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## Moai in Japan

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than US \$3,000 to the Fonck Museum. We hope that this is nothing more than a bureaucratic glitch and that a check will be in the mail within a very short time.

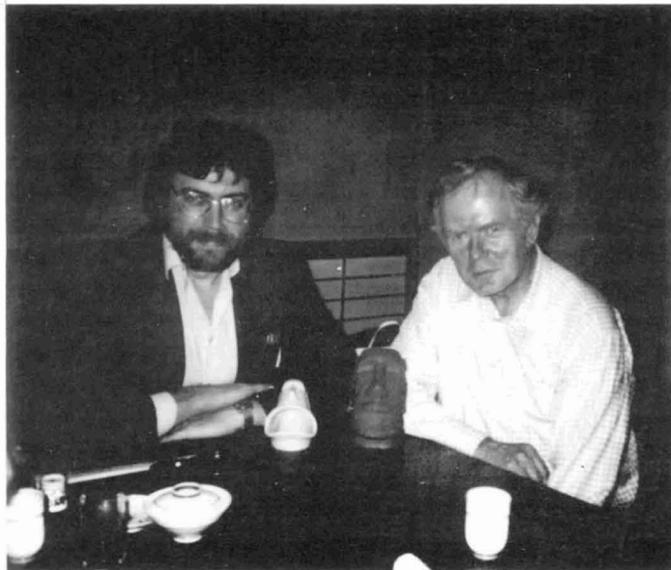
- Roberto Parraguez Singer, the first pilot to fly to Easter Island (in a Catalina 405 seaplane) has died. Parraguez pioneered the air route from Chile to Easter Island in 1951.
- The Fonck Museum in Viña del Mar, Chile, is exhibiting a series of color photographs by Wally McGalliard of Los Angeles in their Rapa Nui exhibit hall. McGalliard's photographs are on loan to the Fonck from the Easter Island Foundation.

## Moai in Japan

Paul G. Bahn and John R. Flenley

We were privileged recently to be invited to an international symposium, "Wa no Kuni" (Forests, Myths & Civilizations), held in Nara and Kyoto, Japan, in December 1995, where we presented a total of three talks about the rise and fall of Easter Island's culture.

In Kyoto we were able to purchase two of the tasteful items in the "Easter Island" range of goods produced by the Iwaya Company of Tokyo—a large brown plastic moai-head money-



1) Bahn and Flenley in Kyoto, showing off their newly purchased Rapa Nui souvenirs. Bahn-Flenley photo.

box, and a smaller, grey-green pottery moai-head ashtray with gaping mouth and a hole in the head for smoke to escape (fig. 1).

Forewarned by the information in *Rapa Nui Journal*, Vol. 9(3):87, that a Mr Sano of Nara was planning to construct a replica of ahu Akivi in Nara, we made contact with him during our stay there. We were able to have a long, fruitful

and enjoyable discussion with this Rapanuiphile, especially about his past, present and future projects on Easter Island.

Katsuji Sano is President of the Asuka Construction Company (motto "We prepare future"). His passion is stonemasonry, and for years he has traveled the world, looking at megalithic monuments, from Stonehenge and Brittany, from Egypt to Borobodur, studying and measuring the great stone structures and carvings, many of which he has subsequently reproduced back home. After the Tadano crane company pulled out of the Tongariki reconstruction (a project it had initiated), after only 18 months, it was Mr Sano who stepped into the breach and saw the restoration through to completion. His numerous visits to the island have produced a keen desire to do more to help the island both culturally and economically.

His current project is indeed a replica of ahu Akivi but it will not, as reported in the *RNJ*, be located in Nara itself. Instead, it will be set up on the coast at Miyazuki, in Kyushu—the nearest point of Japan to Easter Island. Mr Sano and his team (fig.2) have measured and photographed the Akivi moai in great detail, and are endeavoring to produce very similar versions. These are being carved in blocks of a volcanic tuff from a site near Tokyo. Since blocks of the required size are rare, some figures will have to be made of two pieces. Mr Sano has a team of five men working on the statues in a yard near his house; they are using modern



2) Mr Sano (far left) with his team of stone workers. Bahn-Flenley photo.

machinery and tools for the project, and he reckons it will take 3 men a month to complete each figure. The platform is expected to be finished and in place by April 1996; nearby will be three heads, based on some of the "heads" on the Raraku slopes, which will give the impression of being buried up to their necks.