

# TRACKS AND TRAMPS

## WHY TRAMP:

Tramps and walks at Deep Cove are intended to give students a basic introduction to the flora and fauna of the area, the environment and the basic skills needed to support life in the outdoors.

Simply walking from A to B or making a race of the activity does little or nothing to achieve this outcome. Hopefully the students in your care will return home with a desire to go out into the bush in the future and to find out more of what they have learnt. This will not be the case if they are burnt out on the walks or if nothing is taught to them.

It is not intended that all walks be compulsory and in fact depending on factors such as the fitness of your group, time available and weather some walks can be truncated or missed altogether. Completing all of the walks while missing out other studies due to a lack of time can be a lost opportunity.

## HANGING VALLEY:

This track starts behind the hostel manager's house and surrounding buildings and goes up alongside the Wanganella Stream, past the Kea Cairn and onto the Huntleigh Falls.

This is a steep and rough track with some rather large steps for smaller students and would no doubt rank highest in the injury stakes when compared with other tracks in the area. Frequently injuries result where students are not controlled and allowed to come down too fast or jump down when they should be climbing down, resulting in a major and often unnecessary drain on the finances and resources of the Rescue Helicopter Trust and others. Care needs to be taken particularly when descending.

In inclement weather and where time is a premium consider turning around at the Kea Cairn. That is a point where the track comes out of the bush and on



to a slab of rock beside the Wanganella Stream. The Cairn is a brass plate mounted on the face of the rock immediately below where the group are most likely to standing.

The Hanging Valley track is a good choice in inclement weather as most of the journey is in the bush providing protection from the wind leaving time for other activities in the fine weather.

#### **WHAT IS A HANGING VALLEY?**

We are all familiar with valleys formed by streams and rivers, these are usually 'V' shaped in section and flow downhill from their source to the lower end or the junction with a lake or another river.

Like rivers and streams glaciers also have main flows with tributaries flowing in from side valleys and formations but in cross section these are usually 'U' shaped.

A hanging valley is formed when the main stream of the glacier cuts across an ice flow moving in from the side with the result that the valley floor no longer reaches the floor of the main valley but is cut off and ends abruptly some distance up from the main valley floor.

Another example of a hanging valley would be the valley above the Helena Falls.

#### **BRASELL POINT NATURE WALK:**

This is a loop track which starts at the back of the hostel. Numbered sign posts are placed at points of interest along the track with booklets available with information and questions relating to each point. The track leads out to Brasell Point which gives great views of Doubtful Sound and the surrounding area, before turning back up to the lookout then a short descent back to the road leading back to the hostel.

The booklets available at the hostel provide a good introduction to the plants and other features along the way.

Care should be taken when going down to Brasell Point as seals can sometimes be found sleeping on the rocks at the point.

George Brasell  
(Brasell Point in Background)  
November 1999



**Brasell Point is named after George Brasell who operated three launches in Deep Cove during the building of the power station. Originally from Lyttelton where he operated the fishing vessel Tawera before moving to Akaroa where he built the vessel “Miss Akaroa” a consortium owned boat which still operates from Deep Cove.**

**George Brasell and the crew of “Tawera” were decorated for saving the**

**crew of the yacht Astral during a race to commemorate the Canterbury Centenary in which two yachts were lost along with 10 crew members. Articles relating to this can be found in the hostel passageway along with paintings painted by Mr. Brasell.**



*Figure 1 Miss Akaroa @ Deep Cove*

**<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/wellington-lyttelton-yacht-race-tragedy>.**

#### **OLD DOUBTFUL SOUND TRACK:**

**This track is part of the original walking track between Deep Cove and West Arm. There can be little doubt that this is one of the prettiest tracks in the area with small waterfalls in the bush along the lower parts of the track. Look for the sign on the right of the track when going uphill indicating ice creams 30 miles. This is a replica of a sign on the original track. A copper telephone cable used to run along the side of this track which was the only means of communication with Deep Cove in years gone by.**

**The bridge over the Stella Burn replaced an earlier swing bridge which was lost during a large snow storm some years ago. Look for the glacier marks on a large rock further up the track. (Location is shown in the GPS manual along with the Latitude and Longitude location).**



**These marks would have been created when this large boulder was brought to this location probably during the last ice age. (10,000 + years ago)**

From the junction of the track with the Wilmot Pass Road it is a short walk up to the start of the Stella Falls Track.

Looking upstream from the bridge 50 yards below the track end a large log is visible across the stream. This still has wire mesh on the top of it and was used as a bridge across the stream on the old walking track.

While many will consider a return to the hostel by road seems to be an easier option walking down the track provides more shelter in cold/wet weather, keeps student away from traffic on the road, and takes about the same time.

From the Start/End of the track groups can either walk along the tailrace embankment (road) or through a track which starts/ends at the first bend in the road after crossing the Lyvia Bridge. Some find it easier to walk along the embankment and view the tail race tunnels and then climb up the bank on a track which has been cut for this purpose to the top of the embankment.



**TAKE CARE WHEN WALKING ON THE ROAD** and stay to one side. In spite of the remoteness of the area this is a busy road.

### STELLA FALLS TRACK:



The Stella Falls named after the Government Steamer 'Stella' which was used in early days to re-supply cairns left for ship wrecked sailors at the head of all of the Sounds.

The area around the falls was badly damaged in a rock fall some years ago which completely obliterated a picnic area used as a lunch stop by school groups beside the falls and a large portion of the track up to the falls.

Following the rock fall and to allow work to be completed at the falls in an effort to stop the stream washing down to the road in flood times a large digger was driven from the roadway, up



through the bush, to the falls. The track left by this machine is now used to gain foot access to the falls.

A short walk through the bush and the track breaks out onto the remains of the rock fall and a view of the Stella Falls. Going up this rock falls takes on to the top of the rock fall and a closer view of the falls. Care should be taken at this point to keep students back from the edge as the bank is can sometimes be corniced by the stream washing under it with the result that it may not hold the weight of a person. Students should not be allowed to race ahead of an adult.

Apart from the scenery and views the first stages of regeneration are a feature of this area with Red Algae, mosses and lichens and Koromiko and Toot seedlings all being visible.

**The Department of Conservation have advised that this track is closed.** Any decision as to the use of this track should be made in conjunction with the Board of Trustees and Management of your school, prior to going to Deep Cove.

A video showing the highlights of this walk is available on this website under Video Recordings - [https://youtu.be/X\\_krbSkoqrs](https://youtu.be/X_krbSkoqrs)

GPS Manual and Information.



*School Party at Falls 1*

#### HELENA FALLS TRACK:

A circular track located on the Helena Falls side of the tailrace can be accessed via a swing bridge across the tailrace. A short track leads off the main track to give access to the Helena Falls. At times flooding or an increase in flow in the stream leading down from the falls, may prevent parties gaining access to the falls but the views are still worth the short trip.

Helena Falls are named after Helena Fells who was the first European woman to visit the area in 1902.





The embankment on which this track is built has been built up in two stages with the first being made from spoil removed from the original tunnel. It is rumoured that much of the plant from the original construction is buried beneath it, although none appears to have been found when part of the embankment was removed during the building of the second tunnel.

During the building of the first tunnel concrete batching plants (Huge concrete mixers) were located on this site along with a number of tunnels and conveyor belts carrying gravel and other material to the mixers.



During the building of the second tunnel spoil was brought out of the tunnel on a conveyor belt and across the tailrace to a dumping point on this embankment, from where it was spread using dump trucks.



During the construction the contractors were required to replant the embankment at various stages with native plants. Time has shown however that these good efforts were in fact superseded by nature with plants that were seeded naturally, growing better than those planted by man.

This is no surprise as man would naturally put the plant where it was easier for him to get a crowbar into the ground rather than the best location for the plant while those seeded naturally would only successfully grow in areas that provided conditions required by the plant.

Areas have been set aside on part of the track to allow students to assess plant growth and the process of regeneration. More information on these areas is available in the hostel resource room.

*Original photographs: Courtesy of Meridian Energy.*

