

TONGA RESEARCH ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER (Formerly Tongan History Association)

A MULTIDISCIPLINARY ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TONGAN STUDIES

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2007 CONFERENCE

With the theme "Tonga: its Land, Sea, and People" the 2007 conference will be held in Moulton Hall, Nuku`alofa, 11-14 July. A "call for papers" and registration form, and a membership application form, can be found at the end of this newsletter and on TRA's website, which is <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/anthropology/tonga/index.html>

Offers of papers have already been received from the following (in alphabetical order)

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|----------------------|----------------------|
| David Burley | Christine Liava`a |
| Geoff Clark | Heather Young Leslie |
| Mele Faiva | Tapani Mangisi |
| `Ofa Fakalata | Kalafi Moala |
| Meredith Filihia | Mike Poltorak |
| Kalolaine Fusimalohi | 'Asinate Samate |
| Steve Tupai Francis | Tangikina Steen |
| Guy Powles | Sisilia Tupou-Thomas |
| Phyllis Herda | Svenja Volkel |
| Hugh Laracy | Joanne Wallis |
| Helen Lee | Elizabeth Wood-Ellem |

Our patron, HRH Princess Pilolevu will open the conference, and **Hon. Tuita** (Minister for Lands) has been invited to be the keynote speaker. Other **specialists** living in Tonga have been invited to speak, but have not yet confirmed.

MORE ON THE TRA CONFERENCE

Requests: If you can spare any books (on Tonga or anything else), please bring them for the Friendly Islands Bookshop, which was destroyed along with its store of spare copies on 16 November 2006. Insurance does not cover "civil riots". FIBS usually has a stall at the conference.

Also, anyone who has a good **film** about Tonga, please contact Besi on fihu28@optusnet.com.au

Travel and accommodation: International participants will need to organise their own flights (book soon as July flights are already well booked) and accommodation. Information on accommodation can be found on the Internet: for example – <http://www.tongaholiday.com/tonga/export/sites/TVB/accommodation/index.html>
<http://www.jasons.com/tonga/tonga-area/accommodation/?quickview=true>
http://www.tonga.spto.org/spto/export/sites/spto/destinations/tonga/to_tongatapu.shtml

Take care when booking accommodation not to be located too far away from town unless you'll be hiring a car. However, standards can change quickly, so if you know someone who has been to Tonga recently, ask them for some recommendations!

In addition to accommodation options you will find on the web, 'Asinate Samate has booked the rooms available through the Tonga National Council of Churches, at a rate of \$30 a night. These have hot water, no meals but these can be arranged. Internet and phone service can be arranged too. You will need to confirm a booking by contacting Nonu at (676)23291.

NEWS AND EVENTS

The **coronation** of HM King George Tupou V has been postponed until 1 August 2008.

Mariner's Bicentenary celebrations, which were to have taken place on 29 November 2006, have been cancelled, although there is a possibility of one or two of the descendants attending our TRA conference this year.

Congratulations also to **Filipe Tohi**, who has recently been artist in residence at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. During February he made an installation based on *lalava* in a gallery and conducted educational workshops for young people. This residency is usually given to north California residents. It is reported (and we can believe it!) to be one of the most successful residencies that de You Museum has had. The museum staff as well as the public learned a great deal about Tongan culture and artistic traditions during Filipe's stay.

Heather Young Leslie will soon begin working with the Tupou Tertiary Institute as a Liaison for International Education, helping the TTI to develop courses for articulation with universities in Hawai'i. TTI already offers New Zealand Polytechnic level qualifications education for Tongan students in Communications and Information Technology, Business and Management. Meetings held in Hawai'i in September 2006 indicate high levels of interest from Hawai'i Pacific University, and University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu. Stay tuned for further developments.

Change of address: Please note the change of address of **Fahina Tavake-Pasi**, our USA/ Canada representative.
National Tongan American Society
2480 S. Main Street #112
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
Phone: (801) 467-8712
Email: fahina36@hotmail.com

Planet Tonga (www.planet-tonga.com) has recently launched an online magazine for Pacific Youth. It is called "The Pacific Eye" <http://www.planet-tonga.com/pacificeye>. Community members are encouraged to submit their writing.

Congratulations to **Eiki Fane Tupou Vava`u**, second daughter of HRH Princess Pilolevu and Hon. Tuita on her engagement to **Siaosi Kiutaukivailahi Kaho**, the son of the Noble Tu`ivakano (Speaker of the Tongan Parliament) and Lopini. The wedding will take place on 3 May in Tonga.

Elinor Mordaunt, *This Was Our Life*, Hutchinson & Co. London, n.d. Author of *The Venture Book*, John Lane London, 1926 (chapters 11-15 about Tonga), Elinor Mordaunt spent some time in Ha'apai with Shirley Baker's daughters, and wrote this short novel loosely based on their lives. Besi has a copy, and wonders if anyone else has come across it. Probably published about 1930.

Words from "Disgusted of Melbourne". Australia is spending \$400 million expanding its facility for asylum seekers on Christmas Island, but can spare only \$4 million to rebuild Nuku'alofa. New Zealand has also offered only \$4 million. Australians and New Zealanders please protest to your governments. Besi

MISSING MEMBERS!

If you know the whereabouts of any of the following TRA members, please send their contact details to Fay Yule (2406 Wills Tower, 28 Wills St, Melbourne 3000. sandyfay@optusnet.com.au).

Tevita Fale
Jim Connor
Setaita Olive
Sitenitoni Palu

Jennifer Taylor
Tonya Toi
Taniela Fiefia
Heidi Foley

Christian Brann
Sinna Sinnappurajar

CONFERENCES

National [New Zealand] Multidisciplinary Conference of Tongan Health Professionals

This will be held on 6 October 2007. The conference theme is *Ko e Mo'ui Lelei: napangapangamalie e sino, 'atamai mo e laumalie* (Health: social, mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing). For further information, please contact `Eseta Finau, Lataisia Uili, or `Epifania Siu, Tongan Nurses Association, PO Box 13252, Onehunga, Auckland, New Zealand, mobile: 0274774867, Email e.finau@auckland.ac.nz, phone 3737599 (ext. 82365), Sia.Uili@waitematadhb.govt.nz, phone:09 8260939, `Epifania: tna@tonganhealth.com, phone 09 6363650. Website: www.tna.org.nz

ASAO February 2007

In contrast to the usual programs at the annual conferences of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, this year there were very few papers on Tonga. Tongan anthropologist Tevita Ka'ili, from Brigham Young University in Hawaii, co-organised a session on "Articulating Indigenous Anthropology in/of Oceania" and co-presented a paper with the same title. Also in the session were papers from Patricia Fifita: "Traditional Medicine at the Interface of Modernity: negotiations of medical systems, knowledge and practice in Tonga"; and Steve Tupai Francis: "'In between days': speaking out about articulation" (presented in absentia). In another session, "'From the Native's Point of View' Revisited: on the problem of 'empathy' in the Pacific", Mike Poltorak presented the paper "Restoring Empathy: ambiguity, efficacy and healing in Vava'u, Tonga".

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION

Tonga and the Tongans: heritage and identity, ed. Elizabeth Wood-Ellem, with 20 essays is in the pipeline. We plan to launch the book at the TRA conference, hopefully on a FILM NIGHT.

Contents of *Tonga and the Tongans*

- 1 HRH Crown Princess Nanasipau`u Tuku`aho**
God and Tonga are my Inheritance
- 2 David V. Burley**
Tonga's Lapita Beginning and its Role in Polynesian Origins
- 3 Guy Powles**
Constitutions and People's Values: changing the Constitution of Tonga
- 4 `Asinate Samate**
Re-imagining the Idea of God and Tonga are my Inheritance
- 5 Filipe Tohi and Hilary Scothorn**
Tupu`anga: source and structure of Tongan *lalava* patterns
- 6 Adrienne Kaeppler**
Heliaki, Metaphor, and Allusion: the art and aesthetics of *Ko e `Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi`a*
- 7 Maureen Powles**
Daniel Wheeler: a Quaker in Tonga 1836
- 8 `Aioema `Atiola**
Tongan Wesleyan Missionaries Abroad 1835-1985
- 9 Christine Liava`a**
The Western High Pacific Commission Archives: a source for research
- 10 Sioana Faupula**
The Shirley Baker Archives (1836-1903) in the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau
- 11 Elizabeth Wood-Ellem**
Conspiracies and Rumours of Conspiracies in Tongan History
- 12 Pasemata Vi Taunisila and Gareth Grainger**
The Ata Family
- 13 Siupeli Taliai**
Ko e kau Fakaongo
- 14 Gareth Grainger**
The Fakaongo Exiles from Tonga to Fiji 1887-90
- 15 Phyllis Herda**
The Political Aspects of Marriage in Traditional Tonga
- 16 Steve Bowman**
Tongan Castaways: a story of survival
- 17 Tangikina Steen**
Creating a Culturally Safe Space for Tongans in Adelaide: the Gap Project
- 18 Helen Lee**
Generational Change: the children of Tongan migrants and their ties to the homeland
- 19 Bruce Hill**
Foreign Correspondent's Report
- 20 Kalafi Moala**
Media: tool for national development

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- D'Entrecasteaux, Bruni, 2006. *Voyage to Australia and the Pacific, 1791-1793*, edited and translated by Edward Duyker & Maryse Duyker. Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Publishing, Carlton, Vic. Australia. 456 pages. ISBN: 0-522-84932-6 (hb). [Includes detailed accounts of the islands and peoples of the Pacific, including New Zealand, Tonga, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and New Guinea. Chapters on Tonga: XII. To New Zealand and the Friendly Islands; XIII. Sojourn in Tongatabou; XIV. Observations on Tongatabou.]
- Ferro, Katarina, & Margot Wallner (eds), 2006. *Migration Happens: reasons, effects and opportunities of migration in the South Pacific*, Contributions to Research on the Pacific, No. 4. Münster: Lit Verlag, Novara. 200 pages. ISBN: 3-8258-6998-9.
- Francis, S, 2006. "People and Place in Tonga: the social construction of *fonua* in Oceania", in T. Reuter (ed.), *Sharing the Earth, Carving up the Land: land and territory in the Austronesian world*, ANU E-Press, Canberra. pp. 345-64.
- Kirch, Patrick V., & Jean-Louis Rallu (eds), 2007. *The Growth and Collapse of Pacific Island Societies: archaeology and demographic perspectives*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu. 423 pages. [Case studies are presented for the Hawai'ian Islands, Mo`orea, the Marquesas, Tonga, Samoa, the Tokelau Islands, New Caledonia, Aneityum (Vanuatu), and Kosrae.]
- Lee, Helen, 2006, "'Tonga Only Wants Our Money': the children of Tongan migrants", in S. Firth (ed.), *Globalisation, Governance and the Pacific Islands*, ANU E-Press, Canberra. pp.121-36. Available online: http://epress.anu.edu.au/globalgov_citation.html
- Lee, Helen, 2006, "Debating language and identity online: Tongans on the net", in K. Landzelius, (ed) *Native on the Net: indigenous and diasporic peoples in the virtual age*, Routledge, London. pp.152-168.
- Poltorak, Michael, 2007, "Nemesis, Speaking, and *Tauhi Vaha'a*: interdisciplinarity and the truth of 'mental illness' in Vava'u, Tonga", *The Contemporary Pacific* 19 (1): 1-36
- Young Leslie, Heather E., 2007. "Tonga Report", *The Contemporary Pacific* 19(1): 262-76.

Heather has provided the following excerpt [these views are not necessarily those of other members of the TRA]:

"The last decade has seen an escalation of social, political, and economic changes in Tonga, but the events of the past year have been extraordinary: Thousands of people participated in numerous protest marches, climaxing in a general strike that held the government hostage for six weeks; royal family insiders spoke publicly against the authority of the king; the first elected and commoner member of Parliament was named prime minister; the first woman was appointed to cabinet; and the king gave his assent to the National Committee for Political Reform. It has been a dramatic, traumatic, and emancipatory year for Tonga, and in these respects the consequences of the popular

uprisings of 2005–2006 constitute a political, social and psychological coup for Tongans at home and abroad.

“Nothing within living memory approaches the events of 2005–2006 for drama, mass participation, and long-term ramifications. What began as a protest against neoliberal reforms of civil service payrolls became a catalyst for changes that have already led to serious political, economic, and, perhaps most significantly, psychological ramifications for the Tongan people: The monarchy is not overthrown, but the sacrosanct status once enjoyed by the Tupou dynasty and traditional nobles is gone; their modern *tapu* has been broken. Nevertheless, though democracy advocates can legitimately claim a moral victory and point to the promise of real changes in governance, and while it is likely that reforms will move Tonga toward a more democratic polity, the tangible responsibilities of the royal and noble elites to the nation will have been reduced, while their economic and symbolic privileges remain unchanged. At the same time, the restructuring agenda that stimulated the general strike has actually been accelerated by the strike’s resolution.”