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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

AUCKLAND

Here is just a sample of the many activities that have been taking place in the Auckland area.

Our congratulations to Peter Pearce who has won a Royal Society Teacher Fellowship to study ways of presenting archaeology to school students. He will be working closely with the University of Auckland Anthropology Department.

Simon Best's current work has involved the excavation of two well sites; one at the Deanery, Parnell with an 1860s date and the other in the Durham Street area revealing a rich slice of 1840's life in early Auckland. The Durham Street well has so far produced about 1,130 bottles (about 5% are complete) from the 1850 – 1870 period. Most astonishing is the recovery, yesterday, of an intact beer bottle complete with perfectly preserved cork and contents - and yes, it still retains its froth. A restraining order has been issued to forbid any sampling attempts! He has also been working at Purakau in the Hokianga at the site of the 1839 Catholic Mission. This is where Bishop Pompallier's mortal remains are to be laid to rest in January 2002.

Auckland Regional Council archaeologists Robert Brassey, Sarah Ross and Ian Lawlor recently carried out an assessment of the Sandy Bay rock shelter on Kawau Island. Over the last 40 years or so an extensive cultural deposit at the site has been almost entirely eroded away by the sea. However a small remnant of midden right at the back of the cave was found to be intact and in a good state of preservation. A radiocarbon date has been obtained and the results will be reported shortly.

James Goff, Bruce McFadgen and Scott Nichol have been looking at possible archaeological evidence for tsunami events in coastal sites in the Auckland area. Evidence uncovered during the 1997 investigation of the archaic site near the Tiri Tiri Matangi Island wharf was inspected and confirmed by James as being consistent with this interpretation. It parallels findings from other regions reported by James and Bruce at the NZAA Conference earlier this year

Caroline Phillips launched her book, *Waihou Journeys*, at Waipapa Marae, University of Auckland, on the evening of the 12 October. It was wonderful to see all those who had travelled from Te Pai o Hauraki Marae for the occasion.

Stuart Bedford is now established as regional archaeologist at the Auckland office of the NZHPT, where John Coster had been holding the fort since Kim Tatton's departure.

Garry Law has been spending an afternoon a week recently working on the Auckland site record file, to maintain the facility in good order. We are very grateful for his input as it has been difficult for Sarah MacCready to spend enough time on this now that archaeological staffing levels are so low.

Simon Holdaway of the University of Auckland, has recently secured a grant of \$50,000 from Virtual Auckland – the Vice Chancellor's Development Fund. More details in the next issue.

Auckland Archaeological Society has a new committee for 2001.

Chairman	Peter Sheppard
President	Angel Middleton
Treasurer	Janice Fraser
Secretary	Jennifer Low

Membership fees remain at \$10 for 2001. To join/rejoin send payment to Auckland Archaeological Society, C/- Department of Anthropology, University of Auckland.

An inaugural meeting of the Auckland Branch of NZAA was held on the 20th September at the University of Auckland Anthropology Department. About 24 people were able to attend and agreed that there is a need for such a group and that they will continue to meet regularly. Sarah Ross took minutes of the meeting. These will shortly be circulated along with notice of the next meeting to be held in early December.

Kath Prickett, Auckland Museum

WELLINGTON

The Science and Research Unit (SRU) of Department of Conservation has moved to the 3rd Floor of the City Library building at 65 Victoria Street. The building is centrally located and has a wonderful view over Civic Square. Besides open plan areas for staff, the NZAA Central File is housed in a separate archaeology workroom of about 30 square metres. Staff are now well established and work patterns are adapting to the new circumstances.

In September SRU hosted Dwight Pitcaithley, U.S. National Park Service Chief Historian. He gave a seminar on *U.S. historic heritage interpretation: vision and practice*. Dr Pitcaithley has been visiting historic places in different parts of the country and was taken on the standard tour of Parliament Buildings in Wellington.

A draft of the site conservation guidelines has been finalised by Kevin Jones and co-authors Derek Gosling and Dianne Harlow and will be discussed more widely with the Historic Places Trust, Maori Heritage Council, and DOC staff in the next few months. A literature is developing world wide on how to manage archaeological sites and two recent publications from the Ancient Monument Division of Historic Scotland have some relevance to New Zealand circumstances. They are: Dunwell, A.J. and R.C. Trout (1999) *Burrowing animals and archaeology*, Historic Scotland Technical Advice Note 16 and Reeves, T and C. Mills (1999) *Bracken and archaeology*, Historic Scotland Technical Advice Note 17.

Kevin Jones has been in Aberdeen for the Aerial Archaeology Research Group conference and also took the time for discussions with county archaeologists, English Heritage, and the Association of Heritage Interpretation on matters such as historic landscapes, site conservation and monitoring and hillfort interpretation. E-mail kljones@doc.govt.nz if you would like his report on these visits.

Recent SRU archaeology publications include Gumbley (2000); Jopson and McKibbin (2000) and Walton (2000). See list of recent reports and publications.

In early September Karen Grieg of NZHPT directed excavations at R26/24 at a large midden site at Henderson's Point on the Pauatahanui Inlet. The site will be destroyed by a re-alignment of the roadway.

Mary O'Keeffe has been doing more NZAA upgrade fieldwork, this time in Timaru and Mackenzie districts. Katharine Watson worked with her for some of the time. Timaru followed the patterns seen elsewhere in coastal Canterbury, where the wide river flats have been repeatedly ploughed for many years to clear them of the water-rolled cobbles, resulting in almost complete destruction of sites - which are predominantly ovens. Mackenzie was beautiful in late winter, perfect weather, snow-capped mountains, a recent snowfall with the compulsory snowball fight, and very interesting sites. Fieldwork can be hell.

Mary has been doing pieces of work for Transit around Wellington and in South Taranaki and organised a group of divers to survey around the wharf on Matiu/Somes Island in Wellington Harbour, for DOC. Recent maintenance work on the wharf indicated the presence of a number of artefacts around the wharf. However the silt prevented the divers from locating artefacts, so instead they identified and began mapping the remains of some copper-sheathed piles of another structure, presumably a wharf, beside the existing wharf.

Mary is attending the AIMA/ASHA conference in Adelaide in late November, where she will be giving a paper on the Inconstant project, tested against ICOMOS's recently ratified cultural tourism charter. In the same trip Mary will be speaking at a conference on World Heritage organised by Australia ICOMOS.

Tony Walton, DoC