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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Northland

The New Zealand Archaeological Association upgrade project began in Northland at the end of 2005 when Meri Low spent some time organising and digitising the site file in advance of the field work. The field work project began early in the New Year in the Coastal Whangarei region and is being led by James Robinson; we all look forward to the results.

In December members of the Te Roroa Management Team, Northern Forest Managers and Michael Taylor hosted a successful Ministry of Forestry outing to the Waipoua Forest. The visitors were shown various archaeological sites and also gum holes and the historic Kawerua Hotel before retiring to the Copthorne Hotel at Omapere.

During January and February an archaeological survey of Urupukapuka Island, in the Bay of Islands was begun. Sally Burgess and Jackie Breen of the Department of Conservation revisited over half of the 67 archaeological sites already recorded on the 208 ha island. The team also recorded seven new sites and several artefacts. The Island is recognised as a place of outstanding archaeological value and has a particularly rich and complex archaeological landscape related to intense Maori occupation in the past. Other team members took the opportunity to carry out basic repairs on several historic buildings on the island, whose heritage value has recently been recognised in a survey by conservation architect Chris Cochran. The archaeological survey is part of the NZAA upgrade project and will also greatly improve the management resources available to the Department. A report will be available on completion of the survey.

Other work being undertaken by the Department of Conservation in recent months has included further survey work by Geometria at Ruapekapeka.

Sally Burgess

Auckland ARC

The Auckland Regional Council Heritage Department is no more. The ARC has been restructured, with the new structure based on a func-

tional rather than outcome based model. The Cultural Heritage team is now part of the Heritage Programmes Group within a new Department called Programmes and Partnerships. Former Heritage Director Graeme Murdoch has decided not to accept a position within the new structure. Graeme is a respected historian and has been an effective heritage advocate, and this will be a significant loss to the ARC and to cultural heritage management generally. Kim Tatton will also be leaving us temporarily. She is planning to take parental leave from mid May 2006 and we are looking for someone to replace her on a temporary basis (see Employment and Fieldwork Opportunities). Leah Stevens is currently working in our summer student position on the cultural heritage database and undertaking site inspections and monitoring. Recent fieldwork has included surveying of new regional parks at Atiu Creek on the Kaipara, and Waitawa near Kawakawa Bay. Ian Lawlor has been working with Ngati Paoa and biological anthropologist Judith Littleton to recover burials exposed by the coastal erosion of a 19th century urupa at Kawakawa, and to achieve enhanced protection of Ngati Paoa urupa generally. The ARC has recently produced a poster/guide called *Historic Mahurangi* to raise community awareness of cultural heritage places in the Mahurangi district. The guide focuses primarily on the district's maritime associations, and covers the coastline from Waiwera to Mullet Point. The Council has also recently published a third booklet in the ARC *Our History* series, this time on the history of the Wenderholm area.

Robert Brassey

Department of Conservation

From the 4–11 February Andy Dodd, Jonathon Welch, James Robinson, and Noel Hill were on Little Barrier Island updating site records focusing on garden systems around the Tirikakawa Stream, Te Hue Point and Pohutukawa Flat. Assistance was also provided by island DOC staff Pete Barrow, Liz Whitwell and Shane McInnis. This work was a continuation from the upgrade work started in 2004 which focused on occupation sites around Te Maraeroa flat and the southern coastline. The majority of sites on the island have now been revisited, with only a small number of sites not re-recorded in areas with limited access where routes are no longer maintained.

Andy Dodd

CFG Heritage

Before Christmas Mat Campbell, Louise Furey and team spent two weeks excavating the gardens and surrounds of the Westney Farmstead in Mangere, near the airport. As part of their expansion plans Auckland Airport

are building a second runway and the Farmstead, built by William Westney in 1855, is in the way and has to go. In late February the house was lifted up on blocks prior to its removal, and a smaller team spent three days excavating the underfloor deposits, which seemed to include whole discarded dinner sets. Throughout this process Louise, with the help of Martin Jones, undertook a comprehensive buildings archaeology analysis of the standing structure. Excavation will conclude when the house is moved, at about the time this issue goes to press. Louise and Mat also helped Simon Best and Barry Baquie observe the disinterment of the bodies in the Westney Methodist Church Denominational Graveyard (which featured on *Close Up* on TV1), recording and sampling the coffin fabric and assisting with unidentified graves. The Church itself was built in 1856 on land gifted to the Methodist Church by William Westney—this is the little church on the corner of Ihumatao Road and George Bolt Drive on the way to the airport from the city, and is probably familiar to a great many Aucklanders. It will also be subject to archaeological investigation some time in the future before it too is moved. Both house and church will move to nearby Nixon Road.

Mat Campbell

Whanganui–Taranaki

The Department of Conservation is proceeding with efforts to purchase, for the purposes of creating historic reserves, two redoubt features relating to the New Zealand Wars. The first of these sites is Alexander's Redoubt at Mowhanu Beach, west of Wanganui, and is historically significant in that a number of British troops who served in the Taranaki Campaign of 1863–66 passed through this redoubt whilst in transit. The archaeological significance of the redoubt lies in the clarity of visible features and the presence of several well defined hut or magazine pits.

The second of the sites is St George's Redoubt at Tataraimaka, south of New Plymouth. The site of the redoubt is historically significant in that it is from this redoubt, and the associated camp, that the British and Colonial forces subjugated local Māori at nearby Porou, thereby releasing sufficient troops from service in the Taranaki region for the defence of Auckland and the Waikato Campaign. While little is visible on the surface, a magnetometer survey carried out by Geometria in 2005 indicates the presence of many intact features including, perhaps, an earlier redoubt relating to the 1860–61 conflict (see this month's cover).

It is hoped that the final aspects associated with the purchase of both these significant sites will be finalised over the next few months. The Department would like to thank the efforts to date of Nigel Prickett and

Geometria in defining and interpreting the features at those sites and the respective landowners for making their land available for the purposes of purchase for the creation of historic reserves.

The Department of Conservation, assisted by Geometria, were able to carry out magnetometer survey of the proposed Whakahoro Campgrounds, Whanganui National Park, during 2005. While nothing of note was located in this area of otherwise relatively dense Māori settlement, the exercise was most beneficial in providing important planning information within a very short period of time. Development of the campground is planned to proceed in the next few months, with associated earthworks being kept well away from already previously identified archaeological sites.

Jonathan Welch

Taranaki

Recently Geometria spent two and a half weeks excavating a 2000 m² Maori horticultural site which was on the Swift Energy site at Tikorangi, north Taranaki. Also recorded were a few large hangi and pits and a small pit which seemed to be associated with the gardens. Details of the excavation are currently being written up. Hans-Dieter Bader (hans@geometria.co.nz) is interested to hear from anyone who has worked on comparable garden sites.

Subdivisions continue to play havoc with the archaeological landscape. A housing development adjacent to the lower Kaitake Redoubt, Oakura, has been monitored during the earthworks phase and a small excavation has been carried out by Geometria on some terraces on a house section just north of Cape Egmont. Geometria have also been monitoring a pipeline from the Pohokura well site to the Waitara Valley Methanex Production site. A farm property at Omata is about to be subdivided into lifestyle blocks which will impact on two major 1860 sites, Kaipopo pa and Waireka Redoubt.

The New Plymouth District Council has announced it will be working with iwi to correct errors in location information for wahi tapu sites in conjunction with the NZAA upgrade which has recently been carried out.

Kelvin Day

Wellington

Tony Walton, Kevin Jones, Bruce McFadgen and Richard Nester visited Kapiti Island on 8 December to inspect work on a new walking track and the associated visitor facilities. Two sites next to the track were recorded. It has been known since the 1980s that there are potentially a considerable number of sites in the archaeologically unexplored hills of the island. Meanwhile, Bruce McFadgen investigated a natural deposit of shell, originally uncovered

when a fence was being built, to determine its context and to collect a sample for radiocarbon dating. This will test a model and chronology of the development of the flats.

A new DOC publication is “A national interpretation scheme for conservation management of historic goldrush sites” by Tony Nightingale (Science for Conservation 262, 2006). Also likely to be of interest to archaeologists is “The role of disturbance in dryland New Zealand: past and present” by Geoff Rogers, Susan Walker and Bill Lee (Science for Conservation 258, 2005). This contains a discussion of ecological disturbance including the incidence of natural and human-induced fires over the last 10,000 years. A database of 234 charcoal radiocarbon dates for the eastern South Island shows increased burning after about 800–900 years BP. Both these publications are available free of charge from DOC’s public website.

A reminder that when setting up a GPS, the correct datum to use for the New Zealand Map Grid is NZGD 49 and not WGS 84. Use of WGS 84 puts the site in the wrong spot by about 10 metres east and 190 metres north.

Tony Walton

Canterbury/West Coast

Katharine Watson has undertaken some monitoring work at Redcliffs Primary School. Due to an increasing role, this school (which is built on a significant Maori archaeological site) has been undertaking an expansion over the last few years. Previous investigations on the school site have revealed intact archaeological deposits in some areas. Investigations in January revealed a small midden, a very disturbed midden and a substantial 1930s rubbish dump.

Katharine Watson