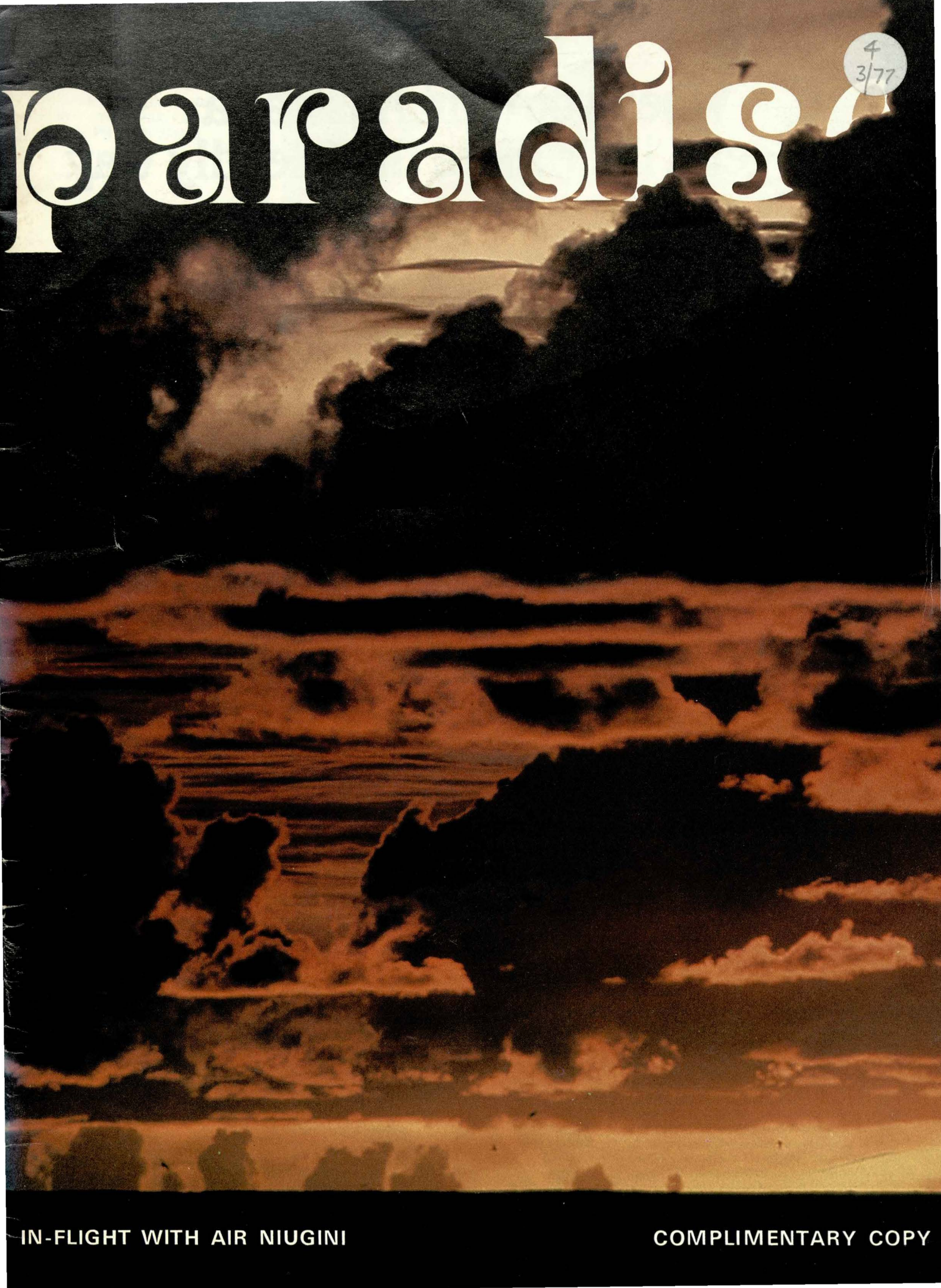


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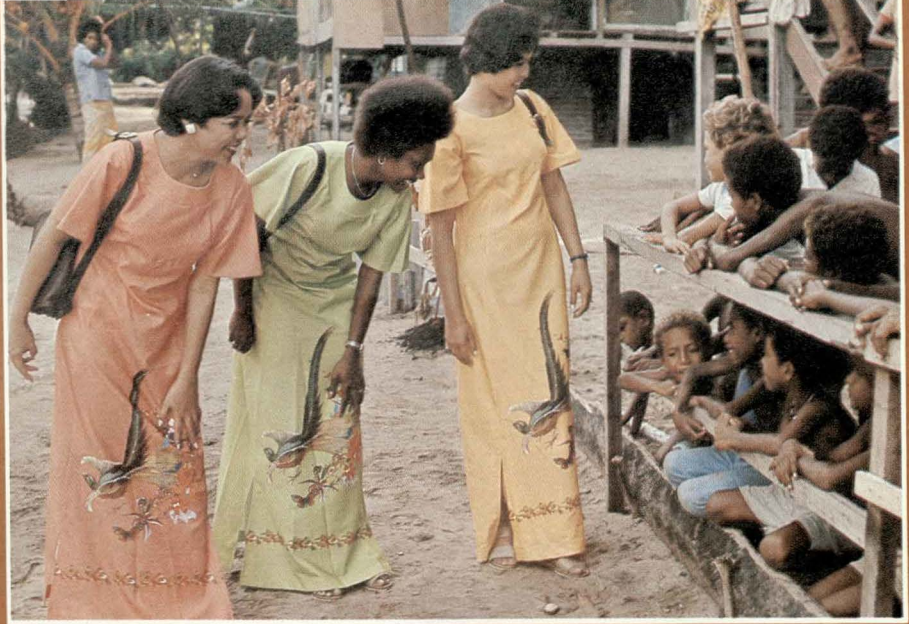


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No. 4 March 1977

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Hello and Welcome!

This is the fourth issue of Paradise and the response which we have received from our various readers has been very gratifying. The standard of the magazine, I believe, is equal to that published by any international airline throughout the world. We have been publishing the magazine on a quarterly basis. However, commencing with this issue, we will now produce a new magazine every two months.

In each issue we will be bringing you interesting sidelights on Papua New Guinea development. If you would like to be on our mailing list, please write to us.

We welcome enquiries from advertisers. With the very wide distribution list and high reader response we are sure advertisers will get good value.

In January we launched our service to Kagoshima in Japan with rapid connections by All Nippon Airways jets to other Japanese cities. Initial reaction has been extremely pleasing. The inaugural service to Japan coincided with the launch of our new hostess uniforms, pictured above.

Interesting packages are being developed to have Papua New Guinea as a calling spot on the warm tourist routes and whether tourists are travelling from Australia to South-east Asia or from South-east Asia through to New Zealand and the South Pacific, a stop in Papua New Guinea is a worthwhile experience.

Papua New Guinea, because of its very rugged terrain, is not a newcomer to aviation. Even though international operations are comparatively new for Air Niugini, the depth of experience which pilots in Papua New Guinea have obtained through rigorous training and exposure to highly sophisticated training methods, makes this a wonderful place to fly - and Air Niugini a very experienced operator to fly with.

Australian flying standards are world renowned, and it is a matter of pride that about 40 per cent of all licensed airline pilots flying for Australian international and domestic airlines received their initial training in the mountains of Papua New Guinea.

C.B. Grey
General Manager.

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Bob Halstead
Terry Baudert
Fritz Prenzel
Peter Jackson
Tom Cooke
John Lever
Greg Mitchell
Shisei Kuwabara
PNG Office of Tourism
Brian Coates
PNG Aviation Museum

COVER

Sunset from the shore of Tench Island, 100 km north of Kavieng, capital of New Ireland Province. Birdwatcher Brian Coates took this shot on one of his many quests in search of Papua New Guinea's avifauna. It wasn't just the sunset which caught his attention. Can anyone spot the bird?



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which one to try first.



Below: Highlander with traditional kina shell and a touch of more modern adornment; right: Man from Bootless Bay near Port Moresby with clam shell filled with imported beads



something old something new

By Terry Baudert

A little bead can be a mighty thing... first in these lands as an article of exchange, travelling hundreds of miles from hand to hand over rugged mountain trails, absorbed and assimilated into local culture, it in fact proved a tiny herald of the tumultuous changes ahead.

Now the cycle is complete. The bead goes back to other lands worn on the necks of Papua New Guinean students and travellers off to study the world, or bought, by delighted visitors, as gifts and souvenirs for friends back home.

One of the earliest mentions of beads as an article of exchange in New Guinea appears in the log of William Dampier, an English explorer who sailed along the coast of, and named New Britain in 1700.

He records that he could not per-

suade the coastal villagers to trade with his sailors for the pigs, wood and water that the voyagers required, so his men landed and took what they wanted, including images. As recompense, Dampier sent a canoe to the village loaded with what he thought they might appreciate — axes, knives, looking glasses, a large bunch of beads and some glass bottles.

Even before this time it is likely that some beads travelled into New Guinea through the visits of Ceramese and Chinese traders who were already making regular trips to West New Guinea by the end of the seventeenth century. They were after nutmeg, massoi bark, trepang (sea slug), tortoiseshell, birds of paradise feathers and slaves.

Beads became so much part of the



Kukuku warrior; inset: beads in abundance at the Goroka Show

business-bartering life of this land that, by the 1870s, when Samoan-American 'Queen' Emma Forsayth arrived to start her copra empire, the exchange rate was already well established: one thimbleful of coloured beads for one pound of copra.

In 1885, Dr F. H. Otto Finsch, a German anthropologist and explorer, recorded, on a trip up the Sepik river, that the people were eager to barter because they had no such items as glass, beads, tobacco or knives.

As anyone can verify who has been lost in the pages of James Sinclair's books of outstanding photographs of the people of Papua New Guinea, beads have since become fully assimilated into the ritual and ceremonial life of the people.

Beads are now used in great quantities and in a most decorative fashion, along with the traditional shells, seeds, tusks, ground vine necklets and fur and feathers that are used to enhance the appearance of young brides. In a similar way, beads now figure in the ceremonial finery of many young male initiates, or on those occasions when a mature man

attains a position of leadership in his village and community.

The importance and significance of such ceremonies is still very much alive. A deep comfort is drawn from them and amongst Papua New Guinean urbanites there is a re-surfacing of traditional values and practices. They are recognising that some old ceremonies, discarded in the headlong race to nationhood Western-style, still have a role in this unifying process.

Michael Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, expresses this feeling in his autobiography *Sana*, where he describes his final initiation and the assumption of his grandfather's title of Sana in his home village, Karau, in the Murik Lakes area of the East Sepik Province. This ceremony was delayed because of his long absences from the village, particularly after he became Chief Minister. But in December 1973 he returned to fulfil this important duty.

He describes the ritual regalia of *yamdar* as a magnificent collection of bird-of-paradise feathers, mother-of-pearl and cowrie shells, animal

tusks and tapa cloth, each piece having special significance in the ceremony. Later, after further ceremonies when Mr Somare also assumed leadership titles in his wife's family and his mother's family, he writes: 'For me, the installation ceremony meant that I had again struck roots at home. Rather than remaining a floating city-dweller, I had been re-integrated with my clan, my family and my village. The wisdom of Sana, my grandfather, had been passed on to me together with his strength and his fighting spirit.'

The importance of these ritual decorations of natural beads, shells, tusks and feathers is also shown in the writing of many anthropologists who have worked in Papua New Guinea. Professor C. G. Seligmann, whose authoritative work *Melanesians of British New Guinea* was published in 1910, describes in careful detail the placing and grading of various shells and natural objects on the necks, arms, heads and waists of the various tribal groups he studied.

It is evident that from time immemorial the men and women of

Papua New Guinea had used the brilliant colours of the birds of paradise, the iridescent wings of beetles, the staining oxides of the earth, even the brittle glory of everlasting flowers, to enhance their bodies — and to express their artistry, pride and sense of social status. Valued objects, such as

shells, animal tusks, teeth and fur, pointed up man's prowess as a hunter, his wealth and prestige. To all this, the little glass bead of the outside world came as a variation and addition.

In his book *Plumes and Arrows*, crammed with details of Papua New Guinean life, Colin Simpson describes, in some sorrow, how the work demands of the foreign white man together with the attractions of the ubiquitous trade store had already changed every-day life in the then just opened-up Mount Hagen-Goroka area.

Because work for the white man brought in comparative wealth, more people than ever before were able to trade for mother-of-pearl shells to wear around their necks, and bird-of-paradise plumes to wear on their heads. At the same time the trade store was offering beads and trinkets and manufactured textiles, so that already, only 20 years after first

'contact', the dog-tooth necklace was regarded as 'old-fashioned'. The bead-string was the 'in' thing. More colour and variety had been added to every-day life, he concluded wryly, but the value of the traditional item had already been demeaned in the eyes of its own craftsman.

In present-day Papua New Guinea,



Bead-bedecked belles from Chimbu Province; inset: the man who owned this traditional form of shell currency - known in the Trobriands as mwari - would be a very wealthy man



clever fingers are creating what can be called, in every sense of the term, the costume jewelry of the country.

Every year, about 2,250 kg of coloured beads are imported into Port Moresby. These are mainly handled by one big trading company which already in 1883 was bringing in the requirements of colonists by means of monthly sailing schooner from Australia. Most beads now come from Czechoslovakia and Italy, but some also come from Hong Kong.

They arrive in small plastic bags

Two ladies from Mekeo, Central Province

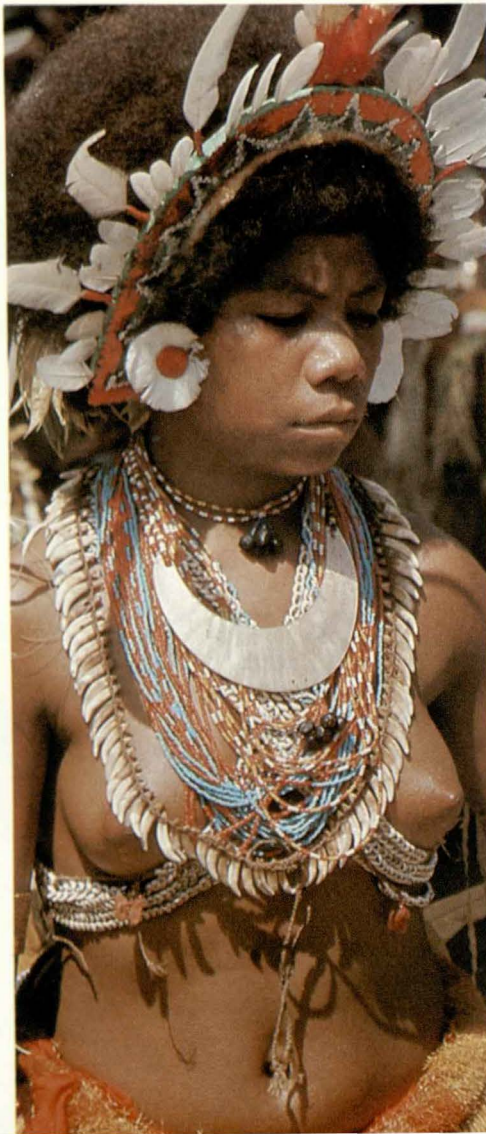


or paper cartons, packed into wood boxes, 22.5kg to a box. In retail outlets, the beads are still sold by the spoonful — big or little. On average, the price is 10 toea for a little spoonful, 20 toea for a big one, but in some stores prices vary according to colour, with red, white and black costing more.

Beadwork is a fragile but important prop in the uncertain livelihoods of many urban households. Some families sell their products on the sidewalks of towns or at irregular art and craft fairs. A few trade stores buy necklaces and rings. In Port Moresby, the biggest single consistent buyer of beadwork is probably the Girl Guides' handicraft shop near Koki market.

Once a week, an assembly of regular suppliers gathers at the back door of the Girl Guides' shop. About 30 women, with children, wait patiently on a sunny bank. There is a regular contingent from Hanuabada village, on the waterfront near Konedobu; others come from villages on the Rigo coastline; a few from inland villages around Kikori.

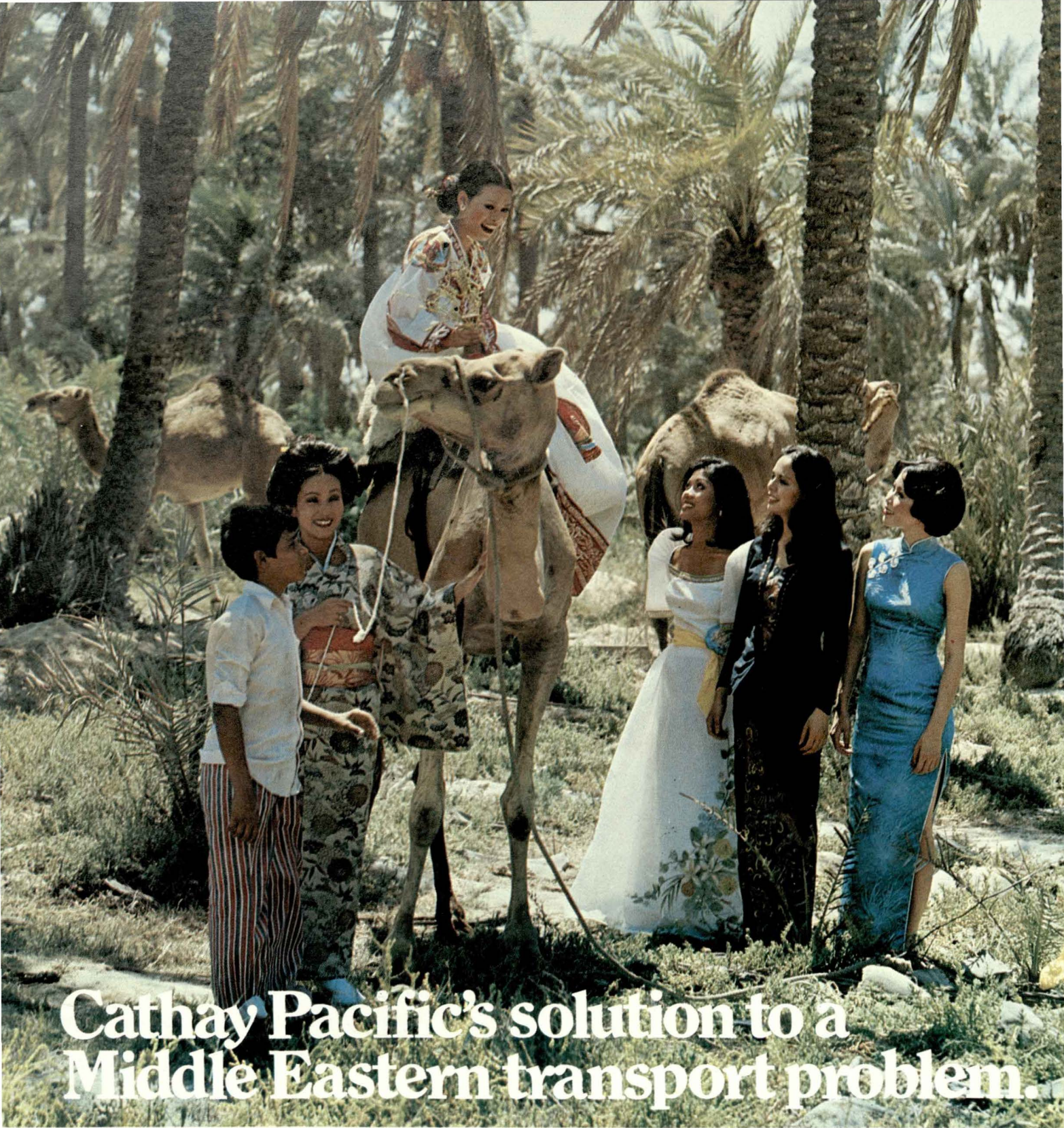
The atmosphere is 'clubby' and cheerful. Work in hand continues while the sellers wait their turn to go up, one by one, to a large table at the back-door of the shop where



each in turn lays out her week's work. This is checked over quickly and expertly by Miro Tau who has been buyer for the shop since 1974. She selects the items she wants and calculates the money due to the seller, even as the next in line is laying out yet another sparkling array of necklaces and bracelets. Each week, according to Miro, the shop spends about K100 on beads.

'Just now, the rope-like form of necklace, fairly short and in a single colour, is in good demand,' says Miro 'but we always get a lot of people who like the long bead necklace with shells.' The shop also buys beadwork from hospital patients who work in occupational therapy units in various hospitals in and outside Port Moresby.

One unit is at the Taurama General Hospital in Port Moresby where people who have lost their limbs, or who for some other reason are unable to return to regular employment, come into work. Among other articles, they produce beadwork. The Rotary Sheltered Workshop at the same hospital also offers beadwork for sale but concentrates chiefly on picture-framing and book-binding. — Terry Baudert is a freelance travel writer.



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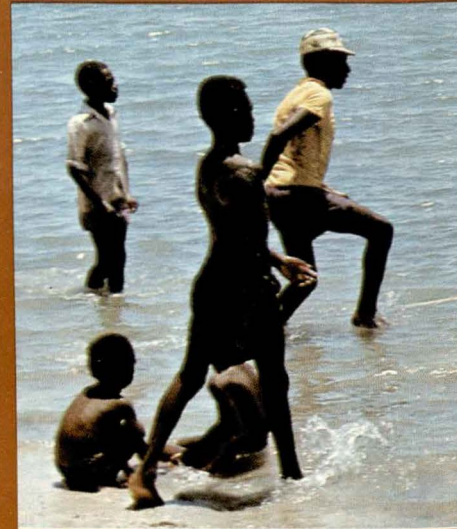
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Learning to



Top: Getting ready for the race at Ela Beach; above: jockeying for position; right: Hey! come back

The canoe craze hit Port Moresby again recently and villagers, right along the coast, busily got to work on their own vessels. When race day came, Paradise designer, Tom Cooke, took his camera down to Ela Beach to capture the action. The Ela Beach canoe carnival also stirred a few childhood memories for Luke Sela, now chief of staff of the PNG Post-Courier. Luke, a man from Manus, recalls canoe techniques and capers when he was just a kid in the Admiralty Islands.

Can't remember what I learned to do first — walk or paddle a canoe. Probably paddle a canoe. You only have to be able to sit down to do that.

It was quite logical really. Our fathers depended on the sea for their livelihood. The quicker we got into training to do the same the better.

When the southeasterlies blew — that was when the real canoeing fun started. But first you had to build your boat. For just clowning around, softwood would do. But, if it was a race you were planning, there was

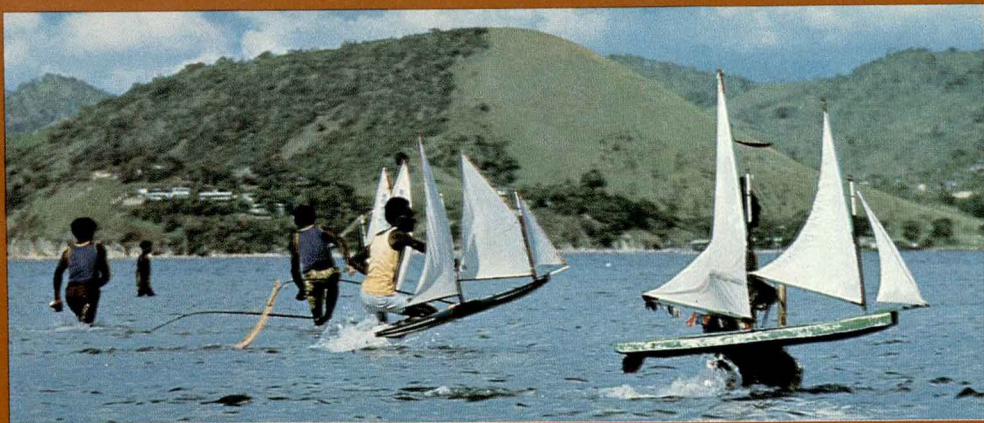
nothing to beat the sago palm.

To learn the secrets of canoe building you simply had to watch your elder brother or cousin. First he shaped two pieces of wood or sago palm to form the main canoe hull and the outrigger. These were joined with smaller pieces of wood. We didn't bother about the intricate markings our fathers used to put on the canoes. Next job was to shape a paddle. This, attached to the stern of the boat, also acted as a rudder.

For the sails we would use leaves,



live on water



Top: Waiting for the starter's signal; above: bending the rules a little - when off course, pick it up and put it back in the race

the mast being the stem of a coconut or sago frond. Two other fronds, bent backward to the stern, were used to support the mast.

The canoes finished and tested, the racing would begin - and almost invariably end up in fighting. One group would claim their canoe had been interfered with or obstructed by another group. Fights, swimming, canoes, fishing — they were all part and parcel of learning to live on water.

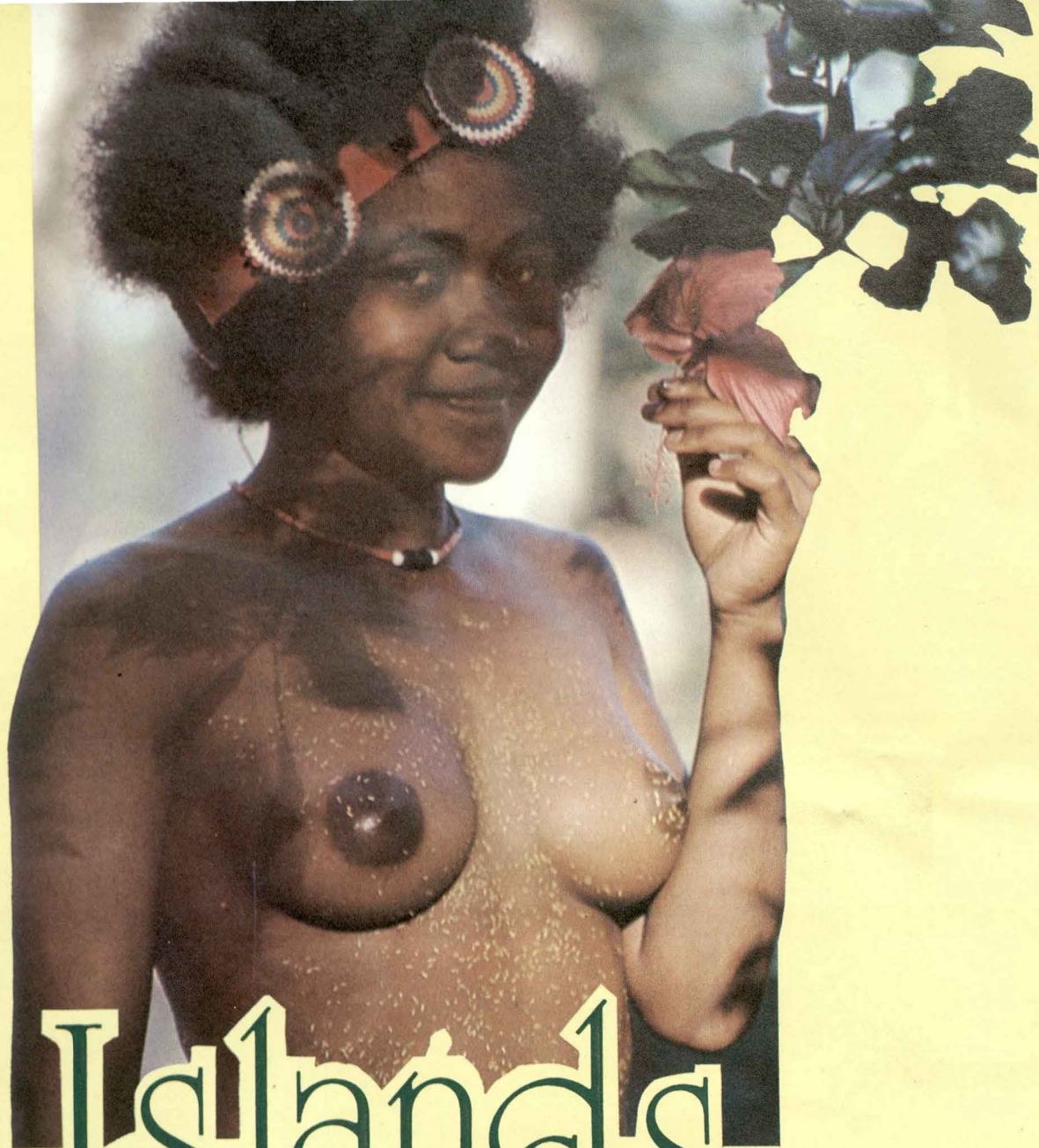
Many is the time I told my teacher

that I had to leave school for the day to 'help my parents' — and then streak off along the beach, perhaps two or three miles, to where the racing would be.

The teacher would start to get a bit suspicious when all he had left to teach were girls. Our parents would get suspicious too when they found knives and other suitable canoe-making equipment missing. Soon our parents would be sending messages down to the school to see if we were there. Next move would be the

teacher's. And then, very quickly, ours as he came storming along the beach. Still, some days we did get a few races in before we were rumbled.

As we grew older we graduated to bigger, more substantial canoes—and to the dangers of deeper water. But, thanks to our devil-may-care days when we used to surf in on a sago palm, we took it in our stride. In those days we didn't have much option. Most of us knew that our futures depended on a living off the sea...



Islands Of Love

Story and pictures by Bob Halstead

Wandering through Paradise is not just the prerogative of angels. Many Papua New Guineans do it all the time — which is how this magazine gets its name.

To show you what we mean, you might like to imagine yourself as a patrol officer on duty, say, in Milne Bay. The task of the patrol officer is to travel around the villages of his beat attending to general adminis-

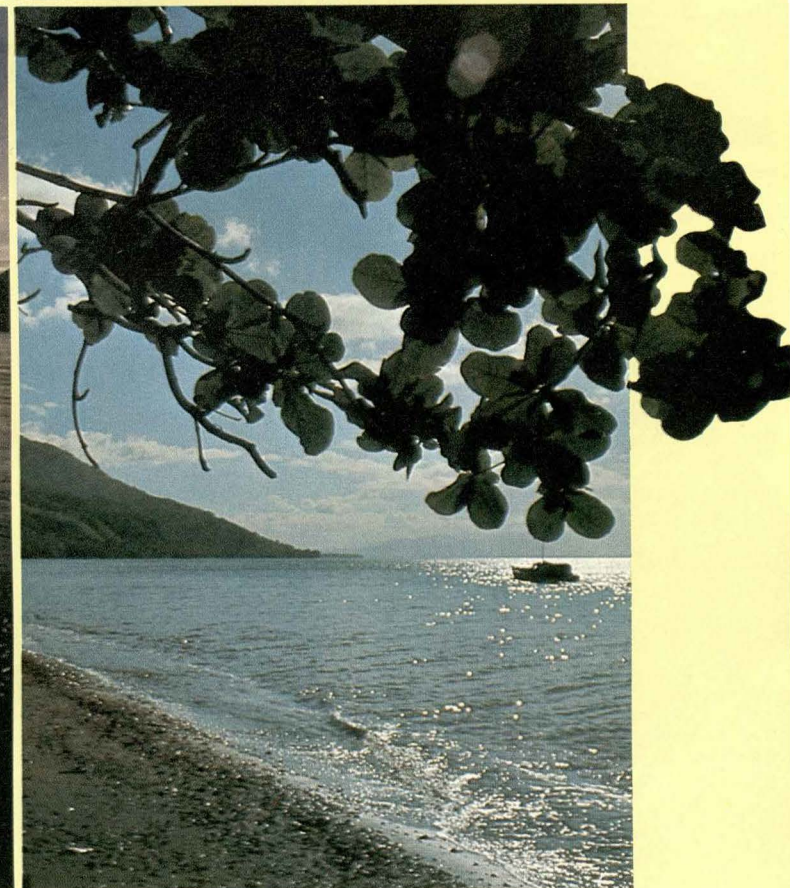
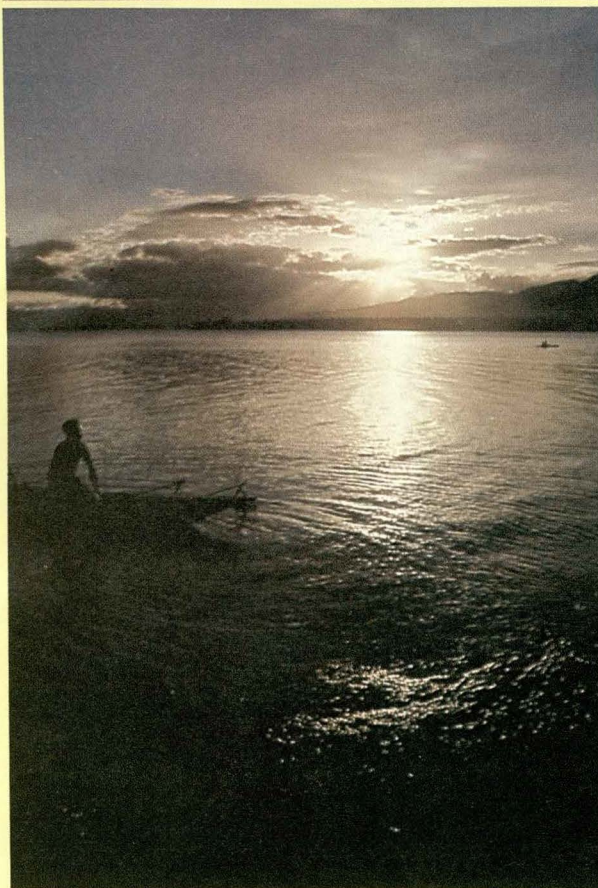
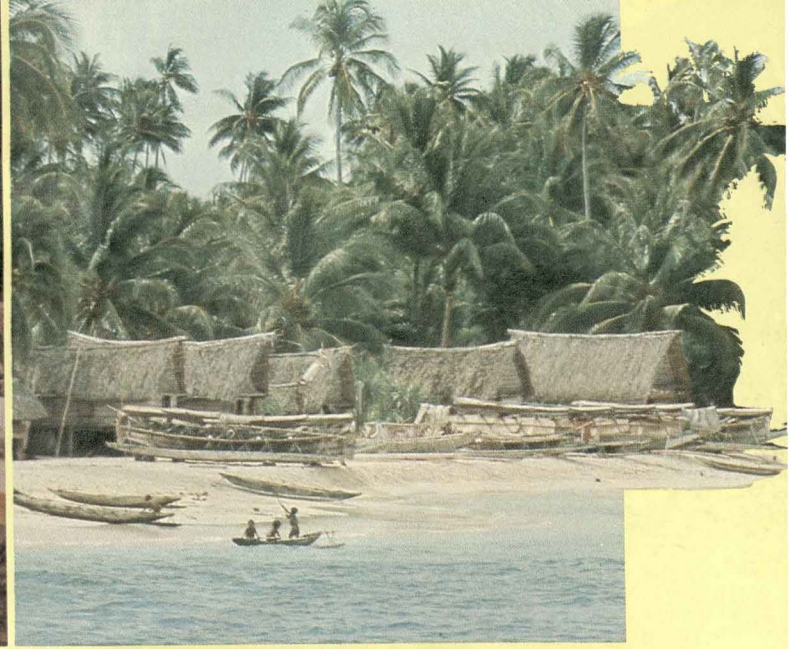
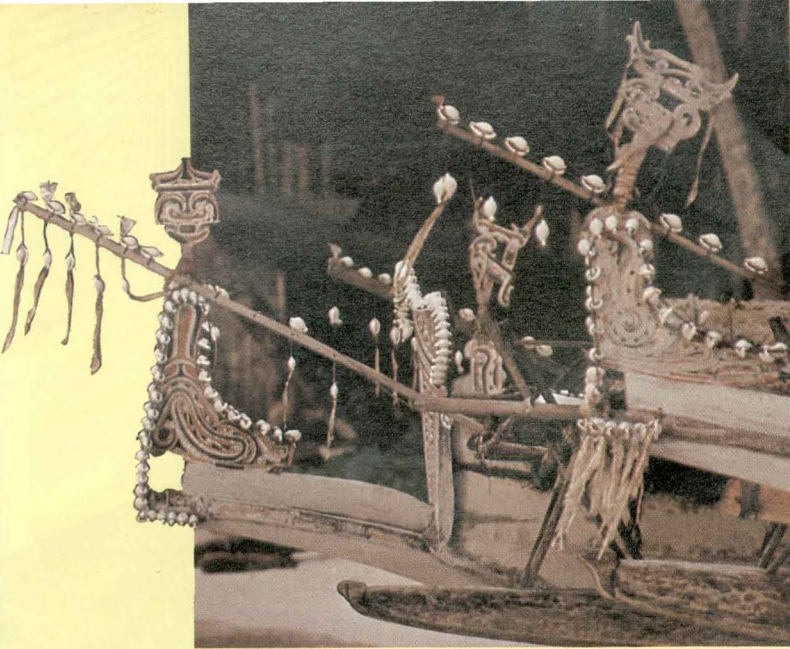
tration, settling local disputes and promoting social and economic development.

Since many islands are involved, travel often is by boat. These may be fast outboard-powered runabouts in protected waters or large trawlers and coastal cargo boats for longer journeys.

Let us suppose you set off from Alotau, the administrative capital of

the Milne Bay Province, for a patrol along the Maramatana coast to the north of Alotau.

A speedboat, laden with supplies, soon takes you past the pretty Killerton Islands where stone ruins of one of the earliest mission stations still stand in the bush among the palms, to East Cape, the most easterly tip of the mainland of Papua New Guinea.



Left: Trobriand girl; clockwise from above: Milne Bay sunset; canoes at Kitava; village on Egum Atoll; a gentle sea caresses a Milne Bay beach

With waves of greeting to the villagers at the cape and a message passed on, you turn back — but this time on the north side of the cape — and travel up the Maramatana coast.

Although it is only a few miles over the mountains from Alotau, the climate has changed. Now sheltered from the south-east winds that bring rain, the hills here are grassy and lack the thick bush characteristic of the Alotau side.

After anchoring the boat just off a beach you swim and then wash in a nearby crystal creek. You sleep in the village rest house, cosier than the Hilton — and what a view!

Renowned for their friendly, generous nature, the people want to talk with you and to bring you food. They gather under a shady tree near the water's edge, savouring the gentle breeze — and waiting for you to spill the government news and let them have their say in reply.

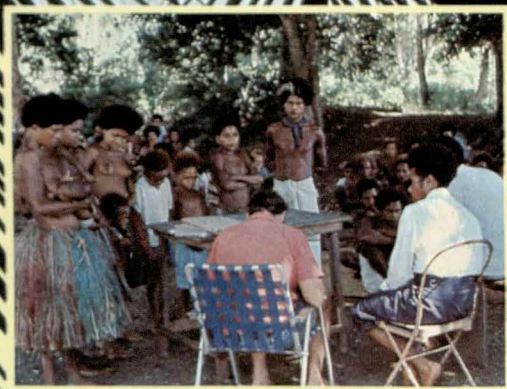
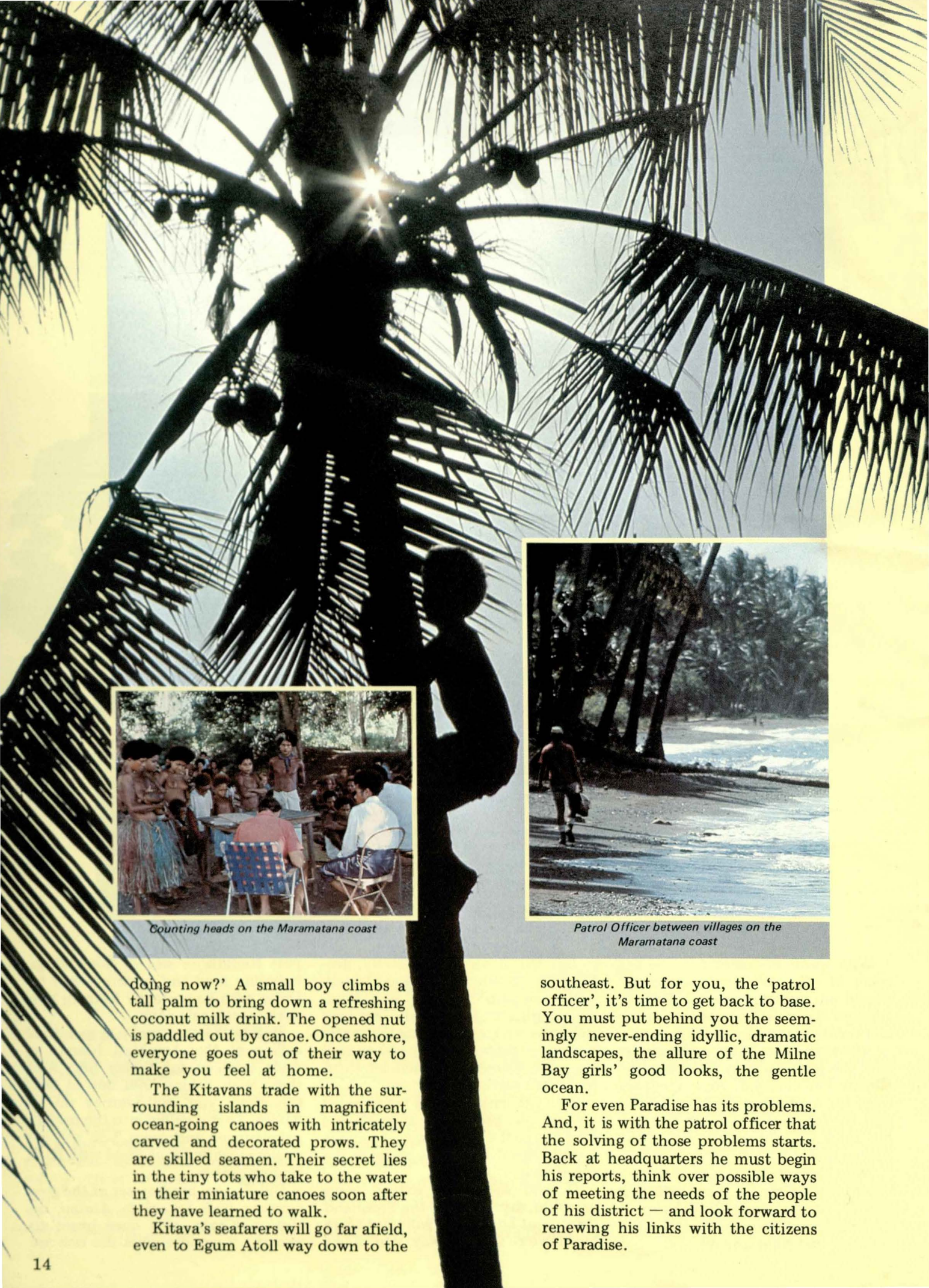
As a vital link between government and people, you do your work and move on to the next village — perhaps a walk inland or a quick zoom in the speed boat.

If you decide to extend your patrol to, say, Kitava in the Trobriand 'Islands of Love', you will need to go by trawler. On the way you might

pass Kedidia — site of hot springs, bubbling mud and geysers — and by Dobu with its perfectly formed, now extinct, volcanic cone.

Before Kitava, make a point of calling at the Amphlett Islands to trade tobacco for a clay pot. And then, with fishing lines out to feed the crew, you can journey on to Kitava. There, sailing into the perfect palm-fringed anchorage, you will see a talcum white beach lined with Kula trading canoes.

Bill Strang, headmaster of the government high school in Alotau, on visiting Kitava, was once heard to remark: 'I wonder what the rich are



Counting heads on the Maramatana coast



Patrol Officer between villages on the Maramatana coast

doing now?’ A small boy climbs a tall palm to bring down a refreshing coconut milk drink. The opened nut is paddled out by canoe. Once ashore, everyone goes out of their way to make you feel at home.

The Kitavans trade with the surrounding islands in magnificent ocean-going canoes with intricately carved and decorated prows. They are skilled seamen. Their secret lies in the tiny tots who take to the water in their miniature canoes soon after they have learned to walk.

Kitava’s seafarers will go far afield, even to Egum Atoll way down to the

southeast. But for you, the ‘patrol officer’, it’s time to get back to base. You must put behind you the seemingly never-ending idyllic, dramatic landscapes, the allure of the Milne Bay girls’ good looks, the gentle ocean.

For even Paradise has its problems. And, it is with the patrol officer that the solving of those problems starts. Back at headquarters he must begin his reports, think over possible ways of meeting the needs of the people of his district — and look forward to renewing his links with the citizens of Paradise.

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JACKSON'S AIRPORT Port Moresby

'Up in New Guinea the other day a jungle aerodrome was given the name of Jackson Field.' That was how a newspaper feature, published throughout Australia on December 27, 1942, began.

The article, by Pilot-Officer J.C. Waters, records the efforts of RAAF 75 Squadron to defend Port Moresby from Japanese air raids. Among the heroes was the leader of 75 Squadron, John Jackson, killed in action and after whom the Port Moresby airfield was named.

On this spread, through the lens of Japanese photographer Shisei Kuwabara, you can see the 'jungle aerodrome' that Waters wrote about.

Although it has not been used for many a year, the 'marsden matting' fighter strip from which Jackson and 75 Squadron flew, is still there — between the new 2,750m runway (capable of taking 747s) and the old 2,072m strip nearer the terminal.

At the foot of the control tower is a monument. A plaque on the monument reads:

Erected to the memory of Squadron Leader John Francis Jackson, DFC, 75 Squadron RAAF, killed in action 28th April, 1942, aged 34, after whom this airfield was named.

Erected by St George, Queensland, Sub-branch of the RSS&AILA.

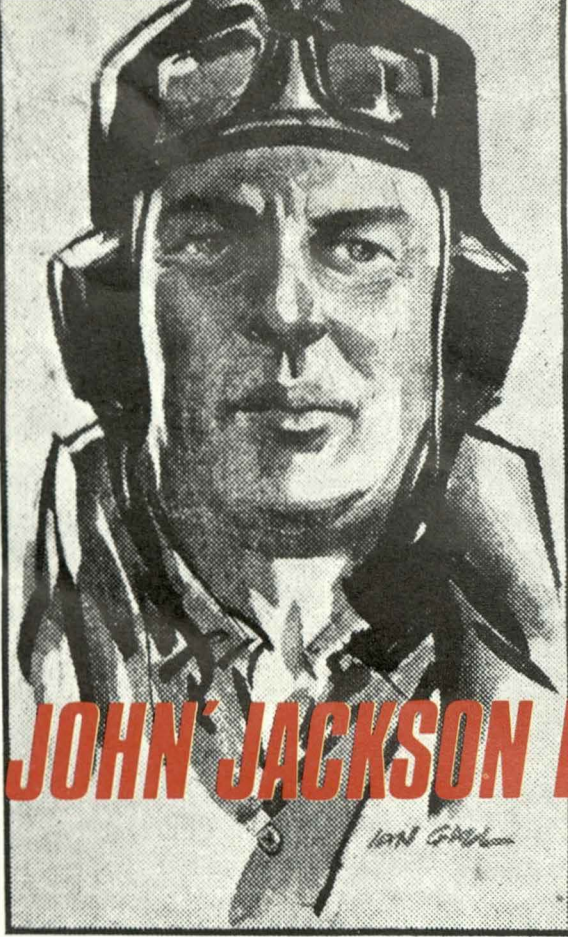
Honorary architect: Imperial War Graves Commission.

Contractor: John Stubbs and Sons (Papua).

Before his final death dive near Port Moresby, Jackson had several other near misses. Over the page, in his own words, in a letter to his wife Betty, 'Old John' Jackson records an episode which began with a reconnaissance mission from Port Moresby to Lae. He was 'Old John' because at 34 he was by far the oldest member of 75 Squadron.



Photograph with the co-operation of the *South Pacific Aero Club*.



'OLD JOHN' JACKSON D.F.C.

12/4/42 — Dearest Betty. Went off to Lae about 1600 on 10/4/42 to do a low reconnaissance flight. Just leaving Lae three Japanese fighters surprised me and shot my plane to bits.

When I first saw them I didn't attempt to fight them as it was essential to get the information back and relied on my extra speed to get away. Anyway, the aircraft I had was no faster so at last decided to turn and fight them but my guns had been hit and wouldn't work. The aircraft was a mass of holes, windscreen all shot away, and on fire. Crashed into the sea about three-quarters of a mile off land near a village.

Aircraft sank in a few seconds. I was out in a flash but oxygen tube held me for a while. I started off for land with the three Japanese flying around and around me and I had a few anxious moments waiting for them to strafe me. After what seemed an eternity they went away.

The New Guineans ashore seemed frightened but a few who I later found were from Rabaul and the Duke of Yorks waited and helped me ashore. The rest of the people were bluffed by the Japanese. Anyway, two good lads offered to guide me. (I forgot to mention as I was swimming in a croc poked his snout at me but

didn't approve and turned away.)

I knew the Japanese would send a search party straight after me so the lads packed their belongings and we hurried away. Hadn't gone far before we sighted Japanese boats so we went into the jungle swimming creeks in my clothes and struggling through swamp and jungle, going down to my waist in slime and mud.

The Japanese landed and went along the way we were heading and some of the villagers were with them showing them the way. At dark we went on to the beach and Edmond, mission taught, said they had gone back so we crept along the jungle track in the dark and came to a fire they had lit earlier, then to a hut. I decided to push on though nearly done in.

I had shed my shoes and socks swimming in from the aircraft and my feet were pretty bad...

When we came to a stony river crossing my feet wouldn't work at all and they had to carry me across. It rained most of the night and I was drenched although they made an umbrella for me out of big wide banana leaves. But I didn't have the art of holding it right.

Goodness knows how they find the track at night, not six inches wide in places. I can't even follow it

in the daylight. We came to another hut and slept. They fed me on roots and coconut. Up at dawn and Edmond found me some old worn out sandals but they fitted badly and I couldn't keep them on.

Just after we left I heard a shot and knew the Japanese were on our trail and I limped on. Providence alone has saved me. My aircraft was shot to ribbons. The croc turned away. And I have two wonderful aids.

Staggered on all day yesterday, towards the end climbing a mountain. Could just only stagger and the boys took turns in pushing me. At midday they roasted some green bananas. Pretty tasteless. Had a tropical deluge.

Anyway, I've learnt the art of keeping dry. Had bananas and a smoke provided by Arthur in comparative dryness. This morning I couldn't even stand up, let alone walk, so decided to stay a day here in a deserted village...

Had some anxious moments yesterday wondering if the Japanese would catch up as we could move only very slowly ...

This afternoon Arthur and Edmond are making me a pair of crutches and have cut up a bag to wrap around my feet. They use vine for twine. They carry quinine,

plaster, scissors and one has a toothbrush and razor. His toothbrush is the only thing I haven't borrowed so far.

I sleep on Edmond's sarong or lap-lap and Arthur's jersey. The mosquitoes so far haven't been too bad. Yesterday heard our Yankee friends bomb Lae so guess the boys were escorting them and giving them 'Tally-ho'...

My feet are the trouble -- this morning they felt like two pulps and I could hardly bear to touch them with my hand let alone stand. I will have to go very easy.

Edmond is C of E and Arthur a Methodist. Edmond reckons God wouldn't let the croc bite me and told Arthur all about it. I'm certain I'm only here now because Providence willed it this way. Arthur can't speak English ...

13/4/42 -- Couldn't leave today but feet are a lot better. Hope to start at dawn tomorrow. I wanted to try today but the lads seemed to think it unwise as the country is extremely difficult. Barely a goat's track over high mountains and valleys ...

We are perched on a mountain overlooking the sea but can't see Lae or Salamaua. Just heard our boys bomb Lae and saw four of our fighters but didn't see the bombers. My two boys here cheered as the bombs were falling. I'm constantly wondering if you've heard I'm missing. I trust not.

Arthur and Edmond have now made the two sandshoes better and made them like sandals. I bathe my feet, every hour or so. The swelling has gone down and they feel and look a ton better but I have some decent stone bruises. I can now walk a few paces... We are off tomorrow to Mapos, a big village higher up and further inland...

14/4/42 -- Got ready last night for an early start. Crutches, hessian, cut up Edmond's laplap into bandages. Tried it all out and can walk but dashed sore.

Up at dawn and had some roast taro. Am getting used to it now. Had some pawpaw yesterday but they are nearly all green. They boil them when green...

Struggled all day. Seemed to be an endless climb up and up and up. What a track! I really never have put in a more hellish day. Leeches by the billion on the men's feet... You

could see the patches of blood on them all day. They didn't worry me. I was past caring. Could have been snakes sucking at me and I wouldn't have felt them, my feet were so sore... I could only take steps of about six to nine inches at a time. A sort of hobble and shuffle. I thought we would never make the top...

About noon we struck some people. All the girls wear nothing from the waist up and look most alluring. They were friendly and sympathetic and gave me two sweet potatoes but couldn't provide any coconuts or water to drink. I was about done in for a drink.

They said Mapos was just ahead and I had visions of a rest. But the people seem tantalisingly vague about time and distance. About 2pm struck a spring and had a much needed drink...

It was all down hill after 3pm and a pleasant change. The old feet were pretty sore but I managed to walk from 4pm to 6pm with only breaks to adjust the hessian and sandshoe soles. Got to the first part of Mapos village about dark and was met by a lot of people, all very friendly.

Mapos is a very big village and the *luluai* (chief) of Mapos is a paramount chief of the Buangs, a string of villages in the Buang valley...

Next morning the *tultul* or second man of the village came along and brought me tea, sugar and Sunshine milk. It was great. Also a basin to bathe my feet and some bluestone and a bit of cotton wool...

I found out that there were some Australian soldiers -- actually NGVR (New Guinea Volunteer Rifles) -- on patrol and wrote them a note which a villager promised to take to them, and did...

16/4/42 -- I rested all day on the fifteenth and bathed my feet. They were rapidly improving. I wondered all day if my message would be delivered. I asked them to get word into their headquarters to pass on to Moresby that I was okay so you would all cease to worry.

Anyway, about 9pm I heard shouting and the boys said white men were coming and in blew Sergeant Stuart Fraser and Rifleman George Kerr and it was great to see them...

Next morning we got away about 9am after they had bathed my feet. They had brought with them a big

pair of size 10 army boots which fitted me nicely. It was much easier to walk with my feet bandaged and dressed and with the boots.

We only did a short stage that day. Got to a village called Lagis about 2pm and camped in the *haus kiap*. They bought vegetables from the villagers -- one razor blade, used or otherwise -- will buy a heap of potatoes. They got a cabbage also.

You can walk all day in New Guinea and in the afternoon, see, no distance away, the place you left in the morning. In some cases the people yodel or call out in a musical sort of chant the story of my arrival.

All day on the fourteenth I could hear the *kundu* drums beating. It is apparently a festive season and a lot of the villages had singsings going on...

Next day we got away early -- travelled through a lot of villages and saw one very good singsing. The male dancers with not much on -- painted with ochre and wearing fearsome looking headdresses, mostly with birds of paradise feathers and other bright-plumaged birds -- dance around in a circle beating their hollowed drums with lizard or snake skin stretched across one end...

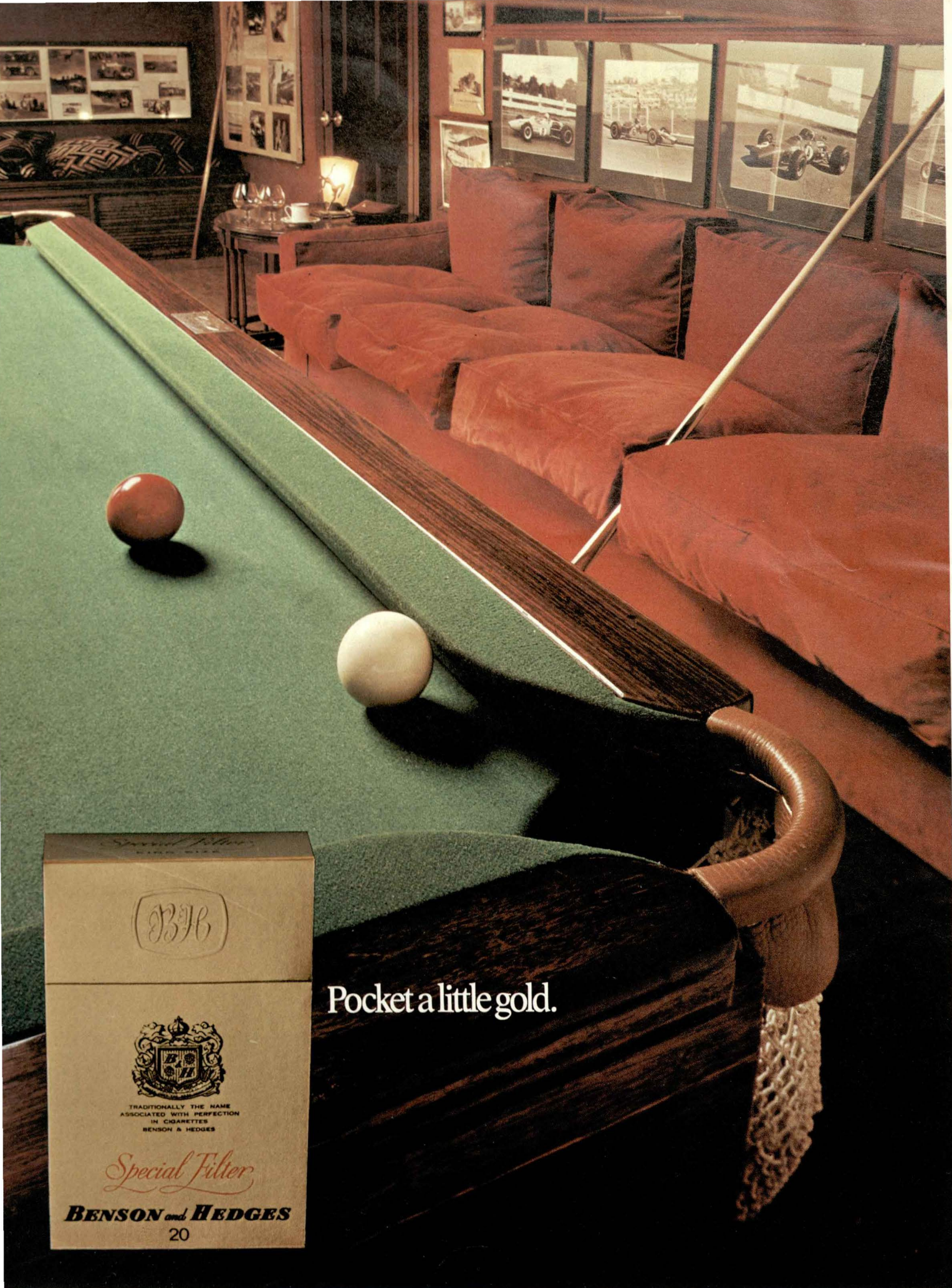
23/4/42 -- Later a plane just arrived to pick me up. Can't tell you the names of towns but have had a good look over the famous gold fields. Way before I arrived at one place a Kittyhawk was surprised and shot down in full view of our army. Was no means of identification but later proved to be poor old Barney Cresswell on his first operational flight.

24/4/42 -- Just stopped to watch a dog fight. Our boys hopping into a mob of Japanese fighters overhead. Yesterday got flown back to Moresby...

Had a hot reception. Was about to land when three Japanese made a surprise attack. Aircraft I was in got full of holes. Had tip of my finger grazed. Just a mere scratch. Providence surely guided and protected me all through... Tons and tons and tons of love sweetheart to yourself, Patricia and Arthur.

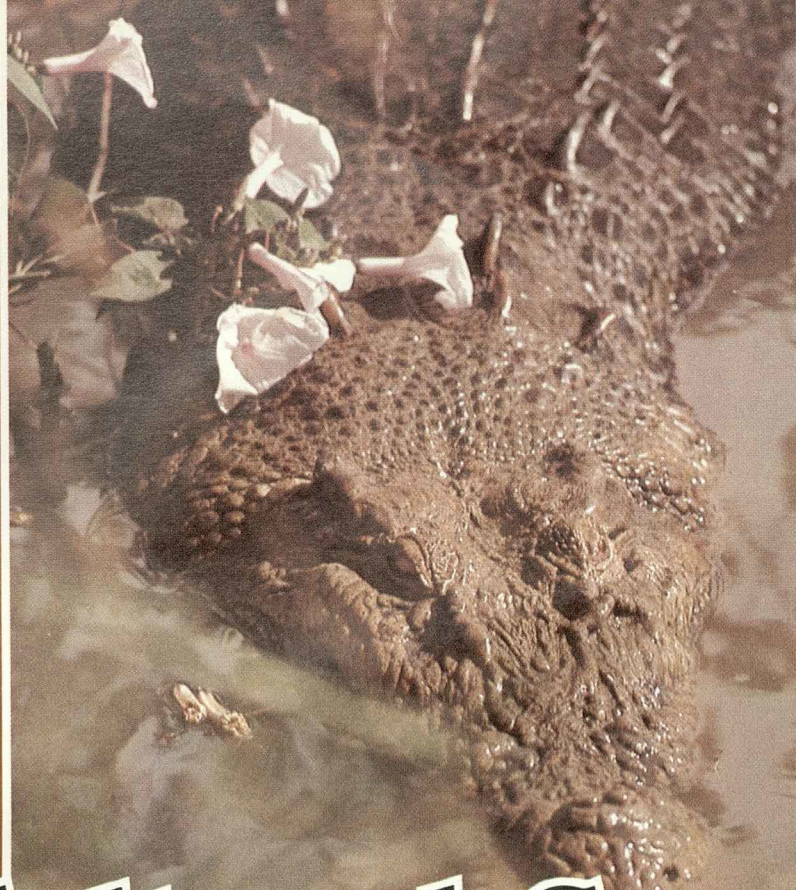
From your ever-loving husband,
John.

Note: Four days after he finished this letter, Jackson was dead.



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Cultured Crocs

By Gerry Dick

Shoot one. Skin one. Even smile at one — from the safety of a boat, of course. But 'farm' a crocodile? Tauros, sauros! Both dangerous if big enough. But while Farmer Brown's ring will usually keep Taurus quiet it takes a bit more security to make sure Mr Croc doesn't get up to mischief.

Today in Papua New Guinea, with the guidance of Department of Natural Resources' officers, Papua New Guineans in some of the most

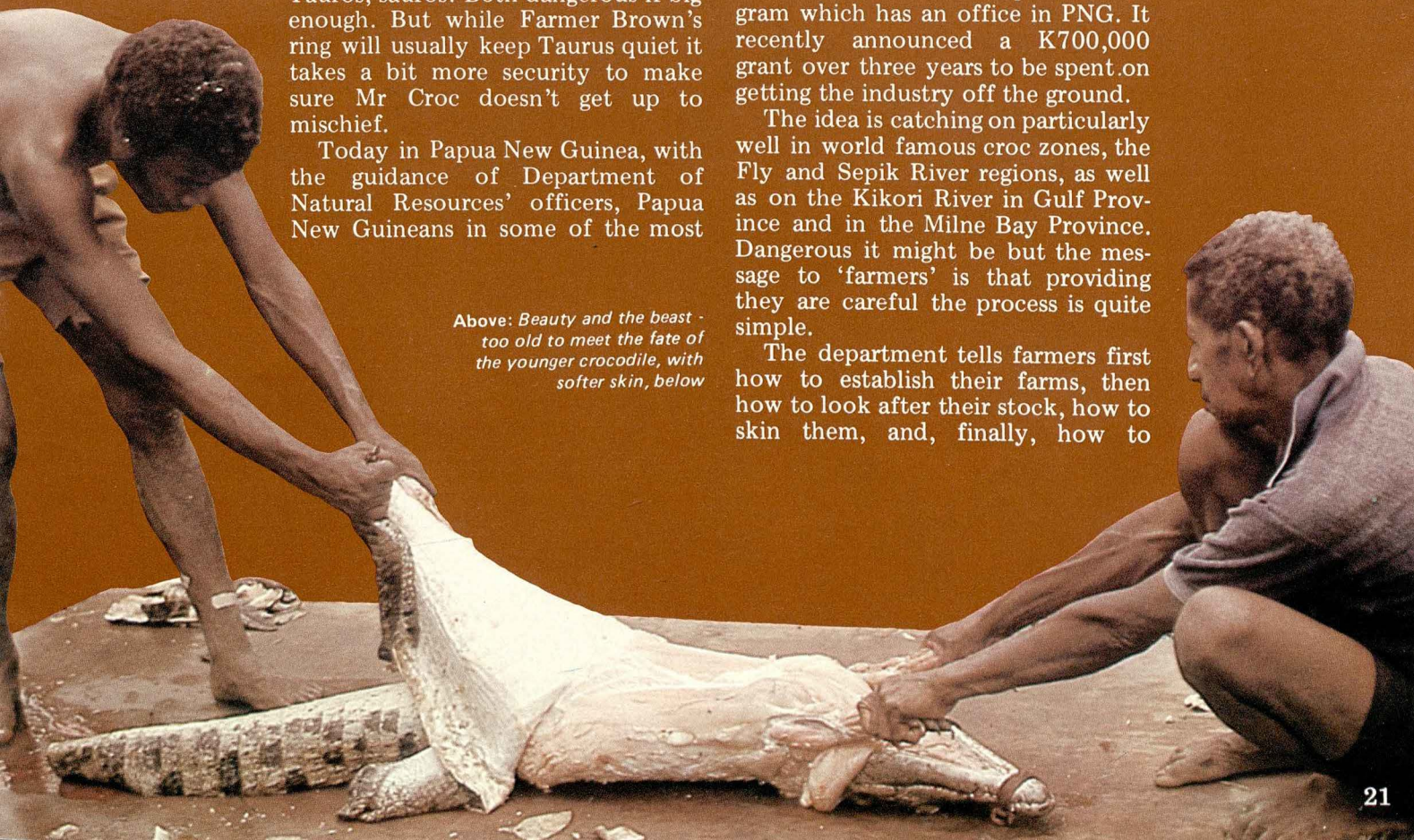
isolated areas of the country are farming crocodiles.

And backing this dicey but potentially profitable occupation is the United Nations Development Program which has an office in PNG. It recently announced a K700,000 grant over three years to be spent on getting the industry off the ground.

The idea is catching on particularly well in world famous croc zones, the Fly and Sepik River regions, as well as on the Kikori River in Gulf Province and in the Milne Bay Province. Dangerous it might be but the message to 'farmers' is that providing they are careful the process is quite simple.

The department tells farmers first how to establish their farms, then how to look after their stock, how to skin them, and, finally, how to

Above: Beauty and the beast - too old to meet the fate of the younger crocodile, with softer skin, below





Assistants struggle with the crocodile after unloading it from the aircraft at Jackson's Airport, Port Moresby.

Flying Crocodile

John Lever, manager of the Moitaka farm, is an old hand at crocodile handling. Along with a light aircraft pilot and an assistant he nearly became a victim of a crocodile first - a piece of human at 1300m.

In a Britten Norman Islander aircraft, John flew to Kikori to collect a 'young' croc Port Moresby-bound. He recalls the incident:

'On reaching Kikori the pilot and I were amazed to find that the 'young' croc was in fact a very mature male 4.5 metres long. The pilot said the croc would fit in the fuselage of the aircraft if he removed the passenger seats, and said that

providing it could be securely tied he had no objections.

'We tied the croc to a long pole and covered its head with a bag. We had to remove both the front and back doors of the aircraft - in addition to removing the seats - to get it inside.

'When loaded the croc's tail was just between the pilot's seat and mine, and its head touched the far bulkhead of the rear cargo compartment. Seats were packed each side of the croc's head, against the fuselage walls, to prevent it from moving. But with few tie-down points in the aircraft's floor, we found it difficult to secure the croc's body.

'My assistant, Ambogono Dagop of Lake Murray, and the pilot and I boarded the aircraft. The moment we left the ground the animal became active, worked the bag off its head and belted the sides of the fuselage with its snout. Ambogono and I crawled along its back and - with difficulty - replaced the bag over its head.

'All went well for half an hour or so, until the croc became restless again and worked the bag off his head the second time.

'We were at 1300m and afraid that the croc would damage the fuselage. I spent the next half hour sitting on its shoulders at the rear of the aircraft, holding a 30.30 rifle against the head - where the bullet would penetrate the brain. But the croc remained relatively quiet and we eventually arrived at Port Moresby.'

The flying croc today is the most vicious at Moitaka. 'It's an extremely aggressive animal,' says John. 'It is now five metres long, and just the other day it almost killed a four metre croc in the pen with it - except that handlers arrived on the scene in time. The croc it attacked has a tooth puncture in its head and is far from well.'

market the end product—the belly skin.

Wildlife Branch officers in the Department of Natural Resources have established that all the hardware necessary to set up a crocodile farm can be obtained right in the swamps where farms will flourish best.

What this means is that the people

of the swamps, until now almost totally excluded from the cash economy—and unable to claim any contribution to the economic development of their nation—can now make a kina for themselves and, at the same time, assist in Papua New Guinea's export effort.

Apart from learning how to handle mature crocodiles, building the bush material pens is the toughest part of the business. Fence poles, about as thick as a man's thigh, are cut about two metres long. They are dug about a metre into the ground and lashed at the top with bamboo. To simulate a natural habitat it is better to have

streams running through the pens or to divert nearby streams.

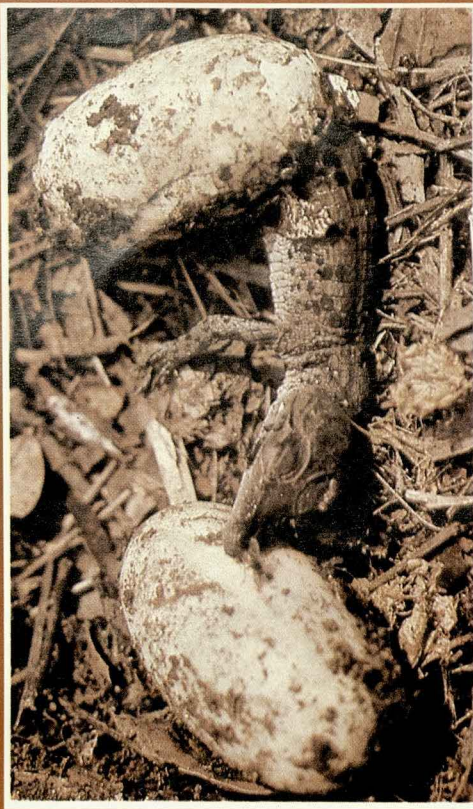
Stocking the pens is usually the least of a farmer's worries. Young crocs—just hatched—are abundant in PNG swamps, particularly in the Fly, Sepik and Gulf deltas. Predictably, the mortality rate is high among young crocodiles but, because there are so many, farmers have no trouble in keeping up their stocks.

As the croc grows—and it's quite a rapid process—its appetite keeps pace. Fish is the main diet, keeping the farmer and his family busy catching in nearby rivers.

Wildlife Branch, in its advice to PNG's far-flung farmers, is not preaching theory. At Moitaka, a few minutes by car from Port Moresby's Jackson's Airport, Wildlife Branch has established its own crocodile farm with stock ranging from a few centimetres to more than six metres. One specimen is claimed to be the biggest salt water crocodile in captivity.

As well as wire compounds, Wildlife has built bush material pens as models to be copied by would-be farmers.

Moitaka is open to the public each



Papua New Guinea's crocodile population is steadily increasing. However the mortality rate of new born crocs is very high

Friday afternoon, feeding time starting at three. Visitors to Papua New Guinea are given the opportunity to witness some of the hazards of rearing crocodiles. Familiarity with its master certainly breeds contempt. It would as soon make a meal of its provider as it would of the fish it is offered.

Wildlife officers believe that Papua New Guinea has the largest crocodile population in the world—and that it is growing.

Crocodile protection laws, first introduced in the mid-sixties, forbid the export of skins more than about 51cm (20 inches) across the belly. This measure is designed to prevent the slaughter of mature crocodiles to enable them to breed undisturbed.

It takes a crocodile only about three years to produce a skin about 40cm across the belly. Not too long for a new farmer to wait for his first harvest. When picked up in a swamp, soon after hatching, a baby will bring K1. A full size skin in good condition will bring K100. Not a bad rate of appreciation in three years!

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KIMBE STRIKES OIL

By Peter Jackson

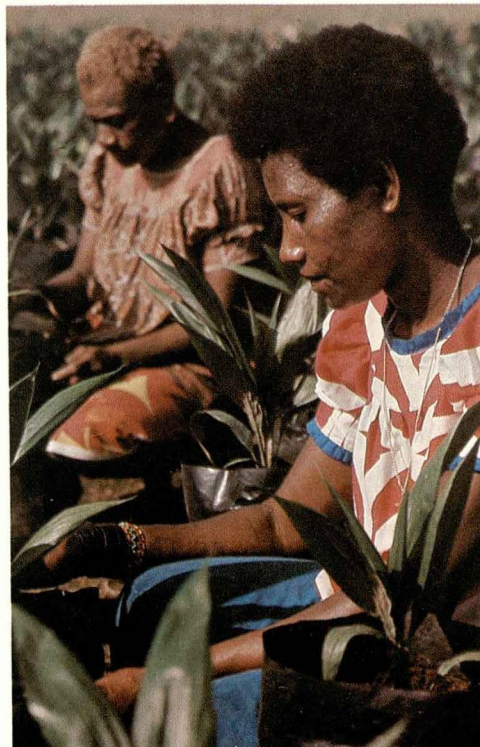
Ten years ago, the West New Britain area consisted of little more than a few coconut plantations and vast expanses of forests. Only cargo cultists saw it becoming one of the country's most prosperous regions.

Now people from all provinces in Papua New Guinea have settled in the northern coastal area between Talasea and Cape Hoskins and it has become one of the fastest developing regions in Papua New Guinea. The lure has been oil! And, as though the cargo cultists may have been right, the oil is flowing from the humble palm tree which grows in such profusion there.

Palm oil — the vegetable oil used in the manufacture of soap and margarine — has been the basis of the area's rapid development. West New Britain is now a province in its own right, with the prospect of even greater development and expansion.

The centre of development has been Kimbe, the provincial capital.

Above: The oil palm seed; inset: harvesting the oil palm crop; below: at work in the oil palm nursery



This modern and carefully planned town typifies the progress in the area in recent years. In 1968 the present town site was covered with coconut trees of the San Remo plantation. It was in June that year that government planners decided to locate the provincial headquarters there.

The original San Remo homestead still stands and, with its unique rosewood walls, gives the town some historical interest. Kimbe also has a large shopping centre and most government departments are represented. Hoskins, a few miles to the north, is serviced most days by Air Niugini.

Between Hoskins and Kimbe is West New Britain's 'oil'. On smallholder settlement blocks, Sepiks, Tolais, Chimbus and a multitude of other regional groups are growing and harvesting the fruit from which oil is extracted. The squat trees, with their sprouting palm fronds, line the highways and backroads for miles.

The New Britain oil palm scheme at Hoskins started in 1968 as a joint



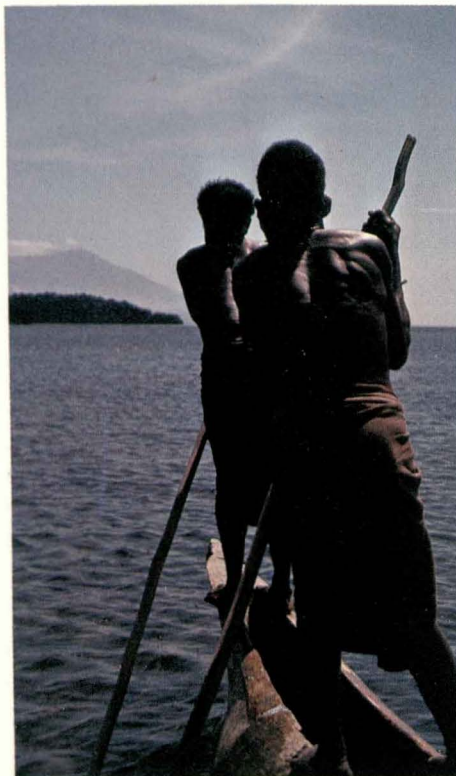
Above: Thermal area on seashore at Talasea with the Willaumez Peninsula in the background; below: An outrigger canoe, off Cape Gloucester in West New Britain, heads toward the volcanic Mount Talawe

venture between the Papua New Guinea Government and an international oil palm company, Harrison and Crossfield. There are now more than 1750 individual smallholder blocks on 15,600 acres. In addition, the company has its own 6000 acre estate, Mosa. The Mosa processing mill serves both the nucleus estate as well as the privately-owned smallholdings. Another valuable asset for Kimbe is a modern overseas wharf which was built in 1972 to service the scheme.

While the oil boom has not resulted in a glut of wealthy tycoons, it has meant a steady income for a large number of Papua New Guineans who have been willing to move into, settle and work in the area — whether they be smallholders or labourers on the main estate.

And, perhaps as could be expected in a newly-born nation consisting of numerous different cultural and regional groups, there has been some friction among the settlers. But, overall, the Cape Hoskins oil palm scheme has proved a resounding success story for a province which is still in its infancy.

The growth of West New Britain



will continue. Another major oil palm scheme has been planned for some time. This will be Bialla, north of Hoskins. A new company is expected to undertake the development. While negotiations continue, about 4500 acres of oil palm have already been planted. Eventually the Bialla scheme will cover about 35,000 acres. Production will start 2½ years after planting. Already part of Bialla is ready to produce.

There are other aspects to West New Britain's economic development. A large logging and sawmill industry has been established at Stettin Bay, near Hoskins, and other large timber developments are in the pipeline. While, from the air, West New Britain might appear to be just a lot of trees, at ground level it is clear that it is indeed a growing province. And, with its pleasing tropical climate and coastline, there is much to attract the casual visitor. There are volcanoes, thermal springs and crater lakes. There is good hotel and motel accommodation in several areas although road transport can be difficult if not arranged beforehand.—Peter Jackson was with the PNG Post-Courier for several years.

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...but not for picking

Story and pictures by Bob Halstead

They'd make a lovely bouquet, those flowerlike marvels so common to the reefs of Papua New Guinea. But if you tried to pick one you would not be popular with your partner for long. Soon she'd be holding a soggy mess — and the smell would be of decay, not scent.

The 'flowers' are soft corals — not plants but colonies of small animals called polyps. The well-known hard or stony corals also consist of polyps but these make a hard stone skeleton which remains after the polyp itself dies. The soft coral polyps do not leave a permanent skeleton and the coral soon falls apart when removed from the water.

Because of their ability to build up huge reefs — even islands and atolls — the stony corals are relatively well studied. Not nearly as much is known about the function or types of soft coral.

Last year a Belgian scientific team working in Papua New Guinea waters reported finding 130 new species of soft coral. Whatever their biological

function, the soft corals certainly enhance the appearance of a reef with their delicate forms and glorious colours.

All soft corals belong to a group known as *Octo corallia*, so named because the polyps have patterns of eight tentacles. Count them and see! The two most common orders are the Alcyonarians, whose bodies are made up of small hard rod-like spicules held in a jelly-like substance, and Gorgonians or horny corals, whose spicules are held in a fibrous material known as gorgonin.

The Gorgonians include the sea fan often collected by divers or by beachcombers after rough weather. The fibrous gorgonin will hold these together for longer than the jelly of the Alcyonarians but, even so, the fan will eventually crumble away.

There is one exception to this: the precious red coral used for making jewelry. This Gorgonian, known as *Corallium*, has not, to my knowledge, been discovered in Papua New Guinea.

Japan and Hawaii have commercial red coral enterprises and it is possible that the coral exists in Papua New

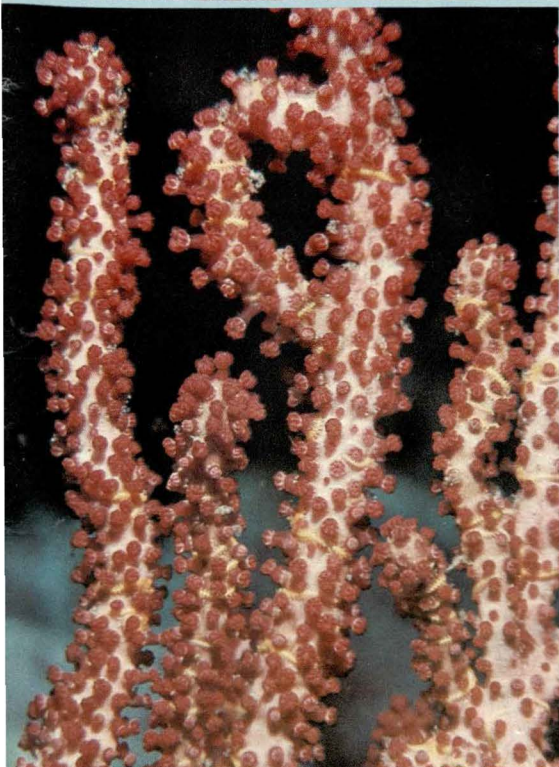
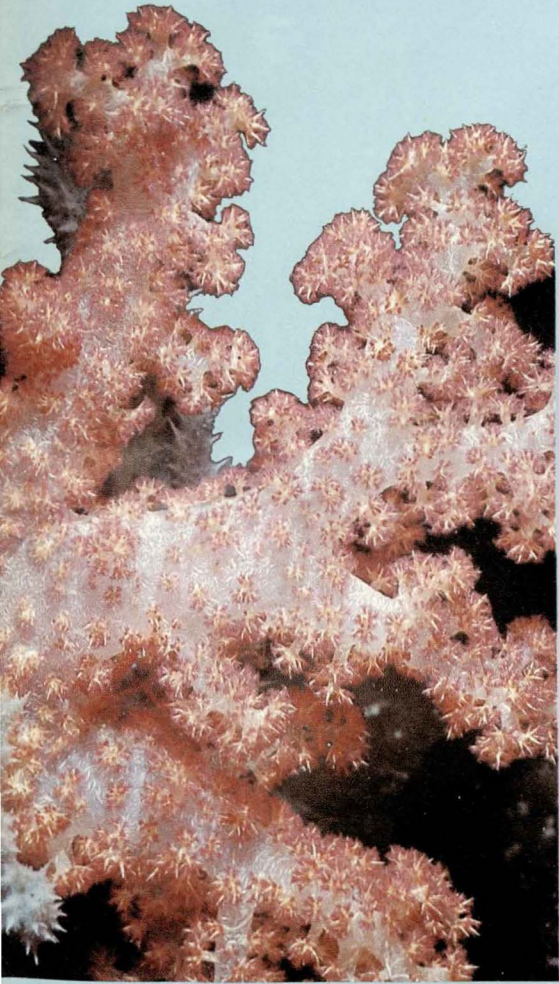
Guinea. But you would not be likely to find it by diving as it occurs deeper than 100 metres.

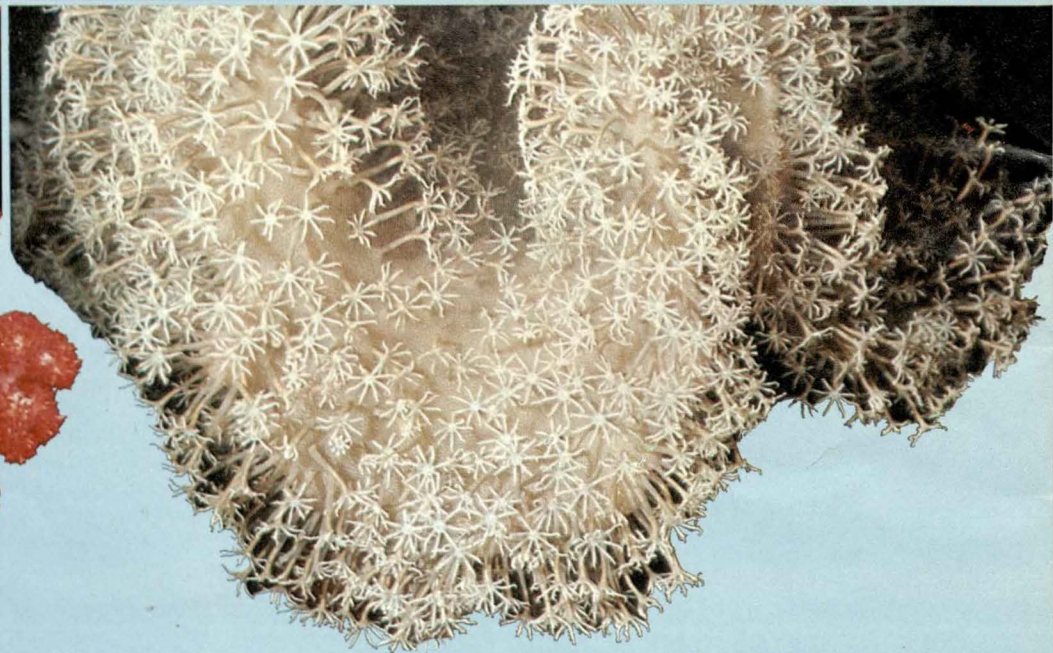
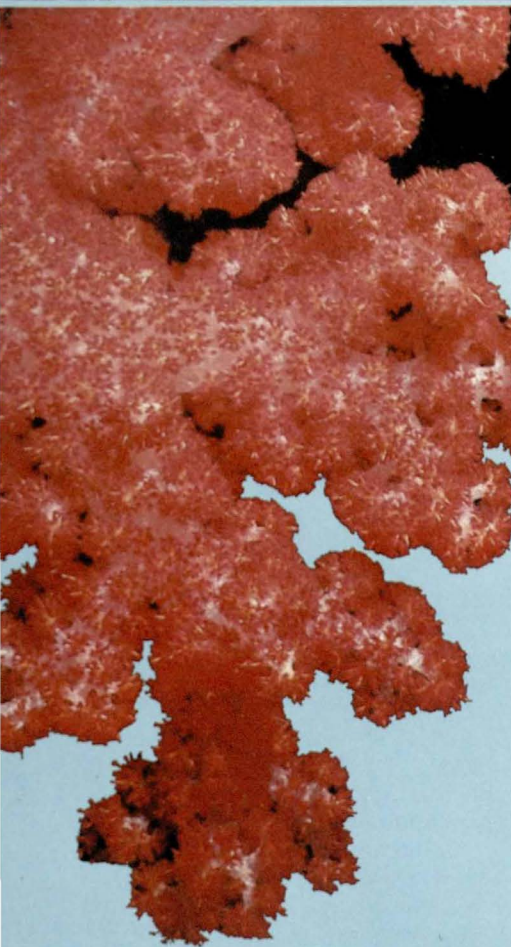
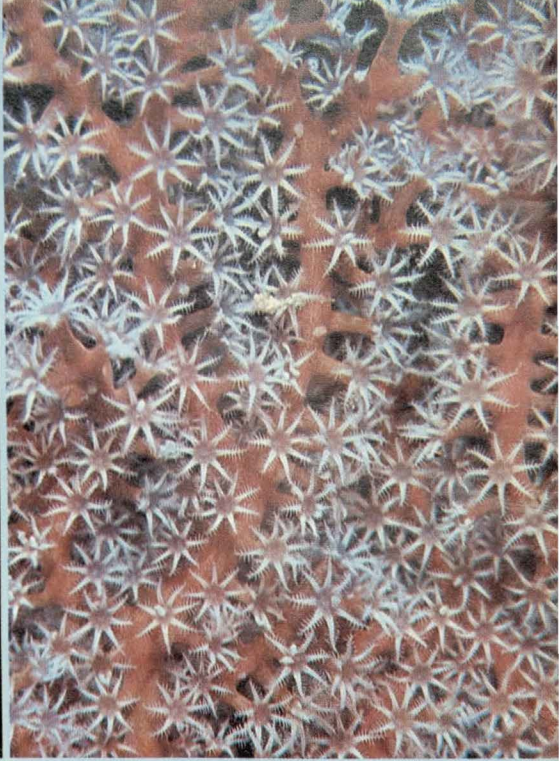
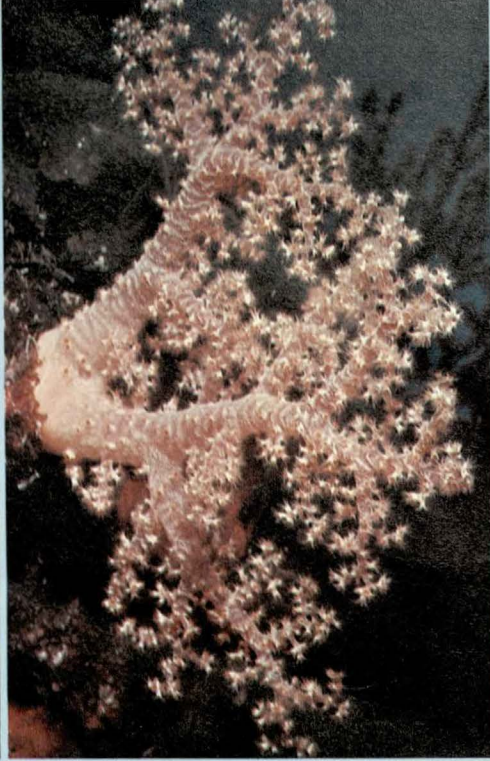
Another precious coral — black coral — is found in large quantities in PNG but this is not a soft coral. It belongs to the order Antipatharia

which have polyps of six-sided symmetry, not eight.

Soft corals can be observed with their polyps extended either during the day or night. In fact, some species cannot retract at all. The tentacles can be seen opening and

Left: Dinah Halstead admires delicate yellow soft coral, *Alcyonarian dendronephthya*; below, left to right: *Alcyonarian dendronephthya* thrives on the outside of a reef where the water is clear and currents are strong; and grows more than a metre in height; *Alcyonarian xenia*, its tentacles constantly feeling for food drifting by; bottom, left to right: *Gorgonian mopsella* entwined with brittle starfish; *Alcyonarian sinularia* stretches its 'fingers', tiny polyps covering the surface; *Gordonian mopsella* whose brilliant magenta needs a diver's torch to show its glory





Top, left to right: Goniopora, easily mistaken for soft coral, is different in that its polyps are unusually extended in the daytime; yet another variation of the delicate genus Alcyonarian dendronephthya; this pink Gorgonian, clearly showing the eight tentacles common to the polyps of the soft corals, was found near the Port Moresby Harbour beacon; above, left to right: at night Alcyonarian dendronephthya swells to almost double its daytime size; photographed at night, this soft coral looks like a bed of flowers as it waves its polyps to the ocean currents

closing like hundreds of grasping hands as they try to catch food particles. Sea fans are usually found with their flat side perpendicular to the tidal currents so that the polyps are spread like a net to catch food drifting by.

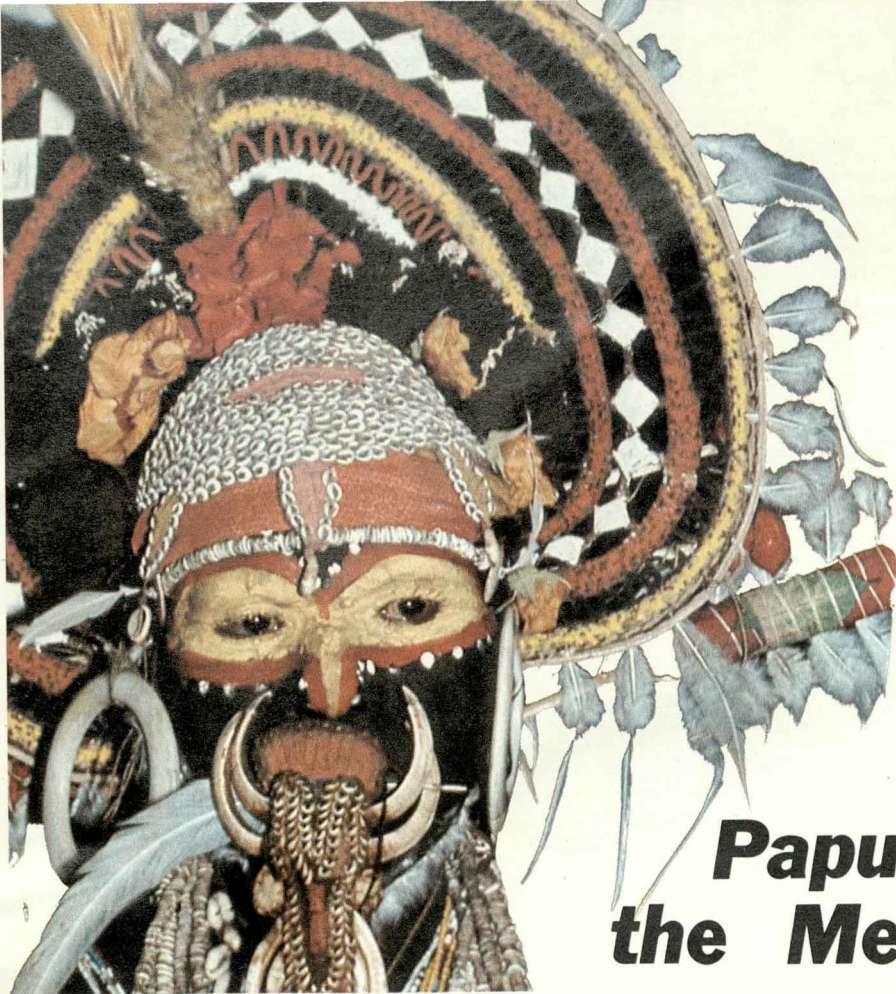
The photographs on these pages show some of the soft corals that are easy to find in Papua New Guinea. Some can be seen on top of the reef and close to the shore though the most brightly coloured tend to be over the edge of the reef and down its outer face.

Since the red part of sunlight can-

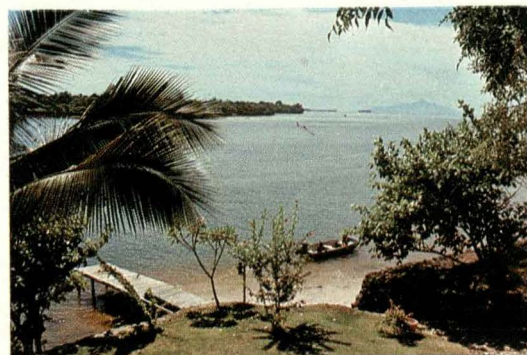
not penetrate even the clearest water for more than 10 — 15 metres, the diver will need to carry his own torch or strobe light down with him to see the glorious colours of these corals.

You might well wonder why the corals are these glorious reds when, in normal circumstances, no red light would ever reach them. It takes man and a torch to balance the blue part of sunlight that is able to reach these depths.

The sea is full of mysteries. Come and look for yourself. But remember — no picking the flowers, please!



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