Humans of Apia: Building a Chronology of Pre-Colonial Human Activity in the Nu'u Mavae of Apia

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Abstract

Apia has long been believed to be the initial area of settlement of visitors to Samoa from the early 19th century, between about 1820 and 1830. Scholars who have studied Apia rarely comment on Samoan history before European contact, citing a lack of written sources. It is widely accepted in academic circles that Apia was established as a village and a township at the onset of Samoa's colonial period. However, the archaeological record via Lapita pottery dates the earliest occupation of the Samoan archipelago over three thousand years before Europeans arrived. Additionally, the resident families comprising the nu'umavae of Apia also hold to oral traditions that date indigenous occupation well before the arrival of Europeans. Like many villages, Apia represents an academic hinterland, except that the development of a capital city around it has consumed no other village. In the face of current and ongoing redevelopment, Apia's few remaining tangible connections to its past are under threat, if not already destroyed. This article describes the first phase in efforts to generate a basic chronology of human activity in the village of Apia before European settlement. Using a mix of quantitative (soil analysis and radiocarbon dating) and qualitative methods (household dwelling surveys, oral history interviews), this project team sought to establish an archaeological baseline of human occupation of Apia, with the hypothesis that carbon dating would be indicative of human activity in Apia before European settlement. The project teams hope this and subsequent research will help inform national development efforts and encourage more holistic management of Samoa's cultural heritage, starting with her capital city.

Keywords: Village of Apia, Samoa Prehistory, Archaeology

Background of Project

On 6 December 2016, the Government of Samoa released the finalised Waterfront Plan (the "Plan"), a 98–page text containing details on the newly launched "Apia Waterfront Development Project, 2017-2026", a large-scale re-imagining of the entire span of both Beach Road and Mulinu'u Road, stretching from Vaiala Beach to Mulinu'u Peninsula. The Waterfront Plan was described as a " strategic document that will guide government planning and waterfront users on future development, and how we envisage the waterfront to be transformed in the next ten or so years" (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment/Samoa Tourism Authority, 2016: 3), a linchpin moment in the ongoing development of Samoa, beginning with the redesign of Samoa's primary urban conduits. This development project covers about

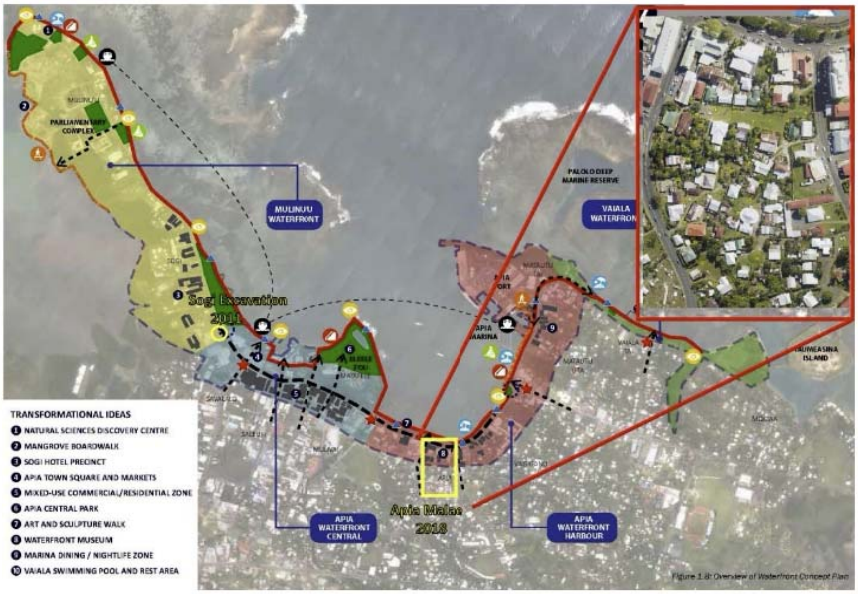
five kilometres along the coast and one city block inland of mixed commercial, residential and government lands.

The Apia Waterfront Development Project significantly impacts cultural heritage management in two significant ways. First, the Plan outlines five specific goals, the first of which, to "reflect a unique Samoan experience" (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment/Samoa Tourism Authority, 2016: 8), is the objective most concerned with the preservation and showcasing of Samoan culture and heritage. The Plan features a list of preliminary initiatives designed to achieve this, such as public art and handicraft displays, a waterfront museum and the refurbishment of existing built heritage sites. While theoretically, these measures will help the Government successfully deliver a visitor-driven version of Samoan heritage, the issue underpinning this process is the large deficit of published knowledge on the history of Apia before the arrival of Europeans in the early 19th century; thus, the 'Samoan experience' being reflected for visitors to the waterfront is one that begins about 1820, and therefore heavily curated by European settlers. This contradicts the oral histories of Samoans themselves (Pratt 1890, Stair 1894, Fraser 1896, Kramer 1994, Buck 1930, Freeman 1944, Henry 1980, Meleisea and Schoeffel 1987, Tamasese 2007, Va'a 2010), and the archaeological record, which dates Samoan occupation of the archipelago to about 1000BC (Leach 1989, Dickinson 1998, Petchey 2001, Rieth 2008, Addison 2010). Second, the Plan divides the Apia beachfront into four thematically unique areas: Mulinu'u Waterfront, Apia Waterfront Central, Apia Waterfront Harbour and Vaiala Waterfront. The Apia Waterfront Harbourincludes "Beach Road, Apia port and the marina area" (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment/Samoa Tourism Authority, 2016: 12) and, by default, it also includes but does not mention, the *nu'umavae* or traditional village of Apia.

The capital of Samoa is named Apia because of its genesis from the village of the same name, a fact that is often lost in the literature, primarily because of the absence of writing on Apia, the village, before it played host to Apia, the capital (Pringle 1989, Burgoyne 2006, Neubert 2014). While the Apia Waterfront Development Project looks to accomplish the government's goal to "showcase Samoa's natural and built environment, history and heritage, sports, local cuisine, language and arts, encouraging our locals and visitors alike to gain a greater sense of appreciation for Samoan culture" (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment/Samoa (Tourism Authority, 2016: 5), its major drawback is that it does not require any pre-development heritage assessments. This means that, potentially, any new development is enacted in complete ignorance of Apia's archaeological

past. At best, it compromises our few existing physical remnants of heritage; at worst, it destroys them outright. Whatever the scale of development, Samoa's collective heritage, without the benefit of evaluation for archaeological or historical significance, is in danger.

Figure 1: Project field site (inset) within the Apia Waterfront Development Plan.



With this in mind, this project was establishedto generate a basic chronology of human habitation in the village of Apia before European settlement. The field site focuses on the Apia malaeas the standard epicentre of Samoan village life and should therefore provide the most evidence of human activity, particularly by Samoans (Van der Ryn 2016). The authors understand that, from an archaeological perspective, a malae is simply an emply space devoid of structures, however, this paper is written from a Samoan perspective that challenges this notion. The first malae was established by the highest of Samoan deities, Tagaloa, and hosted the first meeting "of chiefs and gods, where the first councils were held to create social and cosmological order" (van der Ryn 2016, 117). So integral are malae to village life in Samoa, that every village in Samoa has one, and all malae are named and recognisedin the honorifics of each village. In his research on the significance of the malae to a village, Micah van der Ryn writes that, "

> *" . . . spatially and temporally, the malae can be understood as a sacred central starting point of a village. The village's founding chiefs built their houses on them, or next to them forming the first ring of structures as the descent group grew over the generations, the village physically grew outward from its sacred malae center" (117).*

Malae, in ancient and recent times, are the literal and figurative center of any Samoan village.

We aim to develop a baseline for a deeper understanding of the precontact history of Apia, therefore requiring a mixed archaeological and ethnographic approach. We were hopeful that the data generated from this project could help inform national development efforts driven by our frequent partners at the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNRE), Planning and Urban Management Authority (PUMA), Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) and the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC).

History of Apia – *Nu'u Mavae* and Capital

The Prehistory of Apia

Lapita

Radiocarbon dates from Lapita pottery sites from the Bismarck Archipelago to Samoa have helped archaeologists track the chronology of human settlement or the "First Polynesian settlers" nearly 3,000 years ago (Kirch 2017:81). The first seafarers explored the Pacific Ocean, stretching 4,500 kilometres throughout "ten to fifteen successive human generations" (Kirch 2017:89). The first settlers adapted to their newly colonised islands. Eventually, they practised inter-island contact, trade, and exchange between neighbouring islands. Specifically, with the islands of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa, scholars have claimed that the interactions of these island groups created a dynamic "Ancestral Polynesian Culture" that evolved over 500 years (Kirch 1989: 1-2; Kaeppler 1978: 246).

Green and Davidson's (1969) thorough archaeological research revealed Samoa's prehistorical villages with house platforms, pigeon mounds, and traces of agricultural evidence of sustainable communities. A combination of archaeological and ethnohistoric materials announced the formation of Samoa's domestic landscapes over time and developed cultivation practices that helped sustain their villages. As did all Lapita populations in Remote Oceania,,Samoans likely practiced agriculture almost immediately upon first settlement. Although there is no plant microfossil evidence for Samoa yet, most likely, the traditional formations of chiefly political structure eventually evolved to maintain crops. This chiefly structure also led to communal hierarchyand the chiefly systems that became *fa'a-Samoa* (Samoan culture, protocols, and practices) as we know it today.

Samoa's archaeological prehistory with legends and stories of "old Samoa" piece together a genealogy and timeline that traces the transitions of Samoa, specifically Apia, throughout the years. Samoa's social structure evolved around the *matai* or

"titleholder" (Milner 1993:136-137). With two classes of *matai*, the *ali'i* (high chief) and *tulāfale* (talking chief), they are responsible for the extended *'aiga* (family), land, genealogies, and authority within the village and district. Each village is maintained through a political structure or constitution called the *fa'alupega* or honorifics that display the hierarchical systems of villages. Each *fa'alupega*is unique to each *nu'u* (village). According to Meleisea,

> *Origins of the rank and status of matai titles cannot be explained by simple generalisation: it seems contradictory, for example that certain tulāfaletitles outrank certain ali'ititles in some contexts. In fact the rank of each title can be understood only in the context of the nu'u and district of its genealogical origins (Meleisea 1992:15)*

Nu'u Mavae of Apia:

Several existing oral traditions detail the original name, geography and inhabitants of the *nu'u mavae* of Apia (Malietoa 2017, Burgoyne 2006). Apia is part of the Tuamasaga political district and falls, more specifically, within the Vaimauga district, which stretches along Upolu's northern coast from Lauli'i in the east to Alamagoto in the west and inland to Alaoa (Kramer 1904, Henry 1980, Meleisea 1987, So'o 2008, Malietoa 2017). Apia is understood to have been part of a larger conglomerate of villages known, in some accounts, by the name Sagauga (Burgoyne 2006: 31, LMS Church1958: 148). While the village today is centred on the coast around its *malae*, Sinave ma Ulumoto'otua (LMS Church 1958: 149), the precontact borders of what is now known as Apia were much more extensive, demarcated by Mata'utu on its northeast corner, Tanugamanono in the south-east, Alamagoto in the south-west, and Apia itself stretching across Upolu's northern coast (see Figure 2). Apia lore states that in precontact times the village was under the domain of three chiefs, Tuiletufuga, Pupuali'i and Leta'a, collectively known as the Faletolu, reflecting the power dynamics of the Vaimauga district (personal communication). While Tuiletufuga held sway in Apia proper, his brother chiefs governed other parts of the district, with Pupuali'i based in Mata'utu and Leta'a in Alamagoto. Together, the Faletolu helped manage a significant subsection of the district with legendary connections to many of the elder deities, including the Fe'e, Vaimauga'sfamous war god (Va'a 2007). According to Malietoa (2017), the name Tuiletufugawas bestowed on the chief builder of the famed Fale o le Fe'e, the house where the Fe'e lived and received tributes deep in the AlaoaValley (6).

Figure 2: 1886 Map of Apia nu'umavae and capital. The blue rectangle indicates the modern city, the green rectangle indicates the current village, and the red line indicates the modern coastline.

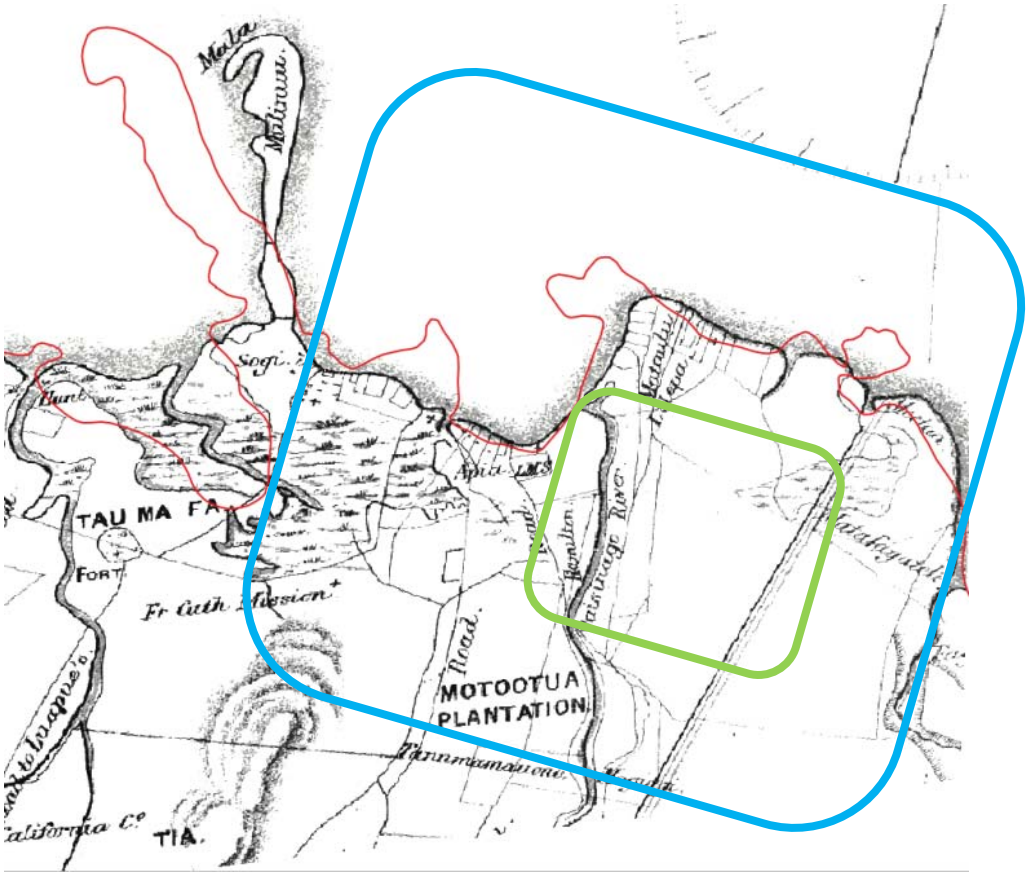


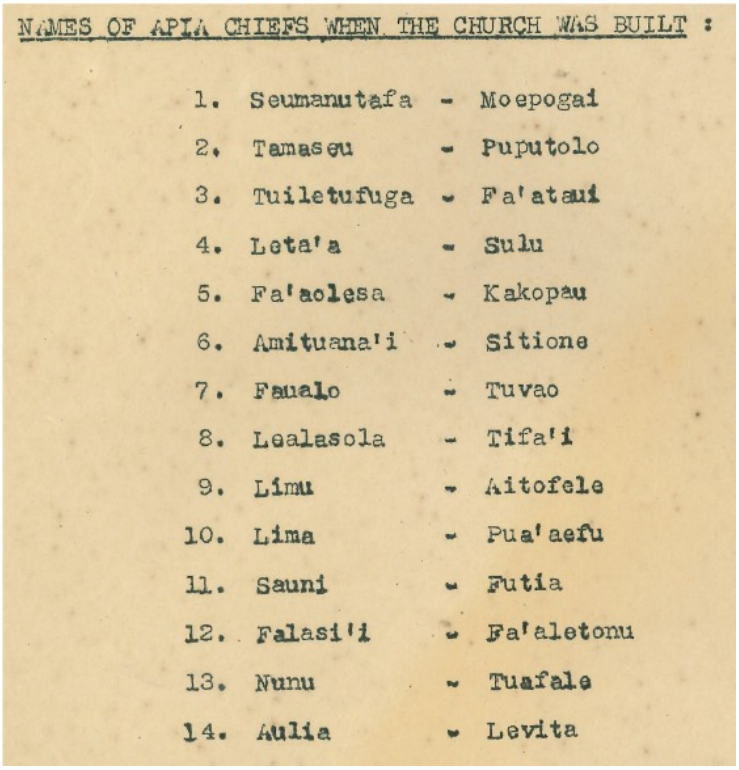
Figure 3: 2019 Building Footprint of the greater Apia area.

By the early 1800s, as more and more European beachcombers settled around Apia Harbour, key power shifts had taken place in the village. The *ali'isili* of Apia, and key interlocuter with foreign brokers, was SeumanutafaMoepogai. In the oral histories of Apia, Seumanutafa is identified as one of the Alo o Sina, along with his brother To'omalatai. According to legend, the two brothers originated in Savai'i. They were hunting pigeons and found their way to Apia one day, where they encountered the Faletolu. Upon inquiry, the Faletolu, seeing the advantage of an entrée into a new political network, invited Seumanutafa and To'omalatai to reside in their village and serve as paramount chiefs.

In contrast, the Faletolu took upon themselves*tulafale* positions. The brothers agreed, and the Faletolu positioned them in central Apia and Mata'utu, respectively, where they remain. The shifting political landscape of Samoa, driven by powerful alliances and wars, also shifted power dynamics in Apia, making space for other families to reside in Apia, including Vaigalepa of Alaoa, and Tamaseu and Faualo,

who represent ancient ties to the Aiga Salevalasi. A good indication of the evolution of power in Apia is seen in the post-contact *fa'alupega*(1981), and Church records from before the colonial era (LMS records from 1892-1898), which reflect ties to both pre and post-contact eras. Today, the *nu'umavae* of Apia, located in the proverbial centre of the Capital, is governed collectively by ali'i chiefs Seumanutafa and Tamaseu and tulafale ali'I Tuiletufuga.

Figure 4: List of Apia chiefs in 1892, the year the LMS Apia church was erected.



NAMES OF APIA CHIEFS WHEN THE CHURCH WAS BUILT :

1. Seumanutafa - Moepogai
2. Tamaseu - Puputolo
3. Tuiletufuga - Fa'ataui
4. Leta'a - Sulu
5. Fa'aolesa - Kakopau
6. Amituana'i - Sitione
7. Faualo - Tuvao
8. Lealasola - Tifa'i
9. Limu - Aitofele
10. Lima - Pua'aefu
11. Sauni - Futia
12. Falasi'i - Fa'aletonu
13. Nunu - Tuafale
14. Aulia - Levita

The name Apia, from which the capital borrows its name, is a contraction of the village's original name, attributed to several pre-historic events. Turner (1884) records the name Apitiaabout the decimation of a fleet from Manono buried at Tanugamanono, which drove part of the community to settle near the bay. According to village lore, the name Apia is short for Apitiaolefaga, a designation reflecting the popularity of Apia harbour as a resting place for travelling parties as they boated around Upolu and to the neighbouring islands, often calling into Apia Harbor for rest and refuelling(Nelson 1925, Tiffany 1979, Pitt 1970). The name's origin story was detailed in a song composed for and performed by the village at Samoa's Independence celebrations in 2017 (Apia Village 2017).

E talalasi Samoa i le mafuaaga o nisi o afioaga

Ona o tala o le vavau ma mea natutupui le soifuaga

E fa'apenasio'unu'ufa'aofofogase'ioufa'amatala

Apia ualauiloa ae pemaifealonamafuaaga

Apitiaolefaganafofoamaiai o lo'uigoa

Ona o a'usafai ma apitaga o e malagamaii Samoa

O motu o le Pasefikafa'apeaisiatunu'utetele

E mapumaiilo'ufaga ma apitiaailo'ueleele

Finagalo tama le suialoa le igoaia Apia

Fa'amanatuaolo'ueleelesafai ma apitaga

Lea uafilifilia e Samoa e fai ma onalaumua

Lo'umatupalapala lea ua to mai e o'oi le gataaga

The Making of a Capital:

The interactions between Samoans and their neighbouring kin from Tonga and Fiji had been established centuries before the first Europeans arrived at their shores (Barnes and Hunt 2005). The first European navigator to describe in writing the islands of Samoa was Dutch navigator Joseph Roggeveen in 1721. The multiple waves of Europeans to the Pacific region included whalers, sailors, Christian missionaries, and colonialism that eventually led to islands being exposed to new ideologies, Western capitalism, Christianity, and more *papalagi*(cloud bursters or sky-breakers, white men) (Henry 1980:162; Meleisea 1987:42). Whalers and beachcombers were common throughout the Pacific, but it was not until after the arrival of John Williams of the London Missionary Society in 1830 at Sapapalii, Savaii in Samoa that "development" and modernisation started through Christian teachings and the spread of the Gospel throughout the Samoan Islands.

The village of Apia on the northeast coast of Upolu had a natural break in the outer reef that allowed access and convenience "for vessels seeking only a temporary anchorage and refreshment" (Burgoyne 2006: 32; Wilkes 1845:116). Burgoyne (2006) suggests that in pre-European contact Samoa, Apia's interactions with neighbouring villages and districts were extensive. John Williams describes Apia

harbour as "spacious and convenient and safe, easy of access and egress and will no doubt become a place much visited by whalers as soon as it is known and as soon as it is deemed safe to anchor among the Islanders" (Williams &Moyle 1984: 168). Williams writes that Apia chiefs had requested more foreign ships to anchor in Apia. Williams' responded to the request by chiefs by stating, "I was perfectly willing so to do, but English captains would ask me about the Chief whether he was of our religion [Christianity] or no and I should reply no he is Devolo [tevolo]" (Moyle 1984: 168). Christian missionaries, mainly the LMS, exposed the Samoan islands to explorers and traders through their reports and journal updates to their headquarters in London. Apia on Upolu and Pago Pago harbour in American Samoa would begin to receive more whaling ships by 1836. It was not until the mid-1840s that Apia would become more popular and develop into a commercial port and centre of European settlement (Gilson 1970: 144). With two prominent Protestant missionaries in Samoa at the time, namely the London Missionary Society and the Methodist Wesleyan Missionary, exposure of Samoa and mainly Apia as a "port town" would become the new normal. With the influx of foreigners into Samoa, the first port regulations were set in 1838-1839 to set rules for those coming to Samoa and for Samoans. The port codes would implement port fees, prohibit liquor trade and impose curfews to protect 'the poor Samoan people' from Western influence (Gilson 1970: 146-148). By the 1850s, the Apia harbour had become a major port in the South Pacific, similar to Papeete in Tahiti and Levuka in Fiji (Meleisea 1987:76).

Political reorganisation became a priority for Apia in the early 1850s because of the presence of European settlers, visiting sailors, and Samoans from various districts. The London Missionary Society too had a strong presence in Apia as well. According to Davidson, a 'mixed court' was organised in Apia between the British and American consuls and principal chiefs (Davidson 1967:42). The American and British interests had grown in the mid-1850s, and Apia was recognised in the region as an important supply and trade centre (Pringle 1989: 14). It was not long after, in 1857 that the German company JC Godeffroy&Sohn established their copra operations in Samoa and they expanded quickly throughout the islands. With large plantations also came laborers from neighbouring German colonies in Meleanesia. Meleisea (1987) writes that within Apia, Samoan chiefs of Apia "no longer had any control over the Apia municipal area" (77) with the rise of foreigners. Local business owners started shops, saloons and hotels to cater for the increase of foreign traders and business owners. Government buildings would eventually be centred along the beach.

With the rise of foreign settler interests in the Samoan islands, Apia became known as a 'little Cairo' and 'hell of the Pacific' because of the foreign community and their 'unruly, disretupatiable' actions (Gilson 1970: 179). Visiting naval commanders and missionaries were criticised and were ashamed for 'setting examples of immorality by gambling, drinking, and double-dealing in all shapes" (Gilson 1970:179). During this transitional period of Apia, Samoa continued to experience civil wars, with the highest titles pushing for power and using the foreign influence of the Germans, Americans and British in Samoa to help support their efforts.

In 1879 a Municipal Convention was signed to provide a legal framework for a consular-controlled Municipal Board that would exercise its jurisdiction over the foreign settlers and Samoan residents from east of Vaiala to Sogi on the west (Gilson 1970: 361; Burgoyne 2006: 70-71). Although Samoans had sovereignty over the islands, Apia became a self-governing enclave as a 'neutral territory.' Protecting Samoan lands and upholding settler economic and political interests in Apia became the ultimate priority of the convention. In 1889, the three powers nearly went to war with seven warships anchored in Apia harbour to provide military support to their respective nations. The night before the battle, a great hurricane capsized all but one ship, with 146 sailors recorded as having died. The people of Apia are credited for rescuing some of the men in the ocean at the time. High Chief Seumanutafa ordered Samoans to rig a rescue line and gradually brought to shore the men stranded at sea. One author writes, "it was only now that white men began to get an insight into the character of the people they were making war against and whose country they were despoiling" (McCarron 1907:20). A treaty was eventually signed in Berlin in 1889 that recognised Samoan monarchy and restricting Western power to the Apia area (Holmes 1974: 14).

Apia's Colonial History:

Western colonialism came to Samoa in multiple waves. Still, it was not until the signing of the 1899 Tripartite Convention that the three colonial powers (Germany, the United States, and Great Britain) agreed to divide the islands of Samoa. Germany mainly occupied the western islands of Upolu, Savaii, Apolima and Manono to use the flat lands to grow their copra, cocoa, cotton, and rubber plantations. The United States controlled the eastern island of Tutuila and later the Manu'a Islands, mainly for the highly desired Pago Pago harbour. The move by the US to occupy Tutuila was a strategic military move ideal for a coaling station (Faleomavaega 1994: 113). Great Britain relinquished its ties to Samoa for German-claimed lands in parts of the Pacific

and Africa. Dr. Wilhelm Solf became Governor of German Samoa. Solf was not new to Samoa as he served the Apia Municipality's executive officer. He controlled the Apia area and took advantage of any opportunity to reduce the royal power and any chiefly title in Samoa. Establishing the Lands and Titles Commission to oversee disputes related to lands and chiefly titles became one method used by Solf to reduce chiefly authority. Germans had a strong presence in the Apia area with plantation headquarters and offices in Sogi and a clinic and hospital. Fortunately for Samoa, there was no strong military presence. Pringle records Apia's physical landscape changing with the Apia Hospital's construction in 1902, the Apia Courthouse in 1903, the Native School in Malifa in 1907, Office of Native Affairs in Mulinu'u in 1909. Under the Germans, two religious landmarks were built in Apia, the Wesleyan Church in Matafele (1900) and the Catholic cathedral in 1905.Eustis' biography of Apia's favourite daughter, Aggie Grey, writes about how European bandstands were built along Apia Beach Road to welcome warships visiting Samoa (Eustis 1979: 42). In addition to the splendid architectural designs, the legacy of Germans was in multiple Samoan families that bore the last names of Germans who settled and lived in Samoa, mainly in Apia.

Powerful Samoan chiefs like Mataafa Iosefo had their titles reduced in the new administration under the new German Governor. As *AliiSili* (paramount Chief), Mataafa Iosefo took instructions from Solf. The *tupusili*(paramount king) was given to the Emperor in Germany. Mulinu'u peninsula is also part of Apia but was the seat of the Samoan Government before 1900 and remained the seat of the Government even today. A burial place for Samoan kings and high chiefs, Mulinu'u was flying a new flag of allegiance. The German Administration were eventually challenged by Samoan chiefs from Savaii and their kin at Mulinu'u. Specifically, famed orator Lauaki Namulauulu and his supporters started the *Mau a Pule*, the "opposition movement of Savaii" that challenged German laws and mainly the removal of Samoan authority. As a result, Lauaki and his supporters were exiled to the German Pacific colony in Saipan, Micronesia.

With the beginning of the First World War in Europe in 1914, Samoa would soon have a new colonial experience. Without any force, New Zealand, under the Expeditionary Force, occupied the western islands of Samoa under Colonel Logan. Samoa immediately became a military government under New Zealand. The British Flag was raised at the courthouse in Apia to officially indicate the relinquishing of German power in the islands to the world. Unlike the Germans, New Zealand had no profit motive in its administration (Meleisea 1987: 132). Before the office mandate system of 1919, the new administration occupied the former German colony on a

"caretaker basis" (Campbell 2005: 50). Apia remained a central hub for business, trading, education and education and urbanisation within the Samoan islands. Not long after the military took over, Samoa experienced a considerable population that died of the influenza epidemic of 1918 under the poor leadership of New Zealand administrators, resulting in the death of nearly twenty per cent of the Samoan population. The local community and Samoans had to adjust to the new laws and regulations administered by the New Zealand administration. In January 1920, the League of Nations officially administered Western Samoa as a mandate territory under the League of Nations. Around the same time, a 'Citizen's Community' in Apia was formed, comprising the European community and *afakasi*as a platform to present their grievances to the new Government.

The 1920s and 1930s became known as turbulent times in Samoa. Local Samoans began to voice their issues with the New Zealand administration. Not only were Samoan chiefs reduced in their authority, but Samoans remained voiceless in the changes within Samoa. One prime example was in 1923 when Major George Richardson established a model native village of Lepea on the outskirts of Apia. Apia experienced a substantial infrastructure transformation with seawalls, electric street lighting, new two-storey offices, bridges, market halls, and the change of Catholic and Methodist church buildings. The *Mau* movement, or “opposition” to New Zealand leadership, pushed for “Samoa mo Samoa” or Samoa for Samoans. Under the leadership of Ta'isi Nelson and TupuaTamasese, the *Mau* movement protested the limited authority given to Samoans through enacted laws, the thousands of deaths from the influenza of 1918, and the disregard of Samoan agency through*fa'ate'a* (exile) of paramount chiefs.

World War II became a transitional period for Samoa. After the formation of the United Nations, Samoa took advantage of the opportunity to push for self-determination. Apia became the centre of the discussion between New Zealand administrators and Samoa leaders as Samoa began to prepare for independence. The UNO (United National Organization) arrived in 1947 to a massive crowd of supporters. As a result of the meetings, the Samoan Amendment Act of 1947 was signed to begin the formation of the Government of Western Samoa, and in 1959, Samoa chose its first prime minister and prepared for independence in 1962. At the seat of Government in Apia, Mulinu’u, the Joint Head of State, Malietoa Tanumafili II, and TupuTamaseseMea’ole raised the Samoan flag at Samoa’s Independence ceremony.

Apia today:

Apia today is a bustling town with shops, grocery stores, markets, restaurants and coffeeshops that have become a popular destination for tourists worldwide. As the national centre of industry, commerce and transportation (Huffer and Soo 2000), Apia provides over 90 per cent of Samoa's paid employment. With development, Apia has seen the rise of new church denominations and problems associated with youth. Although the village of Apia continues to thrive as a*nu'umavae*, the changes have resulted in village chiefs dealing with challenges that other villages do not face. Despite the changes, the *nu'u*system remains at the centre of Apia's physical and cultural life (Huffer and Soo 2000: 87). Samoans flocked to Apia to expose themselves to Western things and to speak English, but also to get a 'good' education.

Figure 5: North facing aerial photograph of Apia town.

Figure 6: Close up aerial photograph of the Project field site.

ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD METHODS

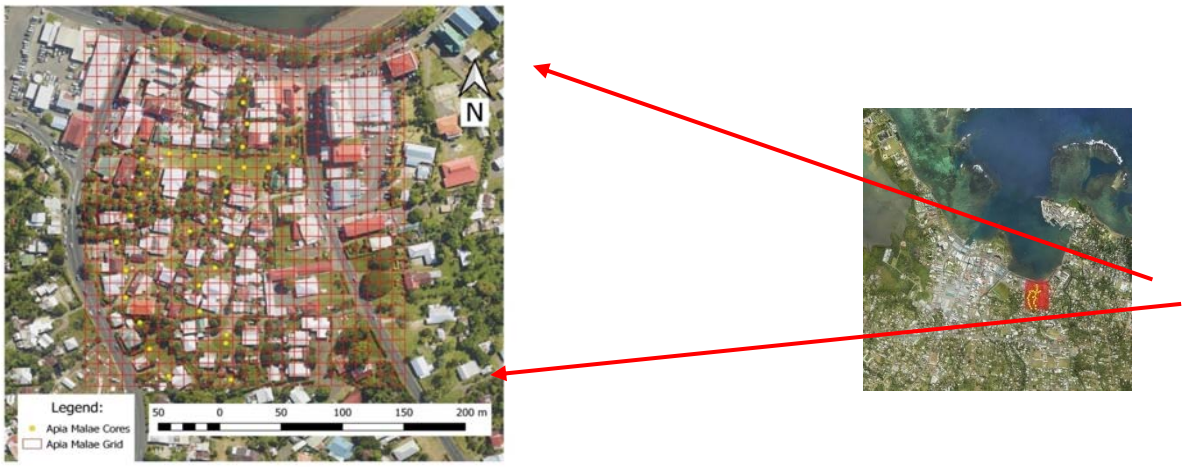
Between October 2018 and February 2019 the Centre for Samoan Studies (CSS) conducted archaeological coring to identify the temporal extent and possible stratigraphy of the village of Apia (see Figures7&12). Cores were obtained using a hand-driven 10cm diameter circular auger. Cores were collected in arbitrary 10cm levels. Standard procedures were used to recover and describe the cores. The auger was inserted into the ground until a 10cm section of the bucket was filled with sediment and removed. Successive bucket-loads (10 cm sections) of sediment were bagged and labelled for examination at the CSS lab. Coring was continued until a depth of 3mbs [meters below the surface] (the working length of the auger) or until made impossible by impassable sediments and rock (see Figure 8).

Cores were generally placed in E-W and N-S transects (deviation of transit line was due to obstruction by buildings, roadways, etc.). The E-W transect was made across the village malae at the N end of the village (Figure 13). Two transits were made in an N-S direction, one on the west side of the village and the other through the centre of the village (Figure 13). A $10m^2$ grid was laid over the village using QGIS to

track/label cores (Figure7). Core GPS locations were recorded with a Samsung S6 Smartphone, and the location and accuracy of the core locations were verified with MNRE 2015 aerial photos with an accuracy of approximately +-2m.

Lacking the expertise to properly analyse the 490 individual sections collected (Figure8), a small representative sample of each core section was later bagged, labelled and saved for future investigation during processing at CSS. Most of each 10cm core section was wet screened through a 1/8 inch mesh screen, with the resulting non-rock debris also bagged for later expert analysis.

Figure 7: Apia malae cores



HOUSEHOLD DWELLING SURVEY AND ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Household Dwelling Surveys (HDS) and Oral History Interviews(OHI) were thequalitative methods used to collect ethnographic data.Core samples were planned for extraction across a 200 x 300 meter section, including key elements of the Apia village community; the malae, the maota of Seumanutafa and the laoa of Tuiletufuga. As in most Samoan villages, residents have settled and spread out according to their affiliation with these critical structures and families (Van der Ryn 2016). By focusing on households and residents living within the designated central 'block' radiating from the malae, the HDS and OHI were devised to collect data on Apia's architectural and precontactethnohistory, respectively.

a. Household Dwelling Surveys –these were 1-page surveys designed to help establish a timeline of architectural development around the malaeby specifically soliciting information on the construction of western-style houses as replacementsfora fale Samoa, a typical trend in Samoan settlement.Other than the maota and laoa, which are of Samoan design, but made of modern materials, all other residential structures in the survey grid are western style houses. We hoped to date the construction of current homes and extrapolate that data to compare with archival images of the malae to track architectural history. We also created a consent form (Appendix A) and a survey form (Appendix B).

   We initially planned to survey 60 Households selected for two reasons. Due to their proximity, first, to the Apia malae, which serves as the epicentre of village events and activities, and second, to the pre-selected core sampling sites. 60 Households were originally identified for the survey. However, our team could onlysuccessfully administer 48HDS.

b. Oral History Interviews – our team also conducted formal interviews with self-identified long-term residents of Apia who lived directly on the periphery of the malae. We did not set a maximum age for the interviews, but at a minimum, we sought out interlocuters who were at least 40. We hoped these interviews would contribute to a deeper understanding of precontact Apia history. Our questions prompted the interlocutersto any personal knowledge of Apia origin stories, their understanding of Apia's matai hierarchy, significant village auxiliaries and village-specific historical events and legends.

We interviewed 21 individuals ranging in age from 45 to 86. All but two interviewees had genealogical links to the village, while two individuals had married into families from Apia. By the time of the interviews, both individuals had lived in Apia for over 40 years.

RESULTS

RESULTS OF CORING:

Except for slight colour differences, gauged using a MunsellColour Chart, all cores consisted of alluvial sediments of silty clay loam with only minor variation in composition (Yeo2001). There were two exceptions to the above: 1. the north end of the survey also contained a coastal "sand bar" (50-60m wide); 2. the upper layers across the malae (E-W transit) showed evidence of "landfill" from other locations (varying from 40-100cm deep in some areas close to the malae).

The water table (level) was recorded at approximately 0.8 to 1.5 mbs with an average depth of 1.25m. (see Figure 8). The subsurface water at approximately 1mbs made it challenging to determine if recovered sediments were brought up from penetration of the auger bucket or were coming in from the saturated sidewalls, but the heavy clay content in most samples seemed to indicate that little "cave-in from above" was occurring. These observations seemed to indicate a coastal "sand bar" (50-60m wide) on the north end of the survey and a river flood plain south of the "sand bar". All core depths were recorded (Fig. 8) with an average depth of 1.9m. Only abbreviated descriptions of each core section were possible as the sediments were mixed due to the method of extraction and were not examined in situ due to a lack of expertise. No faunal, floral or plant microfossil identification has yet been undertaken on the materials recovered. Charcoal was recovered and dated from 3 of the 27 cores taken [7 out of 490 auger core sections of 10cm each contained carbon used for dating] (see Figures8, 9&10). No recognisable prehistoric cultural artifacts were recovered from the extracted cores.

Figure 8: Core Depth & C-14 Samples (24 cores shown)

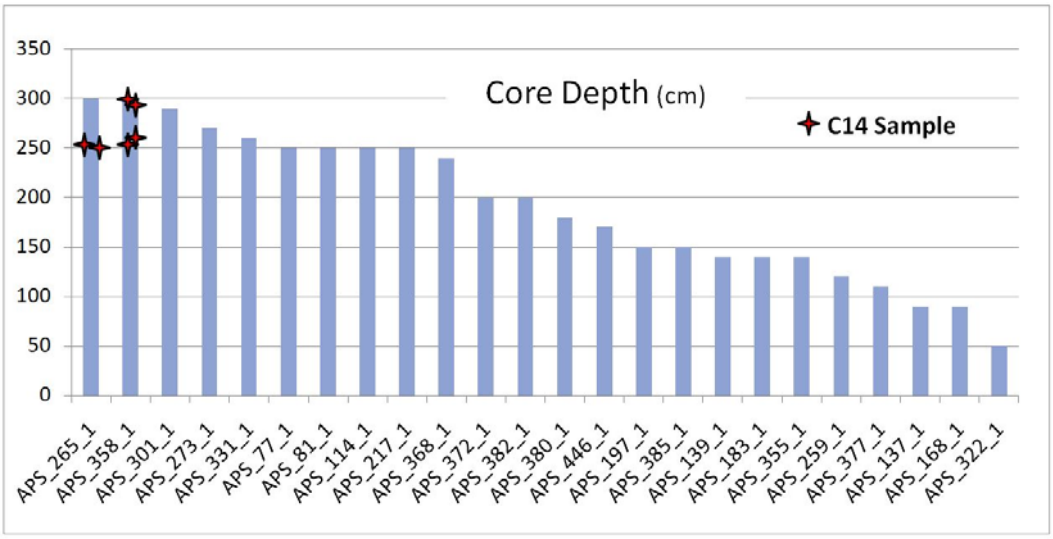


Figure 9: C14 Dates

Core-Layer	Sample #	dC13	F14C %	Radiocarbon determination BP (68.2% Probability)	Approx. ADdate	Material
APS 358 Layer 25	Wk-50743	-26.8 0.8	80.1 0.4	1778±36	172 ±36	Wood
APS 265 Layer 23/24	Wk-50738	-27.8 0.8	80.5 0.4	1741±39	209 ±39	Wood
APS 358 Layer 30	Wk-50746	*	80.8 0.1	1713±13	237 ±13	Wood
APS 358 Layer 28	Wk-50745	*	81.3 0.1	1661±14	289 ±14	Wood
APS 265 Layer 23	Wk-50737	-27.5 0.8	81.6 0.4	1630±44	320 ±44	Wood
APS 358 Layer 24	Wk-50741	*	81.8 0.1	1613±13	337 ±13	Wood

Figure 10: C14 Dates

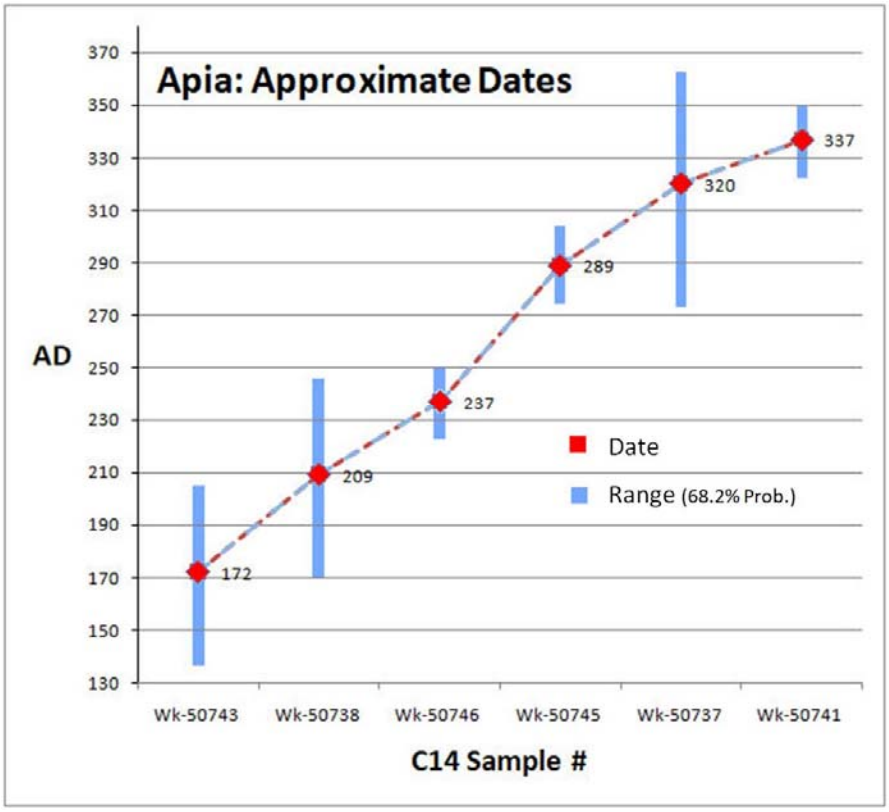


Figure 11: Apia Cores: Basic Data

Previous Designation	Core Depth	Water Depth	Longitude	Latitude	Date Recorded
APS_114_1	250		-171.763632	-13.83498278	Feb 2019
APS_137_1	90		-171.7635413	-13.83419835	Nov 2018
APS_139_1	140	120	-171.7634952	-13.83436514	Oct 2018
APS_168_1	90		-171.7634609	-13.83420095	Oct 2018
APS_183_1	140		-171.763457	-13.83561925	Feb 2019
APS_197_1	150		-171.7633013	-13.83404271	Oct 2018
APS_217_1	250		-171.7633123	-13.8358402	Feb 2019
APS_259_1	120		-171.7631124	-13.83406323	Oct 2018
APS_265_1	300	80	-171.7631577	-13.83460259	Oct 2018
APS_273_1	270		-171.7631227	-13.83535223	Feb 2019
APS_301_1	290	110	-171.7630378	-13.83506475	Nov 2018
APS_304_1	nd		-171.7630998	-13.83535118	Nov 2018
APS_322_1	50		-171.7629265	-13.83415944	Oct 2018
APS_331_1	260	170	-171.7629549	-13.8349521	Nov 2018
APS_355_1	140		-171.7628535	-13.83427656	Oct 2018
APS_358_1	300	130	-171.7628371	-13.83478568	Feb 2019
APS_368_1	240	150	-171.7628735	-13.83550816	Nov 2018
APS_369_1	310	220	-171.7628888	-13.83558799	Nov 2018
APS_372_1	200		-171.7628461	-13.83586954	Feb 2019

APS_377_1	110		-171.7627869	-13.83351031	Nov 2018
APS_380_1	180		-171.7627715	-13.8337322	Nov 2018
APS_382_1	200		-171.76281	-13.83391837	Nov 2018
APS_385_1	150	130	-171.7627411	-13.83420871	Oct 2018
APS_446_1	170		-171.7625554	-13.83415927	Oct 2018
APS_77_1	250		-171.7637208	-13.83440184	Nov 2018
APS_81_1	250	120	-171.7637169	-13.83476468	Feb 2019
APS_87_1	nd		-171.7636669	-13.8352046	Feb 2019

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS

This project had four primary objectives:

1. To answer the question: how old is the Apia malae?

   We took core samples across and in the vicinity of the Apia malae, hoping to come across carbon samples that we could date, assuming carbon samples are indicative of human occupation (Gosling2019). One of the most effective direct measures for tracking past human activity is the presence and abundance of ancient (fossil) charcoal found in soils or sediments (Whitlock & Larsen, 2001). The use of charcoal to track past human activity is particularly effective in tropical settings where a natural fire is limited due to either a lack of ignition source or flammability; that is, the appearance of fire is dependent on the arrival of humans (Argiriadis et al., 2018; Huebert& Allen, 2016).We have cores and carbon samples that tell us that at 3 meters deep, there is evidence of human occupation on Upolu, including the Apia area. Core samples at a depth of 2-3 meters have produced datable carbon samples showing the probable presence of human activity in the Apia area before 300 AD. We acknowledge that there is a possibility that carbon could have been washed "downstream" from people living anywhere above the Vailima/Vaisigano watershed, which would correlate with other studies that confirm more concentrated inland settlement before the arrival of Europeans (Davidson 1969, Golson 1957, Watters 1958). All of our samples were

extracted from a depth of 3 meters. Thus, we would need to go lower to determine the actual age of the malae and how long humans have lived there. For now, we have established that the Apia malae was likely used by humans after AD 300.

Figure 12: Apia Core Locations

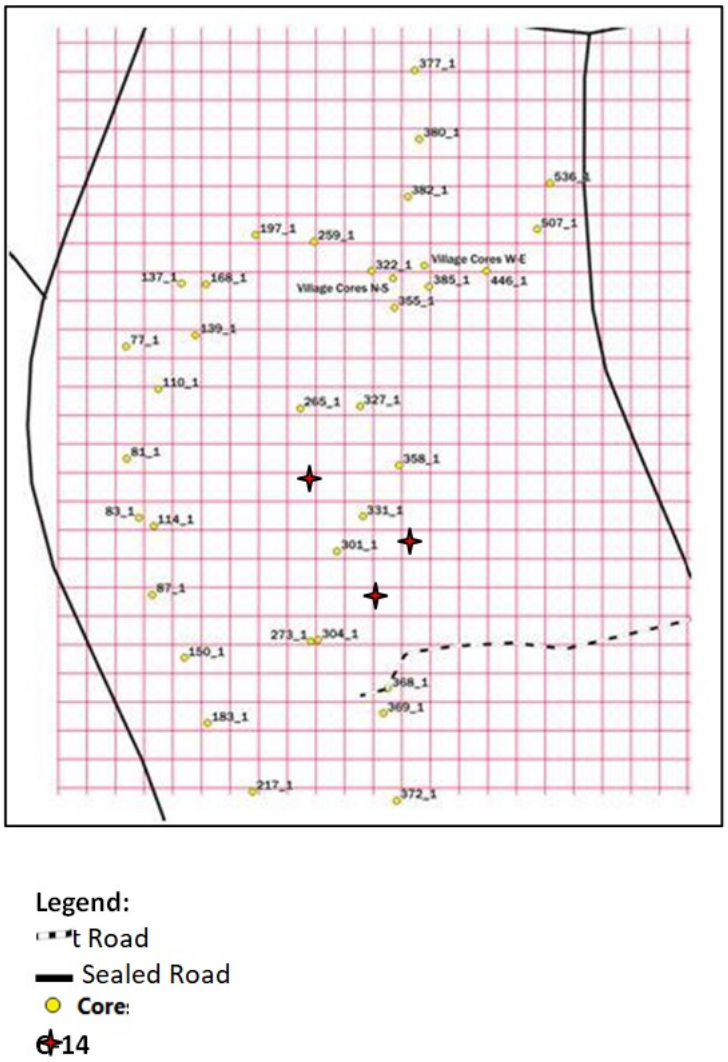
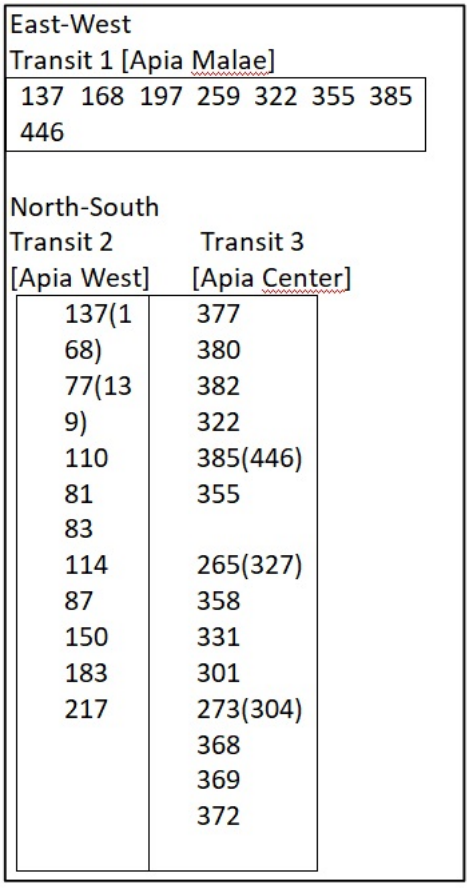


Figure 13: Transits



2. Create a chronology of human activity in the village of Apia before European settlement.

Human activity in the village of Apia before contact was confirmed through carbon samples. Although futher research is needed, based on the deepest position of the datable carbon, we postulate that the ground level of Apia was 3 meters lower 1500 years ago and filled in over time. We have dated human activity in Apia to 300 AD, about 1400 years before Europeans arrived. The oral histories collected from Apia residents also confirm that humans, specifically Samoans, were active in and around the Apia malae, with significant transitions in power taking place well before contact. Wars could also have contributed to the changing human landscape of Apia as part of the development of the Vaimauga district and was mentioned by several residents as the origin story of different parts of Apia. The HDS data also indicates that settlement around the Apia malae predated European arrival, with all

respondents confirming that their modern day homes were built on repurposed faleSamoa house platforms, as is the trend in most Samoan villages.

3. Document the precontact history of Apia village and use this data to create a more holistic history of Apia township.

   All we can say at this point is that the ground in Apia was lower and has been filled in over time. That area was different than it is now. So we need faunal and floral analysis to supplement, more research is needed, and we hope that others can build on this preliminary research on the occupation of the village of Apia.

4. This data will be provided by PUMA/MNRE, STA and MESC to assist in ongoing/future national heritage management efforts.

   This is ongoing, but this data can be highlighted in the narrative supporting the redesign of the waterfront.

Conclusion

The Humans of Apia Project was an opportunity for the Archaeology and Cultural Heritage division at the National University of Samoa to use archaeological and ethnographic approaches to generate data to provide a basic chronology of human habitation in the village of Apia. This is also our first foray into urban archaeology in Independent Samoa. Our students had a hands-on experience in the field, working with the people of Apia to use the sacred space of the malae for dating human activity around the malae, create a chronology of human activity in Apia generally, document its precontact history, and provide data to the Government of Samoa ministries for their information and future urban and developmental planning. Although we expect further archaeological research will be done in the future, our data suggests that humans most likely used the malae as early as approximately AD 300.

This research provides the people of Apia, and Samoa at large, an approximate date of the earliest known period of human habitation of this area. Furthermore, it highlights the sacredness of the space that is interwoven with legends, genealogies, wars, and stories that span hundreds of years and was, and continues to be, integral to the functioning of a vibrant and active Samoan village and community. With many developments in the Apia area, this research will highlight the centuries of human contact that should be recognised in a developing and more ‘modern

Samoa', even before the arrival of foreigners. This research is part of an ongoing objective of preserving and celebrating cultural heritage in Samoa. For Samoans, the malae remain these sacred spaces worth preserving and keeping as a nu'umavae.

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Appendix A

Oral History Consent Form

Project title: Humans of Apia: Building a chronology of human activity in the nu'u mavae of Apia

Interviewee: _____

Address: _____

Contact number(s): _____ Email: _____

Interviewer: _____

Thank you for your participation and your willingness to share your historical memories and/or knowledge. By signing the form below, you are giving your permission to the interviewer/interviewers named below to interview you by video and/or audio recording, and to use your interview as part of a research paper and/or project, which may be eventually incorporated into a public internet site or documentary film. The video and/or audio recording of your interview will be archived in digital form at the National University of Samoa's Centre for Samoan Studies for future viewing and may be displayed, in full or in part, on a public internet site and/or in a film. We ask that you sign this form to acknowledge that you transfer all rights, title, and interest to this interview to make it available for researchers for current and future use.

Additionally, by signing this form, you agree to allow your interview to be used in the event that the faculty member and/or student and/or research team conducting this interview may desire to produce a resulting research paper, research article, website, and/or film, and that any of these productions may be entered in a competition or film festival. You acknowledge and agree that this interview (or portions thereof) may be publicly shown on television or in a theater or other forum. The archived copy of the video and/or audio of this interview will or may also be available on a public internet site for use, with appropriate citation, in the research of future scholars and/or students.

The Centre for Samoan Studies greatly appreciates your participation in this oral history project.

I agree to the uses of my interview as described above.

_____
Name of Interviewee (printed)

_____
Name of Interviewee (signed)

_____
Date

Appendix B

Household Dwelling Survey

Dwelling code #: _____

Recorder: _____ Date: _____

Type of dwelling:

Falesamoa _____
Western style house _____
Government office building _____
Church _____
Other _____

What are the main materials used for the roof/wall/floor:

	ROOF	WALLS	FLOOR
Brick			
Cement blocks			
Corrugated iron			
Wood			
Plastic			
Mix of mud/cement			
Tile			
Carpet			
Linoleum			
Stone			
Thatching			
Leaves			
Asbestos			
Other			

How many rooms does the dwelling have? _____

How many walls does the dwelling have? _____

How many doors does the dwelling have? _____

Does the household own this dwelling? _____

What year was the dwelling built? _____

Did the existing dwelling replace another dwelling? _____

Who built the dwelling? _____