



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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## FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### **Auckland**

#### *HPT*

NZAA filekeeping and searches

The Auckland office has recently lassoed an archaeology Masters student volunteer, to assist with the filing of NZAA site records and keeping things up to date. Charlotte Warner is currently undertaking a thesis in the management of Volcanic Cone Archaeological Landscapes and will volunteer at the Trust for one day a week.

Please note the following in respect of record searches; this information has been sent to all consultants by e-mail.

As you are probably aware the file keeper's position is a voluntary one which we endeavour to fit around our NZHPT work. Due to a large number of enquires and requests for file searches recently it has become apparent that the existing ad-hoc arrangements for visiting the file or ordering file searches are not as efficient as they could be. We have had requests for urgent file searches when we were snowed under with statutory work, people turning up to view the files without notice, sometimes interrupting meetings underway in our office, and a couple of times two or more archaeologists trying to conduct their own file searches simultaneously. Files have also been mislaid and/or incorrectly replaced.

In order to try and manage the situation better it has been decided that the following procedure should apply for visiting the file or requesting site numbers or a file search.

- Site numbers will continue to be given out as requested by phone or (preferably) email.
- All file searches should now be ordered by email to [gwalter@historic.org.nz](mailto:gwalter@historic.org.nz) and cc to [bparslow@historic.org.nz](mailto:bparslow@historic.org.nz). If the search is of a locality the search request should have a map attached with the area of interest indicated. For searches of a particular property or lot the street address and lot number should be supplied. We will endeavour to fill emailed requests within 2 weeks of receipt.
- Archaeologists are still welcome to carry out their own file searches but must phone Bev or Greg beforehand (307 0413) to ensure that a)

one of the file keepers will be present and the file room will be open and b) that the visit will not impinge on Historic Places Trust business or result in two archaeologists trying to use the file at once. Please note that the file is only available at times when one of the file keepers can supervise its use.

- We are happy to receive SRF's and upgrades at any time either in hard copy or via email.

*Bev Parslow*

## **Bay of Plenty**

A pa site at Omaio Bay near Opotiki was recently excavated by Richard Walter, Chris Jacomb, Lynda Walter, a team of students from Otago University, and members of Te Whanau a Nuku. The pa was occupied just prior to European arrival and is in excellent condition due in large part by the lack of intensive coastal development in the area. The local hapu are working closely with the archaeologists on this project. Storage pits and living areas revealing information about the construction of the pa site were uncovered. The site at Omaio Bay is located within the Hoani Waititi Memorial Reserve. The project was a joint initiative between Te Whanau a Nuku (Te Whanau a Apanui), the University of Otago, the Whakatane and District Historical Society and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

In November Ken Phillips and a team of archaeologists worked on a significant excavation at the former McKenzie Motors site on the corner of George Street and the Strand, in Whakatane. The site uncovered was an early Maori fishing village, and archaeological site talks by Don Prince on the afternoon of 23rd November, organised in conjunction with the Historic Places Trust, gave Whakatane locals a chance to find out what was happening in their town up to 500 years ago.

Ray Hooker, in between Waihi Pumphouse events has been monitoring forestry sites at Taneatua, near Whakatane.

Phil Moore is continuing to monitor the stormwater installations at Waihi Beach and Omokoroa. He has also started work at Tuapiro Reserve, where the council is putting in a new access road and capping middens in the process. Western Bay of Plenty District Council have raised a few eyebrows in a recent article from the Bay of Plenty Times (27 February 2007) where Carl Bosselmann, the council's project co-ordinator, claims "the technique of laying a 'geotextile' separator over archaeological remains, covering the fabric with soil and development then continuing is a first for the district and has so impressed the Historic Places Trust he believes that organisation will suggest it be used more widely." As this technique has been widely used for

the last 20 years it would seem that Western Bay of Plenty District Council have been existing in somewhat of a time-warp. Also, the Trust has been recommending this technique for many years, and has suggested it to Western Bay on more than one occasion in the past. Perhaps a suggestion could be made to the Bay of Plenty Times that in future they might like to interview more than one source?

*Tiffany James-Lee*

## **Taranaki**

Geometria has undertaken an excavation and monitoring job in Bell Block, Taranaki. A suspected prehistoric pit site, which was detected using a fluxgate gradiometer, turned out to be from the second half of the 19th century. Several pits and adjacent structures as well as large areas of mixed garden soil were encountered. The material dates the site to after the Taranaki Land Wars with some part of the site to the end of the 19th century. It seems to have been occupied by Maori rather than European settlers as the structures are clearly in Maori traditions. This is of particular interest as the land was owned by European settlers since the land sale of the Bell block in the 1840s. Obviously some negotiations between Maori and European absent landowners took place to allow Maori to use the land up until the end of the 19th century. A Section 18 investigation on the adjacent property on the same site showed pits of some antiquity (cal. AD 165 0–1680, 1730–1800 A.D. at 68% confidence interval). This establishes continuity of use and occupation before and after the Land Wars by Maori on land in European ownership. This is consistent with archaeological research showing close working relationships between Settlers and Maori before, during and after the Taranaki Land Wars at the Street Homestead at Penrod Drive, Bell Block and at Oropuriri, Bell Block.

*Hans-Dieter Bader*

A meeting, convened by Nigel Prickett, was recently held on the site of Waireka Camp and nearby Kaipopo pa, at Omata, with a number of interested parties including the landowner, representatives from DoC and Puke Ariki. The landowner wishes to subdivide his property and is keen to see what can be put in place to protect these two important First Taranaki War (1860–61) sites. Further discussions will be held.

*Kelvin Day*

## Wanganui

In December 2006 CFG Heritage excavated two Town Sections of the city block being developed by the Universal College of Learning (UCOL) (Sections 79 and 77).

Section 79 contained the house of Thomas Bamber, a blacksmith who became the Mayor of Wanganui from 1878 to 1880. Valuation rolls from the 1870s record Bamber as having a six-room dwelling and a smithy on the section. Early photographs show a large house present on the section from the early 1860s; it was probably built in the early 1850s. The house stood, though much modified, until 1995 when it was demolished. This site had the potential to provide information regarding domestic life during the early settlement of Wanganui and also for its relation to a prominent figure in Wanganui's history.

Numerous postholes outlined Bamber's house, as well as alterations and additions over time. Several pits on the Rutland Street frontage contained scrap iron, presumably relating to Bamber's occupation as a blacksmith. They appear to predate the house. At the other end of the site a thin layer of dark soil that may have been a garden soil was scattered with dispersed bone, broken ceramics and other artefacts. Two wells were also found – both had had their brick linings removed, presumably for recycling.

Section 77 was the site of the Wanganui Hotel, which dates from the late 1850s to the 1880s. Historic photographs show that the hotel comprised three adjoining buildings, the smallest of which may have been a dwelling for the innkeepers. Part of the hotel was replaced by a large, two-storey building by the 1880s, and today the 1914 Public Trust building fronts onto Market Place. The excavation included the area at the back of the Public Trust building where the small building and gardens of the hotel had stood. Remains of two, possibly three, brick fireplaces were uncovered, one at least of which matches the position of one shown in historical photographs of the hotel. Two wells were discovered. As with Section 79, neither was lined with brick.



*Sir Robert Burkett & Co Old Tom Gin bottle from the Wanganui Hotel site*

Other businesses also used parts of Sections 77 in the 19th century. The foundations of at least three different structures were identified. Some of the large, deep postholes uncovered in the southern end of the site may have been associated with the late 19th century Thompson and Lewis bottling factory, which had badly affected the older archaeology of part of Section 77 and much of Section 78.

A number of bottle dumps were uncovered towards the southern end of the site. These were filled with both whole and broken bottles, mostly dating from the late-1850s to the mid-1870s. Of particular note was the very large number of bottles with paper labels still adhering to them, which showed that the majority of bottles had contained alcohol: gin, beer, wine and cognac.

*Matthew Campbell*

## **Wellington**

DOC Head Office staff, formerly housed in three separate offices, have come together in a redeveloped 'green' building in Manners Street, Wellington. The Central File was packed up in late November, was partially operational in its new location by late December, and was fully operational by late January.

A desk-based assessment of NZAA records for sites managed by the Department across the country has begun. The work is being done by the NZAA Upgrade Project with funding from the Department.

Kevin Jones has been in the Whirinaki, at Whakatane, and on Whale Island looking at proposed track alignments. In November 2006 he was in Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia assisting with the World Heritage tentative list process in those countries. The Babeldaob hill terraces were a key focus of the Palau visit and the Nan Madol and Lelu ruins the focus in Federated States of Micronesia.

Peter Clayworth has completed the interviews for an oral history project which collected hapu oral traditions relating to the battle of Ruapekapeka.

Research Development and Improvement Division has recently published Peter Petchey's report on Bullendale (see below) and, as usual, this is available in printed form or as pdf files on the internet.

Mary O'Keeffe has been looking at the archaeology of Government House in Wellington for a conservation plan, monitoring conservation work on a historic wharf on the Wellington waterfront, and assessing a proposed foreshore enhancement work at the Ngati Toa Domain in Porirua. This is near the historic Paremata barracks and also near one of the more significant archaeological sites in Wellington, an early moa hunter and settlement site. ICOMOS is revising its charter for the conservation of places of cul-

tural heritage value, and stakeholder meetings in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch are scheduled in late March to discuss proposed changes.

The NZAA/HPT/DOC Working Party met on 23 February and were taken on a tour of the new Conservation House by Bronek Kazmierow, Science Manager Research, Development & Improvement, and Tony Walton showed the group around the newly relocated NZAA Central File collection.

*Tony Walton*



*The NZAA/HPT/DOC Working Party inspecting the new Central File, left to right: Pam Bain (NZAA/DOC), Garry Law (NZAA), Tony Walton (DOC), Rick McGovern-Wilson (HPT), Lynda Walker (NZAA), Karen Greig (NZAA), Rachel Darmondy (HPT) and Bronek Kazmierow (DOC)*

## **HPT**

The Historic Places Trust's project to make all the reports they hold available in digital format is now complete and the Archaeology Reports Digital Library has now gone live. A catalogue can be accessed from the Trust's home page, <http://www.historic.org.nz/>. File size varies considerably – small files will be emailed while large files will be burnt to CD and posted.

*Rick McGovern-Wilson*

## Canterbury/West Coast

The Pegasus archaeology team are still full-time in the field, and laboratory work has begun as well. The Pegasus Town construction work is expanding, with extensive soil stripping as well as bulk earth works. Abundant archaeology continues to be discovered below the plough zone by the soil stripping. This is a range of mostly small shell deposits and ovens of various sizes. All of these belong to features at about 20 cm below ground level. In addition, a substantial amount of greenstone has been found.

Of particular interest was a piece of industrial human bone which was in a refuse dump in a gully. This had finely cut grooves which are identical to those made by burin cutting. The grooves were square in cross section and not like those made by stone sawing. It is likely that among the flint artefacts recovered that there is a true burin, or perhaps a snapped flake with burin-type wear.

*Dan Witter*

Les Wright has started a survey of the Alexander mine for Oceana Gold Ltd. This was a quartz mine prospected from 1921, worked profitably from 1924 to 1943 and reopened at the lowest level by Macraes in the early 1990s. Sites include two batteries (one with an almost intact cyanide plant), a beautifully preserved Edwards ore roasting furnace, an intact double-drum incline brake, an intact aerial top return wheel, two power houses and water races, numerous adits, the odd winze, a school, a boardinghouse and numerous huts. For the initial fieldwork Les has been fortunate in having Graeme Baxter, who's been exploring the place on and off for more than 40 years.

Les's survey of the Supreme is nearly finished, with a day's fieldwork remaining to find the odd feature still lost in quite dense forest. Highlights there have included remnants of the Golden Gully ore bins, an iron baling bucket frame with hoops for the timber bucket still inside, and a place where they had started to build an incline tramway but abandoned it, leaving behind rails and some mossy old sleepers, cut but never installed.

Les has also completed the Britannia quartz mine and track baseline report for DoC and has started historic assessments of the Prohibition mine and ball mill and the Snowy River battery at Waiuta. As a spare time project Les is continuing a survey and record of Waiuta township.

Katharine Watson and a team of students from the University of Otago excavated at the old Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum in December and January. The asylum (later known as Hillmorton Hospital) occupied the site from 1863 until 1999 (and Hillmorton Hospital now operates from an adjacent site), during which time there has been considerable construction and demolition, a process which has destroyed much of the archaeology of the asylum.



Nonetheless, the foundations of the east building were excavated, along with a number of drains and sumps. The remains of garden walls and paths from an 'airing court' were also excavated, revealing an interesting separation of space between staff and patients.

*Katharine Watson*

### **Otago/West Coast**

A number of geophysical surveys were undertaken by Geometria on a variety of archaeological sites. Two of the more interesting sites were the Lawrence Chinese Camp and the Archaic site at the Buller river mouth. At the Chinese Camp a back street, not shown in the historic map, and a number of houses/structures along this street could be identified. At the Archaic site the distribution of hangi/ovens and the basic layout of the site could be established. The position of two of the hangi were ground truthed by small test trenches. On both sites it is hoped that the geophysical investigations will help to guide future excavation work towards interesting target areas.

*Hans-Dieter Bader*