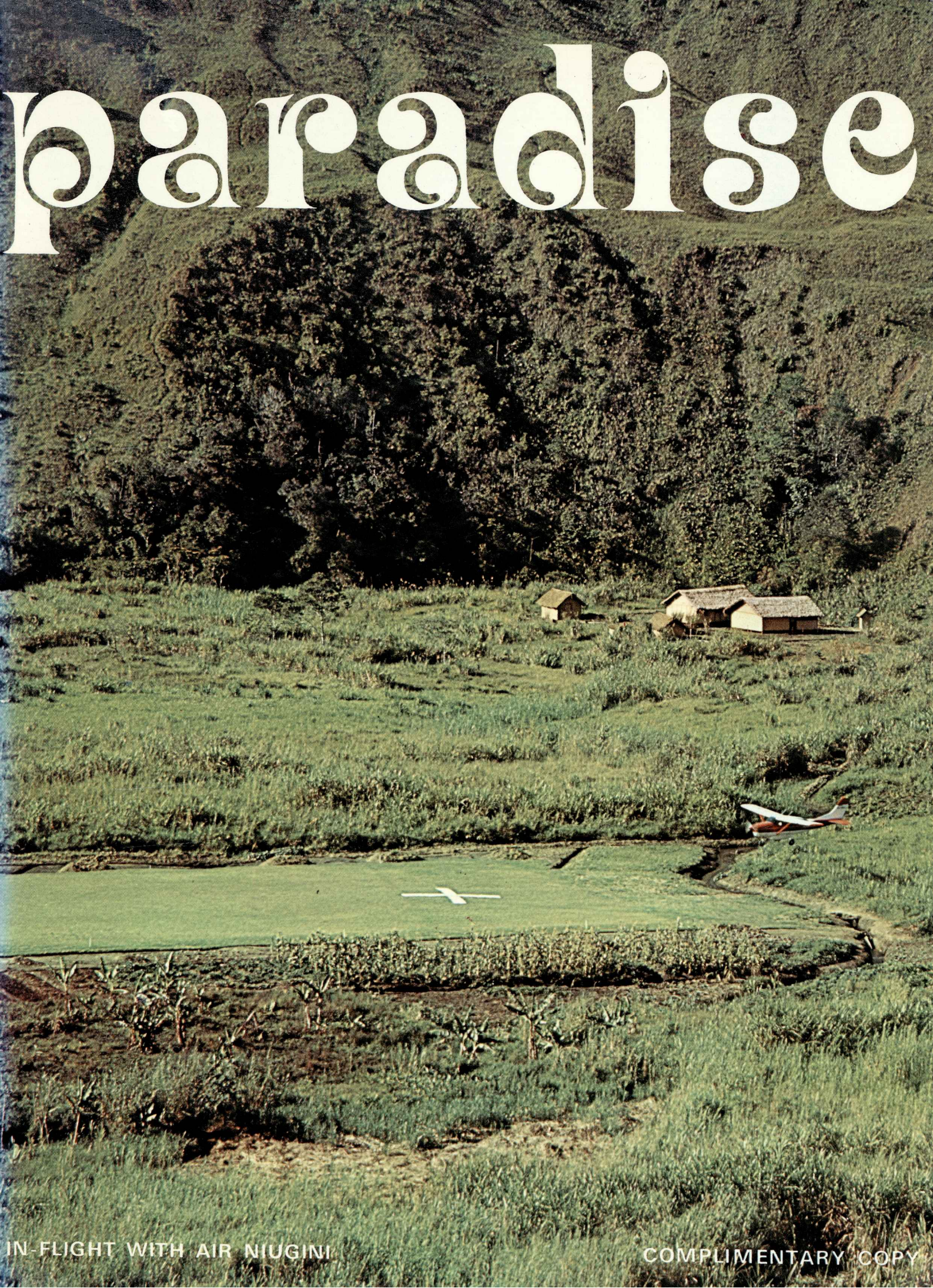
paradise



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No. 10 March 1978

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IN THIS ISSUE

4. Rodeo
7. Hanuabada
15. Seafari
18. Skyway to Hong Kong
21. King Cam
29. Grass power
31. Liklik balus



Welcome aboard

In this issue, on our cover and in a photo feature, we pay tribute to Papua New Guinea's 'Third Level' operators. The term itself does little to describe their activities. It stems from the fact that international aviation operations are 'First Level' and domestic trunk routes are 'Second Level'. Hence commuter services, usually by light aircraft, are 'Third Level'.
Our cover shows a Mission Aviation Fellowship aircraft on final approach at Marawaka in the Eastern Highlands. Light aircraft are the only certain contact which many people in Papua New Guinea have with the outside world. Flying in and out of bush airstrips, they take to villagers all medical, education and social services. Over the years they have earned the deep gratitude of thousands of Papua New Guineans and visitors to our country.
Third Level operators, which are licensed in some cases to provide scheduled services over routes which are not dense enough to justify Air Niugini operations, provide feeder services to Air Niugini routes. One cannot help but be impressed by the past efforts of patrol officers who organised villagers to construct airstrips in areas where no wheeled vehicle, prior to the arrival of an aircraft, had been seen before. When you visit our country, I suggest you arrange a flight with a Third Level operator to a remote strip.
On this page we feature Angelyn Tukana who brought great honour to Air Niugini recently by winning the Miss Papua New Guinea Quest. Angelyn, a stewardess on our international routes, will be happy to welcome you aboard. And if you happen to miss her, one of her sister stewardesses will be just as happy to accord you the very best in Papua New Guinean hospitality.

C.B. Grey
General Manager

PHOTO CREDITS

Brian Coates
Paul Croft
Mark Davis
Jim Fenwick
Bob Halstead
Gary Kildea
Jim Sinclair
Denis Williams
Veronica Williams

COVER

A Lutheran mission pilot stretches the final approach of his Cessna at Marawaka to avoid landing on an unserviceable section of the airstrip. Jim Sinclair, author of *Wings of Gold*, took the photograph.

RODEO

High-crown stetsons, bucking horses and broken bones have become a way of life for more than 1,500 Australians. They deal in danger each weekend on the Australian rodeo circuit.

Most contest rodeos for the pleasure, knowing they have a better chance of collecting a broken leg than recovering their entry fee. It is their idea of a great weekend to be able to ride a bucking bronc, throw down a flying steer after diving onto its horns from a galloping horse, or just try to stay on a wildly leaping Brahmin bull.

But to a smaller group, 50 or so of the best roughriders in the business, the rodeo circuit means money and the free-wheeling life they love. It's a year-round job for these professionals and there is up to K300,000 in prize money to be picked up around Australia each year for the daring and the skilful. Cowboys in the top group can earn more than K20,000 a year, which puts them into the nation's top salary bracket.

Australia's best known cowboy (they prefer being called 'cowboy' to the old Australian term of rough rider'), is Jim Dix of North Collie in Western Australia. Jim has been in the the top 10 in world standing since 1969 when he qualified for the American National Finals Rodeo as a bareback bronc rider. Since then he has collected almost K300,000 in prize money to be, by far, Australia's top cowboy.

But Dix is not the only Australian who has made good on the highly competitive North American rodeo circuit. Brisbane's Darryl Kong was placed third in the World Saddle Bronc Riding in 1973 in



Story: Laurie Kavanagh

Photography: Jim Fenwick

the United States. To take his place with the world's best Darryl had to contest 100 rodeos in North America. His prize money on the way to the top was more than K20,000. Before leaving North America, Darryl won saddle bronc championships at the famous Calgary Stampede, at Cheyenne, and at the Pendleton Round-up.

Another Queenslander, Doug Flanigan, won the Calgary Stampede Bareback Riding Championship in 1964 and returned there two years later to win the Calgary Stampede title.

Last year the Australian Government sent a team of eight cowboys to the United States as a goodwill gesture for the Unites States Bi-centennial celebrations and they performed extremely well.

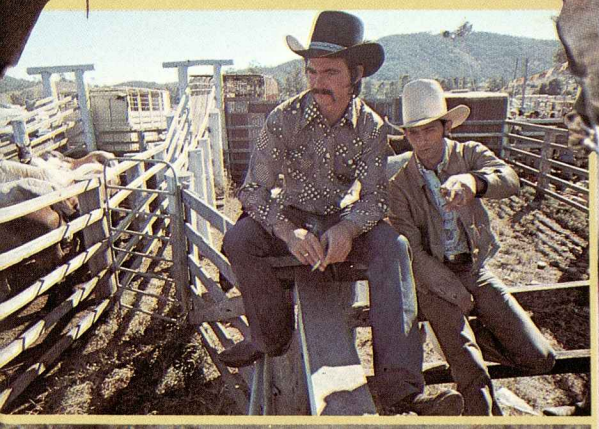
Although the Australian rodeo circuit cannot compete with the huge prize money on offer in North America, it still provides a good, if dangerous, living for Australia's top cowboys. So much so that some top riders have bought their own aircraft to travel quickly between rodeos. Others with pilot's licences hire planes.

Travelling between rodeos, which in some cases involves thousands of miles, is one of the drawbacks for Australian cowboys. The 110 professional rodeos on the Australian circuit are scattered from Western Australia to Far North Queensland. Riders try to contest as many rodeos as possible and many compete in up to 65 a year.

All the money from rodeos does not, however, go to the riders. Most rodeos are conducted for local charities. Mount Isa's Rotary Rodeo, for instance, has raised around K250,000 for local, state and international charities since it was started 17 years ago.

In many cases, money from rodeos goes to local ambulance services, and hospitals, which is fitting indeed, for there is not a fair dinkum rodeo professional alive who has not seen the inside of an ambulance or hospital at some stage of his risky career. — *Laurie Kavanagh and Jim Fenwick are Brisbane* Courier Mail *staffers.*

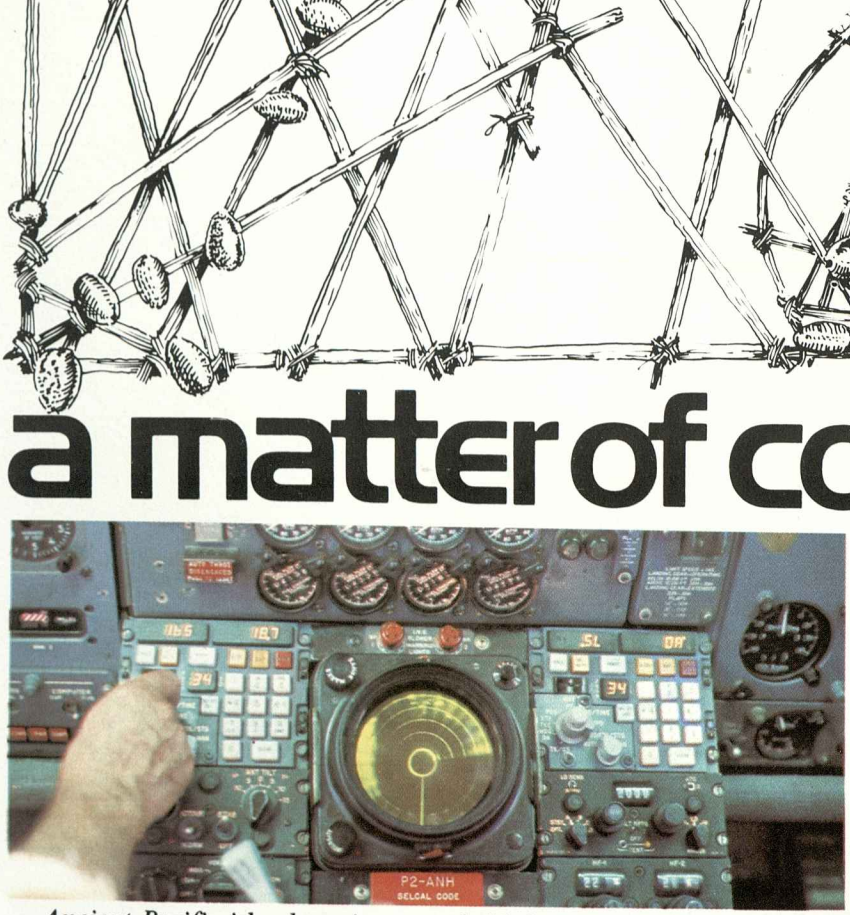


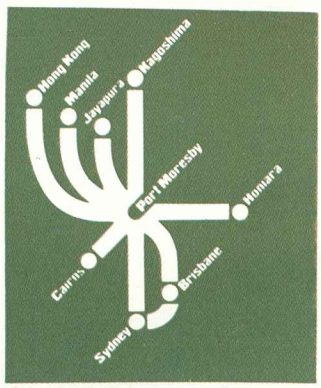






Navigation is not a matter of course





Ancient Pacific island mariners used this latticework of palm fibre and cowrie shells to find their way across the trackless wastes of the Pacific. Today Air Niugini pilots use Inertial Navigation System (INS), a wonder of space age electronics, rarely found on the Boeing 707. At the touch of a button the pilot can pinpoint the exact position of his aircraft on any part of the globe at anytime. A comforting thought.

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HANUABADA

By Olive Tau and Mark Davis

Hanuabada — 'big place' — stood stilted over the waters of Fairfax Harbour long before the bay got its name, and long before the whiteman's settlement which grew up to be Port Moresby saw its first building.

Today, now much larger than when Captain John Moresby first sailed into and named the harbour, Hanuabada stands detached from, yet very much an integral, dynamic part of the national capital.

Despite its closeness to the city centre — a five minute drive — Hanuabada retains much of its traditional way of life. The houses though now of corrugated iron, fibro and weatherboard, are still very much in the form of the old log and thatch homes still to be found in Motu villages along the coast from Port Moresby. True they lack some of the refinements of western-style homes but they are bright and comfortable.

There's a rough and tumble about Hanuabada which sees a variety of moods rippling through the village. One moment the atmosphere is moody, oppressive; the next, bubbling, carefree. On the traditional side, villagers provide fish and garden produce to the city's markets. Village men make good use of the rich reef waters along the coast and the women have extensive gardens along the banks of the Laloki River which skirts the city. Yet, in the modern economy, Hanuabada is the home of the public service bureaucrat, the carpenter, mechanic, taxi-driver, national politician, sports hero. You name the profession, Hanuabada probably has it.

An unusual feature of the make-up of Hanuabada is that the settlement is home to two distinctive peoples — the Motuans and the Koitabu. Between them they present a proud, slightly reserved, yet friendly, hospitable front. Motuans are coastal people, fishermen and, to a lesser extent, hunters. The

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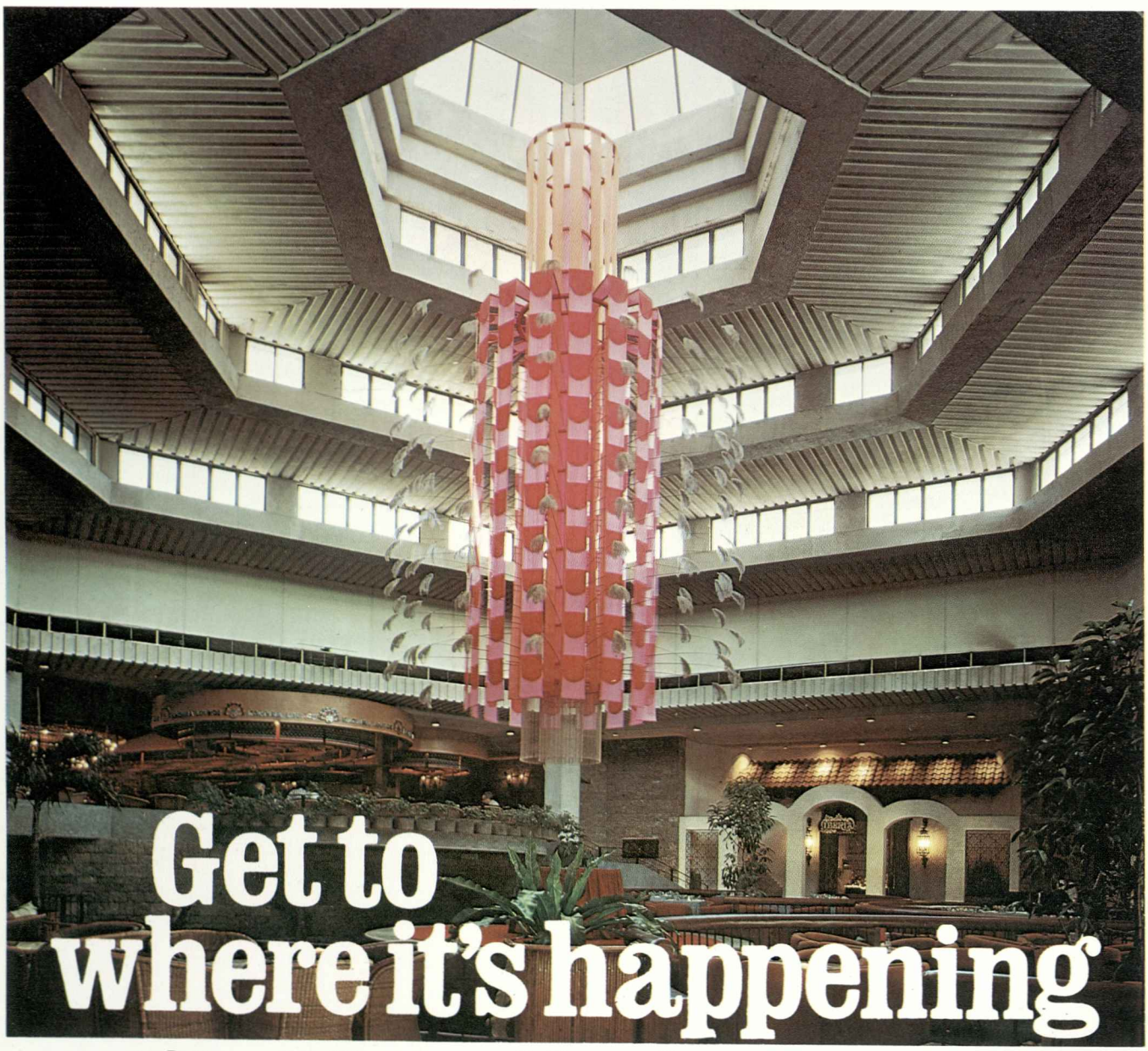

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women are expert gardeners. The Koitabus came to the coast centuries ago from the hilly hinterland. They were hunters. They are still known and feared for their powers of sorcery.

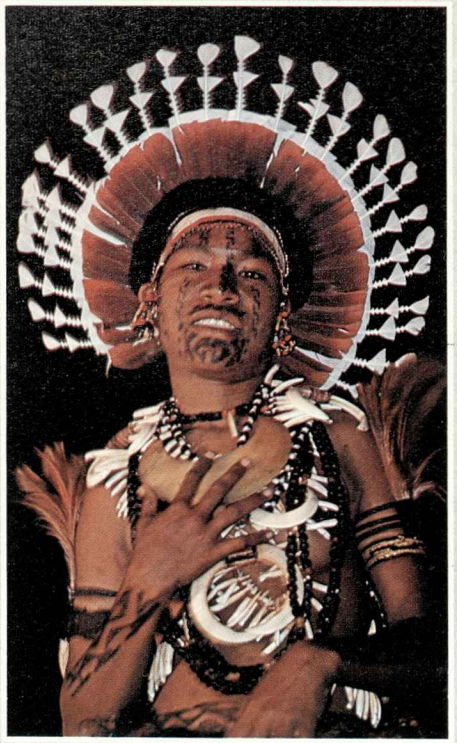
Although the two groups have mixed easily and live side by side in many parts of the village, there are still areas which are almost exclusively the domain of one or the other. Hohodae, for example, is mainly a Koitabu area. The names of the other areas of the whole village are Poreporena (which takes in Hanuabada, the main area), Elevala, Gabi and Kuriu. These areas can again be broken into smaller units. When the first missionaries arrived in 1873 the Koitabu and Motu people were already living together.

Village history is vague. To make a definite statement is to invite bitter dispute. The only sources available are oral and opinions differ greatly. The general consensus is that the Motu people came from a village, now destroyed, at Taurama beach, only a hundred years or so before the missionaries arrived. At Taurama, about 11 kilometres south-east of the city, excavations have revealed an extensive village site. Whether the Koitabus were already living at Hanuabada when the Motuans arrived is not clear.

The two main clans said to be involved in the shift from Taurama — the Kwaradubuna (house of the skulls) and Tubamaga (house of the ancestors) — are still leading clans in the modern village. Old people say that two other present-day clans, Apau and Mavara, were among early Motuans to go to the village.

One of the reasons for the clan system retaining its traditional strength has been the presence of the church. Most Hanuabadans, especially the old folk, are deeply religious. The church, mainly the United Church, comprising the London Missionary Society (LMS), Presbyterian, Anglican, Lutheran and Methodist churches, has a major influence on village life. And the village, in return, is proud of its association with the church. In 1873 Lakani Toi, a Tubamaga man adopted into Kwaradubuna, told his people to let the LMS South Sea islander missionaries Ruatoka, Henry, Andrew, Adam, Raua and Piri, land without fear for their lives.

The church gets great support from the villagers. Once a year it holds a *boubou*, or collection, taking in Hanuabada and other villages such as Rearea, Papa, Roku, Tatana, Porebada and Barune to the west and Vabukori, Pari, Tubusereia, Barakau, Gaire, Gabagaba and Hula to the east. The *boubou* creates intense rivalry both within and between villages to see who gives the most. With by far the highest population, Hanuabada usually leads the way, giving up to K70,000 per year.



Above: Hiri Hanenamo *contestant;* **below:** lakatoi *racing on Fairfax Harbour*

The proceedings last about a month with colourful traditional dancing and singing, church ceremonies above Elevala (Motu prophet songs are a highlight), feasts and fund-raising parties. And when it's all over, the winning clan lets all the village know about its generosity by way of a noisy 'victory parade' along the main street. For the past two years the Gunina clan has enjoyed that position, giving up to K12,000.

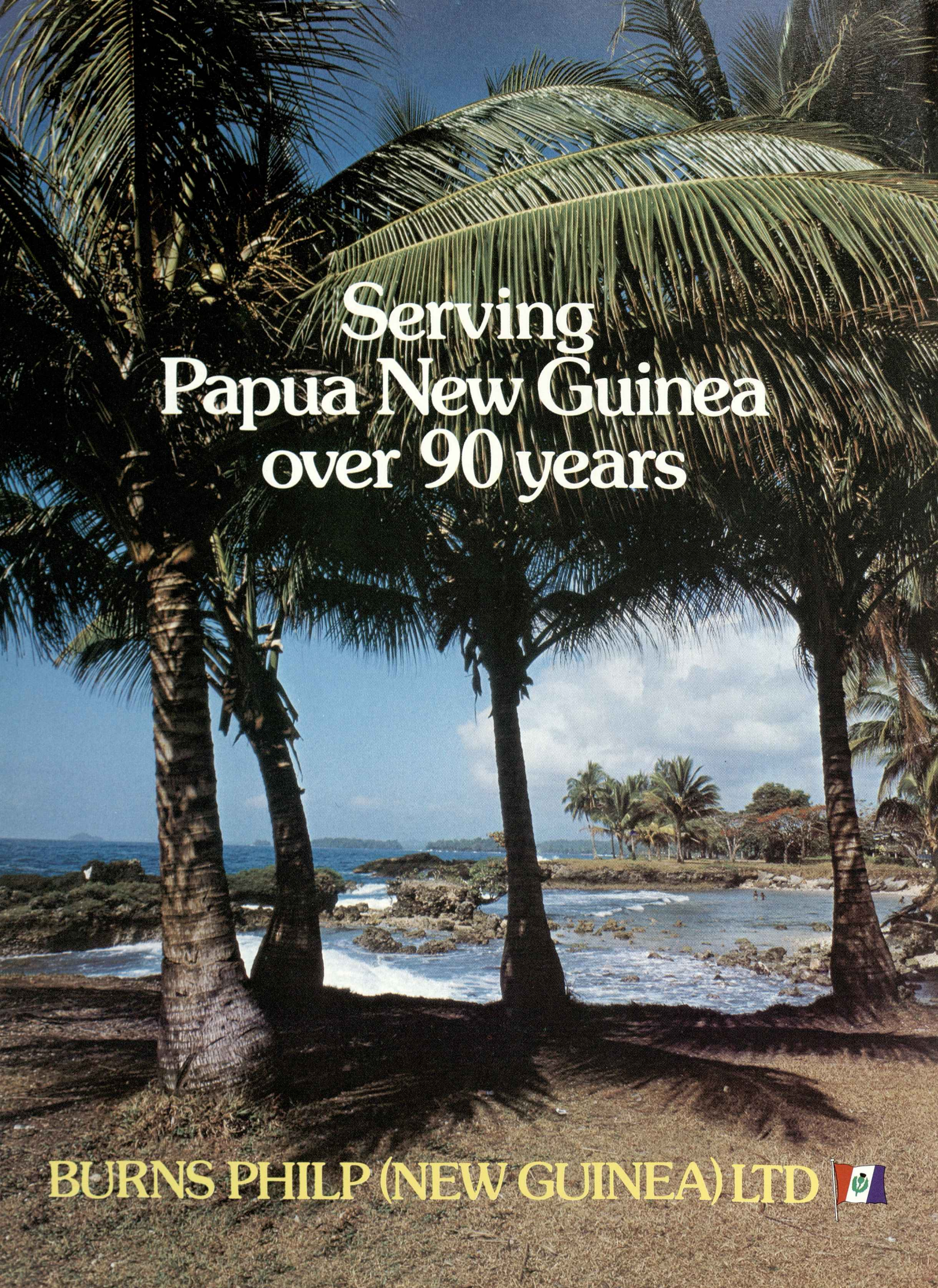
Another celebration which the village takes great delight in is the annual *Hiri Moale* festival which marks the return of the Hiri trade expeditions which used to go to the Gulf of Papua where *lakatoi* (canoe) loads of goods would be traded with the Erema (Kerema) people. On their return, the women, who were forbidden to go on the *lakatoi*, would prepare a huge feast which, with singing and dancing, would last for many days.

The celebrations in Port Moresby today are not only for Motuans, but for everybody although most participants come from the Central Province around Port Moresby and along the Papuan coast.

The highlight of the festival is the *Hiri Hanenamo*, or Hiri Queen, quest, where young women compete in traditional dress for trips overseas. Canoe racing and other contests are also held. Youngsters see it as a time for fun while older people believe it is a good opportunity to show off their culture and riches. For the *Hiri Hanenamo* quest, the girls dress as for a bride price ceremony, armshells, bird of paradise feathers, beads and betelnut adorning their bodies, their faces, legs and arms painted in the patterns of the old tattoo styles.

Bride price is still an important custom to the Motu people although it has changed to some extent. To a non-villager, especially marriageable young men, it is enough to bring on a cold sweat. 'Hanuabada girls are too expensive,' is their cry. Some

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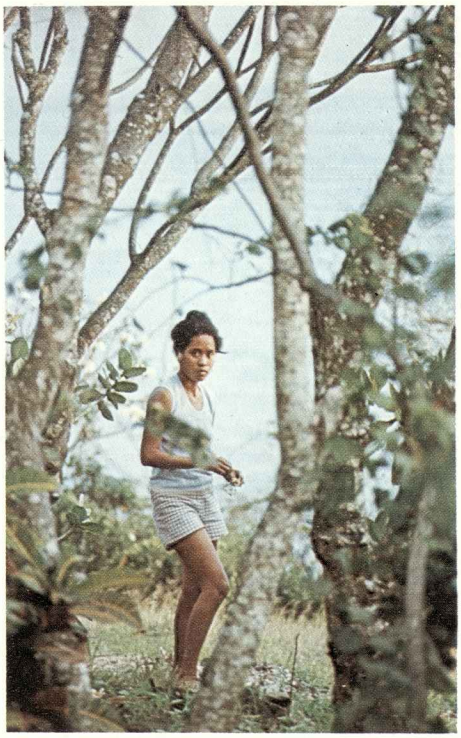
say it to tease, others with frustration, anger and in misunderstanding of the village way of life.

Pigs, armshells, pigs' tusks, bird of paradise feathers and local vegetables are the traditional form of bride price payment but money, obviously, now plays an important part. Traditional riches still take pride of place. A bride price without armshells (*kina* and *toea*) brings shame to the groom's family. The highest bride price paid in recent years was K10,000 in cash and 1,000 armshells, worth from K5-10 each, depending on size and shape.

Outsiders tend to count only the amount of cash, believing it comes from the young man only, but the system is extremely complex, involving clans, families, friends and even other villages. The payment is not only a reflection of the groom's personal wealth or the wealth of his family, but is also an indication of a relationship between clans, families, and friends, even villages.

When a payment is about to take place, the groom's family notifies relatives, friends and people whom they have helped with earlier payments. On the big day the groups helping the groom prepare their payment. A pole nine metres long is hung inside the house and gifts of money or armshells are brought in. Just before sunset, the gifts are sorted into a set pattern and cash and armshells are tied onto the pole. The men carry pigs, rice, flour and sugar while the women, painted, scented and dressed in their finery, carry the pole. They all meet at the girl's parents' house where the goods and money are carefully counted and noted.

In the late 1960s, bride price became a political issue, with the Hiri Council ruling that the maximum payable should be K500, with a possible fine of K200 for those who exceeded the limit. By studious disregard, the rule is now non-existent.



Modern Miss from Hanuabada

The bride price system applies to anyone marrying a village girl, although in certain circumstances it is waived. But no matter where young Hanuabadan men marry, for pride's sake, they still pay as much as they possibly can.

However, as western culture intrudes into the tradition, more and more people criticise the system. A common attitude, particularly among people from outside the village, is that it is nothing more than a form of slavery — the 'buying' of a woman. However the system cannot be criticised without a better understanding of it. Both bride and groom and their families have obligations, with the ceremony going through four main stages.

As soon as a marriage is agreed upon, the women of the groom's family visit the bride's family with the proposal. They take about K50 and several armshells. This is called *daedae*. When agreement is reached, both families keep in touch, helping each other and exchanging goods. After a year or so, the groom's family pays *imavaro kwato* — the second stage. This marks the agreement to marry and consists of about K200 and K100 worth of armshells, possibly more.

After another couple of months the groom pays *maoheni* — the engagement payment, worth about K1000 and K500 in armshells, plus food and pigs. The final stage is *davabada*, the biggest and most important stage.

During each stage the bride's family prepares food for the people who provide the money for the groom. The bride herself is given food to take to her prospective parents-in-law's house to cook, where the groom's family and clansmen eat. The bride also visits the groom's aunts and uncles to provide food.

The final stage for the girl is when her parents provide raw and cooked food, household goods, pigs, money and armshells for her husband's parents. The bride and groom bring their families together and another bond in the tight-knit Hanuabada community is forged.

Bride price is a time for family enjoyment, joking and singing and it shows no sign of fading.

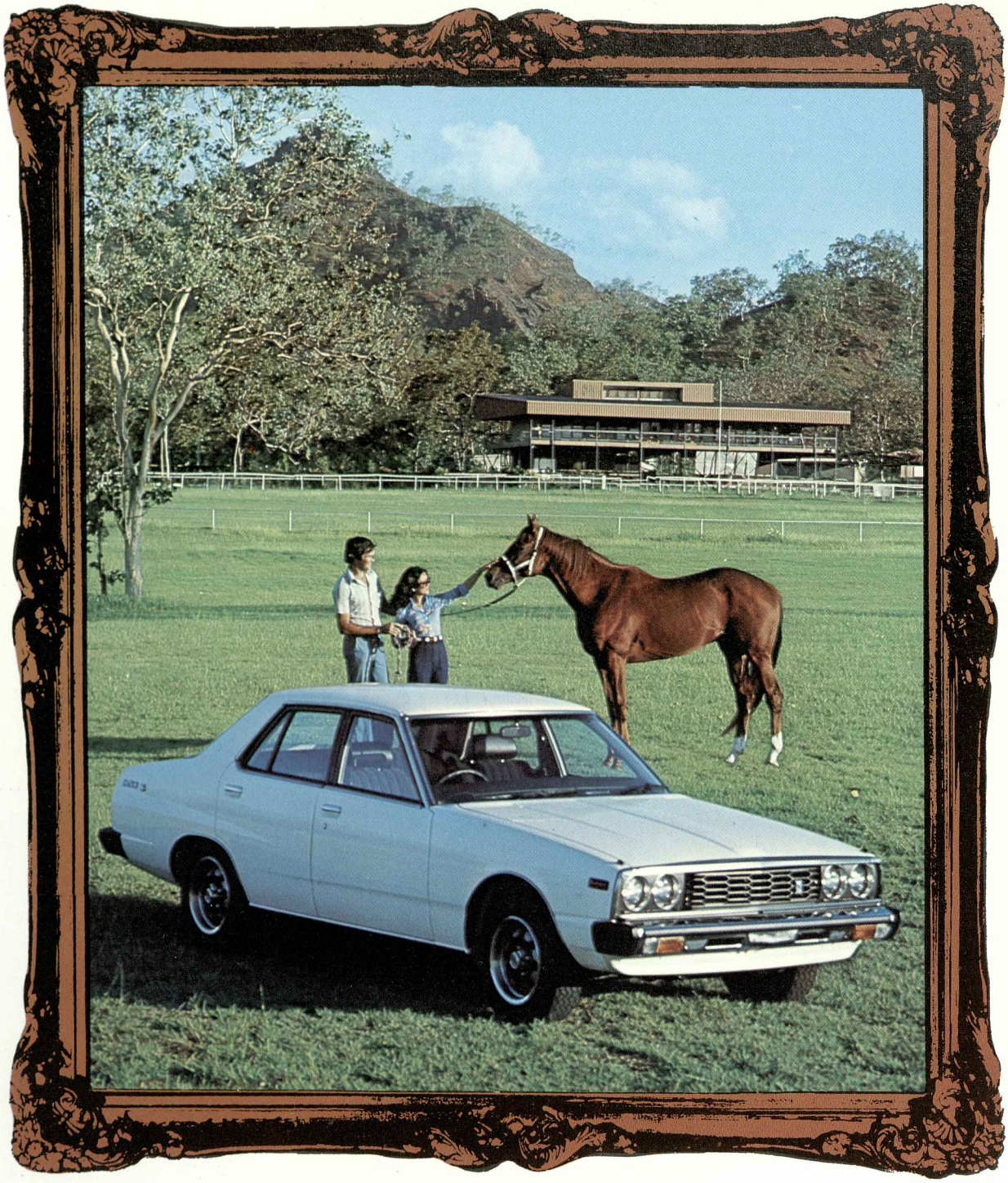
Sport, too, takes up a lot of village time. In the months from September to March it's cricket — either a village series or with a city team. Quite often it's both — the



On the way to the bride's home with the money pole



A bride price instalment is paid



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serious stuff on Saturday and a village game on Sunday. Once seen village games are never forgotten. The main street is about a mile long with various open spaces leading off. On any weekend during the season there are up to 100 games in progress — either young boys playing hit-and-run, an inter-clan match or one of the amazing Hanuabada versus Trobriands/Milne Bay games. Every year Hanuabada takes on a team from the Trobriand Islands and Milne Bay, with men, women and children taking part.

The ground only has to be roughly flat and capable of getting 100 players and several hundred spectators packed into it. Rubbish bins serve as wickets, bits of wood for bats. Tennis balls are used. There do not seem to be any rules. Just a lot of action and noise. Scores are kept (very roughly) and the home side usually puts on a feast, complete with pig, after the game is over.

Playing (and spectating) is quite strenuous. The most agile clamber over cars and onto the roofs of adjoining houses to field or get a better view. A game can go for a whole weekend, given enough betel nut, food and drink.

For the remaining six months of the year the big game is football — mainly Rugby league but with some Australian rules, soccer or union thrown in. The village league team, including a few outsiders, is Hanuabada Hawks. Capable of beating anyone, but temperamental with it, they have an enormous following. The fervour of their supporters is as intense as can be found anywhere in the world.

The women, too, like their sport. They play cricket, netball, softball and basketball. Rugby league is growing in popularity as a participant sport for women in Port Moresby. Village life is as enjoyable as a villager makes it. In Hanuabada they don't leave fun to chance. — *Olive Tau, from Hanuabada, and her husband, Mark Davis, are former staffers of the* Papua New Guinea Post-Courier.



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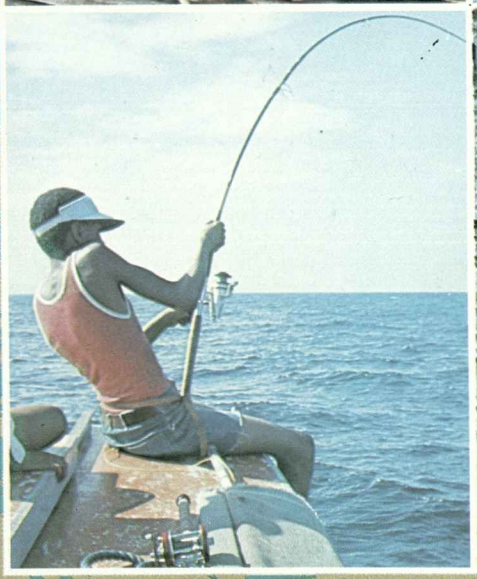




Seafari

Harold Weeks, 13, went fishing in the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea recently. We thought you might like to read parts of the letter he wrote his Uncle Willard in the United States after the trip.

Dear Uncle Willard

. . . Daddy, Edisa and I just returned from a 10 day trip to the Milne Bay Province here in Papua New Guinea. We flew by Air Niugini to Alotau. We chartered an island work boat, which is normally used for carrying copra and people, for travelling and fishing among the islands . . .

We flew to Gurney Airport near Alotau . . . There we hitched a ride in a truck to Alotau. We went by boat to Samarai and then on to a small island about two miles away called Kwato. Missionaries from England started working there nearly 100 years ago. It was once famous for its cricket team . . . Our first fishing was Saturday afternoon. We landed two fish out of eight strikes. And lost five lures. Not too good. One of the fish was a striped tuna, and the other a Spanish mackerel, known here as a kingfish . . .

On Sunday we went out again in the morning and after church in the afternoon. Once again we lost lures (mainly squid that I'd rigged). But we discovered what part of our problem was. Our leaders were too short. So we lengthened them, but we still caught only two fish, a kingfish and a fish called locally *hula-hula.*

On Monday morning early we left for East Cape [the most easterly

point of mainland Papua New Guinea] across Milne Bay. On our first day there in the afternoon we went out to some reefs beyond two small islands and landed eight fish out of 13 strikes . . .

We developed a system where we stopped the boat as soon as we hooked a fish, or when one of our two reels began racing and we heard the noise of the ratchets as the fish took out the line. This allowed the fish to take out line under no pressure . . .

We were fishing with only two outfits. An Abu 20 rod with an Abu 7000 reel, and an Abu Pacific 30 rod with a Penn Senator 4/0 reel. Sometimes I fished with my spinning outfit on a surf casting rod from the roof of the boat. When the fish were eager I would cast out. The boat was already stopped. I was able to land a 94 centimetre 6.8 kilo kingfish on my surf casting rod...

Tuesday at seven in the morning we were out again and had great fishing. We landed nine fish, lost seven others, and only lost one more lure. Mostly we trolled using Japanese plastic squid (red) with No. 7/0 hooks, or feather jigs, same size hook. Our first fish on Tuesday was a 4.5 kilo tuna on the 30 which Daddy landed. They fight hard. Next I hooked a large kingfish and lost it in about 10 minutes when it dropped off the hook. Then Daddy got a large kingfish right up to the boat, but it threw the hook when he tried to stop a last run. Next fish was a rainbow runner that I got on the 30.

We then landed our first double. We had had some doubles before but always one had gotten off. Daddy got a trevally (same as a jack in Florida) which weighed 5 kilo, and I got a rainbow runner. We had another double and I lost mine, but Daddy landed another trevally which went 7 kilo. Both fish were a beautiful purple with a few other colours. While Daddy was fighting his big trevally I cast out a Rebel Popper on my spinning outfit. It wasn't a far cast. About six feet away from the boat something swallowed it. The fish headed straight for the bottom and then levelled off, taking over 100 metres of line until I could see the bottom of the spool! After a while I fought back most of my line, and then the fish cut me off on something on the reef.

Oh yeah, Daddy landed his big trevally tail first — the leader was wrapped around the tail. Later on that day Daddy had a fish so big that he bent and broke the hook in half . . . Then we landed two more rainbow runners, a small striped tuna, a 5 kilo kingfish and a 14 kilo kingfish. The last was our largest fish of the trip. I landed him after a fight on the Abu 30 outfit. So that morning Daddy and I brought in over 42.5 kilo of fish.

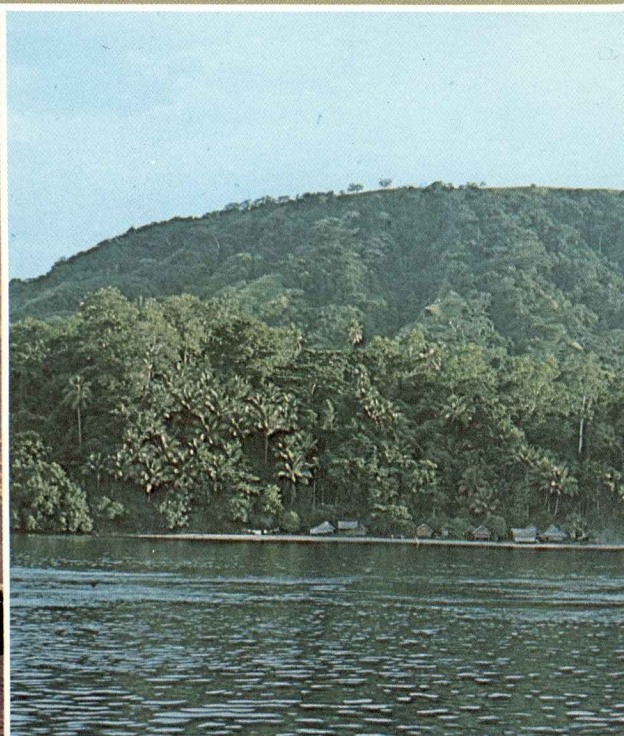
That afternoon we landed eight tuna on eight strikes. Nothing lost. Our host's son went with us and he landed one tuna on the 20 outfit, Daddy landed two, and I got five . . .

Wednesday morning we trolled with a large drone spoon, 4½, and got two large kingfish, both being foul hooked in the head and side! We also caught one more rainbow

East Cape, PNG's most easterly mainland point



Dobu Island, after a rough trip from East Cape

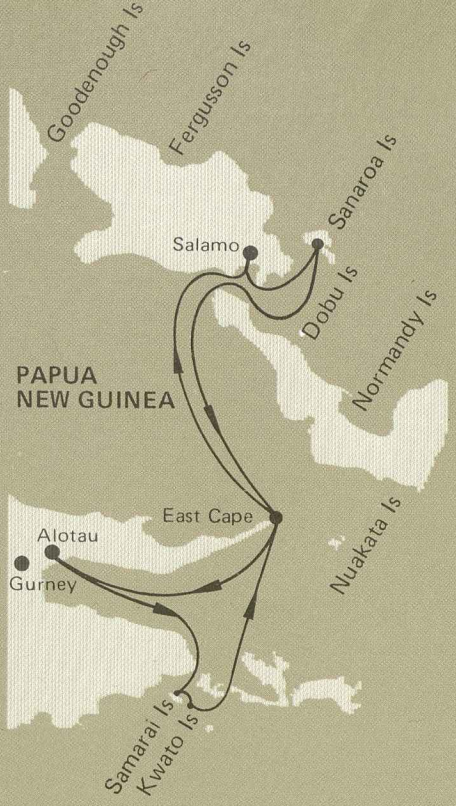


runner and six more tuna. That afternoon, going out towards Nuakata Island, and the long reefs before it, we landed two barracuda . . . We also got another rainbow runner of 5 kilo, and a 13.5 kilo kingfish . . .

Thursday morning we left for Salamo, perhaps 80 kilometres to the north of East Cape on Fergusson Island. On the way we got a tiny fish, 25 centimetres, which we tried to rig as a trolling bait, but failed — we couldn't attach it to the drone spoon and had no large hooks with us to do it properly. I put a squid on the 20 then and a large fish swam by a minute later. I thought it was a shark, but a minute later a large bill fish (we were not sure whether it was a marlin or a sailfish) struck the squid and leapt twice before it broke the line . . .

That afternoon we reached Begasi village, 3 kilometres from Salamo where we were to stay with the Reverend Robert Duigu (father of David Duigu at the university who arranged the trip for us and works in the Faculty of Education where Daddy is). We went out again in the later afternoon to troll in the large, calm, protected body of water between Fergusson and Normanby Islands, and the small volcanic island of Dobu. It was more like a large lake instead of the sea. The trip from East Cape had been very rough as the strong southeasterly winds were blowing. That afternoon we caught only one fish . . .

The next morning we went to some reefs out in the ocean beyond Dobu Island. Great swells were running. We got two kingfish, two barracuda, and one rainbow runner. None was big, but I had on a very nice dolphin fish for about 10 minutes only to lose it by the boat. It was very pretty, jumping and tail walking, a bright green with yellow and blue on the fin tips. It might have gone 9 to 11 kilo . . .



We returned to East Cape very early Saturday morning. The southeast wind was blowing and we had to head into the waves. Many times the boat heaved high and came down with a great spank. On the way we trolled heavy drag lines as it was too rough for fishing. We pulled in one kingfish, tow striped tuna, and two nice yellowfin tuna — one 6 kilo, the other a 6.5 kilo . . .

Back at East Cape in the late afternoon we went out for two hours and had our best fishing of the trip. A villager named John took us to his favourite fishing spot along a reef off a small island. We landed 12 fish. Our first four were rather drastic. We were trolling our two normal lines from rod and reel and our guide, John, asked us to put out a drag line in the middle. We did. Then he put out his own line with a streamer fly on it. A few minutes later we had four fish all at once. We didn't panic but we had problems unheard of. We landed all four fish, all very large rainbow runners, the biggest weighing 4 kilos — but we decided it was better to fish with only two lines from rod and reel . . .

Sunday morning we found we were nearly out of lures, but we managed to throw a few together. And the fish chewed up everything we put out. We caught two more kingfish, two tuna, and another rainbow runner . . .

At all the places we went to we stayed in houses built by the missionaries, except at Salamo where we stayed in a village house on stilts with a grass roof and all, but it was nice . . . People were kind to us everywhere. We ate lots of yams, taro, manioc, sweet potatoes, sago and fish. When are you coming to go fishing in Papua New Guinea?

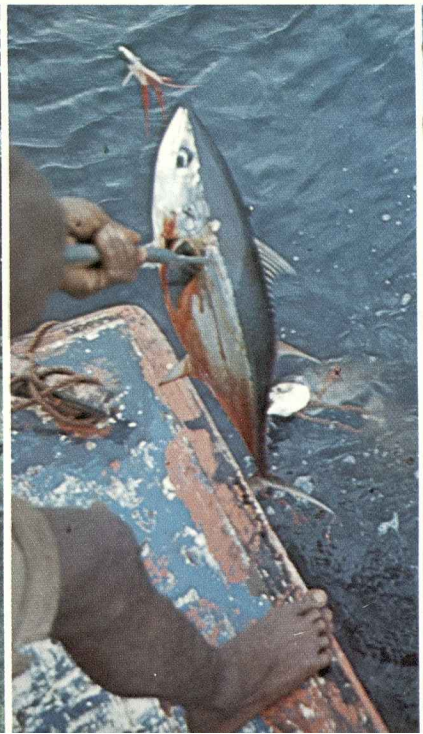
Love
Harold

Salamo High School's mission house





The catch is landed







Skyway to Hong Kong

Papua New Guinea Post-Courier chief photographer Denis Williams joined Captain John Sunderland up front on Air Niugini's Boeing 707 Bird of Paradise to Hong Kong just in time to catch the sun setting over the South China Sea before they landed at Kai Tak. Denis's photographs were taken at more than 11,000 metres while the crew were preparing for a night landing at Kai Tak. Denis used an Olympus OM1 with a 15mm lens and Ektachrome 64 ASA film.





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King Cam of Kitava

By Paul Croft

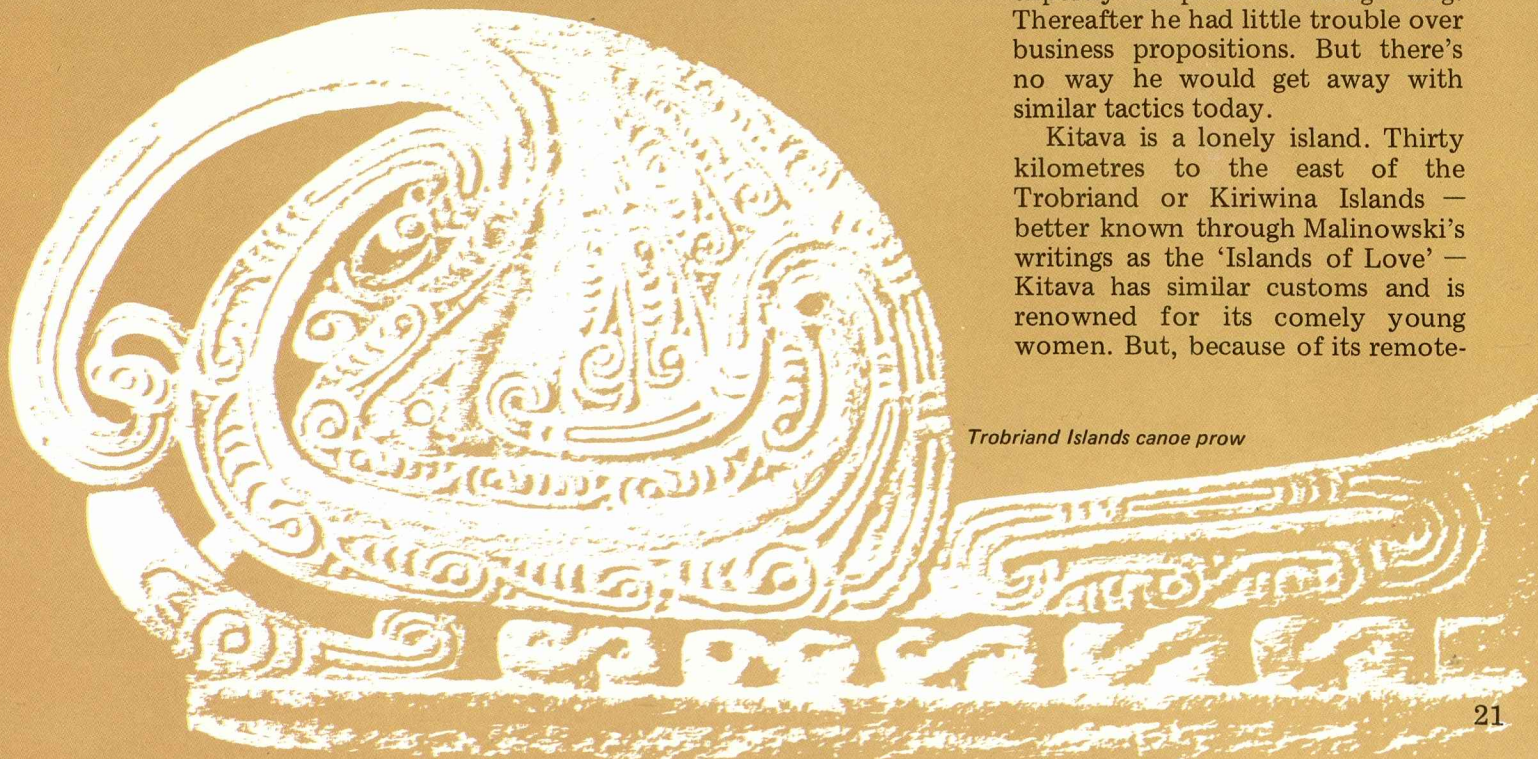
Most of us, at sometime or another, have dreamed of having our own secluded tropical island, complete with abundant fruits, sunshine, glittering white beaches, shady palms and coral lagoons. A flight of fancy, maybe, but some fortunates have achieved this utopian state, rarely again to visit the modern world.

Such a man was Cyril Bernevelot Cameron who settled on the little coral island of Kitava, in Papua New Guinea's Milne Bay region, in 1912. Born near Launceston on the Australian island state of Tasmania in 1887 into a wealthy farming family which claimed to be descended from Scottish aristocracy, young Cameron found life in Tasmania far too dull. He headed north to Papua to become a patrol officer on the goldfields of Milne Bay at a time when booming Samarai was the first port of call for all ships visiting Papua.

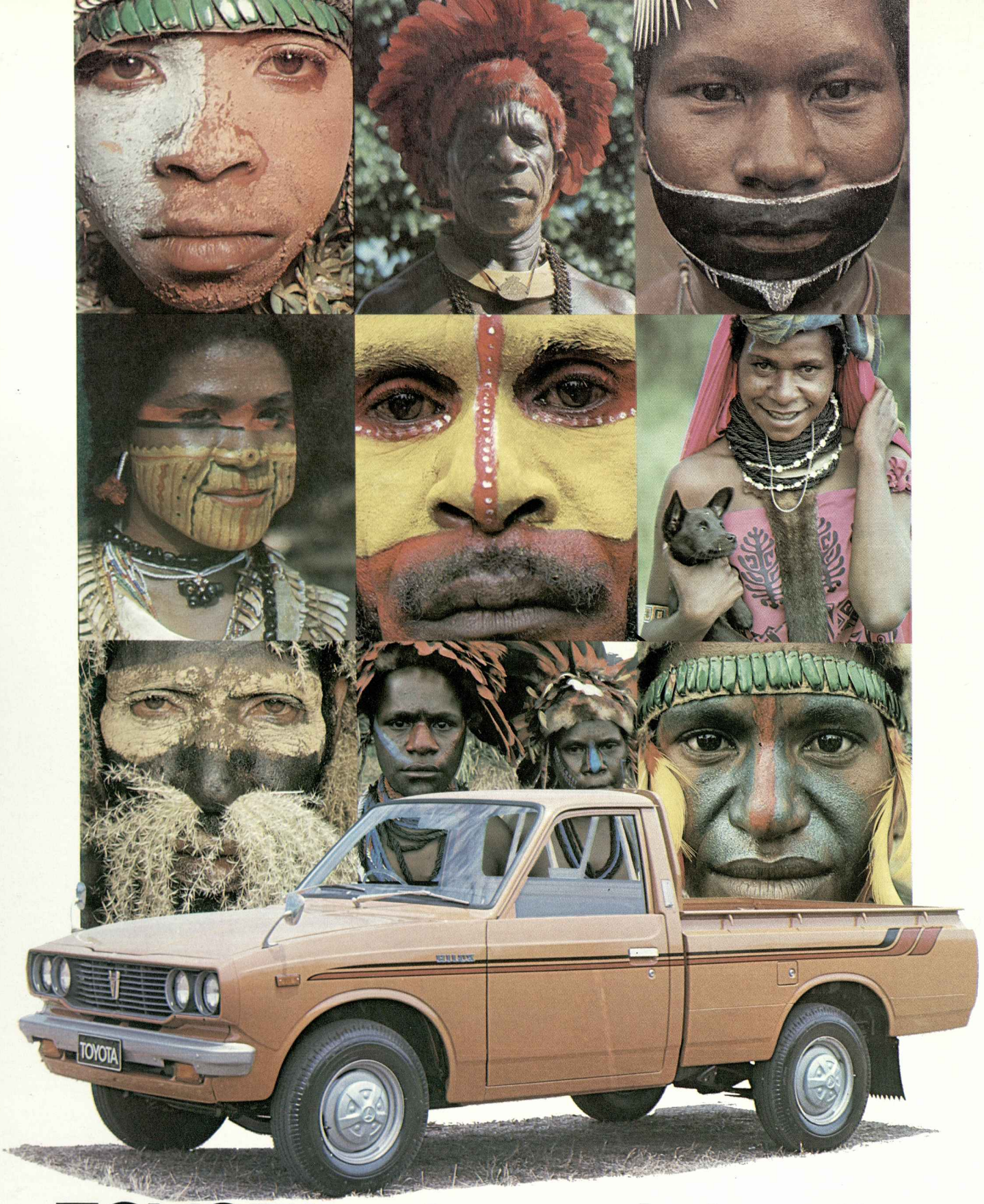
But government service wasn't paying too well those days so Cameron got out and became a digger on the tough, rough goldfields of Woodlark Island. But again there was no fortune to be made. So, remembering Kitava from his patrolling days, he decided to make his home there. With gold revenue declining, the government was eager to develop new industries. Copra was one. With government assistance Cameron purchased some of the best land on Kitava.

The story goes that when this tall, tough, lean 25-year-old arrived on Kitava to pitch his tent, warriors made it clear that he was not welcome. Cameron's retort was to calmly draw his .45 pistol and expertly despatch a village dog. Thereafter he had little trouble over business propositions. But there's no way he would get away with similar tactics today.

Kitava is a lonely island. Thirty kilometres to the east of the Trobriand or Kiriwina Islands — better known through Malinowski's writings as the 'Islands of Love' — Kitava has similar customs and is renowned for its comely young women. But, because of its remote-



Trobriand Islands canoe prow



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Above: *The Trobriand Islands come into view;* **below:** *Kitava today where King Cam is little more than a memory*

ness and the lack of regular passenger boat services, it has remained almost inaccessible to this day.

It is an island of peace and harmony, populated by friendly, happy people with scarcely a sign of the civilisation and development which is sweeping Papua New Guinea into the twentieth century.

The pear-shaped island is really a low hill of uplifted coral cliffs and rocks covered in a rich tropical growth. Except for a small area used by Cameron, the island was mostly unsuitable for large plantations. Thus, for all the years he stayed there, Cameron never had to share his time with any other permanent European resident.

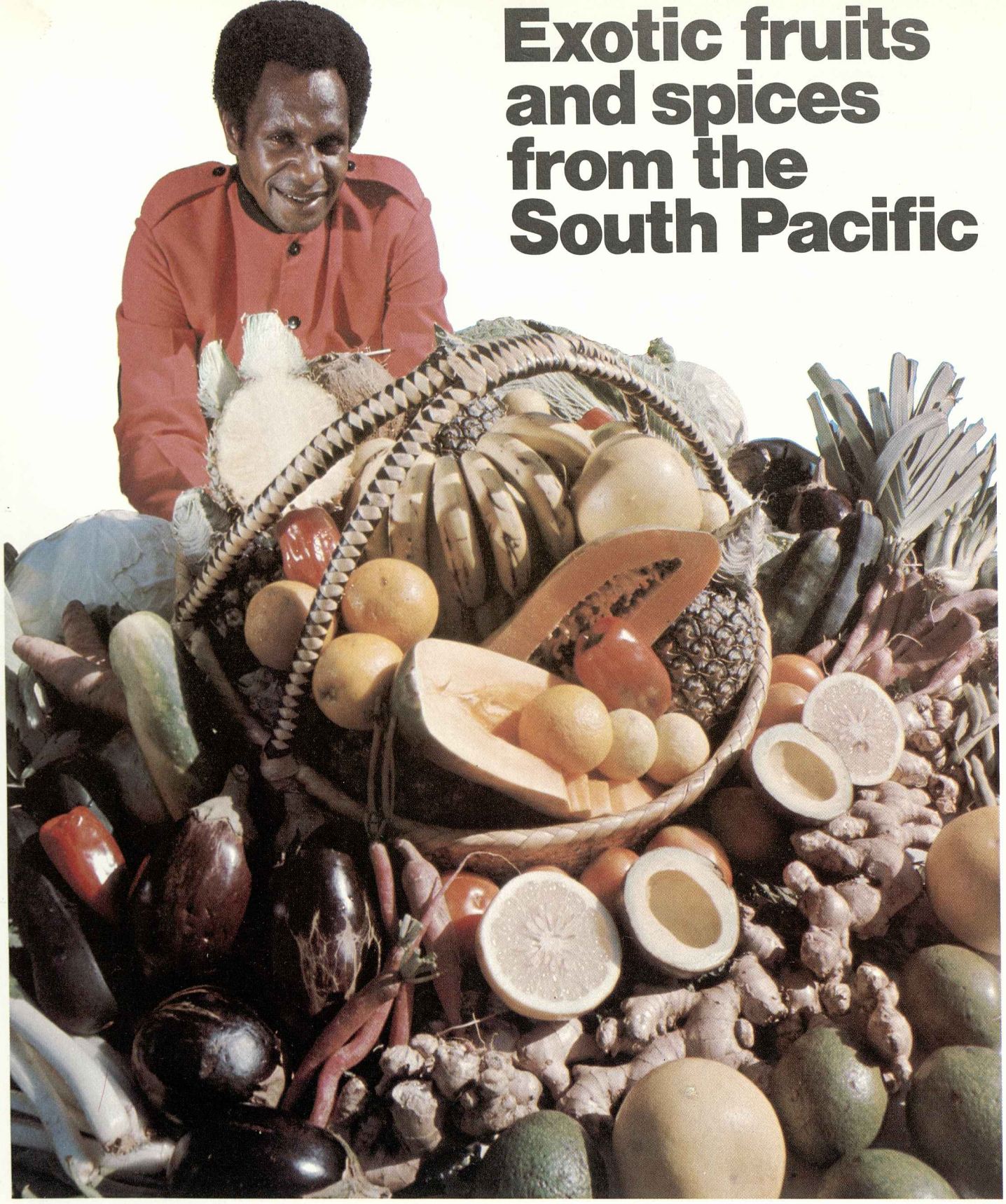
Apparently he quickly established his authority and influence and set about building up a coconut plantation. He imported labourers and seed and began teaching the islanders how to grow coconuts. They were almost unknown before he arrived.

As the years rolled by, Cameron built himself a large house even though his small plantation never made a great deal of money. He rarely left the island. His position as the only European increased his influence with the colonial government and islanders would visit him with their law and order problems.

'King Cameron' — as he was becoming known, ironically, all over the South Pacific except on Kitava itself — is often credited with great sexual prowess, even up to the time he died at 78 in 1966. The old village women would joke about his activities with the island's young



Exotic fruits and spices from the South Pacific



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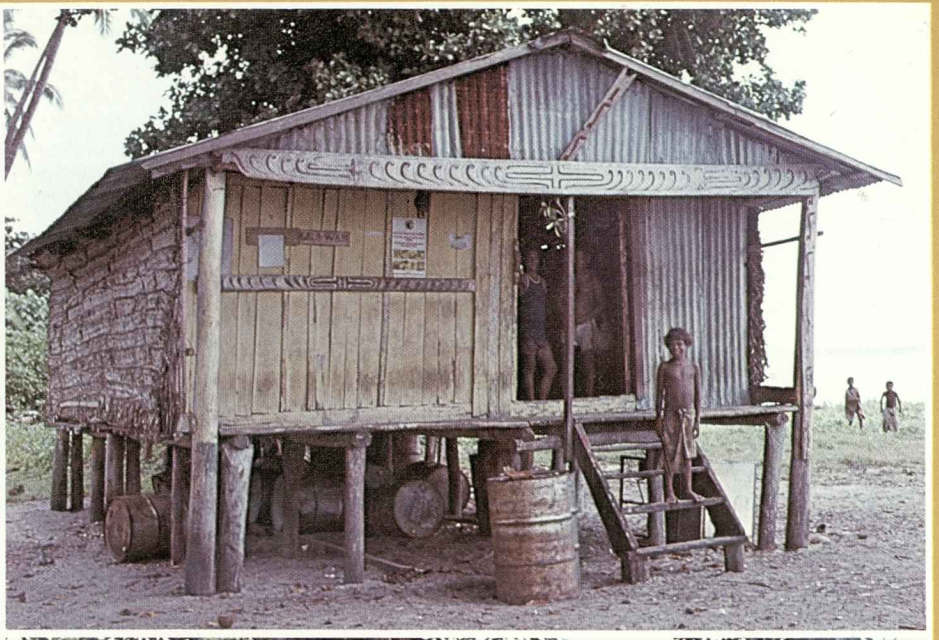

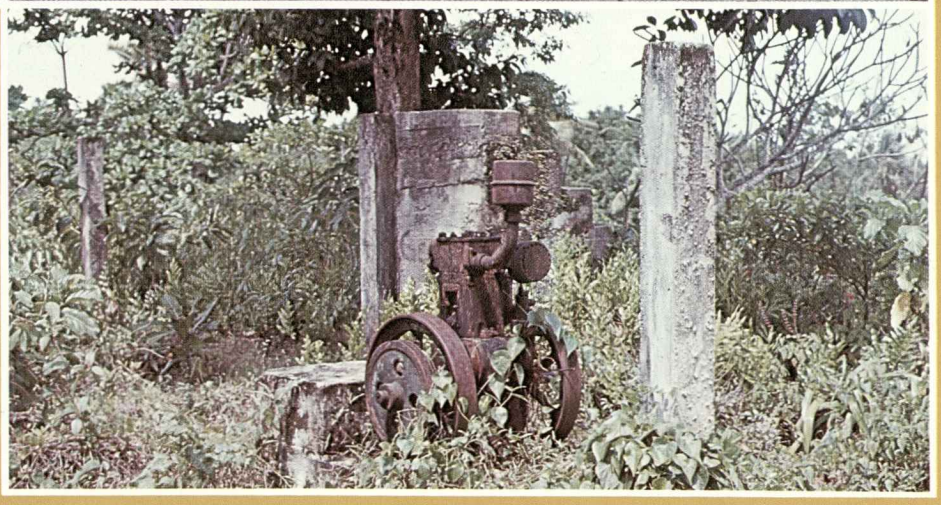

Top left: *King Cam's grave;* **top:** *trade store at Kitava built from remains of King Cam's house;* **above:** *only the stilts and derelict generator remain of Cam's house*

beauties and would swear that 'next time' they would kill him.

Stories about Cameron would fill a book. Rumour has it that he kept a harem of 100 girls and would begin to train them at 12 and dismiss them at 14. It is believed that he always refused to trust the men of Kitava. If there's any truth in some of the rumours about Cameron, it's not hard to understand his insecurity. He kept a storeroom in his house which was well stocked with black twist tobacco, drums of minties and a few other Europen-type goods. He would allow only the women to buy from the store. He would only allow the men to come to the bottom of the steps of his house.

It was not long before 'King Cameron' became a legend in Papua New Guinea (among the whites of course) and throughout the South Seas. Journalists helped to spread the word. Inevitably the stories grew out of all proportion and Cameron grew to hate journalists. As a result of one story published about him, Cameron received 156 letters, mostly from crackpots, wanting to come to work for him, not for money but 'for love'.

Cameron is known to have married three times in village ceremonies. His wives produced a daughter and two sons. His last marriage was in 1934 to an extremely beautiful girl named Kovararaki who was with him until he left the island in 1942 to escape the advancing Japanese armies.

Although there were never any battles fought on Kitava, the people felt the impact of war in other ways. A large freighter had run aground on a reef at the southern end of the island in 1939. This received constant attacks from Japanese planes and warships which suspected it of belonging to the American navy. Villagers, unlucky enough to be in the area at the time, would sometimes be caught in the attacks. In May 1942 a large Japanese armada sailed close to Kitava on the way to the Battle of the Coral Sea. In August, another Japanese armada passed on its way to defeat in the Battle of Milne Bay.

The only Japanese to land on the island were two pilots who had been shot down over Woodlark Island and were trying to escape by canoe. The villagers painted Cameron's light-skinned son Jack with charcoal and hid him in the bush in case the Japanese visitors wanted to kill him because he appeared to be a European.

After the war Cameron returned to Kitava. At 60, he began restoring his neglected plantation and replacing his wrecked house with a very large structure of timber with iron roofing. It sat on high concrete posts and was built around a gigantic open verandah which was almost like an assembly hall. It had a study, two bedrooms and a store room.

On his return, his son Jack soon became Cameron's favourite. Jack was sent for schooling at the Anglican mission at Dogura on the Milne Bay mainland. However, his father never took up again with Kovararaki.

Cameron was a well read man who kept a large library on many subjects. The most valuable book he possessed was a rare volume which had remained in his family since 1670 and was reputed to have been bound in the skin of his ancestors. In contrast to his severe personality, he also kept books on ballet. He maintained a particularly keen interest in this art form though he probably did not see a ballet performed in 50 years.

On his rare visits to Samarai, Cameron presented a strange image as he hobbled about his business, a



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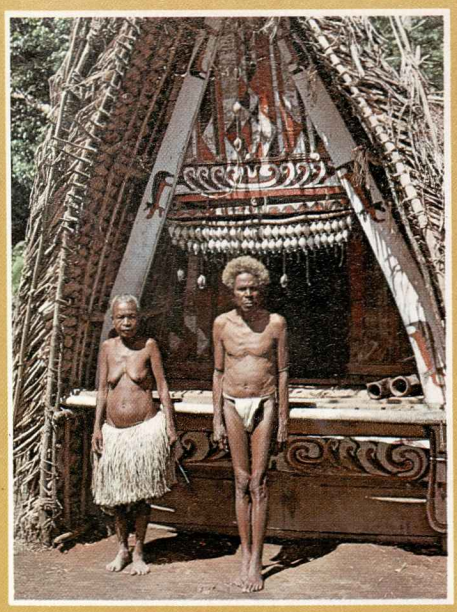
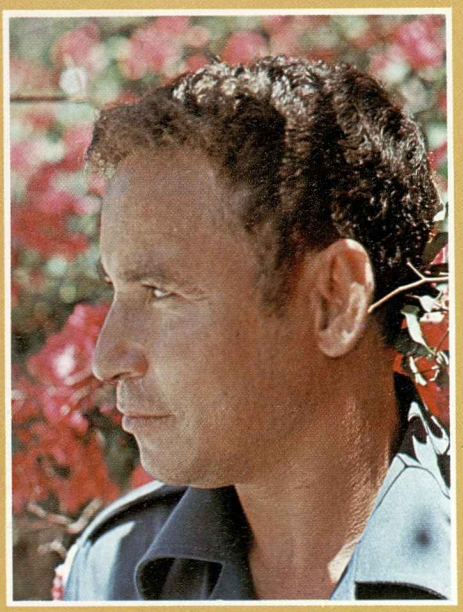
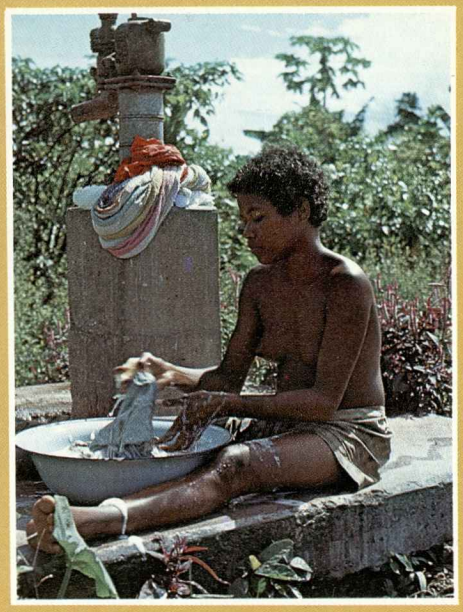


A chief on Kitava and his wife who well remember the crusty planter



Jack Cameron, Kim Cam's son, was protected by the villagers



Kitavan villager launders near the ruin of King Cam's house

stout Trobriands carved walking stick supporting his huge frame. A towering 1.9 metres of extremely thin build, he had pale skin and long legs. His hair was short, brown and wavy. He had piercing greenish blue eyes and a prominent beak-like nose which supported a pair of small round gold-rimmed glasses. When he wished to look particularly stern he would let the glasses slip to the end of his nose and fix his listener with a most disconcerting stare.

His ears were tiny and for many years he was almost deaf. He wore a pink hearing aid which caused him to speak in a loud, gruff voice. Between a full set of false teeth, Cameron always chewed his 'Sherlock Holmes' pipe. It hung from the side of his mouth even when he talked. It was encased in thick grime from the molasses-soaked twist tobacco which he smoked exclusively.

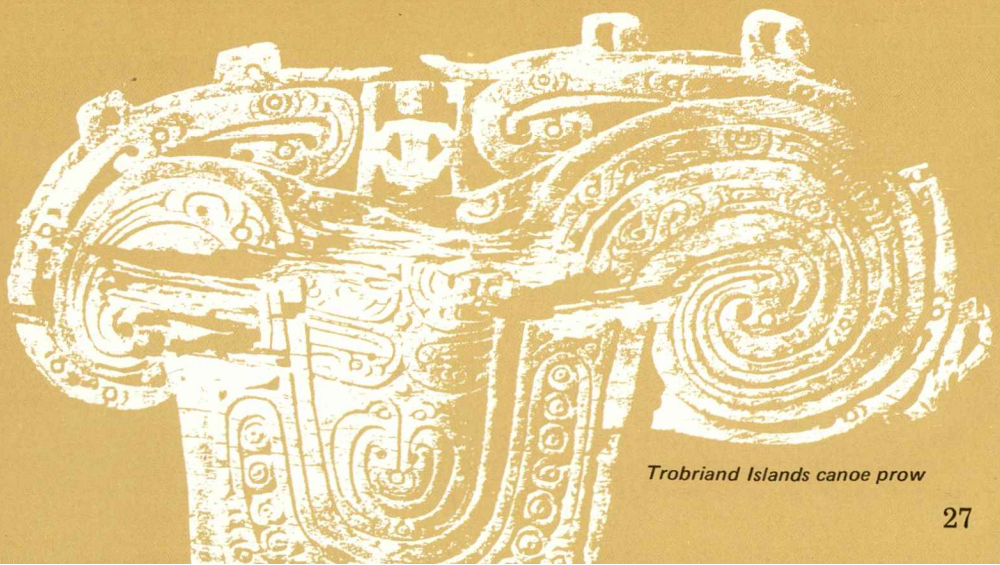
Despite his meticulous habit of always being clean shaven, Cameron was a notoriously bad dresser. If he was working on his plantation's dirtiest job or going to Samarai, his garb never changed — and it was torn, old and ill-fitting. He wore weathered boots, knee length wrap-round gaiters, long baggy Bombay bloomers and grey, faded flannel undershirts. A red handkerchief sweat-soaked, was always around his collarless neck and a shapeless felt hat sat tight around his ears. In his leggings were a sharp knife and a flat board, tools for cutting twist tobacco.

Friends called him 'nature's gentleman'. But if you crossed him you had an enemy for life. He was a serious, moody man, who didn't laugh very often and never encouraged visitors to Kitava to stay for more than a day or two. He didn't like visitors taking his hospitality for granted. He expected them to offer to pay. And when they did he would refuse their offer. He was tight-fisted. So much so that he would ask groups of grass-skirted girls to dance for him and pay them with a single mintie each — but only if they were good.

'King Cameron' represents an extreme character in Papua New Guinea's colonial past. Today he is seen by Papua New Guineans as an arch colonialist and as a racist and an exploiter of workers and women. It seems unlikely that he would have been able to adjust to today's ways. He never did mix well with the Kitavan community. The relaxed mixing of people in Papua New Guinea today would have been totally unacceptable to him. One wonders if, even back in 1966, he sensed the coming change. Independence was emerging as a concrete possibility. 'King Cam' fell sick, was taken off the island and died in hospital soon afterwards in Port Moresby following a heart attack.

His body was taken back to Kitava and buried on the top of the 20 metre coral cliff overlooking the lagoon, a place he often walked to in the evenings. A long concrete slab marks his resting place and a plaque reads: *In memory of Cyril Bernevelot Cameron, born in Tasmania July 21, 1887, started plantation Kitava 1912, died March 28, 1966.*

For a while, with the passing of 'King Cam', the Kitavans' link with the outside world lapsed, with not even the motor of a diesel generator to disturb their lives. But now construction of an airstrip has started. For better or for worse, the isolation of Kitava will become a thing of the past. — *Paul Croft is a Planning Officer with the PNG Office of Tourism.*



Trobriand Islands canoe prow

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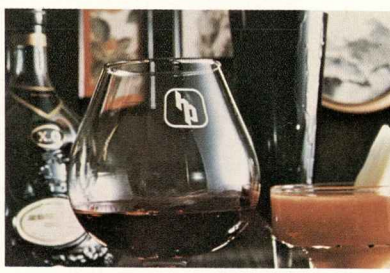
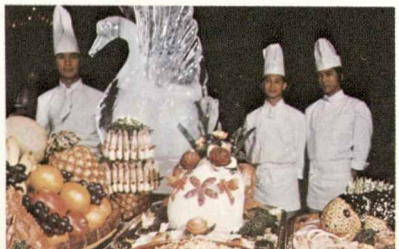
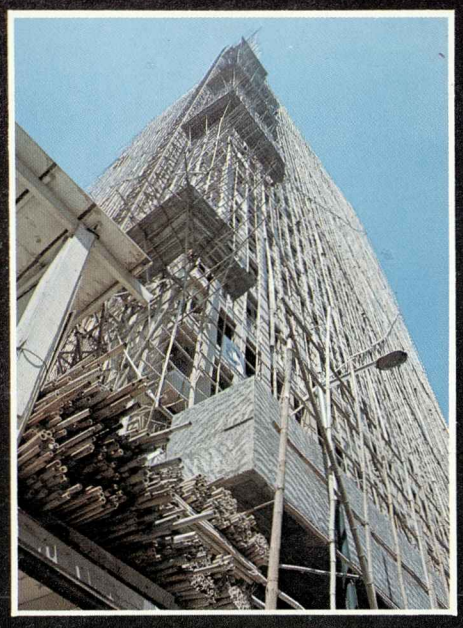






GRASS POWER

By Matthew Cheung



The mountainous skyline of Hong Kong is punctuated by many high-rise buildings. Two decades of remarkable growth and continued prosperity have been matched by building construction on an equally impressive scale.

Urban Hong Kong appears to grow taller and more slender each day, with multi-storey buildings for office, commercial and residential use going up at an unusually fast rate, somewhat akin to the rapid growth of bamboo, the stems of which can reach heights of 23 metres in less than four months. And bamboo plays a vital role in Hong Kong's booming construction industry. Bamboo scaffolding rises from almost every building site.

Growing from a lattice-work cocoon of bamboo, reinforced concrete buildings soar 30 floors or more, still sheathed in their somewhat frail looking bamboo scaffolding. Steel will never take over as long as there is an ample supply of this tough, durable but lightweight member of the tropical giant grass family.

In fact, for centuries bamboo has been a distinctive feature which characterises building works in China. It is generally believed that



only the Chinese know the secret of putting up a bamboo scaffolding.

Hong Kong, just inside the tropics on the southeast coast of China, adjoins the province of Kwangtung. Although certain species of bamboo are quite prevalent in Hong Kong, the amount available is negligible compared to the demand from the construction industry.

In the first four months of last year Hong Kong imported nearly 6,000 tonnes of bamboo poles — reflecting the current building boom and the attendant heavy demand for bamboo for scaffolding purposes. Although the bulk of bamboo poles comes from China, small amounts are also purchased from Thailand, Taiwan and Macao.

The greatest advantage with bamboo from China, besides the quality, is the low freight rates. The cost of shipping such large consignments of low-cost material from more distant parts of Southeast Asia is prohibitive, whereas imports from China are brought the few miles from Canton, by barge or ship, by way of the Pearl River.

On arrival in Hong Kong, the bamboo is sold at a special market in Lai Chi Kok in the northwestern part of Kowloon peninsula. Here the bamboo stems or culms, usually referred to as poles, are selected by scaffolding sub-contractors — all skilled craftsmen employing small teams of scaffolders who travel round construction sites erecting the vital bamboo framework.

The poles are simply tied together with strips of bamboo (called splits) and the entire grid is supported by massive bamboo columns with diameters of about 20 centimetres at the base. Short bamboo poles, about 1.2 metres long, are used to secure the entire scaffolding to the exterior of the building at a distance of about 60 to 90 centimetres.

There are about 300 scaffolding sub-contractors in Hong Kong, many of them small family businesses employing less than five skilled craftsmen. An experienced scaffolder gets an attractive remuneration for his skill and 'acrobatic' ability to manoeuvre without any difficulty from one grid to another at a height which scares all pedestrians on the pavement.

For his 'daring' expertise, a scaffolder is paid HK$89 (about K15) a day — a high wage by Hong Kong standards. The scaffolder normally works an eight-hour day, and five or six days a week. However, whether he can keep himself employed all the time hinges not merely on the market forces of the construction industry but also on weather conditions. No scaffolder can work in high wind, heavy rainfall and thunderstorms.

Each scaffolder can erect (or dismantle) some 65 square metres a day. Most bamboo is scrapped after use on tall buildings, but in the case of a building being completed in less than seven months, the bamboo is occasionally used a second time after thorough inspection.

Women play an important role in the scaffolding profession as assistants. They pass up bamboo poles, or skilfully catch the dismantled poles, dropped from heights of up to 12 metres.

In spite of the lucrative wage it offers, the profession is at present facing the threat of extinction, not so much because of the increasing competition from steel scaffolding methods favoured by some large construction companies, but rather because of the lack of successors to inherit the dexterity and skill of the ageing workforce of scaffolders. Few young men take up the trade — for a combination of reasons. Some find the work too strenuous and dirty, others simply find the height too frightening. What is more, good working conditions in Hong Kong's industry tend to pull a lot of potential new blood away from the occupation.

As it is, the fate of the profession seems to be hanging in the balance. Despite this, the traditional and deeply rooted belief in bamboo scaffolding as a safe and convenient method for building construction work in Hong Kong has never faltered. This belief is not without substance. One incident served to reinforce Hong Kong people's respect for the frail looking bamboo frame. Two 25-storey buildings were under construction in Central District on Hong Kong Island when a severe typhoon hit the colony one summer day 13 years ago. One of the buildings was sheathed with bamboo scaffolding, the other with steel.

To the dismay of almost everybody, the typhoon blew away the heavy steel poles, causing considerable damage in the vicinity. The bamboo frame bent and swayed with the wind and withstood gusts up to 190 km an hour. — *Matthew Cheung is a journalist with the Hong Kong Government Information Services.*

Liklik Balus

Without the services of third level airlines a vast number of Papua New Guinea's people would live in almost constant isolation, their only link with the outside world being the sound of a one-way radio – a world of listening without the opportunity to reply. But into the nooks and crannies of deep rural Papua New Guinea – whether it be among the central peaks, on the Fly and Sepik flats, or on coral specks in the ocean – tiny airstrips have been laboriously carved. These pictures, past and present, provide a view of the role of the liklik balus *and the country they fly in . . .*



Top: *Over Papua New Guinea's central peaks;* **above:** *Talair Twin Otter going through the Kokoda Gap, Northern Province, 1977*





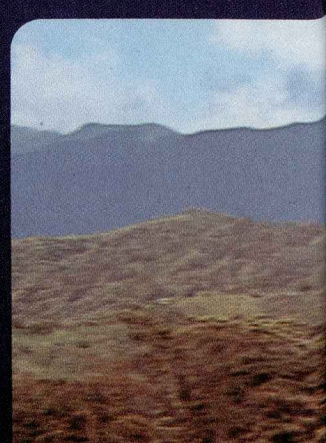
About to touch down at M

Above: *Marawaka airstrip and government station, Eastern Highlands, 1971;* **below:** *TAL (now Talair) Cessna at Karimui airstrip, Chimbu Province, 1972*



Above: *Pilot's eye-view of Pa*







rawaka, 1972



ua New Guinea's rugged interior; **below:** *Cessna 206 comes into Goroka, 1971*





Above: *Cessna taking off from the short, steep strip at Obura, Eastern Highlands, 1972;* **below:** *Cessnas meet at Marawaka, 1971*



Above: *Wonenara strip, Eastern Highlands, 1968, with Cessna turning steeply out of valley, was closed soon afterward because it was sub-standard;* **below:** *Britten-Norman Islander calls into Witu Island, West New Britain Province, 1977*



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