



SARCC New Zealand Tour 2020

CYCLING:

Day 2. PAIHIA. We rode to [Waitangi Treaty Grounds](#) in the afternoon, a short ride with a couple of meaty hills to test our bikes out. The day's highlight was an evening Ferry Trip to Russell and a fabulous Meal on the Veranda of the [Duke of Marlborough Hotel](#) watching the sunset over the Bay of Islands.



Day 3. 90 MILE BEACH – We read the forecast it was for a strong Southwest wind so... we changed direction and set off South to North from Ahipara (W/Coast Rd 11km up the beach) [76km and 3 hours later](#) we rode 3km [up Te Paki Stream](#). The Beach was a dream ride but the creek soft sand and deep water was a bit of a test. The rest of the team did the tourist thing of [visiting Cape Reinga](#) – Eric forgot tell the tourists that the Lighthouse viewing spot is a good 2km return walk dropping & climbing 160M – they enjoyed the exercise I think. We returned late to our great [Paihia water front Cabins](#)



Day 4. PART ONE TWIN COAST TRAIL -This was 49km. We split into 2 groups 1 group drove to Kaikohe, the other rode out from camp up a short steep hill to Opua, then found the trail by weaving through boat yards. A pleasant ride with both groups enjoying themselves (swapping keys halfway) especially in Kawa Kawa where the [Trainline runs through the middle](#) of the town and the famous [Hundertwasser Toilets](#) plus monster ice creams, coffee and Lemon and Paeroa. An interesting fact, the artist/architect [Hundertwasser is being honoured with a Whangarei building](#) -check it out



Day 5. PART TWO TWIN COAST TRAIL -Same technique with 42km second ride. We split into 2 groups all drove to Kaikohe dropping all riders then two vehicles and four riders drove to Horeke – we swapped keys halfway. We all praised the courageous Marg, Ron, Bob and Roger who had a tough escarpment to ride up – the rest of us had a thrilling descent. We arrived at Horeke to discover NZ's oldest Pub is no longer a Pub just a private guest house... but; refreshments were just across the road in a local caravan stall.



Kaikohe Start

>The big escarpment

Lunch by the stream

the boardwalk at Horeke

Welcome Pub substitute



Day 6. KAURI COAST TRAIL – The ride from [Rawene to Trounsens Park](#) is beautiful but a narrow State Highway Road so we drove from Paihia to Trounsens Park stopping at Opononi for a relaxing refreshments then on to admire the magnificent Kauri, Tane Mahuta; great group Photo at the tree. We went on to Trounsens Kauri Park, and in three groups all but two drivers rode down 37km to Dargaville. A good mostly downhill road ride with a bit of a hill just before Dargaville.



The Schoolhouse we slept in for the night – tight squeeze but fun 😊

Day 7. KAIPARA HARBOUR – The Tide was wrong for an afternoon cruise pickup, and to ride to Pouto along the beach sands. We didn't ride, but some did go for an unforgettable cruise across the Kaipara Harbour. Our thanks go to the volunteers who drove the 300km to Parakai to pick us up. A pleasant day albeit being tourists and returning bicycles kept us very busy. We even negotiated a thick fog on our early morning 70km drive from Dargaville to Pouto Point. A highlight was communicating with a group of riders who were on the [Tour Aotearoa \(read about it\)](#).



Day 8. TRANSIT AUCKLAND TO QUEENSTOWN – We travelled by various flights to Queenstown with Eric and Rick driving down from Christchurch (arrived previous night and rented Minibus).



Day 9. QUEENSTOWN TRAIL – We drove to pick up another Rental Bus and Trailer then off to Arrowtown to get our rental bicycles. The ride was straight from Arrowtown along the Arrow River Bridges Trail 15km to Gibbston. A group drove to Gibbston Winery and rode to meet the Arrow Bridges riders at the Kawarau Bungy Bridge where we exchanged keys, and some had lunch. One group went on to Gibbston to collect the vehicles and shopping - we thought a great sacrifice as the rest were riding back to Queenstown, we lost our sympathy when we saw the photos of their lunch at the winery. The ride to Queenstown was a combination of Gibbstown River Wine Trail 8.7km, Twin Rivers Trail 19km and Queenstown Frankton Track 16km a fantastic jaunt of 44km albeit we lost and found ourselves twice.



Day 10. LAKE MAVORA - ROUND THE MOUNTAINS TRAIL –We drove to Mavora with morning tea at the Dome in Mossburn. We had a walk at lake Mavora then rode down the gravel road 41km to The Key. Due to a mishap we then loaded on board and drove to Te Anau.



Day 11. TE ANAU TO MANAPOURI RETURN – Initial plan was to drive to Homer Tunnel, ride down to Milford Sound then on return ride down 82km from divide to Te Anau; flooding got rid of that. Plan B was a brilliant ride on the very new [Lake2Lake trail](#) which runs alongside Lake Te Anau and the East side of the Waiau river to Manapouri. The trail and the bush and vistas of lakes and rivers was fabulous and for a bonus we watched rare takahe birds being fed.



Day 12. FIVE RIVERS TO KINGSTON - ROUND THE MOUNTAINS TRAIL – Early start to Five Rivers Café 78km down the road – we just beat the tour buses and enjoyed a good Breakfast. Riding the trail 60km to Kingston, a good ride, minimal undulations giving us time to reload at Kingston for the long drive to Clyde via Queenstown and Cromwell.



Day 13. ROXBURGH GORGE – The Plan was to ride the Roxburgh Gorge Trail but there is an economic hurdle, a 13km stretch from Doctors Point to Shingle Creek there is no trail – this creates a monopoly for a jet boat operator to charge \$110 per person, the highest ferry fare per kilometre in New Zealand. Plan B, out and back from Clyde... we rode the 12km fantastic 150th Anniversary River track from Clyde to Alexandra , then 20km return Alexandra to Doctors Point on the cliff hugging spectacular Roxburgh Gorge – returning to Clyde via River trail or Otago Rail Trail (both 12km) for a total ride of 44km.



Day 14. CLUTHA GOLD TRAIL – Simply ride out the gate of our accommodation and off we go on the diverse and fun ride of the Clutha Gold trail 64km in all a fabulous ride; not too onerous with towns spread at 20km intervals.



Day 15. AROUND LAKE HAYES – Our last ride – we had returned to Queenstown from the end of the Clutha Gold Trail. The plan was to return the Bikes and Trailers to Arrowtown and have a good 20km last ride together – it worked. Finding the link from Arrowtown via the Countryside Trail to Lake Hayes was fun and took us through the famous Millbrook Golf Course. The Lake Hayes Trail starts with an uphill and undulates around a beautiful small lake.



▲ THE ABOVE SUMMARISES THE EXCITING, CHALLENGING, RECREATIONAL CYCLING NZ 2020 ▲



WHAT ELSE:

Absentees. We sadly started without Linda and Tracy who were both unwell had to withdraw. We missed them both on the tour.

Breakfast and Lunches, A new highly successful concept of providing breakfast and lunchmaking together on a long tour: it gave us an opportunity to be together at the start of each day and gave nominated members the opportunity to contribute to the tour as well as being financially and space efficient.

Group Meals, again we allocated 8 meal preparations to groups of three, it was a success with everybody contributing and a camaraderie evolved that enhanced the conviviality of eating together; some groovy dancing was observed in the kitchen. Funded by a kitty system, meals were healthy and catered for most tastes (across two weeks of breakfast, lunch and 8 dinners the cost was \$150 per person). Wine and beer groups and kitties evolved separately to meals and was appreciated.

Friday, we all arrived in Auckland safely, some arrived 2 to 3 days early which was a bonus for the 16 who arrived Friday evening – the early arrivals purchased our breakfast for our Saturday morning. We had a challenge to resolve - one members case went missing from Auckland Airport requiring urgent acquisition of essential clothes etc. – all accomplished by the early arrivals. Accommodation at YHA International was squeezy but clean and efficient.

Saturday, we didn't ride; firstly getting our vehicles because [James Blond Rentals](#) don't deliver to Auckland CBD, secondly [Natural High Bicycle Hire](#) a little longer, thirdly it was raining in Auckland.

Sunday, the Drive from Auckland with Morning tea [Whangarei i-Site](#) (we didn't stop at the funky Kaiwaka [Eutopia Cafe](#), not enough parking for bus and trailer) the journey was pleasant. The arrival was fantastic with [Paihia top 10](#) being a picture postcard, set in native bush in the Bay of Islands with ocean at our front door. We all fitted in our cabins comfortably. As above we dined in luxury that night.

Monday, a big day on or off the bike 450km return drive to Cape Reinga and 6 hours in the minbus – We were satisfied and really tired.

Tuesday, another morning in Paradise many of us walking the bush trail early morning and then, after riding, going for a swim, albeit the bay floor was soft mud, the salt water was great. We had our first group evening meal what a great bbq success 😊.

Wednesday, another morning in Paradise, another great group evening meal.

Thursday, an early start for a drive 89km to Opononi a great morning tea stop at the [Landing Café](#) then off 23km to the incredible big Kauri Tree [Tane Mahuta](#). We were privilleged to have a team of DOC (Department of Conservation) staff tell us about the majestic tree e.g. its roots are three times its height, it is 2000+ years old, there is a bigger older tree 3000 years old. We had a great evening meal together in the [Greenhouse Backpackers](#) a converted school house – bakery pies, a collection of salads and dessert from [Taste & See NZ](#) we certainly enjoyed it. Our hosts Darren and Karen were most accommodating and welcoming.

Friday, a very tightly packed day achieved by the contribution of our volunteer drivers, we didn't ride but we did a lot of cruising on a boat across Kaipara Harbour. Rick and Eric flew to CHCH and sampled a [Jucy Snooze](#) pod for the night.

Saturday, everybody cooperatively organised shuttles etc and achieved a flight to Queenstown. Eric and Rick had a long but enjoyable 480km drive. Queenstown accommodation was good. We wandered into town for our meals in the adventure capital of Australasia.

Sunday, Pick up rental minibus from USAVE Car & Truck Rentals alias [www.hirecar.co.nz](#); oops the Auckland office hadn't transferred a NZ\$100 deposit from their faulty bike trailer – so, no vehicle available. Drove to Maugers to pick up our bike trailer and they offered a [Mercedes 7 seat people mover](#) for similar cost so vehicle problem solved. It suited our purpose to carry 18 members in the 12-seat minibus and the 7-seat people mover. Another great group meal.

Monday, We discovered our booking for [accommodation on return to Queenstown](#) had been wrongly reserved as four consecutive days instead of two days Sat & Sun then two days the following Fri & Sat. Our email trail confirmed it was their error, and with negotiation over the next two days a substitute accommodation was established. Then in the early afternoon while most of the group was riding, we had a blowout of the left tyre on the heavy long bike trailer, with skill and luck there were no serious injuries and the vehicle was mechanically sound to be driven. Everybody rallied to support and gathered again at Te Anau for BBQ!

Tuesday, Plan B worked a treat we even had a late start. The [individual rooms at Te Anau](#) worked well albeit we were spread across two wings of the large lodge. The central shared kitchen was a little compact, luckily not too many other guests at the lodge. Everybody enjoyed an evening eating out in Te Anau.

Wednesday, the concept of getting out early and having breakfast at [Five Rivers Café](#) worked well. We swung into Queenstown to get another spare rim for the trailer. The [Antique Lodge](#) was a comfortable night and we found a few eateries open for an evening meal.

Thursday, after a group discussion we resolved not to do the Jet Boat at \$110 per person so we did the loop as above and drove late afternoon to [Clutha Gold Cottages](#). Christine our host was most accommodating and hospitable. The four bedroom house gave us a great venue for a group meal; curries for the winner!

Friday, The long return drive from Lawrence 187km to Queenstown with split venues most of us at [Creeksyde Holiday Park](#) with five at Lakeview which did create some issues (i.e. the resolution to Lakeview accommodation booking error). The Group Meal was in the Creeksyde kitchen and dining room, which we swamped while we ate Lasagne!

Saturday, our last riding day was going well until Rick had an unscheduled dismount off his bike caused by a motorist assuming right-of-way on a designated shared path. The return of bicycles and trailer was convivial and smooth. We recommend Adin to everybody, his bikes are good his service and helpful approach is a breath of fresh air – If you ever need a bicycle in Queenstown Area go to [Arrowtown bicycle Hire](#). We dropped off of [Maugers](#) Mercedes and Trailer, good service from Scott, with excellent Mercedes vehicles; their single axle long bicycle trailer needs a dual axle. We had arrived at our last night and our Group Meal was great followed by a superb presentation of awards by Denise and Danny – we all were summarised with our idiosyncrasies and good deeds or transgressions and lucky-dipped prizes from a bag.

Sunday, most flew home. Eric, Sara and Rick drove 480km to Christchurch to return the last van. Kevin, Judy, Graham, Ron stayed to explore more of NZ.

The New Zealand Tour was a great memorable success in all aspects, with 600km of fantastic riding.