



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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## ROGER GREEN

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This issue of ‘Archaeology in New Zealand’ is dedicated to Roger Green, a founding member of our association, and a teacher, mentor and friend to many of today’s members. Roger died in 2009 after a short illness but he leaves behind a huge legacy in the form of his writings, and his wider influence on the archaeology of New Zealand, and Oceania. Roger arrived in New Zealand in 1958 direct from Harvard and with a background in the archaeology of the American Southwest. Here he met Jack Golson and was influential in the establishment of our first site recording scheme. From New Zealand he carried out work in French Polynesia – in the ‘Opunohu Valley of Mo’orea – and returned permanently to New Zealand in 1961 to replace Jack at the University of Auckland. Roger never lost his love for the American Southwest – Roger and Valerie recently spent some research time in Albuquerque and Roger was proud and delighted to be treated by junior researchers there as a real Southwestern pioneer. But he will always be remembered for his total embrace of the Pacific world – language, art, culture, history and, of course, cuisine. In fact, Roger had a peculiarly Polynesian way of thinking about his role and contribution as a scholar. You could say that his model of the academic endeavour was underpinned by the notion of whakapapa. He was always acutely aware of, and proud to acknowledge, the role of his intellectual tupuna, teachers like Gordon Willey and Douglas Oliver, and formative colleagues like K.C. Chang and Doug Yen. And he was equally mindful of the future; a deep concern with the contribution that his students would make to what he always referred to as “the ongoing discussion”.

Roger’s publication record is extraordinarily diverse – as Dorothy Brown discovered when charged with the task of bringing it together for the 1996 collection of essays in his honour. But at the core of all of his work was a commitment to the concept of culture. Roger was a proud culture historian during the reign of the New Archaeologists and later defended the culture concept in the face of the worst excesses of post-modernism. Out of this commitment to culture emerged the ‘historical anthropology’ that characterised his Pacific work

of the last three decades, and which drew together the many fields of culture history – linguistics, archaeology, ethnography, oral history and biology. His writings have helped establish the modern framework of Pacific archaeology and the large, multi-disciplinary projects that he pioneered in the Pacific helped kick-start the careers of many of today's professionals. The influence of Roger's work will continue, not just in the existing body of writing, but in the books and articles that will be coming out over the next few years with Roger's name on them, and as the many ongoing projects he initiated gradually wind down. Finally, and as he had hoped, his influence will live on through the work of the many students he taught over his five decades of teaching in New Zealand and the Pacific.

The essays in this volume are diverse, reflecting Roger's own diverse interests. They range from an examination of one his letters to his fascination with the Spanish in the southeast Solomons and to his academic contributions in the field of linguistics. All the essays highlight his generosity and his deep passion for archaeology, and understanding the past. Roger's legacy is one that will live on for many years to come.