

*Reanalysis of the E. W. Gifford Collections,  
Hearst Museum of Anthropology  
by Patrick V. Kirch*

A continuing, long-term OAL project is reanalysis of the Oceanic archaeological collections obtained by Prof. Edward W. Gifford of the University of California, during his three pioneering expeditions from 1947-56, and curated in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology. Beginning with his excavations on the island of Viti Levu, Fiji, in 1947, Gifford reinvigorated the field of Pacific prehistory by using stratigraphic excavation methods to demonstrate that long-term cultural change could be ascertained in the Pacific Islands. On his next expedition, to New Caledonia in 1952, Gifford discovered the type site of Lapita at Koné, and excavated a number of other post-Lapita sites as well. His final expedition, in 1956, was to the island of Yap in Micronesia.

Gifford was not only a pioneering fieldworker, but a careful museum scientist, and his extensive collections from these excavations (more than 40,000 cataloged lots) have been curated in the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology at Berkeley. Although Gifford published excellent monographs on the results of each of his expeditions, advances in method and theory since Gifford's days now allow for significant new interpretations of these collections.

Assisted by undergraduate and graduate students at Berkeley, Prof. Kirch has been restudying the Gifford collections since 1989. Results of a reanalysis of the materials from New Caledonian sites 13 (Lapita), 14, and 26 (Oundjo) were published in P. V. Kirch, M. Weisler, and E. Casella, Eds., 1997. *Towards a Prehistory of the Koné Region, New Caledonia: A Reanalysis of the Pioneering Archaeological Excavations of E. W. Gifford*, Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers, Vol. 82, Special Edition. Berkeley.

In 2002, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Gifford's 1952 New Caledonian expedition, Christophe Sand and Kirch published *L'Expédition Archéologique d'Edward W. Gifford et Richard Shutler, Jr. en Nouvelle-Calédonie au Cours de l'Année 1952*. Edward W. Gifford and Richard Shutler Jr's Archaeological Expedition to New Caledonia in 1952. Profusely illustrated with photographs taken by Gifford and Shutler in the field, this volume chronicles the daily activities of this path-breaking expedition. A separate article by Sand, Kirch, and Coil reports on results of further reanalysis of the Gifford New Caledonian collections, including a series of new radiocarbon dates on samples excavated in 1952.

***Publications:***

2002 C. Sand and P. V. Kirch, *L'Expédition Archéologique d'Edward W. Gifford et Richard Shutler, Jr. en Nouvelle-Calédonie au Cours de l'Année 1952*. Edward W. Gifford and Richard Shutler Jr's Archaeological Expedition to New Caledonia in 1952. *Les Cahiers de l'Archéologie en Nouvelle-Calédonie*, Volume 13. Noumea: Service des Musées de du Patrimoine de Nouvelle-Calédonie. [192 pp., 144 figs.; dual French and English text]

2002 C. Sand, P. V. Kirch, and J. Coil, Old sites, new insights: A reanalysis of the 1952 Gifford and Shutler New Caledonia collections. In S. Bedford, C. Sand, and D. Burley, eds., *Fifty Years in the Field: Essays in Honour and Celebration of Richard Shutler Jr.'s Archaeological Career*, pp. 173-88. New Zealand Archaeological Association Monograph No. 25. Auckland.

1997 P. V. Kirch, M. I. Weisler, and E. Casella, Editors, *Towards a Prehistory of the Koné Region, New Caledonia: A Reanalysis of the Pioneering Archaeological Excavations of E. W. Gifford*, Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers, Vol. 82, Special Edition. Berkeley. [vi + 153 pp., 11 figs., 60 tables] (If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this publication, please contact the Kroeber Anthropological Society, c/o Department of Anthropology, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720)