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No 100 Sept-Oct 1993

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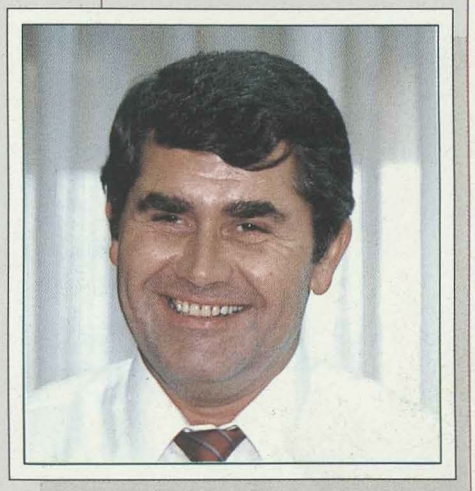
Welcome aboard!

Villagers of the Hunstein Range are tapping the riches of their rainforest without destroying it; gathering fragrant barks for perfume, collecting gum for lacquer, selling their carvings and playing host to eco-tourists.

For a group of orchidists from Germany, the Nondugl orchid nurseries and a visit to the Jimi Gap were more than they believed possible, with a drizzling mist, and raindrops highlighting the magnificent colors of the orchid blooms.

Read how two men from Baruni village are endeavoring to preserve the traditional craftsmanship of asi asi canoe making by encouraging a regular youth church group to actively build and race this type of canoe each weekend around Fairfax Harbor.

Enjoy these and other articles and have a pleasant flight.



DIETER SEEFELD
Chief Executive & General Manager
Air Niugini

IN THIS ISSUE:

Cover: Ramu River boy shows off a good size prawn destined for market. (see page 31). Photograph by Kevin Glennon.

Dieter Seefeld
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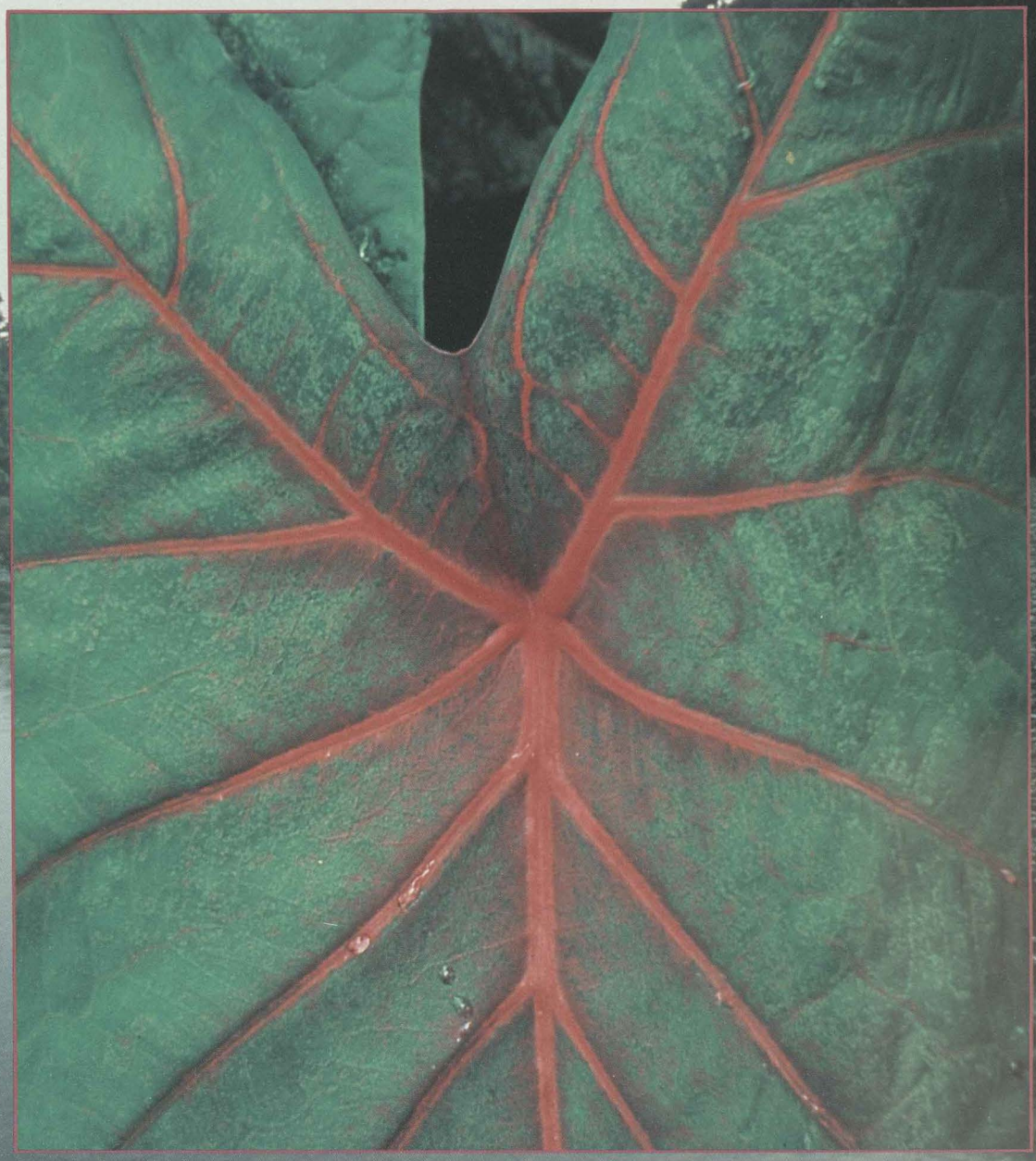
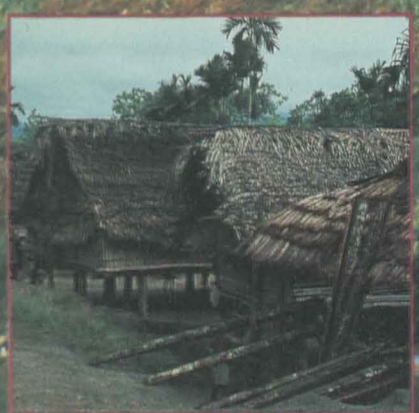
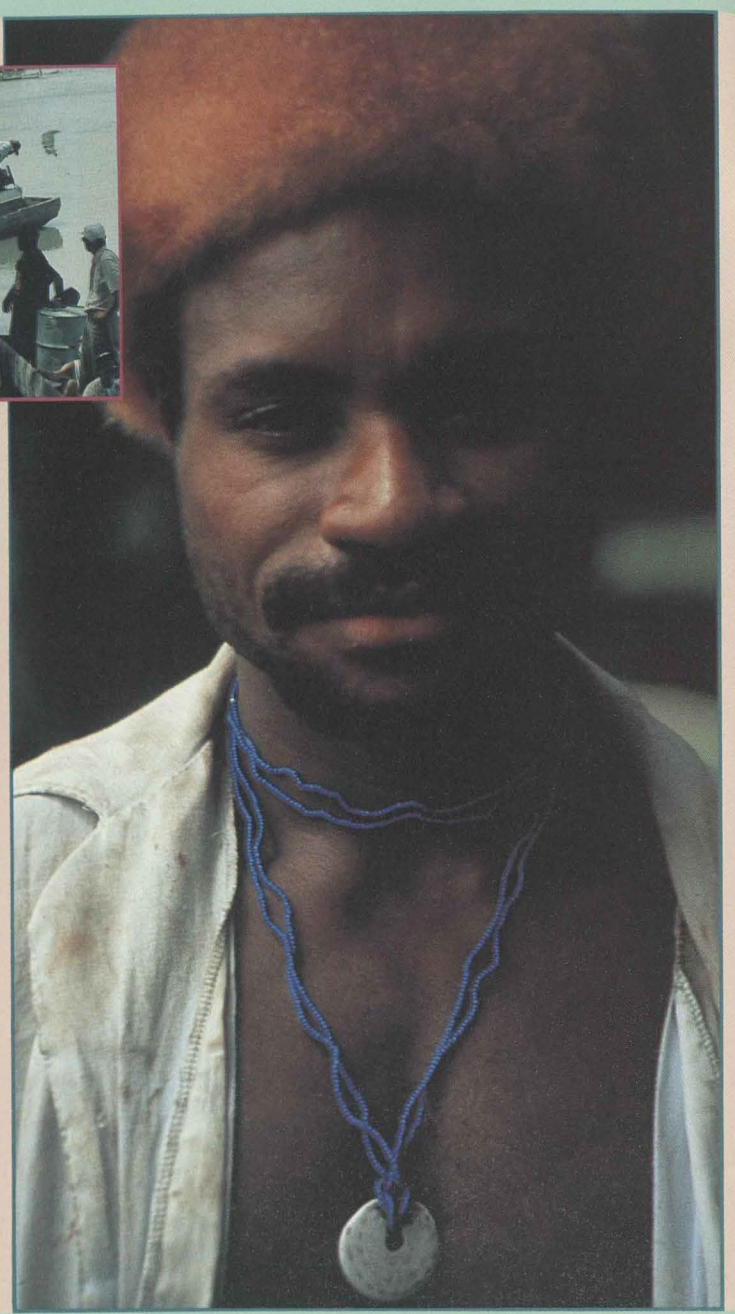
Green Mountain

Story and photographs by Paul Chatterton



Green Future





According to the local people, nobody has reached the top of the Hunstein Range —the highest freestanding point in the Sepik. A giant centipede writhes through the lakes beneath the summit and guards the mountain from intruders. When approached, it throws up thick forest barriers, blasts climbers with wind and mist and causes them to lose their way in the dense moss forest. Locals, of course, know better than to try.

To their discomfort, a party of botanists discovered the truth of this when they attempted the climb in 1989. Sodden and disoriented they made a hasty retreat. They had lost some dignity but they had also gained an understanding of why this rugged area has protected some of the richest forests on the north coast of Papua New Guinea.

The people of the Hunstein Range, with the help of the centipede, have protected these forests for millennia. Now they are developing new ways of earning a living that continues this tradition and offers a lesson to the world.

Five hundred kilometres from the mouth of the Sepik, the Hunstein Range is isolated between the main mountainous backbone of the country and the snaking upper reaches of the Sepik. The nearest roads are a day's canoe away at Pagwi and the nearest major town is the small government station at Ambunti across the Sepik River.

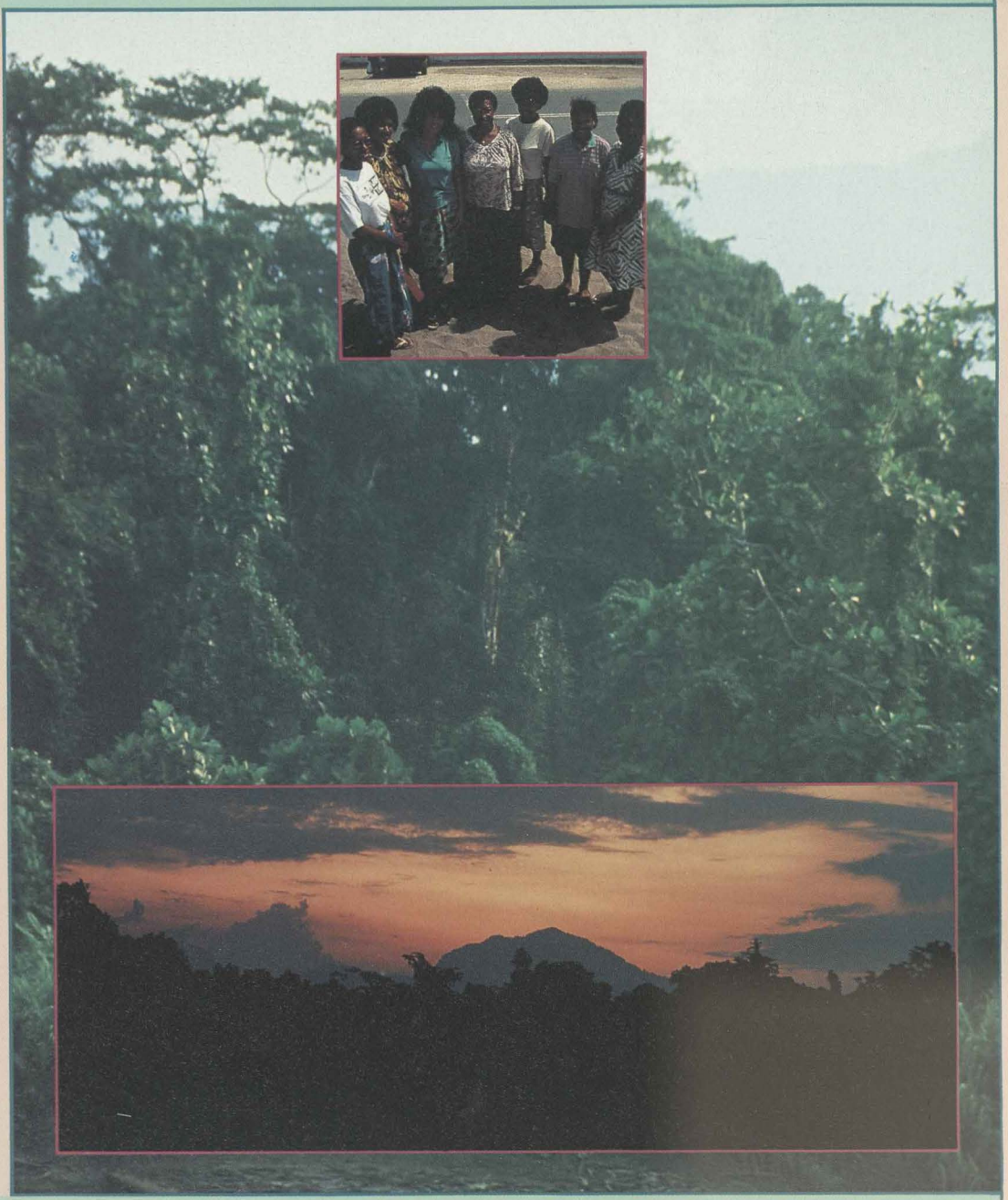
This splendid isolation has left the Hunstein Range as one of the largest areas of intact rainforest in PNG. A place of tall jungle, sago swamp and mountain cloud forest, of tropical pines and orchids, birds of paradise and cuscus.

The botanists, from Forest Research Institute at Lae and Hawaii's Bishop Museum, quickly recognised that the area is outstanding scientifically. During the month they spent in the range they collected more plants than had been collected in any other single place in PNG; a total of 1,237 separate species representing a staggering 231 families. Early surveys suggest that as many as 100 of these may be wholly new to science, and this is just from one river

Far left *A stilt house in Bugapuki, a Hunstein Range village on the April River, a tributary of the Sepik.* **inset** *Yigei, another village managing its rainforest resources.*

Inset, centre left *Visitors and supplies setting out for Ambunti Lodge.* **Left** *Kagiru villager and tree kangaroo fur hat.*

Right *Rainforest of the Hunstein Range.* **top inset** *Staff of the East Sepik Council of Women.* **bottom inset** *Sunset over the Hunstein Range, from Bugapuki village.*



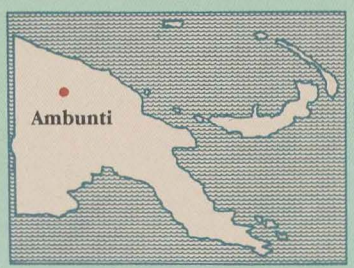
valley.

The expedition found some extraordinary life forms too. A new type of plant that provides a home for ants in return for protection against smothering vines. The world's largest stand of the rare kauri pines, an ancient tropical pine left over from cooler ages. And a wealth of new orchid varieties.

It appears that the Sepik has some of the richest rainforest ecosystems on earth, rivalled only by Borneo and the Amazon in diversity, and the Hunstein Range is one of its jewels.

In a world where rainforest of this sort is rapidly dwindling, the forests of the Hunstein Range and other parts of PNG will become increasingly precious. Recognising that they are becoming an attraction of world significance, the Department of Environment and Conservation is now proposing that the area be made a nature reserve and possibly listed as World Heritage.

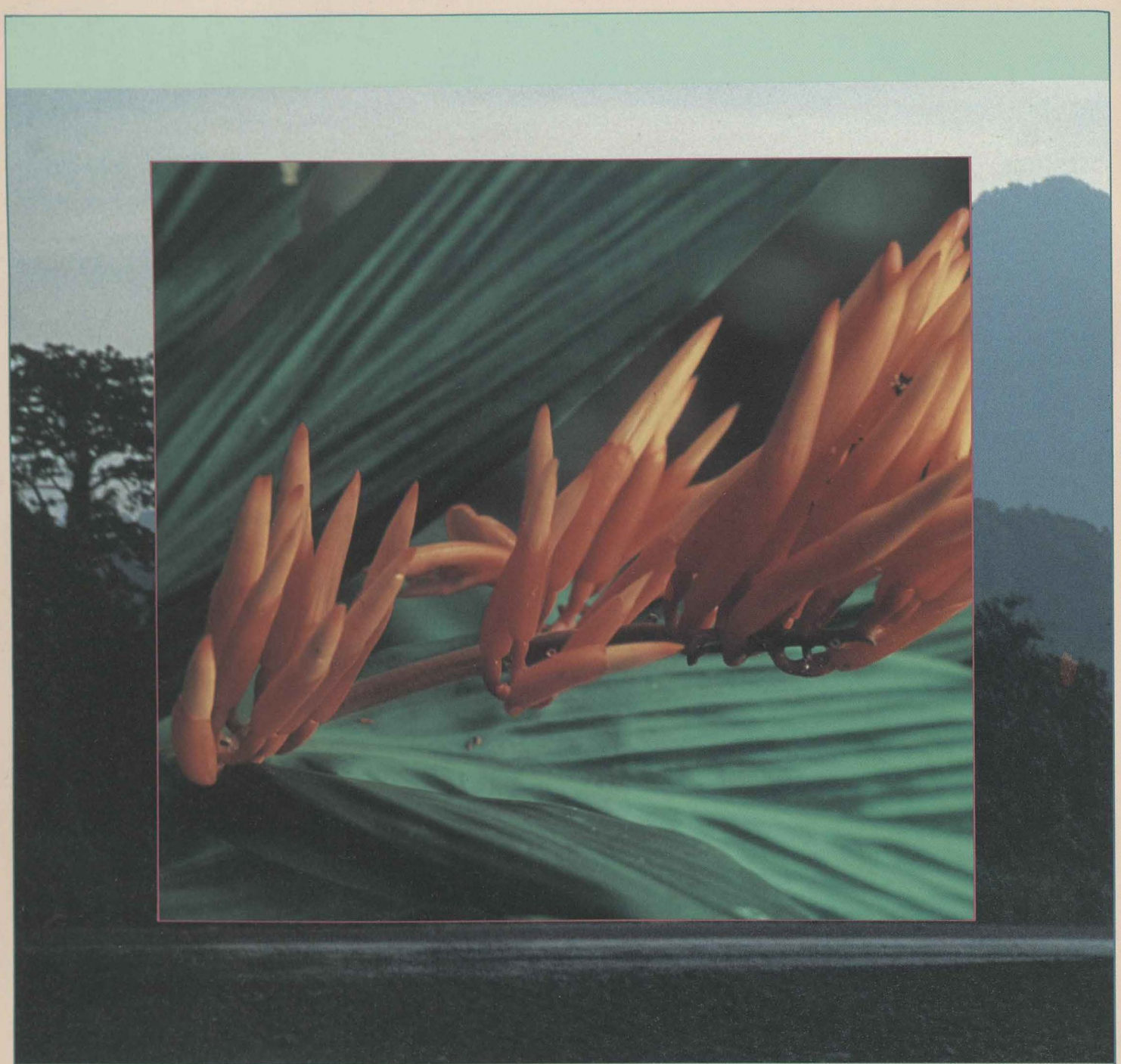
I had the opportunity to visit this remarkable area. The image that sticks in my mind is not of the forest, but of its



people and their closeness to this forest world.

Their culture is intimately entwined with nature and in many ways I came to realise that they are the real experts on its botany. Although they may not be scientifically qualified, their languages contain hundreds of names for the plants and animals of the region and their understanding of the complex relationship between these far exceeds that of the scientists.

Like so many villagers, they must have this knowledge. Their life depends on it. The forest is their lifeblood and the provider of almost the entirety of their needs. It gives materials for their homes, wood for canoes, meats and fruits for food, leaves and barks for medicine, and most importantly the stories and spirits that give them their



Above *Forest plants are cropped for medicine, food and commercial products.*

sense of meaning.

And in the same way that the forest has protected them, they are also its protectors.

Far from the romantic picture of tropical forest dwellers though, the life of the Hunstein Range people is often painful. While they enjoy a provident forest, a strong community and a rich culture, the splendid isolation can also be cruel. Diseases such as malaria, pneumonia and even leprosy are commonplace and few can afford the petrol for the two-day canoe trip to market. Fewer still can pay the yearly fees to send their children to school. With all this, the clamor for change is growing daily and like so many other communities in PNG, the temptation to sell off these precious forests for logging to get some quick money is growing with it. Fortunately, there are alternatives and the forest itself has proven their provider again.

With the help of a local community group, the East Sepik Council of Women, the Hunstein Range people are developing ways to earn the money they need and protect their forest. They are developing enterprises that allow them to harvest some of the richness of the forest without destroying it. Businesses are growing, collecting fragrant barks for the perfume industry in Europe, tapping the gum of the kauri for the lacquer market and selling their world renowned carvings. Studies in the Amazon have shown that communities can often gain two to six times the income from selling these non-timber products of their forest as they can from selling the timber.

In addition, two villages have already set up their own guest houses and are working with local tourism operator and owner of Ambunti Lodge, Alois Mateos, to draw people to sample the delights of this extraordinary part of the planet.

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TASMANIAN TIGERS

Story by Greg Morgan
Photographs by Greg Morgan and Ned Terry

Left *Tasmanian tigers were hunted to extinction by European settlers. (Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery)* **above** *Australian postal authorities were wishful thinkers when they included a Tasmanian tiger on the endangered species series.*

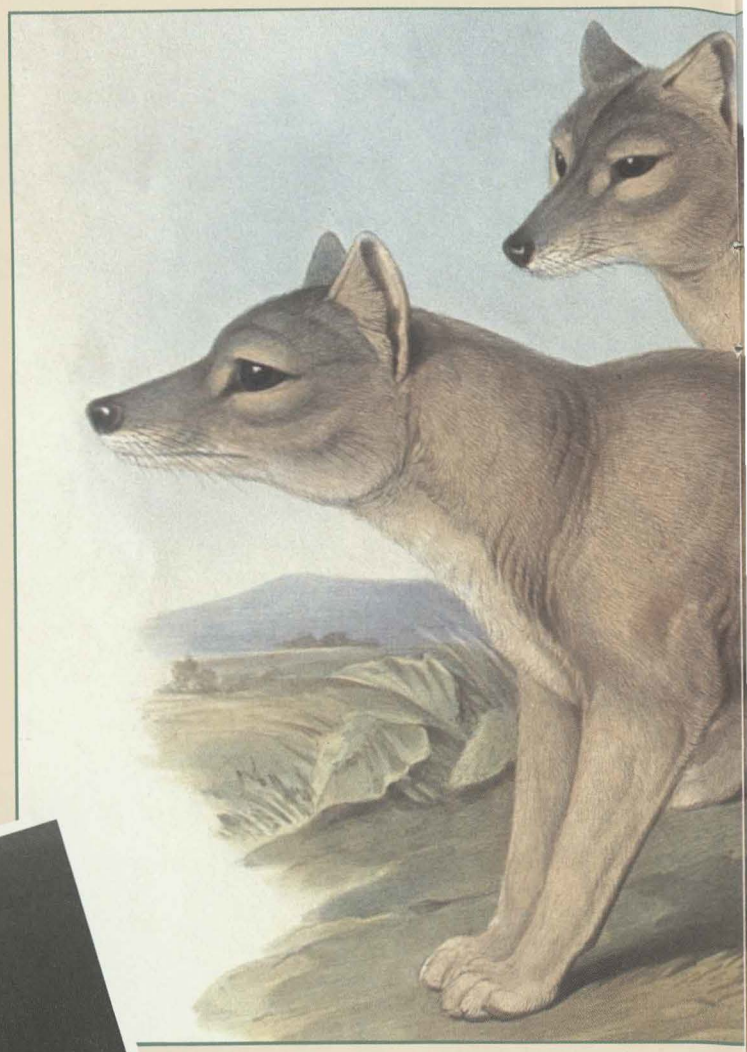
If it still exists, the Tasmanian tiger or thylacine, is the world's largest carnivorous marsupial and the world's rarest animal. Even though the last known specimen died in the Hobart Zoo in 1936, a steady stream of sightings continue to be reported — not all of them from Tasmania.

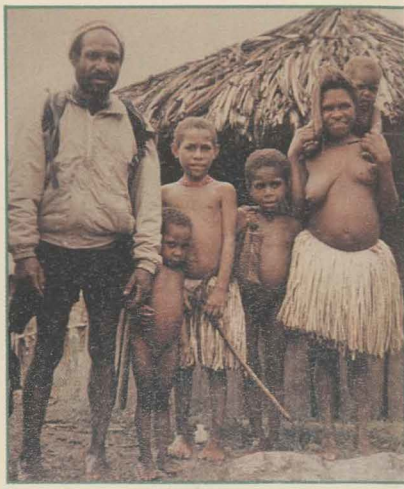
According to Peter Murray, a palaeontologist with the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Darwin: "Fossils show thylacines were common across the tropical north of Australia and New Guinea thousands of years ago, and perhaps the whole continent". Their demise on the Australian mainland is generally attributed to the arrival of dingoes. Humans co-existed happily in Tasmania with this rarely seen creature until the 1830s. Until then, it was just another curious antipodean animal.

With the introduction of sheep, tigers became a threat to the young colony's livelihood. Eric Guiler, perhaps the most respected of tiger experts, says that while thylacines killed some sheep, they became the scapegoat for poor farming, stealing and attacks by wild dogs and Aborigines. Thylacines' reputation as sheep killers rapidly grew to demonic proportions and their countdown to oblivion began. Bowing to increasing pressure from graziers, Tasmania's Parliament introduced a government bounty of one pound a carcase in 1887. The officially sponsored annihilation of thylacines took about 25 years, 2,184 government bounties being paid.

For a species in such obvious peril, the scientific community showed a remarkable lack of interest until too late. Lacking even basic scientific data, thylacine lore has grown more from myths, fading memories, dreams and guesswork than from facts.

The search for definitive





Right *Spectacular gape of Tasmanian tiger on film taken at Hobart Zoo in 1928 (Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery).* **top right** *From John Gould's Mammals of Australia 1863, which predicted the thylacine would follow Britain's wolf into extinction (Royal Society of Tasmania).* **far right** *Guides who helped Ned Terry's search.* **near right** *Guide farewells his family.*

proof that the thylacine survives is as intense as the medieval quest for the Holy Grail. Like a holy crusade, it bonds many Australians in a rare, shared dream. Few have worked harder at this quest than Ned Terry, ironically a grazier. Acting on the best information available, including many highly rated eyewitness accounts, Ned has scoured the Tasmanian bush for several years for the challenge of finding a thylacine. Many observers believe it would be easier looking for a moving needle in a haystack.

A few years ago Ned received a phone call from a missionary who had just retired after 17 years in the remote Highlands of Irian Jaya. One night while showing tribesmen photos of strange Australian animals, he showed them a photo of a Tasmanian tiger.

They were very excited and pointed to the high country saying it lives there.

Ned was dubious but contacted a missionary working in the same area who speaks the local language. She had never heard of Tasmanian tigers but at Ned's request asked the tribesmen to describe this animal. A report came through which excited Ned beyond words.

The report said the locals rarely see the animal in full daylight hours, usually only while it is hunting at dawn or dusk for small marsupials and birds. They are very afraid of it and associate it with evil spirits and use the faeces to perform black magic on enemies. The dens are usually in rocks or caves. It was the physical description which had Ned packing for the next plane.

The locals go on to describe

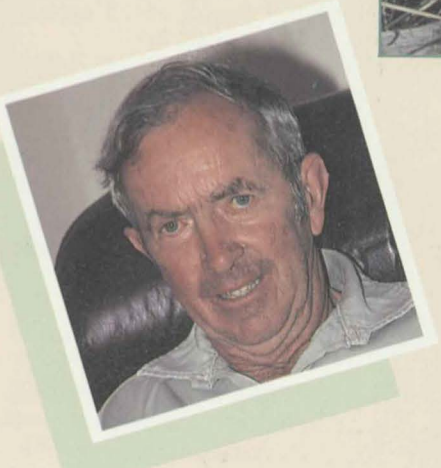
it as having a head and shoulders like white man's dogs but with a huge, strong mouth and a long, thin tail almost the same length as the body. They add that from the ribs to the hips there are no intestines - meaning it is very thin in this area - and that part has stripes. Ned still sounds excited when he talks about it. "That was enough to start me going. It was spot on. I couldn't have described it better myself."

When they went to investigate, Ned and his cousin Robin were met by the missionary who sent him the report. She and her colleague introduced the Terrys to the locals and acted as interpreter. When Ned showed them his photographs of thylacines, they pointed higher up and cried out: "Dobsegna! Dobsegna!"

The local hunters had conflicting ideas of where to find dobsegna. Two were chosen as guides and the party flew by helicopter up to about 4,000 metres. Ned was hoping to find tiger footprints or even a cave-lair which may have contained a tiger skull or fur. Unfortunately, after two days searching, there were no positive signs. Ned said: "We didn't prove anything one way or another."

At first, searching for thylacines on the island of New Guinea seems preposterous. But it is quite feasible. First, it is known from ancient fossils that they lived there. Second, there are amazing parallels in the habitat of thylacines of Tasmania and that highly elevated part of New Guinea. There are small prey-marsupials in both, and the climate is similar. The vegetation types and general landscape of open woodland, rocks and steep gullies are also similar. Third, is the incredibly detailed and accurate descriptions of tigers by the local hunters, which only the most outrageous and informed imposter could hope to emulate. As Ned says: "They know the tiger's living habits too well for it not to have been there very recently. They know where it slept, how it hunts, what it eats and the difference between its pawprint and that of a dog's."

Ned is undeterred. He feels that if they do exist in New Guinea there are not many. However, someone who knows what he's doing should be able to find one in a week. "We were out of time and had to leave, but I'll be back. It's just so exciting; it's a mystery that has to be solved! Next time I'll stay for longer and I'll know where and how to look." As hope dies of live Tasmanian tigers ever being seen in Tasmania again, perhaps efforts should be redirected further north. Ned Terry said he will be there if it happens.



Top *Study from John Gould's Mammals of Australia 1863.* **centre** *Faded, mounted museum specimen in thylacine's natural habitat.* **left** *Ned Terry, tireless searcher for the Tasmanian tiger.*

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THE Orchid HUNTERS

Story and photographs by Peter van Fleet

Above *Two species of high mountain wild orchids.* **below** *Firing up a mumu (earth oven feast).*

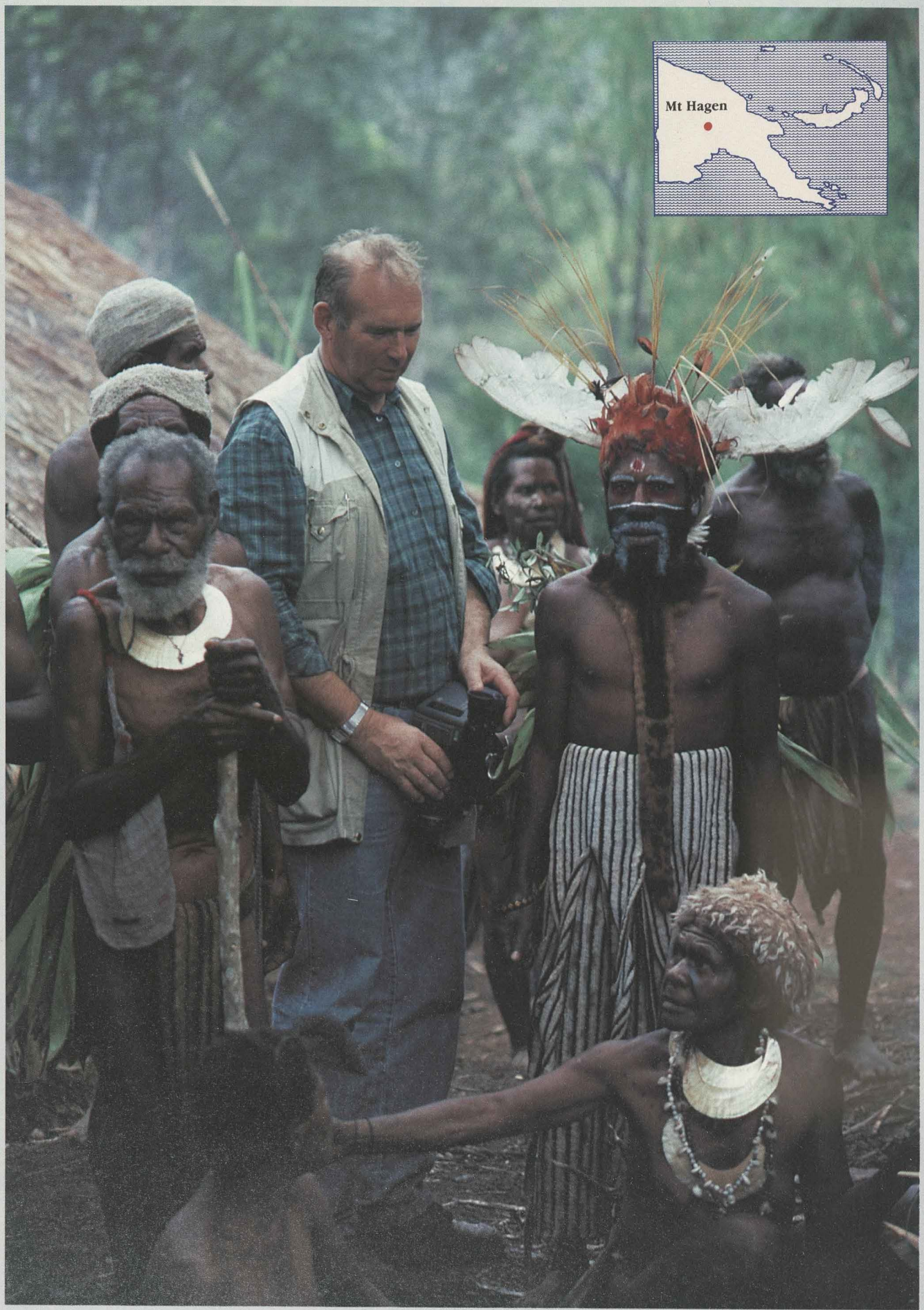
Crashing down the logging path to the gravel road which traverses the Jimi Gap, the excited orchid hunter brandished his prize for all to see. Gently removed from the trunk of a recently felled tree, the tall spiky orange orchid was beautiful. The other members of the group of 18 orchid fanciers from Germany gathered around to admire the plant. An expert, summoned to give genus and species, was unsure. Several new species had been found in the Jimi Gap area and perhaps this was another. George Denge, the horticulturist in charge of the Nondugl orchid nurseries took charge and said he would look after it properly and see what came of the beautiful plant and flower.

All members of the group were keen orchid growers and collectors and some were involved in the commercial propagation of orchids in Germany. Papua New Guinea with some of the world's most interesting orchids, many unique, is a mecca for orchidists.

Travelling along the old Highlands highway to Nondugl, the group visited the Nondugl orchid nurseries run by the Western Highlands Provincial Government. Staffed by a group of local horticulturalists, the small but attractive nursery is home for dozens of local species. Luckily, a cold snap had induced many to bloom and dozens of delicate and beautiful flowers greeted the visitors.

The winding road up to the Jimi Gap was shrouded in mist and the trees waved their beards of grey green moss in the sharp breeze. As the tour bus slowed at corners, the group began to spot species after species of orchid - dendrobium, bulbophyllum and many others. After a picnic lunch in drizzling mist at the top of the gap, the hunt was on to find more. As the trip was

Right *Kameng villagers welcome German orchid fancier.* **lower left** *Dressing for a singsing.* **lower right** *High mountain wild orchid.* **below** *Admiring orchid finds along the Jimi Gap Road.*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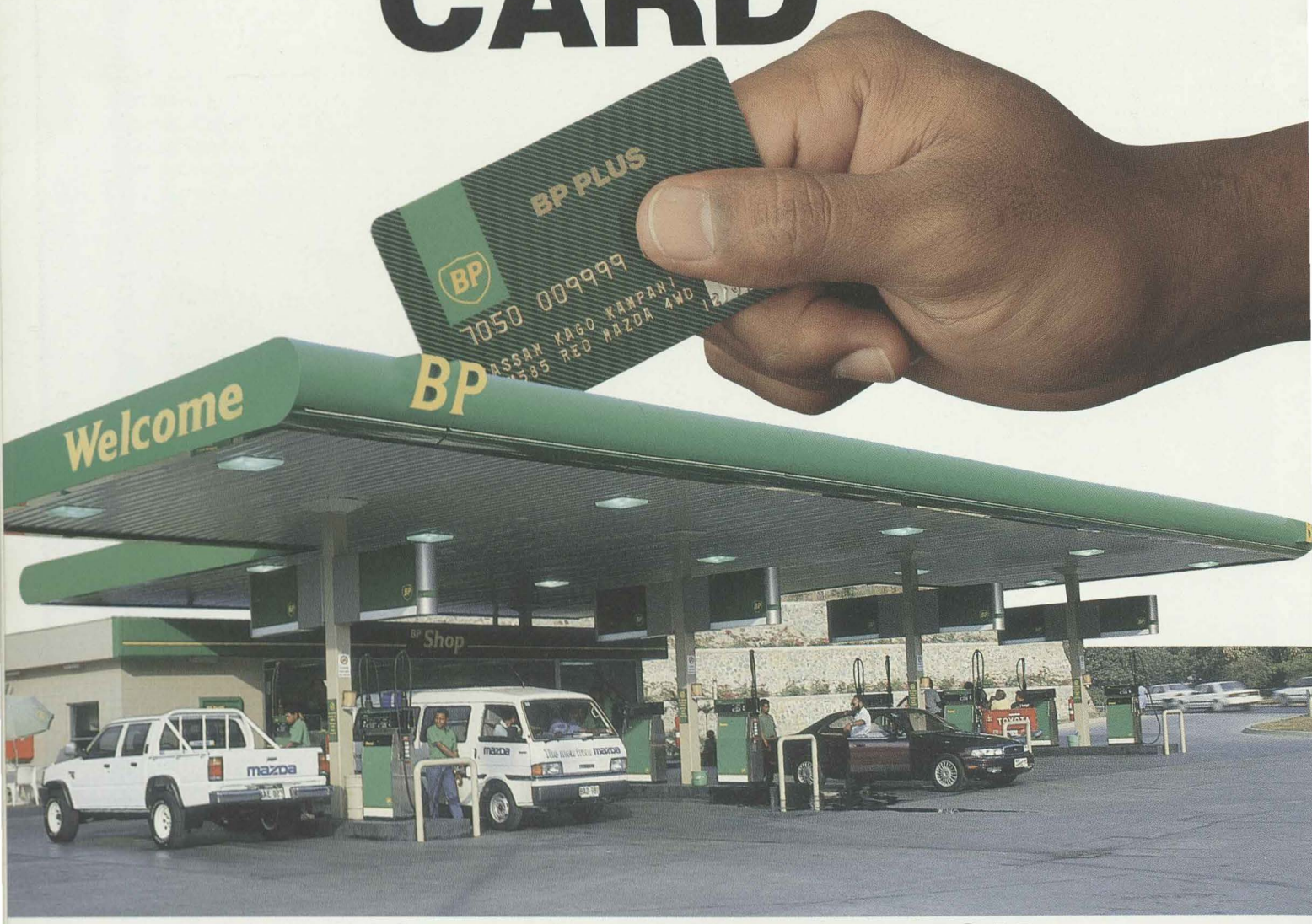

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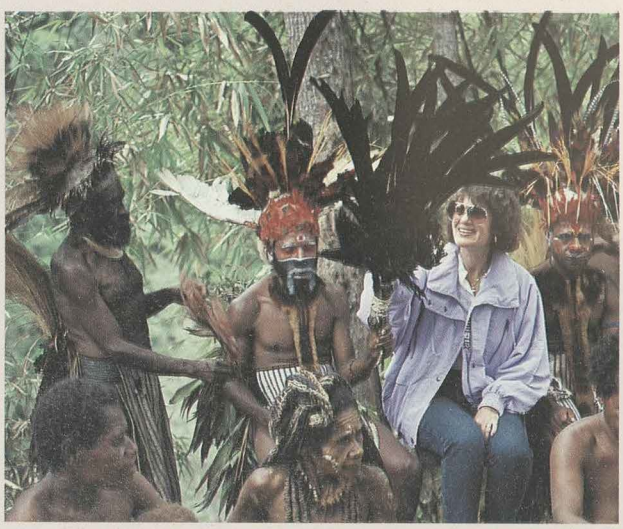
only for finding, viewing and photographing, no orchids were removed except for rare species to be given to George for growth at the nursery. As the group walked back down the road from the gap, more and more orchids were located growing on the steep road sides.

Some species glowed like bright jewels, tiny raindrops refracting light from their deep red flowers. Others huddled in damp mossy crevices, little white flowers twinkling like stars. Waxy-leaved dendrobium orchids stood robustly in large groups on steep clay slopes, orange flowers shining like beacons. Cameras clicked, videos whirred and voices exclaimed at the wonder of beautiful plants and flowers found growing in their natural environment.

Later that evening, after a hot meal and coffee around the blazing log fire in the Plumes and Arrows Inn, Mt Hagen, the group members reflected on the day's activities. The next day's tour was to be somewhat different, being a village study day at Kameng village at Minj in the Wahgi Valley. The eerie after dinner performance of the mudmen held in a smoky, fire-lit garden setting was the major topic of discussion and it was the ideal end to a day of orchid viewing.

Arriving at the high mountain village next day, the tour group was met by 30 traditionally dressed villagers. Soon the tourists and villagers were studying each other, checking out clothing, jewellery and habits. The sound of wood chopping was heard. Gathering broad green banana plant leaves, the women used hot rocks and grasses to fashion an earth oven mumu to cook vegetables and greens for lunch. Once the

Above *Kameng villagers prepare a welcome feast.* **lower left** *High mountain wild orchid.* **lower right** *Showing visitors bird of paradise plumes and headdresses.*



Below *High mountain wild orchid.* **lower left** *Searching Jimi Gap for specimens.* **lower right** *Kameng villagers and their guests.*

mumu was steaming, other women began to weave string bag bilums while men sharpened stone axes on sandstone blocks. The twanging of jew's harps mixed with the sound of bamboo being shaped into hunting bows.

A beautifully dressed young girl had everyone entranced as she sat, delicately balancing the towering head-dress of sooty black Princess Stephanie bird of paradise plumes. Women gathered around her to see the plush possum fur neck piece and to see the twined rope and wool skirt she wore.

Steaming portions of food from the earth oven provided a sumptuous lunch.

The next day's tour through bustling Mt Hagen and its famous markets showed the group that not only orchids grow well in the crisp and cool Highlands weather. Mounds of fruits and vegetables - carrots, lettuces, broccoli, strawberries and greens were set out near the traditional vegetables - sweet potato, kumu, bananas and taro.

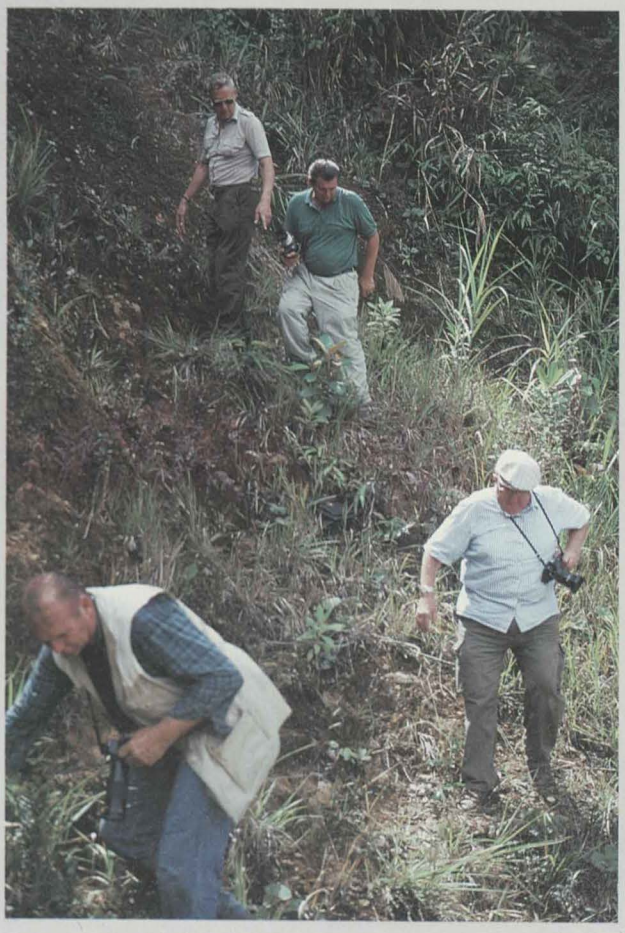
Colored wool and neatly sewn skirts and blouses covered the ground in one section and squealing pigs and softly clucking chickens another. One set of benches had rows of pungent locally grown tobacco and another, nuts and possum wool.

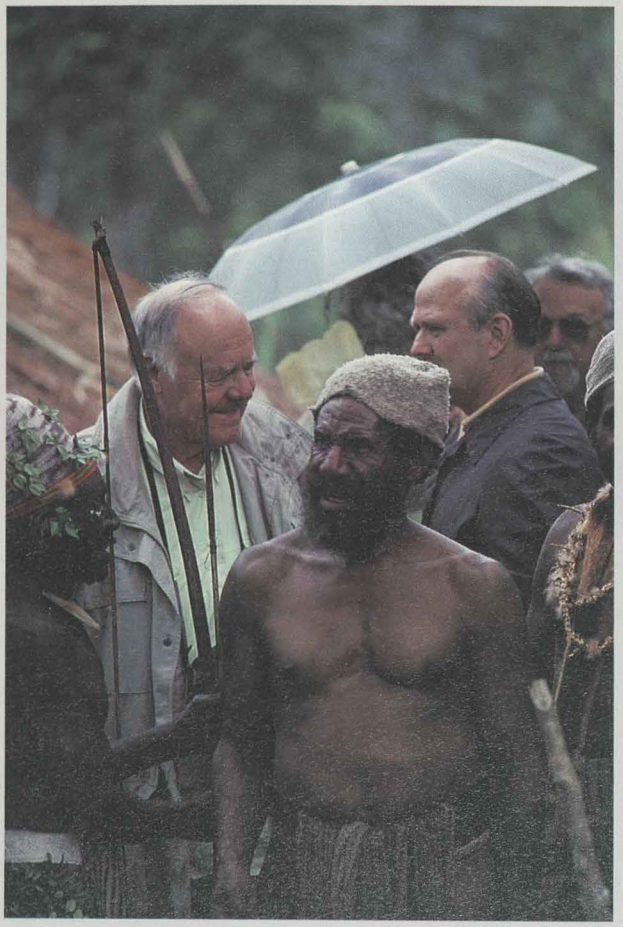
Gossiping crowds and earnest sellers mixed into a wonderfully confused and confusing cacophony of sound, movement, smell and color.

The tour group left PNG with fond memories of tiny jewel-like mountain orchids, huge clumps of hundreds of terrestrial orchids, delicate spider orchids and massed displays of purple blue vandas, but no flowers or plants were taken. Vivid scenes of cultural activities, beautiful highlands and coastal scenery and overwhelmingly friendly contact with village people were also fond memories this group took with them.

Orchids are one of PNG's most valuable natural assets, in the natural beauty they provide, the valuable part they play in the variety of orchids around the world and in the potential they hold in attracting tourists from around the world.

Orchid tours can be arranged through Tribal World, PO Box 86, Mt Hagen, Ph. 551555 or Fax. 5511546.



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PACIFIC
OCEAN
HONG KONG
Hanoi
LAOS
Luzon Strait
Hainan
PHILIPPINE
SEA
COMMONWEALTH OF
THE NORTHERN
Saipan
MARIANA ISLANDS
Guam
VIETNAM
THAILAND
Bangkok
SOUTH
CHINA
Luzon
Manila
PHILIPPINES
CAMBODIA
Phnom
Penh
Ho Chi
Min City
Gulf of
Thailand
Palawan
SEA
REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL
ISLANDS
Majuro
FEDERATED STATES
Caroline Islands
OF MICRONESIA
Mindanao
BRUNEI
Koror
REPUBLIC
OF PALAU
MALAYSIA
CELEBES
SEA
SINGAPORE
Borneo
Halmahera
Biak
NAURU
Yaren
KALIMANTAN
Balikpapan
Sumatra
Jayapura
Manus Island
Celebes
Moluccas
Vanimo
New Ireland
IRIAN JAYA
Rabaul
Jakarta
INDONESIA
JAVA SEA
BANDA SEA
Mount Hagen
Bougainville
PAPUA
NEW GUINEA
SOLOMON SEA
SOLOMON
ISLANDS
Bali
Flores
Java
Port Moresby
Timor
ARAFURA SEA
Torres Strait
Honiara
Santa Cruz
Islands
TIMOR SEA
Great
Barrier
Reef
Darwin
Gulf of
Carpentaria
CORAL
SEA
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Norfolk Island
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PLAIN
WALES
Lord Howe Island
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GREAT
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North Island
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ZEALAND
Wellington
TASMANIA
Hobart
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SOUTHERN
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Stewart Island


Manila
Hong Kong
Jayapura
Vanimo
Bewani
Sissano
Aitape
Imonda
Lumi
Amanab
Dreikikir
Maprik
Nuku
Green River
May River
Sepik River
Ambunti
Kairiru Island
Wewak
Angorum
Manam Island
Hansa Bay
Bogia
Karawari
Amboin
HINDENBURG RANGE
CENTRAL RANGE
Telefomin
Ok Tedi Mine
Oksapmin
Lake Kopiago
Porgera
Tabubil
Wabag
Baiyer River
Wapenamanda
Mount Hagen
Tari
Mendi
Mt Giluwe
Kundiawa
Goroka
Mt Wilhelm
Ningerum
Rumginae
Kiunga
Nomad
Moro
Lake Kutubu
Erave
Kagua
Lake Murray
Kikori River
Kikori
Baimuru
Balimo
Morehead
Bensbach
Daru
Daru Island
Kiwai Island
GULF OF PAPUA
Singapore
Manus Island
Lorengau
Momote
New Hanover
BISMARCK SEA
Karkar Island
Bagabag Island
Madang
Long Island
Umboi Island
Siassi
Gloucester
Talasea
Sialum
Kandrian
Kainantu
Okapa
Kaiapit
Huon Peninsula
Nadzab
Lae
Finschafen
Tami Island
HUON GULF
Salamaua
Mumeng
Wabo
Bulolo
Wau
Purari River
Morobe
Ihu
Kerema
Kukipi
Mt Albert Edward
Bereina
Yule Island
Hisiu
Popondetta
Kokoda
Mt Victoria
Tufi
Wanigela
Sogeri
PORT MORESBY
Bootless Bay
OWEN STANLEY RANGE
Kwikila
Kupiano
Mulgrave Island
Moa Island
TORRES STRAIT
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Rabaul
Bainings
GAZELLE
PENINSULA
Stettin Bay
Hoskins
New Britain
Pomio
Kimbe
Gasmata
Buka Island
Buka Passage
Tinputz
Wakunai
Arawa
Torokina
Copper
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Panguna
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Choiseul
Island
Santa Isabel
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SOLOMON ISLANDS
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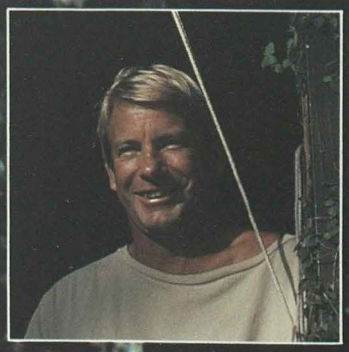
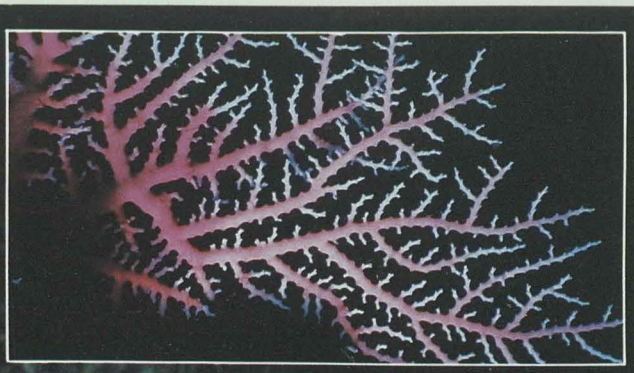
Normanby Island
Alotau
Milne Bay
Misima
Samarai



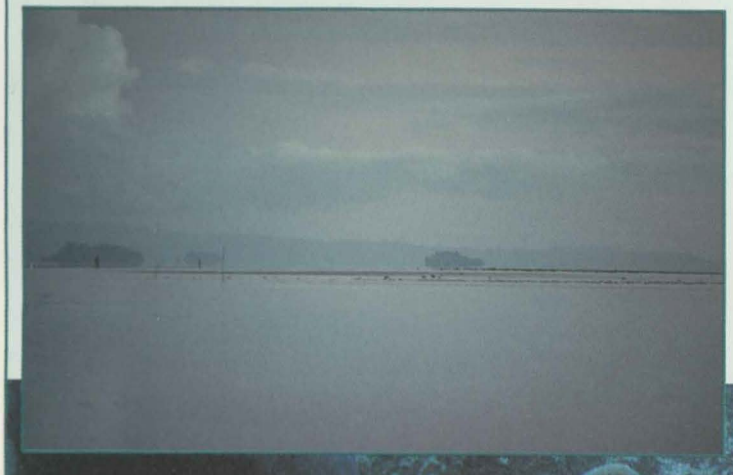
Left *Max Benjamin, creator of Walindi Plantation Resort.* **right** *Coral fingers.* **below** *Angel fish.*



Papua New Guinea has long been famous for its adventure trails and ancient rituals, its primitive cultures and painted faces. It is a land of mountainous terrain, fast flowing rivers, mud men and bride price. People all over the world know these things about PNG. Some also know that the country's visual extravaganza is mirrored with equal intensity beneath the ocean surface. Instead of painted faces there are multicolored reef fish, instead of mountains and rivers there are caves and coral fans. PNG is fast becoming known as one of the greatest diving areas in the world.

Story by Liz Thompson
Photographs by Liz Thompson and Sea Niugini

WALINDI



Divers are learning of the underwater beauty of this region as dive centres continue to develop. One of the most beautiful and well established is at Walindi in Kimbe Bay, on the east side of New Britain. Surrounded by oil palm plantations and fringed by volcanic mountain ranges, this is one of the country's magical spots. Originally established in 1935, the plantation was bought in 1969 by Max and Cecily Benjamin. In 1983 Walindi Plantation Resort was established, the result of increasing interest of international divers who recognised the incredible diving the area had to offer.

The resort sits peacefully at the water's edge. Small bungalows made of local materials and each with their own garden fit in perfectly with the local environment. A swimming pool built into a wooden deck provides for relaxation if visitors do not want to dive everyday. A large double hammock swings gently in the breeze.

But for most, it is the diving they have come for and they could not come to a better place. Full sets of top quality equipment can be hired. For those not trained divers, instructors offer courses from a one-day resort course to a world recognised openwater diver standard. For those who are certified divers but have not dived for a while, instructors will refresh memories. At Walindi, as in many other diving resorts in the country, there is a strict policy that nothing is to be removed from the water by divers. It is important, as the popularity of the sport increases, to take increasing care of the extremely fragile underwater environment.

There are a variety of choices in terms of dive expedition. Regular day divers leave the resort about 7.45am. Usually going on two dives, they might stop for picnics at one of the outlying islands. Walindi has such a variety of local dives one could easily dive twice a day for a two-week period and avoid returning to the same spot.

While the area is an established dive location, new areas are constantly being explored. Divers can now book onto the MV Febrina operating out of Walindi. A 22-metre live-aboard dive boat, the vessel is fully air-conditioned and carpeted throughout. With a compressor and large storage tank, the boat offers trips for 12 divers, and is capable of accommodating 18 passengers and a crew of four. There are toilets and showers and all underdeck accommodation is fitted out with red cedar and teak. A large galley, lounge and bar surrounded by tinted glass, television and video facilities

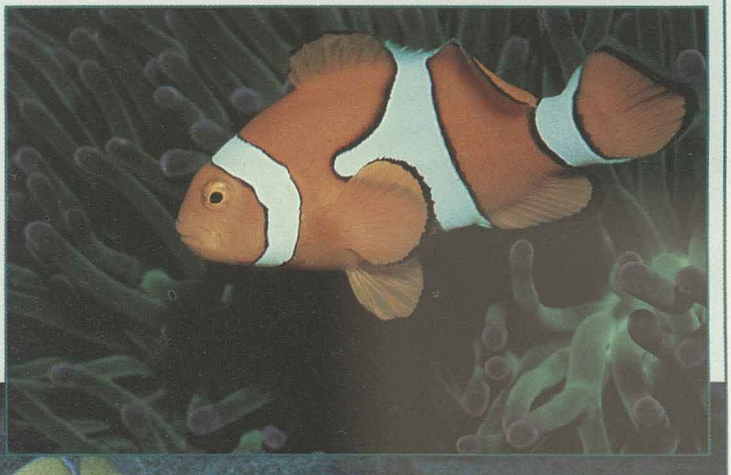
ensure drive trips combine superb diving with ease and comfort, hot water and good food. The Febrina started operations in early December 1991 and takes regular tours, usually between three and 11 nights from Walindi.

At Walindi, crystal-clear waters drop thousands of metres through hanging gardens, deep oceanic reefs and underwater ridges. Reefs rise up to an abrupt stop just below the surface, their tips covered in soft corals, fire whips and barrel sponges. Intricate fans of blood-red coral cling from sheer walls, clown fish swim amid flesh-soft anemones and parrot fish flirt with electric blue coral fingers. The Quarry, lying off the volcanic shoreline and one of the bay's numerous diving locations, a spur jutting from the main reef, provides a base for trees of ebony black coral. Clams withdraw their ochre and green lips sensing the presence of divers and clouds of tiny purple fairy bassets divide, their underbellies forming shining silver corridors through which to swim.

An underwater photographer's paradise, one of the most beautiful reefs is North Emma. Spectacular moonrises cast a white light across the inky black water, providing eerie illumination on night dives as it penetrates an underworld afloat in sleep and silence.

There is no doubt Walindi is a diver's location but it also provides for family holidays or visits by people who do not want to spend hours under the water. Snorkelling equipment is available for hire from the dive shop and snorkellers are welcome to accompany dive trips. Outboard powered boats are available for hire with a driver provided. A limited amount of fishing tackle bait and lures are available and fish are regularly caught from the end of the jetty. For keener fishers, a full-time professional guide at Walindi can organise specialised trips into the jungle for black and spot tail bass. A night-and-day tennis court next to the plantation office is available and racquets and balls can be hired. The beaches are beautiful, and reading books on the verandah of a bungalow is an extremely pleasant recreation.

Walindi is a stunning diving location and internationally renowned. It can provide some of the best diving the world has to offer in an extremely peaceful environment. It shows that PNG is as fascinating beneath the surface of the ocean as it is above.



Facing page, from top *Comfortable, charming resort bungalow; tropical wrasse; morning mist on Kimbe Bay.* **centre** *Kimbe reefs teem with fish.* **This page, from top** *Local children like to meet visitors; clown fish; Kimbe's famous coral gardens.*

Investment Corporation of Papua New Guinea

The Investment Corporation was established in 1971 by an Act of Parliament by the National Government.

Papua New Guinea is known worldwide for its mineral wealth, but there is also enormous potential for agricultural/ agro based industries, particularly for value added products. In keeping with the Government's policy of encouraging investment in Papua New Guinea, the Corporation is keener than ever to identify and implement viable new projects in conjunction with overseas partners.

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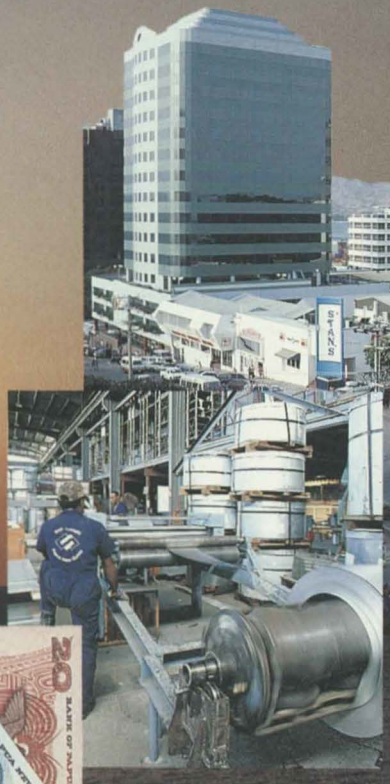

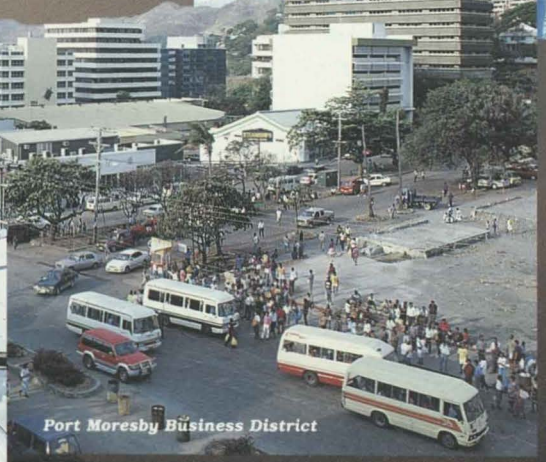

Port Moresby Business District

Wish to take advantage of the excellent business opportunities offering in Papua New Guinea! Please contact:-

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Telephone: 0011-675-212855
Facsimile: 0011-675-211240

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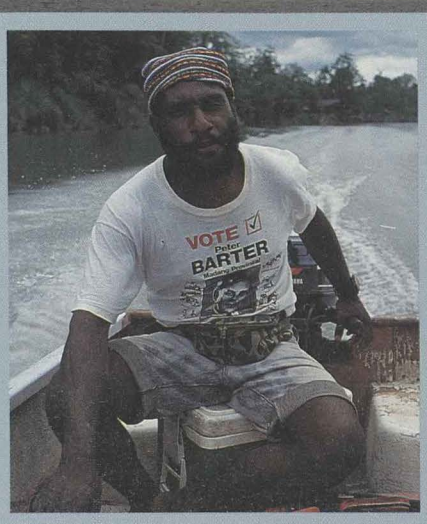
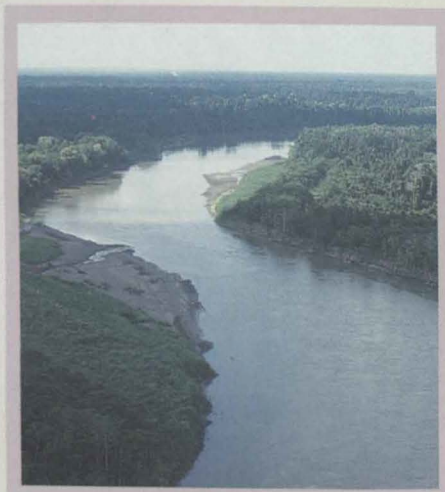
RAMU river run

Story and photographs by Kevin Glennon



Henry returns to Bunapas with bins full of prawns. They will be packed in seafood containers on ice before starting their journey to the dining tables of houses and hotels in main towns.

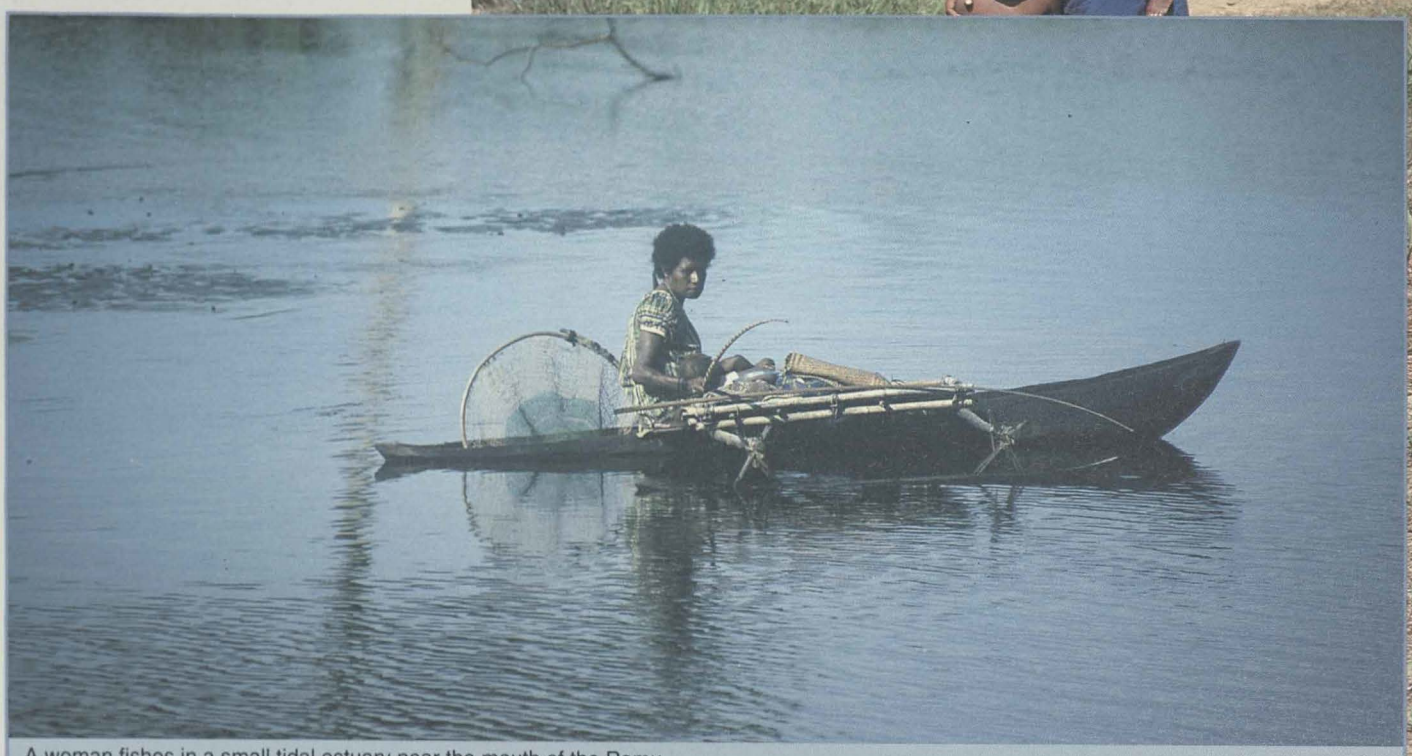
A Great Egret takes flight with the approach of Henry's motorised dinghy. The lower Ramu has abundant bird life; egrets, cormorants, terns and kingfishers at the water's edge; hornbills, kites, parrots, and eagles flying overhead and into the surrounding forests.



The Ramu River on its way to the Bismarck Sea. The river rises in PNG's Central Highlands where it powers a hydroelectric station. After dropping out of the Highlands the river runs through a long wide valley parallel to the main range before turning and entering the sea on the north coast close to the Sepik River. The Ramu is PNG's third longest river, after the Fly and the Sepik, and runs 720 kilometres from mountain to sea.

Prawn harvesting involves everyone. Women make the basket traps and collect the coconut meat to be used as bait. Men and women, young and old, set the traps and retrieve the catch.

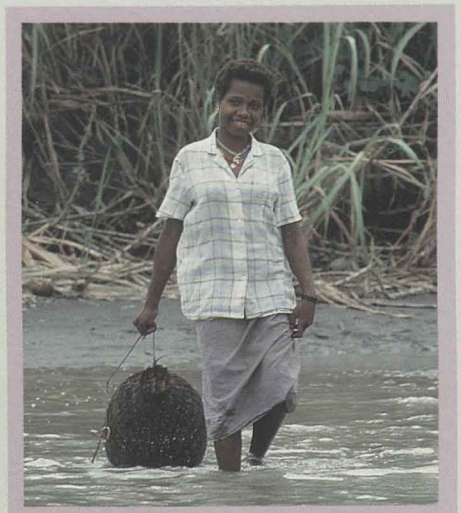
Ramu River prawn. Three species are known by the Ramu people, all belonging to the genus that has a world-wide distribution. The young of some species require brackish or salt water to survive while the adults are found almost exclusively in freshwater.



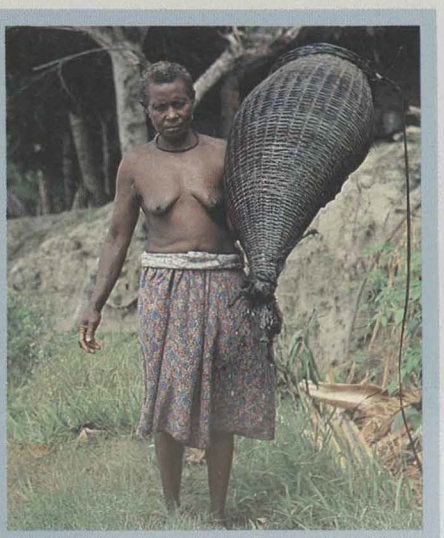
A woman fishes in a small tidal estuary near the mouth of the Ramu.

A small hamlet on the banks of the river downstream from Bunapas marks the start of Daidem village. This

village is one of the largest on the river and runs for many kilometres along the banks.



A young girl carries her catch out over a small sand bank to Henry's boat.



A woman carries her catch along the bank for sale at Nem Nem village downstream from Henry's starting point at Bunapas.

It is early morning, Tuesday, as Henry's offsiders carry the fuel tank and insulated bins down the steep bank of the Ramu River. Henry leaves last-minute instructions with his wife before clambering down the steep silty bank and into his boat. For the next four hours he will cruise the river, buying prawns trapped in large cane baskets by the local riverside dwellers.

The river run starts and finishes at Bunapas village on the lower Ramu. Henry poles his boat out

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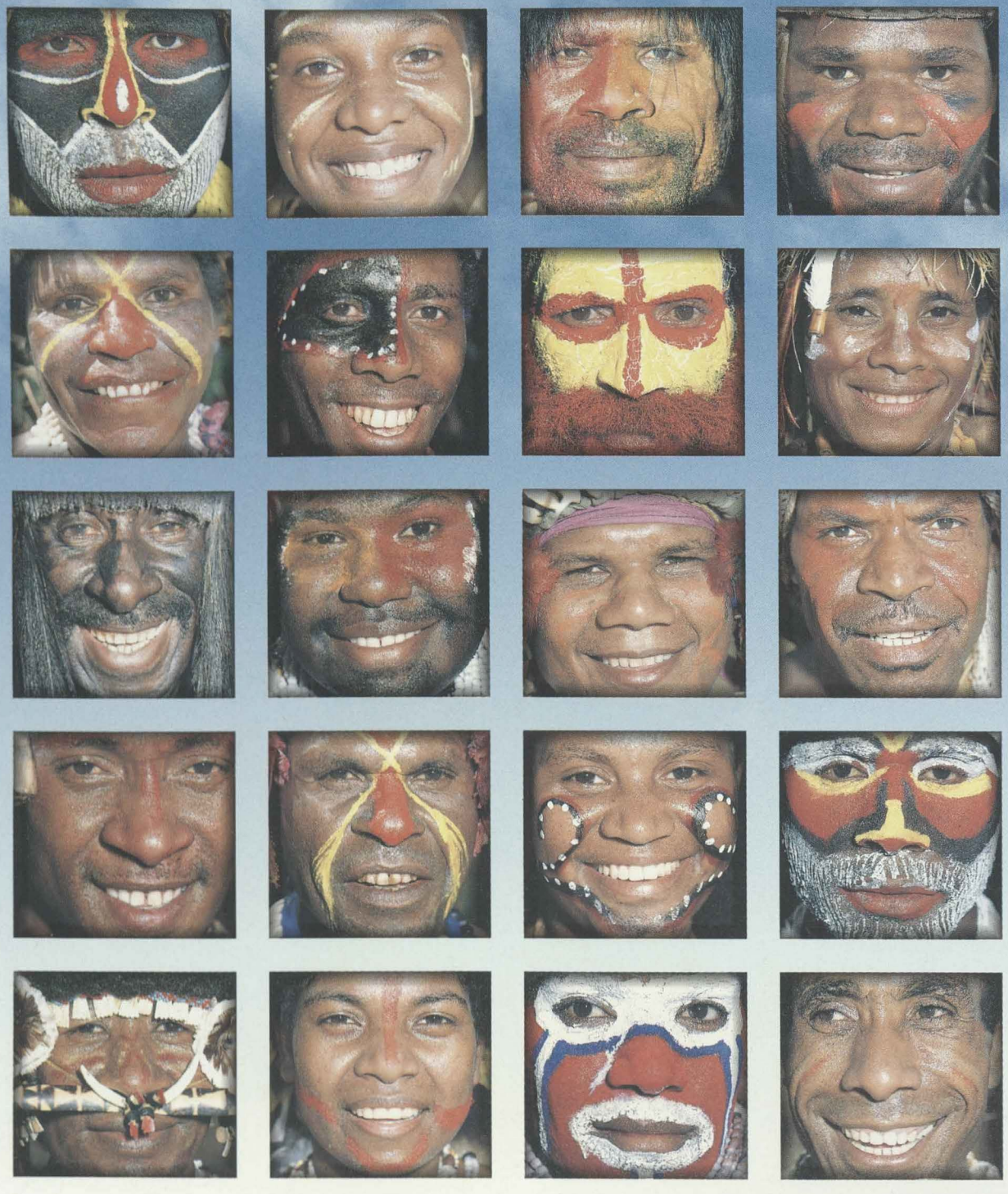

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Villagers gather to watch the trading. The prawns are harvested only during the dry season - June to September.

from the bank and eases it into a muddy brown stream that has fallen thousands of metres from Papua New Guinea's central mountain spine. Around Bunapas the terrain is flat and the river flows deep and gentle on its way to the Bismarck Sea.

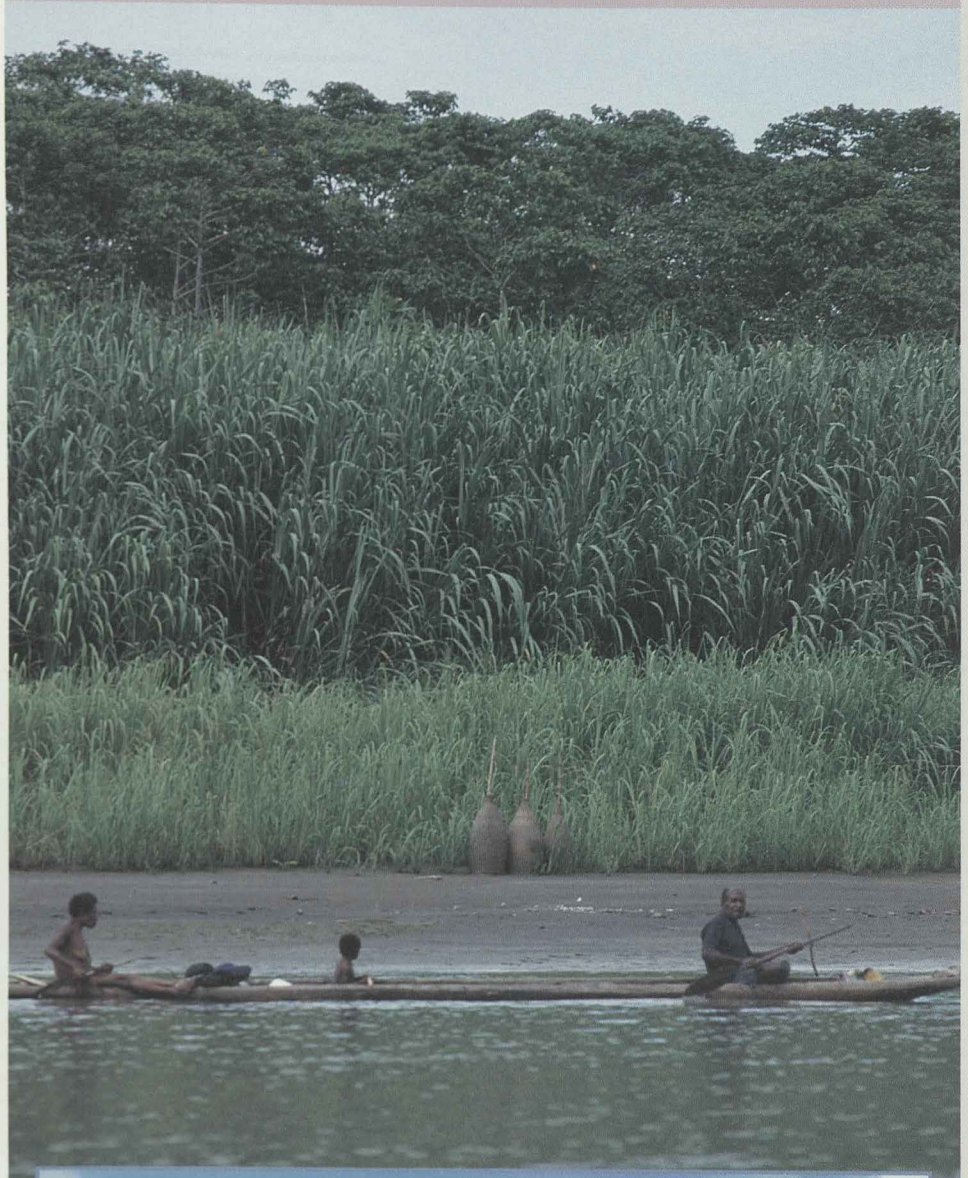
Today, Henry travels downriver to the villages that lie scattered along the banks —Nem Nem, Bosmun, and Daidem. Later in the week he will visit upstream villages and others located in small side streams. In the villages on the lower Ramu, life focuses out over the banks, towards the coiling, life-giving river.

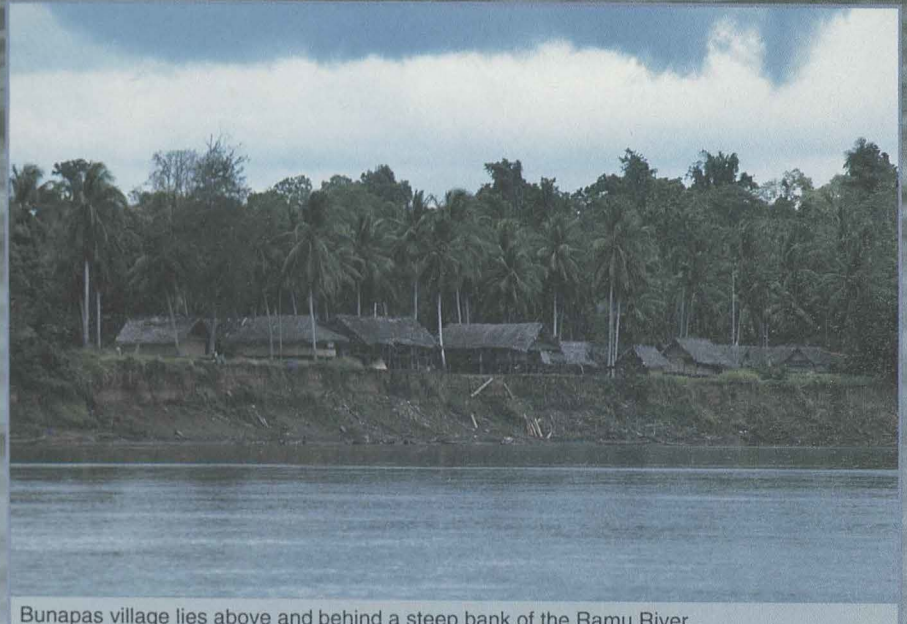
Henry works with little fuss and

Henry trades in anything going. He has bought a freshwater crocodile that he will later sell in town.

Timber jetties are built along the river to moor canoes. They are also sometimes used to anchor the traps and store the prawns until collected by Henry on his buying trips. Here children watch the sale of prawns from a nearby jetty.

Families travel by dugout canoe to riverbank gardens and to check traps set along the river. Outriggers are not used on the calm waters of the Ramu River.



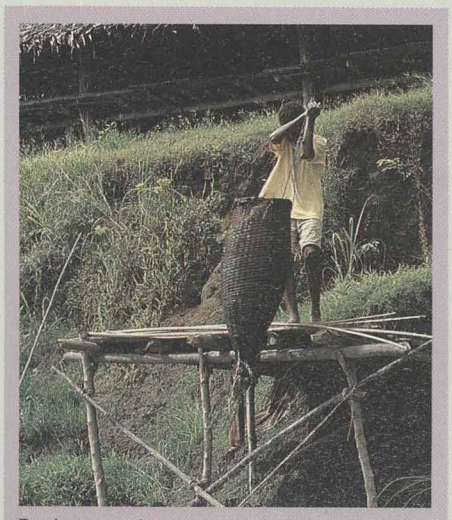


Bunapas village lies above and behind a steep bank of the Ramu River.

few materials. The buying and selling is done without scales. The prawns are simply counted, not weighed, and each prawn fetches 40 toea irrespective of size.

The prawn fishery is a traditional source of food. The marketing in distant towns, however, is a recent local business endeavor. After the prawns are counted and paid for, Henry packs them on ice. Later, back at Bunapas, the prawns are transferred to large insulated containers and re-iced. A truck makes the one-hour trip to the north coast town of Bogia later in the day. The prawns are weighed, put into 2kg packs and quick frozen, ready for town markets.

To travel with Henry on his twice weekly run is to gain insights into the operation of a unique PNG small business, to meet friendly Papua New Guineans on an equal footing in their riverside village environments, and to travel along a life-giving artery that has served these communities for many millennia.



Baskets used to trap and store prawns are made from sago palm fronds. A boy retrieves a catch for sale.

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Boat Racing

Story and photographs
by Jann Iorns

At the northern end of Port Moresby's Fairfax Harbor beyond the World War II shipwreck Macdhui and the island of Tatana, lies a quiet bay — one of many to be found at the feet of Moresby's parched hills. Down by the shore, close to the mangroves, sits a Motuan village. Home to some 1,300 or so people, it is called Baruni.

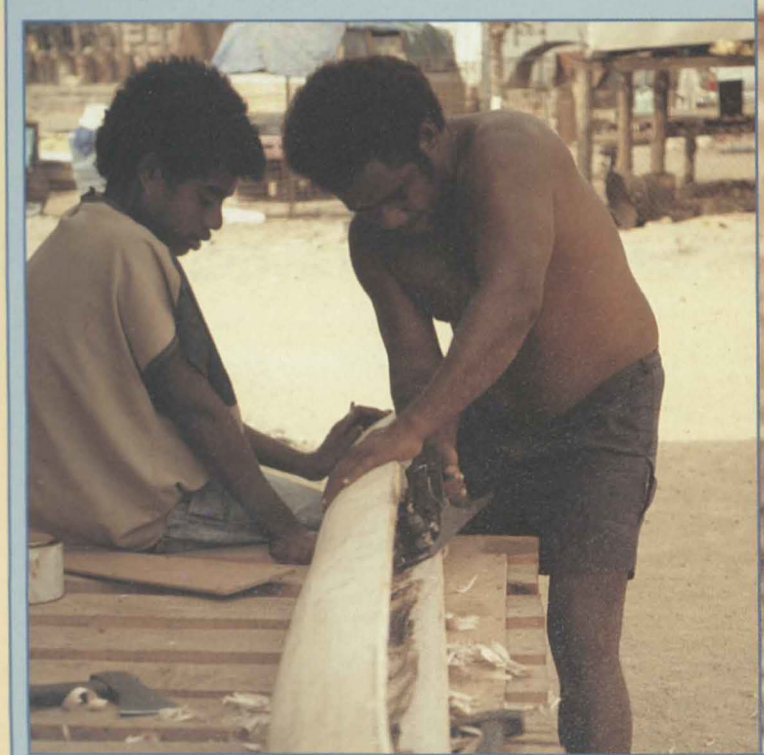
I first became aware of Baruni and its unusual Saturday afternoon activity after seeing brightly colored sails careering around the harbor. I was outside the Royal Papua Yacht Club, and from there assumed the boats to be a fleet of modern racing dinghies. Driving off from the yacht club, I passed through the suburbs of Konedobu and Hanuabada, and on reaching the village of Baruni, I saw that these were not modern racing dinghies. They were traditional vessels, old-time Motuan sailing canoes.

I went down to the water's edge for a better view. Suddenly, one of the boats flew past me at top speed. It had a bamboo pole for a mast and two sails stretched taut — a small triangular jib and a large square mainsail. Boats were buzzing around the bay. Some were waiting for the wind to fill their sails, or were in the shallows and others were in various stages of assembly.

The Baruni people call these boats asi asi.

I noticed a boat heading in my direction, mast tilted, its tiny outrigger flying through the air. It streamed into the shallows and was quickly captured by two men. There was no-one on board, no

Lower left *Ume Vaki shapes the hull of a new asi asi.* **lower right** *Spectators enjoy the racing.* **Facing page, far right** *Rigging the sail of an asi asi.* **right** *Ume Vaki and daughters admire his handiwork.* **lower** *Kouba Seri urges his racer across the finish line.*



skipper or crew. Looking round I could see that none of the boats had people on board. They were all unmanned!

Asi asi are not unique to Baruni. A similar craftsmanship occurs in many villages along the Hiri coast, although the name each village gives their boats can differ. In the Tatana, Baruni and Gubutu settlements around Port Moresby, the boats are known as asi asi, while in Hula, further down the coast, such a boat is known as a koroli.

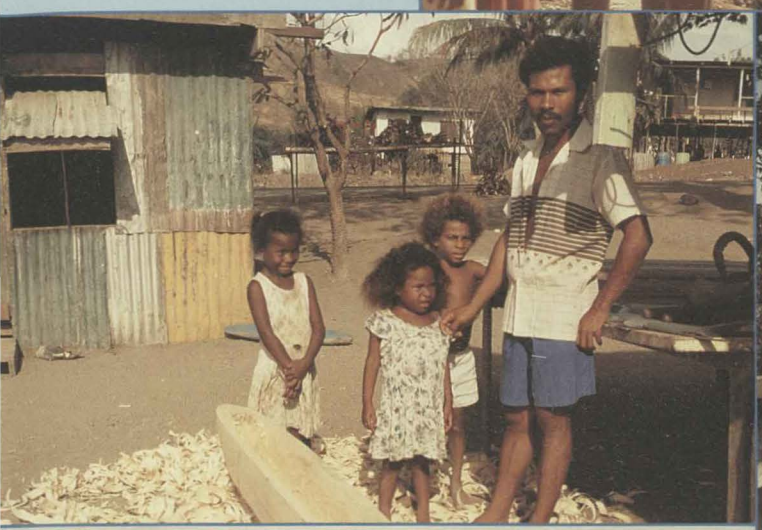
The asi asi has a three-metre hull made of softwood with a small one-metre outrigger to support it. Ume Vaki, a Baruni resident, was building one at the time of the race and he told me the method. First he carves the hull, chiselling it from a single piece of wood, until there is just 15 or 20mm of skin left. He tapers the points for bow and stern. A piece of plywood is shaped and fitted to the top of the hull with a water-tight seal. More softwood, or bamboo, is used for the mast and outrigger.

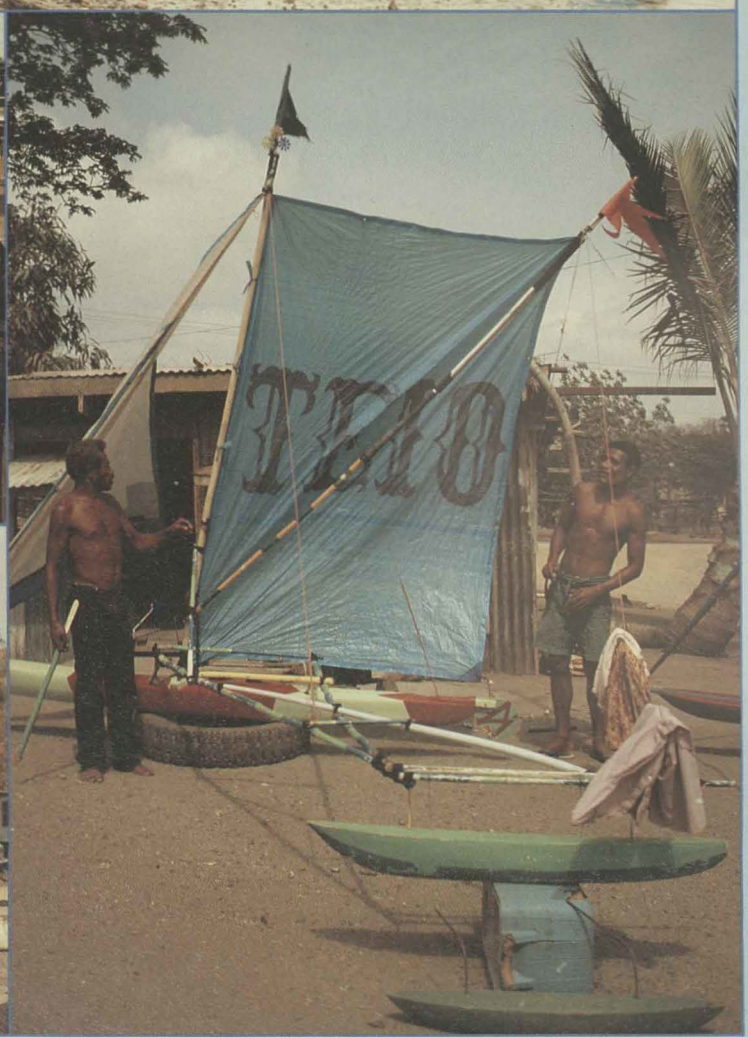
Lengths of bamboo are lashed together to form the crossbeam which links the outrigger to the main hull. Two sails are fitted — a jib to the forestay and a mainsail to the mast. A small aluminium rudder is fitted to the hull's stern and a wind indicator is fixed to the top of the mast.

"How long will it take to finish?" I asked Ume. "Three to four days," he answered. "Three or four days to build an asi asi."

Suddenly I heard the sound of a motor firing. The asi asi were piled on top of a banana

Below *Young spectators discuss finer points of asi asi racing.*





boat and moving away from the beach, up-wind in the direction of Tatana. About three kilometres out, the motor cut and the asi asi were put in the water, ready for the start. I could see markers close to where I stood, in the form of two small poles sticking up out of the swampy shallows, about 100 metres apart. This was the channel through which the asi asi would have to pass in order to make the beach and vie for a cash prize.

They were racing, a spectacle of blue, orange and white sails, picking up speed and skimming across the water. The elements controlled the boats as they set off on a downwind course.

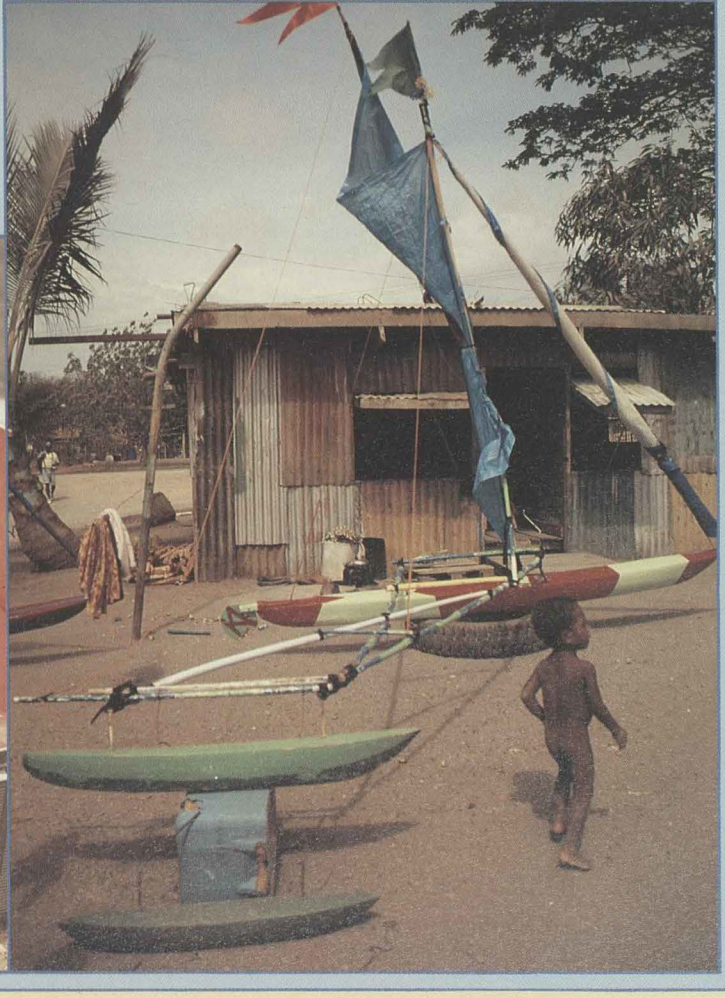
Sometimes in the south-easterly trade winds, they are lost and never seen again.

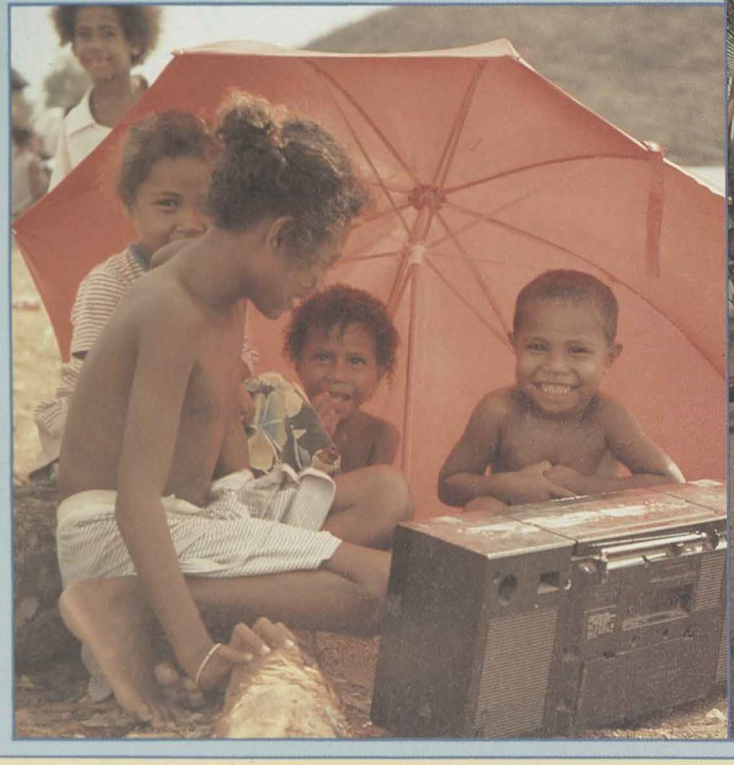
"That's the joy of it," said Ume. "If your boat comes home, you're lucky. If not, too bad. You just build another one."

There was a growing fervor among the crowd as the boats got closer. They sailed in all directions. Many did not make it through the channel, landing in the mangroves instead.

One asi asi, almost at the finish, moved gingerly, edging only centimetres inside a marker. In the end his was the only one of the 20 boats in the race that managed to complete it.

Kouba Seri and Ume Vaki are the men responsible for asi asi racing at Baruni. It is a regular church youth group activity, something to keep the unemployed youths off the street and away from temptation. Because of men like Ume and Kouba, the traditional craftsmanship will be passed on to future generations and preserved as a part of Papua New Guinea culture.





Top *Asi asi on show in Baruni village.* **above right** *Race entrants ready their craft for the big event.* **right** *Sails furled for transport to the water.* **lower** *Music for young enthusiasts between races.*

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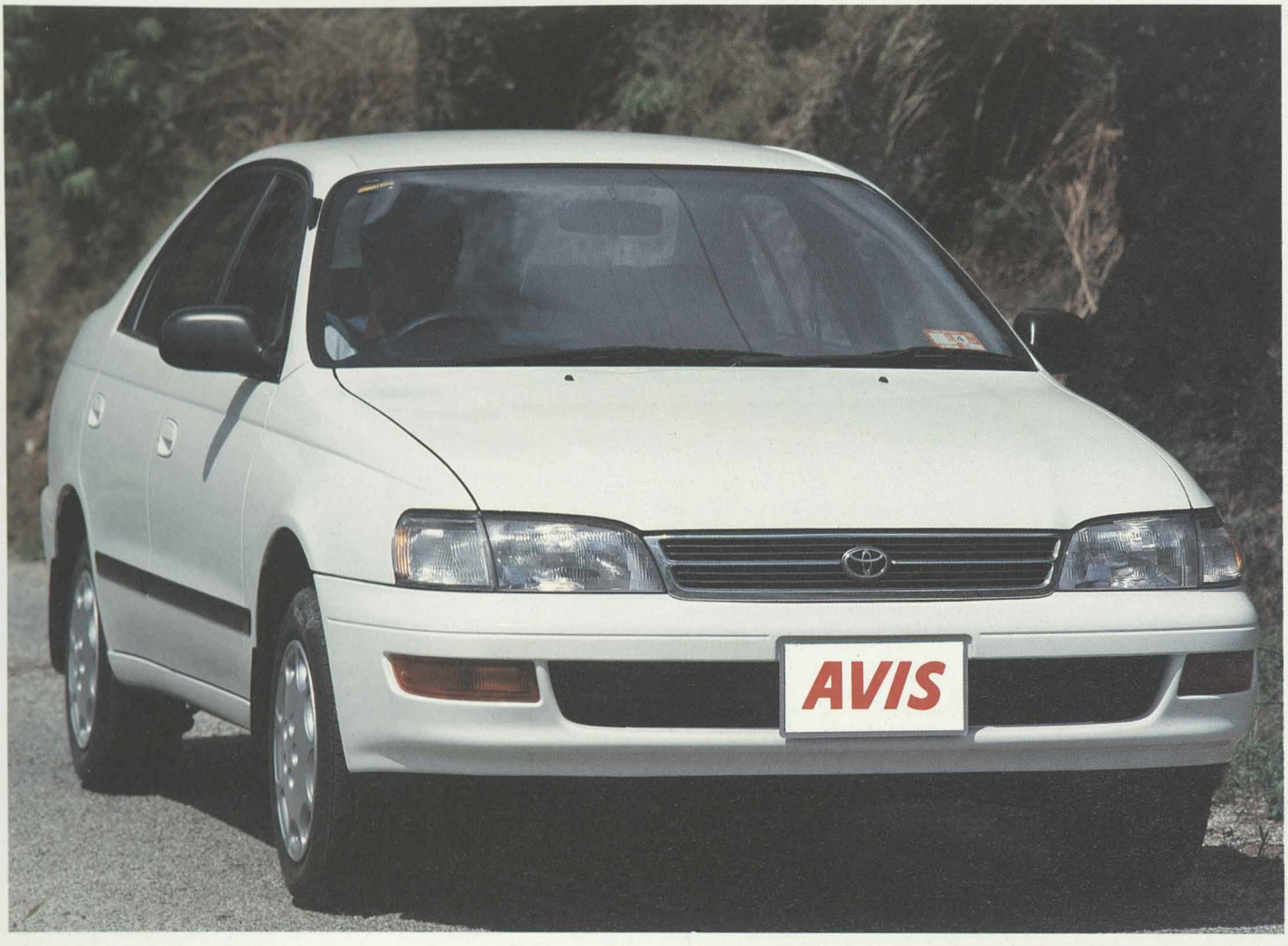

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Story by Liz Thompson
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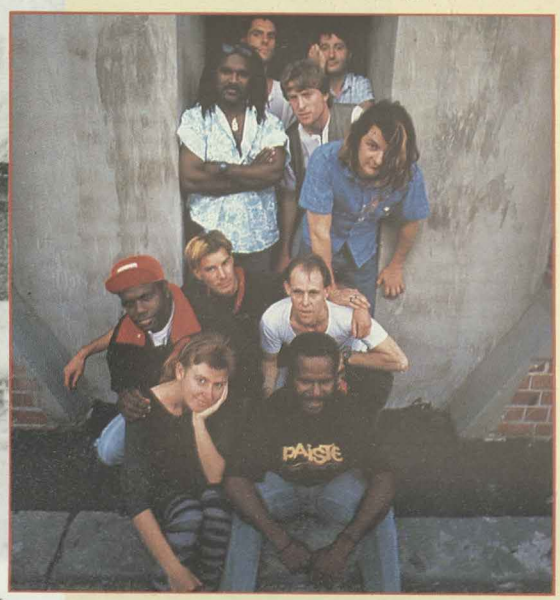
NOT DROWNING WAVING
and the MUSICIANS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

east west record
APRIL 199

Tabaran is a Kuanauan word spoken by the Tolai people who live around Rabaul in Papua New Guinea. A tabaran is a powerful spirit which has its own special dance and is honored at local ceremonies. It is also the name chosen for a recording produced through the collaboration of Australian-based band Not Drowning Waving and PNG musicians. The album combines the influences of both cultures to produce a new and dynamic sound that is a powerful indicator of the potential for cross cultural collaboration in the creation of music. The album received wide acclaim from critics and earned considerable praise from internationally recognised



Above *Australian pop band, Not Drowning Waving, and musicians of Papua New Guinea.*

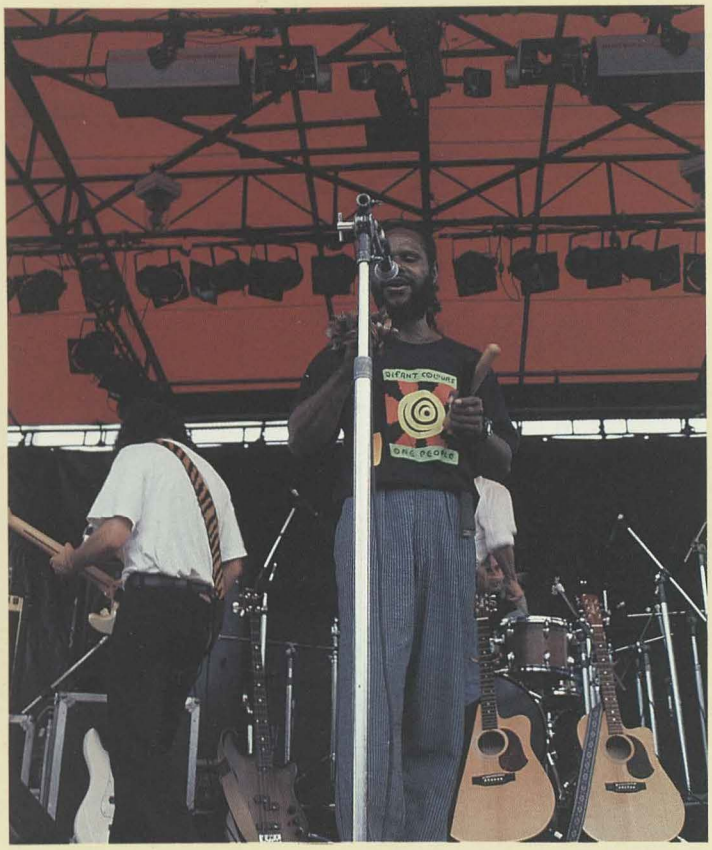
musicians David Byrne of Talking Heads, and singer Peter Gabriel.

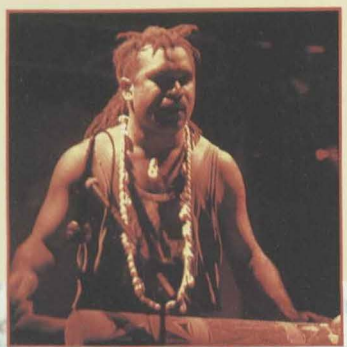
David Bridie, keyboardist and vocalist with Not Drowning Waving was first introduced to PNG when Australian film maker Mark Worth asked them to work on a film on canoe makers in PNG. After an initial trip, Bridie returned with five other Australian musicians for six weeks. Together with PNG musicians they went on a journey out of which grew Tabaran. Recorded at Pacific Gold Studios in Rabaul, the album is the result of what Bridie referred to as a musical 'get together'.

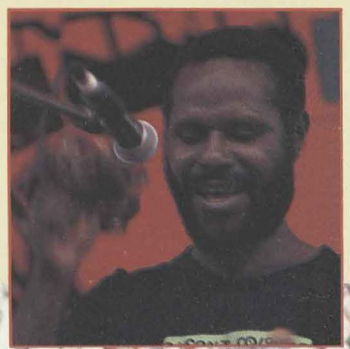
George Telek, from Raluana village about 15 kilometres out of Rabaul, features heavily on the album. A successful musician in his own right, Telek is something of a pop star in PNG. According to the album cover of Tabaran, it is believed that when Telek was a child he ate a special betel nut which enables him to receive stories for the village in his dreams which provide the lyrics for his songs. Two of the most haunting songs on the album, Abebe, a song about butterfly spirits and Tabaran, about an evil spirit, are said to have been conceived in this way.

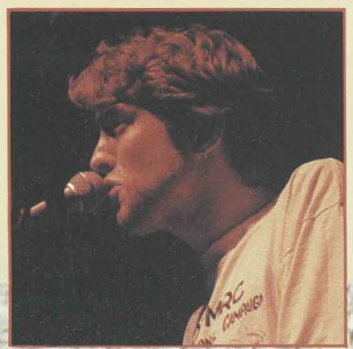
Tabaran combines instruments, including traditional garamut drums, string band guitars and bamboo flutes with piano, keyboards and acoustic guitar. Lyrical content shifts from traditional PNG funeral chants to comment on contemporary social and political events. The Kiap song, written by David Bridie, describes the relations between Kiaps and native labourers. Blackwater is a powerful comment on the West Papuan refugee situation. Stringband contributions like Pila Pila are entirely local, later treated by Not Drowning Waving in the studio.

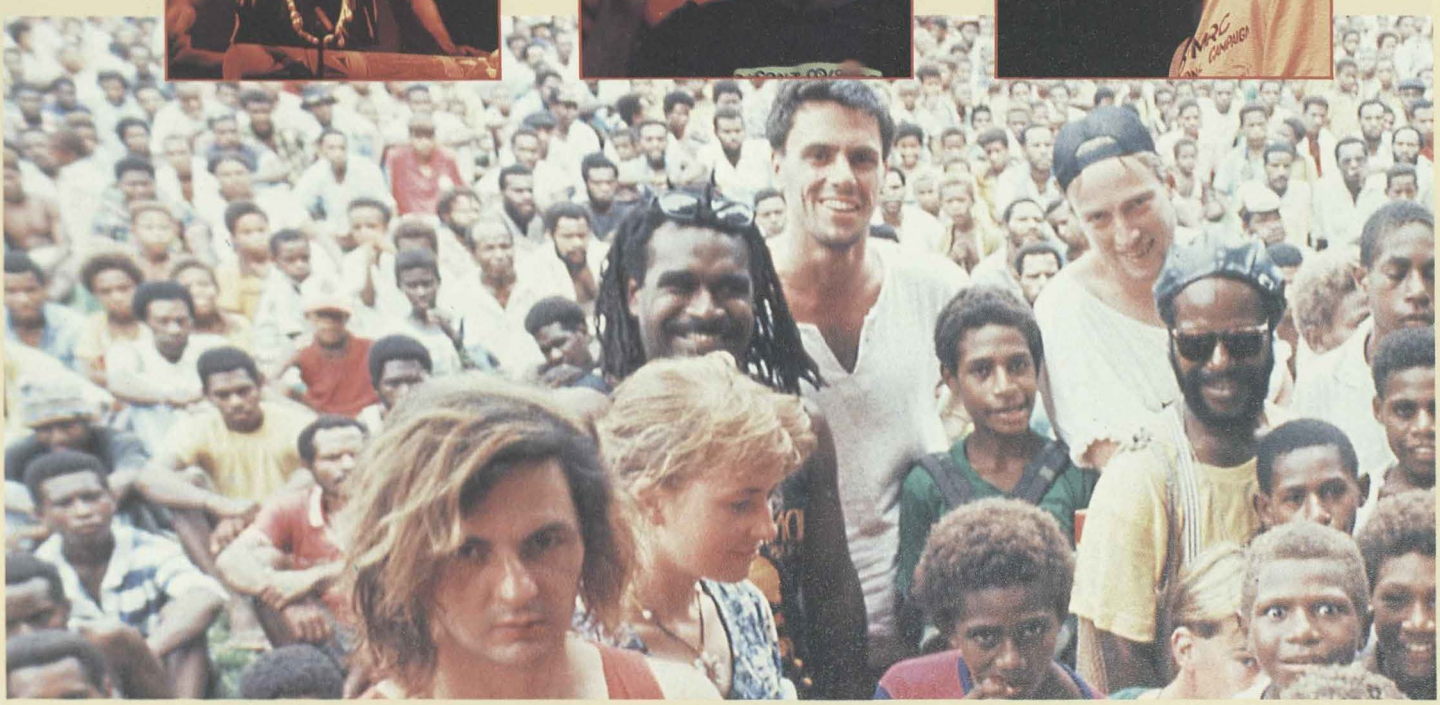
The musicians performed in Telek's hometown of Kokopo and drew over a 1,000 locals to what was described as an











Top *PNG performer Pius Wassi at Big Day Out music festival.* **below left** *Percussionist Ben Hakilitis.* **below centre** *Pius Wassi.* **below right** *Song writer David Bridie.* **bottom** *Not Drowning Waving members mingle with Port Moresby audience.*

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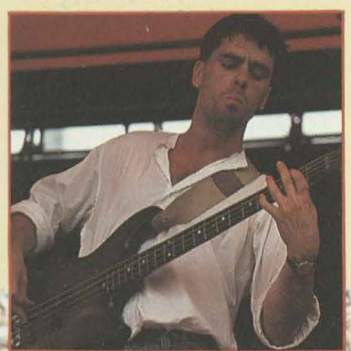
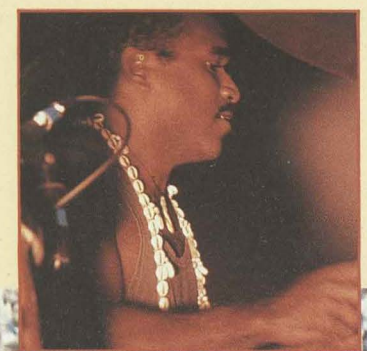
extraordinary performance. Twenty five thousand came to the Unity concert in Port Moresby at which Telek, PNG musicians and Not Drowning, Waving performed with eight other bands. Since then, the PNG musicians have toured Australia with Not Drowning Waving.

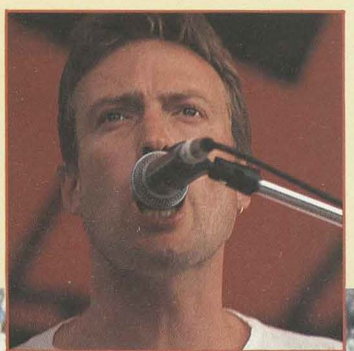
Their show in Sydney was packed out. Telek wearing a traditional headdress was an impressive sight and the haunting chant of the funeral song was enhanced by excellent lighting and the appearance of various PNG carvings on stage. More recently the same musicians have collaborated to perform at the Big Day Out in Australia, a musical celebration to mark Australia Day and at Womad, the World Musical Festival held in Adelaide, Australia.

Telek and David Bridie talk of the collaboration as one in which they have learned and developed musically through working together. Bridie talks about a sense of being apprentices in the face of local garamut and stringband guitar players and the extraordinarily different rhythms and patterns the local players followed. He tells of recording seven garamut drummers who appear on the track entitled Azahe, who were playing intricate melodies, not just rhythms, and had children as young as three playing along with them, hit for hit.

A documentary made by Mark Worth, Tabaran - Not Drowning Waving was screened earlier this year on Australian television. Documenting the collaboration and production of the album, it is an uplifting film and leaves viewers feeling inspired and aware of the enormous possibilities this kind of project raises. Bridie believes there is immense potential for future cross cultural work of this kind to take place, not only between Australian and PNG musicians but throughout the region.







Top *Not Drown Waving's Helen Mountforte at Big Day out music festival.* **below left** *John Phillips.* **below centre** *Ben Hakilitis.* **below right** *David Bridie.* **bottom** *Part of the Post Moresby audience.*

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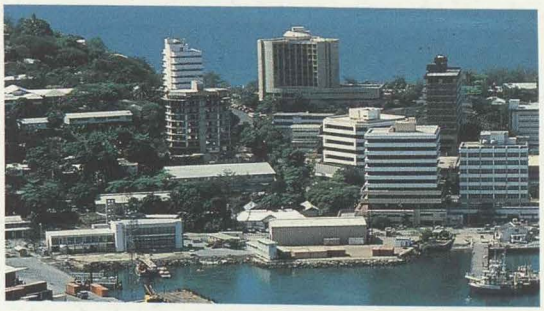

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