



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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EDITORIAL

The formal sessions of the Eleventh Science Congress of the Royal Society of New Zealand concluded on February 17th. The Archaeological subsection of the Anthropology sessions covered a wide geographic field and the next issue of the NEWSLETTER will publish some of the papers presented by field workers in different areas of the South Pacific. This publication will allow a more informed discussion than was always possible immediately after the verbal presentation, although these discussions seldom concluded with the ending of the session : in fact the archaeological subsection finally concluded its extended discussion over a cup of tea at 1.0am on the 18th.

One striking fact which may not be apparent from the papers presented so much as from the discussion evolving from them, is the ambivalence of the archaeologist. Nurtured by the humanities but trained by the sciences, archaeology seeks safe refuge in the objectivity of scientific observation and perhaps feels slightly guilty about leaving the humanitarian home. Some archaeologists, however, are on speaking terms with both parents, others talk only the language of the scientific father, but most bumble guiltily along in heavy disguise trying to show allegiance to neither. This lack of allegiance led to basic defects in clear exposition of the themes under discussion and in some of the papers presented, so that facts, assumptions and interpretations were mixed in highly coloured confusion. It is possible that future Congresses will recognize this dichotomy and provide archaeologists with two subsections, one attached to the humanities and the other to the applied sciences.

Dr.Glyn Daniel would have had some cause for hope in that his advice was, by and large, taken : most of the papers confined themselves to the time allotted. He would have been brimming with joy had he been able to attend the Geological session on Evolution in the New Zealand Pleistocene when three speakers and at least nine commentators managed to contribute the substance of their themes in a total time of ninety minutes.
