



Heritage Trails



Kaweka Hawke's Bay



Road to the Saddle

I. Hughes

the Real
Discover  New Zealand

Heritage Trail

Kaweka

Hawke's Bay

The Kaweka Trail provides an excellent cross-section of rural Hawke's Bay. Starting and finishing at Puketapu, a small rural settlement adjacent to the lower reaches of the Tutaekuri River, the trail climbs into the upper high country of the Kaweka Range. As it travels west, both the annual rainfall and the depth of volcanic ash in the soil mantle increases. Viticulture is a relatively new use of the valley floors and low terraces. Sheep and cattle farming (with some farm woodlots) occupy the majority of the hill country, and large-scale dairying is also in the process of development in selected areas. On the steep publicly owned conservation lands at higher elevation, land use is focussed on watershed protection for sustained stream flow to the lower regions, and on public recreation. These lands include areas of remnant indigenous podocarp and southern beech forests, grassland, and sub-alpine flora. The trail offers panoramic vistas, interesting landforms (including limestone formations), private gardens to visit, walks and longer tramps, a museum, and even the possibility of a dip in the Mohaka River or a hot spring.

Total distance of 193km can be done in 4hr but allow a full day (and more!) to enjoy all that is to offer. Not all the roads are sealed - take care on the gravel.

Petrol and diesel are not available on the trail after you leave Puketapu.

Take food and drink with you. Bring out any rubbish. Observe The Environmental Care Code. Be prepared for a change in the weather - the trail penetrates high country. 'Enjoy!'

I. PUKETAPU.

In the early days the two-storey Puketapu Hotel was a breakfast stop on the 'Inland Patea' (Taihape) route from Napier. Fresh horses were hitched, and salt from the tidal crossings near Napier was washed off the coaches. Sometimes repairs were necessary at the blacksmith's shop. There was also a saddlery, general store, seed merchant, wool wash and flax mill in this enterprising village.

The Church of Saint Michael & All Angels was erected in 1910 as the centre of a parish. It is noted for its fine stained



Inset: Stained glass in Church, I. Hughes

Puketapu Hotel, HB Museum

glass windows, one depicting a racehorse whose winnings are said to have assisted the parish development.

Commence by taking Dartmoor Road that follows up the Tutaekuri River valley, past

Puketapu Park, the "Silverford" avenue of oak trees, and Riverside Wines where cellar door is open 11am-4pm Labour Weekend then 7 days from 27th December through 28th February (excluding 1 January). Picnics at other times by arrangement. Phone (06) 844 4942

At the corner with Apley Road turn right into Apley Road for main trail to Patoka (see 3,4,5 6 below). Otherwise continue on Dartmoor Road for special vistas, but note: the majority of this route is unsealed and will take up to 1/2hr longer.

2. DARTMOOR ROAD ROUTE.

(Dartmoor Road, Waihau Road, Price-Cockburn Road, Hawkston Road.)

Access to Tutaekuri River.

Along Dartmoor Road, public access to the river is at well-signed intervals:

'HAKOWHAI River Access' and roadside park. No camping. BBQ. The Hakowhai stopbank was built in the 1990s for flood protection, and this allowed extensive horticultural development on the flats.

'KAIPAPA River Access'

'MANGAONE River Access' and roadside park.

'DARTMOOR River Access'

Sacred Hill Wines. 1033 Dartmoor Road.

Phone (06) 844 0138.

Open for cellar door sales and free wine tasting from December to the end of February.

Interest points further up Dartmoor Road include an area of impressive limestone formation on the left; a possibility



Limestone Formations

I. Hughes

of seeing Highland cattle grazing near the road; and impressive views of the Kaweka Range to the west. Just after the Waihau Road junction an especially fine rural view can be enjoyed that includes the Tutaekuri River gorge area.

In the Waihau valley basin is a recently developed large-scale dairy farm.



Waihau Valley & Kaweka Range

I. Hughes

'Te Motu' Garden. 1976 Dartmoor Road.

Phone (06) 839 5856

Offers a spectacular display in spring when both lake and ponds attract water birds.

'The Quarters'. 1262 Waihau Road

Phone (06) 839 8688

A quiet country retreat sleeping up to 5 people.

3. RISSINGTON

is where an old 1930 steel bridge crosses the Mangaone River. It has a low overhead span which has decapitated at least one cow travelling in a cattle truck! Early bridges were washed away in 1897 and again in 1924 when, for four years, children had to cross the river in a flying fox cage to attend school.





Just before the bridge, on the right is the Girl Guide Association's comfortable "Omatua" lodge that replaced the original Omatua Homestead built by Captain Anderson in 1861. The old home had twisted in the earthquake of 1863. In 1921 Miss Jerome Spencer used the homestead to convene the inaugural meeting of the New Zealand Country Women's Institute.

Across the bridge a little way on the right, a plaque marks the site of the recently demolished Rissington Hall, built in 1907. Earlier this site was where horses were changed after crossing the river.

In the cemetery lies John Cooksey MBE, known in scouting circles as "Little John". During the Boer War John heard of Baden Powell and scouting, and in the 1910s he started a scout patrol in Rissington called the Weka Patrol. Little John held many Scouting ranks but is remembered best for his arranging (1949) the gift to scouting of the 6.8ha Weka Campsite a little further along the trail.

Colonel Sir George Whitmore



Hawke's Bay Museum

An early resident of Rissington, later knighted, was Colonel Whitmore who purchased over 30,000ha of land, and leased more, to total about 44,500ha extending from the sea to the Kaweka Ranges. Later Government policies for closer settlement broke up this vast run and today only some 810ha remain as 'Rissington'. The name comes from Whitmore's home in England.

Whitmore built a house here with double shingle-filled walls to prevent musket balls entering, should the house be attacked. The Colonel, a peppery military commander, is said to have introduced many now-noxious animals and plants to Hawke's Bay, including rabbits. He is also said to have named the surrounding high points after his three lieutenants; Neil, Cameron and St John, suggesting at the time that he would not mind if someone named a mountain after him! A rather small mound close to the present road was promptly named Mt Whitmore!

4. CAMP FLAT.

Colonel Whitmore became Commandant of Militia in 1863 to protect settlers and road builders. He had a militia force of three mounted troops garrisoned on Camp Flat, Smithfield, where they excavated stables in a nearby hill.



5. MOUNTAIN VIEW LOOKOUT

has panoramic views covering the Tutaekuri River Valley, the Wakarara Range, and the Ruahine Range.



Transport of wool

Hawke's Bay Museum

6. PATOKA.

Patoka is a community centre with both a school and a hall. A grocery shop (with petrol) closed in quite recent times. Adjacent to the school is a wonderful grove of gum (Eucalyptus obliqua and regnans) and acacia trees offering welcome shade on a summer's day. An early Maori route to Taupo followed this way, and in 1864 a nearby hill was the site of a stockade manned by the Armed Constabulary.

7. THE HARTREE RESERVE.

Now owned by the Department of Conservation (DoC). In the past this reserve had been cleared, but the steep faces proved unstable and the bush has been allowed to regenerate from deep moist gullies. Today this bush is maturing well, and ancient fern allies like club mosses and primitive ferns may be seen around the tracks. Refer Kaweka Conservation Park booklet.

WILLIAM HARTREE MEMORIAL LODGE (back-packer style, up to 15) is owned by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (Forest & Bird). For accommodation please phone (06) 844 4751 or email wutsie@xtra.co.nz

The lodge has its origins in 1953 when the late Reg. Williams formed his Junior Wildlife Wardens. These young people protected the Cape Kidnappers Gannet Sanctuary and their well-known red berets became a familiar sight whenever wildlife was threatened. These young folk were also interested in bush areas and were befriended by William Hartree who allowed them to build a laboratory and shelter on his property for the purpose of nature study.





8. MANIAROA SADDLE LOOKOUT

(please park carefully) offers a wonderful view of the Puketitiri Basin that was once filled with magnificent native podocarp forest. In the late 1890s 4 sawmills had 17 steam traction engines transporting timber up this steep hill to Napier. The coachmen and haulers who used this narrow road with teams of horses, tried to avoid meeting one of these snorting monsters. Horses never liked steam engines!

9. LITTLE BUSH ROAD.

Gardens in Little Bush Road (phoning ahead is essential if you wish to visit):

"Burnwood", a country cottage garden with mixed plantings of perennials, roses and camellias amongst old established trees including an 80yr old Wellingtonia Redwood. Phone (06) 839 8872.

"Wharehau", a rambling garden with flowering camellia, rhododendron, magnolia and cherry trees. Open from September to December by appointment. Phone (06) 839 8873.

Little Bush Scenic Reserve is owned by 'Forest & Bird'. Once part of Mr and Mrs Rob Whittle's farm, this bush could be the most protected reserve in New Zealand. Rob Whittle trapped any animal that threatened his forest, removed any invasive plant and fed sugar water to the honey-eating birds during winter. Today native mistletoe, orchids, ferns and prolific bird life can be seen from the circular track (45min walk). Refer Kaweka Conservation Park booklet.

10. PUKETITIRI AREA.

Hutchinson Domain. This is a valued public facility with picnic area, water, toilets, and golf course.

Department of Conservation (DoC) Field Centre. (Phone (06) 839 8814). Although not always open, helpful staff can supply copies of the Kaweka Conservation Park booklet, and offer up-to-date information on tracks, fire risk, or road closures.

Hutchinson Scenic Reserve. (Altitude 550m). Short walking tracks pass through regenerating forest below exotic trees, like larch, spruce, Douglas fir and Monterey pine. The central area is grazed, with odd patches of bush and a windbreak of eucalyptus, Japanese cedar and Douglas fir. The eastern area has mature kahikatea, rimu, red beech and matai with Himalayan cedars, Chinese poplar, alder and Douglas fir. Refer Kaweka Conservation Park booklet.



The 110ha area was purchased in 1921 by Mr and Mrs Frank Hutchinson of Rissington to save one of the last remaining forest areas in the district. It was gifted to the Crown in 1937, but a disastrous fire in the drought year of 1946 took out 75% of the mature native forest.

Lemmon's Trust Museum (Open by appointment phone (06) 839 8894) has a unique collection of over 5000 things that were in daily use by New Zealand pioneers. There are several family veteran and vintage cars in running order.



Lemmon's Trust Museum

I. Hughes

*Beyond the village, the Trail continues past the Puketitiri School, through a road cutting where the rich colour of the brown ash layers is a feature, to the junction of Whittle and Pakaututu Roads. Here the Trail divides, left (Whittle Road -see * below) to Makahu Saddle, and right (Pakaututu Road) to....*

I I. BALLS CLEARING SCENIC RESERVE.

The main area of 36ha has some of Hawke's Bay's finest native trees. The main canopy reaches some 35m high, and the forest has 'an awesome' density of podocarps with straight un-branched trunks supporting colonies of perching plants. Under these are other trees in their many varied forms, with ferns and plants covering the forest floor. After dusk, long-tailed bats might be seen; the colony is one of the best in the country. Bird life is usually profuse so listen for tui, bellbird, whitehead, and watch for kereru (pigeon) and ruru (morepork). Easy walking tracks loop through the reserve. Refer Notice Boards, and Kaweka Conservation Park booklet.

Beyond Balls Clearing Pakaututu Road continues as a typical gravel road, but Makahu Road to the Hot Spring becomes more a summer vehicle track. Although it is reasonable for car access, use at your own risk. Allow 1hr from Balls





Track entrance, Balls Clearing
I. Hughes

Clearing to the Hot Springs. Please drive slowly and carefully.

Continue along Pakaututu Road and turn left into Makahu Road. This leads to, and then crosses, the Makahu River by a ford passable only at low flow. Use first gear. It then climbs steeply as a narrow road to the top of the ridge, and then proceeds as a narrow summer track (one-lane) to the Kaweka Forest

Park boundary before winding slowly down into the Mohaka River Valley.



12. MANGATUTU HOT SPRINGS

have two steam vents. The more accessible is reached from the first car park down a steep track toward the Mohaka River. Here a pipe diverts hot water to a fibreglass bath that is large enough (just!) for six people. The sodium-rich hot water appears to be surface water, heated by rising steam from a deep-seated source that has passed underground for some distance to surface as thermal springs. These springs were used up to the 1900s by the Ngati Hinepare and Ngati Mahu Maori tribes living to the east and the Ngati Hineuru to the west. In the early days the river was noted for its eels, and tribes from as far away as Taupo had hunting camps along the river. The Good Friday flood of 1879 was especially significant in destroying traces of the Maori fishing traps.

TE PUIA LODGE. 500m further along the road are "The Gums" (*Eucalyptus delegatensis*) planted in 1960. A pleasant place for a rest - or perhaps a little fishing. An information board marks the start of a moderate walking track to Te Puia Lodge. Allow 2-3hrs (one-way) for this scenic walk.

MANGATAINOKA HOT SPRINGS is a further 45min upstream across the Makino River (swing bridge) where a pair of fibreglass tanks provide a welcome hot bath for walkers.

Refer Kaweka Conservation Park booklet.

Returning to the junction of Makahu and Pakaututu roads

EITHER turn left and proceed to a pleasant river flat where the Ripia and Mohaka Rivers meet. This area was once choked metres deep with pumice from the Taupo eruption (see later); remnant terraces of pumice are now camouflaged





The Bath at Mangatutu

J. Watt

by plant growth. A bridge crosses the Mohaka River where there is access to the river, but driving beyond the bridge only leads to a dead end.

OR turn right and proceed back to Balls Clearing, and then to Whittle Road which leads up to Makahu Saddle. This road crosses farmland studded with single kahikatea trees (relics of the early forest) and then climbs steeply to...

13. MOUNT BALDY. (Altitude 802m)

This is best recognised as the quarry (road material) you drive through on Whittle Road. There are fine views of the Anawhenua Valley and the Puketitiri Depression. The summit is a mass of shattered rock on the crush zone of the major Ruahine Fault that you can easily see as a step or groove running north along the edge of the Anawhenua Valley. This fault is even more obvious as you drive up.

*Just after Baldy, at the junction with Lotkow Road, take the right fork to enter Kaweka Forest Park on Kaweka Road leading to Makahu Saddle. The road climbs around the deep Gorge Stream and then very steeply up to the crest of the Black Birch Range past tropical looking mountain cabbage trees (*Cordyline indivisa*) which are a special feature.*

(In winter Kaweka Road is not recommended because it can be either blocked by snow or icy on the steep incline. Check with the Department of Conservation Puketitiri Field Centre, Phone 06 839 8814.)



Mt Baldy / Mountain Cabbage Tree



I. Hughes

14. BLACK BIRCH LOOKOUT.

On the right, at the top of the steep section, a short unsurfaced road leads to a scenic lookout. If you bear right down to a quarry, there is a turning point where you will get great views of the Kaweka Flats, the Kaweka Range, and much of the Heretaunga Plains. Cell phone reception is usually possible here, but not further on.

At this point you are 1083m above sea level and in an area where with very little warning there can be a dramatic temperature drop, or even snow. It pays to be prepared for all weather conditions.

THE BLACK BIRCH RANGE is divided from the Kaweka Range by a fault line and from the Heretaunga Plains by two very active faults that have been eroded by streams into deep gorges.

In the past hot pumice ash showers have blanketed the whole range, destroying most of its plant cover. The most recent destructive eruption was the Taupo Pumice Ash Eruption of 186AD that poured out of vent(s) close by the Horomatangi Reef in Lake Taupo. It was one of the largest eruptions known. There is some suggestion that both the Romans and the Chinese observed effects when some 60 to 100 cubic kilometres of tephra were blown into the upper atmosphere. Fortunately the bulk of the Kaweka Ranges largely blocked the eastward drift of the ash, saving tracts of forest in Hawke's Bay from destruction.

In pre-European times these eastern foothills of the Kaweka Range were the hunting domain of the Ngati Mahu, a Maori sub-tribe, who regularly fired the hills to enable easier harvesting of bracken roots, which were pounded into a kind of gritty porridge. Fires sometimes went out of control to sweep to the crest of the main ranges. In early European times sheep were allowed to graze to all elevations, and fire was used to facilitate both access and new growth. The eroded faces of the Kaweka Range are, at least in part, an enduring consequence of this early misuse.

P

Return to the road and proceed along the ridge to your right. A short access road on the left leads to Little's Clearing, a parking and picnic area and the start of two walks.

15. LITTLES CLEARING.

The Loop Track (20min) leads through beech forest; the Black Birch Bivvy Track leads to the edge of the Black Birch Range and offers extensive views out to the Pacific Ocean with Gorge Stream below. A route also leads into Little's Clearing, a tussock and celmisia (daisy) meadow, where alpine and sub-alpine flowers lace the golden grass during the Christmas vacation. Below this, dark manuka scrub has colonised most of the clearing to provide a nursery for future forest trees. A fenced-off area is worth inspection, illustrating the effect of no deer grazing since 1958. Look for the red mistletoe in December.

16. MAKAHU SADDLE AREA.

Commencing from the car park are several interesting walks detailed in the Kaweka Conservation Park booklet.

Easy walks include the Ngahere Loop track past the stream-flow recording weir, up the hill and back up onto the road.

Also short explorations around the saddle (see Notice Board).

More strenuous hikes. For those with more energy the most popular tramp is up Makahu Spur to the open tops of the Kaweka Range where alpine flowers grow during the summer. The views are spectacular when you reach the highest point, 'Kaweka J' at 1724m. (We recommend allowing 5-6hr for the return trip, though the 'fit and experienced' can do it in less)

Warning. It is stressed that although the tramp is within the capabilities of most people of reasonable fitness, the weather can change very fast, and low cloud can make it hard to find the right spur down.

- Be properly equipped with warm clothing and wet weather gear.
- Leave word of your intentions with someone.





Makahu Saddle carpark

I. Hughes

MAKAHU SADDLE

Forest Research Institute (FRI) Field Centre.

Makahu Saddle was selected in 1959 for studies in climate, historical land use, processes of erosion, and methods of restoration. A two-roomed field base was constructed in 1964, and in 1967 a vehicle track was established to what is now the Makahu Saddle Car Park. Restoration and erosion control planting had a high priority, and a nursery of over 50 species (natives, deciduous hardwoods, but mostly conifers and especially pines) was established. The nursery (near the car park) can still be identified, and trial plantings at different altitudes can be discerned on the slopes above. Erosion control methods were also investigated and some successful attempts at vegetative 'gully-plugging' were achieved. By 1972 other priorities saw FRI withdraw from Hawke's Bay. The facilities are now owned by DoC.

Ngahere Hydrological Research Catchment

A walking track from the car park leads through manuka scrub to a hut built by the Ministry of Works in 1968 but now owned by the DoC. Established as a representative and research basin for the International Hydrological Decade through the 1970s, the research emphasis was on the hydrological cycle (rainfall, stream flow, transpiration etc). A weir on the Ngahere Stream (crossed on the Loop Track) is still functional, supplying valuable information on stream flow and water yield from the 110yr old regenerating beech forest located on non-eroded soils of volcanic ash origin. The Ngahere Stream has never been known to run dry, though flow can reduce to a persistent trickle in the height of a drought. Telemetered rainfall data from the area is part of the flood-forecasting network for the Heretaunga Plains.

The Trail returns to Puketitiri and Rissington. Rather than returning to Puketapu via Apley Road, continue straight ahead on Puketitiri Road all the way (past Seafield Road) to Puketapu Road where, on a hilltop site on the left about 500m from the corner is the Alexander Memorial. P.T.O.

17. ALEXANDER MEMORIAL.

Alexander Alexander, born in Scotland in 1820, was 'the first man to become what might be justly termed a Hawke's Bay settler and farmer'. Educated and of fine physique, he arrived in 1840 and took up land at Wharerangi, built Napier's first building (a store on the Tutaekuri River at Onepoto), kept a schooner, and traded with the Maori.



Alexander Memorial

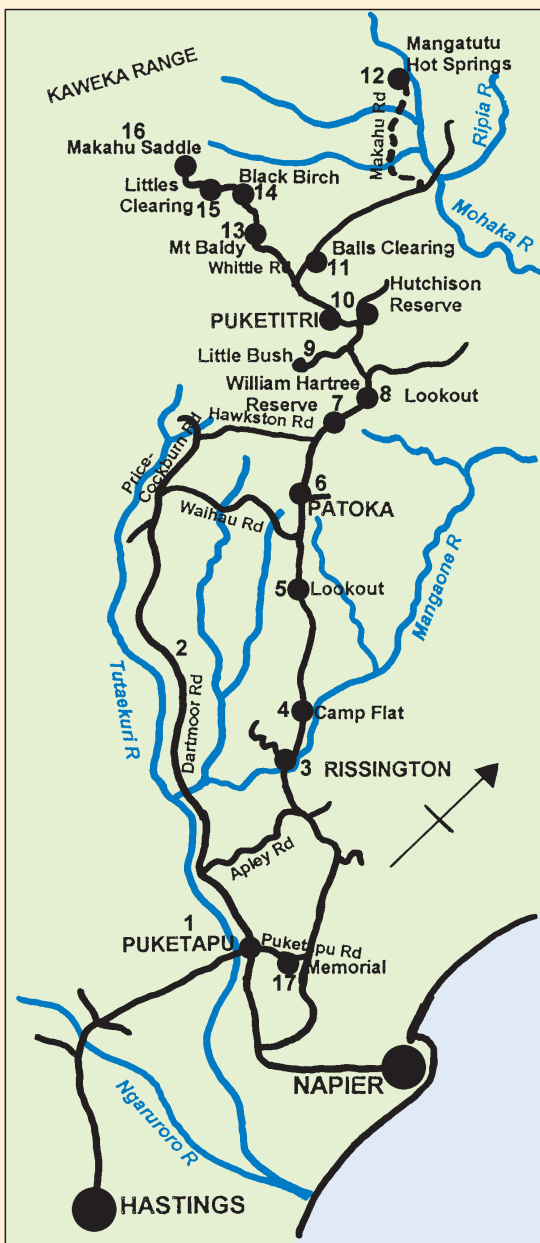
I. Hughes

TRUE LOVE!

Alexander is probably better known for the story of his marriage when he was fifty. His love Harata, defying the elders of the Poraiti Pa, swam out to Alexander's schooner, which was moored in the roadstead about 3km offshore. The Maori elders guessed her destination and arrived at the ship to find Alexander sitting on a sea chest. Alexander invited them to search the ship, which they did, not suspecting that Harata was hiding in the sea chest!

The Trail ends at Puketapu where it started.

Adjacent to Puketapu on the road from Taradale is the scenic Springvale Lake where tree planting commenced in 1980.



Puketapu (via Apley Road) to:

- Rissington, 15km
- Patoka, 33km
- Puketitiri, 46km
- Whittle Road corner, 50km

Whittle Road corner to:

- Balls Clearing, 2km
- Mangatutu hot springs, 20km (allow 1hr)
- Makahu Saddle, 12km

Acknowledgments:



HASTINGS
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Hawke's Bay
Regional Council

Safeguarding Your Environment



SITE



Visitor
Information
Network

Hawke's Bay Cultural Trust
(Hawke's Bay Museum)

Publisher:



Hastings District
Heritage Trail Society Inc.

c/- Hastings District Council
Private Bag, Hastings

Researchers:

*This edition: Jim Watt, Ivan Hughes,
Stephanie Hughes, Deborah Turner.*

*(We acknowledge the use of some
material from earlier editions prepared
by the late Roy Peacock.)*