In view of the coming visit of the Society to the Nelson area it was thought that members would like to read the following article re-printed from National Park News, about the opening of a new National Park Youth Lodge.

"Rotoiti Lodge is the pioneer" said the Minister of Lands (Mr Duncan MacIntyre) speaking at the Lodge's opening ceremony at Nelson Lakes National Park recently, "but I hope it will soon be one of several lodges built through the enthusiasm of local people as a major contribution to the preservation and use of our national parks and reserves".

The opening ceremony of the Lodge was the culmination of tremendous enthusiasm from Nelson and Marlborough people who contributed cash, materials and labour which, supplemented by subsidy money from the National Parks Authority, saw the Lodge built for a fraction of its insurance value of $100,000.

The seventy bed lodge, on a commanding site overlooking Lake Rotoiti, is being used throughout the academic year as a base for classwork in the natural sciences by secondary schools in Marlborough and Nelson with a specialist teacher based at the Lodge. At weedends and holiday times, the Lodge is available for other youth organisations.

Mr MacIntyre used the occasion to warn of the dangers which faced New Zealand in trying to preserve natural areas and said that there would always be those who would want to exploit land that had been reserved.

"There will always be a few" said the Minister, "who will want to despoil the landscape for selfish interests but there must be good reasons before any changes are allowed. Today, for example, there is a conflict through the search for minerals - a conflict which must be recognised and rationalised."

Change also came about through the pressure of people and, with more than one million people visiting the most accessible parts of New Zealand's National Parks in a year, they cannot help but cause damage and produce change, Mr MacIntyre commented. In a plea to keep beautiful picnic places and parkland unmarred by litter, he urged those entering Nationsl Parks and scenic reserves to "leave nothing but footprints - and those lightly trod".

Recognising that some parts of the parks will always be more popular than others, the Minister said that National Parkland was now being classified into four groups - scientific areas, wilderness areas, natural environment areas, and development areas. The classifications recognise that there are some parts of the parks which should remain almost undisturbed by man, but that there are other park areas where the public should be made especially welcome and provided for.

"It is inevitable that there will be pressure from those who see an opportunity to make money to develop national parks in undesirable ways" continued Mr. MacIntyre, "but we must guard against exploiting such areas too much so that we lose all in the search for the dollar. For people who come to holiday in the parks we need roads and tracks and huts with parking areas, an occasional shop and washing facilities at main points of entry but we do not want a fairground atmosphere."

In this way and through projects of vision and inagination such as Rotoiti Lodge, New Zealanders would understand and appreciate natural surroundings in a positive and enlightened manner, concluded the minister.

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A NOTE ON MOEHAU ---------- A.D.Mead.

With three Wellington friends interested in botany, I spent a week of August in the Coromandel peninsula, with our main objective a climb of Mt. Moehau, 2926feet.

The Moehau Range runs NW and SE along the centre of the northern part of the peninsula, and it is interesting to compare it botanically with the Waitakere Ranges. The Moehau is a little further north than the Waitakeres, and the sea round its coast is warmer, the Waitakere coast being influenced by the cold Tasman Sea current from the south. Consequently the Moehau vegitation shows the influence of a much greater range of temperature from base to summet than does that of the Waitakeres. The botany of the range was first described in a paper in Transactions 1888 by Adams, who was greatly intrigued to find on the summit alpine plants which do not reappear till the centre of the North Island is reached. About 45 years later Lucy Cranwell and Lucy Moore made a detailed botanical survey of Moehau. They published two papers, one on microlaena and the other on kauri, including a certain amount of general botany, but I have not yet located their manuscript giving their full cover of the range. I have nothing to add save to mention a few plants which specially interested us. As illustrating the warmth of the coast, we were delighted to find at Port Charles, overhanging the coastal cliffs, Pittosporum umbellatum in full flower. On the climb of Moehau, the approach spurs at 2000 feet show indications of colder conditions than in the Waitakeres, with for example Weinmannia racemosa, Griselinia littoralis, Metrosideros albiflora and Pseudowintera axillaris. The true alpines are found on the south summit of Moehau, which is a sharp rock peak 50 feet lower than the broad rounded summit forming the highest point, and it is considered that it is its greater exposure to gales which creates the more alpine condition on the south peak. Three plants which specially delighted us were Celmisia incana carpeting the ground with its silvery rosettes, with one plant in flower, Ourisia macrophylla and Dacrydium bidwillii.