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**MODERN ART
IN PNG**



Cacharel

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paradise

No 62 May-June 1987

Paradise is published bi-monthly
by Air Niugini. PO Box 7186,
Boroko, Papua New Guinea
(telephone 273415
telex NE22225)

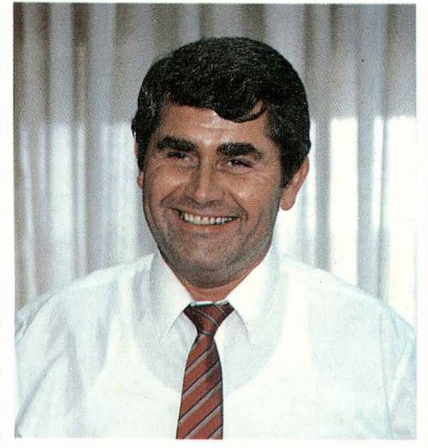
Welcome aboard,

Rural people in Papua New Guinea, as in many countries throughout the world, rely on traditional medicine for their well being. In this issue we explain how some of the traditional knowledge of medicine is being retained and in some cases combined with the modern medical system.

Join us in a journey to the contrasting terrain of the Schouten Islands and enjoy the mouthwatering description of the islanders' traditional mumu.

Enjoy your flight.

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Subscriptions

Annual subscription rates for six
airmail issues are: USA, Europe, UK
and Africa Kina 23 (US\$28)
Australia, New Zealand, Asia and
South Pacific K19 (US\$24, A\$25)
Papua New Guinea K13 payment by
international bank draft.

Printed in Singapore by Times
Publishing Group.

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Cover: A pilot and his aeroplane by the PNG artist, Kaugeu.

Invest in gold.





Story and Photographs by Liz Thompson

Modern Art in Papua New Guinea

Contemporary Papua New Guinea art relates to and directly draws from the people's history and cultural traditions. The artists explore these traditions, established over thousands of years, using new contexts and frameworks. They are also influenced by developments of recent times. The creation or production of 'art' now occurs not only in the village but also within schools and art schools. As such it has inevitably taken on new connotations.

Traditionally the art form of sculpture and carving had spiritual and secular implications. These however were not a pre-requisite for 'creativity'. Everyday objects were elaborately decorated; paddles, spoons, bowls, often displaying stylised engravings. Such designs as well as being esthetically pleasing contributed to a sense of identity. Designs were usually owned by tribes

and as such produced by them only.

Tribal designs are evident in most contemporary work but innovation has come with the new mediums available and the effects of new subject matter as the artists' experiences and lifestyles change.

The generation which makes up some of the country's foremost contemporary artists (people like Akis, Kauage, Kundun and Jakupa) has been influenced by life in villages which, until recent developments in communication, were isolated from one another.

These artists now find themselves in Port Moresby, the capital city and inevitably they experience stimuli very different from that of village life. The established schools in urban environments provide a base for previously geographically diverse people to come into contact with one another for the first time. This new

PNG artists maintain links with the past as in this powerful design in a monochromatic print above.



Cars and other trappings of the industrial society as seen through the PNG artist's eyes left

situation encourages contact and interaction between different groups whose learning or creative expression was shaped by tribal heritage. Apart from a certain amount of inter-tribal exchange the development of designs with which each was familiar remained relatively free of outside influence.

One of the most obvious differences in recent work is the introduction of new mediums. Painting is executed on canvas, paper, glass, in fact any available surface. At the National University and the hospital in Port Moresby murals stretch along the walls. In several schools throughout PNG pupils have decorated the walls of the buildings with their own designs.

New commercial dyes, paints and inks are available which have changed dramatically the whole color range available to artists. They no longer rely solely on ochres, umbers, sienna and charcoal, the natural, organic and earthy colors. Now they have access to the bright vibrant reds, yellows, blues and greens of powder, poster and acrylic paints and inks. Brushes are used rather than fingertips, leaves and feathers.

Kauage is one of the most prominent artists in PNG today, his images are generally paintings or prints. Students sat in the hot muggy afternoon as I climbed the stairs to Kauage's studio. I passed a group of young men on the ground floor who were busy cutting three-metre shapes of musical instruments out of polystyrene. The shapes were to be sprayed with paint and used as a backdrop for a hotel band. Pieces of trombone, saxophone and the arm of a double bass leaned against the wall white and incongruous.

Kauage's room on the top floor was covered with his paintings and against the table lay a folio bursting with prints. There were two of these I particularly liked, both on the familiar two-dimensional plane, no recession into depth and both depicting human forms caught within the machines



A surreal warrior, traditionally adorned but armed with guns, by Kauage above.

they operate. One was a car and its driver, whose vehicle seems to be growing from his waist, an extension of his form.

In a work depicting a pilot and his aeroplane, the head is the only visible part of the human form and is part of the same overall design which describes the plane. The two-dimensional aspect greatly contributes to this illusion. The flat shapes contain the two elements with little discrimination. The threatening

qualities of an advancing technological age are neutralised.

These figures like many that appear in contemporary work float nebulously in an undefined space. Little attention is paid to environments or landscapes, the elements of the paintings are not locked into a context. There are particular ways of conceptualising in traditional art which it seems are not lost in the midst of new subject matter. In traditional carving and

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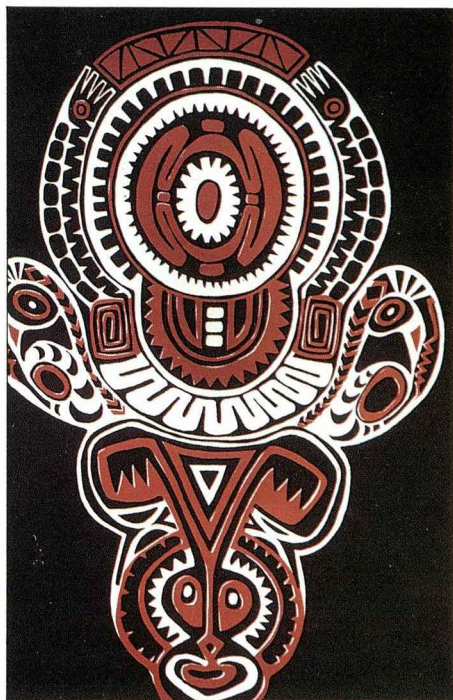
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Art as social comment **right**. Bold design brilliantly evoked with two colors **below**.

painting there is little concern for realism or authentic perspective. Imagination develops as human forms are juxtaposed with animal images.

Often there is an element of ambiguity as a few lines are used to suggest features in otherwise undefined shapes and figures. It appears that all these characteristics currently manifest themselves in various ways. There is a greater element of spontaneity than in the abstraction or symbolism of several Western art movements. The abstract images in Western society have invariably undergone a rational process and are the creations of artists who are reacting against certain esthetic value systems, attempting to move away from trained or conditioned ways of seeing.

Art in PNG has a direct link with tribal past and to date has relatively limited 'formal' training. There is significantly less to unlearn, an occupation which has become such an obsession in the West. Kauge himself was a high school teacher until someone 'discovered' him. His work has both the feeling of a strong cultural link and a fairly direct



response to confrontation with Western systems.

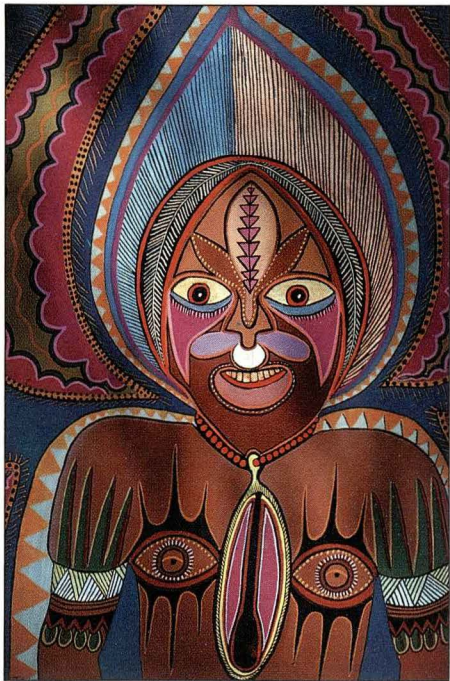
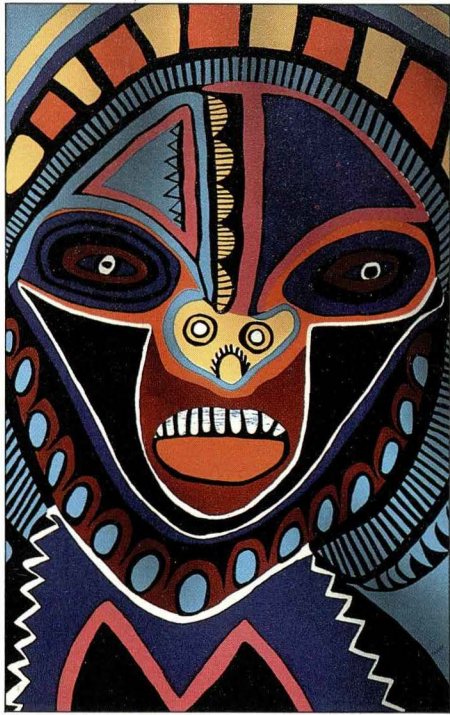
It is interesting that some international galleries are lined with PNG artifacts yet very few house collections or even samples of contemporary work. Such is the fascination with that considered to be 'the primitive'.

However things are changing. In

1986 Gickmai Kundun, one of the country's leading sculptors, was asked to present some of his work at the Sydney Biennale. His work was displayed along with others including a piano suspended from the ceiling periodically playing a handful of notes alongside a ringing telephone, a television tape of a man building up a relationship with a coyote while he



Mythical man and beast showing the energy and vitality of PNG art **left**. Traditions of bold and colorful design are the essence of these works **below** including Kauage's two birds of paradise.



shared a cage with it for something like 72 hours and a few other odd and interesting things from various corners of the globe.

Kundun's work rather than being carved in wood as is in keeping with tradition leans more heavily towards what has become known as the 'junk' style or 'new sculpture', which is considered to be the brain child of Marcel Duchamp. The idea is one of 'readymade sculpture', assemblage and images made up from pieces of the immediate environment, things like car bumpers and wheel spokes.

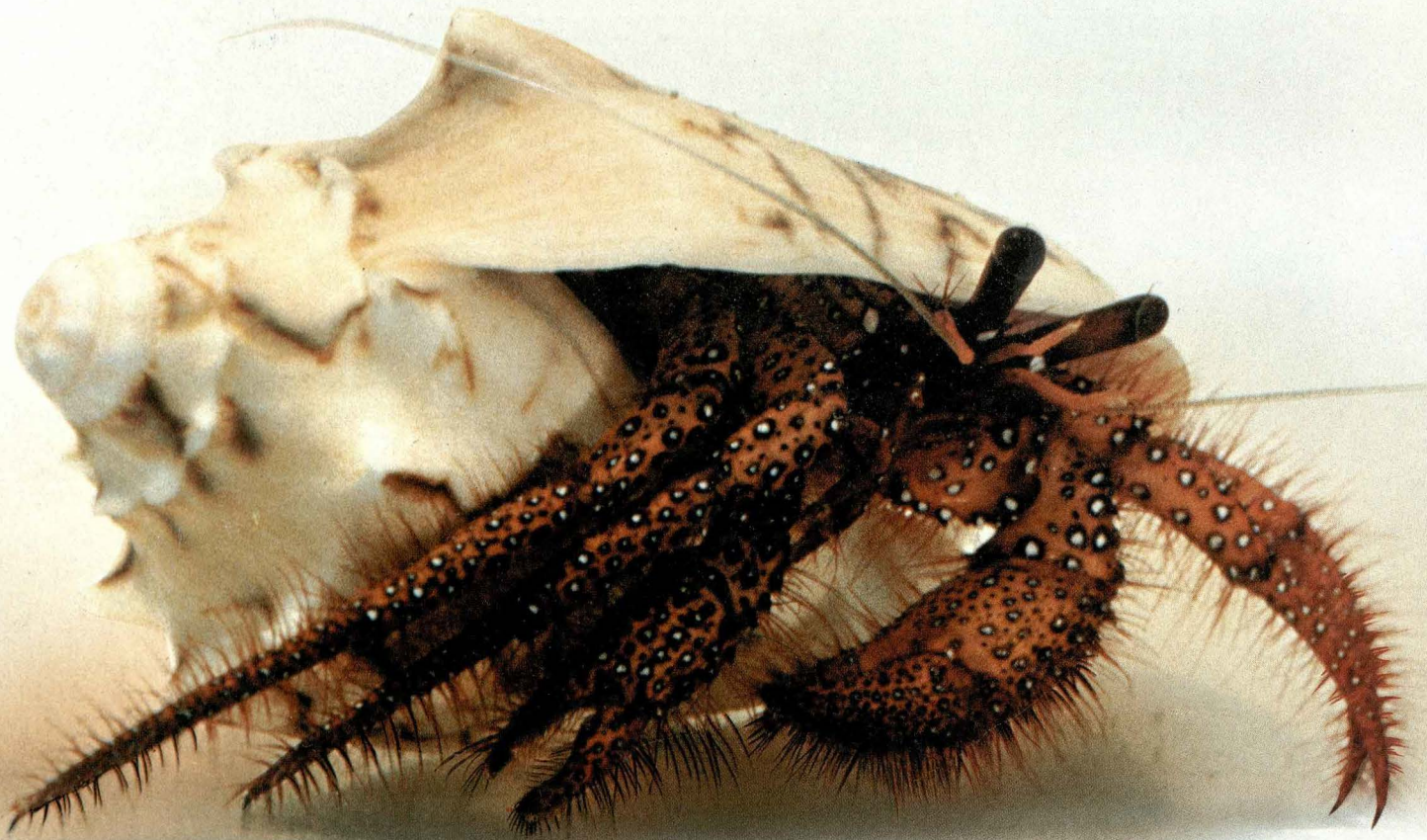
Recently Kundun was working at the National Art School on an exhibition to be staged in the gallery there. The workshops were filled with wrought iron and welded metal and a couple of huge birds of paradise stood awaiting a coat of paint. He was putting together pieces which commented on a range of issues as diverse as singsings, tribal fighting, to Christianity, divorce and nuclear

testing in the South Pacific Islands. His work is inspiring and innovative whilst very much utilising his understanding of traditional form. (An article "Artistry in Steel" examining Kundun's work, appeared in Paradise No. 59 last year.)

The textiles department was also preparing an exhibition while I was there. Pieces of fabric hung from lines, the sun directly behind them displaying beautifully hand painted patterns. Fabrics are also produced with batik, silk-screen and hand-printing methods. Some of the designs had been taken straight from the tribal shields, the final garments were full of an energy and vitality and evoked a wonderful sense of the tropics.

The contemporary art world in PNG is developing at a great pace. The interior of Parliament House is decorated with some of the finest contemporary work in the country. As things continue to change in PNG so too will the creation of art.





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Traditional Medicine

Story and photographs by Ellen Woodley

Imagine the setting: a cluster of huts in a rainforest clearing, the muted sounds of children laughing, women boiling taro over smoking fires, and a young man limping towards the central hut in the village. The hut door is shut behind the injured youth and in the semi-darkness the affected limb is examined, some words muttered and a remedy given. The healing words are those of the village elder, he who possesses the carefully refined knowledge of herbal medicine.

Such a scene has always been common in Papua New Guinea, where the use of plants as medicines has helped sustain the health of the people for thousands of years. Today, the majority of the rural population relies heavily on plants for all aspects of life, from the obvious uses for food, clothing, shelter and transportation to the not-so-obvious use of plants for curing disease and malaise. The extremely useful plant-derived traditional medicines have evolved through the selective process of trial and error over numerous generations and has accumulated to provide a very rich heritage for the PNG people.

Herbal therapy has been in use since the very beginning of human history. In ancient China, India, Egypt and Greece, for example, the indigenous system of medicine exclusively maintained the health of the population. Even today in the People's Republic of China, both traditional and modern medical practices are widely



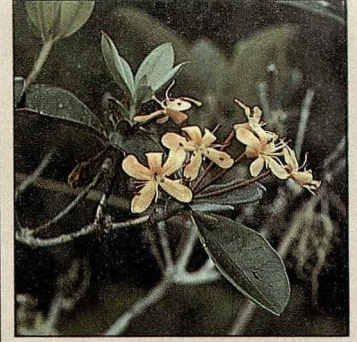
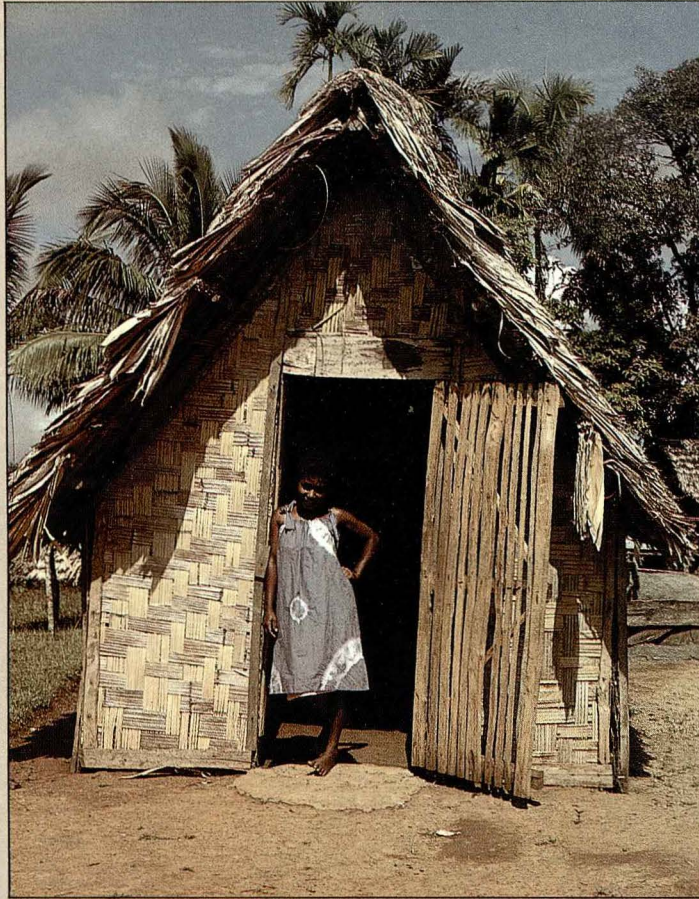
Traditional salt is made from dried plants which are later ashed.

used. Travelling through China, numerous unpretentious herbalist shops can be seen along the roadsides and, in the bustling centre of Beijing, the large modern hospital offers, even the foreigner, the choice of treatment – traditional or modern. In Africa today, busy markets are made colorful by piles of powdered leaves, flowers, roots, berries and seed pods sold next to small clay pots which conceal their important contents.

In PNG, the practice of traditional medicine is not readily apparent unless one treks down a bush path and views rural village life and its subtleties. Generally, it is a dominant person in the community that possesses most of the inherited knowledge of plant medicines. Access to this information is not always easy because the knowledge bestows power to the honored keeper and maintains the mystique in the healer-patient relationship.

The dramatic topography of PNG has served to isolate pockets of the population, forming different language and cultural groups. Despite cultural segregation, there are some common plant species used throughout the country; one species may be consistently used for the same ailment everywhere or else one species used throughout may have a multitude of different applications. Close to four hundred plants in PNG have been documented to have some medicinal use.

For example *Cassia alata*, a

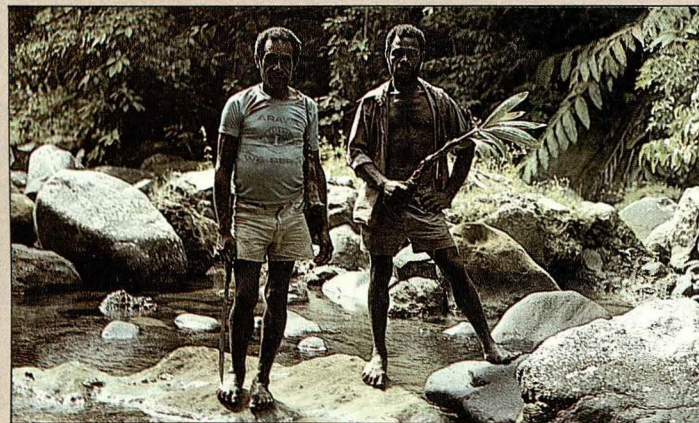


member of the legume family is widely used to treat a fungal skin infection. New leaves of *Scaevola sericea*, which grows along sandy coastlines, are used to treat colds. A concoction of the leaves of *Rhododendron macgregoriae* is drunk to cure diarrhoea. The milky latex from the leaves of *Calophyllum inophyllum* is diluted and applied to itching skin.

Imported drugs administered from hospitals or health aid posts now play a vital role in PNG. The question which emerges is whether the imported system of medicine will replace the indigenous system with the loss of a rich and important cultural heritage.

The advantages of maintaining viable traditional methods are many. Medicinal plants are usually easy to obtain, inexpensive and do not require sophisticated storage conditions. In addition, research has shown many traditional medicines to be equally or more effective than their synthetic counterparts.

Many of the modern medi-



Clockwise from top left, *Scaevola sericea* treats colds; an Aid Post Orderly who is a practitioner of traditional medicine; *Rhododendron macgregoriae*, used against diarrhoea; *Calophyllum inophyllum* milk, used on itches; guardians of the herbal treatment secrets; *Cassia alata* is applied to fungal skin infections.

cines used extensively in industrialised countries are based on plant derivatives such as the alkaloids atropine, digitoxin and quinine. There are some 155,000 species of tropical flowering plants and

only a minute fraction of these have been screened for their chemical constituents.

The chemical and pharmaceutical testing of plants is a lengthy and arduous process. Some global agencies are active

in the investigation of medicinal properties of plants and some progress is being made to identify and document those species of importance.

The extensive forests that characterise PNG are virtually an untapped resource. Their remarkable floristic diversity is a potential source of many yet undiscovered drugs.

Efforts are being made by the Wau Ecology Institute in PNG to record the traditional medical practices and to encourage the sustained use of plants known to be useful medicines. Hopefully this accumulated knowledge will remain intact in PNG culture and simple and effective traditional practices can be improved to work hand in hand with a modern medical system. There is no doubt that modern medicine still has a great deal to learn from the herbalist.



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For two hours the column of fatigued Australians and Americans wound its way through the dense, steaming-hot tropical jungle of Papua New Guinea some five kilometres from the township of Madang. The silence was punctuated by the occasional shriek of a bird of paradise. There was no other sound and we were too exhausted even to slap the mosquitoes from our faces.

I was part of what turned out to be the adventure of a lifetime, a photographic expedition, the aim of which was to capture on film some of the relics of World War II on land and underwater, record the culture of PNG and to explore and photograph the remote coral reefs of the outer islands.

The expedition included some world famous photographers and divers:

Ron and Valerie Taylor, Australians who have been producing documentaries, books, magazine articles and film for motion pictures for some 30 years.

Irvin Rockman, chairman of the Melbourne Tourism Authority and proprietor of the Rockman's Regency Hotel in Melbourne. He is also one of Australia's pioneers in diving and underwater photography.

Henry Bource, another of Australia's pioneers in diving and underwater photography, who lost his left leg just below the knee some 20 years ago in an encounter with a great white shark.

Michael Wolper, Michael Garfield, Peter Armitage and myself, businessmen from Melbourne with a common love for adventure, diving and photography.

Representing the National Geographic Society was David Doubilet who has been a contract photographer for National Geographic for the past 15 years and is arguably the world's best underwater still photographer.

Peter Benchley author of "Jaws", "The Deep" and his latest and most beautiful story of the sea, "Girl of the Sea of Cortez", with his wife Wendy.

Mike Jones, a professional helicopter pilot and scuba diving instructor who as a United States Marine flew helicopters in the Vietnam War.

The dense jungle gave way to a clearing in the midst of which we saw the rusting, burnt-out remains of a Japanese twin-engine Mitsub-

spirits of those who had died here.

Early the next morning we boarded the Reef Explorer for two days of cruising around the waters of Madang. We had to load more than 1,000 kilograms of equipment which had arrived through the courtesy of Air Niugini. Capable of carrying

Expedition members, (top row) Henry Bource, Wendy Benchley, Peter Benchley, Mike Jones; (middle row) Kerry Plesch (captain), Ron Taylor, Irvin Rockman, Michael Wolper, Pip Beatty (crew), Michael Garfield; (bottom row) David Doubilet, Peter Armitage, Bronnie Taylor (crew), Valerie Taylor.



Outer Island ODYSSEY

Story and photographs by Michael Czarny

bishi bomber. We stood and looked at the wreck in silence. Perhaps it was the oppressive and ominous atmosphere produced by the steam rising from the jungle and rays of sunlight filtering faintly through the surrounding trees that sent a chill up my spine, or perhaps I sensed the presence of the

12 passengers and a crew of four, The Reef Explorer is a 20-metres-long, air-conditioned luxury cruiser which has a full Commonwealth Survey enabling it to operate anywhere in the world.

Her home port is Cairns on the north-east coast of Australia from which for the past 10 years

she has been one of Australia's best known, live-aboard dive boats operating regularly along the Barrier Reef and into the Coral Sea. For the past two years she has spent the first five months of the year in the waters of PNG.

Just north of Madang off the coast of Wongat Island lies the wreck of an American Mitchell B25 bomber. In 1943 while on a bombing mission it was damaged by Japanese anti-aircraft fire and the pilot ditched the aircraft in the water. Five of the crew survived, were captured by the Japanese and taken to Wongat Island where four were executed. The aircraft, adorned with sea whips, sponges and brightly colored soft corals, now lies as a monument to those victims of war. This plane is intact with the 50-calibre machine guns at the nose, cocked with ammunition belts in place looking as if they are ready to spit forth fire and destruction. She is now home to two large gropers, coral trout, exquisitely beautiful but deadly butterfly cod and countless coral fish that form kaleidoscopic clouds of movement as they swim about the wreck.

Off the coast of the mainland we located the wreck of the US mine-sweeper, The Boston. This huge ship lies completely intact only 50 metres from shore at a depth of 35 metres. It was a deep dive and we had to plan it carefully and monitor our decompression time. As we descended to explore the wreck we passed through a school of barracuda and two large black-tipped whaler sharks swimming effortlessly past us showing no signs of aggression, merely curiosity.

The wreck itself is a diver's dream, with the companionways, cabins and wheel house of the superstructure being easy to penetrate and explore. The quiet blue of the deep ocean turned electric as strobe after strobe fired away at a never-ending parade of marine life that inhabits the wreck.

The next day we put to sea again, and headed north-east past Crown Island to the

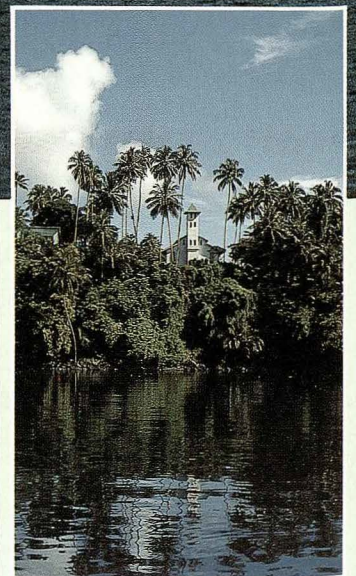
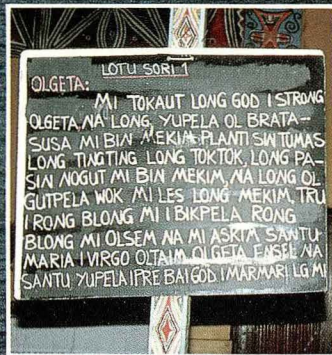
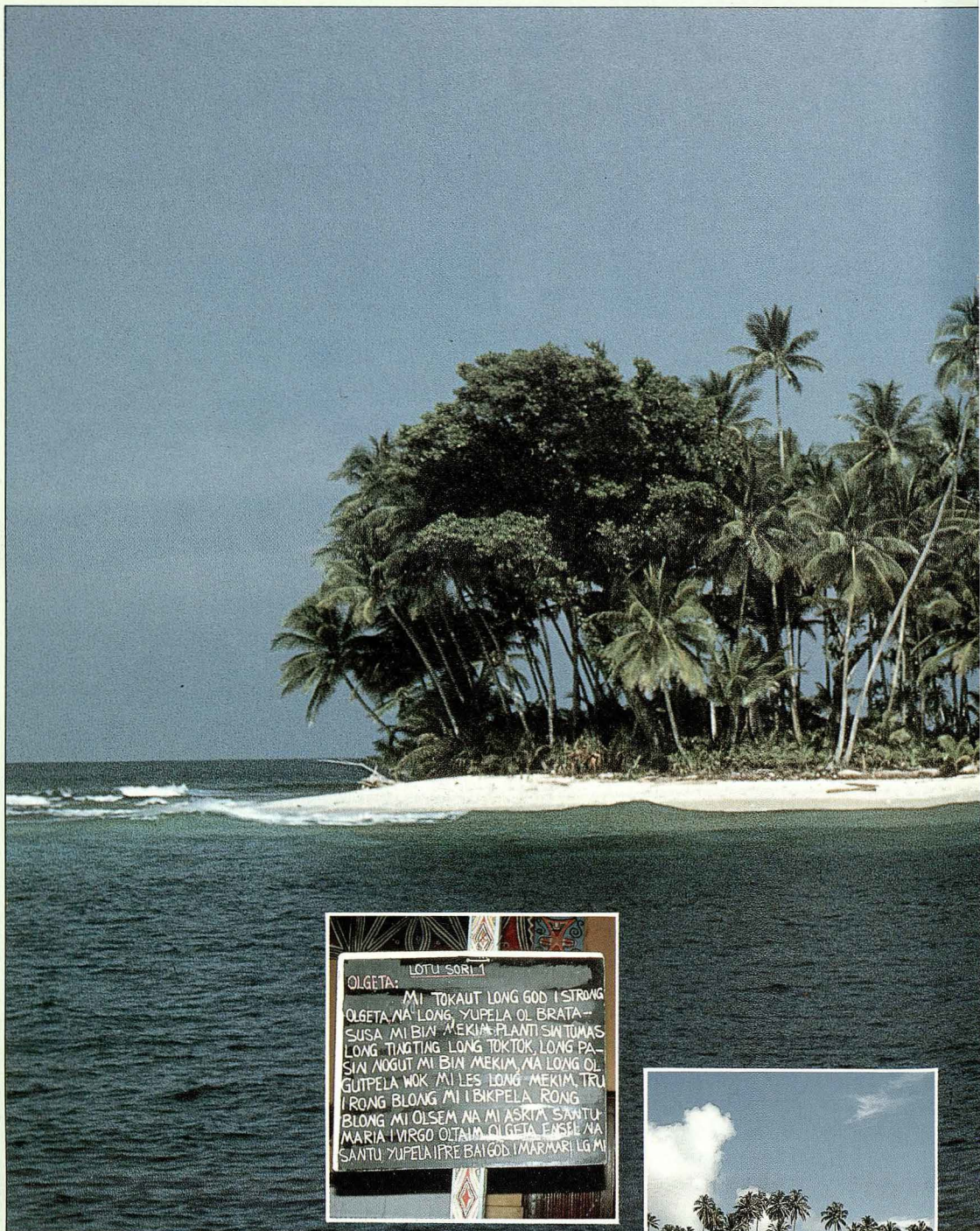
Whirlwind and Otilian Reefs. These remote coral reefs provided some of the most spectacular diving any of us had ever experienced. Sheer coral walls dropped away 1,000 metres into the depths of the cobalt blue Pacific Ocean. The sides of the walls were adorned with forests of precious black corals, huge tube sponges, soft corals and other invertebrate life. Patrolling the edge of the walls were schools of barracuda, tuna, trevally and ever present sharks.

In all my years of diving I have never seen large schools of pelagic (open water) fish, clouds of reef fish and sharks so tame, having no fear of divers. It was obvious that we were the first divers on these reefs. Above water we explored small coral cays – sandy islands that were home to nesting colonies of gannets and other ocean birds.

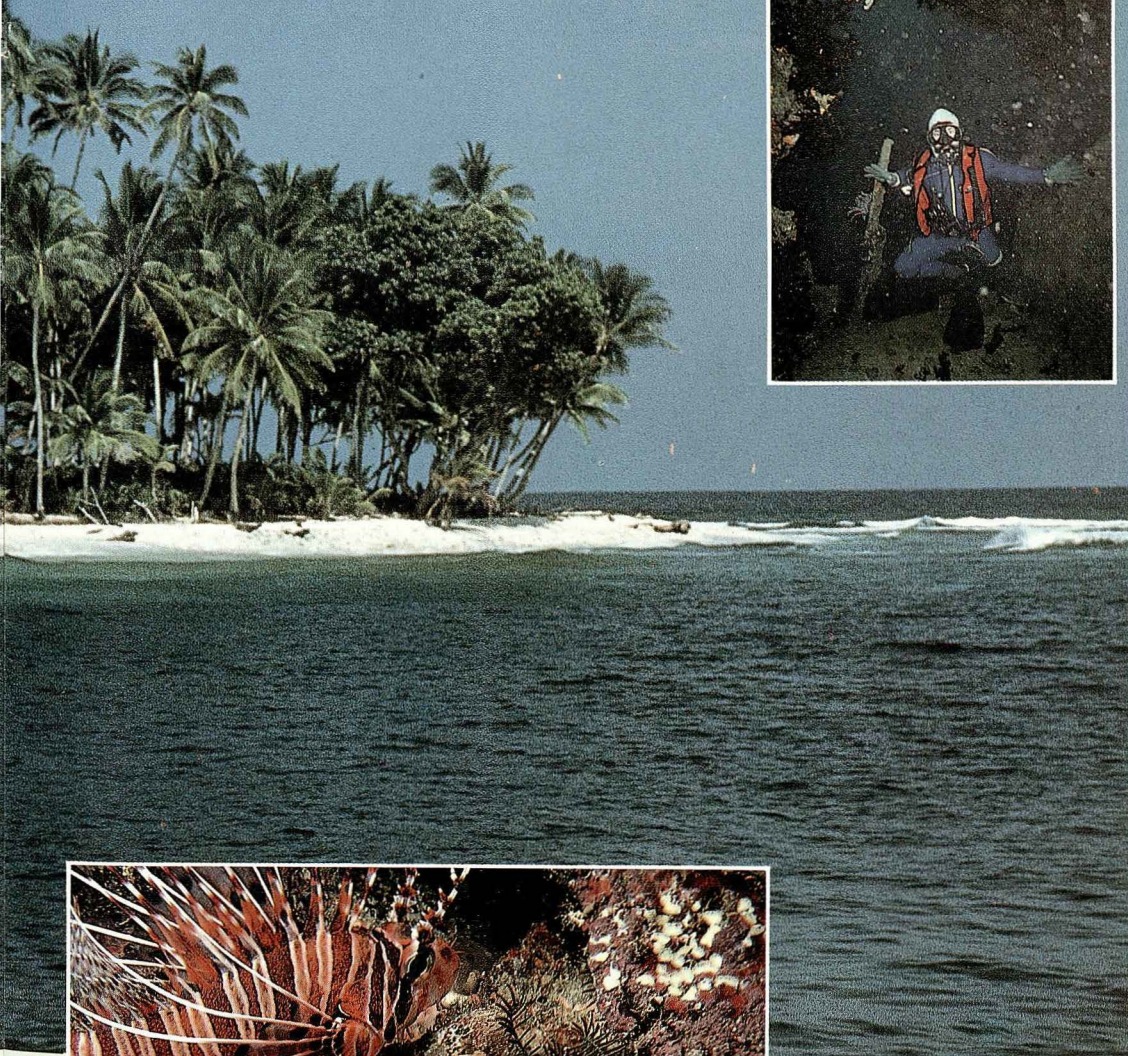
We continued north-east to the Vitu Island group, a large group of mountainous volcanic islands. All were covered in thick dense jungle and on one island we came across sulphurous pools of boiling water with hot fumes rising through the jungle. It was as if we had gone back to prehistory. I half expected a giant dinosaur to come crashing through the trees. Most of the islands in this group are uninhabited, and on one of the few inhabited islands, Butu Island, our guide informed us that we were the first white people the islanders had seen for more than 10 years.

One night we anchored at Garove Island in a magnificent natural harbor which was in fact a volcanic crater that had blown its side open allowing the sea to gush in. On the cliffs above the harbor, built in the clearing in the shade of towering palm trees, was a beautiful church. Christianity and education had been brought to this remote place by the Roman Catholic Church.

Inside, the walls of the church were decorated with beautifully hand-painted murals. Daily prayers were neatly hand-written on large black-



Scenes to remember from the odyssey included tiny coral atolls, a remote island church with its prayers in pidgin, the debris of war swallowed by jungle and sea. The beautiful butterfly cod lives in a bomber wreck.



boards in pidgin. Some of our party on entering the church were so taken by the atmosphere, they were moved to kneel in a moment of prayer. With the aid of the church, the villagers had developed a degree of commerce running a small copra plantation and

taking shells from the surrounding reefs for sale to trading boats that called regularly to collect the copra. The villagers were also proud of the educational achievements of the young in that many had gone on to high schools and universities in Port Moresby

and Rabaul and some had even attained positions of stature with the Federal and Provincial Governments.

It was in this crater that the villagers pointed out where we could dive on two small ship wrecks. We dived and photographed the wreck of a 20-metre long Japanese coastal patrol boat and the wreck of a small landing barge. The patrol boat in particular was quite fascinating with munitions, small arms and other artifacts strewn all around the wreck. In the jungle above the crater, we photographed a large Japanese

coastal gun, still pointing menacingly out to sea protecting the harbor from an enemy that no longer exists.

Leaving the Vitu Island group, the Reef Explorer steamed south-west to the north coast of New Britain and into the Dampier Straits where we spent two days diving in one of the most beautiful groups of tropical islands I have ever seen, the Saissi Islands. These islands are all small, flat, palm tree covered, coral atolls and not the huge volcanic islands that we had seen up until then. Their snow-white sandy beaches are surrounded by coral reefs. The beaches are a shell collector's dream come true with many beautiful and some quite rare shells just lying waiting to be picked up. Again, most of the islands are uninhabited.

One night we went ashore for a barbecue on the beach. I sat there watching the evening sky turn a blazing yellow, orange and red as the tropical sun slowly kissed the waters of the Pacific Ocean, and I had to pinch myself to assure that this was all real.

Our expedition continued south-west through the Tami Islands where the islanders were particularly hospitable, showing us about their villages, allowing us to inspect and photograph their copra plantations and pointing out the best diving locations along the reefs.

Inevitably our journey of discovery had to come to an end, and the Reef Explorer made its way into Lae Harbor. We had spent 17 days in this fascinating country of more than 700 languages and nearly as many cultures and traditions. We were leaving behind a jungle-enshrouded time capsule where evidence of the history of man as far back as the stone age and up to the horrific days of World War II, remains awaiting the adventurous traveller.

Air Niugini operates regular flights to Madang and Lae from Port Moresby and other centres.

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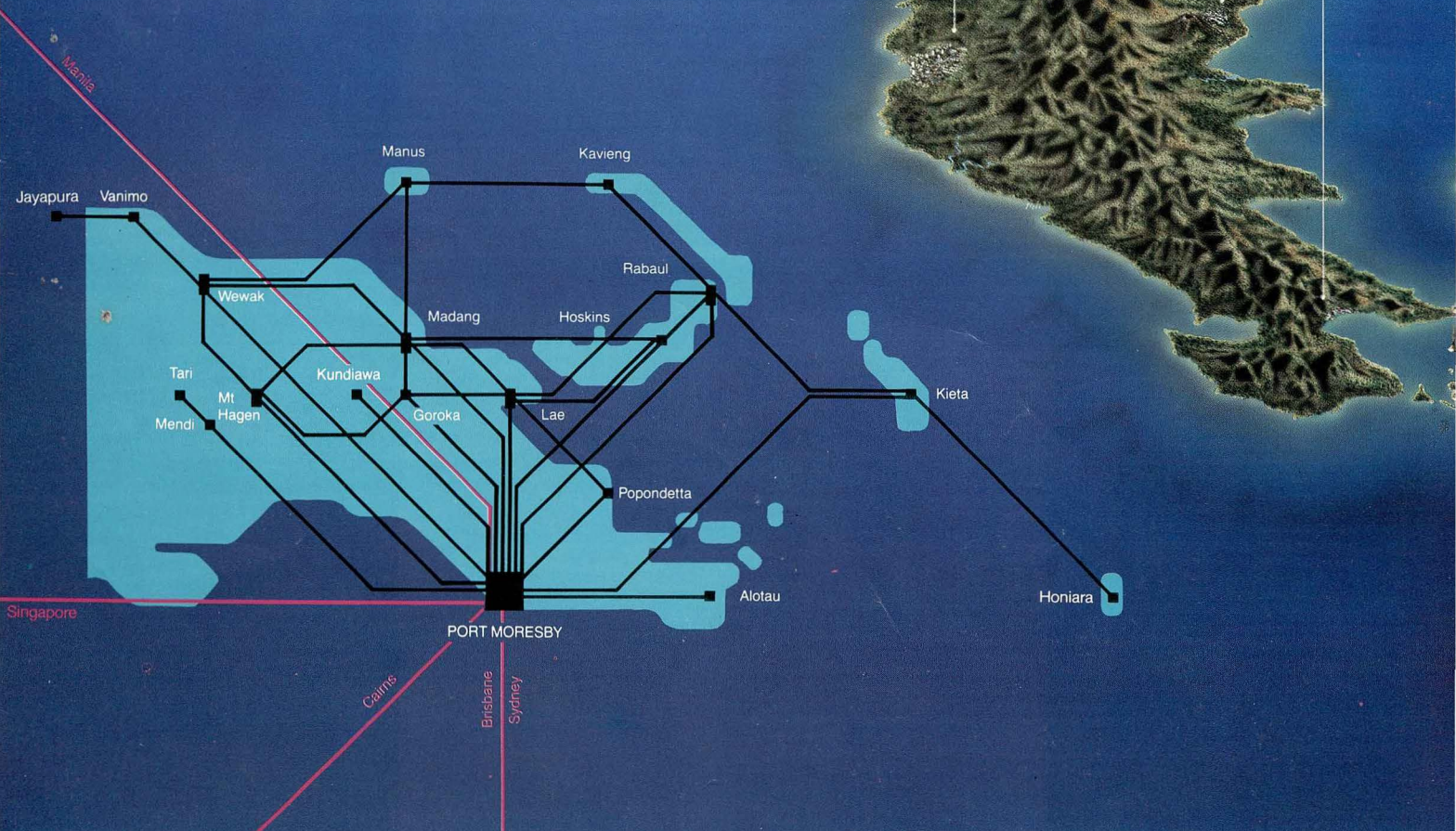
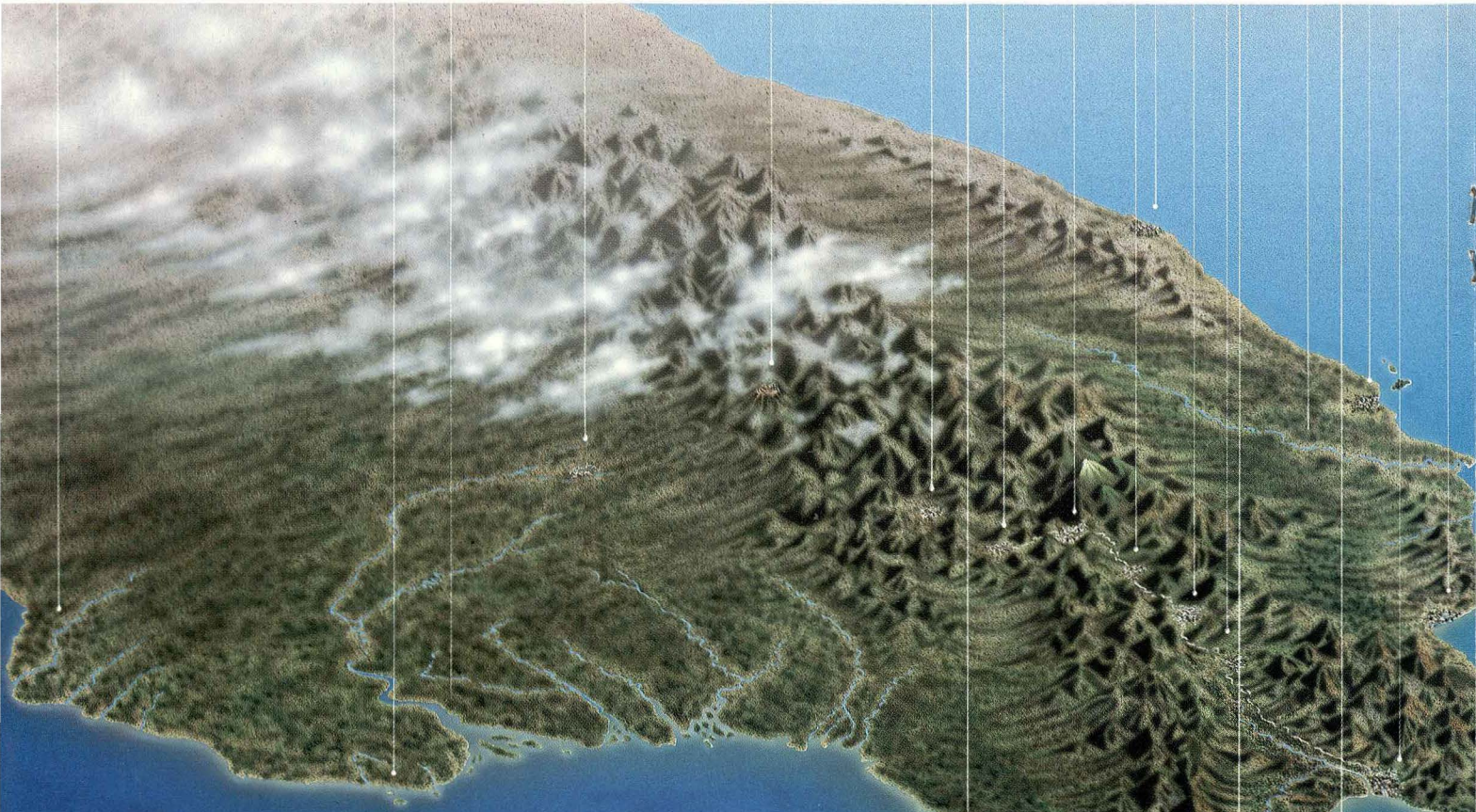
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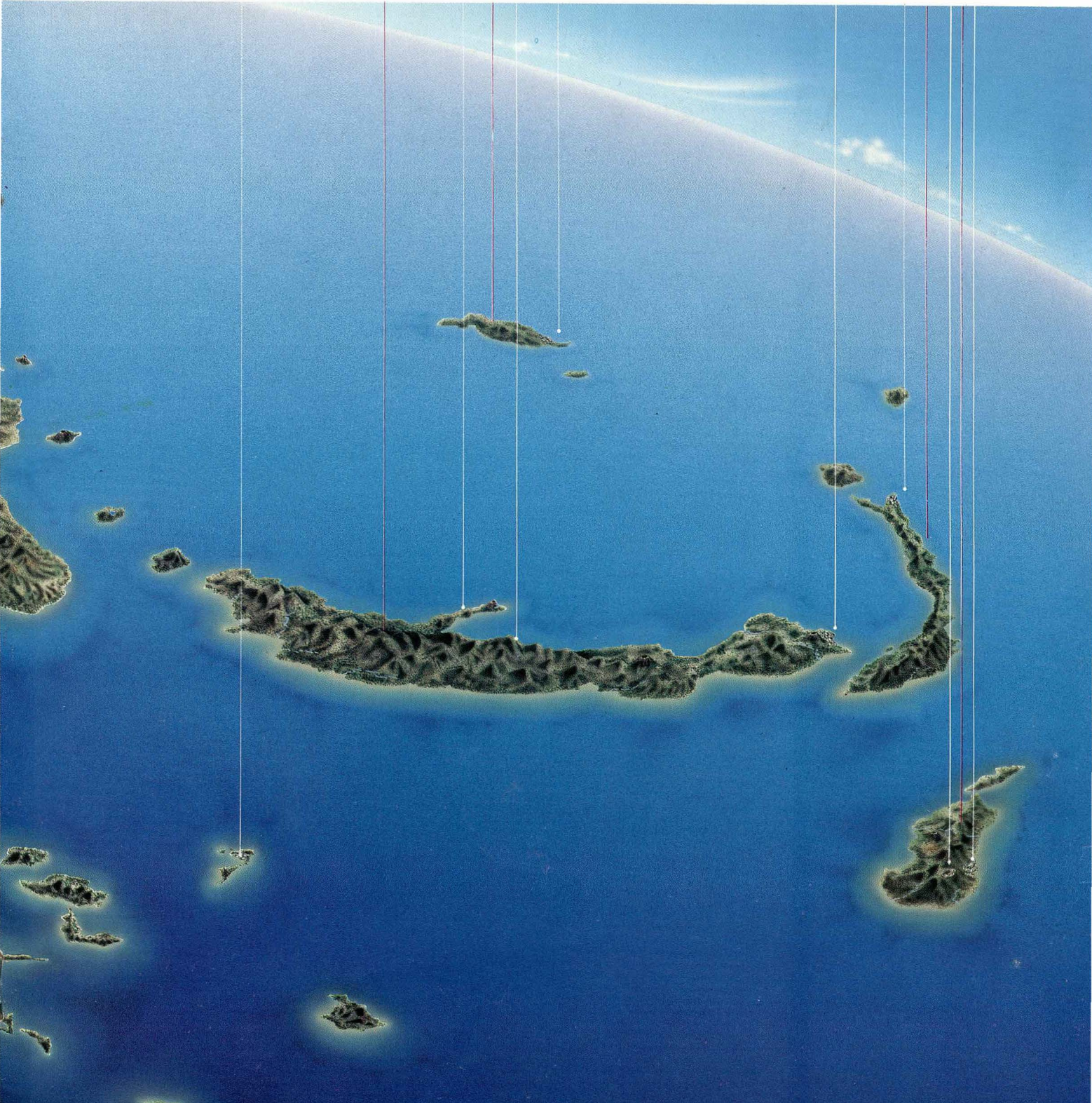
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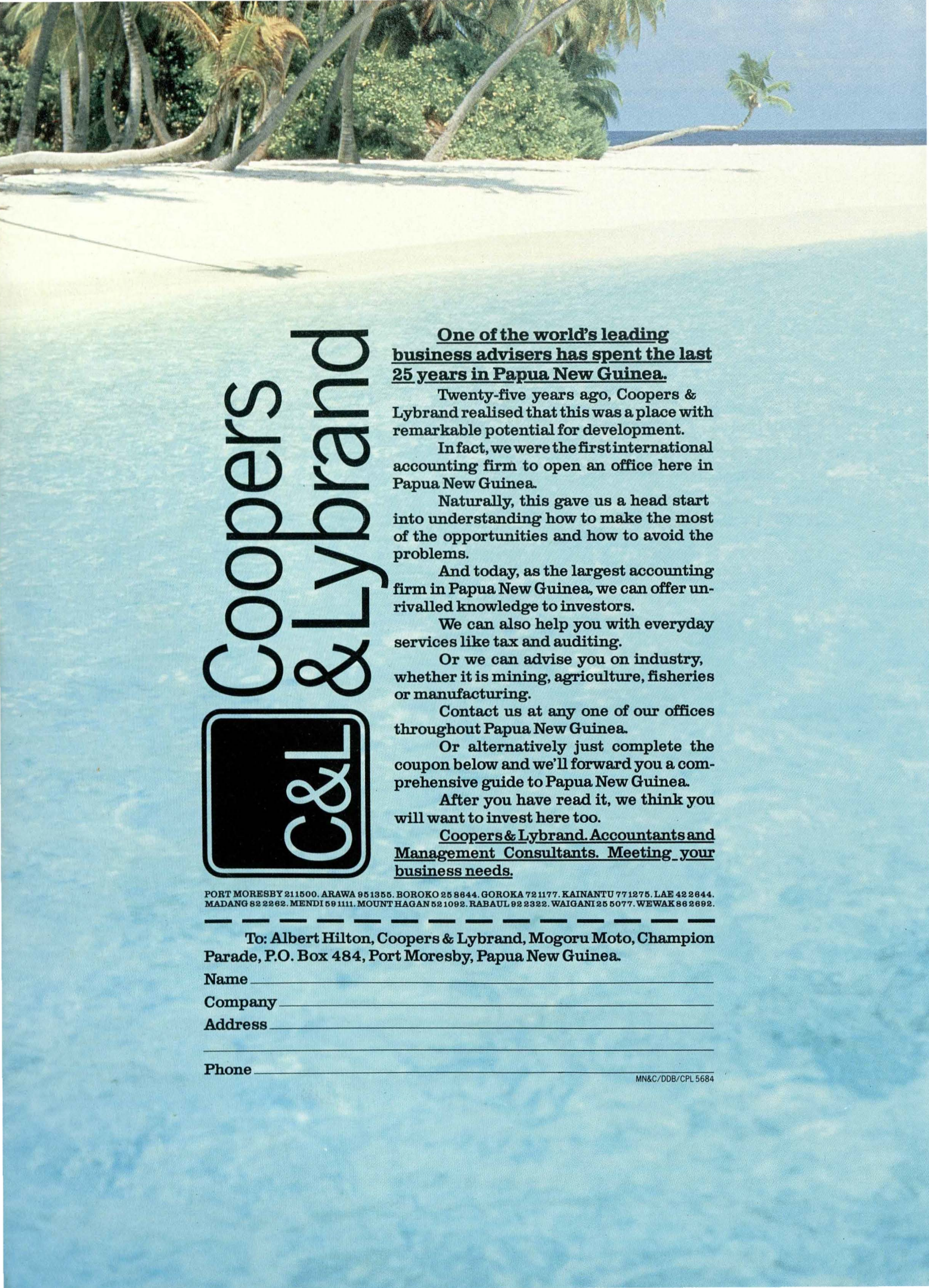
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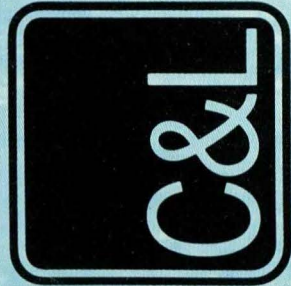
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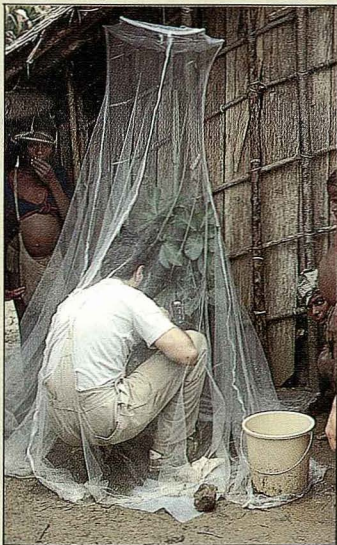
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Story and photographs by
Terry Reardon and
Peter Baverstock

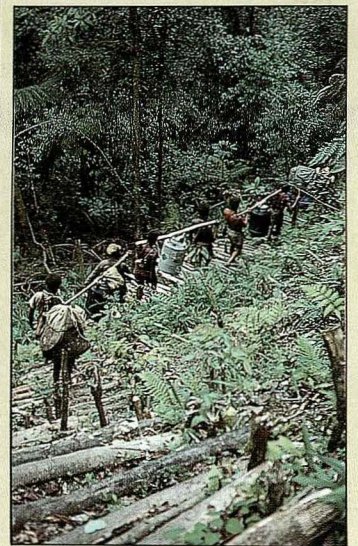
The moss forest at night is eerie. We have set out mist nets to catch bats and are about to search for frogs to make recordings of their calls. The leaf-littered carpet of the forest floor and the enclosing vegetation expose their moisture by glistening in our head torch beams. It is still warm and quite humid. The evening concert of insect and frog calls is in full swing but only after it was introduced by the screeches of a mysterious insect known to the local people as 'yamis'.



This tube-nosed fruit bat is believed to be a new species **centre**. A jungle photo studio **bottom left**. Scientific equipment is carried into the field **bottom right**.

Fireflies dance merrily through the open spaces, luring their companions with green flashing lights.

Perhaps most stunning are the luminescent fungi. Having crept over fallen logs and up tree trunks, they reveal a myriad of shapes against an otherwise pitch black background. It has all the atmosphere of the haunted house at an amusement park but without the threat of frightening ghouls. It is a privilege to be here, a zoological paradise, and one cannot help feel the excitement



In search of

NEW WILDLIFE

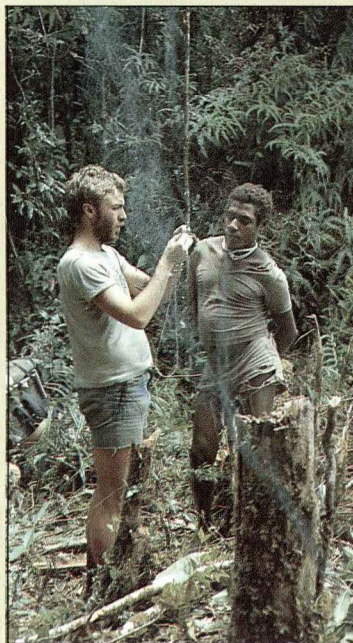


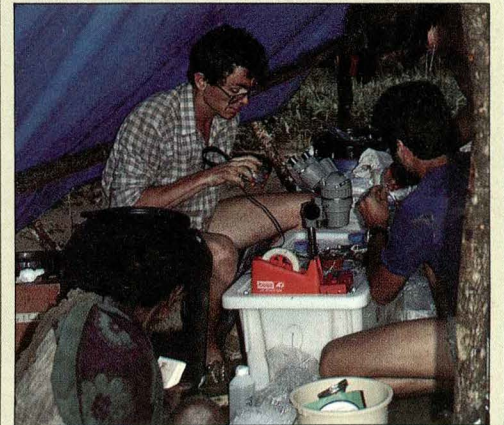
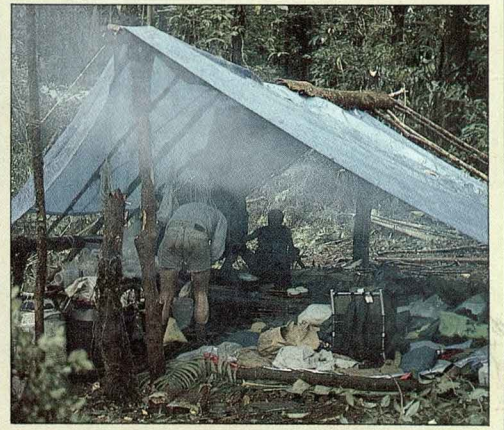
and adventure that must have been experienced by the great explorers of the past.

Our five-member expedition is working near the remote village of Bobole in the Southern Highlands Province. It is the sixth in a series of expeditions to Papua New Guinea since 1981 organised jointly by the South Australian Museum, the Australian Museum, the University of New South Wales and the Wildlife Department of PNG. The aim of these expeditions has been to collect terrestrial vertebrate fauna – marsupials, rodents, bats, birds, frogs and reptiles in order to fully document what species occur in PNG.

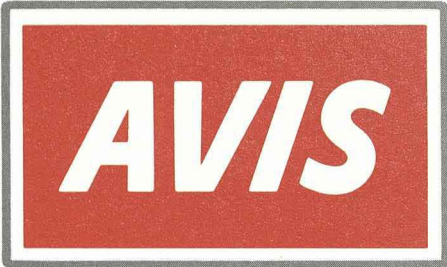
These expeditions, of course,

are not the first to take interest in the exotic and diverse fauna of PNG. The wildlife of PNG has played an important role not only as a food resource but also in ritual and customs of the indigenous peoples since their arrival some 30,000 years ago. Early European interest probably dates back to the 1600s when the Dutch actively traded for bird of paradise feathers and when exotic faunas were sought to furnish private collections. Since that time there has been an increase in the study of natural history for its own sake. History books and scientific journals document the contributions of many individuals and institutions whose sustained efforts, often

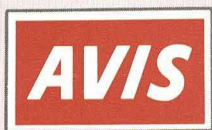




Forest dragon **top, facing page**. Setting mist nets for birds and bats and crossing a stream **bottom, facing page**. A species of cuscus new to science **left**. Tents become field laboratories wherever the expedition stops **above**.



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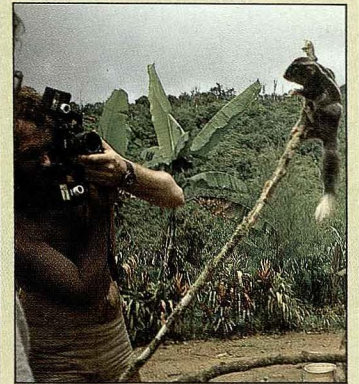
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AVIS IS NATIONWIDE IN PNG



Long-fingered skunk possum **top left**. The bare-backed flying fox **bottom left**. Photographing specimens is important **bottom**.



under most adverse conditions, have led to a working basis for our current series of expeditions.

There are three reasons for believing that more species await discovery in PNG. Firstly, we have at hand modern biochemical techniques and computer analysis that give us a more rigorous method for detecting closely related species. Biochemical techniques are conducted in the

laboratory back in Adelaide, South Australia. Although these techniques require fresh frozen tissue such as liver, heart and kidney, they offer the important advantage that only a few specimens of each type need to be collected for examination. This contrasts with old techniques that required the sacrifice of large numbers of animals. Secondly, our experience using these techniques in Australia have shown that among many

groups of animals, there are multiple species within what used to be considered a single species.

These species have gone undetected in the past because all emphasis was placed on the physical characteristics for classifying species. We now know that different species can look the same but have a very different genetic makeup. Thirdly, the rugged terrain still makes much of PNG accessible

only with great difficulty and so relatively few areas have been comprehensively surveyed for wildlife.

Our reasoning has not been unfounded. Examination of specimens from the first five expeditions has recently begun and already many new species of marsupials, rodents, lizards and frogs have been identified.

The choice for collection localities is governed by the simple need to sample from a wide geographic and altitudinal range. Thus far, highly successful expeditions have been made to Vanimo, Yapsiei and Telefomin in the West Sepik Province, Mt Karimui in the Chimbu Province and the Mount Albert Edward in the Central Province (with further expeditions planned for 1987). To be sure of successful collecting, specific localities must be in areas of relatively unspoiled bush. Such places are often remote and accessible



only by air. Because many animals occur over a narrow altitudinal range it is important that a wide altitudinal range is within easy reach of the base camp, itself usually established at around 1000 metres. The co-operation from local villagers is also essential.

In organising these expeditions to remote areas, major logistic problems are often encountered. Apart from unpredictable weather for flying and the uncertainty of landing-strip conditions, there is always a substantial load of scientific

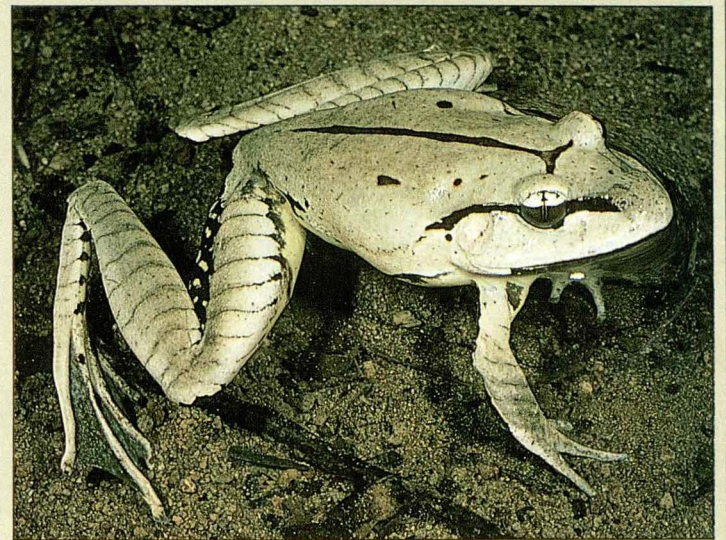
equipment to be managed. The most fragile and awkward to transport (by air or foot) are the liquid nitrogen containers in which the frozen tissue is stored for analysis back in the laboratory. These containers are metal vacuum flasks that hold 30 litres of liquid nitrogen at minus-196 degrees Celsius. They are easily damaged and their contents rapidly lost should they be dropped, a major disaster should this happen after three weeks of collecting and all the tissue were to thaw.

On this expedition, all gear has had to be brought in overland as there is no airstrip at Bobole. It was an arduous 11-hour march by bush track from the nearest road at Malanda. We enlisted the aid of ten Huli men to help carry the equipment and supplies. Although the track was often steep and treacherous under foot, all our gear arrived unscathed and we are left to admire, as always, the stamina and sure-footedness of our assistants.

Bobole is a small village with

perhaps no more than 100 people, they are of the Etolo tribe. We have set up base in the 'haus kiap', a hut set aside in all villages for official visitors.

With the exception of bats and birds, most specimens are collected by the villagers who are zealous in this pursuit. Small lizards and frogs are usually brought in by the children and women but the larger animals are collected by the men. Our day begins at 6 am when the first specimens are brought in. With most of the villagers engaged in collecting, there is a



constant flow of specimens coming in and our examination and processing rarely finishes before 2 am. Two of our team spend the afternoon and night in the bush, setting mist nets to catch birds and bats.

Within the first week we are delighted with the catch. Some species are so rare in museum collections that we are probably the first scientists to see them as live specimens. The Etolo are not only skillful hunters but their knowledge of the individual species of animals is often far better than our own. Since most animals are food resource for these people, and because we are only interested in taking particular tissues and the skins and skulls, we are able to return the remainder of each specimen to the villagers to eat.

The Etolo are endowed with a great sense of humor and despite the language barrier we have formed a happy and

A species of rat new to science, a blue-tailed skink and a green python facing page. Clockwise from top left, Pigmy tree frog, rare subterranean Microhylid frog, newly described species of barred frog, lichen spider, serrated-leg tree frog.

warm relationship with them. Through their enthusiastic support, we are assured of another successful expedition and so contribute to a fuller understanding of the fauna of PNG, an understanding essential to the management and conservation of the nation's natural resources.

It is time to check the mist nets, will we have a new species of bat tonight?

(The authors are scientists at the Evolutionary Biology Unit of the South Australian Museum, Adelaide.)

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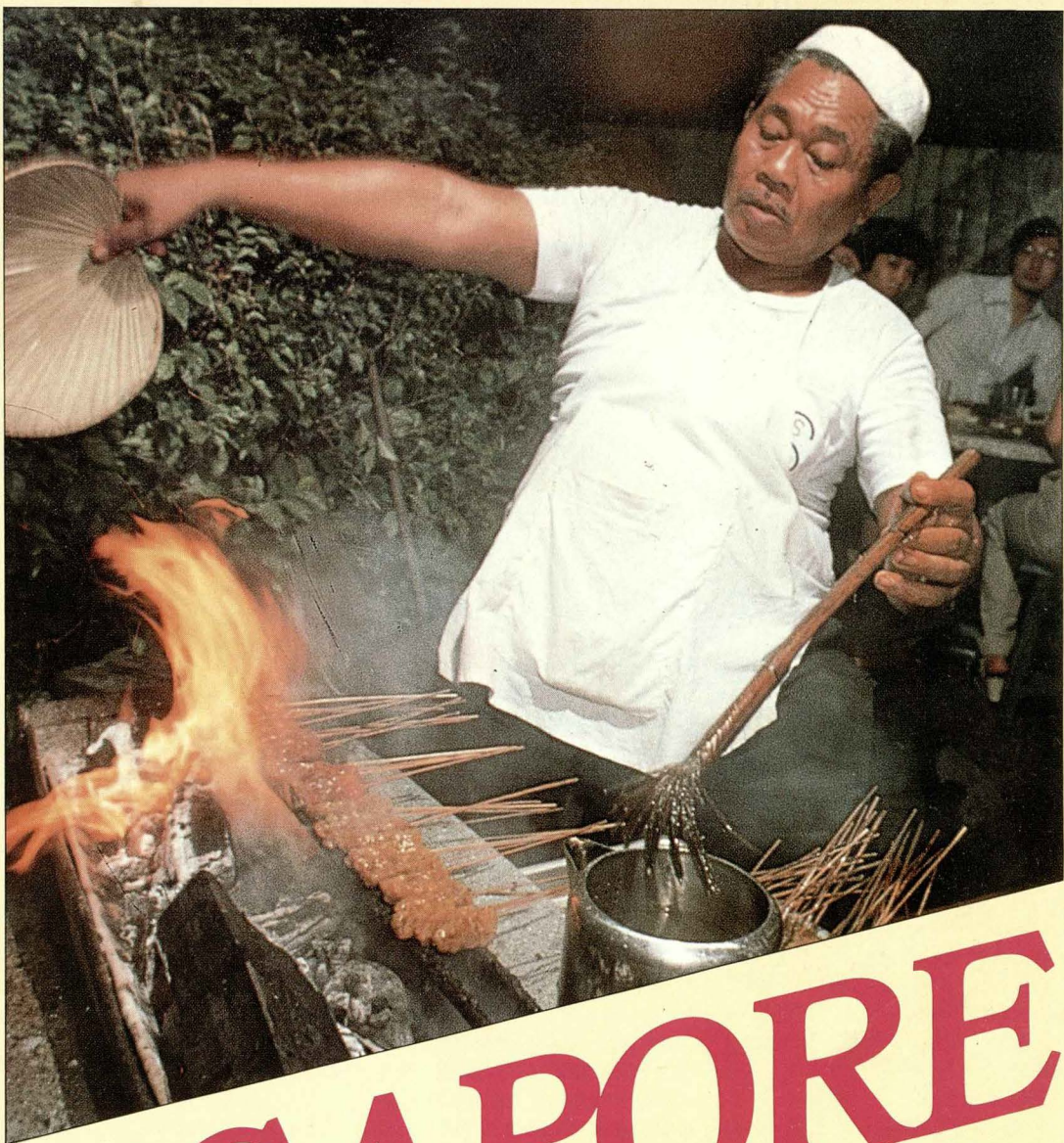


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Prosperity and modernisation are goals for any nation, but for most Asian centres they are a long way in the future. Since its independence in 1963, Singapore has continued to leap ahead in its development, and is now firmly positioned as a vital tourist and commercial centre.

By 1990, Singapore hopes to receive some four million foreign visitors, twice the size of its present population. Yet Singapore can very efficiently cope with this big influx of visitors. It has more first class and luxury hotel rooms than any other city of comparable population – and several more are being built. Today's 18,000-room capacity will increase to 27,000 by 1990. Eight luxury hotels have been completed in the past two years. These include the giant Raffles City twins, the Westin Plaza and the Westin Stamford as well as others, such as the Pan Pacific and Dai Ichi.

Of course, there is a lot more to Singapore than splendid hotels. It is a compact, peaceful and politically stable and increasingly prosperous city-state inhabited by people of multi-cultural background. Numerically the Chinese dominate, making up some 75 per

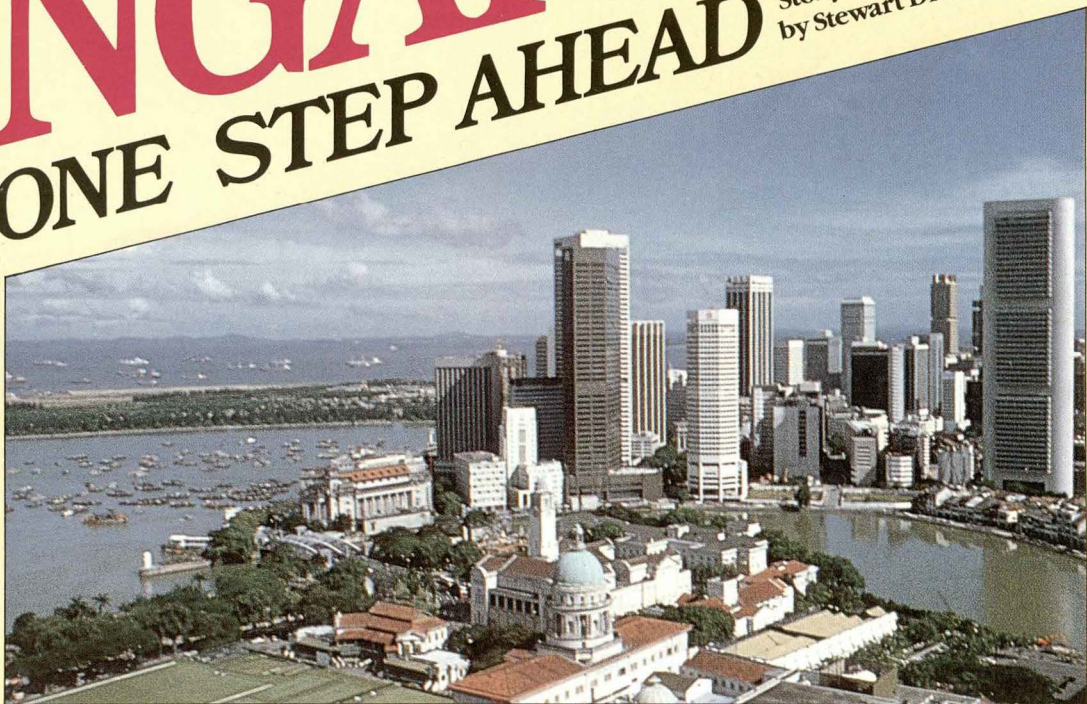


SINGAPORE

ONE STEP AHEAD

Story and photographs
by Stewart Dickson

cent of Singapore's 2.5 million people, followed by much smaller Malay, Indian, Pakistani and European minorities who, however, enjoy equal rights. English is the language of administration and business and often the common denominator between the races.



Fast food Singapore-style from a street vendor **top**. The city's ever-changing skyline **bottom**.



Singapore's appeal as a tourist destination has remained intact despite massive changes during the past 27 years of independent nationhood. The 'Surprising Singapore' and 'Instant Asia' images have survived well even though its character and economy have changed dramatically.

In the immediate post-war years, it was a quiet British colonial outpost, a rundown city liberated from Japanese occupation. It has since blossomed into a world capital of myriad attractions. The glittering trinkets, cheap radios, instant tailoring and grotesque appeal of Bugis Street have all but vanished, giving way to a wide range of sophisticated shopping and entertainment. But not everything old vanishes: the famous Tiger Balm Garden, for instance, is being renovated and improved to maintain its place as one of the city's major attractions.

Duty-free goods are still there, in vastly expanded range; the tailors are still cutting their cloth, but nowadays tend to opt for quality instead of dazzling speed. Shopping is still fun here - rich in choices, colorful in its exponents, rewarding in results. The fashion kings and queens

are all there: Hermes, Gucci, Yves St Laurent, Valentino and others are well represented in boutiques and department stores, less expensively than you could obtain them in Paris, London, Sydney or New York.

Possibly the best buys in Singapore are Asian antiques: ceramics, jade, bronze carvings, scrolls, wood carvings and jewellery. Collectors can still find good pieces from the T'ang Dynasty which ended almost 11 centuries ago. Batiks and excellent Persian carpets are other highly recommended buys.

Dozens of shops stock a big range of electronic and electrical goods, cameras, jewellery, watches and all sorts of sound equipment.

Another popular pastime in Singapore is eating. The Singaporeans eat well and often and the visitor soon follows the pattern, plunging into culinary experiments with gusto. All over Singapore, including near the Orchard Road hotels and also in the business district, numerous open air or undercover street stalls serve quick, inexpensive and very tasty dishes.

Hotels and restaurants also cater for all tastes and budgets. The most popular are the

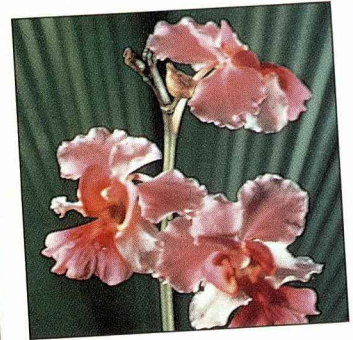
Singapore's rich mixture of cultures and attractions, man-made and natural, draw tourists by the million.

Chinese dishes, with Cantonese food dominant. Try their famous dian xin (dim sum), an assortment of steamed or deep fried tidbits, popular at lunch-time. Other Chinese regional cooking well worth a try are the Sichuan, Chaozhou and Fujian specialities. Malay and Indian dishes are also plentiful. There are many fine small restaurants in Little India, near the US Embassy where meals are eaten off banana leaves, with bare hands.

Every city has certain areas which appeal, more than others, to tourists. In Singapore it has always been Chinatown with its crowded streets, narrow footpaths, strange aromas, simple eating places and marvellous characters.

As Singapore went through some gear changes, progressing from a sleepy colony to a bustling world metropolis, it had to perform some clever balancing feats. The task was how to modernise and wipe out the slums without destroying the original character of Singapore.

A few years ago, town planners began to demolish





Chinatown but the move was halted. A public outcry demanded that the wreckers quit and Chinatown be restored rather than replaced. Tourist authorities, at the vanguard of this crusade, were delighted and have drawn up plans for a revamped Chinatown. They want to make the buildings pleasant and liveable for the people, not just decaying shells for tourist voyeurs – and they also want to bring back the area's once vibrant, vital and colorful street life.

Singapore's many attractions appeal to all tastes but visitors who only spend a short time in Singapore should plan their days carefully. A welcome refuge from the city bustle is Sentosa, a nearby island resort with many places of interest and recreational facilities. These include the 19th Century British built Fort Siloso, a corallarium with some 2,500 seashells, a spectacular musical fountain, two splendid golf courses and water sport facilities.

Sentosa is reached by ferries from the World Trade Centre or by cable car from the top of Mt Faber. Transport on Sentosa is provided by a monorail that runs along a six-kilometre track, passing the sea, the forest and various attractions on the island.

Singapore's Zoo is world famous, with many of the 1600 animals living in an open air environment. That famed orangutan, Ah Meng, is one of

the established stars of the Zoo, eating breakfast with visitors while her eldest daughter, Medan, also stars in a show.

Jurong Bird Park is a huge, landscaped garden, home to more than 3,500 birds from all over the world, with two special bird shows every day. The Botanic Gardens, Fort Canning Park, the Chinese Garden, the Japanese Garden, and the Kranji War Memorial are other places of interest.

Those who are interested in history could go and see the original landing site of Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore. Then they should visit the elegant old Raffles Hotel on Beach Road, sip a famous Singapore Sling in the Palm Court and drink in the atmosphere which has accumulated there since 1886.

The Supreme Court and the City Hall are two splendid old buildings at St Andrews Road, near the Singapore Cricket Club and a vast expanse of open green space where, even in the heat of the day, all types of sport are played.

Singapore's nightlife has a style of its own. There are many restaurants with floorshows, nightclubs, discos and piano bars to keep the restless night owls on the go.

But no matter how much luxury a hotel offers, most people still want to leave it and explore a city. This is fun in Singapore, whether you do it on foot, in a taxi or a trishaw. The new Singapore Explorer unlimited travel bus pass is increasing in popularity catering for locals as well as the curious tourists, Singapore authorities recently reopened the once popular night bazaars, the 'Pasar Malam'. They are open five evenings a week at the Singapore Handicraft Centre and draw very good crowds. The night bazaar sells brassware, souvenir items, batik products and handicraft items. Shows and performances add to its attraction as well as the nearby hawkers' stalls, the Rasa Singapura.

Even tourists in the most relaxed mood cannot help

Singapore's markets offer fresh produce, new fashions and antiques.





Hotel accommodation ranges from remnants of the colonial past to the ultra-modern, and a friendly greeting is guaranteed.

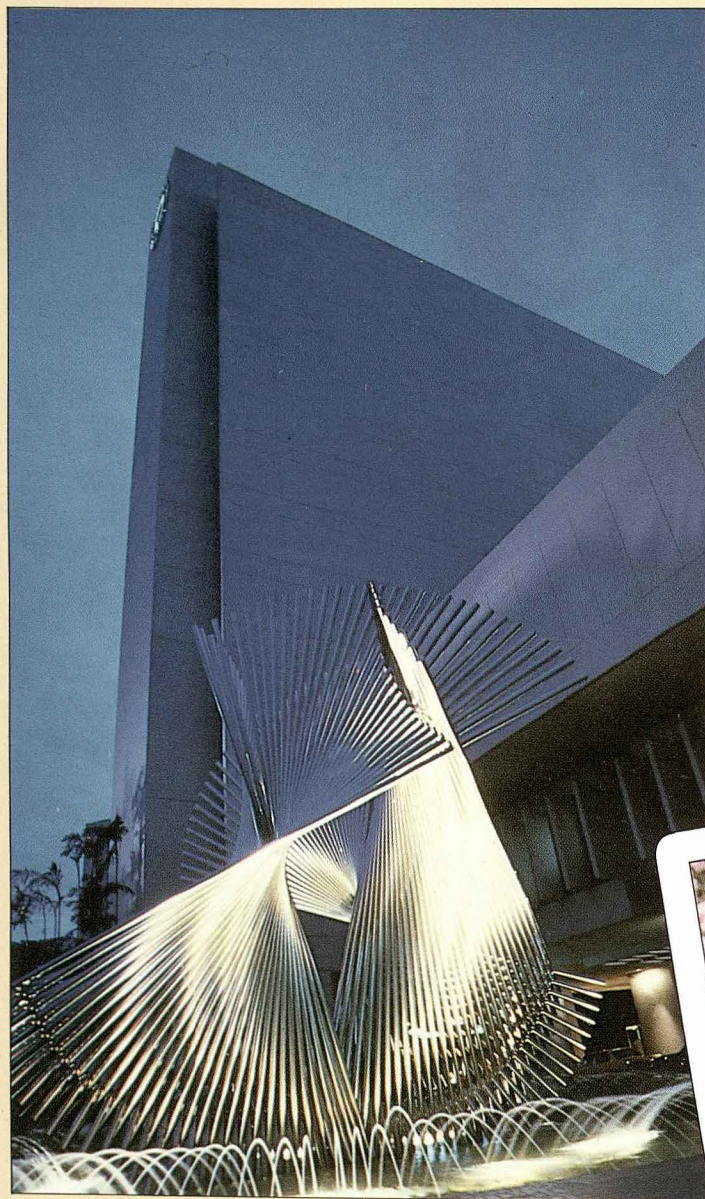
noticing that Singapore also has a very sober face. It is a city with a lot of pride and ambition. Trailing only Japan in Asia in per capita wealth, Singapore is now a vital centre of international finance and banking. It has the world's busiest port, having recently overtaken Rotterdam. Changi is the world's most modern international airport - already being enlarged to meet 21st Century needs. More than 500 flights leave Changi every week for all parts of the world.

All visitors to Singapore take back home with them the impression that construction work is in progress around the clock. New steel and glass



wonders are shooting up everywhere, constantly changing the skyline. Meanwhile, down in Singapore's modern labyrinths, a new mass rapid transit system is being built which will ease the city's traffic problems. Over the 47 kilometre system, there will be 34 stations.

Singapore is keen to stay one step ahead of world trends and demands. It is an unforgettable place and only those regret their visit there who have failed to stay long enough.



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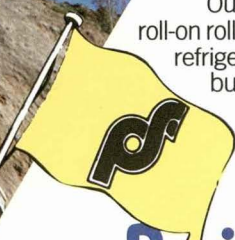
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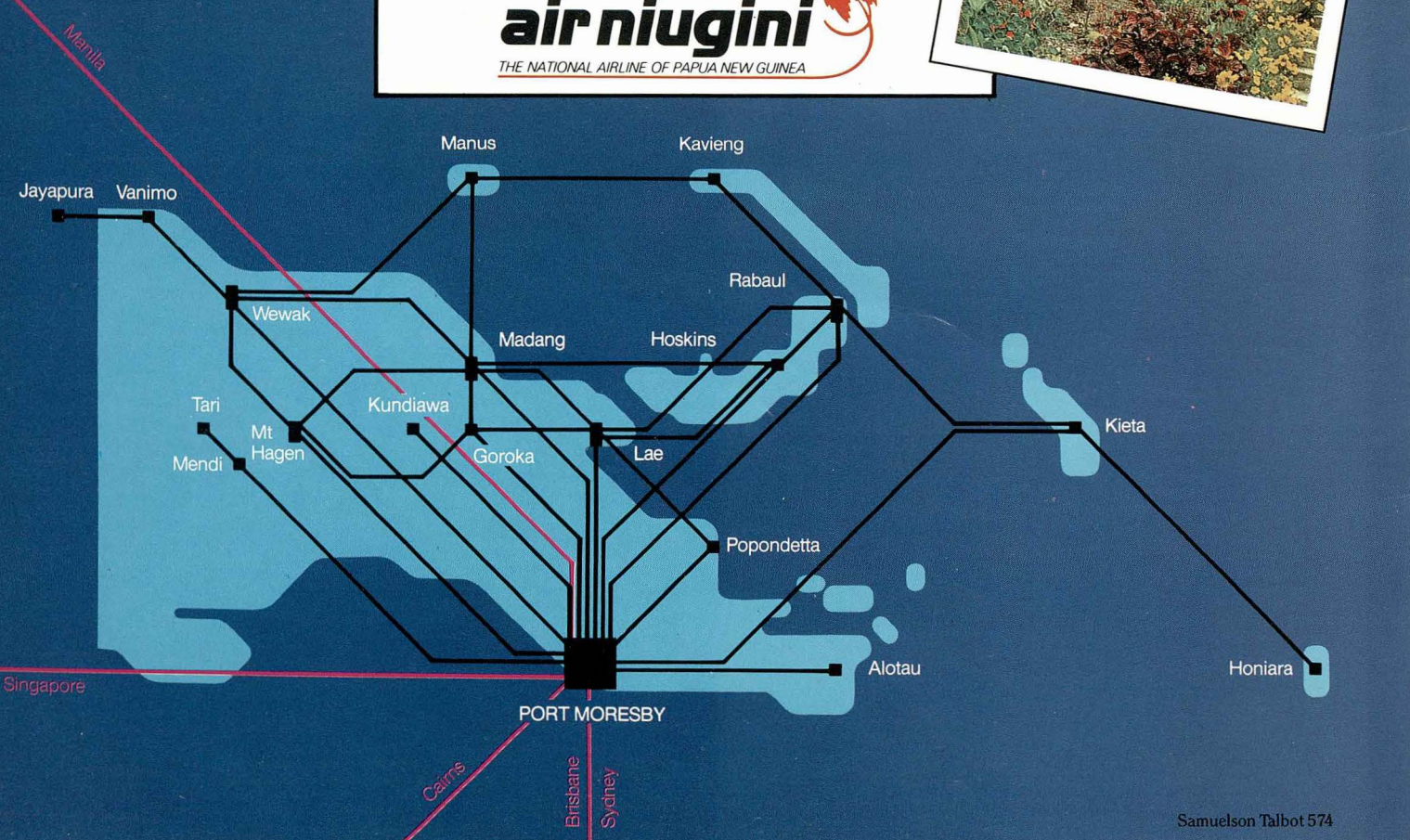
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We were heading towards the Schouten Islands, a string of six sparsely populated pieces of land threaded along the East Sepik coast. The islands begin with Vekeo about 60 kilometres south of Wewak through to Koil, Wei, Blup Blup, Kadovar and finally to Bam just above the mouth of the Sepik.

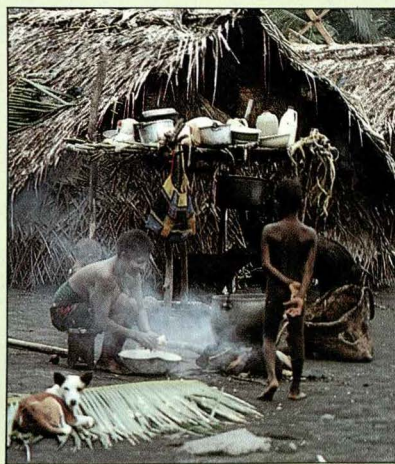
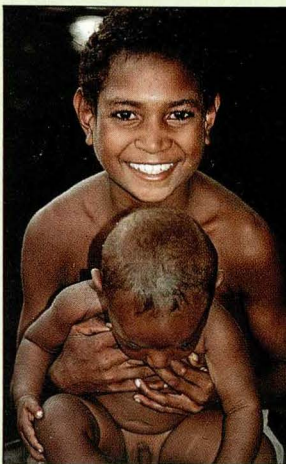
It was Bam that we were to visit first and the boat drew closer in the early hours of a grey and stormy morning. Like all the islands of this group with the exception of Koil, its topography is steep and mountainous. It is a volcanic island and rises sharply from the ocean to its crater. The only signs of the village were the suggestions of roofs through a thick web of palms wrapped about the circumference of the island and stretching halfway up its slopes. At a midway point the palms gave way to a blanket of lower and denser vegetation.

Much of the base of the islands is dominated by precipitous rock and boulders and are unsuitable for any kind of growth or development. Several of these large black boulders marked the entrance to the village and within minutes of arrival these were covered with moving patches of colored fabric as people ran to greet the boat. Outriggers were dragged from the rocky shore and hurled into the swell of the water, dark in its reflection of the overhead storm.

The Schouten Isles canoes are a full, round-bellied shape unlike the trench-like construction of those on the Sepik. Their sides curve into a narrow slit at the top and the only way of using them is to sit on the ridge provided by the edges of this while lower legs are lodged within the belly. These canoes are often beautifully carved with elaborate designs extending from the bow of the boat. The figureheads are said to represent the heads of bush animals. Alternatively a symmetrical linear design is used which extends about a foot along either side of the hull. The details and color are



A welcoming party greets visitors on the rocky shore of Bam **left**. Friendly faces and a peaceful village scene **bottom**.



reminiscent of the complexity of Indonesian carving. Sissano Lagoon is the only area of PNG in which this kind of decoration is carried out in even greater detail.

The canoes moved out to collect the people, sacks of rice, boxes of tinned fish and branches of boui from the Tabibuga, the passenger ship on which we were travelling. The transferred cargo balanced precariously in the outriggers, with each swell the hulls lunged into the troughs of the waves. Slowly all was transported back to shore until the boxes and sacks began to appear through the gaps in the vegetation, moving at a steady rhythmic pace, up and down on the heads of the villagers. Food supplies supplement the limited diet provided by subsistence living. On almost all these islands the terrain means that there is limited land available for gardening and that which is usable often has to be terraced to avoid erosion during the wet season.

Potential crops are limited. Taro, kaukau, bananas and kumu or greens form the bulk of the cultivated diet and fish are plentiful.

Koil Island is the exception to the topography rule and stretches long and flat, inlaid with deep blue lagoons. Its shores are outlined with long stretches of white sand and fringes of palms. The population of this island is based in five villages which are now divided through their religious affiliations, Roman Catholic or Seventh Day Adventist. Tradition and custom change their structure to allow for celebration of their newfound beliefs.

Singsings and feasts have been replaced by a weekly mumu. This is a form of cooking which involves wrapping of the food, in this case bananas, taro, kaukau and fish in banana leaves. The leaves have already been softened by holding them

SCHOUTEN ISLANDS

Story and photographs by Liz Thompson

above the heat of the fire and their spines removed. The spines are laid in a star on the ground and used as a base on which the layers of banana leaves are built up one across another until there are no gaps and into the middle of this is put the food over which is poured coconut milk. These are then tied into light bundles and the fire prepared. Sticks of wood are laid symmetrically in rows until a vague frame has been constructed.

On the top of this the villagers place medium size rocks. The wood is set alight and as it burns it heats the rocks. These are ready only when they turn white. The rocks are then cleared and the food bundles placed in hollows in the ground and covered with the remaining leaves. The heated rocks are built around the packages until they are completely submerged and are left overnight.

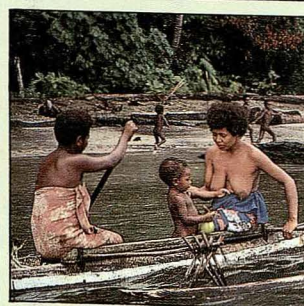
The people of Koil have a richer production of food due to its flatness providing available land for gardening. They are however, economically in much the same position as the rest at the chain. For all the islands, transport to and from the mainland is irregular and unreliable. Although this factor probably contributes to the maintenance of tranquillity and beauty they so obviously possess it also serves to aggravate their isolation and limits the people's ability to trade. This factor has discouraged the sale of crops, fish or crafts at the Wewak markets which the Sepik people and many others rely on as a source of income. Due to the land and transport problems the most practical crop that can be cultivated and proves to be the mainstay of the islanders' economy is that of copra. The Schouten Islanders have become almost totally reliant on its production and sale. The hardy nature of the crop means that erratic transport does not present a problem, it is easily stored and preserved, and the coconut palms are grown in abundance in otherwise infertile land.



Schouten Island girl in reflective mood left and clockwise a carved canoe prow, a narrow-hulled outrigger canoe, preparing copra, vegetables for the Wewak market.

Processing is simple and inexpensive. The white meat of the coconut is cut from the matured nut, not the young, soft, green husked ones which provide the drink known as kulau. This flesh is then set on a trellis of bamboo either to dry in the sun or to be baked above slow burning fires. This drying process usually lasts several weeks and the pieces are then soaked in salt water. When thoroughly cleaned they are approximately half their original size and turning copper in color. These pieces are sorted and placed in hessian sacks which are suspended from bamboo frames and further broken up by a repeated pounding with a long wooden pole. Once the copra is adequately broken the bags are sewn and await the next available transportation. It has been said that PNG oil is one of the best in the world and consequently there has always been a demand for it.

Recently however the copra prices began to drop as in 1985 when the increased availability of alternative oils with palm oil, soya bean, rape seed and olive oil created a glut in the market. The Government reports that in 1984 exports of copra were as much as K91 million while in 1985 they fell to K57.78 million in addition to which the amount exported increased by 10 per cent. It also reports that in the space of 24 months the price fell from an all time high of K720 per tonne to K36 per tonne. However the World Bank projects a recovery of copra prices which will go towards re-establishing an untouched and unspoiled island existence of coconuts, canoes and a contented people.



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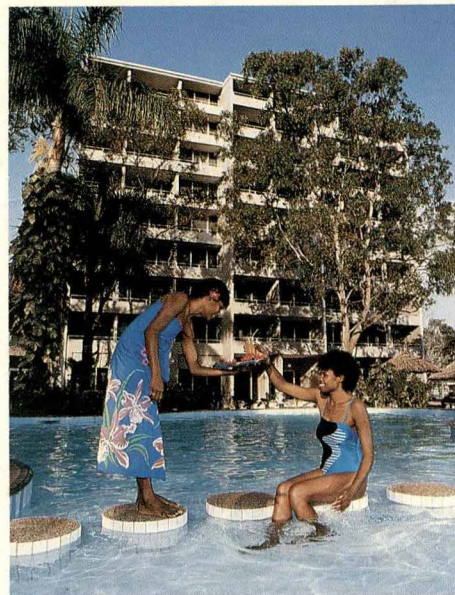
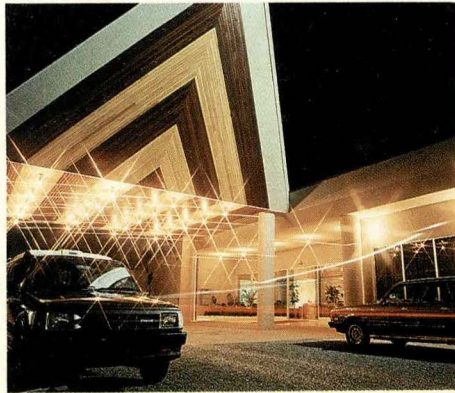
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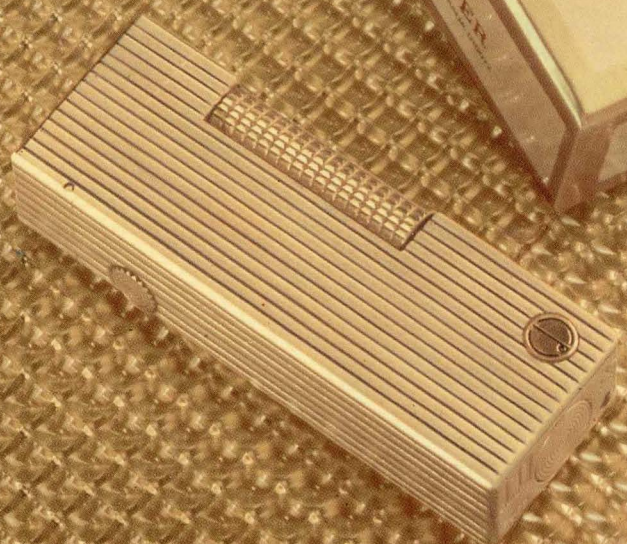
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