

News

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WHAT'S NEW ON RAPA NUI

Cultural Council recognizes founder of Rapanui Language Academy as a “Living Human Treasure”

(As reported by www.soyvalparaiso.cl, published online 1 August 2012). The Consejo de la Cultura (Cultural Council) honored Maria Virginia Haoa (Vicky Haoa) as a Tesoro Humano Vivo (living human treasure) on the part of the Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y Las Artes de Chile (National Council of Culture and The Arts of Chile). She is one of the founders of the Academia de la Lengua Rapa Nui (Rapanui Language Academy) and is the sixth living human treasure to be appointed by the council. Haoa was distinguished in the *Ámbito del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial* (Framework of Intangible Cultural Heritage) due to her role in maintaining oral traditions and expressions through the development of Rapanui texts that explore stories, nature, history, and poetry.

Mata Ngarau area of ‘Orongo closed

(As reported by Lilian López Labbé, Museo Antropológico Padre Sebastián Englert). At the ceremonial center of ‘Orongo, CONAF has closed the area of Mata Ngarau to visitors due to concerns about the stability of this portion of the cliff. Visitors to ‘Orongo are no longer able to access this portion of the site and stand atop the reconstructed house to admire the large concentration of rock art in this area.

What’s new at the MAPSE

On the 27th of May, the museum celebrated the *Día del Patrimonio* (Day of Patrimony) with a special celebration that included historical photos on display, a screening of the film “*Mana Rapa Nui*”, an artistic presentation outside the museum, and guided tours of the “*Sebastian Englert, misionero, científico, educador*” (Sebastian Englert, missionary, scientist, educator) exhibition, which opened in April. In June, together with visiting astronomers from the Universidad de Chile, the museum offered an astronomy workshop shortly before the Transit of Venus, which could be seen from the island. From 7 to 22 July, Dr. Britton Shepardson visited the museum and directed an intensive 2-week archaeological outreach program for local high school

students. A report outlining their research is featured in the Reports and Commentaries section of this issue.

WHAT'S NEW IN OCEANIA

Waka Tapu en route to Rapa Nui

Two traditional Polynesian double-hulled sailing canoes are currently traversing the Pacific. The waka departed Auckland’s Viaduct Basin in New Zealand on 17 August and are traveling over 10,000 nautical miles en route to their final destination of Rapa Nui. Further information about the voyage can be found at www.wakatapu.com.

Rapa Nui thrills at Pacific Arts Festival

(As reported by Michelle Williams, University of Auckland). The Rapa Nui delegation was a favorite at the 11th Festival of Pacific Arts, held in Honiara July 1-14, 2012. They quickly made fans of both the local and visiting audience alike, and were met by enthusiastic crowds at all nine of their performances, having more stage time than any other ensemble. The dancers’ professionalism and experience performing for foreign audiences was obvious, and the group earned headlines in several issues of the local *Solomon Star News* during their stay. The festival was a grand affair with twenty-one visiting delegations as well as performing groups from each province of the Solomon Islands. Performances took place in the main festival village and several satellite locations, and included dance, vocal music, drama, film, and an art gallery and craft market. Audiences were greeted to an impressive fireworks display each night of the festivities. It was the largest international event to have taken place in the Solomons.

WHAT'S NEW ELSEWHERE

New Kon-Tiki film released

On 24 August, a new action-adventure film entitled “*Kon-Tiki*” was released in Norway. As with the classic Academy Award-winning 1950 documentary, the film documents Thor Heyerdahl’s legendary expedition across the Pacific on a balsa raft in 1947. The film has since been screened at international film festivals, including the Toronto International Film Festival on 6