

## 26.12.2015, Pleasant Point, Timaru

Over Christmas we were pampered at Pauline's and Lincoln's on their Church Farm with very fun and pleasant company, plenty of delicious food, even Santa stopped by for a visit.



With a few kilos more on our ribs we leave on Boxing Day and drive to Timaru, where we stock up on food, fuel and stay for the night on the parking spot at 'Caroline Bay' near the port. It's allowed to stay here overnight in a self contained vehicle and the beach view is included, too.



## 27.12.2015 Timaru, Waitaki River

Under bluest sky we stroll through Timaru and check out the Boxing Day Sales specials. For his birthday Werner gets the official Tourist Fishing Permit and is now allowed to fish in all waters of New Zealand. Let's see if he is equally successful as in Iceland.

A few more errands to be done, we also buy self-inflatable sleeping mats, because the mattresses in the camper are too thin and not suitable for our aged bones anymore. Fingers crossed we'll sleep better with a bit more padding underneath.

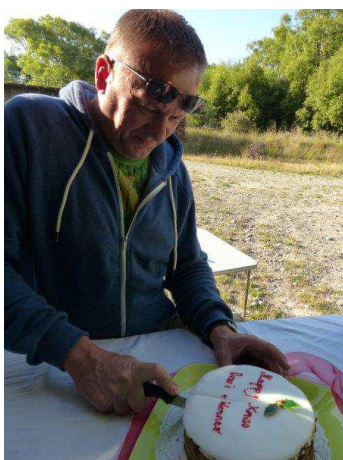




We drive along the coast on Highway 1 until we reach the river mouth of the Waitaki river.

On the way we pass by „Butler’s Berry Farm“ which sells fresh berries. Of course we cant resist and have to stop to enjoy an ice cream with fresh raspberries.

Near the Waitaki bridge we find a sheltered spot to camp, other fishermen also park there already. Werner sets off immediately to try his fishing luck, but not without first enjoying some of Pauline’s delicious Christmas cake.



## 28.12.2015 Duntroon, Naseby, St.Bathans and Blue Lake

The day starts with a small hiccup as our car doesn’t want to start. Earlier it had made already some clicking noise, when being started, but... After a few phone calls with the rental company trying to figure out the problem ‚AA‘ (the local emergency road service) had to come... Luckily we are not parking in the total bush, but at a good accessible spot. Turns out, that our battery is flat. Maybe we were driving too little? The mechanic tells us to sufficiently drive today then hopefully all will be ok.



On the Seven Miles Road we drive to the 83 until we stop in Duntroon for our lunch break. Duntroon is a little place with the usual charme of a former gold mining town. We are a bit



worried to turn off the engine, but one hour of driving should be enough to fill up the battery... We have a little picnic in Duntroon before we hit to Danseys Pass. The car starts without any problem!



In this region there are Maori rock drawings, but some vandals have also scribbled on the walls, so the original drawings are hardly visible anymore.



We follow Danseys pass until we reach Naseby, a former goldmining town. It's a picturesque little place with a little village shop, where 'everybody' is buying an ice cream – so do we.



Finally we reach St.Bathans, which has a free DOC Campsite. The Blue Lake next to it turns out to be a great swimming lake, so we jump in immediately to cool off. It's a man-made lake created by gold sluicing; here hydraulic digging techniques were used for the first time.





After a drink at the Vulcano Hotel – the only hotel left of 14 hotels that existed at goldmining haydays – we have dinner ,at home’.



## 29.12.2015 St.Bathans, Oteaki Conservation Park, Omakau

This morning we start with a 3km loop walk around the Blue Lake. This lake offers great views from all angles.



We then continue the ring road through the Oteaki Conservation Park. Amongst the very dry, nice landscape we discover the Homestead Campingsite, hidden between pine trees. Would love to stay, but at least we can have our lunch picnic there.

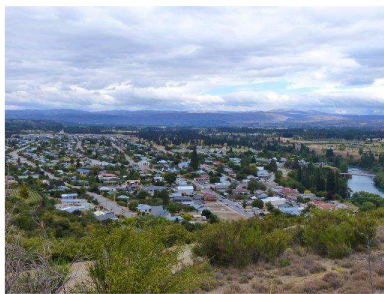
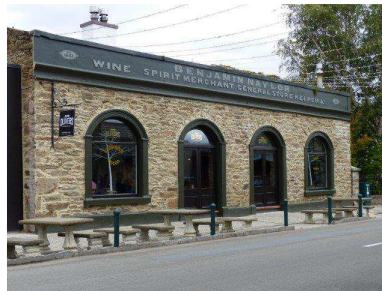




Finally we are back on the 85 and end our day with an ice cream in Omakau, where we stay on the local motor camp. It's time to wash off the dust of the past days.

### 30.12.2015 Clyde, Alexandra, Clyde Dam

Today starts with rain, which is very much needed by this dry landscape so we won't complain. We drive the short distance to Clyde, also a pretty little former goldmining town. Well, not only us, but plenty of others had the same idea to come here for lunch and all places are very crowded with long lines. Finally, we get a space at „The Merchant“ and for the first time have a Friand. It's a small muffin-like cake which tastes very delicious. So delicious that we had no time to take a photo...



It's a short walk to the lookout where we enjoy the view of Clyde.

Only 1988 this little town had 3-4 parallel streets to the main street. Meanwhile the town has at least doubled its size.

Early afternoon we reach Alexandra, where we buy a local sim card, do some grocery shopping and at the 3<sup>rd</sup> stop can't restart the car all of the sudden! This time the engine was warm, we could not have forgotten anything over night... Another call to our rental company and after only 15min a colleague from 'Alexandra Electricals' is with us. Luckily, this time we stranded on the main road in the middle of town... Diagnosis: we need a new battery. Our Electrician has to drive back to his shop and comes back with the perfect size of battery. This fast and professional service is very impressive. He is so fast, that we have hardly time to finish our dinner.







We need a beer to cool down at Monteith's Brewery next door, then drive back to Clyde Dam, where Werner has a chance to dip his fishing rod a few times in the water in the remainder of daylight.

### 31.12.2015 Cromwell

After Werner's a.m. fishing session we have breakfast at the lake and continue to Cromwell, centre of the stone fruits. Naturally it's time to stock up on fruits and we also buy walnuts. Haven't had fresh walnuts for ages.



The way to Queenstown leads through the Kawarau gorge. In 1986 the Kiwi AJ Hackett made bungee jumping famous when he jumped from the Eiffel Tower. Since then, New Zealand has a special relationship to bungee jumping. Most bungee jumpers jump from this historic Kawarau Bridge 43m down in to the gorge. Meanwhile they have a big bungee-jumping-tourist-center with plenty of merchandising articles and visitors are lining up to pay 195NZ\$ to jump down. Not a thing where we would spend money for...







Shortly before Queenstown is a big traffic jam. An accident has happened, the traffic has to be guided past the scene by police and because of new year's there is a lot of traffic. „Again“ Asians are involved, we see them standing there. Unfortunately, Chinese are causing most of the accidents in NZ. Meanwhile, information about traffic rules are handed out to them when they get their visa and also the board info of Air NewZealand explains traffic signs...

Queenstown is packed. Luckily we find a parking spot and join the crowds strolling through the city. Ice cream, cold drinks, burgers help shorten the time until midnight...



Live-bands and many intoxicated teenagers are also welcome entertainment. Pub Crawls - 'Big Night Out' - are happening here and young people in big groups tour the pubs, well taken care of by the organizers.



\*We can herewith officially confirm that these Scots stay true to their tradition of wearing nothing but the truth underneath

We meet the different crawler groups again and again throughout the night and it's fun to see the progress. They are getting louder each time and many are not able to stand / walk straight anymore. Shortly before midnight a young chap even falls from the pier into the water, but many help immediately to quickly pull him out of the water. He doesn't look like he realized what just happened. At least he holds tight to his wet mobile phone.

During our last visit at new year's in Queenstown, it was allowed to camp on the sport field and stay on the parking in the middle of town, which we thought was a great idea. To our disappointment, unfortunately, this year it's not allowed anymore. After the nice firework we therefore drive back to the Shotover Bridge, where the Freedom Camping zone begins.



**~ Happy New Year 2016! ~**