

paradise

in-flight with Air Niugini

complimentary copy

LANVIN
PARIS



Arpège de Lanvin

paradise



Welcome aboard

This month represents a milestone in the history of Air Niugini. From November 4 Air Niugini, together with Cathay Pacific and Air New Zealand, will run a once weekly service between Auckland and Hong Kong, via Port Moresby. This new service will be operated with a Boeing 747 aircraft. Domestically we have commenced new regular scheduled services to the Ok Tedi mine-site at Kiunga and to the Highlands ports of Kundiawa and Mendi. These new services will utilise the De Havilland Dash-7 aircraft.

The collective introduction of these services represents a major step forward in the evolution of Air Niugini. It demonstrates that the airline is living up to its charter to provide a comprehensive airline system to the people of Papua New Guinea.

It further illustrates our commitment to attracting tourists and business to our country by providing an efficient network to and from Papua New Guinea within the South Pacific and South East Asian basin.

No. 38 Nov 82 — Jan 83

Paradise is published by Air Niugini's Publications Department, PO Box 7186, Boroko, Papua New Guinea (telephone 27 3542; telex NE22225). Printed in Hong Kong by Progressive Printing Agency.

Managing Editor — Tom Cooke
Editor — Bob Talbot
Design — John Devereux
Typesetting — Kath Williams
Advertising — Margaret Bates

Advertising

Papua New Guinea — Publications Department, Air Niugini, PO Box 7186, Boroko

Australia — Murray Publishers Pty Ltd, 152-154 Clarence Street, Sydney, NSW 2000 (telephone (02) 268 9811)

Hongkong — Progressive Advertising Agency, 11 Kam Ping Street, Kam Ming Yuen, Rm C, 2nd Fl., North Point (telephone 5-630145-6; telex HX65474PPAAE)

Japan — Universal Media Corporation, GPO Box 46, Tokyo (telephone 666-3036; cables 'Unimedia' Tokyo)

United Kingdom — Intergroup Communications Inc., 31 Lyncroft Avenue, Pinner, Middlesex (telephone 01-868 9289; cables Pacom Pinner)

Subscriptions

Annual subscription rates for six airmail issues are:

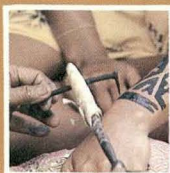
USA, Europe, UK and Africa
Kina 23 (\$US35)

Australia, New Zealand, Asia and South Pacific K19 (\$US29)
Papua New Guinea K13

Payment by international bank draft, please.

Please address all correspondence to Paradise, PO Box 7186, Boroko, Papua New Guinea.

Joseph James Tauvasa
General Manager



5 MARK OF RESPECT

The token revival of a traditional art form



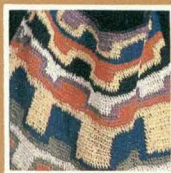
11 BIRTH OF A BUTTERFLY

The life cycle of one of the world's largest butterflies



15 MYSTERY BOMBERS

Relics of World War II indicate the possibility that the Japanese were planning a second front in Papua New Guinea in 1942



21 BILUMS

Papua New Guinea's most dominant form of contemporary art



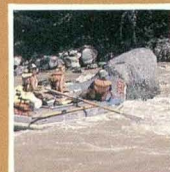
27 CAT CRAZY

Papua New Guinea wins the South Pacific Hobie Cat Championships



31 FLUTES, LIZARDS AND SLEEP

The cultures and customs of the Sepik people by a tourist who did it the hard way



37 BARAAHP

An insight into the adventure and hazards involved in the exciting sport of white water rafting



Quality in Air Transport

Cover: Detail of a retwisted wool bilum made by the Goilala people

We've got it all wrapped up.



The complete freight handling service requires an organization encompassing a daunting assembly of expertise. Stevedoring, through cargo handling, ancillary shipping and packaging services, road haulage, specialised freight handling equipment, complete container facilities, cold storage, full vessel agency are but some of the essential services required.

The Robert Laurie-Carpenters Group of Companies covers all these and more. In fact so comprehensive is the service offered that you are invited to send for the RLC information folio which describes in detail this complete freight handling service. Whether it's sea, land or airfreight — RLC have it all wrapped up.

Robert Laurie-Carpenters Pty. Ltd.
PO Box 922
Port Moresby
Papua New Guinea

Telephone: 217324, Telex: NE22107
Branches throughout Papua New Guinea

RLC

MARK OF RESPECT

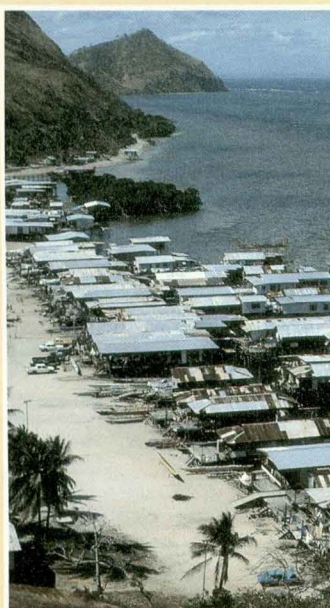
Story by Carol Kidu, pictures by Karen Munce



In Pari village near Port Moresby, as in other Motuan villages along the Papuan coast, tattooing was traditionally regarded as an important part of life for village women. A girl without tattoos would walk with shame in the village street. So it was that traditionally all girls were tattooed. Interest in this traditional art led to a token revival of it earlier this year.



Clockwise from top left: the dye is painted on with a piece of sago palm bark; Pari village; mother-in-law concentrates on her work; tattoos are made with a sharp thorn needle and a hand stock; a looped palm frond is used to scrape off excess dye



THE house swayed gently with the movement of the sea below. Hurricane lamps dimmed and flickered. The laughter and singing of children playing in the moonlit street gradually faded as they succumbed to the desire for rest; and still the talk continued, late into the night, about the ways of the ancestors.

Eyelids became heavy but the old people talked on in hushed whispers, their minds alive with memories that are for them realities. The talk about tattooing rekindled in me a curiosity I had for a long time about this traditional art.

My initial request to have a tattoo done in the traditional way was met with reservations. "Do you like pain?" was the typical comment. But as the request was discussed further, interest spread within the family until it was a group to be tattooed rather than an individual.

•••••

Clambering along the base of a hill near the village, eyes fixed to the ground, occasionally stopping to clear the dirt, at last, we find what we are searching for. We carefully remove the dirt and break off pieces of a vine-like root, soft and spongy to the touch, called *varovaro* and *ogoseva*.

Carefully, we place them in

our small string bag and search for more.

It is hot now, the sun reflects on the sea and the stoney beach. Satisfied with our collection, we retrace our steps to the village, sweat glistening on our bodies.

With an indulgent laugh at our ignorance, mother-in-law throws away many pieces of incorrect vine then busies herself with the next step in the procedure.

She balances a wide-necked clay pot called *itulu*, upside down on three medium sized stones, then gently blows on some glowing coals beneath the pot. The dry, soft vines are placed on top and soon the coals flicker to life. A dark, black smoke (like that caused by burning rubber) rises into the clay pot and the soot clings to the inside of the pot.

As the pot cools, the *koukou* (a container made from a coconut shell) is removed from its resting place on the wire rack in the smokey kitchen. The soot is meticulously transferred from the clay pot to the coconut container.

Water (fresh water or sea water) is added and mixed to make the black dye. We are ready to begin.

With a fine piece of *kipa* (sago palm bark) as a pen, the elderly artist (the mother-in-law), begins her work. With steady hand and eye, the artist methodically passes the sago 'pen' from soot solution to arm and back again. The geometric pattern grows to cover the lower arm, precise and detailed.

The quiet is interrupted by the protesting wails of a group of small boys who are dragged off by their mothers and chided for watching an activity traditionally seen only by women.

"Are you women?" This ridicule quickly disperses them and they return to their play in the sand below the houses.

The patterns upon the arm have dried, so the artist now prepares her tattooing equipment: a *gini* (sharp thorn needle) and an *iboki* (hand stick) to be used





as a light hammer. We finger the needle apprehensively.

"Will I do it or not?" Mother-in-law gives us a chance to change our minds.

The initial pain changes to a dull numbness as the incessant pricking of the tattoo thorn continues. Dizziness leads to embarrassment as I find the only way to prevent fainting, is to lie down.

Murmurings from the older women bring assurances that many of them felt the same, years ago, when their tattooing was started. But theirs was the start of a long process to span the years of their adolescence and to culminate in almost all of their bodies being tattooed.

And ours? A mere token, prompted by curiosity; a small band tattoo, called *toea*, upon the wrist to remind us of the strength and endurance of past generations.

Tap, tap, tap. The *iboki* rhythmically taps the *gini* and it feels as though something is beating on our bones. The women comment on the quantity of the blood flow.

The greater the flow of the blood, the less the amount of dye that enters the skin, and so the fainter the resulting tattoo pattern. This usually necessitates a "second coat" to be applied to the tattoo at a later date.

At last, the rhythmic tapping ceases and the bleeding stops. A coconut frond is tied into a loop and used to scrape off the blood and excess dye to reveal the permanent tattoo below. The *iboki* is gently but firmly rolled across the area to help prevent swelling.

Finally, the tender flesh is washed in fresh water and we are cautioned that, by custom, we are not allowed to bathe in the sea water for at least four days. A week passes. The black outer layer of skin peels off and leaves a fainter, greenish tattoo, a token revival of a traditional art.

•••••

Traditionally, Motuan tattooing was done during the time of the Hiri trading expeditions.

The Hiri was an annual expedition made by Motuan men to Kerema villages in the Gulf of Papua.

During the season called *Lahara* (October to March approximately) Motuan villages were very short of food because the gardens were not yet ready for harvesting. Because of this food shortage, each year groups of men prepared *lagatois* (large canoes) while the women made clay pots. At the end of *Hitau* (the 'good' season) preparations were complete.

During the month called *Huria* (September approximately) the womens' tears of sadness and apprehension marked the departure of the *lagatois*, laden with pots for the Gulf. The *Laurabada* winds (SE trade winds) carried the men on their long and hazardous journey to trade the pots for sago and other items.

As the force of the *Laurabada* eased, the women knew that the men had now reached their destination, and were meeting with their traditional trading partners. Soon the winds would change and the *Lahara* (NE trade winds) would make the return voyage possible. Now was the time by custom for tattooing to commence.

For the young girls, about 10 years old, the process began with their hands and arms being tattooed first, possibly because these are the least painful areas.

Each year, during *Lahara* season, the process would be continued. Breasts, buttocks, backs, and sides were tattooed. Some older women regard the underarm sides to be one of the most painful areas.

Faces (even eyelids for some), thighs, abdomen, pubic areas and legs; day in, day out, during the season of *Lahara* each year, the *iboki* tapped gently on the girl and the patterns grew.

Each part of the body had its own particular pattern, usually handed down in families. All the patterns were distinctly Motuan in style but displayed variety within, according to vil-



Left: roots, coconut shell container, thorn needle and hand stick used by tattooists; **bottom:** finally the tender flesh is washed with water



lage, family and artist.

Traditionally, throughout the time of tattooing (several months), the girl being tattooed was not allowed to wash herself, comb her hair, or take part in normal village activities. From morning till night she remained in the house, and her mother patiently tattooed her while other family members prepared food and attended to normal activities. If her mother tired, a grandmother or aunt would continue.

A girl who could endure long hours of tattooing was admired for her strength. If the girls cried out or showed obvious signs of distress, their mothers reprimanded them by hitting them on their heads with *iboki*.

And so it continued for several months until it was time for the *lagatois* to return from the Gulf, with the sago to sustain the village until yam harvest time. The continual tapping of thorn on flesh stopped; the *gini*, *iboki* and *itulu* were carefully

stored; and after four days the girls bathed in the ocean and cleaned themselves, ready to walk with pride in the village.

Most Motuan tattoos have no symbolic meaning. Most are simply decorative patterns handed down in families and changing slightly with different artists. These patterns had names to identify them.

In Pari village, only three of the many patterns have symbolic meanings. Facial tattoos could be done for anybody, except for under the eyes. Only the first daughter of a family could have the tattoo done below each eye down the cheek; and she could have it done only if her father had made a *lagatois* for a Hiri expedition.

This tattoo is called *irurumata* ("teardrops") and it symbolises the tears shed by the women for their men away on the hazardous expedition.

Tattoos on the lower part of the leg (below the knees) were also symbolic and could only be

done if the girl's father had been involved in a Hiri expedition.

The third symbolic tattoo was a "V" shaped tattoo from the sides of the neck to between the breast. When a boy's family had approached the girl's family and marriage commitments were made, this tattoo was started. When the bride price had been paid, this tattoo was completed, and it showed clearly to all that she was a married woman.

The pain involved in permanent tattooing is no longer a reality, but the pride in this aspect of Motuan culture is not lost. With felt pens in hand, grandmothers probably reminisce as they adorn young girls with temporary "tattoos" for traditional dance activities — a tradition of body decoration that is not dying, but changing to suit a changing society. — Carol Kidu is a school teacher at Port Moresby High School

WHY HANDLING YOUR CORPORATE INSURANCE IS RATHER LIKE WINNING AT WIMBLEDON



Winning the big one at Wimbledon demands fierce concentration. You must anticipate every possibility. Move immediately to counter it. Pounce on opportunities. Or think ahead to create them, if none occurs.

In short, you must be totally aware of the situation, and react instantly to every development — which is exactly what we at Bain Dawes do, when we handle your corporate insurance. We keep so closely in touch with you that we become virtually an extension of your organisation.

When we've arranged your corporate cover — no matter how detailed and creative a task that may be — our work has only just begun.

If you want an insurance broker who'll handle your business with the concentrated alertness of a top star at Wimbledon, call Bain Dawes today.

These days, you can't afford to lose a point.

Bain Dawes
*International Insurance Brokers
and Risk Management Advisers*

Hunter Street, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. Phone 21 1277.
Savloan Haus, Second Street, Lae, Papua New Guinea. Phone 42 1835.
22 Atchison Street, St. Leonards, NSW 2065, Australia. Phone 439 6744.

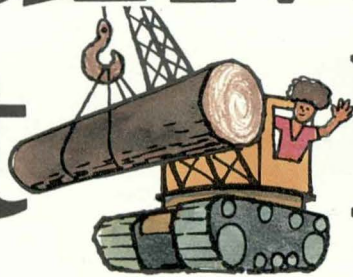
And at Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin, Hong Kong, Tokyo, London, Paris and other offices throughout Asia, New Zealand, North America, the United Kingdom, Europe and South America.



drive it



lift it



light it



heat it



cool it



drill it



ship it



fly it

cut it



dig it



power it



Shell does it

Shell Papua New Guinea Pty. Ltd. PO Box 169 Port Moresby. phone 22 8700

BIRTH OF A BUTTERFLY

By Chris Prior

Papua New Guinea is the home of the world famous birdwing butterfly. The family includes Ornithoptera alexandreae, the largest butterfly in the world, and Ornithoptera paradisea which has been described as having perhaps the most exquisite of butterfly designs. Of the eight species in the country, seven are restricted to small areas and are rare and protected. The eighth, Ornithoptera priamus, is much more common and widespread than the others and has numerous distinct races distributed through Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, North Australia and the Solomon Islands. The one illustrated in these pictures, Ornithoptera priamus bornemanni, is the variety which occurs in New Britain and the Witu Islands. Another variety, Ornithoptera priamus miokensis, occurs only on the tiny island of Mioko in the Duke of York Islands near Rabaul.

Male Ornithoptera Priamus Bornemanni feeding on Ixora flowers, a favourite source of nectar. The males are always active and, unlike the females, they never rest with their wings open



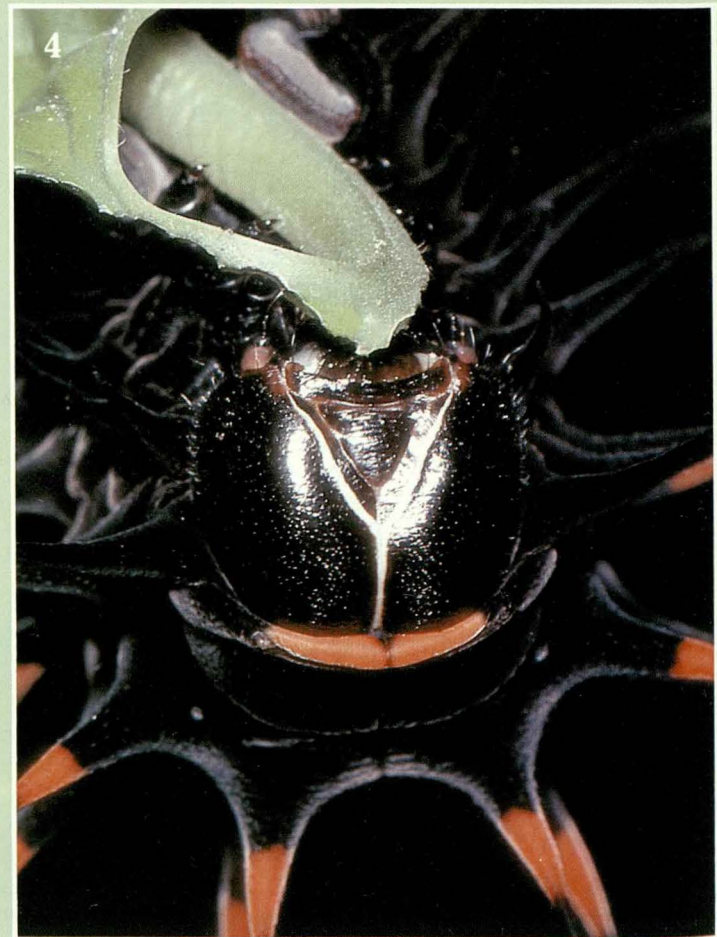
BIRTH OF A BUTTERFLY

1 The eggs are laid on the underside of the leaves of the foodplant, a vine that grows in the bush. The larvae hatch after about ten days and their first action is to eat the empty egg case. Many eggs are parasitised by a tiny

wasp which lays its eggs in the butterfly egg and whose larvae eat the contents.

2, 3 The caterpillars moult four times before reaching full size and their skin pattern changes from brown with a red band to a dark velvet brown with a white band and red-tipped soft spines. The larvae eat with tremendous

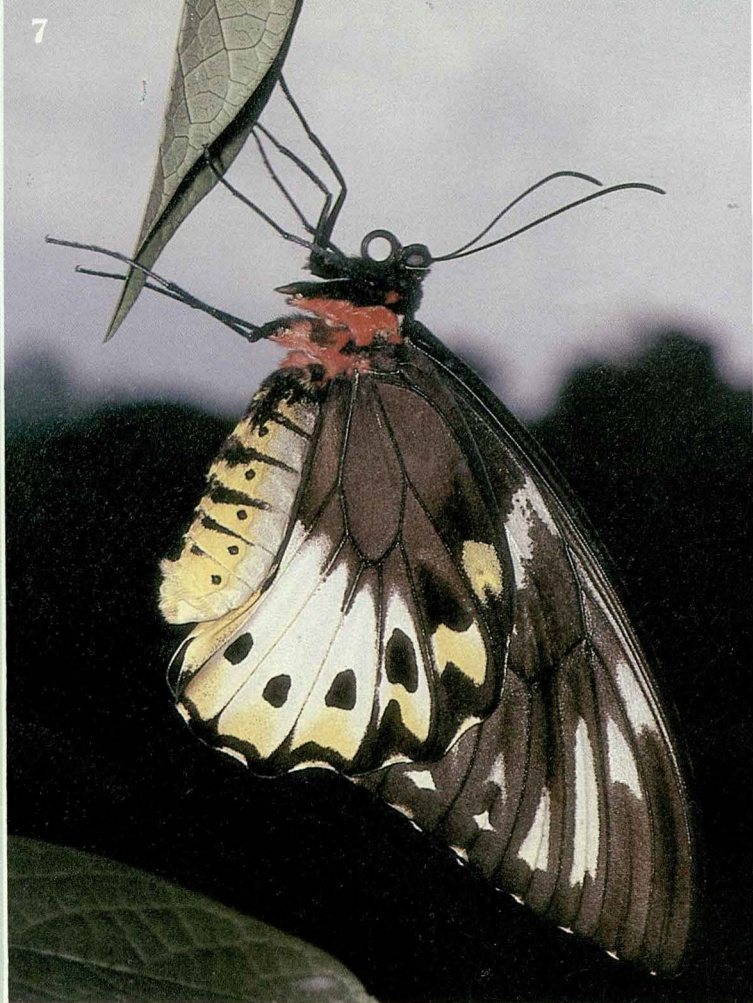
appetite and wipe out leaves like a wet cloth cleaning a blackboard.



4 The double red mark above the head capsule is the tip of a concealed weapon called the osmetrium. When it is alarmed the caterpillar suddenly shoots out this red, forked organ which emits a nasty smell to warn off the attacker. The caterpillars are distasteful to predators because they have an unpleasant taste.

5 After about a month the full grown caterpillar spins itself a pad of black silk which it sticks to the underneath of a leaf. It anchors its back feet in this and then spins another one higher up, from which it suspends a strong loop. It puts

its head in the loop and then slumps backward, suspended and quiet. After three or four days the larva moults for the last time. The skin splits and reveals a bright yellow, soft chrysalis.

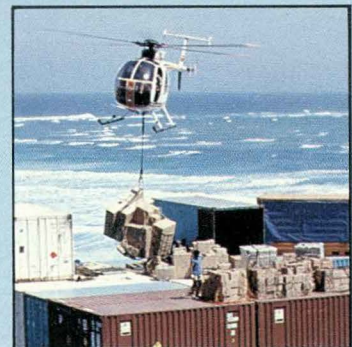


6 After five weeks, the chrysalis darkens slightly and the next day the butterfly emerges by bursting through a weakness in the case, usually in the early morning. At first very crumpled and wet, it hangs on the empty case, drying its wings and pumping fluid into them until the wonderful patterns are fully displayed. The one pictured is a female.

7 The newly emerged butterflies rest for about eight hours before taking flight. The females may mate at this time if a wandering male happens to catch them. More often they mate in flight, after a preliminary chase in which the male follows the female in a very fast and close formation.

8 The adults have a very long proboscis and favour flowers with long throats such as hibiscus. ♣

The 500 tonne lift

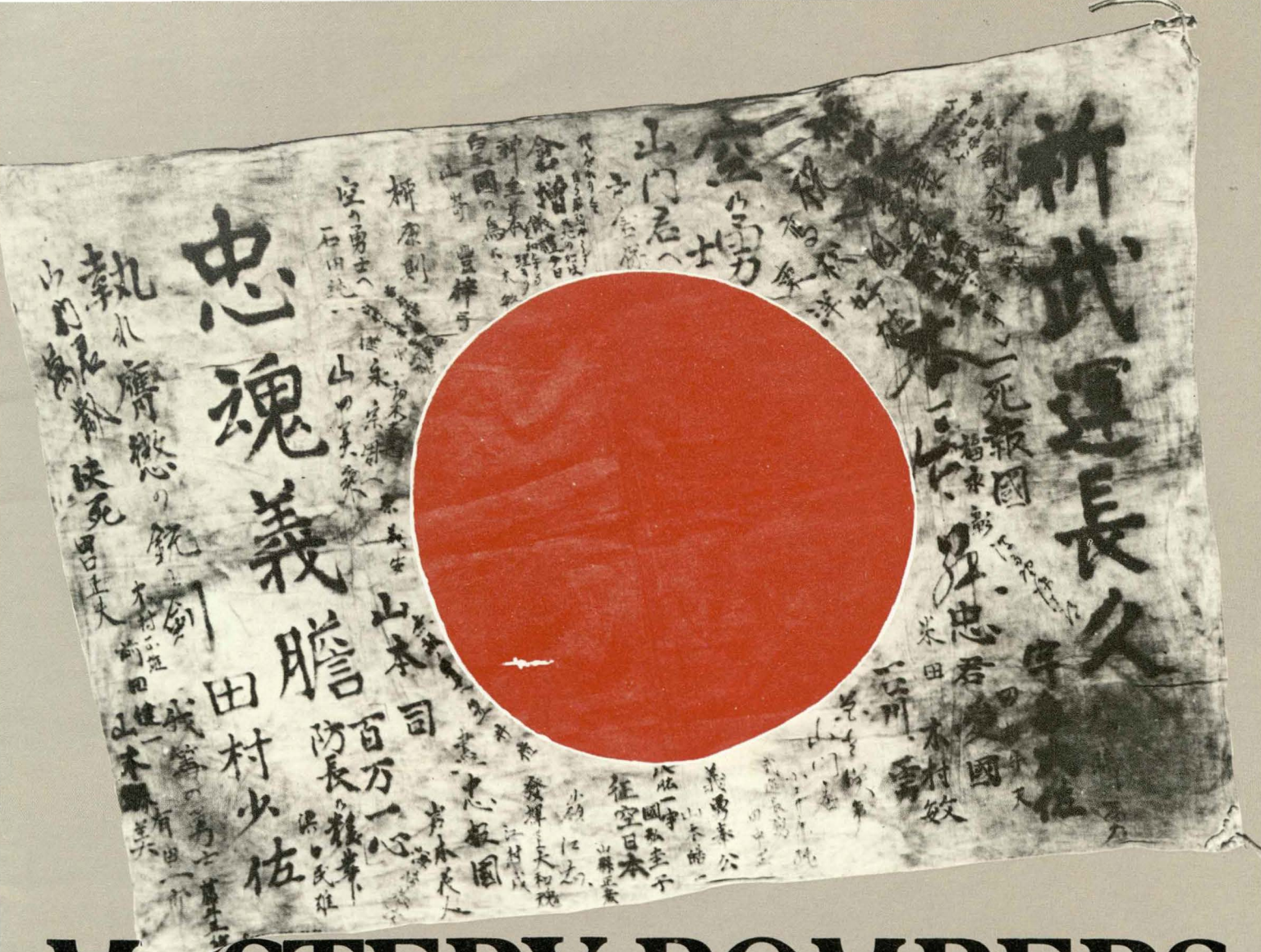


The way to get the *Waigani Express* off the reef required a helicopter air lift. Our Hughes 500 machines moved over 500 tonnes of cargo to barges, waiting in the lagoon, faster than it could be brought up from the holds.

As Papua New Guinea's largest helicopter operator, with four types of helicopters strategically placed in four centres spanning the country, we're ready to serve you at a moment's notice. If our Hughes 500s, Bell 206s, Hiller Solos or 7-seater AS350B Squirrel Helicopter are not just right we'll bring in the helicopter that will do the job. Our pilots are skilled in all phases of helicopter support work: remote area construction, surveys, mining, agricultural application — even above 3,000 metres. So whatever the job, Pacific can do it.

Head Office: Goroka Airport, Eastern Highlands Province,
PO Box 342, GOROKA; Telephone: 72 1830; Telex: NE72623;
Cables: PAC-HEL GOROKA
Branches: Port Moresby 259301, Lae 424624, Rabaul 921209.





MYSTERY BOMBERS



Warrant Officer David Marsh of ANGAU; **above:** the Japanese flag belonging to the lead navigator, Matae Yamakado

In 1970, Robert Kendall Piper, a field officer with an exploration company, began researching the mystery of three Japanese bombers found on a Papua Beach during the height of the Pacific War in 1942. Why were they landed there? Were they off-course or lost? Were they a special reconnaissance party aiming to open up a new front? In an effort to find out, Robert Kendall Piper talked to ex-District Commissioner David Marsh, who participated in the 1942 investigation of the mystery landings, and Professor Ikuhiko Hata of Tokyo who translated the Japanese side of the mystery.

THREE Japanese 'Val' dive-bombers were discovered landed under mysterious circumstances on an allied beach in Papua during early September 1942.

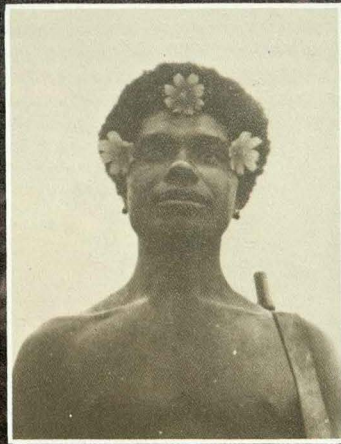
At this time both the Kokoda Trail and Milne Bay campaigns were in full swing as Australians fought against the invaders for control of these strategic areas. Where the aircraft were abandoned was a remote position on the south coast of Papua, approximately mid-way between the two centres of dispute. The

planned seaborne invasion of Moresby had been thwarted earlier in May with the Battle of the Coral Sea.

Signals were quickly flashed to the ANGAU (Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit) post nearest the sighting, which was 130 miles east of Port Moresby, at Abau Island. Major W.S. Lambden M.C. received and decoded the message then handed it to WOII David Marsh, who had just arrived back from patrol. The words were brief and to the effect that

there were three enemy aircraft on the sand at the northern end of Table Bay. As this area runs east-west for some thirty miles and clarification on the so-called "northern end" was not forthcoming it was decided to take a small launch to the western end and search eastwards from there.

Limited by the size of the launch, the party consisted of Lieutenant K.W. Bilston, David Marsh and four native members of the Royal Papuan Constabulary; Sgt. Nikira and



armed constables Dipora, Haila and Onewa. Also a local cook named "Hitolo" (Motu coastal language for hungry!). In charge of the boat was Cpl. Joseph Dixon assisted by a trusted prisoner, who was in jail for life after committing wilful murder.

At Table Point the party left the launch and arranged a rendezvous with Dixon at Deba Point. Later the following day those on foot discovered the three aircraft, about 100 yards apart, not far from Deba Point. All were Aichi two-seater naval dive-bombers, (code named 'VAL' by the allies) identical to those that had been attacking shipping and installations in the Milne Bay area.

Each had been partially burnt out in the centre around the cockpits by the crews who had ignited parachutes in an attempt to destroy their planes. Local villagers informed the search party that six Japanese had removed the rear mounted machine guns from each, as well as food supplies, and headed inland.

Documents consisting of maps, ships silhouettes as well as surplus rations were found buried at a nearby rough campsite and retrieved by the Army men. It was here as well that a note was brought to them from a native pastor of the London Missionary Society. It indicated that he was trying to lead the

Japanese airmen around in circles until the police could catch up.

After a hasty conference it was decided to bring in reinforcements and then go inland via Amazon Bay, (a few miles further east) in an attempt to cut the enemy fliers off at the pass on top of the main range.

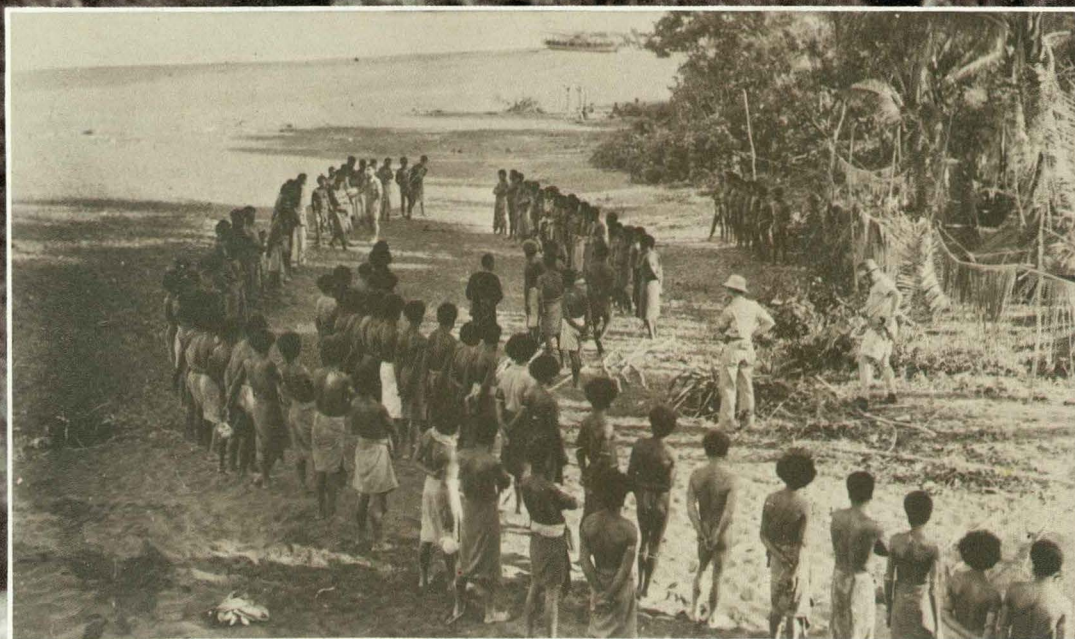
Cpl. Dixon was met at Deba Point and despatched on foot to walk back to Abau along the beaches and arrange for more men. The launch was retained so that the party could more easily reposition themselves should additional information on the Japanese movements come to hand.

A remarkable trek was made

by Dixon and as luck would have it the *m.v. Laurabada*, with Ivan Champion in charge, was at Abau when he arrived. Late the following afternoon the vessel pulled into Mogubu Plantation at Amazon Bay with ten native police reinforcements.

No further news had been heard about the 'Val' crews so the armed party, with David Marsh leading, moved steadily inland until dark. Early the following morning the searchers set out in earnest to reach the top of the main range.

During the day Hitolo the cook dressed himself as a local native and went into villages to obtain information while the



Abandoned Japanese 'Val' dive-bomber on the beach at Table Bay; inset clockwise from above: labour lines assembled at Table Bay to recover the 'Val' bombers; gunner/navigator Susumu Tanaka; gunner/navigator Hisao Ibori; a Papuan tommy gun bearer who assisted in the chase; one of the beached 'Vals'

police deployed on the outskirts. At that time the Papuans on the coastal plains were not friendly. However, those along the beaches and in the mountains were and gave what assistance they could.

Late in the afternoon of the second day, as David Marsh and his men approached a small hill settlement engulfed in cloud, word was received that the Japanese were in a hut across a creek from the village. Silently taking up positions the patrol fired a volley and called on them to surrender. The Japanese airmen opened up with their three machine guns.

It was a baptism of fire for the police and one, Cpl. Lapa,

broke and ran right through the line of fire. Luckily he was not hit but didn't rejoin the others for some two days. The rest remained firm and the Japanese shortly thereafter ran into the jungle immediately behind their bush house. Quickly responding the police took a parallel course up the mountain and beat three of them to the top. Three of the airmen were killed and three escaped.

Three two-man patrols were despatched to try and cut the remaining naval fliers off on the northern side of the range. One pair, Constables Haila and Onewa, eventually re-located the second group in an open area with high grass. Strategic-

ally placed the police were on a small hill with four Japanese on a vulnerable slope below. Once again the pursuers called on the aircrew to surrender.

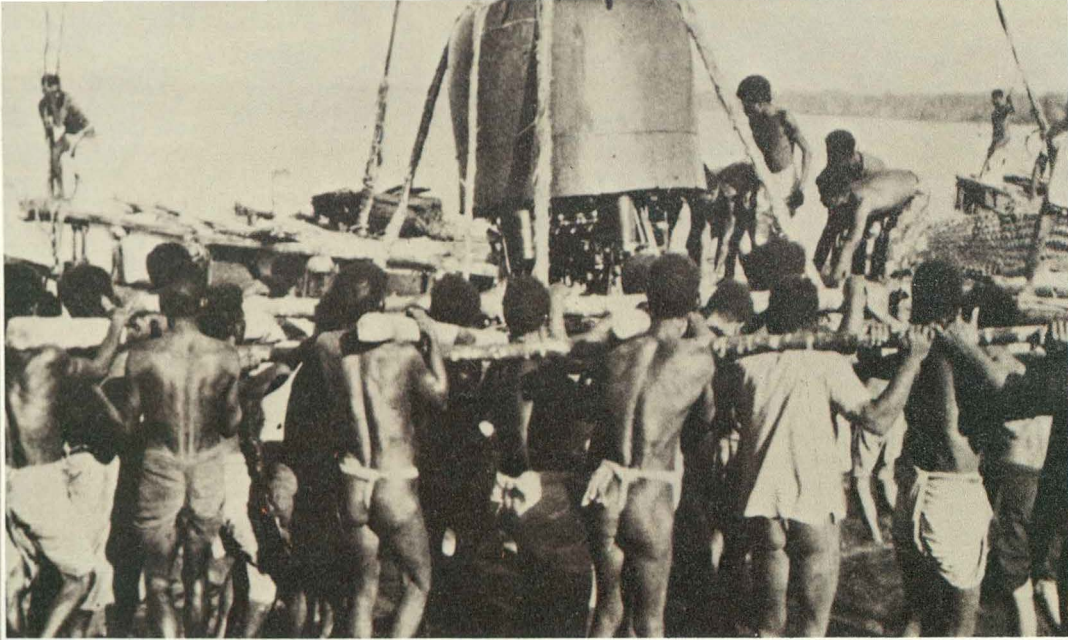
The aviators replied with pistol shots. Having little respect for small firearms, the native police carefully counted off six rounds and then moved in. With their .303 rifles they retaliated and killed the three remaining runaways.

Lieutenant Bilston read a burial service over the first three killed and they were buried in a common grave close to where the action took place. The others were interred on the northern side of the range where they were killed. These

encounters had taken place in the area known as *Dimuga*.

One of the machine guns was later mounted as a memento on Abau Island. By sheer luck, it was discovered after the encounter. The police riflemen had hit one of the Japanese machine guns in the gas chamber and a second in the drum magazine effectively jamming it. Only the third had still been functioning when it was discarded as the airmen fled. These weapons were virtually identical to the British Lewis gun except the cooling system was not installed.

A military unit later uplifted the least damaged Japanese aircraft by barge. A valuable prize for allied intelligence. Discovery of the abandoned dive-bombers is attributed to Squadron Leader Wright (RAAF) who sighted them



The 14-cylinder engine from the beached 'Val' bomber is carried in regal style to commence its 60 kilometre journey from Table Bay to Abau by canoe; **below:** a machine gun from one of the 'Val' bombers is examined at Milne Bay



revealed that the 'Vals' were led by a former retired pilot Warrant Officer Ota Genga, with navigator Yamakado Matae. Ota had participated in previous attacks on Milne Bay. Those accompanying him were believed to be fairly inexperienced and held junior ranks. Their names were Hori Mitsuo (pilot) and Tanaka Susumu as well as Maruyama Takeshi (pilot) and Iburi Hisao. All the Zeros later flew onto Buna and arrived safely at 1730 hours.

A flag recovered from the hut at the scene of the first encounter, and still retained by Mr Marsh, has been recently identified as belonging to the lead navigator Yamakado.

Australian Navy records confirm that on 2 September 1942 the destroyer *H.M.A.S. Arunta* and Dutch cargo ship *Tasman* (4492 tons) had indeed entered Milne Bay. Neither reported sighting enemy aircraft on that occasion. Royal Australian Air Force diaries as well as those of an American engineering unit located near the dive-bombers nominated target also make no mention of any opposition planes entering that zone on the day.

In retrospect David Marsh, now living in Sydney, believes the Japanese knew exactly where they were heading. Once over the range the men could have picked up on the opposite coast or have attempted following it up to their own lines at Buna. The heavily armed group was equipped for a jungle patrol and appeared to have landed with a deliberate plan in mind. Equipment included walking boots, whisky, invasion money, steel helmets and concentrated rations.

Was this a special reconnaissance party to survey a second Kokoda type trail and surprise the Australians midway between their main bases? 🌿

about midday on 5 September, while flying a Kittyhawk fighter from Moresby to Milne Bay.

A Tiger Moth flown by Group Captain Garing, with Flight Lieutenant Winten as observer, flew up to Table Bay the same afternoon. The slow flying fabric biplane was also able to land on the beach safely. Photos were taken and after a quick examination of the 'Vals' the Australian airmen returned to their unit and confirmed the amazing find. It was falsely assumed at the time that the enemy bombers, which were identical to those involved in the heavy raid on Milne Bay nine days earlier (27 August), had been damaged by 75 Squadron's Kittyhawks in combat.

About 1960 David Marsh, then an acting District Com-

missioner with the P.N.G. Department of District Administration, was once again travelling across Table Bay by sailing canoe close to the place of the 1942 dive-bomber incident. From behind the line of surf he engaged in a shouted conversation with a local native on the beach in front of his village. The Papuan said he had a letter to deliver to a person named Marsh and went off to his house to collect it. Coming back down the beach he tied the message to a stick and swam out through the surf to deliver it.

The note was a second one from the same London Missionary Society pastor of WWII and had been given to the man to deliver in 1942. Further information was contained in the letter about the Japanese and it

also asked David to deal with a man in the village who had been challenging the minister's leadership. Enquiries at Japan's War History Section in Tokyo during January 1982 finally solved part of the mystery. Three 'Val' dive-bombers of the 2nd Air Corps, escorted by six Zeros, had departed Rabaul at 12.30 pm on 2 September 1942 to attack a light cruiser and transport at Milne Bay. Japanese authorities say that three hours after take-off they parted company with the fighters and were never seen or heard of again.

Captain Sakae Yamamoto, then commanding officer of the unit, was to comment in his diary of the same date that perhaps the three crews were still alive. Japanese records further



See Papua New Guinea with Douglas Airways

Within an hour's flying time of Port Moresby we can show you the historic mission at Yule Island, the exciting mountain scenery of Tapini or Woitape, tea plantations and butterfly farming at Garaina, the unique fiords of Tufi, or the never-to-be-forgotten "jungle" airstrips and villages dotted along the famous wartime Kokoda Trail. Our scheduled and charter flights can take you country-wide in comfort and safety.



Head Office: Jacksons Airport, Port Moresby
Telephone: 253499, 253330, 253440

WINNERS TAKE OFF WHEREVER THEY LAND.

Winners travel far and wide. Which is one of the main reasons why winners rent with Hertz. Because no matter where they land, Hertz puts them first.

With over 4000 locations around the world, it's hard to find a place where you won't find Hertz.

Asia Pacific is no exception. In this region, we have more airport locations than any other car rental company. This means you can arrive practically anywhere and pick up an immaculate (inside and out) Hertz Car. And with a valid Hertz Credit Card or a Hertz No. 1 Club Card, no one can get you into a car and out of the airport faster than we can.



A Hertz Credit Card gives you instant rent-a-car credit at any one of our world-wide locations. It's quick. It's convenient.

Hertz No. 1 Club facilities are available in Australia, Canada, Europe, Japan, New Zealand, U.S.A. There's no faster way to rent a car.

So if you want to take off wherever you land, do what winners do.

Take off with Hertz.

Apply now and go places fast. Membership for both the Hertz Credit Card and Hertz No. 1 Club Card is free. For an application, contact your nearest Hertz office, or write to: Ken Patteson, Vice President and General Manager, Hertz Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd., Regional Office, Maxwell Rd. P.O. Box 286, Singapore. 9005.

American Samoa. Australia. Fiji. Guam. Hawaii.
 Hong Kong. India. Indonesia. Japan. Malaysia.
 Nepal. New Caledonia.
 New Zealand. Norfolk Island.
 Papua New Guinea.
 Philippines. Saipan.
 Singapore. Sri Lanka.
 Tahiti. Thailand. Vanuatu.



WINNERS LOVE HERTZ.
 Hertz rents Fords and other fine cars.

Scali/HZ1089



BILUMS



Story and pictures by Maureen Mackenzie

BILUMS, those ubiquitous flexible net bags, are essential accessories of every day life in Papua New Guinea.

Used by man, woman and child, national and expatriate alike, they are evident everywhere: in the city, the village and the bush; at the market and the supermarket; at the airport

and the PMV stop; at the University and the community school; in the garden, the home, the *haus win* and the *haus tamberan*; at the *singsing*, at church and at the most sacrosanct of traditional rituals.

They come in all shapes and sizes, from the tiny finger-sized chest bilums, to the huge elastically expanding 'market'

bilums; and they display an overwhelming variety of strong and vital designs.

They are one of the most useful objects in the country; and, more than this, they reflect the flavour of society and social values at large today. They are a form of culture that nothing can suppress . . . a virtual subculture . . . Papua New Guinea's

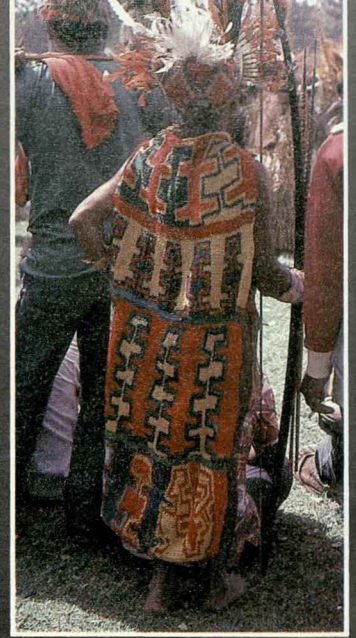
most animate art form.

The bilum has unselfconsciously bridged the gap between traditional and modern living. It seems to have made this transition naturally without a falter, making use of new materials and the stimuli from introduced cultures and technologies.

The art of bilum-making allows for new forms of creative

Previous page: retwisted wool bilum made by the Gollala migrants in Port Moresby

The surrogate son to the parents of his best friend who died, carries this bilum given to him by the dead man's parents to establish their new relationship; an East Sepik Province custom; **below from left to right:** a small chest bilum from Telefomin decorated with Lesser Bird of Paradise plumes; a jumbo sized bilum swollen to the limits of its elastic weave; Ipi, a catechist in the Western Province, wears a small amulet bilum



expression which are relevant to the changing times — it is a true contemporary folk art.

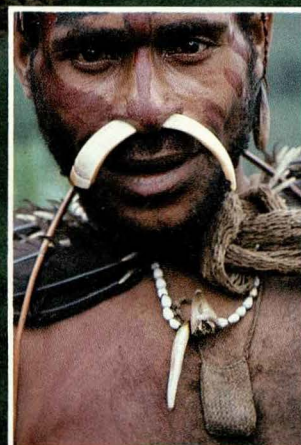
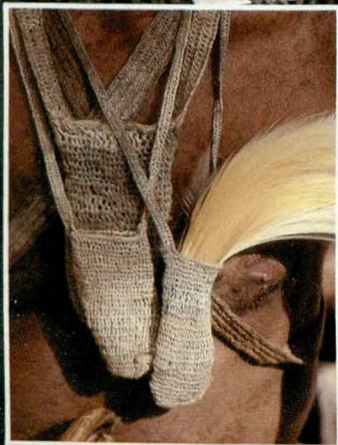
Since it is primarily women who make bilums, it is women who are now responsible for carrying out PNG's most dominant form of contemporary art. Women are beginning to use bilums as a vehicle for self expression and creativity.

This development, away from recreating the designs of ancestors, is most noticeable in the melting pot of Port Moresby. Open to the stimulus of designs from other areas, displaced from their cultural backgrounds, with no access to the traditional fibres and dyes, women are taking advantage of the colourful wools and nylon string now available from trade stores; and are initiating and imitating designs in an almost competitive spirit.

This eclecticism is apparent in the polychromatic bilums of the Gollala migrants in Port Moresby, who are particularly influenced by the vibrant colour combinations and complimentary inter-reacting shapes of the Chimbu designs. Yet Gollalas interpret the designs with a freedom of expression which results in personal asymmetric pattern as opposed to traditional Highland symmetry.

Today the exuberance and variety of designs across the country is a visual delight.

Traditionally, each cultural group has its own bilum designs. These range from the simplest marks formed by alternating circular stripes of different coloured natural fibres





Centre: a spectacular bilum worn as a decorative cape; **right:** from womb to bilum, a natural transition; **below:** mother and daughters from Umeda village, West Sepik Province with a variety of bilums; **below right:** the wild fowl plumage on this bilum donates the first stage of male initiation in the Star Mountain area

(Western Province) to the complex motifs and geometric patterns derived from using different coloured threads (Highlands and Maprik).

The traditional designs serve as a symbol, or emblem, of the cultural group; and so one could recognise which part of PNG one comes from simply by looking at his bilum.

Customarily, bilums are made with thin but strong string hand twisted from the fibres of available plants. Today, materials used still reflect directly what is available in the immediate environment, although this is now an environment as often influenced by modern technology as the natural environment.

Natural raw materials used are directly related to the differing ecologies.

Coastal and lowland areas use the washed and beaten inner bark from sisal, mangas or banana trees. Highland environments support a greater variety of fibrous plants; the twine can be made from the inner bark of the Paper Mulberry (*Broussonetia Papyrifera*), the aerial roots of the fig (*Fixus Cunninghamii*) or the *tulip* tree, to name but a few.

In urban areas colourful second-hand clothes and nylon rice bags may be shredded and re-twisted into thread.

The process of twisting fibres into yarn is a simple, though laborious, operation.

Two thin strips of inner bark or man-made fibre are pinched between the fingers, and held

against the naked thigh or calf. They are initially twisted separately by a stroke of the palm towards the knees; and then with a single backward stroke of the palm the two are twisted into a single two-ply strand, which results in a virtually unbreakable twine.

After making two bilums myself, struggling with making the string, I now understand why women prefer to use nylon thread if it is available. Although to Western eyes it may be aesthetically less pleasing, it is much quicker and easier to use; and the finished bilum is more durable, as it can be washed without the danger of rotting.

Making a bilum is a time-consuming activity no matter which technique of knotting is used — the expansively flexible basic 'hour glass' weave of domestic bilums, or the close weave of magic bags which is so tight the contents of the bag are protected from uninitiated eyes.

Women from different provinces use multifarious working techniques; some starting at the base of the bilum, others at the mouth; some reel the spare string across their palm from thumb to little finger, others use hand to elbow; some ensure evenly spaced rows by inserting strips of pandanus or plastic binding; others use a tension string around the knees; some use needles made from hollow flying fox bones or old umbrella spokes; others use no tools at all.

When working designs with more than one colour, Maprik women work up to 12 threads simultaneously, whereas Highlanders and Goilalas work progressively in blocks of a single colour.

Throughout the country, women usually carry their on-going bilum with them, turning to it in a spare moment here and there, much as some Western women carry around a piece of knitting to work on while riding on the bus or chatting to friends.

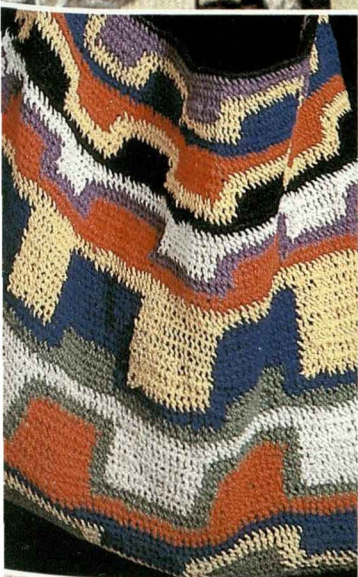
Traditionally, rope is turned and dyed as it is needed im-





*Basic bilum weaving
using strips of
Pandanus to space
the weave*

Left: bush string is dyed from the seeds of *Bisika Orelliana*; **centre:** contemporary Eastern Highland design; **below:** using their toes, Sowanda village women in West Sepik Province, tension the string while making a handle; **bottom:** design on an Eastern Highland man's pouch used for carrying betelnut and other oddments; **right:** a bilum made in the Southern Highlands from retwisted wool



mediately prior to use. Dyes are made from various natural ochres and the roots, seeds, berries or leaves of plants, which are either squeezed or scraped, boiled or unboiled, used alone or mixed with other substances.

In urban areas natural bush dyes are being replaced with brighter, imported pigments like gentian violet from the medical aid post, dye from carbon paper and the commercial powder dyes from trade stores and chemists. Like the imported rope they are less laborious to use and the colours are more permanent.

Colour is no longer governed by traditional symbolism or restricted by the availability of natural pigments. Colours are now being selected subjectively. Contemporary bilum makers exploit the radiant energy of manmade colours, contrasting even primary hues with a joyfulness which is found in the folk art of people everywhere.

Yet aesthetic considerations are not foremost in the design of a bilum. It is, after all, primarily a functional object; and the size, shape and ornamentation will reflect not only the maker's personal taste, but must inevitably be determined by the uses to which the bilum is put, and the person who will use it.

Bilums for women and men are different because they perform different functions. Each man, woman and child owns several bilums.

It is not unusual to see a woman returning from the bush with three or four bilums hanging from her forehead — large and undecorated ones bulging with *kaukau* (sweet potato), swollen with pawpaw and greens, another bristling with bush knife and firewood, one carrying her small personal necessities, and finally one on top of all the rest cradling the baby.

Men's bilums in general are smaller, and they are carried over or across the shoulder rather than on the head. For many village men the bilum is like their bank, containing their

most valuable possessions — shot gun cartridges, razors, a tin filled with tobacco and toea coins, betel nuts, lime powder and stem ginger, a smoking pipe, maybe even a baked taro for the midday snack.

Yet bilums are not just carrybags.

They have a variety of other uses within daily life. They are used in the absence of cupboards and drawers for storage, and as babies' cradles hanging from the rafters. They are highly valued as trade items. They may be used as a quiver for spears. And they are as much a part of everyday clothing as lap-laps, meri blouses and grass skirts.

They are, as it were, woven into the cycle of life. Just as the bilum itself is made up of interconnected loops, so it could be said that the giving and using of these bags similarly interconnects with a wider set of ideas which give bilums yet another *raison d'être*.

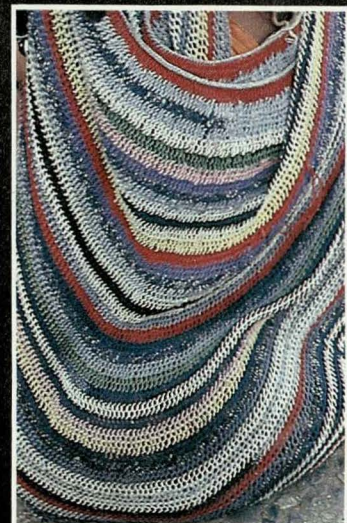
The bilum conveys signs and symbols as subtle as the old school tie in the U.K.

Bilums are expressive of relationships. They are made almost exclusively by women and given to their menfolk: wife to husband, mother to son, sister to brother, and ceremonially in gift exchange.

They are used to establish new relationships, such as gifts at marriage, and from parent to surrogate child.

Bilums also carry messages about the social status of their owners. Traditionally they serve to reinforce ones' status within the community; such as bilums which are differentially decorated and given to young men to mark the progressing stages of initiation, those decorated to denote a successful hunter, and those used only by *Bigman*.

Bilums have different ritual functions. In *singsings* throughout mainland PNG they are used both as body decoration and dancing regalia. They are used as protective amulets, as



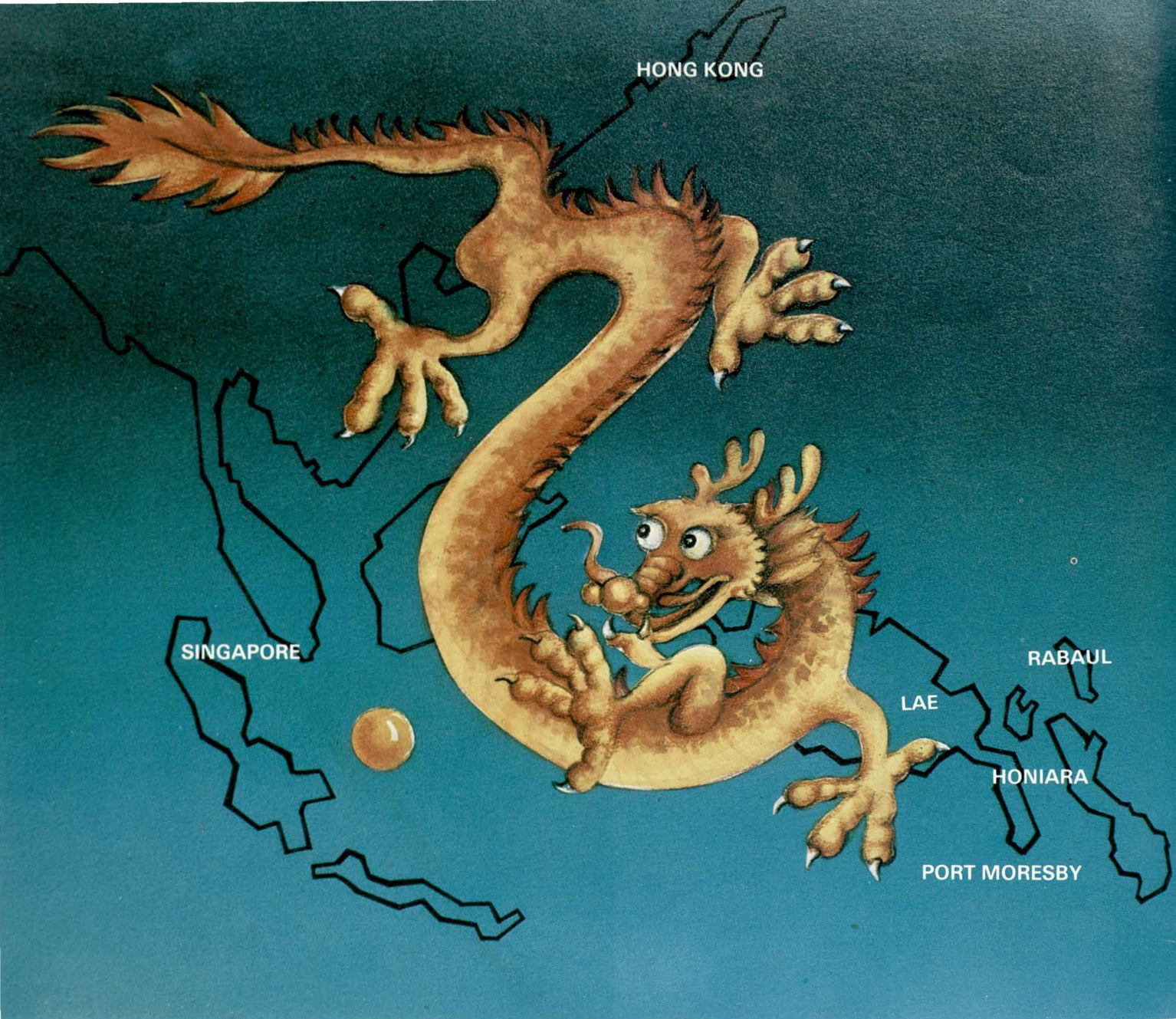
containers of magical substances, and as power objects in curing and sorcery rituals.

In fact, life itself can be seen to be contained by the bilum, as we both begin life and end life in a bilum. In the lingua franca, pidgin, bilum means both 'net bag' and 'womb'. We go into it as a cradle, nourished by the food it carries and, as Gell says in his "Metamorphosis of the Cassowary" 1975, sheltered as in a marsupials' pouch.

So, from birth, man is intimately bound by the bilum. Throughout his life he uses the bilum.

It is a vehicle for his creativity; and in death his spirit is invited to return to the bilum of the mourner where it can rest while preparing for its journey to the spirit world. The spirit thus completes the cycle, returning to the protection of that universal bilum. — *Maureen Mackenzie is affiliated to the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies.*

This fascinating aspect of Papua New Guinea's culture forms the theme of Air Niugini's 1983 calendar entitled "Our Network".



Only our Dragon Boat visits more ports, more often, in the South Pacific.

The New Guinea Pacific Line offers the quality handling you're used to, through its exclusive containerised service to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

Rely on us all the way.

- Fast transit times to all ports.
- A guaranteed schedule every 30 days, thanks to berths in Papua New Guinea and Honiara reserved for N.G.P.L. use.
- Safe, secure transport of goods in containers, both L.C.L., and F.C.L. — no more damage or pilferage of cargo.
- A wide coverage of all ports with the monthly container service from Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Bangkok to all Papua New Guinea ports and Honiara.

For further details on our reliable Dragon Boat service contact:



**NEW GUINEA
PACIFIC LINE**

PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Steamship Trading Co., Ltd.
Port Moresby
Telephone: 212000

HONG KONG
Swire Shipping (Agencies) Ltd.
Telephone: 5-264311

SINGAPORE
Straits Shipping Pte. Ltd.
Telephone: 436071

CAT-CRAZY!

Story: Andy Thompson
Pictures: Grant Nichols

WHEN the south-east trades blow in Port Moresby, the Hobie cats fly. The Hobies, two-man catamarans developed from a design based on wave-surfing, find the ultimate conditions in Port Moresby Harbour between April and November, scudding along at up to 25 knots as the trade winds peak.

High performance, and an exciting experience in sailing, are guaranteed as the large sail area of more than 24 square metres often overpowers the lightweight craft, necessitating both crew using the trapezes to windward and reaching.

Needless to say, their capability has made them popular. Fleets of more than 30 Hobies regularly race on Sundays and Thursday evenings from the Royal Papua Yacht Club on Moresby harbour.

In Papua New Guinea, these craft have provided a particularly colourful spectacle because a local waiver allows the boats to carry sponsored sails, with company logos and colours.

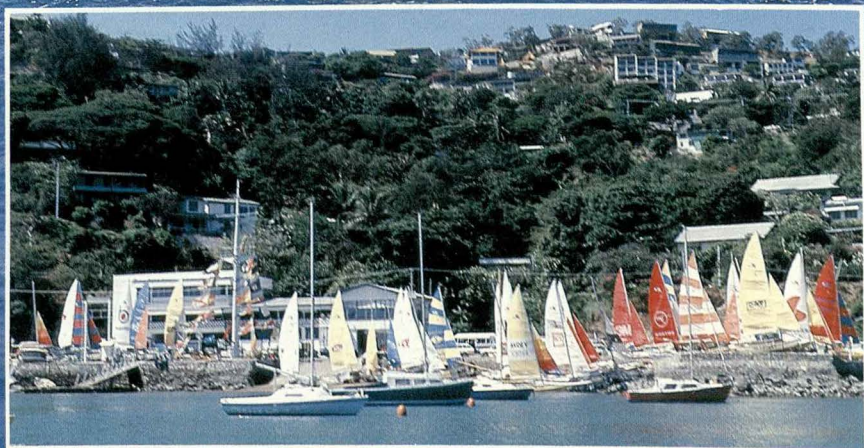
This variation on International Yacht Racing Unions

rules which disallow advertising has helped many local yachties defray costs and pursue the sport.

The two-man catamaran, the Hobie 16, is a natural development of the Hobie 14.

The Hobie concept came to the fore with the success of the Hobie 14 — a cheap one-man catamaran designed specifically for surfing and recreational use by ex-surfboard manufacturers Hobie Alter and Sandy Banks from the United States.

Within two years of their release and with more than 40,000 sold they designed the more popular Hobie 16, for those who wanted one-design, easily



rigged and tuned catamarans for pleasure or racing. More than 70,000 of these catamarans have been sold in a little under 10 years, making it the largest catamaran class in the world.

Top PNG Hobie sailor Bruce Tardrew, with crewman Steve Beals, recently won the prestigious South Pacific Championships held in Port Moresby. Sailing their boat

ICL, they defeated the then current world champion, Brett Dryland from Australia, in a seven-race series attracting 48 boats, of which 18 entries came from overseas.

In the World Championships in Tahiti in August they were to meet disappointment, missing out on the finals. Nonetheless, Papua New Guinea was represented in the final 48

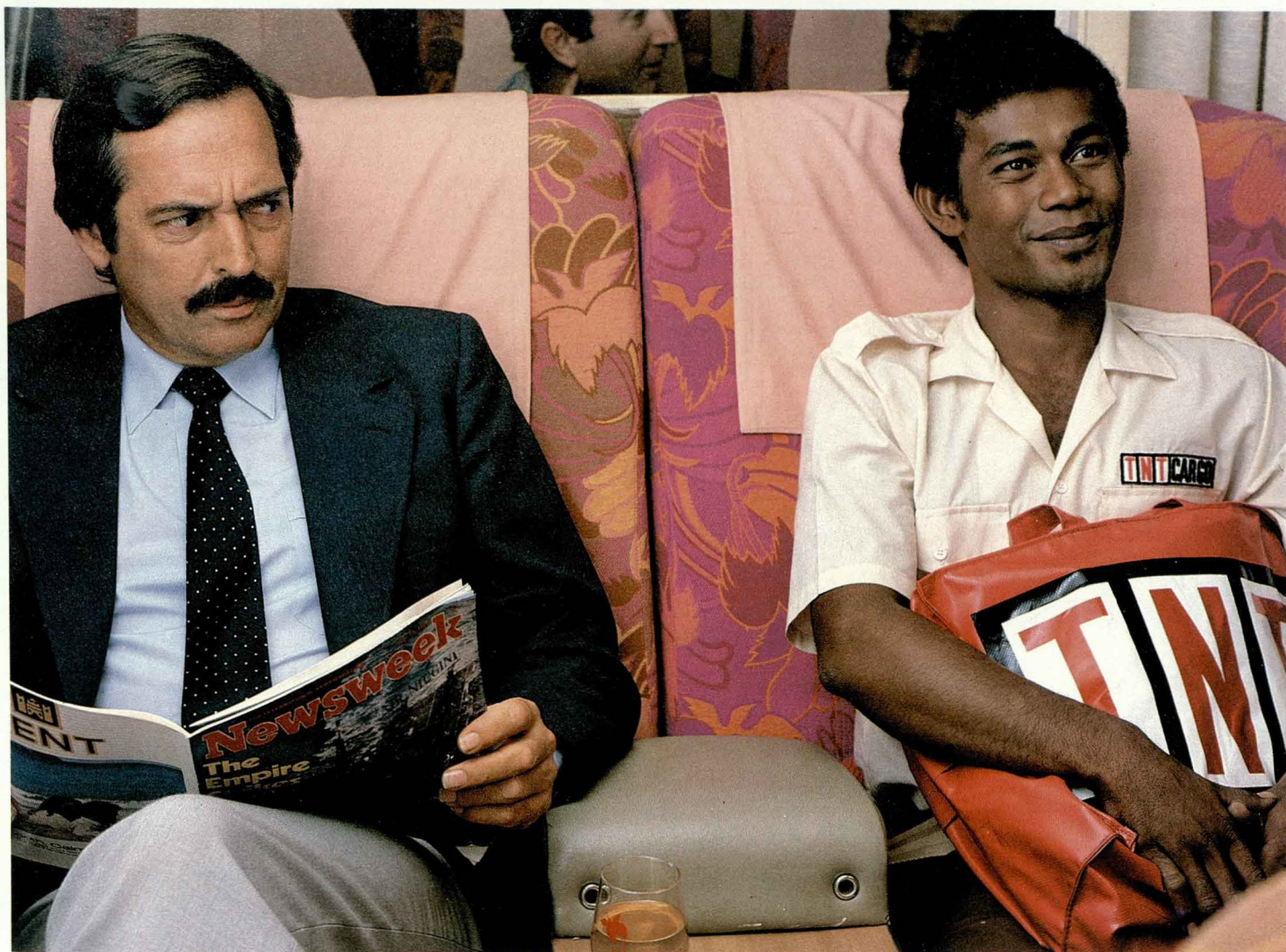
of the World Championships: Andy Thompson and Bob Gray qualified 12th and went on to finish 39th of the 178 competitors.

Port Moresby has again been allocated the South Pacific Championships — in June next year — as part of the international Hobie calendar, and a fleet of more than 45 boats is expected, with entries coming from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Tahiti, Guam, New Caledonia, Hawaii and Fiji.

Topping the entry list, hopefully, will be current world champion and son of the originator Hobie Alter Junior.

The local fleet has also lodged an application to stage the 1984 World Championships in Port Moresby. If successful it will be hosting more than four hundred of the finest Hobie sailors and administrators from around the world. They can be guaranteed the ultimate conditions. — *Andy Thompson is on the managerial staff of PNG Printing Co. Pty. Ltd.*





Who's that sitting next to you?

If you're flying either way between Port Moresby and Australia, take a good look around. One of your fellow passengers may well be a TNT on-board courier.

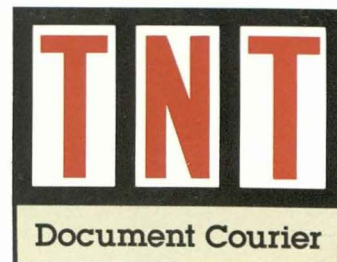
He's carrying with him a bag full of important legal and business documents for guaranteed express delivery.

TNT operate this exclusive service three times a week each way between Papua New Guinea and Australia. We collect your documents, and our courier personally travels with those documents to their destination, where they will be delivered to the addressee.

No one else goes to these lengths to give you this kind of service.

But then, there's no one else quite like TNT.

TNT Document Courier Service,
PO Box 6645, Boroko
Phone: 252411, Telex: NE22300





Gulf airbus



The new Talair bus service to the Gulf means you can turn up, pay and fly all stops between Port Moresby and Baimuru, daily from Monday to Saturday. Enquire about our commuter services throughout the country.



TALAIR

In our 30th year of flying Niugini

Talair Pty Ltd (Head Office) PO Box 108 Goroka. Telephone: 721355. Telex: NE 72519

ANG/T002

FLUTES LIZARDS and SLEEP

by Rob Damon

LYING on a limbum floor in a middle Sepik village . . . sleep comes irresistibly, nothing so soporific as the virtuous physical fatigue of a hand-to-mouth, up-at-dawn, boy scout existence; and the rhythm of village life. We move into a village towards nightfall: there is only time to find an empty house, dive into the Sepik river and, fighting the deceptively powerful current, wash. Village girls, perching in a riverside tree, sing a pidgin song in their shrill, sweet voices. A meal of rice and Boston meat, the coarse traveller's staple, a glass of whisky on the verandah. Just before it becomes abruptly dark the women are returning from their gardens, their bilums loaded with taro and kaukau; the young children are playing marbles and hopscotch. For us there is the ritual of the mosquito net, tying it with the bush string to the walls and ceiling of the house. And in darkness, as sleep begins to tug at us, we hear the hoot of Sepik bamboo flutes, more narcotic than any bed-time story . . . it's then the full sense of remoteness and wonder mingles into sleep.

We had set out from Wewak one Friday, equipped with copious supplies of tinned food, mosquito repellent, film and, for softies, a mattress. In three hours we reached the densely populated Maprik area. At several points along the road we



Chambri Lakes, photo Malcolm Kirk

glimpsed the sunset colours of the haus tambaran spirit house fronts. Next morning we reached Pagwi, our starting-point for the middle Sepik: it's a dusty, slow-moving, one-horse, two-trade-store town. I ambled down to the river, our vague aim being to get to the fabled Chambri Lakes where a colleague, the *ultimate* boy scout, had been trapped by the rampant weed, salvinia, in the middle of the lake for two nights in a large canoe with a broken engine and no paddle!

For the adventurous spirit, PNG may be one of the last places left in the world where you can get yourself into a Really Tight Corner.

Could we outmanoeuvre the weed and reach the mysterious, distant shore?

Among the many canoes tied

up at Pagwi the first one I approached happened to be from a village on Chambri. When there is a deal to be made it is wise to negotiate step by step. "Timbun, a?" "Where's that?" "Are you going back today?" "Now?" "Is there any space?" "No, not much cargo." "Do you want any passengers?" "How much?" But before long our rucksacks are being loaded up and we're underway, cutting through the brown water downstream. Kunai grass spiking the mud, intermittent settlements along the baking shore, the houses on stilts against flood, people in dug-outs shouting out as we slow down to pass them, fishing baskets tied to posts in the shallows. One of our guides, a young, taciturn fellow, is standing by the outboard at the back, the steamy water splashed

into clear splinters as we plough through it.

The first place we stop is Korogo, a village with a well-established carving trade. There are, in particular, huge seated statues costing hundreds of kina, crouching in the haus tambaran, regal, dusty, massive figures carved out of single blocks of kwila. Smaller carvings hang around the walls and the central supporting posts, while around the side there is a platform made of limbum, where the men doze, chat, rest and doze and chat. A trader tells me that the large, seated figures mainly go to the United States; they are often paid for in kind, particularly with economically essential items such as outboard motors.

Next we stop at Suapmeri (pronounced "Shotmeri"). So far we have not been savaged by the evil Sepik mosquito, the monster malarial *natnat* reputed to tear great hunks of meat out of you and with its horrible tool-kit of piercers, borers, augers, anaesthetisers and suckers and drain great dewdrops of blood. Complacently, we have not sprayed on any of the almost equally evil anti-mosquito spray.

We land at Suapmeri and crack a can of tuna for lunch. The mosquitoes move in like squadrons of Messerschmidts over Tunbridge Wells. They go for the lilly-white smooth honky

The ancient masks evoke feelings of unspeakable deeds in the past; **below:** the Sepik's answer to Lee Marvin, **bottom:** Salvinia weed is choking the lakes

flesh behind the ankles. When they have gorged themselves on our blood they are suicidally sluggish, as if overloaded. When you swat one against your recently-drained arm, there is a thimbleful of crimson blood as evidence.

The biggest economic and social problem on the Sepik is salvinia molesta, which clogs up lakes, tributaries and *barets*, multiplies exponentially like some vegetable nightmare in a cheap horror film and disrupts transport and food-supply. Simbabaret near Suapmeri, is one of the few unclogged ways into Chambri at this time. We set off past an expanse of mud-flat and head for the mouth of the canal. There is a rope across it to inhibit the weed from entering. We move into the narrow *baret*, where the copious foliage on either side forms at times a tunnel of green light. Apart from the breadfruit and sago trees it could be some English river, the Stour or the Cam, curling placidly through the summer countryside.

We move out into Chambri Lake itself and to our left is a vast carpet of the notorious weed. It's so thick you'd think you could walk on it. It's a poisonous greeny-yellow colour. The plant has a long trail of roots hanging down like the tentacles of a jellyfish.

Behind the vast lake there are three hills, Aibom, Chambri and Ambunti, behind them a mysterious blue distance. I try to imagine what vast tracts of unpeopled bush, what little-known villages you would find there. We are by now hours



from places which are themselves a long way out. Wewak, with its shops, government offices and a degree of Western influence, seems like the memory of another planet.

The big man at the back of the canoe, a grizzled, cavalier old gent with a Lee Marvin manner and a cowboy hat is, to my sudden alarm, loading a shotgun. Bandits? Lake pirates? It is an ancient, barbarous machine, the kind that hangs above the fireplace and is taken down once a century. Lee Marvin fires, apparently at random, and two birds drop near a clump of grass. Expertly one of the crew hooks the victims, cuts their throats and the first of many Strange Dinners is in the bag.

Timbun is what you might call right off the tourist track. It lies on the west side of the lake which is why at this time it is unobstructed by salvinia, since the wind is blowing it eastwards to strangle the villages on that side.

We unload the canoe, helped by some boys and girls who come down to meet us. We are then installed in the local trade store, among tins of fish and



packets of hard biscuits, matches, chewing gum and sugar. Later we feast on roast duck and a mountain of rice. Soon after that the slow pace, the darkness and the rice mountain compel deep, relaxed sleep.

The next day we negotiate Deal Number Two. We had thought to hitch piecemeal from from village to village. This is not really practicable but our hosts are willing to give us a Middle Sepik Package Tour. Long and very oblique negotiations begin in a big house. We are fairly pedantic about the small print: can we stop anywhere we like? I ask for a price. The village councillor is sent for. It seems that Papua New Guineans dislike the prospect of direct haggling and a prestigious intermediary is needed. The deal is made and it turns out very well: over the next few

days we really are looked after. Our guides find houses, through wantoks or otherwise, arrange the cooking of our food, accommodate our every whim with great patience.

This done we stroll along the path to see the settlements strung along the shore. There is a fenced crocodile pond, where the vicious-looking little brutes bask and feed until they are big enough to be sold to the larger crocodile farms. Our guide steps boldly into the pond and picks out submerged specimens, apparently unperturbed by fear of the creatures making a submarine breakfast of his calves. *Pukpuks* (crocodiles) don't bite underwater, they say, but I would be unwilling to test the truth of this! Further on, in the increasing heat, we drink *kulau* coconut milk, the creator's masterpiece in the thirst-quenching department. According to physicians coconut milk is in fact an excellent substitute for dehydration fluid.

Later we nudge our way through the salvinia to visit the three villages, Kilimbit, Indingai and Wombun, which make

up Chambri itself. The motor clogs and cuts periodically but with shouted directions from old ladies fishing in paddle-canoes we make it through.

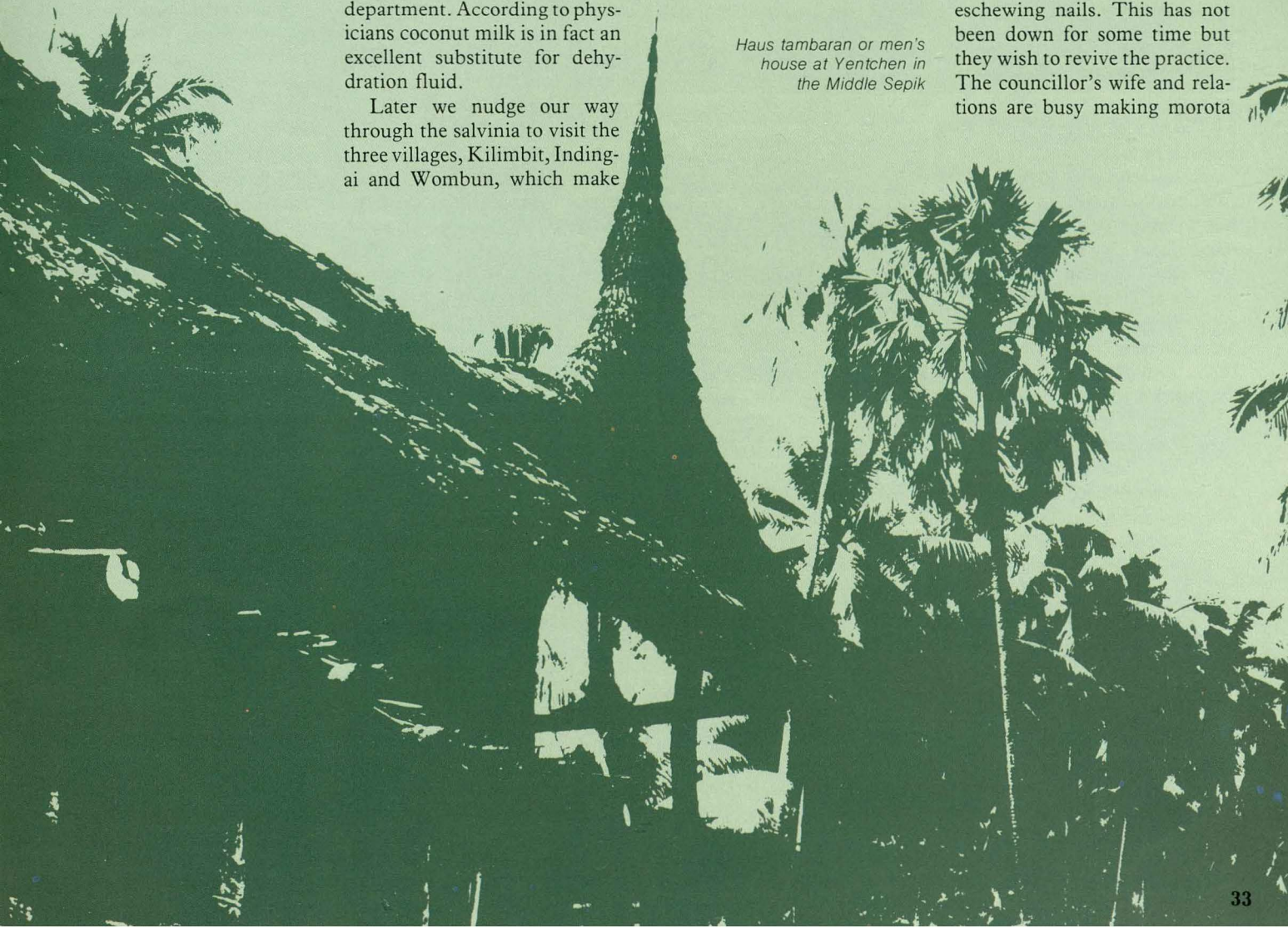
That night we walk to another village to see "guitar races". These are a string band competition held in an enclosure made of sago, limbum and coconut. Young and old shake and stomp to the successive bands, backed by the rubbery bass of the bamboo organ played with plastic thongs. The grass is soft, the sound is soothing, it's been a hard day. Unconscious again.

The next day — Sunday? Monday? — after two days you feel as if you've been away for weeks — we load up, meticulously covering the cargo against sudden squalls of rain, and leave Timbun. Having passed through the Suapmeri *baret* we

head downriver. We stop at Indabu, an offshoot of a village further down-stream. It is a ghost village; a few old people and women are the only ones left. Most of the villagers are working in Madang. Absolute silence in a sizeable village; empty house after empty house, is eerie. Some houses have tumbled down, derelict. An old man berates salvinia good-humouredly. The enemy. The village is beautiful in spite of desertion — stout, comfortable houses in the shade of a row of yellow-blossomed trees.

In this little-visited village we see more actual cultural activity than elsewhere. A hapless lizard is skinned to produce a speckled kundu drum-skin. The only two young men in the village are making a house with traditional methods, tying the beams and posts with bush rope, eschewing nails. This has not been done for some time but they wish to revive the practice. The councillor's wife and relations are busy making morota

Haus tambaran or men's house at Yentchen in the Middle Sepik





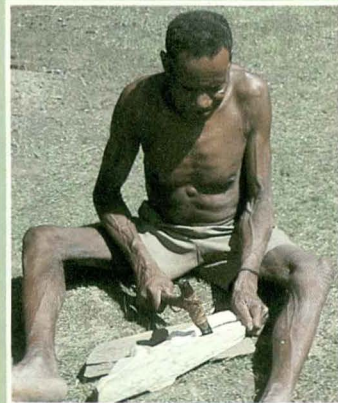
Clockwise from left: *Parambei is the Hampton Court of the Middle Sepik; a lizard is skinned to make a kundu drum; local carver at work; village women display bilums for sale*



for the roof of their unfinished house. These are thatch shingles made by removing the midrib from sago leaves and then sewing them onto a six-foot-long stick, making a kind of shingle. One lady is making fishing baskets out of pangal, the sago palm stem. These routine activities are somehow more interesting than anything done specifically for visitors.

Yentchen, next stop, is another up-market village. We stop at the trade-store to replenish supplies of hard biscuit, rice and tinned fish. Prices, naturally, are by now much higher than in Pagwi. A *muruk* (cassowary) pads around in the dust. The carvings on display in the *haus tambaran* are very good. Inside, our guide tentatively wakes up the one sleeping occupant, mouth open and snoring with the stupefaction of village noon.

The young Yentchen man grunts and stirs and is then full of energy as he shows us upstairs. Very old artefacts, full-



length masks used at initiation ceremonies, hang in the gloom. These *tumbuan* are made of a kind of whicker made of cane which forms the head, with sago-stalks lower down. Their colours, made from local clays and vegetation, are faded with age. The masks are disturbing. They evoke images of primal, ancient energies, unspeakable rites.

The young man leads us around his Chamber of Horrors. An obscure, round, charred object in a hanging basket is a

man's skull, cracked open in some conflict long ago. The aura of dark deeds builds up. There is an old, carved chair used for sacrifice before an attack on enemy villages. By now we can almost hear the hypnotic beat of the kundu, the unknown chants of dancing figures around the spasmodically lurching, humpty-dumpty spirit-masks, grinning, seed-rattles waving. He tells a good story and earns the 50t for the tour!

Parambei is the Hampton Court of the Middle Sepik. A mile's walk from the main river you come upon two *haus tambaran* set in an avenue. The immaculate sweep of lawn, the hibiscus and the sunlight softened by the huge trees suggest the grounds of an English country house — except of course for the *haus tambaran*.

Inside these we see a distinctive kind of shell-money, "used for buying women and pigs". We ask about *bilums*, string bags made and coloured with bush materials. Word goes out and we emerge to see the whole village alive with *bilums*, women coming from all directions with a glut of *bilums* to join an already long line of sellers with *bilums* spread on the grass. We buy a lot. It is a good idea, by the way, to bring plenty of small



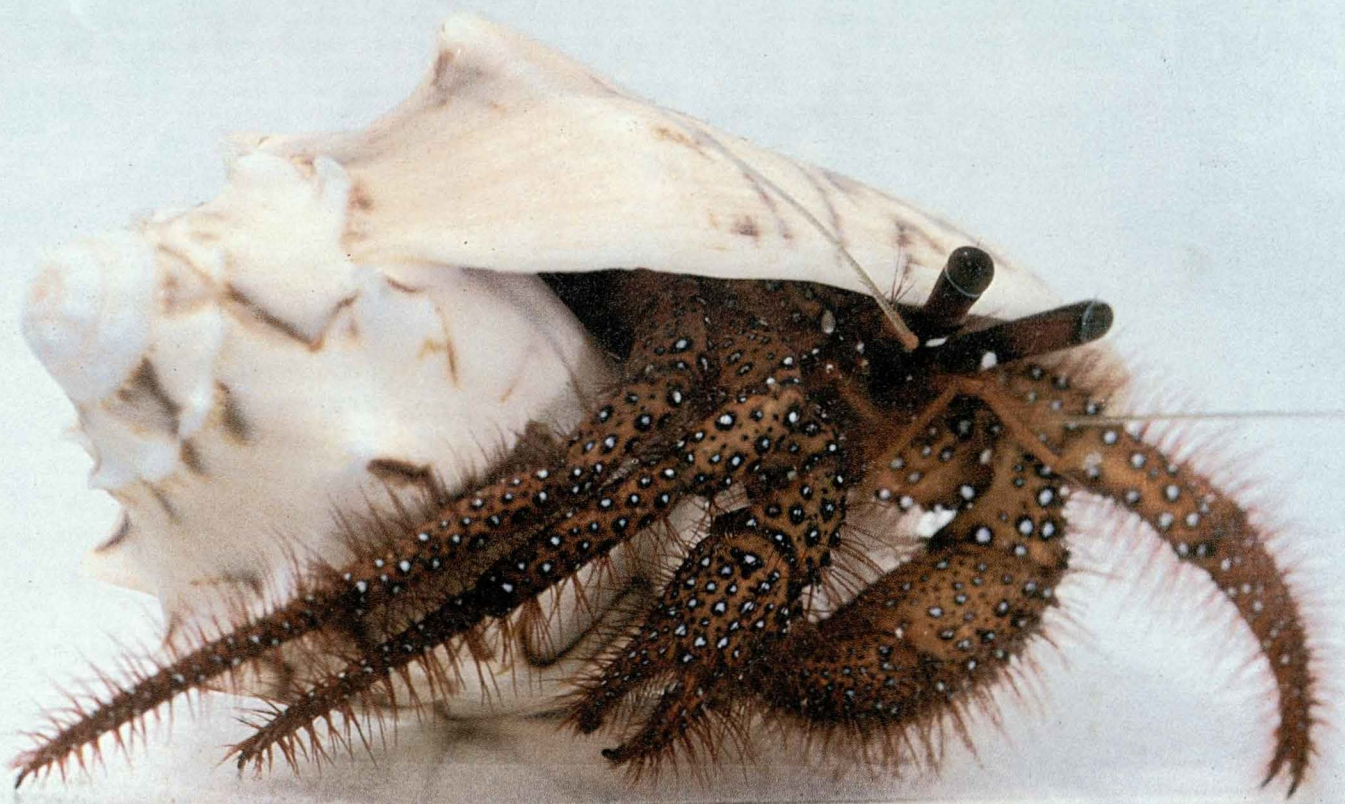
money, one or two kinas, in order to avoid difficulty in paying the agreed price.

We move onto Kanganaman where the large fleet of canoes in the *baret* indicates that this is a large village. We make contact with our guides' wantoks, camp in a spacious *haus kiap* with a splendid view over the darkening river. We are serenaded by a group of schoolboys with guitars.

We pass through Parambai again to reach Malingai. This is also a very pleasant village, off the usual track. We see an old carver at work shaping the soft wood with a heated adze.

That night, staying at Suapmeri, a young man befriends us. "Will you stay to supper?" "Do you like turtle?" This hospitality is typical of the friendliness of the people we encountered on the river. Dinner arrives: there is roast turtle. Its webbed feet taste of fishy chicken. Light pink sago appears and is very palatable. The macau fish, 200% fresh, wins five stars. But what are the small rubbery globes of membrane? Turtle eggs! We split the soft shell and suck out the delicious, warm liquid. In the gentle kerosene light there is a pidgin story on East Sepik radio, a murmur of conversation. Sleep.

A week away from Wewak seemed a month. What remains in the mind is the friendliness of the people, a vigorous culture which will soon change as more roads are carved out to the river, and the Sepik flutes, haunting the night. — Rob Damon is a school teacher at Kupiano High School



Protection need not be a burden

In nature a creature's protection, while no doubt ideal for its own environment, may seem rather strange to us. But then what's insurance to a Hermit Crab is of little help to you. Yet it illustrates the need to have an insurance policy that gives you protection in your particular situation. Niugini Insurance Corporation have the experience in Papua New Guinea that can give you the right insurance protection and it won't be a burden.



NIUGINI INSURANCE
CORPORATION

PO Box 331, Port Moresby
Phone: 21 4040, Telex: NE 23041

An airline planner's view of the DC-10.

Passengers enjoy wide-cabin spaciousness, comfort and decor. High ceilings, soft lighting, big windows, and a complete change of air every three minutes all combine with exceptional quiet to make our DC-10 cabin a "living room with wings."

A choice: 255 seats (or other arrangements) in mixed class. Up to 380 seats in economy class. Galleys above or below deck.

Cargo capacity volume is 86 cubic metres; 132 cubic metres if galleys are located on upper level.

The DC-10 cockpit is the model of simplicity, low workload with quiet comfort and visibility. Large windshields, clearviews that open, and side panel windows give pilots 135-degree vision - a bigger sweep than on other commercial jetliners.

Three fuel-efficient engines offer economy without sacrificing power or range. These are quiet, smokeless, proven General Electric or Pratt & Whitney Aircraft high-bypass-ratio turbojets with easy maintenance designed in.

DC-10 flexibility is the answer when planning for the uncertain times ahead. It will work efficiently, reliably, profitably as your load and distance requirements change. It will work equally well on growing routes, across continents or seas, carrying a mix of freight and passengers, and on

high-density routes where wide-cabin efficiency can yield high return and yet preserve competitive passenger appeal. It will adapt easily to route changes and shifting economic conditions, flying profitably even where lower load factors penalize other aircraft.

DC-10
MCDONNELL
DOUGLAS



'BARAAHP

BARAAHP is an acronym meaning between a river and a hard place . . . it's a situation to be avoided at all costs." The words were drawn in a mid-western accent by the 5'10" ball of muscle perched nonchalantly in the blow-up rubber boat. The man was Jim Slade, master boatman, tour guide, cook and a walking encyclopaedia on whitewater rafting. "The Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, which is known for its

Story and pictures by Bob Talbot

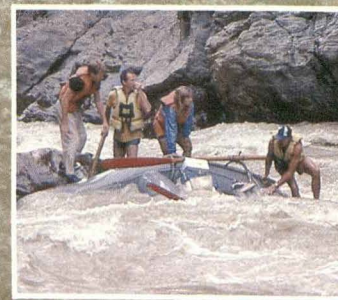
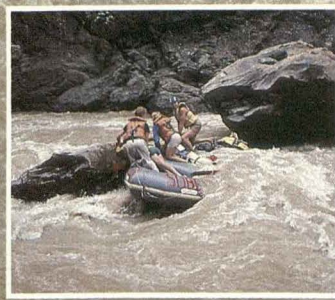
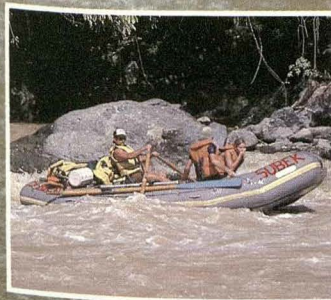
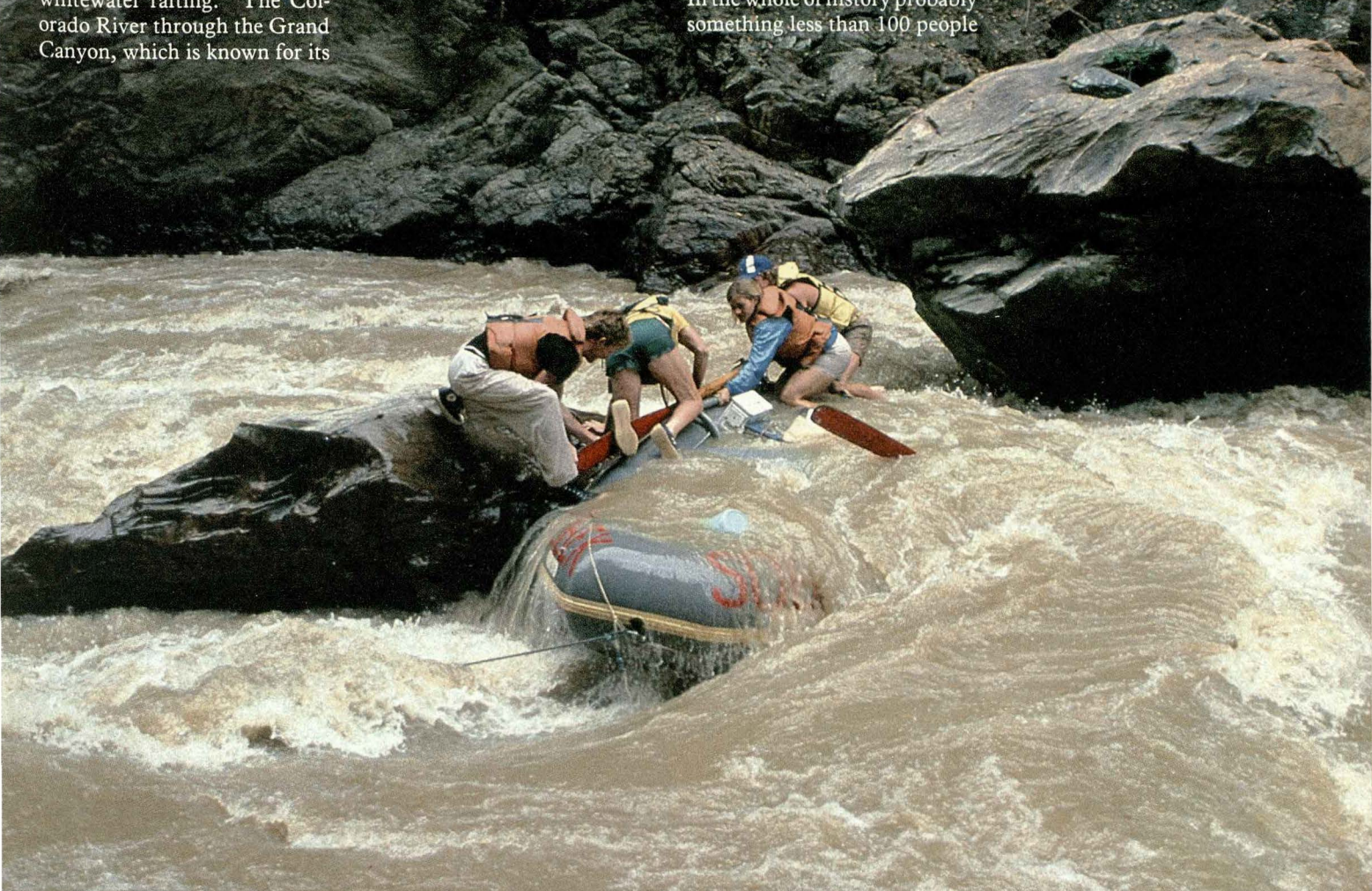
whitewater, drops at an average of eight feet per mile. "By comparison this section of the Watut drops at an average of 45 feet per mile," he says with a grin that leaves you wondering what the full implications are.

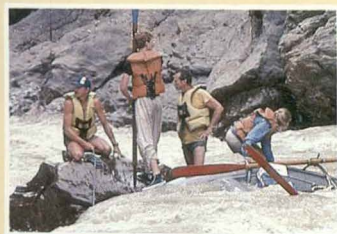
The Watut River is situated in Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea and is regarded by

whitewater adventurers as one of the wildest rides in the world. This up and down, wet and rocky roller coaster takes you through some of the most beautiful but remote jungle to be found anywhere. Sobek Expeditions of the United States is the only company to run regular expeditions on the Watut. In the whole of history probably something less than 100 people

have run the entire length of this notorious river. The jungle is untouched, much of it inaccessible even to the local people. Slade rates the Watut as the best jungle whitewater in the world.

On the way down the river towards the Markham and Lae, the provincial capital, we will stay in a village guest house and observe at close range the vir-





tually untouched culture of the local people.

"In the unlikely event that you find yourself in the water don't panic, these life jackets are designed to keep you afloat even if you are unconscious." One is jolted back to the present as Jim Slade continues his instruction on how to handle yourself in the boat, and in the water.

We had travelled from Lae in a PMV, a bus for the local people, along with thirteen villagers, a pig, two chickens and miscellaneous bags and boxes of fruit and vegetables. We met the Sobek boatmen, Jim Slade and Mike Boyle, at Cederbridge, the headwaters of the Watut.

The wide, flat expanse of the brown Watut lulls us into a false sense of security. Having been on these sorts of "expeditions" before we accept the discussion on safety as part of the act to excite the tourists. The first and second days confirmed our belief. Two hours into the third day changes our minds . . . quickly. The words spoken 72 hours before spring to the top of mind. "These jackets are guaranteed to keep you afloat even if you're unconscious; "Don't panic; "Avoid getting

caught between the boat and a rock or wall; "It's often safest to float through to the bottom of a rapid; "The worst thing that can happen is that the boat gets wrapped around a rock in the river, it's dangerous, you can even lose the boat!"

Suddenly it's all happening at a notorious rapid which the Sobek boatmen have named "Baraahp" on a previous trip. At this point the river narrows to a tight channel with a large rock in the middle. The technique is to approach the rock with the boat side-on and then at the precise last split second shoot the boat backwards or forwards, left or right, around it.

The movement is crucial. On this occasion the boatman, Mike Boyle, misses the manoeuvre and a split second later the inflatable boat is carried onto the rock. A second later it is buried under tons of water. With every passing moment the raft is being wrapped tighter and tighter around the rock. In the words of Jim Slade "a classic wrap". Perched on the rock in the middle of the swirling torrent one gives thought to the ramifications of the problem: 100 kilometres from nowhere on a jungle river with the boat, food and our worldly posses-

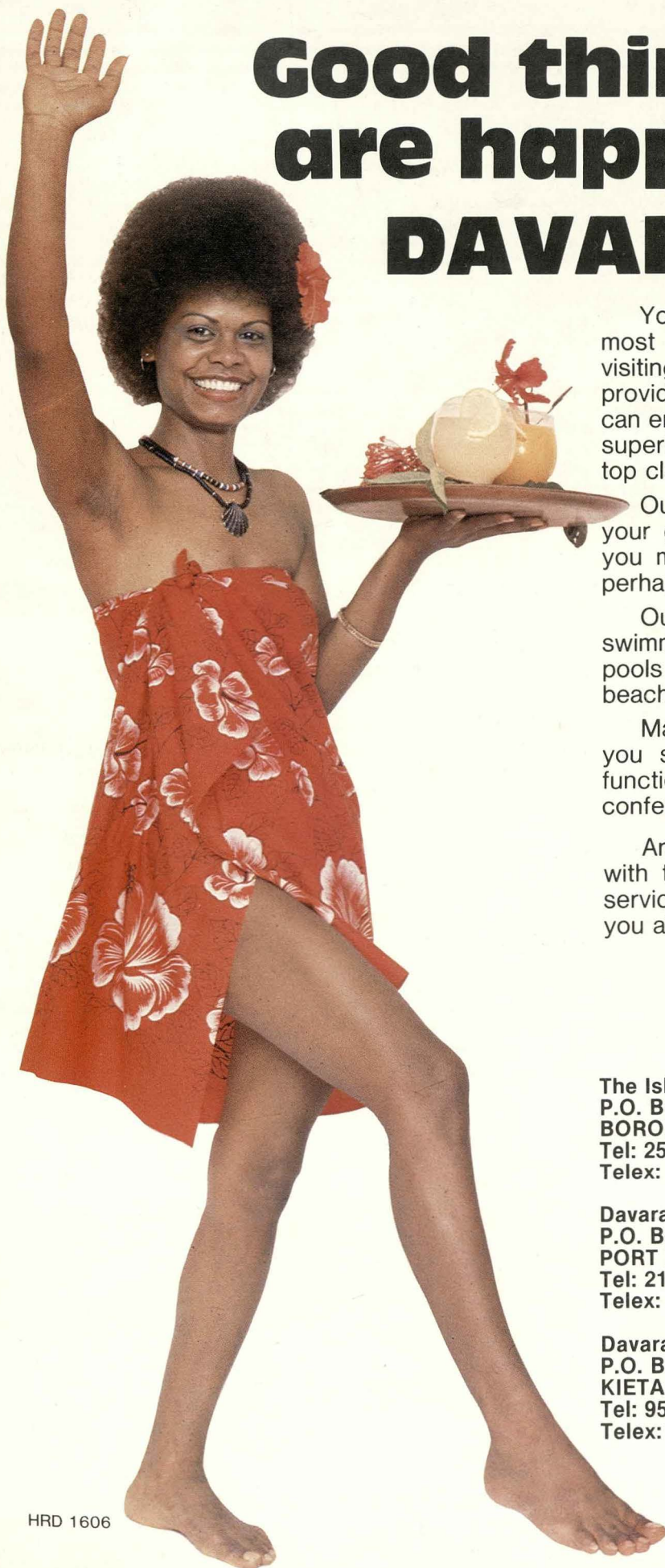
sions pinned to a rock in the middle of a dangerous rapid. There are only two alternatives. Salvage the boat or abandon it. The first looks impossible and the second means a 50 kilometre trek through trackless jungle and before that a two mile swim through tearing rapids. The choice is obvious, but how?

For 15 minutes eight arms and eight legs push and shove in a bid to inch the boat around the rock. Not a movement. Bailing doesn't work. The water is coming in faster than it can be bailed out. It's decided to strip the boat of its cargo. Before the operation begins a safety line is taken from the boat and lashed around an enormous rock. Back on the boat three men and a girl are wrestling with the river. Suddenly a freak swell in the current tugs the fragile boat around the rock. The safety line goes taut and snaps like an overstressed guitar string. Two men and the girl are plunged into the raging brown river and the agile boatman makes a desperate leap from the midstream rock to the fast disappearing and crewless raft.

Fortunately he makes a safe if uncomfortable landing on the cargo at the back of the boat. The imminent danger is that

the boat, heavy with water will crush the three people in the water against a rock or a wall . . . "between a river and a hard place." The boatman reaches out and with one swift movement plucks the girl from the foaming water. The two men, one with the separated safety line caught firmly around his neck are carried along in the foaming river in unison with the bobbing raft. Sawtooth rocks flash by, left and right. The words keep coming back . . . "the way you get through a rapid on your own is on your back with your feet downstream to fend off the rocks . . . do your breathing in the troughs, catch your breath wherever you can and try to stay away from the boat".

Mike manages to drag his second passenger into the boat but John, with the rope around his neck attached to the boat, is caught in an impossible situation. He can't get away from the craft, he's having difficulty getting close enough to get into it and there's a huge rock wall coming up. Mike Boyle is having enormous difficulty controlling the boat due to water it's carrying. John is in exactly the least desirable position, between river and a hard place. In a desperate bid to save him from being crushed Mike throws all his weight against the ten foot oar and flicks the boat backwards and away from the wall. After twenty hair-raising seconds that seem like a lifetime, the boat is in calmer waters and John is hauled aboard. Our boatman, Jim Slade, says "it's not always like that". His wry grin leaves you in no doubt that whatever a trip on the Watut is like, it's never dull. — *Bob Talbot is a film director who has made many sporting and adventure films throughout the world.*



Good things are happening at DAVARA Hotels



You will find the Davara Group the most enjoyable Hotels to stay at when visiting Papua New Guinea. We not only provide an endless summer in which you can enjoy yourself, but, as well, a choice of superb local and international cuisine and top class cabaret entertainment.

Our airconditioned bedrooms ensure your good nights rest, so that refreshed, you may enjoy our Catamaran cruises or perhaps some energetic water ski-ing.

Our weather lends itself to plenty of swimming, be it in our sparkling swimming pools or along some 'almost' deserted sandy beach.

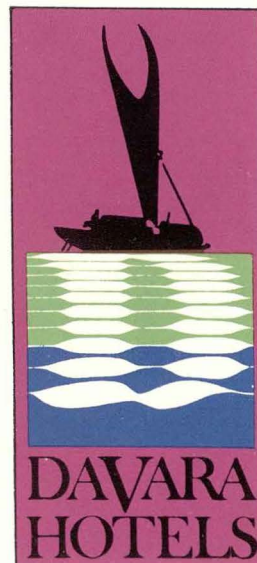
Maybe too, if you are a businessman you should consider our well appointed function rooms and facilities for that conference or special presentation.

And during your stay you'll be pampered with traditional Melanesian friendliness and service. So let good things start to happen to you at Davara.

The Islander Hotel
P.O. Box 1981,
BOROKO
Tel: 25 5955
Telex: NE22288 'Davara'

Davara Hotel,
P.O. Box 799,
PORT MORESBY.
Tel: 21 2100
Telex: NE22288 'Davara'

Davara Kieta Hotel
P.O. Box 241,
KIETA.
Tel: 95 6175
Telex: NE95852 'Davara'





It's no wonder most Australians spend their holidays at home.

It's easy to understand why.

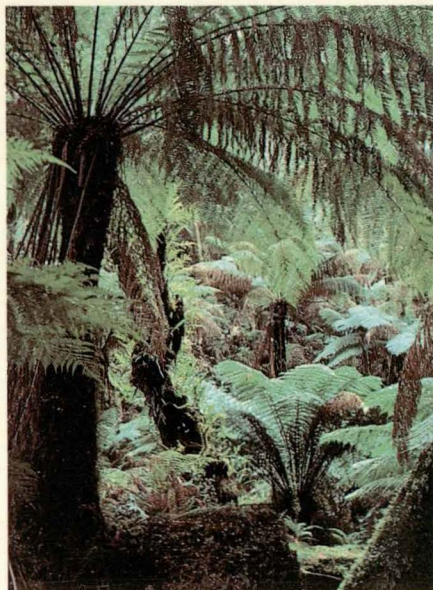
After all, Australia is the world's largest holiday island.

Just mile after endless mile of sun-bleached beaches, tropical rainforests and snow-capped mountains.

It's difficult to imagine ever wanting to spend a holiday anywhere else.

Most Australians certainly don't seem to bother.

And certainly no airline feels more at home there than Ansett.

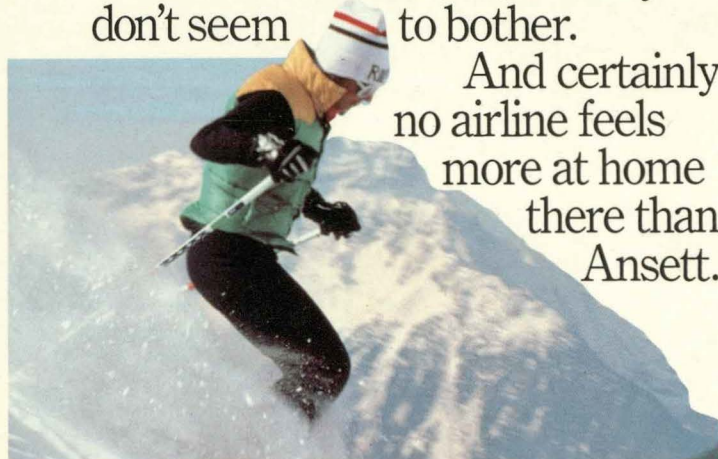


With our associate airlines we cover more of Australia than anybody else.

And our jet services to major Australian ports connect with all international flights.

So, why don't you see Australia the same way more Australians prefer to see it?

On any one of the countless Ansett low-priced packaged holidays.



Every year more and more Australians fly Ansett for their holidays than any other airline.



For further information and a copy of Ansett's Australia holiday brochure, just contact Ansett or your travel agent.

Ansett
Airlines of Australia.