



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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## FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### AUCKLAND

It is consoling news that all the Auckland Conservancy archaeology staff have survived the most recent savaging of the Department of Conservation.

Staff at Auckland Museum however are still in shock over the loss of 28 jobs caused by a \$700,000 operating deficit. The most worrying aspect of these redundancies has been the closure of the Marine Department and the loss of its two curators, signalling a weak commitment to scientific research and the collections. Dr Bruce Hayward, known to many of us for his numerous contributions to archaeology, lost his position as Curator of Marine Invertebrates (he also wore the unofficial hat of Curator of Geology). That a scientist of his calibre can be treated as surplus to requirements is most alarming. Fortunately a technician will be retained to curate and provide access to the marine and geology collections.

The Auckland Archaeological Society had a successful first semester which included a talk on East Africa by Jack Harris and the Mesoamerican house site by Chris Fung.

The second semester programme kicked off with Ian Lawlor talking about the Regional Councils' strategies for conservation of heritage. In August, Society members toured some of the Archaeology and Ethnology storage areas of Auckland Museum with Louise Furey and Kath Prickett. On September 17th Keay Burrige will be talking about archaeology in Modock County, North California; on October 1st Caroline Phillips will discuss her recent attendance at the Australian Women in Archaeology Conference in Kuaranda; and on October 15th, Nigel Prickett will speak on the archaeology of New Zealand Shore Whaling. These talks are held in the Anthropology Department

tearoom on the 8th floor of the Human Sciences Building, Auckland University, at 7pm.

The final Arch. Soc. gathering will be held on October 25th with a tour of some of Auckland's archaeological sites conducted by Sue Bulmer. Contact Blaze O'Connor, Archaeological Society, Department of Anthropology, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, or phone 3737 999 ext 8419, if you would like to attend.

A further opportunity for archaeologically getting together is now provided for by an informal breakfast on the first Friday of every month. Last month a dozen people met at Habaneros, Pitt Street, to swap news and discuss issues. The next gathering will be at the same place and same time - 8.00am onwards. Anyone is welcome. The time and venue can be changed in future to suit the majority. Any enquiries, call Amanda Young at the Historic Places Trust  
307 0413.

The Historic Places Trust team, Kim Tatton and Amanda Young, have been busy processing authorities leaving time for only occasional forays into North Auckland to meet Councils and Forestry Groups. They have been preparing a joint application with the West Auckland Historical Society for Lotteries assistance in reserving and evaluating historic sites in the Waitakeres.

Auckland Regional Council is to be congratulated for producing a poster for schools to raise awareness of one of the region's significant but rapidly disappearing archaeological landscapes. It features Chris Gaskin's depiction of the Matukuria stonefields as they might once have looked. Anyone wishing to obtain a copy should contact Ian Lawlor, Auckland Regional Council.

Kath Prickett, Auckland Museum.

## **NORTHLAND**

Well we're still here up in the wet wintery north but at least don't have to go hunting jobs in the frozen regions of the country.

Now that our role outside the DoC estate has been severely limited we are encouraging other groups to get involved and have had a great response from

Northland Polytechnic. Two of the lecturers there are particularly interested in the history and archaeology of Northland and students are currently undertaking a variety of projects which include recording kauri dams near Ngunguru and pa sites around Tara, a small volcanic area just south of the Brynderwyns. They are also planning an archaeological survey of part of the Taiharuru Peninsula, to the east of Whangarei, where there are numerous unrecorded sites.

A keen interest in kauri logging and associated industries was also shown by members of the public who accompanied us to Matakohe Museum during recent Conservation Week activities. For those of you who, like me, have not been there for a decade or more, it should be an essential part of a trip to Northland. The museum has been extended considerably and provides fascinating insights into an industry that ravaged Northland's forests but also provided many challenges to Kiwi ingenuity and remains an intrinsic aspect of our history. While you're in the area call in at the little antique shop between Paparoa and Maungaturoto. The folks who own it make Shaker furniture and have rescued the local 19th century lock-up. You can stay the night in the cells and indulge in some above ground archaeology by deciphering the original graffiti scratched into the walls - honestly I'm not getting a commission!

Other aspects of conservation are being undertaken by the Paparoa Lions Club. They have formed a track through regenerating bush to an impressive pa site just south of the township. A mixture of DoC specialists visited it recently to advise the club on preserving and enhancing the natural and historic values of the area. It was one of the few times I've been out of the office for months so of course it poured with rain. Still the trip was worthwhile. The pa covers about a hectare and contains more than 60 storage pits on and near the summit. Local Maori have no information on the history of the pa and research by Simon Best has not unearthed (figuratively speaking) anything specific either. However a number of large trees on the summit suggest that it may be 200-300 years old. The practical enthusiasm of local groups like the Paparoa Lions for conserving historic sites appears to be increasing. We thoroughly appreciate and support their efforts especially as funding for this type of project is not available either through the Department or the Historic Places Trust.

A great deal of information on Northland archaeology has been collated in the last few months. Simon Hodge has completed an M.A. thesis which

includes detailed plans of sites on the east coast of Whangarei from Matapouri northward. Simon Best has produced a final report on the Hall House site at Russell where a vast collection of 19th century glass and ceramic artefacts were retrieved, many of them whole; and the stack of site records continually accumulates on the filekeeper's desk both from DoC and contract archaeologists. Many thanks to the contract archaeologists who also provide us with copies of their reports. This means that we can keep up-to-date with area surveys which is essential for processing resource applications.

Joan Maingay, DoC

## WAIKATO COROMANDEL

It is now 12 months since any news about the Waikato Coromandel region has appeared in AINZ. The lengthy gap doesn't mean that nothing has been happening, only that no-one has got round to compiling any news items, despite timely reminders from the editor. In similar vein the relatively voluminous notes below do not indicate that an enormous amount of fieldwork has suddenly happened in the last three midwintery months, but rather that an attempt has been made to catch up on the year-long news backlog.

At the Department of Conservation the Historic resources section, consisting of Neville Ritchie (fulltime) and Owen Wilkes (half time) has come through the current re-structuring unscathed. Over the 12 months their fieldwork and other activities have been more historical than archaeological, but have included further restoration/maintenance of the historic lighthouse settlement on Cuvier Island, and preservation/stabilisation of the kauri driving dam at Christmas Creek in the Kauearanga valley.

A team of seven worked on Cuvier Island for eight days in December of last year on a trip organised jointly with botanical and zoological studies. The main task was finishing off painting and other maintenance work on buildings. A tramway system which formerly served the settlement and the lighthouse was mapped and a section of about 200 m was subjected to preservation. Sleepers were treated with copper-based fungicides and rails were de-scaled with a hammer, rust was passivated with phosphoric acid, and the steel was coated with anti-corrosive primer, or, as a trial, fishoilene. The World War 2 radar station on the summit of the island and masts for a pre-war radio direction-finding beacon were assessed for possible future

preservation. A series of stone-faced terraces, of Maori origin and presumably for horticulture, were inspected. One of the midden sites on the island is eroding away rapidly over a sea cliff and needs to be dug before it disappears. Other Maori sites, mapped by Janet Davidson in 1972, are becoming harder and harder to find, let alone investigate, thanks to the way the native vegetation is re-asserting itself now that DoC and its predecessors have eliminated goats, rats and people. Only muttonbirds and tuatara are now stirring up the stratigraphy.

Remedial work on the Christmas Creek kauri driving dam has not gone smoothly. To start with, the helicopter pilot decided it was too dangerous to land in the creek bed below the dam, so we had to construct a helipad on a rather lumpy ridge above the dam (and cut a track down to it). Cleaning down the dam with waterblasters wielded by commercial abseilers dangling from an overhead wire rope went relatively smoothly but we then had a series of unconnected and unforeseeable mechanical problems with various items of equipment used for applying the preservatives. Massive replacement rafters and other timbers were cut from kauri logs found in an area of DoC swamp alongside the Piako river. Some of the lesser but only just-movable timbers were later stolen from the DoC's Kauearanga yard.

On top of all these setbacks chemical analysis of wood samples taken from the Dancing Camp kauri dam indicated there had been less retention of preservatives in the three years since this dam was treated than had been hoped for. This has caused a bit of a rethink of preservation strategies. One possibility being looked into is a form of treatment used with Australian hardwood poles on high-voltage power lines. Foley International, a company based in Orewa, does in-situ ultrasonic scans on such poles to detect internal decay, and applies a preservative/penetrant gel at ground level inside a heat-shrunk plastic "bandage" wrapped around the pole. We are looking at adapting this technique to kauri dams. It would involve changing from copper-based fungicides to TCMTB, a thio-cyano heterocyclic compound, one of the "Busan" family. Whether this will be much better remains to be seen. Initial tests indicate so far that kauri, with its tracheids almost totally occluded by kauri gum, is an intractable timber as far as non-diffusing preservatives are concerned.

One interesting development on the site-recording/filekeeping front has been the decline in requests for information from the Coromandel file and the increase in requests for information from the Waikato file. These two trends

are respectively accounted for by a decline in prospecting and mining applications in the Coromandel, and an increase in the number and spread of lifestyle subdivisions, mega-milk processing plants, highway upgrades and suchlike "progress" in the Waikato. The Pukekohe-based Huakina Development Trust (environmental wing of the Tainui iwi) has copied several hundred Waikato records, apparently as part of its case for opposing the Waikato-water-to-Auckland pipeline.

In the Coromandel file a few new records keep trickling in, mostly from Auckland-based fieldworkers. In the Waikato district Owen Wilkes' burst of site-recording zeal ground to a halt with his assumption of DoC duties. The Coromandel file body-count dropped by about one thousand recently when Coromandel filekeeper Neville Ritchie handed over responsibility for topo sheet U13 to Bay of Plenty filekeeper Rick McGovern-Wilson. U13 (Waihi Beach) is all within the western Bay of Plenty and should never have been included in the Coromandel file district. It includes the famous Kauri Point and Ongari Point pa, part of Matakana Island, and the infamous Athenree peninsula.

One hoary old issue that has taken up quite a bit of time over the past year is that of a trio of contiguous pa south of Te Awamutu known as the "Three sisters". The three pa are on three separate titles and are threatened by three quarries operated by three different companies. All three pa and all three quarries are visible from the main highway, and about once every 6 months someone phones up to claim that quarrying is wrecking a pa. Careful fieldwork by Ian Barber, Alexy Simmons and Owen Wilkes over the last year has indicated that, so far, the quarries are (only just) keeping their distance, but that farming activities, less spectacular and less visible from the highway, are actually causing a lot of damage. The pa themselves are quite imposing, and it would be a shame if they were to disappear. The District Council has slapped a heritage order on the most threatened pa, but this is being contested by the quarrying concern, on the grounds that there is more than a million dollars worth of road metal under the pa, that good blue-metal is a rarity in the mostly soft-rock Waikato, and that quarry establishment costs in this age of OSH and RMA are almost prohibitively high.

A massive expansion of the already gigantic NZ Dairy Group milk powder plant at Te Rapa north of Hamilton has provided a good opportunity for large scale and detailed examination of one of the extensive patches of kumara garden soils alongside the Waikato river - with free earthmoving equipment

laid on. Warren Gumbley (formerly with Historic Places Trust in Wellington, now a Hamilton-based consultant), Tom Higham and Matt Schmidt (both with the carbon dating lab at Waikato University, although Matt has now headed off for some O.E.) have been monitoring the earthmoving associated with expansion of the factory. Stage one of this project has been largely completed and has affected the margins of a large area of garden (plaggen) soils adjacent to Mangaharakeke pa on the edge of the river. During the monitoring a number of features, including large drains, were identified and mapped around the margins of the garden soils. Stage Two of the expansion will directly affect the garden soils as well as some borrow pits, and an investigation strategy is being developed. A conservation plan is also being prepared for the part of Mangaharakeke Pa owned by NZDG.

Waipa District Council has recently been developing a residential subdivision on the bank of the Waipa River at Pirongia, on what turned out to be the previously unrecorded location of the Pirongia East redoubt (not to be confused with the restored Armed Constabulary redoubt a bit further upstream). A local bottle collector fortunately alerted the NZAA filekeeper and the local HPT rep, and Warren Gumbley has since completed a preliminary investigation for Waipa DC. A digger was used to scrape topsoil off several transects up to 200m long across the site. This confirmed the location of the redoubt itself, which was outlined by a steep-sided ditch dug in rather loose substrate. The ditch appeared to have been purposefully refilled shortly after having been excavated. A military hospital and commissariat shown on historical documentation have so far not been relocated.

Tom Higham has started on a dating project at Aotea Harbour on the west coast. The aim is to investigate the reliability of carbon dating shell from a limestone-enriched environment. Sampling of shell and charcoal from some of the numerous middens which surround the harbour is planned after further consultation with tangata whenua.

Over at Whangamata on the Coromandel Cathryn Barr, formerly with DoC Waikato, has now been with Carter Holt forests for almost a couple of years. She reports that site survey work is continuing in forest blocks, but with fewer sites turning up now that the focus of harvesting is in the Ohui block. Past surveys and current work indicates that the majority of Maori sites are located around the coast and in lower stream gullies. It is expected however that numbers of mine adits etc will be found higher up when logging crews

start working in the vicinity of the old Phoenix mine. Crews will be returning to finish harvesting Whangamata peninsula this summer, where a high density of sites are already recorded.

Cathryn has been running site identification workshops for forestry contractors. These sessions also outline the legal situation, and describe the steps to be taken when a forest worker discovers what appears to be a site. The sessions have been successful in that several new sites have since been reported. One new pipi midden reported to Cathryn turned to be very new, and has been assigned with some confidence to the pinus radiata period of Coromandel culture.

Outside the forests Cathryn has been doing consultancy work on proposed developments in the Whangamata/Whitianga area. Most interesting of these are two separate proposals which may impact on the Whangamata wharf (or "Cabana Lodge") archaic site T12/3 and an associated site T12/240 further up the harbour.

Warren Gumbley has recently carried out a site survey in an area south of Whangamata. He has also been doing surveys of proposed residential subdivisions around Hamilton and Thames. One significant discovery was that a row of what appeared to be perfectly ordinary rectangular kumara pits were in fact dug in the 1920s by a night-soil contractor to receive his nightly gatherings. Excavation showed each pit to be partly filled with a very humus-rich layer derived from you-know-what, capped by a layer of what in other circumstances would be called "sterile" sand. A few bits of coal and crockery were also found - exactly what you would expect kids to have been dropping down the dunny-hole. Does this foreshadow a re-opening of the old debate about the function of rectangular pits?

Phil Moore from Waihi Beach and Neville Ritchie have been investigating ore roasting kilns, most recently those at the Union Hill gold mine near Waihi. These are brick-lined vertical-walled chambers about 8 m deep cut into the bedrock with tunnels underneath for trucking out the roasted ore. Getting down into the kilns was made easy by some rather nifty clip-together sectional aluminium ladders borrowed from DoC ornithologists who use them to climb trees for kokako monitoring. The kilns are a rather unusual form of ore processing technology, and no earlier documentation of the process is known of.

Nick Twohill of the Thames School of Mines Museum has also been active in the Waihi area. Eleven years after doing the archaeological component of the Golden Cross Mining Project environmental impact report he was back at Golden Cross in August to do the archaeology needed for Coeur Gold NZ Ltd to meet its statutory requirements when the mine closes down and the surroundings are rehabilitated. The hard-rock mine and its well-publicized tailings dam is 350 m up at the head of the Waitekauri Valley, along the southern part of the rugged spine of the Coromandel Range. Despite 5 years of exploratory drilling and massive construction, roading, and underground mining, the archaeological remains of earlier (1892-1904) goldmining - tunnels, adit portals, shaft-heads, mullock tips tramways, a battery site and a town site - are still in reasonable condition.

Owen Wilkes, DoC

## **BAY OF PLENTY**

Restructuring has been the order of the day, and a lot of time has been taken up with that. Fortunately Historic Resources staff have been largely unaffected and we have all been reconfirmed in the new structure. As a result of the uncertainty and upheaval, only a few milestones have been recorded lately.

The end of May saw the Ohope Waterways hearings taking place in Whakatane. This is a proposal for a Pauanui style canal development on the Ohiwa Harbour around the base of a small knoll where Te Kooti is reputed to have built a pa between 1889-93. The proposal was vigorously opposed by the combined Mataatua iwi (Ngati Awa, Tuhoe and Whakatohea) and at the present time the applicants have asked for a six month extension for further iwi consultation.

In mid June I mapped a previously unrecorded pa site on the Urewera foothills on the eastern side of the Galatea plains. There would appear to be quite a number of unrecorded sites along these slopes which are known to local farmers, and I am working to try and get the sites recorded, and the pa mapped, before some of the older informants die or retire from the district.

Late June saw me carry out a small salvage excavation on Tuhua (Mayor Island). Constant wave erosion in Southwest Bay was resulting in the slow collapse of the high cliffs, with the result that large quantities of midden was

being dropped onto the beach below. Four bulk samples were removed and analysis is currently being undertaken. I am hoping to begin a more extensive excavation program on the island this summer as part of the restoration and revegetation project that the Department is hoping to implement.

Map sheet U13 (of the northern end of Tauranga Harbour, Matakana Island, Athenree area) and its 1000 or so records has been transferred from the Coromandel to the Bay of Plenty file.

Recently I attended a hui on Matakana Island where Bruce McFadgen, Mike Sheppard and Harley Betts presented the results of the work they have been doing to record the formation, landforms, and palaeoenvironment of Matakana. This work was being undertaken separately from, and in addition to, the work that Doug Sutton and the Centre for Archaeological Research were doing on the archaeological sites.

Archaeological field work associated with resource management and Historic Places Trust continues apace in the Bay of Plenty. Recent field work has included:

The investigation of the interior of a ring ditch pa at Te Kaha. The interior of the pa had been subject to repeated ploughing, and the nature and extent of surviving features within the interior of the pa was unknown prior to investigation. Excavation revealed the presence of a number of infilled storage pits and between 50-70 postholes. Analysis and report production is now underway.

In Tauranga the recent removal of three houses, constructed between 1895 and 1920, from intercity properties for site redevelopment, has revealed the presence of intact archaeological sites. In one case a small portion of a shell midden and firescoop had survived extensive previous ground disturbance on the property. In the second, a pre-1900 rubbish pit was excavated and the property also contained intact shell midden deposit. The third property had been subject to ground disturbance and infilling when the house was constructed in 1920. A number of rubbish pits were present on the property associated with the occupation of the house. Removal of the fill layer revealed earlier pre-1900 rubbish pits and an infilled ditch and bank fence which extends beyond the property boundaries. These latter features appear to be associated with the occupation of the Te Rapa military encampment during the 1860s. Analysis of the material recovered from the site is

currently being completed.

The third case described above is a strong reason for the advocating of on-site archaeological monitoring during the removal of houses, and is not the first time that surface features have been uncovered on a site where an initial assessment had found no surface features, but made no consideration of the possibility that subsurface features would exist.

A number of archaeological surveys have been undertaken for resource management consents, including forestry, quarrying, urban subdivision and rural residential subdivision developments. Archaeological surveys associated with proposed traffic bypass construction in the vicinity of Tauranga have also been completed.

Rick McGovern-Wilson, DoC

## **EAST COAST**

A range of interesting and varied work has been happening on the East Coast. A major part of the Department of Conservation's work has revolved around the theft of the McCahon painting from the Aniwanuiwa Visitor Centre. It was part of the museum and had recently been conserved by Sarah Hillary of the Auckland Art Gallery. Due to the plethora of this information in the media we spent some time researching the history of the painting and developing a Fact Sheet.

The Cook Landing Site National Historic Reserve "Cone of Vision" is again in the news. The proposed District Plan retains the Cone minus the temporary agreement for storage. The Port Company have started a misinformation campaign which we have been countering in association with the local HPT Committee. I am currently working on a Conservation Plan for the Reserve and DOC has completed a Fact Sheet for Reserve and Cone. We are working on a case for the Environment Court and are hoping to meet with the new Board. A delegation from Daniel Solander's hometown in Sweden are coming to visit Cook sites in the area to make a film for Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian television.

The Gisborne Museum and Arts Centre have completed a report on the collection and documentation of the Aniwanuiwa Collection and work on implementing those recommendations will begin soon.

Thanks to Kevin's amazing aerial photos I have managed to meet a number of requests for talks on the Archaeology of the area.

Gordon Jackman and Victoria Grouden have been involved in two excavations in town on sites associated with early Gisborne.

The Gisborne District Council have initiated two programmes of field checking for their proposed District Plan. Lynda Bowers and Ken Phillips were contracted to assess approximately 100 sites where landowners had raised issues. This exercise has proved extremely useful in educating landowners, getting support from landowners for listing historic places and relocating a small percentage of the East Coast file. Associated with this was another exercise to locate wahi tapu sites which had been identified by kaumatua. Some locations were not fixed, some landowners had problems and some sites were recorded as destroyed in the NZAA file. I worked with Kaumatua and Gisborne District Council staff to identify these places on the ground - and it was great to be out in the field! We took a GPS reading on each site and located some new sites.

It is East Coast Forestry Project time again and I have been involved with Gisborne District Council in assessing land use consents.

The Gisborne Museum and Arts Centre have an ambitious project underway currently. In 1995 Weddel NZ announced the brick buildings on the foreshore were to be demolished. The buildings were on land that had been lived on or used as cultivated plots since the initial settlement of Turanga. Constraints were placed on archaeological research by the developer which ensured only a fleeting excavation. The exhibition entitled 'Footprints' will essentially take the form of a walk through a timeline demonstrating the change to that area of Kaiti Beach and the Turanganui River area making use of the artefacts located in that excavation. It has been curated and designed by Mike Spedding and Ian Smail who visited a number of museums in Australia to develop ideas for the exhibition of archaeological material. This exhibition opens on September 3rd and will be in place for 2-3 Years- See You there.

Pam Bain, DoC

## WELLINGTON

The major event of recent weeks here in Wellington has been the rediscovery

of part of the wreck of the *Inconstant*, also known as 'Plimmer's Ark', in the reclamation under the old BNZ buildings in central Wellington. The barque *Inconstant* was beached on the Wellington waterfront by John Plimmer in about 1850 for use as a warehouse and it was subsequently buried in a reclamation, parts emerging briefly in 1901 when the BNZ buildings were constructed. The BNZ complex is currently being refurbished for retail and residential space. The timbers are remarkably intact. Susan Forbes and Mary O'Keeffe cleaned down the wreck, and recorded and photographed it.

Artefacts recovered included many bottles, some still with corks intact, pottery inkpots, shoeleather, and felt and copper sheathing used for insulating the boat hull. The developer is keen to have part of the boat as a display piece in the completed complex; work is being undertaken to assess the viability and options for conservation and display. Two descendants of John Plimmer have visited the site and there was good coverage in the local press.

The Maritime Archaeology Association has undertaken an investigation of the wreck of the *Hydrabad* on Waitare Beach in Horowhenua. The wreck was measured and recorded and three metal samples were taken for analysis. The local residents want to relocate or "preserve" the wreck; the work undertaken by the maritime archaeology group has convinced the community that relocation or any other type of intervention are not possible due to the nature and instability of the metal.

Mary O'Keeffe has done an assessment of the archaeological resource in Kapiti District for Opus International, for an AEE for a new roading development going through.

Tony Walton, DoC

## CANTERBURY

Michael Trotter and Beverley McCulloch are occupying themselves (during what is fallaciously known as their 'retirement') in writing up the results of a long-standing backlog of (mostly) salvage archaeology and associated research. A paper on the Ward Lime Kilns has been published in the *Records of the Canterbury Museum*, and a major paper on the archaeology and history of Onewa Pa submitted for publication. A similar study of Kaiapoi Pa and its environs is in the process of gestation - this will include the results of five archaeological excavations dating from 1970.

Michael has also been working as a consultant for the Kaikoura District Council, monitoring work carried out during the development of new Whale Watch facilities at South Bay, and Michael and Bev jointly ran a summer 'dig' excavating the remains of an 1863 'cob' (adobe) cottage at Cust in North Canterbury with the assistance of the Cust and District Historical Society. It is possibly the first such cottage built by a Scottish settler to be investigated, at least in Canterbury.

Beverley McCulloch and Michael Trotter