



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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## FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### Northland

The winter months in Northland have been relatively quiet in terms of fieldwork. Caroline Phillips has been continuing with the re-piling works at Ruatuna Homestead in Northland. Ruatuna is a 136 year old homestead in Hukatere, the home of former prime minister Gordon Coates and now managed by Heritage New Zealand. Flood prevention works have been completed in the Kerikeri Basin with the removal of a small river boulder bank and knoll. This work was instigated by the Northland Regional Council and had the extra benefit of providing better protection for the Kerikeri Mission Station (Kemp House and Stone Store) in times of flood. I am happy to report that the recent storm event in Northland was no match for the protection works and the Mission property was safe. The monitoring works were undertaken by Bill Edwards. Works are also continuing on the Kerikeri Basin Upgrade Project, which includes the upgrade of the existing car park and insertion of public toilets. These works are being monitored by Andrew Blanshard, Department of Conservation. Andrew has also been monitoring the track works at Marsden Cross, Hoihi / Rangihoua pā as part of preparation for the upcoming commemorations in December 2014 for the First Church Mission Society site in New Zealand. Dianne Harlow has also been continuing with works at Bream Tail Farms in Mangawhai as more properties within the subdivision are now being built upon.

*Brooke Jamieson*

### Auckland

On 24 July 2014 a joint seminar and book launch was held in the Anthropology Tea Room at Auckland University.

Harry Allen's seminar described Hongi Hika's genealogy which placed him at the apex of a number of chiefly lines in northern New Zealand. He rose to prominence as a middle-man in 1815 assisting the entry of Christian Missionary Society missionaries into New Zealand, using this influence to gain allies and to equip his warriors with muskets defeating tribal enemies across the North Island. Genealogical links, Hongi's abilities as a war leader and the opportunities that chance put in his way all contributed to his rise. He steadfastly lived his life by Māori values and, at the end, these were the cause of his downfall. Hongi Hika remains a significant and controversial figure in New

Zealand history. In discussing Hongi's life and times, Allen drew attention to the manner in which genealogical, archaeological and traditional sources might be combined to provide greater insights into historical processes.

Following the seminar there was a book launch for *Archaeology at Opita: Three Hundred Years of Continuity and Change*. This volume was jointly authored by Caroline Phillips and Harry Allen and is No 5 in the Research in Anthropology and Linguistics Electronic Series; it can be accessed online in three volumes from <http://tinyurl.com/aaaomqm>.


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DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY | THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

## Archaeology at Opita

### Three Hundred Years of Continuity and Change



Caroline Phillips  
Harry Allen

 THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND  
NEW ZEALAND  
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makarau

Caroline Phillips introduced the book prior to its launch. Opita was an area approximately three hectares in extent within an old bend of the Ohinemuri River near the junction with the Waihou River at Paeroa, in the Hauraki Plains. In 1991, a University of Auckland Field School found evidence of a number of Māori settlements, including eight undefended kāinga and a small fortified pā. As in Allen's seminar, the investigations at Opita also link oral accounts, archaeological findings and historical information to provide a richer analysis in which cultural identity can be connected to the material evidence. This work revealed a complex mix of activities, production and consumption, as well as broad spatial changes and continuities throughout the Opita area over possibly three hundred years, including the time of early European contact. In addition, the investigations challenged some commonly-held ideas of cultural change and interpretations of archaeological assemblages.

*Caroline Phillips*

## **Bay of Plenty**

Not much fieldwork news from the central North Island this winter, but there is reported to be a lot of report writing going on.

Brigid Gallagher, with support from Heritage New Zealand (Rachel Darmody and Cathleen Haumann) spent a week excavating at the historic Athenree Homestead, former home of Adela Stewart (*My Simple Life in New Zealand*), one of Katikati's 1878 Ulster Irish settlers. Finds included a Māori midden, plough marks, building foundations, a possible smithy and artefacts including a harness buckle, a musket ball and a scone. A public open day attracted about 80 people.

In Tauranga, Ken Phillips excavated the site of a bakery operating from the 1870s to at least the 1940s, located on The Strand. Remains included the brick foundations of large ovens, a cobbled floor and hearth. The oven foundations, dating to the 1870s, are similar to an intact oven found in Dunedin. Tauranga City plans to preserve some features of the site.

In Taneatua, CFG Heritage carried out a small investigation near a pā site. A few features were found, including a small pit.

Lynda Walter and John Coster have both been doing a bit of subdivision and forestry work.

*John Coster and Cathleen Haumann*

## **Wellington**

Kevin Jones has been assisting Mary O'Keeffe with enabling work on the Kāpiti/Mackays to Peka Peka (M2PP) expressway. Other than that Kevin has completed heritage assessments at Ship Cove and Te Awaiti (Tory Channel).

Andy Dodd has been monitoring earthquake strengthening works at the site of the Wallaceville blockhouse in the Hutt Valley. The strengthening works being carried out by Heritage New Zealand have involved the removal of river gravel from the wall cavities, and earthworks to replace rotted timber piles and base plates, and to improve drainage. A small assemblage of mid-19th century glass and ceramics was recovered from deposits directly beneath the base plates, and an assemblage of nails was also recovered from the wall cavities. Andy has also been monitoring at the former Hutt Club site at Woburn. Nineteenth century occupation of this site included remains of a chimney and stone foundation from a residence known as Trendenham, the upper portion of which was originally constructed in Sydney and shipped over to New Zealand in the 1850s. This development is now proceeding on a lot-by-lot basis and a small quantity of late 19th century artefacts has been recovered so far.

On the Kāpiti Coast, Andy has been monitoring earthworks for the development of residential sections at Peka Peka, which have uncovered a number of discrete midden features to date. Andy has also been monitoring re-contouring works at Waikanae Beach for the El Rancho Christian Holiday Camp. The recreation areas formerly used by the camp have been required for the M2PP expressway works, and necessitated the creation of additional flat land on the western side of the camp. The works were in the vicinity of early 19th century Māori cultivations, known as Ngahuruhuru, believed to have been in the area of what is now Weggery Drive. Three discrete areas of midden were uncovered on a low dune ridge to the east of Weggery Drive. No evidence of horticultural activity was encountered. Andy has also been monitoring earthworks for the M2PP expressway between the Waikanae River and Te Moana Road including works on the sections adjoining the Grace and Ahuwhenua Trust properties. The work is being carried out with iwi monitors from the Grace family, Ahuwhenua trustees and Takamore trustees present.

Mary O’Keeffe continues monitoring construction earthworks for the M2PP expressway on the Kāpiti Coast.

*Mary O’Keeffe*

## **Canterbury**

Archaeologists Megan Lawrence and Elsa Koenig have recently joined the team at Opus to help out with the steady stream of earthquake work. Sam Kurmann and TJ O’Connell have been monitoring the repair works at Radcliffe Bridge in Governors Bay, a single arch stone bridge constructed in 1862. Patrick Harsveldt has been monitoring the demolition and heritage-façade retention works of the former Junction Hotel, Rangiora. Sam and TJ have been monitoring

the foundation removals happening at the site of Victoria Brewery in Waltham, where they recorded three brick-lined wells. The monitoring of foundation removals at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) has been keeping TJ, Elsa and Megan busy, though few finds have come out of the work so far. Emily Cunliffe has been monitoring residential foundation removals in the suburbs of Brooklands and Southshore, where evidence of cultural layers has been identified.

The second stage of the Avon River Precinct works are due to kick off again soon, with two full-scale excavations planned for Mill Island, near Hereford Street, and The Bricks landing site near Barbadoes Street.

Michael Trotter has been making the most of the cold winter weather trying to catch up on a backlog of archaeological reports, but some fieldwork has nevertheless been unavoidable. Excavations at the new hospital site in Kaikoura, adjacent to Takahanga pā, are now well under way, as is work on a kitchen extension at the marae complex on the pā itself. At South Bay (Kaikoura) monitoring has been carried out on a variety of small to medium sized projects, the most interesting being the construction of a new waterway which provided further evidence of a long suspected agricultural area. Other recent work – some of it on-going – has been at Goose Bay, Omihi, Amberley, Loburn, Rangiora, Tuahiwi, Kairaki, Kaiapoi and Birdlings Flat.

Dan Witter has monitored earthworks for a residence at Rakaia Huts (Rakaia River Mouth Site). There was a zone of mixed oven material at the back of the middle terrace which was interpreted as the food preparation area for the nearby living area excavated by Chris Jacomb. The big oven and moa bone area on the upper terrace is therefore probably a moa meat preserving area. Otherwise Witter Archaeology is mostly in report writing mode.

Jeremy Habberfield-Short has been monitoring piling earthworks associated with a 20th century house in Peterborough Street. As the foundations of the house were removed, evidence of 19th century historic occupation was encountered, including an artesian well, chimney base with bricks dating to 1860-1865 (Matt Hennessy, *pers. comm.*) and typical Victorian domestic refuse. Of particular note is the relative abundance of slate pencils and slate calculus fragments.

Jeremy has also been working at Redcliffs, assisting Helen McCreary and Teri Anderson with recording several ovens exposed during Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT) work under Main Road,

Redcliffs. To date, nine ovens have been exposed, all in the sides trenches excavated for services during the 20th century. One piece of moa bone has been recovered, and four flakes have been found so far, one of which has been polished.

Archaeological work at the Christchurch Justice and Emergency Services Precinct (CJSEP) finally came to an end at the start of July. In the last fortnight of work at the site, the substantial brick remains of a 19th century sawmill were exposed. Now the work on the report begins. With over 100 boxes of artefacts and some 12 town sections, this will be a substantial piece of work!

On the second weekend in July, the team from Underground Overground Archaeology volunteered at French Farm house. This building dates from the 1840s and was built by the French navy. It is now in a poor state of repair and the Akaroa Civic Trust is working to save the building and preserve it for the future. In the first instance, this involves installing supports for the first floor of the building, repiling, and digging drains to stop water pooling inside the building. The archaeological work carried out to date has involved drawing all external elevations, mapping the area, drawing a floor plan, recording the building, removing and recording all loose material from within the building and excavating two rooms. This last activity yielded a surprising number of artefacts.

*Katharine Watson*

## **Otago**

Over the last two years Jill Hamel has been fundraising and coordinating efforts to stabilise a kilometre of an unusually fine, stone, field wall along Mopanui Road north of Dunedin. It runs along a road which had been a major route in the 1870s for local farmers but fell into disuse in the 20th century, becoming a dead-end road. In the last 10 years, the wall has become a boundary along the edge of the maintenance road for the predator proof fence around Orokonui Ecosanctuary. With the cooperation of the Ecosanctuary, Department of Conservation, the Dunedin City Council, Dow Excavations and some local stonemasons, fallen sections have been rebuilt which has remedied the main problem - inadequate road construction in the 1870s and unsympathetic road maintenance until two years ago. The degree of deep disturbance of the wall by past roadworks was a surprise, and needs to be kept in mind by archaeologists and others when undertaking restoration work on this humble vernacular type of structure.

*Emma Brooks*