



Buzzy Bee, Sure to Rise and others which New Zealanders of all ages will be familiar with. Around the back of the main street and opposite the old Railway Station is a Public Convenience decorated with the names New Zealanders bestow on their toilets – Long Drop, Loo and many others.

The old Railway Station is now used for coffee roasting and sale. Great stop for the first caffeine shot of the day if that's your custom.

Get back on the main street, lined with hanging flower baskets, and stop at the Library where there is a fine example of Maori carving – a gift to the people which typifies in traditional form, the eight most important Maniapoto Chiefs of the area.

Now travel up to the end of the shopping area and follow the signs left to the Kiwi House. The house opens 9.00am to 4.30pm. Entry is \$15 per adult and \$4 per child aged 5 to 16 years.

This is an excellent facility, which is the leading authority on Kiwi in New Zealand. Kiwis are fed at 1.30pm and 4.00pm. Kea and Kaka are fed at 11.00am. We suggest you spend about an hour here. Light food, tea and coffee are on sale.

Leaving the Kiwi House, travel back down the Main Street and turn right onto SHW31 to Pirongia. You are now travelling North and soon you will see Kakapuka, a small but prominent hill away to your right and then Pirongia – a large bush covered mountain will come into view away to your left.

The turn off to Kawhia is well signposted and is about 12 minutes out of Otorohanga. You now start to climb through good farmland up and over the southern shoulder of Pirongia Mountain. At the top you pass Te Raumoia, the site of the old coach house which in olden days was an overnight stop on the journey from Kawhia to Hamilton. You will be in Kawhia in 30 minutes.

Downhill to Kawhia you come to Te Kauri Lodge. Check this out because at the time of writing plans are well advanced to open a Natural History



Museum here. Hopefully they will have on display amongst other things, the skeleton of a giant two metre high prehistoric penguin discovered in 2006 at Te Waitere.

On down to Kawhia you pass Harbour Road, which goes off to your left. Note this as after leaving Kawhia you will come back to here and travel on Harbour Road.

Next it's Oparau and a service station and general store with excellent home made pies. Then you come to the shores of Kawhia Harbour with an oyster farm out to your left. An interesting story originates here at the oyster farm.

Biannual testing by the USA Food and Drug Agency is a pre-requisite to exporting shellfish to the USA. Officers come to Kawhia and test the oysters to determine water quality. The result is we know Kawhia oysters are grown in some of the purest water in the world!! – according to the USA FDA.



Not far on you will notice a road on your right to Raglan. Don't go there – it's gravel, very windy and takes about two hours to cover the 50km to Raglan.

Next you are at Kawhia and you've travelled about 90km's since leaving Te Kuiti. At Kawhia,

permanent population 350 persons, there is a service station, general store, hotel, motel, and two cafés. There is also a Police Station.



Things to do include the Museum which has an excellent display of local history. Maketu Marae is full of history as the resting place of the great Tainui canoe. Take a trip out through the pine forest to the Hot Pools and walk the sands to the waters of the Tasman Sea. Make sure you take your

swimsuits and dig yourself a hot pool in the sand.

Kawhia was, for a brief period in history, going to be a major port in the minds of early administrators. Road and rail links were planned. Whilst Kawhia traded in early exports of flax, pigs and other food crops to the goldfields of Australia, the Waikato wars with Maori meant Kawhia was vacated in 1863 by Pakeha and forgotten for many years.



After the wars, in 1883 a military garrison was established here for some time but Kawhia was to be what it is today – a small, delightful seaside resort on a beautiful harbour.

Freehold sections with modest baches sell for \$300,000 more or less. Those with commanding views of the Harbour make up to \$500,000.

Before you leave Kawhia, make sure you have enough fuel in your car for 100km's of travel. Have some lunch at Annie's Restaurant, which is located opposite the Community Centre down by the Wharf. Annie's is recommended.

Travel back up the highway to Harbour Road and turn right to Kinohaku - 29km's. You are now travelling through rough and steep sheep country with plenty of bush and some



magnificent limestone escarpments. Early Maori used some of these limestone formations to bury their dead. In turn there were instances of grave robbing to obtain the carved heads which were for a while a valuable trading commodity.

It takes about 45 minutes to get to Kinohaku with the road skirting the upper reaches of the Harbour. At Kinohaku sailing ships used to load produce for the voyage to Australia. Today you pass within meters of where the wharf was and you have to wonder at the amount of soil that has filled the Harbour since the early settlers started cutting the bush off the hills for farming.

Turn right at Kinohaku for a little side diversion to Te Waitere (12km's return). This was the site of an early Wesleyan Mission Station established in the early 1830's. By 1840 it was recorded that the great chief Haupokia and over 450 followers often worshipped here at Te Waitere.



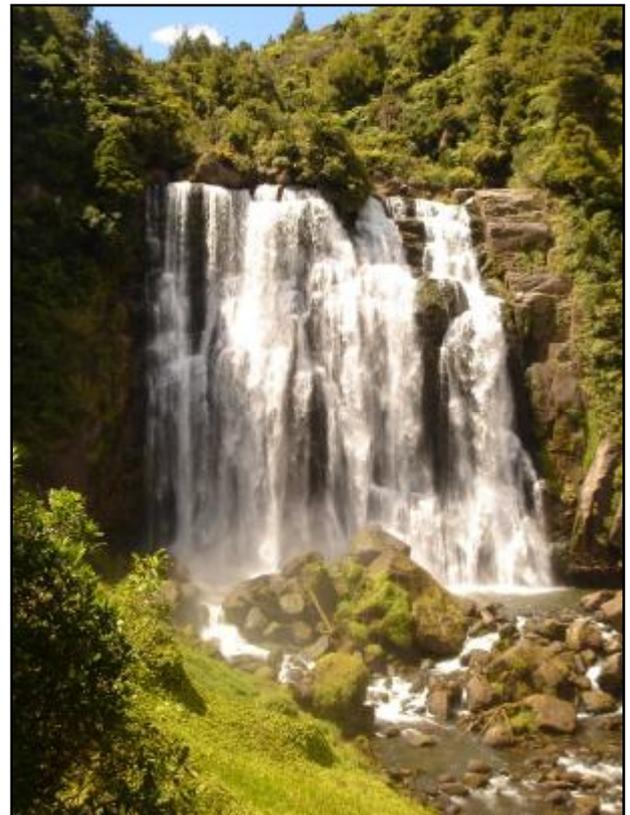
This little town which once boasted a dairy factory (now the boat club) and a boarding house now consists of 14 houses. Seldom do baches come up for sale and the few bare sections command prices in excess of \$200,000.

The views from the small cemetery overlooking the township are extensive and it's a great place to stop, stretch your legs, and reflect.

Once back at Kinohaku you now head for Te Anga climbing up from the Harbour before taking a left turn, and downhill to Te Anga.

Here is a hotel that serves tea, coffee and food and if open it's a good idea to fuel the body because another kilometre up the road is the Marakopa Falls. These magnificent falls are 36 meters high and very, very photogenic. They are accessed by an easy 20-minute return walk.

After the falls it's on up the road about 3 kilometres to the next hidden gem, the Natural Bridge (Mangapohue). This is really a spectacular "must see". An easy 10-minute



walk off the road via an excellent wooden walkway takes you to the foot of a staircase where you get an excellent and stunning view of this 17-metre high natural limestone bridge. You can either return the way you came or walk the full circuit as described at the site. A good toilet is available here.

From the Bridge it's off through the Tawarau Gorge with the dense untouched indigenous forest on one side and Pinus Radiata forest on the other. After 10 minutes or so you are out of the gorge into sheep farms and suddenly you are at the top of the hill looking out over the Northern King Country.



On a good day you will see the mountains of Ruapehu, Tongariro and Ngaurohoe away to the South. A few minutes past the top of the hill is the Haggas Lookout which has a good descriptive sign of where and what to look for.

Now it's down the hill to Waitomo Lodge, which is only 27 minutes away. We suggest an early meal at the HUUU located at the far end of Waitomo Village, which is about 16 minutes from the Lodge.

The HUUU is an award winning licensed restaurant serving small or big plate meals. There is an associated high quality New Zealand gift shop with quality New Zealand made gifts and souvenirs.

We trust you enjoyed this Route and tomorrow if you take Ring Route 2 we'll show you that wild west coast and the black sand we talked about.

Cheers

