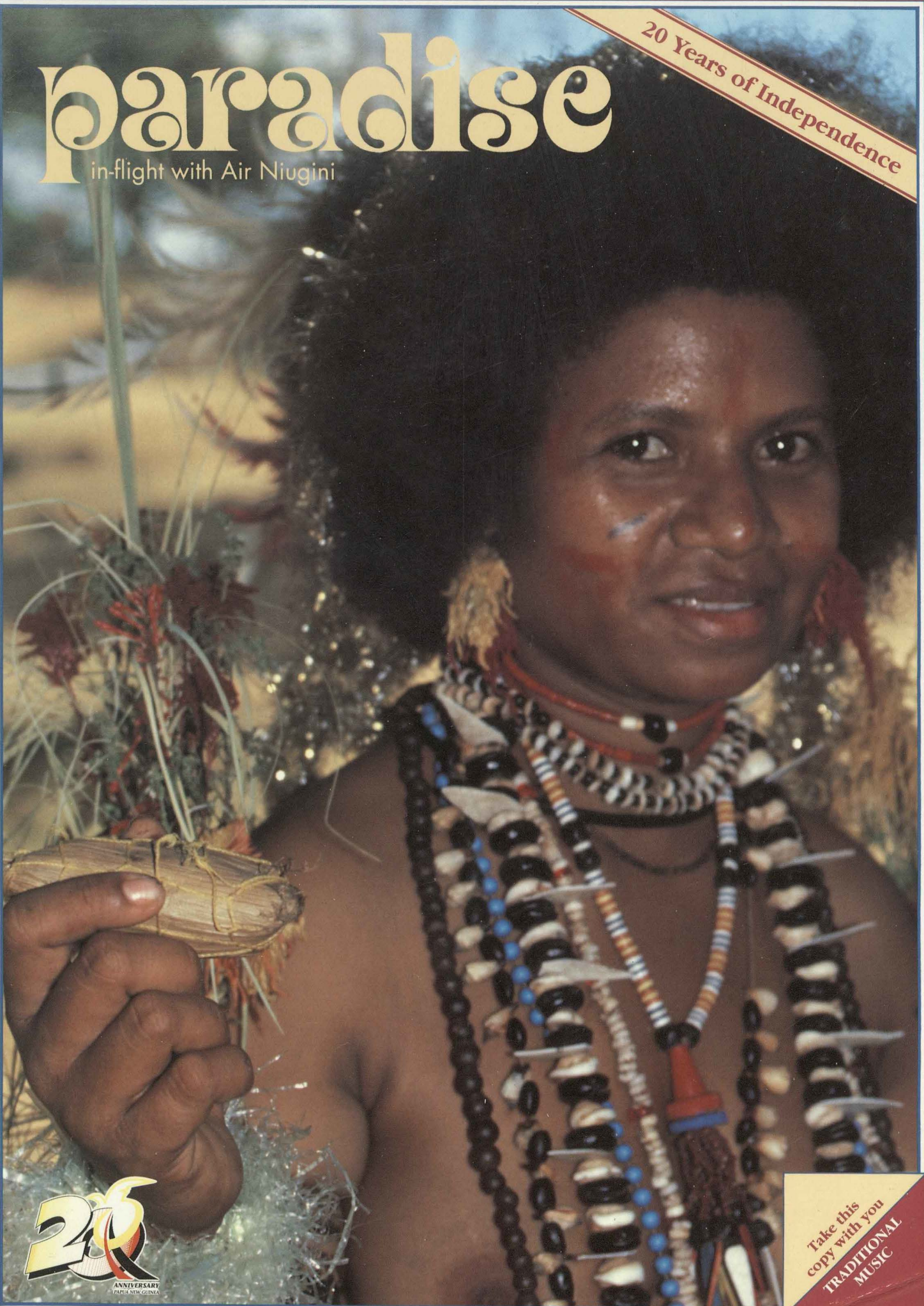


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No 112 Sept-Oct 1995

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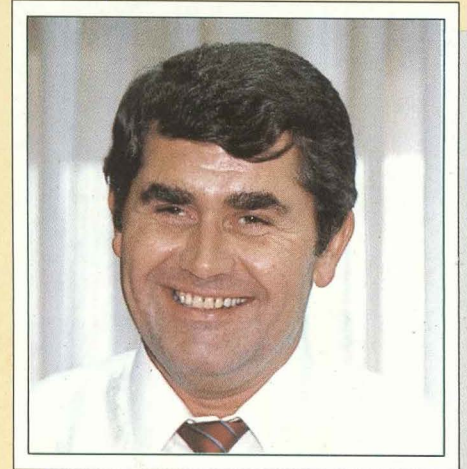
Papua New Guinea celebrates 20 years of Independence this September and the four Prime Ministers who have held office share with our readers, their views on the nation, its brief history as a sovereign state and its future.

To mark the anniversary of nationhood, three regular contributors write about traditional skills and arts developed in the creation of music, food and water transport.

This issue also revisits the Hiri Moale festival which has come to be associated with the celebration of Independence but which began long before Europeans ever set foot in Papua New Guinea.

Enjoy your flight.

Dieter Seefeld
Chief Executive & General Manager
Air Niugini



Dieter Seefeld
Chief Executive & General Manager
Air Niugini

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20 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

By Sir Ken Trezise and Sir Paulias Matane
Photographs by Auri Eva

“Change never comes without some pain and achievements can’t occur unless there is some honest sweat...”

These are the words of Papua New Guinea Prime Minister, Sir Julius Chan, spoken on the eve of country’s 20-year Independence celebration. To commemorate this special occasion, Paradise spoke to Sir Julius, Sir Michael Somare, Paias Wingti and Rabbie Langanai Namaliu - the four men who have guided this new country through its first two decades.

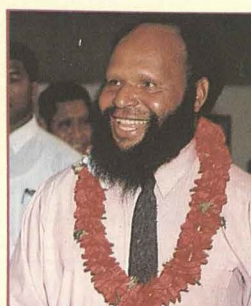
Sir Julius Chan

TWENTY years may not be long when measured against the broader span of history, yet it represents a period of immense change and on-going achievement for modern-day Papua New Guinea.

However, says Sir Julius, achievement was and is never possible without some measure of hardship. “And by any measure at all, we have indeed experienced pain and expended honest sweat!” he said. “And more pain and more sweat will be needed if we are to meet the aspirations of our people.”

Thinking back to 16 September 1975, Sir Julius says that for Papua New Guineans to have a place they could “rightfully claim as their own” was a major achievement.

“Although we never had to fight for our Independence — not in the same physical sense as many other colonised countries had to — it was still very much a battle of wills and a fight against a vague lack of confidence perhaps in our own abilities to cope. “



From left
Sir Michael Somare,
Sir Julius Chan,
Paias Wingti
and Rabbie Namaliu.

While Sir Julius never doubted the country's ability to manage its own affairs, he said it was important to convince Australia and more importantly, the Papua New Guineans themselves. "We had to convince our own people that the sun wouldn't disappear once the Australian flag was replaced with our own new standard," he said.

"We had to convince many different groups and regions to view themselves as one people and one nation."

The first few years after Independence were comparatively calm. The machinery and infrastructure for a modern economy were set in place and the same dedication and hard work leading up to self-government and Independence, continued unabated.

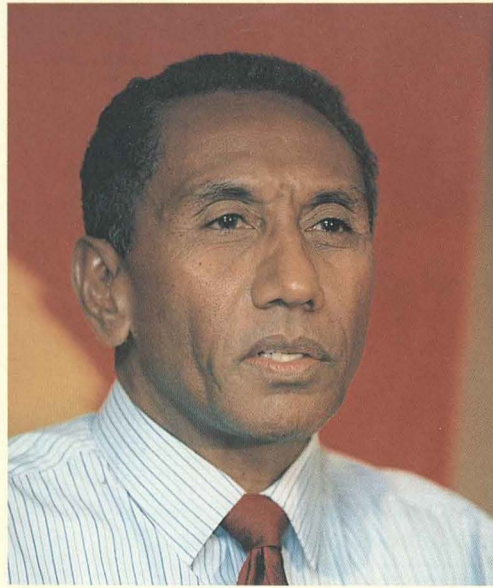
However, in the early 1980s, efficiency levels within the government plummeted with growing complacency. According to Sir Julius, many lost sight of the ultimate goal of their newly Independent country — it wasn't enough to simply manage their own affairs, they also had to manage them properly.

In addition, there was a marked reluctance to allocate resources where they were needed most in the bush, away from the imagined delights of the towns and cities.

The problems were tackled quickly as PNG faced up to what Sir Julius refers as a "slight case of adolescent measles".

Unfortunately, Papua New Guinea is once again having to dig its way out of a morass.

But again Sir Julius is confident the situation is not unsalvageable. However, he



Left Sir Julius Chan, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

warns that it would be grossly foolish to say that all was well in PNG — economically as well as attitudinally.

"We tell ourselves we are a resource-rich country but we fool each other if we think that those resources represent riches if they still lie in the ground. Of course we are potentially rich, but we will never realise that potential unless we exploit what nature has given us and exploit it in a sustainable manner."

Despite his criticisms, he is confident Papua New Guinea is once again on the right track.

Founding Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare

Sir Michael Somare did not eat much lunch that day. He was still smarting from a thank-you speech delivered earlier by a Papuan colleague at the Sogeri Teacher's Training College where he was studying.

A New Guinean, Sir Michael remembers the

speaker's words vividly. According to the young man, there were two kinds of people in PNG: Papuans with light skin and straight hair and New Guineans with black skin and strong, curly hair.

While toying with his meal, Sir Michael observed the speaker entering the dining hall and immediately leapt up, grabbing him by the shirt collar, squeezing his neck and shouting: "You master, why did you say you were Papuan and we, New Guinean? We are not two people. We are one."

The speaker never repeated the practice.

It was 1956, Papua New Guinea was still under Australian colonial rule and few had contemplated a united, Independent country. Yet the young Michael — who was to become the country's first Prime Minister — was already thinking and talking about PNG's future.

Rubbing shoulders with Sogeri students — who were destined for political and legal prominence — was to have a profound effect on Sir Michael.

His determination to free PNG of its colonial shackles was later fuelled by his work as a radio commentator and as interpreter for the country's Legislative Councils. A visit to Papua New Guinea in the 1960s by Prime Minister of the newly Independent Kenya, Tom Mboya, and encouragement from the former PNG Director of Education, later Administrator, Les Johnson, and Governor General of Australia, Sir Paul Hasluck, further hardened his resolve.

His eagerness to see a self-governing PNG, resulted in his forming the Bully Beef Club, which was to be the launching pad in June 1967 of Pangu Pati, PNG's first political party.

Nothing was to deter Sir Michael from his goal of political Independence for his country. He became deeply involved in the Constitution Development Committee which set about devising PNG's future National Constitution, much of its raw material gleaned from trips to Pacific

and African countries. Today, Sir Michael views the constitution as one of the country's greatest achievements.

Australia accepted the inevitable. In 1973, PNG achieved self government, and Independence just two years later. Sir Michael, Chief Minister under the rules of self government, became Prime Minister.

Asked to comment on the achievements of the past 20 years, Sir Michael places political Independence first. "While other nations fought for their freedom with guns, we fought only with words," he said.

Sir Michael believes improved education to be one of the shining achievements of Independence. "Twenty years ago there were only a few people with a university education. Today thousands of young people graduate from our universities and colleges each year."

While PNG's economy is still small, many more Papua New Guineans are participating. Currently the GDP is K10 billion and

growing.

Despite some misgivings, Sir Michael believes experience combined with an increasingly educated population and the country's rich natural resources will make the next 20 years a time of progress, productivity and achievement.

Paias Wingti

Within eight years of entering politics, the boy from the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea — Paias Wingti - became the country's second Prime Minister, toppling the man who gave him his first big break in politics, Sir Michael Somare.

Mr Wingti first became interested in politics while studying an economics degree at the University of Papua New Guinea in the mid 1970s. However, his academic pursuits were quickly cast aside in favor of political ambition and he returned to the Mount Hagen district to become a provincial planner.

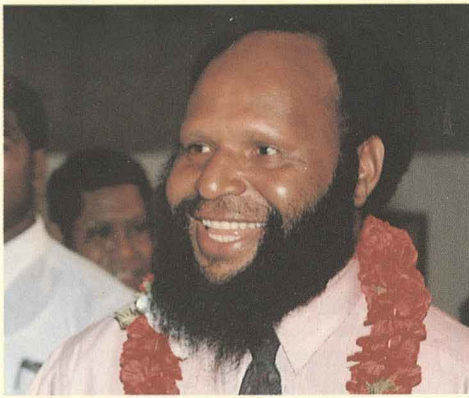
Within months he had contested an open seat for Mount Hagen and won. It was 1977, just two years after PNG had secured its Independence.

Winning the seat a second time in 1982, brought Mr Wingti to the attention of then Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, who recognising his leadership qualities, appointed him as his deputy.

However, restless and anxious to take over leadership from Sir Michael, Mr Wingti formed the opposition People's Democratic Movement, taking with him 15 Pangu Pati defectors.



Right Sir Michael Somare, founding Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.



Far left Paias Wingti and (at right) Rabbie Namaliu, former Prime Ministers of Papua New Guinea. Mr Namaliu is now Speaker of Parliament.

In November 1985 through a vote of no confidence, Mr Wingti defeated Sir Michael. He was to be the first Prime Minister from PNG's Highlands Region.

Over the next nine years Mr Wingti was to form another two national governments, with his premiership briefly interrupted in 1988 when Rabbie Namaliu took up the reins until 1992.

His second defeat came in August 1994 when he lost government to his then deputy, Sir Julius Chan — PNG's incumbent Prime Minister.

He has been Prime Minister three times and opposition leader twice. His People's Democratic Movement is the second largest political party after Pangu Pati.

On the economic front, his government has been responsible for major policy changes in the agricultural sector and has worked hard at promoting PNG's secondary industry.

Mr Wingti has also taken an uncompromising stand on corruption, initiating a judiciary inquiry into the PNG forest industry. On the international front, he has succeeded in securing PNG special observer status in ASEAN.

Rabbie Namaliu

It was Rabbie Langanai Namaliu's academic brilliance that first brought him to the attention of the then Chief Minister, Sir Michael Somare, in the crucial years leading up to Papua New Guinea's Independence. It was this academic excellence that would eventually result in his becoming the country's third Prime Minister over a decade later.

The man Mr Namaliu has most to thank for encouraging his academic pursuits is his father, Darius, an influential community leader in the tiny East New Britain village of Raluana.

Darius was determined that all his children receive the best possible education, which they did. Not surprisingly today all have top positions in a variety of different fields.

The field Rabbie Namaliu chose was teaching. On attaining his BA in English and History at the University of PNG in 1970, he went on to earn an MA in History and Political Science from Canada's University of Victoria, British Columbia, just two years later.

He returned to his country to become the first PNG national on the University of Papua New Guinea's academic staff.

Until then all positions had been filled by Australian expatriates and foreigners.

However, his academic ambitions were to be short-lived. Sir Michael Somare invited him to become his principle private secretary and political adviser. It was a critical period in PNG's political history, before Independence.

Mr Namaliu took his political role seriously. Following Independence he became involved in developing the country's system of Provincial Governments and later as chairman of the East New Britain Constituent Assembly, was responsible for co-ordinating, planning and establishing the ENB's first Provincial Government.

His big break came in 1982 when he was elected to PNG's National Parliament. His first appointment was as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade in the Somare Government, followed by Minister for Primary Industries in 1985 - the year Paias Wingti took power.

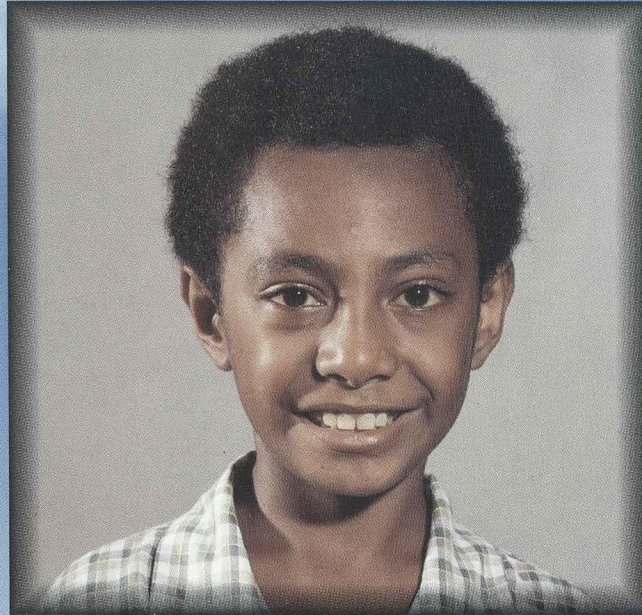
Despite several years in opposition, Mr Namaliu's rise was meteoric. In August 1988 he became the country's fourth Prime Minister, holding on to the position until July 1992.

Today Mr Namaliu is the elected Speaker of the National Parliament.

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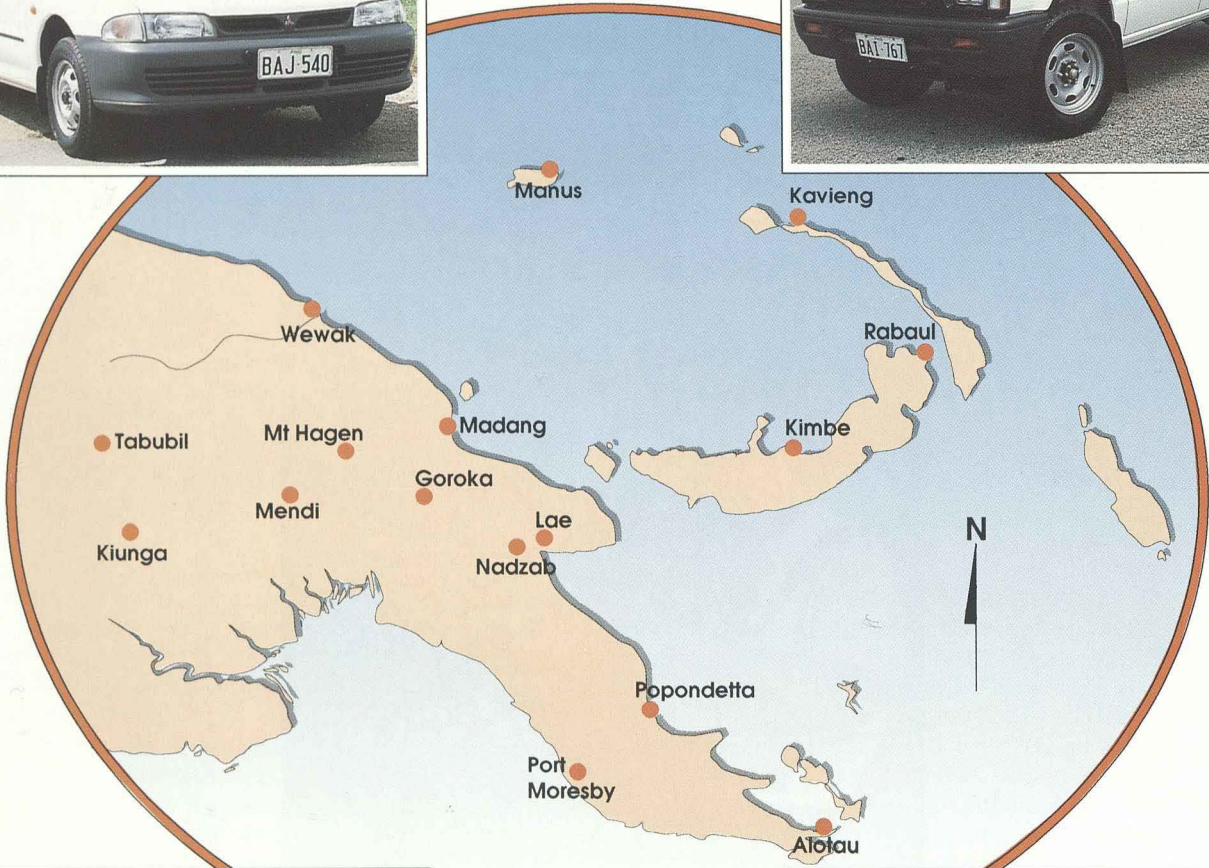


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Left Crafting paddles from silky oak. **bottom** Paddlers in a racing canoe practise their team-work.

Graceful vessels glide along with apparently little effort on the part of the paddlers, perfectly mirrored in the dark waters of the lagoon. Solemn, wide-eyed children watch mauve water lilies and large pink lotus flowers slip by. Small boys shoot sago leaf rib arrows at egrets and small wading birds which have been startled from the tall grass.

The evening sun flashes on wet paddle blades as women return to the village after a day's fishing, sago making or firewood gathering. Men carry home loads of coconuts, garden produce or heavy house posts with the same effortless, rhythmic strokes of their paddles.

TIMELSS BEAUTY

Story and photographs
by Keith Briggs



Toddlers are given little paddles and unconsciously absorb the art of handling a canoe with the same superb balance as their older siblings and parents. So by the age of seven their parents are happy for them to cruise off to school by themselves.

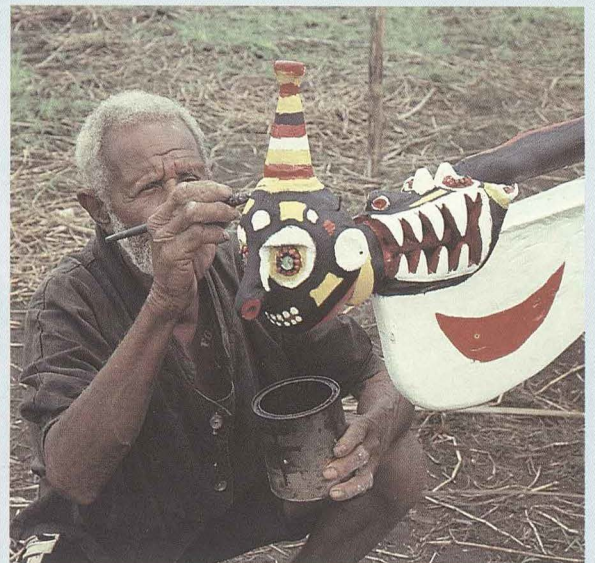
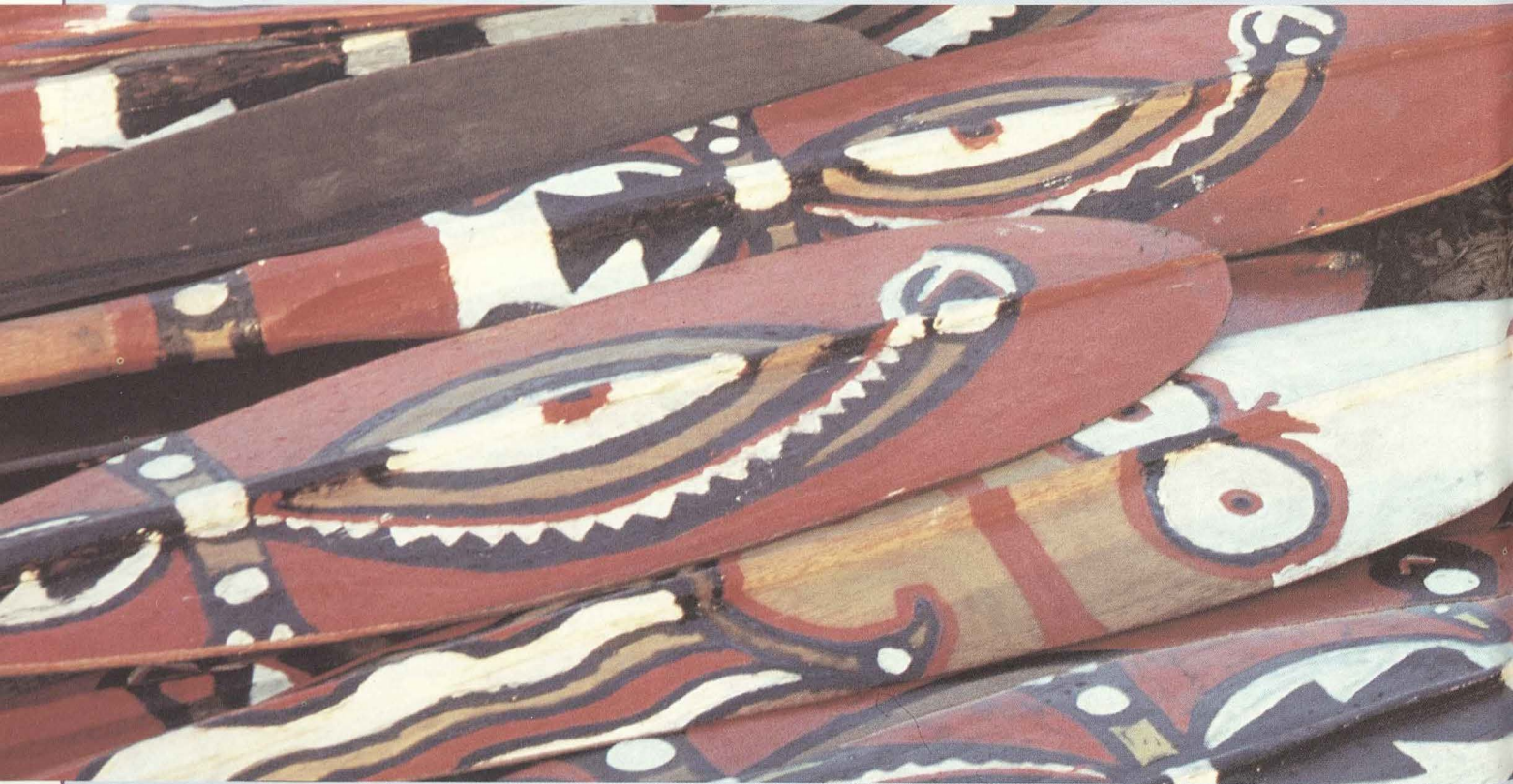
This is the timeless scene wherever people dwell near PNG's waterways.

Every canoe is home-made, and the best tree to use is the fragrant rosewood renowned for its durability. Lesser timbers are only used to knock up a quick canoe for the kids to play in.

Ideally, a tree is selected from near the water's edge where it can be floated to the owner's house. The most conveniently located trees have long since been cut

down, so nowadays the trees usually come from deep within the forest. The area around the tree is cleared so that the tree does not break when felled. Trees are cut through the roots to prevent them from splitting, which is especially important for racing canoes which can be up to 28 metres long.

Once the log has been cut to



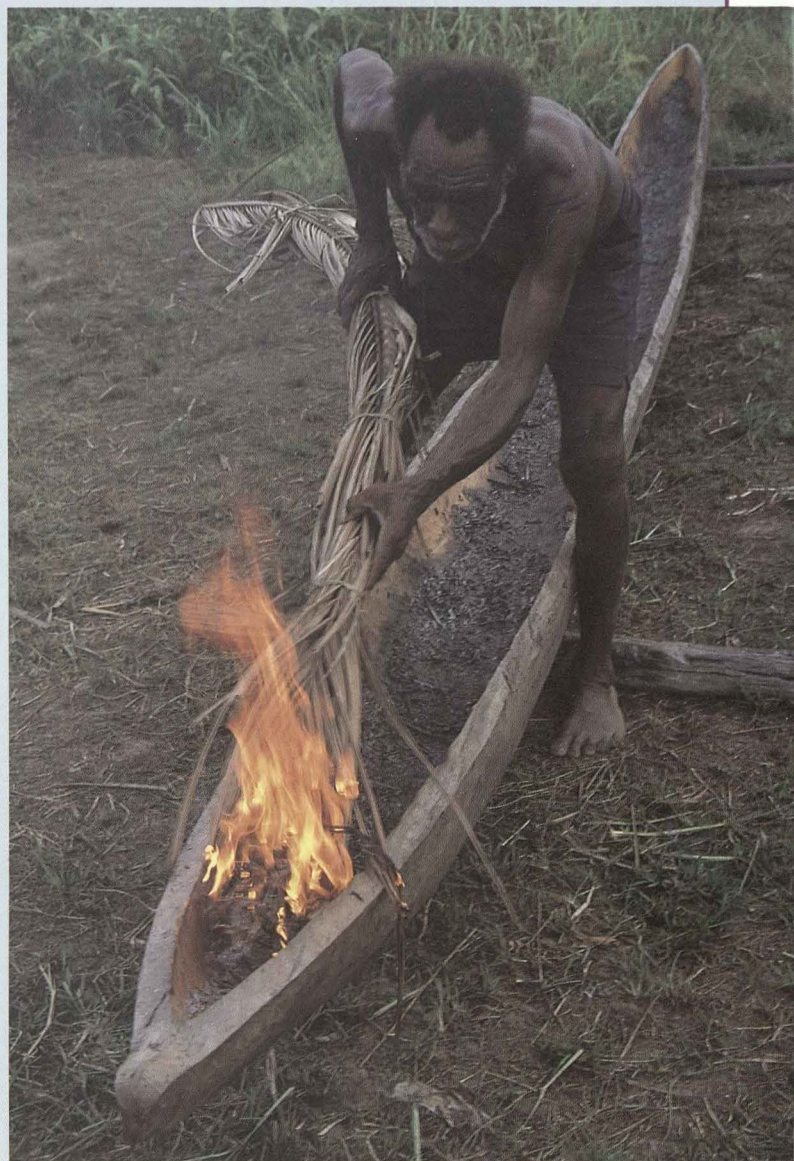
Left A work canoe takes shape alongside a racing canoe. above A master builder paints the prow of a racing canoe.

the desired length, the top is flattened with an axe, and the inside of the hull is roughly chopped out in large chunks. It is rolled over and the bark and outer layers are cut away with an axe, forming the rough shape of the outer hull. The lower end of the tree trunk always forms the bow of the canoe.

The canoe-builder usually travels to and from the site each day so this initial process takes some time. Having cleared a track to the nearest water and laid saplings along its entire length, he calls upon family and friends for the canoe pulling. The event is followed by a celebratory feast to thank those who helped pull the canoe to the water's edge. Then it is off home down the river, where the finishing touches can be made at leisure.

In the days when stone tools were used it was an arduous and time-consuming process to make even a small canoe. These days, pieces of truck leaf spring are shaped and sharpened for an adze head. The handle is made from a small tree with a club-like root, with intertwining grain to prevent splitting. A hole is made through this knob and the adze head mounted in a tapered holder that can be rotated to any desired

Below Paddles showing clan motifs. **right** Charring hardens and seals the interior surfaces.



Above Adze head can be rotated to cut at any angle. **right** Chopping out the interior of a log.



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position. The cutting edge can be set at right angles to the handle, parallel to it, or at any angle in between. No commercially made tool could be as versatile.

The craftsman adzes out the inside, keeping the walls to a uniform thickness. The bottom is somewhat flat and about twice as thick as the walls. All of this is achieved without a tape

measure in sight.

Once the builder feels the canoe is close to completion, he or his wife (if it is to be her work canoe,) takes it out for a trial run. If it travels 'heavily' the builder will trim more timber off, and this process continues until it runs 'lightly'. The final procedure is to char both inside and out, which smooths, hardens and seals the

*Below Successful 50-man racing canoe is greeted by well-wishers. **bottom left** Gauging the thickness of the hull by feel alone. **bottom right** Paddle maker plies his craft.*



pores of the timber and helps stave off the rotting process. Excess char is scraped off with the sharp edge of a piece of split cane.

The making of a prestigious racing canoe is much the same. One senior, skilled and experienced man is solely in charge of the designing and making of a racer. After the first

trials he alone assesses where wood has to be removed and marks the areas with charcoal. After each modification, the racer is tried with a full crew until all are satisfied it travels 'lightly' and is as hydrodynamic as possible.

Paddles are made from pink silky oak which is light, strong, and does not warp, split or rot easily. Paddle shapes vary with

each language group. The round-ended paddles of the Gogodala people are used to bale water dextrously out of a canoe in minutes.

The sight of a man and his wife paddling a well designed family canoe is pure visual music that never ceases to delight.

To the Gogodala people of the Western Province, the canoe is a living thing, the very foundation of their heritage and culture.

A 28-metre racing canoe with 50 paddles simultaneously entering the water to the metronome-like toots of the conch shell, brings a lump to the throat and tears to the eyes of even an outsider.

For the load it can carry and the small amount of energy needed to propel it in calm water, the dugout canoe must be the most efficient hull in the world. Most lagoons are filled with grass but the slim canoe quietly parts the vegetation and slides through.

Modern technology has not come up with anything to match the economy, beauty, efficiency and versatility of the timeless canoe.

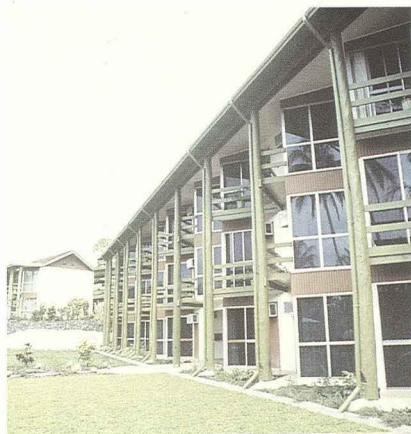
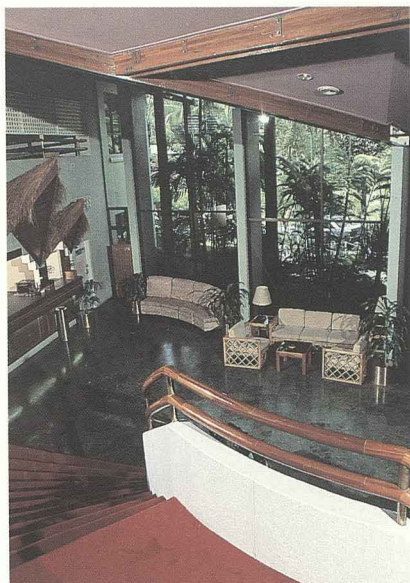


Above Charring process is also used to seal and harden the exterior. **right** Putting the finishing touches on a new canoe.



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T R A D I T I O N A L MUSIC

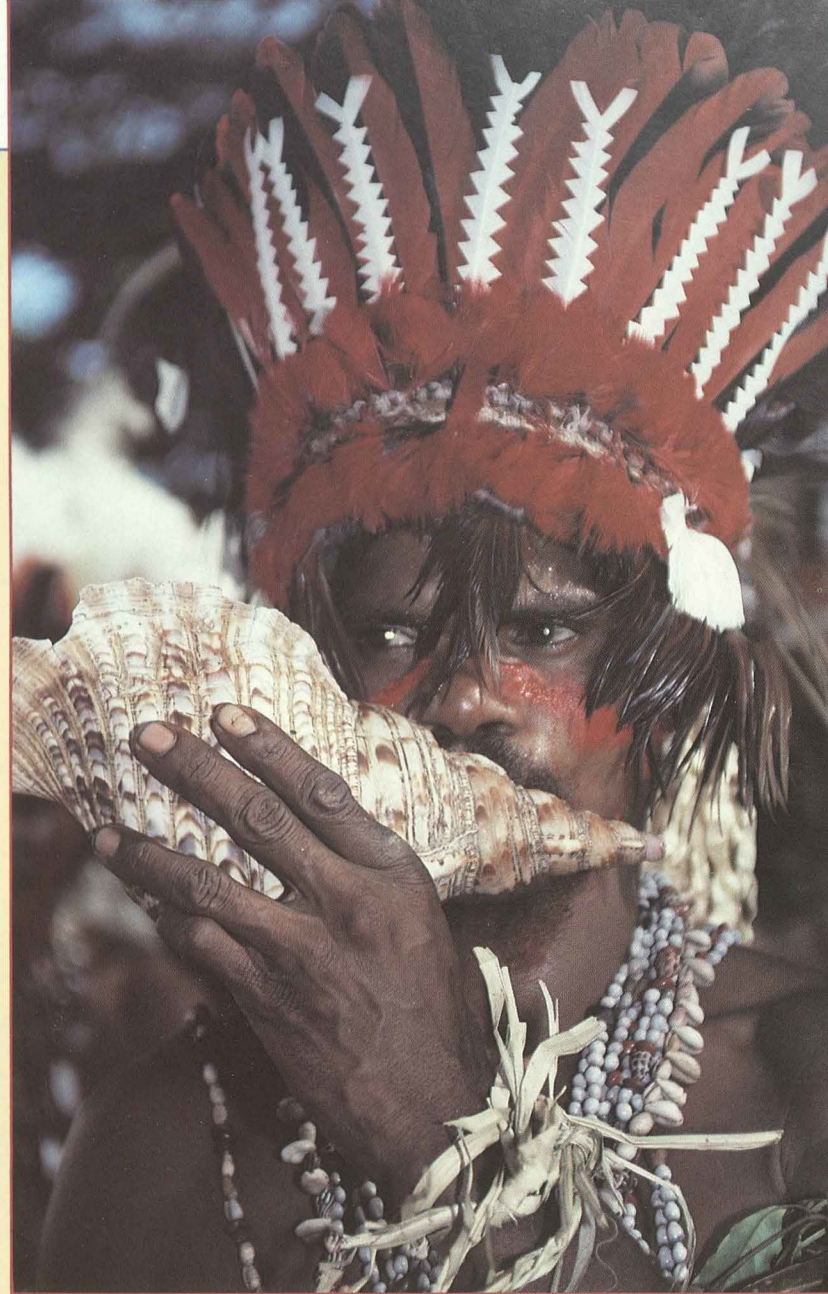
Story and photographs by Georgie and Ron McKie

Paitim... to strike, beat, clap, strum or pluck. Winim... to blow. Meknais... to scrape, rattle or shake. These are some of the ways in which people produce sounds from musical instruments. Using natural materials, the people of Papua New Guinea have designed and constructed an amazing range of musical instruments.

To attend any one of the country's major singsings, is to come face to face with a bewildering array of traditional instruments, lovingly made from bamboo, cane, pitpit, coconut shell, gourds, sea shells, bush string, seeds, wood and even clay. Because of the ready availability of these materials, a rich and vibrant music tradition is kept alive. Playing many traditional instruments is closely linked with the rites of passage to manhood, and ritual within a society.

An enormous variety of instruments is found in PNG, and pan pipes are widely distributed throughout the country. They are constructed from tubes of thin-walled bamboo, which has a narrow diameter. The pitch of each pipe is determined by its length: the longer the pipe, the deeper its pitch. They are bound together by string or vine, and may be assembled side by side to form a raft, or bound together into a bundle.

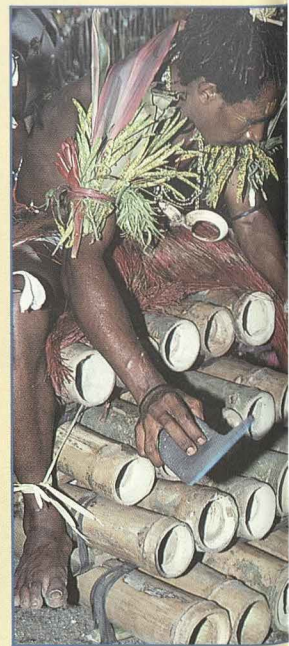
There are an incredible range of flutes. In the Mindimbit region of the Middle Sepik, tradition has it that women discovered the musical properties of bamboo. Women were working in their gardens and could hear melodic sounds coming from the bamboo. They believed the sound came from ancestor spirits, and ran to tell the men.

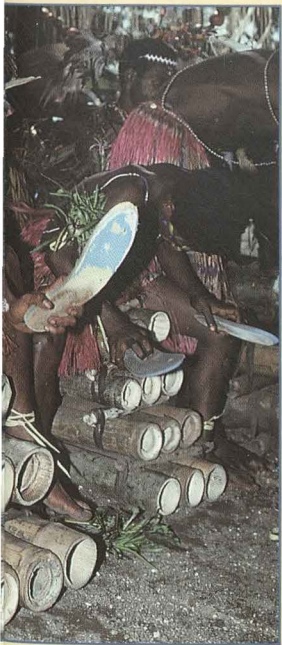


The men cut down the bamboo, and removed it to the haus tambaran (spirit house). The men decreed that women must never be allowed to hear the 'voices', as it would stop them from working. Today, it is still the general custom that women are not supposed to hear or see the sacred flutes being played.

Sepik flutes are generally side blown and are played in pairs or in groups. Young men are taught to play the flutes during their initiation. Some of the Sepik flutes are up to three metres in length and are supported over the player's upper arm. In each pair of flutes, one is a little longer than the other, generating two different pitches. These splendid

Above Baniara man playing the conch shell. *above right* Bamboo band from Madang. *right* Eastern Highlander makes music with arrow and bow string.





Above Rare trumpet flute with gourd bell, from Eastern Highlands Province.
below Flute players from Fanowa.



flutes have elaborately decorated stops, which are removed for playing.

In the Highlands, flutes are quite short, about 40cm long. The pair of flutes are the same length, producing identical sounds.

One instrument, difficult to find, is the bamboo trumpet with gourd bell. This was used originally in Eastern and Southern Highlands rituals. It is a simple bamboo trumpet to which a shaped gourd is attached. We found one being played with a group of side blown flutes in the Eastern Highlands.

One of the most spectacular instruments is the conch shell. This large shell has been traditionally used for signalling over long distances and is also used in dancing. Many coastal provinces have relied on its penetrating sound to signal a good fishing catch, or to announce the arrival of visitors.

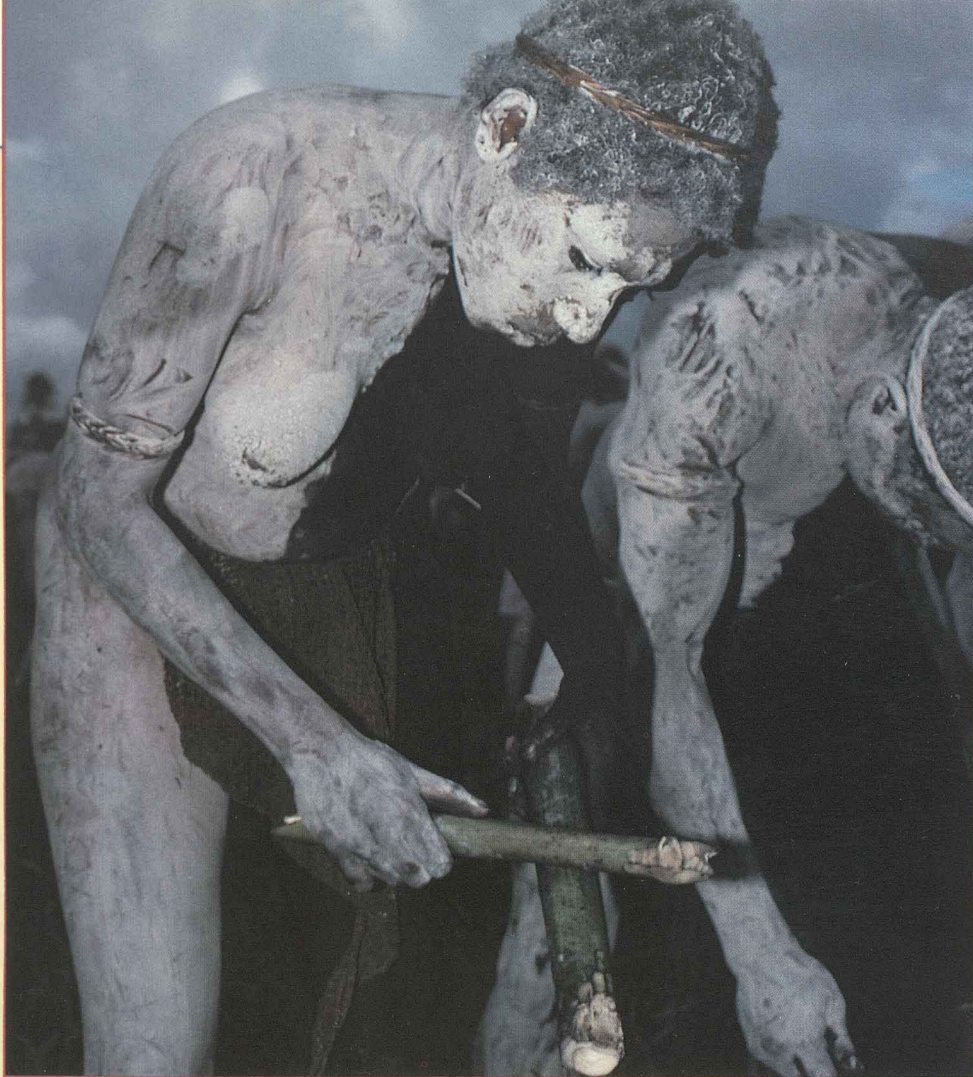
Several groups throughout the country carry bundles of bow and arrows as part of their dancing regalia. At certain intervals, the arrows are beaten across the bow string producing a flat 'twang'.

The mouth bow is commonly played by women in the island provinces. It is a piece of rounded stick carrying two strings. One end of the stick is held between the teeth and the strings are vibrated with a small piece of wood. The other hand does the fingering.

The greatest variety of instruments produce sound by being shaken, stamped, struck, scraped, plucked or rubbed. It is the body of the instrument which vibrates to produce sound.

Stamping tubes are made from bamboo and are held in one hand and stamped vertically against the ground, logs or stones. Different bamboo lengths produce different pitches. This is the instrument used to accompany the Bainings fire dancers in East New Britain.

Also beaten against water, mud or the ground are Sepik water and mud drums. They produce a



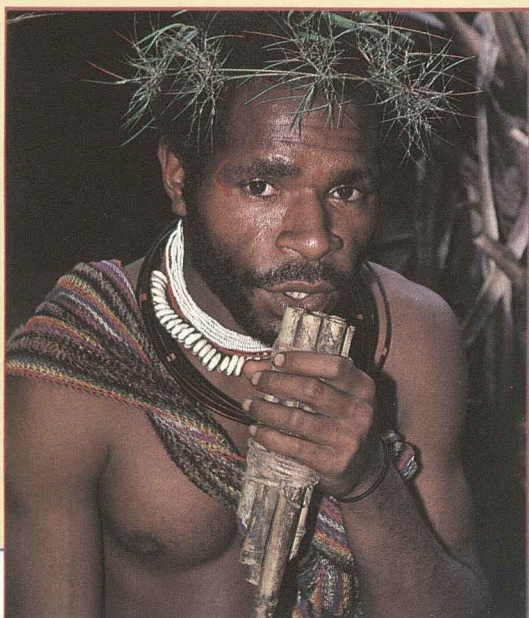
deep resonant barking sound reminiscent of a crocodile and are used during initiation ceremonies.

The bamboo band is one of the more contemporary instruments in PNG. It was introduced from the Solomon Islands in the late 1960s and is particularly popular in the Madang area. Rows of thick-walled, large diameter bamboo tubes of different lengths are placed side by side as rafts, and then assembled in tiers. Players sit astride the tubes and slap the open end with rubber thongs. They are tuned to a guitar and can play the chords commonly played in string band music.

The bamboo container rattle and the small hand-held leaf wrapped rattle (gasasa) are typical of instruments which have seeds sealed inside them. When shaken or flicked, the seeds rattle against the sides of the container. These instruments are usually played by women and girls.

The serrated edge of a lime spatula, drawn in and out of a gourd lime pot, is sometimes used to provide a rhythmical accompaniment to dances. It allows the dancer to continue to chew betelnut while dancing. Both gourds and rasps are likely to be ornately decorated.

The full range of kundu drums produce sound by a vibrating skin. Generally shaped like an hour glass and fashioned by fire from wood, these drums vary enormously in size from small hand drums to very large pieces. The pitch of the drum can be changed and it can be tuned by applying blobs of wax to the skin. The variety of decoration is unbelievable and the Kundu, which is part of the nation's official Coat of Arms, is truly one of the most recognisable symbols of PNG.



Top Simple dancing sticks. **centre left** Gasasa rattle. **centre right** Split pitpit-grass rattle. **right** Huli youth plays bundled panpipes.



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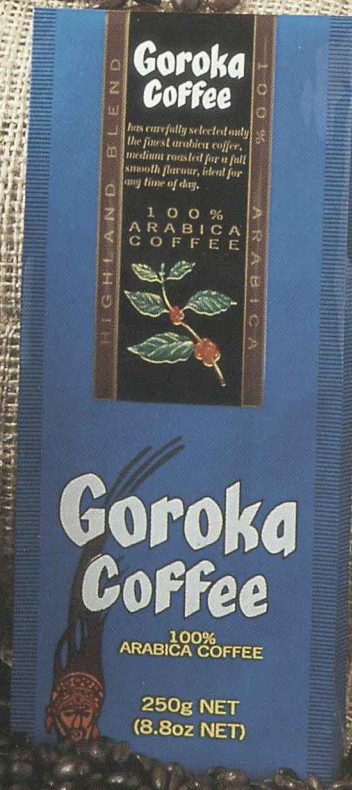
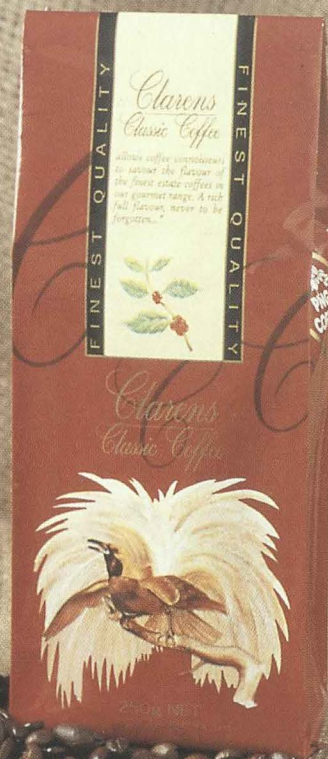
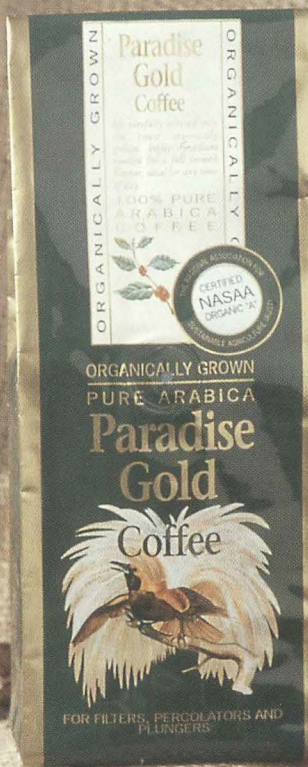
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FOREST

Story and photographs
by Keith Briggs

Flour

It is fascinating to ponder how things we take for granted were discovered. Who would have thought to dry, roast and grind the seeds of the coffee cherry to produce the aromatic beverage enjoyed the world over?

Similarly, what could have led to the discovery that the trunk of the sago palm holds the substance which forms the staple diet of thousands of Papua New Guineans? Growing in dim, mosquito-infested swampland, some bristling with defensive spikes up to 15cm long and possessing a hard skin that defied stone implements, it is amazing that the secret of the sago palm ever came to light.

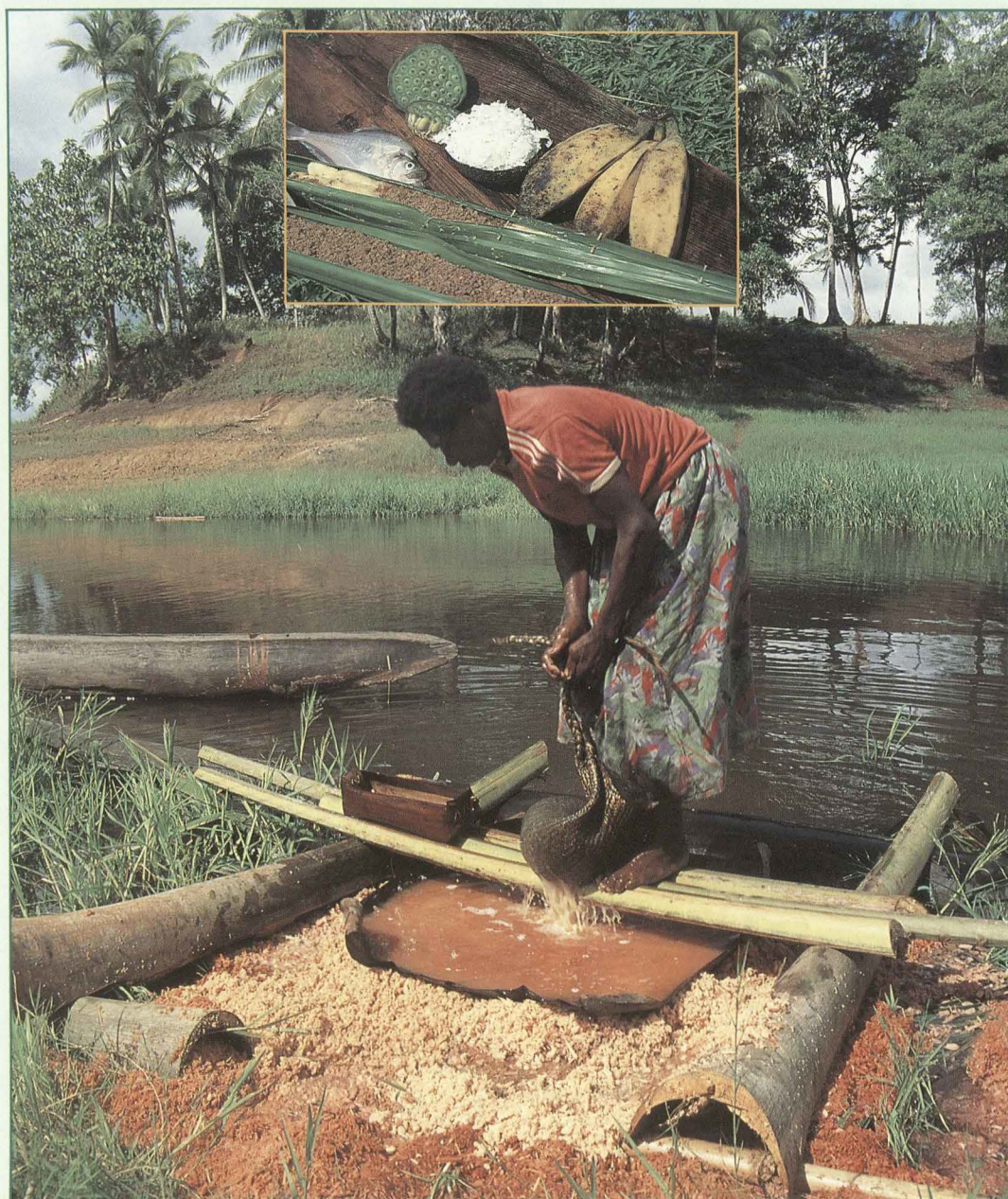
Sago palms grow to altitudes of about 1,000 metres, overlapping at that point with sweet potatoes, the staple of the Highlanders.

Processing sago in the lower Fly delta and Aramia River is different from most other places in PNG. In areas at or a little above sea level, sago trees grow to maturity in about 15 years. Small ones with only a couple of metres of trunk will yield sago, but it is wasteful to cut one so young. A mature tree will grow to a height of 15 metres with a diameter of 60 centimetres.

Top inset Sago maker adds water to the pith before pummeling and squeezing. **Lower inset** Fish, lotus seeds, grated coconut and banana, ready to be cooked with sago.



Below The main process of treading on the pith to squeeze out the sago.





Left Peeling back the bark of a sago palm to reveal a day's work of sago making. **Lower** Filling a sago-leaf tube with freshly made sago.

The tree is felled and trimmed of spikes and limbs. A cut is made along the top side of the trunk and the bark peeled back with an axe, unwrapping only the amount of inner pith that the women can work in one day.

The only change that has been made to the traditional paring adze is a short piece of sharpened steel pipe fitted to the end of the hardwood head. Quick, powerful, precise strokes across the grain, pare the pith to the crumbly consistency of coarse sawdust. This is carried in woven bags to the processing plant set up near a supply of water.

During the wet season, sago is made in the shady forest where water is handy. During the worst few months of the dry season, wells have to be dug in the bed of the dry swamp, or the pith has to be carried long distances.

Two limbs from the tree, acting as bearers, are set wide apart with another two placed close together across them. Beneath these is spread a pliable leather-like sheet obtained from around the upper trunk of the black palm. These are stored and re-used, after being softened each time by immersion in water.

The bag of pith is placed on the supports and water poured in with a scoop made of the skin from the base of a sago frond. With superb balance on the rounded, slippery, frond ribs, the women trample and squeeze the bag. The pummelling and rush of water through the pith loosens the sago powder

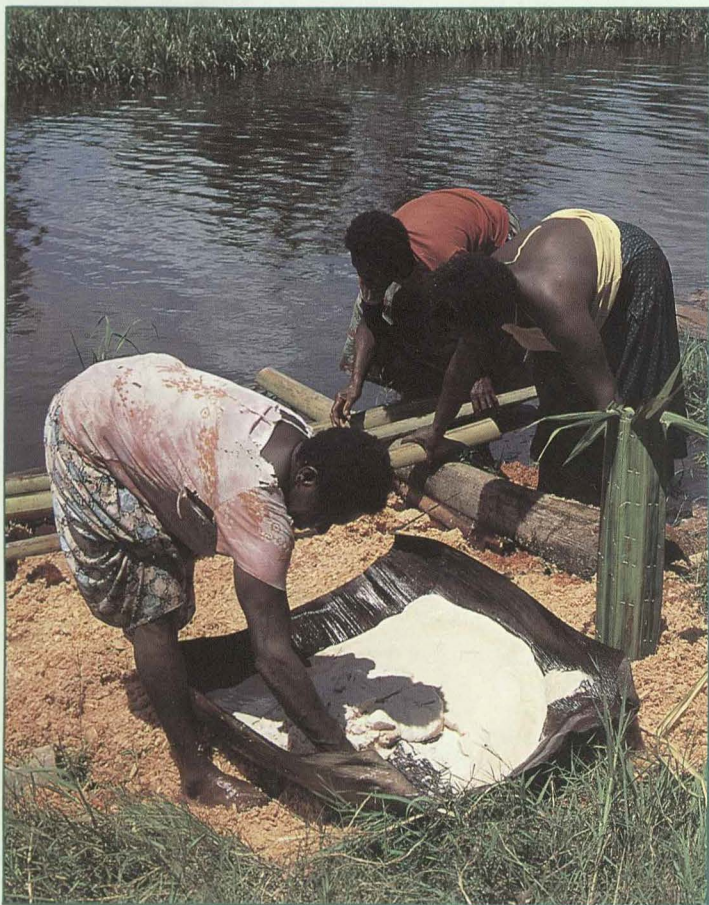


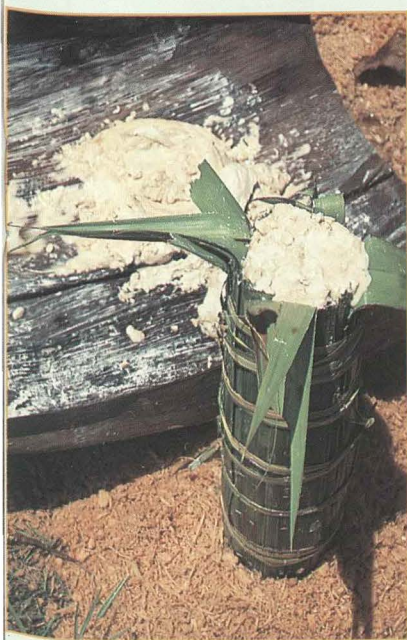
from the fibres and carries it through the close weave of the bag into the tub below.

This process is repeated until water from the bag runs clear. The spent pith is emptied around the tub to bolster up the sides as the water level in it rises.

The heavy sago quickly settles in the tub, one corner of which is occasionally pressed down to drain off water.

During the day, the women make storage tubes by pinning sago leaves together with short lengths of leaf rib, like nails. The residual starch is heavy, with the consistency of





putty. It is packed into the tubes or bags, from which excess water seeps.

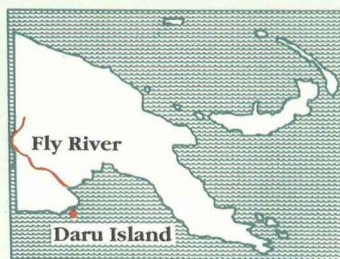
Raw sago will keep fresh in the container for about a month, although most families would consume it within that time. A good tree yields about 10 large tubes, one of which would feed a family of five for about a week.

In most other parts of PNG, sago is processed in a trough made by joining and sealing the bottoms of large fronds together and setting them on a frame about waist-high. The pulverised pith is beaten with a stick, mixed with water and

Above Water drains away to reveal the residue of starch. **inset** Weaving grass bag for sago making or storage. **Left** Leaf tube filled with freshly made sago.

squeezed by hand. The frond rib acts as a spout along which the water flows, carrying the suspended sago through a strainer which excludes the fibre.

Sago is quite bland, as is wheat flour, but as flour is the basis for many culinary delights, so sago is cooked with countless additives. Meat, fish, fat, fruit, greens, nuts, seeds, shoots, grated coconut and its cream, all combine to make an endless variety of palatable and nourishing dishes. One of the delights is coconut and banana sago topped with coconut cream.



Air Niugini operates regular services to Daru Island from Port Moresby, with light aircraft connections to other parts of Western Province.

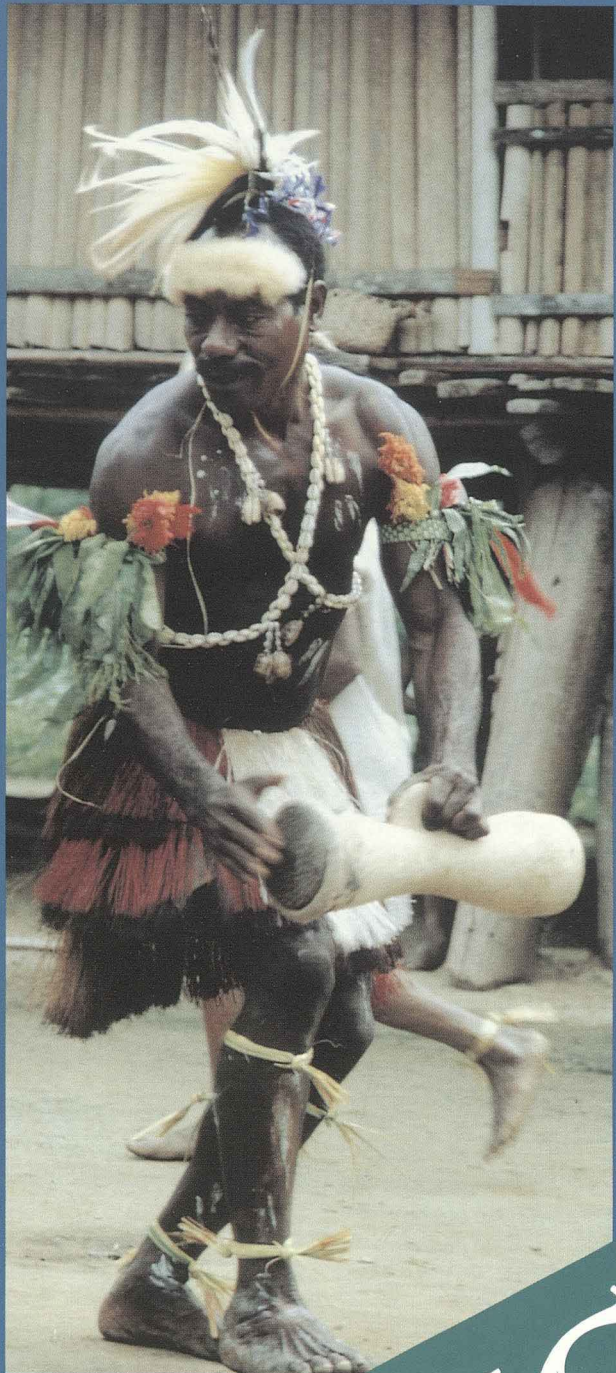
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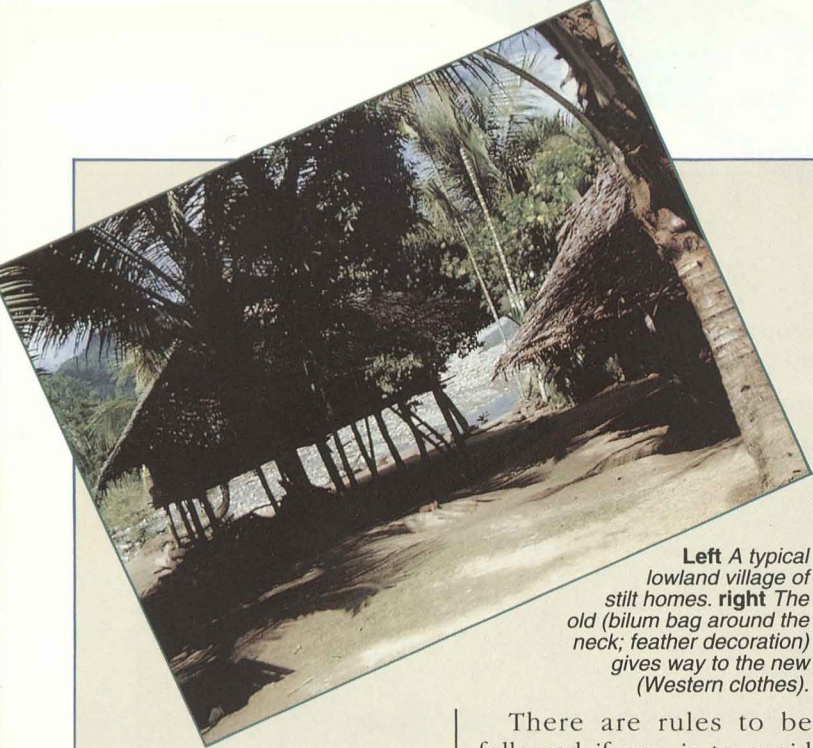
IMPRESSIONS

(A European view of Papua New Guinea and its people)
Story and photographs by Christine E. Gottschalk-Batschkus



Above left Village children, dressed in bilas (finery) watch and absorb traditional dance and the playing of a kundu drum demonstrated by an adult member of the clan (**above right**).

OF PNG



Left A typical lowland village of stilt homes. right The old (bilum bag around the neck; feather decoration) gives way to the new (Western clothes).

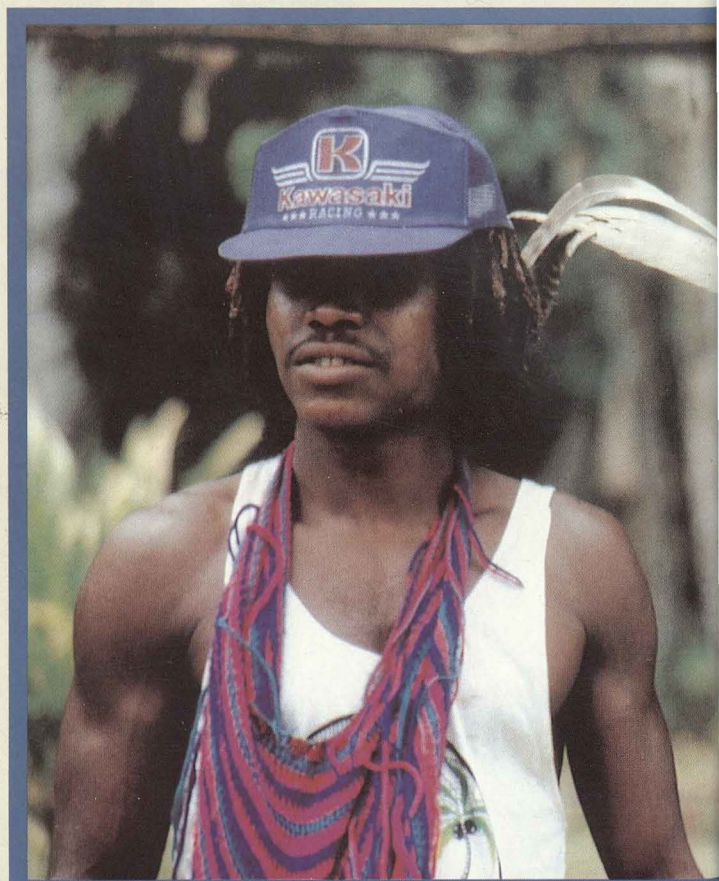
We had come to Papua New Guinea to talk with people, gather information about the country, discover their traditions and ideas. In the course of our many conversations, it became apparent that young people respect and revere their elders, as the latter possess knowledge to the secrets of life. In a small, remote village on the north coast, we became acquainted with the elders who are central to village life, who were pleased to share their stories and secrets. They are proud of their traditions, which are passed on from generation to generation.

We were told that the people of PNG are deeply enmeshed in the spiritual world of nature and of their ancestors. There are spirits of mountains, trees, and stones. They appear in the midday sun in the form of humans, or perhaps as an animal such as the snake, wild boar, cassowary or opossum. They whisper, chatter, or rustle in the twilight from the depths of the dark forest. The elders see the spirits; the youth disbelieving until they have themselves been possessed.

There are rules to be followed if one is to avoid being possessed by a spirit of ill will, bringing disease and contention. In the framework of these unwritten laws, the people orchestrate their weddings, parties, and conflicts. Natural spirits and conflicts are associated with disease, and the curse or ill will of a person can cause the death of a child, or a woman in labor.

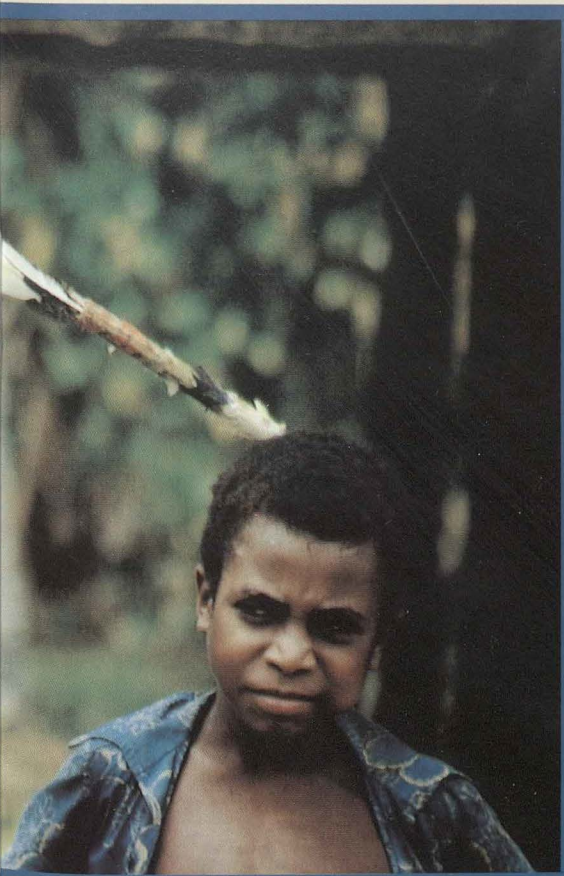
We were told of a woman who moved in with a man not approved of by the other villagers. The couple quarrelled frequently and the three children fathered by the man died. Soon after, the woman left him and moved in with another man. The man she left and his family made her life difficult. When the first child of her new marriage died, the village counsel was consulted. It was decided that the families of both men should host a peace celebration for the entire village to lay the conflicts to rest. The celebration took place, and today the woman has six healthy children.

The people of PNG attempt to use a process of arbitration in the resolution of conflicts, thus averting disease and purging evil spirits while renewing the feeling of 'wellness'. They make use of age-old natural medicine, which provides



Above Author's daughter, Garant, village children to learn the secrets.

Right Garance Gottschalk-Batschkus, the author's daughter, below A young woman receives instruction as traditions are passed on from generation to generation.



maintain peace and health in their villages, and live in harmony with the wilderness surrounding them. During the course of our stay, we witnessed many examples of this.

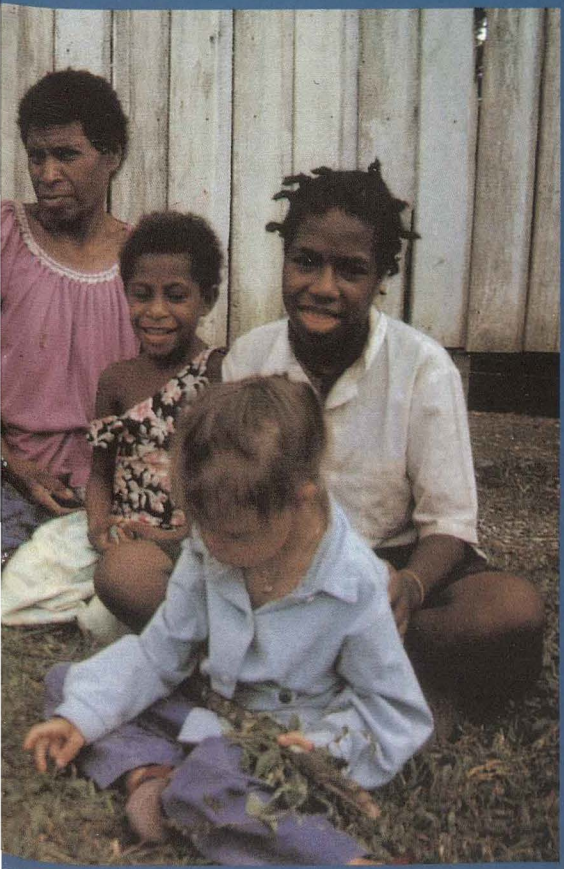
Here is an excerpt from my travel notes regarding a conversation with a woman named Klara.

Klara and I sit with the children in their house. We hear the men outside, and the atmosphere is one of womanly bonding as Klara explains to me the cutting of sago. After mixing the dry, crumbly substance with hot water, a viscous, translucent-white paste is produced. She dextrously moves two wooden sticks in the substance, and pulls a clump out of the mass and wraps it about the sticks until it assumes the desired pear-shaped form. Then she lets the clump of sago slide onto a banana leaf.

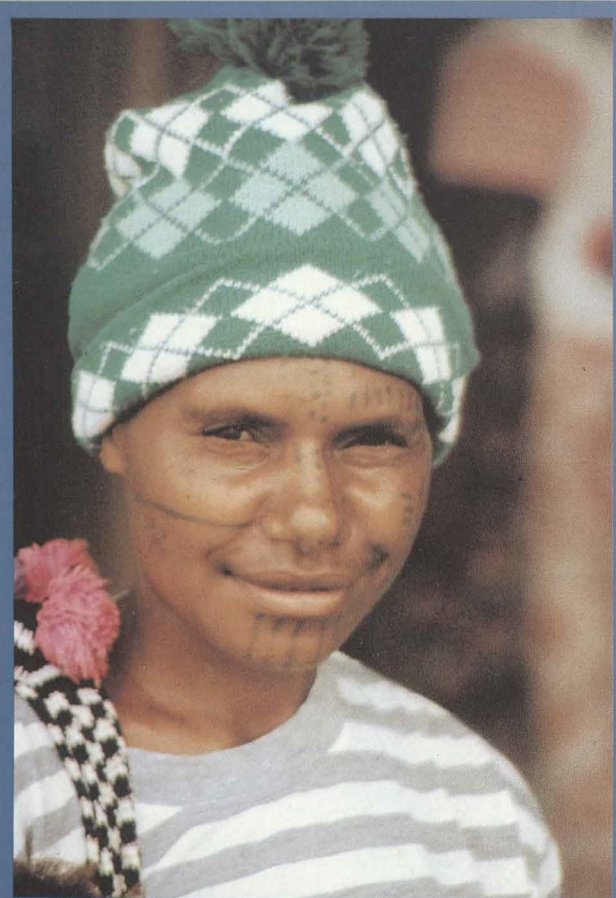
As I watch her, I ask, "Klara, how old are you?". Surprised, she looks at me and asks; "Why do you want to know?" I explain that in another village, I had come to know another woman very well having often spoken with her. It turned out that she was exactly the same age as me, therefore I was interested to know

them with effective health protection. For example, there is salat, a plant often used for treating pain and sickness. Its leaves have an effect not unlike that of stinging nettles, and when rubbed into the skin, they produce a strong burning sensation.

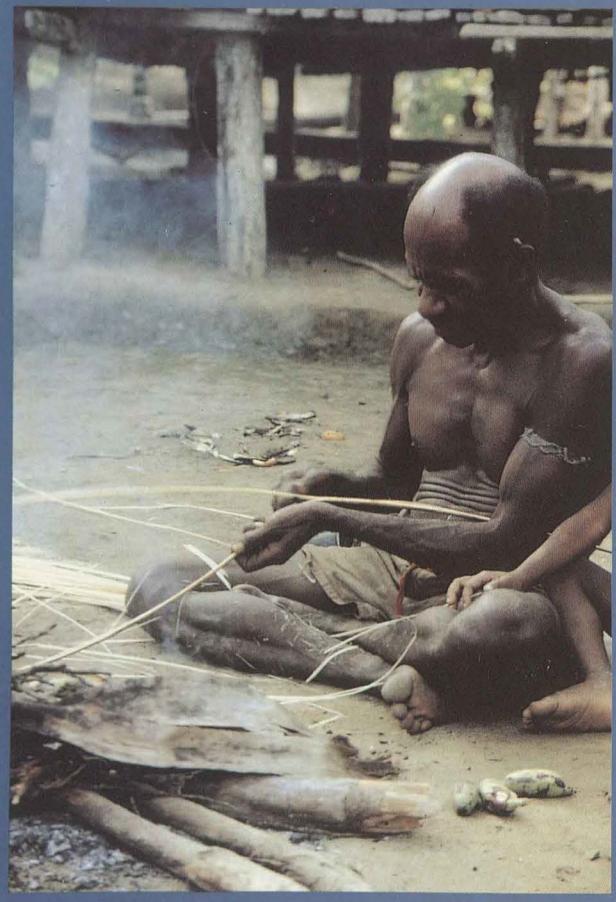
In adhering to the complex rules of societal order and their system of beliefs, the people of PNG



(foreground), sits with of life.



Left Facial tattoos tell a story of ancestry and custom. **Lower left** Village elder prepares materials for basket weaving. **Lower right** Garance Gottschalk-Batschkus with village playmates.



Klara's age. Klara answered, "Sorry, I can't tell you that. None of us in this village know how old we are. We know how old babies are in months, but we don't even know how old the children are. In our village this isn't important, we don't need to count the years. We work every day in our gardens and have our babies. When the girls and boys are big enough, they get their initiation and they marry. Only the whites know how old they are. They have a document in which the age is given, and they can always look there."

I am quite impressed by this explanation. Naturally, Klara is right that there is nothing to gain by counting the hours or the years. On the contrary, by not counting, they are not missing out on anything either. The concept

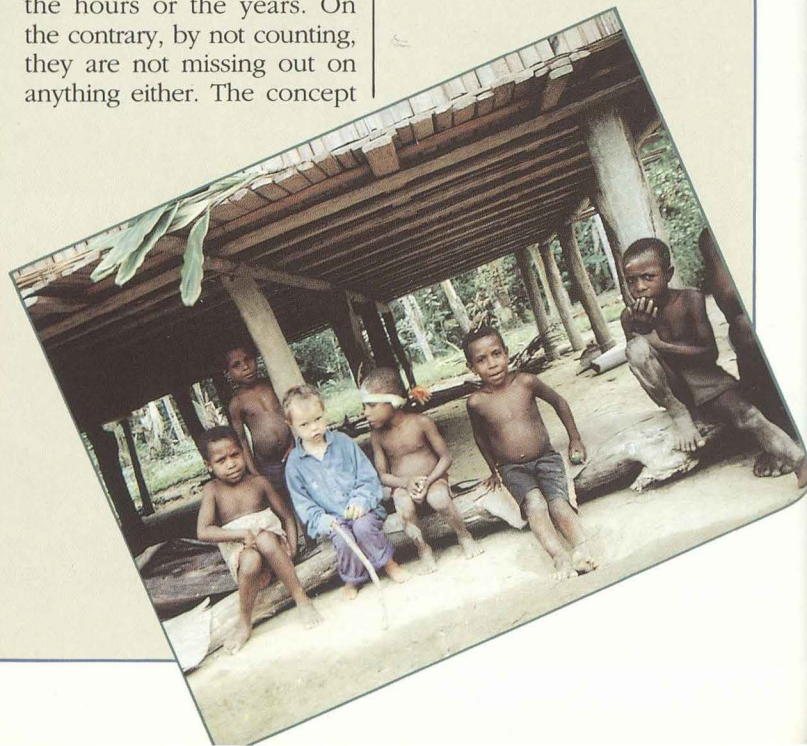
of wasting time and years simply does not exist here.

We hope that Klara and her village can maintain this consciousness, and that they do not lose their culture. They have already seen what the world has to offer and video cameras, cassette recorders, keyboards, and electric guitars are objects greatly desired.

And yet, they sit together at the fire in the early morning, after the sound of the garamut-drum, and eat plantain bananas and taro before setting off to work, the men to build houses, the women and children to tend the gardens.

We considered what would remain when an old house fell apart, in the west. There would be a huge pile of rubble that even after decades would hardly be overgrown by grass. Here, on the other hand, there would be a pile of wood and palm leaves, and the forest would soon consume that remains just as surely as it had created them.

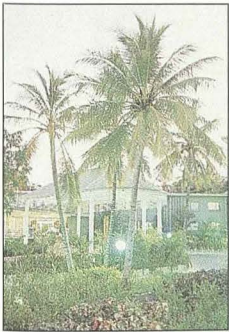
We are very thankful to all the people of PNG for these enlightening experiences. And yet, I believe we only scratched the surface of their great fund of knowledge and wisdom.



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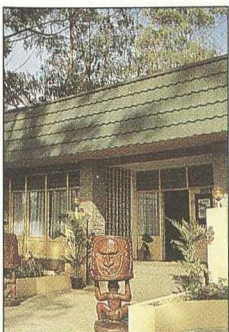
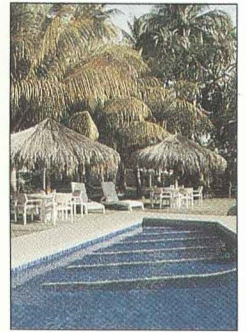


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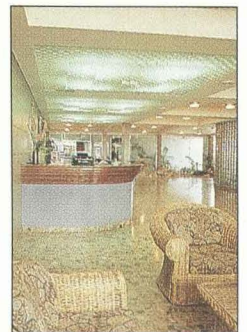


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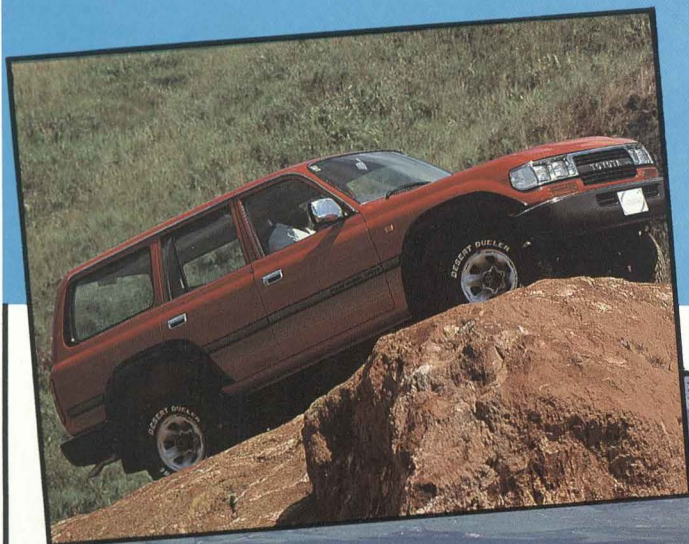
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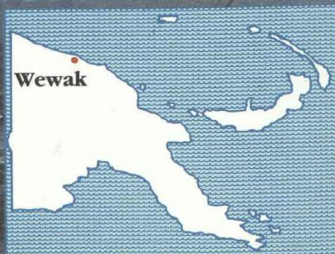
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Sun Sea & Shells



Story and photographs by Liz Thompson

Inset Sea shells at Unai Island. *main picture* Outrigger canoe sailing between Yuo Island and Wewak.



Air Niugini operates regular services between Wewak and Port Moresby and other centres.



Scattered along the golden coast of Wewak are beautiful, tropical islands. Little known and rarely visited, they are about to be rediscovered, the East Sepik Tourist Board having decided to promote them. Set in aquamarine waters, these island jewels offer superb snorkelling, swimming and sunbathing. The sand is thick with shells and coral fragments. The rainforest with which many of them are covered, is filled with exotic flowers and a wide variety of animals and birds.





Left Unai Island, about four kilometres offshore from Wewak, is a tropical paradise. Mostly visited for day trips, it has superb swimming and snorkelling. Sometimes swells breaking on the reefs on the ocean side of the island produce ideal surf for board riders.

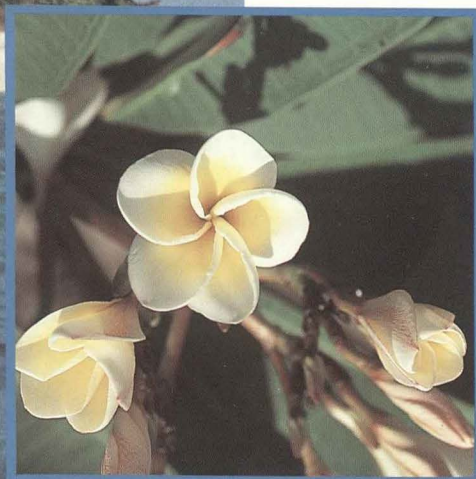
As a national park, Unai is uninhabited, and wildlife — especially pigeons and wildfowl — is

abundant. Much of the breeding takes place at a small mangrove lake estuary which cuts into the centre of the island.

Inset, far left Colorful flowers abound on Unai and Yuo Islands.

Inset, left Stephen, a tour guide who works from the Windjammer Hotel in Wewak, looks at the white sands and blue-green waters which surround Unai Island. Stephen takes tourists to the island on day trips so they can swim and snorkel in safety and enjoy lunch of fresh fish which he catches on the spot.

Inset, lower Frangipani trees are scattered around the villages of Yuo Island, which unlike its uninhabited neighbor, Unai, supports members of three clan groups. Sweet scent from the white and yellow frangipani flowers fills the air of the island, adding to the feeling visitors get of having stepped into a masterpiece of nature.



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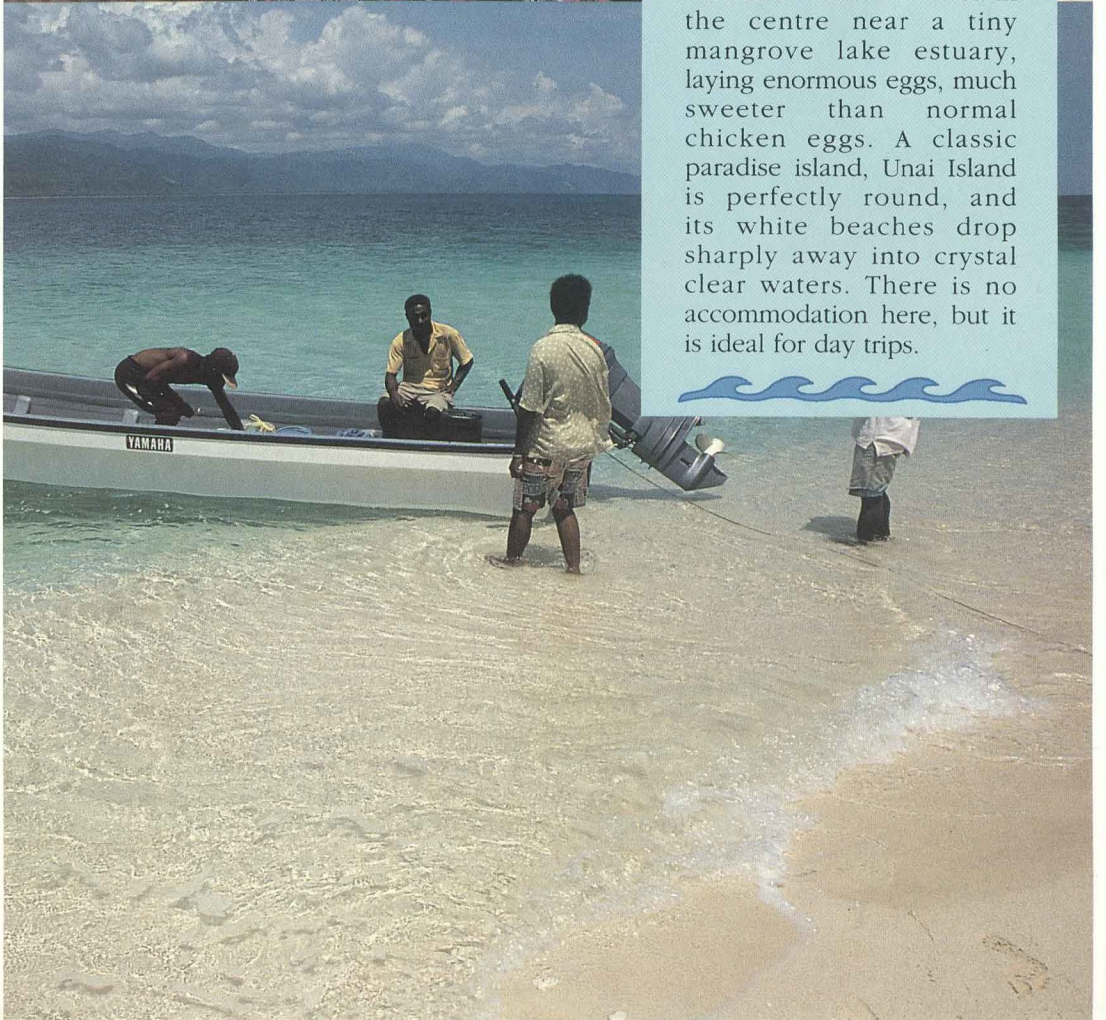
Inset above Another of the many variety of flowers which provide color to the tranquil setting of Yuo Island, just four kilometres off the coast from the mainland provincial centre, Wewak.



Unai Island is a small island and one of the most beautiful. In the evening, it is filled with the soft sound of pigeon calls. Only about half an hour from Wewak by speed boat, it is uninhabited and has been declared a national park in order to protect its animal population. Here, the mountain wild fowl lives in the centre near a tiny mangrove lake estuary, laying enormous eggs, much sweeter than normal chicken eggs. A classic paradise island, Unai Island is perfectly round, and its white beaches drop sharply away into crystal clear waters. There is no accommodation here, but it is ideal for day trips.



Upper right A young woman with facial tattoos which distinguish her as a member of a Yuo Island clan. The island has supported three main clan groups but the majority of the traditional population live on the mainland. Many of the community come back frequently to garden and fish but maintain no permanent presence.



Lower right One of the boats used to take tourists on day trips to Unai Island. The sea around the island and its neighbor, Unai, are rich in edible fish and yellowfin tuna are plentiful.



Inset left *Brightly colored flowers are among the delights of Yuo and Unai Islands. These are typical of the many varieties which grow on Yuo.*



Far left *Flying foxes, large fruit-eating bats, fill the air of the aptly named Flying Fox Island, one of the many small islands in the group off Wewak which includes Unai and Yuo Islands.*



Upper left *Yuo Islander looks like strange creature as he walks along the beach carrying a large palm frond he has collected to decorate a traditional outrigger canoe. Outriggers with sails are used by the islanders for travel to and from the mainland, in spite of the advent of motor boats.*



A short distance from Unai is Yuo Island, inhabited by three different clan groups, most of whom have now gone to live on the mainland. This island, bordered by tall coconut palms, is now most often visited by the villagers for fishing or gardening. This area also has some

wonderful snorkelling. Both these islands are really suited to day trips, though there are plans to develop tourist accommodation. Visits to all the outlying islands along the Wewak coast can be organised through the Windjammer Hotel on Wewak Beach.



Lower left *Showing no signs of the stress of city living, these Yuo Island children enjoy a holiday from school. Resting in the shade of a beach tree, they are sharing milk from a coconut just taken from one of the many palms that fringe their island.*



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Hiri Moale Festival

Once again, Ela Beach is crowded with holiday-makers ready to celebrate the Hiri Moale festival on Independence weekend. Hiri, is the name given to the ancient trading expeditions of the Motu and Erema people in Papua.

Each year when the south-east monsoons were still blowing, Motuan people from villages where Port Moresby is today, would build a fleet of ocean-going canoes or lagatois. These were sailed for hundreds of kilometres to the west into the Gulf of Papua.

Below *A child, resplendent in a headdress of bird of paradise feathers, joins the revellers at the Hiri Moale Festival in Port Moresby.*

Story and photographs by Liz Thompson



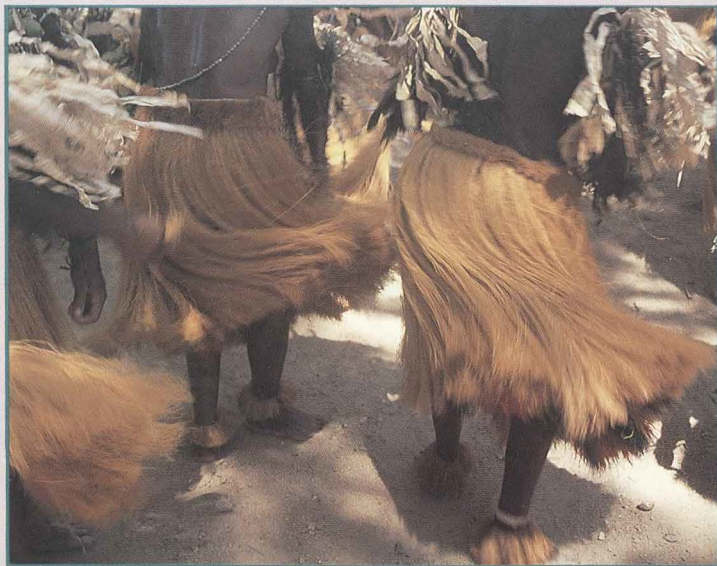
The homecoming of the lagotoi was an occasion for celebration, or Moale, which is how the Hiri Moale got its name. Traditionally, this event was a time for feasting, dancing and celebration and a giving of thanks to the spirits which protected the boats on their journey. Today, lagotois are not often seen on the water, but once a year at the Hiri Moale festival they are once again sailed by the Motuan people.

The first Hiri Moale festival was in 1971, but it was some years later that the first lagotoi took to the

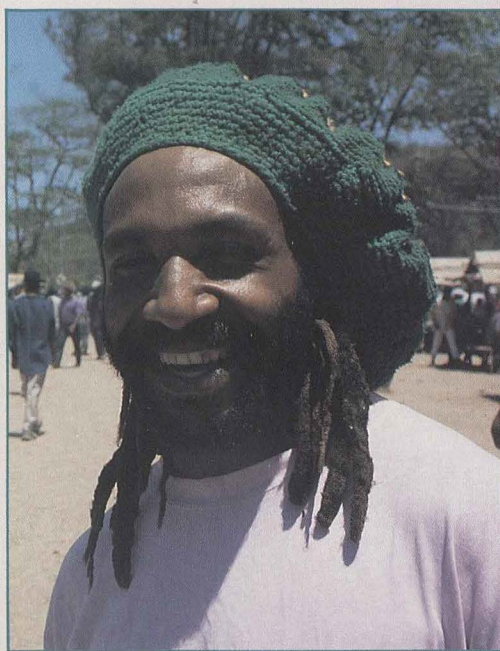
pottery and small clay flutes.

In between the stalls musicians play. Groups of young women, their hair covered with strands of bougainvillea, play the guitar. Another group play PVC pipes with thongs, an instrument which has replaced the traditional bamboo version. Here and there a religious convert sets up an amplifier and clutches a Bible, telling the straggling crowd why they should follow the Lord.

At one stall, two young girls are being tattooed, using traditional dyes and a tiny thorned branch, which



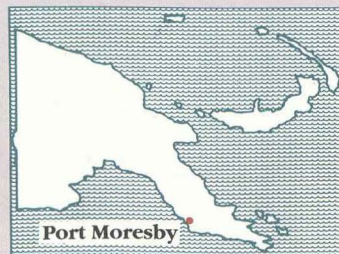
Above Grass skirts sway to the rhythm of snake skin kundu drums as performers dance throughout the afternoon. **far left** Traditional cooking at an Ela Beach stall. **Left** A happy spectator at the festivities. **right** Spectacular headdresses, painted with traditional designs and decorated with feathers and dyed grass. **bottom** Spectators on Ela Beach watch a race between uncrewed model boats.



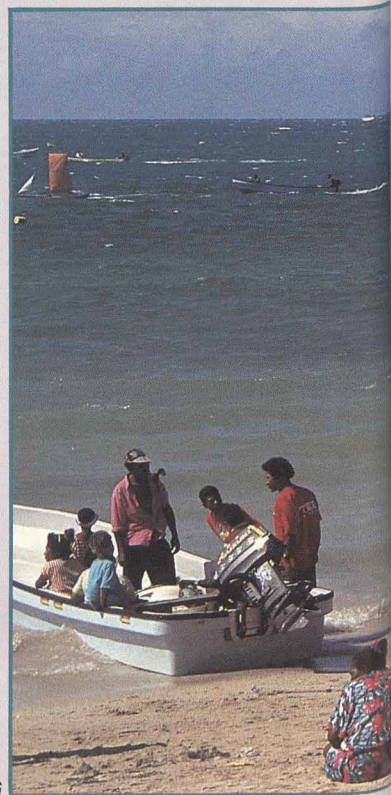
water, after they had been banned in 1957 by the Australian colonial government. On the weekend of the festival, the beach is lined with dancers in full traditional costume and the sound of drums fills the air. The famous Hiri Moale lagotois rest lazily in the shallow waters. Beside the pathway and the beach's grassy verges, locals sit with goods for sale — local bananas cooked in coconut cream, coca-cola and lurid ice pops — the stalls stretch as far as the eye can see. Other stallholders sell shells, jewellery, crocheted hats,

is hammered softly across the design. This practice is again related to the Hiri tradition. The Motuan women made tattoos on all female children when the men were away on their expeditions. This painful process began when the girls were five or six and each year new tattoos would be added and old ones redone to make them darker.

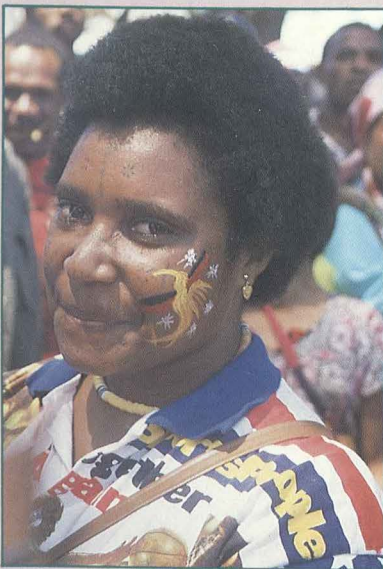
When the girls reached 10, the 'kadidiha' tattoos from under the armpits to the nipples would be made, and then later, the tattoos on the shoulders and down



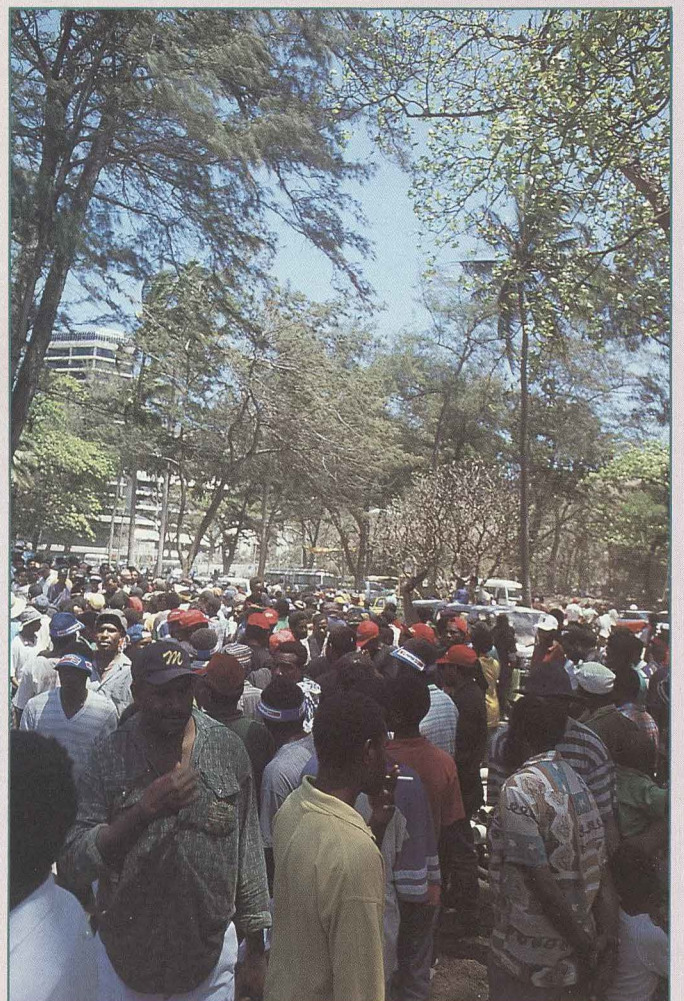
Air Niugini headquarters are in the capital, Port Moresby, at Jacksons International Airport, gateway to PNG







Above Dancers decorated with feathers, shells and cordyline leaves, perform on Ela Beach for Hiri Moale. **Left** Spectator with a face painting of the bird of paradise from the PNG flag. **right** Some of the crowd drawn to Ela Beach.



the back. There were several tattoos to mark special events, which included one for young girls whose fathers had completed a successful Hiri expedition, where they were tattooed on the lower part of their legs.

There is activity everywhere, and this year one innovative young man set up a face painting stall from where people emerged with

the Papua New Guinea bird of paradise painted on their cheeks, as well as optional designs he had displayed on a large piece of card. Small children decorated by their parents wandered with enormous feather headdresses. The scene was vibrant, alive with color and movement, as the people of Port Moresby celebrated their Independence.

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