



# Exhibition Drive

100 years of making the grade

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Friends of Arataki & Waitakere Ranges  
Regional Parkland Incorporated

## *Researching a Road*

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Why Write About a Road?

# Exhibition Drive today



# Then and now

January 1914 opened

Centenary February 2014

42

THE AUCKLAND WEEKLY NEWS.

[January 29, 1914.



AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION DRIVE, TITIRANGI, AUCKLAND, ON SATURDAY LAST: MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL, WAITEMATA COUNTY COUNCIL, AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION, AND OTHERS AT THE PRESENT TERMINUS OF THE ROAD.

The Exhibition Drive at Titirangi, W. takere Ranase, which has been constructed by the City Council, with the assistance of a donation from the Auckland Automobile Association, was opened by Mayor Mr. C. J. Parr on Saturday afternoon, in the presence of a large gathering, including most of the members of the City Council, representatives of the Waitemata County Council, members of the Automobile Association and other citizens. The day was an ideal one for the ceremony. The visitors from town, who filled upwards of 60 motor-cars, thus forming an excellent procession, started from the Town Hall at twenty minutes past two. The summit of the Titirangi Hill was reached in about half an hour. It is here that the new drive, which extends for some four miles along the Ngaruwhero road, was opened.



# The Auckland Exhibition 1913/14

Industrial, Agricultural & Mining Exhibition at Auckland domain

The Exhibition Palace of  
Industries



# Inspiration for an Exhibition road

- *New Zealand Herald* editorial in December 1912
- Oratia resident Mr M. Brain's letter promoting a loop road route for the exhibition is tabled at a City Council meeting in early 1913 and met with a favourable response
- The Auckland Automobile Association added support to the idea of an exhibition drive at their February 2013 meeting
- Mayor Christopher Parr and council party visit the pipe track constructed in 1912 to scope out a motor road route in February 1913



# What existed before the Drive's construction

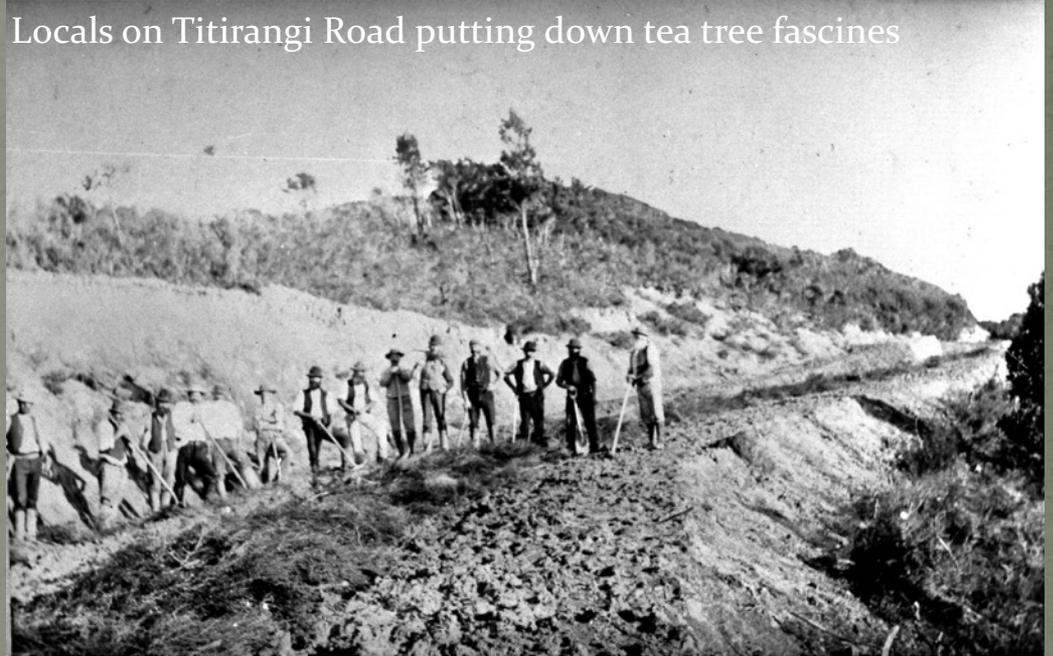


# State of Roads in the Area



The Corban family travelling to the opening of Exhibition Drive Feb. 1914

Locals on Titirangi Road putting down tea tree fascines



# Motor Vehicles & Transport around 1910/20s decades



# Auckland Automobile Association

Extract from their 1923 *Motor Trips Around Auckland*, cost 2/6-

*“... Another alternative is to take the upper road to the right just below Titirangi Peak, and driving along the Pipe Track for a short distance, get back to the North Road through what is known as the Exhibition Drive. This is the route followed by Auckland’s water supply from its principal source, the Nihotupu Dam, some four or five miles from Titirangi. The Drive is unfortunately, only a clay road, and is frequently impassable in bad weather. But under ordinary conditions the experience is a most delightful one. The track, which was the service road for the water supply system, winds along the hills in their western or Manukau side, above deep ravines filled with dense native bush – pungas or tree ferns of colossal size, nikaus with their symmetrically latticed leaves, and rata, rimu and here and there a great kauri, raising their heads aloft into the upper air. Many large kauris survive here, in spite of intermittent ‘cutting out.’ One of the finest, a tree of seven or eight feet in diameter, stands alone in an open paddock on Mr J. Bishop’s property, close to the Pipe Track, nearly opposite the tanks at the entrance to the Drive. The road curves back away from the Manukau and after about two miles, leaves the thickly wooded gullies, sweeping inland through half cleared bush, toward the flat on the Auckland side of the Titirangis. Running downhill past small farms and homesteads it finally comes out through Carter’s Road, on the main Nihotupu Road — about two miles beyond Waikumete ...”*

# The AAA in action



Auckland Automobile Association

1903

(AFFILIATED WITH ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB)

TELEPHONE 883.

P.O. BOX 540.

Premier Buildings,

Corner of Queen & Durham Sts.

Auckland.

301 5

9th March 1928

The Mayor & Councillors,  
Auckland City Council,  
AUCKLAND.



Gentlemen :-

At last night's meeting of the General Committee of the Association attention was drawn to the fact that although a considerable sum of money was expended in forming the Exhibition Drive, Titirangi, towards which this Association contributed £250, it is even now impassable for motor traffic.

I was instructed to write to your Council and also the Waitemata County Council asking whether there is any prospect of the Drive being metalled so that some benefit may be derived from the money already expended upon it.

I beg to remain, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

Secretary.

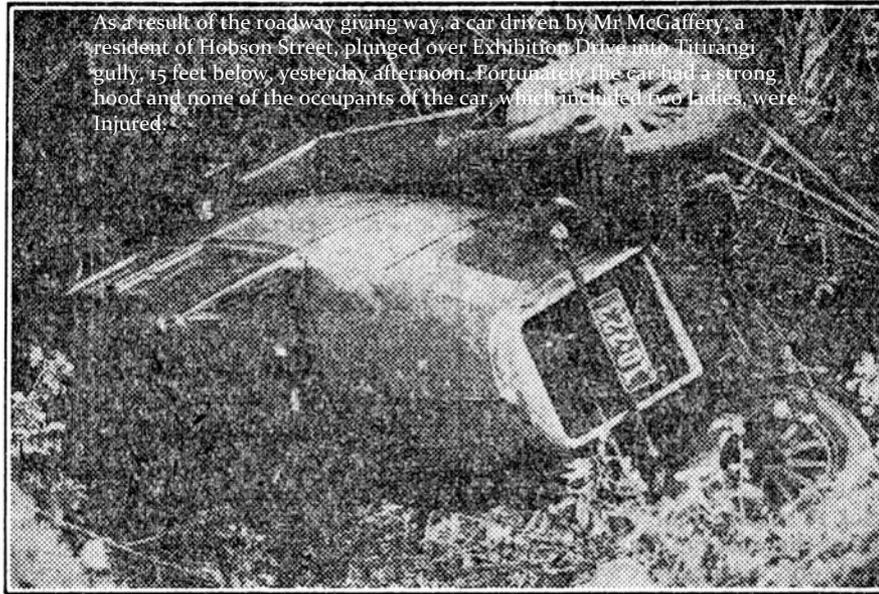
# The public outcry

On a recent week-end no less than 30 cars had to turn back. No funds, indeed! The City of Auckland has not yet awakened to the neglect that is rapidly causing this scenic route to get into such a state that even to repair damage will cost a big sum. Some tourists have lately done this trip on foot, the only way to do it now, and they state that in the Exhibition Drive, Auckland possesses a tourist attraction with few equals in the Dominion, in fact, nothing to compare to it can be found near any New Zealand city.

Does this great city, which rakes in the harvest of fees from motorists, not owe some duty to keep its scenic drive in order. Do the commercial interests of Auckland not realize what a magnificent asset this drive is in the attractions it presents to tourists. Finally have the citizens of Auckland no love of beauty in their souls that they can allow their City Council to so neglect this incomparable scenic route.

Work that now will cost £6000 to £8000 will require from £12,000 upwards if the present policy of neglect is persisted in for another year or two.

'I heard about the Exhibition Drive,' said one Dunedin visitor, 'and determined to see it while I was in Auckland. I have seen it. I left the car and did the trip on foot ... it is a disgrace to Auckland that it should be in the state it is.' Another visitor remarked, 'Auckland does not deserve to have this Drive. Its shamefully neglected state proves to me that Auckland people must be lacking in a sense of the beautiful in nature.'



As a result of the roadway giving way, a car driven by Mr McCaffery, a resident of Hobson Street, plunged over Exhibition Drive into Titirangi gully, 15 feet below, yesterday afternoon. Fortunately the car had a strong hood and none of the occupants of the car, which included two ladies, were injured.

**IN A LEAFY BOWER** a motor car came to rest on Sunday when the roadway on the Exhibition Drive broke away. The owner of the vehicle, Mr. McCaffery, and two lady occupants, escaped injury.

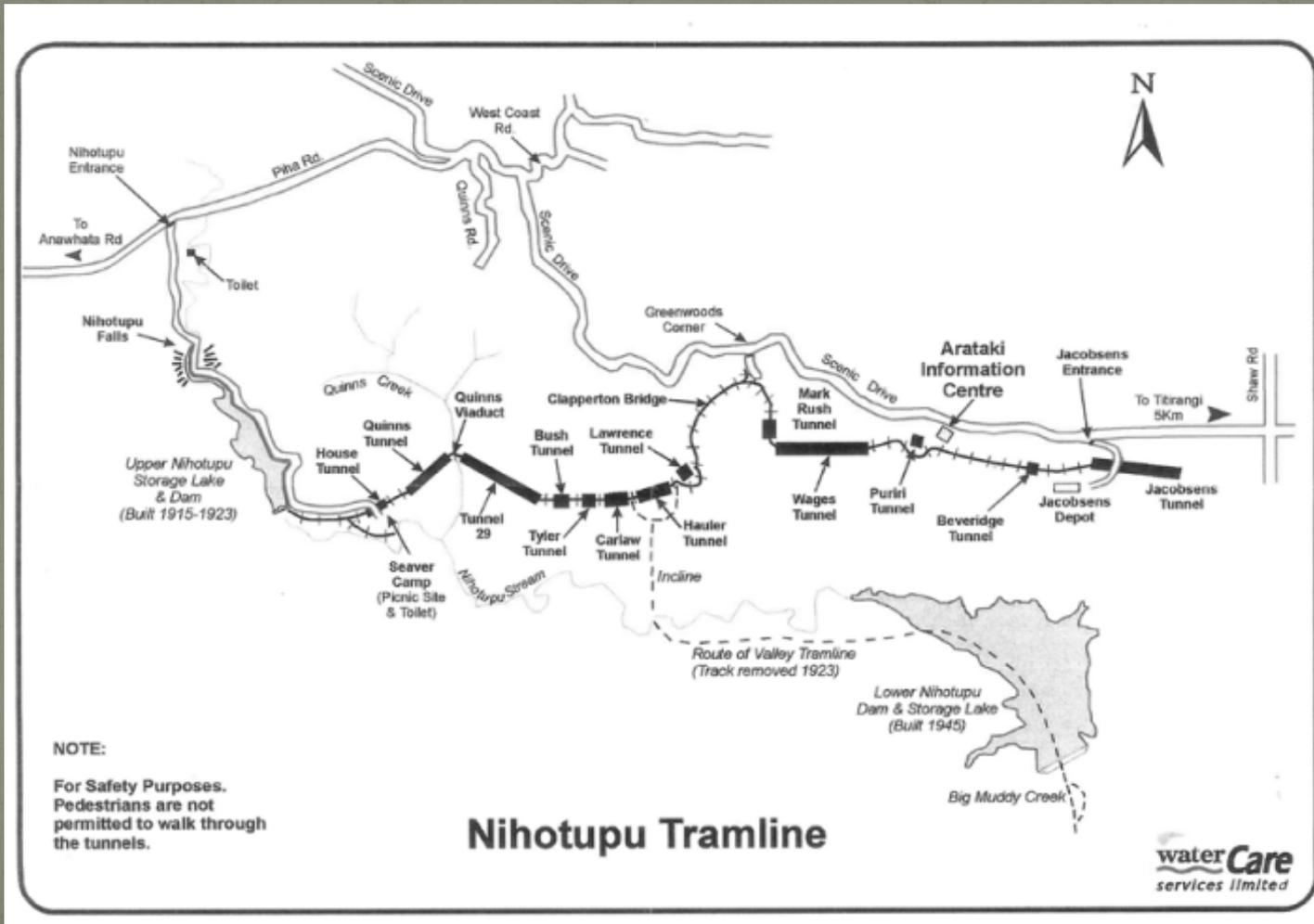
Sir. — In reply to the suggestion that the City Council should attend to the Exhibition Drive, they raised the bogey of a penny increase in rates over the whole city of Auckland. There are four miles of roadway, the formation is already there for the most part, and if to clear a couple of slips, saw up one tree and make a one-way traffic strip of metal sufficient for tourists necessitates an increase in rates, this city must be in a parlous state indeed.

The Exhibition Drive continues to be an exhibition of everything a drive not be. It may be objected that it should not be called a drive at all, because nobody can drive over it. But, from all accounts a tunneller or a miner could drive through it, and you can't ask any more than that, can you? One really must not be hypercritical.

# Exhibition Drive Impacts Timeline

- The **construction of the Upper Nihotupu Dam**, tramline and tunnels built from 1912, dam completed 1923
- The **Auckland Exhibition 1913/14**, some tramway lifted then removed after dam construction
- **Extension of the Drive from Mackie's Rest to Huia Road (1927) +**
- The development of the **concrete road from New Lynn (1931)**
- The **growth of tourism in the area**, drawcards including Atkinson Park, Frank Peat's Museum, Hotel Titirangi etc.
- The advent of **the Scenic Drive (1939) -**
- Road closed sign appears in 1953, **road closed to traffic for good** that same decade
- **The addition of the Beveridge Track**, creating a route to Arataki Visitor Centre and the 76km Hillary Trail (2010) +

# The construction of the Upper Nihotupu Dam



# Auckland Exhibition 1913/14

- Drive planned for the exhibition but justified as of use to the dam construction
- 1 mile of tramway was lifted during construction then all tramway removed after dam construction
- 1 way road, timetabled at either end as no room to pass
- Council viewed it as a summer road, no metal was laid
- Drive extended to Carter Road

## AUCKLAND CITY COUNCIL

Exhibition Drive

**STOP.**

All persons using this road do so at their own risk.

To avoid accidents please observe the following timetable:

FROM TITIRANGI	TO TITIRANGI
9.30 a.m. to 10.15 a.m.	10.45 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.
12 Noon to 12.45 p.m.	1.15 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.
2.30 p.m. to 3.15 p.m.	3.45 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.
5.00 p.m. to 5.45 p.m.	6.15 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

BY ORDER.

# Extension of the Drive from Mackie's Rest to Huia Road

- From inception of the Drive, a road linking to the West Coast Road was mooted past the Upper Nihotupu dam
- A logical link was the short distance to Huia Road, providing a major shortcut to Laingholm, Cornwallis and beyond, and for those residents to Oratia and beyond
- This finally happened in 1927, when the council needed easy access for work on the Huia pipeline and the new filtration plant
- Exhibition Drive becomes a modified longer road with 2 branches

# Mackie's Rest

- Location with viewpoint to Big Muddy Creek
- Site of historic seat named after Alexander Mackie
- Originally erected by local farmer and councillor Marshall Laing
- Seat inscribed with STOP – MACKIE'S REST



A scenic view of a lake and forested hills from a tramper stop. The foreground shows a wooden bench with a metal post. The middle ground features a large, vibrant green fern frond. In the background, a blue lake is nestled in a valley, surrounded by dense green forest and rolling hills under a clear blue sky.

**Stop. Mackies Rest**

[nztramper.com](http://nztramper.com)

# Frank Peat's Treasure House/Museum



# The Treasure House







C. 1940S

# Auckland Tramping Club Map 1932



# Concrete Road from New Lynn



# The Scenic Drive



The 1939 opening

View in 1940



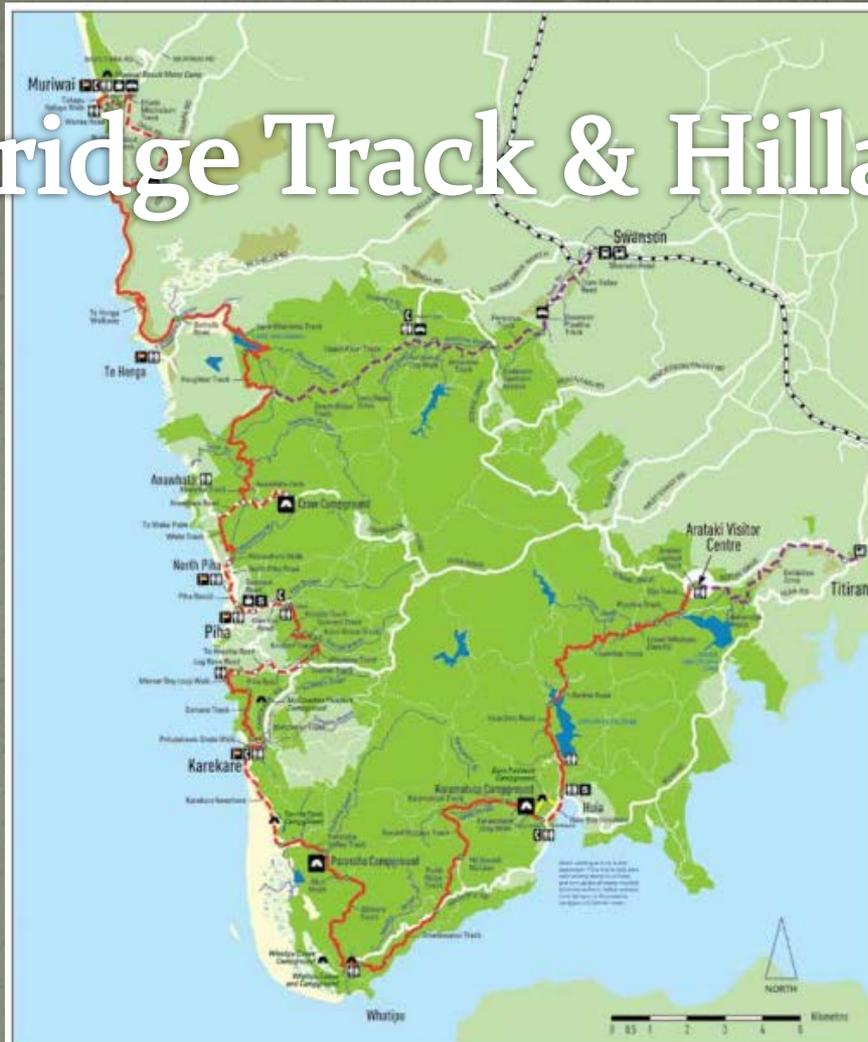


*A SUMMER DAY OUT OF DOORS.—Yesterday was ideal for picnics and hundreds made the trip to the Waitakeres. On left, a lunch party at Titirangi, and, right, hikers tramping through the bush.*

# Exhibition Drive closed to traffic 1953



# Beveridge Track & Hillary Trail



## The Hillary Trail

Hillary Trail	Public transport option	Hillary trail campground	Surf sheltering club	AEC Parkland
Road walking Closed during high tide	Rail	Other campground	Store / cafe	Other Public Open Space
Beach walking	Bus stops	Emergency telephone	Dike	Beach and wetlands
High tide alternative	Railway station	Pick up options	Toilets	Private land

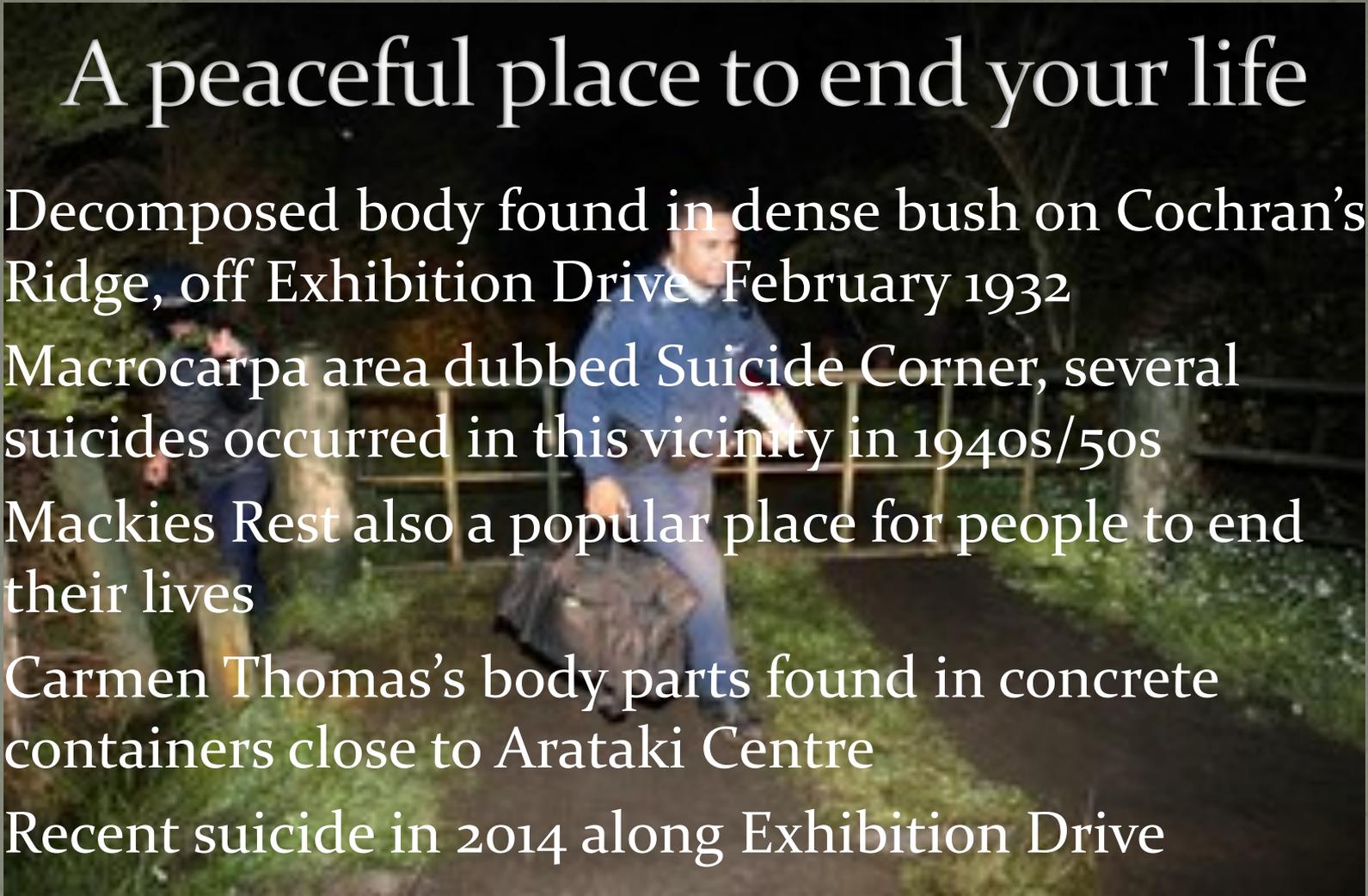
At high tide, walk along Hauraki Road with care, take the Karamutu Farm driveway. Follow the walkway from the barn to the Karamutu Campground.

Hillary Trail Map.

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# A peaceful place to end your life

- Decomposed body found in dense bush on Cochran's Ridge, off Exhibition Drive February 1932
- Macrocarpa area dubbed Suicide Corner, several suicides occurred in this vicinity in 1940s/50s
- Mackies Rest also a popular place for people to end their lives
- Carmen Thomas's body parts found in concrete containers close to Arataki Centre
- Recent suicide in 2014 along Exhibition Drive



# The Drive Centenary 2014



# The time capsule gathering



# The Centenary Convoy



# A time traveller 1914-2014

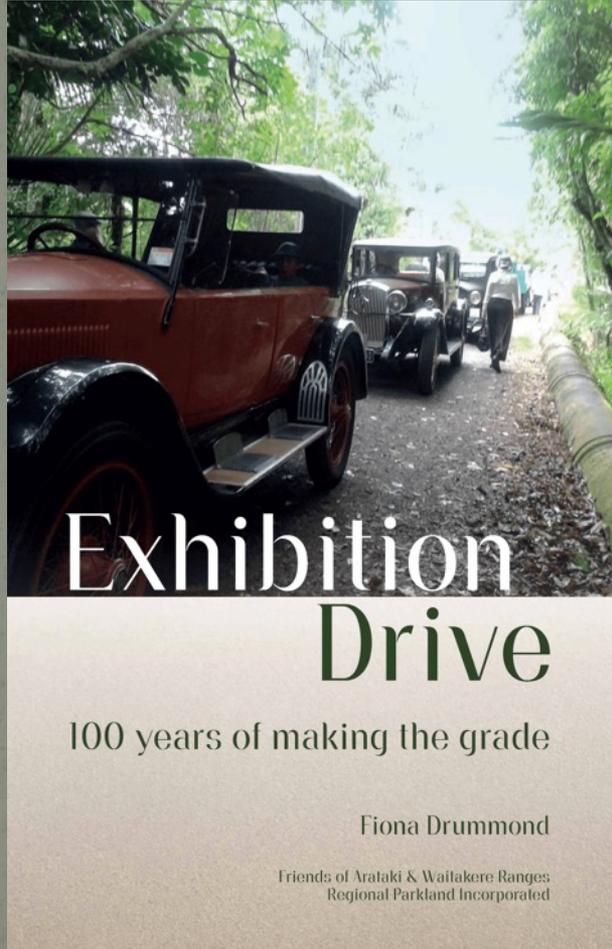


Will the future of E.D. echo the past?



# Exhibition Drive, 100 Years of Making the Grade

Cost \$35.00



# Learnings from writing an historic book

- Determine your funding opportunities and negotiate
- Have faith in your passion for the subject
- Believe in your ability to see it through
- Check your facts as much as possible
- Papers Past is a wonderful resource
- Avoid tempting diversions that aren't relevant
- Researching is fun, writing for publication is hard
- Keep records along the way, especially research sources
- It is reassuring to use an editor and publisher
- It is worthwhile in the end