

NEWS AND NOTES

What's New in Polynesia

- A large scale program devised under the United Nations World Decade for Cultural Development and administrated by UNESCO, *Vaka Moana: The Ocean Roads*, was established in response to a growing awareness among Pacific islanders of the importance of their heritage. *Vaka Moana's* theme is the Pacific Ocean, the source of people's resources, and the pathway linking the islands and peoples of the region.

The program's objectives are a better understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage of Pacific peoples as well as their diversities; development of cultures and attitudes which build on that heritage while, at the same time, taking advantage of the technologies of today; a greater understanding and tolerance for values, practices and attitudes of others.

The goals of *Vaka Moana* are to reinforce links between Pacific peoples, promote and disseminate knowledge (both traditional and scientific) concerning the sea and its resources; to study conservation and appropriate use of resources for the benefit of peoples of the region; to promote all forms of art which have the common theme of the sea; and to involve peoples of various island countries.

The *Vaka Moana* program is administrated through the UNESCO Office for Pacific Studies in Apia, Western Samoa. For further information, contact Mr. Mali Voi, UNESCO Office for the Pacific States, PO Box 5766, Matauta-uta P.O.; Apia, Western Samoa.

Hawai'i

The State of Hawai'i has withdrawn from a mammoth geothermal-electricity project on the island of Hawai'i. This action follows two lawsuits and years of opposition by environmentalists and native Hawaiians. The project would have involved carving up the Puna rainforest and adding a network of powerplants, pipelines, and transmission lines to send electricity via undersea cable to Honolulu.

- The Office of Hawaiian Affairs has filed a lawsuit to force the state to expand its Hawaiian immersion education program. The suit seeks to require the state to create a pool of Hawaiian language teachers by allowing standards by which "community expertise can be substituted. . . to use these people as part of that pool". OHA is concerned with the survival of the Hawaiian language.

Tahiti

Tahiti recorded 200,000 visitors so far in 1995—a record. The January-June results put Tahiti 13,635 tourists ahead of the same period last year when a record of 166,086 was set. The lead over last year represents 17.45% tourist volume increase. The average stay for all tourists during the month of June jumped from 8.85 days a year ago to 12.43 days this

year. The top three countries represented among the tourists are the U.S. mainland, France, and Japan. A drop was recorded in the number of visitors from Germany and New Zealand.

- Due to the renewed nuclear tests, riots have broken out in Tahiti. In August, a major demonstration in Papeete coincided with the arrival of the Greenpeace flagship *Rainbow Warrior II* which then continued on to the Mururoa test site. Her multinational crew consists of individuals from France, New Zealand, Australia, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Britain, the Netherlands, the United States and Italy. Upon crossing the 12 mile test zone limit, some 150 French commandos surrounded and stormed the Greenpeace ship. Tear gas cannisters were thrown on board, doors knocked down and windows smashed. The crew was detained and interrogated for some 15 hours and some were arrested.

South Pacific leaders condemned the action against the Greenpeace ship which was clearly overkill considering that the crew did not offer any resistance. The *Warrior* was towed back into international waters. Later, in a separate encounter, both the *Warrior* and the MV *Greenpeace* were boarded by French commandos and nine Greenpeace inflatable rafts were intercepted. Two Greenpeace divers who reached a test monitoring platform were arrested.

President Chirac stated that he had great respect for the governments and people of the South Pacific *but the tests would go ahead anyway*. He asserts the tests have no ecological impact, but independent studies have found defects in the sub-strata of the atoll. Since 1970 more than 130 nuclear warheads have been detonated in deep shafts on the atoll. Elevated levels of plutonium were found outside the 12 mile sea zone.

As we go to press, rioting continues in Papeete. Many buildings have been firebombed, shops looted, and downtown stores boarded up. One tourist hotel had to be evacuated. The airport was closed as local protesters overran the airport runway and set fires in the terminal. The French response was tear gas and a call for more French paratroopers and Foreign Legionnaires from Mururoa.

Chirac claims that after eight blasts, he will then sign a global test ban treaty.

New Zealand and Chile have recalled their ambassadors from Paris.

Pacific News Bulletin, Vol. 10(6-7), 1995 and Associated Press, 8 September 1995.

Marquesas Islands

Members of the Asociación Española de Estudios del Pacifico traveled to the Marquesas Islands to participate in activities that celebrated the 400th anniversary of the discovery of those islands by Mendaña in 1595. Among those in the delegation from Spain were Francisco Mellén Blanco, Mercedes Palau, Vicente Fernandez Vazquez, and Carlos Fernandez Shaw, former ambassador from Spain to the South Pacific. The Spanish group visited four islands and

participated in various activities at Hiva Oa, Fatu Hiva and Tahuata. They were accompanied by Sr Cadillac, Administrator of the Marquesas Islands, and the mayors of the three islands mentioned above; Bishop Chevalier, and other civil and religious persons of French Polynesia. The Spanish delegation placed commemorative plaques at Fatu Hiva, the first island to be visited by Mendaña, and at Tahuata, where they also celebrated Mass.

Prior to their arrival in the Marquesas, the Spanish delegation presented 100 books in Spanish and English to the library of the University of French Polynesia in Punaauia.

As part of the general celebration, the Office des Postes has issued handsome stamps to commemorate the 400th anniversary.

Mangareva

The dramatic intensification of ciguatera problems is believed to be linked to reef damage or pollution originating at the nuclear-testing facilities on Mururoa. Islanders can no longer eat fish caught in Mangareva's lovely lagoon. The toxins have no effect on the fish but become concentrated in large predatory fish and thus enter the food chain. The entire population of Mangareva (near the test site of Mururoa) has suffered from seafood poisoning.

David Stanley, Tahiti-Polynesia Handbook.

International News

Santiago de Chile

- Protestors against French nuclear tests marched on July 14th from the French Ambassador's residence on Andrés Bello to the Plaza Italia. Some wore death masks and others carried a replica of a nuclear missile. The protestors called out slogans against French President Jacques Chirac and his decision to renew nuclear testing in Mururoa atoll. A Bastille Day celebration at the French Embassy was poorly attended due to general displeasure over the French decision. Thus the Chilean government has joined Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island states in formally protesting the resumption of French nuclear tests. The French Ambassador to Chile, Gerard Cros, stated that the French rationale for testing is "very complicated" with military, political, diplomatic and scientific implications.

The Chilean Senate (of which Rapa Nui islander, Alberto Hotus, is a member) released a statement opposing the nuclear tests, stating that they will directly affect the health, flora and fauna of Easter Island. Hotus stated that a large quantity of poisoned fish has been detected in recent years. Even though scientific basis is lacking to connect the incidence of poison fish to the nuclear tests, there are strange cases that never were recorded prior to the tests. Hotus stated that only 4800 km separates Rapa Nui from the test area, and this is not far enough away for safety.

- On the 24th of July, Francisco Bertolucci stated that he supports the idea of land for the Rapa Nui islanders. At this time, 40% of the island belongs to CORFU, 40% to CONAF and, of the remaining 20%, the largest part is administered by the Chilean Navy. Only the urban sector of the island remains, that that is practically filled. Bertolucci stated that the government is responsible for studying the problem of turning over land to the islanders. The government properties are rich agricultural land and also have tourist possibilities. Earlier he had noted problems of isolation and supply, the lack of incentive, and the need of maintaining the culture. He also suggested a change in the Pascuense Law to eliminate extenuating circumstances for rape convictions. He stated this is a recurring problem on the island and should be treated severely.

- It has been proposed that a new region of Chile be created to encompass Rapa Nui and the Juan Fernandez Islands so they will be connected directly to the central government and have a voice in the government (they are now part of Region V. The president of the Interior Government of Congress, Carlos Cantero, proposed that the new region be called *Ultra Mar* (Lands beyond the seas). Thus Easter Island and the Juan Fernandez Islands would have their own government but would be connected to the national government by means of a Ministry of Interior.

- Ricardo Lagos, Ministry of Public Works, announced that millions are being invested for the progress of Easter Island, including the improvement of the runway and the paving of the road to Anakena. The runway upgrade will enable the island to be a future stop on direct flights from Chile to the Pacific Rim countries. It will also improve the integration of the island with Chile and the rest of the world. Asphalt removed for runway repair will be recycled for the road paving project.

Australia

The French consulate in Perth, Western Australia, was destroyed by an explosion and fire in June. This protest against the French announcement that it will resume nuclear testing has sent shock waves into the South Pacific. Consumer groups in Australia and New Zealand claim that more than 80% of people questioned in surveys vowed to stop buying French products. France cancelled plans for two military aircraft to refuel near the northern ports of Australia after unions refused to service them.

Pacific countries have protested before in regard to nuclear testing, but not with so much passion—and dismay. This is partly due to independent island nations, along with Australia and New Zealand, who have developed a strong sense of regional identity and do not hesitate to attack outmoded colonial attitudes.

In 1985, the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone treaty was adopted, banning stationing, testing, or dumping nuclear material in the region's oceans. France has continued testing,

claiming there is no environmental damage. If this is so, replied Australia and New Zealand, why not conduct them in rural France?

Japan

A Japanese Rapanuiphile, a Mr. Sano, is building a life-size replica of Ahu Akivi in a park in Nara. A big donor to island projects, he donated a chemistry lab to the island school. Unfortunately, there is no space in the local school to set it up.

California

The Polynesian sailing canoe, *Hokule'a*, was welcomed as it passed beneath the Golden Gate Bridge on July 2nd. Local Hawaiians tossed blossoms from the bridge to welcome the vessel as 15 *Pa'u* drummers beat out a welcome and conch shells sounded from the Marin headlands. A fleet of 42 canoes from the Northern California Outrigger Canoe Association, the Coast Guard and two San Francisco fire-fighting boats escorted the *Hokule'a* into the Bay.

This trip was the first time the *Hokule'a* has been outside the central Pacific. Starting in Bellingham, Washington, the



Six members of the Rapanui canoe team pose following a practice run. From left to right are Rodrigo Paoa, Zoilo Huke, Christián Arevalo Pakarati, Tete Tepano, Chad Babayan (the Hawaiian navigator on the Hawai 'iloa), Iovani Teave and Tito Paoa.

Photo: Terri Plake

Hokule'a and the Hawai 'iloa were entertained by the Lummi Indian Reservation and the city of Bellingham. The Hawai 'iloa then went north to Juneau; the *Hokule'a* headed south.

The West Coast waters were cold and rough and fog forced the canoe to use instruments to reach San Francisco. A gale off the Oregon coast snapped the canoe's boom and steering paddles. The vessel was repaired in Eureka before continuing its journey south.

Following the visit to San Francisco, the *Hokule'a* next put into Santa Barbara's West Beach, accompanied by a regatta of outrigger canoes. Coming in to Santa Barbara was 'full circle' for that is where the story begins. Twenty years ago, anthropologist Ben Finney, then at the University of California at Santa Barbara, built a 40 foot replica of a Hawaiian double-hulled canoe and shipped it to Hawai'i. Finney wanted to test his theories of how Polynesians navigated across the Pacific and colonized an ocean world long before Europeans ventured far from land. In 1975 a group called the Polynesian Voyaging Society built *Hokule'a*, with Finney's help. Since then *Hokule'a* has logged over 50,000 miles at sea, retracing early Polynesian voyages. The canoe and its voyages have been featured in documentaries, magazine articles and books.

Hokule'a is 62 feet long and carries two crab-claw sails. She can sail 70 to 75 degrees to windward and can make six to ten knots with the wind on the beam or downwind.

A tremendous renewal of interest in Polynesian sailing and navigating has resulted from the various voyages and has instilled new pride among all Polynesians.

The *Hokule'a* arrived into Long Beach harbor on July 12th and was escorted in by boats and canoes including one canoe with Rapanui islanders, many of whom had flown in just for this occasion. During the following two days a community forum was held accompanied by a week-long celebration of

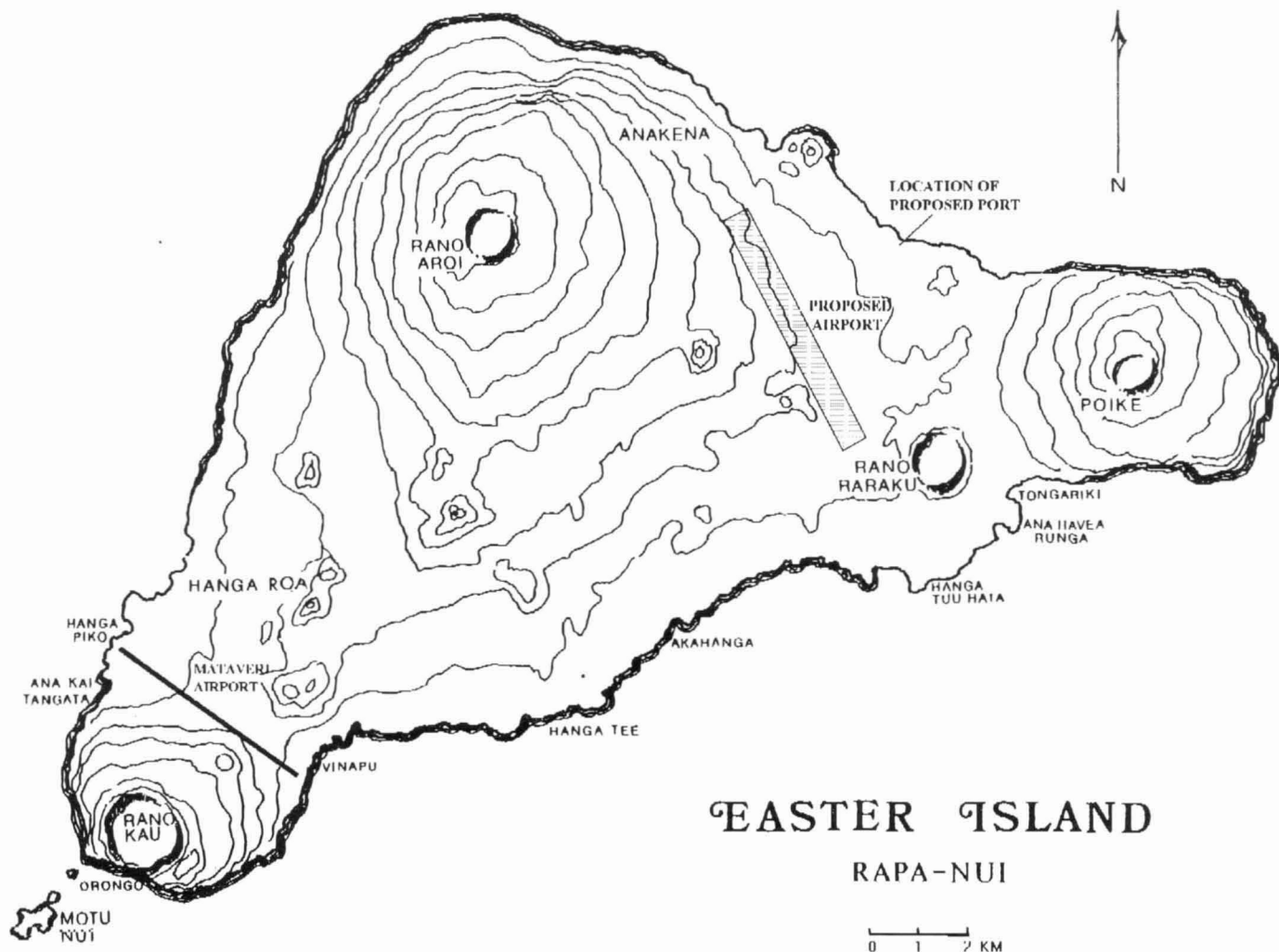


The *Hokule'a* at Long Beach Harbor. Note the *Queen Mary* in the distance. Photo: Terri Plake

Polynesian cultures. One event was an outrigger canoe competition which drew a large crowd of local Polynesians. At the end of the celebration, the Rapanui outrigger club was inducted into the International Polynesian Canoe Federation. *Hokule'a* departed on the 20th of July, headed for San Diego.

During the festival, a booth selling Easter Island wood carvings and T-shirts was manned by Rapanui—both locals and visiting islanders. Rapanui islander Christián Arévalo

tourists come from Europe; South America is second; North America, third; and Asia is fourth. These data do not separate out length of visit, thus the figures include those arriving on cruise ships, most of whom spend only a few hours on the island. The official *Sernatur* (Servicio Regional de Turismo) brochure now lists 10 hotels and 28 *residenciales* on the island.



Map showing the location of the proposed port at La Perouse Bay and a second airport, just inland from La Perouse. This section of the island is loaded with archaeological sites which will be impacted and/or destroyed by development. See story on page 89.

Pakariti, a talented artist as well as a member of the canoe group, displayed his paintings in the hotel lobby.

Aside from Christián, other Rapanui who competed in the canoe races are: Nico Haoa, Rodrigo Paoa, Zoilo Huke, Tete Tepano, Iovani Teave and Tito Paoa.

What's New in Hanga Roa

- Approximately 8000 tourists arrived to Rapa Nui in 1994. December and January had the highest number of visitors; June the least. The first six months of this year recorded 5539 tourists. A tally of the 1995 arrivals so far shows that most

- Hanga Roa's main street, Policarpo Toro, has two supermarkets and a third one is on a side street. New stores and restaurants have appeared, and a surprising variety of items is available. One can even buy a cup of espresso! Stores often display Visa and Mastercard signs—even some of the wood carvers in the *mercado* take charge cards! The island has its first veterinarian.

- The paving of the village roads continues. New trees are planted along the main street. Things are looking good. A few of the streets have sidewalks, and trash cans have appeared along the main street. These are welcome additions and the

trash/litter level has dropped considerably. [This is a contrast to Tahiti where litter has reached epidemic proportions; anyone wishing to do a photo-essay on litter should head to Papeete and Moorea].

- The numbers of vehicles is astonishing. Would you believe traffic jams on Easter Island? Everyone seems to have a vehicle, and more come from the mainland with each supply ship. We were told there is one car for every two persons on the island—not counting motorcycles and mopeds. Policarpo Toro street has No Parking signs and posted speed limits.

- Construction is going on at the soccer field where dressing rooms are being constructed and the playing field extended. Lights are to be installed for evening games.

- The most prominent of the new supermarkets is a “hipermercado” built by former governor, Sergio Rapu. It is modeled after the Ala Moana center in Honolulu with a covered courtyard and small shops opening into the “mall”. Called *Tumu Kai* (roughly, Foods for the Family), it is the first to feature pushcarts and serve-yourself shopping. It has a meat market, bakery, and a deli in preparation along with a sushi bar. Rapu plans to feature fresh local products. Islanders consume 90 tons of chicken a year—all coming from Santiago, along with eggs and meats. It is estimated that \$400,000 to \$500,000 leaves the island yearly for food. The island needs to raise its own chickens, eggs and pigs, instead of bringing them in from the mainland, and this is one of Rapu’s goals. His store features locally made guava jam. The label has a *moai* on it and should be a great tourist item to take home (we bought some!)



Hanga Roa's church has a new coat of paint which shows off the rongorongo carvings on the exterior.

- The sub-secretary of the Ministry of the Interior, Belisario Velasco, came to the island in July to study the problems of the continuing strike. Members of the Consejo de Ancianos #2 still occupy the church grounds where large signs proclaim their desire to have control of the island returned them. A meeting was called between the islanders and Velasco. One islander placed a tape recorder on the table before the Secretary so that others, not in attendance, might hear his words. Velasco pounded a fist on the table and said it was not permitted to record the meeting. Islanders shouted back, pounding *their* fists on the table. End of meeting—which lasted all of five minutes. The Secretary returned to Santiago. The strike continues.

In a later newspaper article, Velasco dismissed as ridiculous the threats by islanders who demanded that all

Chileans leave the island in 30 days.

Velasco stated that reform of the Indigenous Law would permit the Treasury to hand over land, some of which has been in their control since 1933. He cited the project for supporting island children who study on the mainland, and suggested that the island school be transformed into a polytechnic school so that young Rapanui (and those from the Juan Fernandez Islands) will not have to move to the continent to study. They now live in government sponsored homes on the mainland (35 students from Easter Island, and 5 from Juan Fernandez), which cost the government close to \$2000 a year, per student. As the sponsoring of government homes is not an actual program, funds—around one-third of a million dollars—must be found for them each year.

- Shortly after the above-mentioned confrontation with the Secretary, another meeting was called by the *Alcalde*, Petero Edmunds, to discuss a ‘thirty-year plan’ for the island. Islanders shouted down one of the speakers, a fight broke out, and police in riot gear charged in and shut down the meeting. The following day admittance was by invitation only; by the third day, tempers had cooled and the meeting went forward. However all are not thrilled to hear of the plans which involve another airport to be built near La Pérouse Bay along with a harbor and dock (see below).

- The 30-year plan proposes a large dock/harbor at La Pérouse Bay which will have space for shipping containers and cargo heading on into the western Pacific/Far East. Aside from the new port, a staging area will be needed for containers to be loaded and off-loaded. All this is in a very sensitive archaeological area. Many islanders were outraged by the idea of such a development. But that paled in comparison to the plans for constructing another airstrip nearby, just inland from La Pérouse (see map on page 88). One can only wonder why an island only 15 miles long with a present runway that is 3353 meters long needs another one—particularly as this section of the island is, also, a sensitive archaeological area. Plans are to make the new airstrip the one used for tourism, and the present one turned over to the armed forces. The idea of an airport on the north coast goes back to one Ismail Parga and his Comité de Adelanto, and is a favorite plan of the former mayor, Alberto Hotus.

- *Alcalde* Petero Edmunds has plans for developing the current port of Hanga Piko into a cultural park by restoring two *ahu*, tearing down some unsightly buildings, and planting

trees in front of other buildings. It is assumed this beautifying plan will come about as shipping activities are shifted to the north end of the island, at the projected new harbor at La Pérouse Bay.

- Next year's *Tapati* festival is scheduled for 26th of January to 4th of February. Already handsome posters are up, featuring a photo of the restored *ahu* at Tongariki with its 15 standing statues. Make reservations early; Lan Chile flights may be disrupted due to airport repairs.

- Tongariki's restoration has 15 standing statues but many statue fragments also were found in the rubble of the *ahu* platform or in surrounding areas. These fragments have been grouped together and placed behind the shrine. The most unusual (headless) fragment has its arms across the mid-section in the same pose as those seen in the Marquesas and Australs (see photo). One statue fragment in the back sea wall has buttocks clearly indicated. Although the central part of the *ahu* at Tongariki is together, the wings still have not been reconstructed, nor are topknots replaced as yet. These await further funding. It is an impressive site. According to archaeologist Claudio Cristino, plans are to prepare the court area in front, restoring some of the cultural features, and construct a wall around the perimeter to keep animals outside.

- Heavy rains have caused the collapse of two of Orongo's stone houses. These had been restored in March of this year. Erosion at the petroglyph site, Mata Ngarau, continues with gravity exerting its pull. Without stabilization, it is feared the site will fall down the cliff. Claudio Cristino excavated a house at Orongo earlier this year and discovered an *umu* that predated the house construction, thus representing an earlier occupation at this site, prior to when the birdman cult activities were ongoing. We hope to have a report on this excavation for *RNJ* readers.

- *Te Reo Rapa Nui* is a local radio station run by the Consejo #2 (the other island stations are government-run). *Reo Rapa Nui* provides history, language, island news and island music for 6 hours a day. A local newsletter was attempted but it went out of business.

- *Ahu Huri* a Urenga, restored by William Mulloy and studied by William Liller (*The Ancient Solar Observatories of Rapanui*, 1993) has long been lost in shoulder-high weeds

and has had a forlorn overgrown look. Recently the *Municipalidad* provided *empanadas* and soft drinks and enlisted the help of local school children who cleaned up the site, cut the grass, and improved its appearance 100%. Congratulations to *Alcalde* Edmunds and the Rapa Nui school kids.



Statue fragments found in the rubble of Tongariki's ahu. Note arm position in front moai, very similar to those from other parts of Polynesia.

- A new CONAF ticket office/entry is to be constructed at the foot of Rano Kau near the present business offices and experimental garden, according to José-Miguel Ramírez. It will replace the current structure which is located up at the entrance to Orongo. The new building also will house displays and information. Plans include the construction of much-needed toilet facilities at the entrance to Orongo.

- Vandals have struck at Anakena. The new dressing rooms/bathrooms were broken into and fires set, and the stone entry sign to the site torn down. Last year vandals completely annihilated the outhouse near the parking area at Rano Raraku. An anti-sanitation plot?

- On August 16th, some 500 Rapanui islanders marched in protest of the nuclear tests in Mururoa. The action was called by the island priest, Padre Ramiro. After marching through the village, they ended with a *curanto* (earth oven) feast held at the home of an islander. An ecologist at the Universidad Austral stated that, in the event of a nuclear accident, a serious amount of radioactive material would arrive to both Easter Island and to the South American continent (in the regions between 38 and 40 degrees south) by means of oceanic circulation, currents and westerly winds.

- Domingo, the Sunday section of *El Mercurio de Santiago* for September 10th carried an article concerning Easter Island, specifically questioning why is it not a major tourist center: no golf courses, no tennis courts, no tourist centers for surfing, no swimming pools [sic], no luxury hotels, no organized horseback riding. (*But gee, fellahs, that's why we like it!!*)

The author, who interviewed several residents of the island, focused on some odd facets of island life: Governor Hey stated that there are only two alcoholics on the island, and archaeologist Claudio Cristino noted that out of 20 or more guides, no more than 3 or 4 are professionals. Sernatur, the Chilean tourist service, said that Rapanui hotel owners do not want (at this time) to have their hotels rated by the number of stars and, of some 700 beds available on the island, less than 10% are at "international levels".

For the future, the Hotelera Panamericana has ambitions plans to remodel the old hotel Hanga Roa ("where Kevin Costner slept"), and in 1996 Lan Chile airlines plans to offer a package tour for high school and college students in Chile and Tahiti.

The author also commented that there are no bars on the island where one can drink a cold beer nor are there restaurants where one can eat local fish.

Did this person actually visit Rapa Nui?

• **Restoration of a moai in Rapa Nui**

Under the initiative of the Museo Sebastián Englert, the damaged moai at Ahu Tahira, Vinapu, was repaired. This statue was vandalized earlier this year, as reported in *RNJ* 9(1): eyes and a smile were scratched into its face. The restoration was done by a specialist in rock art conservation, Antoinette Padgett, who volunteered her services. The cost of materials for the repair was financed by the Rotary Club of Isla de Pascua; shipping charges for the materials were paid by the Easter Island Foundation. The restoration was done by authorization of the Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales, with technical support from the Centro Nacional de Restauración y Conservación, the collaboration of the Easter Island Foundation and under the supervision of the Museo Sebastián Englert and CONAF. □

Conservation Assessment Project 1995

In July of this year, a month-long project to assess changes in the condition of some of the island's petroglyph sites was undertaken by Antoinette Padgett and Georgia Lee, under the auspices of the University of California, Berkeley, University Research Expeditions Program (UREP). The study was based on a series of documentation programs that began in 1981 and resulted in the accumulation of slides, photographs, drawings

and field notes (Lee 1992). Using the earlier research as a control, several sites were selected for assessment: these



Figure 2. Rano Kau's spectacular panel before vandals carved initials into it. The panel is 5 meters across. Deeply carved designs—some in intaglio—swirl around the boulder. The large bearded face on a fish body is similar to some that are carved on the heads of wooden kavakava figures.

include Orongo and others that receive a fair amount of visitation from tourists.

The project was approved by the Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales and CONAF (National Parks of Chile). As part of the program, the World Monuments Fund provided funding in order that Paula Valenzuela of the Centro Nacional de Conservación y Restauración, Santiago, could represent that organization and work with the project. A total of 16 volunteers from the United States, Canada, and Sweden provided the work force.

The study focused on a variety of problems: animal damage, microflora or plant damage, spalling, erosion, unstable rock surfaces, graffiti, and abrasion. Preliminary results suggest that several sites are in peril, with the petroglyph site at Orongo being the most fragile. Although it was anticipated that the site was suffering from erosion due to natural forces and foot traffic, close examination revealed that general erosional forces are at work and the site is in danger of falling down the cliff. Cracks were observed in the petroglyph panels and the petroglyph area is generally undermined. Stabilization is vital if the site is to be preserved.

Sites with petroglyphs on ground level lava flow (*papa*)



Figure 1. Petroglyph at Hanga Piko that appears to represent a large tree. Drawing shows the panel prior to its being vandalized.