

ROGER CURTIS GREEN 1932-2009: IPPA PRESIDENT 1988-1992

Peter Sheppard, Peter Bellwood and Andrew Pawley

Roger Curtis Green 1932 – 2009. BA, BSc (New Mexico), PhD (Harvard), ONZM, FRSNZ, member Nat. Acad. Sci.(USA), Hon. Fellow Soc. Antiquaries (Lon.) and Emeritus Professor of Prehistory at the University of Auckland.

From Peter Sheppard, University of Auckland:

In 1958 archaeologist Roger Green came to the University of Auckland as a Fullbright scholar to spend 9 months in New Zealand preparing for fieldwork in French Polynesia. Although Roger's early interest was the archaeology of the southwest USA, his exposure at Harvard to the Pacific anthropologist Douglas Oliver turned his interest to the Pacific. This shift in interest resulted in a career which spanned 50 years and field research which covered Oceania.

In 1961 Roger joined the Department of Anthropology at Auckland as the only archaeologist, replacing Prof. Jack Golson who had moved to ANU. Between 1961 and 1967 Roger conducted significant research in New Zealand, ultimately writing the important theoretical piece: A Review of the Prehistoric Sequence in the Auckland Province, which was presented as his Harvard PhD. In keeping with his life-long pattern, however, his New Zealand research was complemented by large seminal research projects in the tropical Pacific (Moorea 1961-62; Western Samoa 1963-1967). These projects were funded by the NSF through the Bishop Museum in Hawai'i and in 1967 Roger left Auckland to take up a position at the Bishop. During this period (1967 to early 1970) Roger conducted important work on a series of Hawai'ian valley systems, where he initiated research into agricultural field systems in collaboration with the New Zealand born ethnobotanist Douglas Yen. Roger returned to Auckland in 1970 as the first James Cook Fellow, taking up a three year position at the Auckland Museum. From the Museum he initiated, with Douglas Yen, the Southeast Solomons Culture History Project (1970-72, 1976). This was the first large-scale, multi-disciplinary, multi-phase archaeological research project in the Pacific and the breadth of collaboration amongst archaeologists, social anthropologists, linguists, geologists, palynologists and other archaeological scientists reflected Roger's enduring interest in what he termed "holistic archaeology or anthropological history". During this project sites bearing Lapita pottery were found in the Reef/Santa Cruz Islands which lie 400 km beyond the Main Solomons across what Roger came to call the Near/Remote Oceania boundary. This boundary marked the limits of human settlement until people bearing Lapita culture and speaking Austronesian languages moved out into the Pacific some 3200 years ago. Although Lapita sites had been found prior to Roger's work, his were the first systematic excavations

providing detailed information on the Lapita culture and as such they have served as archetypes for subsequent work and debate. Throughout the rest of his career questions of Lapita settlement and Polynesian origins were at the core of Roger's work and he continued to publish on his Southeast Solomons research up until his death.

In 1973 Roger was appointed to a personal Chair at Auckland which he held until his retirement in 1992, after which he was Emeritus until his death. Retirement for Roger simply meant more opportunity for publishing and his output has been prodigious. In 1995 at the time of the publication of the festschrift, *Oceanic Culture History: Essays in Honour of Roger Green*, a bibliography of 259 publications was compiled. Since 1995 publication has been steady with two new papers in the week prior to his death and more in train. Perhaps one of Roger's proudest achievements in later years was his co-authoring with Prof. Patrick Kirch (Univ. California, Berkeley) in 2001 of *Hawaiki, Ancestral Polynesia: An Essay in Historical Anthropology* which allowed him to combine his expertise in Pacific archaeology and linguistics and provide a theoretical and methodological basis for a holistic historical anthropology.

Roger Green has been a foundation scholar in the archaeology of the Pacific and his contribution is marked by his publication record but also by his hundreds of colleagues and students who have gone on to define the field. His contributions were recognized by memberships in the National Academy of Science (USA) and the Royal Society of New Zealand. In 2003 he was awarded the Marsden Medal by the New Zealand Association of Scientists for his work in Pacific archaeology and cultural history and in 2007 he was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for "services to New Zealand history". Roger has been the father and grandfather of archaeology and anthropology at the University of Auckland, his academic family will miss him.

Kua hinga te kauri o te wao nui a Tane

From Peter Bellwood for IPPA:

Roger Green was President of IPPA from 1988 to 1992, hence during the period of our Yogyakarta conference in 1990. Most of the results were published in two large volumes of the IPPA Bulletin, numbers 10 and 11 (1991), including Roger's much-quoted "Triple I" paper on the origins of the Lapita cultural complex.

My own memories of Roger are very special, since he was a formative influence on my thinking about Polynesia when I joined the staff in the Department of Anthropology at Auckland University in 1967. At that time Roger was at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, but after he returned as a James Cook Fellow to the Auckland Museum in 1970 we had many discussions about Pacific

prehistory from both archaeological and linguistic perspectives. Roger was an archaeologist of great vision and he will be missed.

From Andy Pawley, Australian National University:

Roger Green, eminent Pacific prehistorian, died in Auckland on Oct 4, 2009, aged 77. He was probably the most influential figure in the field of Oceanic prehistory over the past 50 years, not only because of his own scholarship (including some 300 publications) but because of his enormous contributions as teacher, mentor and backer (in matters of grant-getting etc) to countless younger scholars and as a mover and shaker. Although best known for his archaeological work in Polynesia and Melanesia, Green also made important contributions to Oceanic historical linguistics and more generally to reconstructing culture history by integrating findings from diverse historical disciplines.

Roger Green was born in New Jersey and grew up in Albuquerque. He did his PhD in Anthropology at Harvard, where Douglas Oliver diverted his research interests from the American Southwest to Polynesia. For much of his career he was based at the University of Auckland, with an interlude at the Bishop Museum and University of Hawaii.

Green's contributions to Oceanic linguistics were of two different kinds. First, he was an academic entrepreneur and initiator of interdisciplinary projects in which there were archaeological, linguistic, ethnobotanical and other strands. After taking up a lectureship in archaeology at the University of Auckland in 1961 he encouraged Bruce Biggs, then primarily a descriptive linguist and Maori specialist, and Biggs' student, Andrew Pawley, to get into Polynesian historical linguistics. In 1965 Green, in association with Biggs and Douglas Yen of the Bishop Museum, obtained a large NSF grant for a Polynesian Culture History project. That grant funded the first few years work on POLLEX, the Proto Polynesian Lexicon database, compiled by Biggs and David Walsh. This grew into a monumental etymological dictionary that is still being expanded and refined (now in electronic form, under the wing of Ross Clark). The NSF grant also

supported fieldwork by Biggs and several graduate students to record several little-known Polynesian languages. In 1969 Green organised a pioneering interdisciplinary symposium in Sigatoka, Fiji, in which (among other things) he invited linguists to seek high-order subgroupings within Oceanic and to take the first steps towards reconstructing Proto Oceanic grammar. Another major project led by Green in the 1970s investigated the prehistory of the Southeast Solomons. This funded fieldwork by Christine Cashmore and Peter Lincoln on the languages of the Outer Eastern Is.

Green's own publications in Oceanic (chiefly Polynesian) historical linguistics form his second category of contributions. The most important of these are listed below in an appendix. In 1966 he published evidence for what has become the accepted subgrouping of Eastern Polynesian languages: there is a Central Eastern group exclusive of Easter Island, and within this, a Marquesic group that includes Hawaiian and a Tahitic group that includes Tahitian, Maori, Rarotongan and Tuamotuan. He subsequently treated the position of Anuta. He also wrote many works drawing together linguistic, archaeological and ethnographic evidence to reconstruct aspects of the material culture and social organization of the speakers of Oceanic languages who first settled the central Pacific. His most important synthesis is undoubtedly *Hawaiki; Ancestral Polynesia: an Essay in Historical Anthropology*, co-authored with the archaeologist Pat Kirch. This 370 page book draws heavily on the cognate sets in the POLLEX database to reconstruct the way of life of the Proto Polynesian speech community. It includes chapters on 'subsistence', 'food preparation and cuisine', 'material culture', 'social and political organization', and 'gods, ancestors, seasons and rituals', as well as on 'Polynesia as a phylogenetic unit'.

Roger was honoured with many awards, among them membership of the US National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society of New Zealand, the Hector Memorial Medal and the Marsden Medal for services to science, and being made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit. He received a 700 page festschrift in 1996.

Roger will be greatly missed by colleagues and students who benefited from his generosity of spirit, as well as from his stimulating intellect.