

Wesley Walkers say you're never too old



The youthful Wesley Walkers in action on the trail.

By Margaret Savage

Every year a group of enthusiastic Wesley Walkers from Tauranga Methodist Church takes off to explore a different venue. This year we chose Coromandel.

Our group of 13 ranged in age from a spritely 67 year-old to three men aged 86. All of us stayed at the Tui Lodge Backpackers in Coromandel.

On our first day we were thrilled with our ride on the Driving Creek Railway. The engineer shared his love of the area and his knowledge of the trees and plants. An added bonus was watching as he fed the resident tuis, ducks and other birds in the large protected area.

Day two was the major highlight with seven of us climbing to the top of 500m-high Castle Rock. Two men aged 86 made it to the top!

Following this we spent an enjoyable two hours at the Waiau Waterworks playing with all the water controlled gadgets and reading all the notice boards.

We then went on to view the Waiau Falls and the stand of wonderful kauri trees on the 309 Road.

Day three began with a picturesque walk around the Long Bay peninsula and a climb up to the kauri plantation, followed by an hour long visit to the Goldmine stamper battery.

In the afternoon we travelled over to Whangapoua Beach and eight of us waded across the estuary and scurried around the rocks to view New Chums Beach, supposedly the most beautiful beach in New Zealand. On the way back we were caught in a heavy shower and arrived back at the cars dripping.

Day four. The really hard ones did another walk which produced a few challenges such as a creek to cross and waist high grass and 600 steps.

In the afternoon we all travelled up to Colville, and stopped for a look at the Buddhist Centre and also the oldest house on the peninsula which looked as if it was about to be restored. As you can imagine everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trip and the company.

But there was another treat in store when our most capable manager, a former Girl Guide leader, told us the cost of all the food came to only \$25 each!

Roll on the next venture for the Wesley Walkers.