



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
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**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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On January 15, 1960, a team of diggers headed by Dr. Roger Duff converged on Waitara, ten miles north of New Plymouth, to search the Houhoutokinui (Bury, or Bind, the Big Adze) Swamp, adjacent to Manukorihi Pa, in the hope of finding more Maori stone-age carvings, similar to the three epa (upright pataka panels) and the magnificent pare (lintel) already discovered in the swamp. A service was held in Te Ikaroa a Maui meeting house, at the pa, on the Sunday, to remove any tapu which might attach to the swamp. It was conducted by the Anglican Maori Missioner, the Rev. Mangatitoki Cameron -- Kamarie'ra is his Maori name -- who was a tower of strength to us during the excavations, and at this service elders of the Atiawa and Ngati-Mutunga people gave their blessings to the search. Later, Miss Anihera Watson and her party gave a fine concert in our honour, which was greatly enjoyed.

On the Monday, about 50 volunteers, including many local people, Maori and Pakeha, assembled at the swamp, the first trenches were laid out, and the dig was on. We dug for a month, and did not find any carvings, but never-the-less, the search was a success. The dig proved many things, among them, that there can be archaeology even in a shallow New Zealand peat swamp. The Director and I had both thought that the dig would be more in the nature of a treasure-hunt than straight-out archaeology, but we were wrong.

The swamp had been formed when the mouth of a stream had been dammed, probably naturally, but possibly by man, and had built up in four layers, including the present surface, to a depth of four feet. In it we found carefully laid stone causeways or pavements placed on the sandstone stream bottom, two basins of stones raised on the peat a foot or two off the bottom, which strongly suggest places for steeping hinau or Karaka berries; a log adzed as it lay in the swamp -- there were a number of logs on the stream bottom, but comparatively little brushwood -- and a great quantity of totara chips, mainly concentrated in the one area, and in the same area the off-cut end of a slab of totora. These chips and the off-cut were close to where the pare was found in Easter 1959, and indicate that carving -- perhaps the actual pare -- was done right there in the swamp.

Many Ko (digging sticks) often with their teka (footrest) in position, were discovered, including two which were important. The first one, found by Kathleen Fletcher and her team on the 21st of January, was about 6 feet long, nicely shaped, and with the teka still lashed on, a feature rarely found, and which, when the Ko is available for study after careful slow drying, should reveal to us several important details.

The second important Ko was also found by Kath and her team, on 10th of February. It is about 7 feet long, with a carved tongue head (resembling a taiaha). The teka was placed close against the head, and the Ko still had much of the bark on, both these features indicating that it had been placed in the swamp in an unfinished state.

It would appear that the swamp was both a working-place and a repository for agricultural implements between cultivation seasons. Mark Voullaire, a seventy-four and a half year old retired farmer who can still show many a younger man how to use a shovel with minimum effort and maximum effect, speaks of the 'Manukorihi Ko Manufacturing Co.', because of the dozens of Ko found in the swamp. Mark found, resting on the bottom, a very pleasant mallet or beater. It is 14 inches in length, 7 inch handle, 7 inch body, with slight concavity at sides and top. Some have suggested a fern-root beater. From its shape, and the marks on its face which I saw as I lifted it, I think that it is probably a mallet used for tapping a wood-working chisel. Totara chips were found, though not in great quantity, near the implement. The other artifact of note was a small, spouted Kumete (food-bowl) found by a Maori lad on his one day's dig at the swamp.

During the course of our search, however, two 'finds' were made by people not directly connected with the dig. While Mr. A.E.Gernhoefer (who later joined the swamp search) was ploughing a site at Leslie Street, to make a children's playground, he turned up a small, good-quality, but water-rotted pare, on January 27th. Subsequent excavation on that site revealed no further artifacts. Then, on January 29th, in a small swamp, a mile or two away from the main one, 'Scotty' Kilpatrick and Maurice Topine, while digging a ditch with a mechanical excavator, threw out a magnificent epa. As Scotty later said, "If you chaps had not been digging, I might not have been thinking of such things, and may not have noticed."

Fortunately, owing to the skilful work of Scotty, when he did realise that he had something, the carving is little damaged. He handled the grab almost as delicately as an elephant picks up a small object with his trunk. The panel is a remarkably fine example of stone-

tool carving. I could exhaust my superlatives and not do it justice. It is superb. I am pleased to say that, and the other carvings found in our swamp and adjacent, are now the possession of the people of Taranaki, and will be housed in the fine new Taranaki Museum.

On the 14th and 15th of January, fifty miles away at Ohawe, near Hawera, Dr. Alistair Buist, with Jim Buttress and helpers, uncovered a series of moa-hunter haangi, one with the complete leg of a small moa still in position, just as it had been flung back by the people eating the meat. They did a very careful job. On the Sunday before our dig started, they came to the service at Manukorihi and then 'kidnapped' me to have a look at their find, in the afternoon. The following weekend, after Jim Buttress had carefully drawn and plotted each stone — Alistair had already taken numerous photographs — we lifted the oven, stone by stone, and it, with log in position, will be reconstructed as a notable exhibit in the Taranaki Museum. One other haangi at Ohawe also contained moa bones, and I found a third with moa and other bones on the banks of the adjacent Waingongoro River. Above the latter is the site of Rangatapu Pa, now unfortunately bull-dozed off for gravel.

Dr. Duff spoke twice, and I once, to the Waitara Rotary Club on archaeological subjects, and on the Friday night before we left Waitara, he and I talked to a public meeting at Hawera, organized by the Hawera Astronomical Society. Astronomy is not their only interest. Dr. Duff's subject was the 'Waitara Swamp Search' and mine, 'Moa-hunters'.

I cannot mention by name all the people who helped in many ways our dig, and showed us hospitality. I was fortunate enough to be the guest of Rigby Allen, at Uruti. Rigby, known to many of you, is temporary (we hope he will soon be permanently) Curator of the Taranaki Museum, and, apart from Dr. Duff, he ran the dig. I also stayed twice with Rex Ridgway and his wife and three charming young daughters, and Rex dug with us. Loyal Smith, who certainly lived up to his name, came from Whangarei, intending to stay a week or so, and lasted the whole dig, toiling away incessantly, despite his sixty-four years. He also made some of the gum-spears which were used as probes. They failed. They could reveal wood, but failed to find even a Ko. Lionel Moiklejohn, Max Smart, from Whanganui Museum, Manga Cameron, and his daughter, Moana, Mrs Puke, Loma and Shona Puke (sometime

there were five of the six Puke children), Burford Norman, another old-timer who can teach the youngsters a thing or two, Harry Dansey, his wife, and her sister, the ladies who tirelessly made scones and pikelets and cake for morning and afternoon tea, Grumpy Hunt, Joan Hunter, and others who week-ended from Hamilton -- the list could go on endlessly. The finest thing of all was that here, where the Maori war began, the Maori-Pakeha relationship is splendid. Both peoples toiled under the blazing sun -- we mostly had scorching weather -- in comradeship -- if anything, the Maori people even keener than the white -- to find the things the old-time Maori had left in the swamp. As Harry Dansey said of the swamp, when so many Ko turned up, "it is like lifting the lid of a Maori toolshed."

The publicity given by the three local papers, Taranaki Herald, Taranaki Daily News, and Hawera Star, was terrific. I've not known anything like it elsewhere. Photos, news items, interviews, day after day, even when the finds were few or none.

An Archaeological Club, as Junior Friends of the Taranaki Museum, led by Rigby Allen, continue the work. Well done, Taranaki!

#### ROTORUA-BAY OF PLENTY by D.M.Stafford.

Archaeological work in the Bay of Plenty has been confined so far to site recording and although there has not been a great number of forms sent in to date, work is progressing at a satisfactory rate.

In Rotorua, the Historical Society has been reformed and at a recent meeting (attended by over seventy people) it was indicated that site recording would form an important part of its functions. As there are a great number of sites in this district, in fact throughout the Bay of Plenty, this should be a very rewarding function for the Society. It will be interesting to members to note that Mr. C.Watt, a member of the Archaeological Association, has so far compiled a list of well over three hundred separate fortified Pa sites in the Rotorua district alone.

In Whakatane, which probably has as many sites as Rotorua, work is proceeding steadily; it is unfortunate that Mr. Frank Davis who had made site recording part of the projects for his class at the Whakatane High School, has taken up a new position in the Paihiatua district and has had to postpone his activities. We are fortunate however in that the Whakatane and District Historical Society is a very live body and under the capable guidance of Mr. D.McBene, the archaeological section of that group is continuing the work.