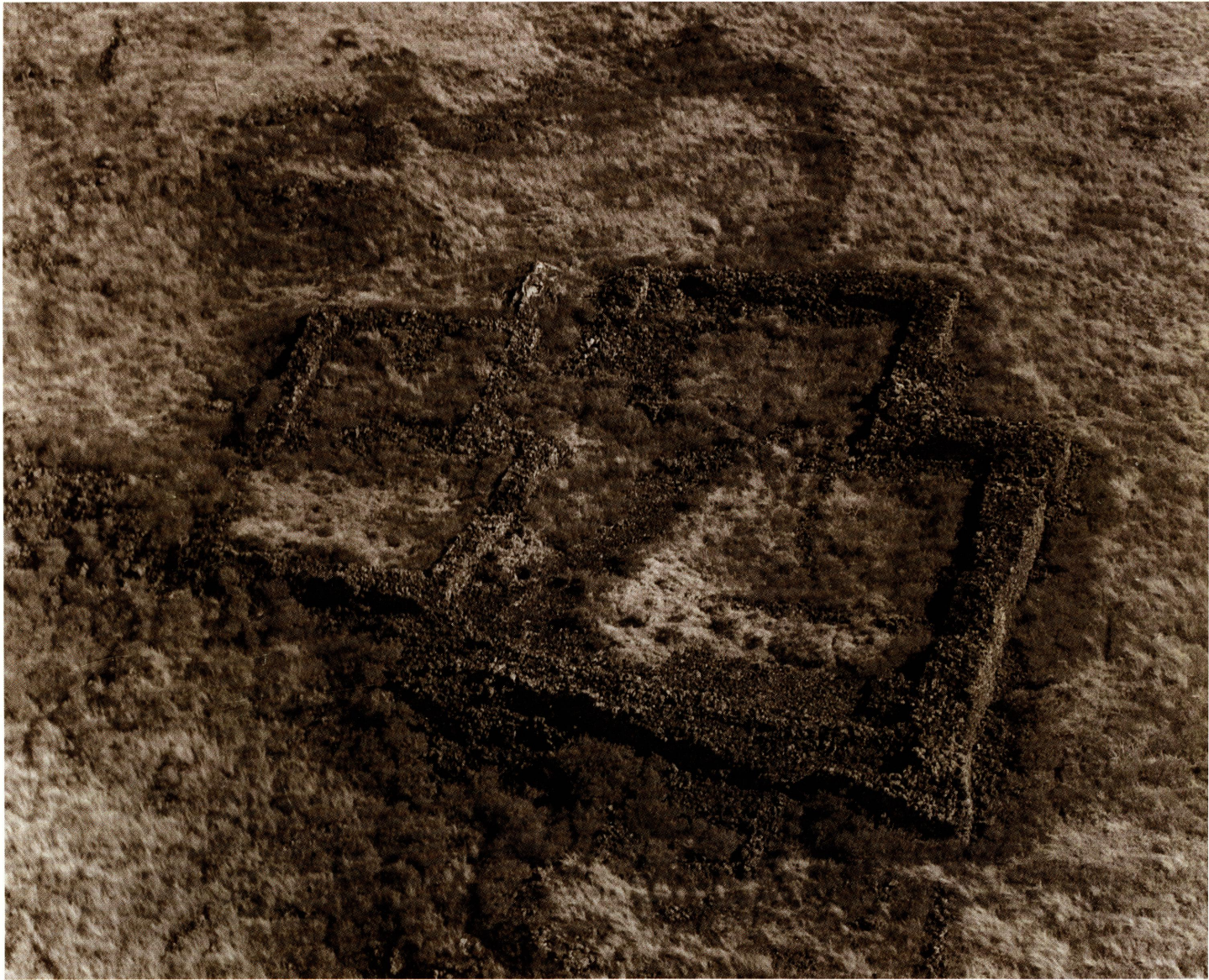


# **Nā Mea Kahiko o Kahikinui**

## ***Studies in the Archaeology of Kahikinui, Maui***

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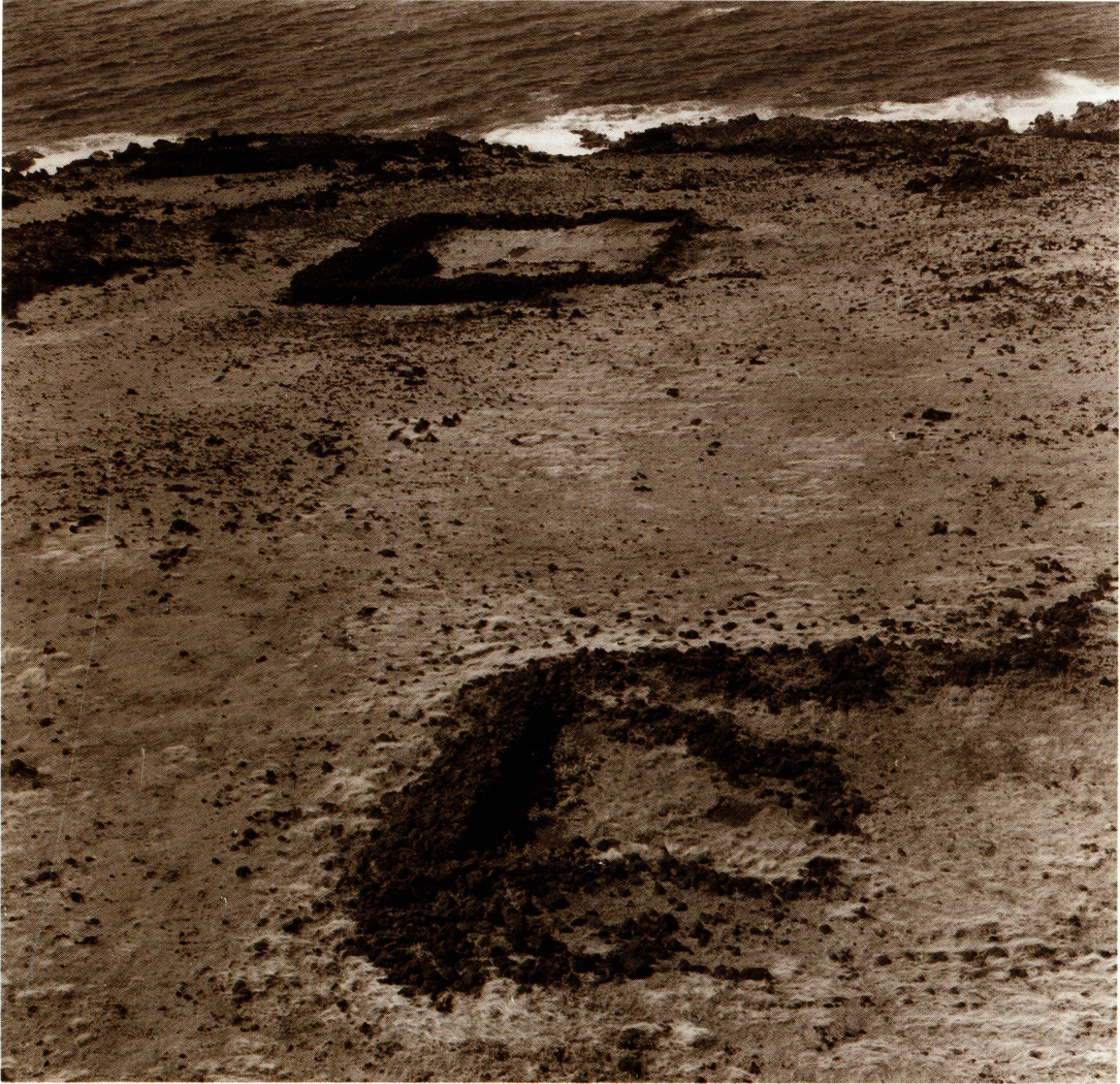
**Patrick V. Kirch**  
Editor

## **Oceanic Archaeology Laboratory Archaeological Research Facility University of California, Berkeley**

The Oceanic Archaeology Laboratory (OAL) is one of several research labs which together comprise the Archaeological Research Facility, an Organized Research unit of the University of California at Berkeley. The OAL is under the direction of Patrick V. Kirch, Class of 1954 Professor of Anthropology at Berkeley. Current research projects of the OAL conducted by graduate students and research affiliates include studies of the Lapita cultural complex of Papua New Guinea and New Caledonia, paleoenvironmental reconstruction of the Holocene period in the southern Cook Islands, rock art in relation to settlement patterns in the Marquesas Islands, household archaeology in Hawai'i and the Southern Cook Islands, and transformations of Hawaiian houses and settlement patterns in the post-contact period.

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Aerial view of coastal sites 309 and 311 (M11) in Kīpapa Ahupuaʻa, Kahikinui. Photo by P. V. Kirch.

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Edited by

Patrick V. Kirch

With Contributions by

Patty J. Conte, Boyd Dixon,  
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Erika C. Radewagen, and Cindy Van Gilder

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*Dedicated to*

**Peter S. Chapman**

*who initiated the modern archaeological study of Kahikinui*

*and to*

**Ka 'Ohana O Kahikinui**

*in recognition of their effort to preserve and  
perpetuate the cultural legacy of Kahikinui.*

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## Foreword

This volume presents preliminary findings from archaeological fieldwork undertaken by three different institutions in Kahikinui District on Maui. The contributors agreed last year that one aim of our work should be to prepare nontechnical reports for public distribution in Hawai'i. In discussing the idea of such a volume, Patrick Kirch and I agreed that while the public in Hawai'i often is aware of archaeological fieldwork being conducted, all too rarely do they get a timely summary of initial findings. Often, results only become available some years later in highly technical reports. Easy-to-read summaries are rarely available. It seemed to us that providing such a summary of the Kahikinui research would be of considerable interest to the public. After all, it is the public—the taxpayer—who ultimately has paid for much (though not all) of this archaeology, be it through national granting agencies, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, state university programs, or the State of Hawai'i Historic Preservation program.

The three institutions carrying out archaeological research in Kahikinui in 1996 were the University of California at Berkeley, Northern Illinois University (NIU), and the State of Hawai'i Historic Preservation Division (SHPD). The U.C. Berkeley program, under the direction of Prof. Patrick Kirch, involves a continuing study of two traditional Hawaiian community lands (*ahupua'a*). Under the direction of Prof. Michael Kolb, the NIU program focuses on religious structures (*heiau*) throughout Kahikinui. Under the direction of Dr. Boyd Dixon and myself, the SHPD continued a Kahikinui-wide study, with initial emphasis on surveying higher elevation sites in three *ahupua'a*, as part of the Kuleana Homestead project of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

These three Kahikinui projects are more than separate research endeavors that happen to involve the same area. They mark the start of a collaborative effort of great and, I think, exciting research potential. For the almost three decades that I have been involved in Hawaiian archaeology, it has been extremely unusual to have three research-focused projects of any scope going on in the same district. Actually, I am not aware that it has happened before; this is a first! More important, all three projects are interlinked. We are sharing information, and we are all looking at multiple research questions of similar interest. In other words, although not centrally directed, this Kahikinui work is a cooperative endeavor in many respects. Such cooperation among three institutions at a major scale has not occurred in Hawaiian archaeology for more than three decades. I personally have found this past year's work to be extremely stimulating. It has provided an opportunity for researchers, in the field and out, to discuss work and share new ideas.

In the past, Hawaiian archaeology has tended to focus its efforts at the scale of the *ahupua'a* land unit, or smaller units within this. In Kahikinui, we are able for the first time to break beyond the *ahupua'a* and actively study with intensive fieldwork sizable sections of an entire traditional district (*moku*). Kahikinui originally contained eight *ahupua'a* or community lands. The U.C. Berkeley project is near to concluding a complete surface survey of two of these, Kīpapa and Nakaohu, from sea level up to about 2,600 feet above sea level, while the SHPD has surveyed the highest elevations from 2,600-4,000 feet. The Berkeley survey builds upon work started in 1966 by Peter Chapman for the Bishop Museum, work in which Prof. Kirch participated as a young student and has long intended to bring to completion. The SHPD also surveyed the upper elevations of the adjacent *ahupua'a* of Nakaaha; in 1997 we will begin sample surveys of other Kahikinui lands. The NIU team has studied larger religious structures in the district—mapping, test excavating, and dating the larger and mid-sized *heiau* across the district. In addition, the Berkeley team has completed several extensive (horizontal) excavations at numerous house sites, to determine what the stone structures were used for and to identify locations of household activities. Clearly, all of this work is providing a massive amount of detailed archaeological information on an entire ancient Hawaiian district—a major step in Hawaiian archaeological research.

This work is exciting for those interested in Hawaiian history. Ideas (sometimes called "models" or "hypotheses" by archaeologists) on major changes in Hawaiian culture from the time of first settlement to European contact and after abound in the archaeological literature of Hawai'i. Over the past two decades, scholars have begun to identify broad changes and their chronology, not only through archaeological studies, but also from the evidence of oral traditions and of ethnohistorical studies. But these are often only very general ideas. We desperately need to test these ideas with concrete archaeological information—to correct, refine, and improve our knowledge of Hawai'i's past. The current tri-institutional

work in Kahikinui has vast promise to provide that long-needed testing. We are studying several major changes: early settlement and how outlying leeward (dryland) districts were utilized; when the leeward districts were permanently settled, the nature of that settlement, and population growth over the land (where, how fast, and the distribution of people); household organization and activity patterns; community organization and the change from kin-based land and community control; and, the rise of more complex political organization and how that impacted outlying districts, particularly in such arenas as pig husbandry, agricultural intensification, and religious offerings. Professors Kirch and Kolb have outlined many research questions and methods for approaching them in their respective grant proposals to the National Science Foundation and National Geographic Society. Boyd Dixon and I have also been working over the past year on developing a set of research questions. Eventually, it is my hope that we will all operate independently but with a set of research questions that have been jointly and cooperatively developed. Some of us may focus on a single issue, while others may study several interrelated questions. But the exciting thing is that we are finally embarking on gathering new data to test broad ideas in Hawaiian archaeology, and we are doing this on a district-wide scale. This has great potential to radically refine and perhaps change our ideas about Hawaiian history.

Kahikinui has the potential to help answer these questions because it is one of the rare places in modern Hawai'i where massive urbanism, resort development, or commercial cultivation have not touched the land. Kahikinui was largely abandoned by the mid-1800s with its people moving elsewhere and relatively low-impact ranching dominated the district since then. As a result, most of the archaeological landscape is still intact. The shoreline sites are there, as are the sites all the way up into the remnant dryland forest. True as Prof. Kirch says in his Introduction, this was a dry land, an *'āina malo'o*, and the ruler and highest chiefs lived elsewhere on Maui. But, this is almost a unique case in the major Hawaiian Islands where we have an entire district with its archaeological sites and landscape largely intact.

I have emphasized the archaeological and scientific excitement generated by these projects, but equally important, these studies have direct value and relevance for people on Maui today. Kahikinui is Hawaiian land, and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands in partnership with a Native Hawaiian organization, Ka 'Ohana O Kahikinui, is currently developing a program to resettle parts of the district, replenish its forest resources, and protect its archaeological and cultural sites and historic legacy. The SHPD survey in the high elevations of Kīpapa, Nakaohu, and Nakaaha was made in the area where Kuleana Homestead lots are soon to be awarded. This survey found important religious sites and other sites, including a previously unknown *hōlua* slide complex, as well as examples of many other kinds of sites. Some sites will be protected and preserved, and important information has been recorded from the others. Beyond the immediate Kuleana Homestead area, all of the projects have helped to identify important types of sites and landscapes across the district, and will provide the basis for preservation recommendations. This work will provide vital information for Ka 'Ohana O Kahikinui, who wish to manage the cultural resources of this vast *moku*; it will provide the basis for responsible site management and planning decisions by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. But most importantly, our studies will result in a more detailed history of Kahikinui, a history of how Native Hawaiian people lived on the land, a history of value to the new residents of Kahikinui, to Ka 'Ohana O Kahikinui, and to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The close cooperation, fostered by traditional Hawaiian values of *kōkua* and *aloha*, between archaeologists, state agencies, and Ka 'Ohana O Kahikinui shows a common purpose in striving to protect and improve Kahikinui.

I hope that this volume of preliminary results stimulates public interest in our research. Patrick Kirch deserves special credit for supplying the editorial drive to compile this volume, and for providing the funding for its production. I hope it will be the first of several such volumes that will present important archaeological findings on Kahikinui, and present them in a nontechnical manner accessible to all.

Ross Cordy  
Branch Chief for Archaeology  
State Historic Preservation Division  
Department of Land and Natural Resources  
State of Hawai'i  
January 1997

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Many, many others have also helped and assisted in the various archaeological projects, and specific acknowledgments will be found at the conclusions of individual chapters.

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