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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

NORTHLAND

With a new face on the team, work with the Department of Conservation in Northland, continues at what appears to be its normal, hectic pace. After a short stint with the Historic Places Trust in Tauranga, Cathy Barr has accepted the mammoth task of trying to replace Joan Maingay, who retired in June of last year. Thankfully, Joan is currently working one day a week for the Department, providing guidance and the occasional words of wisdom.

James has just returned from another trip to the Three Kings, completing the survey of sites on the islands, with the assistance of Kim Tatton. In addition to the usual DoC bods looking at plants and birds, several representatives of Ngati Kuri were able to spend some time on the island, and provided James with the opportunity to talk to them about the work that the archaeologists are doing in the area. This should be the last trip to the Kings for survey work for some time.

Linked with the trip to the Kings, James, Cathy, Kim and Peter Reed from Salmond Reed Architects managed to get out to Motuopao to inspect the lighthouse. Built in 1879, the light was decommissioned in 1940, at which time the light was moved to Cape Reinga. All that remains is the wooden base of the structure, built of kauri and Australian ironwood. Over the years the structure of the building has deteriorated, to the point that unless some stabilisation work is done soon, all will be lost in a big gust of wind (and this is a very windy spot!!). We are now looking at ways of carrying out some emergency work that will hold things together while a long-term plan is formulated.

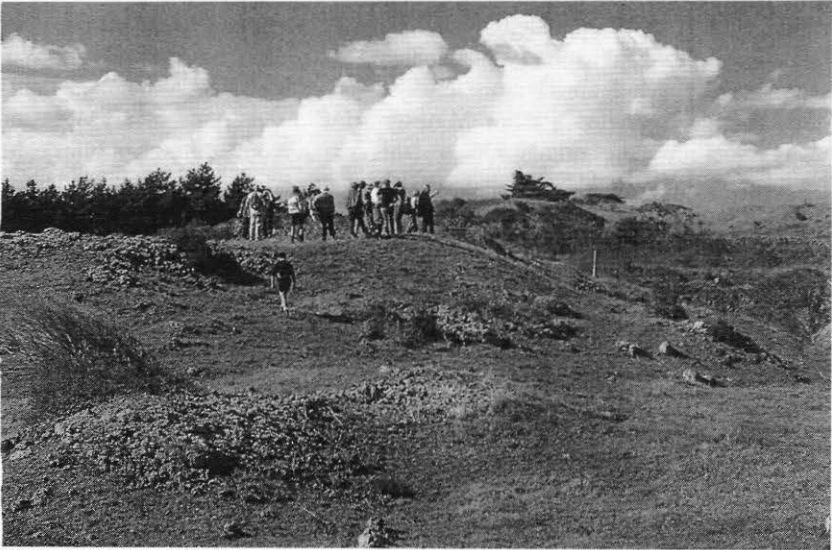
Adi, Cathy and Joan managed one day over in the Hokianga during the University Field School, providing an opportunity to do some real archaeology. Excavations were at Purakau, the site of the first Catholic Mission in the Hokianga, and revealed a number of features associated with the mission, as

well as several miraculous medals. We look forward to the possibility of further work at the site, and promise to stay for more than a couple of hours next time.

Cathryn Barr. Doc

AUCKLAND

The official opening of the Otuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve on Saturday 10th February was a bittersweet occasion for archaeology. It was the tangible culmination of success at securing and presenting a magnificent heritage resource; safe for the future at last. Not far off however, lie the equally worthy Matukuturua stonefields, the court proceedings over which precipitated action to acquire Otuataua, and which are now under serious threat. Helen Clarke and other government representatives were present for the opening. Let's hope she now has a better understanding of the threats to Auckland's archaeological heritage. Congratulations and thanks go to all those who made the opening such a notable event and particularly to the battlers who have fought long and hard to have this dream come true.



*The opening of the Otuataua Stonefields Historic Reserve, 10th Feb. 2001.
Photo: ARC/Alastair Jamieson*

Sarah Ross reports for the **Auckland Regional Council** that gearing up for the Otuaatua Stonefields Reserve opening weekend required a great deal of staff time and energy. It was a successful day and we had a good turnout from the public. We are in the final stages of completing the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Network for the Auckland region, a document that will be released soon to those who attended the forum last June. We have received funding from the Ministry for the Environment to continue this project as they see it as an important part of their national monitoring programme.

Matt Felgate has been carrying out a survey of World War II anti-invasion and local coast defence sites in the Auckland region for the ARC Heritage Department. Around 90 previously unrecorded pillboxes, searchlight emplacements, tank traps etc. have been recorded and will be entered into the ARC Cultural Heritage Inventory and NZAA site record file. A significant number of these WWII sites have been destroyed over the last two decades by development or coastal erosion, and the survey will help identify priorities for long term preservation.

NZAA Auckland Branch News

The last meeting was held on 14 December 2000, combining pre-Christmas drinks with a discussion, led by Ian Lawlor, about the latest proposal by Winstone Aggregates to quarry the remaining Matukutureia stonefields and Wiri (McLaughlins) Mountain. Discussion focussed on how NZAA members could help by corresponding to the Minister of Conservation, local MPs and Councillors about the heritage values of this area. It is only through public desire for preservation of this site that it will be protected. The heritage values (archaeological, geological, botanical and ecological) need to be emphasised so that they are prominent in decisionmakers minds.

Next meeting of NZAA Auckland Branch:

Tues 3rd April 2001 at 7pm for 7.30 start.

Venue – University of Auckland Anthropology Department, tearoom. 8th floor.
 Speaker – Alistair Jamieson, photographer, will show some of his fabulous aerial photos of Auckland's volcanic cones and their archaeological features (with tips on how to achieve these results). Alistair is responsible for the photography on the ARC Heritage Landscapes poster and postcard series.

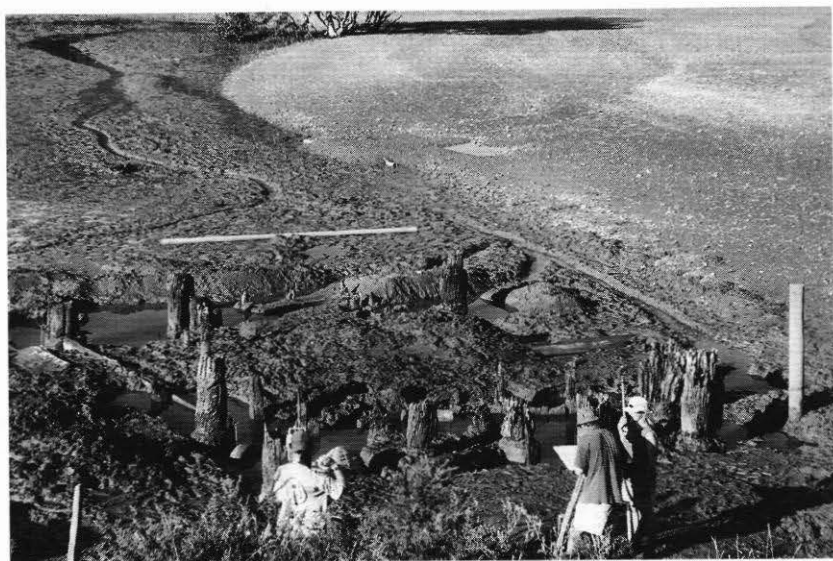
Auckland University News (from Keay Burridge)

After winding up their field programme on Great Barrier Island, the Centre for Archaeological Research (CAR) FoRST project investigated the possibility of doing some fieldwork at Patua South, near Whangarei, in November. Unfortunately the site had been extensively modified some years ago, so they

are currently pursuing other sites to investigate. Reports will soon be out on the CAR website at <http://www.car.auckland.ac.nz>

The Auckland University Anthropology Department and Centre for Archaeological Research and CAR hosted the Australasian Archaeometry Conference 2001 from 5-9 February. The conference was well attended, with delegates coming from all over Australia and New Zealand and as far away as Argentina, Mexico, Canada, England, Ireland and Hungary. The four days of sessions provided some interesting discussions and the field trip took the out of town delegates on a tour of One Tree Hill and the Auckland War Memorial Museum (thanks to Sue Bulmer and Nigel Prickett who acted as tour guides).

The Anthropology Department's annual Field School ran from 3-19 February at Purakau, North Hokianga, at the site of the 1839 Catholic Hokianga Mission. Harry Allen, Simon Best, Rod Wallace and Angela Middleton supervised sixteen undergraduate and graduate students.



Flourmill (tidal powered) site excavated by the Auckland University Field School, Purakau, North Hokianga. Photo: Angela Middleton

The site consists of a series of terraces, middens, and the foundations of a flourmill. The class excavated three main areas – the remains of two chapels and

a house on Chapel Spur, surrounding midden deposits, and the mill site. The excavation of Chapel Spur recovered items directly connected to the mission, including two medals, a small crucifix and a glass seal from a bottle of Chateau Lafite.

Simon and Rod ran the excavation of the mill site at low tide. Built in 1840 by Father Petit, the structure is unique as it is the only tidal powered mill in the country. Preservation below low tide mark was excellent enabling the water control and milling mechanisms to be revealed. Analysis by the students of material recovered will be ongoing throughout the first semester.

Auckland Museum

At 1.05 am on the 30 January, burglars crowbarred open the heavy outer west side doors of the museum, smashed through two sets of glass doors and the display case, to grab a pre-Colombian gold frog then exit, alarms screaming, before police and security could stop them. Not long after, Nigel Prickett was phoned to inform him of the theft. He was able to reassure everyone that the stolen frog was a replica, not the original 800-1200 AD frog from Panama, belonging to the Sir George Grey collection. Although the intention had been to display the authentic version, the Archaeology staff decided at the last minute to substitute it for the replica, being mindful that other institutions had lost and not recovered pre-Colombian gold items. The replica glitters more than real gold. Keep a watch for this piece; it may turn up in a future excavation - in fragmentary condition!

Kath Prickett, Auckland Museum

EAST COAST

As part of a nation wide programme at the moment the Dept. of Conservation is undertaking condition reports and completing maintenance schedules for the archaeological sites we manage. It is proving an interesting task looking at the cost of maintaining these places. Elizabeth Pishief is also doing one for the museum at Aniwanuiwa looking at future requirements and maintenance costs.

We have been involved in an attempt to purchase land surrounding Otatara Pa which includes part of the pa and other associated sites which it was hoped would be added to the Historic Reserve. This is floundering at the moment for lack of finance so if anyone has some ideas they would be greatly appreciated. Elizabeth has also been involved in consultation with iwi over research recently completed by Kevin Jones on the archaeology of Southern Hawkes Bay from the air and it is hoped to have this report published soon.

Pam Bain, DoC

WELLINGTON

Recent archaeology publications by Science and Research Unit or its staff include Jones (2000), Leathwick (2000), Lowe and others (2000), Walton and Bagley (2000), and Williams and Tupara (2000). See list of recent reports and publications. The Williams and Tupara publication is particularly important for the attention it draws to the rock art of the Central North Island. Current understanding of the rock art of this area is based on knowledge of well-known sites such as Rua Hoata and Waihi, but many more sites exist. The art is often rather minimalist and enigmatic and has generally attracted little attention. This report summarises the results of a first attempt to study these sites, and their conservation needs, in more detail.

In early February Kevin Jones, Mary O'Keeffe, and Chris Edkins teamed up with some conservancy staff to map parts of the Waipuku quarry complex in the Egmont National Park near Stratford. The site complex, dating from c.1900, is focussed on a concrete crusher foundation 83 m long and averaging 4 m in height. Two crushers were driven by 6' pelton wheels. Other elements of the site are an extensive railway system with many bridge foundations and a sand trap to clear the water for the pelton wheels. While in Taranaki, Kevin and Chris also took aerial photos of Kaupokonui, Rewarewa and many of the pa on the lahar mounds near Cape Egmont.

At the Australasian Archaeometry Conference held in Auckland in early February two papers were presented on the results of research into the old radiocarbon ages of kiore. The first paper, by Nancy Beavan and Rodger Sparks (both IGNS) and Bruce McFadgen (DOC), examined the effects of diet on rat ages and showed that diet can have a major effect on the apparent ages of animals. Modern rats living at the southern end of Lake Taupo were depleted in radiocarbon and one rat had returned a "radiocarbon age" of c.2100 years. The second paper, by Richard Holdaway, presented data from a rock shelter in Otago that indicated an age for kiore bones of about 2000 years in circumstances where the possibility of diet affecting the age of the bones was not an issue. The data included dates on kiore bones, dates on two species of herbivorous birds, and OSL (Optically Stimulated Luminescence) dates on the actual sediments that comprised the stratigraphy in which the bones were found. All were consistent.

A third paper into the effects of catastrophic events of the mid 15th century (Alpine Fault rupture, river aggradation, coastal dune advance, and tsunami) on prehistoric Maori coastal communities generated considerable interest. Some coastal archaeological sites have evidence of what appears to be a salt-water inundation at about this time although whether the inundation is a widespread

tsunami event is still to be determined. There is a good story about New Zealand's violent landscape to be unravelled here, one which has implications for interpretation of historic resources and the natural environment, and the interaction between the two.

NZHPT Archaeologist Karen Greig attended a training course based in Nara, Japan, late last year. The course was titled "The Survey and Restoration of Historic Monuments" and was a joint initiative by UNESCO and the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs. The course covered a wide range of topics, including international law for the protection of cultural heritage, world heritage sites, archaeological site management and conservation techniques for stone and wooden buildings.

Tony Walton, DoC

CANTERBURY AND MARLBOROUGH

Towards the end of last year when the Department of Conservation wished to replace and extend an old fence in a Raincliff, South Canterbury, Maori rock art shelter (J38/56) with one of a "more appropriate style", we were asked to provide advice on, and to monitor, aspects of its erection that might affect the archaeological components of the site. The local runanga, Te Runaka o Arowhenua (notice lower South Island spelling), expressed the wish to receive all the cultural material on their marae prior to depositing it in the Timaru Museum.

The installation of a fibre-optic cable by TelstraSaturn for 23 kilometres at Kaikoura, was completed in January this year. Our involvement covered an archaeological appraisal, meetings with the Kaikoura runanga, preparation of an application to the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, and monitoring the actual trenching through four sites O31/14, O31/76, O32/48 and O32/8. At the last site, Omihi, we were not available at the time the contractors wanted to start work before Christmas, and Amanda Young kindly stepped in for a couple of days. In the New Year, when trenching was to resume, neither Amanda or we were available, and the final day's work was monitored by Reg Nichols.

Disturbed and undisturbed occupational material was found of all sites, and while it "contributes to the understanding of New Zealand's past" there was nothing of major significance. The great fear, held by runanga and contractors alike, was that burials might be uncovered at Omihi, a site that has had a unfortunate history of disturbances to burials. In the event none were found.

We have just received notification from the Waimakariri District Council that our submission that the District Plan include listings and locations of archaeological sites in the District has been rejected on the grounds that it is not their business and that it duplicates the work of the Historic Places Trust.

We were greatly saddened when Kaikoura upoko runanga, Wiremu Solomon, died on 9 February. We had had many dealings with Bill (as he preferred to be known) over the years, starting with monitoring the bulldozing of part of an urupa at Omihi in 1977. It has never been clear why this was sanctioned by the Trust authorities of that time, but Michael was notified and found himself in the position of collecting the bones of over twenty people when Bill arrived to assist. (His father had fought for years before that to try to get the Omihi urupa protected.)

We worked together with Bill at two 'digs' at Takahanga Pa (O31/63) in 1980 and 1982 where the Kaikoura runanga carried out excavations under our direction – he was featured on the cover of *NZAA Newsletter* 23 (2) standing beside the excavation. And there were many, many other times when we consulted Bill – or he consulted us – about Kaikoura archaeological sites. One of the last things he did (in the archaeology line) was to write an impassioned letter to the Trust pleading that the remaining Omihi burials remain undisturbed.

We have lost a great friend.

Michael Trotter and Beverley McCulloch

OCEANIA

Solomon Islands

In November-December, 2000, Peter Sheppard and Richard Walter continued their research into the Prehistory of the Western Solomons by conducting a three week field survey and excavation on the island of Rannonga, located west of the Provincial capital of Gizo. It was originally hoped that the series of terraces reported from the island would provide useful contexts for the investigation of the Pleistocene occupation of the Solomons. Unfortunately the terraces are not raised reef deposits which might contain rock shelters and caves but terraces apparently formed by the differential weathering of the underlying volcanic sandstone and shelters are virtually absent. We did manage to map a series of late prehistoric shrines and feasting platforms in the area of Naiame Village and conduct test excavation along the edge of a large (>80 m) feasting platform. Excavation provided a series of ceramic samples which can be dated and used to help with our understanding of the late prehistoric ceramic series in the region. Despite various adventures in dug out canoes in stormy seas, with drunken militia and four people being shot in our hotel in Gizo, an interesting time was had by all.

Excavations at a Lapita site on Naigani, Fiji.

In April 2000 Geoff Irwin and Simon Best together with six graduate students from Auckland and staff from the Fiji Museum carried out excavations at the site of VL 21/5 on Naigani Island, Fiji. The site was originally discovered during the construction of a resort on the island. This was brought to the attention of Roger Green and then Simon Best made extensive test excavations in 1981. At the time the material evidence of the site seemed very early for Fiji, although it was anomalous that other Lapita sites were producing earlier C14 dates. Now the C14 for Fiji has been up-dated and Naigani stands as a very early site in terms of radiocarbon as well.

In April the team had to spend a few days relocating the Lapita deposit because of substantial bulldozing since 1981. An area excavation was opened up in what had been an extensive cooking area on the former beach. There were many ovens, some of which still contained extremely large *trochus* shells. It looked like the initial exploitation of local resources. Quantities of bone were recovered and flake material. A third flake of obsidian, which is likely to be from the Bismarck Archipelago, now joins two others found in 1981. Among the pottery are designs normally described as Western (or Middle) Lapita, which reinforces the picture of an initial settlement site. Laboratory work is in progress. Two MA projects are being carried out by Jonathan Carpenter on the pottery and by Stuart Hawkins on the fishbone.

Thegn Ladefoged has just returned from fieldwork on Easter Island. A report will be published in the June issue.

Conference on Eastern Polynesian Archaeology Report

An international conference on East Polynesian archaeology was held from 24 November to 2 December 2000 at the Richard Gump Research Station, Mo'orea, French Polynesia. Organised by Eric Conte (Université de Polynésie française) and Pat Kirch (University of California at Berkeley), the conference was supported by a grant from the Fonds France-Berkeley fund and included sessions on: problems in the colonization of eastern Polynesia; settlement patterns and household archaeology; ethnoarchaeology, ancient economies and research strategies; issues of cultural patrimony and site preservation; and concluded with a half-day discussion concerning future research priorities in eastern Polynesia. Three and a half days of papers were followed each evening with lively discussions, and an afternoon field trip was made to visit sites nearby in the 'Opunohu valley—where Roger Green, in 1960, conducted the first settlement pattern study coupled with excavations in French Polynesia. These events were followed with a cocktail reception and buffet in Papeete sponsored by Madame

Louise Peltzer (Minister of Culture) and Sylvie André, president of the Université de Polynésie française. The hospitality of Neil Davis (Director of the Gump Research Station) and the superb cooks on his staff will not soon be forgotten.

Marshall Weisler



Conference participants included Eric Conte, Pat Kirch, Roger Green, Pierre Verin, Pierre Ottino, Atholl Anderson, Jean-Michel Chazine, Marshall Weisler, Claudio Cristino, Barry Rolett, Melinda Allen, Eric Komori, Yosi Sinoto, Joseph Tchong, Christophe Sand and Patricia Vargas, with invited guests Marimari Kellum, Mark Eddowes, Neil Davies, J.-M. Dubois, and students Sidsel Millerstrom, Hinanui Cauchois and Tamara Maric. Pictured here also are members of the French research station on Mo'orea.