



Heritage Trails



Napier to Wairoa



Lighthouse, Wairoa

Ivan Hughes

Hawke's Bay

the Real
Discover  New Zealand

AN HISTORICAL JOURNEY

Broken hill country, deep ravines and geologically unstable terrain dissuaded early travellers from venturing too far inland on the torturous journey between Napier and Wairoa. Consequently early travel between the two centres was by canoe or along the coastal track.

The sea journey was dependent on weather conditions. Travel was frequently delayed by storms and high seas. Later when coastal steamers were introduced the notoriously unpredictable river bar at Wairoa caused further problems. This early sea link came to an end when Wairoa harbour trade ceased in the late 1930s.



Crossing the Wairoa Bar

J & M Swan Collection

The coastal walking track followed the line of shingly beaches, crossed numerous streams and rivers and climbed steep headlands. Gradually this developed into a bridle trail and became negotiable by horse or bullock drawn wagons. Adverse weather conditions caused floods and slips. Again travel was frequently delayed so an alternative was needed. By 1900 an inland road suitable for coaches had been formed. A weekly mail coach service between Napier and Wairoa was operating by 1908. Although more reliable than the coastal track the road still held much excitement for the traveller. Inclement weather played havoc with the road which traversed the high rugged hill country. The road surface often became a puggy papa mess which tested the skills of both driver and horses.

This road formed the basis of the present Napier to Wairoa highway which even today continues to be ruled by the elements.



Coaches crossing Devil's Elbow ford

J & M Swan Collection

The completion of the Westshore road / rail Bridge and embankment in 1918 was the first major step in the construction of a rail link to Wairoa. The line took 21 years to build. Construction was hampered by floods, earthquakes, massive slips and the depression years of the early 1930s. As well as four notable viaducts there is one of New Zealand's highest viaducts and nine tunnels.

The line was officially opened in July 1939. Originally trains were hauled by steam engines then in 1955 diesel railcars were introduced. By 1966 freight trains were also hauled by diesel locomotives. Today this line no longer carries the volume of traffic that it did in former years.



Westshore Road/Rail Bridge

I Hughes

Travelling direct from Napier to Wairoa allow approximately 2 hours. This does not allow for site stops or side trips to view sites along the trail.

Petrol available at Napier, Tutira and Wairoa.

NAPIER – WAIROA HERITAGE TRAIL

(Distances shown are approximate only and begin at i SITE Napier)



i SITE NAPIER VISITOR CENTRE

Open every day (except Xmas Day) for information on tourist attractions, accommodation and heritage trails. Pick up your copy of the popular 'Hawke's Bay Visitor Guide', which includes everything you want to know about Hawke's Bay, so you can plan your visit. Located 100 Marine Parade. Phone 06 834 1911.

Continue north on Marine Parade around Bluff Hill. Pass Port of Napier before entering the suburb of Ahuriri, the earliest settlement in Napier where the original port was situated.



Continue to SH2. Cross Westshore Bridge. Note Ahuriri Estuary Wildlife Refuge on left and a finger of land which is a Maori Canoe Reserve, a reminder that this estuary was once navigable. In the distance is the road and railway bridge and embankment. At the time of its completion in 1918 this was the longest concrete bridge in the Dominion. On left pass Westshore Wildlife Reserve and Hawke's Bay Airport. This area was an extensive tidal estuary prior to the Hawke's Bay Earthquake in 1931 when the land was raised by over two metres. On right is the coastal suburb of Westshore and adjacent to the road, on the gravel embankment, is the railway line. Pass through the settlement of Bay View. Prior to the 1931 earthquake this township was situated on the northern edge of the inner harbour. Opposite Harrap Nurseries remains a section of the stream along which the Esk River flowed before the devastating 1938 flood when flood waters reached the rafters of many homes and forced a new channel to the sea.

See Heritage Trails brochure 'Hastings/Napier to Taupo including Westshore and Bay View' for details of sites and further information on the stretch of SH2 to the Esk River bridge and also 'Ahuriri Walk' trail brochure.

Napier – Wairoa Heritage Trail SH2 crosses Esk River Bridge (15km).

Tait Road (15.5km) to left leads to Petane Marae with Te Amiki, the meeting house and Pohio, the dining hall.



1. Whirinaki (17km) is a beach settlement offering good beach fishing but is not suitable for swimming.

On the left is Whirinaki Gas Turbine Power Station. This emergency diesel operated station was originally commissioned in 1978.

Pan Pac Forest Products Ltd. was established in 1971 as a joint venture between New Zealand and Japanese companies with the main purpose of providing wood fibre for paper production in Japan. It became fully Japanese owned in 1993. Pinus Radiata is the predominant timber processed and today wood fibre, logs, lumber and pulp are marketed world-wide.

Approximately 1/2km on left past Pan Pac's entrance is the not easily seen entranceway to the carpark of Ken Ross Reserve.

The hour long Ken Ross Walkway, a Pan Pac environmental initiative project, is well worth the effort. The track leads up the valley beside the 'Cascading Aeration and Wetland Treatment System' to a viewing platform and kiosk with commanding views over the industrial site and Hawke Bay and beyond.



Steam plume - Pan Pac I Hughes

Where the road runs beside the sea note the lone hillock, Pane-Paoa, at the end of the straight on the right.

Tangoio Beach and Waipatiki Beach turn-off (22km). This was the area of the former Tangoio settlement comprising a post office, store and school. Tangoio Marae is situated at the corner.



2. Tangoio Beach (2km from SH2) is a small coastal settlement. A short distance north is Whakaari Headland, a Maori canoe landing reserve. For the early Maori this had been a lookout point while in the 1840s the headland became a whaling station with many local Maori working the boats. The large flat rock in the sea beside the headland is known as Te Papa or Flat Rock. Further north, on what was once the early section of the coastal walking trail to Wairoa, is Stingray Bay and



Punakarau (Tait's) Beach, a beautiful scenic spot with golden sand. The inland swamp rose four metres as did much of the nearby coastline during the 1931 Hawke's Bay Earthquake. In this area moa bones, traces of kumara pits and other signs of Maori habitation have been found. Beach fishing, crayfishing and walking with care, can be enjoyed.



Track to Flat Rock

I Hughes

Return to Waipatiki Road turn-off and continue north to

3. Waipatiki Beach (11km from SH2) is a picturesque settlement with native bush and a broad stretch of golden sand. In pre-European times this area was well populated as the estuary was a rich source of flounder. However the 1931 Earthquake lifted the flats and a stream system formed. The Waipatiki Scenic Reserve contains 64 ha of coastal bush with nikau dominating the lower flat while kanuka and a wide variety of larger native trees cover the hillside. Tui and native pigeons are plentiful. Within the scenic reserve traces of the original pre-European foot track, which connected Napier to Wairoa, still remain. By 1860 this had been enlarged to become a bridle track which pack trains used for nearly forty years. By 1900 a dray road had been constructed inland via Tutira and the coastal route fell into disrepair. Waipatiki Domain, a small native bush area, was in danger of being eaten out by goats and opossums but with fencing and predator control the native bush has regenerated.



Camping ground, beach picnic area, dressing sheds, toilets. Swimming often dangerous.
(refer DOC Napier for further information)



Waipatiki Beach

I Hughes

Return to SH2/Tangoio Beach turn-off



4. Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve (25km). In pre-European times there were several Maori pa in Tangoio Valley although today there is no evidence remaining. Maori history records the existence of a pa near the falls. The Tangoio Walkway passes through both native coastal bush and introduced forest. In early summer native orchid flowers can be found. Kareara and Rauwiri Kokomuka streams make their way down through the reserve creating waterfalls and pools.

Parking and picnic area. (refer DOC Napier for further information)



5. White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve (29km) comprises 19ha of native bush with kahikatea as its dominant species and an impressive grove of nikau palms. A picturesque stream and a small waterfall are visible from the track. A short loop track has a grade and surface suitable for wheelchairs.

Car park, picnic shelter, toilets. (refer DOC Napier for further information)



Continue to top of hill. Note unique 'self fielding' 20 metre concrete cricket pitch in valley on left. This was developed shortly after WW1 by returned servicemen who farmed in the area.



Wheelchair track - White Pine Bush

I Hughes

Tangoio Road (31km) on right is alternative route to Waipatiki Beach.

Kaiwaka Road (31km) on left, offers alternative scenic drive to Napier – Taupo SH5. Pass Tareha School and Kaiwaka Hall towards Darkys Spur and enjoy views. Turn left into Waipunga Road to view railway in Esk Valley and extensive views towards Maungaharuru Range before reaching SH5.

Aropaoanui Road (31.2km) on right, with panoramic views of Hawke Bay, passes Glenview Farm Stay, phone 06 836 6232 or 06 836 6235.

6. Aropaoanui Beach (13km from SH2). In pre-European times many pa existed in this area as food was plentiful and it was a stopping place for canoes. The first European to settle in this valley built a pit-sawn homestead in early 1860s. Coastal steamers serviced the area with surfboats ferrying stores in and the woolclip out. Aropaoanui was often a stopover point for early travellers using the coastal route between Napier and Wairoa.

Originally a coastal walkway existed from Aropaoanui River to Waikari River mouth following an interesting course over rocks, under

towering cliffs, along sandy beaches and across the massive 1931 HB earthquake slip. In places the walkway followed the original Napier to Wairoa coastal walking route.



Coastal Scenery near Aropaoanui

I Hughes

Return to SH2 and continue north travelling Devil's Elbow - views of Maungaharuru Range.

7. Lake Tutira (39km) was formed by the mass slumping of soil across the river at the northern end of the lake. As the inlet and outlet are only a few metres apart, water circulation is minimal and, along with nutrient run-off from the surrounding farmland, this lake has often suffered from eutrophication. Remnants of pa sites, middens and cooking stones show that Tutira was occupied by early Maori. Abundant food from the lake and surrounding forest made this area very popular. European farming commenced here in the early 1870s. By 1882 Herbert Guthrie-Smith, a conservationist and author, farmed the area until his death in 1940. He left part of his station in trust for farming, conservation and education purposes – Guthrie-Smith Outdoor Education Centre. To the east of Lake Tutira is Tutira Country Park (426ha managed by HB Regional Council) with many well-formed scenic walking tracks taking from 20mins to 4hr 30mins to traverse – no dogs allowed. Lakes Tutira, Waikopiro and Orakai and much of their shorelines are DOC Wildlife Refuges and all bird life, including introduced species, are protected.



Picnic shelters, toilets, camping for a small charge. All tap water must be boiled for drinking. Fishing, swimming, boating (no motorised craft). Note Information Boards. (refer DOC Napier for further information)



Lake Tutira

E Glanville

8. Tutira Memorial Church (40km) was built in 1954 to honour the men and women of the district who served in both world wars. The church is situated in an elevated position above both the road and lake and from the scenic window at the eastern end a beautiful view of the lake can be enjoyed. Services are still held periodically. Please ensure gates are left as found.

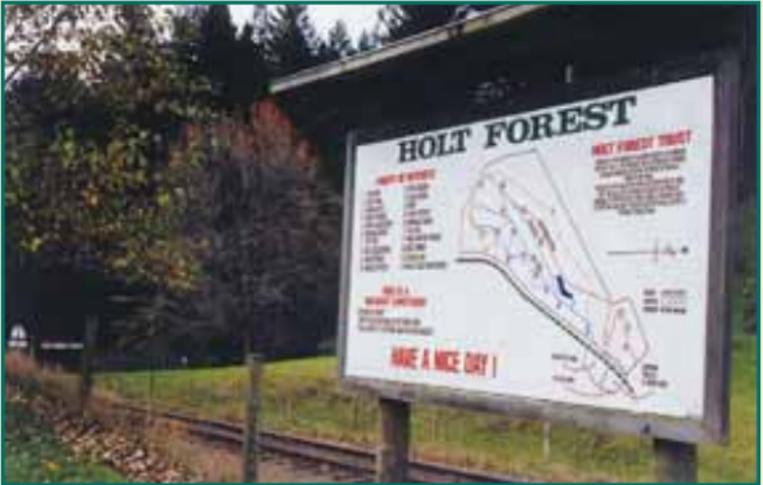
At Waikoau Road (42km) turn left. Note Tutira Public Hall. Pass Waikoau steel railway viaduct on right (149m long 72m high). Travel through Waikoau originally a railway settlement camp and milling village. Note 1930 style railway houses.



9. Holt Forest Trust (7.5km from SH2). In 1933 Harold Holt purchased land at Waikoau. For more than 45 years he and his wife Dorothy collected and planted 15ha with around 500 species of indigenous and introduced trees, shrubs, ferns and flowering plants. In 1962 this was proclaimed a Wildlife Sanctuary and gifted to the people of NZ. This arboretum is open to the public all year. In spring there are carpets of bluebells, primroses and daffodils while in autumn the deciduous trees put on a colourful display. Magnificent Californian Redwoods and Douglas Fir dominate the entrance.



Broad gravel paths are suitable for wheel chairs. Picnic area, toilets. No smoking. No dogs.



Holt Forest entrance

R Spiller

Return to SH2.

Tutira Store (43km) open 7 days: petrol, takeaways, first aid, picnic area. phone 06 839 7847

Pohokura Road (43km) on left leads to several scenic reserves with walkways, magnificent native bush and bird-life.

10. Opouahi Scenic Reserve and Walkway

(11km from SH2). The 30min Lake Loop Walk through regenerating native bush skirts picturesque Lake Opouahi. Bird life is abundant. A longer walk (4hrs return) leaves the lake loop, crosses over farmland and leads to Thomas' Bush containing high altitude native forest. From the top of the ridge extensive views from Mahia to Napier can be enjoyed.

Picnic shelter, toilets. (refer DOC Napier for further information)



Lake Opouahi

I Hughes



11. Bellbird Bush Scenic Reserve (15km from SH2) is aptly named from the number of bellbirds in the area although numerous other native birds warblers, tui, fantails and tomtits also add their pleasant songs. In autumn, when berries are ripe, numerous native bush pigeons flock to the area. There are several walking tracks but care should be exercised on Spooners Hill where tomo (deep holes) in the limestone formations can be dangerous to the unwary. Logging has been carried out in the area and an old logging track provides a short walk to Waikoau Stream where there are several small waterfalls and a water slide.

Picnic area. (refer DOC Napier for further information)

12. Boundary Stream Scenic Reserve (19km from SH2). This is the most accessible of all the NZ's 'mainland islands' (an area where predators and pests are significantly reduced through on-going vigilant pest control). Endangered species becoming established are kakabeak, NZ falcon, NI brown kiwi, kokako and others. The reserve contains typical mountain and lowland forest. The 1hr 30min loop track passes through some virgin forest and notable is a magnificent matai. A four hour through walk passes by high sandstone cliffs and deep gorges. The track continues along Boundary Stream to Shine Falls (Site 13) then on to Heays Access Road.

Parking, toilets. (refer DOC Napier for further information)



Boundary Stream Track

R Spiller

Continuing on Pohokura Road note sign on left (21km from SH2) to Bell Rock (4hrs return walk) an unusual shaped rock sculptured over the years by the wind to resemble a large bell. From here extensive views as far as Mt Ruapehu can be admired on a fine day. Further on (approx. 7km) turn left on to Waitara Road linking to Napier - Taupo SH5.

Return on Pohokura Road to Matahorua Road junction, turn left on to Matahorua Road and left again on to Heays Access Road to NE end of Boundary Stream Scenic Res. (approx. 12km.)

13. Shine Falls. The track initially passes across farmland dominated by towering wind-sculptured sandstone cliffs. Remnants of early Maori habitation have been found. Kiwi were once present. The spectacular 58m falls are reached after passing through light bush with many kowhai growing on the steep sides of the gorge. There is a swimming hole at the foot of the falls. Two hour return walk. (refer DOC Napier for further information) Picnic shelter, toilets.

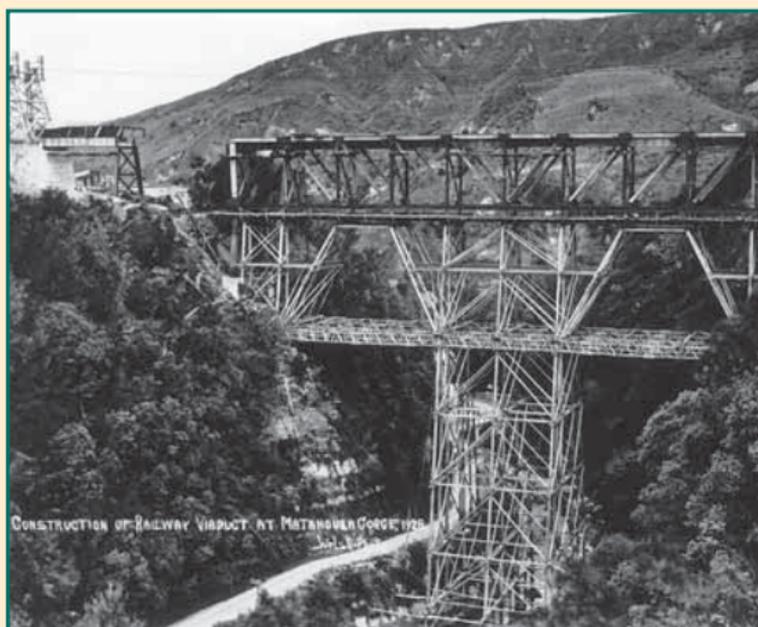


Fifty-eight metre Shine Falls

I Hughes



Return to SH2 at Tutira Store. Pass through Matahorua Gorge (48km) where kowhai blossom profusely in early spring. Note the railway viaduct which is unique on the Napier to Wairoa line in that it crosses the gorge in a single span. As there were no intermediate piers that could be utilised in its construction, massive timber scaffolding was erected to a height of 61 metres above the river bed.



Matahorua Viaduct under construction 1928 R Spiller Collection

(An alternative return route to SH2 is via Matahorua Road travelling north but this route bypasses the Matahorua Gorge section of the Trail).

14. Putorino (58km) is mid-way between Napier and Wairoa and is the centre of a farming community. Originally settlement in this area was at the mouth of the Waikari River as this was a stopping point for Maori canoes, whalers, coastal traders and other travellers who walked or rode the early tracks. European settlement began here in early 1860s. Around 1900 the inland road was formed bypassing Waikari River mouth. In 1902 Waikare Hotel opened for business at the new settlement of Putorino, 12km from the river mouth. Today there is a large sports complex and Waikare Hotel with its friendly country hospitality and an interesting display of old photographs.

The hotel is fully licenced, offers meals, takeaways, accommodation and toilets. Phone 06 839 7354





Waikare Hotel c1930s

W Ward

Inland from Putorino, near Putorino Railway Station is Waikari Viaduct the steel for which was railed directly from the Port of Tauranga in 1930.

Continue along SH2 through Waikari Gorge with a restful picnic area beside the river bridge.

On Willowflat Road corner is Mohaka Forest Headquarters. In 1974 in the high back country, beyond Willow Flat, dinosaur fossil bones were discovered in Te Hoe Valley.

Pass through settlement of Kotemaori (69km) consisting of country police station, school, community hall and railway siding.

15. Mohaka Coach Road (74km) to the right is a gravel and clay road often used for car rallies. It passes through local farms on the way to Mohaka River mouth (approx.17km from SH2). This stretch of road is a remnant of the original inland coach road constructed at the end of the 1890s to offer a more reliable journey than that along beaches and around or over coastal headlands. For many years a two coach system operated between Napier and Wairoa. The northbound coach would travel as far as Mohaka where the passengers would stay overnight. Next morning passengers and goods would transfer to the Wairoa coach. For the Napier to Wairoa run around one hundred horses were needed being quartered at strategic changing points along the route. On the steeper grades or when the road was extra muddy passengers were often obliged to trudge behind to lighten the load. To

experience Mohaka Coach Road extreme caution must be taken as washouts and slips often occur on narrow parts of this road.



16. Mohaka Railway Viaduct (79.5km) (height 95m, length 278m) was opened in 1937. Work commenced in 1930 and by the following year the foundations were completed, sunk 21 metres below the river bed by means of caissons. The structural steel was railed directly to the site from Port Waikokopu, Mahia. However, due to the devastating Hawke's Bay Earthquake of 1931 and government spending cutbacks, work was suspended until 1936 and completed the following year. At time of completion it was said to be the fourth highest viaduct in the world and still rates as one of the highest in Australasia. In 1990 this structure was recognised by the Institute of Professional Engineers of New Zealand as an important part of New Zealand's engineering heritage. The Institute have placed a commemorative stone in the picnic area near the road bridge.



Mohaka Railway Viaduct

R Spiller



17. Mohaka River Bridge (80km). The original timber truss bridge with reinforced concrete piers was built during 1922 on the new road deviation that replaced Mohaka Coach Road, which had its crossing near the river mouth. Following the Rabbit Nuisance Act of 1928 a rabbit proof gate was erected at the north end of the bridge leading to the local name 'Rabbit Bridge'. The gate was removed about 1954. During the disastrous 1938 Flood the bridge suffered great damage. While repairs took place, and the deck raised almost two

metres, road traffic was diverted across the newly completed railway viaduct. The 'Rabbit Bridge' was replaced in the 1970s by the present reinforced pre-stressed concrete structure officially opened 14 February 1975. This was one of the first bridges in NZ designed to absorb earthquake force by ductility (movement). From the picnic area the piers of the old 'Rabbit Bridge' can be seen.



Mohaka Bridge 1938 Flood

Daily Telegraph/M.O.W. Booklet

18. Raupunga (82km) during the inland road and railway construction period, boasted a picture theatre, garage, post office shop and dairy. Reminders of this era are the three railway workers' houses while the nearby double water tank is a relic of the days when steam trains frequented this line. On the hillside, in white painted stones, is the name of the local school. Next to the school, sited on the rise, stand Kotahitanga Memorial Hall, Te Huki, the modern constructed and carved meeting house and Hineringa, the 130 year old restored painted meeting house. Hineringa was originally located at Mohaka River mouth where it was used as a resting house in earlier coaching days.

Marae visits are available by appointment only - Nell Adsett phone 06 837 6891.

At junction SH2 and Putere Road are toilets and a picnic area.





Hineringa Meeting House

R Spiller

A pleasant drive on Putere Road passes Mangawharangi Scenic Reserve (4.5km from SH2). Further on (11km from SH2) is Pihanui Conservation Area comprising 726ha native bush. Continue through exotic forest before reaching Lakes Rotonuiaha, Rotoroa and Rotongaio (25km from SH2), the latter two forming a DOC Conservation Area as they have high natural and historic value.

(An alternative route to SH2 is via Cricklewood Road but this bypasses the historical Mohaka section of the Trail.)

Return to SH2. From Raupunga the Trail continues north passing Mangaturanga Viaduct (244m long, approx 70m high) on left. This viaduct was completed in 1930 so steel for Mohaka Viaduct could be railed directly to site from Port Waikokopu, Mahia.

At Mohaka Township Road (85km) - Stock Route turn right.

19. Mohaka. (5km from SH2) Rongo Mai Wahine, the uniquely constructed round hall, which was built about 1885 of pit sawn timber, stands prominently beside the meeting house Te Kahu o te Rangi. The entrance to the meeting house is flanked by two impressive pair of whale jaw bones.

During the 1860s a large number of people, predominantly European, lived on the south side of the river mouth. There were even government plans to lay out streets and sell sections. There was ship building on the river, a dance hall, hotel,

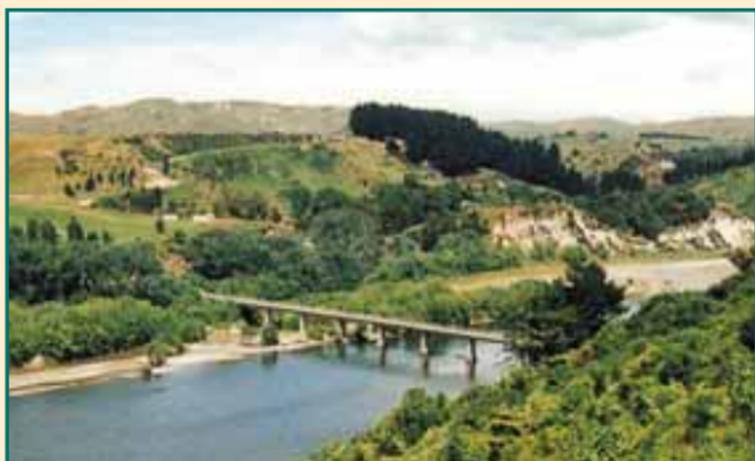


Interior Rongo Mai Wahine

I Hughes

blacksmith and stable, police station, church, school and a racecourse. On the northern side of the river was a large Maori community. In 1869 Te Kooti and his followers ransacked and burned the small southern township and near the coastal sand-hills is the site of the blockhouse built for those involved in the search for Te Kooti.

The Mohaka River was bridged near the mouth in 1896 and the Mohaka Coach Road (site 15) opened at the turn of the century. Part of this mouth bridge was swept away in 1897, replaced, burnt in 1921, replaced, swept away again in 1938 to be replaced by a pedestrian suspension bridge until the present concrete bridge was built in 1962. In 1922 the 'Rabbit Bridge' (site 17) was built and the new inland road bypassed the south side of the river. This led to the further decline of the settlement on the southern side of the river and many amenities were moved to the northern side. In the late 1950s a further deviation completely bypassed the settlement of Mohaka.



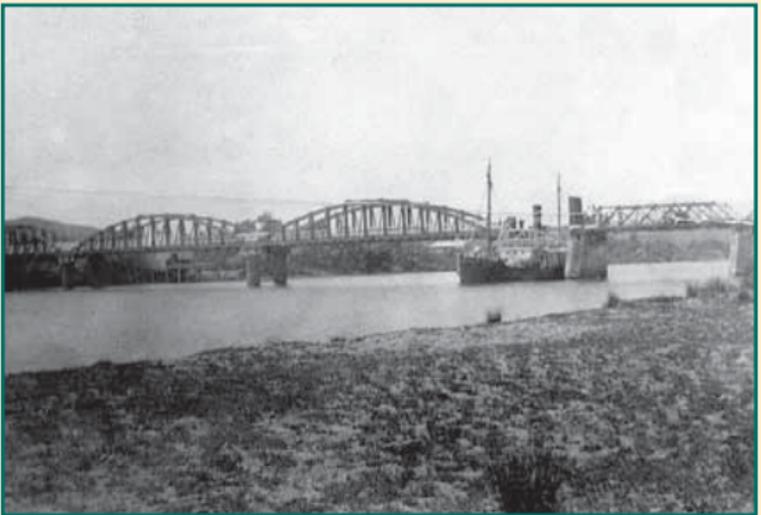
Mohaka Rivermouth bridge

I Hughes



Return to SH2. From the top of the hill overlooking Mohaka there are picnic areas and panoramic scenic views of Hawke Bay. (Pass alternative road, Mohaka Township Road 89.5km to Mohaka). Continue through the settlement of Waihua (96km) where two concrete block ex-railway houses stand between the railway line and SH2. A short drive to the right leads to a rugged coastal beach which once was part of the coastal walking route between Napier and Wairoa. Waihua Valley on left was developed as a Returned Servicemen's Farming Settlement Scheme. Approximately 1.5km north of Waihua Valley Road the road ascends and passes over the Waihua Rail Tunnel.

On left Cricklewood Road (106km), Ohinepaka, leads to Bushdale Farm Backpackers (4.3km from SH2) phone 06 838 6453, and continues on to meet Putere Road.



1888 Wairoa Bridge with drawspan

J & M Swan Collection



20. Wairoa River (112km). This magnificent broad river is fed by four major tributaries one of which flows from Lake Waikaremoana. In early times the river was the water highway for the area. In 1866 a 200ton paddle steamer, *Huntress*, steamed up river to Hikawai near Frasertown. Until the 1888 drawbridge in Wairoa was finally destroyed in 1932 by a local earthquake, coastal boats regularly navigated as far inland as Frasertown. The replacement bridge, built a little downstream from the 1888 drawbridge, was swept away by a massive log build-up during 1988 Cyclone Bola.

The Wairoa River Railway Bridge was decked and used until a new traffic bridge through the town was built.

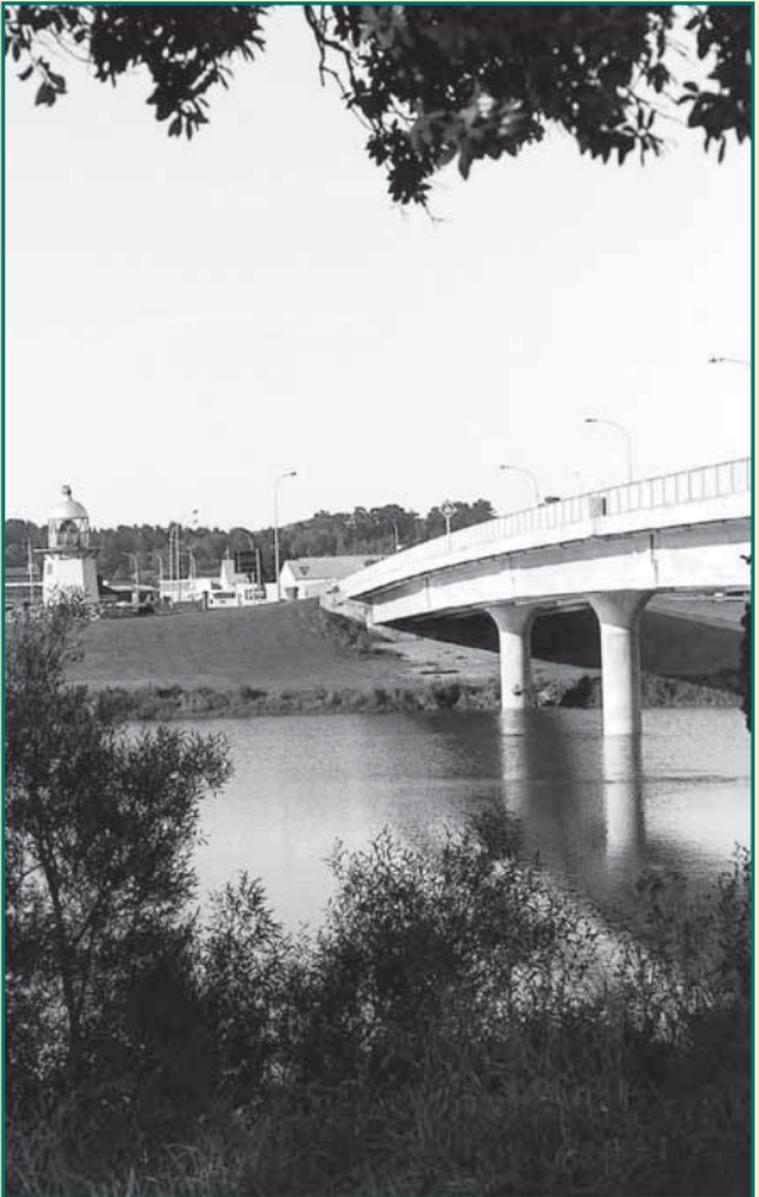
Riverside picnic areas, boating, canoeing, fishing and whitebaiting in season.



i SITE WAIROA VISITOR CENTRE

(117km) for information, accommodation and tour bookings in the area. Souvenirs, phone cards and internet services available. Collect information on Wairoa Heritage Trail, Waikaremoana, Morere, Mahia Peninsula and other attractions.

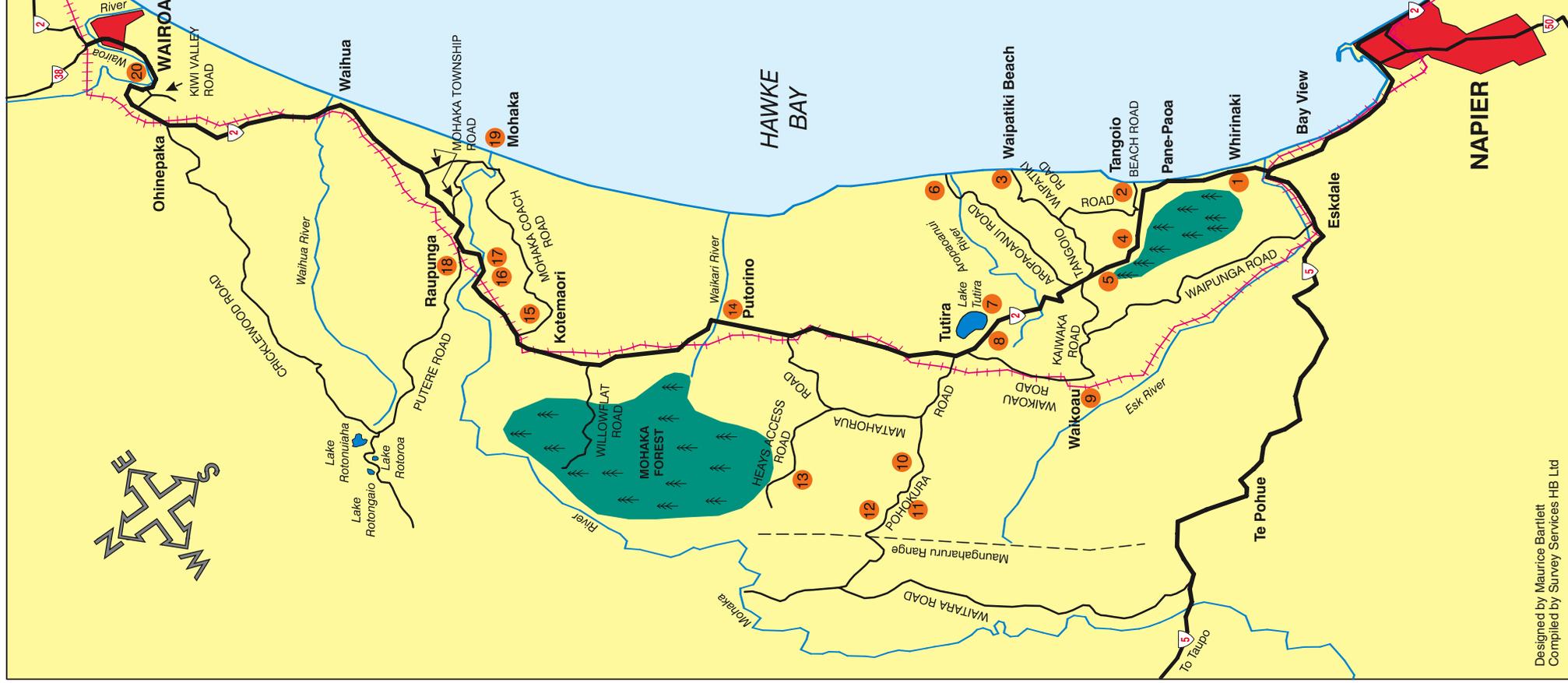
Located corner Paul Street (SH2) and Queen Street.
Phone 06 838 7440.



Present Wairoa Bridge

I Hughes

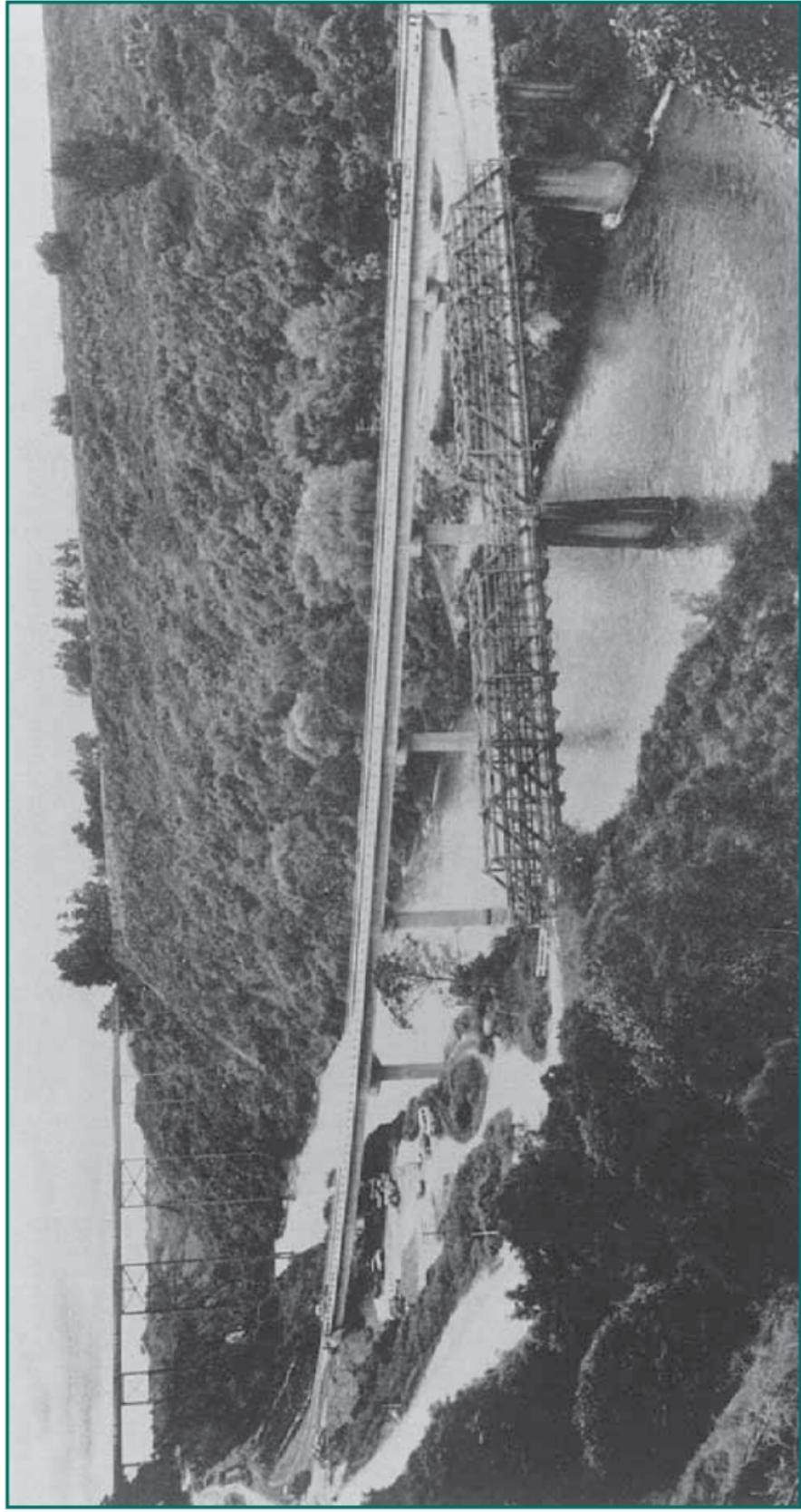
NAPIER - WAIROA HERITAGE TRAIL



SITE NUMBERS

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- 2 Tangoio Beach
- 3 Waipatiki Beach
- 4 Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve
- 5 White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve
- 6 Aropoanui Beach
- 7 Lake Tutira
- 8 Tutira Memorial Church
- 9 Holt Forest Trust
- 10 Opouahi Scenic Reserve and Walkway
- 11 Bellbird Bush Scenic Reserve
- 12 Boundary Stream Scenic Reserve
- 13 Shine Falls
- 14 Putorino
- 15 Mohaka Coach Road
- 16 Mohaka Railway Viaduct
- 17 Mohaka River Bridge
- 18 Raupunga
- 19 Mohaka
- 20 Wairoa River

Enjoy the Outdoors
Take only Photos
Leave only Footprints



Mohaka viaduct and bridges, SH2 - 1975



Protect plants and animals
Remove rubbish
Bury toilet waste
Keep streams and lakes clean
Take care with fires
Camp carefully
Keep to the track
Consider others
Respect our cultural heritage
Enjoy your visit
Toitu te whenua
(Leave the land undisturbed)

Copies of this brochure are available at

i SITE Napier
Deco Centre Napier
i SITE Wairoa

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