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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Auckland

Auckland Regional Council

Vanessa Tanner, Charlotte Judge and Edith Tuhimata spent several weeks this summer undertaking a survey of the coastline of the Awhitu Peninsula between Orua Bay and Waiuku. The Awhitu Peninsula was identified by Kim Tatton during a review in 2000 as a high priority area for archaeological survey as very little of the peninsula has been systematically surveyed, and where archaeological survey has occurred, high concentrations of sites have been recorded. 76 new sites were recorded during the present coastal survey. As expected sites are predominantly shell middens. Also recorded are a number of historic buildings or building sites, an historic orchard, evidence of gumdigging, wharves, landing sites and a previously unrecorded pa.

University of Auckland

The summer field school was taking place at Bell Block, Taranaki at the time of writing; the period of student input having ended but another two weeks still required of contracted help to complete the excavation programme

The North Taranaki Wetlands project has now concluded and a summary has been provided by Harry Allen. For full updates on both projects see the Taranaki section of 'Fieldwork and Other Activities'.

Contract archaeology

Brent Druskovich advises he has now left Bioresarches to be self-employed.

Hans-Dieter Bader has recently conducted geophysical surveys for James Robinson at Ruapekapeka, Northland, suggesting small changes in the positioning of the boardwalk, and for Louise Furey at the cemetery of the Anglican Church, Silverdale, where some possible unrecorded graves were detected. He is involved with the Bell Block project and other work currently underway in Taranaki.

Auckland Museum

Nigel Prickett spent four weeks from mid-January working at the excavation of the Oashore whaling station, Banks Peninsula. The excavation was the first in a joint project of the University of Otago and Auckland Museum (see report by Ian Smith, in the Canterbury section of 'Fieldwork and Other Activities'). Shaun Higgins, Kate Hill, Kipa Rangiheuea, Jade Baker, Megan

Williamson and Kath Prickett were the personnel with an Auckland Museum association who helped with the excavation. Other Auckland participants were Mat Campbell, Jacqui Craig, Liz Pascal, Pat Basket and Garrick Payne.

While the resident archaeologists were absent Louise Furey monitored an exploratory hole made by the contractors in the museum courtyard where demolition of the exhibition hall and other structures to be removed for the Stage 2 reconstruction has been finished. Nothing culturally significant was found.

Personal

Congratulations to Stuart Bedford and Caroline Brunet whose new addition to the family, Louis Frederick, was born on the 12 February. Congratulations also to Brent Druskovich and Mandy, who had a daughter, Jasmine Blaze Kato on 25 February.

Kath Prickett

Two adjacent projects, the University Business School and Grafton Gully Motorway upgrade, have presented the opportunity to examine an archaeological landscape—often impossible in urban archaeology. Grafton Gully runs down the valley of the former Mechanics Bay, the industrial centre for the developing town of Auckland from 1840. The Business School site is located in Wynyard St which runs parallel to the gully and was the location of merchants' houses. The two projects provide both industrial and upper echelon residential facets of the 19th century town.

Excavation of the gully unearthed many remnants of early industry including breweries, aerated water companies and in particular the remains of Auckland's largest foundry, the Phoenix Foundry. The flues and casting floors of a refining furnace was recovered (the flues have now been reconstructed for display beside the new overbridge). A large cake of slag incorporating parts of many artefacts, including plough shares, revealed that the furnace was used for recycling Auckland's waste.

Archival evidence for Wynyard St revealed that the manager of the works, George Fraser occupied one of the houses. The archaeology also indicated that the neighbouring houses also had a close relationship with the foundry. On one allotment slag had been used to level the site before construction of a new dwelling and elsewhere firebricks and other materials from the foundry had been used in construction of garden features. Of particular interest was the discovery of a 'garden shed laboratory' where numerous crucibles, tongs and quartz fragments suggested that the owner indulged in private assay work. The laboratory had a basalt block floor with a porcelain angel buried upright in the corner of the floor—perhaps reflecting the owner's strong Catholic faith. Material culture

from wells, cellars and garden features indicated a higher standard of living than those of other assemblages excavated from inner city slums. Finds included a bone domino set and numerous bone handled toothbrushes. Both projects are coming to the end of fieldwork and analysis and write-up is well advanced.

Rod Clough

Bay of Plenty

Warren Gumbley directed the excavation of a pa site in the Poplar Lane Quarry, Te Puke in late 2003. The upper entrance to the pa was excavated, which was all that was left, as it had been quarried in the 1960s. Construction of the defensive ditch dated to the late 17th–mid 18th century.

Don Prince and his team (Ken Phillips, Mica Plowman, Charlotte Judge, Phoebe Mohns and Barry Baquie) recently finished excavating a large site at the Maranui Estate Subdivision, Waihi Beach. The site was an extensive storage, gardening and associated activity site. There also appeared to be some temporary house floors.

Louise Furey has been working on a number of sites in the Bay of Plenty over the past few months excavating lots of storage pits! One site was a village with 28 inter-cutting pits. In the next few weeks Louise will directing one large ridge top excavation at Omokoroa, plus several smaller sites on the property.

In early January Mat Campbell and a team from Auckland and Hamilton excavated site U15/9 at Hamurana on the north shore of Lake Rotorua. An accident black spot is being realigned, and affected features included kakahi (fresh-water mussel) middens, garden soils, storage pits including large bell shaped rua as well as rectangular pits, a posthole alignment outlining a house, and an alignment of larger postholes that may represent a palisade or a fence. Very little work has been done either on kakahi middens, or in the Rotorua Basin, so this represents an exciting research opportunity on both counts.

Lynda Bowers has been working on the conservation plan for the Mauao Historic Reserve (Mount Maunganui) with Wildland Consultants, for the Tauranga District Council. Lynda has also been running archaeological workshops for land management staff at Environment Bay of Plenty, Tauranga District Council, and QEII field officers (with a little help from Rick McGovern-Wilson and Rachel Darmody). The workshops have been very popular, as they include a field trip to the Mauao Historic Reserve where there are lots of site management issues.

The Historic Places Trust was again successful in receiving grants from Environment Bay of Plenty's environment enhancement fund for 2004. This

year's archaeology project will involve the detailed analysis of material from the excavation of a midden site at Papamoa, directed by Warren Gumbley in 2003. The findings will then be used as a basis for a public education programme, to teach the community about their local heritage through a "people-friendly" publication and public lectures. Warren, Mat Campbell and Rachel Darmody are working on the project.

The Whakatane Historical Society also have funding from Environment Bay of Plenty to undertake an archaeological inventory for Whakatane's CBD. Ken Phillips and Lynda Bowers have initiated the project to identify the historic places within the Whakatane township area and to provide recommendations for the future management, conservation, protection or investigation of sites as appropriate.

Rachel Darmody

Taranaki

Two major archaeological projects are underway in Taranaki at present. The first is the continuing work on the 1850–60s house site and associated features which is in the path of the Bell Block Bypass (see below).

The other project is the monitoring of the earthworks for Shell's Pohokura Project at Motunui, just north of Waitara. Under the direction of Michael Taylor a number archaeological contractors and iwi personal are working on site. Of particular interest are the wetlands as similar areas nearby have, over the years, produced a number of wooden artifacts, some of which have been carvings.

Kelvin Day

A second season of excavation at P19/262, Oropuriri, near Bell Block, New Plymouth was conducted in February and March this year. As before, this is a collaborative project involving Archaeology North, Geometria and the University of Auckland, with the assistance of students and iwi representatives, funded by Transit New Zealand. Excavations in 2002 revealed a substantial house, 22 m long with evidence for a further two houses truncated by the later construction. The current work aims to complete the house excavation begun in 2002 and investigate a variety of features indicated by the results of a resistivity survey undertaken by Hans Bader and Russell Gibb of Geometria. At the time of writing we are half way through the excavation season and have discovered that the site has many more surprises in store for us than we previously imagined. A narrow trench feature, tentatively identified as a rifle trench in 2002, has turned out to be part of the defences associated with a gun fighter pa that surrounds the original large house. Pit features, including a bell shaped rua and defensivetrenches have produced many artefacts including complete bottles,



Excavation of the gun fighter pa defences at P19/262, February 2004

ceramics and, significantly, an engraved piece of slate. The slate engraving features what arguably is a Maori person wearing a cape, firing a long barrelled firearm across a parapet. All material excavated so far points to occupation of the site during the 1860s. The location of gun fighter pa so close to the Bell Block Stockade site is something of a surprise.

As before, the site is being recorded using a variety of electronic instruments. The location of all artefactual material is recorded with one of three total stations and the shape of excavated features is logged with the Cyra laser scanner recently purchased by the University of Auckland (see *AINZ* 46(3): 132, 2003). Digital photographs taken from towers positioned above the excavation are superimposed on the three dimensional images.

To date we have approximately 13 000 items located in three dimensional space, each represented by a separate record in a geographic information system. A field laboratory is used to enter descriptions of the artefacts into a database as they are excavated, considerably speeding up the post excavation analysis phase.

We are developing three-dimensional models of features in the site, notably the defences and the house, and we intend to use these models as the

basis for a variety of interpretative products that portray the changing nature of this site through time.

Simon Holdaway, Michael Taylor, Hans Bader

The Marsden Fund Project ‘The Cultural Significance of Wetlands in Taranaki’, undertaken jointly by principal investigators Harry Allen and Dilys Johns (University of Auckland), Janet Wilmshurst (Landcare Research), Kelvin Day and Tipene O’Brien (Te Puke Ariki – Taranaki Museum), Caroline Phillips (archaeological contractor) and Ngati Mutunga, between 2000 and 2003, has now reached its conclusion. The project has provided new information concerning the scope, nature and timing of landscape changes in North Taranaki, particularly those concerning the wetlands. The goals of the project were: to renew research into cultural wetlands in New Zealand and to contribute to the International field of wetland research; to integrate information from wetland sites with the archaeological information available for North Taranaki; to study the lowland wetlands of North Taranaki using archaeological, environmental, dating and conservation techniques to create a more complete record of the archaeological and environmental changes which have affected the region; and to use a landscape approach to integrate Maori traditions, use and knowledge of wetlands with the archaeological, art-historical and environmental information.

The project has been a multi-disciplinary research effort, carried out in partnership with Ngati Mutunga. Environmental, archaeological, palynological, geomorphological, archival, and field work carried out as part of this project provides considerable information that should assist in formulating plans for the long term preservation of the wetlands. In association with the traditional knowledge that has been collected, it will enable new interpretations of the history and landuse practices by Ngati Mutunga. Analysis using an archaeological landscape approach is continuing. This will allow an understanding of the interrelationship between the physical and cultural and the dimension of time.

North Taranaki does not have the research information that is routinely available for many areas of New Zealand. This project, has attempted to partly redress this. The information gained from this project will assist in the protection of the heritage of North Taranaki for future generations and contribute to the establishment of good relationships between Ngati Mutunga, landowners and councils. These these stakeholders are now in a better position to determine the further research that is required into the wetlands of North Taranaki. Articles with more specific information have been published in *World Archaeology* (2002), *Journal of Wetlands Archaeology* (2003) and *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* (forthcoming 2004).

Harry Allen

East Coast

Ken Phillips is nearing completion of a report on archaeological monitoring and excavations carried out within the old Watties factory on the left bank of the Turanganui River in central Gisborne. A remnant of an early river bank settlement was found between the foundations of the baked bean canning plant. Whole and worked moa bone and lithic artifacts were recovered and ¹⁴C dates indicate the site dates to the 13th Century. The location of the site has added interest as it is within 100 metres of Captain John William Harris's trading post (Harris acquired a quantity of locally sourced moa bones in the 1830s that eventually found their way to Richard Owen) and 100 metres from Williams 1872 discovery of moa footprints in the mudstone bed of the Waikanae Creek.

A team of archaeologists from around the North Island including Ken Phillips, Don Prince, Charlotte Judge and Mica Plowman spent eight days investigating the Albion Hotel site in central Gisborne. The property was the location of four successive hotels, the first of which was built in 1868, while the last was demolished only a few years ago. Numerous structural features including stables, cellars and a well were investigated and countless ceramics and bottles recovered for analysis.

Pam Bain

Hawke's Bay

The most important archaeological news in Hawke's Bay is that an American developer has built a golf course at Cape Kidnappers, which is probably the most important archaeological landscape in Hawke's Bay and of national significance. We can live with the golf course, it is far from the most important areas, but he has just obtained a resource consent to build a huge lodge and chalets in the Cape Kidnappers Outstanding Natural Area—quite against Hasting District Council's own Plan! Three appeals have been lodged with the Environment Court. Recently NZAA has put forward a proposal to register this area with NZHPT as a Historic Area. We are refining the proposal at present. The proposed historic area is an outstanding example of a complex landscape that possesses high historic, archaeological, cultural and visual heritage values. There is a wealth of sites, features and stories in the area that span its human history. These places and stories relate to Maori and European history and also the period of the first interactions between the two groups. This time span and the concentration of sites make the area an extremely unusual and significant place. It is a largely intact microcosm of New Zealand history, few examples of which remain around the country. Cape Kidnappers is highly valued by Maori and Pakeha. The stable land use over the last 150 years has resulted in a landscape

that has retained its visual integrity, being uninterrupted by residential development. Cape Kidnappers is a dramatic landform resulting from geological processes. The area is characterised by coastal terraces dropping sharply to the sea. To the south, Ocean Beach is a long open beach backed by sand dunes rising to coastal hills. It is against this back drop that the heritage features and sites of the area are found. Archaeological sites include defended pa sites on the hill tops and ridges with open settlements, houses, storage pits, gardens, flaking floors, midden (including archaic sites) and burials nearer the sea. There is also a whaling station, Rangaiika. Palaeofaunal, early and later midden sites are concentrated in the dune systems at Ocean Beach.

Elizabeth Pishief

Wellington

Long-serving Wellington Filekeeper Ian Keyes died on 4 February after a long illness (see obituary).

Wellington Regional Council is reviewing its management plans for regional parks and looking at improving management of heritage. New Zealand Historic Places Trust manages the Pencarrow Lighthouse but the surrounding reserve land is vested in the Council. The reserve contains a range of remains associated with the lighthouse including the lighthouse keepers' house sites, a cableway, a zig-zag track, and ditch features. The Council also manages Battle Hill, scene of fighting in 1846.

In November Kevin Jones presented a paper jointly written with Mary O'Keeffe on "Reconciling differences in historic interpretation" to the Australian ICOMOS Conference.

A recent SRU publication is Nightingale and Dingwall (2003), produced to mark the centennial of the Scenery Preservation Act. This legislation allowed land to be set aside for aesthetic, scientific, historic, and natural values. According to Richard John Seddon, the populist Liberal premier, "the time has arrived in the history of our colony when our scenery should be preserved, when the historic and beautiful places should be for all time conserved, and when we should do something to protect the thermal springs, which are of so great value to the country, from being destroyed and from falling into the hands of private individuals."

Tony Walton

West Coast

The 2004 University of Otago archaeology field school was held this year at the Buller River Mouth site, K29/8. The site is located on the south (true left) bank of the Buller, or Kawatiri, River approximately 1 km from the sea and

directly across the river from Westport. The site was first recorded by Owen Wilkes in 1965 and a small excavation was carried out there in 1969 by Wayne Orchiston, as part of his doctoral research out of the University of Sydney. The 2004 excavations were part of a joint research project of the University of Otago Anthropology Department and the Historic Places Trust and were directed by Richard Walter and Chris Jacomb with technical support from Brooke Tucker and James Robinson (both of University of Otago).

The K29/8 site is located on grazed pasture land about 50 m inland and 4 m above the high tide line of the Buller River. Surface collected artefacts of typologically early form had been recovered from drain cuttings on the site from at least the 1950s. Orchiston's 1969 excavations were never fully published but he reported dates indicating site occupation in the 14th century AD, confirming the material culture evidence for the age of the site, and making it one of only a handful of 'archaic' phase sites known from the South Island's west coast. Orchiston also reported clusters of features including post holes and ovens from several of his excavation units, raising the possibility that structural remains might be present. He reported that the cultural deposit at the site was patchy and discontinuous. In September 2003 Walter and Jacomb visited the site for a half day to assess its status following a report that it was threatened by development activities. Lines of test pits were excavated out from Orchiston's excavation areas and these seemed to confirm his findings that the cultural material was very localised. Nevertheless, it was deemed necessary to undertake a more thorough investigation and the field school excavations were designed to address those assessment/management objectives, as well as a number of research aims.

The site occupies at least 1.2 hectares, divided into two titles. The West Area was under the most immediate threat of development and thus in greatest need of a wide-scale assessment of the sub-surface deposit. In this area hydraulic excavators were used to skim the turf from a series of trenches exposing, or nearly exposing, the surface of the cultural deposit. The machine excavation was closely monitored, the exposed areas were later scraped down by hand, and several areas identified for more detailed excavation. In the East Area there was less urgency since this part of the site lies within a road reserve and standard hand excavation techniques were used. In laying out the excavation units areas were targeted, especially in the East, where Orchiston had reported the discovery of post holes.

In the East Area a total of 21.5 m² were excavated and in the West six trenches up to 90 m in length were opened using the hydraulic excavator. The areal exposure was sufficient to provide good information on the spatial distribution of features and was more than adequate for assessment and

management purposes. Large artefact assemblages were collected from both the East and West Areas although there was very little midden present anywhere on the site—a total of only 500 g of shell was recovered, and about the same quantity of bone. The paucity of midden is likely due to the exceptionally low pH levels of the local soils.

The results of the Jan–Feb 2004 investigations are currently being assessed and various artefact and other studies are ongoing in the Otago Archaeology Laboratories, but, in short, the site is larger and better preserved than previously believed and seems to contain a unique record of life on the West Coast of the South Island within a century or so of first colonisation of the country. Richard and Chris plan further investigations on the West Coast including an excavation at the Heaphy Mouth Site (in collaboration with DoC) in April and further work at Buller within 12 months.

Richard Walter and Chris Jacomb

Canterbury

Oashore Whaling Station Excavations

Ian Smith (Otago University) and Nigel Prickett (Auckland Museum) have just completed four weeks excavation at the Oashore whaling station, Banks Peninsula, in the first season of a three year Marsden funded project investigating *The Emergence of Pakeha Culture: Historical Archaeology of the Shore Whalers*. The Oashore station operated from 1840 to 1849 with a maximum workforce of 35 men, along with several women and children. It was selected for investigation because of its potential to disclose details of domestic life and social organisation in one of the first resident European communities in southern New Zealand.

Oashore is one of the best preserved whaling sites of the mid-nineteenth century, with the tryworks and other industrial activities located immediately behind the shore, and a distinct residential area further inland. Excavations were confined to the latter area and located five buildings and the whaler's garden. The buildings included a large rectangular stone-walled house; two smaller houses with stone chimneys and probably timber or canvas cladding; another large rectangular building with a fireplace broad enough to suggest that it was the cookhouse; and a timber slab building that an 1849 plan indicates was the boathouse.

Analysis of the excavated assemblages has just begun at Otago University under the direction of Ian Smith, part of which will be incorporated into an MA thesis by Jaden Harris on the material culture of the Oashore whalers. David Haines will soon begin investigating written and oral history sources for an MA thesis on Maori engagement in the Banks Peninsula whaling industry. Nigel Prickett's research will focus upon identifying as many of the Oashore whalers



Oashore Whaling Station, Area 5, showing fireplace with whale rib fender.

as possible and tracing their lives before and after Oashore, and also setting the operation of this station into its broader commercial and technological context. Planning is currently underway for excavations in early 2005 at a whaling site on the Mahia Peninsula in the North Island.

Ian Smith