

Group: Don't rebury Hawaiian artifacts

March 2 2006

Artifacts found in a Hawaiian lava tube should be put on display and studied, not buried, a group of native Hawaiians said Thursday.

The artifacts were found in January by a pair of brothers who were hired to assess the safety of a cave 3 miles north of Kailua-Kona.

"These are treasures of our kupuna (ancestors) that should be shared," William Hoohuli, 64, told the Honolulu Star-Bulletin. He said his family has lived in the area of the cave for nearly three centuries.

Hoohuli and his brother were hired by Rutter Development Corp. to inspect the cave as part of an assessment being done in advance of construction of a 500-home golf course complex.

Hoohuli and supporters suggest the cave might have been a storage area or a secret place of worship established after Chiefess Kaahumanu outlawed the Hawaiian religion in 1820.

"Different people have told me that we should bury them because they are not for us or for our eyes," Hoohuli told the newspaper. "I feel differently. If the kupuna hadn't wanted us to see it, they would have destroyed it already. They wouldn't have left it. When it was discovered, it was time for them to reveal themselves."

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Citation: Group: Don't rebury Hawaiian artifacts (2006, March 2) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-03-group-dont-rebury-hawaiian-artifacts.html>

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