**ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND**

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

We write regarding the paper "The development and application of New Zealand obsidian hydration dating, 1996-1998" by P.J.Sheppard, P.Barker, G.J.Irwin, M.Jones, C.Stevenson and D.G.Sutton, which appeared in your Journal volume 39, 1996, pages 16-29.

Let me, (Paul Barker), say at the outset that, despite being cited as a co-author, I have never seen this paper, did not know of its existence, and certainly did not know of its appearance in your Journal. Actually I did not know of the Journal at all, which is why this letter is so late. In particular I do not agree with the views expressed about the accelerator mass spectrometry carbon-dating technique, to which Rodger Sparks in his letter on pages 238-240 of the same volume quite rightly took exception - they are illjudged to say the least.

But we have a further objection. The nuclear reaction technique which is described for determining the obsidian hydration profile was developed as part of the PhD thesis work of one of us (Suzanne Neve) under the supervision of the other (Paul Barker). Consequently for one of us to be cited, it should be Neve, although both would have been appropriate (see (1) below).

Although publication of this letter can nullify, to some extent, the effect of the first wrong, the second seems impossible to rectify, which is a great pity. Publication and acknowledgement are important to a young scientist.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Professor P.H.Barker
Ms S.R.Neve


(1) "Hydration Depth Profiling of Obsidian Surfaces using $^7$Li Ions", S.R.Neve and P.H.Barker, Proc. 14th Int.Conf. On the Application of Accelerators in Research and Industry, 1996, (Denton, to appear in 1997).