



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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In Tauranga, two very enthusiastic members, Mr. P. Crichton and Mr. P. Mortenson, have undertaken to record the sites on the coast between Tauranga and Papamoa, a very interesting area, and the results of their labours are keenly awaited.

The file-keeper for the Bay of Plenty area (Mr. D. Stafford) extends a very cordial invitation for any members of the Archaeological Association to contact him if in Rotorua at any time. His Phone No. -- 579 (business), A826 (home).

HAMILTON-WAIKATO by C.G.Hunt.

Some eighteen months ago, Jack Colson gave an illustrated address on archaeology to the Waikato Scientific Association and stressed the need for the formation of an Archaeological Group in the Waikato which was rich in suitable sites.

Subsequently, the executive of the Waikato Scientific Association decided to call a special meeting of members and non-members to hear a further address on the subject by Messrs. Groube and Smart of Auckland. Those present who were interested in forming an Archaeological Section of the W.S.A, were invited to hand in their names and addresses and twenty people did so.

In August 1959, these twenty were called together and were formally constituted a Section of the W.S.A, with Mr.F.J.Butler as Chairman and Mr. E.Campin as Recorder. For some weeks the new Section was without a Secretary but that office was eventually filled by a volunteer in Mr. A.T.Scott.

It was decided that a field exercise should be held as soon as possible to give instruction in modern techniques and assistance was promised by several members of the N.Z.Archaeological Assn., living in Auckland. Preliminary survey of the district to choose a suitable site for the exercise was done by the Chairman and others, but a decision was rather forced on us by the news that Te Rapa Pa, right in Hamilton City, was to be shortly bulldozed away to make new approaches for the proposed additional traffic bridge across the Waikato River.

The Rapa Pa is situated in Richmond Park which has been grassed and has had some exotic trees planted in it but has never been developed as a playing area. At the time of writing it is grazed by stock and is used occasionally by Girl Guides and Boy Scouts for week-end camps. After a surface survey of the site the members of the new section decided to tackle it before Christmas and a date was fixed early in December to suit the Auckland members who had offered to act as instructors.

The next task was to gather together sufficient tools and equipment to undertake preliminary excavations. Voluntary offers of assistance were soon forthcoming. Mr. M.E.Campim volunteered to procure the timber for pegs, and Mr. Hans Pos undertook to supply the wire and make the wire pegs. Mr. Butler supplied sacks for making screens for the necessaria and Mr. Roche undertook to sew these together. Others formed themselves into working bees to make various small items and offers of the loan of wheel barrows, shovels, spades, slashers, measuring tapes etc., were soon forthcoming. Mr. C.G.Hunt was appointed Director of Operations for the first dig and the whole Section went to work with a will to prepare for the opening dig.

Adequate transport was made available and at 8 a.m. on December 5, when the equipment arrived at the end of the road nearest to the site, several members were already slashing a track through the undergrowth smothering the approaches. A track was soon cleared, a stile placed over the fence and a bridge thrown across a small stream after which the tools and equipment were carried in and dumped on the site to be excavated.

While the Recorder and his helpers were pegging off the squares to be excavated the others set to work erecting the tent, constructing suitable necessaria -- one for the ladies and one for the men -- preparing a camp fire and generally doing the necessary tasks inseparable from such an undertaking. By 10 a.m., everything was ready and the billy was boiling by the time the first car load containing Miss King and Messrs. Golson and Groube arrived from Auckland. The second car, containing Mr. and Mrs. Laurie Birks and Mrs. Joan Hunter arrived shortly after and we were ready for our first instruction. Jack Golson gave a broad outline of the techniques to be adopted and then the local members were split up into small groups each under the supervision of experienced instructors, and the work began. This is not the place to give a detailed account of the work which was done or the discoveries that were made as that would be better left until more work has been done on the site and an appraisal made of what was revealed by the excavations.

Six or seven squares were opened up, and though one proved to be negative, the others were most interesting and provided some useful information of the previous inhabitants of the site. During lunch on the first day a slight diversion was made when a Hamilton member gave a demonstration of his powers of divination with some slight, but not entirely negative success in locating rocks buried in the ground.

The exercise was continued next day and, later in the afternoon, the excavated sites were duly recorded and then filled in and re-turfed because the area was to be used as a camp site by the Girl Guides the following weekend. The tent and other structures were demolished in quick time, and before darkness fell, there was little evidence of the two-day activity on the site.

It is obvious that much more work must be done on the site before a complete picture can be built up of the former pa and it is hoped that this may yet be done. But the bulldozers are expected to start early in March and we can only hope that they too will reveal some of the mysteries of the long disused pa.

In the meantime the exercise was an undoubted success owing largely to the co-operation of the members. All the equipment on the many lists given to members to make or borrow arrived on the site and we lacked nothing on that score. The organization worked like clockwork and everything turned out as planned. The assistance of the Auckland members was very much appreciated and the much-needed instruction given by them was invaluable.

As Jack Golson so rightly pointed out, the Waikato is rich in archaeological sites and the success of the first field day augers well for the future.

GTSBOFNE by Alan Pullar.

During the year, my own personal interest lay in determining the relationship between the 'black' or 'X' pumice and the Kaharoa ash eruption 1100 A.D., i.e., whether the black pumice is older or younger. Although the search was unfruitful, we did find Kaharoa ash on the Gisborne Plains ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick) and in