

MARQUESAS ISLANDS EXPEDITION 2022

ABOARD THE HANSE EXPLORER



THE CULTURAL
SANCTUARIES
FOUNDATION





CONTENTS

Expedition objectives.....	3
Project proposal summary	4
The Marquesan Islands – quick facts.....	5
The Marquesan language.....	6
The Marquesan cultural renaissance.....	8
The Marquesan Academy and the Marquesan Festival.....	8
Patutiki or Marquesan tattooing.....	10
What represents Marquesan culture – keywords.....	13
The Marquesan economy.....	13
The six inhabited islands.....	14
The need for a cultural community centre in the Marquesas.....	16
Proposed project details	18
Interviewees.....	20
Thank you	20

THE LAND AND THE OCEAN

“The land said to the ocean: I am better than you. I am made up of all the colours in the world. The ocean replied: I am made up of all those same colours and if a colour disappears from the ocean, that same colour will disappear from the land. You and I are connected and can never be set apart.”

EXPEDITION OBJECTIVES

Our mission was to visit each of the six inhabited islands of the Marquesas, the farthest North and least visited island group within French Polynesia and one of the remotest island groups in the world, to meet community elders and leaders and to learn about the Marquesan culture and language.

We hoped to understand whether the community currently has the benefit of a community cultural centre to help protect, promote and celebrate their culture and language and, if not, whether they would welcome one.

The timing of the expedition – at the generosity of our hosts Kristin and Sven Lindblad aboard the expedition ship The Hanse – felt serendipitous in view of:

- a) the holding of the Blue Climate Summit in French Polynesia this year,
- b) the announcement in February by French Polynesia's president Edouard Fritch of a commitment to create a marine protected area of 1 million square kilometres (of which half is around the Marquesan islands) and
- c) the soon expected classification of certain Marquesan landscapes and culture with UNESCO World Heritage status.

We later learnt of a fourth important development: the planned opening of the first international airport in the Marquesas in 2026 and, with it, the expectation of a significant increase both in tourism and in export opportunities.

We achieved our objectives and more – we came away inspired by the Marquesan culture in a way that we had not expected. The famously warm welcome of the islanders greeted us every step of the way and we learnt of the remarkable renaissance of the Marquesan culture (so distinct from its Tahitian neighbour). Having been crushed to near dormancy as recently as the 1980s by colonisation and the church, it is once again thriving and strong – an inspiration to all endangered cultures around the world as to the power and might of pride and leadership in resurrecting traditions to the extent that the young of the islands don't even now realise that they had almost disappeared. The Marquesan cultural revival can and should be a role model for the world.

We were also again and again reminded of the crucial link between ocean communities and ocean health. It is the local Marquesan communities who know how to look after their shorelines and they are collectively supportive of the plan for a marine protected area in the ocean around their islands. They are its guardians and it is theirs.

PROJECT PROPOSAL SUMMARY

We are committed to support the Marquesan community continue to strengthen their culture and language. While now thriving again, it remains endangered and, with the small size of the population, the lack of financial means within the community, a sense of sometimes unfair competition or appropriation from Tahiti and the impending arrival of international flights from Hawaii, much is at stake.

We therefore propose to help the community build the islands' first Marquesan community centre. We will:

- take inspiration from the wonderful cultural museum created by the community of Ua Huka and the Atitia community centre on the Southern French Polynesian island of Moorea
- build the centre on the Koueva site on Nuka Hiva (for the reasons described on page 17), making sure that it will represent the culture and people of all of the six islands of the Marquesas
- work with all of the island communities, and specifically with Aniata and Debora Kimitete, first to restore the existing buildings at the site – by the time of the Nuku Hiva Festival at the end of 2023 and then to create a larger, more comprehensive community cultural centre the following year; the project will therefore be completed in two phases
- collaborate with the communities of all six islands to ensure that all are involved and that the distinct culture

and artefacts of each island is properly represented and celebrated, and

- in doing this, create an enhanced and rich cultural experience for visitors to the Marquesas islands, including the passengers on Lindblad Expedition ships (see page 18).

This main thrust of the project will complement two other, more discrete project workstreams:

- a) the support of Hinano and Frank Murphy at the Atitia cultural centre on the island of Moorea to enhance the use and effectiveness of the centre and to add an additional building for technology, photography, language and arts, and
- b) the introduction of the artisans of Tahuata to the International Folk Art Festival in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This is an internationally renowned art fair to which artisans come from all over the world (from Austria to Peru and Colombia, Niger and Mali to New Zealand) to sell their craft. No artisans from French Polynesia are currently represented at this globally important (and economically valuable) art fair.

We will develop a detailed budget for the project in the coming months and then will start to fundraise for its first Phase.

See more on page 19.

THE MARQUESAN ISLANDS – QUICK FACTS

One of the remotest island groups in the world

Made up of: 12 islands of which 6 are inhabited (comprising the three Northern islands of Nuku Hiva, Ua Pou and Ua Huka and the three Southern islands of Hiva Oa, Tahuata and Fatu Hiva)

Location: 1,500 kilometres North of Tahiti; part of the French Overseas Territory of French Polynesia, the Marquesas is the most Northern island group within French Polynesia

Area: 620 square kilometres (405 square miles)

Population: approx. 9,400 (split between the three large islands of Nuku Hiva (3,100), Ua Pou (2,200) and Hiva Oa (2,200) and the three smaller islands of Tahuata (650), Fatu Hiva (620) and Ua Huka (670))

Population history: peak in the eighteenth century of 80,000 people, down to just 2,000 in 1926 (as a result of the introduction of European diseases)

Population outside the Marquesas: approximately a further 10,000 ethnic Marquesans, many of whom have never visited the Marquesas, live in Tahiti

Language: French and Marquesan

Dialects: split broadly between the Northern dialects and the Southern dialects but each individual to its island

Religion: mainly Christian (of which about 90% Catholic)

Largest town: Taiohoe on Nuku Hiva

Access: by plane to Nuku Hiva or Hiva Oa (about 3 hours 40 minutes from Papeete); otherwise by ship or sailboat

Governance: administrative centre in Taiohoe but ultimately governed from Papeete and, more indirectly, from Paris

Colonised: by indigenous Western Polynesia voyagers in around the tenth century

Name provenance: named after the sixteenth century viceroy of Peru, the Marquis de Canete, by navigator Alvaro de Mandana in 1595

Geography: the Marquesas are very unlike most of the island atolls of French Polynesia. They are mountainous and full of deep ravines and canyons - volcanic islands rising majestically from the deep ocean around them. They are lush, rainforest-like and extremely beautiful

THE MARQUESAN LANGUAGE



Kids in Hapatoni (Tahuata island)

The official language of the Marquesas, like that of the rest of French Polynesia, is French.

The Marquesan language is spoken by most islanders (60/70%) but it is slowly starting to be seen by the younger generation as losing relevance. Only about 30% of those under 30 are fluent speakers. Having until recently been taught only in French at school and increasingly now also speaking French at home, those in their 20s and 30s often just don't see Marquesan as very useful. One additional challenge is that when Marquesan is taught



in schools, it is often not taught by native speakers. Most teachers are French or Tahitians educated in France.

There is a concerted effort being made to change that - see more below - and what is also interesting to note is that while Marquesans can understand (if not speak) most Tahitian, most Tahitians can not understand Marquesan.

The Marquesan language is seen as being "the heart" of its culture and therefore has been and must remain at the heart of the Marquesan cultural revival.



THE MARQUESAN CULTURAL RENAISSANCE, THE MARQUESAN ACADEMY AND THE MARQUESAN FESTIVAL



The Marquesan cultural awakening began in the 1977 with a focus on the revival of the Marquesan language. This was in part due to the increasing use of French in many homes and a growing worry that that shift, put together with the fact that all school teaching was then in French only, would mean the likely demise of the Marquesan language. It was also a reaction to a government push in Tahiti that all Polynesians should be taught Tahitian, rather than their individual island languages. The Marquesan culture at this time was “dormant, essentially dead”.

Founded by Georges Toti Teikiehuupoko and Ben Taikitutoua in Ua Pou working with Lucien Kimitete in Nuku Hiva, The Motuhaka Association was formed in 1978 – with a mission to preserve the Marquesan language and to promote the Marquesan culture. Toti was the Association’s first President; he remains its President today. Once the Association was formed (with 2 representatives per island) and with each island also creating its own individual cultural association under the umbrella Motuhaka, the hard work began.

The Association’s first focus was to create a Marquesan flag and anthem. Supported by the French government, the colours of the Marquesas were agreed upon: red to represent the chiefs of the islands, white to represent its spirits, yellow to represent the young generation and black to represent the tiki, the people of the community and their ancestors. Together, these elements make up the essence of the Marquesas. Motuhaka and its island groups then set about the design of what would become the Marquesan Festival, a festival of Marquesan culture that would take place every other year and which would be hosted alternately by each of the six islands. (Each island therefore hosts the Festival every 12 years.) It is an irony that, initially, many community members resisted the idea of the Festival - having been “brainwashed by the Catholic church into thinking that their culture was demonic”. It was some of the bishops that actively encouraged the revival: “the very church that had destroyed this culture then helped reawaken it”.

The first Festival was held in 1985 on Ua Pou – its aim to reconnect the islands and islanders and to “start to dance again”. In 1999, the Festival for the first time invited non-Marquesans to join them and voyagers came from all of the three corners of the Polynesian Pacific – Hawaii, New Zealand and Rapa Nui (Easter Island). Now, about 2,000 Marquesan people attend each Festival (almost a quarter of the total population of the islands) and it has become a central part of Marquesan life.

THE HERMIT CRAB

“A land crab scurries into his hole at any hint of danger. It is much better to be a hermit crab. He carries his home on his back and it protects him. Your culture, your language, your knowledge, your love is your home. Carry it with you and it will always protect you.”

The next will be held at Koueva, the same site at which the 1999 Festival was held, in Nuku Hiva in December 2023 (and the site for our proposed community cultural centre – see page 18).

Next came a concerted effort to focus on the Marquesan language and, in 1992, the Marquesan Academy was created. Its objective was to protect the diversity of the language (“la richesse”) and to respect its distinct dialects. The group, again made up of two representatives from each of the six islands and one from Tahiti, works to document and archive the language, to try to protect its purity and to create “new” words to reflect an evolving society. To avoid the import of Tahitian, French or English words, the Academy creates and publishes new words – for example, the newly agreed, literal translation for the word computer is, in Marquesan, “electric brain”. The Academy leverages off the early dictionaries created by a Catholic priest in 1904 and now focuses on culture and the Marquesan environment as well as language and language education.

It has also been a part of the big push to reintroduce Marquesan language teaching as compulsory in schools. Now all primary school lessons for children up to age 5 are conducted in Marquesan and 50% of lessons to the older primary school age group are in Marquesan. There is work afoot to increase the number of lessons secondary school pupils are taught in Marquesan too and the Academy is

confident that that goal will be achieved. If so, the islanders hope that the Marquesan language will be protected into the future – there will inevitably be something of a “lost generation” who don’t speak it fluently but the next generation will do so.

The Academy does have its limitations though – it is seen as academic and rather old-fashioned and its work is slow. Young Marquesans do not see it as having much relevance to, or influence on, them. More work is needed to help to protect the Marquesan language alongside it. Other cultural and community leaders are also crucial in leading the charge.

With strong, stubborn and determined leadership from those individuals, including Toti and Ben and Debora Kimitete in Nuku Hiva, and the hard work of the Motuhaka Association and the Marquesan Academy, the Marquesan culture has revived. No longer is each island carving its own path (“A dragon with too many heads doesn’t go anywhere”); now they are working together. Many young Marquesans have no idea of the peril that their traditions were in not more than a generation before them. A culture and language, crushed to dormancy by the church and colonisation, are now alive and thriving again.

(With a twinkle in their eyes, the Marquesans also told us that so strong is their culture now that the song sung to greet arrivals at Tahiti’s main airport is in fact Marquesan and not Tahitian at all!)

PATUTIKI OR MARQUESAN TATTOOING

For a Marquesan, his or her tattoos are his or her identity. They are a powerful reflection of spiritual belief, of kinship, of community, of family and of home.

Traditionally, patutiki represented beauty, identity, the Gods, the tiki and the ancestors. In the early 1800s, all adults – male and female – in the Marquesas were tattooed. A Russian expedition team visiting the islands in 1804 noted that “not one adult was not tattooed”. To this day, the elders remember that when they were young, all adults were tattooed.

In the nineteenth century, Catholic missionaries banned all tattooing in the Marquesan islands and the rest of French Polynesia (along with all other rituals, dances and language). A partial and somewhat ineffectual ban was introduced in 1863 – with hit and miss results, largely due to conflict and constant quarrelling between the state and the church. In 1898, a total and more effective ban was enforced – “on the grounds of morality and health”. The last fully traditionally tattooed person died in the 1960s.

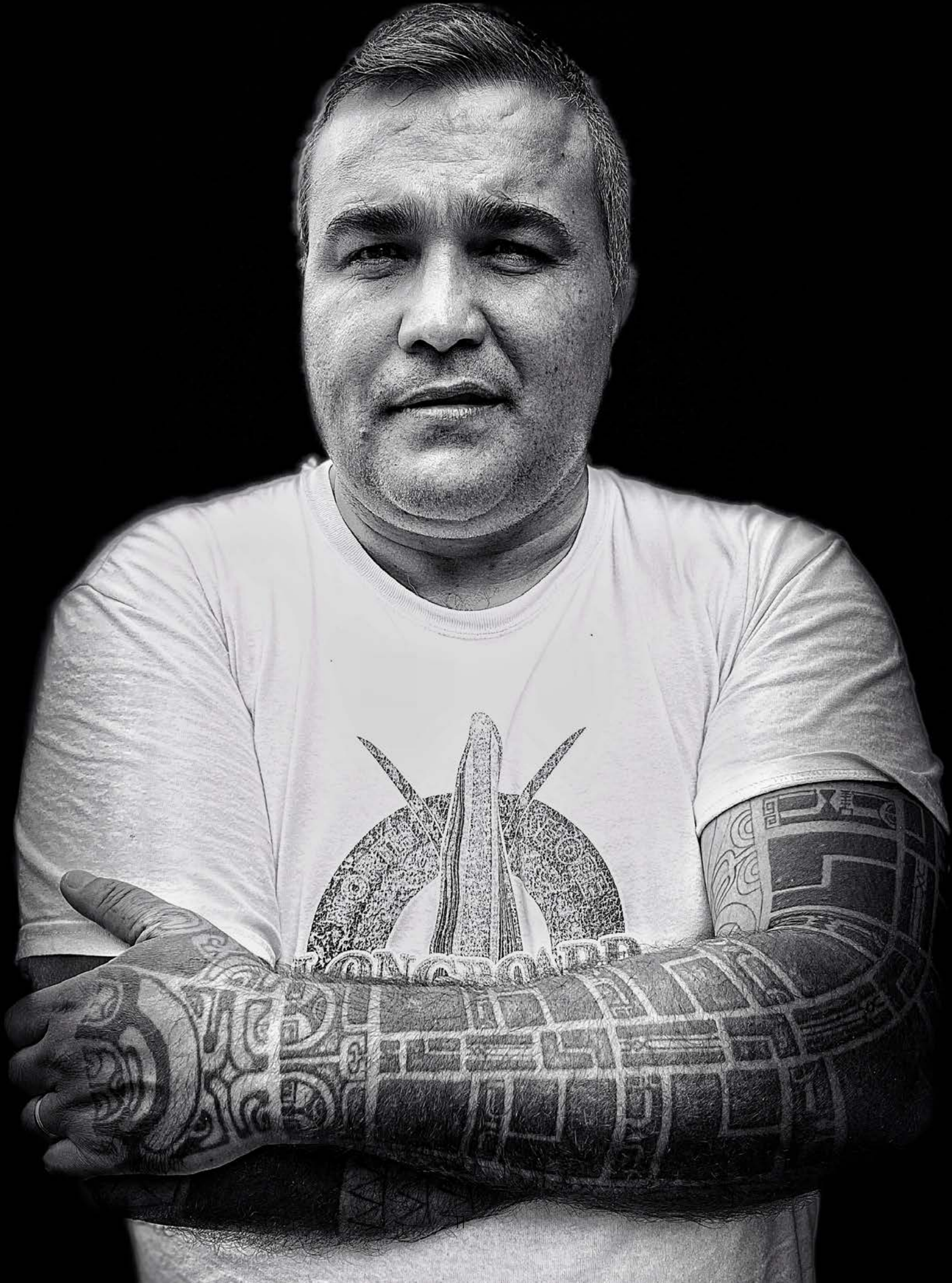
But, against the odds, the designs and symbolism survived. A German ethnographer visited the islands at the turn of the last century and again in the 1920s and, as part of a wider multi-book project recording Marquesan legends and carvings, photographed many surviving tattoos. He and his team also identified the meaning of each symbol and its link back to Marquesan

language and legend. All of this detail was included in their books – written in German and, only when translated into French in 2005, accessible to the Marquesans themselves. In parallel to this external influence, when the Marquesans were banned from tattooing, they carved the designs on wood and on drums – keeping their symbols alive and not forgotten.

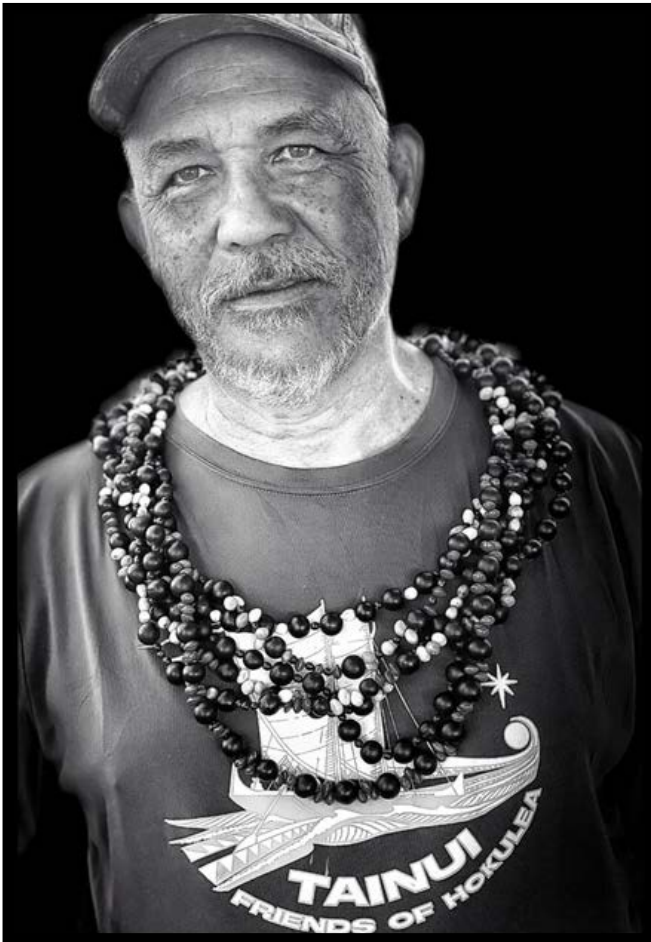
The Marquesan cultural renaissance started in 1978 by Toti, Ben and Lucien has gradually brought back the practice of patutiki. The original bans were never technically lifted but slowly simply fell into disuse and were increasingly viewed as invalid. Now, everyone aged in their 20s and 30s is tattooed and the over 40s are increasingly tattooed.

The meaning and design of the tattoos are very complex – with nuanced links to language, spiritual beliefs and ancient legend. There is a push to recognise the purity of the tattoo and to shun “the lie” of Tahitian design leaking in or of Marquesan traditional tattoo designs being appropriated as Tahitian: described to us as “like ripping the tree from its roots and trying to put another, wrong tree on those roots”.

Tattoo schools have reopened – with the master tattoo artist, Teiki Huukena (pictured on page 11) in Nuku Hiva, having opened his school in 2021. It now has twelve students and a patutiki artist is assured a good, well paid living.



The hope of those like Teiki is that in 20 or 30 years' time, all Marquesan adults will again be tattooed. The church's bans will at last have lost the last of their impact and the practice of patutiki will be fully restored. Things will have come full circle.



Eriki (master carver, Tahuata island)



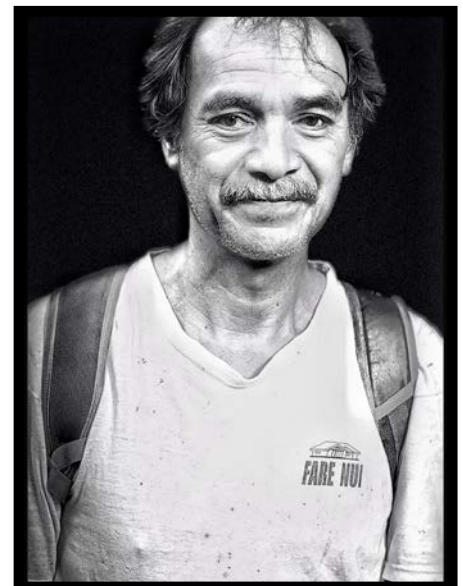
Leonie Tatua (teacher, Fatu Hiva island)



Tipiero (cook, Ua Pou island)



Kehu Aka (mayor's office, Ua Pou island)



Ara (conservationist, Fatu Hiva island)

WHAT REPRESENTS MARQUESAN CULTURE – KEYWORDS

In every interview, we asked those that we met what Marquesan culture means to them. The consensus is that it is made up of:

-
- The “Welcome”, including giving of beads and shell garlands and the blowing of the conch shell
-
- Connection to the islands and to the ocean
-
- Songs
-
- Music, including large drums and the nose flute
-
- Dance
-
- The Marquesan language
-
- The bi-annual Marquesan festival
-
- Tiki statues
-
- Storytelling
-
- Tattooing or patutiki
-
- Carving
-
- Beads and jewelry
-
- Tapa (painting on bark)
-
- Food (pork cooked underground, raw fish hung in salt, sea food including the black crab and sea slug, breadfruit)
-
- Herbs and traditional medicine
-

THE MARQUESAN ECONOMY

- Subsistence farming
-
- Arts and artefacts (the main income source for most of the islands)
-
- Coconuts and copra
-
- Other agriculture including noni fruit, yarn, taro, bananas and sweet potatoes
-
- Fishing
-
- Tourism

All of those that we met were very focused on the need to create more opportunities on the islands if the young are not to leave for jobs in Tahiti or elsewhere or to stay in France after university or their (voluntary) military service. The sale of arts and artefacts is incredibly important – and the planned new airport is viewed as bringing welcome access to a new market as well as more tourists.

THE SIX INHABITED ISLANDS

TAHUATA

Population: 650

Known for: singing; wood, bone and shell carving, jewellery and crowns

Other points of note: So welcoming are the people of Tahuata that the navigator Etienne Merchant in 1791 named the harbour to the village of Hapatoni “The Bay of Friends”. The tradition of “The Welcome” stays strong to this day

HIVA OA

Population: 2,200

Known for: beads and seed necklaces; the former home of Paul Gauguin and of Begian singer Jacques Brel; tiki sculptures; traditional costumes made from large leaves and large crowns of flowers

Other points of note: 2nd largest island in the Marquesas; home to The Paul Gauguin Musueum which attracts international tourists; the only one of the islands not to participate in the Papeete Arts and Crafts Expo which is so important to the economy of the other 5 islands

FATU HIVA

Population: 620

Known for: Thor Heyerdahl and his book “Fatu Hiva – Back to Nature” and the art of Tapa, painting on banyon, mulberry and breadfruit tree bark: this is “the island of Tapa”; clothes made of tapa

Other points of note: Home to the endangered Monarch bird; former home for a year to Thor Heyerdahl

UA POU (or UA PAU)

Population: 2,200

Known for: artefacts and wonderful carving and jewellery; herbal medicines and oil

Other points of note: We visited a small but impressive archaeological museum at the island’s Mairie; there are plans to expand an existing group of buildings that currently house a shop, café area, museum area and dance platform

UA HUKA

Population: 670

Known for: wooden tiki carving

Other points of note: The community of Ua Huka created a fantastic museum in 2013 “by the community for the community” and each year the community holds a contest to learn how to replicate/create a particular traditional art piece or carving. The winning entries are exhibited in the museum. The site also holds stages, dancing areas and a craft workshop. (This is a cultural centre, even if no-one calls it that!)

NUKU HIVA

Population: 3,120

Known for: being the administrative capital of the Marquesas; the site for the beloved Marquesan Festival of 1999

Other points of note: See more on page 17



MARQUESAS ISLANDS

Hatutu
Eiao

Nuku
Hiva

Ua
Huka

UA
Pau

Fatu
Huku

Hiva
Oa

Monotani

Tahuata

Fatu
Hiva

Hawaii

PACIFIC OCEAN



Marquesas
Society

Samoa

Cook

Tonga

Tahiti

Tuanotu

Mangareva

Rapa

New Zealand

Tahiti to Marquesas
900 miles

THE NEED FOR A CULTURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE IN THE MARQUESAS

Those that we interviewed were unanimous in their support for the creation of a cultural community centre.

No equivalent currently exists per se but the closest to it that we saw was the impressive cultural museum in Ua Huka.

The reasons given for the need for a cultural centre included that:

- no such centre exists in the Marquesas
- it is something that has been discussed for some decades, including within the Motuhaka Association
- the idea of a centre in Nuku Hiva has been mooted and even blueprint drawings drawn up – a lack of funding, knowhow and support has meant that this had led nowhere
- it would bring the opportunity to showcase the distinct culture of each of the six islands
- it would be an important gathering place for the community and would serve to demonstrate the importance of the Marquesan culture and language to the islands' kids and youngsters
- it should highlight the link between the communities and ocean conservation and health – it could be a centre to underpin and expand local ocean conservation efforts and to demonstrate traditional knowledge as to sustainability and fishing practices
- with a plan still to expand the marine protected area around the Marquesas (from the currently planned 30 nautical

mile range around each island to a much larger area), those pushing for that expansion need a focal point for their lobbying

- there is a need to protect the local traditions around endemic plants and medicines – the centre could feature a botanical and medicinal herb garden to teach locals and visitors alike
- many Marquesan artefacts stolen or confiscated over the years are scattered all over the world – there is a strong desire to bring them back but nowhere currently to put them
- a place is needed to house important maps and a paper and digital library for the culture and language
- a hub for photographs and other records of the islands, perhaps with a photographic and technology room and/or classroom would be welcome
- the new international airport will bring more tourism (expected to over-quadruple) and more international awareness of the Marquesas. The islands currently lack a central cultural draw for tourists – a place for them to learn about the different islands and their unique traditions and crafts. A community centre would be the perfect place for this, and
- it will bring much needed revenue opportunities.



Rationale for choice of Nuku Hiva for the location of community centre

In every conversation on each of the islands, we asked those that we met as to where, should we create a Marquesan community cultural centre, it should be.

The unanimous answer was that it should be on the island of Nuku Hiva on the basis that it is:

- the “heart” of sorts of the Marquesan islands
- the most connected to each of the other 5 islands
- the largest island with the largest population – the centre will therefore be readily accessible to the largest proportion of the population
- the island to which members of all the other island communities regularly go
- the administrative centre of the Marquesas
- the island most visited by tourists
- the site for the international airport

to be opened in 2024 – tourists will increase and all the other 5 islands will use the airport for export distribution for their products

- the island to which the largest number of cruise and expedition ships go, including the Lindblad Expedition ships
- the venue for the next Marquesan Festival – to be held in December 2023 – and the site of the most important and, as widely accepted, the best Marquesan festival to date – that of Nuku Hiva in 1999, and
- home to the sacred site of Koueva which is community land – such that there would be no need to buy land and no need for any Government approvals from Papeete or Paris.

It is also interesting to note that the Marquesan cultural revival has perhaps been less vital in Nuku Hiva than it has been on the other islands. The strength of the culture seems to be directly inverted according the size of the island – the culture is strongest on the smallest islands and least strong on the largest.

THE UNESCO PROCESS

The story of the Marquesan islands' desire for UNESCO world natural and cultural heritage status is a muddled one. First put on UNESCO's Tentative List in 1996, it has been variously supported and objected to by, among others, the French President (with President Macron now in full support), the Tahitian government (who sometimes view it as competition to their own application relating to Tahitian dance) and even descendants of Marquesan chiefs. It is, however, overwhelmingly supported by the Marquesan people. Those that we talked to "can't think of any negatives". The consensus is that it will come in 2024 - with three sites on each of the six islands being covered by the classification. They tend to be more natural and environmental in focus than cultural but there is a hope that Marquesan carving and tattoo design will also ultimately be recognised.

The proposed Koueva site

The Marquesan Festival in Nuku Hiva is held at the sacred site of Koueva, a short drive from the main town of Taiohoe, the main town of Nuku Hiva and the area to which all the other islanders have to come (not least as it has the only gas station, the only hospital and the only secondary school on the island). Koueva is well known as the site of the most successful Festival - that of 1999 - and will be the site for the 2023 Marquesan Festival.

A number of structures and platforms sit on the large, community-owned site (stretching 6 hectares in total) but they are run down and the area over-grown.

Visiting the site, we felt its power - it is impressive and, surrounded by lush forest and towering banyon trees, feels very connected to the land and ocean. A stone bust of Lucien Kimitete, Debora's husband and the highly respected and admired former Mayor of Nuku Hiva who was instrumental in the Marquesan cultural revival and who disappeared in a plane crash twenty years ago, watches silently over the area.

Debora supports the expansion and enhancement of the Koueva site and recommends that we enlist the help of Aniata and of Hiritu, the current President of the Festival and another much-admired young community leader, to lead the project. Blueprints already exist for the development of the site - envisioning six "houses" each to represent the six islands of the Marquesas, simple residences for visiting artists and craftsmen and areas for music and dancing. The proposal is that we would leverage off these existing ideas to work with the community to create a vision and design for the site.

The proposed visitor experience

The Marquesas islands currently receive relatively few tourists, mainly due to their remoteness and lack of easy travel access.

Those that do go do so mainly for the sailing, for the stunning landscape, for the warm welcome and to experience a little of the Marquesan culture. Often, there is a blur between what is Marquesan as opposed to Tahitian or even Polynesian.

The proposed community centre would transform the visitor experience in showing the depth and richness of the Marquesan culture.

Passengers travelling on the Lindblad Expedition ships and other tourists visiting the centre would:

- experience the warm traditional Marquesan Welcome
- enjoy Marquesan songs, music and dances from each of the different islands
- learn about the Marquesan history and its extraordinary cultural renaissance
- learn about traditional language and knowledge and how to keep it alive and strong
- eat traditional Marquesan food – cooked in a traditional underground stove
- meet resident artisans at work
- learn about patutiki, its designs and symbolism
- see traditional carving being done first hand
- buy arts and crafts from each of the six islands
- have a taste of the distinct culture of each of the islands and to understand what awaits them when travelling on
- learn about local ocean conservation efforts and traditional knowledge on sustainability and fishing
- learn about traditional medicines and tour the botanical and herbal gardens, and
- visit the living museum and library and truly learn about the uniqueness of Marquesan culture.

The proposed project timetable

We propose that this project would be completed in two phases.

Phase 1 would involve:

- the clearing and restoration of the Koueva site
- the building of additional structures to represent the 6 islands
- expansion of the Atitia cultural centre in Moorea with the creation of an additional building focused on language,

photography, technology and the arts, and

- the introduction of the artists of Tahuata to the International Folk Art festival of Santa Fe.

This phase would be complete in time for the Marquesan Festival at Koueva in December 2023.

Phase 2 would involve:

- detailed planning and consultation for the new community centre
- the creation of permanent houses representing each of the six islands
- the building of simple residences/dorms for visiting artisans
- the building of teaching rooms, workshop areas and a cooking/kitchen area
- the building of a technology and photography house
- the design of workshops and teaching
- introduction of WiFi as necessary
- design of the visitor experience at the centre
- paving of the road leading to the site to allow for good access, even in wet conditions
- a marketing plan for how to advertise the centre to expedition ships, tour groups and other visitors, and
- the hiring of 2 or 3 people to run the centre going forward.

All of this is of course subject to the views of the community and to consultation with all six islands. The project and the centre will be community-led.

This phase would be complete, ideally by the end of 2024, well in advance of the coming of the new international airport.

INTERVIEWEES

The people that we interviewed during this expedition include:

Tahuata: Tehautetua Tauhiro, Leonne Tauhiro, Felix Barsinas, Katy Teiefitu, Solange Mote, Marie Lyne, Teupoo Barsinas, Piokoe Tahueinui and Poesa Raihauti

Fatu Hiva: Leonie Tetua, teacher Tiatete and the team at the Monarch bird reserve

Ua Pou: Georges Toti Teikiehuupoto, Ben Taikitutoua, Kehu (Pierre) Aka

Ua Huka: Mayor Nestor and Ranka

Nuku Hiva: Teiki Huukena, Debora Kimitete, Aniata Kimitete



Mayor Felix Barsinas and team in Vaitahu (Tahuata island)

Thank you

Our enormous thanks go to our amazing, generous hosts Kristin and Sven Lindblad without whom this expedition would not have been possible and with whom it was a delight to travel and explore; to Aniata Kimitete for being our wonderful guide and organiser; to the rest of our little expedition team Tua Pittman, Jenny Kingsley, Yannis Saint Pre and Lothar Grenier for their support and fun along the way; to the fantastic crew of The Hanse; and to the people of the Marquesas.

Disclaimer

While this report accurately reflects our observations and the notes of our many interviews, any errors are ours alone. It is always possible that we may have misinterpreted something or written a fact or date down incorrectly or that some nuance was lost in translation. What can never be disputed, though, is the passion and warmth of the Marquesan people or the lasting impression and inspiration that they have given us.



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