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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Office of Tourism P.O. Box 773, Port Moresby



Laurence Roe



paradise

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Welcome aboard

For an all-too-brief fortnight in late June and early July the eyes of the world's press focused on Papua New Guinea as host to the Third South Pacific Festival of Arts. The cameras clicked, notebooks filled with descriptions of events in the biggest cultural extravaganza the Pacific has ever seen.

Air Niugini announced a competition to find the photographer who had best captured the 'magic' of the festival. From a host of entries, Derek Page was judged to have submitted the best portfolio of festival 'magic'. His prize is a Port Moresby-Hongkong return ticket. Congratulations, Derek.

This issue of *Paradise*, regular readers will note, is bigger than ever, not just to accommodate a hefty spread of festival photographs but to cope with increasing demand from advertisers, national and international, to share the *Paradise* experience. We welcome and thank them for their support.

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Acting General Manager

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COVER

White Australians were invited to participate in the Arts Festival. Circus Oz were a smash hit as they dished up, to overflow audiences, expert renderings of the Europeans' remnant mediaeval culture. This and other photographs made Derek Page winner of Air Niugini's festival photography competition.



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KARAWARI LODGE

'... located on the Karawari River, a tributary of the Sepik, the lodge is in the tradition of Treetops and other great wilderness hotels.' *Allan Seiden, Travel Agent Magazine.*

'Something like a National Geographic expedition. No roads. Thick jungle. Locals poling dugouts. Crocodiles. You wind up at the surprising Karawari Lodge. All kinds of comfort in the midst of a thousand miles of jungle.'

Robin Kinhead, Chicago Tribune.

'This was the primitive culture we had come to see — the culture so well delineated by (the late Dr) Margaret Mead and National Geographic editors.'

Betty Peach, San Diego Tribune.

'... the silence and peacefulness is deafening to unaccustomed city ears.' *Heather William, Sydney Sunday Telegraph.*

'Perhaps the view from the Lodge alone is worth the effort... but the real attraction could be the people. They have lived as they have for untold generations... storytelling, rituals and music.' *Charles Sribner, Pol Magazine.*



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OPERATION ARMADA



Arnold Zable

Port Moresby had never seen anything like it. An estimated 20,000 Papua New Guineans and visitors from all over the world packed the waterfront. Thousands more lined the ridges overlooking Ela Beach. Stretching away to the southeast across the waters of Walter Bay were hundreds of vessels – a fascinating array of traditional sailing, racing and paddle canoes, sleek yachts, cabin cruisers and powerboats. Operation Armada – from a ‘fleet’ of just one, the *Vevevelego*, which set out from Mullins Harbour, Milne Bay Province, far away to the southeast a week earlier – had arrived to provide a sensational start to the Third South Pacific Festival of Arts, hosted by Papua New Guinea. With the armada all the way was Arnold Zable of Melbourne who chronicles this historical event.

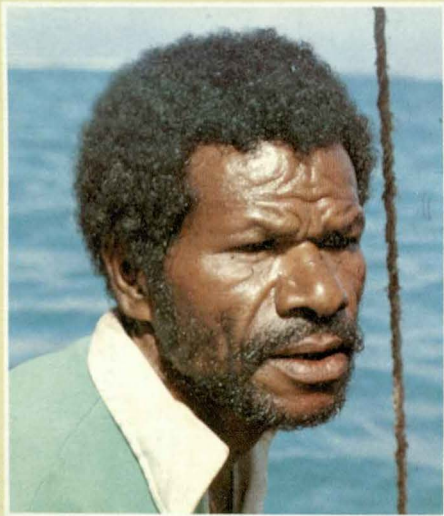
June 23: It's 3am and we are awakened by the warming engines of the government boat *Yalangili*. I stay huddled in my sleeping bag on the open deck as we lurch through a series of pre-dawn squalls. Spray sweeps over us as we try to grab a few more hours' sleep. It is a relief to reach the calm water of Mullins Harbour after the acute open-ocean rolling of our cumbersome diesel-powered boat.

As we approach our rendezvous point, the village of Konemaiawa, we can see only a solitary vessel pulled up on the beach. It is the *Vevevelego*. We have been anticipating several boats from the Milne Bay Islands to be gathered for a mass start. And

where are the two canoes from Manus Island which set out from Lorengau on May 25? This is supposed to be the starting point of the armada's run into Port Moresby, about 400 kilometres to the northwest.

But Melanesian time is not western time. Sailing canoes are dependent upon the winds, currents and the mood of their crews. It is, for instance, very good manners to delay the departure of a vessel to spend more time with relatives and





Arnold Zabie

Nusa Kavoi . . . seasoned voyager — but all the way to Port Moresby on the *Vevelelego*?

friends, especially in areas not often visited or difficult to get to.

The *Vevelelego* is a six-metre outrigger with rosewood hull built in 1964 by Nusa Kavoi of Sili Silo Bay in the Suau area of Milne Bay Province. It has a crew of four — Nusa, two sons and a nephew. At first Nusa is shy, withdrawn, seemingly bemused by all the fuss that attends the one-boat 'armada' launching. Already he has sailed *Vevelelego* to Alotau and Wari Island in the south-east and to Mailu in the west, to trade, fish and visit relatives. But Port Moresby? A formidable challenge for such a small canoe.

My bible is Haddon and Hornell's classic of the thirties, *Canoes of Oceania*. Their descriptions of traditional vessels enable me to assess changes in design, function and use of materials. The *Vevelelego* (sea snail) is in the finest tradition of Suau canoes, especially in the way its booms are attached to the outrigger and the shape of the hull and float. But canvas has replaced plaited pandanus leaf sails, and shackles, bolts and western rigging work alongside bush materials. Haddon and Hornell wrote that the art of canoe building was disappearing from Suau and that boats were being purchased from other areas even though the Suau people continued to be avid seafarers. So it is fitting that Operation Armada is to be launched by this solitary canoe from Suau built by a local man.

June 24: A media circus arrives by helicopter to join the developing carnival atmosphere. Complex photographic and sound equipment is set up on the beach. Cameramen, writers, a video team and two film

crews are busy. The helicopter hovers over *Vevelelego*, almost ripping off its sails and drowning out official speeches.

Patrick Paulisbo, Premier of Milne Bay Province, reminds us that his people are a seafaring race, they have survived by learning to live with the sea. Operation Armada, he says, might become a regular event which will help preserve a vital heritage and provide a regular opportunity for people from farflung places to meet.

It is almost noon. Nusa and his crew set sail on the calm lagoon waters. They are followed by the 'mother boat', the *Marie Louise*, and by the *Kwala*, a narrow eight-metre fibre-glass speedboat which will act as a rescue craft.

Outside the reef the sea chops up and a strong southeasterly pushes *Vevelelego* to more than 10 knots. An occasional shower. The skies darken and visibility closes in. But the Suau entrant presses on, arriving at Magarida in Amazon Bay at night-fall. Amazon Bay is first stop along the Central Province coast. The *Vevelelego* is the only starter from Milne Bay Province.

On the beach are the two Manus canoes. Having overshot Mullins Harbour, they have rested up a few days at Magarida (see box). Welcoming ceremonies and feasting over, I see my first performance of the Manus 'sock dances', so called because of the long blue sock — stuffed with newspaper and cardboard — which is tied around the waist, protruding as a large penis and tipped with cowrie shell. This phallus is vigorously shaken to the rhythm of the *garamut* drums, hollowed out logs which produce a sharp, resonant beat. Sock dance performances are to break up crowds with laughter all the way to Port Moresby.

June 25: The Manus crews are up before dawn, rolling their heavy boats on logs into the shallows. They 'out-board' several hundred metres before unfurling doubles sails to catch early winds. As they disappear, the Amazon Bay canoes begin to assemble for the official start. Large sailing canoes drift in from the nearby islands of Lалуoru and Mailu. Along the beach at Kulele several canoes are being loaded with provisions, sails, steering oars, paddles and poles to push vessels over reefs.

Haddon and Hornell tell me that Amazon Bay is the easterly limit of the *orou*, massive double-hulled boats, some more than 10 metres

Manus Odyssey

The final teardrops were shed on Sunday, May 25, at 11 am as the Manus sailors took to their boats. More than 500 relatives, friends and onlookers lined the shore and the Salvation Army choir sang 'Jesus Will Pilot Me'. The harmony and the sound of the waves lapping on the shore heightened the sensation of elation and expectancy one feels before embarking upon a major adventure.

We headed round to the naval base at Lombrum to rendezvous with our escort ship, the PNGS *Samarai*. Next day we headed south across the Bismarck Sea. Soon we had that feeling of being in the middle of nowhere. But the day seemed to pass quickly and the sun was soon slipping away to the west. It was lonely when the stars came out but we were able to stay in touch with the patrol boat by radio. It took three days to reach Madang, on the north coast of the mainland, our first port of call.

Soon we were on our way again — this time along the Rai Coast. We stopped overnight at two villages but when the ocean was calm and easy we sailed quietly on through the night. We reached Lae, capital of Morobe Province in the Huon Gulf, on June 2.

So far, so good. An uneventful journey. But the calm we sailed out onto when we left Lae was misleading. Within a few hours we were being tossed around in our first major ordeal.

Waves six and seven metres rolled around us and winds of about 20 knots threw us all over the ocean. As we battled to keep the canoes the right way up I can remember wondering: 'Is this the

The crews of the two Manus sailing canoes which voyaged from Lorengau to Port Moresby, joining Operation Armada at Magarida in Amazon Bay, will carry happy memories of that epic for the rest of their days. David Haro of the PNG National Broadcasting Commission sailed with them. He recounts some of the emotions and events of the longest sailing vessel voyage in recorded PNG history.



end? Will we ever see our families again?' But our sturdy vessels proved equal to the test and our confidence grew as we came to realise this.

We were a tired lot when we sailed into Oro Bay in Northern Province. What a relief it was to be on land again and what a reception we got! Provincial government members lined up to greet us and traditional dancers from the region entertained us. As if in relief after our ordeal, we plunged into feasting and dancing that night. And then, for two days, we rested our weary bodies.

On June 11 we were on the

way again, bound for Tufi, home of Papua New Guinea's 'fiord' country. There we were greeted by the eerie chant 'Oro! Oro! Orokaival!' by the Orokaivan people. Standing by to meet us was Stephen Tago, the Minister for Science, Culture and Tourism. More feasting and dancing and the young people of Tufi organised sporting events.

On Friday June 13 we defied superstition and headed out to sea again. Midway between Tufi and Cape Vogel a strong squall enveloped us but it soon subsided. Then our two fishermen began catching fish while others tried to lasso the dolphins who were accompanying us. I said we were supposed to be sailors, not cowboys. That set us laughing and soon we were all in high spirits. We were still feeling good when we found a lonely island where we cooked for ourselves and spent a peaceful night on the beach.

Next day we sailed on to Bentley Bay where we rejoined the

Samarai. At daybreak on June 16 we sailed into Alotau where we were to spend four days overhauling the canoes, repairing minor damage sustained since leaving Manus.

By this time we were beginning to feel very much like a song and dance group must feel when it's on the road. We were entertaining crowds at every stop — and they all seemed to love us.

After Alotau we spent time at Kwato and Logea and then called into Suau where a pig was promptly killed to celebrate our arrival.

It was when we left Suau that we made a mistake. Armed with incorrect information, we overshot the official starting point for Operation Armada — Mullins Harbour — and, 13 hours later, found ourselves at Magarida in Amazon Bay. We weren't going to go back so we waited at Magarida. When the *Vevelelego* eventually arrived we were at last part of the armada.

In the days that followed, we headed up the Papuan coast. As we

drew nearer the big city of Port Moresby, we began to feel more confident that we had succeeded in a venture which many had said would end in failure. We were also looking forward eagerly to being reunited with all our friends in the national capital. But there was also a touch of sadness — sadness that we were rapidly leaving behind us all the unspoiled ocean and coastline, golden beaches, gentle lagoons, heaving swells — all alive with so many fascinating creatures. Daily we saw dolphins, seabirds wheeling and diving, surface fish ever ready to put on a display, turtles . . . these and so many more

And we remembered the fear we had felt as the waves grew around us; and the easy nights when the sky was too beautiful for us to think of sleeping. And I remember thinking of my own ancestors, the Toaripi people who took part in annual voyages from Gulf to Port Moresby which, known as *sariva* voyages, were the equivalent of the more famous Motuan *hiri* trading voyages. In my experiences with the Manus vessels, I felt that I had shared something with my ancestors.



Simon Swale



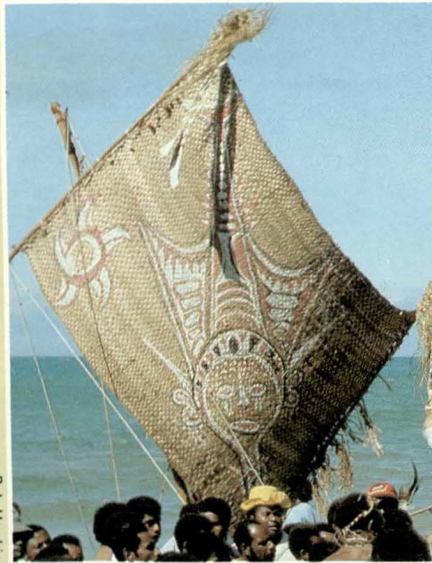
Rob Kysely



Simon Swale



Bob Hawkins



Bob Hawkins

Top down, left to right: section of canoe which sailed from Vanuatu; Motuan racing canoe close to Port Moresby; hull and boom lashing on Vanuatu canoe; the Aventura, the only modern yacht, crewed by the Cornell family, to accompany Operation Armada from start to finish; woven pandanus sail on Tami canoe from Morobe Province; 'mother ship' Marie Louise; hull and platform of canoe from Tufi, Northern Province; Air Niugini bird of paradise symbol skims the waves

long. I am to observe in the days to come that they cope easily with a variety of weather conditions and have no trouble sailing into the wind. But there are changes in the *orou*. The main change is that the plaited crab-claw sails have given way to huge rectangular cloth sails attached to a vertical mast.

We leave Magarida as a fleet of eight — the *Velevelego* and seven entries from Amazon Bay. The 'armada' is materialising. I am on the 14-metre *Ilua* from Lалуoru. Its huge hulls, about two metres apart, are linked by boards laid lengthwise which make a sturdy and spacious platform. A crew of six takes turns at steering, working the ropes and bailing. As the winds freshen we settle to eight knots, our course established by a large steering oar held against the rear of the hull.

Vessels begin to join us, including a stately 15-metre double hull from Boru village in Baxter Bay, the *Oibo Wadauma*. In gentle seas we are able to stretch out for several lazy hours, chewing betel nut, the crews telling stories of other voyages by



the *Ilua* to the eastern islands of Milne Bay and as far west as Port Moresby. The *Ilua* is a seasoned wanderer.

It is now late afternoon and we are gliding around Dedele Point and into Cloudy Bay for an overnight stop at Abau Island. An enthusiastic crowd awaits us on the breakwater. A femal choir greets us with a new song for the occasion for 'sailors from faraway islands to the island of Abau'.

June 26: '*Taim bilong kaikai. Taim bilong kaikai.*' The cry goes out among the sleeping crews. Blearily, they rise to find a communal breakfast set out on rows of banana leaves and palm fronds. Dawn is not yet with us. It is first light as hundreds of well-wishers send us on our way. Some throw rocks into the water, drenching us as we pole through the shallows. Abau's infectious hospitality has welded us together. We really are now a unified armada.

I am on the *Saint Michael*, smaller of the two Manus canoes. It is a spacious 12-metre boat with outrigger attached to five booms that stretch almost four metres out from the hull. The long journey from Manus has left its scars and as we hit rougher seas one of the main masts snaps, requiring a quick rescue operation to retrieve the sail and retie the supports. A few hours later frayed rigging snaps. Again crew plunge into the ocean to bring back the sail.

Three outriggers with bright orange plastic sails move out from

Baramata. Others join us from Tutubu and Kapari. As we near Marshall Lagoon a fleet sails out to greet us including a 20-metre single-hull paddle canoe with about 30 crewmen, in traditional dress, thrashing their oars in unison.

Again there is a large crowd at our stopover village — Gavuone. The performance is like that of yesterday. And just as enjoyable. Greeting songs, speeches, a late afternoon feast of chicken, baked pig and vegetables cooked in coconut juice and a variety of seafood.

June 27: I am back on the *Velevelego* and am feeling vulnerable and cramped after voyaging on the big boats. But it is easy sailing as we move past black beaches edged with clusters of pandanus palms, their starkly outlined fronds weaving ghostly shapes in the fresh post-dawn sea breeze.

But now, a few moments later, we are tossing in the roughest conditions yet encountered. We are passing Pari Point and the waves are several metres high. The winds whine and whistle about us. Water is crashing over the *Velevelego*. Nusa grabs the spare steering paddle to help steady his outrigger and bring it to the wind. He clings desperately to a precarious perch on the outrigger booms. His two sons hold the main oar at the stern. His nephew bails water quickly but without panic.

Now I can appreciate the skills of these sailors, dodging unknown reefs, guided only by an occasional

beacon and the naked eye. Unexpected reefs require a quick turnabout, making the crew work flat out to untie and retie the ropes. Now and then there is an exhilarating moment when we pick exactly the right tack and rocket along with swells at more than 10 knots.

It is mid-afternoon and we have caught up with the fleet assembled off Hula Point, waiting for the high tide and a co-ordinated arrival at Hula village.

All together, slowly, we begin to pole in over the reef, drifting in unison. We pole past huts high on stilts over the water. A fleet of small decorated canoes paddles out to greet us. The welcomes are becoming increasingly lavish and rehearsed the nearer we get to Port Moresby.

I spend the night on the beach talking to village elders about trading canoes of yesterday. Old Pouna Vavine recalls the large double hull canoes of the twenties with crab-claw sails. They were used in the *vili* trading system, he recalls, which supplied Motuan villages to the west around Port Moresby while many of the Motuan men were away on their annual *hiri* trading voyages to the Papua Gulf. The people of Hula traditionally supplied the Motuan villages at this time of year and then, when the *hiri* voyagers returned, the Hula people would buy some of the sago which had been brought back from the Papua Gulf.

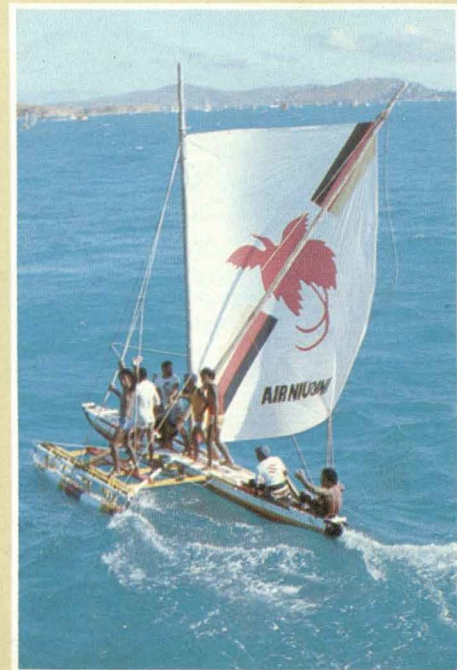
June 28: It is dawn and I can see the maritime arts of Hula have not died



Tom Cooke



Simon Swale



Tom Cooke

Clockwise from right: Crewman at work on the Manus canoe Saint Michael; Operation Armada off Taurama Point before entering Walter Bay; paddle power by the men of Gogodala from Western Province; armada's end, on Ela Beach, Port Moresby, with Paga Hill background; Pouna Vavine, memories of the twenties

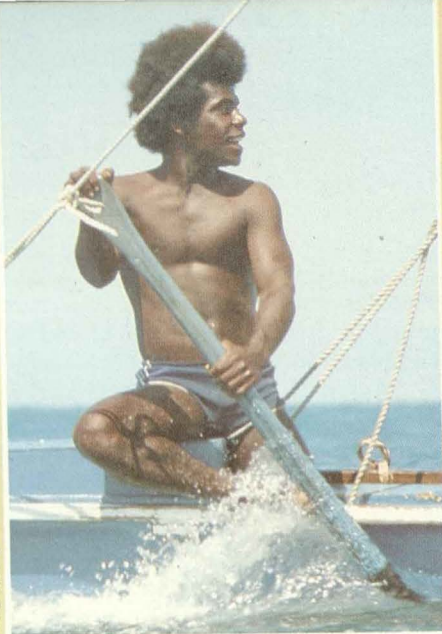
out though they have evolved new directions. About 20 sleek outriggers are lined up on the beach ready to join the armada. The basic design is traditional but heavily influenced by observation of western yachts and materials. The dugout hulls and light outriggers are constantly modified to improve speed and performance. Terylene racing sails are imported from Hongkong.

The *Oibo Wadauma* is my vessel today. The oldest crew member, Wanua Padi, sits on the roomy platform between the hulls, recalling journeys on routes rarely sailed today. He has been to Misima in the Louisiade Archipelago where he remembers trading for *bagi*, the red shell once in heavy demand as currency and ornamentation.

Port Moresby is now not so far away. Helicopters with film crews are clattering overhead. We are now more than 60 canoes and more join us as we pass small coastal settlements. We assemble for a unified move into Kapa Kapa. More speeches, more feasting. Singing. Dancing. From early afternoon to way after midnight.

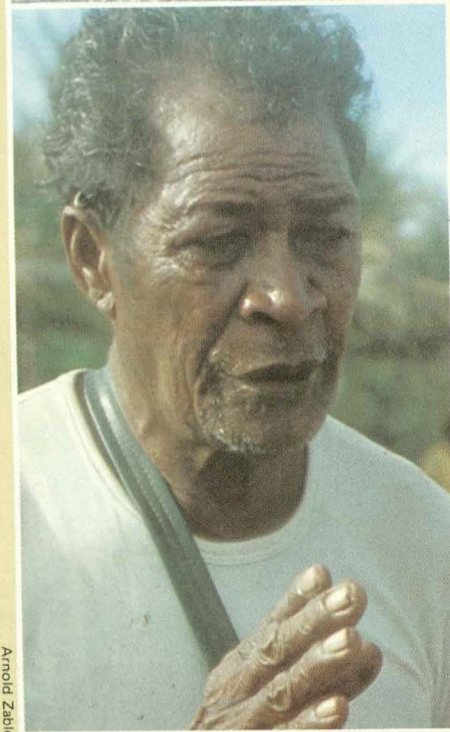
Papua New Guinea Development Bank officer Tau Vere recounts stories to me handed down to him by his ageing father. Kapa Kapa is the most easterly Motuan village. His father knew all about the ceremonial and sheer hard work involved in *hiri* voyaging and the stockpiling of pottery and shell money necessary before heading west to buy the sago of the people of the Papua Gulf. **June 29:** A wailing siren breaks the pre-dawn peace. An amplified voice calls on the people of Kapa Kapa to prepare breakfast for the itinerant mariners who are their guests. Some villagers are already active, putting finishing touches to racing canoes they will pit against the speedsters from Hula and other coastal villages.

Today I sail with the larger Manus boat and its crew of 13. Excitement among the Manus men is rising as they sense an end to their odyssey. The captain, Benedict Kalman, tells me that the experiences of the previous month have sharpened their sailing skills, taught them how to cope with unfamiliar waters and conditions, and given them many



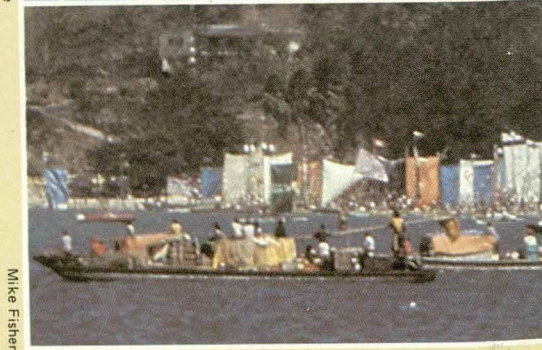
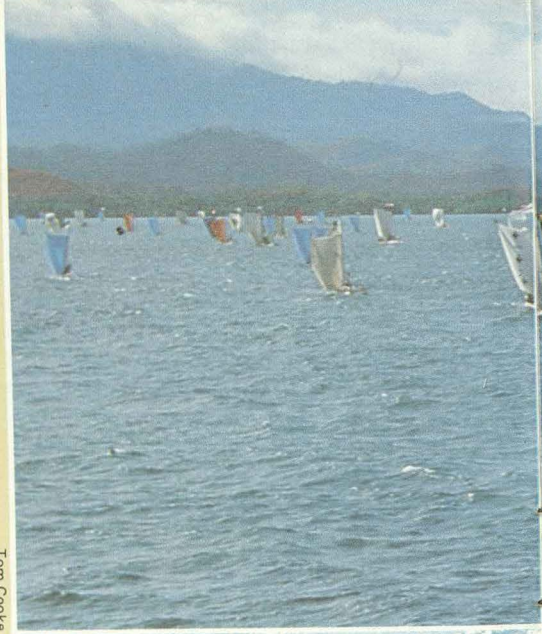
Arnold Zabie

Tom Cooke



Arnold Zabie

Tom Cooke



Mike Fisher

ideas about how to improve their vessels.

We slip past Gaire and Barakau, each time being joined by a new contingent. As we head toward Tubusereia, the Manus men change into their dance gear, painting their faces and stuffing those now-famous 'socks'.

They tell me some of the scenarios they have been acting out. They imitate the underwater girations of the tuna, mimic the sounds and movements of the eagle and mime a cat stalking and catching a rat.

Time and tide waits for no man. As we slip into anchorage at Tubusereia the water is well out and we face a wade ashore through a thick, black quagmire of mud strewn with broken bottles, tins and consumer society debris. Signs are clear we are approaching 'civilisation'.

As we make our way through crowds into the dusty village clearing, the Manus crew are overwhelmed by the welcome of their *wantoks*, fellow Manus people, who have come from Port Moresby. About 50 of them dance to the rhythmic beat of several large *garamut* drums, surrounding their sailor heroes. They move in a controlled frenzy that sets the crowd alight.

June 30: Today is the big day. Our next stop is Ela Beach, Port Moresby. I am jolted awake by traditional drummers beating in the final day of Operation Armada. The *Velevelego*, the lonely starter from Mullins Harbour, now has 150 companions and many more will swell our numbers as we head across the final stretch to Walter Bay and Ela Beach.

I join the *Oibo Wadauma* from



Boru but find its previous spacious platform now crowded with about 25 Amazon Bay *wantoks*. The next few hours are dreamlike. We move off on schedule into waters whipped by a lively southeaster. The helicopters buzz incessantly around us. Pleasure craft by the score join in to add glory to the vastness of the armada. Racing canoes slice through our ranks, practising their turnabouts and jockeying for favourable positions.

As we come inside Local Island (Manubada is its Motuan name) for the final run across Walter Bay we are amazed to see the multitudes gathered along the waterfront and on the hills all around the harbour. As we near the beach, vessels which have been shipped in from all around the Pacific join us as well as the ornate Gogodala canoe from Western

Province with crocodile prows and paddled by 50 crew. The sails tell the story . . . Tahiti, Micronesia, New Caledonia . . .

Nusa and the crew of the *Vele-velego* are visibly overwhelmed as they ground on the beach. A group of dancers from the Milne Bay island of Dobu are there to greet them and to illustrate their pride in the little boat and four men who have sailed from their home province. Tears are close.

Crews queue up before the VIP stand — adorned by 'big men' from home and abroad — each to collect a medallion symbolising their participation in Operation Armada. The crowd presses close. I drift away, rucksack over my shoulder, trying to contemplate the significance of the occasion. Soon I meet a young Maori carver, Teatu Nepia. With

other Maoris he is constructing a 20-metre double-hull canoe in New Zealand's northern island town of Pahiatua. They intend to revive the long extinct tradition of ocean sailing which took the Maoris many centuries ago to New Zealand. They plan to sail from New Zealand to Tahiti to Hawaii, retracing the path of their ancestors.

Teatu has flown to Port Moresby to meet other canoe builders and sailors of the Pacific. I introduce him to some of the armada sailors and leave him with Nusa: the Pacific's resilient maritime culture, in which lies the origins of settlement of this vast ocean, is about to take yet another direction. Ocean voyaging in the Pacific in traditional style is very much alive and evolving every day. — Arnold Zable is a lecturer at Melbourne University



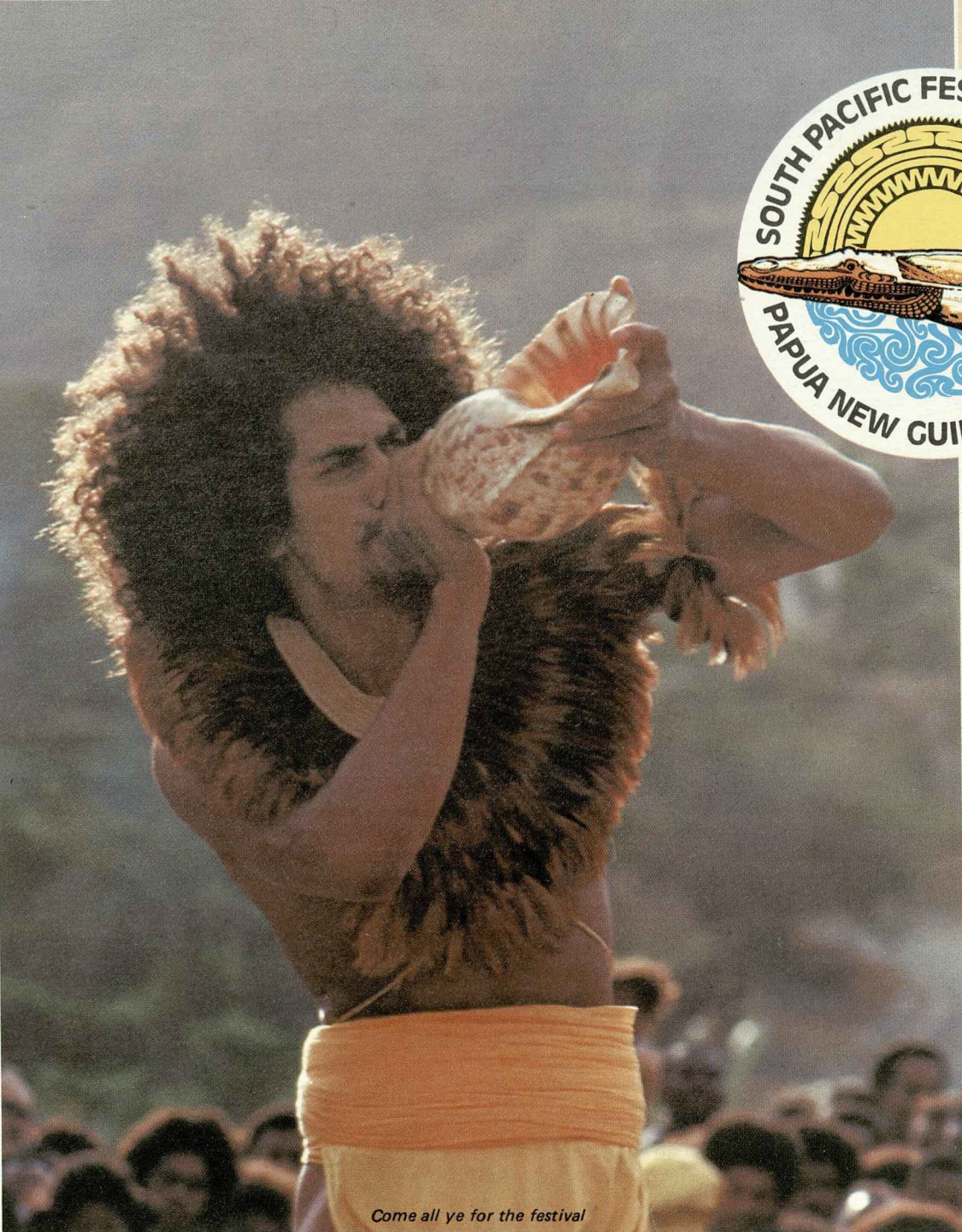
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AVDEV



David MacDonald

Come all ye for the festival



When Islanders get together...

When the people of the Islands get together – whether they be Melanesian, Micronesian, Polynesian, or Australasian – there is a feeling of 'one-ness' found nowhere else in the world among peoples separated by such vast distances.

In a sense, this 'one-ness' is a strange phenomenon in that the cultural diversity, even within identifiable ethnic groupings, is extreme, making such harmony unlikely.

But for the people of the South Pacific – and Micronesians and Hawaiians north of the Equator have no problems convincing their antipodean neighbours of their South Pacific-ness – there is an awareness, which is growing, of being part of one gigantic family of tiny nations. (The largest of these – excluding Australia which is a somewhat enigmatic member – has barely three million people.)

In late June and early July this year this family of nations sent ambassadors numbering more than

2000 to Papua New Guinea, host for the 'Third South Pacific Festival of Arts'. They met, mingled, danced, sang and in many other artistic ways presented to the world a spectacularly colourful reaffirmation that the South Pacific Family of Nations is alive, well and ready to let the rest of the world know of its existence.

Paradise resources couldn't cope with the photographic coverage necessary to capture the festival atmosphere so we invited camera enthusiasts to show us their best. In the following pages we present an SPFA montage which will give Air Niugini travellers some impression of the biggest event of 1980 in the South Pacific. We have not tried to order the photographs. We have not pretended to capture each and every aspect of festival activities. But what we are sure we have done is to convey a Pacific truth: when Islanders get together they always have a marvellous time.

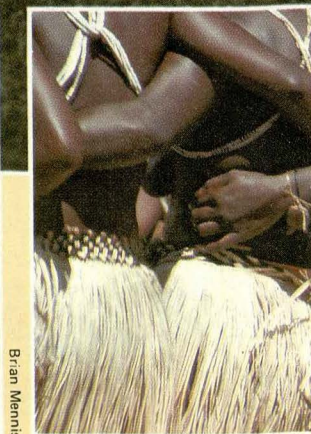
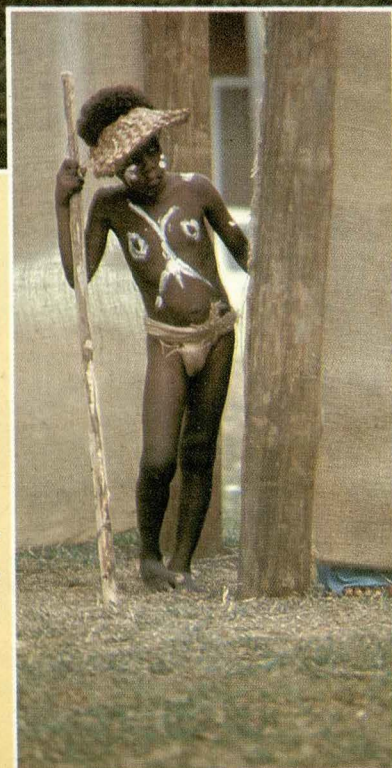


Multicultural dance routine



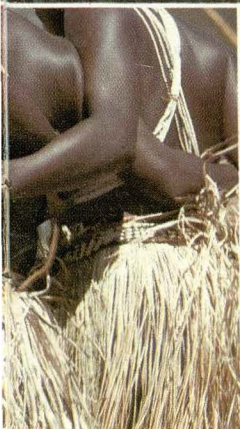
Micronesian hands

Tom Cooke



Brian Mennis

'Time for me?'



Together

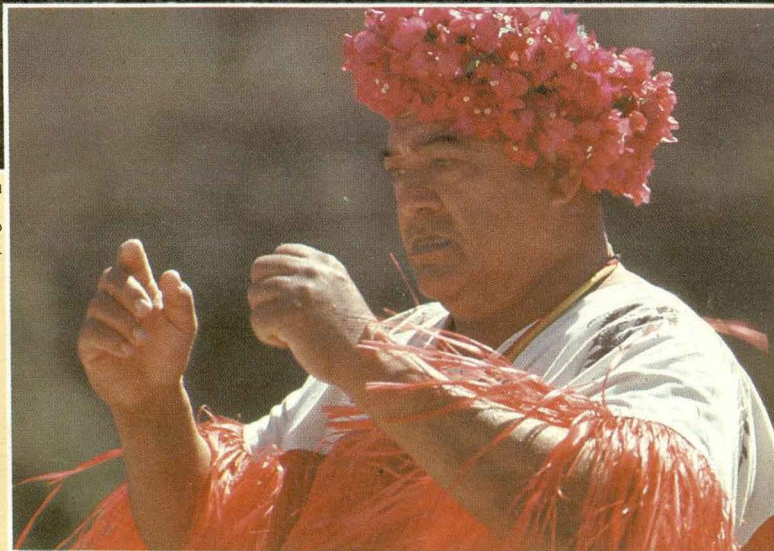
Gillian McGregor



Tom Cooke

Louise Lavrack

Top hats and tails

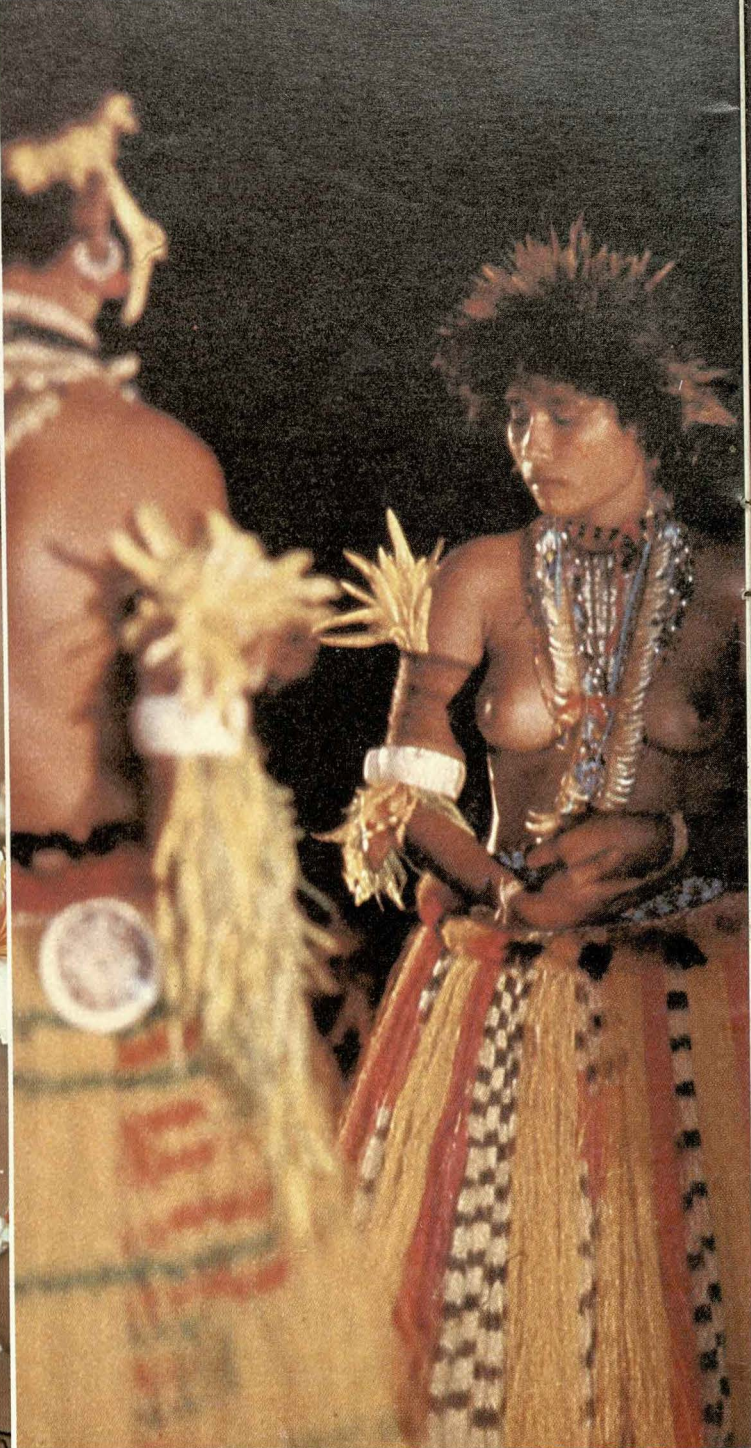


'All together, now!'



Carefree from Kiribati

David Holdsworth



Modest Mekeo Miss



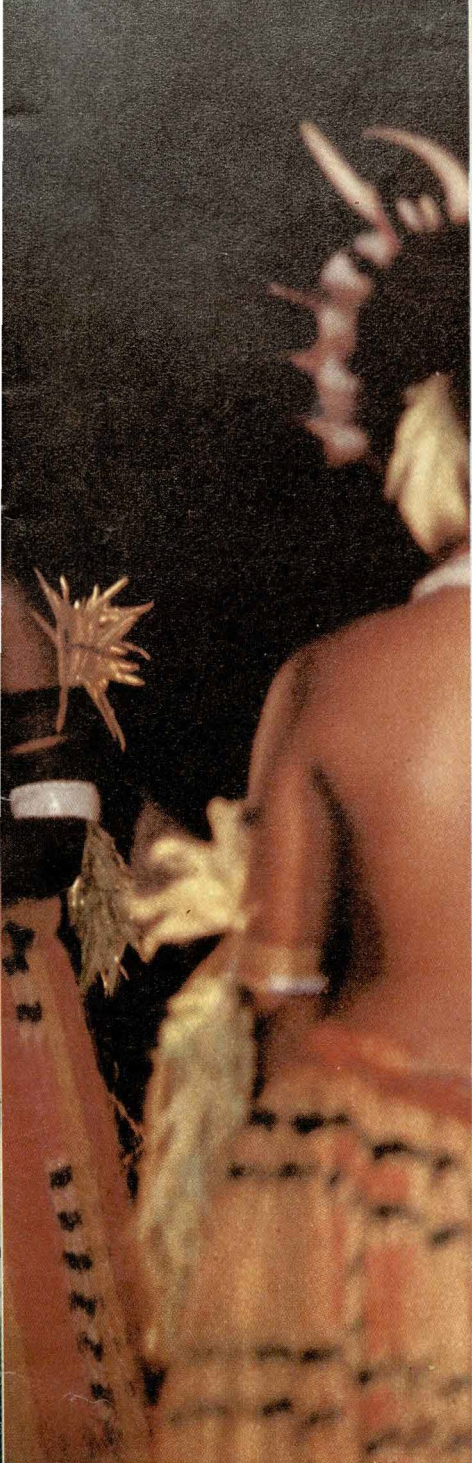
Derek Page



Tom Cooke

Kiwi cacophany

Thursday Island Jaws



Brian Rigg



Built for comfort

Maureen Mackenzie



Derek Page

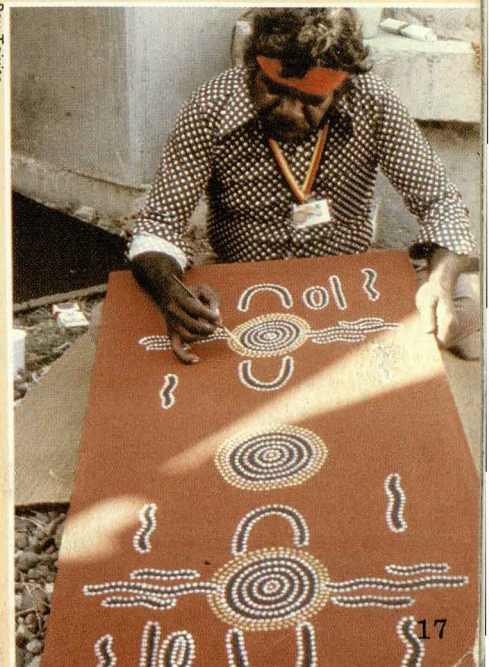


Making up

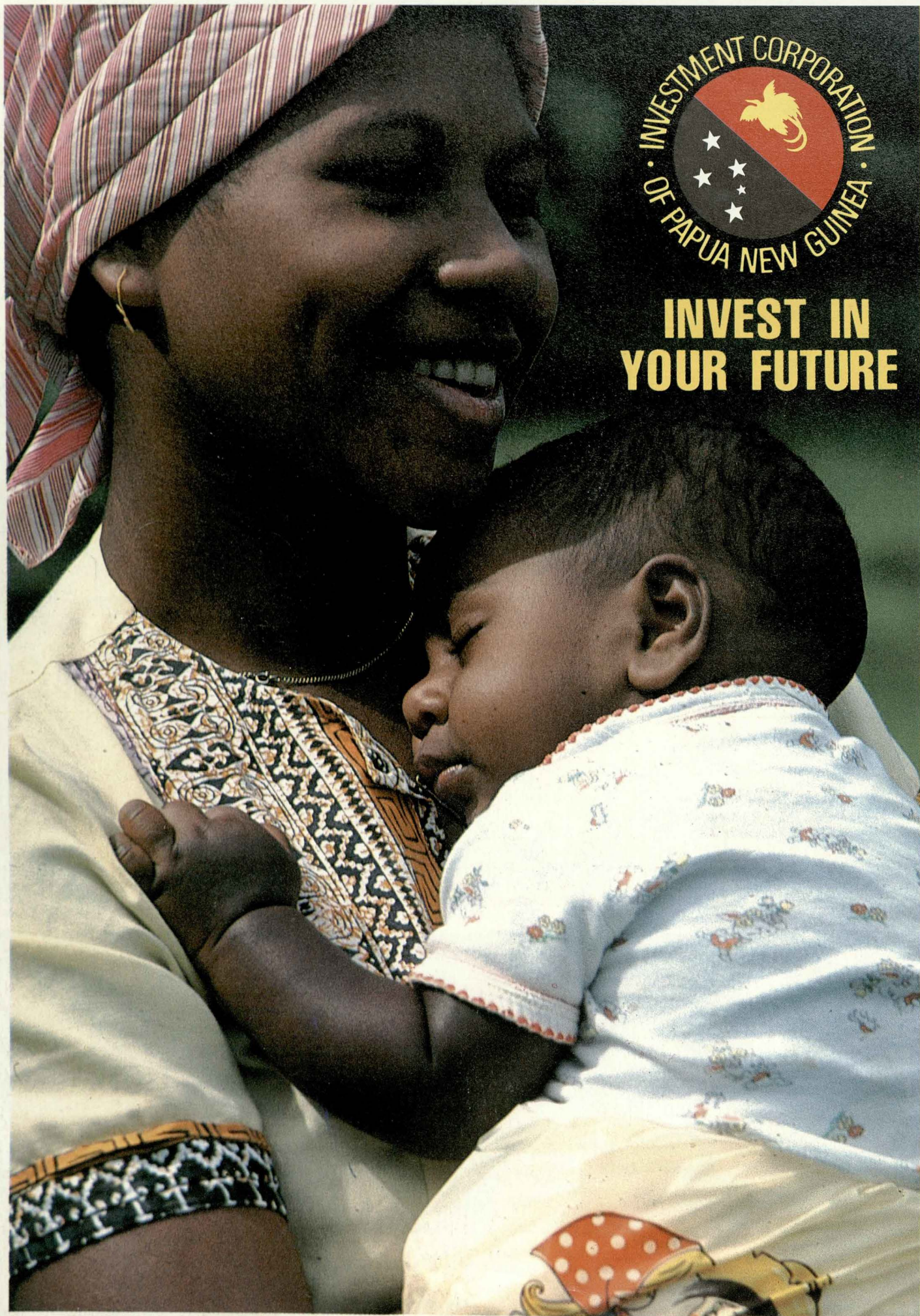
Oz in orbit

Pou Toivita

Maureen Mackenzie



Ancient artistry



**INVEST IN
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Polynesians on parade

Rebuilding an ocean of cultures

During the third South Pacific Festival of Arts in Port Moresby, Phyllis Rubens interviewed Ralph Wari, executive officer of the SPFA. We extract some questions and answers.

Seven's a crowd

Derek Page

PR: *Why do the Pacific people spend so much money on an arts festival every four years?*

RW: There are a few reasons. One is the historical one. It emanates from the invasion of the western powers into the Pacific. Our cultures, apart from anything else, were affected. The festival is really to reactivate and revitalise the cultures of the peoples of the Pacific; to identify themselves as a region in the world; to put us together as the peoples of

the Pacific. This of course includes Micronesians, Melanesians, Polynesians, and Australasians. It includes Australian Aborigines.

You might say that the name of the festival is misleading. It is called the South Pacific Festival of Arts. It really involves reactivating the cultures of these four ethnic groups.

The reason, as I said, is a historical one because our cultures were affected by the traders, the whalers, and the missionaries, and of course the governments who colonised our islands and divided us into so many different territories

and dependencies.

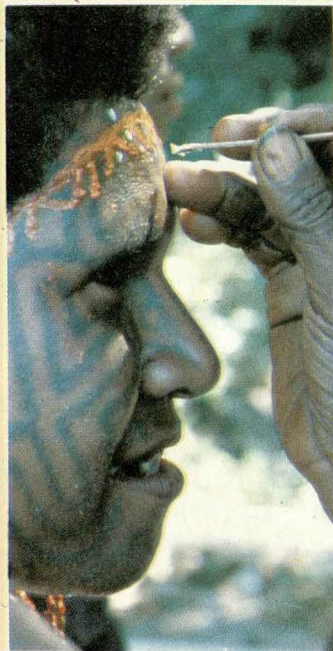
The cultures of our people were exploited. A lot of our artifacts were either stolen or destroyed, burned down by missionaries because they were used for heathen practices, worshipping gods. Where I come from, in the Sepik River, *haus tambaran*

Not a smiling matter

David MacDonald

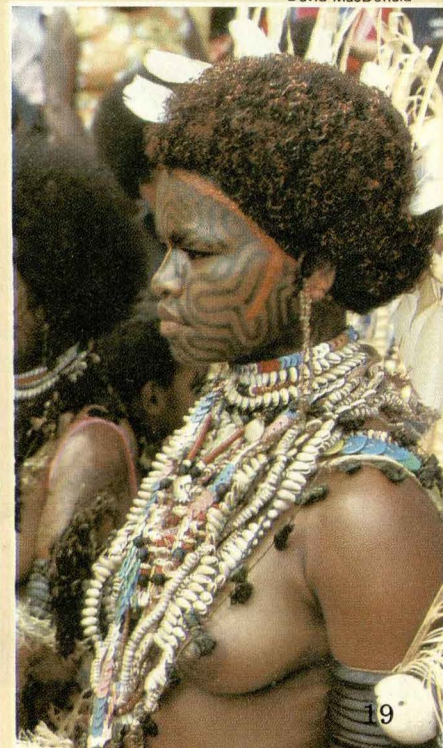
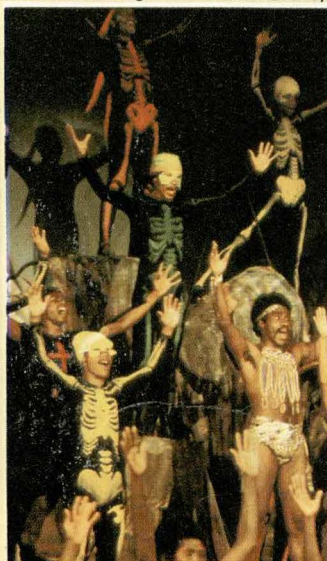
Finishing touches

Maureen Mackenzie



Skin bun nating

Richard Buckley





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Nimble fingers

Maureen Mackenzie



Tom Cooke

Tahitian toppers

'I luv's y'all'

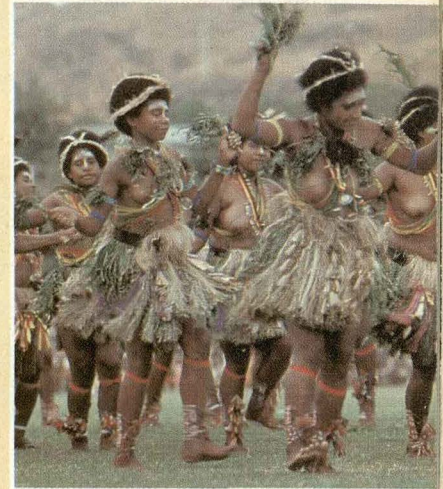
were burned down. My own people's masks were burned down because my forefathers were worshipping 'heathen gods'.

PR: *Did the missionaries do this?*
RW: Yes, a lot of missionaries did that . . . I do not mean here to knock the churches. They have done a lot of good in this country but in the early stages unfortunately they didn't accept our worship as worship to the unknown, to the cosmos that a man doesn't understand . . . our religions were just as good as Catholicism. It was a religion to worship what the Christians call God. My people had a lot of gods. We still have a lot of gods. We have a god to an institution, whereas Christendom has one god and there are no other gods. That was the biggest conflict. It is different today. The churches have come to work together with us now. The worship is done in our own style and our own way of worshipping our own gods . . .

PR: *You have accepted Christian teachings. How can they accept your own practices in combination with their ideas. It's a strange unity really, isn't it?*

RW: Yes. It is a strange unity which I am personally very pleased about. Let me give you a specific example. When young men are initiated in my village, the last part of the initiation is going to war and killing an enemy. This of course doesn't happen today. The second last part of it is the scouring of your back . . . it means they carve a crocodile on your back. When that is done it is a very elaborate ceremony. It takes up to six months, depending on the importance of the boy . . . it is

Manus merriment



Louise Lavarack

only after, that you can get married. You become a man. It allows you to enter the spirit house . . .

PR: *How does this festival differ from the previous two? It must have evolved and changed.*

RW: Being in Melanesia does make it different. You have variations of cultural practices. We have had the whole country taking part in it. In our official contingent there are 400 people. Twenty from each province. The natures and the diversity of the cultures of Papua New Guinea have made it very different.

PR: *Is this just a festival of the arts, or is it something more?*

RW: It is something more than just people getting together in a performing venue and watching the swaying hips and bare breasts . . . it is much more than just dancing or seeing people come in a canoe armada. It emphasises our basic

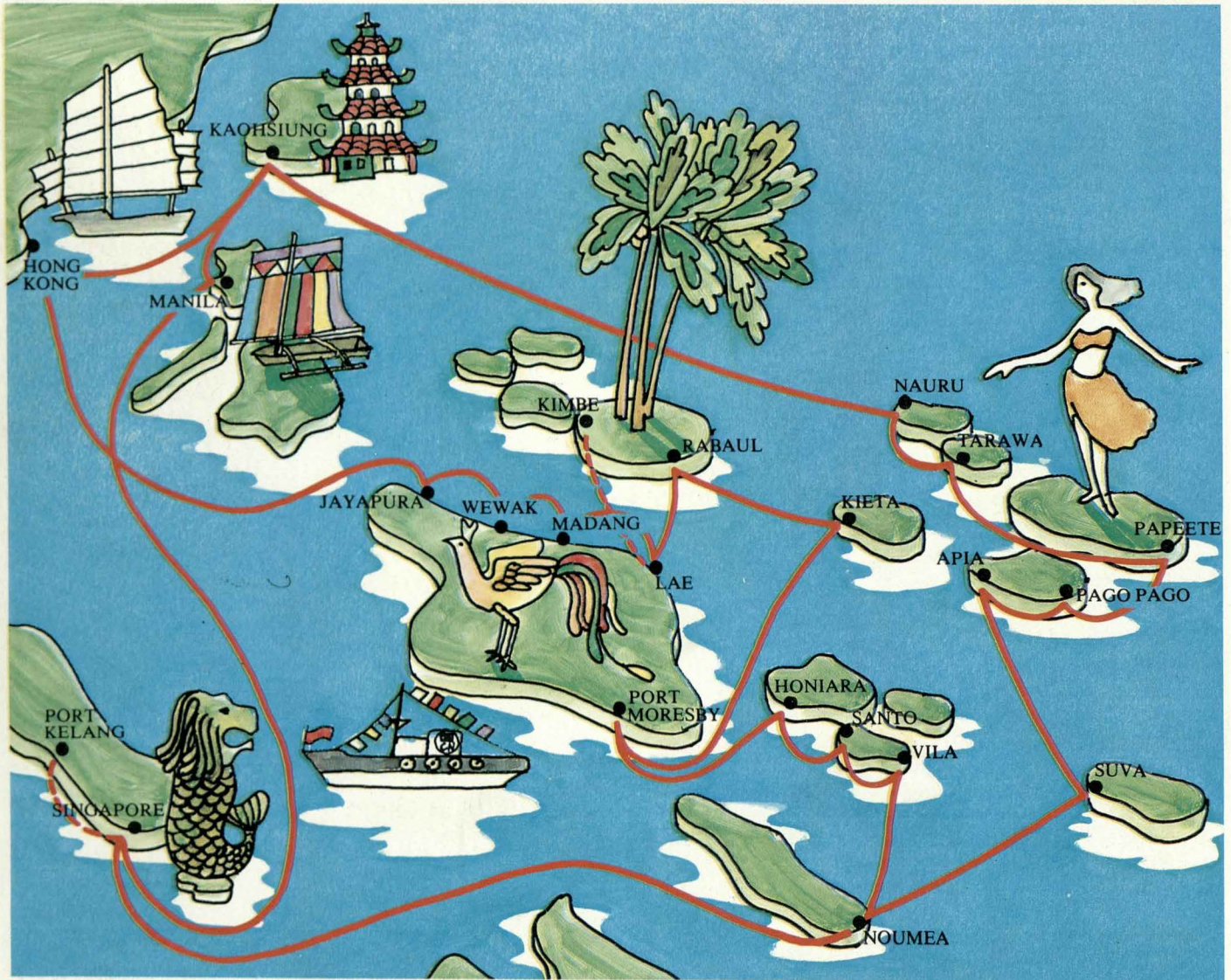


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Wallisian war dance

Brian Mennis

roots. If it hasn't, and if the last two festivals haven't, then we are wasting our time and money. It is to emphasise to our own younger generations that our cultural heritage is not lost because of very strong influences that have come to our shores.

PR: So, would you say that this is what makes this festival unique from any other festival?

RW: No, not quite, because the last two festivals also have had that emphasis. We, in Papua New Guinea, as a host country, suggested to the others . . . that it be 'the celebration of Pacific awareness'. To bring to the rest of the world this awareness too. Our young people in particular should be aware of our needs and the limitations we have, our natural resources, our financial resources; as to how they can be best used, so that the people of the Pacific will still survive and remain as people of the Pacific, and not become a second rate group of people in the world. We make that emphasis, and make sure that our future generations remain to be Pacific and proud of the Pacific people; that they retain their cultural heritage and traditional practices. Of course there are bad traditional practices that we must see go. The emphasis is that we celebrate the awareness of the Pacific people for our continuing existence . . .

PR: Have the Aboriginal performances been very popular?
RW: They have attracted crowds bigger than they can entertain. People are fighting to get in to

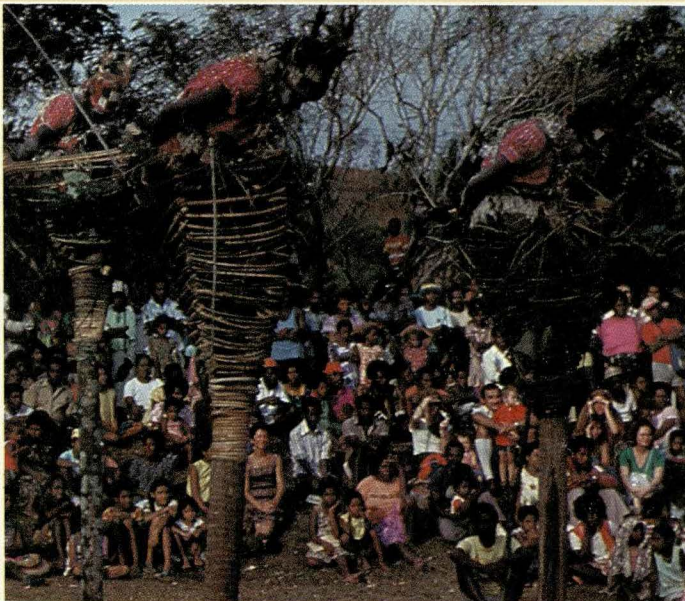
performing areas to see the Aboriginal dances. The only group who can associate itself with the Aborigines is the group of Papua New Guineans who are closer to Northern Australia. Their dances are fairly similar . . .

Circus Oz is one aspect of the festival that is very different from what has happened in the last two festivals . . . Circus Oz has attracted crowds that are fighting to see them. The University Forum, where they are performing, can hold a capacity of maybe 1000 or, if they squeeze, 2000, but there are more than 2000 people going each night to see Circus Oz.



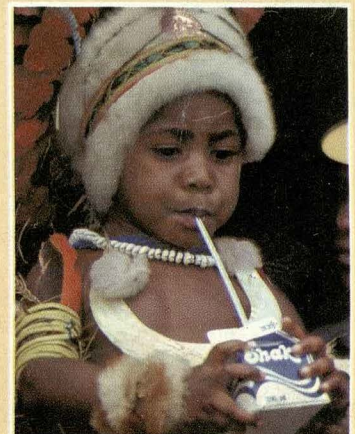
Bamboo rhythm

High spirits



Mike Wright

Fastest straw in the Fest



Roger Smith



Left: testing solar panels on Mount Yule; right: looking for a path through the murk

DIAMONDS IN THE SKY

By Gerald Dick

Kevin Parnell isn't a gambling man. So, when he's got an out-of-town job, he always takes a deck of playing cards along. Out-of-town for Kevin usually means a mountaintop, and it's the getting back — or, more accurately, the not getting back — which prompts him to pop the cards into his pocket.

Kelly Electrical, formerly managed by Kevin and now by his brother Tony, has a contract with the Papua New Guinea Department of

Posts and Telegraphs to instal solar photo-voltaic equipment in mountaintop microwave repeater stations.

The quick way — sometimes the only way — to get to these repeater stations is by helicopter. Even then, sometimes five and six attempts are necessary to get access to — or away from — some of the more difficult sites.

The department lays down strict guidelines for teams visiting the repeater sites. There is a limit on the amount of time two men can be left on a mountain by themselves, a

week's food supply should be taken for every man on the job (even if the task involves only a couple of hours work). The helicopter companies which fly the teams in also have some unbreakable regulations — like not shutting down their engines after landing at high altitude because they cannot be restarted. Getting a team and equipment out of the helicopter must be done quickly and efficiently.

But, for all the precautions, no one can tell Papua New Guinea's fickle weather how to behave. Kevin



and his colleagues have a string of tales to tell about being 'caught up in the air'.

His first experience is one he'll never forget: 6½ days on the summit of Mount Doige, 2000 metres, about 65 kilometres inland from Kupiano on the coast southeast of Port Moresby. Doige, says Kevin, is a particularly bad mountain though by no means home of the highest repeater station. Its problem is that it is plagued by bad weather.

With the weather in mind, Kevin decided he'd get the job done in a

day by taking a big crew in. Having deposited the men on the Doige summit 80 minutes after leaving Port Moresby, the helicopter went down to Kupiano to ferry in equipment. As it whirled away the weather closed in behind it. The stranded men didn't see the helicopter again for nearly a week. But they heard it beating about above the clouds, looking for a gap to dive through.

Kevin recalls: 'The weather was wet, miserable and cold. We sat in our tent most of the time playing cards. It was not until the fourth day

that we got our radio to work. And, even then, the only person we were able to contact was a technician trapped on top of a mountain across the Solomon Sea in East New Britain. He was able to relay a message from us to the helicopter waiting at the foot of his mountain to lift him out and, in turn, a message was sent to Port Moresby and then on to our own helicopter pilot waiting at Kupiano.'

Though they had taken a week's supply of food with them, Kevin recalls the situation 'becoming a little



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Approaching solar installation on Mount Yule; right: men at work on the tower on Mount Boregoru

desperate because there had been a mix-up and part of the rations turned out to be a carton of dog food'. They were lucky with the brand. No one, says Kevin, suffered any ill effects after eating it.

'At times it got very frustrating, just sitting there waiting for the weather to clear. We could hear the chopper but never saw it. Then we noticed that each afternoon there were breaks in the cloud just before sunset. When we got in touch with our stranded friend in East New Britain we were able to relay this information to our own pilot at Kupiano.'

The local record for being trapped on a mountaintop is held by a team led by an Englishman who had arrived in Papua New Guinea only

two weeks earlier. For 27 days they shivered on top of Mount Burgess, 4150 metres, in Enga Province. By the time his party was lifted out the Englishman was speaking fluent pidgin.

Kevin also got stranded on Burgess for five days. He remembers the discomfort: 'The wind howls continuously and the air is so thin even the smallest physical effort leaves you gasping for breath.' He said his assistants who were born and bred in hot and steamy coastal Papua New Guinea had a particularly tough time withstanding the bitter cold.

Brother Tony and Alan Aisi found themselves alone on top of Mount Otto in West New Britain. 'The weather was perfect for flying,' Kevin recalls. 'We were trying to



clear a site and because the weather was so good we didn't take rations. It was simply a matter of loading the chopper's sling and making 15-minute flights to and from the foot of the mountain.' With just one load to go, Tony and Alan volunteered to load up the sling and bring it down by themselves. In just 15 minutes the weather had closed in and there they were, stuck on the mountain top.

If he hadn't been due out of Papua New Guinea for leave in Australia in two days, Tony might have been content to wait for the weather to

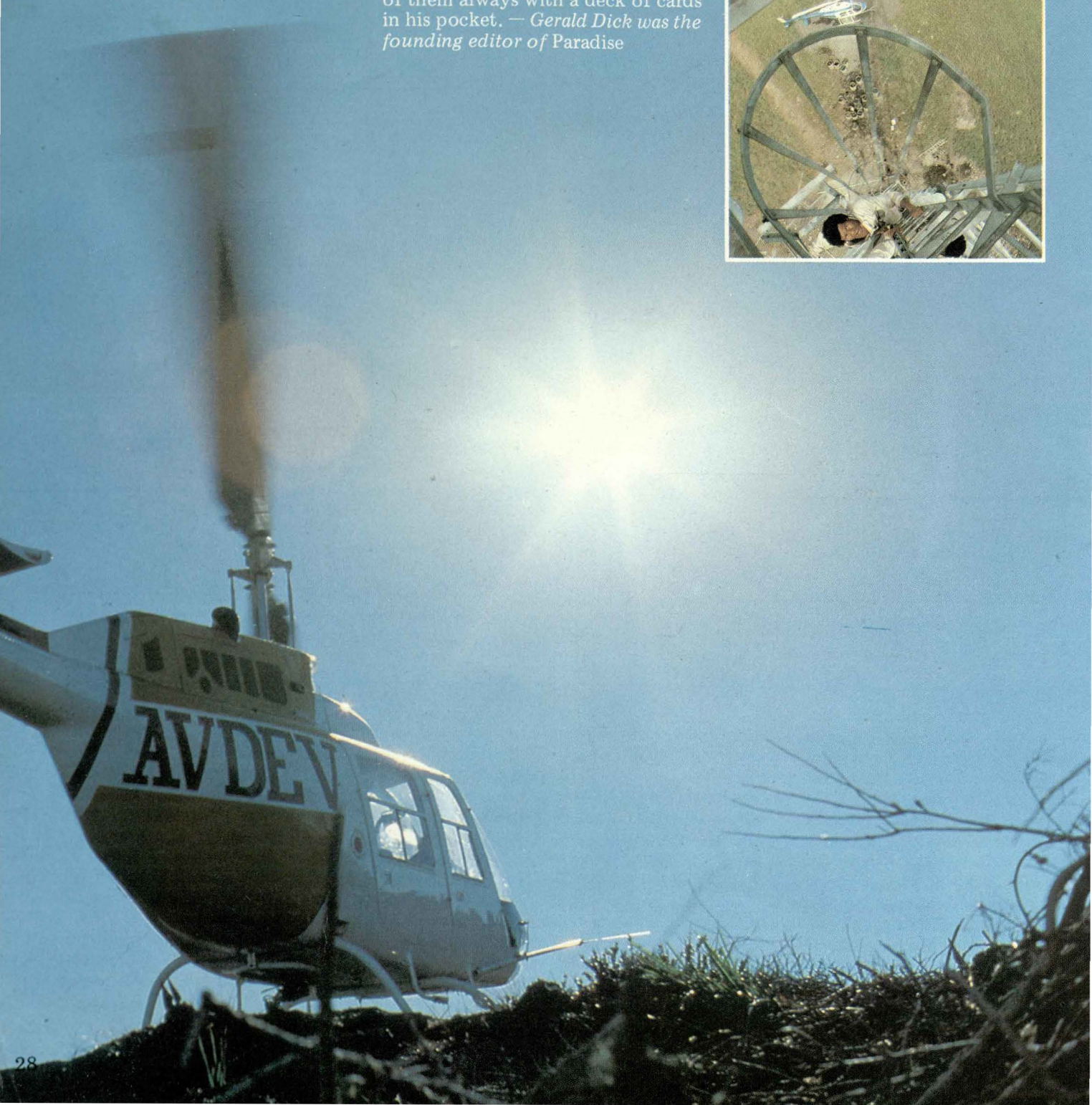
clear. But he wasn't going to miss his leave so they high-tailed it down the mountain. Eighteen hours later, most of it in the dark, when they got to the base of the mountain, Tony's feet were so swollen and sore he didn't wear shoes for a fortnight.

The role that Kevin and his teams play on Papua New Guinea's mountaintops is vital in the development and maintenance of the nation's highly sophisticated telephone system (and television, if the need ever arises). It is among the most modern anywhere in the world and several other Third World countries are studying PNG's efforts

in the field of solar photo-voltaic equipment.

In Papua New Guinea today it is possible to dial internationally from any small village outposts. Now, new transmitters (solar-powered) are being installed which will make it possible to dial from a grass hut in a lonely village to anywhere in Australia — and soon the world.

But remember — wherever you are, when you hear that voice, crystal clear, coming to you from the heart of Papua New Guinea — it might never have happened if small bands of men hadn't made a habit of whirling their way to the peaks, one of them always with a deck of cards in his pocket. — *Gerald Dick was the founding editor of Paradise*





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THE PARSON WORE CREAMS

By Tony Austin

'We transformed our spears into wickets and our shields into cricket bats.' Hardly an orthodox road to Christianity but one taken by a missionary working in Papua at the turn of the nineteenth century. The Reverend Charles Abel was no one's stereotype. He was a rebel and a humorist; a county cricketer and a Puritan; a destroyer of Papuan tradition yet a champion of the oppressed.

He was acclaimed by a succession of colonial administrators but reviled by a generation of white traders. He was adulated by his followers and resented (though not without a measure of grudging admiration) by fellow London Missionary Society workers.

This man of many parts, whose uniform was white shirt and trousers with starched collar and bow tie, chose a tiny island as his mission headquarters. To it were to come Papuans from many parts of the Milne Bay region and from it were to

emerge skilled tradesmen, fine cricketers and literate-in-English students who today are the grandparents of many senior government and business officials.

Kwato Island is in the China Straits, off the southeastern end of the island of New Guinea. It is about three kilometres from the more famous Samarai Island. Kwato became an LMS station in 1891 with the arrival of Abel's close friend, the Reverend Fred Walker. A fiery, charismatic Englishman, Walker did not spend long with the LMS before leaving to set up a Christian trading company. Abel joined Walker before the end of 1891 and before long they were regarded as a couple of 'young Turks' within the LMS. They espoused the view that narrow evangelism was downright harmful to the Papuan people. They argued it was necessary also to develop earthly skills that would equip them to cope with the modern world which was being thrust upon them.

This was not an entirely radical position within the LMS. The society had already established primary schools in other parts of what was then British New Guinea and had begun training Papuans to become semi-skilled carpenters, boatbuilders and blacksmiths. But it was the emphasis which Abel and Walker were putting on these skills which was raising society eyebrows.

Abel's years at Kwato were in an age — which lasted well into the sixties of this century — in which it was taken for granted that 'the natives' were so decidedly inferior as to deserve little else but degrading and offhand treatment. Abel's respect for Papuan rights (in contrast to his contempt for many of their traditions) angered the tough white non-missionary settlers of the new colony.

Abel was no stranger to the harsh, often seamy, frontier life. He had left school at 16 and drifted aimlessly from job to job in London



Charles Abel of Kwato

before sailing for New Zealand in answer to an appeal for cadets to learn colonial farming. There, in addition to absconding from his cadetship and once more trying his hand at a variety of jobs alongside tough frontiersmen, Abel developed an empathy with the Maoris who were by no means as well treated as many white historians would have us believe. Abel was ready to indulge in a stand-up-knock-down fight on behalf of his Polynesian acquaintances if he saw them being ill-treated. Even on the voyage back to England he spent a brief sojourn in a Middle Eastern jail for brawling with a fellow passenger over the ill-treatment of a young Arab.

Abel's defence of Papuans against injustice and brutality at one stage had him looking down the barrel of a settler's gun and, on another occasion, in need of a bodyguard to shepherd him through an angry European crowd while on his way to



Samarai courthouse to defend a Papuan's rights.

Undeterred by his critics, Abel reasoned thus: 'If we do not boldly champion the cause of these natives, whom we are here to befriend and help in every way, and insist upon their right, in their own country, to competition, with the white man, we shall lend our hand to their destruction, and a white New Guinea will, at no distant date, reward our pains.'

After returning to London, Abel spent five years at Cheshunt College, a grey, Puritan, Congregationalist theological institution,

Cricket on Kwato's reclaimed pitch at the turn of the century

which, surprisingly turned out more than a handful of colourful, unconventional, sometimes eccentric, missionaries. He was not a brilliant student but an accomplished cricketer and he distinguished himself in the service of the Hertfordshire country cricket eleven. Cricket was to remain among his first loves.

When Walker and Abel arrived on Kwato it was not the idyllic emerald isle it is today. Already it was notorious for the bloody ejection by Suau warriors of European and Chinese traders. The Suau, in those days, had not yet abandoned their arms in favour of cricket bats and stumps. The inhospitable manner of the Suau was in keeping with the atmosphere around an evil-smelling swamp which dominated the island. It took four years, but Abel supervised the efforts of his small group of students and followers to fill the swamp and convert it into a cricket field. It is there to this day. It was

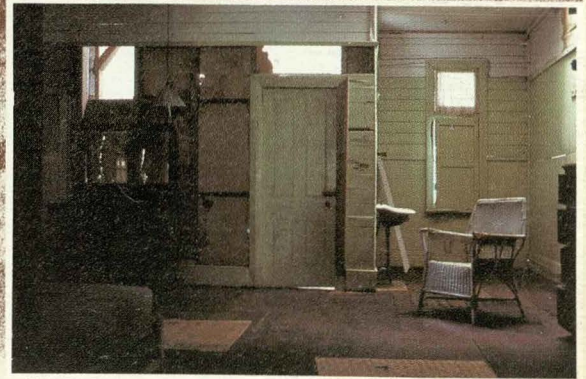
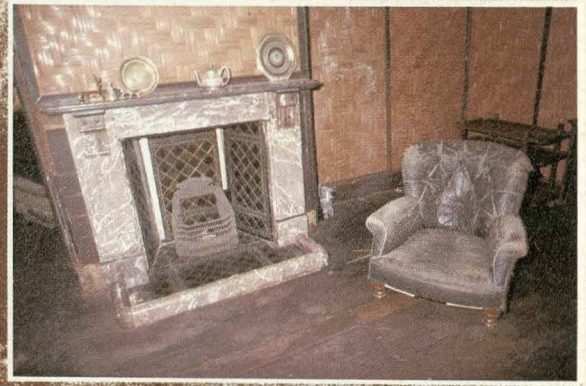


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Draining the swamp for a cricket pitch and scenes inside the Abel house, now empty but kept immaculately clean by mission staff who still sense an Abel presence

not long before a team of Kwato players was competing against the crews of British warships which called into the China Straits. And there were regular matches between the LMS Papuans and white residents on nearby Samarai. More often than not, Kwato won. Imagine the dent to the settlers' pride? Imagine the fillip to Papuan dignity after years as the underdogs and of being treated, on occasions, worse than dogs? Nearly 40 years after Abel arrived on Kwato, an island team travelled to Port Moresby to play a 'test match'. It lost but by no means ingloriously.

It was not just his love of cricket which motivated Abel. He regarded Papuan prowess at the game all part and parcel of an eventual equality for them in their own country. Along with a tiny group of Europeans, Abel foresaw a time when Papuans would manage their own affairs and be equal partners in their country's development. Such an attitude made Abel a man ahead of his time. But he was certainly a man of his time in his extreme distaste for most aspects of Papuan culture. He saw the Papuans' only hope of salvation lying in them turning their backs completely on their pre-

colonial way of life. Papuans, he believed, were 'degraded' people with numberless undesirable characteristics. He saw nothing good about their immensely rich culture. Yet he would tolerate no psychological or spiritual pressure to eradicate their traditions.

Abel's strategy was to establish outstation schools on the mainland whose object was to tempt children away from the 'evil' influences of village life and begin the task of Christianising and educating them. It was an unashamedly elitist system: the best pupils (in both terms of secular learning and religious conviction) would be sent to Kwato where they would be made numerate and literate in English and also taught the practical skills to become tradesmen and efficient housewives.

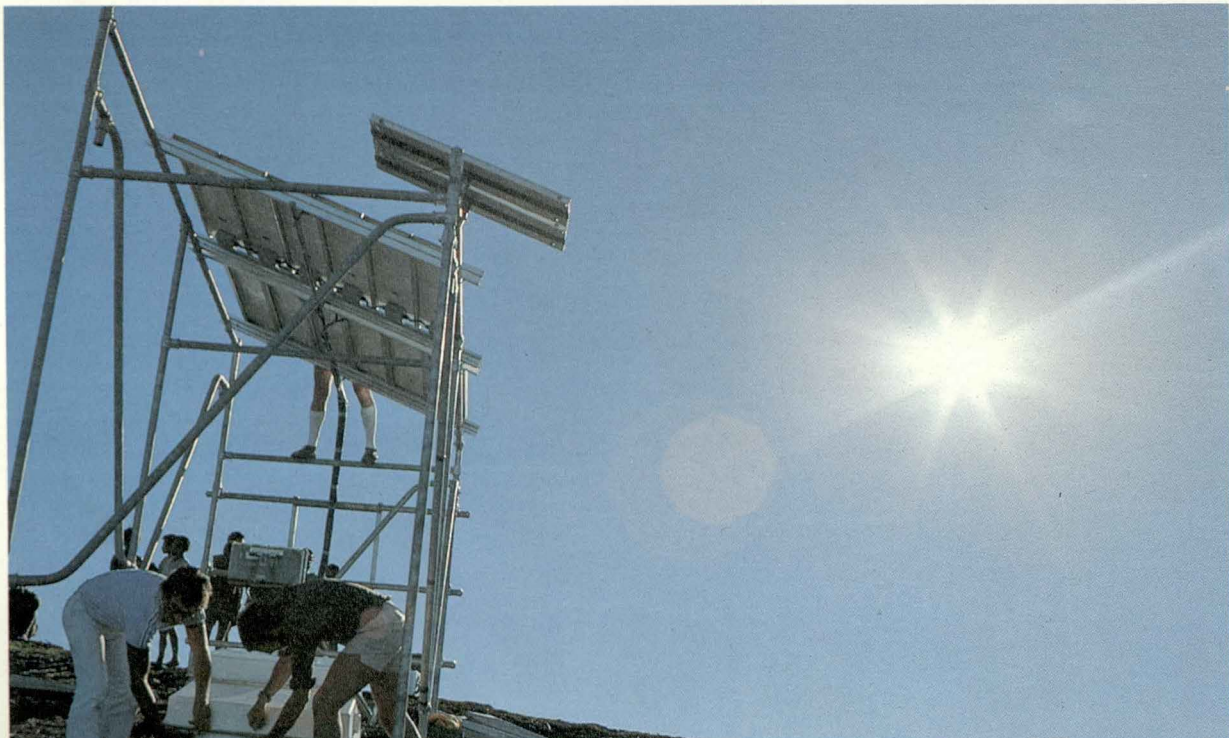
It was as a centre for technical training that Kwato became renowned throughout the colony. Girls were taught what is known today as 'home economics'. They developed skills as lace-makers which were acclaimed at home and abroad. Kwato boys became skilled as printers, plumbers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and, most of all, accomplished boat-builders. Telling blows were struck in the name of racial equality as

skilled Papuan tradesmen found they could compete on their own merits with whites — both as employees in European businesses and as self-employed workers.

It was the success of Abel's 'industrial' activities which brought him into conflict with the LMS bureaucracy. While technical training had its place, it was necessary only to the extent that mission stations could handle their own repairs. It was regarded as vital in the building of character but had to play second fiddle to religious work. Abel was accused of allowing religious work to suffer because of his emphasis on practical work. And graduates were committing the unpardonable offence of competing with white tradesmen.

Abel argued that education for life was integral to the business of producing Christians. Once he went so far as to say: 'Religion comes second, life first . . .' As for white traders and tradesmen, Abel had no sympathy. 'The Papuan,' he said, 'was here first and he is working in his own country. The white mechanic can go across to Australia and get his living whereas the Papuan is colour-bound to Papua.'

The mission persisted in its



Turn on the Sun when the Moon comes up



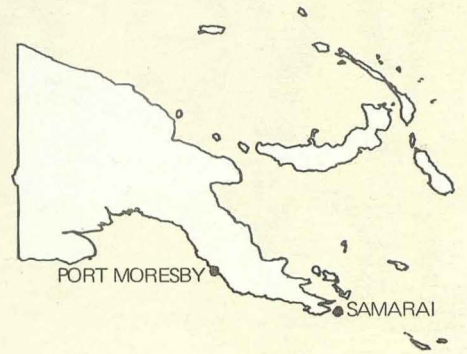
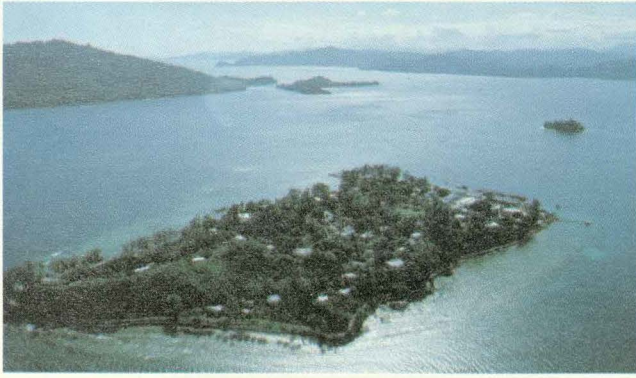
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Below: An early Kwato XI; left: the design of the church built in his memory probably would not have met with Abel's approval; above left: nearby Samarai with Kwato in the background; above right: monument to Charles Abel

by his family. A son, Cecil, still lives in Port Moresby with his Kwato-born wife.

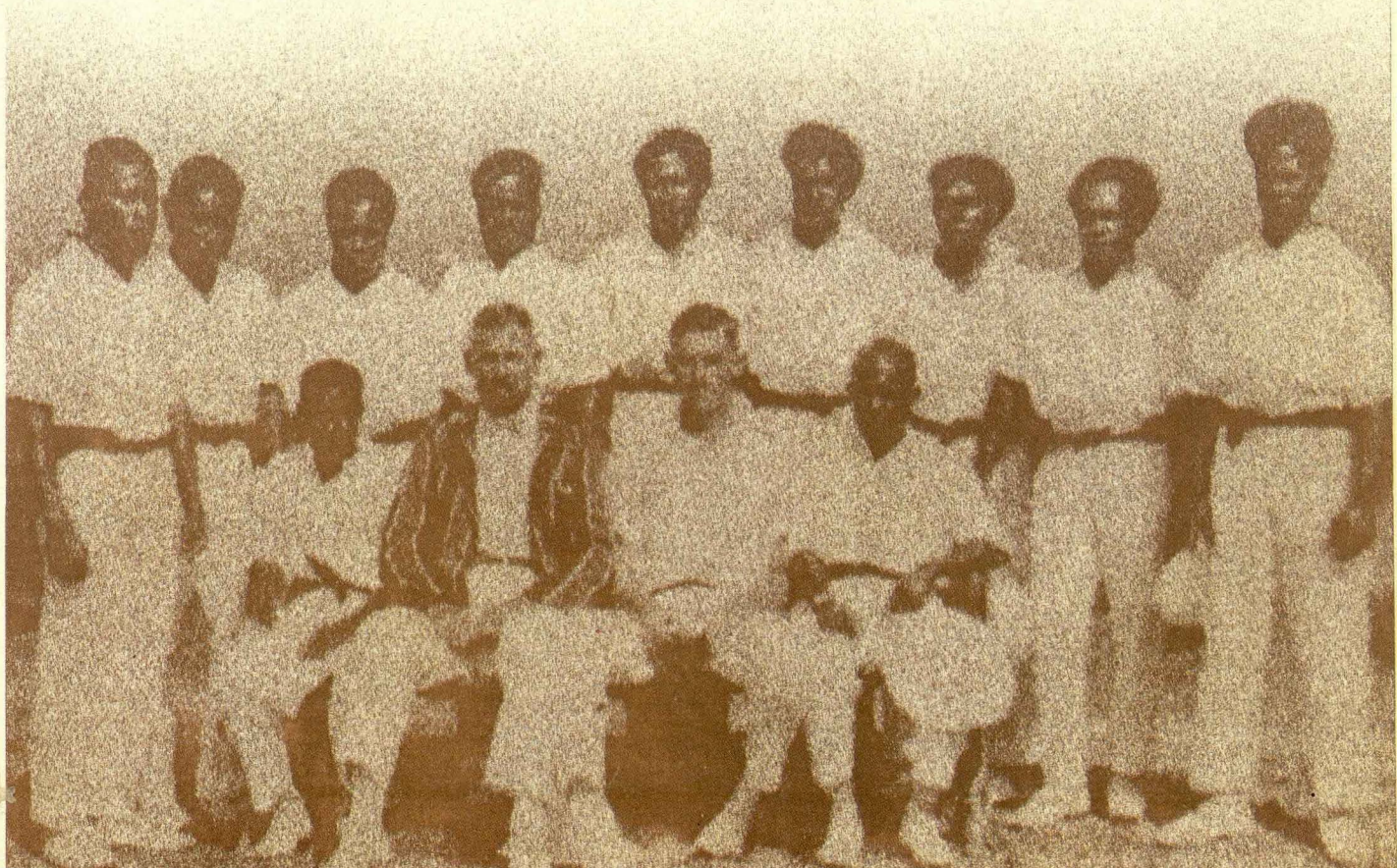
Some historians have been critical of Charles Abel for his doctrinaire form of Christianity and his contribution to the destruction of Suau culture. This criticism is not without justification. But criticism must be balanced with recognition of his vision of Papuan self-determination. He encouraged local decision-making decades before the colonial administration introduced local government. He talked of the day when Papuans would become university graduates. That would have caused great guffaws among the whites in the first half of this century who, to quote Abel, would not 'credit a nat-

ive with real ability'. Whites, he said, 'seem to think it lets them down if the Papuan is able to do something better than they'.

Half a century after his death there are reminders of the work of Charles Abel. Kwato people, out of all proportion to their numbers, have graduated from the University of Papua New Guinea and occupy positions of authority. Numerous boats ply the waters of Milne Bay Province which were built in the Kwato workshops or by Kwato-trained tradesmen. And, at Kwato itself, there is a church built in his memory. It was erected soon after his death. In many ways it is a tribute to Abel's determination that Papuans should be their own people. It is built in the grand, sweeping style of Suau tradition. — Tony Austin is director at the Solomon Islands Centre of the University of the South Pacific at Honiara.

demand that he cut back on the industrial activities so, in 1918, Abel broke away from the LMS and formed the 'Kwato Extension Mission'. It is a measure of the force of his personality and persuasiveness of his arguments, that he was able to make the break with the blessing of the LMS.

Fifty years ago Charles Abel was killed in a motor accident in England. Work at Kwato was carried on



We're looking for business

In introducing the Fifth National Investment Priorities Schedule, the former Minister for National Planning and Development, Mr John Kaputin said:

'We seek through our economic and other policies to create the basis for a free and democratic society genuinely controlled by and actively involving the people of Papua New Guinea.

'There is no reason why foreign investment and this kind of development cannot go together. Indeed the one can scarcely be conceived without the other. For this reason, we welcome responsible foreign investors who are prepared to respect our

activities are divided into three main categories — PRIORITY, OPEN and RESERVED. These are reviewed annually.

Foreign investment in PRIORITY activities is considered to be an essential part of Papua New Guinea's development programmes over the coming years. OPEN activities are projects which are suitable for development by foreign investment but which are not Government priority.

RESERVED activities are those in which foreign investors will not, as a general rule, be allowed to establish new businesses or to take over existing businesses.

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

1. Mining: the development of mining and petroleum products.
2. Agriculture: the growing of legume and grain crops.
3. Forestry: sawn timber and veneer production; woodchipping in association with reforestation; further processing of timber; development of follow-up land use scheme.
4. Shipbuilding and ship repair.
5. Hotels.

OPEN ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

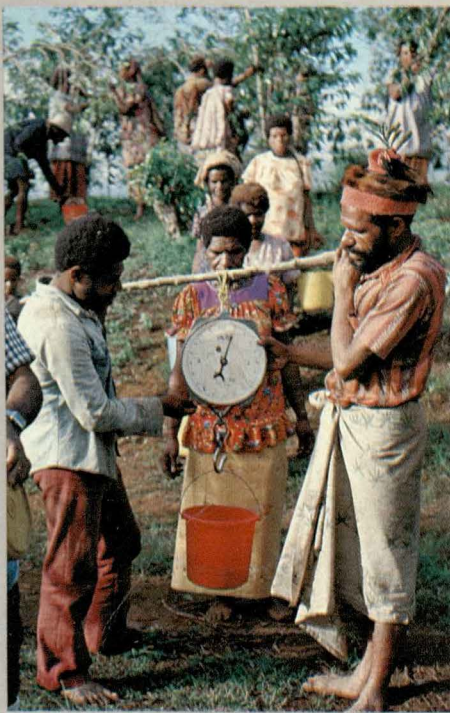
1. Agriculture: growing of fruit trees, and oil palm, rubber, cocoa, seeds and spice — through nucleus estate development.
2. Wildlife: harvesting and farming of deer.
3. Forestry: integrated timber development in six provinces.
4. Fishing: farming of prawns, eels, pearls, edible oysters and mussels; aquaculture; fishing of sharks and mangrove crabs.
5. Secondary industries: the processing, manufacture and assembly of a wide variety of goods.
6. Construction: using specialist skills not available at competitive costs in PNG.
7. Trading: export of minor agriculture products.
8. Tourism, restaurants and motels: in conformity with a National Tourism Plan.
9. Technical and professional services.

The following new incentives have just been introduced:

1. First, the accelerated depreciation allowance:—
This will allow a greater claim for depreciation in the year of capital purchase. It is intended that this incentive be made available to the manufacturing, transport and communication, building and construction and business service sectors for items of investment which have a useful life of over five years.
2. The next new incentive is a 200% deduction from assessable income for wages paid to apprentices registered with the Apprenticeship Board of Papua New Guinea.
3. Thirdly, the Government will provide necessary infrastructure, including buildings, to investors for new industrial projects in return for a negotiated user charge payable annually over the life of the project.

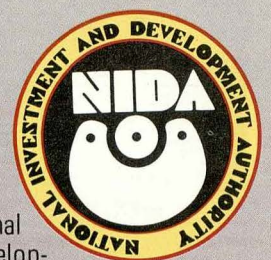
There are, of course, many other schemes and policies already in existence which are intended to assist investors.

We have an Export Incentive Scheme for manufactured goods under which 50% of profits related to growth in export sales are exempted from company tax; an Infant Industry Loan Scheme under which Government will consider providing an unsecured standby loan facility for firms which identify possible financial problems in the early years of a project; a Feasibility Studies Contribution Scheme for certain qualifying industries. We have no import duties on capital goods, other than the general levy of 2½% on all imported goods. Investors can also apply for exemption from the generally low rates of duty on raw materials if the latter are significant to project operations.




laws and people. I hope that you may be numbered among them.'

It is the role of the National Investment and Development Authority (NIDA) in addition to promoting, regulating and controlling foreign investment, to assist investors and co-ordinate all matters relating to foreign investment in Papua New Guinea. Your first point of contact is NIDA at the address below, if you are interested in looking at the investment opportunities and potential or if you need further information. Projects and business



For further information, contact:
The Executive Director, National Investment & Development Authority, PO Box 5053, BOROKO. Papua New Guinea



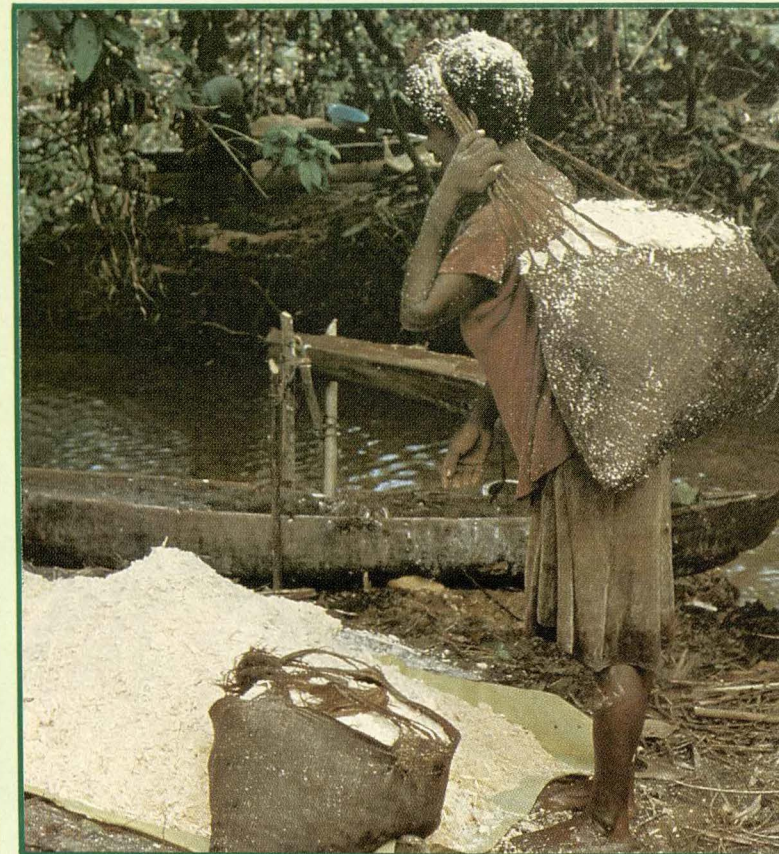
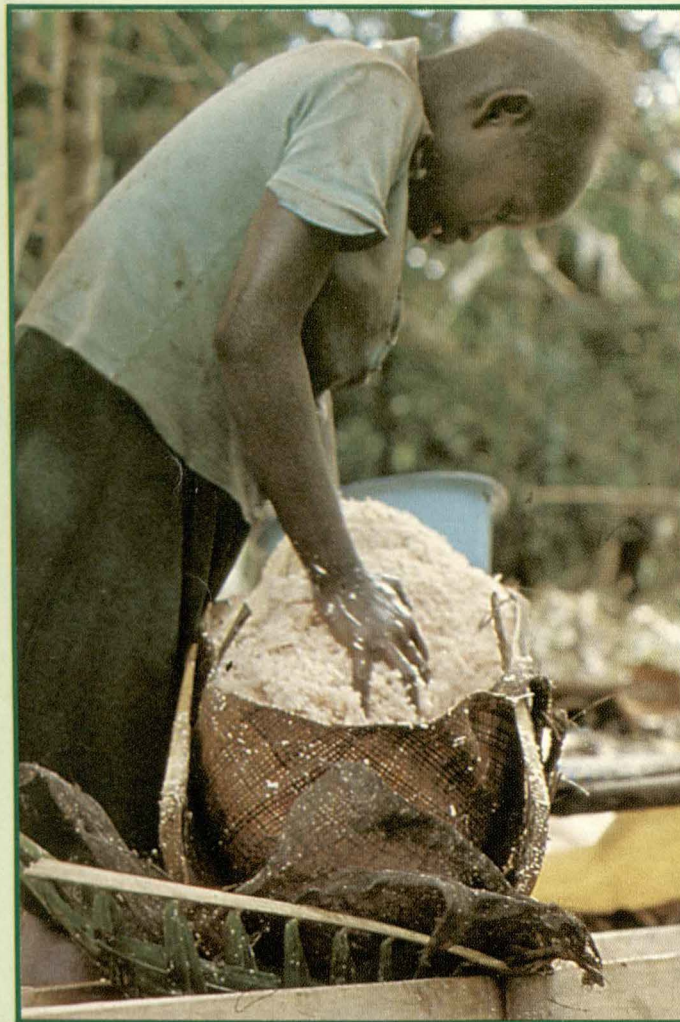
paitim saksak

Story and pictures: Colin De'Ath

Vincent Kanau, an old friend at Pelipowai, spent the evening telling me of the importance of sago to the villagers. Next morning, he said, he would show me how they obtained *nipi'i*, the local name for sago.

My education began with a two-kilometre walk to the sago camp. It wasn't just a steady stroll. At times I was wading up to my thighs through thick, black mud. When we reached the camp, several teams were already hard at it, hacking into the palms, their sweaty bodies glistening and pulsing in the shadows and shafts of

*A young sago palm,
and pith on the
washing apparatus
in the sago swamp*



sunlight which dappled the thick vegetation of the sago swamp.

Sago palms are allowed to grow to around 14 metres before they are felled. Vincent, a former local government councillor, told me there are 10 varieties of palm in the Pelipowai area, each of which takes up to 10 years to mature. Then they put out large but unspectacular flowers. Production from the different palms varies greatly, the *pamak*, the most fruitful, producing as much as 20

times more than the least productive, the *m'wei*. A hard-working team can produce up to 40 1½-to-2 kilogram bundles of sago in a day but normally about half this amount is produced.

The people of Pelipowai were originally inhabitants of the Manus inland where they preferred to eat taro, a root crop, but since moving to the coast sago has become more popular — and fortunately so, because a blight attacked taro and

has eliminated it from Manus Island.

A sago team usually comprises a husband and wife and their children but often teams comprise only teenagers.

The job of chopping down the palm and hacking the pith from its trunk is exclusively a male task. From then on it's women's work. They take the pith (*kotoroa*) — which is hacked out of the trunk with a bow-like instrument (*kua-muk*) in salmon-coloured flakes —



and wash it. The task is to separate the sago powder from the pith. This is done by pouring water over the flakes and straining the run-off through coconut fibre (*sichiau*).

The sago precipitate and water are caught in a large container (*ar*). When the sago has settled, the water is poured off. The wet sago is put into plaited drying pouches (*kulik*) woven from the bark of the *poah* tree. The pouches are then hung over a fire for an hour to be smoked and

Clockwise from bottom right: Trainee sago cutter; plaited bags for drying washed sago; shredded pith on way to washing; squeezing water and sago precipitate from the pith; the tops of upper fronds from felled sago palm are used for thatch, the bases as channels for sago washing apparatus; chopped pith is loaded into plaited bag for carrying to washing area; kneading sago is women's work



heated, a process known as *sahur*. The pouches are emptied and the still-damp sago lumps are bound in the leaves of any of a number of trees (*lalaun nipi'i*). Sometimes the raw sago is broken up and sun-dried, a process which will allow it to keep for three to four months.

The fire-drying process allows the sago to keep for only three to four weeks, its life depending on the purity of the water used to separate it from the *kotoroa*. The colour of cooked sago depends on the colour of the water used to wash it. It ranges from white through brown to pink to black. Clear running water is often not available in sago swamps.

Each Wednesday and Saturday morning the people of Pelipowai sell

their bundles of sago to people from outlying islands who pay in cash, seafood or crafted goods such as mats, clay pots and beadware. Money is increasingly preferred because the people, despite their inland heritage, are learning to do their own fishing and are substituting imported for crafted items.

In traditional village markets a bundle of sago sells at 10 toea (about 13 cents Australian) but in Lorengau, the capital of Manus Province, a bundle can sell for three times as much. A youth might eat as much as a bundle in a day whereas adults consume about two bundles in three days.

The people of Pelipowai have tried many ways to get the best taste out of their sago. Here are a few of them: fried with grated coconut, boiled with coconut and water, made into fritter-shaped squares, sealed in leaves with coconut, boiled in hot water, baked in embers, steamed in green bamboo tubes, charred in lumps and then scraped before eating. Some women are not allowed to eat certain types of sago because they are forbidden food in their husbands' clans. They break the rules under threat of giving birth to deformed, lazy children.

Though the technology of sago-making remains the same as in pre-colonial days, some Western materials are being brought into the process. The *sichiau* may be replaced by muslin cloth, plastic buckets may

Sago wrapped in leaves in the market place and (above) fire drying which gives the sago only a three-to-four-week life

be used instead of the water scoops fashioned from the frond bases of the sago palm, a sharpened metal pipe sometimes is the substitute for the *kuamuk* and plastic rice bags are sometimes used to put the wet sago in.

There are side benefits to sago-making. The washed fibre, which decomposes very quickly, is excellent for mushroom-growing. The heart of the palm, which is not touched, quickly decomposes and, after about a month, produces a fine batch of white grubs which, lightly barbecued, go well with sago and other foods. The discarded pith ferments rapidly and fills the swamps with a pungent odour. One can almost become inebriated by breathing the languid fumes (*manuhun cha'in*) in abandoned sago camps.

There was concern among southern Manus sago merchants recently when it was heard that a machine had been imported to the northern side of the island. The machine, it was rumoured, could shred the pith of the sago trunk. Southerners fear that such a super-efficient machine will lead to the depletion of sago palms, even those which are cultivated, as owners hasten to export their sago bundles to Lorengau and offshore islands. Certainly, the hard work at present involved in *paitim saksak* acts as a brake on mindless over-production. — *Colin De'ath has been visiting Manus for many years.*





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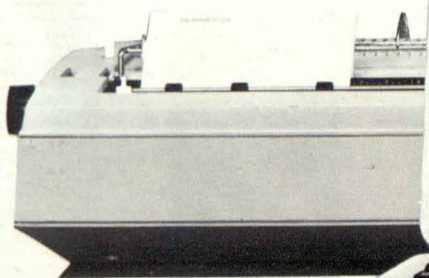
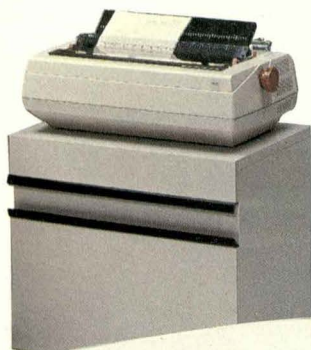
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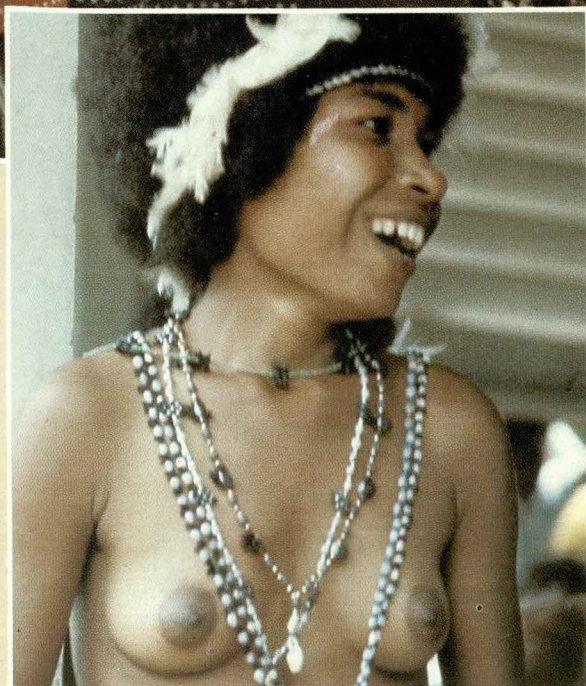
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Top: Spectators engrossed in *Dua Dua* antics; above: actors enjoy themselves too

dua dua

Story: Tracey Lloyd Pictures: Wayne Woof

Bent double under heavy loads, the line of figures winds slowly up the steep mountain track. Morobe Province's *Dua Dua* theatre company is on the move again, this time on the way to Patep village where its players will provide an afternoon of music, mirth and drama.

As they near Patep, an excited crowd clusters around the players, fascinated by their colourful *kago* — grass skirts, spears, bows, *garamut* and *kundu* drums and fantastically-decorated masks. Strangers to Patep are unusual and the villagers do not know what to expect.

Inside the village compound, which has a fence of bamboo stakes reminiscent of a Wild West stockade, the audience gathers in eager groups. A lucky few have umbrellas to protect them from a burning sun. Children from the community school, the special 'target' of the *Dua Dua* players, wriggle and nudge each other in feverish anticipation. Only dogs and

rooting pigs are indifferent to the excitement.

In their improvised open-air dressing room, the players adjust head-dresses, check instruments and put finishing touches to body paint. Everything right? A brief speech of introduction by the compere and the show begins.

Clowns in grinning masks leap and tumble in the sunshine. Giggling children surge toward them, only to recoil in terror from a ferocious 'devil' with 15-centimetre 'finger nails'. A sketch about truants brings knowing smiles to teachers' faces. Disco dancers in jazzy costumes offer a glimpse of life in the bright lights of the big city. Patep has never seen anything like this before.

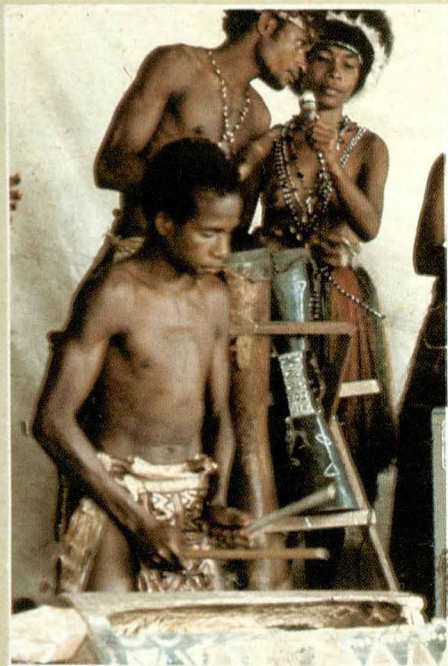
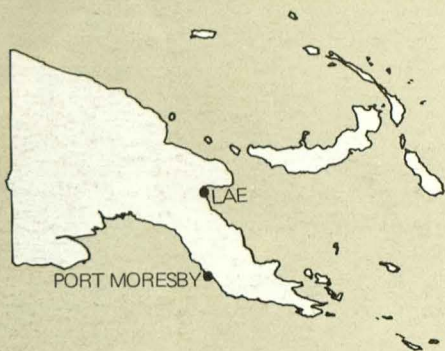
The show goes on for hours. The villagers love it, as do the entertainers. Then it's over and the audience stands and begins to drift away. The company packs instruments and costumes and begins the steep descent to the road where their bright green truck, 'Dua Dua Theatre' blazoned in yellow across its door, waits to take them back to home base at Lae, Morobe's provincial capital. Next day they will be off again along a precipitous mountain track to another isolated village for another

afternoon of music, laughter and excitement.

There's nothing new about theatre in Papua New Guinea. It did not come with the white colonialists. The traditional *singsing*, with its expressive songs and dances embodying village myths and history, has been a vital part of tribal life for thousands of years.

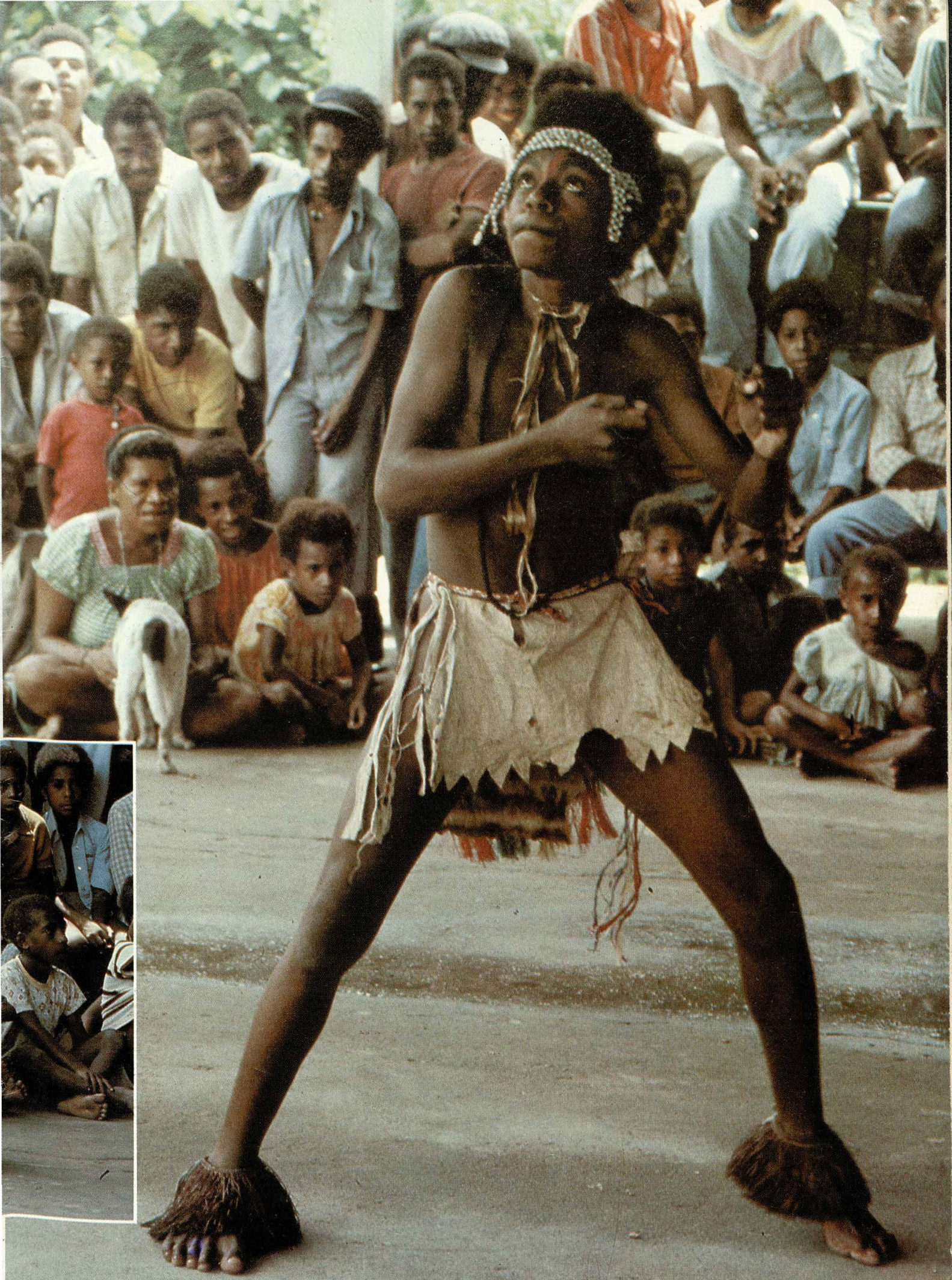
But Dua Dua theatre is more than just *singsing*. Being the foremost entertainers in the populous city of Lae, the Dua Dua players like to offer their audiences a little bit of everything. Urban dwellers who crowd to their performances in school halls, youth clubs and cinemas are provided with the nostalgia of traditional village life many have left behind. They are treated to displays of dancing drawn from all over the northeastern mainland of New Guinea. But in the villages, the disco routines (acted out to the latest cassette music) and the comedies about the hazards of city living are the ones which go down best.

The young men and women who make up Dua Dua, most still in their teens, work long, hard hours to provide this invaluable service to the people of their province. They must train their bodies and voices with



Above: a drum roll signals the action; right: Dua Dua actors take time off to join the audience; far right: 'What's that up there. Is it a bird? Is it a ...'





Right: Tension builds in the orchestra pit as (below) the drama reaches a deathly climax



punishing exercises; they must talk together, exchanging legends from their diverse tribal backgrounds; they have to fashion their elaborate costumes and masks to provide colour to their performances. And, for all this, they are paid nothing.

Their dedication is impressive. A typical morning in their rehearsal room, an echoing cinema in Lae, begins at 8.30 with a couple of hours of warm-up exercises — handstands, cartwheels, backsprings to strengthen muscles, finger-snapping games to develop concentration, verbal tongue-twisters and deep breathing to give their voices the clarity and control so vital to open-air performances.

There is always a new play to be rehearsed. The intricacies of its plot and dialogue have to be hammered out in group discussion and the problems of presentation — how to represent a mountain, a grove of trees, a ghostly spirit — all call for ingenuity and improvisation.

In the afternoon there may be a performance at a nearby school or a boneshaking trip to some neglected corner of the province. If not, there is always work to be done on costumes and props. Or maybe, just for the fun of it, they may take their truck down to the beach and stand on their heads in the sand — to the great delight of the townspeople.

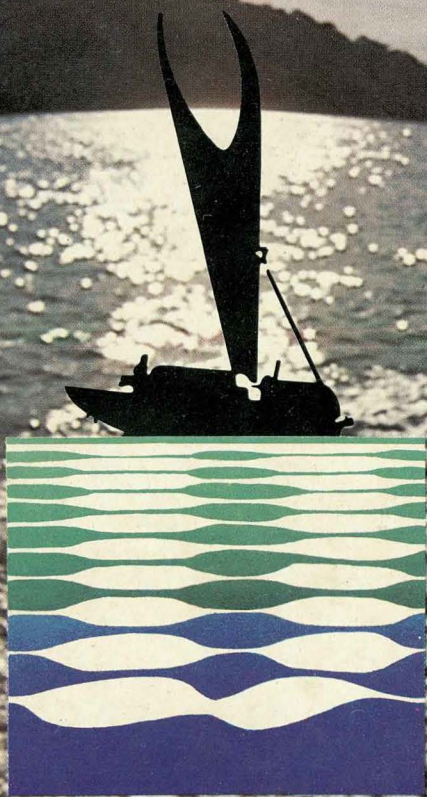
Dua Dua (from *plestok* meaning 'fun and games') began in 1978 when

Francis Namayo and Norman Shepherd, youth workers in Lae, got together a group of school leavers to work on local songs and dances. It was not long before the group was in great demand at schools, colleges and hotels around Lae. Then the Urban Areas Activities Scheme gave them the truck and the province had become their oyster. This year they became the first theatre group to perform before an audience of serving prisoners at the Buimo Corrective Institution at Lae. During the South Pacific Festival of Arts in July, Dua Dua players were in the thick of activities at Lae.

And then there is the overtly educational side of their activities. In collaboration with the Departments of Education and Health and with the assistance of nutritionists, they have put together sketches with

which they will convey vital information in fun form to villagers who are not making the best of food resources available to them.

Dua Dua are booked up months in advance. But that doesn't prevent visitors to Lae from seeing a show. If you happen to find yourself in Morobe Province and see that now-famous green truck heading your way, you can be sure you are in for some fabulous 'fun and games'. — Tracey Lloyd is based in Lae and writes for the National Broadcasting Corporation and the British Broadcasting Corporation



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