foundation. Steps have been taken to register a non-stock and non-profit scientific and educational foundation to be called W. G. Solheim II Foundation for Philippine Archaeology, Inc. Final arrangements are being made regarding the official registration of the foundation. Anyone interested in becoming an incorporator of the foundation or extending support may respond to the address below. All incorporators are asked to donate at least P 500.00 (ca. US $10.00); larger donations are needed and most welcome. As of this writing, P146,000.00 in grants and loans have been raised and deposited in a Foundation account. Contact Bill at: wso@edsaimail.com.ph Mailing address: Archaeological Studies Program, University of the Philippines, Palma Hall, Quezon City 1101, Philippines.

**HAWAI’I**

**THE MYSTERY OF WHY SOME Europeans who used products containing kava extract and subsequently suffered severe liver damage may be solved. A number of nations banned sales of the herbal supplement as a result of reactions to the product. Scientists believe that the problem is a compound found in the stem peelings and leaves of the kava plant, but not in the roots used to make the traditional kava drink, as consumed by Pacific Islanders. Anything made from leaves or stems of the plant should be avoided. While kava supplements are not banned in the US, the Food and Drug Administration issued an advisory warning of risk from dietary supplements containing kava.**

The health alarms left farmers in Hawai’i and elsewhere with crops that were hardly worth harvesting. Until researchers found the key, experts were unable to explain how a plant used for centuries could be so toxic. But now it appears that the dangerous alkaloid is not found in the root, which is used for the traditional drink.

Pipermethystine belongs to a group of natural amide alkaloids of which a wide range are found in different members of the Piperaceae plant family, including kava.

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**PITCAIRN**

In *RNU* for October 2002 (Vol. 16(2):114), we reported that twenty men from Pitcairn were being investigated for sexual abuse, including rape. Prosecution is moving forward, according to news from the island in March, which included the following: “…Pitcairners learned that some of the men here were to be charges (sic) with sexual offences.” And, “Readers may have been puzzled by many of the people appearing on Pitcairn over recent times…” “When criminal allegations were made the British authorities set up a Pitcairn Logistics Team (PLT) to provide support for investigations and possible trials on Pitcairn…. The PLT is responsible for securing personnel, arranging transport and accommodation to and from the Island, (no easy task) providing accommodation here and support through food and provision and satellite communication and setting up a court here complete with video link. This has meant the construction of new buildings such as the ‘Pink Palace’ and three-cell ‘Remand Centre’, as well as refurbishing and extending the hostel and the lodge. Personnel employed by the PLT include two Ministry of Defence policemen here for terms of three months, two social workers appointed from New Zealand here for six-month terms. We have a full time governor’s representative. There is a communications specialist and his wife here setting up a satellite video link to New Zealand, and a medical officer funded by the PLT. In April we are expecting a further team of twelve to arrive: two defense lawyers, three prosecuting lawyers, a court official, a magistrate and a further five British policemen. It is not surprising that many Pitcairners are feeling dismayed by such a large presence of outsiders on the Island. If the PLT chartered ship sends the crew ashore in April, outsiders will almost equal Pitcairners in number. Certainly this presence has changed the daily life on Pitcairn. It is also interesting to note that millions of dollars can be found for pursuing criminal matters but not for urgent work around the Island such as an airfield, sealing of the main road, a breakwater for the jetty, a new school and school house and a rebuilt hall. In fact progress on these projects seems to be frozen.”

*Pitcairn Miscellany for March 2003*

**WHAT’S NEW IN HANGA ROA**

RUMORS ABOUND THAT RAPA NUI could become autonomous, and thus no longer dependent upon the V Region. Mayor Pedro Edmunds stated that, after 100 years of dependence, Rapa Nui may have their longed-for administrative autonomy. The commission that is studying this agreed unanimously to convert the island into the first Special Territory of Chile. This will give the island a direct relationship to the Chilean Government. Two types of authorities on the island are being considered: one with executive power and the other a kind of cabinet. All will be elected by popular vote. Edmunds stated that he felt the individual should be called President of the Special Territory, thus Rapa Nui will have a president, and the collective authority will be like an assembly. Edmunds added that such a move would eliminate the bureaucracy that exists now. For example, when the hospital urgently needs some drugs, it sometimes takes weeks for approval and delivery. Skeptics are less sanguine about the autonomy; some commented that it would only be “cosmetic” and not “real surgery”.

WE ARE HAPPY TO REPORT on a conservation project at ‘Orongo. Eduardo Villafranco, Manager, Professional Services Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC), has implemented a site redevelopment and interpretive plan for ‘Orongo. A proposed trail layout was completed and approved by the Rapanui community. On site training was provided for the crew that was working on the trail and the rehabilitation of areas that were affected by erosion. The next part of the project will be interpretative, including signs. Comments have been positive and now discussions are underway to begin planning for conservation work at Rano Raraku.

THE GUIDES ASSOCIATION OF EASTER ISLAND has a project to help clean up the archaeological sites. Local tourist organizations support the volunteers with money for gasoline, food and drink, and transportation. Each Wednesday the volunteers clean and maintain one site.

A PRIVATE SCHOOL CALLED San Sebastian de Akivi is operating with the first 5 basic years and it is hoped that, in future years, it will be continuing on to the 8th grade. Each classes has a maxi-
mum of 15 pupils. The highly publicized new Catholic school will apparently not be built on the island, after all. As of now, there is no sign of any construction and rumors are that the project is "on ice".

The Viracocha was in the news again. The reed boat, Viracocha, was built on the beach at Viña del Mar and subsequently set off for Easter Island with plans to continue on to Australia, after stops at Tahiti and Fiji. The initial plan of the nine-man crew, commanded by the US biologist Phil Buck, was to land on Rapa Nui the first week of May, but the lack of wind slowed them down. An article in El Mercurio de Valparaíso stated that, "Fifteen days ago, the US cameraman Tom Pollard was rescued by a ship of the Armada after they radioed for help as Pollard was affected by severe depression. He had been hired by the National Geographic TV channel to make a documentary of the voyage. In addition to Buck and Pollard there was a 26-year old German translator, a 47-year old Bolivian boat constructor, a Chilean, a US businessman, and a French biologist". They finally arrived to Easter Island but the Viracocha was deteriorating and slowly sinking. She was towed out to sea and burned.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso mentioned that the mayor of the Juan Fernandez Islands wants to buy or borrow some moai from Easter Island and plant them on the hills so that they, too, can attract tourists. Surely he was kidding?

It was reported in El Mercurio de Valparaíso that all islanders were to be vaccinated for yellow fever, triggering rumors that somehow yellow fever was rampant on the island. However, as it turned out, it was a tourist from France who was in the island hospital with malaria (which he had had for years) and that was enough to start a rumor that malaria was now on Rapa Nui. The mosquito found on the island is not of the type that transmits malaria. However, in August the hospital staff began vaccinating the population against both hepatitis A and yellow fever. The Ministry of Health program is hoping to avoid future epidemics. The vaccine is from Brazil and will be given to about 4000 people over the age of 9 months. For it to be effective, at least 95% of the population must be vaccinated.

El Mercurio de Valparaíso, May 31

Brett Shepardson, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, has been teaching a high school archaeology program on Rapa Nui for the past five months. The program, initiated by Museum director, Francisco Torres, is in its third year, but it has become more intense and formalized in the past months. Francisco Torres and Veronica Salvatierra of the Sebastián Englert Museum help coordinate the program while Shepardson has taken over the instructing. The goal was to design projects in archaeology that could help develop skills for the students of Rapa Nui that could apply to any field of interest, and at the same time prepare them to care for their own archaeological heritage. Shepardson reports that it has been amazing to see how much the students have learned, not only about the island and archaeology, but about computer programs, public speaking, and problem-solving skills.

The program’s main field project is to develop two- and three-dimensional maps of Puna Pau including information and photos of the pukao. Puna Pau seemed like an ideal location for the students to make an original contribution to the documentation and preservation of the cultural heritage of the island. In the field they learned how to make scaled plan maps, how to use compasses, how to use a theodolite (left in the museum by William Mulloy decades ago), how to use an electronic total station, and how to work with digital photography.

The students also meet two nights a week at the museum, to move the information they gather in the field into digital format. Some of the students weren’t comfortable using a mouse when the program began, but now all of them have some knowledge of Excel, PowerPoint, and GIS database programs.

Eventually, a complete report of Puna Pau will be presented to the museum by the students, who have already given presentations of preliminary findings to a number of audiences on the island. The program is entirely voluntary, and nearly every free day that the students have, they ask to participate in fieldwork. Shepardson is working to formalize the program so that it is easier to seek funding for basic equipment that the students can use. He is working to construct a website for them. This is not only to have a website for the program, but also that the students can learn about website construction. Shepardson hopes to continue with the classes and projects, but needs support. Email contact: bleif@yahoo.com

Alcalde Pedro Edmunds announced that, due to European investments in science and technology, Rapa Nui will become the new scientific center of Polynesia. Edmunds stated that the European Community has approved the installation of a science center for biological sciences including the human genome, renewable energy, care and recuperation of the environment, bioscience, and biotechnology. The project involves several entities such as the International Science Council for the Development of the Islands (Spain), the Foundation of St. Petersburg (Russia), UNESCO’s International Egi, and the International Consortium for Ocean Science (Italy). Also participating are the University of Torino y La Sapienza (Italy), the cities of Carrara,
Porto Venere and Orta, the Provinces of Palermo and of Spezis, the international Italian commission for UNESCO, and the Community Consejo of Rome. “We will receive annual investments of more than 1 million dollars,” said the mayor. UNESCO has had a similar program in Tahiti.

**PUBLICATIONS**


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