

From the Editors

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Polynesian Archaeology and Research* (JPAR). We have been working with colleagues at the University of Hawai'i Press for the past two years to establish and launch this open-access journal that focuses on the region of Polynesia with a particular emphasis on publishing the results of research by archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and other researchers working in the region.

For more than three decades, both the Society for Hawaiian Archaeology (SHA) and the Easter Island Foundation (EIF) have been committed to promoting research and dialogue on the archaeology of Polynesia. Over the past 30 years, more than 33 volumes of the *Rapa Nui Journal* were published by the EIF and its founding editor Georgia Lee, and 15 volumes of *Hawaiian Archaeology* and four special publications were published by SHA (all volumes of both journals are now freely available on the University of Hawai'i's eVols digital archive, available at evols.library.manoa.hawaii.edu). It is with mixed emotions that we say farewell to these two long-standing forums and embark on a new journey in partnership with SHA, EIF, and UH Press. While JPAR replaces these recently retired journals, it carries on the legacies of these significant regional publications. It is hoped that JPAR will serve as a forum to bring together important research and conversations around archaeology, history, and heritage management in Polynesia that are of significant relevance to both organizations. We are especially grateful for the continued support of our members, support from whom allows us to produce an entirely open-access journal at no cost to authors.

Rapa Nui Journal

The *Rapa Nui Journal* began as a newsletter dubbed *Rapa Nui Notes*. Recognizing that Rapa Nui had never had a newsletter and in hopes of filling that void, in 1986, archaeologist Georgia Lee embarked on a new mission: to bring news from and about the island to interested parties throughout the world. She initially developed the newsletter to keep in touch with volunteers who participated in her research projects on Rapa Nui. Her former volunteers routinely wrote to her asking for updates on her research projects as well as news of any developments on the island. Rather than write countless responses, she decided to compile a newsletter to send out to former volunteers. The first newsletter was just four pages long and included a short report on Georgia's most recent field season as well as an outline of plans for a future field season. The newsletter also included headlines such as "The Runway Controversy" and "The Heyerdahl Haul," highlighting recent events such as the community's divided views on the planned expansion of the airport and Thor Heyerdahl and his team "walking" a *moai*. These newsworthy current events were featured alongside a section on new publications and other research.

The following year, Alan Drake joined Georgia as a co-editor and they unveiled a new look and longer format for the Winter 1987/1988 issue. It was then that Grant McCall

dubbed the publication as “the premier source for current Easter Island events and scientific studies” and the journal added this as its byline. In 1988, they changed the name of the newsletter from *Rapa Nui Notes* to the *Rapa Nui Journal* and described the publication as “an international newsletter published four times a year for the benefit of those interested in Easter Island.” Later that year, the editorial description changed to the following: “Rapa Nui Journal is an international newsletter published four times a year for the benefit of those interested in Easter Island and Polynesia.” The addition of “and Polynesia” was significant. Georgia announced that she was embarking on a new rock art project in the Hawaiian Islands and described it as a comparative investigation of Hawaiian petroglyphs that was being undertaken as a complement to her six-year study of the petroglyphs on Rapa Nui. It was also during this year that research projects from other areas of Polynesia, such as the Marquesas, were featured in the journal.

In 1989, the Easter Island Foundation was founded with the primary goal of establishing a research library on Rapa Nui dedicated to the memory of the late archaeologist William Mulloy. The Easter Island Foundation News section of the journal was added in 1990, as was a “What’s new in Polynesia” section. From this point forward, *Rapa Nui Journal* became the official publication of the EIF. Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of the journal is that it provided a space for open dialogue. In addition to articles, reports, publications, and news, most issues published during the 1990s and early 2000s contained letters to the editor, comments on articles, and responses from authors and the editors.

Georgia and her partner, Frank Morin, worked together to produce the journal from 1991 until 2008, then Shawn McLaughlin joined the team in 2008–2009. Thegn Ladefoged and Mara Mulrooney joined the editorial team in 2010, and from 2013 to 2016, Mara served as editor and worked in close collaboration with Antoinette Padgett, the EIF office manager who also filled the important role of editorial assistant.

During its 34-year history, *Rapa Nui Journal* steadily evolved from a newsletter to a full academic journal, with the first peer-reviewed articles being published in 2010. Over the years, the journal retained its role in connecting readers with happenings on the island, and the headline “What’s new in Hanga Roa” that was born in 1987 continued to be featured until Volume 30, along with news from the wider region as well as the popular “Moai Sightings” section featuring *moai* spotted all over the world. When the *Rapa Nui Journal* came back to life in collaboration with UH Press, and Volumes 31 through 33 were published, the journal morphed again. It featured a new format and continued to include peer-reviewed articles as well as reports, commentaries, and book reviews. Realizing that most people get their news from online sources, the news section became more truncated to focus exclusively on EIF news. During this time, there was also a steady decrease in submissions to the journal, and the global pandemic seemed to exacerbate the situation. It was then that discussions began about retiring the journal and replacing it with a new title that would also replace another regional journal that had faced similar challenges, *Hawaiian Archaeology*.

Hawaiian Archaeology

When the Society for Hawaiian Archaeology was established in 1980, there were frequent discussions of having either a newsletter or journal that would help communicate the results of recent archaeological work in Hawai‘i to the SHA membership, institutions, and other stakeholders. The minutes of the November 22, 1982 SHA board meeting made a special

announcement that “the long awaited SHA newsletter is in the works !!” along with a call for papers requesting manuscripts of 5–15 pages, double-spaced, and typed. A key selling point in the call was that figures, or even photographs, could be included. The newsletter also welcomed abstracts of contract work of 1–2 pages in length, particularly if the work had been done “in the last couple of years or so.”

The minutes from these early board meetings reveal that the Society was undecided on whether a newsletter or journal was the best medium (eventually SHA would come to have both). Although most early conversations referred to this first publication as a newsletter, by the time Volume 1 was published, *Hawaiian Archaeology* had distinctly become a journal. In 2004, Volume 9 introduced a formal peer review policy. Despite this, *Hawaiian Archaeology* always managed to cultivate a more conversational tone than the typical academic journal, and served as a valuable forum for discussing the state of the field, experimentation with new theories and methods, and provided a supportive training ground for students embarking on their first academic publications.

From 1984 to 2021, the SHA Publications Committee published a total of 15 volumes and four special issues of *Hawaiian Archaeology*. The first announcement for *Hawaiian Archaeology* anticipated its publication in May 1983, though it was not until July 1984 that Volume 1 was published. It would take another nine years before Volume 2 would get to print. The editor’s note for this volume, written by P. Bion Griffin, began with a more somber tone: “We can only hope that future volumes of *Hawaiian Archaeology* are produced in a more timely fashion and with less pain than Volume 2.” The time, expenses, and occasional dearth of article submissions posed significant challenges to the journal from the outset. It cost \$900 to print 300 issues of Volume 1, which nearly bankrupted SHA, prompting the board of directors to consider raising membership dues, instating a journal subscription fee, and reconsidering their expenses on “the newsletter, coffee supplies, and mailings.”

The persistence of *Hawaiian Archaeology* across four decades, sustained entirely by volunteer labor, is a remarkable testament to the SHA community and its members’ dedication. The editorial role for the journal has passed through a number of different hands, many of whom are leaders in the field of Hawaiian and Pacific archaeology: Patrick V. Kirch, P. Bion Griffin, Terry L. Hunt, Melinda S. Allen, Sara Collins, Tom Dye, Mike T. Carson, Mary C. Sullivan, Michael Desilets, and Windy McElroy. The final issue, Volume 15, was edited by Jillian Swift and William Belcher. Production for the journal was always coordinated in-house, even down to some particularly ambitious bookbinding efforts. It takes an entire village to make such efforts happen, and this is demonstrated by the long lists of individuals who were acknowledged in individual issues, including Melvin Agustin, Bethany Austin, Carl Christensen, Bonnie Clause, Anne Garland, Mark de Guzman, Joseph Kennedy, Helen Leideman, Richard Pearson, Michael Pfeffer, Hardy Spoehr, Matthew Spriggs, and Frank Thomas. In addition to those who were acknowledged, behind every issue were members of the SHA Publications Committees, SHA board members, organizational and individual donors and those who sought funding to support continued publication, authors, peer reviewers, and everyone who was willing to sit down over a beer with a past editor and listen to them complain about the process!

Editorial Remarks

The cover of this inaugural issue of the *Journal of Polynesian Archaeology and Research* honors the founding editor of the *Rapa Nui Journal*, Georgia Lee, and her connection to

both Rapa Nui and Hawai‘i. The bas-relief petroglyphs featured on the large boulder that was identified in Moanalua on the island of O‘ahu, Hawai‘i, is strikingly similar to the *tangata manu* (birdman) petroglyphs that are prevalent in the corpus of Rapa Nui rock art. The selection of this frontispiece also highlights the connection between Rapa Nui and Hawai‘i, in particular, within the sea of islands known as Polynesia.

The names *Rapa Nui Journal* and *Hawaiian Archaeology* give the impression that these journals were focused on a particular island or archipelago. However, each of these journals included articles and content focused on research that was carried out in other islands of Polynesia. The *Journal of Polynesian Archaeology and Research* carries their legacies forward with a name that appropriately encompasses their scope. It is our greatest hope that JPAR can carry on the spirit of the *Rapa Nui Journal* and *Hawaiian Archaeology*, and continue to serve the needs of an ever-evolving community by offering an open-access forum for archaeological, anthropological, and related research across Polynesia.

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