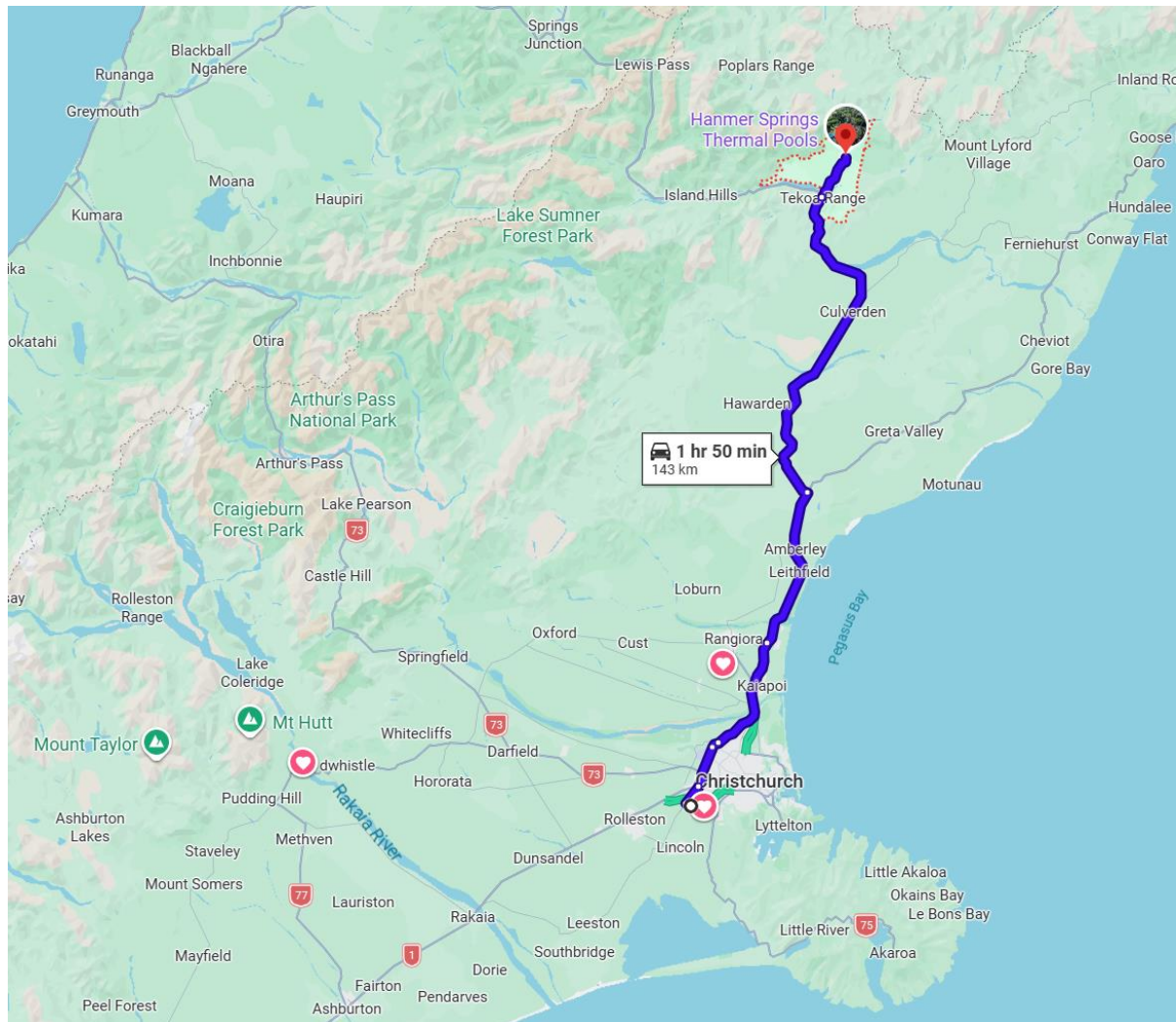




In May we spent a weekend in Hanmer Springs, 2 hours drive north of Christchurch.



Hanmer Springs, is a historic alpine township located in North Canterbury, New Zealand. The area was named after Thomas Hanmer, a Welsh pioneer surveyor who mapped the Amuri district during the 1850s. European discovery of the hot springs occurred in 1859 when local farm manager William Jones investigated what appeared to be a "remarkable fog" rising from the Hanmer Basin. The Crown formally designated the area as a public reserve in 1881, funding the first official bathhouse in 1883 to establish Hanmer Springs as a premier health and wellness retreat. Over the following decades, the government significantly expanded infrastructure, utilizing prison labour between 1903 and 1913 to plant the extensive exotic timber tracks that now form the Hanmer State Forest. Following the destruction of the original sanatorium, the historic Queen Mary Hospital was erected in 1916. The facility served as a vital convalescent centre for returning World War I soldiers suffering from joint disorders and

psychological trauma, capitalizing on the soothing nature of the mineral pools. Today, the modern Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa Complex preserves this heritage, operating as an internationally renowned destination that bridges historical rehabilitation with contemporary alpine tourism.



*View of Hanmer Springs from the top of Conical Hill, a popular short hill walk.*

These are some of the views from the back of our accommodation:





Our accommodation had this rather nice railway clock in the lounge area, seemed fitting to line up Brake for a photo.

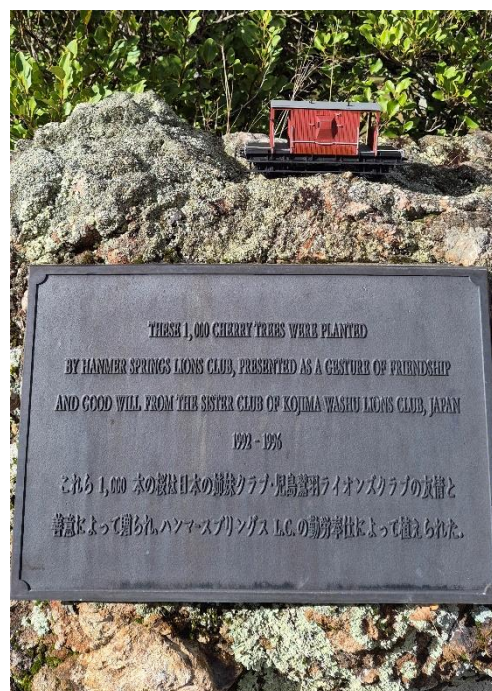
Several locations in West London are connected to "Kensington Station" and the year 1879, with the most notable historical railway event being the Metropolitan District Railway (now part of the London Underground's District line) expanding its operations through the area.

Quick search on Google shows that these are quite popular clocks!

In 1992, the Lions Club of Hanmer Springs spearheaded a major community project to beautify the alpine village by planting roughly 1,000 cherry blossom trees.

This initiative transformed local streets, most notably Conical Hill Road, into vibrant pink corridors during the spring. Today, those mature cherry trees remain a stunning scenic attraction.

You can easily spot their spectacular blooms every spring while enjoying the Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools or exploring the local walking tracks.





Queen Mary Hospital in Hanmer Springs opened in 1916 to treat soldiers returning from World War I. The military chose this alpine location to use the local thermal springs for healing shell shock and psychiatric conditions.



Over the decades, the facility evolved into a pioneering, nationally renowned centre for alcohol and drug addiction treatment before finally closing its doors in 2003.

Today, the site is recognized as a Category 1 heritage area by Heritage New Zealand, celebrating both its architectural and cultural history.

The land holds deep significance for local Māori, who originally used the springs for healing.

Beautifully preserved buildings like the Soldiers' Block have been restored, serving the modern community as gathering spaces and accommodation.





Exploring the centre of Hanmer this is a view towards Conical Hill





Visited PJ's Pies for some fresh gourmet pies, bit expensive but really good.

Brake poses for a photo as a little Swiss boy, 'From the Matterhorn to Conical Hill!'.

Signature & Gourmet Pies -

- Smokey BBQ Beef Brisket.
- Chicken, Cranberry & Brie.
- Angus Steak & Blue Cheese.
- Lamb Rendang.
- Farmhouse Chicken & Bacon.
- Pork Belly & Apple.
- Angus Steak & Shiitake Mushroom.

Classic Pies & Sides -

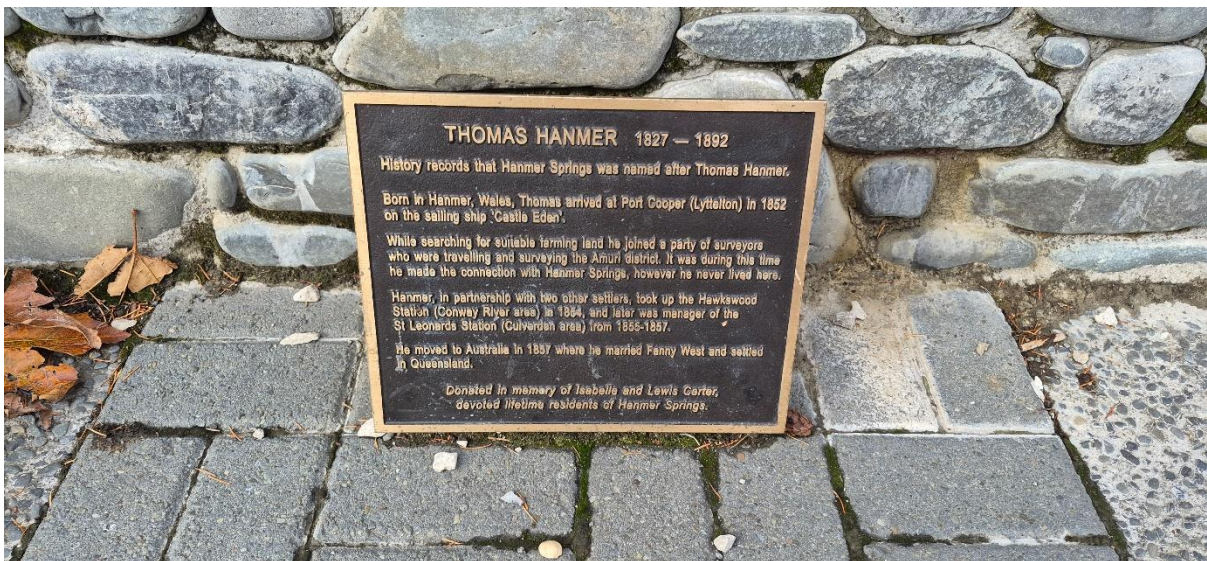
- Angus Mince & Cheese.
- Angus Pepper Steak.
- Angus Steak & Cheese.
- BBQ Pork Sausage Roll.



Centre of Hanmer Springs with Conical Hill in the middle of the photo



Hanmer Springs is named after Thomas Hanmer, a Welsh immigrant and early runholder who surveyed the Amuri District in 1852. Despite giving the town its name, Hanmer never actually settled in the township itself. The broader history of the area centres on the famous natural springs and the town's development as a health resort



Brake getting measured up, is he old enough to go up Conical Hill?



Time to walk up Conical Hill



At the top of Conical Hill is a large boulder with a plaque on it



Duncan Rutherford (1853–1917) was a prominent North Canterbury sheep farmer, generous philanthropist, and instrumental figure in the establishment of the Hanmer Springs township and its military hospital.

A successful runholder, Rutherford owned the Hanmer Lodge Hotel. During World War I, he offered this property to the government to act as a convalescent home for injured soldiers. He also formed a Red Cross committee, personally employing staff and funding the makeshift hospital until the government took over.



The view from the top of the hill looking across the valley to the mountains.



Half way up slightly different views



The Hermitage Hanmer Springs hotel, the site has had a hotel on it since 1897, this version is since 1980s



Just before returning home we had a game of crazy golf, 18 holes





