



View down runway 05 toward northeast

The Remarkables, south of the airport

The Remarkables, from Queenstown

The Remarkables mountain range appears in some scenes of the Lord of the Rings movies.



Looking south along Lake Wakatipu

A scene along route to Te Anau

Tall trees, driving on left side of road

As we approached the tall mountains we began to see storm clouds, not knowing that intense rain and snow had been falling on the west side. Though a few waterfalls were seen at Milford Sound during the 1974 trip, this time there were perhaps ten thousand waterfalls! These few photos cannot adequately demonstrate what we saw during this visit. Waterfalls were nearly everywhere for many miles and of many intensities. Sometimes melting snow could be seen on the high terrain.



Storm clouds spilling over the mountain

and obscuring the snow-covered peaks



We started seeing single waterfalls

Many more as we exited Homer Tunnel



It was raining at Milford Sound but not excessively. We took the usual boat ride, miles to the ocean and back.



The landmark Mitre Peak was obscured



The intense waterfall at Milford Sound



Intense hanging valley waterfall, plus ?

The big surprise was to see water coming down to a cliff edge and then “falling” upwards, reversing direction. The white patch near the middle of the right photo is one of those, getting blown upwards by the strong wind.



At this angle, that patch blows upward

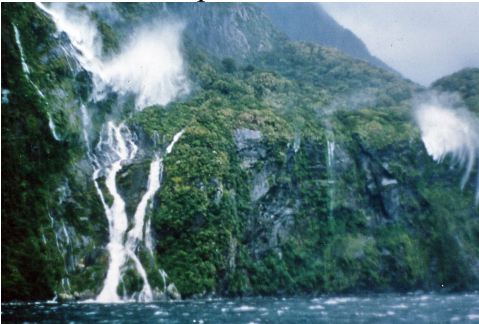


These two blow sideways and upwards

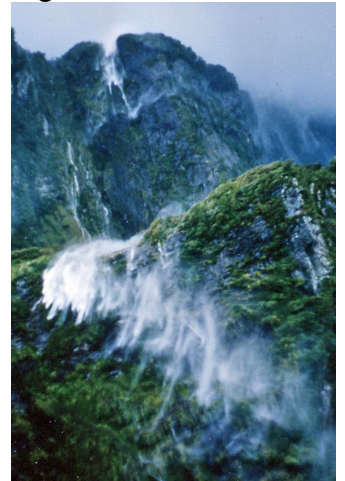


Another tour boat and waterfalls

The horizontal patches in the last two (and other) photos are window reflections from a light inside the boat.



Water being blown upwards



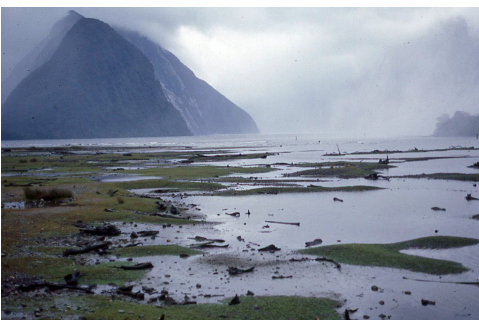
Dozens more waterfalls, miles of them!



Gail sheltering in the boat.



The green radar display guides boat pilot in fog by showing the fjord walls.



Mitre Peak becoming visible



Milford Sound waterfalls and boat docks

Impressive!





The streams and rivers were running full



At the Cascade Creek campsite I ran in rain to record what we enjoyed in 1974



The lake was there but not the bridge.



Commercial elk herd, raised for meat

The next day the weather was improving. The plan was to go westwards from Queenstown along the shores of Lake Wakatipu to find the settlement called "Paradise". There was good scenery along the way.



View from motel outside Queenstown



The bottom of the sign says "Gateway to Paradise". We drove until this:

Then we reluctantly turned back to Queenstown. Next we visited the Kiwi & Birdlife Park.





The Kiwi is nocturnal, so it was not possible to photograph them in the dark rooms.

X-ray of Kiwi, huge egg in lower right



friendly female Paradise Shelduck, *Tadorna variegata*



Tui (Parson Bird)

New Zealand Pigeon



Pacific Reef-Heron



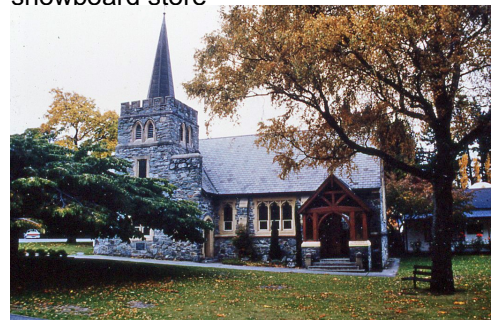
Queenstown harbour area

Micah liked snowboarding in Colorado. So we photographed this snowboard store in Queenstown. However, Micah had a different interest at that time. He had somehow read that Queenstown was the world's home town for commercial bungy jumping. He had to try it. His group went into the hills to a high bridge over a river. I think that the fall was about 100 meters, 300 feet. It was video taped for him. After dangling upside down he was lowered to a boat in the river. The rest of us had stayed in town, with Gail and Ruth having a case of "motheritis".



snowboard store

Sunday morning I went bird watching in a park on the south side of the harbour. While there I helped an oriental couple gather chestnuts from trees in the park to take home for eating. Then we attended the services at St. Peter's Anglican Church. I may have shown the Biblical Coins exhibit there.



St. Peter's Anglican Church

It was two years later, in 1999 to 2000, that the Lord of the Rings movies were photographed throughout New Zealand in more than 150 locations. We recognized some of the scenes based on our two trips to that country. In recent years the tourist industry has offered visits to some of the filming locations, promoting the scenery as "Middle Earth".

Since then I have sometimes thought that if I ever had to move to a very far remote location in the world, Queenstown, New Zealand, could be an interesting and pleasant destination.

(written in late November 2020 by Dr. Ed Holroyd)