

Mt Alaska, Whakaari Conservation Area

Whakaari Conservation Area was once a hub of scheelite mining (calcium tungstate).

There are several old huts and mining relics around the area, including tracks that were cut for access to mines around the mountain sides.

Mt Alaska (1965m) is accessible via an old trail from Mt Judah Road. It's a good day out with plenty of vertical rise, a changing horizon and the chance to explore the remains of mining equipment to break up the journey. The Mt Judah Track leads to Mt Judah Road, a road in name only as it is just a farm track and no vehicles are allowed. This rises easily above Buckler Burn and around Mt Judah, eventually meeting Bonnie Jean Creek – a place to get water and refresh on a hot day.

Just above the creek, on the east side, is Jean Hut, an historic structure built from hand-flattened 44 gallon drums. The roof is held down by hung stones.

The trail winds its way up a steep grassy hill via a series of relentless switchbacks to the three-bunk Heather Jock Hut. It's a small hut, but cosy and has a water tank.

From here, continue to the ridge that runs directly down from Mt Alaska. At around 1430m there is a saddle where the old mining trail cuts through and continues towards Mt Larkins. This is a spectacular viewpoint, but there's still a way to go to reach the summit.

Climb directly up the ridge in a south-easterly direction to Mt Alaska. There is no trail, but the ridge is stripped bare in places by harsh weather and erosion.

It's a steep walk with intermittent short sections of scramble and loose terrain, but the views, especially those to the Rees Valley and Mt Earnslaw, are certainly worth it.

Return the way you came, perhaps overnighing in Heather Jock Hut.

Wild File

Access 2km south of Glenorchy township, entrance and car park on east side of road

Grade Moderate

Time 8-10hr return

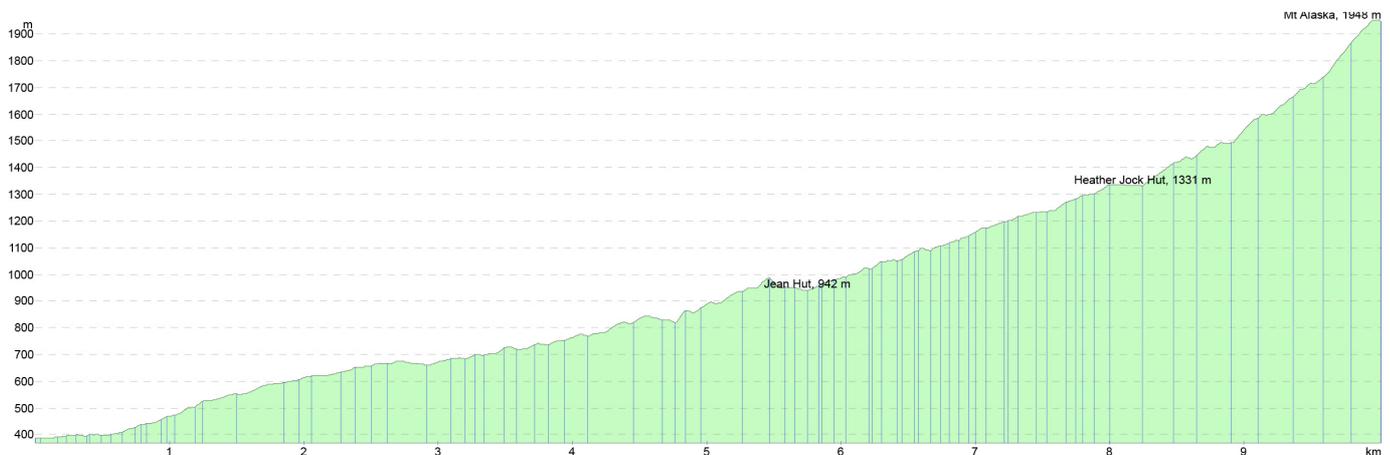
Distance 10km to summit

Total ascent 1706m

Accommodation Heather Jock Hut (free, three bunks)

Map CB10

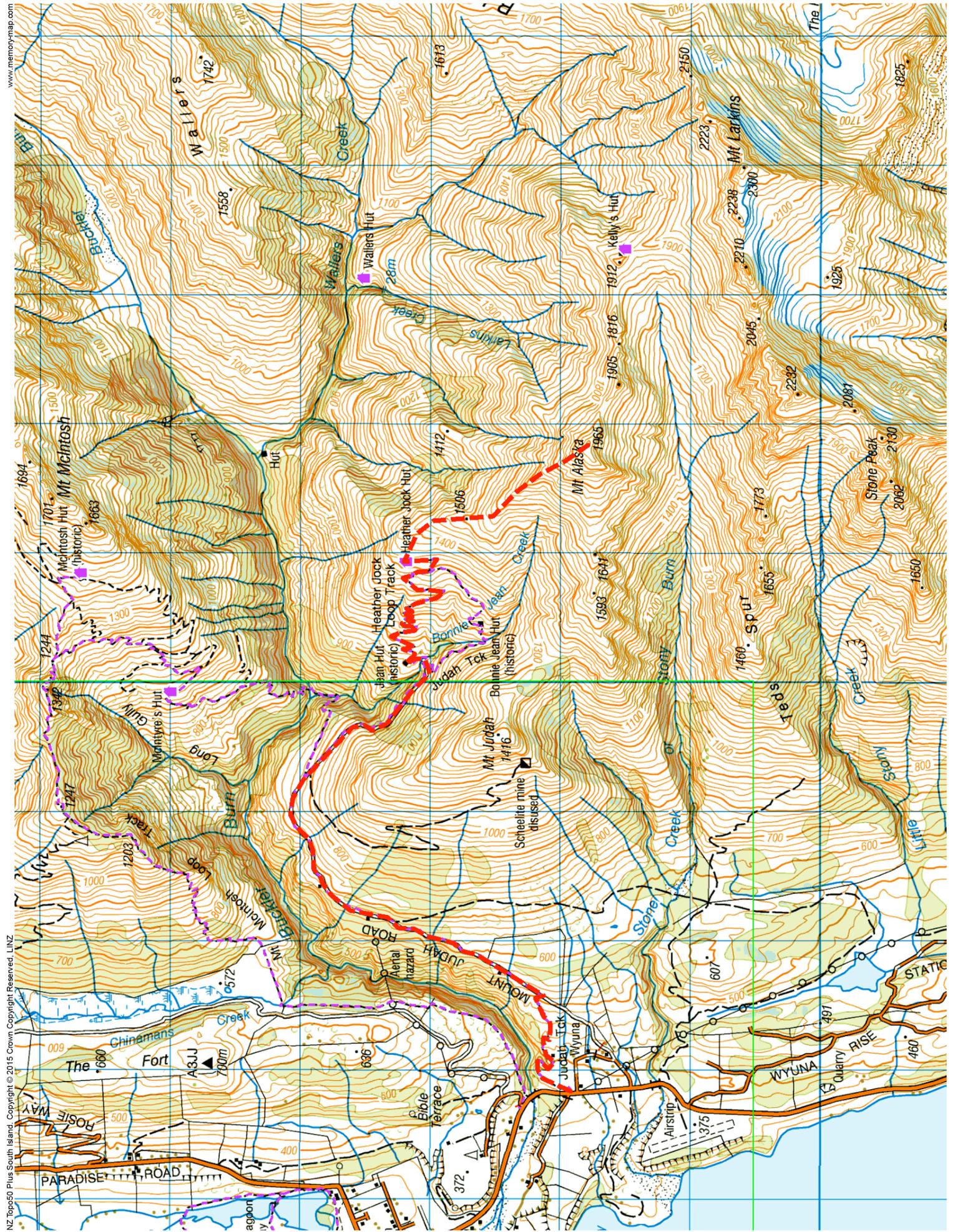
Elevation Profile



Wilderness Magazine, www.wildernessmag.co.nz

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, *Wilderness* does not accept responsibility for any errors. Users should plan their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing. The GPX file associated with this route has been drawn using Memory-Map software, version 6. Use discretion when following the route, especially when no track is marked on the map. The GPX file in these cases are a 'best guess' of the route only. Users should use a combination of GPS, visual observations, maps and compass to find the best possible route. Memory Map shows purple tracks and hut icons as verified routes and huts. Red or blue routes are those drawn by Wilderness.

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