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News and Notes

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UNITED STATES

A scientific expedition is planned for late August, 1997, by the Science Museum of Long Island, New York. It will be led by Dr. John Loret, who sailed with the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition of 1955-56 and who is a past president of the Explorers Club. Field work includes obtaining deep sediment cores from the island's craters and drilling cores from sea coral in order to determine if past episodes of El Niño affected fish resources. One team will survey the varied land and marine habitats. Information on how to join this expedition can be had by contacting the Science Museum of Long Island, 1526 N. Plandome Road, Manhasset, New York 11030. Fax: 515-365-8927.

WHAT'S NEW IN POLYNESIA

SUVA, FIJI

NASA is studying the troposphere—the lowest layer of the atmosphere that is in direct contact with land and sea. The troposphere shapes the weather, receives pollutants and controls the air we breathe. The project, Pacific Exploratory Mission in the Pacific (PEM-Tropics), will survey relatively unexplored areas of the troposphere via specially equipped aircraft. The southern tropical Pacific region, including Fiji, is experiencing increasing burdens of pollutants coming from long distances: South America, Southeast Asia, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand.

In a public lecture at the University of the South Pacific, Dr Patrick Nunn warned of the effects of global warming on the Pacific islands. Deforestation, the "greenhouse effect" and sea-level rise are effecting the area. The latter will make some atolls uninhabitable. Changes in the weather also are linked to an increase in tropical cyclone frequency.

The University of the South Pacific Bulletin, Vol. 29(30-31), 1996

SAMOA

The Samoa Voyaging Society "Aiga Tautai o Samoa" is building an operational replica of an ocean voyaging canoe similar to those used in Samoa prior to 1850. The community based Voyaging Society was created to restore and preserve ancient knowledge and skills of voyaging canoe construction, crewmanship and navigation. The Society is actively seeking members. For information, contact Mr Sven Ordquist, Friends of the Samoa Voyaging Society, Jean P. Haydon Museum, American Samoa Government, Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799.

The 7th Pacific Festival of Arts was held in Apia, Samoa from 8-23 of September. The Arts festivals showcase traditional arts and crafts, dancing and singing, film festivals, costumes, and various cultural demonstrations. Attendees of the 1996 Festival report that the dance groups from Rapa Nui were highlights of the festival and were enthusiastically applauded. A 3 meter high wood statue was carved on the spot by Bene Tuki and presented to the Ministry of Culture. The next festival will be in the year 2000.



Bene Tuki at the Pacific Festival of Arts displaying his ceremonial paddle. Photo by Bud Henry

NEW ZEALAND

The Institute of Polynesian Languages and Literatures and the journal *Rongorongo Studies* are pleased to announce that the winner of the Polynesian Literary Competition for 1996, whose theme area was the Cook Islands, is: Elizabeth Arait Ponga of Avarua, Rarotonga, the Cook Islands, with her short story, "Te Reo o te Ipukarea." Elizabeth Arait Ponga, who is a native Cook Islands writer, has been awarded a Certificate of Award and a cash prize of US \$250. The winning story, with accompanying English translation, will be published in the forthcoming issue of the journal, *Rongorongo Studies*.

The adjudicators for the 1996 Competition were the Cook Island educator Rangitukua Moeka'a of the University of Auckland and the Cook Islands anthropologist and cultural advisor Kauraka Kauraka of the Ministry of Cultural Development, Rarotonga. Permanent moderators were Dr H.G.A. Hughes of Clwyd, Wales, and Dr Steven Roger Fischer of Auckland, New Zealand.

PITCAIRN

Want a souvenir from Pitcairn Island? Looking for a gift for that difficult uncle? Available are postcards, posters, tee-shirts, wood carvings and baskets. A list of items with prices and shipping information can be had by writing to the Pitcairn Miscellany, Pitcairn Island, South Pacific Ocean, via New Zealand.

WHAT'S NEW IN HANGAROA

Elections were held on the island at the end of October. Hangaroa's Mayor for the next four years is Pedro Edmunds Paoa who was re-elected by a landslide vote. The five town councilmen for the next four years are: 1st Concejal: Enrique Pakarati Ika; 2nd Concejal: Alberto Hotus Chavez; 3rd Concejal: Marcelo Pont Hill; 4th Concejal: Dr. Rodrigo Noran-bueno Marchant; and 5th Concejal: Claudio Cristino F.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso for 20 August reported that a young Rapanui islander was shot and killed by a Chilean guard who tried to prevent his escape from the Easter Island jail. The Intendente of the Fifth Region, Hardy Knittel, said that the Islander was being held in jail on misdemeanor charges including damages, injuries and forced robbery. The charges were being investigated by the Court of Letters of Easter Island. He was shot by 1st Corporal Amado Valenzuela when he and some others tried to escape. The shooting occurred at 3:15 a.m. while the Corporal was guarding an annex of the Easter Island prison. At that moment some prisoners tried to escape, among them the victim, Esteban Edison Tepano Pakarati, age 19. Intendente Knittel lamented the situation saying that "We are speaking of something that is strictly a police matter, but we certainly consider it very unfortunate. . . ."

FALSE ALARM OF TSUNAMI IN EASTER ISLAND, read headlines in *El Mercurio*, reporting on an earthquake with an epicenter located 670 km (406 miles) from the Island. At least four telluric earth movements of a magnitude close to 7.1 on the Richter scale occurred between 04:14 and 09:46 EDT in the ocean floor northwest of Easter Island. Because of the seismic movements, the island's satellite telephone system went out of service, raising alarm on the continent because no reports were available from the island. The Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service of the Chilean Armada noted that the quakes were not large enough to generate a tsunami. When communications were reconnected, Governor Jacobo Hey reported to the Region's Intendente that "all was tranquil" on the island.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 6 September 1996

An expenditure of more than 5 billion pesos (US\$12.2 million) that permitted the rehabilitation of the Mataverí Airport runway pavement and the completion of the first asphalt road on the island was celebrated on August 28th by the Ministers of Defense, Edmundo Pérez Yoma, the Minister of Public Works, Ricardo Lagos and the Commander in Chief of the Air Force, General Fernando Rojas Vender. These projects cost US \$12.2 million.

The work was finished three months ahead of schedule. The resurfacing of the runway at the international airport of Mataverí was carried out in three stages so that there was available some 1500 meters for the Boeing 727s of Lan Chile and the C-30 cargo planes of the Air Force to land. At 3,353 meters long and 45 meters wide, Easter Island has the longest runway in Chile.

The largest part of the investment was spent on the road from Hanga Roa to Anakena, some 4.881 million pesos (US\$11.9 million). The work, executed by the Department of Roads, extends a total of 16 kilometers, passing through the central part of the island in the North-South direction.

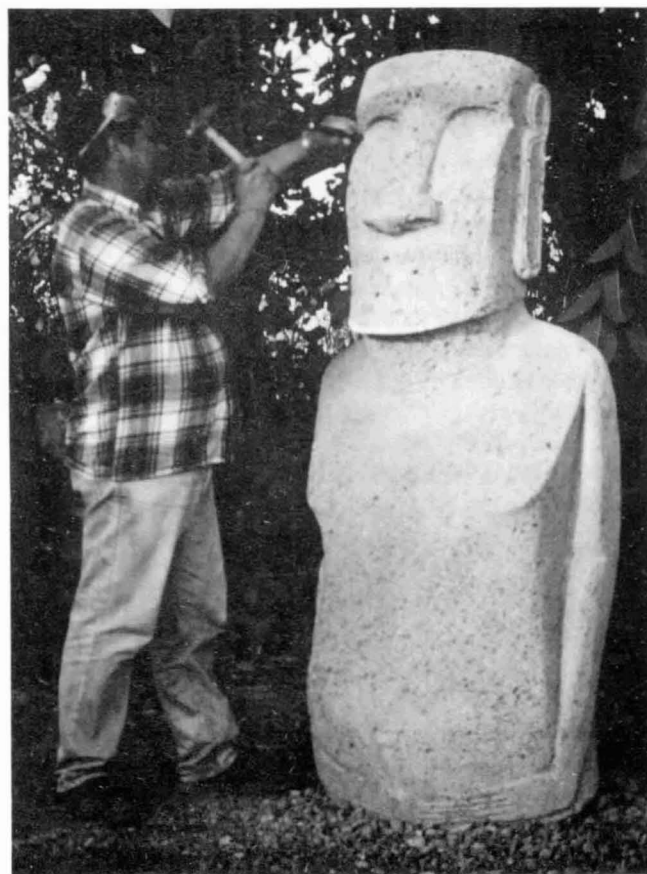
The Navy supply ship *Maipo* sailed on August 30 for Rapa Nui, carrying relief crews of Navy Infantry Guard for the military station on the island, as well as cargo. It arrived to the island in order to take part in the activities commemorating the 108th anniversary of Chile's taking of possession of Easter Island. For the anniversary, Commander in Chief of the First Naval Zone, Contra-admiral Hernán Couyoumdjian Bergamali, flew to the island in order to take part in the celebration.

The cargo included some vehicles and containers with general supplies for the island population. Also on board: a doctor and an orthodontist to provide medical and dental care for the population.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, 27 August, 1996

Arte Cultural Rapanui

Sculptor Rafael Rapu Haoa, one of the more widely known sculptors from Easter Island, has recently completed a two-meter high basalt *moai* under a commission by a private party from Costa Rica. This *moai*, of a size often used for placement on an *ahu* in the past, is made from some of the best basalt material available on Easter Island rather than the



Rafael Rapu with his recently-made basalt *moai*.
Photo by Joan Wozniak.