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## WHAT'S NEW IN THE PACIFIC

### NEW CALEDONIA

The Institute of Archaeology of New Caledonia and the Pacific was created earlier this year (2010). The "Pacific" was added to the title of the Institute to strengthen ties with colleagues of the region and to allow work outside the limits of New Caledonia.

The Institute's board is composed of representatives of the Provinces and the New Caledonian government as well as one representative of the Senate of High Chiefs. The board makes decisions about overall objectives of the Institute, along six main missions that were given to the Institute at its creation.

Christophe Sand was chosen as the first Director, with a team of eight archaeologists. It is hoped to add two people full-time before the end of the year. The Institute has moved into a new building at the edge of the town of Noumea and plans are being made for a field program this year. It took nearly 20 years for this goal to be reached and for the creation of an official archaeological structure in New Caledonia.

### NEW ZEALAND

A fleet of traditionally-designed Polynesian canoes left in April to re-create past migrations. Four double-hulled canoes left Auckland for French Polynesia (a voyage of 2,485 miles), the departure point for the Polynesian migrations to New Zealand, Hawai'i and Easter Island at the end of the first millennium. The 3 month voyage retraced the great Polynesian migration journeys of 1,000 years ago – although in the opposite direction. This voyage was an attempt to revive traditional sailing skills, including navigating without instruments or maps. The canoes, however, were hybrids: a mix of the old and the new. They had fiberglass hulls but were lashed with rope, and were large enough to carry up to 16 people. The crews came from New Zealand, Fiji, the Cook Islands, Samoa, Vanuatu and Tonga. Their arrival in Ra'ivavae and then Mo'orea was greeted with great excitement and celebration. They sailed for Tahiti, to pay respects at Taputapuatea at Raiatea.

*Tahiti-Pacifique* 230:30-33, 2010

A stone laying ceremony by the crews of the five voyaging canoes was held at the Taputapuātea *marae*. The crews were welcomed through a traditional *turou* (welcome) conducted by Vaitoti Tupa, the *kauono* of the Te Arera Rangātira. The crew members were led to the large stone *marae* where two warriors stood while Potikitaua Anau Manarangi and Bobby Turua waited for the group inside the compounds of the *marae*. Two stones from Tahiti, one from the Cook Islands and one from Aotearoa were presented for laying within Taputapuātea. One of the stones for the *marae* was presented by Tahiti vaka Faafaite's ceremonial leader, Moana'ura Walker, who explained that the stone he presented was from the falls below the sacred mountain of Hiro on the island of Ra'ivavae, the first port of calls for the canoes after 19 days of voyaging from Aotearoa.

It was a spiritually uplifting and moving experience for all. Members of the Cook Islands crew then performed a *haka* that brought the stone laying ceremony to a close.

*Cook Islands News* <<http://www.cinews.co.ck/index.htm>>

#### **JUAN FERNANDEZ ISLANDS**

WHEN THE MAGNITUDE 8.8 EARTHQUAKE and resulting tsunami hit Chile in the morning of February 27, no one thought to alert the small village of San Juan Bautista on Robinson Crusoe Island in the Juan Fernández archipelago, some 400 miles west of the coast of Chile. Residents of Robinson Crusoe didn't feel the earthquake, so the arrival of the tsunami was unexpected. While the height of the wave is still under dispute—somewhere around twenty feet high—all describe it as huge, partly because it was "funneled" into Cumberland Bay, where the island's only village was located. The village was flattened and several inhabitants, both adults and children, were washed away and perished amongst the debris. One of the structures destroyed was the island's Daniel Defoe Library and the Casa de la Cultura. The director, Victorio Bertullo, survived the tsunami, but lost his entire library and cultural center: "With the tsunami, we lost completely the Casa de la Cultura that I had the honor of directing since 1997. With the help of many, we have begun again with the library, with internet. Also, we had a history museum named for Baron Alfredo De Rodt (who established the community in 1877) and an excellent audio commentary which we hope to recreate....any assistance would be very valuable for us." The EIF has come to the rescue, sending (so far) 1.5 million pesos (about US \$2875) to help Mr Bertullo rebuild, and to replace the contents of the library. Anyone wishing to donate to help rebuild the library can contact the EIF for details.

#### **GUAM**

GUAM TURNED AWAY A SHIP infested with creepy crawlers in late July 2010. The Port Authority of Guam imposed a ban on the re-entry of the spider-filled MV *Altavia* cargo ship, found to be crawling with thousands of large hairy spiders. Another cargo ship from the same origin (South Korea) was also refused entry; the Stx *Alpha* cargo ship was diverted to Busan Port, South Korea for fumigation, according to a port

spokesperson. The decision to refuse re-entry was made by Gov. Frank Camacho and officials of Customs and Quarantine, Dept. of Agriculture, and the Port Authority. The vessel will only be allowed to re-enter and tie up to the pier after fumigation and after it has passed another inspection. The infestation of hairy spiders was noted when stevedores began unloading the ship and containers. The species is unknown and it is not known if they are dangerous.

*FoxNews.com, 16 July 2010*

#### **YAP**

THE ISLAND OF YAP, PART OF Micronesia, also is reviving the old sailing arts. There, canoe-builders put vessels together for the first annual canoe festival of the Yap Traditional Navigation Society. The canoes were built without nails, blueprints or measuring tapes. An open-ocean voyage is planned and, when the festival began in Colonia, the capital of Yap State, smaller canoes raced on the waters within the Yap reef and women danced in grass skirts. The celebration marked a revival of what was the world's first ocean-going technology - and the navigational methods used to steer the canoes across the vast Pacific. Master Navigator Ali Haleyalur from the Yapese outer islands of Lamotrek and Satowal teaches the art of celestial navigation, sailing by the stars, winds and currents, without maps or star-charts. A whale surfaced under his canoe on a recent trip to Palau, about 400km (250 miles) from Yap, and lifted the canoe out of the water on its back. But then it swam away.

*Ben Lowings, BBC*

#### **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

RESIDENTS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S isolated Carteret Islands are the world's first climate change refugees - the islands are disappearing under the Pacific Ocean, as rising sea levels inundate crops and contaminate water supplies. A relocation process started but only a few moved to nearby Bougainville. Charles Tsivi moved his family to Bougainville's northeast coast last year and is glad he made the move; wind-blown waves spoiled the produce gardens on the Carteret Islands, but now he has a large garden where he can grow enough to live comfortably. Planting a garden is something he could not do back at his old home 100 kilometers away. The Carteret Islanders made headlines around the world but so many journalists have visited the islands that now locals are tired of having to accommodate them; unfortunately publicity has not translated into help. The Carterets will be largely uninhabitable by 2015. Time is running out.

*Liam Fox Radio Australia, 29 July 2010*

#### **FRANCE**

THE FRENCH PARLIAMENT VOTED overwhelmingly to repatriate some 15 tattooed and mummified heads of Māori warriors to New Zealand, ending years of debate over the restitution of the human remains. The heads are stored in several French museums.

*Steven Erlanger, nytimes.com, 5 May 2010*