



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
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## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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## FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Auckland**

#### *Historic Places Trust*

Authorities continue to come in at a steady pace in the Northern Regional Office. Our most recent news for those of you who have not already heard on the grape vine, is that Stuart Bedford has resigned from the Trust to pursue his post-doctoral research on Vanuatu at the ANU. Bev Parslow has increased her hours to full-time as Acting Regional Archaeologist and Greg Walter has stepped into Bev's part-time position as acting assistant archaeologist. The Trust is still going through its continuous improvement phases and expects to formalise/advertise these positions toward May of this year. At this stage it is also expected that some boundary changes may take effect, increasing the size of the Auckland team area to include Thames/ Coromandel and the Waikato.

The Auckland region is certainly experiencing a consultancy drought brought about by the migration of most available trowels to the Wellington bypass investigations. The new year has also seen the resurgence of development and many earthworks put on hold over the extended rainy season have hit with a vengeance. Authorities pending relate to some potentially interesting investigations after negotiations with the Trust. In particular extended facilities at Auckland International Airport will result in the investigation of the Westney Homestead, an early 1840s farm/homestead, and the reinterment of burials associated with the old Westney local church. Both these buildings are in negotiations to be removed, recorded and relocated to a heritage type precinct under management of AIAL, a very positive outcome for Mangere Heritage, so far.

There is a lot of archaeological research potential in both these investigations as little is known archaeologically about early farming in NZ, and little if any information archaeologically is recorded on early European burial practices. It will also present the opportunity to reinforce and formulate buildings archaeology practices through the conservation plan, research and recording of the buildings. Russell Foster will be conducting these investigations under authorities from the Trust.

The Trust is also working on forging some good relationships with iwi-based resource management units and continuing with its lead heritage training role in processes for the identification and protection of cultural heritage at

Rodney and Waitakere City Councils. Another issue highlighted by awareness of cultural heritage and development pressure is the lack of new archaeologists entering the field and the need for a strong focus on acquiring skills in survey and archaeological assessments. On a lighter note there are also some opportunities for volunteer work at the Auckland office of the Trust for those interested in furthering their knowledge in cultural heritage management, such as filing.

*Bev Parslow*

## **Bay of Plenty**

Archaeology in the BOP continues to keep everyone frantically busy, especially with so many archaeologists away on Wellington's inner city bypass project. We're all looking forward to the end of the earthworks season!

Don Prince and Ken Phillips have started mapping archaeological features at Hiruharama Ponui, Acacia Bay, Taupo where they plan to excavate later this year. Don has also been working on the Carmichael Block in Bethlehem, Tauranga. This is one of the largest archaeological landscapes in Tauranga where a huge number of subsurface features have been uncovered including pits, house floors and burials.

During January Elizabeth Pishief directed the excavation of the Taupo Police Station site at the Taupo Domain. Elizabeth, Cathy Barr, and Jeremy Habberfield-Short found some interesting artefacts including three rifles along with numerous documents dating from the 1890s. They also uncovered the totara piles from buildings dating back to the 1870s.

Papamoa continues to be the centre of much attention. Last year Matt Felgate directed the excavation of the Supa Centa site for Jonmer Projects Ltd on Domain Road. This was a large site with a range of features excavated including pits, a house floor, garden soils, lots of hangi stones and midden material. Matt then excavated a midden in the Tuihana subdivision, which was a much smaller site with only midden and hangi stones uncovered. Matt is currently monitoring earthworks at the Evans Road subdivision.

Ray Hooker and Phil Moore recently excavated a midden site at Papamoa in the Lansdale subdivision, where they uncovered an unusual amount of obsidian for Papamoa. They also found a piece of greywacke from which fine files were being sawn-off. Other projects they have been working on include the excavation of pit sites at a large residential subdivision in Waihi Beach and the excavation of more pits at Te Puna to make way for a new house.

The NZHPT declined an authority to destroy part of a midden site at the Papamoa Junction commercial development and spent a week in the Environment Court in February defending its decision. Ken Phillips and Rachel Darmody

presented the archaeological evidence for the Trust, while Doug Sutton represented Papamoa Junction. The Court is expected to make an interim decision in 4–6 weeks. Meanwhile the Trust is focussing on the protection of archaeological sites within Tauranga City’s next major development at Papamoa East where 359 acres will be transformed into neighbourhoods of identical houses, a town square, central boulevard, industrial areas etc., etc. The promotional material notes that this will “create a cohesive community connected to its stunning natural setting and rich cultural heritage!” Ken Phillips has been working with Bluehaven Holdings, one of the major landowners, to preserve many of the sites.

*Rachel Darmody*

## **East Coast**

### *Te Hoe dig*

Excavations were carried out from 16 January to 13 February at the Te Hoe whaling station site, Mahia Peninsula, northern Hawke’s Bay. The dig was the second of two undertaken for a programme of investigation into New Zealand shore whaling—Oashore on Banks Peninsula was excavated in January–February 2004. The project, ‘The Emergence of Pakeha Culture: historical archaeology of the shore whalers’ is supported by a grant from the Marsden Fund of the Royal Society of New Zealand, and is under the direction of Ian Smith, University of Otago and Nigel Prickett, Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Work at Te Hoe focussed on the tryworks area, and on whalers’ huts marked by the collapsed remains of stone chimneys. Prominent stone remains near the beach turned out to be only one of several tryworks. There was also an earlier tryworks beneath the visible remains, and nearby, another stone foundation which clearly had supported a trypot, with a 4 ft square rivetted ‘ship’s tank’ next to it, sunk into the ground to hold whale oil before it was put into barrels for shipping.

Five domestic fireplaces were excavated, most serving earth-floored huts. One hut of ca 3 x 4 m was marked out by the remains of a slab wall, but other hut walls were not easy to find and may have been made only of light poles supporting thatch or canvas. The largest collapsed stone chimney stood at the end of a wooden floored hut. This may date from late in the history of the settlement, when it had changed from a station manned mostly by European whalers when established ca 1840 into a largely Maori village with whalers having married into the local community. The settlement may not have been abandoned until early last century. Whaler descendants in Mahia today are generally Maori.

The Te Hoe excavation attracted considerable local interest. As many as 200 visitors made the 20 minute walk from the road on our open day, with more

visitors including the local school coming on other days. Work still to be carried out on the project includes historical research into the Oashore and Te Hoe stations and their whaler communities, and generally into New Zealand shore whaling. A report on the project will be prepared by the end of 2006.

*Nigel Prickett*



*Tryworks above the beach at Te Hoe. Photo Nigel Prickett.*

## **Wellington**

The archaeological work associated with the construction of the controversial Wellington inner city bypass got under way in January and February with numbers of archaeologists descending on the capital to form the work force.

The Department of Conservation has re-structured its Regional Offices and the Science, Technology and Information Services Division (STIS). The latter included the Science and Research Unit. The new structure came into existence in January with a new Research, Development and Improvement Division (RDI) picking up the responsibilities of STIS, plus some other functions formerly undertaken within the regional offices. The changed arrangements are intended to produce substantial savings to the Department.

Arrangements relating to the management and operation of the NZAA Central File have not changed, but the responsibility for this now rests with the Science Group within the Heritage Appreciation Unit of RDI. There has been no change in historic resources policy and the Department remains as committed as before to the tripartite agreement with NZAA and NZHPT. The Central File remains housed in its current location in the City Library building in Victoria Street, Wellington.

The Science Group in the Heritage Appreciation Unit consists of Peter Clayworth (historian), Kevin Jones, Tony Walton, and two social scientists. The Heritage Appreciation Unit is one of six units within RDI.

Three recent publications from Science and Research are *Bannockburn Heritage Landscape Study* (Stephenson, Bauchop & Petchey 2004), *Historic buildings appraisal, St Bathans, Otago: Post Office, Bank of New South Wales' Gold Office, Stone Cottage and Public Hall* (Harwood & Woodmansey 2004), and *Management of wetland archaeological sites in New Zealand* (Gumbley, Johns & Law 2004). These three publications are available free from the Department's public website. Go to [www.doc.govt.nz/Publications/004~Science-and-Research/index.asp](http://www.doc.govt.nz/Publications/004~Science-and-Research/index.asp)

Overseas visitors to Wellington in the last few months have included Talya Bagwell (Somerset County Historic Environment Records Officer) and Peter Stone (University of Newcastle upon Tyne), both of whom gave talks on their work. Peter Stone noted a strong trend for funding agencies to focus explicitly on the commercial value of historic heritage to the tourist industry when evaluating projects.

English Heritage has recently published a study on *Mitigation of construction impact on archaeological remains* (Davis and others 2004) which summarises a great deal of thought and practice relating to the subject in the UK and elsewhere. The volume looks at the engineering processes, their impact, and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies through pre-construction to post construction phases.

*Tony Walton*