

WOULD YOU BELIEVE TRAFFIC JAMS on Hangaroa's main street? Coming from the bank, it is nearly impossible to turn either way on Atamu Tekena street. Locals complain that the Chileans park along the street and then get out and stroll around. Cars often are double-parked, causing gridlock all along the street. And locals tell us that exiting the parking lot at the airport would be impossible without police directing traffic. And to think there were five vehicles on the island in 1975!

VISITORS TO 'ORONGO in June experienced a rare treat when they spotted a pod of around 30 whales cavorting near Motu Kao Kao and Motu Nui. Whales are rare in these waters, although island guide, Conny Martin, saw some from 'Orongo about four years ago, and she also spotted some in the waters off Tepeu.

TOURISM STATISTICS FOR 2005. In 2005, 46,320 tourists came to the island, an increase of nearly 10,000 from the year before. Seventy percent of the visitors were foreigners and the average tourist stay was five days. Of those who arrived to the island, 83% came via air, and 16.7% came via sea, with 99.5% of those coming on cruise ships. 45% of the tourists were from Europe; 11% came from North America and 12% from Asia.

As far as the comments made by tourists, 22.5% complained about being unable to use their Visa cards, and 37.5% wanted more variety in food choices and more cultural activities. More women than men visited the island, 55.1% vs 44.9%; and more than 30% were between 25 and 34 years of age. As for accommodations, 48.5% stayed in hotels and 30.3% in *residenciales*. Eighty-seven percent came for a vacation.

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www.taraihenua.com

THERE IS A NEW WEBSITE for Easter Island sporting events, www.makemakerapanui.com, with information about diving, surfing, mountain biking, etc. What brought us up short was an item regarding the re-activation of the Birdman ceremony at 'Orongo. The site mentions that a delegation from Red Bull (a beverage) came to the island for some advance planning for a future birdman competition. Initially, competitors will be Rapanui but, in coming years, outsiders who are into extreme competitions will be allowed to compete. Wow. Hope the competitors have their insurance premiums paid up.

RAPANUI PIANIST MAHANI TEAVE is pursuing her studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music in Ohio. Only 23, she performed with Chile's Symphony Orchestra in July, as well as giving a benefit concerts in Valdivia and Arica. Mahani's classic Polynesian features, talent and dedication have brought her a following of admirers. Her first instructor was Chilean pianist, Roberto Bravo, who recognized her innate talent at an early age. She has held prize-winning performances throughout Chile, Spain, and in the United States. Mahani admitted that life in the United States is expensive and she has had to be innovative in trying to

support herself. She has played at churches, sold earrings, and worked at her school dorm. She has downsized by taking lessons from only one instructor. Mahani always dreamed of playing with Chile's symphony orchestra and before traveling to her island home for a visit, she hopes to help some current piano students in Chile, to show them what she has learned. She is happy that her talent can reach people: "Why are we given talents, if not to push them to their limits?"

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"PACIFIC ENCOUNTERS: ART AND DIVINITY in Polynesia 1760-1860" is an outstanding exhibit of Polynesian art on view at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, Norwich, England. Curator Steven Hooper has brought together over 260 rarely or never before seen objects, mainly from British museums. The pieces, many of which date from the 18th century, are in exquisite condition, including a feather headdress from Rapa Nui collected by the Forsters and now at Pitt Rivers Museum. Though the exhibit run is much too short for an exhibit of this high caliber, 21 May - 13 August 2006, there is fortunately a very thorough and very beautifully crafted catalog, published by the British Museum Press. There are also plans to install the objects from the British Museum in that institution after the Sainsbury exhibit closes.

Hooper, Steven. 2006. *Pacific Encounters: Art and Divinity in Polynesia 1760-1860*. London: British Museum Press. ISBN: 0-7141-2575-X288 pp., 340 illustrations. \$39, available at amazon.com.

"AKU AKU FROM AFAR"
An exhibition about the 1955/56 Norwegian
Archaeological Expedition to Rapa Nui
- as remembered today

By Olaug Irene Røsvik Andreassen, Exhibition coordinator

"*Alle fugler små de er...* ('all the little birds'...) do you remember the rest of the lines?" Of course I do; this song would be a childhood memory of any Norwegian. What was more surprising about this question is that it was asked by a Rapanui, and on Rapa Nui. Angela Tepano, a beautiful grey-haired *nua* selling souvenirs in the Mataveru airport followed up her question by humming the rest of my childhood's song about the migrating birds returning in the spring and chasing away the snow of winter. "I was only a little girl of seven when the expedition was here," Angela then explained, "but I used to go with my cousin Maria to bring food up to Rano Raraku and when the Norwegians didn't work, they sang!"

She went on telling me her memories like so many other Rapanui have done simply upon learning that I'm from the same country as "Señor Kon-Tiki".

FROM SCATTERED MEMORIES TO AN EXHIBITION
In order to save some of these living memories before all those that experienced the expedition would be gone, archaeologist Helene Martinsson-Wallin started an interview project in 2004. We were then contacted by the Chilean Council of

National Monuments; they wanted to create an exhibition for the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition of 1955/56. Although the snowball started rolling, the Chileans eventually had to pull out because of financial problems. However, we finally got the necessary means from the Kon-Tiki Museum in Oslo and the Norwegian Embassy in Santiago. The result was two exhibitions opening simultaneously on the island and in Santiago, in May 2006. "*Aku aku mai te kona roa*," the main exhibition, which includes a number of stone objects and other artifacts returned from Norway, is on display in the *Museo Antropológico Padre Sebastián Englert* (MAPSE) until October of this year. A smaller poster version "*Aku aku desde la distancia*" is exhibited in the new *Biblioteca de Santiago* and will be displayed until the end of June; it then will travel around Chile. Former expedition members like Thor Heyerdahl, Jr., Gonzalo Figueroa, Johan Kloster, and their Rapanui counterparts such as Lazaro Hotus, Analola Tuki, and Juan Atan, were the guests of honor and many met again for the first time in 50 years.

The title "Aku Aku from Afar" refers to the nickname of the expedition, which came from Heyerdahl's popular account "*Aku-Aku. The Secret of Easter Island*" (1957), which naturally was inspired by his fascination with the Rapa Nui guardian spirits. "Aku Aku From Afar" wants to show how the expedition from this distant country is remembered in time. It is, at the same time, a greeting from the surviving expedition members, with the hope that their research contributed towards preserving the island in the guardian spirit of the *aku aku*. As all know, the island has changed dramatically since then, with the venue of international tourism and Chilean modernization. The older Rapanui still thank "Señor Kon-Tiki and his books" for bringing tourists and money to the island, but who is to judge if this was a good thing? The expedition archaeologists, especially William Mulloy, are recognized for having preserved the Rapanui past, but international archaeology in indigenous communities is far from unproblematic. For Helene, as an archaeologist of the Kon-Tiki Museum, and for me as a Norwegian anthropologist, the task of writing the exhibition texts confronted us with uneasy feelings of favoritism and questions without answers. Our solution was to let the people that experienced the expedition talk for themselves.

MEETING BETWEEN DIFFERENT WORLDS AND TIMES

"The months I spent here as a 17-year old were so fantastic that I was almost afraid of going back and having to discover that my memory was just a dream," confessed "Kon Tiki Iti-iti" (Heyerdahl, Jr.) in his opening speech on the island. "But I am very glad to see that the island has managed to adapt without forgetting its past," he continued, referring to Rapanui dominated tourism. "The Kon-Tiki Museum also wants to adapt to the new times and, as a token, we hereby deposit part of the unique collection of *toki* stone axes and cave stones here on Rapa Nui," he stated, as the head of the board of the museum in Oslo. "And we also want to invite a Rapanui representative to go through the rest of our collections in order to see if there are objects that would be better con-

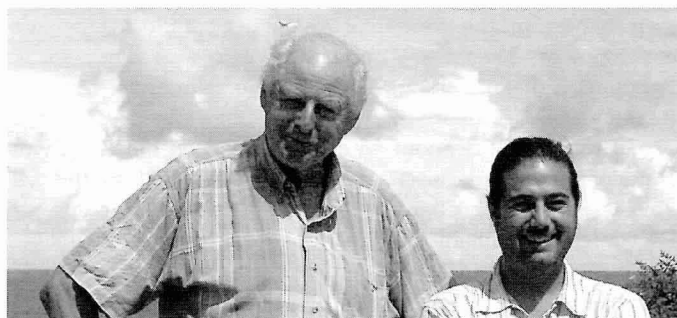
served on the island than in the Kon-Tiki museum," he concluded. Francisco Torres, the MAPSE director, highlighted the importance of the expedition as inspiration for following generations of researchers and that, despite the fact that much of Heyerdahl's Americanist theory has been refuted, he did prove pre-historic contact between the continents. But above all, he said: "This expedition was in itself an encounter between continents, and this exhibition is the meeting of long lost friends and good memories."

That this first encounter between Rapa Nui and Norwegians in the 1950s also had been a meeting of different worlds was clear in Lazaro Hotus' opening speech in Santiago about how he had tried to explain to the scientists that the *moai* had walked with *mana*. "I told them: you come with studies and mentality from the outside, but the island is another story," he recalled, still seemingly frustrated. "But in the end they told me: Lazaro, you were right" he concluded calmly. Salvador Atan, grandson of former Mayor Pedro Atan, also pointed out that it had been just as much the Rapanui teaching the scientists than the other way around and that the expedition had given them renewed pride and belief in their capacities as a people.

SINGING BIRDS BRINGING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

The happiness over meeting both old friends and simply seeing all the photos of long-gone family members turned the exhibition room into a party scene that nobody wanted to leave. Angela and other older Rapanui brought an accordion and surprised the younger public with their Norwegian songs. However, Heyerdahl, Jr., and Johan Kloster had not forgotten the songs of their youth either and performed one Rapanui song after the other as if they had been practicing for this show for the last fifty years – or as if time had stood still. As when Angela asked me about the song lines and told me that they used to sing that song a long time after the expedition had left as a way of remembering; she told it so vividly that I could see the seven-year old girl in Rano Raraku through her eyes, and again I was reminded that the 50s are not as long ago as they might seem on Rapa Nui. This was a revelation for many young people visiting the exhibition and like this, another part of Rapa Nui history has been saved for another generation.

Thanks to the old boys and girls of Rapa Nui, to the staff at MAPSE, the Norwegian Embassy, the Kon-Tiki Museum, the Biblioteca de Santiago and everyone that made this exhibition possible.



Thor Heyerdahl, Jr. and Francisco Torres, director of MAPSE, talk things over at the exhibition on the island.