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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

In a Letter to the Editor ('Archaeology in New Zealand' 40(2):162-3) Paul Barker and Suzanne Neve raise concerns over the paper entitled 'The development and application of obsidian hydration dating, 1996-1998' (Archaeology in New Zealand 39(1):16-29).

The paper in question was extracted from an application to the Foundation of Research, Science and Technology which was written during 1993 and 1994 by those who are listed as its authors; i.e., Peter Sheppard, Paul Barker, Geoff Irwin, Martin Jones, Chris Stevenson and Doug Sutton. Paul Barker wrote sections of that application, saw successive drafts of the whole thing, and had every opportunity to change any parts of the final version with which he did not agree. At no stage during the lengthy process of drafting and redrafting that application did Paul Barker object to 'the views expressed about the accelerator mass spectrometry carbon-dating technique'. Hence we find his decision to do so in a public remonstrance 3-4 years after the fact of joint authorship somewhat enigmatic.

On the second point raised, we agree that 'publication and acknowledgement are important to a young scientist'. For that reason we are pleased to have supported Suzanne Neve's work for the duration of the FoRST grant in question and will continue to collaborate whenever possible.

Doug Sutton
Peter Sheppard
Martin Jones