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Fieldwork and Other Activities

It has been an active summer both in New Zealand and for NZ archaeologists overseas. A notable development in recent years has been the adoption of drones for archaeological survey and recording, as can be seen in several of the reports and images below.

Otago & Southland

In Dunedin Southern Pacific Archaeological Research (SPAR) has been excavating part of the site of the Otago University Dental School redevelopment. The excavations (not yet complete at the time of writing) are being directed by Richard Walter and Emma Brooks, and have found several intact wooden barrels (at least one of which was used as a latrine), a cobbled

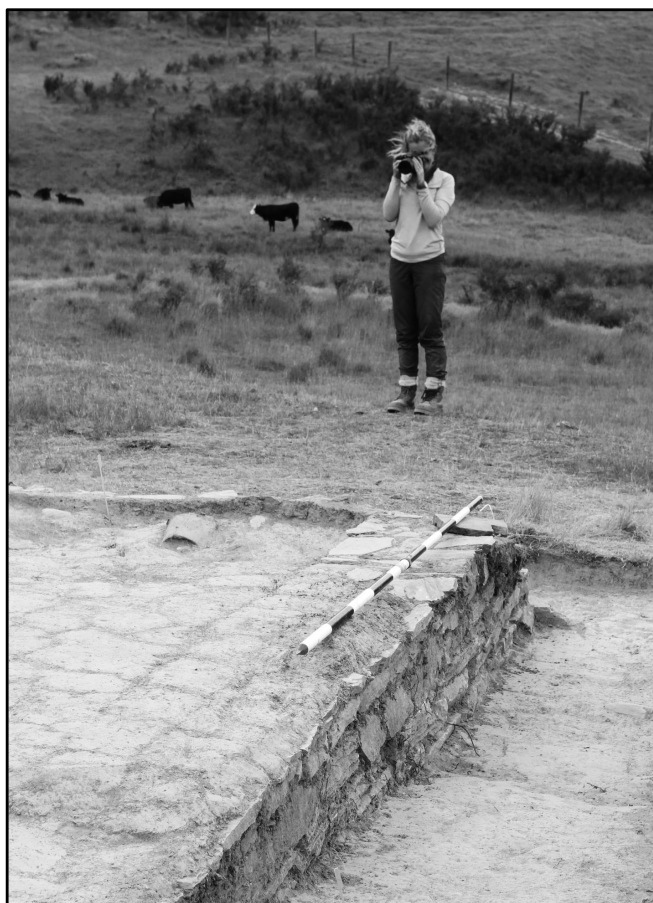


floor and stone building foundations, as well as the usual range of historic artefacts, all probably dating to the 1870s onwards. This part of Dunedin was largely developed after the gold rushes of the 1860s, which created a commercial boom for Dunedin.

Left: One of two intact barrels at the Otago Dental School excavation in Dunedin (SPAR).

The Otago University Archaeological Field School is underway at Vinegar Hill near St. Bathans in Central Otago, under the direction of Tim Thomas. The students are excavating part of gold mining entrepreneur John

Ewing's homestead (site H41/178), which was occupied from 1883 until the early 1900s. The excavation is focussed on the remains of a stone and mud brick structure that might be associated with an electric generator that was installed in 1889 to power carbon arc lights in the mine and to supply the homestead. Ewing was an early adopter of this technology, which allowed night-time working in the mining claims. The field school runs for three weeks.



Clara Watson photographing a stone and mud brick structure at the Ewing Homestead site at Vinegar Hill, Otago (Tim Thomas).

Canterbury & West Coast

The post-earthquake work continues apace in Canterbury with 20+ archaeologists kept busy there, along with the usual development-based work in the wider region. Michael Trotter and Jeanette McIssac have been monitoring various sites, and have helped Deb Foster excavate human burials found during construction work in Kaikoura. In Kaiapoi both historic (flat irons, bottle glass, a cow skeleton) and prehistoric

(a shell midden) features have been found during street trenching. In Rangiora Matthew Hennessey monitored excavations at the site of a coffin maker's house and workshop that burnt down in 1873 and a butcher's shop that was established in 1876. Not surprisingly, he found rubbish pits that contained animal bone and condiment jars at the latter.

In Christchurch City Hamish Williams has continued his interest in Victorian drains, and investigated the remains of Christchurch's original outfall sewer in Tuam Street. The brick and concrete sewer was built in 1873, and was oviform in section. This section was probably abandoned in 1899 when a new sewer was built nearby. Also on Tuam Street, Shana Dooley has been investigating a nineteenth century industrial site that at present is unidentified, but has two brick floors and concentration of slag and metal fragments.



A 19th century brick sewer containing 21st century infrastructure in Tuam Street, Christchurch (Hamish Williams).

Julia Hughes has been working on the site of the ‘Old Tin Shed’ at the Arts Centre (the old University buildings), and has recorded foundations details and some laboratory artefacts. This was the first building constructed for Canterbury College (later to become the University of Canterbury), and was built in 1877 and demolished in 1916. It was the subject of an earlier archaeological investigation in 2001 by Katharine Watson, when similar evidence was found.

A fragment of a plate found in Christchurch, ‘Boy with Punchinello’ (Underground/Overground).



In Lyttleton Kurt Bennett monitored excavation work at the Port, near Gladstone Quay, and amongst other railway-related features he found the concrete ring from a turntable. This turntable is shown on an 1890 map of the area, and formed part of the rail infrastructure of the nineteenth century port facilities. The structure has been left in situ.

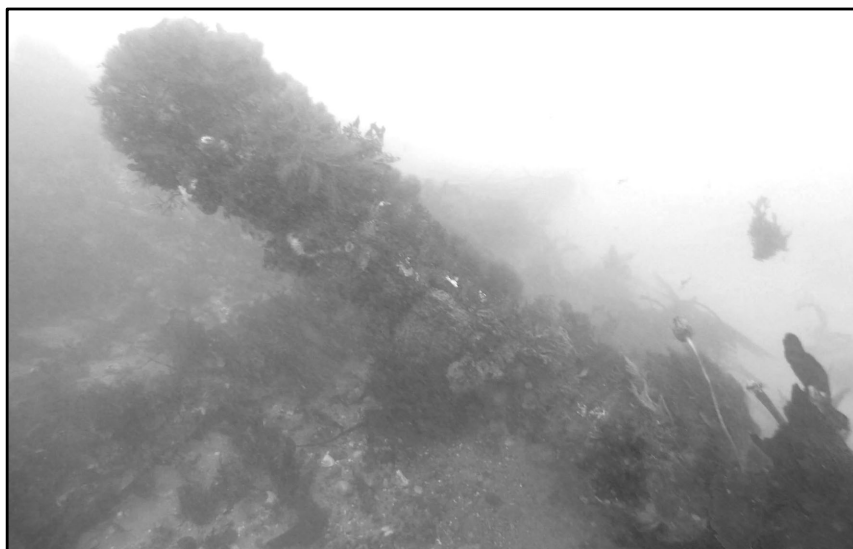
In the hinterland, Katharine Watson and Tristan Wadsworth recorded the Clarence River section of the Hurunui Rabbit Board’s rabbit proof fence.

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This was built between 1887 and 1889, and considerable stretches remain in reasonable condition.

Wellington

In Wellington Andy Dodd has carried out an assessment for the Wellington Harbour shipping channel deepening project. The section of the channel between Point Gordon and Pencarrow Head is known to have seen 33 shipwrecks between 1848 and 1996, and was also a focal point for the coastal defence network from the 1890s onwards. Two nineteenth century shipwrecks, *Willie McLaren* (R27/205) and *Tui* (R27/496) are outside the dredge footprint but have been proposed for monitoring due to the potential changes in sedimentation and wave action that the deepening project may cause.



Working with limited visibility: one of the iron frames of the wreck of the Tui (Andy Dodd).

Work continues on the MacKays to Peka Peka expressway on the Kapaiti Coast. Mary O'Keefe is

still monitoring earthworks, and is working on the analysis of faunal material with Yolanda Vogel. Construction has also started on the Transmission Gully road, and Mary is monitoring earthworks there as well.

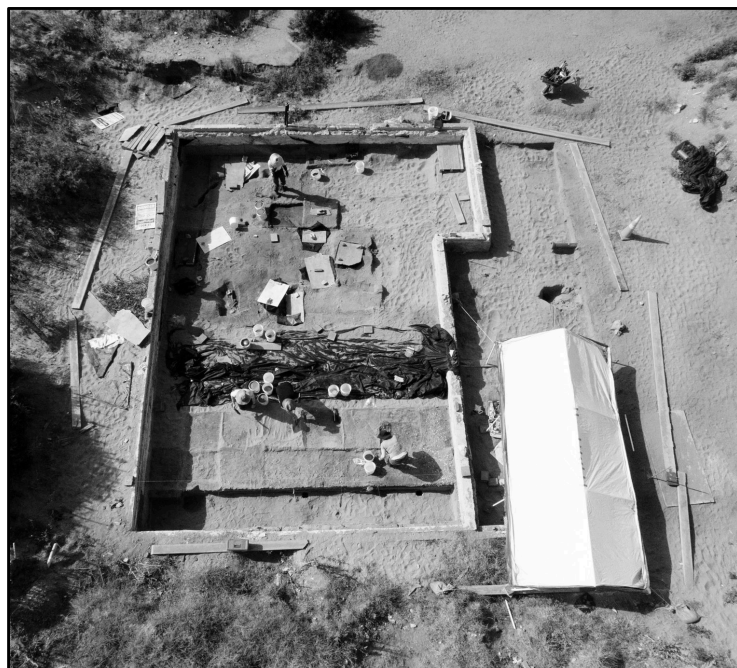
Central North Island

Warren Gumbley has recently finished fieldwork for the Huntley section of the new Waikato Expressway, focussing on horticultural sites including domestic and crop storage components. A highlight was the discovery of sand-filled bowl-shaped hollows that represent the in-ground bases of individual planting mounds (puke), found on the level surface of a back-filled borrow pit. Another unusual discovery was an inland shell midden on what was the southern shore of Lake Kimihia near Huntley. It included cockle, pipi and some scallop.

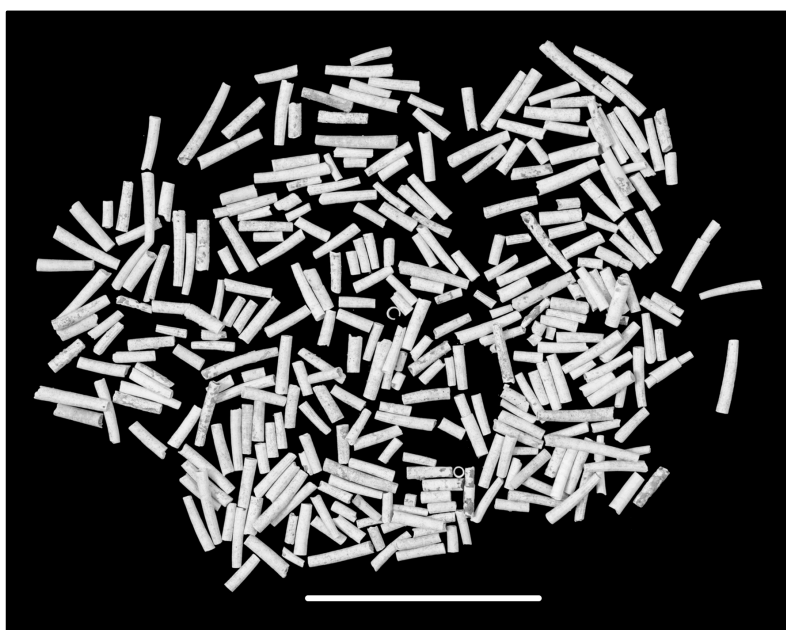
Auckland & Northland

North of Auckland, Matt Campbell (CFG Heritage) and Beatrice Hudson have been working on a site at Long Bay Regional Park that has revealed a large number of koiwi. Originally the excavations were intended to clear the site of a restaurant redevelopment following the discovery of burials in 2013 and 2014, but the number of interments found in the small space of the building (12m by 12m) led to the abandonment of the redevelopment.

A drone shot of the CFG excavations at Long Bay Regional Park (Matt Campbell).



The archaeologists are currently completing the excavation of the area opened up in 2015, and have found more burials and several cultural layers separated by wind-blown sand. The earliest layer contained seal bone and moa bone fish hooks, while the upper layer has been dated to cal AD 1500-1635.



Dentalium beads from a disturbed infant burial at the Long Bay Regional Park (Matt Campbell).

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Further north again, in the Hokianga, Matt Carter (La Trobe University) has just finished his Phd research excavation at Horeke, the site of one of New Zealand's earliest ship building yards used between 1826 and 1831 (possibly until 1835). Fifteen to twenty volunteers worked for two weeks, and exposed a number of features and a considerable volume of artefacts from both the domestic and industrial use of the site. The presence of the local pub across the road from the excavation, and the support of the local community, made this a very pleasant project. For more information see the project blog at <https://thefirstshipsproject.wordpress.com/>



Gemma sieving and Hans supervising at the Horeke shipyard excavation in January 2016 (Matt Carter).

Also in the north, Brent Druskovich excavated a midden site at Marsden Point in Northland prior to a new seawall being built for the oil refinery. He found three distinct areas of shell disposal, containing predominantly pipe with occasional cockle.

New Zealand Overseas Projects

In Thailand Charles Higham of Otago University has been directing the 2016 season of excavations at Non Ban Jak, where he has continued to find evidence of Iron Age occupation, including house foundations and human burials. Hallie Buckley has been directing the analysis of the 149 burials that have been found so far. One of the highlights of this season has been the discovery of an early historic religious structure that contained a small clay statuette of a seated Buddha. Thai company Mappoint Asia has carried out the detailed mapping of Non Ban Jak and other excavated sites in the region using both a drone (see the photograph below) and a fixed wing aircraft. An experiment using Lidar within the main excavation unit was undertaken for the first time this year, and we await the results with some interest.

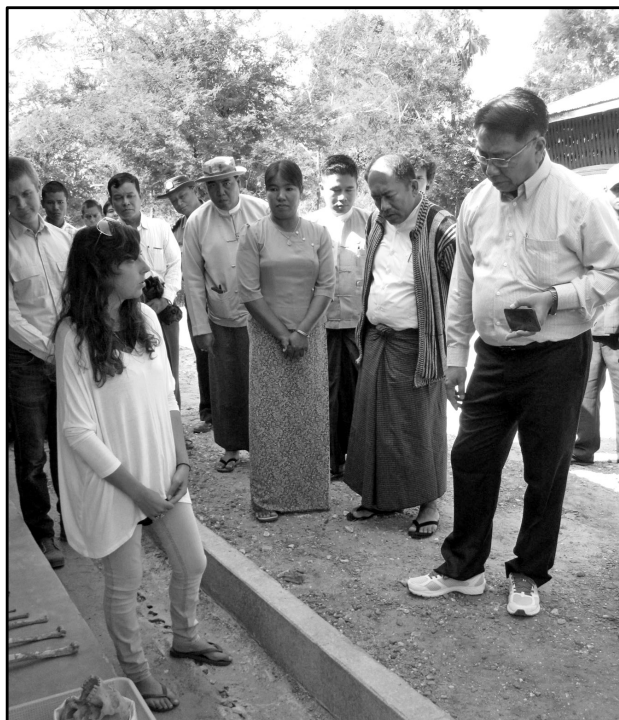


Charles Higham and Helen Heath (both of Otago University) with the drone used for the survey at Non Ban Jak in NE Thailand (Charles Higham).

Peter Petchey, Jitlada Innanchai and Anna Willis have been participating in the *Mission Archeologique Francaise au Myanmar* in Burma (Myanmar), where two bronze age sites have been investigated. The Nyaung-gan site is a cemetery on the lip of a volcanic crater, and Oakaie-3 is a lithics production site some six kilometres away. This latter site contained evidence of stone bead, chipped/flaked stone tool and stone bangle production. Numerous stone bangle cores showed how bamboo sections were used as drills to cut through thin stone blanks. Although the area is intensively farmed, most cultivation is

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still carried out using single-furrow ploughs pulled by bullocks, and so the plough soil is very shallow. As a consequence, although the Oakaie site is



exposed at the surface in a field it has suffered relatively little damage. This is likely to change as Burma opens up to the world, and tractors have already begun to make their appearance in the villages. The rich but relatively unknown archaeology of this region is under serious threat.

Anna Willis (ANU, ex-Otago University) addressing the Myanmar Minister of Culture at Nyaung-gan.



Ploughing near Oakaie in Burma using a single-furrow plough in 2016. Easy on the sub-surface archaeology, but change is on the way.

Thanks to Kurt Bennett, Emma Brooks, Matt Campbell, Matt Carter, John Coster, Brent Druskovich, Charles Higham, Mary O'Keefe, Tim Thomas, Katharine Watson and Hamish Williams for the updates on recent activities.