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REVIEWS

Paul R. Dingwall, Kevin L. Jones, and Rachael Egerton (Eds.). 2009. *In Care of the Southern Ocean: An archaeological and historical survey of the Auckland Islands*. Monograph 27 of the New Zealand Archaeological Association. 317 pp, plus illustrations and maps. Softback. \$57 plus p&p; members \$48 plus p&p.

Neville Ritchie

Authored by members (including many experienced archaeologists) of the 2003 Auckland Islands Expedition, this monograph (NZAA Monograph 27) combines archaeological and historical research in the islands for this first time and breaks new ground.

Following the introductory chapter, the other chapters cover all the major episodes in the human history of the islands. Starting from the time of discovery by Polynesian seafarers in the 13th century, followed by a 500 year hiatus, it then flows through the various European-era events beginning with the 30 year sojourn of the sealers during which fur seals were largely exterminated; followed by the short-lived Enderby Settlement (1849-52) and whaling enterprise (1850); the scientific expeditions (1840-74); the failed pastoral farm settlements; the better known shipwreck era (1864 to c1910); and the Erlangen incident and coast watch stations of World War II.

Possibly the chapter that breaks the most new ground is Atholl Anderson's (Chapter 2) on the 'prehistoric archaeology' which confirms and demonstrates that there had been prehistoric Polynesian habitation in the Auckland Islands (although possibly only on Enderby Island) in the 13th-14th century AD. Besides his conclusions, his 'recommendations' for future work are a useful guide as to what needs to be done next.

Nigel Prickett reviews the known history of sealing in the islands and the difficulty of defining definitive archaeological evidence associated with it. Nonetheless 12 sites historically associated with sealing were visited and the sparse evidence documented. He concludes all of them may yield more information from future work.

On New Year's Day 1850 a small band of British colonists gathered on the shores of Erebus Cove in Port Ross. They held a simple ceremony to establish the Southern Whale Fishery Company and temporary base for the intended town of Hardwicke. At its height some 30 buildings housed 200 colonists but

in less than three years the settlement was dismantled and abandoned with the failure of both whaling and farming. Despite the difficulties posed by the terrain and vegetation cover, the 2003 expedition members (see Chapter 4) did a very thorough job of documenting the field remains and reconstructing the layout of the Enderby settlement based on an interpretation of the archaeological evidence and historical records. As this is one of the most visited sites in the islands this chapter it is likely to be compulsory reading for most visitors with a sense of history.

Chapter 5 by Kevin Jones covers the various scientific expeditions which sojourned or did research work in the Auckland Islands (prior to World War I) especially on the sheltered shores of Port Ross. Most notable are four scientific expeditions from four nations which converged on remote Terror Cove in Ross Harbour for observations. With the exception of the German Transit of Venus expedition in 1874, they have left little physical imprint but as Jones outlines they all made important contributions to consuming global scientific questions of the day.

The failed farm settlements are the subject of an interesting chapter (6) by Paul Dingwall. He concluded that apart from a few remnants of buildings, little direct tangible evidence remains of the several ill-fated attempts at farming on the islands, doomed to failure by isolation, the unfavourable climate and inhospitable terrain.

The shipwreck history and epic tales of survival are possibly the most well known aspect of the history of the Auckland Islands. At least 10 ships were wrecked on the islands between 1833 and 1907, the most famous or infamous being the *General Grant* (1866) and the ongoing fascination it has provided treasure hunters. There are more extant remains from the shipwreck era than any other on the islands. The 2003 expedition provided the opportunity to visit all the sites of significance - wreck sites, castaway camp and hut sites, provision depots and boat sheds and the network of fingerposts to direct survivors to them. Again combining historical and archaeological information it provides the most comprehensive overview of the shipwreck era published to date.

The final thematic chapter, another well-researched one, covers the historical archaeology associated with WW2 activities on the island, most notably the Erlangen incident and the secret coastwatching bases.

The last two chapters evaluate the marks of humankind - the trail of botanical introductions, the effects of the various episodes of human settlement on the group and the factors which give rise to its unique historical landscape and seascape character. While Jones' and Dingwall (p.264) promote the notion that the historical seascape and landscape rival the natural values which saw the five New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Island groups collectively made a World

Heritage site in 1998, I suspect those human elements were not totally overlooked when the islands were granted that hallowed status.

Although the *raison d'être* for the 2003 expedition was driven by management imperatives, long after this monograph has been succeeded by future studies, it will remain a comprehensive and oft-referred to treatise on the 700 year history and archaeology of the islands as it was known at the beginning of the 21st century. It is a comprehensive work and compelling insight into the human history of one of our southernmost island outposts.

Sara Donaghy. 2008. *A Critical Exploration of Frameworks for Assessing the Significance of New Zealand's Historic Heritage*. BAR International Series 1836. viii+196 pp; 59 tables; 10 figures; 7 data appendices. Soft-back. £36.00.

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As the title suggests, this book is a critical review of New Zealand's frameworks for assessing the significance of its historic heritage. Because the vast majority of archaeological work in New Zealand involves such assessments I looked forward to reading the study with interest. The research question for the book, "Are existing frameworks for valuing and assessing New Zealand's historic heritage appropriate and effective?" is set out clearly in the first chapter. Following this, the two frames of reference for the study are presented. First is the set of theoretical principles that relate to the qualities of heritage value and second are the operational strategies that relate to the actual process of assessment. The specific objectives of the study were to make comparisons between New Zealand and overseas approaches (Australia, Canada, England, U.S.A.) to (a) value ascription, (b) national and local frameworks of assessment, (c) the community dimension and (d) the strategy of assessing significance.

Following a review of the relevant literature the author identifies "effective system characteristics based on common features" which provides a yardstick with which to assess the New Zealand framework. The research methodology involved data collection through (a) reviews of heritage provisions in city, district and regional plans and policy statements, (b) questionnaires which were sent to both professional and non-professional heritage practitioners and (c) an "expert panel" of heritage practitioners who were invited to a conference in Auckland.

Aspects that receive particular attention are effectiveness of the following: national strategies and resourcing issues, local authority mechanisms, locally significant heritage, issues of indigenous historic heritage, community engagement, and consistency in the assessment process. The author identifies nineteen measures of effectiveness (e.g. presence of a national heritage strat-

egy; primary integrated legislation; indigenous heritage respected and valued; adequate resources) and finds that our system meets only five, and then only in part. A recurring theme in the study is the gulf between the theory of assessment and its practical application. To address this the author argues for more engagement and debate between heritage academics and heritage practitioners.

One important aspect of the study was an evaluation of frameworks for assessing the significance of Maori heritage. Although the author identifies problems with this aspect of significance assessment she acknowledges that she herself failed to connect successfully with Maori in the time available for her study.

A major conclusion of the study is that there is no national strategy in New Zealand to “promote effective management and a coherent set of priorities, objectives and structures for government involvement in the heritage sector”; the result of this being a lack of consistency across the various agencies which have a heritage management role. It is suggested that this shortcoming could be remedied either through a national policy statement or through a set of environment guidelines for historic heritage. However, the author notes that a national policy statement was a key recommendation of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment’s (PCE) 1996 report on heritage and that it has still not appeared. The author also notes that the heritage sector has “grown jaded with government reviews which promise much yet deliver little”, and that the Ministry for Culture and Heritage is seen as less than effective in terms of its policy making.

Not surprisingly, the author offers no quick fixes for the problems she has identified. She suggests that national policy documents would go a considerable way towards remedying the shortcomings in the legislation and policy development side. However, in terms of the inadequacies of the theory and practice of heritage assessment in New Zealand, all she proposes is further research and debate.

The book is based on the author’s PhD dissertation and this is strongly reflected in its structure and presentation. It includes extensive material that is not particularly necessary (particularly in the numerous appendices) and could have done with some judicious pruning and reorganisation to make it more coherent and less repetitive. Nevertheless, the study contains a reasonably full review of the New Zealand system in an international context. It therefore provides much important background that should be taken into account during

any future reviews of our frameworks for valuing, managing and protecting heritage.

D. J. Addison and S. Sand. (eds). 2008. *Recent Advances in the Archaeology of the Fiji/West Polynesia Region*. University of Otago Studies in Prehistoric Anthropology. No.21. Dunedin. vi+115 pp. Softback \$6.95 USD. ISBN: 978-0-473-14880-5. Free electronic download (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/anthropology/news/pdfs/Vol21.pdf>). ISBN: 978-0-473-14586-6.

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Available as both a free PDF download from the University of Otago Anthropology Department website and as a printed hard copy from amazon.com, this edited volume collects together a series of papers describing recent research in Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. The origins of the book lie in a working conference held in Tutuila in 2006 (Archaeology of the Polynesian Homeland Conference) but the papers have a tangential relationship to that event, simply presenting new research by some of the participants. The conference was organised as a workshop in which discussions were held on 12 themes important to the prehistory of the region rather than the usual format of presented papers. The editors promise that a full synthesis of these discussions is in preparation, and so, in the first chapter of the current volume, they present only a brief 'snapshot' of each thematic discussion. The result is an encouraging argument for more of these sorts of regionally targeted, discussion oriented conferences, since it is clear that areas of debate and agreement were usefully hashed out, and moreover, an awareness of gaps that need to be filled by future work was developed. I will resist presenting an even briefer summary of the editors' brief summary of the conference here, and instead focus on the remaining contributions to the volume.

In the second paper, Janet Davidson reviews the history of field research in the region, beginning with the work of McKern in 1920-21 and ending in 1979 with the publication of J. D. Jennings' *The Prehistory of Polynesia*. Her focus is primarily on the development of the concept of the Polynesian Homeland, and the research that led to archaeologists gradually shifting explanatory emphasis from origins external to Polynesia to internal development in Fiji/West Polynesia. She also stresses the historical role of collaborative research programmes dedicated to increasing archaeological coverage, hinting that the 2006 conference is part of this tradition. Davidson was of course one of the pioneering archaeologists of West Polynesian and the chapter includes numerous historical photographs of early field research, and will be useful for anyone wanting to find their way into the basic literature. She ends with a few words of caution on the need for awareness of what archaeology can and cannot achieve

(suggesting the rise of the Tongan Maritime Empire is beyond archaeological investigation) and the use of linguistic reconstructions – possibly reflecting conference debates.

The next three papers all present careful applications of archaeological science in the interpretation of archaeological remains. Julie Field summarises early unpublished excavations at Tatuba cave in the Sigatoka valley of Viti Levu conducted by Fiji Museum staff in 1972, and presents data from her own 2002 excavation of a 1 m² test pit aimed at clarifying the chronology and depositional context. Examination of the latter is enabled by a geoarchaeological analysis, the results of which suggest stratigraphic displacement and acidic erosion has affected the cultural material – reinforcing a growing awareness of the need for caution when interpreting material recovered from solution caves, particularly when reconstructing stylistic chronologies. Valentin et al. describe an early first millennium AD burial from Cikobia (northeast Fiji). Left in situ, and analysed in the field before reburial, the remains presented obvious difficulties for analysis, but a meticulous description of element positioning allows useful information on funerary practice to be conveyed. This is supplemented by dietary reconstruction through an isotopic analysis of bone collagen. Alice Storey contributes a paper critiquing early archaeological claims for the detection of cannibalism, arguing for a robust analytical criteria consisting of nine points. She then evaluates four Tongan skeletal assemblages against this model, finding no evidence for cannibalism, but some evidence for the use of human bone in tool manufacture. She concludes with an interesting suggestion that the use of modified human long bones may have been part of the Lapita cultural complex.

The remaining papers describe aspects of research in the Samoan archipelago. Barnes and Green speculate on who built the well known Uliamoa fort on Savai'i, arguing that a single chief who had spent time in Tonga can be identified as a prime candidate and that construction was probably initiated in response to conflict in 1843. In their own words this is conjectural history, requiring amongst other things that we accept that three named individuals in early European accounts are actually the same person. Whatever the case it is definitely a site that would bear revisiting. Fiona Petchey and David Addison present a revision of previous ¹⁴C marine reservoir determinations for Samoa, providing two new ΔR values from Tutuila, possibly helping clarify uncertainties caused by widely varying results in earlier studies. Rieth and Addison review the radiocarbon corpus relating to the period 1500-1000 calBP, in an effort to determine the primary site characteristics of a period known as the Samoan Dark Ages. It is a very useful review of a crucial period in Polynesian prehistory, bringing together information on 18 sites of the period. But ulti-

mately this reinforces how little we know and how much there is still to learn of this period. The final paper of the volume, by Addison, Toloa, Tago and Vaueli, is linked to the previous one in that it looks at the period immediately prior to the onset of the Dark Ages. The authors discuss the current state of knowledge about Samoan plainware ceramics on Tutuila, reviewing previous literature in light of new findings. Mulifanua is still the only site in the archipelago with dentate stamped ceramics, with all other sites of similar and more recent age containing only Samoan plainware (some of which has incising). Over the past 15 years many new ceramic bearing deposits have been located, mostly on Tutuila and the authors review these new sites here. Many have not yet been fully published and so this is an important contribution. CRM archaeology has been crucial in the production of new sites, particularly through surveys associated with a sewer line development on Tafuna plain (full disclosure: I worked on one of these in 1998) showing again that development and discovery often go hand in hand in Pacific archaeology. The authors' main conclusions include a refinement of the dating suggesting ceramics begin around 500 BC and persist until AD 400-800 on Tutuila (not later as recently thought). They also find some evidence for inland settlement early on – perhaps around 200-100 BC – which is not surprising given the scarcity of coastal land in American Samoa.

To sum up, the book is very diverse with little thematic continuity. The editors acknowledge this, but argue that it showcases the richness of recent research and demonstrates that it is an exciting time for Fiji/West Polynesian archaeology. Ultimately I think many of the chapters are destined to be read only by specialists in the region, but this should not deter readers interested in wider themes since there is enough here for them. If I have one criticism it is that the whole volume really needed a thorough proof-read – there are typos and errors in every chapter: in the maps, in the citations, in the dates, in the spelling of site locations. On the other hand, you cannot go wrong with free. I await the synthesis of the conference discussions with much interest.