

paradise

in-flight with Air Niugini



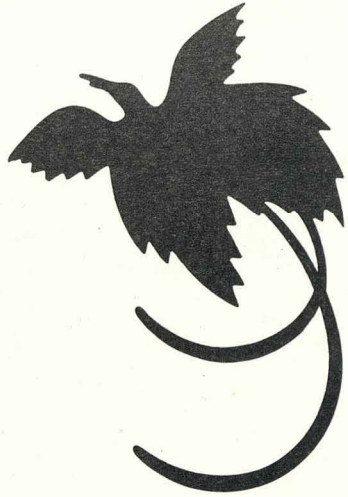
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PARIS



Arpège de Lanvin

AIR NIUGINI



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paradise

Welcome aboard

Papua New Guinea has many natural attractions, of which it is justly proud, but this year it has had something special to offer — a total solar eclipse on June 11. Total darkness over Port Moresby and along a band of countryside on the central path for more than three minutes . . . in the middle of the afternoon.

Air Niugini has been much involved in the events surrounding the observation of the eerie act of nature. It has been represented on the National Eclipse Committee, which set out to educate people in how to watch the spectacle without eye damage, as well as allaying fears of the supernatural. And, of course, it carried numbers of international enthusiasts who came from several countries to observe the eclipse.

Not everyone who wanted to view the eclipse made their arrangements in time. But, by a unique chance, they are still in luck. Parts of Papua New Guinea happen to be on the path of a total solar eclipse in November 1984 as well — the first known time ever anywhere that one area will have experienced an eclipse of this nature in consecutive years.

I hope they make their plans early to see Papua New Guinea's next big natural attraction.

J.J. Tauvasa
General Manager, Air Niugini



4 DINAH THE DIVER

A sparkling photo-portfolio by Dinah Halstead, one of Papua New Guinea's top diving specialists



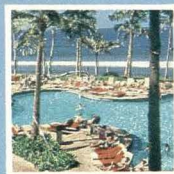
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Tapini, nestling high in the Owen Stanley ranges, is now accessible by road. Roger Gunson decided to give it a try



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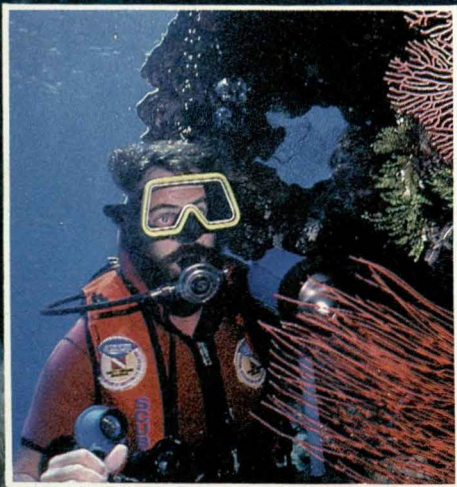
An in-depth picture study of some of the colourful bird life to be found in the area of Mount Missim in the Morobe Province

Cover: Common Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera Galatea*. Photo by Stephen Pruett-Jones



Quality in Air Transport

A vibrant underwater panorama of a reef in Dinah's home province of Milne Bay. Inset: an underwater portrait of husband Bob (a photo like this won Dinah a silver medal in the Oceans 1983 underwater photography competition).



Dinah the Diver

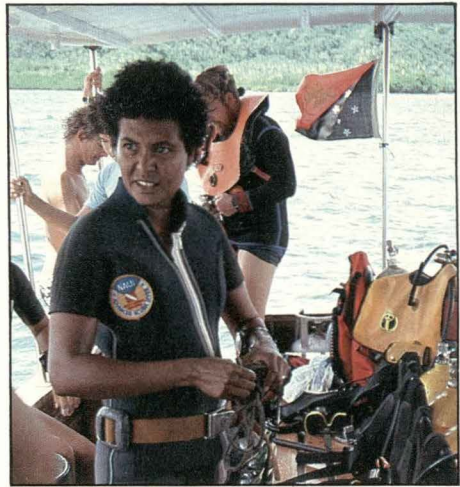


photo: Bob Halstead

“DINAH *still* down? Doesn't she breathe or has she got gills!”

The surprise registered by visiting divers refers to Dinah Halstead, a lovely, joyful lady from Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea, who is more at home underwater than most other people are above it.

She is so relaxed in the water that her breathing rate is less than half that of the average scuba diver. This gives her the ability to stay down for hours on a single tank of air — much to the amazement of anyone who dives with her.

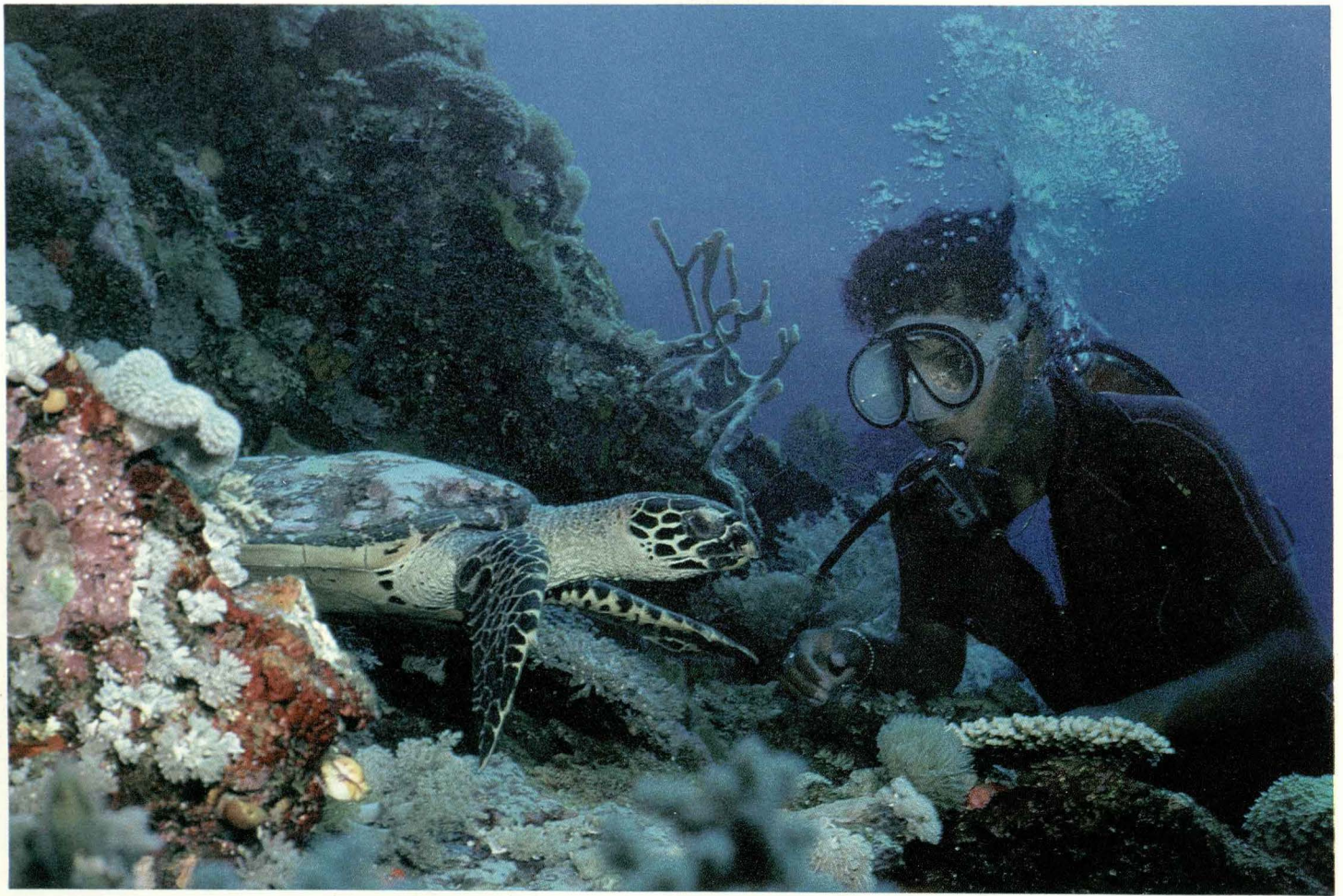
When she eventually surfac-

es, she loves to laugh and joke as she shares the excitement of the dive with the others aboard her dive boat, the M.D.V. Solatai. Opening up a collecting bag, she shows her underwater finds, or she describes other marine creatures or seascapes discovered, or even recalls the strange antics of fellow divers if she has spotted them in a weak moment.

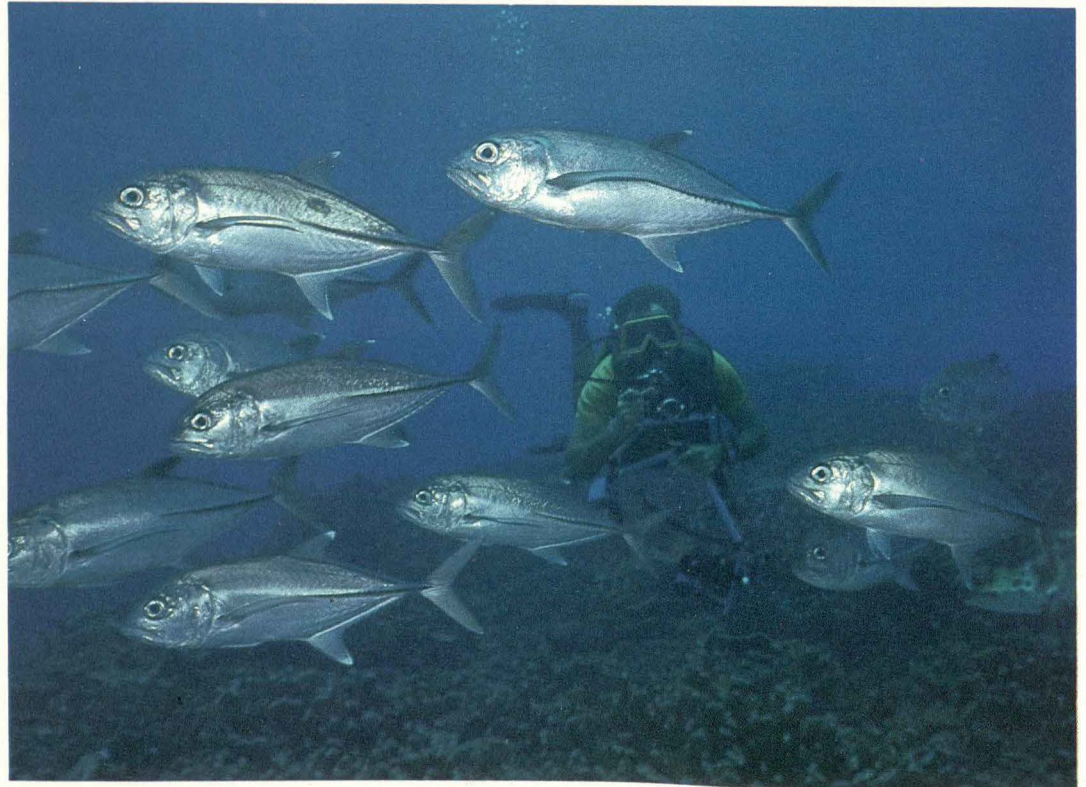
With Dinah, diving is a lot of fun.

Many marine creatures, particularly live shells, are so well camouflaged as to be almost impossible to spot, but Dinah has a magic eye and has discovered many marine spec-





Above: *Telita, Dinah's daughter, meets a turtle face-to-face and, top right, takes a ride. Dinah can be seen at work with her camera in the background. Right: Dinah skillfully captures the moment as a school of Jacks swims past, creating a superb feeling of depth and perspective. Below right: Dinah dearly cherishes scenes like these and does all she can to encourage the protection of the reef environment for all to see and enjoy.*



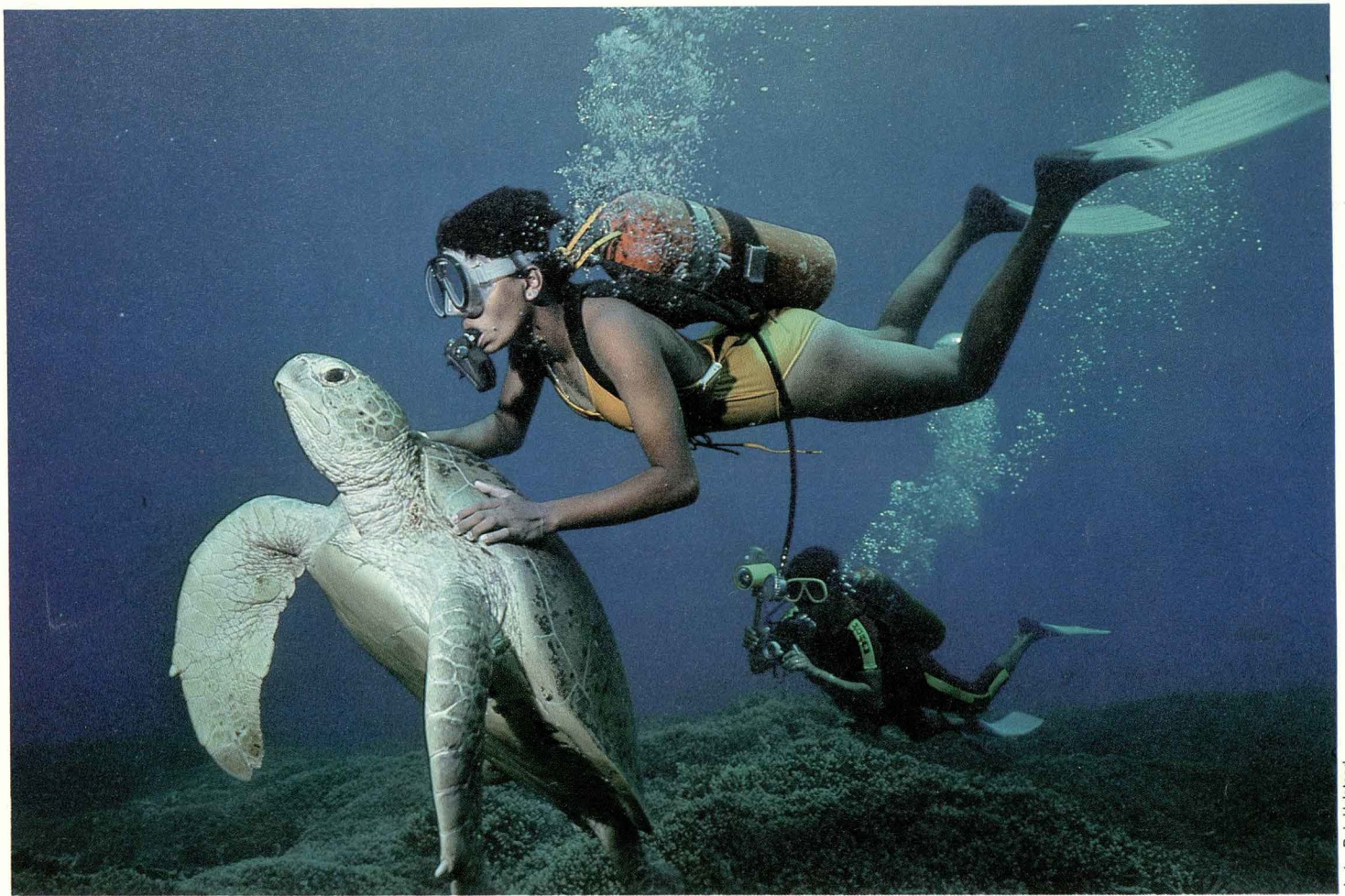
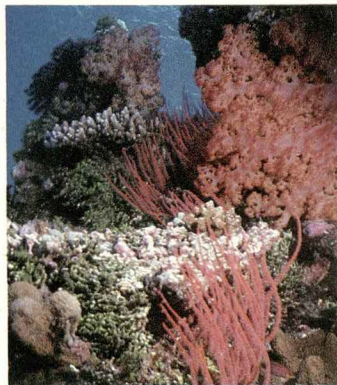
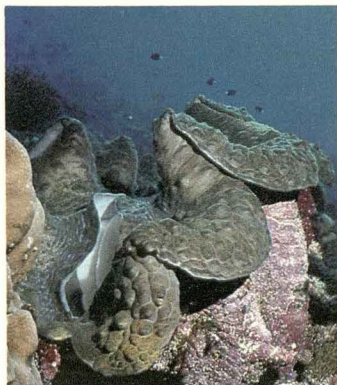


photo: Bob Halstead

ies not previously recorded from Papua New Guinea. These include the second specimen ever found in the world of the very rare Merlet's Scorpionfish, and some shells that are apparently new to science.

Dinah believes that marine creatures are her friends and she has a great affinity with them; including some that, if you believe the movies, are only waiting for you to get in the shower before they gobble you up. Her relationship with "Nessie", a huge moray eel, has been filmed and shown on television in several countries, and she is quite happy to chase after large sharks with her camera to try to get better pictures of them.

Dinah, from Divinai village near Alotau, started diving in 1975. That was when the secondary school teacher first met her scuba instructor husband,



Bob, who was running a diving class.

"She was such a terrific natural diver I just had to marry her", he says.

Now, Dinah is also a qualified instructor and, together with Bob, runs a sport diving business called Tropical Diving Adventures, with headquarters in Port Moresby. After thousands of dives throughout Papua New Guinea, Dinah has probably seen more of its underwater paradise than any other of its citizens.

A few years ago Dinah started taking underwater photographs. In this issue, Paradise is publishing for the first time a selection of her underwater art. Most of her photos have been taken in her home province of Milne Bay, where Dinah and Bob run diving safaris, exploring reefs and islands of this beautiful area. Visiting divers



Above: a school of Yellow-tailed Fusiliers frolic in front of Dinah's camera. Right: an Anemonefish snug in its 'nest' - a large sea anemone.

come from all over the world for these special adventures where Dinah introduces them to some of the finest diving and nicest people in the world.

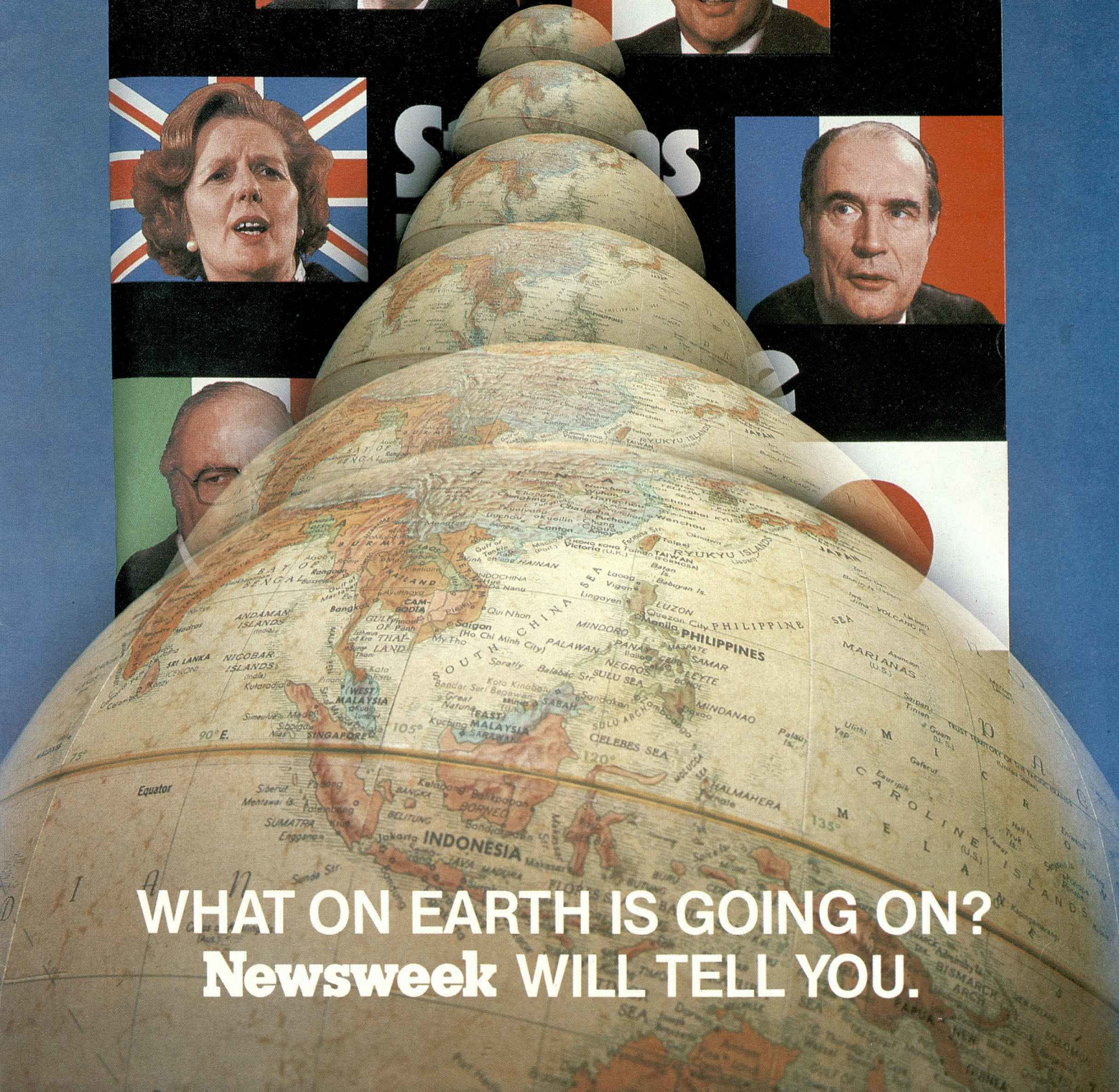
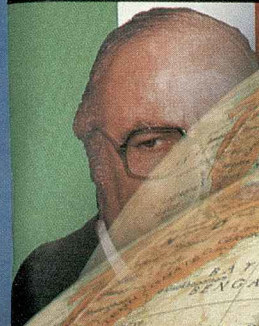
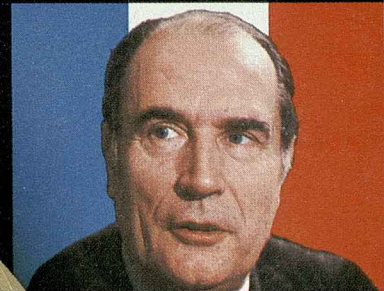
She is proud to be a part of the development of her province. And she notes that no-one had really heard of Milne Bay since the war until she and Bob started publicising it. Now clients from as far as the USA are placing their third trip with Dinah the Diver. 🌿

Air Niugini offers diving package tours to Papua New Guinea in association with Tropical Diving Adventures.



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HIGHLAND HIDEAWAY



by Sheldon Weeks

photo: Sylvain Cordier

ONE of the most beautiful places in Papua New Guinea is also one of the most inaccessible. It is the sub-district of Oksapmin, part of the Telefomin District in the West Sepik Province.

There is only one scheduled flight a week to Oksapmin from Vanimo to Oksapmin, but it is also accessible by government charter from Vanimo, the provincial headquarters on the Bismark Sea 310 kilometres away, or occasionally on MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) planes out of Telefomin, Wakwak or Mt Hagen.

For the few that are hardy, it is a four-day walk from Lake Kapiago, the farthest point by road from Lae, the end of the

The rugged highland scenery of the Strickland Gorge is a paradise for hikers

Highlands Highway. From Lake Kapiago the hiker must walk down to the Strickland River, cross the gorge on a rope bridge, and then ascend 1200 metres up to Oksapmin. Fewer people do the 100 km walk from Telefomin to Oksapmin, crossing mountains at 3350 metres.

The Strickland Gorge between Kapiago and Oksapmin is one of the world's natural wonders. Some day it may be declared a national park. Meanwhile it is a favourite of bushwalkers.

Oksapmin station is situated at the western end of a small valley at 1500 metres, the

mountain walls surrounding the valley a full 360 degrees, making a complete bowl. The streams that wind down the valley floor disappear into sink holes and work their way underground to the Strickland. This also happens to the larger Tekin River in the next valley to the west.

Most map makers can't cope with vanishing rivers so make nice lines down to the Strickland on their maps, but it just is not so. Tremendous unexplored caverns must exist in the Oksapmin area.

There are more than 7500 people in the Oksapmin sub-

district, most of them living in five mountain valleys — Gaua, Bak, Bim, Tekin and Oksapmin. The most populated is Tekin where the Australian Baptist Mission (ABM) is established. North of Tekin and Oksapmin, across the Om River, are the Shattebrugh Mountains and there rises the Leonard Schultze River, a tributary of the Sepik. In this census division, bigger in area than the island of Manus, live only 300 people. Yet it takes the patrol officer based at Oksapmin one month to do a census of these 300 people.

In Papua New Guinea, Oksapmin is the farthest easterly point in the island of New Guinea where traditionally

Right: feathers and phalacropts are essential wear in sing-sing celebrations; far right: three local characters from Tekin; centre: sing-sing in full swing; below left: time for a smoke; below right: the airstrip at Oksapmin

people wear phalacropts (penis gourds).

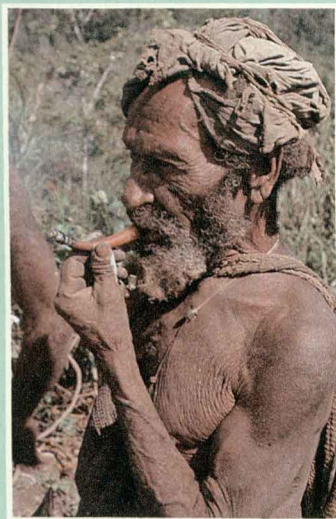
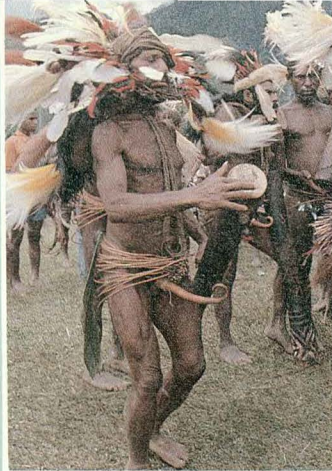
The first contact that the people of Oksapmin had with the Australian Government was in 1938-39, when a patrol led by Taylor and Black visited the valley. Long before this, the people of Oksapmin had trading contracts with other provinces for salt, shells, axe stone and feathers. The next patrols did not visit Oksapmin until the 1950s, when they passed through intermittently, and the first patrol post was established by P.O. Cochrome in June 1961.

From this start a layer of development quickly spread. The mission (ABM) opened at Tekin, 10 kilometres away, also in 1961. Aid posts were started in 1962, and the first primary school opened at Tekin in 1967 and Oksapmin in 1968 (though the mission had started literacy classes at Tekin in 1964). The first plane landed in Oksapmin

in the Southern Highlands. Oksapmin and Bimin can take Twin Otters.

There are now six primary schools in the sub-district. To get to high schools, students from Oksapmin had to fly 280 kilometres to Aitape, on the north coast in the West Sepik Province. This, after the distance students from Kiunga must fly to get to Balimo, was the second greatest distance travelled in Papua New Guinea to get to Grade 7! But in 1981 a high school was opened at Telefomin and now Oksapmin children only have to walk for four days west or fly for 20 minutes to get to school!

Oksapmin is a small government patrol post with a sub-health centre, a community school with six teachers, four didiman (agricultural extension staff), a few policemen, a tractor driver, a number of interpreters and three kiaps (patrol officers). The village is

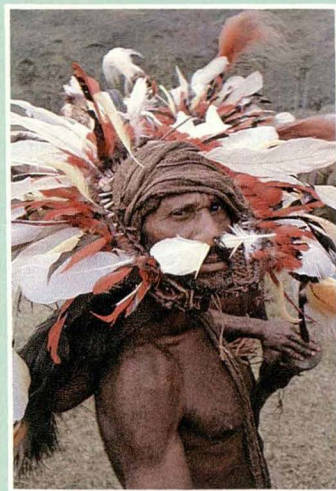
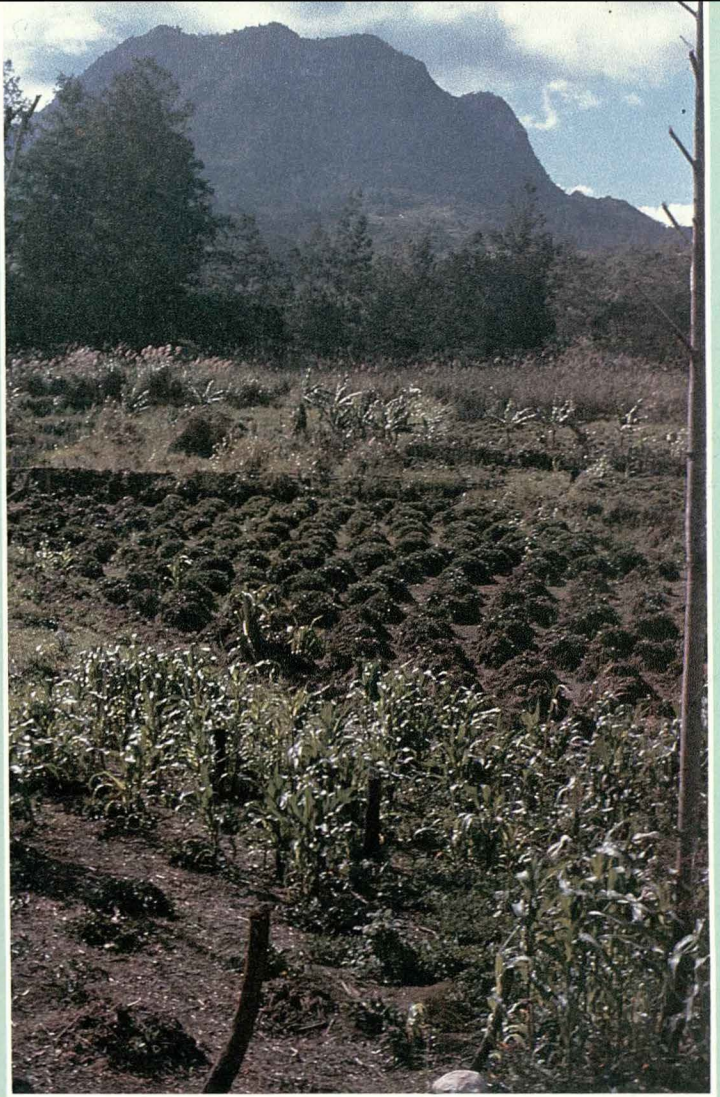
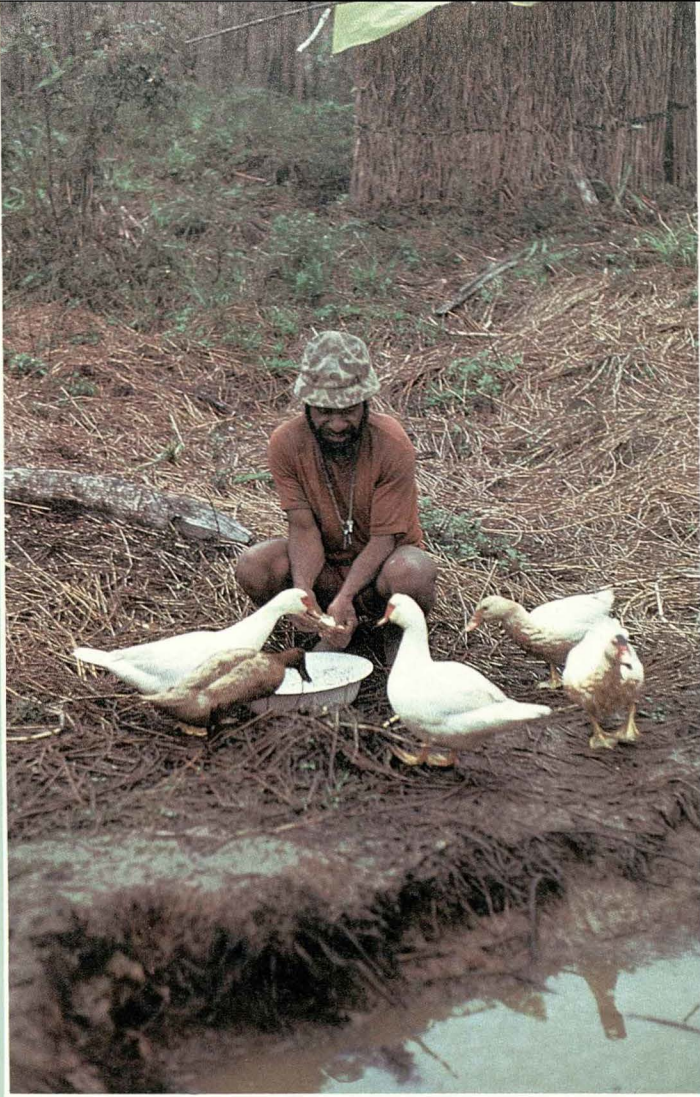


in September, 1961, and at the mission strip at Tekin two years later.

There are now four airstrips in the sub-district — the main one at the patrol post at Oksapmin (which is shown incorrectly, down by the Om River, on navigation charts), and the mission strips at Tekin, Bimin, and one the SDA has just built where the Laigap River from Enga joins the Strickland at Sisimin, actually

photo: Sylvain Cordier





Top left: newly introduced farming ideas are helping to ease problems of malnutrition; top right: new gardens planted in Tekin Valley; far left: high-fashion headgear, Oksapmin style; left: a group of children join in the revelry

now linked to Tekin, over the mountain wall, by a rough road which climbs up above 1800 metres. It is used by tractors, a few motorcycles when they are running and four-wheel-drive vehicles. The dream is a road link to Koperasi, with a large suspension bridge across the Strickland Gorge.

Meanwhile the main access to the mountain valleys is by air. Vegetables are backloaded on the government charter aircraft to Vanimo on the coast.

The Mission Aviation Fellowship also flies vegetables from Tekin to Frieda Copper and Wewak. There is now a cooler room at Oksapmin so that vegetables that miss the plane will not rot. It was built by New Zealand aid.

The people of Oksapmin and Tekin Valleys have taken to growing a variety of Highlands-introduced vegetables that are in great demand on the coast and at Ok Tedi. In 1982 at least K200,000 worth of produce

were flown out — nearly eight tonnes a week. In 1983 it is up to ten tonnes a week. This is a major source of cash to the people.

The Oksapmin Vegetable Market is a well organised locally owned co-operative business. It has been so successful recently that it has paid 200% dividends!

A buying centre has been opened up at Tekap at the western end of the Tekin Valley and people there, and in the Bak

Valley, can now market vegetables. They are carried the 25 km to Oksapmin for 10 toea a kilo.

Another source of cash is the remittances sent home from the Aviam and Kindeng Tea Estates in the Western Highlands where 500 men from all over the Oksapmin valleys are working on two-year contracts. When they return, they bring another K200 in termination pay. There are now over 100 trade stores in Oksapmin sub-



district, started mainly by these returning plantation workers.

Development in Oksapmin has come quickly since the establishment of the patrol post and mission 20 years ago and most of Oksapmin is now integrated into the cash economy, with the exception of the isolated Om and Upper Leonard Schultze areas. Still it remains one of the least developed parts of Papua New Guinea. The per capita income for the 7500 people in the five high valleys was perhaps K15 per annum for 1981. This will go up as the export of vegetables increases to Ok Tedi and Frieda River, the two big copper projects nearby. And, as more educated Oksapmins find jobs and send remittances home, the people will also have more cash to spend. Meanwhile they remain essentially self-reliant.

Ironically, a major problem in Oksapmin is the constant shortage of food locally. Traditionally, food was shared with one's neighbour, rather than exported, and it is said that Oksapmin has one of the highest rates of malnutrition in Papua New Guinea.

Extra government staff have

been assigned there to do extension work in the five high valleys in an effort to improve subsistence agriculture and to diversify it, adding protein foods like soyabean and peanuts, introducing chickens, ducks, improved pigs, and carp in fish ponds. Demonstration gardens at schools and aid posts are used to feed malnourished children.

The occasional visitor will find a warm reception as the people are amongst the friendliest in Papua New Guinea. The only guest house until now has been at the Baptist Mission at Tekin. It should be booked in advance, but bushwalkers with their own gear always find places to camp in local hamlets, at schools, aid posts, or *haus kiaps*. Village councillors help make arrangements for you. A good time to visit is New Year's or Independence as there is usually a gathering of people for an impressive singsing.

The Youth Club at Oksapmin plans to build a guest house, museum and artifact store to help cater for the needs of hikers from Kapiago and tourists from Ok Tedi and this should be open during 1983. ♣

Above: growing vegetables for 'export' to the Ok Tedi mining settlements; centre: Oksapmin women showing off their traditional regalia; below: pupils hard at work at Akupa Community School, Bim



photo: Nancy Birge



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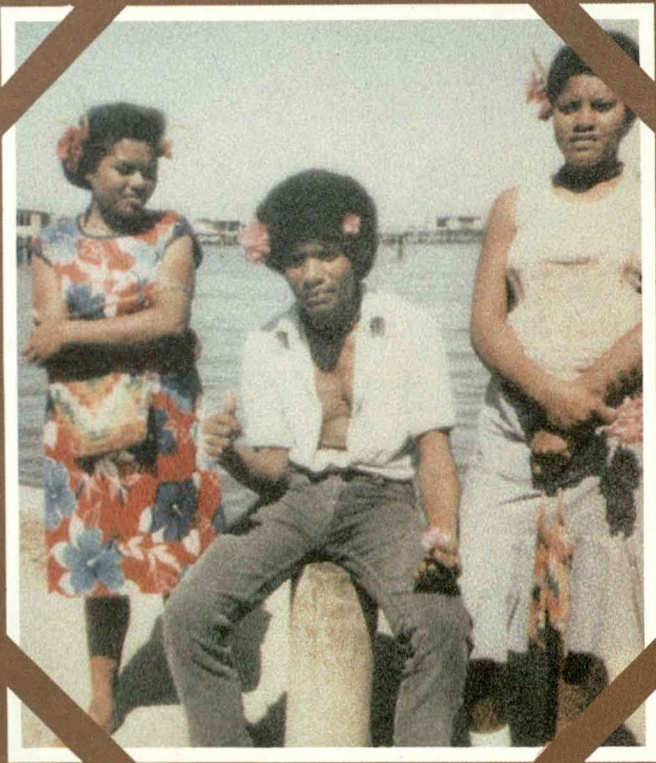
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Port Moresby's
"Portrait Professionals"



Story and photos by Benjamin Umba

FOR most of us, the conventional photo studio consists of a room with a large and expensive range of cameras and lenses, films, brochures on the latest developments in photography, displays of portraits mounted on decorative frames, conspicuous 'No Smoking' signs and among other things, a huge wall chart indicating the various print sizes and their respective prices. In an adjacent room, one can see a camera mounted on a tripod, floodlight lamps and a stool set against a dark curtain.

The whole room is filled with an atmosphere of professionalism and big money.

Being used to the conventional notion and characteristics



of a photo studio, we are often unaware of the unconventional developments . . . like Koki Photo Studio.

The Koki Photo Studio is located opposite the Koki fish market and behind the Koki BP petrol station. But there are no buildings nor signs. The studio also serves as a loading and unloading zone for the fishermen who come in with their motorised canoes to sell their catch at the market and to pick up new food supplies. The market shoppers also use the studio for their car park.

And one other factor that makes the Koki Photo Studio most unusual is that its customers can drive into the 'studio' and conduct their businesses while still enjoying the cool-

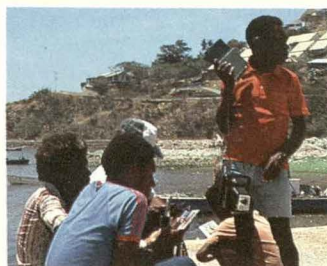


ness and comforts of their own vehicles . . . all because it is an open-air studio.

It is easy to identify the Koki Photo Studio photographers. They all carry a Polaroid "instant" camera, an open folder with a variety of samples of their work (which is in fact their only form of advertisement), and a handbag containing cigarettes, tobacco, betel nut, food items purchased at Koki market and two unexposed films at the most. They use an 8-exposure film which they buy in the retail shops from 13 kina and they charge two kina for a print. They usually use up one roll of film in one day. At weekends they usually go through three films. They would save money by buying their films in bulk but due to lack of proper storage facilities they cannot do that. And the cameras they use cost between 30 and 50 kina.

There are no set business hours for the Koki Photo Studio. It is open for business when the first photographer arrives on the scene and closes at the departure of the last photographer. They have no protection from the scorching Moresby sun, dust and strong winds, or smothering humidity and torrential rains. Yet the photographers operate in almost any weather conditions.

Koki's photographers have acquired their skills through on-the-job training and a lot of trial and error. They do not



always produce an award-winning shot but, through years of experience, they are usually consistent. They have never heard of such terms as exposure, composition, impact, depth of field, subject and so forth. But their shots, nonetheless, usually fulfill those requirements.

Their customers do not judge their work on these criteria. If they can identify themselves in their photos, they have gotten their money's worth so far as they are concerned. It is, for them, a fairly reliable record of one moment of their lives, and that is what they wanted and paid for. They also enjoy the thrill of watching their images appear slowly on what was moments before a



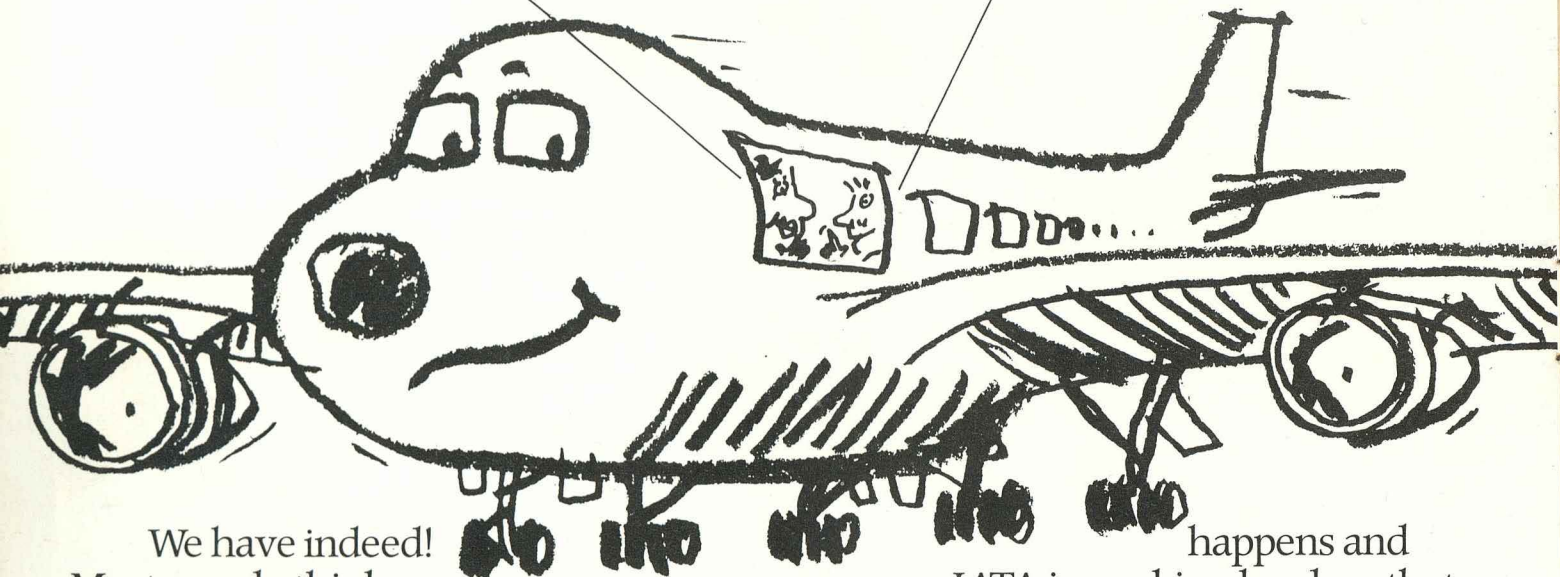
blank, glossy piece of paper.

Those photos may end up in a worn-out family photo album or be sent away to parents, friends and relatives back in the villages hundreds of kilometres away. The photographers have supplied a specific demand satisfactorily and that is the basic principle in any business adventure.

And with good weather, a constant demand for their services, stable prices for cameras and films (which is unpredictable in Port Moresby), good judgement, perseverance and tons of sheer luck, they have managed to keep their heads above the water — which is what they have been determined to do each time they have set out from their homes. 🌿

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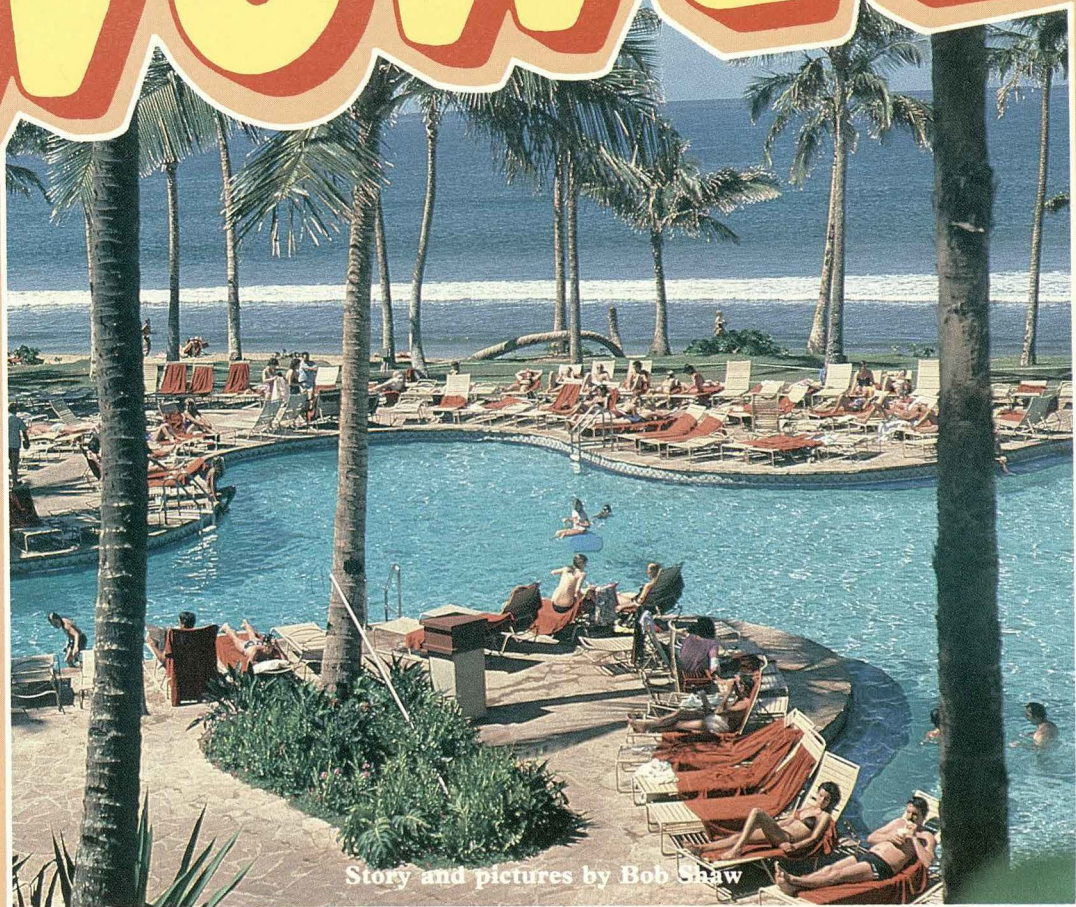
indeed gives us a lot to answer for.



LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE WHO FLY

Maui?

WOWEE!



Story and pictures by Bob Shaw

IN contrast to the relaxed Air Niugini international flight to Honolulu, the inter-island hop to Maui is more like a hectic bus ride. But then the large volume of tourists that Hawaii attracts require rapid transit and care little for trivialities.

Thus, seat allocation is non-existent; first in claim the window seats. And there is little chance to savour the tropical cocktails served on board. After barely 20 minutes of flight, there is a steep descent toward Kahului Airport and one is forced to down them with undeserved haste. The view makes up for that . . . lush islands and emerald reefs at weird angles in

a translucent ultramarine sea.

Millions of years ago Maui was born by the gradual merging of two volcanic peaks. Such a fiery past seems alien to this, the second largest island of the Hawaiian group, relatively undeveloped and an idyllic setting for a relaxed holiday.

Advance accommodation and rental car bookings are recommended. Don't take a cab from the airport — it's a long way to the chief resort areas of Wailea-Kihei and Lahaina-Kaanapali. With long distances between centres a hire car is ideal. Most of the island is served by excellent highways with splendid views of mountain scenery, volcanic slopes and

wide open cane fields.

Our introduction to condominium style living was at Maui Sunset on South Kihei Beach. The spacious ultra-modern apartment had all the amenities required for self-contained family living, from cutlery to clothes dryers. Linen is changed every three days and the apartments tidied and beds made each day.

The master bedroom was air-conditioned while every apartment had a lanai (verandah) overlooking the jacuzzi, pool and mini golf course. Other amenities included spa, gym, sauna, croquet and shuffleboard. Most "condo's" usually require a three-day minimum



Pyrotechnic wonder of a Haleakala sunrise; below left: Iao Needle and the black gorge are well worth a visit; centre: Haleakala volcano crater; right: the brigantine Carthaginian 2 moored at Lahaina dock

stopover, and depending on type and location, a good condo for a family of four can cost between US\$30 and US\$50 a day.

The excursion to the Iao Needle is worthwhile. Three miles beyond Wailuku the road meanders through haunting canyons of gnarled kukui trees into a dramatic steep-sided black gorge. Here, according to legend, the daughter of Maui was turned to stone by the fire goddess, Pele. Now the petrified knife-like tower soars 685 metres into the air, its entire surface covered in verdant shrubbery. Even the distant upper reaches appear to be upholstered in rich green velvet.

From Kihei we drove to awesome Haleakala, "The House



of the Sun", the world's largest dormant volcano. A good road with stupendous views twists from sea level to over 3000 metres in 65 kilometres to the rim of the caldera, 33 kilometres around.

The 915-metre deep crater is 11 kilometres across and 4 kilometres wide, a dead world of black and brown ash. Fifty square kilometres of fumaroles, secondary craters and classic cinder cones, some 300 metres high. Minerals stain the surface of the high altitude desert — rich ochre tones of yellow to red, and the green of oxidised copper.

Inside, nothing mars the impression of a lunar landscape, this must be the closest sensa-

tion to moonwalking. There are splendid views from the observatory perched precariously at the summit of Red Hill and Kalahaku overlooking the low-side rim.

Haleakala is rarely clouded in but frequently very cold. Sunrise views from the summit are legendary and thought by many to be a pyrotechnic wonder of nature.

We drove to the other side of the island, where there are numerous condos and major hotels at the Kaanapali resort, a picturesque playground on a 5-kilometre beachfront. We strolled through quaint Lahaina, former capital and birthplace of colonial Hawaiian history. The wild old whaling



port, a favourite of Mark Twain and setting for much of Michener's "Hawaii", has been restored to its original magnificence.

After browsing through fascinating stores, a coral cruise gave our feet a welcome rest. Divers from our glass-bottom boat briefly disturbed the tranquility of multi-coloured sea life while we witnessed the staggering beauty of the coral reef. Nearby, surfers rode the docile but constant shore break.

A favourite with the kids is the cane train ride, an old steamer and carriages that travels the length of the Lahaina-Kaanapali coast. And moored at Lahaina dock is the fully rigged brigantine, Carthaginian 2,

a restored veteran of the old whaling days.

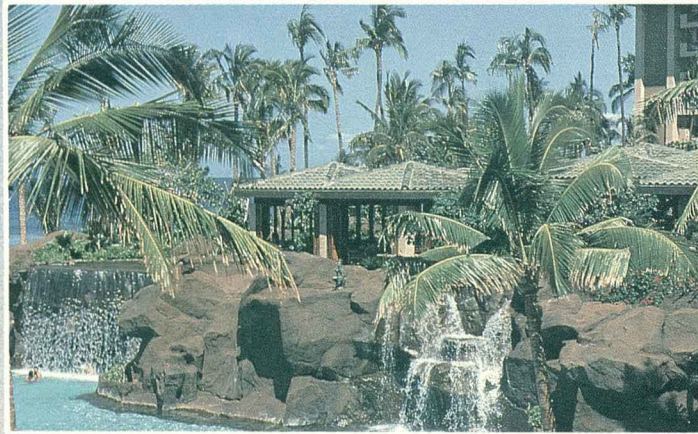
The western sky was tawny as we hastened to the Sheraton Hotel, for here is Black Rock Peninsula, site of the famed traditional sunset dive. As the blazing sun sank toward the horizon, a Hawaiian carrying a burning flare ran along the cliff path and lit a chain of tiki torches. He hesitated atop the cliff surrounded by tourists. Dinner cruise vessels jockeyed for position below, expectant patrons crowding the rails in anticipation.

There was a hushed silence, the diver neared the edge and glanced at the scarlet sun hung vividly in an amber sky. As the sun met the sea he launched himself into a graceful swan dive. To the chorus of countless camera shutters he plunged smoothly beneath the limpid surface. As if in mutual salute the sun then ignited any remaining cloud with golden splendour.

The choice of meals along the Kaaanapali Resort is endless — fast food outlets, elaborate

luau's with Hawaiian dancing, and classy nightclub restaurants. Lahaina also offers variety but tends to retire early with only the occasional nightclub open beyond 10 p.m.

One particular attraction not



to be missed amid the natural vistas is man-made — the Maui Hyatt Regency Hotel and gardens. A mile of beachfront forms the fourth side of the impressive \$80 million complex. Contained within is a magnificent 8 hectares of exotic landscaping and tropical forest. The network of lagoons and

waterways surround an elaborate hectare-sized swimming pool.

Roughly dumb-bell shaped, its narrow section is actually a 60-metre long cave, cleverly disguised each end by

waterfalls. Swim through the waterfall into the cave to reach the cosy grotto bar concealed within or simply use the regular pathway. The deeper end beyond has an elevated rope suspension bridge and steps up to steep twisted water slides 30 metres long.

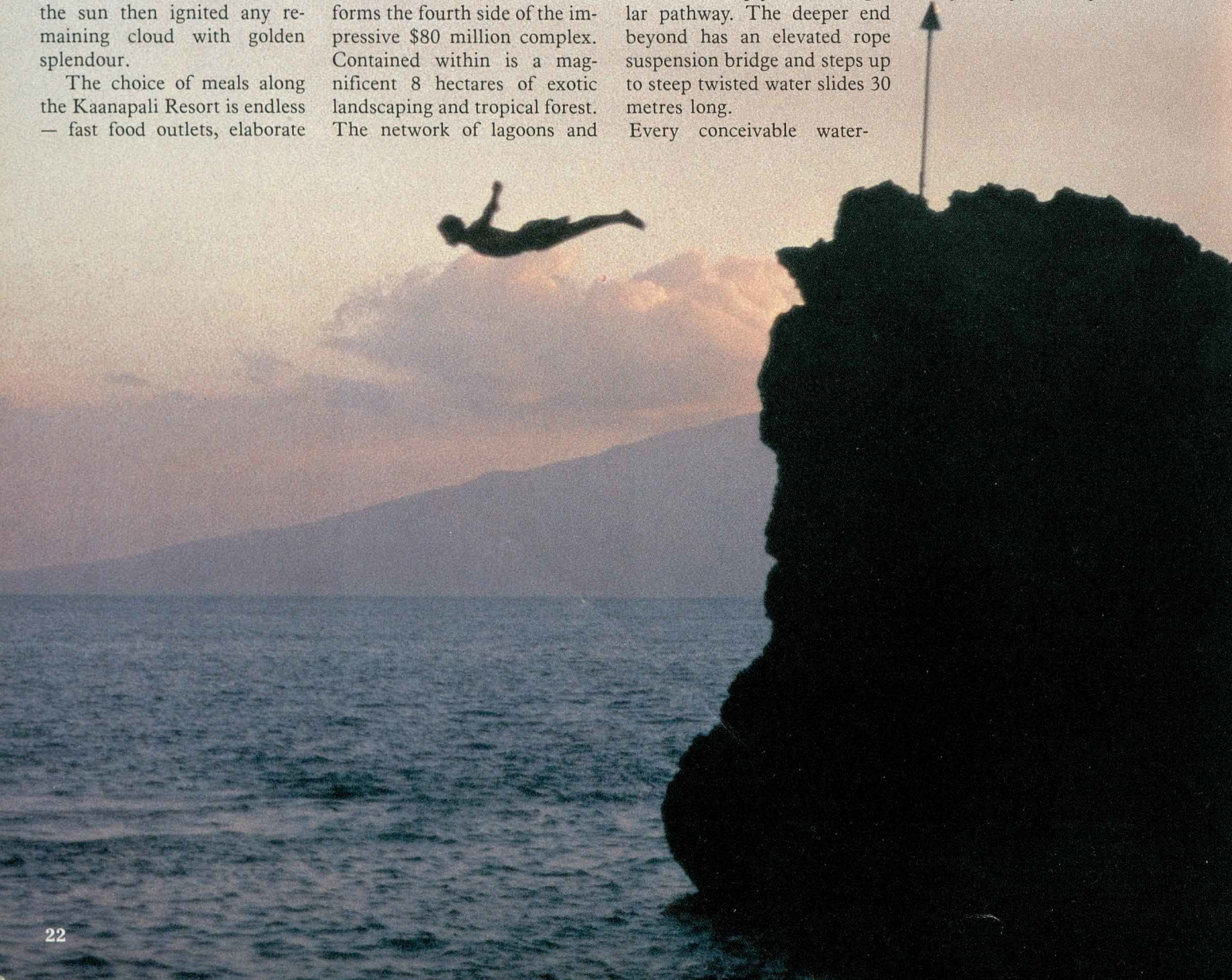
Every conceivable water-

sport is catered for off the 5-kilometre beach, from fishing, surfing and waterskiing to jet skis and parasailing. Black and white swans, flamingoes, peacocks and even penguins roam free amid the picturesque lily ponds, the home of many goldfish.

The foyer of the Hyatt is just as elaborate, decorated with unusual and exotic art worth over \$2 million.

Honolulu is great. But if you want solitude, beautiful scenery and relaxed pace at a reasonable price, then Maui is for you. The traditional saying is "Maui no ka oi" — "Maui is the best". Nowadays they simply say "Maui? — Wowee!" 🌺

Air Niugini operates a weekly service to Honolulu, gateway to the Hawaiian islands, departing Port Moresby every Sunday.



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Below left: Vanimo has one of the most unusual land formations in Papua New Guinea; below right: Jayapura city

IF you wanted, you could take the once-weekly flight from Port Moresby and be in Jayapura, the capital of Irian Jaya, in time for a late lunch. *Nasi goreng*, perhaps, or a plate of chilli sambael chicken? If you liked, you could even be back in Papua New Guinea's capital for dinner, as the flight is a 'turn-about' service.

The alternative to coming straight back, which would be a great pity, is to stay in Irian until the next Wednesday's flight or to spend a few days there before flying on to Indonesian points west: Ambon, the Moluccas (Moluku), Bali or Java. Going westwards the schedules on internal airlines are frequent, with daily flights to most main centres, including a jet service to Jakarta.

Irian is thus an ideal way to approach the Indonesian archipelago and coming through Papua New Guinea is the best connection for getting there. However for anyone who has not visited Wewak and Vanimo, the capitals of the East and West Sepik provinces, the journey can be enjoyably broken. The prime consideration is to get to Vanimo before 1210 hrs on Wednesday to catch the flight across the border.

Wewak's Windjammer Hotel and adjoining beach are guaranteed to soothe the soul while tiny Vanimo has some of the clearest water and most deserted beaches anywhere. There you can stay at the Hotel Narimo which, while a little costly and sometimes beset by labour problems, is located right by the sea. Nearby are the local government offices, built in a chalet style, with steep roofs, as if anticipating snow. They must have been designed by a consultant from, say, Switzerland, nostalgic for home.

The best swimming is along the beach to the right, in front of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force's officers' mess. If you come down for a sunset dip you might be invited in for a cool drink afterwards. The only

VISITING THE NEIGHBOURS

Robin Osborne flew on Air Niugini's shortest and least travelled international route and concludes that a visit to "the other side" of New Guinea is time well spent.

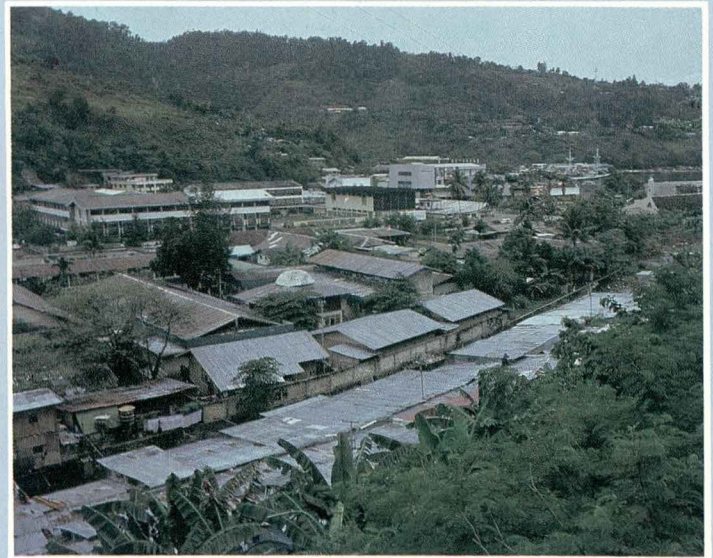


photo: Air Niugini

other bar licence in town belongs to the provincial guest house, now privately run. It also offers small rooms and large, cheap meals. It's on the other side of Vanimo's coral airstrip.

Once you've relaxed in Papua New Guinea's north coast you'll be thinking about nearby Irian Jaya, Indonesia's largest province. Its 420,000 sq kms represent 22 per cent of the Republic's total land area. If you've been to Indonesia before you would know that it can be useful to arrive with a supply of local currency, *rupiahs*, in order to pay for transport to town. If there is no airport money-changer the alternative can be very awkward.

Thus I began to comb Vanimo for rupiah sellers . . . in vain. You would imagine this a simple task, after all Jayapura is visible on a distant hillside



across the large Humboldt Bay. At last I located a trade-store owner, Adrian Vissar, with whom I changed K30. The Indonesian money brought back memories of previous visits. I glanced at the notes with their pictures of the "1945 Generation" of Independence heroes. The difference between the seven-year-old Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, with over 35 years experience, seemed to be symbolised by the currencies. Here the heroes of the independence period are still leading the government. Not for another 10 or 20 years will Michael Somare be enshrined as

one of the fathers of the nation.

Air Niugini's F27 unloaded a large number of passengers at Vanimo. A much smaller group, say a dozen, waited to board the flight to Jayapura. Most were missionaries, returning to Indonesia, and they knew the procedure for clearing Papua New Guinea immigration. For the rest of us it was hard to believe that we were travelling "overseas".

After take-off, the pilot made the standard announcements and informed us that we would be landing in 15 minutes; hostesses handed out Indonesian immigration cards; and below



Left: rich fields in the Baliem Valley grow a wide range of crops; below, although this Dani woman is young she is married, a status that can be gathered from her Yungal, a skirt woven from world orchid fibres



us the thick forest — and somewhere the invisible border — slipped by. Yellow earth roads snaked in roundabouts which must have caused lengthy delays in construction. The only clearings in the jungle were the swathes that had been cut for transmigrants' villages. After these areas were levelled, modern style kampongs — stilted houses with corrugated iron roofs — were built upon them. Cleared farmland was usually in evidence nearby.

About 300,000 non-Irianese now live in the province, having come as either sponsored transmigrants or spontaneous settlers. They account for one-quarter of the population, and are engaged in a wide range of agricultural and business activity.

The jungle appeared too thick to penetrate, yet I recalled that in 1957 a Dutch party trekked from Merauke, in the south, to Jayapura in a couple of months. It seems hard to believe.

Lake Sentani, a vast expanse of water, is spectacular from the air. In an odd contrast to the clear ocean, its fresh water was clouded. From stilted villages by the lake came large, motorised outriggers carrying passengers and fishermen. The shadow of the F27 flitted over Sentani's smooth surface and diminished as we approached the earth.

Most arrivals in Indonesia remark that their first sensual impression is of the fragrant (some say pungent) *kretek* clove cigarettes. I noted that the smell was as ever-present in Sentani as in Jakarta.

When President Sukarno was trying to get the Dutch out of Irian Jaya in the early 1960s he coined a famous slogan to describe how Indonesia legitimately ranged "Dari Sabang sampai Merauke" — from Sabang, a tiny island off the west tip of Sumatra, to Merauke, the easternmost settlement in Irian. Today the claim is a fact and it is symbolised by, among other

things, the distinctive aroma of *kreteks*.

Sentani airport actually does have a money-changer. There are certainly two ways of travelling to town — the expensive way, which involves chartering a whole minibus, or the local way, walking 200 metres up the road to share one to Jayapura for about K2.

Lake Sentani is as enjoyable when seen from the ground as from the air. Halfway to town, at Abeपुरa, is the province's university, Cendrawasih, named after a bird of paradise, a creature which also inhabits the Indonesian side of the border. Many students speak English and there is a small but worthwhile ethnographic museum. If you ever want to get out and sightsee there is always plenty of transport around; you are now in an Asian country, remember.

Jayapura — when it ceased to be Hollandia it was named "Place of Victory" — is picturesquely positioned around a fine harbour but the city of about 100,000 sprawls unattractively.

If you like medium-sized towns in Java or Sumatra — and personally I do — you'd be better off going to those places. Even the reportedly risqué nightlife here fails to match its reputation. Far East hands may take comfort from the ready availability of Singapore's Tiger Beer. You can develop a thirst for it by visiting (again, on public transport) "Base-G" and walking down to the beach where US forces were based during the Second World War. General MacArthur was headquartered in Jayapura for some time.

The Base-G beach is a good swimming spot and offers a view back across the bay towards Vanimo, just hidden on the other side of the peninsula.

Having enjoyed a few days of sea, you would probably feel like getting on the road again and heading inland. As in Papua New Guinea, the "road" means the air. And in Jayapura,

Below left: Airfast DC3 in racy colours; bottom left: Dani children help with the work in the sweet-potato field; right: one of the many sons of Obaharok, the Dani leader who hosted US journalist Wyn Sargeant in the 1960's; bottom right: at Jiwika, villagers soak banana-palm fibre in natural salt springs. Later the fibre will be dried, burned and the 'black salt' eaten with food

apart from irregular mission flights, there were two choices — the airline Merpati Nusantara (Dove of the Archipelago) or a charter outfit named Air Fast. Their name seemed a misnomer as their only planes were 1950 vintage DC3s (I later learned that Air Fast had helicopters and some light aircraft that were active in the recent drought relief effort).

Nonetheless, Air Fast had done a good corporate image job by painting their old planes in bright yellow, like Kodak film packs. Nostalgia got the better of me and I booked my passage — Rp30,000 (K30) one way — to Wamena in the central highlands. The only formality was to obtain a *surat jalan* (travel letter) from Jayapura police HQ, a matter that took only an hour or so.

I had thought I might be the only passenger as the fare was Rp7,000 higher than Merpati's. But the old Dakota was laden with cargo and a few Chinese traders from Java.

The youth of the two pilots concerned me somewhat. I have travelled with many small Asian airlines but never seen two quite so inexperienced looking fliers. Like true Javanese males they were growing moustaches, yet neither had managed to sprout more than a few wisps.

However, as pilots they were superb, although one unnerving moment occurred when the chief pilot turned round to me and said he was handing over the controls. "Didn't you say you were a pilot?", he asked. I replied that I was not. I realised then that he had misunderstood me when I had asked him before take-off whether *he* was a pilot. Obviously my Indonesian needed some practise!

This DC3 route was started in 1961 by the Dutch airline NGLM and it seemed quite historical to be flying in one of the same planes more than 20 years later.

Wamena, the administrative centre for the Baliem Valley, is



a place to walk out of — in any direction. If you do stay a night or two, then don't miss the village-style bungalows of the Hotel Baliem, which is a bit of a walk from the airport. Built by Pertamina, the national oil company, it is now run by the local government. It features large rooms and Japanese-style bathrooms with indoor gardens. If the hot water is running (keep your fingers crossed, or ask for a bucket of it) you can lie in the tub and gaze at the clear night sky above this 2,000 metre high valley.

The hotel is managed by a Moluku woman who works hard to please. When I asked for only minimal meat with dinner she said, "Ah, you are just like me, you probably prefer seafood?" I told her that this was so, although we were rather a long way from the sea.

"Ah, but we have some very special *udang besar* (big prawns), very fresh . . ."

She explained that they had come from local rivers. In the kitchen she showed me plastic bags, each containing 2kg of still kicking freshwater crays, or yabbies as they are known in Australia. Each bag only cost

Rp1,000 (K1). That night she served a multi-course meal that featured "big prawns" in chilli sauce, a fortifying dish in the cool climate.

The surrounding population of some 200,000 Dani people is friendly and still living in a traditional way. You see the occasional pair of blue jeans, and a few officials on motorbikes. But the general atmosphere reminded me of old film footage of the Papua New Guinea Highlands shortly after the days of the "first contact" in the 1930s. The only difference is that the young people in the Baliem go to school.

If you can speak some *bahasa Indonesia* you will find you can chat with people who have had very little personal contact with outsiders. The young men are keen to act as volunteer guides, and you will be welcome to stay in local villages.

The Danis' commercial instincts are less aggressive than Papua New Guinea's Highlanders. While they sell some market produce and firewood to the townspeople of Wamena, they have a less-developed cash economy and rely more on a highly-developed system of

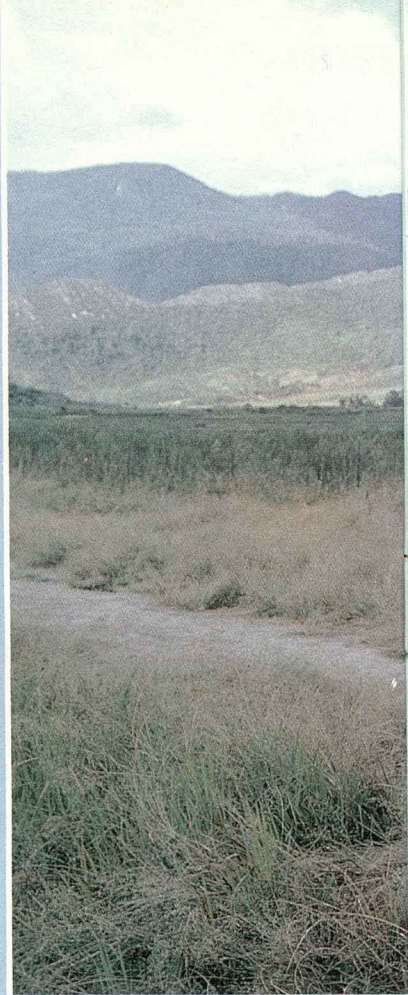
subsistence agriculture.

Garnaut and Manning, the authors of a thorough study of Irian Jaya, quoted the words of Ian Hughes, who spent much time here: "Segregation of crops and garden types is almost complete. Villagers of the Baliem Valley have brought large areas of swamp under cultivation by systems of regional drainage. A similar system was used in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea until last century, when the Wahgi people abandoned the valley floor".

In the well-irrigated fields grow a wide variety of vegetables while from the mountains, somewhat magically, comes a supply of natural salt. To extract the salt the Dani soak beaten banana-trunk fibre in salty pools which form at the conjunction of tiny streams. Later they dry the fibre in the sun and then burn it, collecting the salty ash which they consume with their food.

Black salt may not sound appealing but it seems to succeed in keeping goitre at bay.

If you learn no other words, there are two essentials: *nayak*, which is said to men and means





Below: Dani woman wearing orchid fibre skirt and noken bag which keeps the cold at bay



hello and goodbye, and *lauk* which should only be addressed to women. They can also double for thank you. If you're carrying a Papua New Guinea *bilum* bag, or intend buying one of the splendid Dani ones, then remember to call it *noken*, which seems to be used throughout Irian Jaya.

The standard reference for Indonesian travellers is Bill Dalton's "Indonesia Handbook" and one can do no better than quote him about the Dani: "They speak with the speed of machinegun fire . . . have the gentlest handshake you'll ever experience and appear fearless, their most striking characteristic".

The Dani are indeed a tactile people and you cannot help noticing their enthusiasm for handshaking and touching generally.

Dani villages are often surrounded by a water-filled ditch and a fence topped with sharp spikes, reminders of the now-passed era of intense tribal fighting. Villages contain a few families, perhaps 20 people, who live in low houses around a U-shaped courtyard. The men's house, *honnay*, is shaped

like a large beehive and has a low doorway set into double walls which help insulate occupants against the heat of the blazing sun and the night cold.

At night we would sit around the central fire, chatting. As the last strains of conversation faded we climbed the ladder to the upstairs section, the floor of which was covered with a thick layer of dry grass. The old expression of "hitting the hay" took on new meaning.

Considering the climate, Dani dress is skimpy. The men wear penis gourds and little else — a matter of some concern to Muslims — and the women have woven skirts (*yungal*) of wild orchid fibre in pleasing colours. Their giant *noken* bags, often greasy with use, are used as coverups in cold weather. To ward off the cold the men simply stand with their arms wrapped around their chests.

If you want to buy some Dani produce you can shop in Wamena market or discreetly make an offer for an item that appeals to you. If people do not want to sell, they are unlikely to be offended that you have put in a bid. The *noken* bags sell for about Rp7,000 and are a great

Right: the 'mummy' at Akima village. Estimated to be at least 100 years old, it is rarely seen outside the spirit house; below, a complete noken bag contrasted with the raw fibre used to make them



bargain compared to the prices of good bilums in Papua New Guinea.

Although christianised by missionaries, the Dani maintain animist links, not surprising given the natural world they inhabit. Part of their beliefs, now discontinued, was the preservation of the bodies of certain tribal leaders. The bodies were smoke-dried and kept in the village spirit house. One village, Akima, agreed to display its 'mummy' to outsiders a few years ago and now, for a fee, will produce the body of a man who died several generations ago. It is worth noting that the money — Rp1,000 — was not immediately pocketed by the body's guardian but deposited on a leaf, representing an 'altar'. I am hesitant to use such a photo in a magazine, except that it is interesting to outsiders and I would stress that it should be regarded as a religious image.

Twenty years ago, about the time the Dutch DC3s started coming to Wamena, the American journalist Wyn Sargeant came to Akima village and formed a close relationship with its chief, Obaharok Doga. Some said that she became his wife although in one of her books she denies this, saying that she became close to the people because she was told her presence would assist in preventing more fighting between neighbouring tribes. She is still remembered here and despite its unfortunate title — *My Life With the Headhunters*, which refers primarily to the Dyaks of Borneo — her book is good background for any Baliem visitor.

In 1972 the dirt road from Wamena to Piriamid, 45 kms away, was finished. Development experts have called it a good example of a low cost village road. It required only Rp140,000 (US\$300) per kilometre. Certainly it has opened up the Baliem floor, although you would not want to drive anything but a motorbike or a jeep over it (neither of which is available for rent). Walking is

ideal and as long as you have your *surat jalan* and pay a courtesy visit to any police posts you see, then the area is perfect for the fast or slow trekker. You are welcomed in villages and while you may have to pay some money here and there, you feel more like a guest than a lodger. And you'll never feel like you're missing out on the local culture.

Things to take along: a few gifts for local people, some dried fruit or chocolate, a warm jumper, sunburn cream. And as

much money as possible in red Rp.100 notes (change your bigger denominations at a Jayapura bank).

From Wamena there are daily flights. Returning to Sentani, I did not take Air Fast but the faster, cheaper Merpati.

I'd long wanted to visit the Baliem and had much enjoyed it. I was sad to be leaving this particular shangri-la, one of many in the world, yet glad to be returning to the sea. I visited other ports — Biak, Sorong —

and decided that to miss Irian Jaya would have been to only know half of this fascinating island.

It is much to Air Niugini's credit that it maintains the only air link allowing one to enter Irian from the east (they took over the route from Merpati and Australia's TAA when Air Niugini began in November, 1973). It is also to the Indonesian government's credit that tourist visas for most western and ASEAN passport-holders will now be granted upon arrival, rather than having to be applied for in advance.

One of the world's "lost corners" is opening up and now is the time to go there — *Robin Osborne works with the Deputy Prime Minister's office in Port Moresby and has travelled widely in Southeast Asia.*

Air Niugini flies from Port Moresby to Jayapura every Wednesday, via Wewak and Vanimo.



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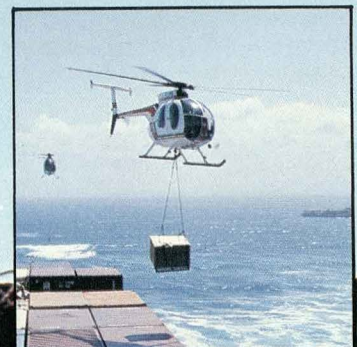
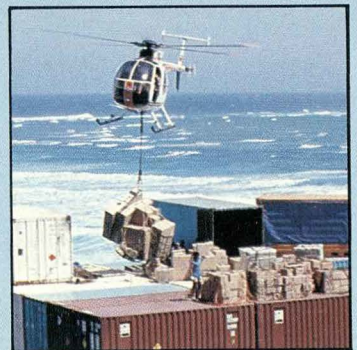
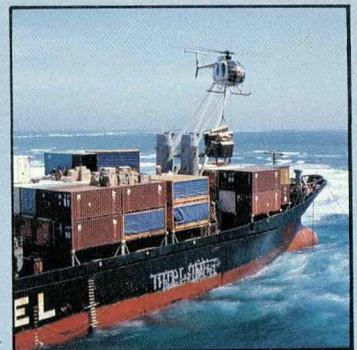
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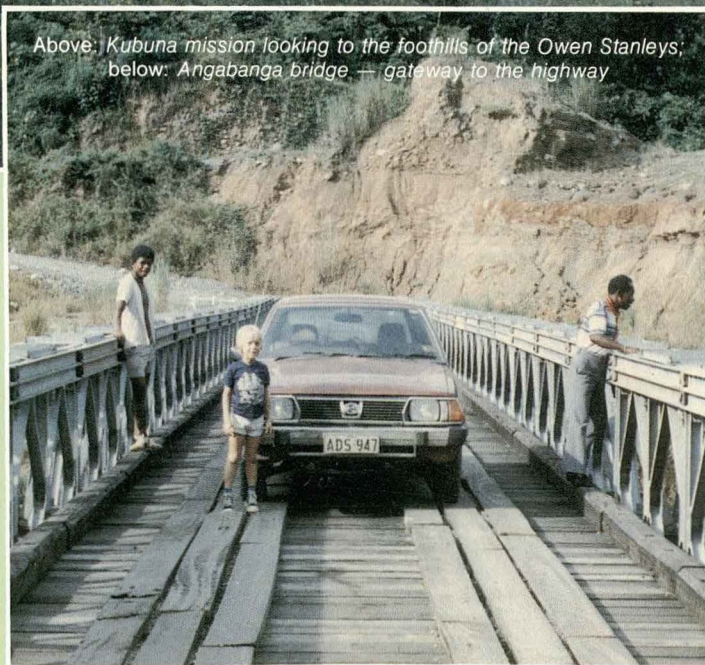
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Goilala Highway

Story and pictures by Roger Gunson

Above: Kubuna mission looking to the foothills of the Owen Stanleys;
below: Angabanga bridge — gateway to the highway



TAPINI, that remote mountain hideaway nestled on the northern perimeter of the Owen Stanley Range world renowned for its spectacular airstrip, picturesque walks and panoramic vista, is also the hub of the Goilala hinterland.

Serving similar mountain towns such as Waitape (first turn left through the mountains after takeoff — first right is Port Moresby) - and Guari, Tapini derives its popularity largely from its inaccessibility.

By air, more recently, or by foot, since time immemorial, has been the only access in or out.

And so it may come as a surprise to many to learn that the advance of civilisation has finally beaten back the relentless thrust of nature and succeeded in pushing a road through these awesome mountains, establishing what for the future should prove the most vital communication link for the area.

Little publicised and still

unmarked on the latest survey sheets this track has been grandly named the Goilala Highway.

Completed in late 1982, the road remains something of a mystery although local residents are quick to confirm its existence. The possibility for motorists of a new and interesting destination within driving distance of arid Port Moresby certainly aroused my curiosity. The imagination so inspired, I decided to satisfy myself

whether the Goilala Highway was indeed fact. The possible perils received little consideration amid the excitement of the idea.

Provisioned with shovels, bushknives, additional fuel, tent and a guide, my son and I pointed our Subaru 4WD in the appropriate direction and prayed the weather would hold to at least even the odds of our reaching Tapini.

The Goilala Highway has

inauspicious beginnings 132 kilometres along the Hiritano Highway, adjacent to Yule Island. Unsignposted, the narrow, winding road wends its way through relatively open country to Kubuna Mission and then climbs 600 metres to Bakoiudu. That beautiful deep blue mountain backdrop which had haunted the horizon is suddenly at your feet; 15 kilometres into the foothills and one is embraced by the northernmost arms of the Owen Stanleys.

The wide but swiftly-flowing Angabanga River, spanned by four Bailey bridge sections, serves as the gateway to Tapini. The crossing also marks the site for the Works and Supply base camp which services the road beyond.

Twenty minutes into the mountains the smaller Talama River is crossed by similar means. From here, the ascent begins in earnest with the track twisting and turning through 900 metres. Every kilometre is punctuated by land and rock

falls, the frequency and size of which are largely determined by the amount of precipitation combined with the instability of the cuttings. Shovel and bushknife proved essential to cut a swathe through the mud, debris and fallen trees, merely to allow a 10 centimetre clearance from a 200 metre drop to the jungle-clad valley floor below.

The motorist is at the mercy of the elements. One effective landslide and the road would be severed and only the bulldozers could restore the status quo. Strictly four-wheel-drive country.

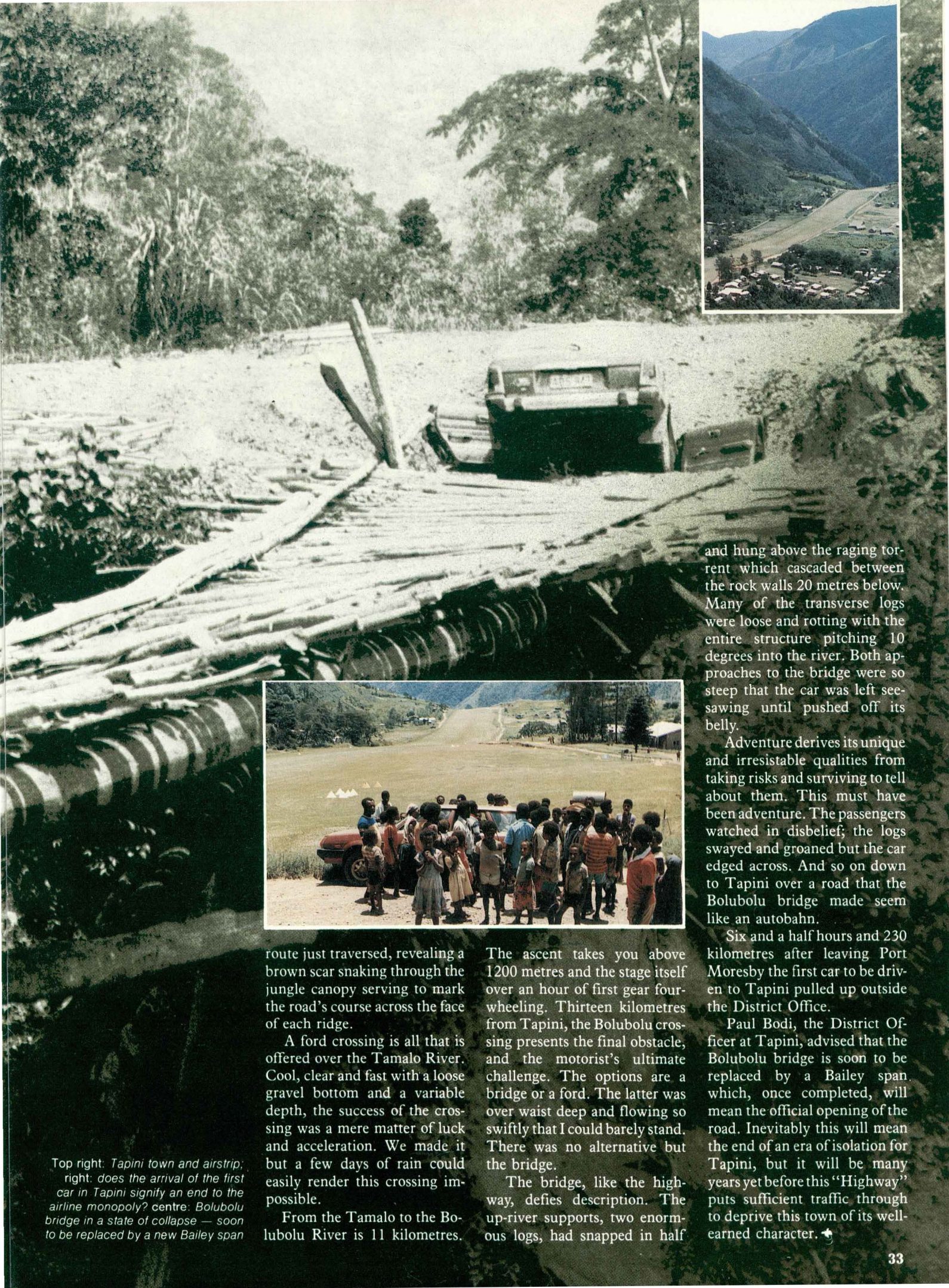
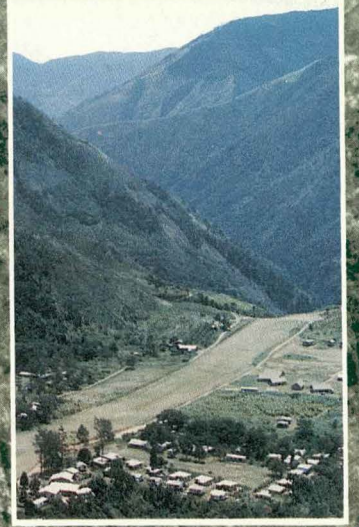
However, the towering and tree-shrouded majesty of the

surrounding and distant peaks provides frequent breathtaking interludes. Small villages comprising two or three central huts intermittently break the jungle landscape. But most of these mountain settlements are disclosed only by the telltale wisps of smoke from cooking fires drifting slowly upwards above the treetops, or by pigs of all shapes and sizes wandering the roadside, squealing and scurrying off into the bush at our passing. The villagers themselves are reticent, yet curious; but, led by the less inhibited children, are eager to respond to a smile or wave.

As one grinds upwards each hairpin offers a view of the

Above: Gollala villagers on the shores of the Angabanga, right: a pause for reflection along the way





and hung above the raging torrent which cascaded between the rock walls 20 metres below. Many of the transverse logs were loose and rotting with the entire structure pitching 10 degrees into the river. Both approaches to the bridge were so steep that the car was left seesawing until pushed off its belly.

Adventure derives its unique and irresistible qualities from taking risks and surviving to tell about them. This must have been adventure. The passengers watched in disbelief; the logs swayed and groaned but the car edged across. And so on down to Tapini over a road that the Bolubolu bridge made seem like an autobahn.

Six and a half hours and 230 kilometres after leaving Port Moresby the first car to be driven to Tapini pulled up outside the District Office.

Paul Bodi, the District Officer at Tapini, advised that the Bolubolu bridge is soon to be replaced by a Bailey span which, once completed, will mean the official opening of the road. Inevitably this will mean the end of an era of isolation for Tapini, but it will be many years yet before this "Highway" puts sufficient traffic through to deprive this town of its well-earned character. ↗

route just traversed, revealing a brown scar snaking through the jungle canopy serving to mark the road's course across the face of each ridge.

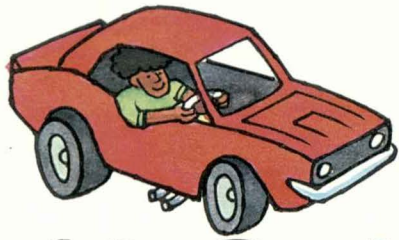
A ford crossing is all that is offered over the Tamalo River. Cool, clear and fast with a loose gravel bottom and a variable depth, the success of the crossing was a mere matter of luck and acceleration. We made it but a few days of rain could easily render this crossing impossible.

From the Tamalo to the Bolubolu River is 11 kilometres.

The ascent takes you above 1200 metres and the stage itself over an hour of first gear four-wheeling. Thirteen kilometres from Tapini, the Bolubolu crossing presents the final obstacle, and the motorist's ultimate challenge. The options are a bridge or a ford. The latter was over waist deep and flowing so swiftly that I could barely stand. There was no alternative but the bridge.

The bridge, like the highway, defies description. The up-river supports, two enormous logs, had snapped in half

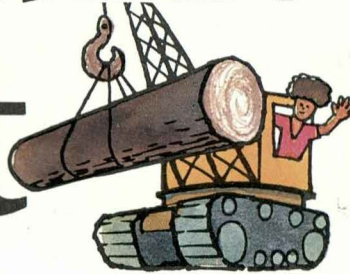
Top right: Tapini town and airstrip; right: does the arrival of the first car in Tapini signify an end to the airline monopoly? centre: Bolubolu bridge in a state of collapse — soon to be replaced by a new Bailey span



drive it



lift it



light it



heat it



cool it



drill it



ship it



fly it

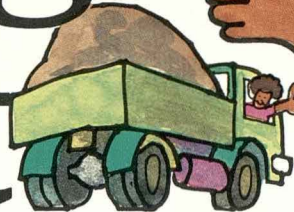
cut it



dig it



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THE bird life of New Guinea is almost unparalleled in its beauty and diversity. It represents a source of constant interest, whether to the first-time visitor to the island, the scientist, or the national citizens.

Probably nowhere else in the world is the relationship between people and birds as close and intricate as that found on New Guinea where birds are a vital part of the numerous national cultures.

With more than 650 species, many of which are found nowhere else, New Guinea supports nearly one-tenth of the world's birds. In any one area, there may be between 100 and

New Guinea BIRDS

by Stephen and Melinda Pruett-Jones

150 species. Although generally difficult to see — particularly those of the forest — the birds offer both pleasure and excitement to the patient observer. Their search can prove as excit-

ing as their discovery.

For the past two years, we have been fortunate to be able to study some of Papua New Guinea's birds on Mount Missim in Morobe Province. There we

found nearly 130 species, including 11 different species of bird of paradise. The portraits on these pages introduce a variety of birds, mostly from Mount Missim, and also some species found in lowland area. We have found that the delicate beauty of birds is best appreciated when they are viewed up close where details in feather structure and colouration can be seen.

The portraits provide a mere glance at Papua New Guinea's birds, each but just one member of a diverse group. As we hope these photographs illustrate, the birds of Papua New Guinea are a resource, to be appreciated, cherished and protected.



Papuan King Parrot *Alisterus chloropterus*

The Australia and New Guinea region is particularly rich in parrots, with 46 species known from New Guinea. In most habitats, parrots are usually the more common, and particularly conspicuous, birds.

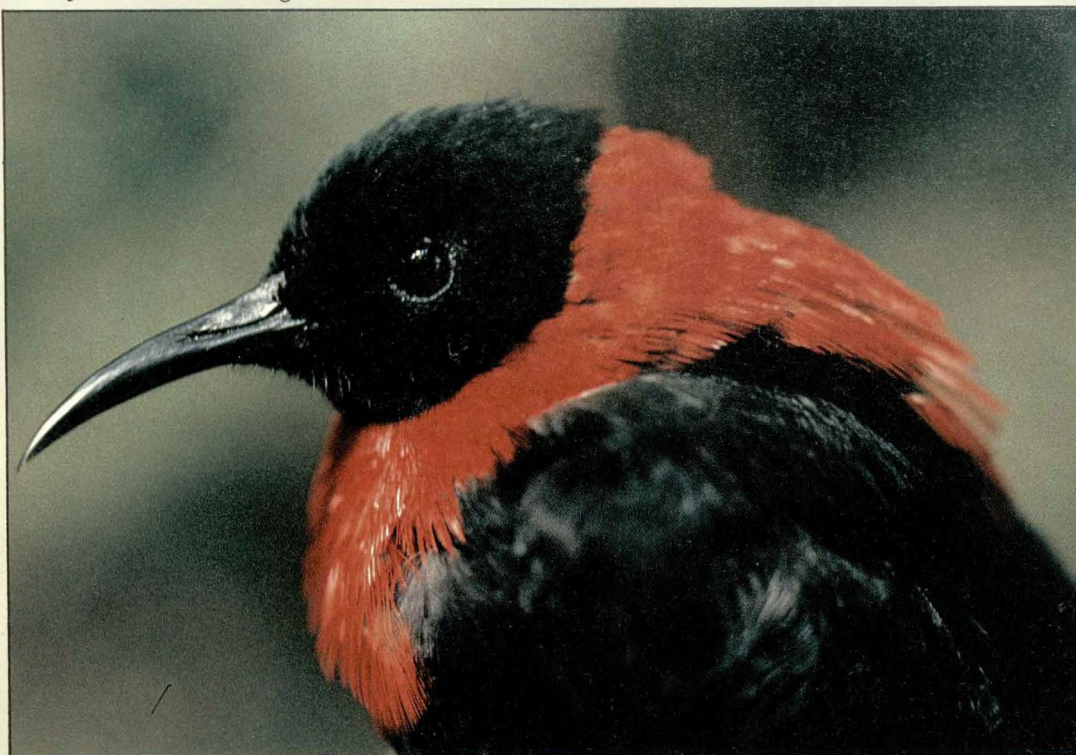
Fruit, flowers and seeds are their typical foods, which they noisily devour in the canopies of tall trees. The Papuan King Parrot, a medium-sized and colourful species, is usually recognized by its long, dark blue

tail which is often all one sees as the bird flies through dense forest. Its flight pattern is distinctive, with long glides between deep and fast wingbeats. Like most parrots, their nest is built in a cavity high up

in a tree and both adults share in the nesting duties. Parrots are among the most intelligent and long-lived of all birds, and it is likely that Papuan King Parrots live up to 20 years or more in the wild.

Black and Red Honeyeater *Myzomela rosenbergii*

Males of this delicate species are among the most striking of the honeyeater family, a diverse group found only in the South Pacific area. Honeyeaters are commonly known as “brush-tongues”, referring to the brush-like tip of the birds’ tongues which aids them in obtaining flower nectar, their primary source of food. The genus *Myzomela* is sometimes called the “honey sippers”. The Black and Red Honeyeater is the only *Myzomela* species to occur at high altitudes, and they are most often seen feeding high in forest trees. They are frequently in the company of parrots. They are active, restless birds which dart about among the flowers probing deep into the blossoms, and constantly chasing each other and other honeyeaters, sometimes twice their size.



White-breasted Fruit Dove *Ptilinopus rivoli*

New Guinea is home to no less than 44 species of pigeons and doves, almost a sixth of the total world’s number. The genus *Ptilinopus* is the largest single genus with 13 species, all of which are medium sized and generally colourful. The White-breasted Fruit Dove is widespread in Papua New Guinea and in different areas the colour of the birds’ breast varies from white to yellow. Fruit eaters, these doves often congregate at trees to feed. It is believed that other species of doves are nomadic, moving

round the countryside in search of areas with large concentrations of fruiting trees. The White-breasted Fruit Dove is common in forest between 1500 and 2600 metres altitude. During the wet season its flimsy nest of a dozen or so sticks placed on a branch of a small tree is easily found and observed. Most doves lay only a single white egg. Interestingly, the adults feed their young a form of “avian milk”, produced from a mixture of saliva and nutrients from fruit.



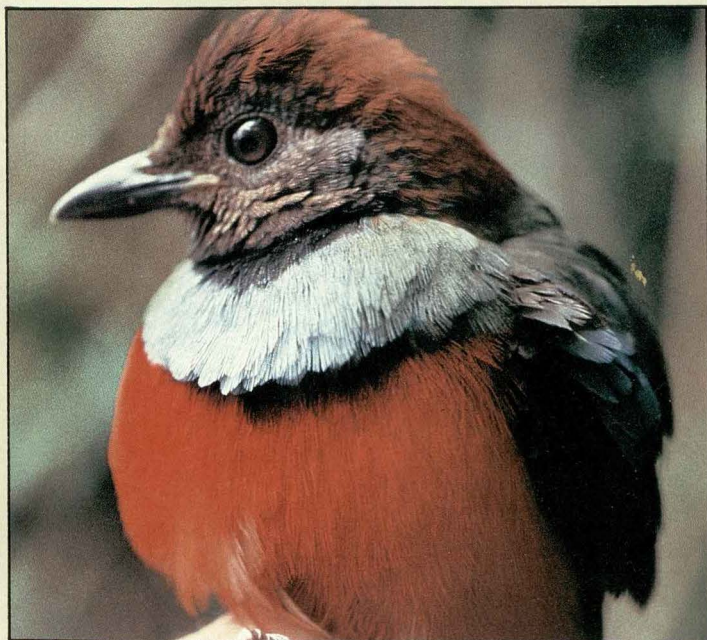
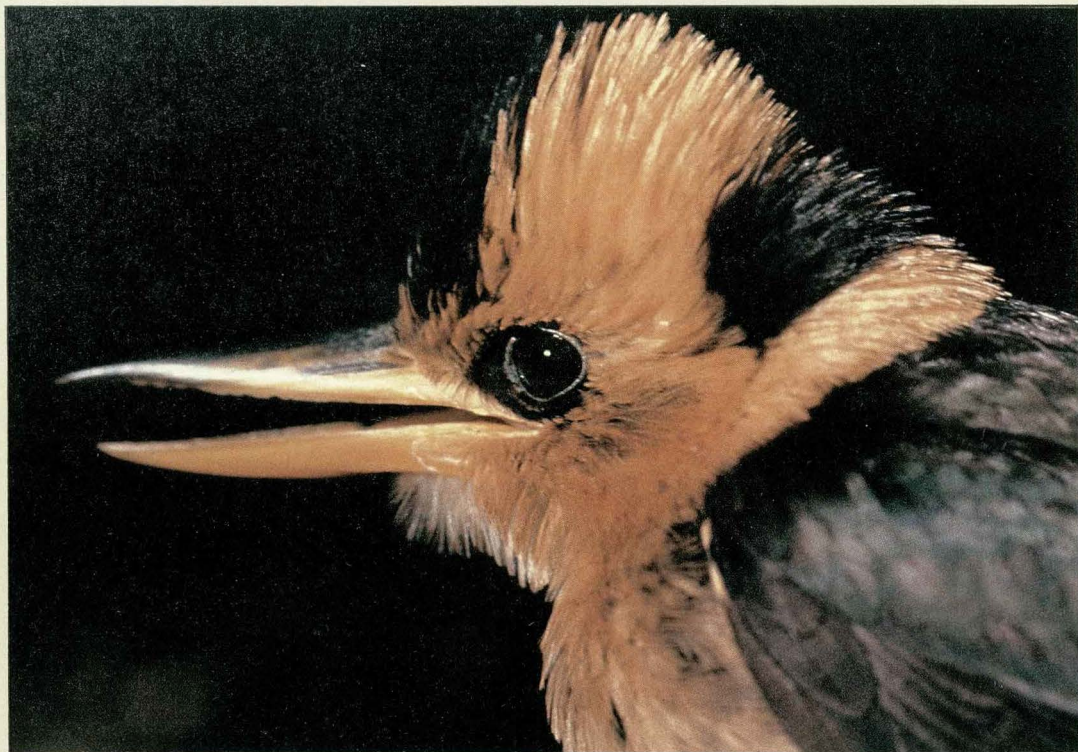
Common Paradise Kingfisher *Tanysiptera galatea*

With 24 species, New Guinea is home to almost one-third of all kingfisher species in the world. Ironically, however, very few of the kingfishers in New Guinea actually eat fish. Their diet consists instead of small lizards, snakes and insects. In the lowland forest, the Common Paradise Kingfisher is one of the most abundant and beautiful of all the species. Perched quietly in the understorey of trees, it appears in colourful

contrast to the dark, damp world of the rainforest. The birds seldom venture from their nesting territories and males and females may remain mated for life. They are best discovered by following their melodious calls to their perch site. This species has a long, graduated “racquet” tail which is frequently raised or flicked from side to side while the bird is perched.

Mountain Yellow-billed Kingfisher *Halcyon megarhynchus*

A true forest species, the Mountain Yellow-billed Kingfisher is found only on New Guinea, between 1300 and 2100 metres altitude along the central cordillera. A close relative, and nearly identical in looks, the Lowland Yellow-billed Kingfisher (*Halcyon torotoro*), occurs below and not overlapping with the distribution of the mountain species. The birds are very frustrating to observers as they sit motionless and hidden in trees while calling with their pleasant whistled song. They are equally difficult to observe foraging as they dart from their perch to catch an insect or small reptile. Their nest, very few of which have ever been found, is made in a cavity high in a forest tree.



Blue-breasted Pitta *Pitta erythrogaster*

Pittas are a most distinctive group of birds, comprising 23 species in Africa, Asia, and Australasia. Also called jewel thrushes, all species are colourful and many have large, white wing patches. They confine their activities strictly to the forest floor and seldom fly unless disturbed or on night-time migrations. More often heard than seen, their habits are poorly known because of their secretive nature. Most species

feed on insects and land snails, which they break open on repeatedly used rocks or hard roots. In no time, these "kitchens" become littered with the broken shells from a single bird. The Blue-breasted (or Red-bellied) Pitta is found both on New Guinea and Australia and might possibly migrate between the two countries. It builds a domed nest of dead twigs and leaves either on the ground or in small shrubs.



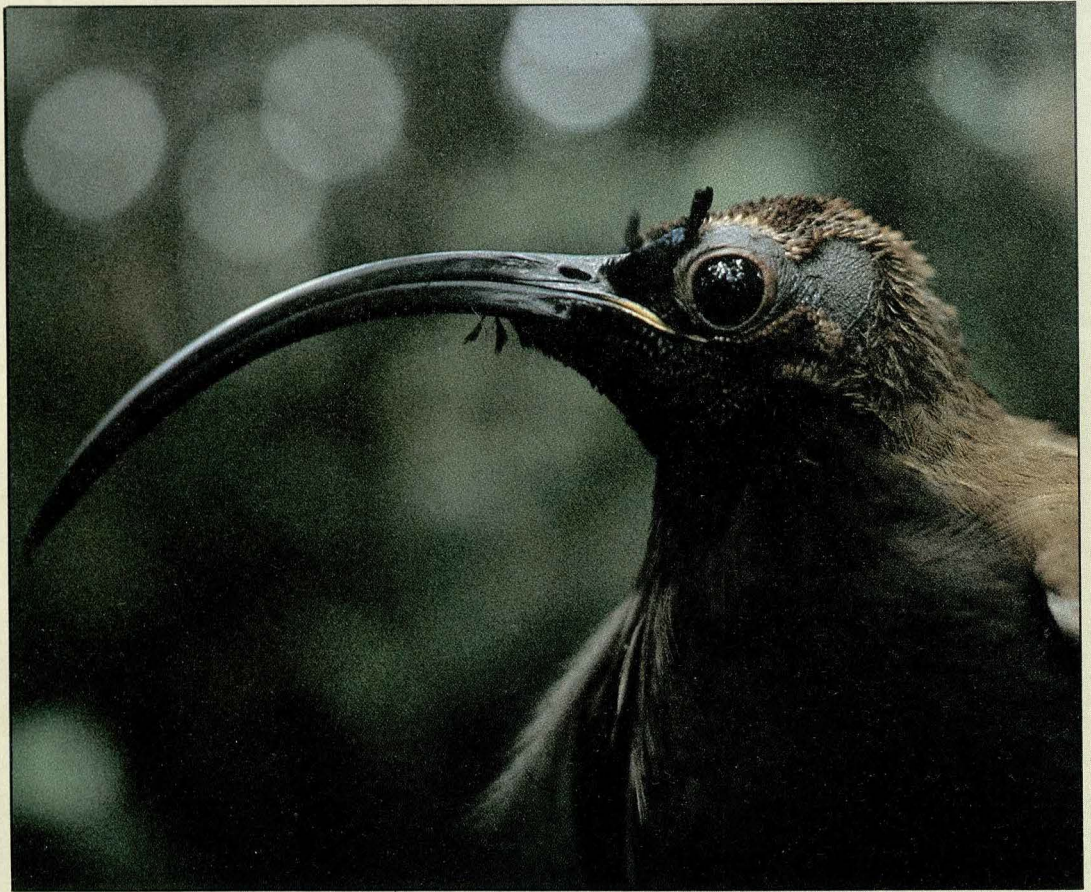
Macgregor's Bowerbird *Amblyornis macgregoriae*

Bowerbirds are famous for their behaviour of building and decorating display sites, called bowers, on the ground. Bowders are structures of interwoven sticks and vegetation. They vary in architecture among species, from a broad mat of twigs to huge stick domes embellished with landscaped gardens. Macgregor's Bowerbird is found in undisturbed montane forest along New Guinea's central cordillera, and is one of the more common bowerbird species on the island. They build a maypole-type bower

consisting of a column of twigs (up to three metres high) erected around a slender sapling, with a mossy border surrounding the maypole. Males decorate their bowers with pieces of black and yellow fungus, fruits, and moss. The bowers of Macgregor's Bowerbird are usually placed along ridge lines and are relatively easy to locate. The brilliant orange crest of the male is erected into a halo during display, adding colourful contrast to the dull browns and greens of his bower.

Black-billed Sicklebill Bird of Paradise *Epimachus albertisii*

New Guinea is best known for the birds of paradise, and rightly so, as they are a fascinating and beautiful group of birds. Thirty-nine of the 43 species inhabit New Guinea and its satellite islands. Most are forest dwellers and their typically loud, discordant calls are easily recognisable. Throughout the mountains of New Guinea above 600 metres in altitude, the Black-billed Sicklebill can be heard giving a surprisingly melodious, and warbled, bell-like call. Unusual among birds of paradise, male sicklebills defend territories on which they feed and attract mates. Their long and delicately decurved bill is a specific adaptation for foraging in crevices and cracks in trees for arthropods, which comprise their entire diet. The bare patch of skin around the bird's eye, which is bright blue in adults, is also found in other species of bird of paradise. Only the male sports the feathered tufts above the eyes.



Mountain Owlet Nightjar *Aegotheles albertisii*

A mellow whistle at dusk, a glimpse of grey and black as night overtakes the forest. These are the most frequent encounters with the Mountain Owlet Nightjar, a species endemic to the mountain forests of New Guinea. Roosting by day, it only emerges at dusk, sweeping through small clearings and the forest canopy, capturing insects in cavernous mouths. The comical, bristly whiskers around the beak actually aid in the location and

capture of insects in flight. If disturbed from their roost, the birds will perch on a limb or stump of a tree and stand motionless, bill pointing skyward. In this way their eyes are hidden and their mottled brown plumage blends with the bark of the tree. Although the bird itself is difficult to observe in the wild, its nest is less troublesome to find, being in a tree cavity or hollow only two to three metres above the ground.



Grey-headed Goshawk *Accipiter poliocephalus*

The Grey-headed Goshawk is a swift and efficient predator of forest and forest-edge habitats. Found in lowland forests and the foothills of the central mountain range, it occurs across the mainland of New Guinea and on the larger satellite islands. New Guinea supports a greater diversity of "bird hawks", as species of *Accipiter* are called, than anywhere else in the world. A total of 12 species are found on New Guinea. Unfortunately, very little is

known of their habits; most species are uncommon-to-rare and, above all, very secretive. The Grey-headed Goshawk is one of the more common species, however, and is not infrequently seen darting across roads, or as a streak of grey and white inside the rainforest. Goshawks hunt other birds, reptiles and large insects for food. They build large stick nests in the canopy of forest trees. ♀

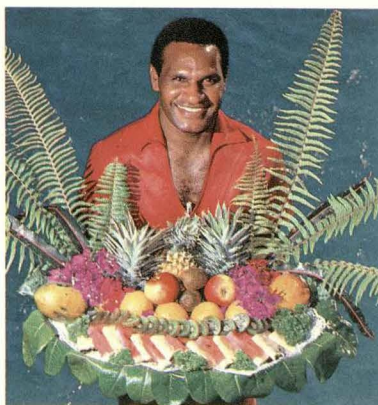


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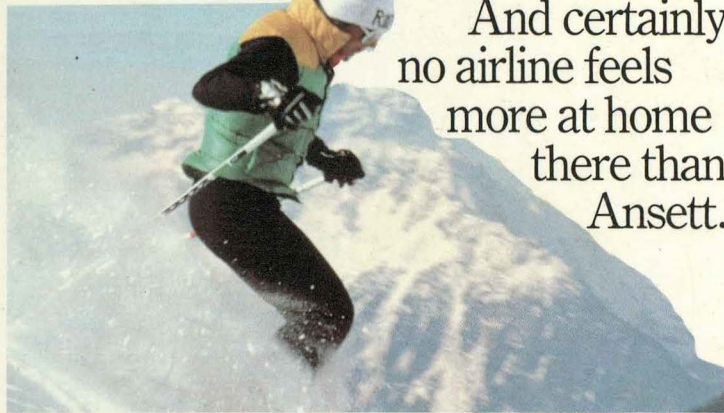
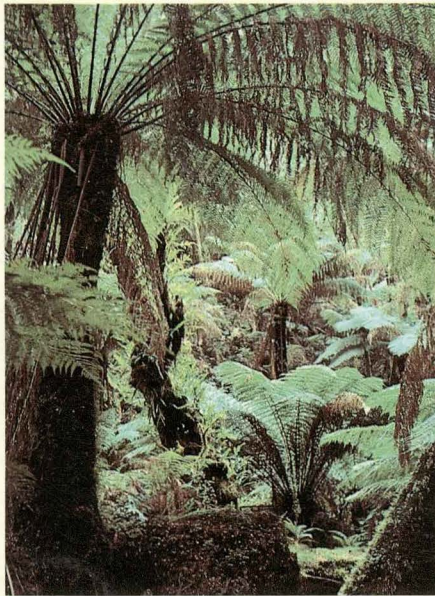
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