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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

NORTHLAND

Recently DOC archaeologist James Robinson visited a number of archaeological sites in the mid west of the USA. Following an invitation from the Office of the State Archaeologist in Iowa (OSA) he was invited to inspect their facilities; participate in their fieldwork, compare methods, approaches and problems and give a slide presentation about conservation archaeology in Northland. The OSA is involved with protecting historic and archaeological sites and its activities include archaeological surveys and excavations, running a site register data base and being the state's principle archaeological specimen repository. Considering the similarities in function between DOC archaeologists and OSA, this was a good opportunity to see how they handle problems in the field of historic and cultural site protection that are common to both countries.

In the last few weeks we have been assisting Russell Field Centre in their planned upgrade of the Whangamumu track. Like much of Northland's east coast the area was intensively settled by Maori who left behind a complex landscape of archaeological sites. Over the next 5 months we will be involved in inspecting the proposed walkway for sites and suggesting alternative routes around the features so as to avoid damage to them.

Recently all three archaeologists were invited by the Regional Committee of the Historic Places Trust to attend the unveiling of a plaque at the old Butler homestead in Mangonui. It was encouraging to see the Trust recognising the important role played by Captain Butler in the early history of Mangonui.

To update projects mentioned in last issue's Notes and News:

1. The remedial carpentry work has been completed at Mangonui Courthouse. Therefore the proposal to remove slip material from behind the courthouse to expose the original surface of the yard is planned for the week 28 November to 2 December.
2. Since the planned helicopter drop of 1080 pellets in Puketi Forest is delayed due to weather, the proposed joint use of this helicopter to airlift the turbine back to the historic Kerikeri Hydro-Electric Station is also in hold. On a more positive note, the Kerikeri Field Centre has finalised the design and purchased the materials needed to reconstruct the powerhouse superstructure. Construction will begin as soon as the turbine is in place.
3. The excavation of the well at Okiato is due to recommence late January. To date we have excavated to a depth of 9.5m and have just reached a level containing beams and planks that may relate to a structure associated with New Zealand's first capital. A number of important design and safety

issues were raised during this well excavation. Since these may be of interest to other archaeologists considering well digs, they will be included in the final report.

James Robinson, DOC

AUCKLAND

A big event in the Auckland Conservancy was the 100 year commemoration of the sinking of the SS Wairarapa on 29 October 1894 off Miners Head on Great Barrier Island. This was originally planned by the DOC field centre manager on Great Barrier Island, Don Woodcock, and was organised by a centennial committee of GBI residents, supported by DOC and Auckland City Council. The event was very well attended, with a number of descendants of the survivors and rescuers (Ngati Wai ki Aotea and others), and relations of the some of the c.130 people who drowned, some coming from Australia.

At 8 minutes past midnight (when the boat struck) on the 29th a service and wreath laying ceremony took place on a barge at the wreck site under fairly rough conditions, which proved too much for me. The wreck itself was lit up by divers. We returned to the wreck site later in the day for another service and to unveil a plaque on the rocks at the point where the ship struck. This was followed by services and unveiling of commemorative plaques at the two SS Wairarapa grave sites at Tapuwai Point (Whangapoua Beach) and Onepoto, Katherine Bay. All followed by a dinner at the Fitzroy Boating Club, where a display had been set up of photographs, newspaper cuttings and various items salvaged over the years from the ship - including the ship's compass and whistle (both still in working order), lifebuoys, and the Captain's toilet seat. The centennial committee are hoping to produce a publication in due course.

Robert Brassey and Leigh Johnson recently spent 8 days on the Mokohinau Islands 110 km northeast of Auckland, recording sites associated with the former lighthouse complex and WWII early warning station, and resurveying the group for sites of Maori occupation. The sites recorded suggest that Maori occupation of the main group of islands was of a temporary nature, probably associated with seasonal muttonbirding activity.

Archaeological surveys have also been completed at Ambury Park, by Brenda Sewell and Russell Foster for the Auckland Regional Council, and on Puketutu Island by Dave Veart in relation to a quarrying application.

One reason you have not heard from us in the last couple of issues is that we have been busy completing archaeological reports - on excavations of two stone heaps at Tapapakanga Regional Park, by Brenda Sewell; of a midden site at East Tamaki, by Dave Veart; and of the cellar of the Victoria Hotel (1841-65),

by Robert Brassey and Sarah Macready. A large artefact collection was salvaged from the cellar, whose deposition can be closely dated to the backfilling of the cellar after a fire in 1865 which destroyed the hotel. It is therefore a valuable reference collection, as well as providing much information about life in the Victoria Hotel at the time of the fire. At present it is housed by the Department, but it will eventually be given to the Auckland Museum.

Sarah Macready, DOC

WAIKATO-COROMANDEL

Theft of historic mining equipment.

On 2.10.94 some 15 tons of historic mining equipment, mainly the components of a quartz stamping battery, was stolen from the Victoria battery site at Waikino. The offenders are known to have used a dark green TK Bedford truck equipped with a Hiab crane. If anyone has seen anyone recently transporting, stowing or newly displaying any of this type of equipment please contact Neville Ritchie urgently.

As an offshoot from the Cuvier Island Historic Sites survey, Cathy Barr has been researching the WW2 radar station (Naval Station No.4) on the island. If anyone knows of anyone who served on the island during the War, Cathy would like to contact them to obtain further information, copies of photographs etc.

The final stage of the Dancing Camp kauri dam restoration job, the application of timber preservative, will be undertaken in early November. The Christmas Creek dam will also be assessed for conservation work.

In late September some restoration work was undertaken on the Alexandra redoubt at Pirongia. A report on the work will be published in a forthcoming issue.

Neville Ritchie, DOC

BAY OF PLENTY

During November the Bay of Plenty Conservancy of the Department of Conservation is carrying out an archaeological survey of the Ohiwa Harbour margins. People involved include Kim Tatton, Dr. Rick McGovern-Wilson from Otago, Ken Phillips, a Masters student from the Auckland Anthropology Department, and staff of the Whakatane Field Centre. Rick is using this work as a preliminary investigation of middens in the eastern Bay of Plenty as part of a proposed midden project to be undertaken in the Bay of Plenty next year.

On the 1st and 2nd of November Michael Kelly, a Heritage Consultant for DOC, and Jack Fry from Conservation Supplies, Wellington, visited the Piako County Tramway in the Waiorongomai Valley, south of Te Aroha to provide specialist advice on the conservation of the structures associated with the tramway. Michael Kelly will write Part 2 of the Conservation Plan for this historic resource. Helen McCracken, a graduate from the Auckland Anthropology Department is currently undertaking archival research into the history of the Piako Tramway in Wellington and Auckland.

Ray Hooker and Cathy Barr have been undertaking archaeological assessments for resource consents in the Papamoa and Whakatane districts. Early last month Kim Tatton and Sue Mavor (Planner) from DOC, and Alexy Simmons (HPT - Central North Island Regional Officer) attended a meeting organised by the Tauranga District Council with local surveyors and the Regional Council to discuss the requirements under the Resource Management and Historic Places Acts.

After a conference in Wellington a group of conservators visited several sites in the Bay of Plenty on an organised field trip with Nick Tupara from the Historic Places Trust in Wellington. Two of those sites included the Kaingaroa and Tarawera rock art sites.

After preliminary recording work in the Matata and Ohope Scenic Reserves in 1993, assessment and recommendations were compiled in September for the protection of historic resources within these reserves that are in direct conflict with recreational use.

Bruce McFadgen and Warren Gumbley undertook a site inspection of a major subdivision (105 ha with 800 sections) in the Papamoa district in late October. Discussions are on-going with the developers as to the degree and extent of mitigation necessary.

Kim Tatton, DOC

TARANAKI

A small headland pa on the edge of Hawera township has been restored in part by the present owner who has dug out sufficient of the upland transverse ditch to define the site once more. Like many ditches, this had been filled both deliberately in the distant past and by stock erosion. The present owner is conscious of the significance of the site and undertook the part restoration and is determined to preserve a group of collapsed rua.

The land on which Onukukaitara Pa is located has been purchased by a Maori couple. This site at Waitara was one of two built in 1860 and saw the

defeat of the Imperial Force as detailed in Belich's 'The New Zealand Wars'. The previous owner had placed a large plastic water tank in what remained of the already eroded site: after the 1860 action, the Imperial Force partially levelled the defences of both pa and built a blockhouse on Onukukaitara. The adjacent pa, Puketakauere, is on land purchased by the Lands and Survey Dept. and is now a DOC reserve. The new owner proposes to provide access from the reserve to the site, and will remove the unsightly water tank. Visitors will at last be able to appreciate the relationship of the two sites which saw such significant action in 1860.

Alastair Buist

Barry Hartley, a marine archaeologist who is based in New Plymouth, is currently reviewing the status of wreck sites around the Taranaki coast with the view of updating site record forms and, where necessary, generating new records.

Thanks to the efforts of Gloria Jones the Taranaki file is now in metric order. Dr Buist and Hip Fenton are continuing, as weather and time permits, with their fieldwork in the north Taranaki area.

Kelvin Day, Taranaki Museum

EAST COAST

The Gisborne City Council recently confirmed a heritage order placed on the old Eastern Co-op building in Gisborne. Stage 1 of the Conservation of the historic Tauranga Bridge has been completed by the works Civil Construction and the bridge is now open to the public again. Further finance is being sought to complete stage 2 of the work and ensure the long term protection of the bridge.

The major event in the last few months for Gisborne was the 225th anniversary of Cook's landing in New Zealand. The city commemorated this anniversary with a number of events.

- 'A meeting of Two Worlds' evening at Te Poho O Rawiri with papers by Prof. Tim Beaglehole (James Cook in the 18th century), Peter Gordon (Turanganui in the 18th century), Simon Smale (Cook Landing Site today).
- Commemoration service with speeches by Mr Darcy Ria, Mr Haare Williams and Sir Paul Reeves.
- Event on Cook Landing Site National Historic Reserve attended by armed

service, Minister of Conservation, and British High Commissioner.

- Walk over Young Nick's Head led by Sheila Robinson, local historian and member of the East Coast Conservation Board, with over 200 people participating.

A re-edited and updated version of the booklet 'Turanganui a Kiwa landfall' was produced including excerpts from Dr Anne Salmond's 'Two Worlds' and a section on the Cook landing Site National Historic Reserve. This book can be purchased for \$6.00 from the Gisborne Museum.

The East Coast Forestry Project tender round is underway again. We assess the likelihood of archaeological sites associated with these blocks for the Ministry of Forestry who then place appropriate conditions on the approvals.

Pam Bain, DOC

WELLINGTON

The local archaeological society has had a varied programme of talks this year. Speakers have been Lynn Williams, Nick Tupara, Tony Walton, Bruce McFadgen and Fred Knox, Jim McKinlay, and Mark Allen.

Kevin Jones's book on aerial photography and archaeology in New Zealand, *Nga Tohuwhenua Mai Te Rangī*, will be launched in Wellington in late November (see Recent Publications section of this issue for more information). DOC is developing a database of site survey reports to augment the national archaeological record database (CINZAS).

Phil Huber, a geologist working on the recent tectonic history of the Miramar Peninsula, has reported two radiocarbon dates from a midden site (R27/181) 100m south of Port Halswell. A date (Wk 1923) on shell from the midden produced a result of 1500-1720 AD and a date (Wk 1922) on charcoal half a metre away gave <250 years.

Tony Walton, DOC

OTAGO

Over the winter/spring months little has been happening in the deep south. Peter Petchey has completed a number of site surveys and mapping projects for Macraes (East Otago) as they seek to expand their operation. His work has focused on a series of large sluicing claims to the southwest of Macraes township and on the Golden Bar complex where there still remains part of the

mine, aerial ropeway, battery and associated buildings. Peter Bristow and Dougald O'Reilly have completed a site assessment at Garibaldis for a mining operation, which will be reworking some of the 19th century sluicings.

A large excavation and mapping programme at Reefton was undertaken in July / August by Rick McGovern-Wilson and his hardy (!) band - Ray Hooker, Stu Bedford, Peter Bristow, Geoff Clark, and Peter Petchey. The site was a former goldmine, dating from the mid 1870s to 1920 (in two separate phases), which is about to be open-cast mined by Macraes. In the mitigation programme a total of 15 house sites were excavated, and four areas of regenerated beech forest were clear-felled so that survey plans could be completed of the sites of the former shaft heads and other mine buildings (including the loading dock for the aerial ropeway and the 1870s battery). Contrary to popular belief, we did get 10 days continuous fine weather to start, but the remainder of our stay was cooler and wetter, including one morning when we arrived up on the hill to find 6-8 cm of fresh powder snow covering everything.

Rick McGovern-Wilson, Southern Arc