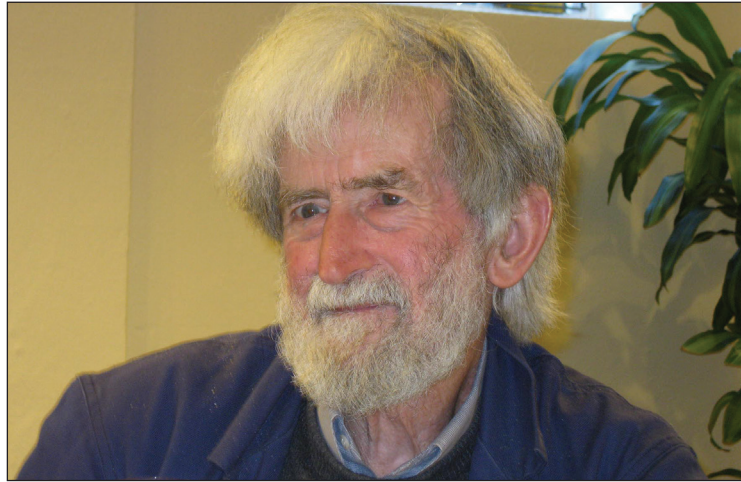


LESLIE MONTAGUE GROUBE 1937–2018



Les Groube, Canberra, 2014, Photo, courtesy Graeme Ward

A biographical sketch

Foss Leach¹ and Helen Leach²

Who owns the past? The real owners of the past of any nation, state or province are not the [self-defined] people today, nor the land owners who are the guardians of the evidence, but the manipulators of that past, the historians, prehistorians, and archaeologists who transform the past into word... The owners of the past of Papua New Guinea in the coming decades will, one hopes, be prehistorians who have learned to avoid the simple pitfalls of equating present diversity with past events (Groube, 1985:58, 69).

STUDENT DAYS

Les attended Napier Boys' High School from 1951–1955, through Forms 3A, 4A2 (1st in class, and 1st in Art), Upper 5th (gained School Certificate), 6B (gained University Entrance) and finally 6A gaining Leaving Certificate). He won the John Alexander Memorial Prize for Art for years 1952–1955. He gained colours in debating in 1955, and was runner up for the Brooks Cup and Rotary Prize for Public Speaking in the same year. While not featuring strongly in the school's sporting life, he was first in the Senior E Non Championship 100 yards sprint in 1954 with 12.2 sec. In spite of his small stature he also played rugby for the 2nd xv as loose forward in 1955. One of his school mates, An-

drew Pawley, described him as a frenetic tackler undeterred by the size of anyone with the ball.

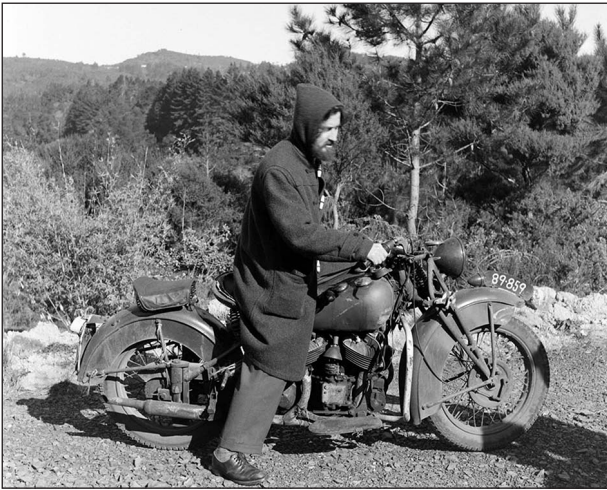
After leaving school, he attended both the Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland in the evenings as a non-diploma student, and at the same time studied courses in the Arts Faculty at Auckland University, for the Bachelor of Arts degree from 1956 to 1960. His subjects included Anthropology, English, Māori Studies, Psychology, and Ancient History. He majored in Anthropology. To make ends meet he worked at the Turners and Growers vegetable market in Auckland, and rode to and from his accommodation on a much modified 1941 Army Indian model 741B motorcycle, sometimes with his wife Rosemary on the back. The pillion seat was a rather poorly designed addition to the original bike and was not very stable with Rosemary on it. On one notable occasion Les bought a box of cheap over-ripe tomatoes, and tied it onto the pillion seat. The vibration turned the tomatoes to pulp so when he arrived at Wal Ambrose's place in Bayswater people thought he had been in an accident.

1 Honorary Research Associate, Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa.

2 Emeritus Professor, University of Otago.

Corresponding author: Foss.Leach@waihinga.ac.nz

Submitted 22/3/18, accepted 5/6/18



Les and his Indian motorcycle, circa 1961. Photo, courtesy of Wal Ambrose.

During his undergraduate years at Auckland University he took an active role in the development of the *Site Recording Scheme* of the *New Zealand Archaeological Association*, and in 1959 was appointed as the official Filekeeper of the Auckland District. In the same year he became Secretary of the *Auckland Archaeological Society*. In 1958 he took part in excavations on Motutapu island, in the Hauraki Gulf in Auckland, directed by Jack Golson. In the same period he was also very active in recording Pā sites in several areas of Hawkes Bay. In 1960, he was the effective day-to-day leader of the excavations on Mt Wellington, nominally headed by Jack Golson.

In 1961 he married Rosemary Russell, and enrolled in the Master of Arts programme in Anthropology and submitted a thesis in 1964 entitled *Settlement Patterns in New Zealand Prehistory*. He was awarded the Senior Prize in Anthropology in 1964. In the same year he took part in an excavation at Castor Bay Pā, North Shore, Auckland, under the direction of Roger Green. While writing his thesis, in 1962, to make ends meet he took up a short-lived career as a teacher at the Te Kaha District High School. His MA was conferred with First Class Honours in May 1965. His thesis was quickly published as a monograph (Groube, 1965a).

OTAGO UNIVERSITY

In 1963 he was offered the position of Assistant Lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Otago in Dunedin, and in 1964 he became a member of the Council of the *New Zealand Archaeological Association*. He was promoted to Lecturer at Otago in 1966. As a University teacher, Les had found his métier – lecturing small classes of enthusiastic students. He was a brilliant lecturer, charismatic, and completely up to date in whatever topic he was lecturing about. On one notable occasion he burst into a classroom (late), and at the top of his voice announced with excitement to a stunned audience:

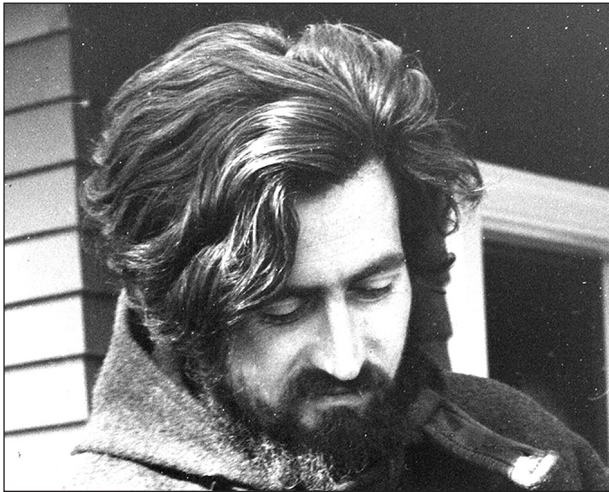
Zinjanthropus boisei has just been dated to 1.75 million years!

Detecting that his audience had failed to appreciate the momentous significance of this, he abandoned the advertised topic of the lecture, and continued with a detailed discussion of potassium-argon dating, and how this single discovery had tripled the length of time of early mankind on planet earth.

One aspect of Les's teaching in this era, not easy to appreciate now, is that Les was a kiwi graduate teaching in a university dominated by imported academics. Otago University had strong links with England, and especially Edinburgh and Cambridge Universities. One of us (FL), recalls how his own application, years later, for a position of Junior Lecturer was sent to New Zealand House in London for assessment. This is unthinkable today. Les took his students on excavations and lived with them in tents, sometimes in appalling weather. Class distinctions were not relevant. He lectured on a wide variety of subjects. HL vividly remembers his course on archaeological methods which left students in no doubt that American habits of unit level excavation were simply atrocious, and that every right-thinking archaeologist needed to follow area excavation and an onion-peel approach to layers. Les's comments on the dangers of unit-level excavation were prophetic (see below). His lectures on the early evolution of the Hominiidae were inspirational, and he took maximum advantage of the collections in the Otago Museum. The former director, H.D. Skinner, had given financial support for excavations in Europe and Africa with money from the Fels Fund. As a result the Museum gained precious artefacts from Olorgesailie, and even stone collections from Dorothy Garrod's celebrated Layer E at Et-Tabun, on the very brink of the period of emergence of *Homo sapiens* along the Levant. Les ensured that these precious artefacts were fully appreciated by his students, who were able to handle real Acheulean hand-axes on loan from the Museum for his classes.

Always short of money, Les somehow persuaded the Otago University Extension Department to allow him to run a series of evening adult education courses on American archaeology for which he would be paid a fee. The Department initially thought there would be no demand for such a series, but showing his usual enterprise, he asked for his students to support him during some of his normal University lectures. Since these evening classes were free for students, large numbers turned up for detailed lectures on, amongst other topics, archaeological surveys of the lower Mississippi Valley. Les had to bone up for these lectures in the library during the day, and give the lectures in the evening. Most of the time he was only an hour in front of his students, but this always gave freshness and vigour to his lecturing.

In 1963–1964 he undertook two excavations with Otago students and a Southland Adult Education class at a site near Riverton in Colac Bay along the shores of Foveaux



Les in a thoughtful mood, early 1960s. Photo, courtesy of Wal Ambrose.

Strait. This had been a living area and adze manufactory using a nearby source of argillite. It rained continuously and students were exposed to some of the realities of archaeological research living in tents and muddy conditions. Les not only attracted students to attend these excavations over the years, but also senior academics, playwrights and novelists who were among his wide-ranging friends. Austin Mitchell, a political scientist, later British Labour MP for Great Grimsby, shared the mud and evening 'knees-up' with students at Riverton. As sometimes happened when Les undertook excavations, it was left to students to write up the excavation 15 years later (Leach and Leach, 1980).

During this stage of Les's career he was fascinated by pre-European Māori domestic architecture, and in 1964 he undertook excavations at a fortified Pā site on the Huriawa Peninsula at Karitane. Once again, students provided the workforce. It was a terrace site, promising to give evidence of a house. Although many post holes were found, they did not easily form an identifiable structure. Even so, the site provided rich faunal remains and artefacts, including a rare whalebone patu (Skinner, 1974: 155, Figure 11.37b).

In 1966 he carried out an excavation over a short period of another Pā site in Otago, known as Mapoutahi. This was a headland Pā on a precipitous headland, known locally as Goat Island, near Purakaunui beach. In spite of the extent of the area opened up, there was only shallow stratigraphy, and few artefacts and items of fauna were recovered. Two students later published a report on this excavation (Anderson and Sutton 1973).

In 1965–1966 he turned his attention to another problem that fascinated him – the relationship, if any, between historical and archaeological evidence that could be tested with a fortified Pā site in the Bay of Islands. This was at Paeroa Pā on Moturua Island, and later, nearby Te Kuri's Village, and Pikiorei's Pā. The French explorer, Marion du Fresne, visited the area in 1772 and was killed by Māori

while fishing in Te Kuri's cove in Manawara Bay. In retaliation, the French killed 250 Māori warriors and sacked and burned the village of Paeroa Pā. However, before it was destroyed, the French mapped the Pā in great detail. It was this map that fascinated Les. Here was an opportunity to test archaeological excavation against a detailed historical record. The grim reality of New Zealand fortification sites is that during their life they were frequently modelled and re-modelled, leaving behind a bewildering series of intercutting layers, and a complex sequence of ditch and bank changes. Les's much hoped for simple relationship between Du Fresne's map and the excavation plan was thwarted by changes made by later Māori settlers (Groube 1964 ms, 1965b, 1966).

In 1966–1967, partly during his time at Otago University, he began working in Tongatapu at a site known as Vuki's Mound. Les was convinced that earlier research on Tonga by Jens Poulsen (Poulsen, 1967) had produced an interpretation of cultural continuity that was not correct. He attributed the failure to interpret the Tongan archaeological evidence correctly to the use of unit level excavation methods (Groube, 1971: 295, 298). Les employed a strategy of area excavation by stratigraphic layers with a large party of student excavators from Otago University that he had confidence in because he had trained them himself (*ibid.*: 297). As a result, his research on Tonga revolutionized thinking about the emergence of the distinctive group of people known as Polynesians. Nearly 50 years later, Dave Burley described the impact of Les's work on Tonga:

I never met Les Groube, a circumstance I am truly regretful for. Les, nevertheless has had a substantive impact on my research. As a neophyte to Oceanic archaeology, and in preparation for my first field season in Tonga in 1989, I read his 1971 paper in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, *Lapita Pottery and Polynesian Origins*. I remember thinking to myself how insightful and how significant that paper truly was. It was not so much about the ensuing *strandlooper* debate he set in motion, nor his claims that ceramic manufacture had ended by at least 2000 BP (now proven). Rather, it was his integration of linguistic and archaeological data leading him to the emphatic conclusion that 'Polynesians, therefore, did not strictly come from anywhere: they became Polynesians and the location of their becoming was Tonga'. I have spent the better part of the last 28 years gathering data to illustrate just how right he was! (David Burley, pers. comm. to FL, 2018, and Burley, *et al.* n.d.).

Above all else, Les taught his students never to take anything at face value, and always adopt a critical attitude to whatever one is reading in scientific literature. A typical example of this was a project he set his third year students:

to carefully read Duff's book *The Moa-Hunter Period of Māori Culture*, and write down a list of every factual or logical error that they could find. He offered a prize for the student who could document the largest number of errors. Les's own razor sharp mind for detail was most clearly at work whenever he was asked to review some recently published book (Groube, 1966, 1973a, 1973b, 1991). For example, in one of his reviews he refused to be fazed by the apparent complexity of recent genetic research in the Pacific, and was happy to challenge simple conclusions derived from it:

As the task of finding a coherent 'trail' amongst the bewildering mass of genetic data assembled in this book is like finding the pattern on a colour-blindness test-card, and what is self-evident to some is invisible to others, the problem is deciding who is normal and who is colour-blind? (Groube, 1991: 163).

AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY

During the period of fieldwork in the Bay of Islands, Les was offered a lecturing position in the Anthropology Department at Auckland University (1966–1968). His courses were mainly on the history of archaeology and human evolution to huge classes of first year students. Garry Law, one of the students at the time, recalls that his habit of rolling his eyes back in his head while lecturing was well established by then. His clothing was sometimes threadbare. A jersey with long trailing threads from the sleeves was often in evidence. A Stage 1 essay subject was: *Is Evolution an Established Fact?* Garry Law commented 'I think he enjoyed the pirouettes the religiously conflicted had to perform. His follow up lecture was an emphatically delivered conclusion that the only necessary answer was YES' (Garry Law, pers. comm. to FL, 2018).

In 1968–1969, he carried out excavations at Waioneke and Otakanini, taking frequent field notes into a tape recorder, which unfortunately have not survived (Geoff Irwin, pers. comm. to FL 2018).

In 1967, he also did excavations at Orakei Basin Pā in Auckland, South Kaipara Peninsula, Auckland, and finally at Waioneke. The Orakei Pā (Site number R11/87) revealed the partial remains of a house, which was particularly exciting for Les, in view of his deep interest in settlement patterns. A partial plan of this house was published by Davidson (1984: 152, Figure 101a).

His meticulous attention to detail during excavation impressed all who took part in his research in New Zealand, and had an enduring impact on students and colleagues alike. This was recognized in 1997 by the New Zealand Archaeological Association when they established the *Groube Fieldwork Award* in recognition of his contribution to New Zealand archaeology (Coster, 1995).

Unfortunately, by 1968, he had become disillusioned

by the huge classes of Auckland University which placed an unwelcome strain on him. Lectures became more of a performance than an educational experience. This culminated with a disagreement with the Head of the Department, Piddington. Fortunately, he was offered a research position in Australia.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

His appointment as Research Fellow from 1969–1973 was at the Australian National University in Canberra, and in his final year he became Acting Head of the Prehistory Department. During this period he assisted with supervision of doctoral students: Graeme Ward, who was working in the Banks Islands, Vanuatu (New Hebrides), Brian Egloff recording burial pottery from Nuamata Island off the north coast of Goodenough Island, Ron Vanderwal's study of Yule Island. The latter related to irrigation systems on stone walled terraces and their associated settlements. In 1970 Les assisted with archaeological research on Nuamata Island, Papua New Guinea, and in 1972 he took part in site surveys on Erromanga, southern New Hebrides, Espiritu Santo, Banks and Torres Islands.

During his time in Canberra, he undertook a complete re-analysis of the Tongan archaeological collection at Australian National University.

Les had not lost his passion for New Zealand prehistory during his time in Canberra, and he continued to work on a major monograph on the Prehistory of New Zealand. Unfortunately, this has never been finished, and the manuscript has not since been seen. One of us (FL) was given the opportunity to see some draft chapters at Cambridge University in 1976. He may eventually have abandoned this work when a book of the same title appeared in 1984 (Davidson, 1984).

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY AND DORSET

In 1975 Les was invited to give a series of lectures in the Department of Archaeology, Cambridge University in the United Kingdom. This was arranged by Peter Gathercole, who had returned to England from his position in the Anthropology Department at Otago University. Les enjoyed the change of scene that England offered, and he soon took up a contract as Dorset Field Survey Officer, Dorset Archaeological Committee, Dorset Country Museum, Dorchester, United Kingdom in 1975–1979.

Les and Rosemary bought an old thatched cottage to live in, and partly because of its age and the possibility of finding interesting archaeological features below floor level, he proceeded to remove the flooring and carry out an excavation to lower the floor level. He also discovered that the end wall of the house made a hollow sound, concealing a space behind. When he broke through the wall he found an inglenook behind, which he promptly brought back into use. These were idyllic surroundings, enabling him to



Their thatched cottage in Dorset 1976. Photo Courtesy of Wal Ambrose.

complete various projects which he brought with him from the southern hemisphere. He instantly made friends with a wide variety of English country folk, including a naval commander who lived nearby, and was even invited to take part in a grouse shoot with a waiver of the £1000 gun fee. Rosemary was most amused by the complex etiquette and dress code requirements, and dined out on the fact that in the end Les simply forgot to take part in the shoot.

His responsibility to the Dorset Country Museum was to carry out a major review on the state of Dorset archaeology, and with his usual bent for thoroughness of detail he immersed himself in every aspect of Dorset archaeology, including a detailed exposition on a novel method of grading archaeological sites. The pièce de résistance was a map of Dorset on which each archaeological site was marked, and coloured according to their different characteristics. Similar sites were joined together into a complex maze of coloured lines. The final result was an inspirational blend of art and science. Matt Spriggs remembers the map well, and wrote the following about his trip to see Les in Dorset:

Yes I saw the map on the wall too and stayed at the thatched cottage. As I walked along the lane from the train station I started seeing bits of paper flying about in the breeze. I picked one up and it was a page from Poulsen, Golson and Groube – Les had left the manuscript at an open window and it was blowing across the fields of Dorset. He had also just excavated a foot or more down into his floor so that people didn't keep bumping their heads when walking about the house (Matt Spriggs, pers. comm. to FL, 2018).

Unfortunately, the governing body that Les was commissioned by were not impressed by the volume he placed in their hands at the end of his tenure, 'ominously entitled *Dorset Decays*' (Canham and Chippindale, 1988: 61). It was declared to be too large for publication and the committee commissioned Mark Bowden to rewrite the monograph

into a smaller volume. This was finally edited by Richard Bradley, and published with the title *The Archaeology of Rural Dorset* (Groube and Bowden, 1982). The Preface to the volume, written by Richard Bradley in 1982, is well worth reading for scholars of the history of archaeology, and of Les Groube in particular. It seems that even this rewrite failed to silence the critics. In reviewing the volume, Fowler describes it as 'a curious kaleidoscope of the true and the trite'. In spite of misgivings, Fowler was led to conclude 'I am happy to recognize here...an intellectual rigour uncharacteristic of the genre, probably reflecting its rewriting at Reading as much as its Antipodean genesis in Oceanic anthropology' (Fowler, 1983: 387).

Les was determined that his original manuscript, *Dorset Decays*, would not be lost to science and he gave copies to a number of libraries, including the Piddington Library, University of Auckland. In spite of a number of enquiries to librarians, none of these copies can now be located.

Part of the reason why this monumental work on Dorset archaeology failed to reach the intended audience by being published was Les's attempt to introduce rigour into ways of evaluating sites using mathematics. The Committee he was responsible to either did not understand the new ground that was being broken, or had something completely different in mind as the outcome they expected from Les's work.

Although Les had little formal training in mathematics, he had a strong belief that many problems in archaeology could be solved with mathematics, particularly those relating to population growth and archaeological site density time series. Throughout his life he struggled to present his mathematical results in a form that would persuade audiences. For example, at a conference on *New approaches to our Past*, at Southampton University in 1977, he shocked his English audience with his paper *Priorities and problems in Dorset Archaeology*. He presented a complex mathematical approach to ranking archaeological problems in order to establish priorities for protection and excavation. He later commented on the bellicose response of the gallery as follows:

The difficulty of establishing a scale of priorities was evident from the hostility which some conference participants appeared to display towards the paper. Special period interests and a 'square root-phobia' probably contributed to this reaction. As the establishment of some such method is now of crucial importance in current British archaeology, the report has been rewritten to soften the impact of the method (Groube, 1978b: 52).

Another paper entitled *The geometry of the dead* (Groube 1996) faced a similar fate, and even stunned the mathematician who anonymously refereed the paper for publication.

Once, when trying to explain the role of infectious

diseases during the emergence of agriculture, fearful of losing his reader, he quoted Stephen Hawking ‘I have no desire to halve the readership of this book with each new equation’, but carried on to include ‘sufficient mathematical detail to avoid being too amiable’ (Groube, 1996a: 113).

A less well-known (and unpublished) example of Les’s preoccupation with science and mathematics was his fascination with a device that one of his students at Otago University invented in 1964, aptly dubbed the Kiwi Computer. Les employed two students to code up the characteristics of stone adzes in the Otago Museum during a mid-year break from lectures. They were instructed to code the information acquired on to novel edge-notched coding cards. This followed an earlier attempt he had made to classify the bewildering array of features on New Zealand fortified pā sites using similar cards (Groube, 1960). In the adze study, holes were punched around the edges of the cards representing different features of adzes. One of the students on the project, who had some training in welding and engineering, decided to build an analogue version of the cards, by marking off points around the edge of a large circular wooden disk. The disk was suspended by a long rod attached to a gimbal, on which was placed a small mirror. A shaft of light was directed on to the mirror which was projected onto a white screen on a wall. After loading small weights around the points of the wooden disk for any one archaeological assemblage of adzes, a point was marked on the screen. After repeating this for adzes from a number of different archaeological sites, or Pacific Island groups, a pattern could be observed on the screen, showing clusters of similarity.

Les was overjoyed at this student contraption, and instantly abandoned the edge-notched cards. In spite of the discovery that any one spot on the wall chart could be achieved by numerous different combinations of loadings on the circular base-plate (a problem of equi-finality), Les built several versions of it over a period years, both at Auckland University, and at Australian National University.

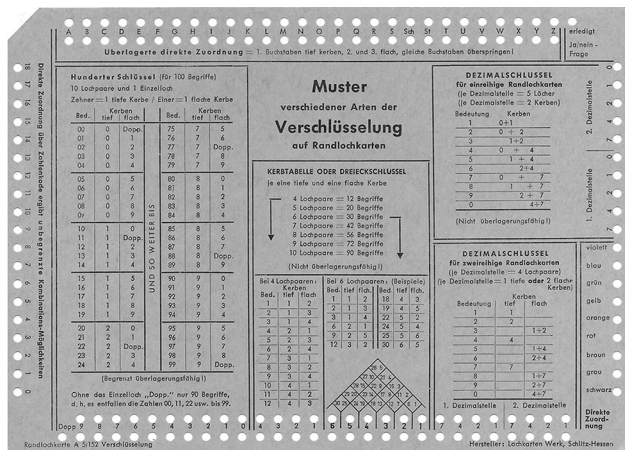
Eventually, John Chappell came to the rescue, and directed Les’s attention on to mainstream mathematical methods to achieve the same result. The adze study was published nine years later without the benefit of the Kiwi Computer (Groube and Chappell 1973).

UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Departing from the English countryside, he returned to the southern hemisphere in 1979, and took up a post in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. He held the post from 1979 to 1989, and became Associate Professor during his time there. Jean Kennedy remembers his time at UPNG as follows:

He took the undergraduate programme in archaeology to its zenith, the charisma we know so well working to produce a cohesive group of PNG students, notable among them John Muke and Jo Mangi. Later, François Wadra, Roselyn Busasa, Josephine Papah and the late Herman Mandui. There were many more. I remember Patrick Silata, now a senior Education Department official, who wrote an honours thesis on the archaeology of the Japanese WWII retreat from the Huon Peninsula: he counted used morphine ampoules and rubber zori soles to estimate population sizes far in excess of standard war records (Jean Kennedy, pers. comm. to FL 2018).

Les was once more absolutely in his element as a university teacher. His lectures were always well prepared and totally up to date on current information of the subject covered. Students could see at first hand during fieldwork how knowledge was wrested from the soil. He raised money to take UPNG students with him to international conferences, and see at first hand how enthusiasts of Pacific



The evolution of the Kiwi Computer. *Left:* (an edge-notched coding card), *right:* (a multivariate weight machine manufactured in Canberra, circa 1972). Photo Courtesy of Wal Ambrose.



Les Groube excavating at the Motupore site, Bootless Bay, Papua New Guinea, 1980. On the left is one of his University students, Jo Mangi. Photographer: unknown

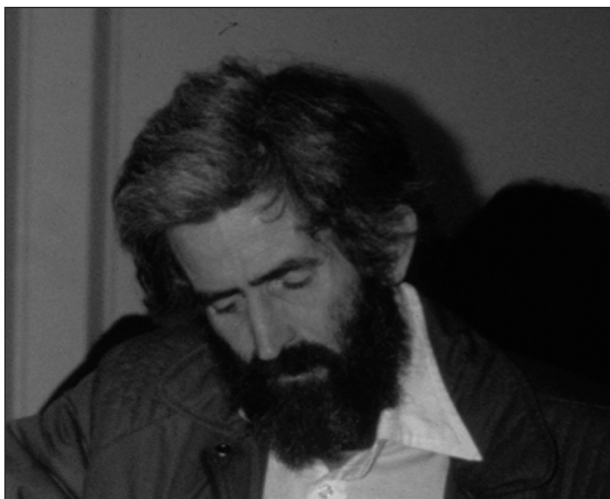
prehistory debate issues both in public and after hours. One such event, in 1983, was the Pacific Science Congress, held in Dunedin. He and his students took over the house of one of us (FL) and on one notable evening entertained the dinner guests with Cossack dancing. On a more serious note, he warned at the conference that the ‘prehistory of New Zealand’ would flounder unless it became ‘Māori history’. This prophetic comment is curiously at odds with his

view on ‘who owns the past’, quoted at the beginning of this present article, and published in 1985 (Groube, 1985: 58, 69).

The time Les spent at UPNG was an especially productive period of publications, in subjects ranging from settlement patterns in British prehistory, lexicostatistics, palaeogenetics, human impact on forests, and above all on his seminal research on the Huon peninsula with his students. This showed that significant numbers of humans had successfully negotiated open sea transport of more than 100 km by occupying Sahuland at least 40,000 years ago (Groube, 1982; Groube, et al. 1985; Groube, 1986), and pointed to the possible use of stone tools for agricultural purposes much earlier than in Europe. The archaeological research on the Huon peninsula was important enough to capture the attention of prehistorians around the world, including in the popular press (Reinherd, 1985).

RETURN TO EUROPE AND RETIREMENT

At the end of his time at University of Papua New Guinea, Les returned to England and during 1990 and 1991 he held a position as Affiliated Lecturer in Australian and Oceanic Archaeology, in the Department of Archaeology, at Cambridge University (Ben Davenport, pers. comm. to FL 2018). However, he and Rosemary finally decided that his numerous projects would never be finished and see the light of day unless they retired, so they moved to France. They bought a house known as L’ancien Presbytère at the



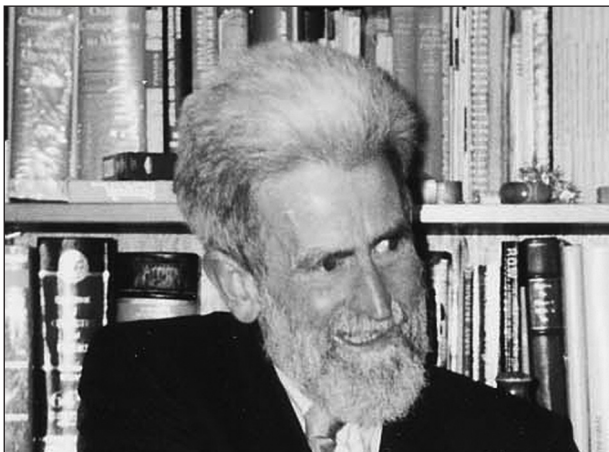
Les Groube consulting some notes during a lecture 1984. Photo, courtesy of Graeme Ward.

village of Mellionec, Côtes-d'Armor, in Brittany.

Without significant income there was a considerable struggle to make ends meet, and Les faced difficulty with the most basic requirements that academics can normally take for granted, such as computer access, the internet, and email. There were also problems in getting access to libraries for journals that he needed. Several of us recall times when correspondence was only possible by using a Fax in a local garage in Mellionec. At one stage, Les was so impoverished that he could not afford the postage to deal with the correspondence required when editing a long paper which he had submitted for a festschrift volume. Long phone calls from Canberra were required to make the corrections that were needed.

To make things worse, Les spent a lot of time struggling with drainage, rising damp and general renovations to the house. A colleague once referred to the house as 'Fawlty Towers', which unfortunately, has a tinge of black humour to it. At one stage there was talk of opening a B&B to make some extra income, and Les began restoring a somewhat derelict potting shed. A useful distraction occurred when he found a panel stuck down in the damp ground. When it was lifted he found a painting on the opposite face. An attempt was made to identify the painter through a contact at the Louvre, who concluded it to be from the Rubens School, but that its condition was too damaged to be restored and sadly was therefore valueless.

Even though life in France was difficult, Les published some highly original material during this period, especially on the relationship between parasites and infectious disease on the course of evolutionary history. His fascination with the impact of malaria on settlement history in the Pacific was an important thread in this research.



Les Groube engaged in a heated discussion in 2005, during one of his trips to New Zealand to visit family and friends. Photo Foss Leach.

THE LOSS OF LES GROUBE

Les died peacefully in a retirement home in Rostrenen, France, 16 March after a short illness. He was aged 80. He was born in Napier 12 December 1937. He was one of three boys in his family, his two brothers being Reg and Frank. Les married Rosemary Russell and the couple had one child Kristin.

One of his colleagues from Les's time at the University of Papua New Guinea, on hearing the news of Les's death, was moved to write to us these following comments:

Les was truly one of a kind, who accomplished many good things with great panache. Les was truly dedicated to his students. And he was thoroughly committed to training Papua New Guinean archaeologists and to expanding and building the national archaeological record in Papua New Guinea. I knew Les during his first two and a half years at UPNG when he worked tirelessly to re-establish the archaeology program, and attract PNG students to the profession. In line with his convictions, Les proved to be a great ally and mentor when the roles of anthropology and archaeology in PNG came under criticism from select Papua New Guineans and expatriates, from academics, and those outside the university.

Les showed a thoroughly wicked sense of humour, in department meetings and without, and could be most entertaining at social gatherings, when appropriate, but he did not suffer fools and irresponsible behaviour gladly. He offered penetrating critiques of policies and prominent actors' salient shortcomings, but usually only when his targets warranted his healthy opprobrium. One incident I recall when Les famously hit the bullseye, with appropriate glee and self-effacing irony, was his asking how a UPNG administrator could demolish three university motor vehicles in succession without paying a single toea of the minimum their insurance required?

After 38 years, it's easy to see him pillorying such shenanigans and speaking out for his students and profession. Yes, we shared some really great times with Les, in ways that become more vivid with hindsight (Bill Heaney, pers. comm. to FL, 2018).

Throughout Les's life he was a constant inspiration to friends, students and colleagues. He loved to play and laugh after work hours, do a Cossack dance, and hold serious discussions long into the night. Wherever he lived, he somehow managed to attract the interest, not only of archaeologists, but an eclectic range of artists, musicians, playwrights and politicians. He read widely outside the subject he loved, and later in life peppered his writings

in archaeology with extracts of poetic verse he loved. Les would have appreciated this final remark from Francois Rabelais:

Tirez le rideau, la farce est jouée.

PUBLICATIONS OF LES GROUBE (chronological)

- Groube, L.M. & R.C. Green, R. 1959. Site survey of South Kaipara Head: preliminary results. *New Zealand Historic Place Trust Newsletter* 2 (2): 8–13.
- Groube, L.M. 1960. Mt Wellington Site Survey. *New Zealand Archaeological Association Newsletter* 3 (2): 24–31.
- Groube, L.M. 1965a. Settlement Patterns in New Zealand. Dunedin: *Occasional Papers in Archaeology* No:1. Department of Anthropology, University of Otago.
- Groube, L.M. 1965b. Excavations on Paeroa Village, Bay of Islands. *New Zealand Historic Place Trust Newsletter* 9: 5–1.
- Groube, L.M. 1966. Rescue excavations in the Bay of Islands. *New Zealand Archaeological Association Newsletter* 9: 108–114.
- Capell, A., Groube, L.M., & Piddington, R. 1966. Pacific commentary: Three Australian conferences in 1965. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 75 (2): 223–228.
- Groube, L.M. 1966. Review: Ancient Voyagers in Polynesia. *Journal of the Polynesian Society*. 75 (1): 132–135.
- Groube, L.M. 1967a. Note on the hei-tiki. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 76 (4): 453–458.
- Groube, L.M. 1967b. Models in prehistory: A consideration of the New Zealand evidence. *Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania* 2: 1–27.
- Groube, L.M. 1968. Research in New Zealand Prehistory since 1956. In: I. Yawata & Y.H. Sinoto (eds.), *Prehistoric Culture in Oceania*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, pp.141–149.
- Groube, L.M. 1969. From Archaic to Classic Māori. *Auckland Student Geographer* 6: 1–11.
- Groube, L.M. 1970. The origin and development of earthwork fortifications in the Pacific. In: R.C. Green & M. Kelly (eds.), *Studies in Oceanic Culture History, Volume I*. Pacific Anthropological Records 11. Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, pp. 133–164.
- Groube, L.M. 1971. Tonga, Lapita pottery, and Polynesian origins. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 80 (3): 278–316.
- Groube, L.M. & Chappell, J. 1973. Measuring the differences between archaeological assemblages. In: C. Renfrew (ed.), *The Explanation of Culture Change*. Proceedings of a meeting of the Research Seminar in Archaeology and Related Subjects held at the University of Sheffield. London: Duckworth, pp. 167–184.
- Finney, B., Langdon, R., Spate, O.H.K. & Groube, L.M. 1973. Shorter notices: *Journal of Pacific History* 8 (1): 236–239.
- Groube, L.M. 1973a. Review. The dispersal of the Polynesian peoples: explorations in phylogenetic inference from the analysis of taxonomy. *Journal of Pacific History* 8: 233–236.
- Groube, L.M. 1973b. Review: Archéologie d'une vallée des Iles Marquises: Evolution des structures de l'habitat à Hane, Ua Huka. *Journal of Pacific History* 8: 238–239.
- Groube, L.M. 1975. Archaeological Research in Aneityum. *South Pacific Bulletin* 25 (3): 27–30.
- Groube, L.M. 1977. The hazards of anthropology. In: M. Spriggs (ed.), *Archaeology and Anthropology: Areas of Mutual Interest*. Oxford: BAR Supplementary Series 19. pp. 69–90.
- Groube, L.M. 1978a. Concluding Address, Chapter 25. In: J.F. Cherry, C. Gamble & S. Shennan, (eds.), *Sampling in Contemporary British Archaeology*. Oxford: BAR British Series 50. pp. 403–408.
- Groube, L.M. 1978b. Priorities and problems in Dorset archaeology. In: T.C. Darvell, M. Parker-Pearson, R.W. Smith & Thomas, R.M. (eds.), *New Approaches to Our Past: Proceedings of the Southampton University Archaeological Society*. Southampton: Monograph Series, University of Southampton, No. 2. pp. 29–52.
- Groube, L.M. 1978c. Concluding remarks. In: Cherry, J.F., Gamble, C. & Shennan, S. (eds.) *Sampling in Contemporary British Archaeology*. Oxford: BAR British Series 50. pp 403–408.
- Groube, L. M. 1981. Black holes in British prehistory: the analysis of settlement distributions. In: I. Hodder, G. Isaac & N. Hammond (eds.), *Pattern of the Past: Studies in honour of David Clarke*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 185–209.
- Lynch, J. & Groube, L.,M. 1981. Lexicostatistical deviates. In: J. Lynch (ed.), *Readings in the comparative linguistics of Melanesia*. Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea. pp. 273–281.
- Groube, L.M. 1982. Recent discoveries on the Huon Peninsula, Moroke Province. In: P. Eaton & M. Chambers (eds.), *Environmental Education Series 1*. Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea, Port Moresby. pp. 8–14.
- Groube, L.M. & Bowden, M.C.B. (ed. R. Bradley) 1982. *The Archaeology of Rural Dorset: Past, Present and Future*. Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society. Monograph Series 4. Dorchester: Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society. 68 pp.
- Groube, L.M. 1985. The ownership of diversity: The problem of establishing a national history in a land of nine hundred ethnic groups. In: I. McBryde. (ed.), *Who owns the past*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 49–73.
- Groube, L.M. 1986. Waisted axes of Asia, Melanesia and Australia. In: G.K. Ward (ed.), *Archaeology at ANZAAS, Canberra*. Canberra: Australian University Press. pp. 168–177.
- Groube, L.M., Chappell, J., Muke, J. & D. Price 1986. A 40,000 year-old human occupation site at Huon Peninsula, Papua New Guinea. *Nature (Letters)* 324: 453–455.
- Groube, L.M. 1989. The taming of the rainforests: A model for Late Pleistocene forest exploitation in New Guinea. In: D.R. Harris, & G.C. Hillman (eds.), *Foraging and Farming: The Evolution of Plant Exploitation*. Papers from the World Archaeological Congress, Southampton, England, September 1986. London: Unwin Hyman. pp. 11–26.
- Groube, L.M. 1991. Review of Hill, A.V.S. & Serjeantson, S.W. 1989. *The colonization of the Pacific: a genetic trail*. Research Monographs on Human Population Biology 7. Oxford: Clarendon Press. *Antiquity* 65 (246): 162–164.
- Groube, L.M. 1993a. Contradictions and malaria in Melanesian

- and Australian prehistory. In: M. Spriggs, D.E. Yen, W. Ambrose, R. Jones, A. Thorne & A. Andrews (eds.) *A Community of Culture: the People and Prehistory of the Pacific*, Occasional Papers in Prehistory No. 21. Canberra: Department of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University. pp.164–186.
- Groube, L.M. 1993b. 'Dig up those moa bones, dig': Golson in New Zealand, 1954–1961. In: M. Spriggs, D.E. Yen, W. Ambrose, R. Jones, A. Thorne & A. Andrews (eds.), *A Community of Culture: The people and prehistory of the Pacific* Occasional Papers in Prehistory No. 21. Canberra: Department of Prehistory, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University. pp.6–17¹.
- Groube, L.M. 1996a. The impact of diseases upon the emergence of agriculture in the Near East and South Asia. In: D.R. Harris (ed.), *The Origins and Spread of Agriculture and Pastoralism in Eurasia*, London: University College London Press. pp.101–129.
- Groube, L.M. 1996b. The geometry of the dead. In: J.M. Davidson, G. Irwin, B.F. Leach, A. Pawley & D. Brown (eds.), 1996. *Oceanic Culture History: Essays in Honour of Roger Green*. Dunedin: New Zealand Journal of Archaeology Special Publication. pp.133–165.
- Groube, L.M. 2000. *Plasmodium falciparum*: The African genesis. In: A. Anderson & T. Murray (eds), *Australian Archaeologist: Collected Papers in Honour of Jim Allen*. Canberra: Coombs Academic Publishing, Australian National University. pp.131–144.
- Groube, L.M. 2004. Before NZAA and after 2004. In: M. Campbell (ed.) 'Digging into History. 50 years of the New Zealand Archaeological Association', *Archaeology in New Zealand*, Special Issue 47 (4):108–111.
- UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS**
- The dates provided for each of these manuscripts is the date of the publication in which they are first cited.
- Groube, L.M. 1964, ms. The Protohistoric Period. Unpublished manuscript, 11 p. Hocken Library, Dunedin.
- Groube, L.M. 1964, ms.. Settlement Patterns in Prehistoric New Zealand. Unpublished M.A. thesis. University of Auckland.
- Groube, L.M. 1964, ms. Archaeology in the Bay of Islands. Pamphlet, Anthropology Department, University of Otago.
- Groube, L.M. 1965a, ms. New Zealand Prehistory (draft of the 1st chapter of the New Zealand Archaeological Association handbook: *An Introduction to New Zealand Field Archaeology*. Typescript, Department of Anthropology, University of Otago.
- Groube, L.M. 1965b, ms. The Classic Māori: Prehistoric or Protohistoric. Paper presented at the 11th New Zealand Science Congress and NZAA Biennial conference 11–17 Feb 1965. [Abstract published in *New Zealand Archaeological Association Newsletter* 7 (4):146].
- Groube, L.M. 1965c, ms. The Prehistory of Fortifications in New Zealand. Paper presented at the 11th New Zealand Science Congress and NZAA Biennial conference 11–17 Feb 1965. [Abstract published in *New Zealand Archaeological Association Newsletter* 7 (4):147].
- Groube, L.M. 1971a, ms. Additional C14 dates for plain lapita pottery from Tonga [cited in Groube, 1971:315].
- Groube, L.M. 1971b, ms. Measuring the difference between archaeological assemblages: an experiment in model building. Unpublished paper presented to the conference on *Models in Archaeology*, University of Sheffield.
- Groube, L.M. 1972, ms. Erromango and Aneityum fieldnotes. Division of Archaeology and Natural History, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.
- Chappell, J. & L.M. Groube 1973, ms. Lexicostatistics: basis in probability theory and status as a prehistorian's instrument. Australian National University Seminar 1/08/1973.
- Groube, L.M. 1979, ms. *Dorset Decays*. Manuscript presented to the Dorset Archaeological Committee, Dorset Country Museum, Dorchester, United Kingdom. [Ultimately revised and edited by R Bradley, and published with the title *The Archaeology of Rural Dorset: Past, Present and Future*. See Groube *et al.* 1982. The whereabouts of the original manuscript is unknown].
- Groube, L.M., J. Mangi, J. & Muke, J. 1981, ms. Recent discoveries on the Huon Peninsula. Unpublished paper presented to the 51st ANZAAS Congress, Brisbane, 1981 [Cited in Groube, 1985:77].
- Groube, L.M. 1985, ms. Waisted and stemmed axes from Asia, Australia, and New Guinea. Preliminary report on research on the Huon Peninsula [Cited in Groube, 1985:77].
- Groube, L.M. 1989. A new Pleistocene stone tool assemblage: implications for the settlement of Sahuland. *Antiquity*, In Press.[Cited in Groube, 1989:303].
- Groube, L.M. 1991, ms. Disease and the Neolithic in the Fertile Crescent. [Manuscript submitted for publication, but not completed for Pawley(1991), Pawley to FL pers.comm, 2018].
- Groube, L.M. 1996, ms. *Micropredation in world prehistory*. [Manuscript of a book cited by Groube (1996a:165), and Groube (1996b:128)].
- Groube, L.M. 1996, ms. *Ethnic replacement and Indo-European origins* [Cited by Groube, 1996a:165].]
- Groube, L.M. 1996, ms. *The role of malaria in Melanesian and Pacific prehistory* [Cited by Groube, 1996a:165].]
- Groube, L.M. 1997, ms. The background to New Zealand prehistory. Typescript, Department of Anthropology, University of Otago. [Cited by Coster (1997:195)].
- Groube, L.M. 2000, ms. *Falciparum* malaria: The final frontier. [Cited by Groube (2000:143)].
- Groube, L.M. 2000b, ms.. Models and muddles: Some problems in population prehistory. [Cited by Groube (2000:143)].

1 An editorial note to this paper states 'Space limitations necessitated drastic cutting of the contribution as submitted. An expanded version of the original text will be published elsewhere.'

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who kindly sent comments about Les and photos of him at various stages of his life, especially Frank Groube, Kristin Tridimas, Wal Ambrose, Graeme Ward, Matt Spriggs, Jack Golson, Jeremy Spencer, Bill Heaney, Jean Kennedy, Jim Specht, John Chappell, Tim Darvill, Dave Burley, Garry Law, Geoff Irwin, Janet Davidson, Phillip Rankin, Andrew Pawley, Atholl Anderson, Bill Ayers, Jim Allen, Ian Lilley, John Terrell, Peter White, Richard Walter, and Robin Torrence.

References

- Anderson, A.J., & D.G. Sutton. 1973. Archaeology of Mapoutahi Pā, Otago. *New Zealand Archaeological Association Newsletter* 16 (3): 107–118.
- Burley, D.V., Horrocks, M., & M. Weisler, n.d. Earliest evidence for pit cultivation provides insight on the nature of first Polynesian settlement. Under review for publication.
- Canham, R. & C. Chippindale. 1988. Managing for Effective Archaeological Conservation: The Example of Salisbury Plain Military Training Area, England. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 15 (1): 53–65.
- Coster, J. 1995. The Groube gumboot award. *Archaeology in New Zealand* 40 (3): 191–196.
- Davidson, Janet 1984. *The Prehistory of New Zealand*, Longman Paul, Auckland.
- Fowler, P.J. 1983. The Archaeology of Rural Dorset, a review. *The Archaeological Journal* 140: 387.
- Leach, H.M. & Leach, B.F. 1980. The Riverton site: an Archaic adze manufactory in western Southland, New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Archaeology* 2: 99–140.
- Pawley, A. (ed.), 1991. *Man and a Half: Essays in Pacific Anthropology and Ethnobiology in Honour of Ralph Bulmer*. Auckland: The Polynesian Society. Memoir 48.
- Poulsen, J. 1967. A contribution to the prehistory of the Tongan Islands. Unpublished PhD thesis, Australian National University.
- Reinhardt, D. 1985. The cradle of civilisation is heading our way. *The Bulletin*, 18 June 1985: 88–90.
- Skinner, H.D. 1974. Patu in the Pacific. In: P.W. Gathercole, B.F. Leach, & H.M. Leach (eds.) *Comparatively Speaking*. Dunedin: Otago University Press. pp. 147–180.