

Note the little Galloway Station on the Rail Trail. Continue into Alexandra by crossing the river and turning left. Turn left at the State Highway 8, Roxburgh - Dunedin sign.

14. The old Alexandra bridge

Dist: 8.3km Total 161.2km

Designed by County Engineer, L.D. MacGeorge, (who also designed the Ophir Bridge) it was the largest and most elegant of his bridges. It took three years to build and opened in June 1882. However, it was not designed to withstand motor traffic and after 70 years service, the bridge was dismantled and replaced with the present day one in 1958.



Cross the bridge and take the first right into Earnsclough Road. At 4km turn right into Marshall Road leading to dredge tailings where the Department of Conservation (Doc) has an information kiosk.

15. Earnsclough Tailings

Dist : 4.0km Total 165.2km

Earnsclough is famed for its fruit orchards but it was gold that first lured people to the area. When the easily accessed gold was cleaned out, miners wanted access to the deeply buried gold alongside and on the beds of rivers. That led to the invention of gold dredges and the first of them started in 1898 to work the Earnsclough Flats. Otago led the world in the development of dredges and at its peak in 1906, there were 14 dredges working between Alexandra and Clyde. The extracted gravel - the tailings - was screened for gold on the dredge before being dumped from a raised elevator. The last and biggest dredge of all, the Alexandra, worked from 1933 and its closure in 1963 brought the dredging era to an end.

Return to Earnsclough Road and turn right. At 2km on the left note the old barn built by a dredging company to repair machinery. Further along on the right is Conroy's Road where one the richest gold bearing gullies in the Dunstan was found and where Dawsons established their fruit orchard about 1864.

16. Boulton Road

Dist: 6.0km Total 171.2km

At the end of the unsealed road is the Packing Shed Café and Gallery. Once a large orchard, the grounds are dotted with dry stone schist walls and gardens built by owner, Lex McLean. For many years, his family mined up the Nevis Valley (access via Bannockburn) until the shaft collapsed. Lex has collected many relics from gold mining workings which are displayed in the garden.

Return to Earnsclough Road and turn right to Clyde crossing the steel bridge built on the stone piers of the original bridge.

17. Clyde

Dist: 4.8km Total 176.0 km

The township took root when thousands of gold miners poured into the area after a rich strike by Hartley and Reilly in the Clutha River in 1862. There are three museums which contain the stories and items from those days. The Railway Station, opened in 1907, is one of three that remain from Central Otago's rail system. A separate brochure, "Walk Around Historic Clyde", guides you around the town's historic precinct.



Website : www.promotedunstan.co.nz

Promote Dunstan acknowledges the support of the Central Lakes Trust



The Dunstan Self-Drive Heritage Trail

Clyde Earnsclough Manuherikia



MacTavish's hut near Ophir



Introduction

The area known as The Dunstan stretches from Clyde into the Manuherikia Valley and was one of New Zealand's richest gold fields. It was visited by Maori, who camped by rivers in summer, and the earliest European settlers were sheep farmers whose runs extended over thousands of hectares. The discovery of gold at Lawrence in 1861 heralded a huge rush as more fields, yielding enormous quantities of gold, were found throughout Central Otago. Thousands of miners were lured here despite the extremely harsh climate and environment.

Many stayed to establish permanent townships on the sites of calico (cloth) settlements. The remains of those places and the scars left by mining operations still can be seen. Clyde, Ophir and St Bathans are the most authentically preserved and significant gold rush settlements in New Zealand; little remains of many other settlements apart from their names and some ruins. Others have survived with a few permanent residents and old cottages now used as holiday homes. Some old buildings have become part of local farms. Gold prospectors and mining companies still search for gold in the district.

It is an area rich in the early European history of New Zealand. The tour will take about four hours (plus one hour if you choose the optional route). Allow time to explore and to pause for refreshments at historic Chatto Creek Tavern, the Vulcan Hotel in St Bathans and The Bakery in Ophir. (Opening times subject to change)

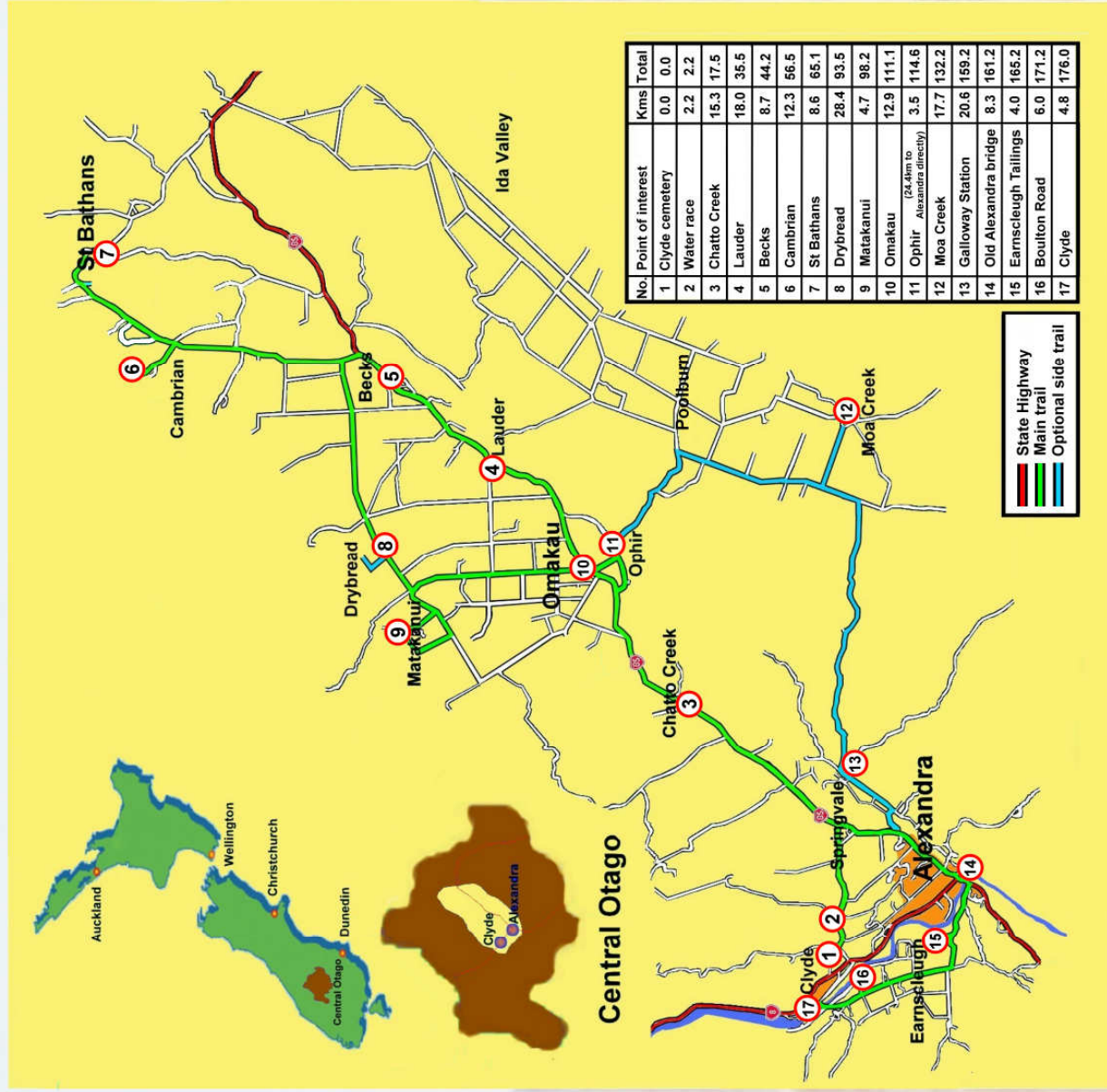
Begin the tour 300m along Springvale Road from its junction on Highway 8 (Alexandra-Cromwell Road)

1. The Dunstan-Clyde Cemetery

Dist : 0.0km Total 0.0 km

The old cemetery is bound by walls and entry pillars of local stone and wrought iron gates. It contains the remains of many notable early settlers and gold miners from throughout the Dunstan. The earliest graves date from the 1850s. More details can be found in the Clyde Cemetery brochure available from Clyde's museum.

A little further along the road on the right is Young Lane where Central Otago's first winemaker, Jean Desire Feraud, built a stone winery. It is privately owned and cannot be seen from the road. More information on Feraud can be found in Central Stories Museum in Alexandra.



2. Stepped irrigation race

Dist: 2.2 km Total: 2.2 km

To view follow the road on left up hill.

This unusual race has concrete steps rather than a pipe which was a more expensive method of lowering the water. It was built in the 1930s when most of the extensive

irrigation networks and major dams in the region were constructed, and the Great Depression ensured there was no shortage of labour. Old gold mining races resting on stone walls can be seen winding around hillsides and some are still used to irrigate farm land. Because of the very low rainfall here, nothing will grow without irrigation.



At 6 km turn left onto Highway 85

3. Chatto Creek

Dist: 15.3 km Total 17.5 km

The origin of the name has been lost. The Chatto Creek Tavern was built in 1886 of mud bricks and stacked stone and contains historical photographs and memorabilia. Numerous Chinese gold miners worked in this area and a large gold dredge operated nearby. The original Chatto Creek post office, which opened in January 1896, was a tent plastered with newspapers for insulation. It was replaced by a public works hut in 1933 and closed in 1975. The hut was shifted to Alexandra but was brought back to Chatto Creek by the local Restoration Committee in 2004.

Letters still can be posted and stamped with a special cancellation.



4. Lauder

Dist: 18.0 km Total 35.5 km

On the left is an example of an early stone house and a little further on is

Lauder Cottage built of mud brick, a readily available building material and familiar to early settlers from Scotland. Many of Central Otago's historic buildings are mud brick.



5. Becks

Dist: 8.7 km Total 44.2 km

Originally the village was called White Horse but became known as Becks after a prominent early settler, John Beck. Just over the bridge on the left are the corrugated iron remains of the blacksmith's forge, a mud brick shed and a large stone step of a house. Further along is the Old White Horse Hotel, an important New Zealand historical building. Built by Beck in 1864, it is one of the 10 oldest hotels or former hotels in New Zealand registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust. It served many purposes becoming a depot for collection for rabbits in 1898 when there was a huge rabbit trapping industry, a post office and later the telephone exchange and was turned into a shop. That closed in 1958 and the building was left to decay. It was saved after nine locals who met in 1990 and formed the Old White Horse Hotel Historical Society which is gradually restoring the building. Please respect the historic fabric of the building when viewing. Call into the new White Horse Hotel (1925) on the right for further information.



Continue for 0.6 km and turn left onto the St Bathans and Blue Lake Road. Pause 200m on the left to view old mud brick and stone farm buildings. A little further on the left is the original homestead and workers' cottages. At 10.6 km turn left onto Cambrian Road (unsealed)

6. Cambrian

Dist: 12.3 km Total 56.5 km

As the name suggests, it was settled by Welsh miners in 1863 who worked the gold and coal diggings there. The rivalry and sometimes bitter acrimony between the Protestant Welsh and their Catholic Irish counterparts in nearby St Bathans was known as the "War of the Roses". Cambrian has a number of quaint early cottages and we ask you to respect the privacy of the occupants.

Drive in for 1.4 km and turn right into rest area where evidence of sluice mining can be seen on the hills. Vehicles should turn here. Further exploration should be done on foot. Return to sealed road and turn left.

7. St Bathans

Dist: 8.6 km Total 65.1 km

Entering St Bathans on the left is a spectacular moon-scape-like terrain which was created by heavy sluicing after gold was discovered in 1863. There were three large mining operations one of which later formed the famed Blue Lake. Just under 3000 kilos of gold came from St Bathans but when it dwindled so did the town. Today there are few permanent residents and there is a rich history to be explored. Park opposite the pub and explore on foot. More details can be found in the "Walk Around St Bathans" brochure.

Leave by the same route as you came. At 1.2 km turn left into Cemetery Road to inspect the public cemetery (1 km return). Return to sealed road, turn left and continue almost to Becks and turn right at School road (unsealed). Keep straight ahead to:

8. Drybread

Dist: 28.4 km Total 93.5 km



The legend goes that the name Drybread came after a wary prospector, when asked how he was doing, replied "Dry bread, seldom better". Few buildings remain but those that have survived, including the Drybread Hotel (on the right) are now used as farm buildings.

A little further on is the signpost to the Drybread cemetery which contains many early graves. Turn right and follow the grass track for 1.2km (dry weather only) Return to the sealed road, turn right, and continue for 4.2km following the signs to Matakanui.

9. Matakanui (Tinkers)

Dist: 4.7 km Total 98.2 km

It lies at the foothills of the Dunstan Mountains and was known as Tinkers, a name possibly derived from the tinsmiths (known as tinkers) who, it is said, abandoned their trade of repairing pots and pans and, instead, used them for washing gold. Another explanation is that when miners were asked how they were doing, they responded: "Just tinkering about". On the left is the original school; its rooftop bell tower a rare sight.



The settlement has a number of mud brick buildings in various states of disrepair. The former Newtown Hotel was rebuilt using the old stone walls of the original. Opposite is a mud brick store that originally began life as a goldfields dancehall. Behind are the stables. A water sluicer lies by the start of Sugarpot Road (along which lies the now flooded head of the Deep Lead mine whose shaft was sunk nearly 80m in about 1898.) Follow the loop road where old diggings can be seen on the hills.

Continue on through Matakanui, following the loop road (Naylor Road) around. Drive back to the sealed road and turn right into Racecourse Road, following this to Omakau.

10. Omakau

Dist: 12.9 km Total 111.1 km

Once a small farming centre, its growth was hastened when the railway line reached it in 1906. To visit the cemetery, turn left off Racecourse Road (at the school), into Deaker Street. Continue along the main street to the Commercial Hotel on the right. This much altered building was built by the Leask family in about 1898 as a farmhouse. It then became a boarding house and finally a hotel. Alongside are magnificent stone stables built about 1880.

If you intend taking the optional route (see below) turn right onto Highway 85. At 1.9 km turn left at the signpost to Ophir and cross the Manuhirikia River over the picturesque suspension bridge named for the Irish patriot, Daniel O'Connell. If you chose not to take the optional route, cross the bridge in Omakau (signposted Ida Valley) and drive 2 km to Ophir on the right.

11. Ophir

Dist: 3.5 km Total 114.6 km

Ophir was originally known as Blacks Diggings, then just Blacks when gold was found in 1863 on the property of local runholder, Charles Black. In 1875 the name was changed to Ophir, the biblical name of the gold mine where the Queen of Sheba obtained gold for King Solomon. A separate brochure, "Walk Around Historic Ophir" will guide you around the village. Cross the historic bridge (see above) and continue to Alexandra. (see below)

11. Alternative route (partly unsealed)

Turn right by Blacks Hotel in Ophir by sign to Ida Valley. At 1 km on the right, pause to view MacTavish's Hut, a restored miner's hut. The road climbs Blacks Hill over the Raggedy Range then drops into the vast Ida Valley. At the foot of the range is Poolburn. Turn right at the hotel onto the Poolburn-Moa Creek Road.

12. Moa Creek

Dist: 17.7 km Total 132.3 km

This settlement, now just a few houses, sprang up after the discovery of gold in 1863.

At 14.5 km turn left into Webster Lane. Halfway along on the right is a restored stone cottage once inhabited by the Websters, early settlers in the area.



At Moa Creek on the left sitting in the middle of a paddock, is the Ida Valley Cemetery (known as Moa Creek Cemetery). The earliest graves date back to the gold mining days when European and Chinese miners were buried here. The Chinese remains were later exhumed and repatriated to China. Many gravestones are illegible and records have been lost. (For permission to visit call at Bonspel Station on Poolburn Dam Road.)

The two buildings on the right date from the late nineteenth century. The larger was the Moa Creek Hotel built in 1912

which replaced the "Carriers Arms" built in 1861 and sited a short distance to the east. The smaller mud brick building was a general store built in 1870. It closed about 1973 and the pub in 1977-78.



Return to the Poolburn-Moa Creek Road. Turn left and then right onto Crawford Hills Road (sealed/unsealed - parts slippery in winter, dusty in summer) At 21.4 km on the right, note the stone walls used to build up the road. At 28.1 km note the piles of Sarsen stones. These are incredibly heavy and were nicknamed chinamen's rocks by the miners. It is said where you find them, you find gold. At 32.5 km on the left is :

13. Galloway Station

Dist: 20.6 km Total 152.9 km

The stone buildings visible from the road - stables, barn, and single men's quarters - were erected in 1868 by the second owner, W.A. Low who owned the station from 1862 till the mid 1870s. In 1916 the 160,000 acre (nearly 65,000 hectares) block was broken up and sub-divided into six blocks to provide land for soldiers returning from the First World War. The station today farms 11,000 hectares. Do not explore the property without asking permission.