

## 8 Kuirau Park

This informal park is situated within the junction of Ranolf Street and Lake Road and contains some 30 hectares. The northern part of the reserve was endowed by Ngati Whakaue, late in the 19th century. Much of the southern part of the reserve was developed during the Depression of the 1930's. Until then it was almost entirely swamp but covered with a heavy growth of manuka. The northern part of the reserve wasn't developed until later and still contains many geothermal features. The walkway allows viewing of many of these. The geothermal areas are somewhat unstable and liable to change. As in all geothermal areas, you are advised to stay on the walkway for your safety.

- The now boiling lake was once much cooler and originally known as Taokahu. Tonuhopu is said to have had a temporary shelter there to use while bathing. First to reside more permanently was Tutea, a grandson of Tumahaurangi. Though Tutea had a large family, one of his sons Tamahika remained there. One day while Tamahika's beautiful young wife Kuirau was swimming in Taokahu, she was seized by a taniwha who desired her and she was taken down into his lair below the lake. This event was noticed by the gods above who caused the lake to begin boiling in order to destroy the taniwha forever. From that time, the lake and surrounding lake was known by the name of Tamahika's wife, Kuirau (or perhaps Kuirau).



*your pace - your place*

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*feel the spirit*  
*Manaakitanga*

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# Rotorua Walkways



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## Background

The Rotorua Walkway has been developed in stages over a period of approximately 10 years. **The entire length of the walkway measures 26 km's**, broken up into 8 shorter sections.

It enables you, the user, to enjoy Rotorua's most scenic points of interest with the ease of entering and exiting it at any stage. Some of the main features of the walkway include geothermal areas, native wildlife and local historic sites.

The walkway has been developed by Rotorua District Council with the assistance of Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust and Department of Conservation.



## 1 Pukeroa Hill

Pukeroa (commonly known as Hospital Hill), was the area occupied and used by Ngati Whakaue for generations as a fortified village and garden.

In 1881 it was gifted by Ngati Whakaue as a reserve for sports and recreation and, for many years, was the venue for all major outdoor events. In 1916, a military hospital was built on the reserve for the care of returning soldiers. This later became the King George V Hospital which still occupies the site.

Urupa (burial) sites are present on Pukeroa Hill. Although human remains have long since been removed, they retain significance to local iwi.

- Pukeroa was the name given to the north-western slopes of the hill, the area through which the walkway now passes.
- Many years ago a woman who lived on the hill gave birth to a daughter who had flaming red hair. The daughter was named Te Makawe and, when she died, she served as a medium to her mother, allowing her to speak to the spirits. The tapu rock associated with Te Makawe bears her name and shows her special significance to Ngati Whakaue. The rock is located just off the walkway.
- The Malfroy Oak is on the eastern flanks of the walkway. It was planted on 4 August 1893 by Jean Michel Camille Malfroy, a prominent Rotorua engineer and civic administrator in the 1880's. Mr Malfroy died a few months after planting the tree and an iron fence with a plaque attached was erected around it.



## 2 Rotorua Lakefront

This section of the walkway takes you along the lakefront promenade from where you can see Mokoia Island out in the middle of Lake Rotorua. Mokoia Island is famous for the tale of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, an old local love story. More information on Hinemoa and Tutanekai is provided on interpretation panels further around the walkway. Mokoia Island can be visited by boats leaving daily from the Lakefront.

## 3 Motutara

### (Sulphur Bay)

This bay is the southernmost bay on Lake Rotorua. It contains many of the waterbirds that inhabit Lake Rotorua and is one of the most significant wildlife habitats in New Zealand. Sulphur Bay is a warm, sulphurous area lying on top of an active geothermal field.



- The murky, acidic water is extremely low in oxygen. It contains little in the way of food so many of the birds need to leave the bay each day to feed. Despite this, it is still an outstanding habitat for waterbirds. Many different species of birds use the waters and shores of Sulphur Bay. In 1967 Sulphur Bay became a wildlife refuge. The refuge status covers the water area of the whole bay.
- From the walkway you will see the two islets off the eastern shoreline of the Motutara peninsula. These islets are known as Timanga and Moturere. Timanga was once a much larger piece of land sufficient in fact to allow a living area for a number of families. The islet is now occupied much of the time by roosting and nesting birds.
- Moturere Island was host to a popular bath used to treat many illnesses. Hoanga (sharpening stones) were used on the island for the sharpening of adzes and polishing of greenstone. The soft rock and warm waters made this an ideal location for sharpening tools. When the lake levels rose, Moturere was almost covered. Only a small part of the original island remains above water today.
- As you carry on south you will arrive at Sulphur Point (Te Kauanga). Sulphur Point contains many active geothermal features including mud pools and sulphur vents. It is credited as the place where Hatupatu dived into the lake and swam underwater to Mokoia Island. **This area is very dangerous and you are advised to stay on the path at all times.**
- Rocky Point is the low, rocky finger of land which sticks out into the southern part of the bay. It was formed by ancient hot springs cementing lake bed gravel and sand. It is a favourite nesting place for gulls such as the red billed, black billed and black backed. The entire point is a Wildlife Refuge and unauthorised access is not permitted.
- The two bays flanking Rocky Point were formed by geothermal explosions. A dramatic change in lake levels caused by rapid draining or a volcanic eruption, produced pressure changes underground. This caused violent geothermal explosions, creating the two deep craters that define Rocky Point.

## 4 Te Arikiroa

The site was given the name Waiwhitiinanga to commemorate the battle between the tribes Ngati Tangaroa-mihi and Ngati Tama which took place on these sandy beaches. This barren, inhospitable area provides a very popular roosting habitat for birds. Banded Dotterel nest and raise their young here.



- On the southern shores of Sulphur Bay, the walkway passes through the area known as Te Arikiroa. Centuries ago a battle raged here on the sandy lake beach. The site was given the name Waiwhitiinanga to commemorate the battle between the tribes Ngati Tangaroa-mihi and Ngati Tama. The dead and dying were said to be so thickly strewn about as a result of the fighting that they resembled inanga (whitebait) cast on the shore.
- This was also where the first aeroplane to visit Rotorua landed in April 1922. The plane, piloted by Capt Lesley Brake, was forced to land here after engine failure. However repairs were made and the plane successfully took off from the beach the following morning.

## 5 Puarenga Stream

The stream was named for the patterns of sulphur particles floating on its surface. Hot and cold springs feed the stream during its journey from above Whakarewarewa to Te Arikiroa (Sulphur Bay). The Puarenga Stream was

an important travel route for the people of Whakarewarewa to and from the lake and was the site of several important battles. Remains of the kahikatea forest that covered the Rotorua basin around 7,000 years ago can be seen along the banks of the stream where geothermal action has silicified the ancient timber. For your safety, the walkway passes under the Te Ngae Road bridge avoiding crossing of this busy road. This section of the walkway finishes at the gateway to the Whakarewarewa village.

## Walking Times

	1 Pukeroa	10mins
	2 Rotorua Lakefront	20mins
	3 Motutara	25mins
	4 Te Arikiroa	15mins
	5 Puarenga	45mins
	6 Rotorua Tree Trust	40mins
	7 Utuhina	2:45mins
	8 Kuirau Park	20mins
	9 Mangakakahi	50mins
	10 Otamatea	30mins

## 6 Rotorua Tree Trust

The walkway now passes through urban streets before joining up with the Rotorua Tree Trust section. In 1990, the Rotorua Tree Trust, as it is known today was formed. The idea behind this development was to provide an area of land for people to dedicate trees for family members or local dignitaries.



### Soka Gokkai

Soka Gakkai (SGI) is an organisation which aims to promote the issues of war and peace and the feasibility of peaceful alternatives.

The Soka Gakkai International Peace Monument was unveiled at the Rotorua Tree Trust on Friday 8th September 2000. The monument is built in a circular design with three granite walls as the main features that contain the messages of six prominent people inscribed in Maori, English and Japanese.

## 7 Utuhina

From the Rotorua Tree Trust the walkway passes through urban streets and reserves making its way towards the Utuhina Stream section. The walkway travels down the stream, through residential

suburbs, providing great access to a beautiful stretch of trout fishing stream and many areas of reserve. Branches of the walkway lead up the Otamatea and Mangakakahi tributaries. The walkway passes under the Old Taupo Road bridge and crosses the Medical Officers reserve before reaching the Kuirau Park section.

### CAUTION:

Please keep to the tracks at all times, due to the geothermal nature of this area.

