



Rapa Nui Notes is an international newsletter published four times per year for the benefit of all those interested in the archaeology and anthropology of Easter Island. Correspondence, brief articles, photographs, drawings, reviews of books and films, announcements of conferences and publications, and related materials are invited, but we cannot be responsible for unsolicited items or anything submitted without adequate return postage or International Reply Coupon. Subscription rates: US 4 issues \$12; foreign 4 issues \$20 sent airmail; US funds only, please. Address: Georgia Lee, Ph.D., Rapa Nui Notes, P.O. Box 1275, San Luis Obispo CA 93406 USA. ISSN 0890-2097

NASA "Boom" Effects

The "world's most isolated inhabited island" is rapidly changing. Since our previous visit, only 6 months ago, we can see many new and different things, strange faces, and a quickening pace. The evident current prosperity is the result of the runway extension, which has provided jobs for many Rapanui, although most workers were brought in from Chile along with the heavy machinery.

However, unless additional public works projects are initiated, the good times won't last. The hoped-for breakwater and harbor are still somewhere in the future, due to a lack of funds. And, at this point in time, tourism is down despite the fact that the island now boasts 5 hotels and 29 residenciales, which range, for a single with meals, from \$20. to \$116 per day.

The island's population now numbers 2500 people; some are with the runway project and thus are temporary. Horses, which numbered about 5000 in 1965-70, are down today to only 200 to 300. I was told by islanders that the reduction is due to the fact that they are being eaten by the Rapa Nui.

Sculptures Salvaged

A rescue effort instigated by Dr. Yosi Sinoto of the Bishop Museum [Honolulu] raised several red scoria topknots, a statue, and some statue fragments from the bay at Vaihu and from the cliff behind Akahanga. Funding for this worthwhile project was generously provided by an American, Douglas Coffin. With the aid of a crane, these stone artifacts were moved by a crew headed by Juan Haoa, and which included most of his family. The pukao and statues were padded with banana stalks to protect them, and we watched breathlessly as they were lifed up and out of the bay and swung gently onto dry land. One of the topknots has petroglyphs on it, and we were thus able to record these designs for the first time.



One of the large red scoria pukao, originally from Ahu Vaihu, that was salvaged from the bay

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New Museum

Construction on the new museum is continuing. The building is a stunner, with an impressive stairway leading down to the entry. It is expected to be completed in January. Plans include several adjacent outdoor sculpture gardens, storage facilities, a William Mulloy Memorial library, a computer room, offices for administration, a catalog system, a gift shop, etc. At this stage, most urgently needed are funds for installing glass cases, lights, and other display features. In the latter category is a display of the living culture today.

Donations can be sent directly to the Governor, with specific instructions as to which project it is to be applied.

It was erroneously reported in the last issue of Rapa Nui Notes that Andrea Seelandfreund was returning to the island to be the director of the Museum. Andrea has made other plans and will not be coming back to the island.

Hangaroa News

Under the direction of the new padre, Paul Luis Bertrand Riedl, the remodeling of the church is moving right along. A new roof has been installed along with new windows, and framing was completed for new front doors. The old cement floor was mostly torn out, and presumably is replaced by now. I was told that the building will have a new facade made from blocks of red scoria, and possibly a bell tower may be added.

The project to reforest the island continues. CONAF, The National Park Service of Chile, has planted 300 hectares of eucalyptus trees plus some ironwood trees. The eucalyptus are intended to be used as a source of energy; the ironwood for windbreaks.

Subscribers Delighted

Thanks to all of you who wrote, expressing interest and enthusiasm about Rapa Nui Notes. We were gratified to read such comments as: "Received Rapa Nui Notes...what a great idea!"; "It is a fine, professional...bit of work..."; "Rapa Nui Notes is a wonderful idea! It is very well-written and I read the first issue cover to cover"; "I loved the first issue!"; "best wishes for a long and prosperous publication!"; and, "Outstanding! There always has been a gap--now you've filled it." We appreciate hearing from you all.

The 1986 Field Season to record rock art on Rapa Nui accomplished several very significant goals. This project, under the aegis of the University Research Expeditions Program [UREP], University of California, Berkeley, was a continuation of work that began in 1981. This year was the fourth season on the island, and research teams documented petroglyphs in several specific areas. These include Puna Pau, where the topknots were made, and where many of these are covered with designs; topknots at Vaihu, including the one what recently was rescued from the bay; and Ahu One Makihi, where designs have been applied to the red scoria facia on the ahu. The information gathered on this "reapplying" of motifs to stones that already carried significant ritual importance will be integrated into a paper now in preparation.

Petroglyphs at Rano Raraku, and designs applied to a statue en route, near Maunga Toa Toa, were recorded; several very interesting sites at Poike were studied, and a final mapping of the great petroglyph site at Tongariki was made.

We next turned our attention to the area north of Ahu Tepeu, and worked our way to the northern tip of the island, at Ahu Poe Poe, recording some extremely interesting petroglyphs along the way. We then began surveying north and west from Anakena, and found many new sites, including two spectacular panels that figure in legends. Our northward progress went to Hanga Oteo where we finally reached the north tip from that side of the island.

At the conclusion of the field season, a report was presented to CONAF [the National Park Service of Chile], and other interested parties, concerning problems of conservation and preservation of rock art sites. The report deals with incidences of vandalism and problems of erosion that were noted during the project. Most of the damage sustained by the petroglyphs is the result of the impact of man, not nature. This includes walking on them and scoring the grooves [scraping with stones] to make the designs stand out more clearly so tourists can see them better. We believe that education is a key

factor in conservation, and to this end we worked with the local TV station on the island, videotaping footage that will be presented over the island's station, with narration stressing the importance of this segment of the island's history. In conjunction with this is a projected program at the local school to increase awareness among the children of the island, and CONAF intends to erect signs at some of the petroglyph sites asking that the rock art be respected, and untouched. CONAF will also construct a stone wall around the famous site at Tongariki, which is particularly endangered as it lies close to the road and receives much traffic from tourists, as well as horses and cattle.



The new archaeological museum as it appeared in September 1986. Under construction now, the finished building will have several outdoor sculpture gardens. This view is taken from the massive stone staircase that descends from the level above.

Winter Storms

Islanders describe the past winter as being the worst in 40 years. Ferocious winds and driving rain flattened trees and some of the less sturdy houses, causing some inhabitants to take shelter in the gymnasium. It even hailed one day!

The storms also caused damage to some of the prehistoric stone houses at the ceremonial site of Orongo. Several of the houses, so carefully restored by Mulloy, collapsed into heaps of rubble.

Although wind is a fact of life on Rapa Nui, outsiders often are unaware of its impact. As part of the new runway construction, steel towers are being erected on the western end of the runway for lights and guidance systems for incoming aircraft. To the great amusement of some, one was blown over during a storm. Back to the drawing board.

The Land Giveaway

The government is giving out around 2000 hectares of land to islanders who will farm it. These "parcelas" are just outside of Hangaroa. If this project works well, another 2000 hectares will eventually be given out.

Mark Your Calendars

A workshop for astro-photographers and observers is planned from 19 April to 3 May, 1987. This workshop includes 6 nights in the Andes, at La Serena, Chile, and 3 nights on Easter Island. It is conducted by Dr. William Liller, former chairman of the Department of Astronomy, Harvard, and author of the recently published "The Cambridge Astronomy Guide", and Dennis di Cicco, associated editor of Sky and Telescope Magazine. Information can be obtained by calling 1-800-223-6626.

An Earthwatch project will be working on Easter Island from January 14 to February 28, 1987. Under the direction of Dr. Nicholas Patricios (University of Miami) and Prof. Luis Darraidou (Universidad de Chile), the project will record the architecture of ahu by establishing a graphic and photographic archive of site types, which will form a basis for future descriptions and analyses of these complexes.

Dr. Roger Green sends word that there will be an international congress on Polynesian archaeology in 1988, probably to be held in the Marquesas Islands. We will keep you updated.

The Mystery of Katherine Routledge

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In 1919, the book "The Mystery of Easter Island" by Mrs. Scoresby Routledge was published in London. Long out of print, it has become a classic--and a primary source--for information about the island. But, of no less mystery is the author herself. Born in England in 1866, Katherine Pease was educated at Oxford where she presumably met her husband-to-be, the Aussie Scoresby Routledge. Together they worked in Africa and wrote an account of the Akikuyu.

Encouraged by the British Museum, they determined to go to Easter Island and surmounted the difficulty of reaching this remote spot by building and equipping their own yacht, the Mana. After being at sea for 13 months, they arrived at Easter Island on March 29, 1914. Katherine Routledge was 48 years old.

What was she like? According to her picture, she was a handsome woman with a firm chin and level gaze. Obviously well-bred and proper, yet she was a staunch suffragette. She relished the experience of living in a tent, being at one with nature, enjoyed the sounds of the waves thundering against the cliffs, and the glory of waking to the sun, air, and dewy grass, or the sight of a full moon making a track of light over the sea. She braved rough seas to visit Motu Nui, and records a near accident which almost terminated the project--and herself.

The more I refer to her book, the more impressed I become with the quality of her research. At the beginning, I assumed that because the information was collected late in time, in 1914-15, many errors had likely crept into it. But time and again I have been amazed by her insightful "take" on things. When compared to ethnographies written by others about other Polynesian groups, her descriptions of customs and practices are "right on."

I have seen copies of some of her field notes from Easter Island, which were recently rediscovered after having been considered lost for some 50 years, and as painful as they are to read due to her hurried and fairly illegible handwriting, they yield interesting asides about her informants and other matters. She calls the birdman petroglyph designs "ducks," and a bit of the proper lady can be detected

when she refers to the numerous vulva signs engraved on the rocks as "natural fig leaves."

There seems to have been some coolness between Katherine and Scoresby, who spent much of the time in Chile while she was working on the island. Charlie Love, Western Wyoming College, has been editing the Routledge notes, and he has the following comments: "Prior to a certain circumstance on Easter Island, she notes what he does almost daily, then suddenly never mentions him again. Granted, he does leave the island, but she hardly notes his return...save in her book, and...nothing after that." And, "...they tend to travel separately after that, save the second expedition. Whether that ever affected her production rate of publishable material between 1924 and 1935 I'm not sure."

Whatever happened to cool their relationship, no clue exists in her field notes, and personal letters have not been located.

They returned to the Pacific in 1921 and sailed to Rapa Iti, Raivavae, and Mangareva, spending 12 months at the latter island, and then travelled back to England separately. During this trip, Katherine collected some 50,000 words of legends and other Mangarevan findings. These have never been located, according to Love.

On 11 December, 1924, the London Daily Graphic reported a poignant interview with Katherine Routledge: "Mrs. Scoresby Routledge...appreciated the incongruity of the weather yesterday when she looked out of the window at the fog and talked about sitting on a coral strand while a native woman told her ancient legends of the islands of the Pacific. I have just started seriously to work on my new book, she said, which is to be based on the results of the last expedition...to the Pacific. I should like to be back there again, said Mrs. Routledge, still looking out the window...."

She died a decade later. The new book was never written, and no trace of the notes has been found. When she arrived at Mangareva, Katherine Routledge was in a unique position to make comparisons with what she had observed at Easter Island. It is tantalizing to imagine her long lost writing being discovered....

Landing Craft, Lunar Potholes and the Landing Strip

The runway extension will be completed by January 1987, making it possible for 747s to land and take off. Several countries, including Australia, New Zealand, France, Japan, and Argentina are eyeing Rapa Nui as a major stopover for new air routes. Unbelievable amounts of rock and dirt are being moved in order to raise the level of the runways extensions. A fleet of 2 dozen large dump trucks are working double shifts to 11 p.m., shuttling back and forth. Rock crushers grind steadily away. All the equipment was brought in specially for the project, via landing craft, and came ashore at Anakena. It must have resembled a World War II invasion scene. The equipment will be removed from the island at the termination of the project.

The south half of the hill known as Tarareina, located on the outskirts of town, is leveled, and the quarry site at Mt. Orito is now a great gaping hole 100 meters deep. There seems to be little provision made for landscaping these ugly scars, according to Don Sergio Rapu, governor of the island. It is feared by many islanders that, along with a new runway, they will end up with a couple of eyesores.

Tarariena belongs to an extended family group on the island which sold rights to the fill for \$100,000. This will be spread around the clan, but still is a sizable amount coming into the economy. Islanders want their lifestyle to be improved; they want to have access to things other countries take for granted. They want to have advantages of civilization/technology. But at the same time, they don't want it to be UGLY. Many islanders we spoke with are depressed by the huge scars in the earth, and worry that the "bad news" will be that they are stuck with them.

In the face of the massive undertaking by NASA which will result in a 11,000 foot runway, the roads of the island stand out in contrast. Rapa Nui has yet to see its first paved thoroughfare. The so-called roads have often been a source of a somewhat black humor, to say nothing of trashed automobiles. But the big trucks brought in for construction purposes have made further inroads, so to speak. We now have lunar potholes to contend with.

Publications

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SHUTTLE DOWN by Lee Correy, Ballantine Books, N.Y.; second printing, 1986. 216 pages.

This book originally appeared in Analog magazine in 1981. It seems to have been reissued in order to take advantage of the controversial runway extension on Easter Island as an emergency landing site for the space shuttle.

The story describes an emergency shuttle landing on Rapa Nui, the problems of dealing with sensitive political realities, and the difficulties of getting the shuttle back off the island, all complicated by a terrorist raid, skulldugery by KGB agents, covert CIA agents, and various love affairs. Not necessarily in that order. But the book basically concerns the impact of high tech on an isolated island where the introduction of a few hundred people can cause major problems.

It is an ironic fact that the actual NASA project really has upset the delicate balance of the island's economy by simply bringing in some hundred extra people. Stores have empty shelves and the entire island ran out of butane for cooking on the 8th of October. The supply ship does not come until mid-December. Thus a misjudgement in ordering supplies a year in advance can have far-reaching consequences.

Those who know the island may be put off by reading such things as "Mt. Ororito" for Orito, and the placing of Ovahe less than 2 km away from Orito and "just off the runway". Never mind the description of Akivi and its 7 statues where some of the characters sit and look "at the ocean below"---no mean feat when the ocean is several kilometers away. And one can only smile at the mention of "some kind of real potent stuff they make from goat's milk." Goats on Rapa Nui? Horrors, there goes the neighborhood. And not even a mention of the traditional fire water, Pisco.

A source of more bemusement is an episode where one astronaut, apparently besotted by a lady, leaves his boots at Akivi and walks the four miles back to the hotel---barefoot. I wince at the very thought.

The above complaints are relatively trivial; others are more annoying for, although the main characters are shallow and poorly developed, the Rapa Nui are virtually invisible. One islander, described as the mayor and hotel manager, plays a minor role; and the other, a medical doctor, is the villain---a Soviet KGB agent---and gets shot by a Chilean, who is really a CIA agent. So much for the people of the island.

No one reading this book would have the slightest idea of the value of archaeological sites in the vicinity of the airstrip, or on the island. When plans are discussed to enlarge the runway, one enlightened female asks if any archaeological areas will be affected; the off-hand reply is that the whole island is an archaeological area. End of discussion. Forward with the plans.

While writers of fiction are allowed considerable leeway, I must admit that my hackles rose when I read the lines that stated, "...all [the natives] are thieves and liars." This comment is followed by complaints from a Chilean about the islanders stealing government sheep. And here we come up against differing life styles, for the traditional Polynesian kinship system was/is such that personal property was/is virtually unknown. Within the family unit, everything is shared. This concept still persists today, despite outside influences.

And there is another side to this, for rustling was/is a way of life on the island since the first animals were introduced. It was always hard for the protein-hungry Rapa Nui to view all those lamb chops and steaks on the hoof and touch them not. It appears to have taken on overtones of a great game of skill and chance---sort of like a South Pacific Robin Hood---to make off with an animal and have an impromptu barbeque in a secluded spot, as practically every cave on the island attests to with its pile of animal bones.

Please to do not think I am condoning rustling. I simply think that describing all islanders as thieves because rustling was/is indulged in by some individuals is to put out the wrong impression of a people, who in my experience have always been warm, friendly, and absolutely honest.

One of the book's few sensitive remarks about the island comes from the local priest who says, "Look around Pascua...and ask yourselves this simple question: what can space do for the Pascuans that they need to have done, that they could not do for themselves, and that would not merely change but improve their lives?" And near the end of the story, the main character looks up at the space shuttle and muses, "...are you really worth it?" Well, that sort of says it all.

"Shuttle Down" is interesting in that real life appears to be following fiction. And, if you like action, intrigue, space jargon, and heavy breathing behind the statues, you will probably enjoy the book. However, if you hope to really learn something about Rapa Nui, find a copy of Katherine Routledge's "Mystery of Easter Island".

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