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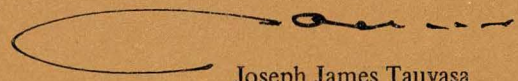


paradise

Welcome aboard

In days gone by, exploration, expeditions, climbing highest mountains and plumbing the deepest depths, were always the achievements of the physically stronger sex. Today, as women assert their right to equality with men, we hear more and more about their remarkable feats of endurance. In Australia a while back a woman walked from the Dead Heart across desert to the west coast, her only companions being camels and a dog. Here in Papua New Guinea recently we have been hearing a lot about another intrepid Englishwoman, one Christina Dodwell. We tell some of her story in this issue, beginning on page 34 and there'll be more about her in future issues.

Papua New Guinean women, too, are making their voices felt more and more in our own rapidly changing society but, secretly, us Papua New Guinean men have never failed to recognise the immense silent strength they have injected into our communities right back through the centuries.



Joseph James Tauvasa
General Manager

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Bark cloth – known as tapa throughout the Pacific – is made in several parts of mainland Papua New Guinea and used much more widely. Jill Donisthorpe tells the story of tapa-making



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A black American anthropologist visiting our country (for the third South Pacific Festival of Arts) found it to be like every place she had never been.



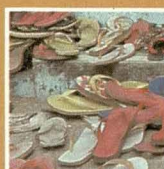
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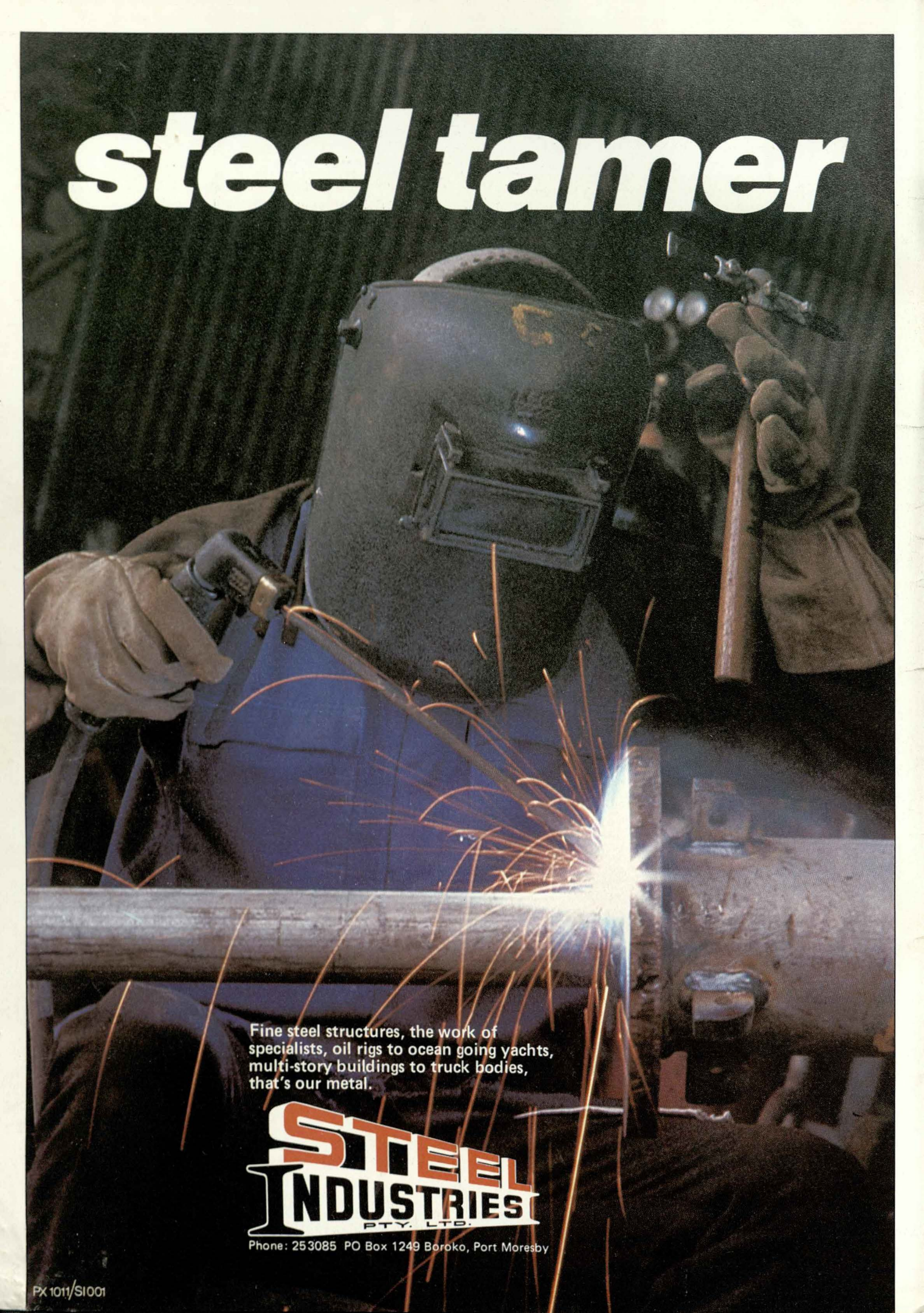
Barefoot, Christina Dodwell walked through some of Papua New Guinea's toughest country. She tells her own story



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Cover: A small boy reflects on his own idea of Paradise on the Karawari River, a tributary of the mighty Sepik. Tom Cooke took the picture

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TAPA

Story and photographs: Jill Donisthorpe

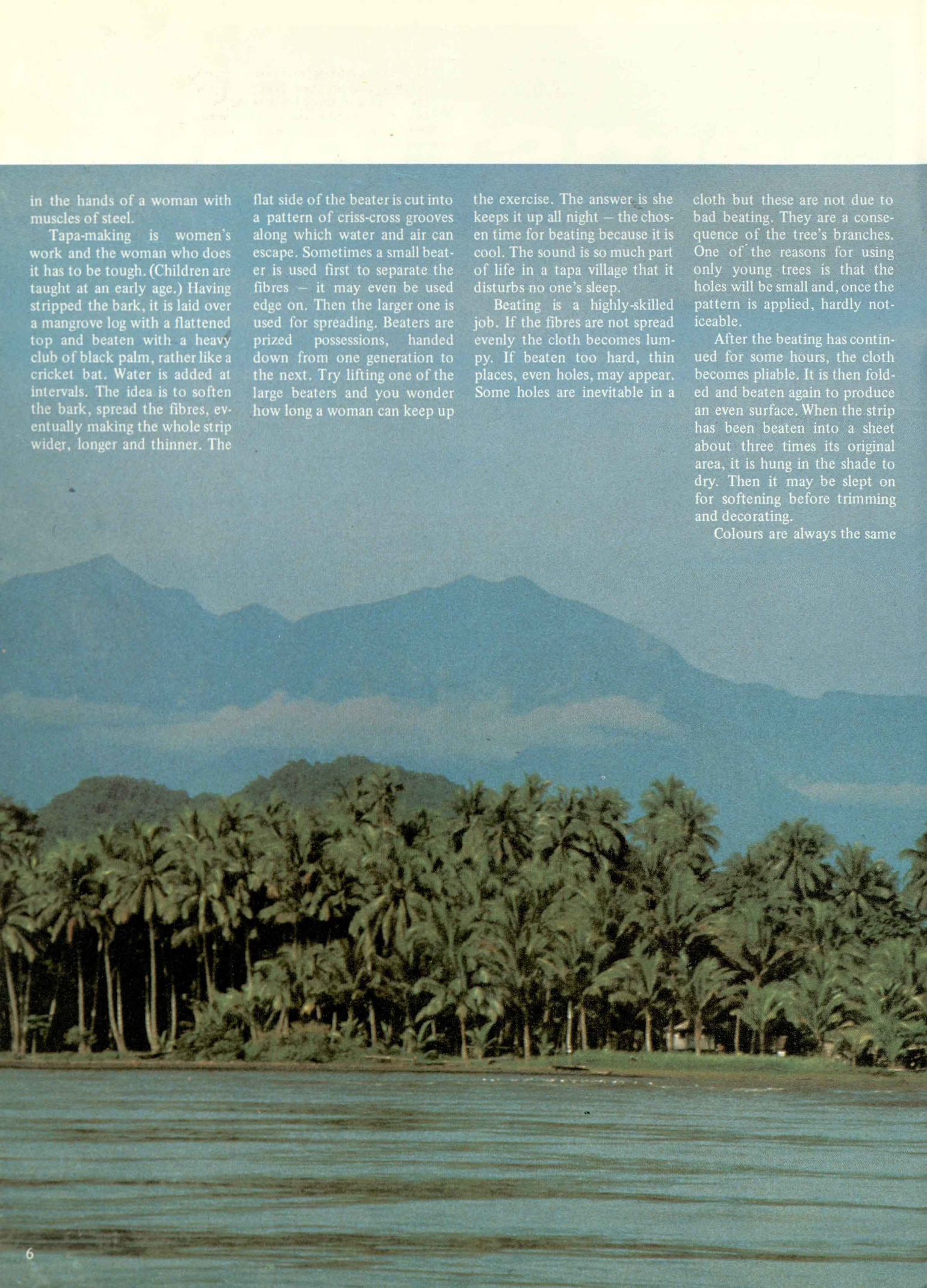


LONG before woven fabrics from the mills of India and Japan invaded the markets of Papua New Guinea, people made their own dress materials – not only the grass skirts of popular fiction but beautiful yet functional bark cloth.

The paper mulberry tree has an inner bark which is strong yet malleable and this, after a lot of hard work, can be transformed into a soft felt-like material generally called tapa cloth. There are said to be three types of paper tree – one with a white inner bark and two slightly darker. All are used, though the white is considered superior.

In spite of the wide distribution of the mulberry, tapa cloth is not made throughout Papua New Guinea. The best known cloths are made by the people on the coastal area of Northern Province. Tapa is also made along the Musa River west of Popondetta, capital of Northern Province. In the Highlands it is found in an arc from Menyamy, in Morobe Province, south through Gulf and Western Provinces and north over the mountains into the West Sepik Province around Telefomin. However samples from these areas rarely reach the tourist market.

In the small coastal villages, each family grows its own mulberry trees for tapa, replanting as needed to keep a regular supply and pruning off the branches to keep the layer of bark unbroken. Small trees, only a few inches in diameter, they are cut when they are one-to-two years old. At this age the bark is in optimum condition for working. When the tree has been cut, the outer bark is scraped off with a knife or shell and the white inner bark slit down its length. It then comes away cleanly in a strip about a foot wide. The puzzle to the onlooker is how this narrow strip can ever become a metre-wide sheet. But it does –



in the hands of a woman with muscles of steel.

Tapa-making is women's work and the woman who does it has to be tough. (Children are taught at an early age.) Having stripped the bark, it is laid over a mangrove log with a flattened top and beaten with a heavy club of black palm, rather like a cricket bat. Water is added at intervals. The idea is to soften the bark, spread the fibres, eventually making the whole strip wider, longer and thinner. The

flat side of the beater is cut into a pattern of criss-cross grooves along which water and air can escape. Sometimes a small beater is used first to separate the fibres — it may even be used edge on. Then the larger one is used for spreading. Beaters are prized possessions, handed down from one generation to the next. Try lifting one of the large beaters and you wonder how long a woman can keep up

the exercise. The answer is she keeps it up all night — the chosen time for beating because it is cool. The sound is so much part of life in a tapa village that it disturbs no one's sleep.

Beating is a highly-skilled job. If the fibres are not spread evenly the cloth becomes lumpy. If beaten too hard, thin places, even holes, may appear. Some holes are inevitable in a

cloth but these are not due to bad beating. They are a consequence of the tree's branches. One of the reasons for using only young trees is that the holes will be small and, once the pattern is applied, hardly noticeable.

After the beating has continued for some hours, the cloth becomes pliable. It is then folded and beaten again to produce an even surface. When the strip has been beaten into a sheet about three times its original area, it is hung in the shade to dry. Then it may be slept on for softening before trimming and decorating.

Colours are always the same

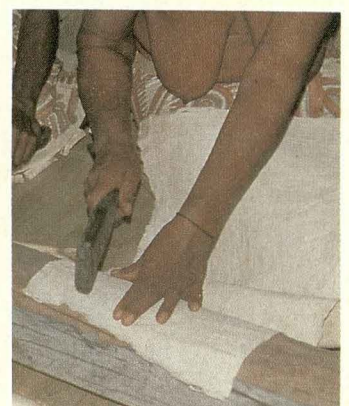
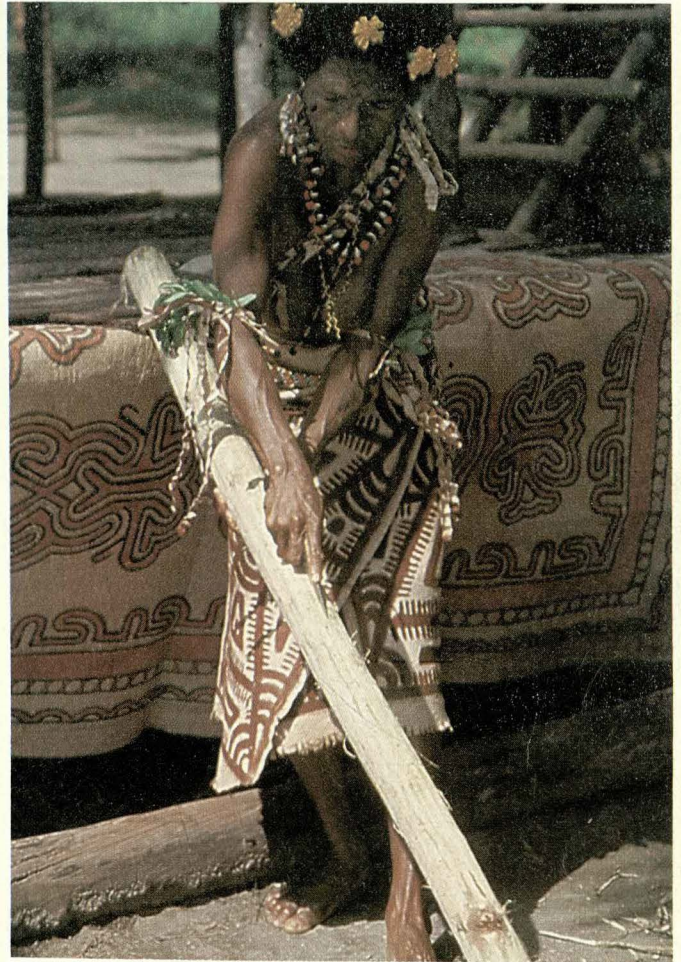
— black and brick red. The black outline is applied freehand, the design often being made up as the artist goes along. Some patterns are based on clan symbols. Others may be simple geometrical designs. The black colour, ideally, should be made from black ochre with water, using the juice of a vine leaf to make it stick. If ochre is not available, charcoal from burnt coconut husks is used. It is applied with a brush made with the frayed end of a black palm twig. The black design usually consists of narrow parallel lines which will be later filled in with red.

The red colour takes longer to prepare. It is made from leaves and bark from two other

species of tree, locally known as *saman* and *dun*, which are boiled together for some hours. The longer the boiling the thicker and darker the liquid. It is applied, very often hot, with a pandanus nut splayed out to fit the space to be coloured.

Traditional garments made of tapa include wrap-around skirts for women (*embobi*) and a loincloth with a tail hanging down at the back (*koifi*) for men. The skirts have fringes

Left: *Uiaku*, home of *tapa* makers, Northern Province, with the Owen Stanley range in the background; below: cutting the inner bark; the bark comes cleanly away from the pole; softening the fibres; sun-drying



Below: Bark and leaves are boiled to make red dye which is then applied between the black lines of the design; bottom: tapa makers from Airara village, Northern Province



which differ in shape according to the clan. Tapa is also made into rain capes, blankets, shrouds and masks. Sheets can be joined by beating the edges together to form a felt.

Nowadays tapa is made into mats, handbags, wall hangings and table tops. Though this trade is growing, and plans are in hand to develop it commercially, it is limited at present by transport problems because the tapa villages cannot be reached by road, a situation which adds to their charm for off-the-beaten-track travellers.

Tapa cloth is worn for singings by people who do not make it, and this involves trading. It is well known that the villagers of Uiaku trade tapa for pots with Wanigela, a few miles away by canoe. But how do the people of Rigo, on the south coast of Papua, get their ceremonial tapa? Some say they exchange it for grass skirts. Oth-

ers deny this. If they do trade, how is the stuff carried over the mountains? Simply on foot, thinks Geoffrey Mosuwadoga, Director of the National Museum. 'After all, it is known that Kupiano on the south coast supplies shells to the villages of Musa River in the north,' he says, 'so why not a trade between Rigo and Collingwood Bay?' The fact that even experts don't know for sure is both frustrating and fascinating. It shows the gaps in our knowledge about the everyday life of the people and the rewards that may come to those who have the patience to keep on questioning. — *Jill Donisthorpe is a script-writer with the Papua New Guinea Office of Information.*



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Top table at Radio Enga official opening; below: young highlander with myoko topping



KRAI BILONG MYOKO

Story and photographs by Paul Brennan



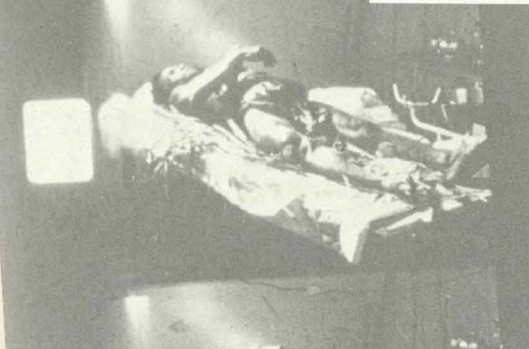
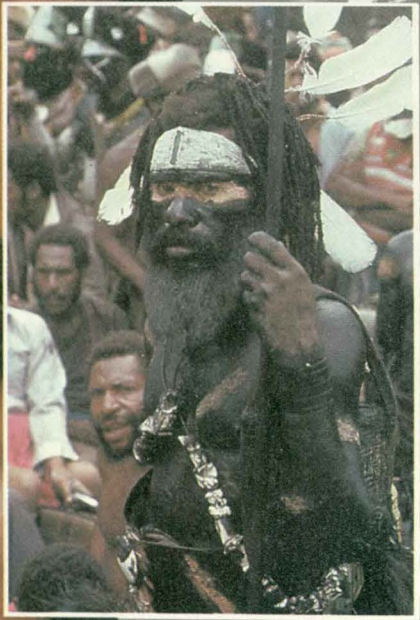
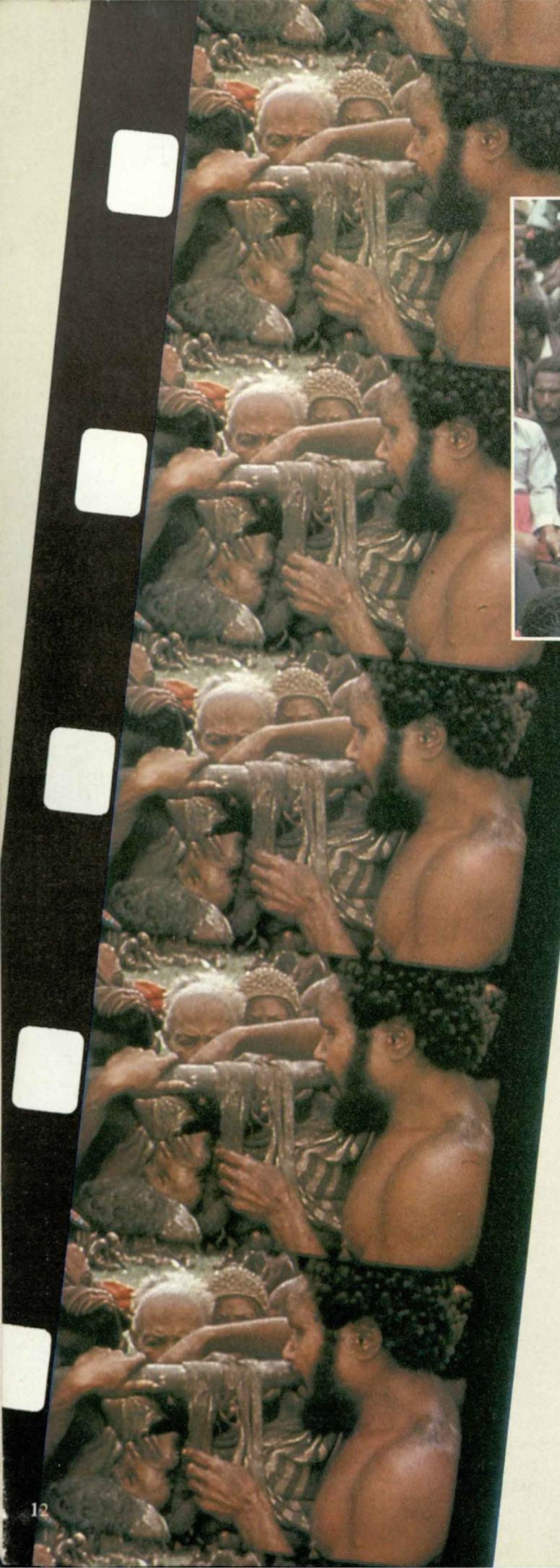
THE tail feathers of *Astrapia stephaniae* (the Princess Stephanie bird of paradise) are not the most valuable. But among the Enga people of Papua New Guinea's Highlands, this bird, known as the *myoko*, stands supreme. It reigns as king, not only of all birdlife but of men and pigs as well.

In Enga songs it is a high compliment to be described as a *myoko*, and that is the name given to the finest porker in a pig exchange. So, it is not surprising, when the recently-established Enga radio station went to air,

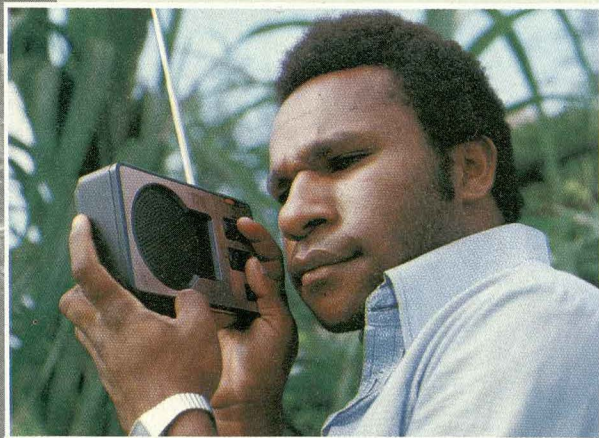
that the word *myoko* found its way into the call sign.

Soon, *Krai bilong myoko* became the catchword for official efforts to improve communications in the province. The *krai* (pidgin for cry or call) of the *myoko* is a distinctive, shrill, penetrating 'quee-quee' and is unmistakable in the wet moss forest where it is found.

In September 1980 a festive crowd of 4000 gathered at Wabag, the provincial capital, for the official opening of Radio Enga. Many dancers, from all corners of the province, sported in their wigs glistening speci-



Clockwise from left: cine film recalls the tragedy of Siki; young warrior; Kandep clansmen at the opening ceremony; Philip Pyaso of Tilypos village, Enga Province, tunes to Krai bilong Myoko



mens of the *myoko* which has an iridescent green crown and black velvet tail feathers tinged with purple.

Most of the assembled clansmen owned no radio but a majority had probably heard the sounds which come from the mysterious 'boxes'. Like so many people in other parts of the Highlands (to which Western

technology came only in the past 30 years), the Enga people's initial reaction to radio messages was one of suspicion.

Several years ago I asked Enga people what they thought of the radio. One response startled me. Translated, it went this way: 'You red men (expatriates) are really clever. You know how to hide behind so many shields. I'll tell you what I think of radio broadcasting if you tell me who's standing behind the shield.'

In the years since, the Enga people have been able to learn more about modern ways which are penetrating their homeland. A few Enga people have been able to see firsthand the personalities 'behind the shield'. They have met the announcers, the script writers, the technicians and others involved in the running of a radio station.

Efforts have been made to familiarise the people with other activities such as public administration, the courts, business houses and churches. All have had at least some layers of their 'camouflage' removed. For some it has meant a greater confidence about accepting change. They are more ready to use modern tools and imported ideas and to join in newly-introduced activities.

The change has not come easily. Tribal fighting, rascality, drunkenness — all have been on the upsurge in the land of the *myoko* in recent years. In fact, the ground on which the Radio Enga transmitter stands is stained with blood of past wars. Lakamanda, less than seven kilometres from Wabag, was the site of a particularly fierce battle on March 16, 1971. When I arrived on the scene I found a large number of warriors intent on settling old scores. I was startled to see, in the first cluster of soot-black faces, the form of Siki Pupu, one of my best Enga language teachers. Siki, father of nine, a friend and a neighbour, was a man of high status — a *myoko*. I pleaded with him to return with me to

his clan area. He brushed my pleas aside, explaining that, like a good Enga, he had to help defend his in-laws.

An hour later, as I began to shuttle the first load of injured to Wabag hospital, I was stopped by a group of warriors carrying a wounded man. It was Siki — hit by a spear in the lower abdomen. Half-conscious, we placed him alongside others in the back of my Land Rover. A few minutes later, I am told, Siki said: 'Tell the red man (me) that maybe a day will come when our children won't have to do this.' Then he died. His words will always be to me like the '*Krai bilong myoko*'.

The opening of Radio Enga nine years later was a significant milestone for communication in Enga. It meant that now all 20 of Papua New Guinea's provinces have their own radio stations.

Before the 180,000 Engas could have their own radio, long and difficult negotiations for the transmitter land itself had to be worked through. That took three years. Then, when the Kina 1.1 million necessary for the project became available, it took time to train 10 Enga staff and to install the equipment. All of these factors combined to delay the sending of clear and relevant messages to a people struggling to find meaning in the race against change.

But now *myoko* is on the air. It is to be hoped that this conventional piece of hardware with the unconventional name will beam, through the Enga forest, messages which are clear, useful, conciliatory and trustful. — Dr Paul Brennan, an anthropologist who lived among the Enga from 1968 to 1977, is now co-ordinator of the national government's Communication Task Force.

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Sheila Walker, an Afro-American anthropologist at the School of Education, University of California, Berkely, came to Papua New Guinea for the Third South Pacific Festival of Arts in mid-1980. At one stage she thought she had found some fellow Afro-Americans. And the New Caledonians she had mistaken for Afro-Americans thought she was a Fijian. Sheila says she found Papua New Guinea 'exactly like every place I have never been'.

A FESTIVAL REFLECTION ON FACES AND PLACES

AS soon as I heard about the Third South Pacific Festival of Arts I knew I just had to be there. How could I miss the only opportunity for the next four years to sample the whole of the South Pacific – and more – all together in one place?

I knew very little about Papua New Guinea. I was aware that it was in the Western Pacific. I had read about the significance of pigs in the Highlands, about the traditional religion of the people of Manus, about the Kula ring in the Trobriand Islands and even a little about cargo cults. But, with Air Niugini's assertion in mind that 'Papua New Guinea is like every place you've never been,' I was willing to admit to myself that I really had no idea what to expect. My scanty reading and other odd bits of acquired knowledge only served to whet my appetite.

Having travelled widely I must admit to having mental models for tropical Third World countries. As an Africanist and Afro-Americanist, I have done research among populations of African origin in Africa and in the Americas. Yet Papua New Guinea was still to prove to be a real discovery for me.

What struck me most was how much human diversity in terms of environment, lifestyle and physical appearance – to say nothing of cultural expression – could be concentrated in one relatively small area of land. As soon as I acquired a sense of this diversity within Papua New Guinea itself, I delighted in being able to pick out the beautiful bony Bougainvillians, the colourful blonde and red-headed people of East New Britain and the strong, muscular, deep-chested Highlanders. I was ecstatic to see a real live 'mudman' from Asaro near Goroka in the Eastern Highlands. I wish now that I could have stayed longer so that I could identify each specific group of 'wantoks'. (*Wantok* is a pidgin word which, among other trans-

Just one face of the Sepik's artistic and cultural diversity





lations, means 'one who speaks the same language'. Papua New Guinea has more than 700 identified and distinct languages.)

Every Papua New Guinean I asked assured me that Port Moresby, the national capital, was in no way representative of Papua New Guinea as a whole. I was lucky enough to discover that they were absolutely right. From Port Moresby I flew to Wewak and then went by road to Angoram on the legendary Sepik River. From there I went on by boat, visiting several villages along the river banks. At one I was fortunate enough to witness a *singsing* (festival involving dancing and singing).

As someone used to cars and freeways, the change to a society where the highway is liquid and transport a canoe, it was a revelation to me of the many possible perfectly adequate ways in which different human groups can organise their lives.

It was appropriate that I should visit the Sepik first because my first contact with Papua New Guinean culture was at a Paris exhibition of Sepik art in 1964. At that time I wondered where the Sepik was and if I would ever see the remote places from which all of those fascinatingly intricate carvings came. Not only had I arrived but I was seeing the rituals which make this art come alive. What I came to realise in my fleeting visit to the Sepik is that there is not just one artistic style or tradition along the river. Just as the Sepik is not representative of Papua New Guinea, no one village on the river is representative of the Sepik.

The arts festival did not merely arouse my interest in the peoples of Papua New Guinea. There were people in Port Moresby and other festival centres who had come from all parts of the Pacific – from the Marianas to the Marquesas. There were people from places I had not even heard of. When friends in the United States asked me why I wanted to go to Papua New Guinea, I told them I wanted to

Below: A-frame spirit houses; below right: faces on the stairs; bottom: the author and Prime Minister, Sir Julius Chan



were Afro-Americans who turned out to be New Caledonians. They thought I was from Fiji.

I met a Papua New Guinean who was convinced I was from New Caledonia. All of these cases of mistaken identity made me realise two things: one, that since I could be confused with the people of various Melanesian islands it was easy for me to feel at home in the South Pacific; two, that the South Pacific is a whole world all of its own in which the people have a good deal of contact with each other but not so much contact with the peoples who inhabit the other corners of the globe. My second point, of course, makes the people of the South Pacific no different from people from other regions. We all have plenty of contact with our own kind but not enough with others.

Now that I'm back home I try to tell people what it was like to be in Papua New Guinea. I can tell them how hospitable everybody was to me and how everyone went out of their way to help me see what a fantastic country they have.

I try to describe life on the Sepik – the canoes with the crocodile prows, the elegant, comfortable, beautifully decorated A-frame houses, some also with faces. I show them the lacy carved wooden Trobriand bowls and my Kambot storyboard and my Maprik yam mask. As I project my slides, I tell my audience about the delights of a mumu in which all sorts of tasty morsels rest among leaves under hot rocks.

I also realise that despite my most sincere efforts to convey the atmosphere of Papua New Guinea, my listeners probably still have very little idea of what Papua New Guinea is like. I know for sure that, having seen some of Papua New Guinea, I have absolutely no idea what the rest of it is like. I can only imagine that, like the parts I saw, it is exactly like more of those places I have never seen.

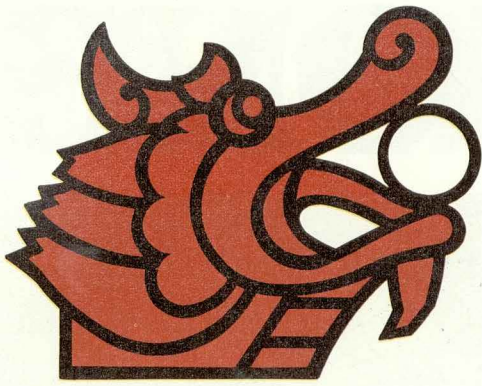
get a concentrated glimpse of the cultures of many peoples all in one space. Now I have to admit my ignorance. Not only did I not know what the different people of the Melanesian, Micronesian and Polynesian islands looked like; there were some from islands which I did not even know existed. I don't think I am alone in this ignorance.

My friends are now dazzled to know there are places called Kiribati (pronounced *kiribas*), and Tuvalu (*too-vaa-loo*) and Wallis and Futuna, all of which have dynamic cultural forms.

I'll never forget the opening ceremony of the festival at the Sir Hubert Murray Stadium in Port Moresby. It was an ideal opportunity to attempt to spot

the differences and similarities among the peoples of the South Pacific.

I expect I was not alone in looking around to see if I could spot any of my 'wantoks' in the crowd although I did not anticipate finding too many Afro-Americans so far from home. However, I did find some. And some that I thought



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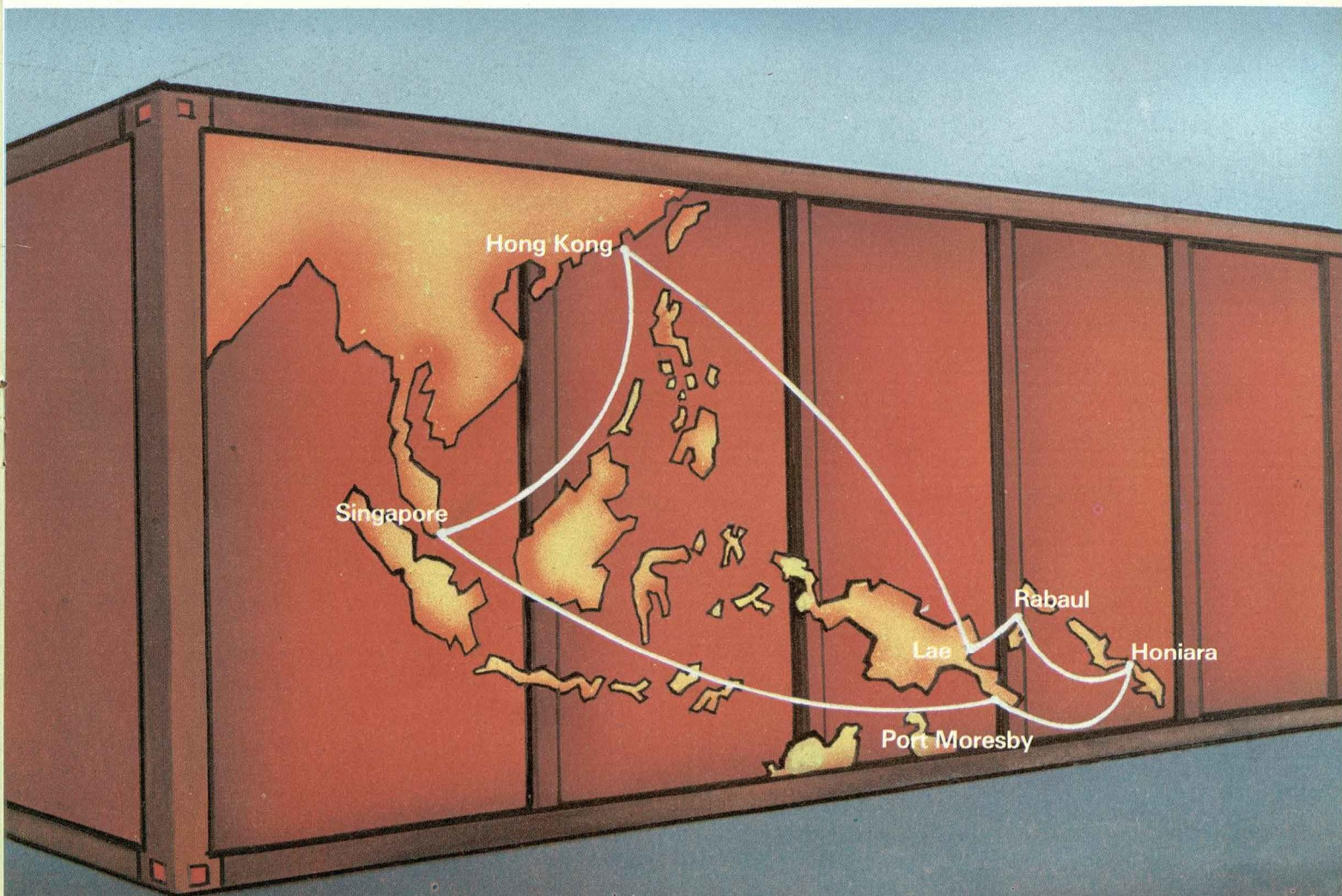
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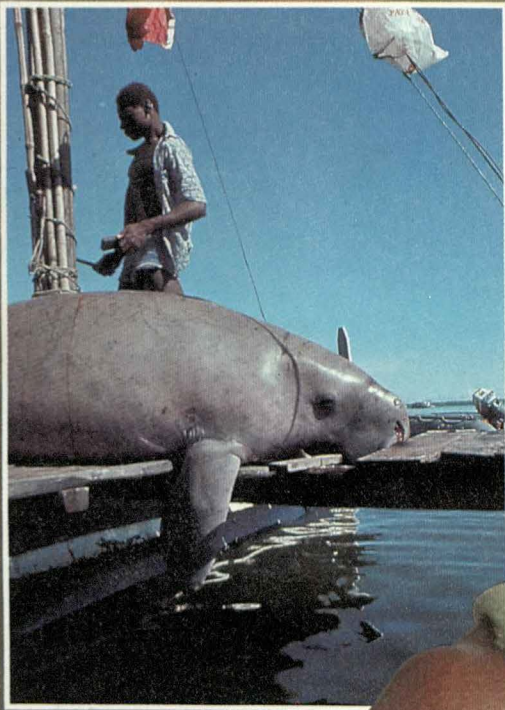
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AT ONE W

Story and photographs by Rom Whitaker

The guria or Victoria crowned pidgeon . . . beautiful, dumb, edible; inset: the dugong is a protected animal in PNG but can be killed with traditional weapons for its meat



WITH THE WILD



WILDLIFE worldwide is fighting a rearguard action for survival but Papua New Guinea still has a chance to get through this century with its unique forest life intact.

Not only is the human population low enough for compatible living with the ecosystem; most of the people have such close ties with, and respect for, the bush and its inhabitants, that they actively, if subconsciously, co-operate in its preservation.

Most land in Papua New Guinea is privately owned. There are no strict laws governing the use of the resources of the land but there are guidelines which help the people to use those resources carefully. Villagers can go into the bush and take a bird of paradise for a headdress or a monitor lizard for a skin to cover a drum. River and lagoon dwellers in the great swamps of the Western and Sepik provinces hunt crocodiles as their sole means of income. Yet these are two of the few places left in the world where crocodiles are still plentiful.

Meat for the pot is easy to get from the bush in most areas. A few experienced hunting dogs will find a wild pig without too much trouble and, with a little luck, a hunter will find a *kapul* (cuscus or tree kangaroo), a wallaby or cassowary.

Surrounded by a wealth of wildlife, it is not surprising that Papua New Guineans have taken to rearing some of these animals in captivity. Crocodiles, cassowaries and the cuscus are more common as domestic animals than cattle and goats in most areas. Which is one more reason why the wild habitat is so well preserved.

Arriving one evening at Wanga Wanga village in Western Province during a crocodile patrol, we were exhausted after an all day trip by river truck under a hot sun. None of us had the energy to do any more than get our gear into the comfortable hut on stilts built for visiting

Clockwise from left: Lorikeets as pets in an East Sepik village; a morning's haul of barramundi at Wanga Wanga village; pet cuscus on Manus; this young cassowary will be reared for a feast



Wildlife Division patrol officers and put on some water for coffee. While we sipped coffee and chatted with the friendly villagers, we watched the sun disappear into the lagoon. We hadn't eaten all day and there was a veritable chorus of stomach growls. Then, right on a cue, a couple of small boys came up the ladder balancing banana leaves piled high with roasted pieces of barramundi (which has to be one of the world's tastiest fishes), wild pig, cassowary and even a haunch of cuscus. Several hunters who had been out that day had returned with the meat. A big pot of rice was cooked up. Once again the forest had provided a feast.

Experience elsewhere suggests there is no stopping the march of what the developed world calls 'progress' and 'civilisation'. The disastrous deforestation of vast tracts of Asia and Australia are desolate reminders of man's rapacious appetite for timber. Demands are being made to exploit Papua New Guinea's timber resources. But, as long as the people of the land are aware of the treasure they protect and the immense value of it to their daily needs, there is a good chance Papua New Guinea will not go the way of so much of the rest of the world. — Rom Whitaker is a naturalist with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization at Moitaka near Port Moresby.





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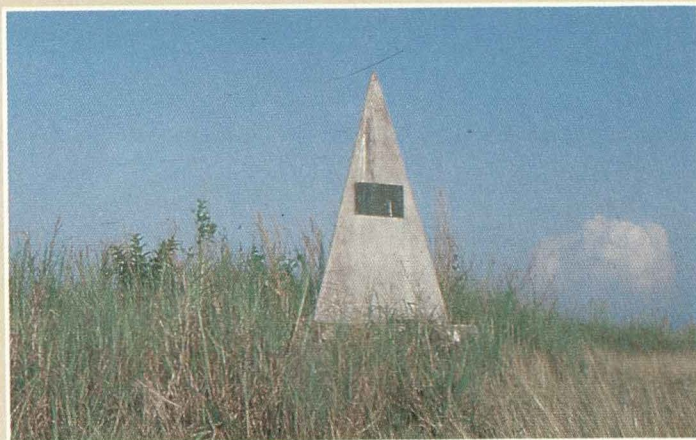
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ONLY
VINCENT
USE THE
GUN.

Story and photographs by Bruce Adam



Top: An American gun rusts outside the International Terminal at Hendersons Field; above: Bloody Ridge with monument telling of those who 'came from the jungle'

THE sign reads: 'Only Vincent use the gun.' Around the small cattle slaughterhouse are fences made from pieces of light metal about 1.25 by 0.6 metres, each punched with holes. At first glance they look like giant pieces of Mecano. They are known to World War II Pacific theatre veterans as 'marsden' matting. (Some will argue that it is 'marston' matting, but that is another story.)

Not far away are crumbling stands once used for testing aircraft engines. The sounds of those engines are still clear in my memory: the smooth whine of the Lockheed Lightning, the growl of the Grumman Avenger, the roar of the Wildcat. The stands are rusting badly. Some have fallen over and are almost obscured by grass.

As I take in the scene it is late afternoon but the sun is still unbearably hot. My clothing is drenched in sweat and my cig-

arettes are a pulpy mess. Below my shorts, my legs are bleeding from the slashing blades of kuni grass. I am standing on a small ridge which overlooks Solomon Islands' international airport – Henderson Field. I hear the monotonous drone of an aircraft in the distant sky. It begins to take shape. It is a light aircraft of the local airline, Solair. It lands, disgorges passengers, picks up more and is quickly on its way. In the following silence my imagination begins to conjure the scene around Henderson Field back in the early forties. I can hear the metallic rattle of machine guns and automatic weapons. And the heavy sound of mortar fire, the cries of the wounded. And then comes the smell of cordite.

The quiet knoll on which I stand is known as Bloody Ridge. Henderson Field is named after Major Lofton Henderson, a US Marine Corps hero who won the Congressional Medal of Honour

for his bravery as a pilot in the Battle of Midway. The honour was awarded posthumously.

The bloody battle for Guadalcanal — one of the most decisive actions of the Pacific War — was fought over Henderson airfield. From August 1942 until the following February, US Marines and the Imperial Japanese Army were locked in mortal combat. They died in their thousands, on both sides.

The whole area is now a ghostly graveyard, a monument to the futility of war. Rusting relics still attract those who wish to remember and tourists in search of souvenirs.

Each year hundreds of ex-servicemen from both armies return. Signs of conflict are to be found everywhere — on the beaches, in the jungle. There are oxidised frames of aircraft, pitted gun muzzles, concrete disintegrating beneath the weeds. Even now, bleached skeletons are found, probably never to be identified.

Some of those who took part in the battle still live on Guadalcanal. Among them are two Solomon Islanders — Sir Jacob Vouza and Bill Bennett. Both are legends in their own time. Sir Jacob lives 35 km from Honiara, capital of Solomon Islands, at 'California' village, while Bill Bennett is only eight kilometres out of town at White River.

Vouza's is a remarkable story. Captured by the Japanese, he was bayoneted several times and left for dead. He crawled to the American lines and provided them with vital information. Each year he is visited by former marines and has twice been to the United States as a guest of the Marine Corps Association.

Bill Bennett was a member of that exclusive band of heroes known as coastwatchers. They stayed behind on the islands of the Solomons and New Guinea after the Japanese invasion and radioed much needed information to the Allies.

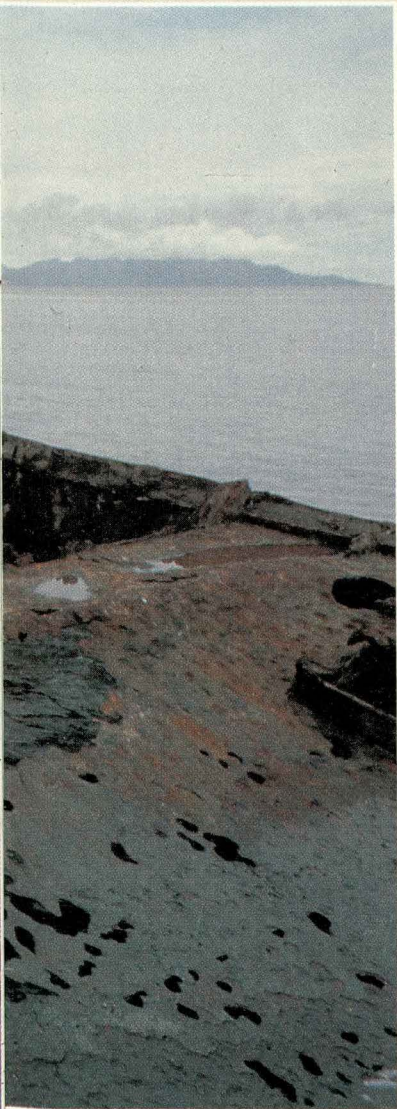
A large Solomon Islander, Bill now owns a trade store.



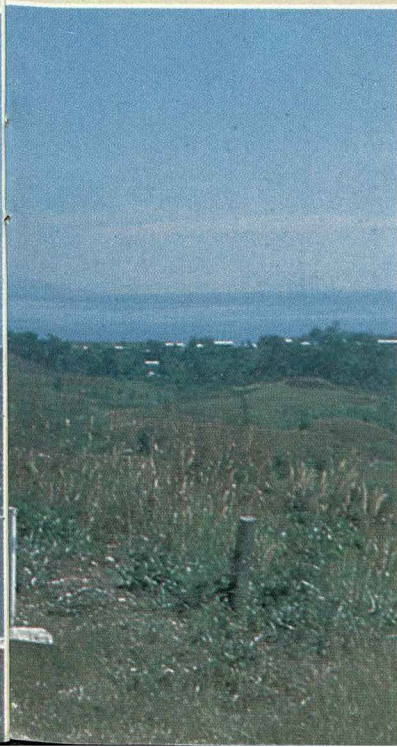
Above: Rusting American pontoons on Doma Beach; right: Japanese monument on the road to Mount Austen

Although retired, he is still a director of the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Commission and Solair. He receives visitors from many places including, in 1979, a 70-year-old Japanese who was a sergeant in a 'rapid fire squad'. He told Bill how his squad used to sneak out of the jungle at night to catch fish and crabs on the beach only a couple of hundred metres from Bill's home. Of the 300 men in his unit, only 13 survived the battle, he said. 'He was an old man with a lot of dignity,' says Bill. 'I felt sorry for him. After all, it's not the ordinary people who make





Above and left: Helmets and aircraft pieces at Fred Kona's museum



wars. It's the politicians and the generals.'

Bill says he has been presented with '12 wrist watches, a camera and a radio' by Japanese visitors, one of whom was a cousin of Emperor Hirohito. From visitors on the Allies' side he has received 'only kind words'.

One Sunday morning Bob

Bird, an Australian and member of the Honiara Underwater Diving Club, took me on a dive into a Japanese transport sunk during the battle. It is a few miles north of Honiara off a small beach called Doma which is still littered with massive chunks of rusting metal. In 1962 a Japanese salvage team lifted much of the wreck and left it on the

beach. Some pieces they took back to Japan.

It was an odd feeling moving among the multi-coloured diving suits on a beach which had once known only camouflage battle gear. After half an hour of probing, the wreck offered up a pair of American jungle boots, a broken dinner plate and one coral-encrusted artillery shell. The boots, indented 'Made in the USA', were in perfect condition. The plate bore no markings. It seems the old transport had later been used by the Americans as a headquarters. Over the years it had slipped slowly off the edge of the reef, finally coming to rest in 20 fathoms.

The Matanikau River in Honiara is bordered by lawns and palm trees. It is a place to which Solomon Islanders drive their Japanese cars then drink Australian beer and play music. Chinatown runs along one side of the river, its trade stores, houses and restaurants blending



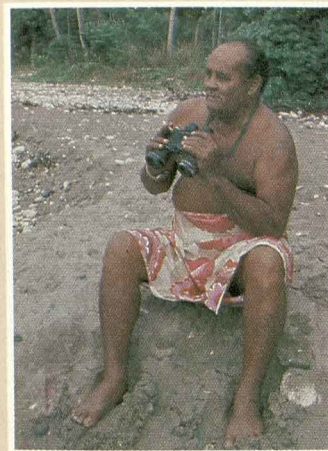
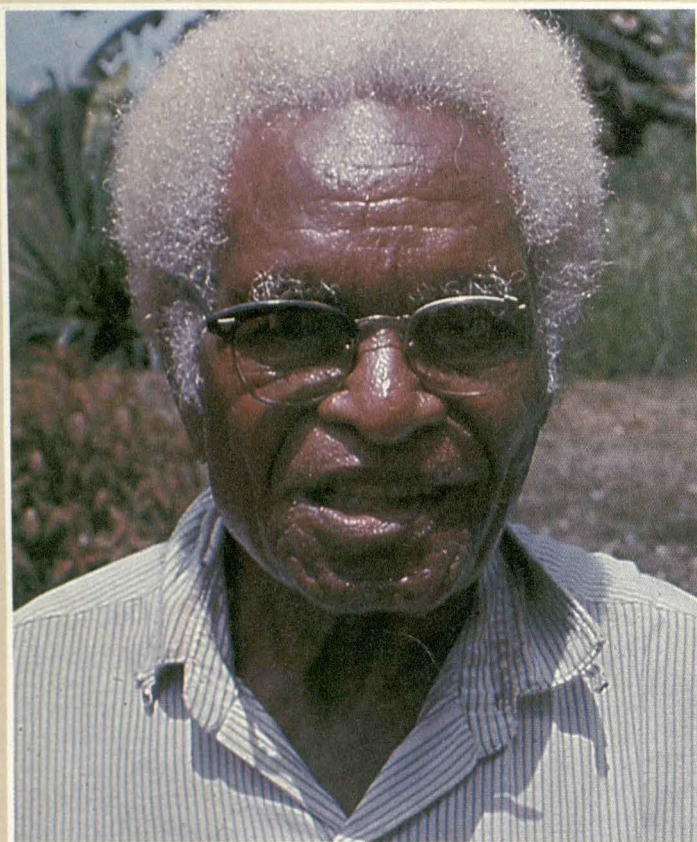
fering heavy casualties, not just from the fierce fighting but from sickness and disease.

In those days Honiara, which today stands on an old ammunition dump, was not the capital. The centre of British colonial administration was at Tulagi, 32 kilometres away by sea. Tulagi was already in ruins, a heavy battle having been fought there.

Twenty-four kilometres up the coast north from Honiara is a war museum run by Fred Kona, a man from the island of Malaita. It is the most interesting and best run museum of its type I have found in the South Pacific. Fred started it in 1970 without any government assistance. Many of the pieces he manhandled himself from the jungle. Even now, in his spare time, he pushes his way into the jungle seeking more relics. He has scoured the whole battle area from Cape Esperance in the north, off which the US Navy suffered one of its worst defeats in an encounter with the Japanese, to south of Henderson Field.

It was from Henderson Field that American Lockheed Lightnings took off to ambush and kill, in aerial combat, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, the Combined Chief of the Japanese Naval Forces in the South Pacific. It was near the airfield that Japan's greatest air ace, Saburi Sake, was wounded. In two of the most bloody nights of the whole of World War II, Japanese forces threw everything they had into a bid to retake the airfield. They were repulsed.

On Bloody Ridge today is a monument listing casualties on both sides. Five words stand out more than all the others: 'They came from the jungle.' In those two nights of hell, thousands of weapons fired hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition. Today, on sleepy Guadalcanal, only Vincent can use the gun. — *Bruce Adams, a photo-journalist with the Royal Australian Air Force, is a familiar figure in the islands of the Western Pacific.*



easily into the foliage. Along the river bank are rusting tanks and pontoons.

On Saturday nights tourists and expatriate residents join local customers at the Lantern, a Chinese restaurant at the river's edge. The conversation now is local politics, the tennis club, yachts, perhaps social events of yesterday and tomorrow. Mata-nikau is a peaceful, sleepy spot. But in September 1942, a month after the Japanese invaded, it was no place for idle chitchat. Both armies were suf-

Top: China Town on the Mataikau River; above: Bill Bennett . . . member of an exclusive band; above right: Sir Jacob Zouza . . . bayoneted and left for dead



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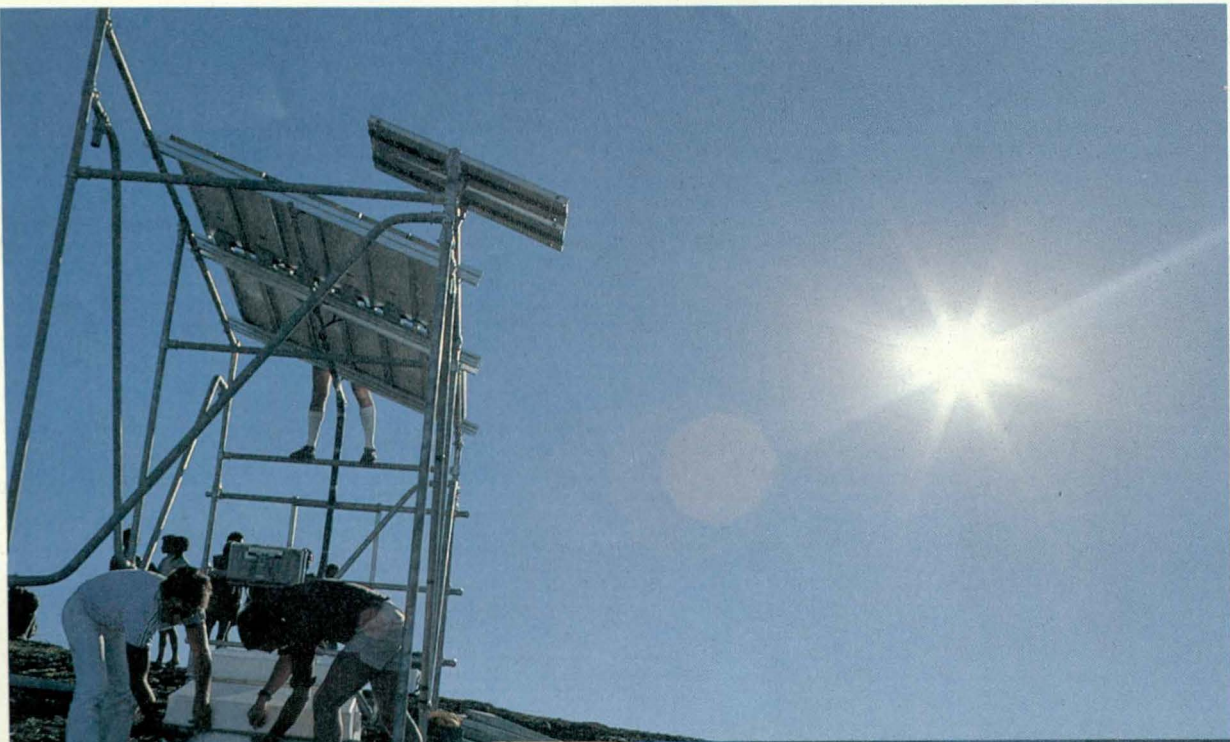
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Story and photographs by Tye Hartall

ZAMBOANGA



ZAMBOANGA. The name rolls out easily, instantly evoking a sense of adventure. Look at a map and you will find the word right at the tip of a peninsula on the western side of Mindanao Island in the southern Philippines. To the west lie the lands of Malay Asia, to the east the Moro Gulf of the Sulawesi Sea, scene of many naval battles between European powers vying for colonial suzerainty of the fabled Spice Islands to the south.

Aptly named 'City of Flowers', Zamboanga is blessed by lush vegetation and flowers which bloom in profusion in home gardens and public plazas all year round.

Malay migrants are thought to have been the first people to settle the extreme tip of the Zamboanga Peninsula, their chieftain making his home on top of Mount Pulongbato which overlooks what is now one of the city's main attractions — Pasonanca Park. The view from the mountain top persuaded him to call his new home Jambangan which translates as 'land of the flowers'.

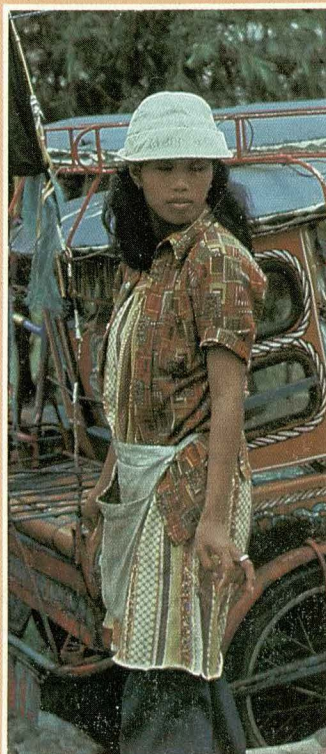
Years later Muslim settlers

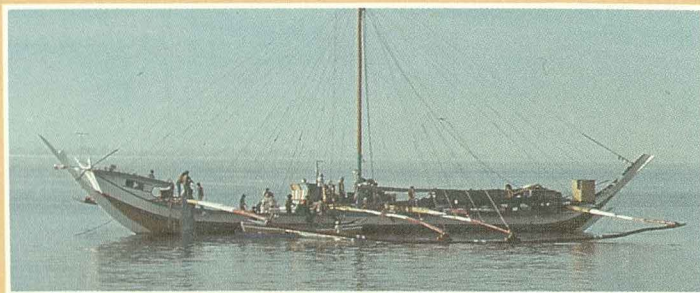
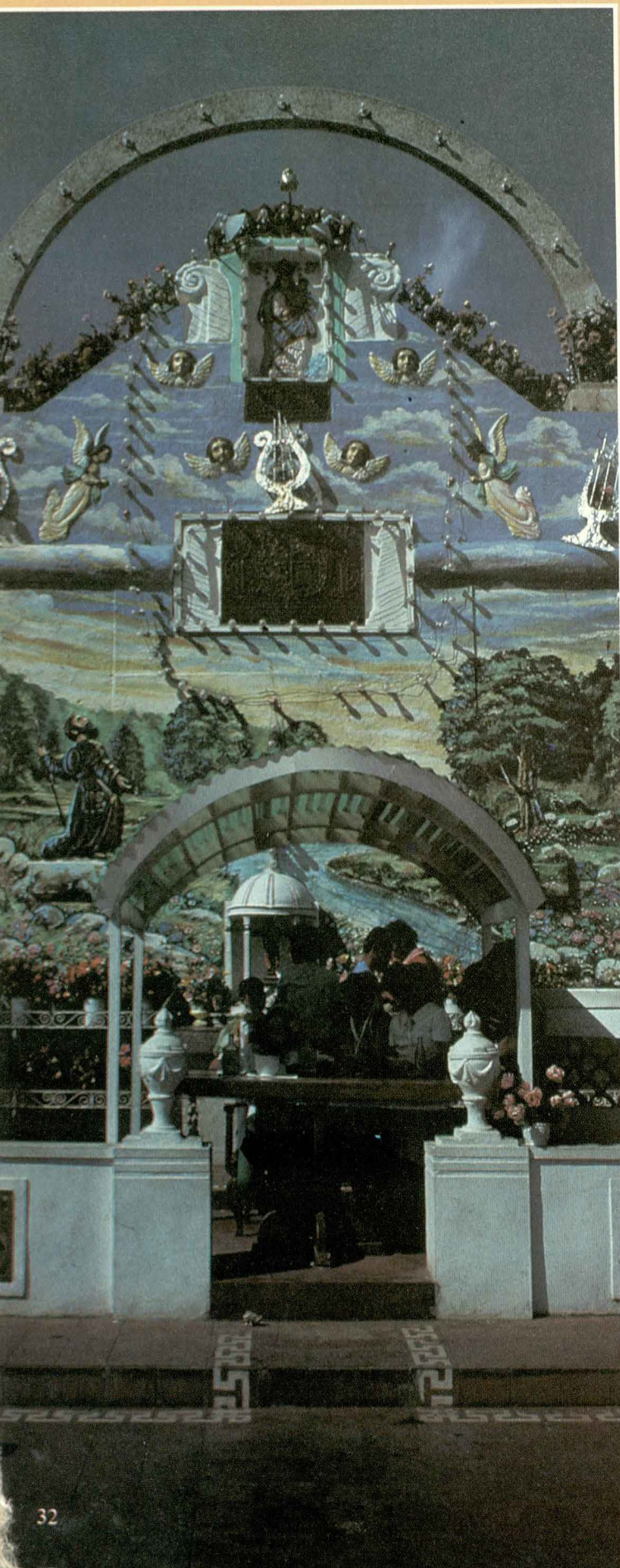
came from the Sulu Archipelago to the southwest. Confusion developed over the name Jambangan and when the first map of the Philippines was produced in the sixteenth century the word which appeared on the tip of the peninsula was Samboanga.

Today Zamboanga is a melting pot of many cultures and ethnic origins. It was once described as 'a Spanish city transplanted under oriental skies in a region of songs and poetry'. This Spanish heritage lives on in the ancestry of many local families, in a dialect which is a blend of about 70 per cent Spanish and 30 per cent local languages, and in a three centuries old fort at the southeastern corner of the city.

It is also home to the proud Tausug and Samal Muslim tribesmen who came from the Sulu island chain. Today they carry on their barter trade in Indonesian batiks, Muslim brassware and Chinese artifacts much as they did centuries ago. Their dusky, tucked-away shops on the waterfront are well worth investigation.

The tourist coming in by sea cannot miss the Badjao sea gyp-





sies who dive for coins thrown into the harbour. The Badjao sell corals, shells and pearls off their boats which they anchor just near the Lantaka Hotel. Most of their lives are spent on dugout outrigger canoes. Badjao children learn to swim and dive before they learn to walk.

Outside Zamboanga City, living in *barrios* (villages), are the Yakan tribesmen who came originally from Basilan Island to the south of the tip of the Zamboanga Peninsula. Farming stock, the Yakan women are renowned for their cooking and, especially, their weaving. I am told the weaving is so fine it takes one person a month to complete a piece a metre in length. Yakan cloth commands a good price.

Not far from the main wharf area is the city's market where incredible bargains are to be found. A big attraction in the seafood stakes is the *curacha*, a half crab-half lobster, which is served in spiced local vinegar or dipped in melted butter. Lobsters, prawns, crabs and many varieties of fish can be bought along the cluttered market alleys. Vendors are not shy in

trying to persuade a visitor to buy their produce.

Deeper into the market the offerings are of vegetable and fruit. It would be easy to spend a whole day there simply tasting the various fruits. Among them are the durian and the marang, known to 'smell like Hell but taste like Heaven', and the mangosteen and gigantic jackfruit and . . .

If it is seclusion you are looking for, just 20 minutes away by *banca* (pumpboat) is Santa Cruz Island, renowned for its pink sand beaches. Among the sights are a quiet lagoon, a fishing village and an ancient Muslim burial ground. The fringing reef offers exciting diving and snorkelling.

When night falls over Zamboanga, the lights of discos and night clubs flick on. But no matter what time of day it is there are always ample partners with whom to dance the latest disco steps. The Filipinos who make up this remote but lively corner of the earth are in love with life and live it to the fullest. — *Tye Hartall is a teacher in Papua New Guinea.* 🍀



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Christina Dodwell canoed into Papua New Guinea, hiked barefoot over some of its most forbidding terrain, and rode rodeo at Mendi. These three facts alone set this English woman apart from the conventional traveller. Paradise asked Christina for her story and impressions of Papua New Guinea. This is the first of her articles.

CHRISTINA TAKES A

A canoe brought me from Indonesia's most easterly province, West Irian, into Papua New Guinea. My first stop was Vanimo, capital of the West Sepik Province. At first I didn't know where I wanted to go from there. Vanimo seemed so far from anywhere. Eventually, I decided to get on top of things by flying by light aircraft into Oksapmin — a small outpost in the heart of the country's central mountain ranges — and walk from there northwest to Lake Kapiago.

It is only about 30 kilometres as the crow flies from Oksapmin to Kapiago. On the ground it is many times further. In the days which followed, with exploratory diversions, I estimate I covered about 250 kilometres.

No one could tell me how long my hike would take. On arrival at Oksapmin I was greeted with the news that the bridge across the Strickland River had been swept away some years before. This, they said, would make it necessary for me to loop north and try to swim a tributary flowing into the Strickland.

Nicky Cape, a United Kingdom volunteer worker, was a tremendous help to me but he didn't like my chances of getting to Kapiago. He warned me that several men, including a patrol officer, had drowned trying to cross the river. And, as for the land, parts were so rugged and wild that government regulations had barred access to them until 1973. He was not aware of any foreigner having walked that way since the area was derestricted.

Still, Nicky helped me find a guide and a porter for the first stage of the journey. It was necessary to take two men because one man fears returning home alone. My aides were of short-stature and one was wearing a pig tusk slotted through his

septum with a beetle claw protruding from the tip of his nose. None of us spoke much pidgin but we communicated well enough. I arranged for them to collect me next day at dawn.

Oksapmin lies in a horseshoe-shaped depression bounded by mountains rising to 2000 metres above sea level. The depression slopes down to the brink of a magnificent escarpment. On a cold, misty morning we set off east down the flat marshy valley. I could see only a few yards ahead as I followed closely behind Kom who was carrying my pack. His pace was fast along the muddy path. At bog patches he jumped nimbly from one firm tussock to the next but occasionally lost his footing and sank to his knees. I was having serious problems because I was wearing sandals. I'd forgotten to bring boots and thong-sandals were worse than useless. I took them off, realising I would have to do the whole walk barefoot.

We turned north along a narrow overgrown path leading to the base of a mountain barrier. Then we tracked steeply up into the clouds. Forest closed over us, water dripped from dank green foliage. Tree trunks were coated in luxuriant moss and lichen and filmy moss hung in trailing beards from the branches.

Our path twisted along the forest floor between and beneath the roots of stilt-legged palms, each stilt reaching down into centuries of leafmould. We crossed gullies on fallen tree trunks. I needed a balance pole. They were slippery. Sometimes we stepped from one fallen tree to another, the trunks forming a network above deep, boggy ravines.

Up and up we went. Craggy limestone surrounded us. Roots across the path made useful handholds as we clambered and scrambled through the wet and

mud. The men took it in turns to carry my back pack. They both carried bows and arrows. When we stopped to catch our breath (*kisim win*), Kom showed me how each arrow was different — a four-pronged bamboo arrow for birds, a knife-shaped one for pigs, another tipped with cassowary bone, and one with barbed hooks running a third of a metre down the shaft, skilfully carved and coloured. The bows were sturdy blackpalm, the bowstrings scraped bamboo.

As the sun headed to its zenith the forest sweated. Trees blossomed with orange and yellow bell-shaped flowers. There were red berries, nuts, giant acorns and other fruits in profusion — hairy, spiky, some brightly coloured. Fruit lay rotting on the ground, smelling fermented. Underfoot were toadstools. Purple fungus grew like coral on dead trees. And tall trees were shedding their thick bark in the annual cycle of decay and renewal. My feet were standing up well though I was finding it tough going keeping up with the pace. I began to despair of ever reaching the top.

But by mid-afternoon we had made it. While we rested a hunting party came along. We exchanged greetings and they sat down. They'd just caught a strange furry marsupial with a long bald tail, hands with five claw-tipped fingers and a pouch containing a miniscule hairless baby. I guessed it was a tree kangaroo. (It surprises me still that despite the years I have spent on the move, I never get the feeling of having seen it all before.)

The men were thin, undecorated and naked except for long curly penis-gourds held up around their waists with string. Their voices were harsh and their sentences began with a sharp, rapid delivery, slowing at

WALK



Two Hewa men cross the flooded Lagai River; right from top: Indonesian Immigration Department canoe delivers Christina into PNG; Christina looks on as a guide tries her backpack; preparing for the river crossing; Strickland Gorge villagers

the end. It made them sound angry though I am told they have gentle natures. I shared out some tobacco. We smoked and moved on.

After walking eight hours, we neared our first day destination. Far below in the Om River valley I could see two huts. As we slithered down the muddy mountainside, Kom and his friend began yapping and yelp-yodelling to announce our arrival. It was like listening to a pack of hounds after a fox but the sound blended into harmony and echoed down along the valley.

The Om isn't a big river and was easy to cross via a vine foot-bridge. Away downstream the Om and Lagaip meet in a T-junction to become the mighty Strickland. The Lagaip, the stronger force entering the Strickland, was what I knew I would have to swim.

It was a relief to arrive at the huts. I was exhausted. A family came out to welcome us. They stood in line, their faces crinkled with curiosity. I shook hands with everyone and the women brought out their babies to shake hands too. The women wore grass skirts and several of the men had pigs' tusks through their noses. One had a chunky tusk and cowrie shell necklet and around his waist were about 30 bamboo hoops joined at the front into an ornate prong. Others wore penis-gourds but of a different style to those of the hunters.

The evening meal was *kau-kau* (sweet potato) roasted in a fire. They didn't have a saucepan, but I did, plus plenty of tinned meat to share around. The menfolk sat around the fire playing long-waisted drums hollowed from a single piece of wood. They drummed and talked till late.

I spent the next few days exploring the area north of the river junction and in the mountains on the edge of the Central Range. Then I went back to the junction and walked about two kilometres upstream on the La-

gaip to a small group of huts known as Sisimin. The people said I wouldn't make it across the river. I went down to the bank to look for myself. The river was in flood, a roaring wide brown torrent of water foaming over hidden rocks. It made my blood run cold. I felt glad they'd warned me not to try — glad but gloomy.

The water level was inching higher every time I checked it. It wouldn't subside until rain stopped falling in the headwaters — which could be days or weeks. But to show my determination, I sat making a model of a raft while thinking about crossing the river. Rafts have been used in this region ever since men first crossed the river. They are one-man rafts which you hold with both hands while swimming like a frog with your feet. Without a raft you would be swept away helplessly and drowned.

My host at Sisimin was Yagol T, an evangelist, and his wife Tocas. That evening they took me to a solitary grass-thatch hut which was the church. I felt a bit disorientated standing in a church with a congregation of people wearing strings of teeth and top knots of hair decorated with leaves and bird plumes.

The service began with a lovely hymn sung in pidgin with a chorus of '*Laikim yu, laikim mi. O God, yu bikpela*'. Into the offertory dish went corn cobs, bananas, sticks of sugarcane and handfuls of groundnuts.

Yago T led prayers, asking for dry weather at the river's headwaters for my safe crossing. He invoked the help of the spirits of those who had drowned in the river. Then he wanted me to say a prayer. There was no need to feel inhibited so I prayed aloud and asked their God to bless them for their kindness.

In the morning I went down to check the river. It was no less violent than the previous day and my spirits sank. While I waited to see if the level was rising or falling, a group of Hewa men appeared. They also want-

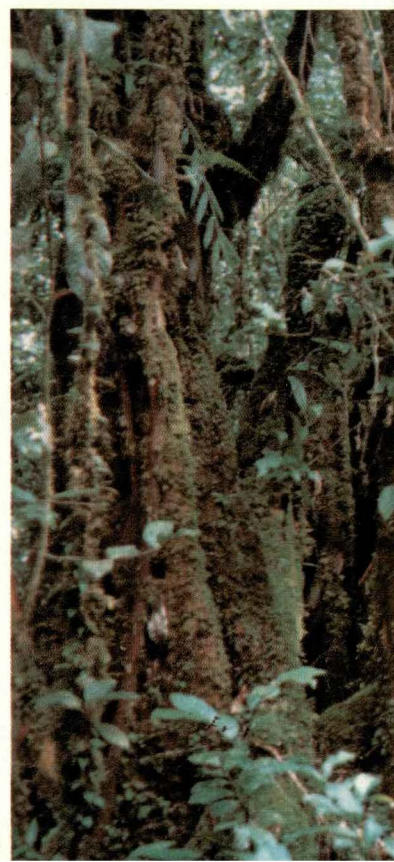
ed to cross the river but not until it was calmer. Nevertheless, they began to prepare for the crossing by making rafts. They chopped down some smallish trees, cut the trunks into metre-length logs, using three logs to a raft. These they bound tightly with creeper. They made one more raft than their own number, saying I could cross with them.

Suddenly they announced they were not going to wait after all and would be crossing right away. I said I was ready, my mind filling with a calm kind of terror. I thought that if they were willing to let me attempt it, it must be possible. We collected my backpack, wrapped it in my plastic rainsheet and roped it onto a raft.

First to try crossing were three men with my backpack. They pushed their rafts deep into the churning water. Swimming hard, yelping their battlecry, their voices grew fainter as the roaring water carried them downriver. The water surged over rocks in huge, angry waves. As the rafts met the rapids, one overturned. I watched horrified as man and raft were swept away. On distant wavecrests I caught glimpses of him struggling to regain control. At last he managed to turn it back over and head for the shore he had just left.

We waited until we knew he was safe. Then it was my turn. They tied my wrists to the raft so I couldn't let go. Then they positioned the raft alongside the strongest man. We set off, their yelpings of encouragement ringing in my ears. I swam for my life. The crossing was wild. An excitement I had rarely experienced surged through me as the water thrashed around me. About a kilometre downstream we struggled ashore on the other side.

The Hewas had offered to guide me for the next few days so I had paid off Kom. They seldom followed a visible path, seemingly moving by instinct. This sixth sense occasionally led





Left: Scarlet pandanus fruit, mumu delicacy at Kaugona; below: Christina and her guide walked barefoot through the dense jungle



them to stalk a bird or animal. We hunted cassowaries and one man shot a big black hornbill which was roasted for supper.

Huts, few and far between, were built on tall stilts for defence, either with a ladder which could be drawn up inside at night or else perched against a steep hill with a removable gangplank. In one hut I slept at the far end and, through a wide chink in the bamboo wall, could see a man sitting guard on the lookout's corner. His long crossed nose-quills and tall thin headdress made an interesting silhouette. He was working diligently, painting something.

I saw some paintings next day. Ochre on bark, they were in a pile under a small thatched shelter. I understand they have a role in hunting. In the act of painting, the hunter creates for himself a variety of powers according to the design. The paint fixes this power onto the bark. I did not find out if the stack of paintings was like a battery which could be recharged or whether the power lasted only one hunt. It is the art of the Hewa people which sets them apart from other highland cultures. Very few other groups decorate objects. Research indicates the Hewa were originally a lowland people, culturally related to the Sepik hill tribes who migrated and adapted to mountain living. The Hewas have maintained a semi-nomadic existence down through the centuries and their lands stretch south from the Central Range to just north of Lake Kapiago.

My next guide was a one-eyed man called Napat who took me for a two-day hike along the edge of the Strickland escarpment. It was a world of cliffs and vast open grassy mountains tumbling down to rocky gorges. Sometimes, when we rested, Napat played gentle zingy melodies on a bamboo jew's harp. I didn't want to leave the escarpment so I spent a whole day just sitting, looking at it. Then I felt ready to face the next stretch.

It was worse even than I had imagined. The terrain had everything: jagged mountains carpeted in thick forest full of spiky, stinging plants, sharp rocks, deep mud, frequent downpours and swarms of flies. My feet collected many cuts and thorns but nothing serious. We travelled up and down steep mountainsides, making only a few hundred metres as the crow flies after kilometres of walking.

As I struggled on it came clear to me how people can live for years and years in total ignorance of even the existence of people in a valley perhaps only a few kilometres away. I am sure there are still groups of people here who are not yet known to the outside world.

At Yokona I explored caves. The area is believed to contain some of the longest caves in the world. One has ancient ochre paintings of symbols, faces and designs like those I had seen on arrows.

We arrived at a hamlet called Kaugona just in time to watch a *mumu* (ground oven) being opened and were invited to join the feast. Many willing hands helped uncover the clay mound, roll back the hot stones and haul open the banana leaf layer which sealed the smoke inside. Eagerly they pulled out pieces of pig meat and long tendrils of juicy bracken which they stuffed hungrily into their mouths.

I sat down slightly apart from the men. I didn't want to interfere since their own womenfolk were not allowed to join in. But nobody objected to me and several passed me choice morsels of pork. I suppose they thought I wasn't really a woman. Napat said women were forbidden to eat certain foods or to touch food that men would eat. I had already noticed that husbands and wives didn't sleep in the same areas. The Hewa have divided huts. The men believe contact with women makes them weak and unhealthy.

Beneath the cooked bracken

was a layer of *kaukau* and a scarlet knobby fruit. This was lifted onto smoked banana leaves and then mashed into a seedy pulp. Then, taking large handfuls, they squeezed it in clenched fists until thick scarlet juice poured out between their fingers. The remains they pushed into their mouths, eating the pulp and spitting out the pips. Their faces were smeared as if with lipstick.

The headman gave me a banana leaf as a plate and heaped it with lots of everything. We were sitting outside the men's hut on a bald mountain shoulder. The forest had been cleared to make space for *kaukau* gardens which overlooked valleys narrow, grim and deep. The view stretched jaggedly above a lush profusion of forest. In the foreground sat red-stained men on their haunches. They pulled more food out of the *mumu* pit but the urgency of their hunger had been satisfied. They now picked at scraps in a leisurely way, patting their bellies in contentment and lighting bamboo

pipes of tobacco. They did not have matches and were used to making fire by rubbing a strip of bamboo around a split branch. A stone is wedged in the split with dry tinder.

I sat with one called Krka. He pointed out different trees and plants and told me of their powers and uses. At sunset rain began which continued through the night. The firelight flickered in the men's hut. I could hear voices and someone singing a solo. He sounded lost to the world, existing only in the melody of his song. He was singing as I fell asleep — and still singing whenever I stirred.

It was a drizzling dawn. Napat's brother had cut his foot badly and gone lame. Krka offered to take their place, saying he wasn't afraid to return home alone. Yet he certainly was afraid of the wild pig we met on the path. It was a sow with piglets and Krka, wearing my backpack, leapt up a tree. I did the same and the pigs trotted past us.

The forest floor was wet,

slippery clay. We clawed our way upwards and from the top of the ridge we could see the next three ridges ahead, cloud rising between each outline. Down in the valleys the rivers were swollen. We crossed them on fallen trees or by jumping from rock to rock.

It rained several times that day. Wet clothes are colder than bare skin and I think Krka was better off than me because he wore only a bunch of leaves and a multi-stranded girdle with a cassowary bone dagger. When he was puffed and breathing heavily it made the pig tusk in his nose whistle. Sometimes he got answering whistles from birds; even inspired bursts of song.

He taught me to recognise three different birds of paradise. His sharp eyes picked them out long before I saw them. He also spotted a snake and some black forest crabs.

Then we reached what is known as 'broken bottle' country — sharp ridges, plunging slopes, spurs of mountains,

all razor sharp. Sometimes Krka walked. Sometimes he ran. When the rainforest thinned out into moss-forest we walked on deep cushions of moss. Its texture made me glad to be barefoot.

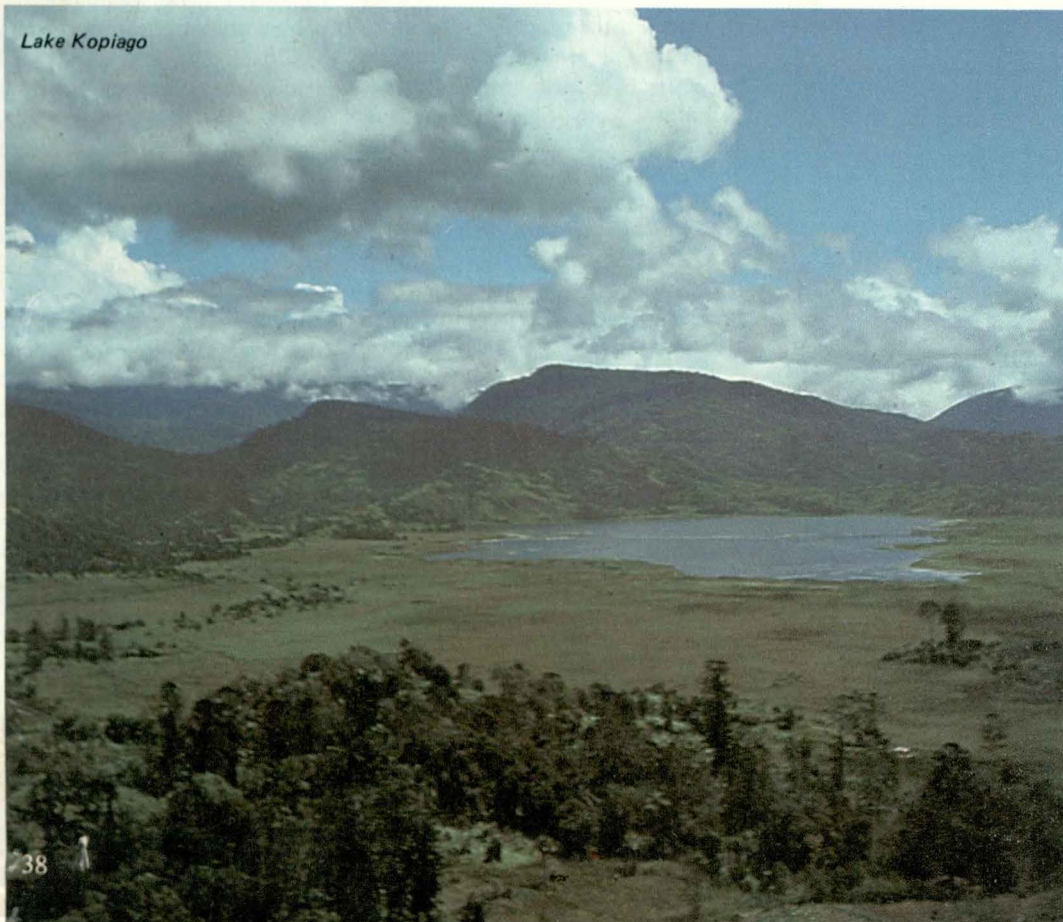
The moss forests were places of mist and cloud, vague shapes of trees, some rising 60 metres without a bend in their trunks. Others were old, gnarled and crooked, festooned with lichen and silvery trailing ferns. There were roots immense with flank-buttresses, trees tangled together with knotted ropes of vines and strangler vines covering pale tree trunks in lacy patterns. Moss overflowed from damp wood, heavy orange moss like saturated sponges, and filmy moss beards dripped from branches. The opaque gloom of mist echoed with birdsong and the perfume of orchids hung heavily in the air.

As we gradually worked our way down to Lake Kapiago we began to meet more people. In garden-hamlets the women shrieked with amazement when they heard I'd walked from Ok-sapmin. The last few miles seemed endless. Krka pointed out a mountain beside Kapiago. As we went up and down range after range it never seemed to get any closer. My feet suddenly began to feel very sore and, despite the black clouds blanketing the sky, I kept having to stop and rest. I was exhausted.

Finally the path became a track. I didn't follow it right into Kapiago. I stopped at the first place I saw. It was the Catholic mission. Father Hans gave me a wonderful reception — hot shower, fresh clothes, good company, real food and home-made bread.

Rain tumbled down all night but it didn't matter any more. I'd arrived and I was sleeping in a bed with crisp white sheets. Looking back on the walk and its ending gave me the lovely feeling of being welcome in Papua New Guinea. ♣

Lake Kapiago





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