



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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for assistance in the preliminary work of material-handling and excavation at various weekends; Miss Anne Leahy who spent her Christmas vacation assisting keenly and well in the less interesting part of the cave, and helped over several weekends with excavation and section-drawing; Miss Sylvia Reece who devoted a week's good effort; the Editors of the Taupo Times and Herald Tribune of Hastings for keeping the exact location of the site a secret; Mr.A.J.Kear of Taupo for the use of his lighting plant; Timber and Building Supplies Ltd. for the loan of 100 feet of 3 inch pipe for the "Infernal Machine"; Mrs.W.B.L.Power of Auckland who gave us the benefit of her knowledge of the cave some fifty years ago; and finally to the one hundred and sixty-odd visitors who signed the Visitor's Book and gave us an excuse for a spell from work, and who encouraged us by their interest. Public interest and support is vital to our Society, so that visitors should not be treated as an interruption of our work but rather as one of the main reasons for it.

Reference

- (1) Duff R.S. 1956, The Moa-Hunter Period of Maori Culture (Second Ed.) Fig. 59, p.226, No.E145.237. (The Whakamoenga example resembles this figure but lacks the two small notches).

AN INLAND ARCHAIC SITE

By R. Cook and R. Green

Site N 84/1 Tokoroa

Professor K.B. Cumberland of the University of Auckland first brought to the attention of Mr. J.Golson what appeared to be an inland "moa-hunter" camp near Tokoroa. Mr. Golson in turn suggested to Mr. R.Cook, a member of the local Society then working at Mangakino, that he investigate more fully the site's potential. In September 1961 with the full cooperation and permission of the property owner, Mr. Cook excavated a portion of a single oven at the site and recovered from it a number of moa bones and characteristic obsidian flakes and knives. These bones have tentatively been identified by Mr. R. Scarlett as those of a not quite fully mature Euryapteryx exilis.

Shortly thereafter the site was visited by several members of the Society, at which time a section was cut near the oven by straightening the face of an already eroded stream bank. This revealed the following general sequence from top to bottom:

Top- A rich, dark black layer of 10-25 cm thickness which over much of the site has been disturbed by recent ploughing. Where undisturbed however, it exhibits a typical profile of a soil that is developed under manuka and tussock grass, which fits with the description of the vegetation before the land was brought into grassland production.

Intermediate- A disturbed zone of 5-15 cm thickness with a generally mottled colour but grading locally into areas with a deep black stain. The layer contains charcoal, obsidian, fragments of ignimbrite cooking stones and other indications of non-European cultural occupation.

Paleosol-On both waterlaid and ash-fall surfaces of the Taupo pumice, a podsol is well developed. It exhibits a greyish leached zone with a reddish zone of iron concentration beneath, each of 4-6 cm thickness. Such a soil is thought to be indicative of a former rimu forest.

Bottom- The Taupo pumice. Away from the stream this gritty white pumice is of ash-fall character and up to 50 cm or more in thickness. Along the edge of the present stream bank it is deposited as a waterlaid channel infilling of pumice pebbles.

Basal- A "greasy" dark brown pumice assigned to the Tirau ash-fall, and probably of Pleistocene age.

Obviously, the position of the Taupo pumice as an ash-fall places the Archaic occupation after A.D. 130 by the amount of time it took the podsol to develop under a rimu forest which established itself in the area. How much time is involved will demand further investigation. The evidence does suggest, however, that the Archaic people cleared the forest in this area, utilised the site for a time, and then abandoned it to invasion by manuka and tussock grass, which the European farmer has subsequently replaced with grassland. For these interpretations and identification of the soils, I am much indebted to Mr. Ross McQueen of Tokoroa.

When Mr. L.J. Davey, the owner of the land, ploughed the site some years ago, a number (he believes six) of Archaic type adzes were recovered, including several excellent examples of the Duff type 1A. These, with the obsidian

knives and flakes, and the moa bone from the oven suggest an inland Archaic site at which the eating and probably the hunting of one of the smaller moas was carried out. If so, the site assumes considerable importance, and for this reason will receive further attention by members from the Society over the May holidays.

A FISHING CAMP SITE NEAR RAGLAN

By C.G.Hunt

Hearing from a Raglan member that earth-moving equipment was uncovering numerous middens on a site (NZMS 1: Sheet N64 (Raglan) 392445 N25) near the local District High School, a party from Hamilton immediately journeyed to the district to investigate. It was found that a low point of land jutting out into the Raglan Harbour was being cleared and levelled to form a playing area for the High School. The scrub had been cleared and burnt while earth-moving equipment had already scraped off the surface soil and stacked it in heaps ready for re-spreading after the site had been levelled.

Shell middens were located on a number of slopes in the area and, after a surface survey, it was decided to concentrate on the largest, which was about 40 yards long and covered a slope about 25 feet high. There was no sign of defence works. The earth-movers working on the site stated that they had not found anything interesting apart from the middens and they very kindly agreed to work away from the excavations for the rest of the day.

As the site was to be destroyed in the near future there was little object in laying out the area in grids so the diggers immediately set to work on the midden. It was soon revealed that this was composed mostly of shells, with some bones. At the base of the slope the material was about 5 feet deep. The quantity and variety of shells visible suggested that this would be a good opportunity for obtaining information about the occupants' food supplies. So, in addition to