



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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## FIELDWORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

### Northland

Over the last few months archaeological works in the Northland region have continued at a slower pace with a number of upcoming projects keeping archaeologists busy with the preparation of assessments for authority applications. However, works relating to forestry have kept Northern Archaeological Research and CFG Heritage occupied as well as Jono Carpenter. Jono has continued with his PhD research at Ruapekapeka; assisted by a willing stream of students and recent graduates keen to get their hands (and feet) dirty. He has also been involved with a series of smaller projects around the wider Whangarei area. This year's conference in Paihia is gearing up and looks to be interesting with a variety of different papers, speakers and sessions which should result in some lively discussions and debates. Finally I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Clayton Blackwood who has recently joined the Whangarei Department of Conservation Office as a new Ranger and will be involved with their management of archaeological and historic heritage sites in Northland.

*Brooke Jamieson*

### Auckland

The University of Auckland Field School of stage 3 students was excavating on Ahuahu Great Mercury Island for two weeks in early February. Excavations continued for a third week with a smaller crew of excavators under the Ahuahu Great Mercury Island Archaeological Project. Two sites in Coralie Bay on the east side of the island revealed a range of features. In one site kumara storage pits were uncovered on a slope which had no surface indications. In the other site earth ovens and postholes associated with a row of stones were situated over clean sand containing numerous large obsidian flakes to a depth of over 1 m. Moa and seal bones were also present. Analysis is now underway. Follow social media and blogs on the excavation:

<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-and-library/research-centre/research-projects/great-mercury-island-expedition>)

[www. http://digdiaries.ac.nz/fieldschool/](http://www.digdiaries.ac.nz/fieldschool/)

The Auckland Council Cultural Heritage Implementation (CHI) Team currently comprises nine staff (1x Team Leader [Chris Mallows], 3 x Principal Heritage Advisors [Mica Plowman, George Farrant, Keita Kohere], 1 x Heritage Advisor [Beth Tauroa], 1 x Senior Specialist: Archaeology [Myfanwy Eves] and 3 x Specialist: Archaeology [Laura Dawson, Mary Kienholz, Rebecca Ramsay) on a mixture of permanent and fixed term contracts. The CHI Team's

role is derived from the Auckland Plan Strategic Direction 4 – “...protect and conserve Auckland’s historic heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations”. The CHI Team provide historic heritage advice to all areas within Council, as well as to ratepayers.

The CHI Team are involved in a number of diverse projects. The Waitemata Local Board Heritage Foreshore Project is designed to celebrate the historic foreshore of the Waitemata Harbour between Point Erin Pools and Parnell Baths. Twenty-seven interpretation panels celebrating the history of the foreshore are being developed as part of a walking trail between the two localities. Supported by Waitakere Local Board money, the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act State of the Environment Monitoring Report: Historic Heritage Review Project, is creating electronic and physical site packs for the 1324 historic heritage sites, recorded within the Cultural Heritage Inventory, within the land area defined by this Act. This immensely important piece of work pulls all known documentation together on each site. This information will ultimately be used for the site visits which will determine the current condition of each historic heritage item. Many of these sites have not been visited since the 1970s. A more unusual project the CHI Team have been working on, following a request from the Auckland Botanical Gardens, is loosely termed the Taro Project. In the early 2000s, Auckland Regional Council archaeological staff collated a number of taro tubers identified visually as being of a Polynesian variety. These tubers had never been planted by the Auckland Botanical Gardens who have posed the question of what to do with them. Before a decision is made, CHI Team staff are visiting the source locations of the tubers to determine if the plants still survive in the wild and from there will determine, in consultation with the Auckland Botanical Gardens, where the project will head. In addition, with the end of the current Council financial year fast approaching, the CHI Team are looking forward to receiving commissioned work on two educational projects that have been developed relating to historic cemeteries and geophysical surveys.

Other business as usual work includes the on-going assessment of the region’s heritage funding rounds, technical advice into Initial Activity Permits (i.e. Coca Cola Christmas in the Park) and the Screen Auckland Activity Permit process (i.e. Power Rangers); as well into statutory processes (i.e. Resource Consents, NORs, Outline Plan of Works) whereby, the CHI Team advocates for project effects on archaeology to be avoided / minimised and positively mitigated.

Finally, the CHI Team have been helping consultant archaeologists to excavate and re-expose the historic industrial site at Limeburners Bay, Hobsonville. The site was subject to unconsented filling, and an Environment Court decision has determined that it will be a Council Historic Reserve.

Caroline Phillips, Brent Druskovich and Russell Foster have been monitoring works in Myers Park as part of the refurbishment of the playground and increased lighting, and the cycleway project around the proposed Dominion Road upgrade. These have been very much keyhole archaeology and even where no archaeological evidence was found, will provide useful information about the likelihood of finding other material in the future. Both works are coming to a close soon. Caroline and Brent were joined by Kate Hill for an excavation of what turned out to be a small Māori settlement on Naylor's Drive overlooking the upper reaches of the Pukaki Creek. This included one almost complete whare and part of another, three roasting pits, a storage pit, two fences and cooking areas.

*Louise Furey, Chris Mallows, Caroline Phillips*

### **Central North Island**

W Gumbley Ltd. undertook some test excavations on the Rangitahi Peninsula at Raglan in February. These were followed by investigations along the Huntly section of the Waikato Expressway, where a series of sites is clustered on the banks of a group of waterways flowing into the Waikato River, just upstream of the Taupiri gap, in the heart of the traditional rohe of Ngāti Mahuta. So far the excavations are approximately halfway through the identified archaeological areas and, as well as areas of Māori-made soils, evidence of peripheral domestic occupation and storage pits has been found. This includes a cluster of seven large rectangular storage pits.

Brigid Gallagher is still excavating at Katikati and writing up last year's excavations in Bethlehem, where over 3000 features were found, including pits, rua, sumps, drains, postholes, fire scoops, hāngi pits and whare floors. A first summary report has been prepared for the client and hapū.

Around Tauranga, John Coster has been busy assessing subdivision and building sites, and at Hicks Bay Kevin Jones has done an assessment for a log-barge landing.

Neville Ritchie and Dave Wilton have been investigating sites associated with HMS Tortoise; a spar-gathering ship, operating near Tairua River in 1842-43. A Heritage assessment being written for the Department of Conservation led to transcription and study of the journal of Thomas Laslett, the Timber Purveyor on HMS Buffalo, and, after Buffalo was lost, HMS Tortoise. Laslett's journal provides sketch maps of the general area the crew were working, and detailed plans of the main camp at the beach at Te Karo and a 'camp in the forest' (CITF) about a kilometre inland. There were up to 60 members of Tortoise's crew residing and working at CITF, over about ten months.

Extrapolating Laslett's map data to a topographic map and some dedicated bush-bashing revealed a likely site for CITF. Preliminary

archaeological investigation, including metal detection and geo-magnetic scanning has produced some archaeological evidence that tends to confirm the location. This includes three likely whare/pit sites, terraces that were possibly tent sites, and rocks that may have come from a fire place (the rocks are thought to be part of the officers' cookhouse.)

The main Tortoise camp at Te Karo beach (commonly known as 'Sailors Grave', as a seaman who drowned when a small boat capsized in the surf is buried there) was recorded as T11/1024 in 2011. Māori contractors employed to haul logs had an encampment on the opposite side of the creek, and this was recorded as T11/312 in 1963. The CITF site is now recorded as T11/2792.

As the geophysical survey of CITF was only completed in mid-May, it was too late to submit a paper for the NZAA conference, but a poster will be presented. It is anticipated that the CITF (and Sailors Grave) sites may be of interest to university field schools or postgraduate research students looking for a topic.

*John Coster and David Wilton*

## **Taranaki**

Heritage Taranaki Inc. have been working with Heritage New Zealand and have submitted 31 archaeological sites to the South Taranaki District Council (STDC) district plan review for listing on the STDC Heritage Schedule. This work corrects errors on the existing schedule and proposes the listing of a number of new sites. Ivan Bruce is in the process of updating the inventories of a number of archaeological sites on the Heritage New Zealand List in the South Taranaki District. Heritage Taranaki Inc. have also undertaken working bees at Te Koru Pā Historic Reserve, primarily maintaining the regrowth of vegetation on the scarps and terraces.

*Ivan Bruce*

## **Wellington**

Christine Barnett has been researching and assessing some older buildings and sites in Greytown and Featherston, including the Featherston Military Camp, the Carkeek observatory, and the home of the first Mayor of Greytown. Christine has also been involved in assessing the archaeological potential of the Ngaumutawa kāinga and pā in Masterton.

Mary O'Keeffe has excavated test trenches in the grounds of Halfway House at Glenside, in preparation for planting of the grounds by Wellington City Council. Domestic artefacts were revealed, including the usual suspects of ceramics and glass; however an unexpected find was a quantity of slate roofing tiles, a costly roofing material for an inexpensive house. Mary also continues work on monitoring earthworks for the MacKays to Peka Peka (M2PP) expressway on the Kāpiti Coast.

*Mary O'Keeffe*

## Canterbury

Archaeological work continues apace in Christchurch. In amongst the SCIRT works carried out recently, Hamish Williams has been monitoring works on two bridges in central Christchurch; the Gloucester Street bridge and the Armagh Street bridge. The works on the latter have revealed the underlying superstructure of the bridge and possibly also a clay layer associated with the original construction of the bridge – this layer contained very small fragments of artefacts. Teri Anderson has continued to monitor earthworks in Sumner, where recent discoveries have included a cultural layer on Head Street (first recorded in 1966, as N36/47) and a deposit of 19<sup>th</sup> century European rubbish in an old stream bed on Head Street. Megan Hickey has been monitoring earthworks in Southshore, but nothing has been found there to date.

Kurt Bennett has been monitoring earthworks associated with the pavement repair in the log yard at Lyttelton Port. Amongst other things, this has revealed the remains of what are believed to be sea walls dating to the 1850s, buried beneath the later 19<sup>th</sup> century reclamation. Kirsa Webb has begun monitoring the deconstruction of the former Odeon Theatre. This was built in the early 1880s and was an entertainment venue of varying types throughout its life. Kate Sheppard spoke here a number of times during the fight for votes for women.

Jessie Garland, Kimberley Bone, Kirsa Webb and a number of others from the team at UnderOverArch spent several very uncomfortable days excavating an asbestos-contaminated site in the late summer heat. The results were about 5000 artefacts, many of which dated to the early part of Christchurch's settlement by Europeans. One part of this section was occupied by doctors for most of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and, unsurprisingly, a high proportion of medicine bottles were recovered from this part of the site. The history of the other part of the section is more complex, and involves a number of occupants – and a 12 year gap for which no occupant can be determined. The clay pipe assemblage recovered from this site is particularly interesting, and contains a large number of unused pipes, as well as pipes representing six countries.

Peter Mitchell and Francesca Bradley have recorded a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century houses in the Avonside area, while Matt Hennessey has been monitoring earthworks around a 19<sup>th</sup> century farm house on the outskirts of the city. So far, no archaeological material has been found. Julia Hughes has been busy monitoring earthworks for demolitions and rebuilds.

*Katharine Watson*