



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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midden was confirmed by excavation. Excavation also revealed additional bone, artefact material, obsidian and a number of hangi pits. The lower cultural layer is separated from an overlying and more recent pipi and cockle shell midden by four to five feet of sterile dune sand. The upper midden is in turn buried under another four to five feet of sand. Again, the lower cultural layer was shallow, scarcely more than six inches in depth except in the area of the firepits.

Conclusion: As stated in the introduction, my intention was to locate and to record on the site record forms, information of value, where it will be available to all members of the association for further research. This report I hope will stimulate others to do the same. The results indicate, I think, the value that similar projects could have, if others will take more than a passing interest in the newly instituted site recording scheme.

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FROM THE MUSEUM

MAORI REPAIRS TO SPECIMENS by V.F. Fisher

Occasionally specimens, illustrating the fact that the Maori, in olden times repaired objects in daily use, find their way to the Auckland Museum. Sometimes they are added to the permanent collections, but in some instances they are sent in for inspection and comment. It is perhaps only natural that when a Maori craftsman had expended much skill and patience on some article for a special purpose, that any minor damage which it suffered should, if possible, be repaired.

Many years ago a teacher brought to the Museum a fine, whale-bone comb (heru). As usual, it was well finished and decorated with a neat piece of carving on the curved edge. An examination revealed that one of the teeth had been broken and about two-thirds of the tooth was missing. However, repairs had been effected by lashing a short piece of bird bone, two inches in length to the broken stump. To ensure that the attached piece of bone was securely lashed, a fine notch had been cut at the top, thus reducing the possibility of the new portion working loose. If my memory serves me rightly, a fine flax seizing had been used.

Flax was not the only lashing material employed for repair work. In North Auckland the wiry, tough stems of the climbing mangemange fern (Lygodium articulatum) were used either whole or split. This material was especially favoured for lashing damaged

wooden implements. Other materials sometimes used were the aerial roots of the kiekie (Freycinetia Banksii), and the thin roots of several species of climbing rata.

Of special interest is a repaired canoe paddle (hoe) which has a well-shaped, thin blade, and wavy handle. The blade itself is 2 ft.  $8\frac{3}{4}$  ins. in length, but unfortunately the tip has been broken away. The widest part of the blade is  $4\frac{3}{8}$  ins. Extending 21 ins. is a longitudinal split or crack, which runs the greater part of the length of the blade. Twelve inches from the broken tip two holes, one on either side of the crack, have been made so that the split could be drawn together and closed. Unfortunately the lashing is missing. Although I have stated that there are two holes, in actual fact, to complete the two perforations, five holes were commenced with a stone pointed drill. Each hole is crater shaped and was drilled part of the way from each side. In one instance, two holes were started on the same side, one of which joins its partner on the opposite side. The thickness of the blade where the repair was carried out is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. To date, I have not seen another example of a repaired paddle blade but obviously it would be easier to effect repairs than make a new paddle.

A repaired wooden shovel 4 ft. 10 ins. in length, with a well shaped, shallow blade 20 ins. in length and  $6\frac{1}{4}$  ins. in width at the broadest part comes from the Kaipara district. On one side part of the rim is missing but there is still evidence of a perforation in the blade close to the part where blade and rim merge. Presumably, there was also a hole or even two holes in the missing rim or edge. Almost opposite on the other side there are two holes in the rim  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ins. apart and a third in the flattened portion of the blade. Perhaps, strictly speaking, this latter is not a repair but is rather anticipating the necessity of repairing the rim, which was very likely to split off when in use. The mangemange lashing is still intact, the unsplit stem being used in this case.

#### NEWS FROM OTHER AREAS

#### FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE GISBORNE DISTRICT by Allan Pullar

There is no branch of the N.Z. Archaeological Association in Gisborne. In 1956, the Gisborne Philosophical Society came into being with a principal object of doing a small amount of original work in natural history. Mr Leo Fowler, the first president, had already conducted some research into oral traditions of the local