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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

NORTHLAND

We've spent a lot of time lately gazing at our new, super-sophisticated computers as they ask weird incomprehensible questions, seize up or completely break down wiping out a slaved over report. This has somewhat limited productivity. However a few things have been accomplished without hyped up modern technology.

Three historic workshop sessions have been held at Te Pahi, Russell and Kerikeri in the hope that more field staff will become aware of Northland's amazing historic legacy and make sure they don't put tracks through any of it. There has been a very positive reaction from staff who have asked for four or five pages setting out basic procedures for identification, recording and protection of historic places. They seem to consider this would be more useful than the 50 page prototype for a 'Protection Plan' developed in Wellington, so how can we refuse.

Another brief foray away from the computers involved test pitting along the route of a proposed fenceline at Bream Head. Practically the whole of this reserve is covered in remains of Maori occupation but the shoreline was suffering heavy stock erosion that was affecting both natural and archaeological values. Test pits and trenches revealed deep midden deposits consisting largely of huge pipi from the harbour, and also a well-preserved hangi with plenty of charcoal so carbon dates will give an indication of when the area was occupied.

The saga of re-vegetating Ruapekapeka continues. We let native grasses go to seed late last summer, collected the seed and have recently planted and fertilised parts of the site - a slow and painstaking process but the long term

results should be worthwhile. We are following the same regime at Butler Point pa, N7/70, where weeds have flourished since the site was excavated some years ago.

Some interesting projects are planned in the next few months. Excavations will be required before extensions are made to the Russell Visitor Centre and a carpark is developed on the adjoining property. Nineteenth century artefacts were retrieved when the visitor centre was first built and a Maori pa is shown in this area on an early survey plan. There is also an old well that James is determined to disappear down. Adie and I are quite happy to stay nearer the surface. Simon Best and Angela Middleton have offered to help, much to our delight, as Simon has had a great deal of experience on the Russell waterfront and Angela is basing her Ph.D. Thesis on Maori and European contact in the Bay of Islands.

Simon is also undertaking the excavation of a small wetland site south of Whangarei before a dam is constructed across the valley. A collection of wooden gardening tools was found here by the owner while cleaning out a culvert and with luck there may be more. If not, at least core samples can be obtained before the valley is flooded to add a little more to our relatively sparse knowledge of the archaeological sequence in the area.

Joan Maingay, DoC

AUCKLAND

Having just emerged from the cold of a late surge of winter weather, Auckland archaeologists are cool on reporting the last few months activities. Many have been buried in paperwork or routine things, too overloaded to communicate the results of their labours or battling with recurring flu.

However, Jeff Mosen of Bioresearches has a small project at Maygrove, Orewa to report. Hopper Developments Ltd contracted Bioresearches to undertake an archaeological investigation of a recorded shell midden (R10/782) at Maygrove, a new suburb located in behind Orewa. The site was excavated in July and numerous features were uncovered including firescoops, postholes and stake holes. Recovered artefacts consisted of a complete adze, chert pieces and obsidian flakes. Four C14 samples have been submitted for dating. A report detailing the results of this excavation is in preparation and should be out by the end of September.

Jeff, by the way, is leaving Bioresarches to take up a business opportunity. He will be a loss to the archaeological community as he has been well organised in getting his reports into the professional arena and registering artefacts and providing for their future curation.

The University of Auckland Archaeological Society have continued their programme; the most recent speaker being Rod Clough on Tamaki archaeology and the Waipuna Site. The next speaker will be Harry Allen who will be talking on the 29th September about the results of the field school excavation at Butler's Store Site, Mangonui. On November 14th a field trip led by Dr Bruce Hayward has been organised to view kauri logging and milling sites in the Waitakere Ranges. (For further details, contact Peter Sheppard, Department of Anthropology, ph. (09) 373 7599 x 8572)

Of great delight to those of us getting a bit longer in the tooth (and a few youngsters come to view 'the legend') was the flying visit of the famous Les Groube. On the 6th July Les gave a lecture to a largish gathering of mostly the mature and 'elders' section of the Auckland archaeological fraternity. His subject, "Infectious diseases and the role of women in prehistory" was stimulating in the expected Groubian tradition and a number of people remarked that Les himself looked pretty good for having left the low-lying swamps.

Rob Brassey reports that he will be taking 6 months parental leave from the 1st September but will be contactable at home by phone or e-mail (rbrassey@clear.net.nz)

The Queens's Redoubt Trust is now up and running and its first "Newsletter" has been produced. Lottery Environment and Heritage have granted \$100,000 to the Trust for the purposes of land purchase. The grant can now be used as seeding money to approach other agencies to assist with this aim. For a copy of the newsletter or further information contact Kim Tatton (ph (09) 307 04130 or Amanda Young(ph (09) 307 0414) c/ - NZHPT, PO Box 105 - 291, Auckland; e-mail HPT.archaeologist@xtra.co.nz

Kath Prickett, Auckland Museum

WAIKATO – COROMANDEL

There is very little of archaeological note happening in this part of the world, apart from redoubt excavations in the vicinity of Pirongia.

A major excavation of the British redoubt at Pirongia east (S15/375 was carried out under the direction of Warren Gumbley for the Historic Places Trust in 1998. No information about the investigations are available. Excavation was precipitated by a decision of Waipa District Council to terminate over a century of public ownership of the site by subdividing and selling as residential sections. Sale of the sections is on hold at present as the Council faces strong opposition from the Pirongia Residents & Ratepayers Association to destruction of the site.

The controversy surrounding Pirongia East redoubt has led to a sudden increase in and concern about other important sites in the vicinity of Pirongia, and in particular the Alexandra Armed Constabulary redoubt S15/28, and Matakītaki, a very large pa, S15/2.

At the Armed Constabulary redoubt excavations are being carried under a section 18 authority by Les Vuletich, Richard Paul with and others, with overall direction by Warren Gumbley. The work began in May 1999 and is expected to continue for several months. Preliminary investigation with metal probes revealed the locations of several previously unknown rubbish pits in close proximity to the east wall of the redoubt. These pits are being excavated and are yielding considerable quantities of artifactual material, including metal wax-vesta boxes, canned food items, bottles, crockery, a cooking pot, leather boots, buttons, portions of clothing, a powder flask and bullets. There are also remains of flax baskets – which presumably once held supplies purchased locally – and woven flax floor coverings(?) There are large quantities of beef bones and much smaller amounts of sheep and pig bone. Oyster shells, pumpkin seeds, peach stones and burnt peas are also being collected.

Matakītaki was the scene of a battle in 1822 between Tainui tribes and Nga Puhi invaders. It was the first time the Tainui people faced muskets, and they were decisively defeated. The land is supposed to be a recreation reserve, administered by Waipa District Council, but is used solely for grazing purposes, with cattle causing some damage to the fortifications. Purekireki Marae is taking the initiative in the development of a proper management plan for this important site, with support from the Pirongia Ratepayers Association. Purekireki Marae Komiti is also supporting efforts to save the Pirongia East redoubt.

BAY OF PLENTY

Little in the way of major fieldwork projects has happened over the last three months in the Bay of Plenty. Winter is a time when the Regional Council (EBoP) put a stop to large-scale earthworks and so for most archaeologists it's a time for consolidation and report writing.

Ray Hooker has recently undertaken a survey of the Hidden Gorge and Omanawa Scenic Reserves, inland from Tauranga, for DOC. A total of 10 sites were checked and four new sites were recorded – and these included: seven pa sites, three middens, three pits and an historic tramway and tunnel. A number of the pa sites have extremely well-defined defence systems, with a couple having ditches that are 2-3 m wide and 4-6 m deep.

Ray Hooker continues to work in the western Bay of Plenty area. Recently he has recorded several more pa sites in the Tarawera Forest as a precursor to forestry operations. This whole area had been planted over in the late 60s to early 70s with hardly any regard to archaeological values. As more and more of the compartments become ready for harvesting, Ray is likely to record numerous additional sites. One reassuring factor that comes out of this is that Fletchers have a policy of not replanting identified and recorded archaeological sites.

Ken Phillips and Warren Gumbley have recently undertaken a large-scale survey of the land east from Papamoa East through to the mouth of the Kaituna River, with the loop of the Kaituna forming the southern boundary. This land is all zoned “future urban” and is held in three large holdings – one Maori and two private trusts. Their preliminary findings show that the band of garden soils that Warren has recorded right along the Papamoa dune plain, between the houses and the palaeochannel, runs out about 500m east of the current housing. There is a change of focus from that point through to the mouth of the Kaituna whereby the first high dune ridge north of the loop of the river (which formed the southern boundary of the survey area) has middens and terrace features along its length, as well as two pa sites. The coastal dune systems contain large quantities of deflated middens which are mostly comprised of ostrich foot (*Struthiolaria papulosa*) and tuatua (*Paphies subtriangulatum*).

Ken Phillips has also been working on a number of smaller subdivisions around the Whakatane District, including a reworked Ohope Waterworks proposal at Ohiwa Harbour – minus the canals.

Ken Phillips and Barbara Proctor have undertaken preliminary excavations at the 1880s Athenree Homestead in the western Bay. This homestead was occupied by Adela Stewart from the 1880s through to 1900 who later wrote of her experiences in a book entitled "*My Simple Life in New Zealand*". Further excavations are planned for this summer.

Rick McGovern-Wilson, DoC

EAST COAST

Work continues on the NZAA upgrade project with input recently from Ken Phillips, Brenda Sewell and Mary O'Keeffe. Iwi groups who have been involved are very supportive of the work and Gisborne District Council and DoC continue their logistical support. A process is being developed which may act as a template for the rest of the country. Work in Ngai Tamanuhiri and Te Aitanga a Mahaki rohe is largely completed, Rongowhakaata will begin in Sept and discussions are underway with Ngati Porou and Ngati Konohi.

Cook Landing Site National Historic Reserve

Submitters to the District Plan have been in mediation for some time. It has been recommended that a feasibility study to look at the viability and financial management issues associated with on site interpretation options be pursued.

Pam Bain, DoC

HAWKES BAY

I will be going to Wanganui for an eleven month stint as temporary Historic Resources person for the Wanganui Conservancy. Robyn Burgess is taking a year's maternity leave. However after discussions with Chris Jacomb and Tony Walton I have decided to retain the Hawke's Bay file as I am intending to return to Hawke's Bay at the end of June 2000 and I will be returning to Napier regularly during the year.

Photographer Adrienne Martyn is exhibiting her wonderful, abstract photographs of Otatara Pa at the Hawke's Bay Museum in Napier at present. I assisted the project by curating a historical overview of Otatara Pa Historic Reserve so that the photographs could be viewed within a traditional, historical and archaeological framework. The Exhibition was opened by Ngati Paarau of Waiohiki Marae who are the kaitiaki of Otatara because their marae sits in its shadow.

Recently we took the East Coast Hawke's Bay Conservation Board to visit Otatara Pa Historic Reserve because they are now reviewing the Draft Conservation Management Plan. It was a beautiful day and the Board enjoyed the experience and was most impressed by this enormous site.

Elizabeth Pischief

WELLINGTON

With the Department of Conservation financial year ending on 30 June, Science & Research Unit (SRU) staff have been busy winding up old projects and getting new ones under way. A backlog of Site Record Forms has been cleared and CINZAS is again fully up to date. At last, we have a complete ACCESS95 database of site survey reports in the Central File collection. The reports have been indexed by author, title, date, local body and map sheet etc. CINZAS is on the move over the next 8-10 months: the data will be moved to an ACCESS97 database as an interim measure in August, and will migrate to a new database early next year. It has proved a particularly busy time for internal and external requests for information, otherwise things pretty much roll on as before.

Bruce McFadgen has been spending a lot of his time on a major project on the ramifications of climate change, effectively diverting him from historic resources work for a period. Ann Williams is working on a number of Tongariro/Taupo Conservancy issues, including a report on rock art and preparing a review of the history and a statement of significance for the Opepe Bush Scenic and Historic Reserve for publication. Her future programme includes preparing the Otago Archaeological Resource Statement, written by Jill Hamel, for publication and involvement in the visitor satisfaction monitoring methodology research project led by Gordon Cessford (SRU).

Kevin Jones, Tony Walton and a volunteer visited Taranaki from 3 to 7 May to complete condition reports on four pa (Okoki, Urenui, Puketarata, Tapuinikau) in historic reserves. This work is part of the earthworks monitoring project which aims to improve the management and monitoring of earthwork sites. One focus is on improving the level of documentation of fabric and values. The pa visited were those mapped by Warren Gumbley under contract to DOC in 1996. Notes on vegetation and damage or potential damage were indexed on the plans. These will be filed and inspections repeated at intervals. Summary results will be incorporated in Conservation

Plans when they are produced.

The visit also provided an opportunity for a second meeting was held with Pukerangiora hapu over the Conservation Plan for the Pukerangiora Pa Historic Reserve. The upgrading of the adjacent road by the District Council was an issue as the proposed work impinges slightly on the reserve but the work provides an opportunity to learn more about the site and will also reconcile a difference between the fenced and the actual legal boundary along the road reserve.

Warren Gumbley mapped a further two pa (Nganana and Te Awa-te-take) in 1998 and SRU is currently editing and drafting this work for publication. Mapping is a research tool and a prerequisite to better management and interpretation.

Tony Walton, DOC

CANTERBURY

Our only fieldwork of note this last three months has been a site survey on Quail Island in Lyttleton Harbour. This was to enable us to compile a report that was commissioned by the Department of Conservation who wished us to assess the effects of a proposed planting programme on the island's archaeological and historic sites.

Quail Island has a fascinating history; among other things it was used as a quarantine station for both humans and animals and it includes the site of New Zealand's only leper colony as well as the sites where Scott and others kept dogs and ponies used for their Antarctic expeditions.

This is the first such survey to have been carried out on Quail Island. At present we have surveyed only those areas where planting is proposed, but we hope to cover the rest of the island later this year with the ultimate aim of publishing a comprehensive report.

Michael Trotter and Beverley McCulloch