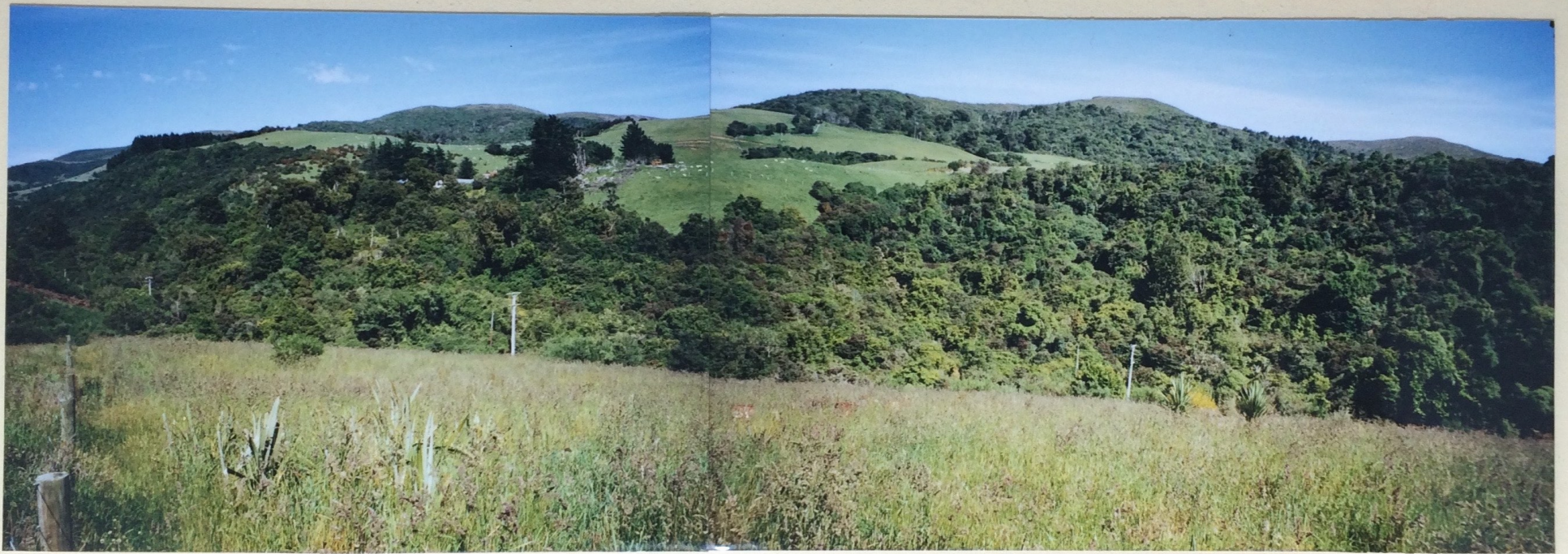


**Moores Bush & Adjoining Scenic Reserve  
From the Eastern Boundary.**



## First Associations With Moores Bush.

28 Jan 1963. Ken and Bruce Mason visited Moores Bush after bush bashing Morrisons Creek.

May 1964 Ken and Bruce join the Otago Tramping Club, become very active members and later life members.. This further strengthens connections with the Moores.

Ellie Moore speaks to a worried 'Mum' Mason and reassures her over Bruce and Ken's first overnight tramping foray into the Silverpeaks.

30-31 Jan '64 Ken and Bruce cycled to Moores Bush from St Clair. From they walked back down to the old Pineapple Track and over Swampy Summit to Green Hut for the night. Visited Silverpeak and Possum Hut before returning in rain to the bicycles at Moores Bush via the Burns track. "Dad" Mason gives them a ride home from Jock Tyson's in Malvern Street.

1964- 1973 Ken makes regular visits to the Moores both at Moores Bush and their home , next to Ross Creek Reservoir and the last house in Cannington Road. He is often accompanied by his younger brother Bruce.

1973 Percy Moore dies. Mrs Moore resigns from the Forest and Bird Committee and later retires to Hawea . Ken makes makes contact with her until about 1990. She is still alive in 1996.

## Forest and Bird Era.

### 1974

21 Jan 1974 Moores Bush is transfered to Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand Inc. as set down in the will of Percy Leonard Moore. The Otago Branch of the Society becomes the local administrators of the property.

24 Aug 1974 Ken Mason starts his long management association with Moores Bush by sorting out a calf and horse grazing agreement (electric fenced) in the grass area above the cottage with neighbour Jack Thomson. Jack and Shelia Thomson share a love of the bush and their whole family become personal friends.

11 Dec 1974 Ken starts cutting the grass around the cottage and along the tracks, initially with a sythe. Fellow committee members ,and mentors to Ken, the late Messers Wallace Ramsey and Jock Tyson give ongoing advice and support.

There were two main reasons for Ken committing himself to and taking charge of the Moores Bush project. The first was out of personal respect to the Moores. The second was to carry on the bush restoration work that the Moores had started in 1946.

### 1975

Dec '74 6 visits made to cut grass plus 2 personal inspections and one sub-committee visit.  
June '75 Mower and tools put in shed.



**August 1977.** Clearing the sizable areas of sycamore, broom, and blackberry on the north end flats. Sadly this area had got away on the Moores as age took its toll.

- 19 April '75 Otago Branch of Forest and Bird 5 person work day.
- 16 Aug '75 Five person work party clears exotics, including sycamore, for a planting site at the track entrance. First trees planted.
- June - Dec 1975 10 trips made. Trees prepared and shifted from under the plantations at Ross Creek, removing exotics, track clearing grass mowing and tree planting. (70 planted by the end of the year.)

*Milage for 1975 was 233km. & 47 personal hours put in.*

## 1976

- Feb - March 1976 3 trips for grass mowing and tree releasing.
- 2 April '76 One of a regular lunch-time inspection with Wallace Ramsey. Wal was the next youngest Forest and Bird Committee member being some 17 years older than me. The other committee members are somewhat older than Wal.
- Feb - April Six visits delivering fencing materials, track culverts, lumber and iron for cottage repairs.
- 24 April '76 Eight person F&B work party. A large truck load of rubbish is removed.
- 2 May '76 Started the fencing programme. Initially post and rail between the large macrocarpa trees and later post and wire fencing.
- May - Sept. Eight further visits, often with a helper. Fencing, track construction, demolishing cottage lean-toos, burning rubbish, clearing exotics, collecting and preparing trees.
- 11 Sept '76 F&B work party. Seven adults and five kids. Finished demolitions, had a burn-up and planted trees.
- Sept 1976 Two more trips to plant and prepare trees for next seasons planting.
- 6 Nov. '76 Chased cattle off the property. Cut grass and released plantings.
- Nov 1976 Two pre work party inspections.
- 20 Nov '76 F&B work day. Five people. Painted cottage roof and post and rail fence; cleared and burned exotics.
- Dec 1976 Two grass cutting and tree releasing trips.

*271km done for 1976 & 82 hours put in by Ken.*

## 1977

- Jan-March 1977 Collected and delivered fence posts, farm gates, more painting and fencing. Started spraying blackberry.



**December 1980** The southern end of Moores Bush prior to the removal of the entrance macrocarpa trees and the demolition of the cottage. The shading shelter belt that ran to the right from the Thomson farm building, has been felled. The bush canopy in the foreground would be nearly 3m higher today



**April 1981**

Starting the fence across the Leith Stream on the northern flats.

- 2 April '77 F&B work party. Eight helpers. I later took 16 people up Nicols Crk to see glow worms.
- 16 April '77 Inspected northern boundary with our neighbour on that side.
- April - May Started work at north end flats. Cut and burned broom. Collected and delivered fencing materials.
- 25 July '77 F&B work party. Eight workers. Cut and burned broom and sycamore.
- 20 Aug '77 F&B work party. Ten adults and four children. Cut and burned broom and sycamore; planted and fenced.
- Sept - Dec 1977 Five visits. Delivered posts and boundary netting. Continued fencing at north end of property. Planted and maintained trees.

*46 hours put in by KDM & 207km run up.*

## 1978

I made 46 visits and put in 178 hours and ran up 816km. Others put in 125 hours under my supervision.

The hours included 157 fencing; 99 removing exotics; 19 planting and maintenance; mowing grass 10 and track work 6 hours.

### SOME DIARY ENTRIES:

- 15/0578 Inspection with Lands & Survey Reserves Ranger.
- 17/06/78 Work party with 7 helpers.
- 5/08/78 Showed Mrs Moore around .
- 26/11/78 Work party with 10 helpers.

## 1979

I made 51 visits to the property and put in 195 hours. Others put in 63 hours under supervision.

The hours included 160 fencing; 37 removing exotics and spraying; 20 planting and releasing and 15 mowing grass.

### TWO INTERESTING DIARY ENTRIES:

- 10/04/79 "Five hours fencing by lantern light."  
Putting in strainer posts and gates, I sometimes worked in the wet under a tent fly.
- 20/05/79 "Big top fence - At last the end of bringing the property under control."

## Learning Priorities the Hard way



**Photo taken September 1982**

**Patsy and my son Brett enjoying mown grass and ornamental plantings in a clearing on the track. Rocks and stumps had been removed to improve the site.**

**In the early stages of the Moores Bush project I wasted part of my effort on such non necessary cosmetic chores rather than attending to the real priorities.**

**Going through the 'school of hard knocks and experience' set me in good stead, and gave me the confidence, to handle much more ambitious restoration projects.**

1980

Made 47 trips and put in 141 hours. Others put in 22 hour under mysupervision.

The hours included 175 fencing; 29 planting and releasing, 15 exotic removal; 10 hours grass mowing and 7 hours track cutting.

NOTES FROM MY DIARY:

4/03/80 Forest and Bird committee inspection. Very good turnout.

7/06/80 Checked flood damage.

4/10/80 Showed the Dunedin Naturalists Field Club around.

1981

Made 33 visits and put in 107 hours. Others put in 66 hours under supervision.

The hours included 89 fencing; 25 exotic removal; 9 grass mowing.

21/03/81 Forest and Bird day trip and inspection. Only four in party. Some work done.

June 1981 From the Otago Branch Forest and Bird newsletter: *"The initiative and much of the work connected with the development of this reserve (Moore's Bush) has come from Mr. Ken Mason. This has taken the form of:*

*(a) Clearing noxious growth, blackberry, broom and the like, which was extensive throughout the areas.*

*(b) Fencing, to confine sheep and other grazing animals to the open spaces, where they serve to keep down the grass.*

*(c) Replacing exotic trees by natives."*

*"Interest in the project does not appear to be widely shared among our members. So few indicated their intention of joining the outing to Moore's Bush planned for Saturday, March 21, that the bus had to be cancelled. Only a small group made their way to the spot by private cars."*

1982

Made 33 visits and put in 119 hours. Others put in 150 hours under my supervision.

The hours included 53 fencing; 54 exotic removal; 53 preparing Leith stream bridge foundations; 27 planting and releasing; 12 working on cottage; 10 grass cutting; 10 track work.

*The Leith Stream bridge* project (no marginal strip at this point) failed to get past the foundation stage as the whole Moore's Bush Account was merged into the Branch general funds and then became untrackable. The treasurer's performance was 'unsatisfactory' at the time.





**March 23, 1983** Mrs Moore doing the honours by officially opening a combined entrance stile and strainer post for a new fence. We felt that the project was advanced enough at this stage for such a ceremony. From left: Mrs Moore, Ken Mason (organiser), Wallace Ramsay (F&B chairman)



**June 1983.** The cottage (Rimu Whare) after all the rotting lean-tos and the brick chimney had been removed. The cottage has been weather proofed and some temporary piling done. For several years I tried to get others to commit themselves to refurbishing the cottage. that everybody aged should be saved. My brother Peter and I demolished the deteriorating cottage in June 1988.

NOTES FROM MY DIARY:

- 11-22/02/82 The Department of Labour student work scheme I had all set up with me to supervise had no takers.
- 3/04/82 "7 people wheel barrowed and carried 1.4m<sup>3</sup> of premix concrete 50m (to the bridge foundations) and had finished by noon."
- 17/04/82 Five on F&B trip come work party.
- 3/07/82 "Ground frozen! - continued fencing"
- 24/07/82 "Checked cottage for restoration with helper."
- 6/11/82 Work party. 7 people burned piles of exotics.

1983 - 1986 Records Missing. (SOME DETAILS FOLLOW)

- Dec. 1983 The big macrocarpa tree at the south end of the property were felled, milled and sold. A profit of \$549.62 resulted
- 1983-1985 I sold \$413 worth of firewood at \$8 a trailer load. The remaining logs were put under a firewood contractor. The firewood contractor was to pay Forest & Bird \$30 per 7.4m<sup>3</sup> truck load taken. We only got about 10 loads paid for and many more were taken.
- # During this period I allowed neighbour Jack Thomson to fell a long belt of macrocarpas on to the western edge of Moores Bush. The logs were salvaged and only tree fuschias were damaged. These soon regrew. The effects of removing these large tree was amazing. In winter the shelter belt used to shade 2/3 of the way across the southern half of Moores Bush. With it gone, the main bush block with all the big podocarps really flourished with the extra sunlight.
- # Jack and son Mike used their bulldozer to tidy up our milling and firewood site.
- 22 March '86 MOORES BUSH "OPENING" Mrs Moore attended. Mrs Moore was the widow of Percy Moore who bequeathed the 4ha + property to Forest & Bird.
- Later in '86 Tracked down the missing firewood contractor. Stated proceedings in the Small Claims Court to recover some of the monies owed.

1987

Made 31 visits and put in 84 hours. Others put in 4 hours.

The hours included 36 fencing; 28 planting and releasing; exotic removal 20.



**April 1982** The foot bridge over the Leith that wasn't to be. The concrete abutments being poured some 50m from the road. No further work took place as the Moores Bush funding 'vanished' somewhere into Forest and Bird general funds. without general approval. We soon had a new treasurer.



**October 1988** The long drop for the toilet being dug.

NOTE FROM MY DIARY:

21/06/87 "Inspected adjoining scenic reserve with DoC conservation officer Chris Stewart. F&B may administer both - fencing needs attending to."

30 Sept. '87 Got \$240 plus all costs from the firewood contractor through the Small Claims Court. We still lost out overall but made a point.

1988

Made 21 visits, putting in 76 hours. Helpers put in 26 hours.

The hours included 33 on toilet construction; 23 for exotic removal; 22 for cottage demolition; 10 on track work; 8 on fencing and 6 for planting and releasing.

SOME DIARY NOTES:

21/02/88 Three of us collected a toilet from Broad Bay and delivered it to Moores Bush.

18/06/88 "demolishd and burned Rimu Whare (the cottage)"

1/10/88 "Inspected cattle damage and fences"

16/10/88 "winched the toilet onto its foundations"

# The cottage was demolished as it had sadly deteriorated to a ruin. For years various people had wanted it to be saved but nobody else was prepared to help do any work on it!

1989

Made 17 visits involving 49 hours.

The hours worked included 29 fencing; 9 exotic removal; 5 releasing and planting plus inspections.

1990 - The Advent of Children Being Involved in the Project.

24-25 Feb'90 Have a trial campout with my family.

17/05/90 Start on ground negotiations with east boundary neighbour to set up fencing. This boundary had been in the legally 'too hard' category since the 1970's.

23 June '90 Ken takes 40 adults and children people from the Waitati Branch of Kiwi Conservation Club around the property before taking them and 100 Dunedin KCCers glow worming up Nicols Creek.

1 July 1990 Dunedin Branch, Kiwi Conservation Club party of 24 under KCC Co-ordinator Ken Mason. (junior section of F&B) Tree planting and exploring. Also visited Sullivans Dam.

PLUS another 11 personal visits during the year involving track work, planting and releasing