping-grounds and parking-places in domains.

Under the provisions of section 13 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1932, rental concessions to lessees of domain lands were granted in six cases during the year.

Numerous leasing proposals were submitted by Domain Boards and fully investigated before approval was given to the issue of leases. Domain Boards generally are realizing the advantage of being able to ask for advice and assistance in this important phase of the administration of domain lands, and on its part the Department is prepared to do all that it can to see that areas are leased, consistent always with the proper requirements of recreation, to the best possible advantage, and that the terms and conditions of leases are fair and reasonable from all points of view.

A number of applications on the part of Domain Boards for the felling of old plantations or parts of plantations on public domains were investigated during the year, and permission given in all cases where it was clear that the trees concerned had outlived their usefulness. It is usually insisted that any cleared areas are to be replanted in suitable trees and shrubs.

The pressure brought to bear on the Department for the setting-aside of public domains in districts where no provision has been made to meet recreation requirements is increasing every year. The Department has always been generous in the matter of the reservation of Crown land for recreation, but it is often difficult in districts where no Crown land is available to obtain suitable land for the purpose. It is, however, recognized that districts where no reserves have been set aside for public recreation and where no Crown land exists have a fair claim to some assistance from the State, and within the somewhat rigid limits of the small annual appropriation that has so far been permitted the Department endeavours to meet the position by the purchase of suitable areas. It is, as a rule, necessary to ask the districts concerned to contribute towards the cost of purchasing recreation areas, and this in many ways is a good arrangement for all concerned, as experience has shown only too plainly in many cases that what is too easily obtained is not always properly appreciated. During the year under review the Department contributed the sum of £1,800 towards the acquisition of recreation areas, and was also able to make some small grants to assist Domain Boards, particularly in country districts, to improve their domains and provide additional recreation facilities for the people. Arrangements were also made during the year for the diversion of funds standing to the credit of certain domains for use on other domains not so happily situated in the financial sense.

In addition to the cases referred to above connected with the addition of areas to existing domains by means of special legislation, the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1933, also dealt with several other matters affecting public domains and Domain Boards. Section 14 of the Act cancelled the reservation over an area of 7 acres 3 roods 35 perches of the Kopuru Domain and authorized its disposal to an adjoining owner. This domain is situated on the west coast of North Auckland, and comprises an area of some 1,087 acres of sandhill country. It is controlled by the Hobson County Council acting as a Domain Board, and in the summer is used a good deal for camping. In order to improve the access to the beach the Council has formed a new road running from a county road partly through domain land and partly through freehold property. The area of freehold required for the new road is 1 acre 3 roods 32 perches, and the owner gave his consent subject to the condition that he be allowed to acquire an area of 7 acres 3 roods 35 perches of the domain. This latter area is not required for recreation, and under the circumstances it was considered desirable to cancel the reservation and to authorize the disposal of the land to the freehold owner. The difference in value between the freehold area required for the road and the domain area to be disposed of will be paid into the domain account before title is issued.

Section 17 authorized the Waiuku Town Board to expend the revenue from certain land in managing, administering, and improving the Massey Park Domain and other land set apart for recreation purposes and under the control of the Board. By the Waiuku Recreation Reserve Act, 1879, an area of 78 acres which had previously been reserved as a recreation-ground and Volunteer drill-ground was vested in a Board of Trustees. By section 4 of the Reserves and other Lands

Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1919, the Board of Trustees was abolished and the land vested in the Town Board for the purposes of the 1879 Act. Under the trust all revenue from the land had to be used in cultivating and improving it. The land has been leased for grazing at an annual rental of £85, and a considerable sum of money has accumulated in the reserve account. The revenue cannot be all spent to advantage on the reserve itself, and the Town Board therefore applied for authority to expend portion on the Massey Park Domain, which it controls in the capacity of a Domain Board, and on other land owned or controlled by the Board. It is proposed to carry out extensive improvements to the Massey Park Domain, the revenue from which is not sufficient to cover all the expenditure required, and also to erect further dressing-sheds and other improvements on the Sandspit Swimming Reserve, a small area purchased by the Board and much used by the public. Under the circumstances, it was considered reasonable to permit the Board to spend part of the revenue from the recreation and drill-ground reserve on the domain and on other land owned or controlled by the Board and used for public recreation and cognate purposes.

Section 35 made special provision for the application of the proceeds from the sale of certain trees on the Okotuku Domain. This domain comprises an area of some 164 acres, of which 160 acres is leased to the Waverley Racing Club for a term of twenty-one years from the 1st April, 1938, at an annual rental of £125. The domain has been used for racing for many years, and the extensive improvements on the leased area belong to the Crown. It was desired to construct some more horse-boxes, but the racing club was not in a position to finance the cost. There were, however, a number of pines on the domain which were becoming overmature and which it was felt should be felled. Some of the trees were overhanging the course, while others were liable to be blown down at any time. The Domain Board proposed to dispose of the trees, and asked to be allowed to use the proceeds in the construction of the additional horse-boxes required. Under the circumstances, it was considered that the request should be granted, but as there was no authority to use proceeds from the sale of trees on domain land in such a manner special legislation had to be provided to meet the position. The Domain Board proposes to carry out a certain amount of replanting.

Sections 23, 25, 30, and 40 validated certain payments made by the Waikawa, Woodend, Brighton, and Papanui Domain Boards respectively, while section 28 validated the borrowing of certain moneys by the Westshore Domain Board and also interest payments and repayment of principal made by the Board. These special sections were all introduced with the approval of the Audit Department.

General legislation amending and extending some of the provisions of the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act, 1928, dealing with certain phases of the administration of recreation reserves and public domains was passed during the year as sections 49, 50, 51, and 52 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1938. Section 49 deals with the making of by-laws, and provides that by-laws for the control of recreation reserves shall be made in a manner as closely as possible approximating the manner in which by-laws are made by local authorities. It is considered that uniformity in that respect is most desirable. Section 51 deals with the making and publication of by-laws by Domain Boards, and simplifies the procedure required. In particular it does away with the requirement that domain by-laws must be published by being painted on boards, or printed on paper or linen and affixed to boards, and displayed and kept displayed at one or more of the principal entrances to the domain concerned. Section 50 provides that the trustees of a recreation reserve may lease the reserve, or any part thereof, to tennis clubs, bowling clubs, croquet clubs, &c., for terms of up to twenty-one years on terms and conditions to be approved or prescribed by the Minister of Lands. Section 52 provides that a trustee of a public reserve or a member of a Domain Board or of a National Park Board may be employed by the trustees or the Board provided that the amount paid does not exceed £15 in any financial year. Past payments of that nature are validated by the section, which will permit of reasonable payments being made in future for secretarial duties.

PART II. NATIONAL PARKS.

The following additions were made to national-park areas during the year:

Park.	Description of Land added.	Area.			Date of Addition.
		A.	R.	P.	
Egmont	Sections 1 and 2, Block V, Egmont Survey District	469	0	30	2/11/38.
Arthur Pass	Part Reserve 1095 (5,190 acres), Reserve 1577 (1,709 acres), part Reserve 1727 (11,400 acres), and Crown land (11,110 acres), situated in Blocks VII, VIII, XI, XII, XV, and XVI, Otira Survey District, and II, III, V, VI, VII, IX, X, and XIII, Taranaki Survey District.	29,400	0	0	4/4/38.

The total area of the Egmont National Park is now 79,469 acres, and that of the Arthur Pass National Park 146,400 acres.

The sections added to the Egmont National Park were at one time held under leases in perpetuity. The leases were forfeited in 1928, and no attempt was made to reopen the sections for settlement as it was considered that the land is unsuitable for farming and that the bush should be preserved. The sections lie just outside the radius line of the park, and as the Park Board was prepared to administer them the Department was pleased to arrange for the issue of a Proclamation under section 4 of the Egmont National Park Act, 1924, altering the boundaries of the park by including Sections 1 and 2 therein.

The land added to the Arthur Pass National Park comprises 11,100 acres of Crown land and 18,300 acres of State forest extending up the Taramakau Valley on its southern side as far as Harper's Pass. Thanks are due to the State Forest Service for making the State forest land available. The scenic features of the additional area are very marked, and particular mention may be made of Lake Kaurapataka, a most beautiful sheet of water situated about six miles from Aitken's Railway-station at an altitude of a little over 1,300 ft.

Section 26 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1938, made special provision for the care, management, and protection of the national-park areas along the Te Anau—Milford Sound Road. In 1934 various areas of provisional State forest reserves totalling some 48,440 acres in the Eglinton and Upper Hollyford Valleys along the route of the new road were declared by special legislation to be set apart for national-park purposes. In the following year various areas of Crown land totalling some 90,650 acres in the same locality were permanently reserved under the Land Act for the same purposes. The new road has quickly become popular with motorists and others, and it has been necessary for the Department to regulate camping along the road. Camping-grounds have been laid off and facilities provided for the use of the public, while during the season a patrolman is appointed to supervise camping and to prevent vandalism and fire damage. Charges for the use of the camping-grounds have been made at the rate of 2s. per day or 5s. per week, and camping anywhere except in the camping-grounds has been strictly prohibited. No difficulty has been experienced in collecting the very reasonable charges made, but as doubts arose as to the authority for imposing such charges it was deemed advisable to place the position beyond all doubt. The special legislation therefore declared it to be unlawful to camp on the national-park areas along the new road except in the camping-grounds already established or to be established in the future, and authorized the Minister of Lands to fix such camping charges as he might think fit. Charges made in past seasons were also validated. It was considered absolutely essential that the scenic beauty of the locality should be safeguarded to the fullest possible extent, and the legislation therefore made special provision for the care, management, and protection of the park areas along the road. In that connection penal provisions based generally on those contained in the Scenery Preservation Amendment Act, 1933, were adopted.

No cases of damage by fire or otherwise in the area were reported during the year. The patrolman, Mr. W. Ballantyne, was most vigilant in carrying out his duties, and is to be congratulated on the success of his work.

Following on the passing of the special legislation referred to above, vigorous action was taken to have cats and dogs cleared off the national-park area, and in this direction the Resident Engineer of the Public Works Department gave valuable help in checking the keeping of these animals by employees on public works.

Notwithstanding adverse weather conditions, the public camping-grounds were used to a greater extent than during the previous year. Camping fees amounting to £59 3s. were collected during the season.

A few acres were surveyed at Cascade Creek, and will be formally set apart as a site for the accommodation buildings provided and controlled by the Tourist Department.

A strong and insistent demand exists for private deer-shooting permits in the national-park area, and after consultation with the Internal Affairs Department it was decided to issue short-term permits to approved persons.

The improvement of the public camping-grounds is receiving attention, and proposals are in hand for the erection of a general shelter-shed and other amenities.

During the year grants of £500 and £350 were made to the Egmont and Arthur Pass National Park Boards for general administration and park-improvement purposes. In this connection it is to be noted that there is no fixed annual appropriation of Government moneys for the purposes of the national parks. Where Park Boards have been established their funds consist of—

- (a) All moneys accruing in respect of the park, penalties, fees, &c.
- (b) All moneys from time to time appropriated by Parliament in aid of the Board's funds.
- (c) All moneys from time to time contributed to the Board by any local authority out of its general funds.
- (d) All other moneys received by the Board from any source as part of its general revenue, including rents derived from leases and tenancies.

In addition, the Boards have borrowing-powers (subject to the approval of the Local Government Loans Board) for the purpose of carrying out park improvements, and may pledge as security for any loan the funds, property, or revenues of the Board. This does not permit of the pledging of the land comprised in the park as part of the security. The land itself remains vested in the Crown as a permanent reserve.

Government grants for the development of the national parks are provided from time to time by way of direct appropriation out of the Consolidated Fund, and any grants by local bodies are made out of the general funds of such bodies provided by way of local rates. There are no fixed annual grants or subsidies either out of the Crown's revenues or local bodies' revenues. There is, however, a growing realization that the national parks are properly the concern of the State, and possibly in the future a reasonable annual appropriation of funds for park purposes will be regarded as a matter of course.

Extracts from the annual reports of the Tongariro, Egmont, and Arthur Pass National Park Boards are appended hereto.

APPENDIX.

REPORTS OF NATIONAL PARK BOARDS.

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(R. G. MACMORRAN, UNDER-SECRETARY FOR LANDS, FOR CHAIRMAN.)

Only one full meeting of the Board was called during the year, and this was held at the Chateau on the 14th May, 1938.

The Manager at the Chateau advises that the number of people who have visited the park during the year has greatly increased. The greatest increase has, as usual, taken place in the winter, and with the improved facilities for skiing and snow sports generally provided by the Tourist Department this increase should be maintained. The Manager states that the year generally has been a good one, and with the exception of last September, when severe blizzard conditions caused the blocking of the main road below the Chateau on two occasions, the weather has been the best he has experienced since taking over the management at the Chateau.

The walking-tracks surrounding the Chateau have received attention by the Chateau staff, and the Waihohonu and Mangatepopo huts were inspected and are reported to be in good repair. No great changes are reported so far as the mountains, craters, &c., are concerned, and Ngauruhoe has been very quiet for a long period.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ALPINE GARDEN.

At the meeting of the Board held on 14th May, 1938, the question of establishing an alpine garden in the vicinity of the Chateau as a Centennial feature was discussed. The correspondence with the Tourist Department, containing suggestion by His Excellency the Governor-General in regard thereto, was read for the information of members. A sub-committee consisting of Dr. Marshall and Messrs. W. H. Field and T. A. Blyth was appointed to arrange the details, and a sum of £50 was authorized out of the funds of the Board to enable a start to be made with the work. It was decided by the Board that no plants other than those indigenous to the park were to be planted.

Areas close to the Chateau were selected, and pegs and hanging plates were prepared for the purpose of identifying trees and plants.

The report of the Chairman of the Committee (Dr. Marshall) is as follows:—

“The Committee paid special attention to the paths which traverse the bush area lying to the west of the Chateau. Here hanging or ground labels were placed in such a way that visitors will have no trouble in identifying these plants. In most cases these labels are far apart and seem very few in number, and the members of the Committee think that duplicate or even triplicate names should be provided for a number of the plants.

“The small area of bush south-east from the Chateau should be carefully preserved. We think that paths in this area should mainly radiate from the centre. At present this area is much disfigured by fallen timber. Mr. Blyth has kindly undertaken to see to the clearing of this. He has already planted several *Todea superba* ferns here and most of them are now well established. Though this beautiful plant occurs widely in the Ruapehu country, no plants have been found growing naturally near the Chateau. This patch of bush contains two specimens of mountain-cedar, an attractive tree which cannot be found elsewhere close to the Chateau.

“The striking mountain plant, *Cordyline indivisa*, is almost absent in the Chateau bush. We think that this should be planted in some numbers on the north side of the road leading across the bush to the new huts.

“A plant of *Ranunculus insignis* is growing well in the border in front of the Chateau and flowered freely. There are a number of plants of this species close at hand which could also be placed in this border. There are, too, a great many plants of *Euphrasia cuneata* which could also be used in this way as well as the ornamental *Cordyline indivisa*, *Pseudopanax*, and *Griselinia*.”

TIMBER TRESPASS ON THE NORTHERN SLOPES OF TONGARIRO.

The State Forest Service has arranged to examine the boundaries in this locality at intervals to ensure that no further cutting takes place on park lands. The Board records its thanks for the valuable services rendered by the State Forest officers in this connection. The posts and strainers have been sold to the Native Department.

CLEARING AND POLING MAHUIA TRACK.

This route is regarded as one of the important outlets from the north-western slopes of Ruapehu to the main highway. The necessary funds for the carrying-out of the work were authorized by the Board at its last meeting.

The work was completed in March last, and comprises poling approximately three miles of tussock country from the Ohakune-Chateau poled line at the head of the Whakapapa Valley to the top of the Mahuia bush and the tussock land on the lower side of the bush to the Tokaanu road, approximately another 1 mile 36 chains.

The centre link traverses about 3 miles of beech bush, through which a good track about 4 ft. wide has been cut and cleared.

The poles used were silver pine of good quality not less than 7 ft. 6 in. long—some are as long as 9 ft. The poles are about 4 chains apart.

SCORIA FLAT ROAD.

The most outstanding work during the year has been the improvement of the road to the Lower Scoria Flat and the commencement of the construction of the road to the Salt Hut on Upper Scoria Flat. This road is now formed to the edge of Upper Scoria Flat, about 500 to 600 yards from the Salt Hut, and an effort is being made to metal the mile of new road before the winter. The road should be finished next summer.

The funds for this work are being provided by the Government.

FIRE-PREVENTION MEASURES.

A full report on this question has been prepared by officers of the State Forest Service, and the matter has been referred to a sub-committee of Wellington members to look into with a view to determining what action the Board can take, having due regard to the financial resources of the Board.

In the Ohakune sector particular attention is being given to the measures necessary to protect the bush adjoining the Ohakune Development Block.

DEER-DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS.

In December, 1938, the Department of Internal Affairs advised of the difficulty in securing suitable men to carry out deer-destruction operations in the various parts of the Dominion needing attention, and that it had been found necessary to abandon the intention to resume operations in the park during the 1938 season.

The Department is looking into the question of operating in the park in the spring of this year in conjunction with another campaign in the Kaimanawa Ranges.

In the meantime, authority has been issued to several members of the Chateau staff to destroy deer under the direct supervision of the Manager at the Chateau.

PLACE-NAMES IN THE PARK.

At the last meeting of the Board the question of place-names was discussed, and a committee was appointed comprising the Warden of the park (Mr. J. Cullen) and Hoani te Heuheu to compile information as to place-names and historical events connected with the park.

In 1931 the Warden prepared a list of the Maori names of features of interest near the Chateau, and the late Mr. T. W. Downes, of Wanganui, also supplied some interesting information in 1938.

The data collected in this respect will be of value to the Geographic Board in confirming names of physical features and localities which will appear on further official maps of the National Park.

MOUNTAIN CLUB HUTS.

In 1935 authority was granted to the Ruapehu Ski Club to erect a mountain hut on the northern slopes of Ruapehu at approximately the 6,000 ft. level and situated near the foot of the Whakapapa Glacier. One of the conditions laid down by the Board was that the sleeping-accommodation in the hut must not exceed twelve bunks.

Representations have now been received from this club pointing out that the growth of ski-ing in the last few years has naturally been reflected in the membership of clubs and that the membership of the Ruapehu Ski Club has almost doubled since the present hut was planned.

The club desires to provide further accommodation for its members, and has applied for authority to extend the hut to provide further shelter space and an additional twenty-four bunks. The Alpine Sports Club desires to erect a hut on the eastern slopes of Ruapehu. The site desired is in the valley of the Wangachu Stream at a height of approximately 5,500 ft. about five miles and a half from the Waiouru-Pokaanui Road and about 6 miles in a direct line from the Waihohonu Hut. The purpose of the hut is to serve as a base for climbing the eastern side of Ruapehu, giving access to the Wangachu, Wahianoa, and Waikato Glaciers and the ridges leading to Ringatoto, Cathedral Rocks, and Te Heu Heu Peaks.

The Club states in further support of the application that it would also make possible a trip round the mountain at the 5,000 ft. level, leaving the Chateau via the poled line to Ohakune Hut, thence to the proposed Wangachu Hut, and thence to the Chateau. A further type of trip which the club hopes such a hut would serve is the winter ski tour between the Chateau or Salt Hut and the Wangachu, there being excellent ski-ing fields between these two places.

Mr. Marchant gave notice of motion at the last meeting of the Board as follows:—

“That the resolution of the Board laying down the policy with respect to the minimum elevation of mountain-club huts be amended in such a manner as to define the area in the park for the 5,000 ft. limit, and that the limit for the balance of the park be 3,000 ft. The 5,000 ft. area be defined by a line from Para-te-tai-tonga through Haubangatahi to the main road, thence along the main road to a line passing through Ngauruhoe to Te Heu Heu, and thence back to Para-te-tai-tonga.”

The matters referred to herein will be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

SKI TOW, SCORIA FLAT.

A ski tow has been constructed by the Public Works Department out of moneys provided by the Tourist Department. The tow is situated on a site several hundred yards above the Salt Hut. Trial runs were made with varying numbers of passengers, and the machine operated very satisfactorily. The tow should be a boon to those visiting the park for the winter sports.

WINTER SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS TO THE PARK.

The following clubs have kindly submitted short accounts of visits of their members to the park during the year under review, and extracts from these accounts are quoted :

The Tararua Tramping Club (Inc.).—"During the year ended 31st March, 1939, the Tararua Tramping Club organized two trips to the Tongariro National Park area.

"The first of these was during Easter, 1938, when twelve members of the club stayed at the Ohakune Hut. During the whole of the four days the weather was bad, but climbs were made to the top of Ruapehu and to most of the well-known points on the south side of Mount Ruapehu.

"The second trip was the club's annual winter sports visit for nine days from 20th to 29th August inclusive. Fifty-nine members of the Tararua Tramping Club took part in this trip. The six perfect days during this period allowed members of the party to indulge to the fullest in ski-ing, and the whole party took advantage of the expert ski-ing instruction which was provided. As a direct result of this instruction the standard of ski-ing has greatly improved. In addition to ski-ing, climbs were made by some of the party to the Crater Lake on Ruapehu and also to the top of Ngauruhoe and Tongariro. In addition, a party visited the Ketetahi Springs."

The Alpine Sports Club (Inc.).—"Easter, 1938: Some twenty-two members camped in the Mangaturuturu Valley, reaching this place by bush tram from Horopito and thence crossing the Mangaturuturu Stream and proceeding up this for some distance to approximately the Pole track. The fine days were spent in a climb of Ruapehu Peak from this valley and in visits to points of interest in the vicinity. This proved an excellent camping-site, and could easily be made more accessible by a little track-cutting. There is a tram-track for some six miles from Horopito Station, thence about 20 chains of bush to the stream, and about half a mile more bush up the stream leads on to the clear ridges above. The club erected a temporary bridge over the stream to facilitate the crossings by the large party and their gear, the river being then in flood. This bridge has probably, however, not stood the winter. Several members completed this trip by traversing round the mountain to the south-east ridge of Girdlestone and thence out via the State Forest at Karioi.

"During the Christmas vacation a small party spent a fortnight proceeding from Karioi State Forest to the Chateau via the Wahianoa, Wangaehu, and Waikato valleys, exploring for possible sites for a mountain hut. This party made a prismatic-compass survey of the eastern side of the mountain, and a map on a scale of 1 in. to the mile, based on their measurements, is in course of completion. While in the Wangachu Valley opportunity was taken of exploring as fully as possible the outlet stream of the Crater Lake; descent was made to the ice-cave at the edge of the lake through which the water flows under the ice and over a waterfall below the summit icefall; a further waterfall under the ice in the valley between Ringatoto and Cinder Peak not hitherto recorded was inspected and photographed; and the ice-cave at the foot of the Wangaehu Glacier was also entered. At a later date this last cave was penetrated for a distance of about 20 chains on the floor of the glacier, under the ice, to a large waterfall in an ice-cave some 50 ft. high and 50 ft. wide. The explorations of this party leave no doubt as to the course of the Crater Lake stream in its journey beneath the ice, a matter previously the cause of much speculation."

Ruapehu Ski Club (Inc.).—"The club's activities have been well maintained during the past year.

"From a ski-ing viewpoint the season has been a most successful one. Snow commenced to build up early in June, and by the middle of July the upper snowfields were in their winter condition in spite of the heavily crevassed surface left by the previous summer.

"Compared with previous years the season was comparatively windless, allowing true powder snow to form on the upper levels. One effect of this was that there was little formation of snowfields of any degree of permanency below the 6,000 ft. level owing to the freshly fallen snow remaining on the upper slopes instead of as usual being blown off and to be deposited later lower down.

"Good ski-ing conditions prevailed from June to the end of January, after which the glaciers became too lumpy for safety. However, but little crevassing took place—practically none except a series of *schrunds* at the base of the peaks on Whakapapa, but a fair amount on the Waikato and Wangaehu. This latter was localized, however.

"During the summer quite a lot of parties worked over the north-east and south-west sides of the park.

"The hut again proved of great value as a base for parties both during the ski-ing season and later for climbing and tramping parties.

"The extension of the Scoria Flat Road will be of considerable use to frequenters of the park, and its progress is watched with pleasure.

"It is to be regretted that further signs of the depredations of deer are evident, and it is to be hoped that steps will be taken to poison out or otherwise rid the mountain of these pests, which, if not checked, will do irreparable damage to the unique flora of the upper levels."

EGMONT NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(W. C. WESTON, Chairman.)

I have the honour to present the Board's annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1939. The year has been an uneventful one, but it can be said with confidence that the state of the Egmont National Park has steadily improved.

The Board's Ranger, Mr. N. P. Gibson, has continued the destruction of goats, and during the year the number destroyed exceeded 900. Since that date the Board has had the help of honorary Rangers, who at week-ends form shooting parties. A tally is being kept of their activities, and it will be found that valuable work is being done.

The Ranger reports that there is very considerable regeneration in these parts of the reserve where the goats have been almost exterminated. The farmers of Taranaki are beginning to realize the serious effect of the goats on the young growth, and it would be a great help if the Government would legislate against the keeping of goats within a three- or four-mile radius of the reserve. The Park Board has seen the destructive effect of the goats in the native bush, and cannot stress too strongly the necessity for their extermination not only in Taranaki, but in all parts of New Zealand. With the extermination of the goat, erosion will be definitely checked.

The Board is of opinion that the opossum does some damage to the young growth in the forest, and on that account applied to the Minister to have the trapping season for Egmont extended from two to three months. This was approved, and so far the trappers, in spite of the bad weather conditions, report excellent results. If the bush is to be saved, the number of opossums must definitely be kept in check.

It is satisfactory to note that the Ranger reports a very real increase in the bird-life on the mountain. A strict watch has been kept on poachers, and with the help of many public-spirited settlers surrounding the mountain this evil has been checked.

So far no progress has been made as to the upkeep of the roads within the reserve. It would be a great help to the Park Board if the Highways Board could take over the liability on the roads to the North House and so end what appears to be a deadlock. If the tolls could be taken off the three roads to the various hostels there would be a great increase in the number of visitors to the reserve.

Finance is a serious problem so far as the upkeep of the reserve is concerned. Apart from the maintenance of the roads, the most pressing need of the Board is the appointment of a young expert forester who could grow up with the Board. Then, the completion of the ring fences round the reserve is a work that should be pressed on. In many cases settlers are helping, and the Board's thanks are due to these settlers, who appreciate the great value of the mountain to Taranaki.

During the year, with the help of the Government subsidy, the thinning-out of the *Pinus* plantation of 300 acres has been continued. This work should be completed early in 1940.

In conclusion, the Board wishes to express its thanks to the Minister in Charge, the Hon. Mr. Langstone, and to Cabinet for the interest and financial help that it has secured during the year.

To the Hon. Mr. Langstone the Board expresses special thanks for his very great interest not only in the Egmont Park, but in the many reserves throughout New Zealand under his charge.

To the Chairman and Committee in charge of the three hostels on the mountain the Board owes its thanks for another excellent year's work. In spite of, at times, the difficulties of finance, the standard of upkeep of the hostels has been more than maintained.

To the local bodies surrounding the mountain thanks are due for their generous and very welcome annual votes. Also, the very practical help of the various alpine clubs must not be forgotten. These clubs are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the six mountain huts on the higher levels, which are of such value to climbers. The formation of a junior alpine club in connection with the New Plymouth Boys' High School adds also to the interest in our mountain.

ARTHUR PASS NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

(N. C. KENSINGTON, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Christchurch, Chairman.)

Financial.—The Government has again granted the Board financial assistance, this year to the extent of £350 for general administration and for park-improvement purposes. This assistance is greatly appreciated, particularly as the Government during the life of the Board has given generous grants from time to time, and these have materially helped the Board in its progress with work in the park. The Board is also grateful to the Christchurch City Council for a donation of £50 to the funds and to those other local bodies which have made donations during the period.

This year the Board canvassed the various local bodies for donations, and, although the result of this appeal is not yet finalized, at this stage it can be said that the response has not reached expectations and has been really disappointing. The Board therefore appreciates the efforts of the few local bodies which have shown their interest in and appreciation of the Board's work by monetary assistance.

Personnel.—A number of changes have been made in the membership of the Board during this period. As indicated in the last annual report, Mr. Beanland did not contest the Mayoral election, and his place on the Board has been taken by Mr. R. M. MacFarlane, who was elected Mayor of Christchurch. Mr. E. S. Brittenden resigned from the Board on his retirement from the New Zealand Railways, and his seat has been taken by Mr. W. Rodgers, who has succeeded Mr. Brittenden as District Traffic Manager. Mr. F. S. Foster has succeeded Mr. Darby as Conservator of Forests at Hokitika and has taken Mr. Darby's place on the Board. The Board has also suffered the loss of one of its foundation members through the regrettable death of Dr. E. Teichelmann.

Meetings.—The Board held three meetings during the year in April, September, and January, and in addition several meetings of the various committees were also convened.

Staff. The Board has lost the services of the Secretary, Mr. C. B. Robson, and of the Treasurer, Mr. M. S. Nestor, who have resigned from these positions on their transfers to other Departments. Messrs. E. J. Lynskey and E. J. C. Salt have filled the respective offices in acting capacities pending the annual meeting of the Board.

Ranger.—During the year the Ranger, Mr. M. Burke, who has given good service to the Board, tendered his resignation, which was accepted as from 21st December, 1938. Mr. E. Wilson has since been appointed working Ranger, and the Board has been extremely fortunate in obtaining the services of a man so well suited to this position.

Township. A number of the lessees have recently painted their cottages, and this has considerably improved the appearance of the township.

The Highway Board is at present defining the boundaries of the proposed straightened road which at some future date will traverse the township. The question of ultimately eliminating the dangerous corner near the railway-station is also being considered. These preliminary surveys will enable the Board to extend the plantation work with the knowledge that encroachment will not be made on land likely to be required for highway purposes.

Rents are being paid promptly and the arrears are small.

Sports.—The Railways Department again organized a number of excursions to the Pass during the winter months, and these were well patronized. The Canterbury Mountaineering Club and the Christchurch Ski Club each have a clubhouse in the township, and the two clubs continue to do their part in increasing the popularity of the park.

Appreciation.—The thanks of the Board are due to Mr. M. J. Barnett, Superintendent of Reserves to the Christchurch City Council, for his supervision and advice in various works in the park; to the Railways Department for the friendly co-operation of its officers; to the public press for its interest in and for the publicity given to the work of the Board; to the Engineers and staff of the Public Works Department in Canterbury and Westland for advice and assistance freely given; to Mr. Burke, the Ranger for the greater part of the year, and to Mr. E. M. Wilson, the new Ranger; to the honorary Rangers, particularly Mr. R. Scott, Mr. W. Frazer, and Constable Osborne; and to Dr. W. McKay, Chairman of the Grounds Committee, for his zeal and supervision in the various activities in the park.

The report of the Grounds Committee, which has been prepared by Dr. McKay and which is submitted hereunder, covers the principal works of the Board in the park for the year.

“The Grounds Committee wishes to refer to the unfavourable weather experienced last winter, which rendered out-of-door work most difficult. The illness of the Ranger, Mr. Burke, extending over some five weeks, and his resignation in the early summer, still further militated against carrying out a complete works programme. In spite of these drawbacks, however, maintenance was kept up to date. Fortunately there has been excellent weather during the past two months, while the newly appointed Ranger, Mr. Evan Wilson, has brought to bear on his task such a refreshing enthusiasm that a considerable list of works has been initiated. Your Committee looks forward to a new era in the way of creating further amenities and maintaining existing ones.

“*Erosion at Township.*—Since last meeting, heavy floods in the Bealey River resulted in considerable encroachment at the rear of several cottages, at one time seriously threatening to cut through to the highway. As the danger from subsequent floods threatened not only the township but also Railway and Power Board property, representations were made to the several Departments concerned, which led to a deputation waiting on the Hon. R. Semple, Minister of Public Works. After learning the facts and the estimated cost of protection, the Minister promised to have the matter attended to as early as possible. Men have been employed now for some weeks on the erection of groynes, which should avert the threatened danger.

“*Proposed Ice-skating Rink.*—A proposition was placed before the Board by Mr. McLeod, of Grassmere, concerning the establishment of a skating-rink on the Waimakariri Flat, not far from the western approach to the traffic bridge. Inspections were made of the suggested site by members of the Committee, and the proposal was also discussed with Mr. McLeod on the ground. As a result of observations made over many years, Mr. McLeod is in a position to state that, throughout the winter, sunlight never reaches this area, so that he feels confident of the success of his plans. After favourably considering the scheme, the Committee submitted the drawing-up of a lease to Messrs. Archer and Lockwood, who have framed a detailed agreement safeguarding the interests of the Board and at the same time affording every encouragement to the lessee in his speculative enterprise. Work on the pond has commenced, and is to be completed before the winter. It is hoped that Mr. McLeod's efforts will be rewarded with the success he anticipates, as the sport of ice-skating has become very popular of late. The site chosen is quite close to the main highway and only about a mile from the railway. The vast improvements recently effected on the road from Christchurch to Arthur Pass render access so easy that this sport, once established, should result in greatly increased publicity of the park.

“*Alpine Rockery Extension.*—In order to complete the plan originally conceived, it was decided to extend the rockery southwards. Mr. M. J. Barnett, Superintendent of City Reserves, was again found most helpful and enthusiastic. After visiting the Pass and discussing the layout with members of your Committee, Mr. Barnett selected a competent gardener who, with suitable assistance and favoured with excellent weather throughout, has furnished a most pleasing addition to the rockery. Our honorary Ranger, Mr. R. Scott, has assisted materially in the collection of desirable alpine plants.

“*Tracks.*—Your Committee continue to feel that one of the most important functions of the Board is the construction of an abundance of good tracks of easy grade and properly maintained. These contribute greatly to the popularizing of the park and will continue to be sources of attraction to the general public. As the newly appointed Ranger has had much experience in this class of work, it is intended to open up a considerable number of new tracks and at the same time to improve the state of existing ones :—

- “ (1) Lake Kaurapataka : The track from the Taramakau River bed up the Pfeiffer Stream, which drains the lake, was put through last autumn. Relevant signposts now make the approach unmistakable to visitors. Arrangements have been made to cut several lookouts so that this beautiful sheet of water may be better viewed by the tramp. The formed track ends at the Otaheke Valley, by which route the return journey may be made to the Taramakau.
- “ (2) Edwards River : A year ago Mr. R. Scott blazed a track up this tributary of the Mingha, thereby giving readier access to a beautiful series of mountain and valley scenes. The Ranger has visited the district, and intends improving and extending this line of approach.
- “ (3) Upper Waimakariri : Instructions have been given to improve a difficult portion of this track near its upper end. This will open up an easier way to that wealth of fine alpine scenery lying in the vicinity of the Carrington Hut.
- “ (4) McGrath’s Creek to Upper Bealey : This is a track recently cut out by the Ranger, opening up some interesting new views and forming a pleasing alternative approach to Margaret’s Tarn and the Bealey Glacier.
- “ (5) Barrack Creek to Goat Hill : An old abandoned Public Works Department track has been traversed and suggestions made for deviations and other improvements. It is hoped to have the work carried out very soon, as at present there is no easy line of ascent to Goat Hill.

“*Carroll Memorial Hut.*—This hut was officially opened on 20th November, 1938, and Mr. G. Flower, representing the Board members, suitably expressed their sentiments on the occasion. The hut will be not only of great benefit to mountaineers in general, but will prove a centre of alpine activities for the youth of the country.

“A brass tablet, appropriately inscribed, was placed in the hut to the memory of the late Patrick Carroll, whose energy and enthusiasm so largely contributed to the success of the undertaking.

“*Fire Precautions.*—The ever-present fear of destruction of bush by fire prompted your Committee to enlist volunteer fire teams at both Otira and Arthur Pass. It is pleasing to report that there has been no lack of offers for the work, which will greatly facilitate the fighting of fires, should such unfortunately occur.

“*Guide Poles.*—Several dozen of these, conspicuously coloured, have been erected at requisite points on several ranges.

“*Fireplaces.*—Three reinforced-concrete fireplaces of the two-way type have been installed at Otira and Arthur Pass. It is probable that more will later on be placed in other localities, and they will prevent most of the promiscuous lighting of “billy” fires.

“*Hall.*—The hall has been entirely renovated, and painted both within and without. This building, centrally situated and now furnished as the Ranger’s office, has become a useful centre of management at the park.”

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