

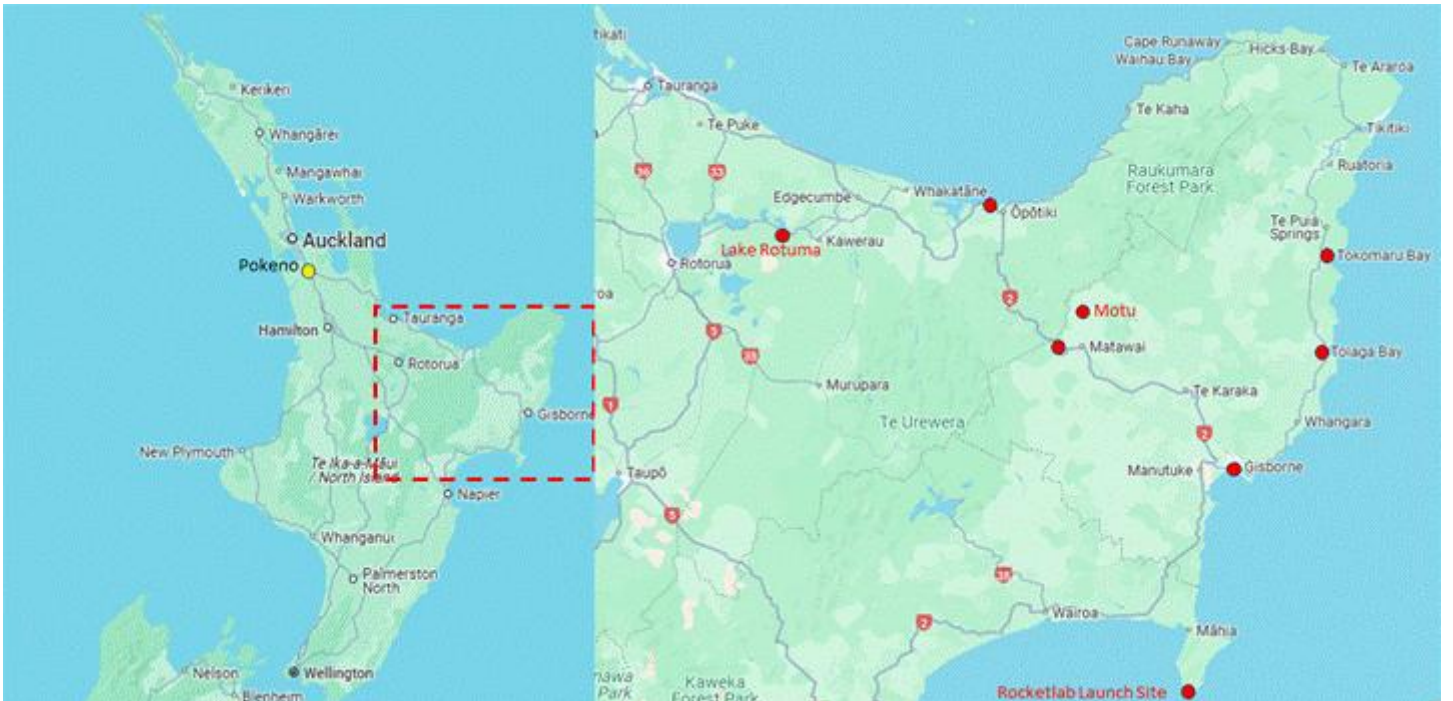
BR Brake Van World Tour 3 Tairāwhiti-Gisborne District February 2025

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What's left of Gisborne Railway Station. Whilst the railway south has closed (having suffered severe storm damage), there is a local preservation effort taking place on the remnant left from the station across to the start of the hills.

This time the newsletter is covering a four-day excursion made across the North Island to the Tairāwhiti Region in the North East corner of the North Island. This involved a nine-hour drive over increasingly challenging but fun roads to negotiate.



A map of the North Island on the left, with a detail map of the area in question on the right. As before, our home town of Pokeno is marked in yellow whilst the places visited and photographed are highlighted in red.



Our journey east took us past the Central North Island Lakes area. This is Lake Rotuma in somewhat unsettled conditions.



Further on we have reached the East Coast at the east end of the Bay of Plenty just before reaching Opotiki. At this point we turn sharp right (literally) to head across the Divide that separates the two tectonic plates NZ rests on.



Having settled in, the next day we heading North from Gisborne to have a look at two piers constructed before the road was pushed through north of Gisborne. These formed the communication links for the local communities prior to the road getting built. This is Tolaga Bay pier and is apparently the longest pier of its type in the Southern Hemisphere at 660 metres long. Sadly it has fallen into disrepair and the outer half is now unsafe due to concrete cancer.



Its cousin at Tokomaru Bay, further north is of similar construction but is in even worse condition and is completely closed off to the public. Indeed, the far end has collapsed into the sea with just the piles remaining.



Day three saw us head south to the Mahia Peninsular and home of the RocketLab launch site. It's quite a drive out to the end of the peninsular to the point where the road and public access ends. This view is typical.



Further along looking back the way we had come.



Close to the road end and the view down to launch site at the end of the peninsular on the flat ground on the right.



Driving home, we took a detour to Motu. This was the point where a brave attempt to connect up the railway at Gisborne with the line through from Auckland and Tauranga ended. This is a remnant of the line that was opened which served to open up the local community until it closed in the 1950s. It succumbed to competition from the road which was finally punched through at the same time.



This is the road (State Highway 2) climbing up to its summit (733m) on the skyline on right, before dropping down steeply into the Waioeka Gorge on the far side for a twisty 60km run out to Opotiki and the Bay of Plenty.