



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

Vol.1. No.1. March, 1957.

EDITOR: R.J. Scarlett, Canterbury Museum, Rolleston Ave,
Christchurch 1.

Dear Fellow-Members,

This is the first issue of our Newsletter, which the Council and I hope will be a means of keeping members in touch with one another, increasing our knowledge of the Society's work, and in general promoting the interests of our Association and its members. The main news in this issue is, of course, the 2nd Annual Conference of the Association, particulars of which are given below. Anyone who attended last year's Conference at Auckland will no doubt wish to attend this one. I strongly urge every member who can to attend. Of the numerous Scientific Conferences of one kind or another at which I have been present, our first one was the best - best organised and most enjoyable for the papers given, and the discussion. There is a great deal to be said for having adequate time to deliver the papers and for discussion.

The efficiency of this letter depends a great deal on your cooperation. I want news of what you have been doing - just brief accounts of your digs, finds, etc., Book Reviews, and anything of general interest. Please send it in. I'll welcome it.

The Editor.

CONFERENCE

PLACE: Otago Museum, Great King St., DUNEDIN

TIME: Tuesday - Friday, 21st - 24th May,
1957.

GENERAL TITLE: MOAS AND MAN

PROGRAMME

- TUESDAY: THE NATURAL BACKGROUND
- Morning: Dr R.A. Falla (Director, Dominion Museum)
 "The Habits, Distribution and Ecology of the Moa and Contemporary Bird Fauna."
 Also, possibly to be included by Dr Falla in his address, a contribution by Dr C.A. Fleming (N.Z. Geological Survey)
 "The Problems of the Extinction of Post-Pleistocene Bird Fauna."
- Afternoon: Mr W. Harris (Soil Bureau) "Pollen Analysis at Pyramid Valley and Contemporary Swamps."
Dr J. Holloway (N.Z. Forest Service) "Post Pleistocene Climates: the Forest Record."
- WEDNESDAY: THE NEW ZEALAND CULTURE SEQUENCE
- Morning: Dr R.S. Duff (Director Canterbury Museum) "The Moa-Hunter Stage."
Mr V. Fisher (Auckland Museum) "The Classic Maori Culture of the 18th Century".
- Afternoon: Mr L. Lockerbie (Otago Museum) "The Culture Sequence in the Murihiku Area of the South Island."
Mr J. Golson (Auckland University College) "From Moa-Hunter to Maori in the North Island of New Zealand."
- THURSDAY: CONCLUSIONS
- Morning: Prof. D.S. Coombs (Geology Dept., Otago University). "Sources of the Principal Stone Materials of the Moa-Hunter in the South Island of New Zealand."
Mr G.L. Adkin "Sites of Moa-Hunter Affiliation in the Wellington Province and Their Geological Correlations."
- Afternoon: Dr H.D. Skinner (former Director, Otago Museum) "Prehistoric New Zealand Culture in its New Zealand Setting."

FRIDAY

Morning: Annual General Meeting.

Afternoon: Visit to Otago Museum.

Each paper will last an hour, followed by discussion.

MEMBERS' DOINGS:

For three weeks in the last week of December and the first two in January, Jack Golson and a team from the Auckland University Archaeological Society (Golson's Gang), including your Editor, excavated a Moa-Hunter Site in North Coromandel. Adzes, fish-hooks, dentalium necklace, paua-shell pendant, and occupation layers, including house-sites, rewarded our efforts. We hope to finish the job next season. For two previous seasons, Jack and his Gang had excavated a house-site on Great Mercury Island, and at week-ends - still continuing - a Pa on the outskirts of Auckland.

Dr Robert Bell of the University of Oklahoma, and a party led by Dr R.S. Duff of the Canterbury Museum, in November 1955 excavated a Ngati-Mamoe house-site at Claverly, Conway. This was the last stronghold of the Ngati-Mamoe after the Ngai-Tahu had expelled them from the Clarence and Kaikoura districts. It was sacked and burned between 1650 and 1700 A.D., after being occupied for 20 years. An unusual feature was the sunken floor, 3ft. below the surface level. Dr Bell obtained an accurate plan of the post-holes, etc. Since then, various weekend parties have continued excavation at the Pa, and have obtained a section of canoe, perhaps re-used as a post. In December 1955, Dr Bell, Dr Duff, Ian Milne and Jim Eyles found a series of house-posts at Wairau Bar, and added more artefacts to the large number already found at this site.

Your editor spent a fortnight at Pyramid Valley, with the assistance of Cecil and John Dunn for five days, in February, and excavated a dozen moas, and numerous bones of smaller birds.

For several years, Bill Hartree has been excavating interesting moa bones, moa eggs, and small bird bones from limestone country on his farm in Hawkes Bay, and has found some most interesting

material.

Last year Dr Blake-Palmer excavated a small midden, with associated moa-bones, near Seacliff.

From 27th December 1955 - 14th January, 1956, an Otago Museum expedition excavated sections of the Papatowai Moa-hunter camp-site. Significant levels of the stratified deposit, which extends to a depth of more than seven feet, have been 14 dated. On January 15th, the Museum party moved to Murdering Beach where until 30 January, sections of the site of the village presumably destroyed by Kelly on December 26 1817, were excavated. Ovens, many post-holes and the remains of a pallisade with adzed post-butts in perfect condition were recorded. Dr Bell was actively associated with both excavations. Throughout the remainder of the year, many weekends were spent in further excavation of Murdering Beach, and in the investigation of other coastal sites. In January 1957, a survey was made of major sites between the Waimataitai River and Papatowai.

BOOK REVIEW: Bones for the Archaeologist, by I.W. Cornwall, with forward by Professor F.E. Zeuner. Phoenix House Ltd, London. N.Z. price £3.0.0.

Don't let the price deter you from buying Dr. Cornwall's excellent book, which should be on the shelves of every practising archaeologist. Though dealing only with mammals, and written for European archaeologists, this book contains a great deal which is useful to New Zealand workers. The sections of the human skeleton are worth the price of the book. The introductory chapter deals with the reasons for the book, and a brief account of classification, principles of nomenclature, palaeontology, evolution, the geological record, etc., follows. From then on, the author gets down to his main business, dealing in turn with the Skull, Dentition, The Axial skeleton, Shoulder and Hip Girdles, Fore-limb, Manus, Hind-limb, Pos, Determination of species from bones, etc. The whole book is crammed with well-presented information, and, although my main osteological work lies with birds, I find it of great interest, and very useful. It is, so far as I know, the only book of its kind, and fills a long-felt need; - R.J.S.

It is to be hoped that every excavator will preserve bone and shell material found in his digging,

with the appropriate data (depth, date, site, and so on). Much has already been learned from a study of the bird bones from midden and other sites in New Zealand, as well as rat, dog, etc., and eventually we hope that seal and fish bones will be able to receive adequate determination. Much more could have been learned had the material been properly preserved in the past. It is often, though not always, possible to determine species from broken bones, and we have the responsibility of recovering all the evidence we can at our sites, and preserving it. Nowadays, too, much that in the past tended to be thrown away is useful for C_{14} dating.