

## AHU AHU OHU from Wanganui River Road

**Topo50 map:** BK33 Mayahowi

**NZTM GPS:** NZTM and WGS 84

**How to get to START:** Starting in Taupo the route was down to Turangi on SH1 then over to National Park via SH47. SH4 was then used to Raetihi then SW to W on Raetihi-Pipiriki Road to reach Pipiriki on the Wanganui River where the Wanganui River Road was picked up.

The exit route from the south end of river road was northwards on SH4 to reach Kakatahi then NE on Fields Track through to SH49 and Waiouru. SH1 was then used to return to Taupo.

**Rough description:** A fairly relaxed 2 day tour with two short tramps, the main purpose being to tramp into the site of the commune at Ahu Ahu where the parents of one of the trampers used to live. The other tramp was very short up to a viewpoint to overlook one of the previous channels of the Wanganui River. Besides that, historic sites that were passed on the road were studied – including the church at Jerusalem and the Kawana Mill.

**Detail:** From Taupo to Pipiriki takes about 2:30 minutes and it is worth stopping off here at the shelter (**RR01**) with toilets to look around. There is half a Maori war canoe, the site of the original Pipiriki Hotel, which was one of the best hotels in NZ in its day, and the building which was the museum and information centre is well worth looking at. From here it is worth driving down past the old wharf then looping round to re-join and head south on the Wanganui River Road at the cemetery.

### The Old Information Centre



The River Road should be used with caution as it is gravel in many parts, quite narrow and there are many landslip areas with debris on the road. During floods the road can also be totally under water – look out for some of the flood markers. The next place of interest was the church (**RR02**) at Jerusalem where there are still a few nuns in residence – it is possible to get over-night accommodation here but book well ahead. The church and surrounding area are beautiful and there is an air of great tranquillity all around here.

Many names on the road reflect the past history and the incomers who passed through or settled in the area – such as London (**RR03**) with its school and church etc, Koriniti (Corinth) and Atene (Athens). The Kawana (**RR04**) flour mill has been well restored and the cottage looks like someone could be living in it. Just south of here is a flying fox across the river as access to overnight accommodation – not used this time.

### Ahu Ahu Ohu

To get to the Ahu Ahu Oha park at the edge of the road at Tuhi Landing (**RR05 / 01**). It is a steepish descent down to the river for the crossing – an inflatable canoe was used for this purpose with the crossing taking about 10 minutes per group of two; the canoeist got a fair bit of exercise as there were 10 in the party.

The wide grass road is high above the river and soon passes below some sandstone bluffs before going steeply down to cross a stream line just downstream from a broken bridge (**WP07**) and re-ascends on a curving muddy, track high above the gorge on the right. Within about one hour the gate to the Ahu Ahu Ohu is reached (**WP08**) below more bluffs and there are good views across the river in a northerly direction. Minutes later there is a slight detour upslope to pass a broken bridge then a Y-fork is met with one branch heading off right down into the valley and open grassy areas (with goats) can be seen over the river.

The first building of the commune is the bee-keeping centre (**WP11**) where there is still some equipment lying about then there is a cottage on the right after passing yet another gate.

### Access & Location



The location of the tramp to Ahu Ahu Ohu can be seen above as the **BLUE** line. The **RED** line is the route from National Park to Pipiriki, down River Road and out via SH4, Fields Track and SH49 to Waiouru.

### NZTM Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
RR01	1775740	5627838	105	Pipiriki shelter with toilets
RR02	1778471	5619514	62.0	Jerusalem Church
RR03	1780651	5616179	64.0	London with school and church
RR04	1784526	5614549	36.0	Kawana Mill just before Koriniti with Flying Fox over river to accommodation
RR05	1782618	5602595	25.0	Park for access to Ahu Ahu Oha track - cross river
RR06	1784653	5587235	26.0	Riverline Lodge - accommodation
RR07	1782385	5588746	174	Viewpoint back over river from Gentle Annie
RR08	1782008	5586787	7.0	Junction of Wanganui River Road and SH4. Detour right for quaint spire on church
RR09	1807999	5611106	287	Junction of Fields Track and Mangaehu Valley Road; culvert tunnel
RR10	1815516	5628455	624	Junction of Fields Track with SH49 - right for Waiouru

### The Church – Jerusalem

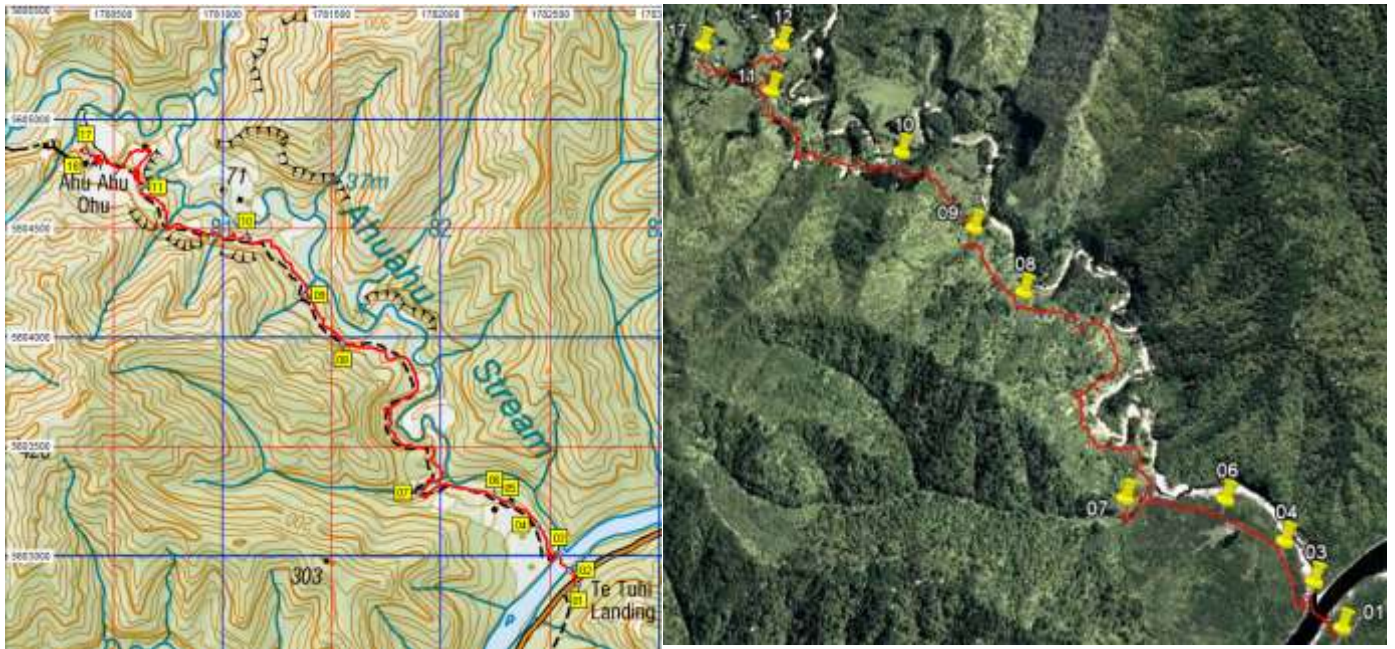


### River crossing





## Map and Google Image of Ahu Ahu Ohu



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1782629	5602866	25.0	Park on side of Wanganui River Road at small access track on NW side (Tuhi Landing)
02	1782592	5602933	13.1	7min(70m); edge of the Wanganui River after steep descent with canoe
03	1782540	5603011	11.9	25min (221m); true right bank of river then steeply up past old flying fox tower and meadows
04	1782444	5603140	36.0	32min (445m); small junction on grass road, go right
05	1782316	5603238	52.1	35min (634m); gate with shed on RHS and derelict house on LHS then down-slope
06	1782245	5603277	43.9	37min (707m); T-junction with wide grass road, go left high above stream below
07	1781901	5603288	27.1	43min (1.09km); steeply down to cross stream line below broken bridge then curving path to the NE
08	1781549	5603972	92.0	1:08min (2.46km); gate to Ahu Ahu Oha below bluffs with views in northerly directions
09	1781372	5604195	74.1	1:14min (2.83km); detour upslope past broken bridge
10	1781107	5604463	67.1	1:20min (3.34k); Y-fork on grass road branch off right. Open grassy areas with goats over the river
11	1780629	5604692	79.9	1:32min (4.04km); first building on RHS. Bee / honey centre then a gate with cottage on the RHS
12	1780658	5604859	75.9	1:45min (4.29km); large house: musician and farming specialist
13	1780537	5604790	78.0	1:56min (4.50km); the dairy in top corner of fenced field
14	1780508	5604786	79.9	1:58min (4.55km); shed, assumed to be used for sheep
15	1780479	5604804	78.0	2 hours (4.6km); cold store caves - walk-through u-shaped tunnel
16	1780425	5604833	85.0	2:05min (4.68km); large octagonal house - communal centre as replacement for original "barn"
17	1780371	5604861	89.0	2:10min (4.78km); the "Fletcher's" house"
18	1780389	5604787	92.0	"Bee Keepers" house



Once over the river (**WP03** below) it is up the steep, slippery river bank passing the old tower for the now-defunct flying fox, old garage into meadows infested with black-berries. At the first small junction on the grass road go right to a gate (**WP05**) near a shed and a dilapidated house off to the left then the track goes downhill to a T-junction – go left on the wide grass road.

### Ahu Ahu Ohu Gate



Sandra Fletcher at Parents' House



Once on the site it must be noted that all the houses now have DoC warning signs that they should not be entered due to the state of repair – in fact if real care is taken many of these buildings are still quite stable though a bit smelly from the present occupants – possum and friends. Some attempt has been made to photograph some of the houses and indicate who, if not by name then by occupation, lived in the various buildings or what the building or structure was used for. The known facts are noted in the waypoints below the satellite image on the next page. Most of the buildings appear to be structurally sound apart from obvious rot and collapse of things like decks. All have been invaded by various vermin. Most have many of the original fittings such as wood-burners and water heating systems still in place.

Octagonal Communal House



Inside the Cold Store





Bee Keeping Centre



Bee Keeper's House



Fletcher Laundry



Google with Ahu Ahu Ohu Infrastructure



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11	1780629	5604692	79.9	1:32min; first building on RHS. Bee / honey centre then a gate with cottage on the RHS
12	1780658	5604859	75.9	1:45min; large house: musician and farming specialist
13	1780537	5604790	78.0	1:56min; the dairy in top corner of fenced field
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17	1780371	5604861	89.0	2:10min; the "Fletcher's" house"
18	1780389	5604787	92.0	1:22min; the "Bee Keepers" house

Telephone



Cold-store Entrance

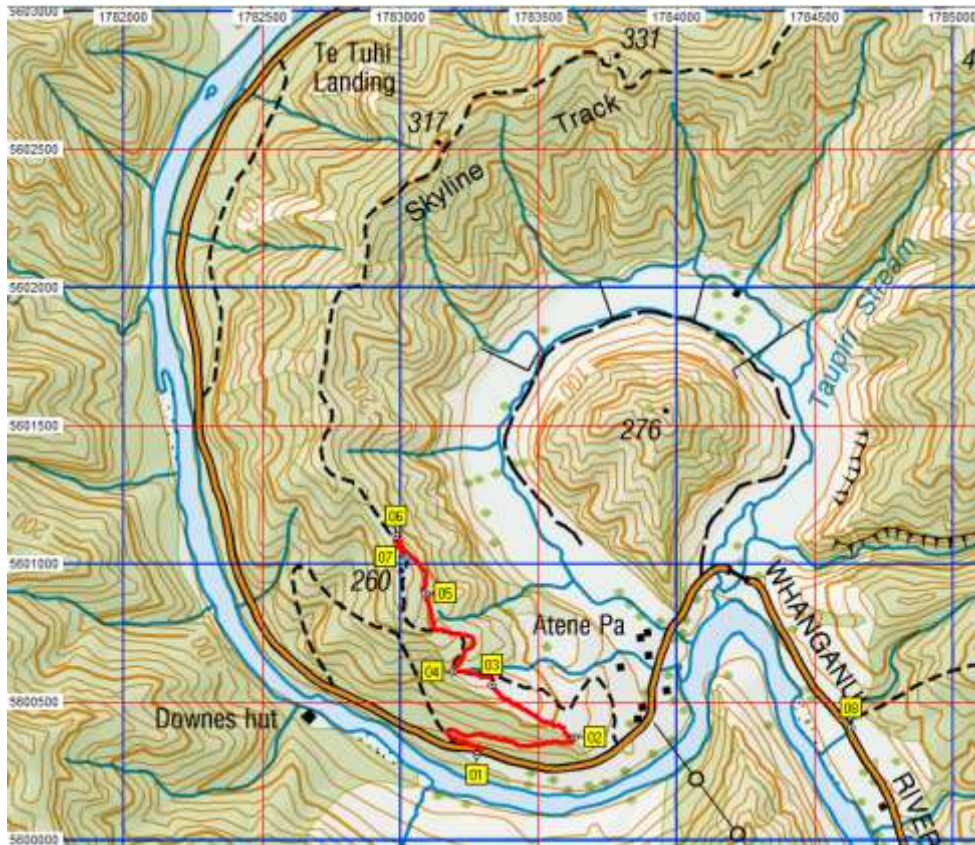


The Dairy

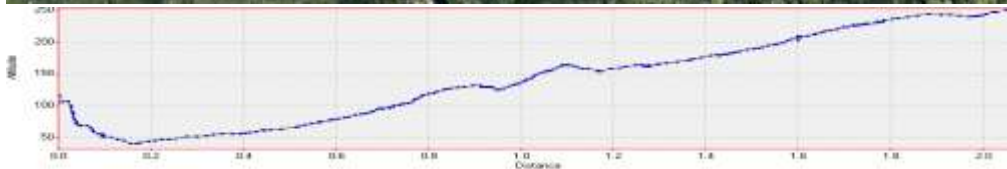




## Map and Google Image of two hour walk



The old channel can be clearly seen on the map and satellite image above as well as in the photograph below. The proposed dam never was approved – probably a good thing as it was to be an earth dam and to block-off this channel would have been a monster.



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1783275	5600311		Track marker at start of 2hour walk and end of Skyline 8hr Track ridge walk
02	1783631	5600375	96.9	5min; manicured track then boardwalk to ascend steps and walk along fence line, open on the right
03	1783332	5600563	163	30min; non-manicured track, stile to open land then downslope on grassy road following contour
04	1783193	5600609	163	40min; DoC toilet near fire notice where old track used to cross fence
05	1783092	5600894	226	45min; huge TV aerial for house in valley. Wide, muddy slippery track
06	1782983	5601102	241	48min; pass along under bluffs to junction with viewpoint 2 min up ridge to left. 8hr track straight
07	1783021	5601024	254	50min; view point with views of old river course etc below
08	1784630	5600409	34.1	Track marker for end of the Skyline 8 hour ridge Track

A few kilometres south of Tuhi Landing, refer the map below, and less than one kilometre south-west of Atene Pa the start (WP01 below) of a short two hour walk can be found; this is also the start of the Skyline Track. The Skyline Track was established during feasibility studies to investigate the possibility of constructing a hydro dam using the old channel of the Wanganui River – the track follows the ridge above this channel.

### Old river channel VIEW



The 2 hour tramp starts on the level as a manicured track then becomes boardwalk and the ascent does not start till a set of steps is reached. After this the track follows a fence-line between the bush and open fields and the open area is accessed over a stile (WP03). A wide grass track then follows the contour passing a DoC toilet (WP04) at a bend where the old track obviously used to cross a fence. The track becomes a bit muddy and slippery then a huge TV aerial (WP05) is passed on the right. Just after passing under some bluffs on the left there is a sign-posted T- junction with the viewpoint (WP07) 2 minutes up to the ridge to the left.

Really comfortable over-night accommodation can be had at River Time Lodge (RR06) and good views back over the Wanganui River are found from the viewpoint on Gentle Annie (RR07) further south on the Wanganui River Road.

### Notes:

- GPS Garmin GPSMap 60CSx on WGS84 and NZTM
- WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- masl = metres above sea level

May 2009  
Update May 2019  
NZTM Grid