



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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THE PRESERVATION AND INTERPRETATION OF HISTORIC AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN U.S.A. AND LESSONS FOR NEW ZEALAND

(An address to the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Archaeological Assn. in Turangi on 30 May 1970 by P. H. C. Lucas, Director of National Parks and Reserves, Department of Lands and Survey)

Archaeology is the key that has unlocked the door to much of the fascinating history and prehistory of the United States of America. The work done in preserving and interpreting early American history and culture to the public through the National Park System of that country should serve as a challenge to New Zealand.

The U.S. National Park Service was established in 1916 as a bureau of the Department of the Interior, America's department of natural resources. The Service is charged with the task of "conserving for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people, areas of national significance which contain exceptional scenic, scientific, historical and recreational resources".

In carrying out this task, the Park Service has classified the 264 separate areas under its control into three categories - natural, historical and recreational - although most areas in the system possess all three values to a greater or lesser extent.

Last year, I visited 11 of the recreational areas, 30 of the natural areas and 32 of the historical areas. It is true that the primary aim of my study tour of North America was to look at the management of natural areas; it is also true that the fascination and quality of historic sites made these a highlight.

Of the positive lessons New Zealand can learn from the U.S. National Park System, the four I would rate first are the staffing level and involvement of young people; the emphasis placed on planning; the quality of interpretation to enhance the visitor's experience; and the emphasis placed on history and culture.

New Zealand lags far behind, not only the United States but Canada in the effort made to preserve and interpret on-site national history and culture. Both North American countries obviously consider substantial expenditure is justified to develop in their own people an understanding and pride in their historic and cultural heritage and to generate substantial tourist traffic as an economic bonus.

Outstanding work has been undertaken as a result of private philanthropy and public expenditure and the National Park Services of both the United States and Canada are given major responsibility and substantial finance to purchase, preserve and manage historic sites. Ninety-four million dollars of Rockefeller funds have gone into restoration work to recreate Colonial Williamsburg as a "living" town of the early 18th Century, while the Canadian Park Service has been granted \$14 million to reconstruct the Fortress of Louisbourg in Nova Scotia. Outstanding work is also done in preserving and interpreting the human history of the national parks and other primarily natural and recreational areas. In this way, a new dimension is added to the experience of the visitor as he is reminded of man's historic involvement with nature.

By comparison, attention to the often fascinating human history of New Zealand's national parks lags far behind the excellent work done in presenting their natural history to the visitor; historic reserves are set aside but no management programmes formulated; while the New Zealand Historic Places Trust has only limited resources.

I believe the interest shown by Americans and Canadians in their historic and cultural heritage challenges New Zealanders to take a greater interest and pride in our unique historical and cultural background. As a young nation, New Zealand has a rich legacy of culture from two races but there is all too little done in the way of on-site presentation to show the New Zealanders of the 1970's and interested visitors how earlier occupiers of this land lived. Certainly much excellent work is done by this country's leading museums but, even the best museum display, cannot completely capture the imagination in the way sympathetic and authentic on-site presentation can.

People are interested in people and their story, otherwise 4,000 a day would not visit Canada's restored Upper Canada Village or the number of visits to historical units of the U.S. National Park System would not have reached 45 million last year. I see a great opportunity for New Zealand to achieve a greater pride in and understanding of our country's story if we are prepared to apply finance and manpower to a positive programme of research, preservation and interpretation of archaeological and historic sites.

Over recent days there has been increasing dialogue between the New Zealand Archaeological Association and the Department of Lands and Survey and, with a Minister of Lands whose broad conservation interests have a special place for archaeology, I look forward to increasing co-operation in the future. For this reason alone - quite apart from

my own personal enjoyment - I welcomed the opportunity of seeing at first hand the place of archaeology in North America and I now welcome this opportunity of sharing what I have seen with you.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN U.S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The Division of Archaeology forms a modest but important part of the U.S. National Park Service, an organisation of some 6,000 permanent staff. At the end of 1969, there were 27 full-time professional employees in the Division of Archaeology; one archaeologist was attached to a Historic Sites Survey; 23 held interpretive positions; 25 occupied park management positions; and one was on loan to another federal agency; making a total of 77 professional archaeologists in the Park Service.

The Programme

These men and women are involved in a four-part programme to recover and protect archaeological remains:

1. Investigating archaeological sites to salvage knowledge and evidence from them before they are destroyed by federally-sponsored works projects.
2. Undertaking archaeological investigations in areas of the National Park System where prehistoric and historic people have lived.
3. Preserving through stabilisation both prehistoric and historic ruins, earthworks and building foundations revealed through archaeology.
4. Publication of information gained from archaeological investigations.

SALVAGE ARCHAEOLOGY

Salvage archaeology is undertaken on a similar basis to the Tongariro Power Scheme and Kapuni Pipeline investigations with work financed by the construction agency and excavations carried out by or under the supervision of the official archaeological agency - here the New Zealand Historic Places Trust; in the United States, the National Park Service.

In the United States, there is a statutory responsibility on all Federal construction agencies to call in the National Park Service

where projects involve or are likely to involve archaeological sites on Federal land of any status and to notify the Park Service immediately any indication is found in the course of construction of an archaeological site.

The prehistory and history of the United States encompasses three phases of development:

Prehistoric Indian
Historic Indian
Historic European

PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Evidence of prehistoric Indian cultures is entirely archaeological, of historic Indian peoples is mainly ethnological, while knowledge of European development comes principally from written records. However, in recent years, archaeology has expanded into the realm of history and has produced otherwise unknown information.

Evidence of places occupied by prehistoric American Indians is found almost everywhere in the United States, in the form of ruins, camp sites, mounds, broken pottery and stone implements. At different times and in different places, there were great variations in the ways the Indians lived, built their homes and buried their dead. In the arid South-west of the country are some spectacular Indian structures, in the East and Mid-west are imposing earthworks - embankments, effigies and temple and burial mounds.

One national park and 20 national monuments are set aside by the U.S. Government and interpreted by the National Park Service for their prehistoric archaeological values. These are managed with two aims in view; so that visitors may appreciate the prehistoric cultures and scientific study may be undertaken.

These 21 archaeological areas last year attracted $2\frac{1}{4}$ million visitors, a remarkably high number considering all are in the South-west and distant from major concentrations of population. Some of these areas support sizeable towns nearby with thriving tourist and souvenir industries with considerable economic as well as cultural benefit to today's Americans of Indian, Spanish, and European descent. I visited four of these archaeological areas in the South-west - Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado, Canyon de Chelly, Walnut Canyon, and Wupatki National Monuments, all in Arizona. In the east, I saw archaeological sites along the Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi.

HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

The works of more recent man are as vulnerable to the effects of time, weather and natural erosion as are those of prehistoric man. Much of the history of Europeans in North America lies under layers of earth or the deposits of later human occupancy. Archaeology has been used by the Park Service as a research tool to seek out information not found in the archives but recorded in the ground.

Among the Park Service historic sites I visited which were made more meaningful by archaeology were the Fort Raleigh and Jamestown National Historic Sites marking the earliest English settlements, the Yorktown National Battlefield Park from the War of Independence; Gettysburg and Vicksburg National Military Parks from the Civil War; the Custer Battlefield National Monument from the Indian Wars, and forts guarding immigrants during westward expansion, such as Fort Davis National Historic Site between El Paso and San Antonio.

SITE SELECTIONS

In selecting sites for recording, marking as National Historic Landmarks or acquisition as National Historic Sites or Parks, the entire field of American history and prehistory has been divided into 22 major themes. Each theme covers a particular unified topic such as Prehistoric Hunters and Gatherers; Early Indian Farmers; Indian Village and Communities; Spanish Exploration and Settlement; English Colonial Development; the War of Independence; Westward Expansion; The Civil War, and so on.

This thematic approach makes possible a comparative evaluation of sites and facilitates selection of the most significant. Sites are evaluated on the basis of:

History
Integrity

The first relates to the importance of the site in history and the second to the site's present condition.

Only a limited number of outstanding sites representative of the different phases of history and prehistory are administered by the National Park Service according to these criteria:

1. The site, when compared with other sites of exceptional value in the same theme or period of history, must stand out as nationally significant.

2. The site must be needed in the Park System to fill gaps in a theme or period of history so that a well-rounded representation of the country's historical and cultural heritage may be achieved.
3. The site must be capable of effective preservation, administration, interpretation, development and use.
4. Acquisition, restoration and management of the site must be financially feasible.

MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Once selected for inclusion in the National Park System, each site is the subject of a Master or Management Plan which records the features and significance of the site, the objects of management and how those objects are to be achieved. Such a plan indicates which areas would be available for the public to visit, those for research and those for future study. It would also indicate a plan for the provision of interpretive facilities for the public, road and foot access, staffing, etc.

PROTECTION

The Park Service protects its prehistoric and historic sites in three main ways:

- Interpretation (or education)
- Reservation
- Stabilisation

The first two protect sites primarily from people; the third primarily from nature.

INTERPRETATION

The interpretation programme is designed to convey to the visitor an understanding, not only of the story of the particular area or site, but the whole concept of protection and conservation - why such areas are important; why each arrowhead or clay pot must be left undisturbed; why only some sites are open to the public and why restrictions are necessary to protect walls, etc.

A variety of techniques is used to communicate to the visitor both the significance of a site and the need to protect it.

Among the various means are:

- on site presentation explained or guided by ranger/
archaeologists
- displays and artefacts in visitor centres
- dioramas and paintings showing how the early Indians lived
- films, slide talks in visitor centres or camp-grounds
- postcards, colour slides, photographs and other sales items.

There is no doubt that a visit to a well planned visitor centre enhances the visitor's interest; so does the sight of a grinding-stone and bowl with a few corn cobs outside an ancient dwelling.

This type of presentation of history - as well as nature - comes under the heading of what the Park Service calls "interpretation". As described by Park Service author, Freeman Tilden, this is:

"An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information".

Park interpretation is universally accepted as an integral and necessary park function and is justified in the U.S. Park Service Administrative Manual's simple but profound quote:

"Through interpretation, understanding;
through understanding, appreciation;
through appreciation, protection."

At the same time it is accepted that, as people visit parks for enjoyment and not education, interpretation is effective only if enjoyable.

RESERVATION

This means of protection is not reservation as a public reserve in the New Zealand sense but simply locking up an area and not allowing any use. Some parts of Mesa Verde National Park are open to the public on a self-guiding basis, others only with a ranger/archaeologist guide and other parts are closed to public use. Yucca House National Monument is completely closed. It contains the unexcavated remains of a large prehistoric Indian pueblo and is being

reserved for study at some future date when it is expected that the science of archaeology will have made further advances.

STABILISATION

To assist in preserving the past, the National Park Service has developed a stabilisation programme for the ancient ruins uncovered by the archaeologists. Through a wide variety of engineering and conservation techniques, stone or adobe forts, temples and pueblos, earthworks, burial mounds and brick foundations are stabilised to withstand the eroding effects of time and weather. The work is done in such a way as to alter the remains as little as possible.

Sites, buildings and objects are safeguarded from visitor impact and the ravages of time and nature by preservation, restoration or reconstruction.

Preservation is designed to apply measures which will sustain the form and extent of a structure by halting deterioration and providing structural safety. It does not include significant rebuilding.

Restoration is seen as the process of accurately recovering the form and details of a structure and its setting by removing later work and replacing missing original work. It aims at some specified period of time.

Reconstruction is seen as the process of accurately reproducing by new construction the form and details of a vanished structure as it appeared at some particular time.

The guideline the Park Service uses is that "it is better to preserve than to restore and it is better to restore than to reconstruct".

Work on Indian sites is generally undertaken by Indian people guided by Park Service archaeologists.

Besides stabilisation, archaeological sites are protected by excluding or regulating visitors - as at Mesa Verde National Park - or by public education through interpretation of the significance or importance of the sites.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

The basis of interpretation of sites is the information obtained from archaeological research undertaken by Park Service staff or other professional archaeologists working under contract from the Park Service and financed by it or by grants from such bodies as the National Geographic Society.

The Park Service seeks to share the knowledge gained from research through publications from the Service's Archaeological Research series to popular booklets and leaflets on individual areas or sites and inclusion of brief outlines in the National Register of Historic Places.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

The National Register of Historic Places lists not only National Park Service historic areas but also structures, objects or districts not administered by the Park Service but accepted by the Secretary of the Interior as sites of national historic importance. Acceptance requires adequate research, classification under one of the historic themes and recommendation by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and monuments. Where the owner agrees to adhere to accepted standards of preservation, the designation of the site as a National Historic Landmark is recognised by the award of a bronze plaque and certificate and listing, along with National Park historic areas in the official "National Register of Historic Places".

An example of a privately-owned National Historic Landmark I visited was the Puy'e Cliff Ruins on the Santa Clara Indian Reservation near Espanola, New Mexico, where stabilisation and restoration has added to the interpretive significance of one of the largest of the prehistoric Indian settlements on the Pajarito Plateau. This site is open to the public on a charge basis and the Santa Clara people have their own rangers and are establishing a visitor centre.

Another National Historic Landmark visited was Fort Michilimackinac at the southern tip of the Straits of Mackinac which link Lakes Michigan and Huron. Here, restoration has been financed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission using loan money serviced from the \$1 admission charge. Built by the French in 1715, the Fort was occupied by the British in 1761, attacked by Chippewa Indians and abandoned in 1781. Restoration based on old records and archaeological research began in 1959 under the guidance of Dr Eugene T. Petersen and is still going on. An innovative approach to interpretation has been followed here, the highlights including:

A succession of signs using an appropriately shaped signboard, an arresting title, a silhouette depiction of the event described and brief narrative to retell the massacre of British troops by Chippewa Indians while French fur traders looked on.

The reconstructed house of a French family where a fleeing British soldier sought sanctuary from the attacking Indians is used to record the reactions of each of the French occupants told by a series of ground floor tableaux with sound activated when the visitor stands on a mat at an upstairs viewpoint above each tableau.

The reconstructed storeroom with articles of the day and moving storekeeper models appropriately dressed.

A sound and light recreation of a 1754 wedding presented hourly in the reconstructed Church of St Anne.

An underground tunnel revealing soil profiles and artefacts with adjacent paintings showing recreation of the scene as revealed from archaeological investigation.

STATE MONUMENTS

There are other significant sites given protection by State agencies. One such is the Jamez State Monument which the Museum of New Mexico manages preserving and interpreting the sandstone and adobe remains of a 17th Century Spanish Mission Church of San Jose de los Jemez and part of the Indian pueblo of Giusewa, predating the church complex by some 300 years.

CONCLUSION

Much more could be written of the role of archaeology in the preservation and interpretation of historic sites in the United States - as well as Canada - but I have sought to present the picture as I saw it. I repeat that, to me, the historic and archaeological sites were a highlight. I believe the achievements of the United States in this field should serve as both an example and a challenge to New Zealand.