



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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NEW ZEALAND PREHISTORY: INFORMING THE PUBLIC

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G. S. Park

Several years ago Park (1972) reminded NZAA members of their responsibility "to commit to paper their ideas about what happened in the past" in ways that were intelligible and of interest to the general public. There are encouraging signs they are now doing this in a variety of publications beyond those mentioned in Park's initial survey. We list here items which have come to our attention, since members of the Association at the Kaiteriteri Conference in Nelson thought such a list would not only be informative, but perhaps also serve as stimulus for others to extend and diversify further the range of outlets utilised. Reviewing the list suggests that an increasing number of prominent archaeologists are now involved in the important task of interpreting results for a wide range of audiences in New Zealand. Nevertheless, the efforts need to be multiplied many times over before we can really claim to be successful.

In compiling the list we have excluded many recent summary papers of interest which in our opinion were scholarly presentations aimed at a restricted audience rather than attempts at popular presentation designed to interest a largely non-archaeological readership. Newspaper articles have also been excluded. What we are certain of from the list, and from the more scholarly summaries, is that there is no longer any reason for those interested in or teaching about Maori prehistory to present the "standard" version of inaccurate and out-dated views that were so prominent in the past. The New Zealand myth of Kupe, Toi and the Fleet dies hard; it will only get decent burial when replaced by a popular literature with other themes and views which reflect the current state of the art.

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NOTE: The preceding list is not definitive. The authors would be pleased to receive notice of errors or omissions for future reference.