would hope, Easter Island). Until then, we’ll keep going back, of course and maybe one day we’ll be able to say we’ve seen it all.

Much more satisfying is the newly opened “Enlightenment” gallery in the former British Museum library, just off the Great Court. Sub-titled “Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century”, the gallery houses parts of the collection of physician Hans Sloane, who founded the British Museum in 1753. And it really feels as if you are seeing the first vestiges of museum as you walk among the seven display sections, whose contents represent “Arts and Civilization”, “The Birth of Archaeology”, and “The Natural World”, among others.

One of the sections, which caught my attention immediately, is entitled “Trade and Discovery: The Pacific” and it is here that these venerated Easter Island artifacts are displayed: two wood moai kava kava; both about 18 inches [46 cm] tall, and both have Makemake carvings on top of the head; a moai pa’a pa’a (also about 18 inches [46 cm] tall; a badly-worn tangata manu (probably no more than a foot [30 cm] long); a rapa (with simple line carvings and no eyes; it’s about 3 feet [1 m] long; two rei miro carvings (with bearded heads; one is about 18 inches [46 cm] wide, the other is 2 feet [61 cm] wide; and that famous carved hand taken by Cook in 1774. Needless to say, it was a real treat to see these original artefacts – and they are another in a long series of reasons to visit the British Museum!

Shawn McLaughlin

WHAT’S NEW IN THE PACIFIC

NEW ZEALAND

ABOUT 10,000 MAORI protested in Wellington, marching against government plans to nationalize the seabed offshore. Many Maori believe they have special rights over such areas. The bill, which would place the coastal areas into state ownership, is under debate.

Pacific New Bulletin 19: 5-6, 2004

HAWAI’I

HAWAI’ILOA IS IN DRY-DOCK at the Marine Education Training Center to repair some cracks in her hulls; repairs are expected to take a year. The original sailing canoe, Hōkūle’a, sailed 5500 miles within the Hawaiian islands in 2004 while training new captains to meet the growing demand for voyaging education programs in the schools. The Hōkūialaka’i sailed with the Hōkūle’a on sea trials. A special trip was made to the island of Kahoolawe for a reunion and dedication of the star platform at Kealakahiki, which may be the most important traditional astronomical site in the Hawaiian Islands. Master navigator, Mau Piailug, participated in the ceremony.

Polynesian Voyaging Society, December 2004

VANUATU

MATTHEW SPRIGGS HAS EXCAVATED thirteen skeletons just outside Port Vila, Vanuatu; he claims this may be the most significant site in the region. He believes the burials date back more than 3000 years and are Lapita, ancestors of the Pacific peoples. Similar pottery finds elsewhere in the Solomon Islands have been carbon dated to more 3000 years.


FIJI

FIJI HOSTED THE FIRST EVER International Conference on Kava in December 2004. It was organized in conjunction with the International Kava Executive Committee, and following a recent Kava symposium that was held in Europe. One of its aims was to create improved quality control for Kava raw materials, and search for bi-products use, such as in cosmetics, and apart from pharmaceuticals.


PACIFIC

TUNA ARE A CRITICAL RESOURCE for many Pacific Island countries, but the widespread collapse of fisheries is feared unless urgent action is taken. Unregulated fishing undermines the attempts to determine sustainable levels of catches. Tough rules are needed, according to studies conducted by Greenpeace.


TUVALU

ON FEBRUARY 16TH, A LANDMARK U.N. pact to curb global warming came into force. Under the Kyoto Protocol, developed countries are supposed to cut emissions of carbon dioxide, largely from burning fossil fuels such as coal and oil in power plants, factories and cars, by an average 5.2 percent below 1990 levels during 2008-12. But the world's biggest greenhouse polluter, the United States, has refused to join Kyoto, and some Kyoto signatories, such as Spain and Portugal, have increased greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent over 1990 levels. Earlier in that same week, Tuvaluans in the capital Funafuti watched extreme high tide and strong wind send waves crashing across the island’s main road, littering it with rocks and debris. The seawalls that were constructed to provide barriers from the waves stood no chance; today they are only tatters of wire amongst other debris along the shores. People watched helplessly as their homes were flooded.

Michael Perry, Reuters, 12 February

WHAT’S NEW IN HANGA ROA

ELECTIONS TOOK PLACE on Rapa Nui on October 31. The position of mayor was hotly contested, as well as those for city council. The results: for mayor, Pedro Edmunds: 58.57%, Julio Araki: 41.42%. The councilors who won include: Alberto Hotus, 13.7%, Eliana Oivares, 12.9%, Marcelo Pont, 9.2%, Marcelo Icka, 9.1%, Hipolito Juan Icka, 7.0% and Nicolas Haoa Cardinali, 6.6%. Eleven other contenders for city council lost.

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