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FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Northland

Settlers Hotel

In November CFG Heritage conducted excavations on the site of the Settlers Hotel, Whangarei, where a new Police Station is to be built. This is the first excavation of any kind in urban Whangarei. The fourth and last phase of hotel construction was a large, two storey brick and concrete building in 1924 and, as expected, this had severely impacted on the evidence of earlier phases. We did find a truncated ‘cellar’, or cool room, partly filled with ash and burnt ceramic and glass, probably relating to the burning of the 2nd hotel in 1875. Our excavations concentrated on the courtyard of the 1924 hotel on the assumption that disturbance would be less here – this was the case but surprisingly few features were found. A disturbed cobbled floor, probably a stable from the 1876 or 1908 hotels, was excavated. No definite traces of the original 1868 structure were found.

Matthew Campbell

Auckland

Auckland Museum

For the Archaeology Department a large chunk of this year has been taken up with the development of a new gallery titled ‘Ancient Worlds.’ The opening was in late September. It is a remake of the former ‘Civilisations’ gallery but is now in the front section of the museum. The display style has changed to a less ‘cluttered’ arrangement and new objects have been included. The regions featured are those where the collections were strongest and include Egypt, Europe and the Classical world, southwest Asia, India, China and the Americas.

ARC

Mica Plowman and summer student Andrew Flaws have commenced an archaeological survey of parts of the region’s coastline, focussing on the Matakana–Tawharanui area and Oruawharo Basin. This is part of an ongoing project to aimed at completing a field survey of the entire coastline of the region. ARC Heritage staff are planning to undertake excavations in March 2008 around the 1870s Brook homestead at Awhitu Regional Park. The aim

of the investigation is to provide a basis for restoration of the setting for the house. Evidence of earlier Maori occupation is also present in the vicinity.

Scott House

This October CFG Heritage excavated at Scott House, a historic farmstead that lies in the path of the new runway being constructed at Auckland Airport. Buildings archaeology and excavation of the yard have been completed, while excavation of the under floor is currently underway.

The original cottage dated to the 1860s, with additions made in about the 1870s, 1910s and 1940s. Excavation around the house revealed the remnants of ditch and bank fences commonly used by early settlers to create animal enclosures and to divide and demarcate land. Some of the ditches enclosed the house and aligned with the original part of the house, while others continued beyond the house area where they probably served to divide land into paddocks. Once no longer needed, the ditches were used for dumping refuse.

Two brick-lined wells were discovered in the back yard. Curiously, these were within five metres of each other. Postholes revealed that structures had stood around the wells, perhaps to support a roof and windlass. One well had clearly been filled in with the clay removed when the second was dug. Excavation of the wells was attempted using a hydraulic excavator but had to be halted due to subsidence. Their excavation will be completed in the coming weeks when the water table is, hopefully, lower.

Other features in the yard included a series of ceramic drains, shell paths relating to the original part of the house and the remnants of overlapping brick paths from different phases of the building. A group of postholes belonged to a fence that was probably built when the ditches were filled in and the yard was widened.

Investigations of this farmstead will complement those conducted by CFG Heritage at the neighbouring Westney farmstead in 2005. Analysis and comparison of the two contemporary farmsteads will provide insight into the rural life and economy of early European settlers in Mangere.

Archsoc

June, July and August were very productive months for Archsoc with members returning from fieldseasons in Hawaii, Australia and the Marquesas, and others participating in excavations closer to home in Whangamata, and most recently Tolaga Bay. Early September saw two of our members, Dale Simpson and Anne McKenzie, flown to Canberra to represent Auckland University and participate with 18 other Honours/Masters

students from Australia and New Zealand at the ‘Contemporary Challenges in the Archaeology and Environmental History of the Asia-Pacific Region’ workshop. Aside from visiting labs and viewing key collections, Dale and Anne also got the opportunity to meet and talk with a range of ANU-based archaeologists, geochronologists and palaeoenvironmental researchers (including Archsoc’s founder, Emeritus Professor Jack Golson). Congratulations to them both.

Our guest speaker for August was Dr. Marianne Turner who gave an excellent talk on historic central Auckland, followed by the uses (and at times fascinating contents) of historic glass bottles in colonial New Zealand. For this month’s meeting we have the pleasure of hosting Dr. John Terrell, Pacific archaeologist, and former University of Auckland Fulbright Fellow and lecturer. Dr. Terrell will be talking about human survival on the Sepik coast and all are welcome to attend.

Kath Prickett, Beatrice Hudson, Andi Crown

Bay of Plenty

Omokoroa

In October/November CFG Heritage conducted excavations at sites U14/3283 and U14/3284, Omokoroa, adjacent to Tauranga Harbour. This was a large excavation that opened eight areas and revealed some very intense use of the sites’ terraces. Nearly 1700 postholes, pits and firescoops were recorded.

U14/3283 was a knoll with three sloped terraces descending the south-eastern side. The lowest of these, Terrace 3, proved to have been used intensively during successive occupations. The surface of the 27 m long terrace was dense with inter-cutting features and at the back of the terrace a series of cultural layers had built up. A degree of spatial differentiation of feature types was evident: postholes, stake holes and oven scoops at the northern end, round bin pits in the middle and square or rectangular bin pits in the south. Rua were dug into the backscarp of the terrace at the southern end, and there was a large rectangular pit, next to which angled rafter slots had also been dug into the back of the terrace.

Area C was a large area showing several different clusters of activity, including one historic structure. At the centre of Area C was an area that had been used intensively and was very dense with inter-cutting and overlying features. These too showed a degree of spatial differentiation by feature type. Successive periods of use were evident, as features were cut through or lay under one of two cultural layers. The build up of these layers was probably contributed to by activity further up the slope, where there was evidence of

windbreaks having been erected around a group of oven scoops. Interestingly, the area of intense activity came to a relatively abrupt end on one side, though nothing in the topography indicated why activity should be so restricted. At the southern end of Area C was a group of storage pits. These were notable for the lines of postholes along their edges that indicated rafter slots for roof beams.

U14/3283 was a terrace with a similar array of features to those on Terrace 3, though not as densely packed. As with Areas C and Terrace 3, there were ruts dug into the backscarp of the terrace. Several phases of occupation were recognised.

Beatrice Hudson



Pits with rafter slots along one side.

East Coast

Cooks Cove

In November an excavation was carried out on an early site at Cooks Cove, Tolaga Bay. The excavation was directed by Richard Walter, Rick McGovern-Wilson and Chris Jacomb and was carried out as a partnership between Southern Pacific Archaeological Research (University of Otago), The New Zealand Historic Places Trust and Te Aitanga a Hauiti. Supplementary funding for the excavation was provided by the Gisborne/Tairāwhiti Branch Committee of the Historic Places Trust. In addition to the directors the excavation team consisted of Pam Bain, Lynda Walter, Karen Greig, University of Otago students and community volunteers.

The site (Z17/311) is exposed in the southern bank of Cooks Cove estuary and is being rapidly undercut by the sea. It was this erosion that prompted the excavation programme. The stratigraphy of the site was more complex than previously thought and included a number of discrete occupation layers. The lower layer contained evidence of moa butchery and was separated by up to 700 mm of fill from another early occupation horizon that contained



Cooks Cove excavation, showing all four excavation units.

cooking features and a variety of artefacts, including moa bone fish hooks. An upper layer contained some early historic material. The site provides a rare insight into early economic strategies on the East Coast and places some important artefact types into good stratigraphic context. Structural remains (post and stake holes, etc.) were recovered from both early horizons and their interpretation will add to the small body of information we currently have on Archaic structures.

A total of about 30 m² was excavated and the faunal material and artefacts are currently undergoing analysis in the Otago Archaeology Laboratories. Radiocarbon samples are being prepared. A web log from the site can be accessed on www.historic.org.

Pam Bain and Richard Walter

Wellington

Bruce McFadgen enjoyed a most successful book launch of his recent publication, *Hostile Shores. Catastrophic Events in Prehistoric New Zealand and their Impact on Maori Coastal Communities*. Bruce has been putting much pen to paper recently (or fingers to keyboard?) with two other publications:

McFadgen, B.G. and Goff, J.R. 2007. Tsunamis in the New Zealand archaeological record. *Sedimentary Geology*, 200: 263–274.

McFadgen, B.G. 2007. Tsunamis, earthquakes and sand sheets. An archaeological view of the hazards of living near the beach. *Survey Quarterly*, 51: 24–27.

On 14 May 2007 Kevin Jones and Neville Ritchie flew a circuit round the Coromandel, photographing Te Aroha, Paeroa Maritime Historic Museum, Waitawheta and associated batteries, Waikino Battery, Martha Hill mine and newly shifted pumphouse, Kauri Point pa (x3), Bowentown Heads, Whiritoa, Onemana, Opoutere, Pauanui canals, Pakau Mt, Hot Water Beach, Hereheretaua, Hahei, Whitianga rock and Browns Bay, Opito Pt and Tahanga, Sarah's Gully, Matakawau, Maunganui (Great Mercury), Cuvier light, Raukawa Pa, and pa/pits south side Coromandel Harbour and Ponui Island. Then, on 28 May, Kevin flew the Catlins coast down to Waipapa light, including most of the Archaic site settings, and again, on 29 May, the Southland coast, starting from Lawrence and the Tuapeka Mouth to Matura, picking up Rachael Egerton and flying over Riverton, Sand Hill Point, Port Craig and viaducts, Paihia Island, Centre Island and Pig Island.

In June, Anita Smith (Australia) and Kevin made a presentation to the World Heritage Committee on potential World Heritage cultural landscapes in the Pacific, with examples such Mauna Kea, Bikini Atoll, Marovo lagoon and the Arawe Islands. Kevin has also attended the Easter Island Foundation conference, Visby, Gotland, and the Aerial Archaeology Research Group conference, Copenhagen.

Two publications by Kevin also came out in this period: *Penguin Field Guide to New Zealand Archaeology*, described by the *Sunday Star Times* reviewer as 'fantastically humourless, pausing to tut-tut over a site "damaged by bottle hunting", and advising visitors to observe wahi tapu...'; and *Caring for Archaeological Sites*, published by DOC in conjunction with the Historic Places Trust.

Field investigations for a conservation plan for the Kaingaroa rock shelter begin in December. Australian Andrew Thorn of Artcare will be providing specialist advice to In-Situ Heritage who will be writing the conservation plan in close consultation with Ngati Manawa. The contract has been let by RDID DOC in conjunction with the Rangitaiki Area Office. Parking and improved access and interpretation may well follow the preparation of the conservation plan.

The Wellington based Opus team have carried out a small investigation on Vivian Street, now in the analysis and write up stage.

Mary O'Keefe is currently analysing artefacts from the Wellington Hospital development site, which has yielded a fascinating assemblage of domestic and medical objects. Mary was recently in the Environment Court for the hearing for the proposed Hilton Hotel, and has been completing assessments for developments in Wellington City and the Kapiti Coast. Mary has also contributed to a conservation plan for Government House in Wellington.

As many readers will be aware, Mary is also covering CINZAS enquiries for Tony Walton while he is on extended sick leave.

Mary O'Keefe

Canterbury/West Coast

The Christchurch City Council has commenced its plan of upgrading the toilets and playground at Birdlings Flat. The monitoring of the first stage of earthworks was undertaken by Matthew Carter and has revealed a large fire pit, 2 x 3 m and over 300 mm deep in some places. Artefacts recovered in association with this pit indicate that it could be Maori or European in origin. Further monitoring is to take place at the site.

Matthew Carter and Bill Edwards have been monitoring earthworks in residential Redcliffs, with a variety of European and Maori material being uncovered. The site has revealed a considerable degree of disturbance which is a reflection of the behaviour of the previous inhabitants with European rubbish dumps and Maori middens being mixed together in a number of places. One adze has been found, as well as a number of flakes.

Katharine Watson has been undertaking surveys of nineteenth century gold-mining in Waimea forest for modern gold miners. The sites recorded during this work include a substantial dam and a number of sluice faces from nineteenth century hydraulic sluicing in the area. It was possible to establish the location of some old mining claim boundaries through remnant pillars of wash that had been sluiced around, and to identify water race systems predating the construction of the Waimea water race (a major Government water race built in the late 1870s that was significant to the ongoing mining of the area).

A similar survey has been carried out in Cockabulla Creek (near Shantytown) where eight large trenches that had been sluiced into a terrace edge were recorded. The largest of these was some 4 m deep and approximately 30 m long. The sluicing had left formations similar to a hanging valley. Few tailings were found in association with these sites, having been washed into the creek bed below. Most, but not all, of these trenches were fed by small water races. Those trenches not supplied with water from an open race are likely to have been supplied with water from a pipe. In the same area but further to the east, two large dams were found, both being over 50 m long. The water races and ground sluicing associated with these dams were small, particularly in relation to the size of the dams and it is likely that lack of water was a problem in this area.

Tiffany James-Lee and Katharine Watson have undertaken monitoring on land adjacent to the Canterbury Club on Worcester Street in Christchurch.

Two rubbish dumps that are believed to have been associated with the Club were found. These contained large quantities of Worcester sauce bottles, other unidentified bottles, tumblers and wine glasses and fragments of a chandelier. Few ceramics were recovered from these rubbish dumps and the only faunal material found was oyster shells. The Canterbury Club was established as a gentleman's club in 1872 and still functions as such today. Further monitoring work is to be carried out on the Club sites in association with the redevelopment of the Club.

Pegasus Town

About 90% of the soil stripping at Pegasus Town has been done now, and the sites exposed have been given GPS locations as waypoints. There are currently over 600 WPTs, including find spots and European post holes. Roughly 400 middens and ovens have been recorded, and about half of them have been excavated to some degree. These sites show considerable variation in content and structure, and different patterns in distribution are already discernable.

The most exciting recent discovery has been a new pa. This is located on a small stream bank where two gulleys enter, forming a sort of peninsula. It came as a surprise, since it does not have ditch and bank fortifications on the open end. It was not until we excavated a line of massive palisade posts that it became clear it was a pa. The area enclosed is about 60 x 60 m in size and has numerous postholes and stake holes. About a third of it is in the process of excavation. The site has been ploughed, so that the features are only to be found in the subsoil. The ploughed horizon contains large quantities of artefacts. This includes a considerable amount of nephrite debitage from preform manufacture. The site has not yet been dated, but contains tuatua midden which is thought to indicate a date of about 500 BP. If so, this will probably be the earliest dated pa in the South Island.

Initially we were not sure if the site could be protected, and undertook salvage work with a crew of Dunedin students for some of the excavation. However, Pegasus Town has recognised the importance of this site and have reviewed their plans. They are now able to preserve the pa as a significant contribution to conservation. This is in addition to the substantial conservation area for the Hohouponamu site and associated sites on the Western Ridge and the current archaeological mitigation program.

Jeremy Habberfield-Short has joined the Pegasus team and this has been a tremendous boost.

Katharine Watson, Dan and Alison Witter