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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

NORTHLAND

The extended summer and mild autumn have allowed fieldwork to continue over a longer period than usual. Adrienne Slocombe and James Robinson have completed a survey of the Waitangi National Reserve - all the scrubby bits that Clayton Fredericksen avoided in his preliminary survey of 1988. Clayton recorded 37 sites then and the recent survey added another 48 middens to the record. This should help reserve staff to avoid damage to sites during landscaping projects.

James and Adrienne have also undertaken an instrumental survey of Paetotara Pa, at Te Paki, and have rechecked the complex of pit, terrace and house sites that surround it. These were first recorded in the 1970s by Janet Davidson who considered that the pa was one of the most impressive in Te Paki. The survey will be the first step in positive conservation of the sites.

The groundcover trials adjacent to Ruapekapeka Pa and Ahipara dune sites have been mentioned in several previous issues. Plans are now underway to implement knowledge gained so far. During 1998 - 99 we intend to begin conservation work on a section of Ruapekapeka and a few of the most significant middens that are under threat.

We are also involved in the conservation of buildings administered by DoC. Conservation architect, Dave Pearson, has produced a condition report on Maxwell's Cottage. This is one of the few remaining kauri cottages in Northland built in the more permanent bushmen's style, and the only one on DoC land. Maxwell was the first caretaker of Waipoua Forest and of additional interest he was the great-grandfather of our Northland Filekeeper.

Stan Bartlett. We hope to begin remedial work on the building next year if finance is available.

Dave Pearson is also eager to visit Motuopao Lighthouse with us in the near future. James and I took a photographic record of the building and associated structures last year and were most impressed with the dramatic framework of the lighthouse. This was built in the 1870s; it was the first in Northland and for many years the northernmost in New Zealand. The light was transferred to Cape Reinga in 1941 but the base was left on the island. It is constructed of Australian ironwood and has survived remarkably well considering the exposed location and the neglect it has suffered. Our aim is to stabilise the existing structure rather than reconstruct it and we hope that Dave can provide a means of achieving this.

The latest on Ngunguru Sandspit - Contractors for Bob Green recently bulldozed a broad access road to the sandspit and tracks around the southern end of Green's property. Apparently only one member of tangata whenua gave him permission to cross Maori land. DoC staff were asked by HPT archaeologists and local Maori to assist with inspection of the damage. Eleven midden sites were destroyed or modified by bulldozing. By putting in tracks on his property Green contravened conditions of the authority given him by the HPT; he did not employ an archaeologist to inspect the area or to monitor the work.

Finally, most archaeologists who have worked in Northland will have known Jack Lee, our most notable local historian. Jack died recently after a brief period in a Kaikohe nursing home and we attended his funeral in the small historic church at Russell. It was a touching ceremony. With his usual attention to detail and intention to cause as few problems as possible he had left instructions on where and how the service was to be conducted, and inevitably he managed to have the last word in a prepared message to his family and friends. He was buried next to his wife in the cemetery at Long Beach overlooking the Bay of Islands.

Many of you will be familiar with Jack's books and the depth of research that preceded them. He was also extremely generous with the material he had collected and provided us with a wealth of information on every aspect of the the Bay of Islands and Hokianga history. While he could be dogmatic in his opinions he was in general a quiet and very unassuming person. His comments to me after we presented him with a Conservation Award for his

contributions to Northland's history were typical - "I don't know why you've given me this I only did it because I enjoyed it, in fact I've always enjoyed everything I've done". What more could you ask for.

Joan Maingay
Department of Conservation

AUCKLAND

For many of us, March and April were dominated by the Historic Heritage Management Review. Various meetings took place. There were public gatherings at the Fickling Centre and AIT hui (organised by the Historic Places Trust and DOC). Harry Allen devoted a seminar to the topic at Auckland University and the Auckland Regional Council held a full, daylong workshop involving a range of interested parties including planners, District Council and Iwi representatives, archaeologists and other heritage organisations. A final meeting focusing on archaeological values was hosted by the Department of Conservation. It certainly required all this talk and thought to feel equipped enough to tackle that questionnaire! Thank you to all those who proffered submissions as a result.

Memories of the Picton conference have barely begun to fade but arrangements for next year's conference are already well advanced. Lisa Matisoo-Smith and Dilys Johns are the organisers. Like the previous Auckland conference it will have an 'origins' theme and it is hoped to attract a broad range of speakers, resulting in the production of a book from the papers.

Our congratulations to Lisa also on her appointment to the position of Lecturer in Biological Anthropology, Auckland University. Another lectureship recently announced is to be taken up by Judith Littleton, whose specialities are palaeodemography and Australian and Middle Eastern prehistory.

The Auckland Archaeological Society has held two talks this year. The first by Shankar Aswani was about fieldwork on New Georgia in the Solomon Islands and the second was on the archaeology of agriculture in New Zealand by Sue Bulmer. Robert Brassey is to give the next talk on the 5th August on the Tiritiri Matangi Wharf site.

Amanda Young and Kim Tatton of the Auckland Historic Places Trust office have been commuting regularly to Wellington to assist in expediting the backlog of authority applications while the appointment of someone to assist Ian Barber is still pending. Following Amanda's initiation of social breakfast sessions last year, Sarah Ross (ARC) has taken up the challenge this year for getting us together and keeping up the momentum gained from the Heritage Review meetings. The current schedule is as follows:

Friday morning breakfasts: 8-9am at KXQ Cafe, cnr K'Road and Queen St on 3rd July, 4th Sept. and 6th August.

Thursday evening drinks: 5-7 pm at the Merchant Mezze Bar, cnr Queen St and Mayoral Drive on 6th August, 1st October and 3rd December.

Any suggestions or queries please contact Sarah (phone 377 4420) or Amanda Young (phone 307 0413).

The Geology Department Research Seminar given on the 1st May by Dr Phil Shane reported his recent work which is directly applicable to archaeology. Titled *Uses (and abuses) of tephra beds in archaeology in New Zealand and India*, it is particularly challenging about our use of Loiseles Pumice as a comparative dating horizon. Phil presented two case studies to illustrate potential pitfalls of using tephra (volcanic ash) beds 'to constrain age for a variety of geologic and archaeological events. The sea-rafted Loiseles Pumice together with the Taupo tephra has long been used to bracket the earliest charcoal assigned to human occupation in New Zealand. New geochemical data show that Loiseles Pumice represents numerous different eruptions in the northern Kermadec archipelago and thus cannot be used as a stratigraphic marker. New geochemical data and isothermal plateau fission-track ages on a distal rhyolite tephra in India associated with fossils Acheulian artefacts indicate that it is the product of the 74 ka Youngest Toba Tuff eruption of Sumatra and that many artefacts are not in situ.

Refurbishment continues apace at Auckland Museum. The 'People of the World' gallery is the latest area to be emptied and will make way for a New Zealand history display. Charles Berryman has been taken on to lead the conceptual development of the new Maori galleries. Approval in principle has been received from the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden to borrow from their Greek, Roman and Etruscan collections. A proposal will now be prepared for an international touring show managed by Auckland Museum and visiting Auckland in mid 1999.

Finally a brief word about the area in Kaipara being claimed by Noel Hilliam of Dargaville as that of a rumoured Waitaha village where a peaceful race, possibly South American, lived for about 1000 years before being chased out by Maori. The area has not been exhaustively surveyed by archaeologists but is close to land covered by John Coster and Gabrielle Johnston during their work for the Forest Service. The mound features are likely to be natural to this landscape but is of note that many Maori sites have been recorded adjacent to the area which is also known to have evidence of gum digging. Coster, John. 1980. *Pouto State Forest (2F Lease and Southern Section) Archaeological Site Survey 1978-80*. Unpublished Report, File A478/8, NZFS > Auckland. 12pp.

Kath Prickett
Auckland Museum

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND CONSERVATION LABORATORY

The laboratory has received a variety of waterlogged artefacts from Northland, Taranaki, Te Awamutu and Southland over the last few months, the latter being a 1.6m long canoe piece and associated pieces. Condition and ongoing treatment reports are currently being prepared for these artefacts.

I visited, and prepared a report for, Jack Fry and the Wellington City Council outlining treatment options which could be available to conserve a section of the ship 'Inconstant' which has been recovered from underneath the BNZ in Lambton Quay.

Late last year I attended the AICCM conference in Perth and was able to visit the Western Australian Museum conservation laboratories. Of particular interest were the wet organic laboratories in Fremantle. I have the conference programme and abstracts and will happily forward copies to anyone who is interested. Ph:373 7599 ex 8580, Fax:3737442 or email:d.johns@auckland.ac.nz

I have a paper in the 'Conservation in Practice' section of a book entitled *Hidden Dimensions: the cultural significance of wetland archaeology* [ed] K Bernick, which was published by the UBC Press, Vancouver, in January this year.

During March Harry Allen and myself gave presentations at a hui on the Urenui marae in Taranaki which covered topics such as New Zealand

examples of wet archaeological sites, their protection and conservation, cultural resource management and legislation in New Zealand and conservation of wet organic material in the laboratory and field.

Dilys Johns

Reports were only received from Northland and Auckland. Could this be the final proof that nothing significant happens south of the Bombay Hills? (ed.)