

paradise

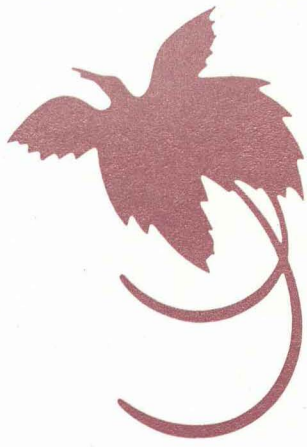
in flight with Air Nugini



Take this copy with you.
AMELIA EARHART
REMEMBERED

Cacharel

Anais Anais



paradise

No 63 July - August

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

Welcome aboard,

In this issue Bruce Hoy, with the assistance of historical photographs from the Lockheed Corporation, has detailed the aviation history of the American aviatrix Amelia Earhart who disappeared exactly 50 years ago this month after departing from Lae on her proposed around-the-world flight.

The secret spirit dance of the Tubuan from the New Ireland Province contrasts greatly with a retired jeweller's 15-year interest in developing a tidal gauge to assist world research of sea level changes.

Enjoy the Bird of Paradise Service.

Dieter Seefeld
General Manager

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Cover: Amelia Earhart, 1897-1937.



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General Manager

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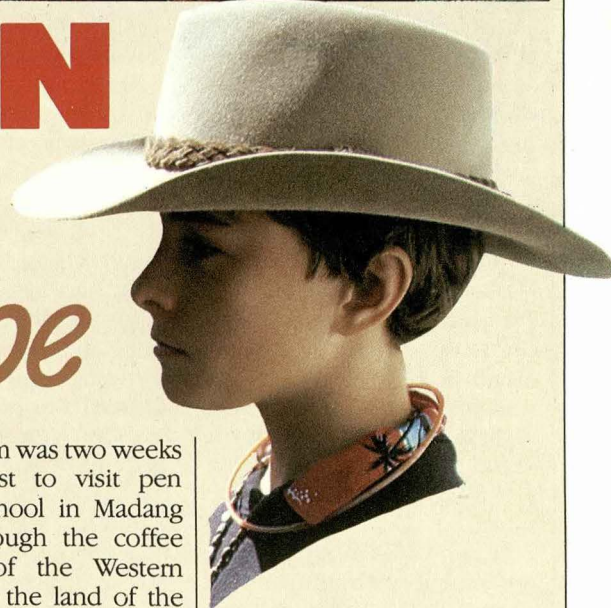




LESSON

— of a —

Lifetime



You could see it on their faces, feel the excitement as the Air Nuigini Dash 7 took off from Jacksons Airport, rising out of Port Moresby, out over the central mountain range, heading north-east to the coastal town of Madang.

The 20 small boys were on the adventure of their lives.

Before them was two weeks of travel, first to visit pen friends at school in Madang then up through the coffee plantations of the Western Highlands to the land of the wigmen, to the isolated Huli people of the Tari basin.

These were lucky children. They had travelled before, some to Fiji, some to Europe,

A welcoming singsing at Madang for the young Australians; and contrasting styles in headgear for host and visitor at Tari.

Story by Dr John D'arcy Photographs Darren Bruce



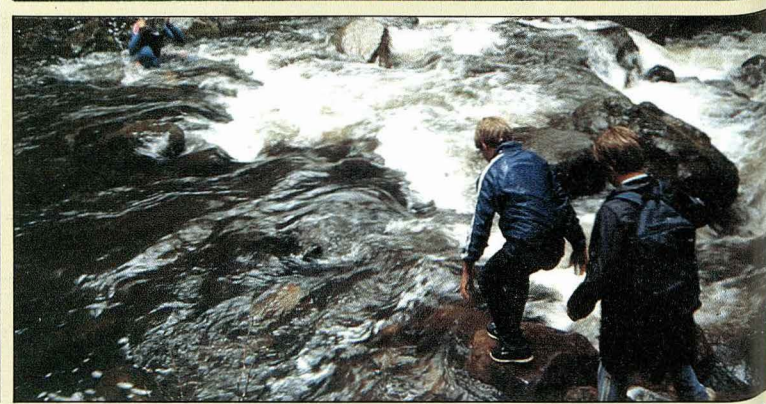
some to the USA. But this was different. There is no other place on earth like Papua New Guinea.

Australians are slow to touch. It's not their way. The boys' greeting at the school in Madang changed all that. Two, maybe three, thousand children; everyone had the afternoon off, everyone wanted to shake hands. It was a great excuse for a party, a traditional dance or singing, a welcome they will never forget.

Lunch was chaos with people everywhere. Plates of kaukau, sweet potato, and rice garnished with all sorts of green vegetables soaked in coconut milk. Parents from the islands offered food typical of their place, those from the Highlands, pig wrapped in banana leaf and cooked on hot stones.

Along the coastal strip, north west towards Alexishaven and a kilometre off the main road, the boys met with a group of Australian Army engineers. It was a chance encounter. The group was told this part of the coast had been the scene of fierce combat during World War II. The soldiers cut through the jungle and showed the boys a Japanese bomber, preserved in the undergrowth. A relic from a long time ago. Nonetheless, a reminder this peaceful spot had seen bitter days. There was a strange silence here. Everyone was affected by it.

Now, off again in the Air Nuigini Dash 7, over the Ramu Valley with its river spidering out below. Dust was rising from the tractors harvesting sugar. Because the wind blows hard through the Ramu the red dust seemed to reach the low





cloud forming to the east over the winding Kasam Pass, the gateway to the Highlands. We climbed up through 15,000 feet (4,560 metres) before descending to the Wahgi Valley. The cabin attendant pushed open the door and said, "Api noon! Welcome to the Highlands". The cool air was refreshing after the lowland humidity.

At first, the Highlands seemed different. The township of Mt Hagen 40 years ago was disputed land. Here were fierce looking men, warriors from the Enga or the Jimi Valley. They walked through the town in their hats of cuscus fur, perhaps a suit coat, and 'ass grass', leaves instead of trousers, down over their buttocks.

The boys were unsure, at first. Little did they know it was banking day and these "fear-

some tribesmen" were down from the valleys to do the banking, sell some coffee beans, perhaps buy a new truck for the village or change a video tape for the latest Kung Fu movie.

Stern-looking faces broke wide with smiles as young boys overcame their fear. Smiles that revealed a mouth full of teeth red from the betel nut that is constantly chewed for its mildly stimulating effect.

PNG is a complex place. Mountain ranges that divide the people geographically make them unique in other ways. There is suspicion at first. People, from valleys only recently connected to the main road south, have many new things to get used to and a bus-load of freckle-faced schoolboys is no exception.

Children play a special part

in this society so our boys were special guests. Before too long they were tasting tomatoes in the market place and chewing sugar cane offered by the women in the small village, not far from the gates of the hotel.

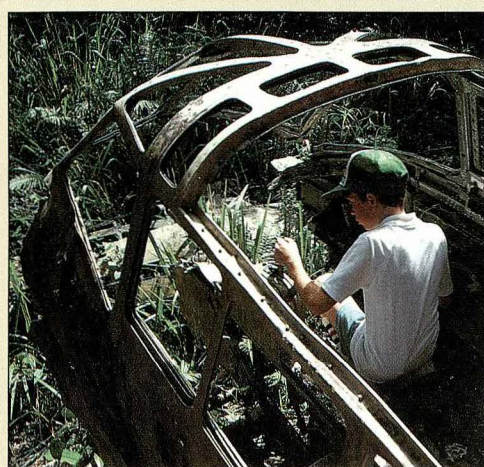
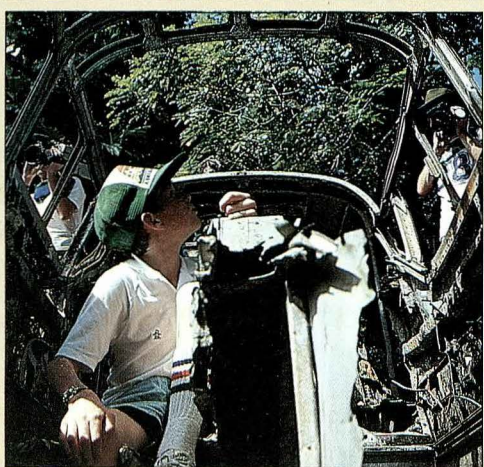
Tari basin, Southern Highlands Province. We were in Papua now, almost in the centre of the country, the land of the wigmen, warrior farmers who avoid villages and stick together in family groups farming the land from plots protected by trenches and sharpened sticks. There is not much need for precautions like that now, it is peaceful and Saturday is market day.

The warriors, emulating the fabulous birds of paradise that are so common here, were dressed up to the nines. Full wigs of human hair interwoven with meadow daisies

Top, from left Pork prepared PNG-style gets a close examination; jungle walk Australian-style, with a brightly-colored umbrella; singing finery Huli-style. **centre top** Another scene from the Madang welcome. **below** Forging a mountain stream.



Top and centre
World War II history lesson from wreckage of a Japanese bomber which crashed in the jungle.

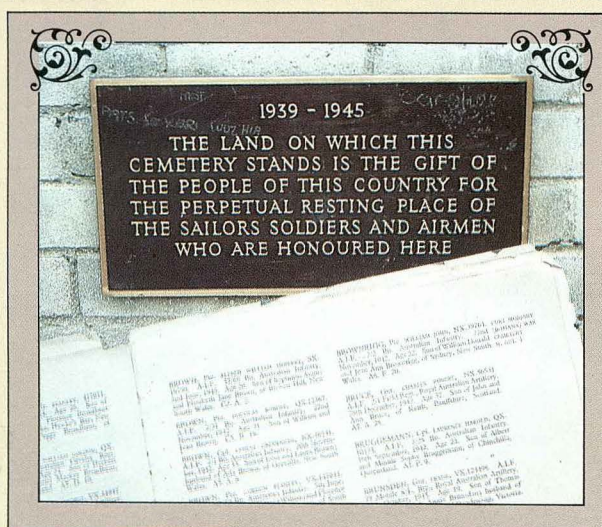


Below More poignant reminders of the war at a cemetery for those who fell in the conflict.

and flashes of red, blue and yellow feathers all bound with cuscus fur. Black skin glistening, the young men parade with their bows and arrows.

Pigs and cattle, possums for sale, feathers, rice and tinned fish. Over in the corner is a shed where young men meet to play cards or billiards on a table that has seen better days. The place is packed.

But too soon it was time to go. We looked out over the Tari basin from the comfort of Ambua Lodge. This morning, the mist was clearing early,



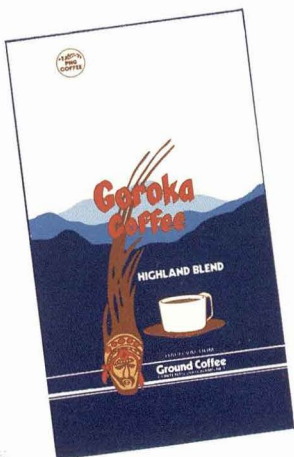
burning off quickly and it was going to be hot. The men took off their jackets and rolled the first smoke of the day. Behind us, a kilometre into the rain forest, a waterfall poured the previous nights rain down, into the river. Eventually, it would drain out into the Gulf of Papua, a journey of hundreds of kilometres.

Visit this part of the world and nobody stays the same. The boys felt it, and they talked about it. It was now part of their lives, a learning experience that will last them their lifetimes.

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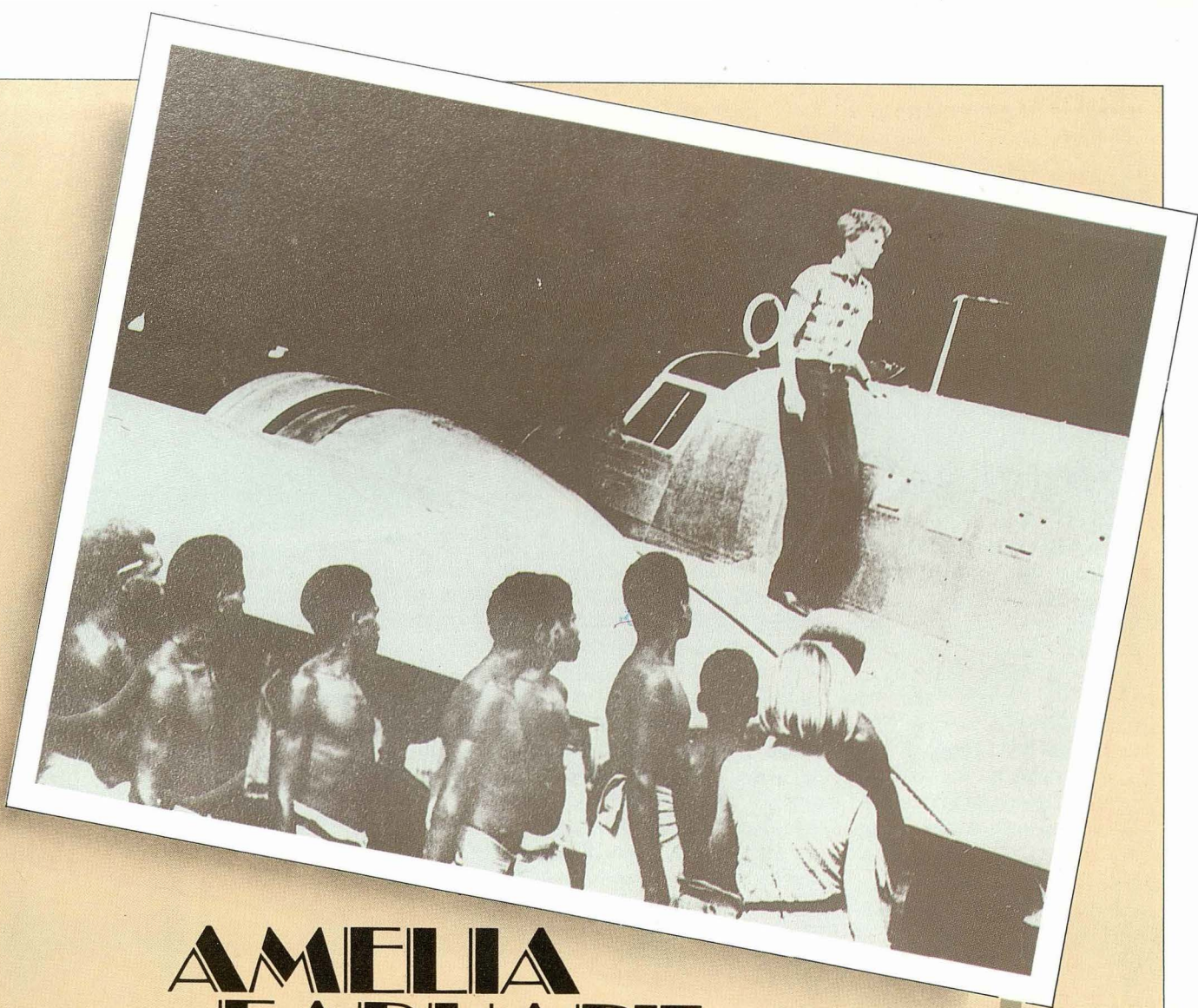


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AMELIA EARHART

Remembered

Story by Bruce D. Hoy

Shortly after ten o'clock on the morning of 2 July 1937, a silver, twin-engine Lockheed Electra slowly taxied away from the Guinea Airways hangar at Lae, New Guinea and rumbled out to the western end of the runway, turned, and faced into the wind. With both engines bellowing the Electra sluggishly moved off gathering speed until, just short of the seaward end, it lumbered off.

The aircraft dropped several feet and almost clipped the water. Gradually it climbed out over the sparkling Huon Gulf, its destination Howland Island, a mere speck of land 3.2 kilometres (two miles) long and less than 1.6 kilometres (one mile) wide, 4,113 kilometres (2,556 miles) out in the Pacific Ocean.

In its 10 years of existence Lae Aerodrome had witnessed many aircraft take off, most



A last photograph of Amelia Earhart taken hours before she left Lae on the ill-fated flight.

“At the age of 10 I saw my first airplane. It was sitting in a slightly enclosed area at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines. It was a thing of rusty wire and wood and looked not at all interesting.”

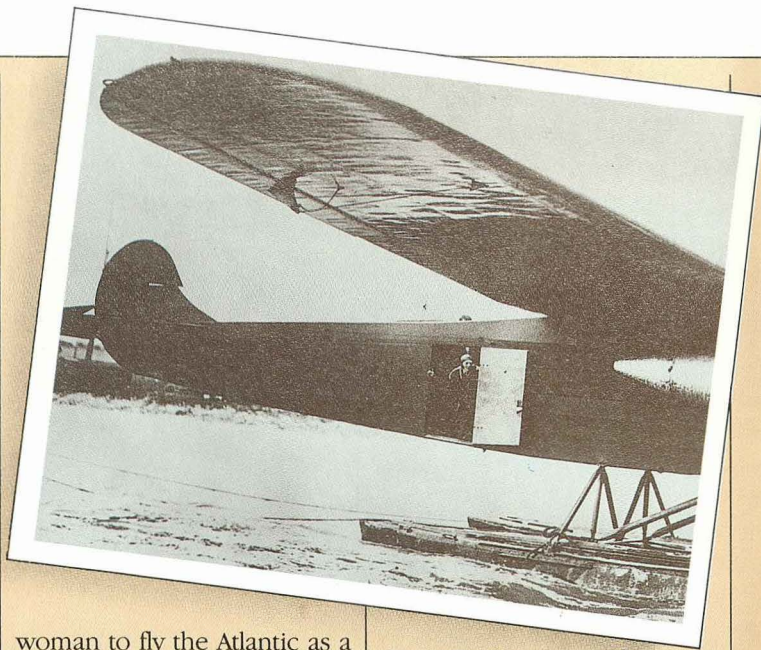
Amelia Earhart

bound for the gold fields in the Wau and Bulolo Valleys. What made this departure an exception was its pilot and final destination. At the controls was the famous American aviatrix, Amelia Earhart, and sitting towards the rear of the aircraft behind a large fuel tank that almost filled the cabin was her navigator, Fred Noonan. They were on the third-last and most difficult leg of an equatorial round-the-world flight that had its beginnings in Oakland, California, on 17 March 1937.

Soon, to the small crowd of officials and well-wishers, the Electra faded into the blue eastern sky and they went about their normal business.

One observer from a news-wire service cabled the news of the departure to the overseas press. The main topic of conversation within the small community of Lae the previous two days was no doubt of Amelia and her flight, pushing the volcanic eruptions in Rabaul the previous May into the background. Within 24 hours the Lockheed and its crew became world headlines which signalled the birth of a legend.

Amelia Mary Earhart was born in Atchison, Kansas, on 24 July 1897, the first of two daughters to Edwin Stanton and Amy (Otis) Earhart. She was bitten by the aviation bug at an early age when aviation was in its infancy. Her first flight of 30 minutes over Los Angeles, California, in 1919 caught her imagination, and in her words, “knew I had to fly myself”. The next year after 10 hours of instruction by pioneer aviatrix Neta Snook, Amelia made her first solo. In 1928, the year after Charles Lindberg made the first solo crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, Amelia became the first

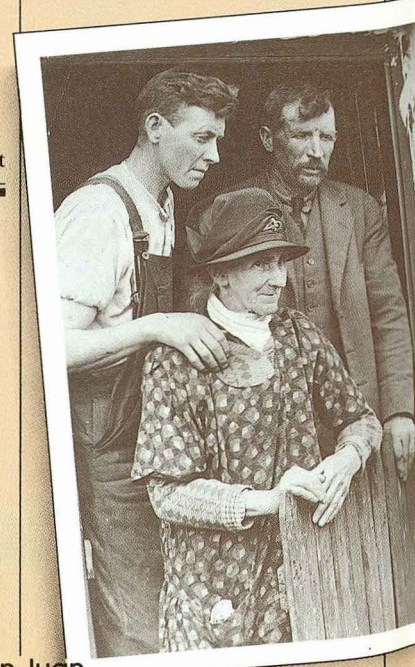


woman to fly the Atlantic as a passenger in a Fokker Tri-Motor named “Friendship”, flown by Wilmer Stultz and

Amelia Earhart at the door of “Friendship”. In 1928, as a passenger in this aircraft, she became the first woman to fly the Atlantic Ocean.

“Frank Hawks, a barnstorming pilot on the west coast, took me on my first flight. As soon as we left the ground, I knew I myself had to fly.”

Amelia Earhart



Amelia Earhart in 1932 became the first woman to fly the Atlantic solo, landing on an Irish farm. Here, the day after, she reads congratulatory messages at the farmhouse.



Louis Gordon. Ocean crossings in those days were fraught with danger. The previous August, the Dole Race from Oakland to Honolulu was a disaster with three entrants crashing before reaching the starting point and five aviators, including a woman passenger Mildred Doran, being lost at sea during the race.

In August 1929, Miss Earhart entered the first Women's Air Derby in which she finished unspectacularly. Following the contest the entrants decided to form an association of lady pilots "dedicated to assist women in aeronautical research, air racing events, the acquisition of aerial experience, and the administration of aid through aerial means in times of emergency". With an initial charter membership of

99 women the organisation became known as the Ninety-Nines Inc. It exists today with a membership of more than 6,500 women world-wide. Amelia Earhart was a prime mover for this organisation and was its president until 1933.

In November 1929, in a borrowed Lockheed Vega, Amelia established a new speed record over a closed circuit course of 296.39 kmh (184.17 mph). The following year she purchased her first Vega which was a high-wing, high-performance, single-engine aircraft painted in a distinctive color scheme of bright red with gold trimming.

On 7 February 1931, Amelia married George P. Putnam, Jr, of the well-known G.P. Putnam's Sons publishing company. They had no children although George had two sons from a previous marriage.

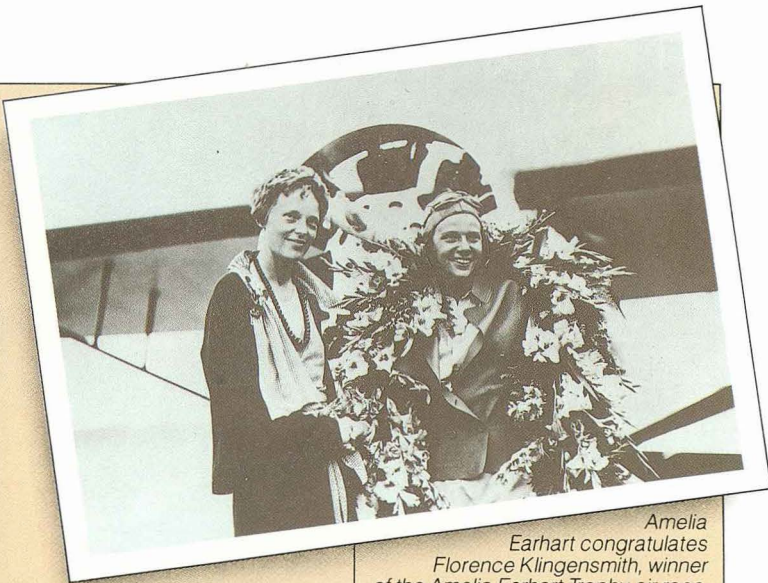
Amelia toured the United States in an autogiro that same year, in the course of which she established an altitude record for rotor-equipped aircraft of 5,598 metres (18,415

feet) over Willow Grove, Pennsylvania.

In 1932, Amelia, piloting a Lockheed Vega, became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic.

On 12 January 1935, she became the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California and three months later on 19 April she became the first person to fly solo from Los Angeles to Mexico City. Then on 8 May she made the first non-stop flight from Mexico City to Newark, then the airport for metropolitan New York.

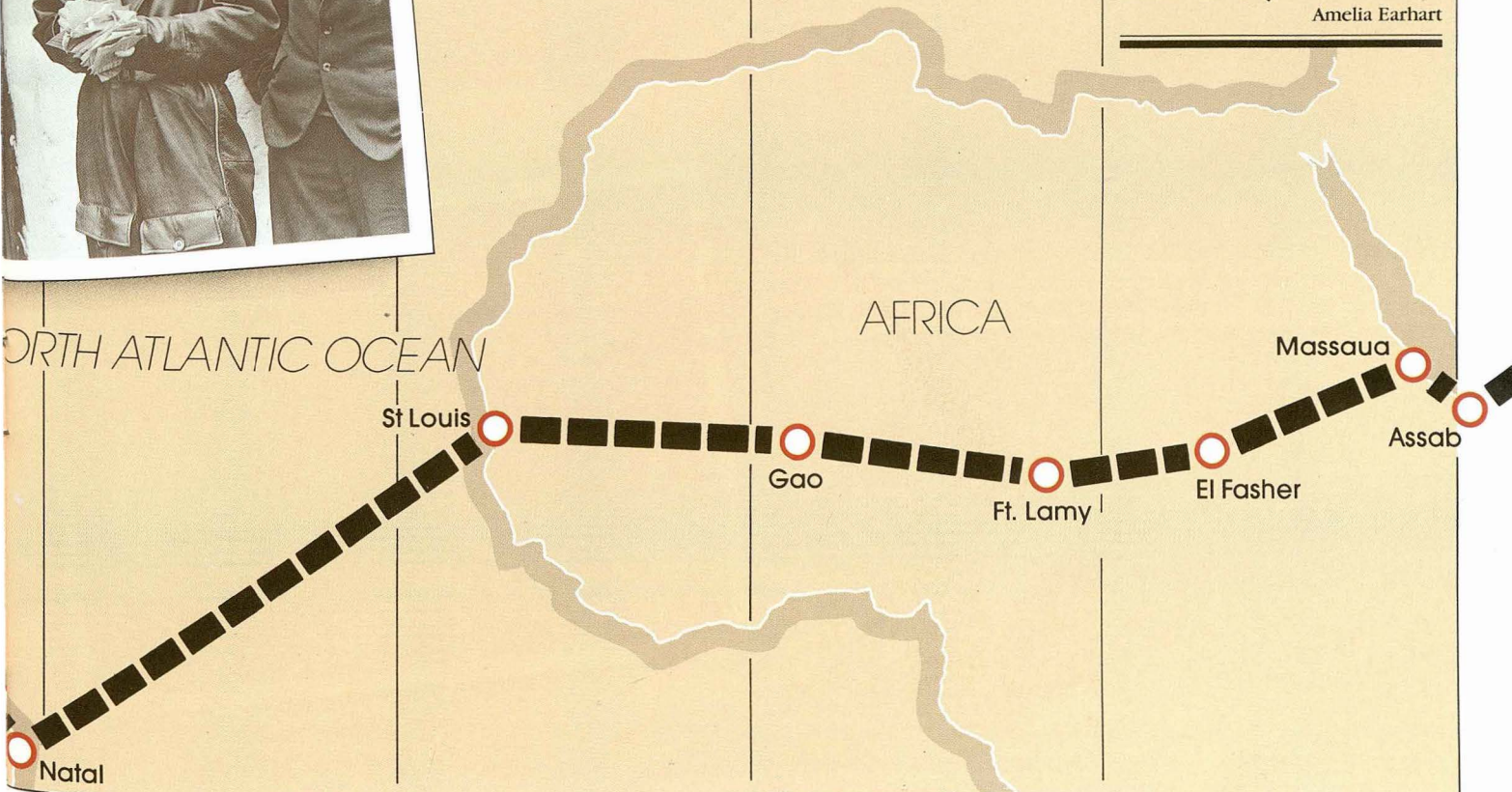
In addition to her flying Amelia served as president of the Ninety-Nines, vice-



Amelia Earhart congratulates Florence Klingensmith, winner of the Amelia Earhart Trophy air race.

"Starting from Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, on the afternoon of May 20, 1932, I landed near Londonderry in the north of Ireland the next morning, thirteen-and-a-half hours after the takeoff. That, briefly, is the story of my solo flight across the Atlantic. I chose to fly the Atlantic because I wanted to. It was in measure, a self-justification, a proving to me, and to anyone else interested, that a woman with adequate experience could do it."

Amelia Earhart





president of the National Aeronautic Association and assistant general traffic manager of Transcontinental and Western Air, the forerunner of today's Trans World Airlines. (The Papua New Guinea National Museum's Ford Tri-Motor was owned by TWA between 21 April 1931 and 3 February 1936, and was subsequently purchased by Guinea Airways on 28 November 1938 to be used in rebuilding the Museum's aircraft, VH-UBI.)

In the middle of 1935 Amelia became a visiting faculty member of Purdue University in Indiana, being appointed career councillor for Purdue's women students and special advisor in aeronautics. In July 1936, the Purdue Research Foundation purchased for her use a Lockheed 10E Electra (the suffix "E" for "Earhart") as a "flying laboratory".

The Electra, registered NR 16020, was extensively modified for high-altitude and long distance flights, and preparations were then started to make, in Amelia's own words, "just one more long flight", an equatorial trip around the world from east to west in leisurely hops starting from Oakland.

Amelia's crew comprised herself; Captain Harry Manning, on leave from the SS President Roosevelt; Frederick Noonan, a veteran Pan American Airways pilot and navigator; and technical advisor for the Oakland-Hawaii sector, Paul Mantz, pilot. They departed Oakland on 17 March 1937, and arrived at Wheeler Field outside Honolulu in 15 hours 47 minutes, which established a new record for the westward crossing. It was planned to leave Paul Mantz in Hawaii, Fred Noonan at Howland Island, and Harry Manning in Australia, and for Amelia to continue the flight westward alone.

Disaster struck when the Electra was taking off from Luke Field near Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, when the aircraft swerved, blew a tyre and was ground-looped. The aircraft was extensively damaged but the three occupants were not injured. The aircraft was shipped back to the Lockheed plant at Burbank, California, where it was repaired. Weather conditions then forced a change of route and it was decided to fly from west to east, with Miami being the final point of departure from the United States.

Finally certified airworthy,

"Please know that I am quite aware of the hazards. I want to do it because I want to do it. Women must try to do things as men have tried. When they fail, their failure must be but a challenge to others."

Amelia Earhart

the Electra was rolled out of the Lockheed plant for what was to be the last time on 19 May, and two days later Amelia and Paul Mantz flew it to Oakland for the start of the second attempt. That afternoon, with a cargo of first-day covers, Amelia set out for Miami by way of Tucson, Arizona and New Orleans, Louisiana. On board with her were her husband George, Fred Noonan and Amelia's personal mechanic, "Bo" McNeely. They arrived in Miami on 23 May. There followed a week during which final preparations were made and the Electra "fine-tuned" by Pan American Airways mechanics.

On 1 June 1937, at 5.56 am, the Electra NR 16020 departed from the Municipal Airport at Miami with Amelia Earhart at the controls and Fred Noonan in the cabin as navigator "bound for California by about

the longest route they could contrive." Eight hours 17 minutes later they landed at San Juan, Puerto Rico. 2 June arrived at Caripito, Venezuela; 3 June Zandery Airfield outside Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana; 4 June landed at Fortaleza, northern Brazil; and on 6 June arrived at Natal, Brazil. While at Fortaleza the Electra was made ready for the trans-Atlantic crossing, again through the courtesy of Pan American. On 7 June, the Electra landed at St Louis, Senegal, although Dakar had been the destination. An hour before reaching the African coast Amelia had chosen to ignore a heading given to her by Fred and turned north instead of south. Had Noonan's course been followed, they would have "hit Dakar almost on the nose".

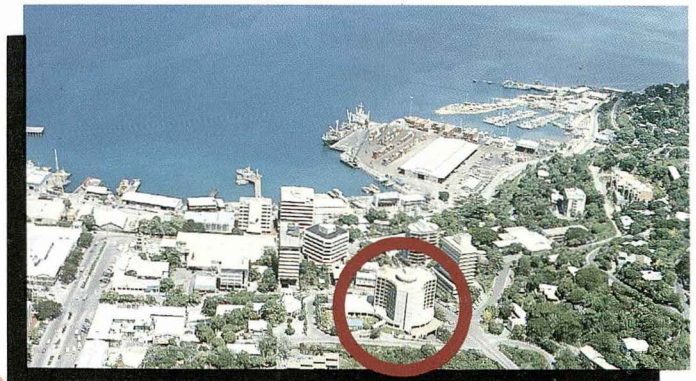
On the 10th they flew 1,835 kilometres (1,140 miles) to Gao in Mali, and the next day 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles) to Fort Lamy, Chad. On the 12th it was to El Fasher, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, where the aircraft was refueled and a little over an hour later they departed for Massaua, Eritrea. The next day was a short hop to Assab in Eritrea. On the 15th they reached Karachi, India. During the day's rest, the Electra was checked over by mechanics from Imperial Airways and the aircraft's instruments were checked by personnel from the Royal Air



An historic meeting of Orville Wright, the world's first aviator, and Amelia Earhart at the 1933 dedication of Philadelphia's Hall of Aviation.

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Force stationed there. The 17th saw the Electra winging its way to Calcutta, and after battling monsoonal rains, finally reached Rangoon on the 19th.

The next day they flew to Bangkok, refueled and continued on to Singapore. On the 21st, Bandoeng, Dutch East Indies was reached, where engine and instrument troubles caused a five-day delay. They set off for Koepang, Timor, on the 27th finally reaching Darwin, Australia on the 28th.

At dawn on the 29th the Electra took-off from Darwin, its next destination being Lae, on the shores of the Huon Gulf in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea. After a flight of 7 hours 43 minutes a safe landing was made and Amelia taxied the aircraft to the Guinea Airways apron, and shut down the engines; 35,400 kilometres (22,000 miles) covered thus far, another 11,265 kilometres (7,000 miles) to go.

For the next 24 hours Lae was swept by torrential rain. For the remainder of that day

and the next Amelia and Fred set about preparing their aircraft for the long and difficult flight ahead, discarding unwanted items, and having the aircraft thoroughly inspected. They refueled it to its capacity, ready for an early departure the next day, 1 July. However with the wind blowing the wrong way, together with threatening weather, their departure was delayed for another 24 hours.

Despite the disappointment in not having been able to depart, Amelia and Fred borrowed a truck from the Cecil Hotel in which they had been staying, and explored some of the surrounding countryside. They crossed a small river and drove through grass taller than the truck before entering a village through a grove of coconut palms. It was here that they learned the name "biscuit box" the local people had given their Electra because its smooth aluminium skin resembled the tins in which a certain brand of biscuits were shipped from England. While in Lae Amelia's only purchase, apart from gasoline and the hotel accommodation, was a



Amelia Earhart and her modified, high-altitude, long-distance Model 10 Electra.

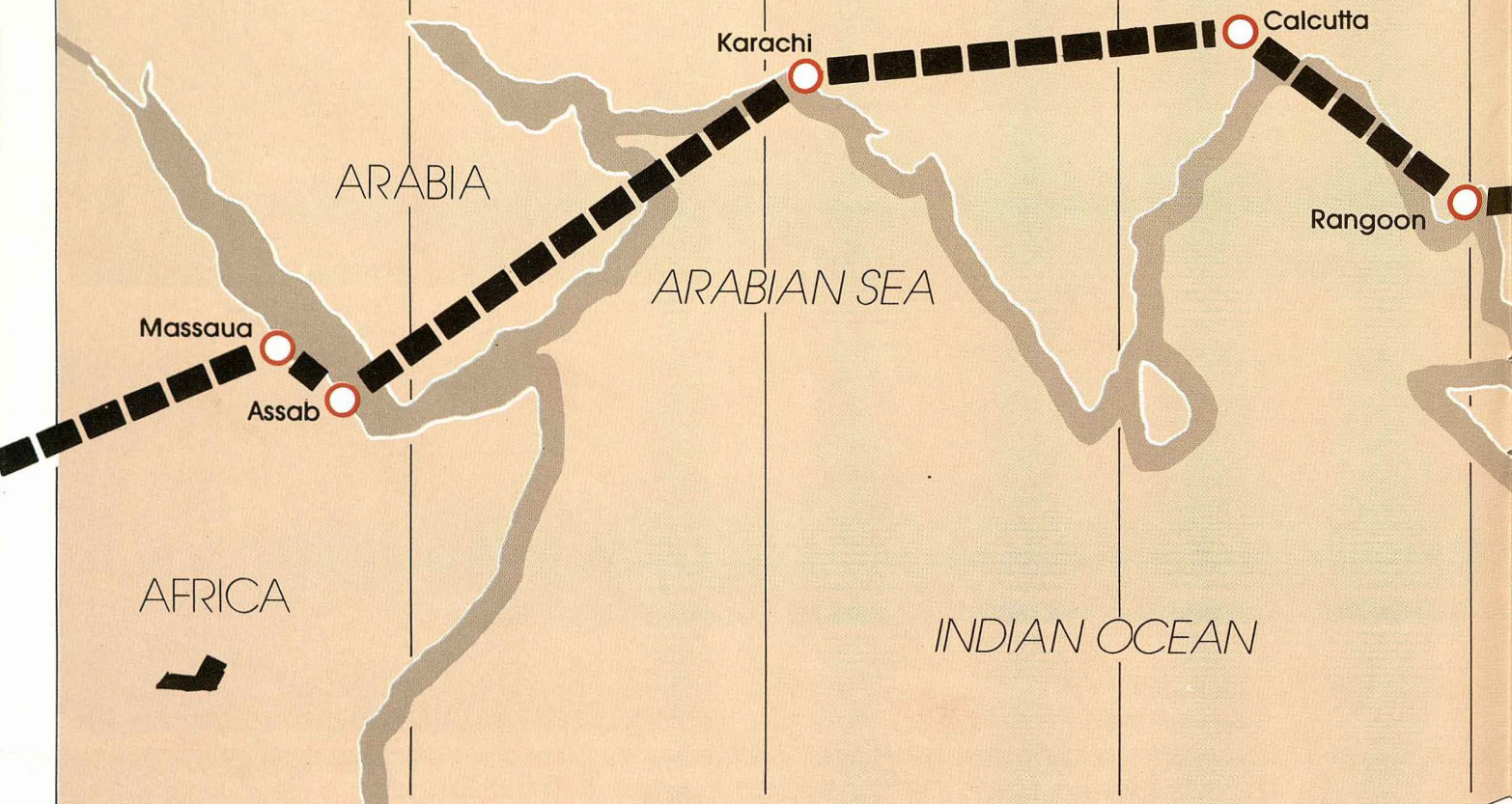
“Not much more than a month ago I was on the other shore of the Pacific, looking westward. This evening I looked eastward over the Pacific. In those fast moving days which have intervened, the whole width of the world has passed behind us – except this broad ocean. I shall be glad when we have the hazards of its navigation behind us.”

Amelia Earhart, Lae, 30 June 1937

Pidgin English dictionary for two shillings (20 toea).

In one of her last messages to her husband from Lae, Amelia remarked: “I wish we could stay here peacefully for a time and see something of this strange land.” Even with the worries of the flight ahead, she was obviously fascinated with what is now Papua New Guinea.

In the meantime Fred was still having difficulty in setting his chronometers due to static in both the Electra's and



Guinea Airways' radios in picking up time signals broadcast by the United States Navy and the National Bureau of Standards in the United States. Any lack of knowledge of their fastness or slowness would defeat the accuracy of celestial navigation which was to play a major role in locating the US Coast Guard cutter "Itasca" on station near Howland Island, a mere speck in the vastness of the Pacific Ocean.

The silver Electra climbed slowly out over the Huon Gulf until it finally disappeared from those watching on the ground. At 5.30 pm a radio message was received from the Electra indicating its position as being 1,280 kilometres (795 miles) out from Lae.

Throughout the early hours of the next morning, which was still 2 July Howland Island time, the "Itasca" received a total of 10 radio messages from the Electra, starting at 2.45 am, the last being at 8.44 am.

"We must be on you but cannot see you. Gas is running low. Have been unable to reach you by radio. We are flying at one thousand feet."

"We are circling but cannot see you. Cannot hear you."

"We are on the line of position 157-337. Will repeat this message on 6210 kHa. We are now running north and south." Amelia Earhart

Then silence. A silence that has not been broken for 50 years. Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan had become victims of mankind's quest to conquer the air. For then, and succeeding generations, a legend had been born. Within 12 hours a

massive sea-air search was initiated by ships and aircraft of the US Navy, covering in excess of 67,000,000 hectares (260,000 square miles) which was finally called off 16 days later.

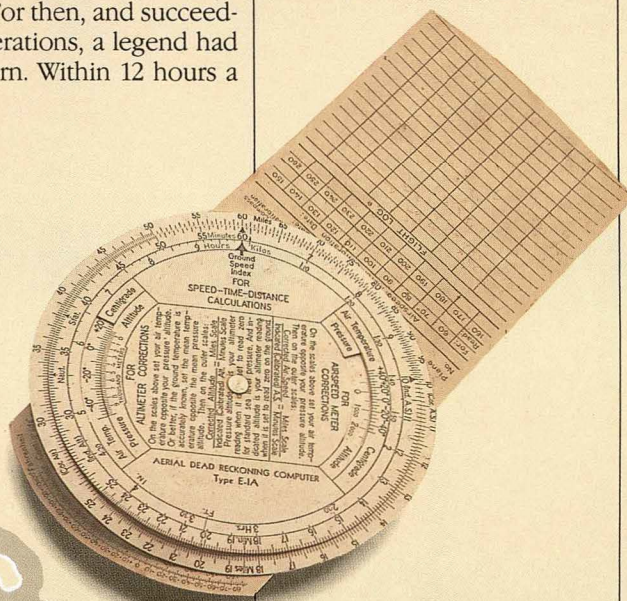
The commander of the "Itasca" privately described Amelia's flight preparations as "casual to say the least". He learned too late that the flyers had discarded their 500-kilowatt equipment in favor of radio telephone, rendering useless the standard marine-length direction finder on his ship.

In the years that followed many speculated as to what actually happened to the Electra and its crew, including a rumor that the aircraft was to have spied on the Japanese

base at Truk, had become lost and crashed on an island in the Japanese Mandates, the crew captured and finally executed by the Japanese. These rumors have never been substantiated.

In all probability, the aircraft went down within 160 kilometres (100 miles) of Howland Island and quickly sank in high seas even though it had been thought the aircraft would float due to its large number of fuel tanks.

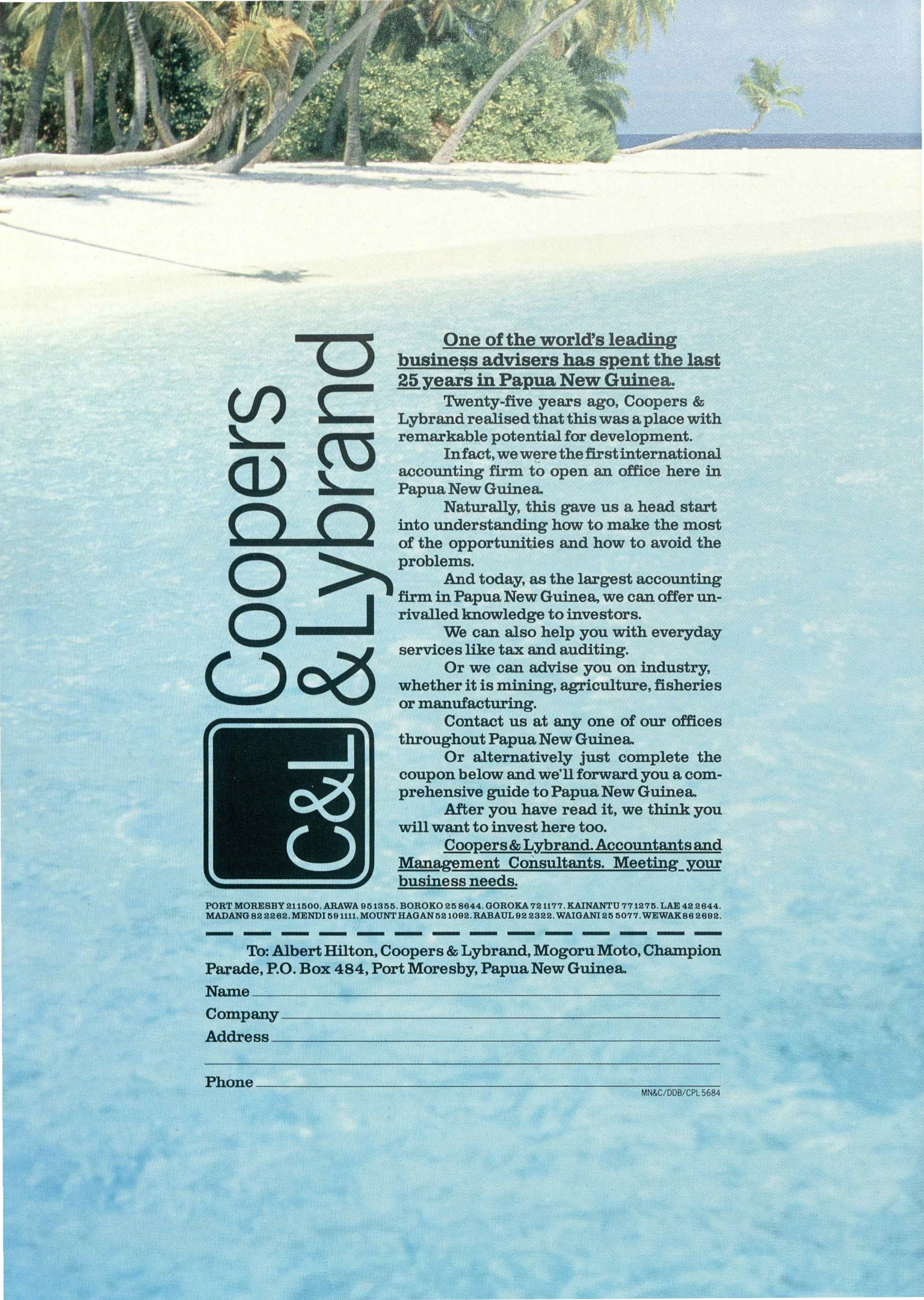
Thursday, 2 July, 1987, Lae, PNG. In a simple ceremony, a memorial plaque was to be unveiled near Lae Airport by the Papua New Guinea Governor General, Sir Kingsford Dibela, to mark the 50th Anniversary of the disappearance of Miss Earhart and Mr Noonan; two fliers who left their indelible mark on the history of aviation, and PNG.




Bruce D. Hoy is Curator of Modern History at the National Museum.

Black and white photographs - courtesy of the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation.

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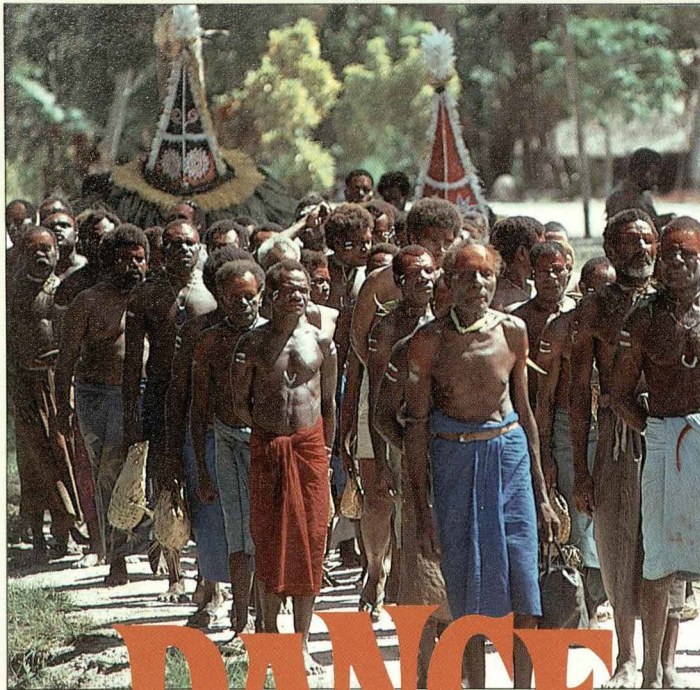
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It's a long trip. But well worth it. Countless coastal villages, some small, compact, others expansive. Some in enviable locations, sandwiched almost, between shimmering blue ocean and incredibly clear, fast flowing streams from the mountains. Others adjacent to mangrove forests with perhaps only a short, sandy shoreline. All with one main asset. Friendly people. Hands wave, faces smile, the sun generally shines.

An overnight stop at the last outpost of "civilisation" which everybody calls Namatanai. The pronunciation remains difficult, the memories clear and vivid. No hot water showers and no a la carte. The deep complexity of Papua New Guinea starts sinking into the blood.

A big man has died. And a traditional singing is in his honor. In the village, bodies move slowly, there's expectation in the air. People start to coalesce into small groups - planning, seeking reassurances, or perhaps just sharing the excitement of the occasion with peers. The village tok

Story and Photographs by Kevin Glennon



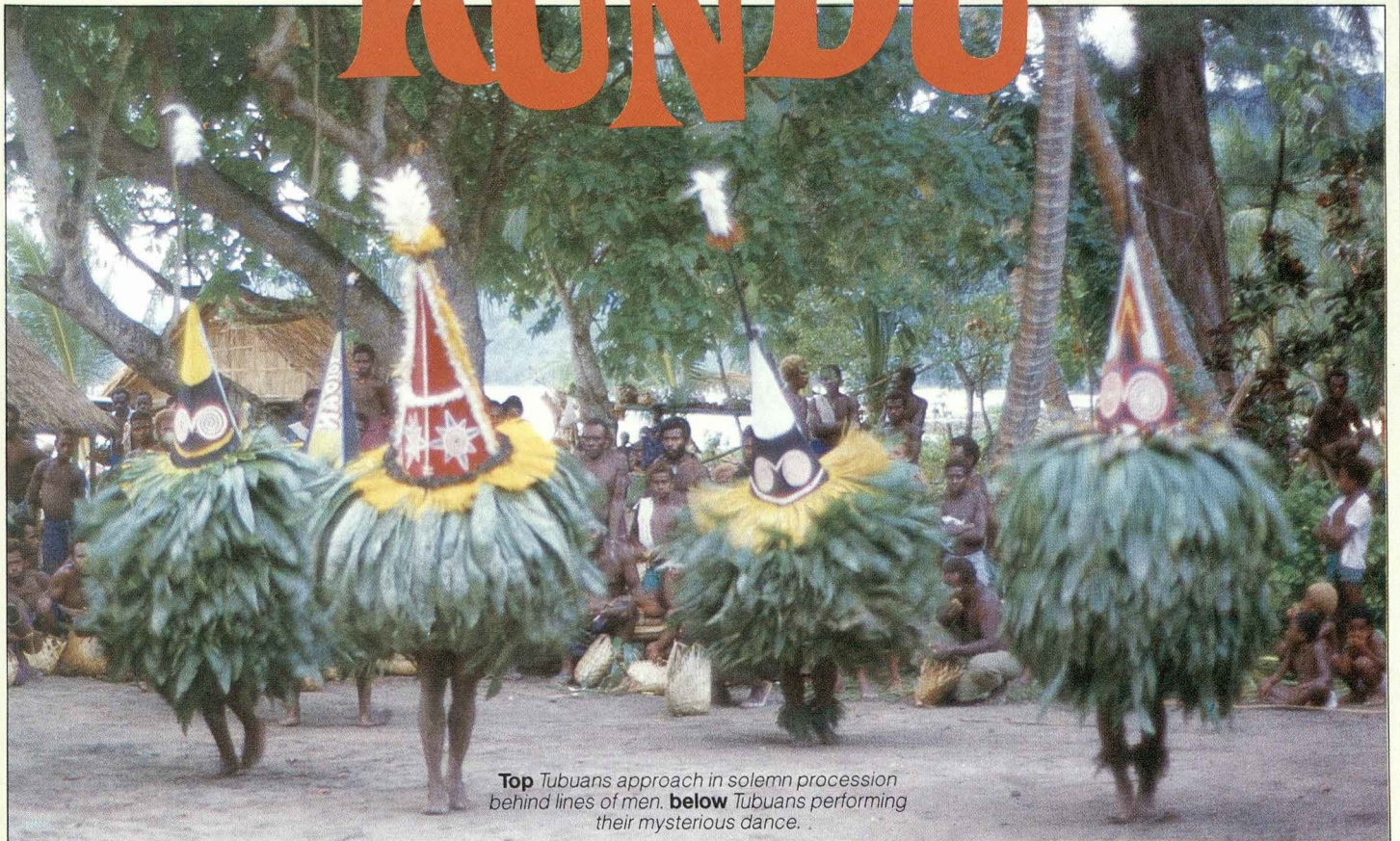
DANCE to a KUNDU

peles (dialect) is alive and thriving and without knowledge of it the window into their world is foggy at best. In some ways the lack of knowledge about the events unfolding does not detract from the enjoyment or the beauty of the moment but, rather, enhances it.

There's whispered talk of "secret societies", men with ochre markings on their foreheads and dabs of lime powder on their faces. Others with black markings. The participants have fasted and the tubuans spend two or three weeks in selected parts of the forest in preparation. Contact is permissible amongst themselves only.

All food too is cooked and eaten in this isolation. Even an anthropologist working within the village for extended periods would find it difficult to decipher the deeper parts of this culture. An overpowering mysteriousness pervades. One's own cultural perspectives remain entrenched.

The heat rises with the sun. A refreshing drink from a young coconut. "Masta i laikum kalau?" The meaning



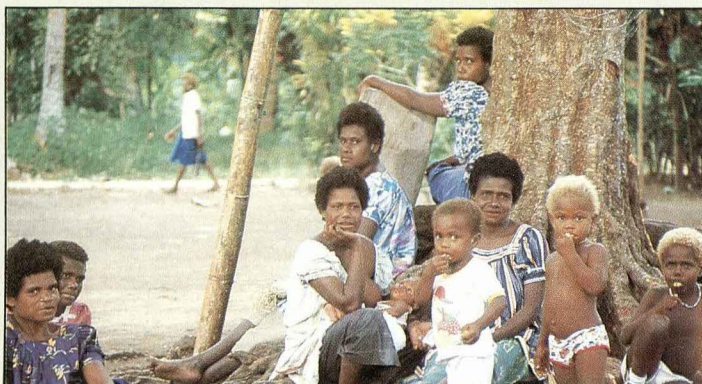
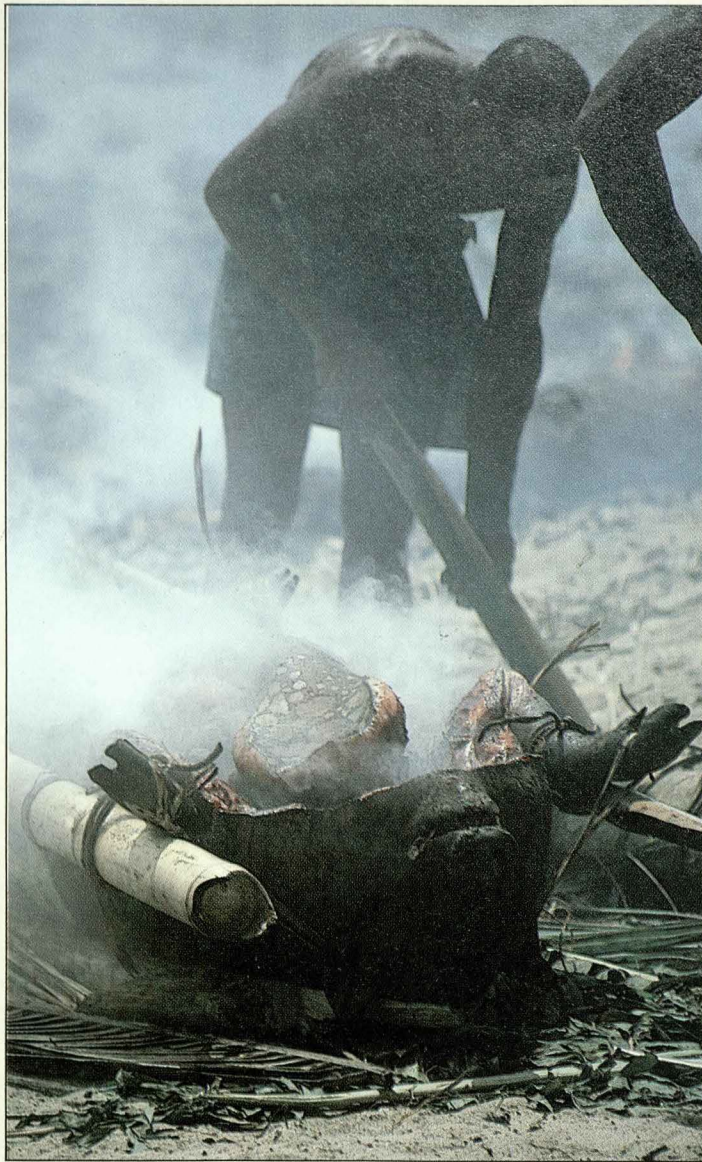
Top Tubuans approach in solemn procession behind lines of men. below Tubuans performing their mysterious dance.

of the pidgin English phrase is obvious from the outstretched hand – a school age boy with a clear, innocent yet somewhat circumspect expression in his eyes. Other children splash in the stream, women bathe downstream of the road crossing. Cold, invigorating water. In the shade of large spreading tropical trees. Bright, white coronous roadway and beyond, the shimmering ocean. An enviable location.

A faint feeling from the forest grows into a hum of beating kundu drums. Louder. A short time later a line of bodies begin to emerge from the forest to the beach and along into the village clearing. Anticipation ceases. A wide circular path, kundu drums, dancing, prancing bodies and, at the rear of the now snaking line, the tubuans' colorful, conical shaped, crafted head pieces and loosely layered leaves around the body. And two protruding legs.

The sun approaches zenith and a coolish breeze begins to trickle in from the shore. Far offshore a boat is moving. Barely visible through the shimmer. Oblivious to the heightening activity onshore. Kundu drums provide rhythm for the dancers. There is a sense of coherency even to the untrained eye. The tubuans squat and the clearing quiets. Is it integral to the performance or merely a pause to catch one's breath? More dancing to more kundu beats. The tubuans disperse from the clearing along to the beach but this time the clearing doesn't quieten, a hum fills the air. Women and children still keep their distance from it all – lime powder liberally streaked across their foreheads and sometimes cheeks. The lime provides protection from spirits which are stimulated by the singsing. In pre-contact times, women were not permitted to witness at all.

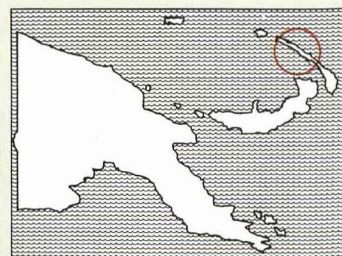
The tubuans filter back. This time the dancing is slightly more frenetic. A tubuan with red and white



Top A pig is prepared for the feast. **centre** A pensive group of men watching proceedings. **below** Women and children sit elsewhere on such an occasion.

pointer protruding through his body leaves seems cast as the enforcer. The breeze from the shore strengthens ruffling feathers and leaves in their costumes. Wailing erupts from two female mourners. More dancing in the clearing followed by dancing, pauses, and dancing in the area where the big man lies buried. The afternoon has worn inexorably on. The sun seems to acknowledge this and starts accelerating for the horizon. Cooked, whole pigs and other food is lined up, cut up, and distributed. Though not just in any manner – a ritual order is followed. The feast begins. Contentment follows.

The trip back along the coast should be anti-climatic, but somehow it's not. A metaphorical feast is beginning. Villages look tranquil in the fading light and the people, still smiling, waving, and friendly. An exotic feeling drapes the car, engulfs it, and an enchantment commences.



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Kundiawa Vanimo

Goroka

Kairantu

Popondetta

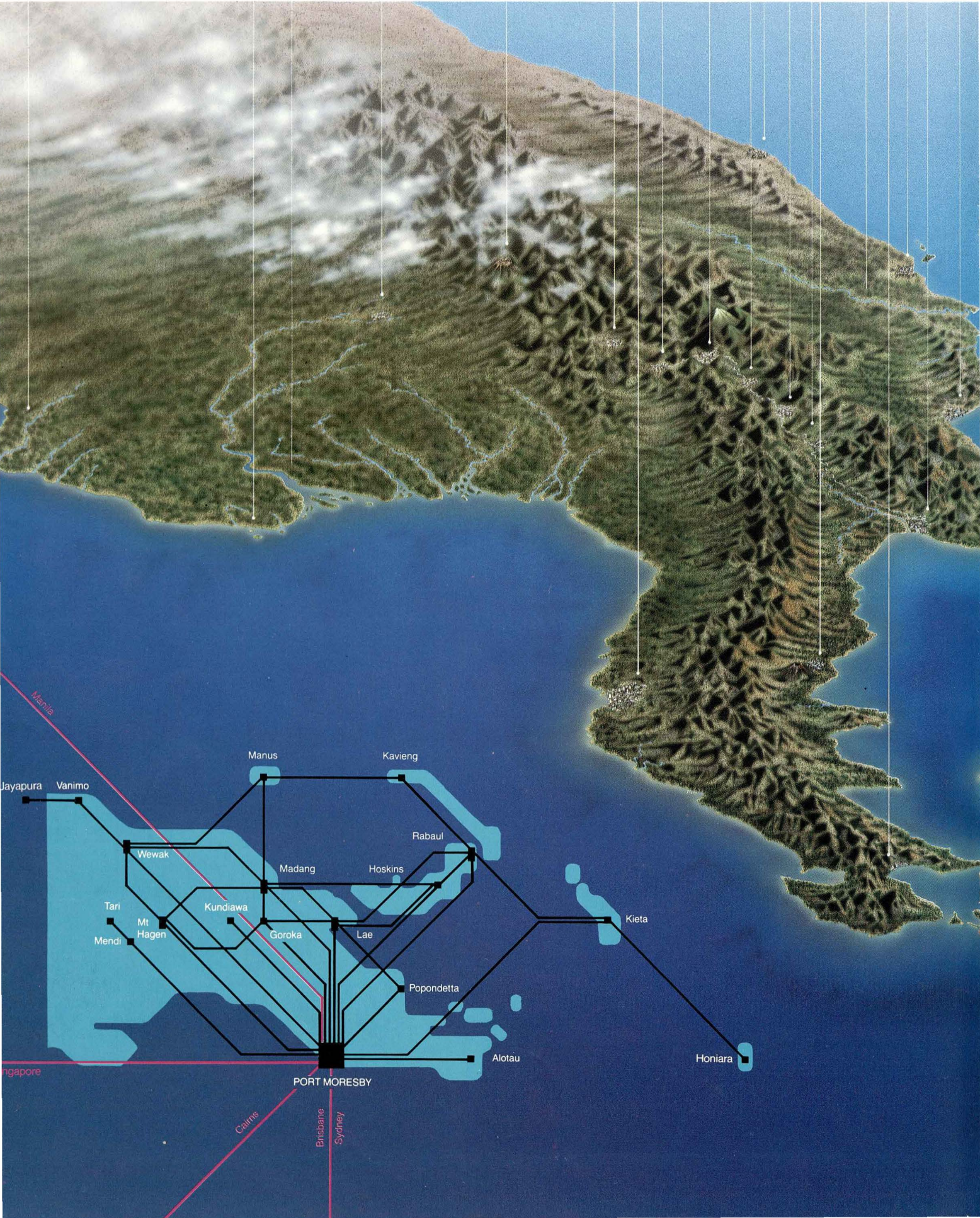
SEPIK RIVER

Alotau

Wewak

Lae

Mad...



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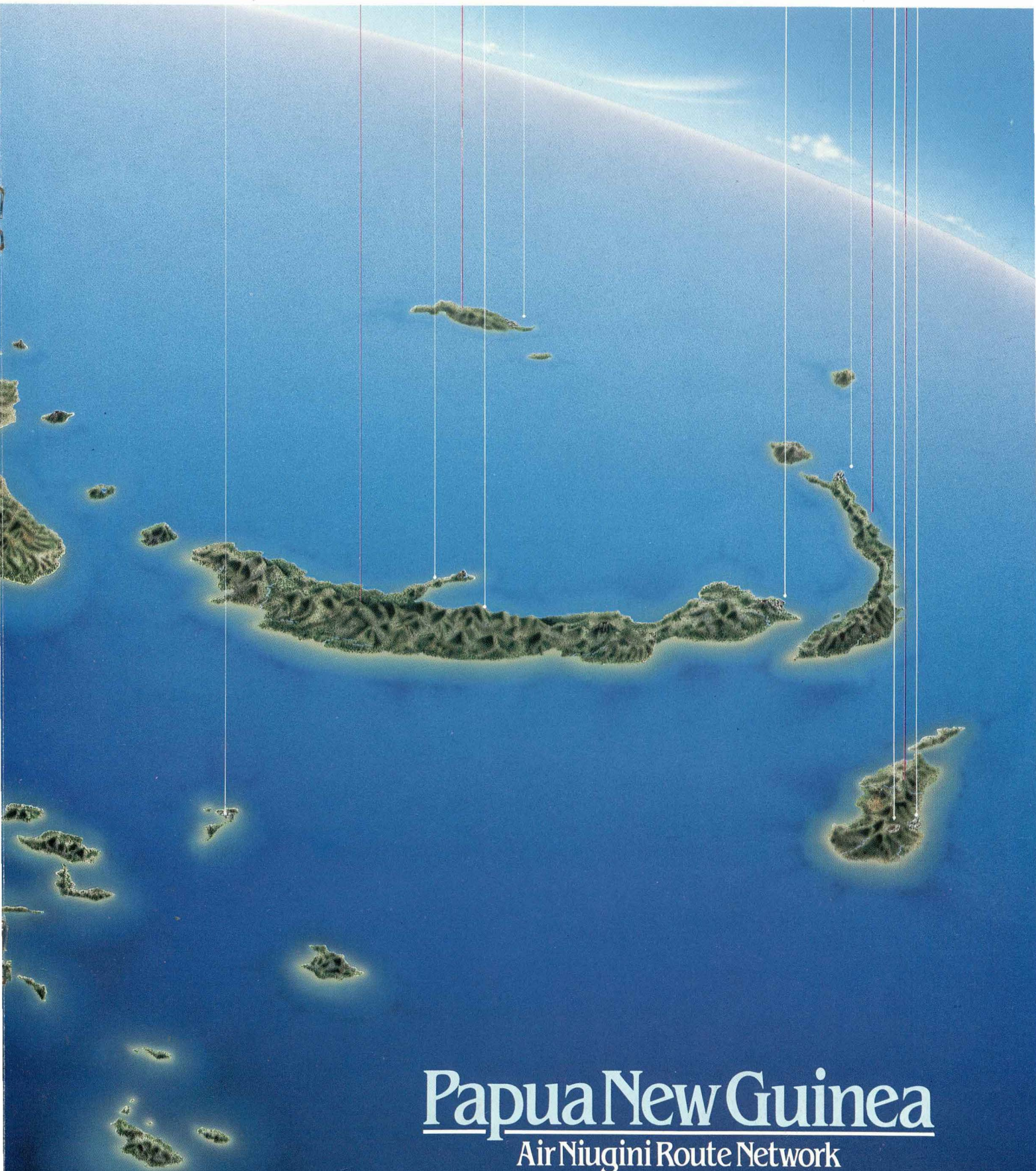
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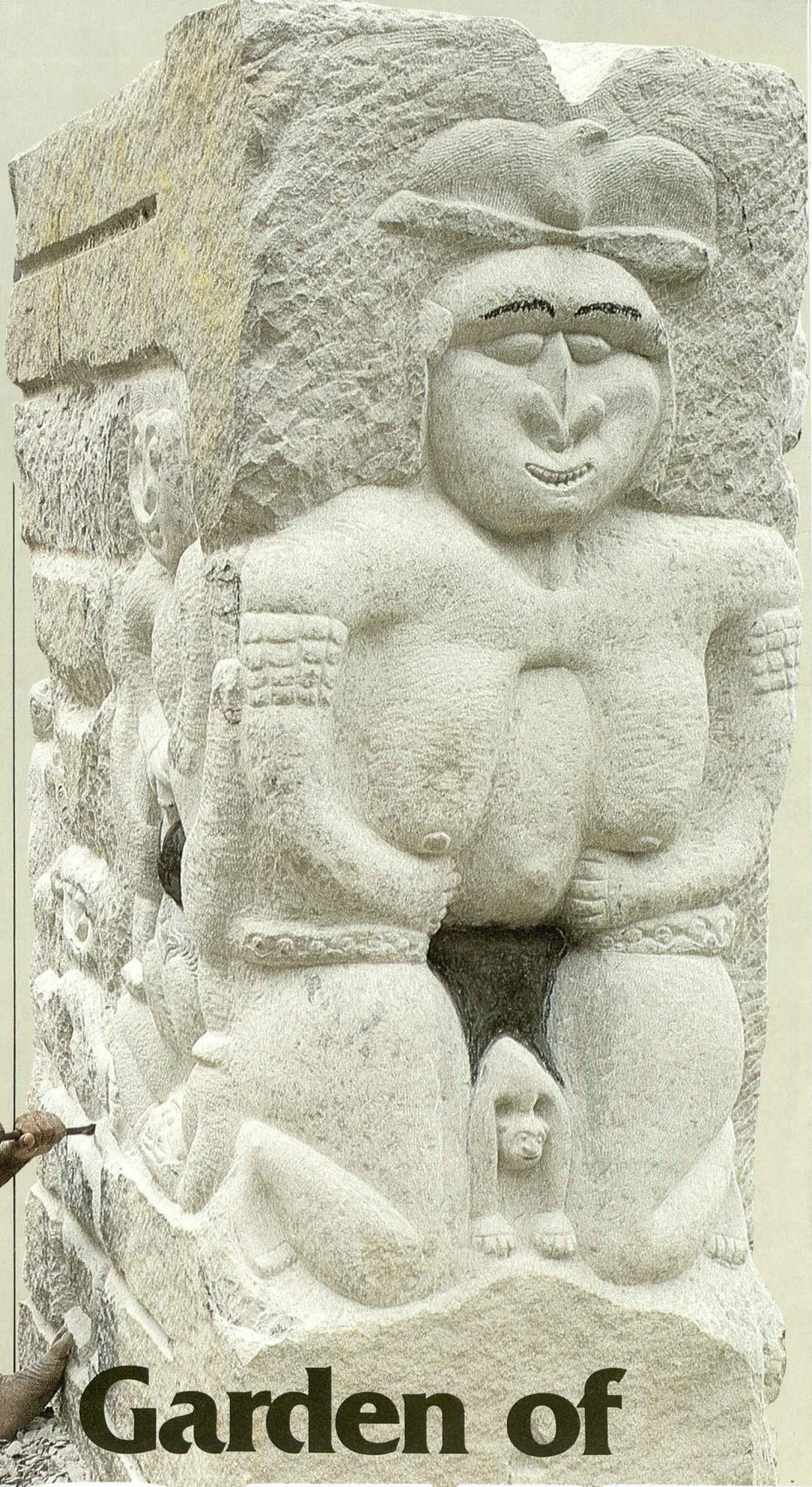
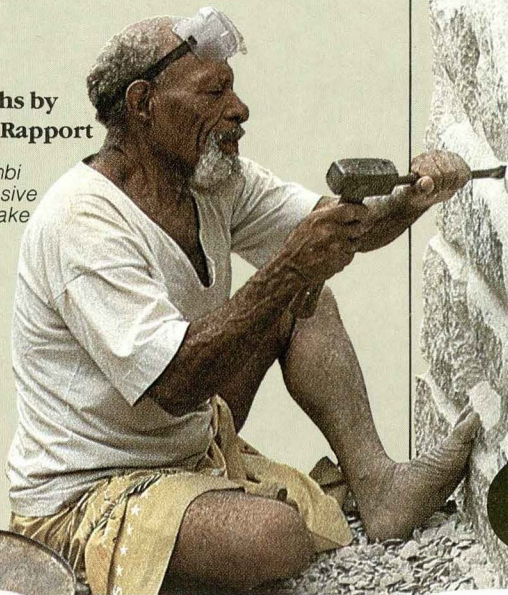
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More than 20 years ago as a young and relatively inexperienced photo-journalist, like thousands of other Australians of my generation, I made the pilgrimage to England to gain European 'experience'. The cheapest way out of Australia at that time was by ship to Greece. Debarking at the port of Pireaus I spent a week or two in the clamor of Athens and then set off to explore the Greek Islands.

Stepping ashore from the ferry at Hydra and strolling along its beautiful waterfront I was stopped in my tracks by a loud voice enquiring: "Are you an Australian? I haven't spoken to a bloody Australian for over a year. How about a beer?" Turning around I was confronted by

Story and photographs by Rob Walls/Rapport

Nawi Saunambi makes a massive stone block take form on the banks of the Hawkesbury River.



Garden of



a tall, lean young man with the type of beard that one usually associates with early photographs of Australian goldminers or bushrangers. Confirming that I was indeed from Australia and not adverse to sharing a few cold beers, we sat down at a dockside taverna and spent an hour or two in conversation.

The name that went with the beard was Lawrence Beck and he had been studying sculpture in the most unlikely place that one would consider in the xenophobic 1960s, Sofia in Bulgaria. The idea that an Australian could spend more than a year living and studying behind the Iron Curtain was a revelation to me.

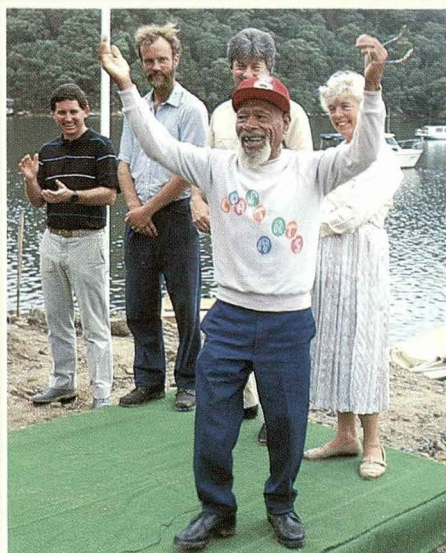
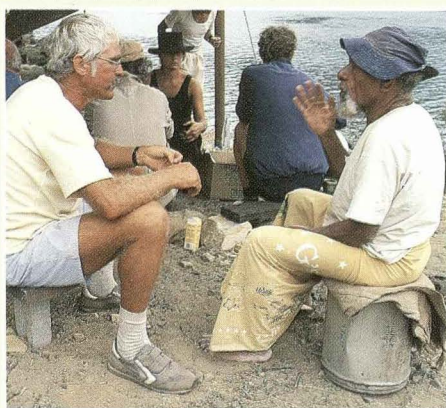
Lingering on in Europe for five years and returning to Australia in 1971, I saw Beck's name crop up occasionally in the newspapers; campaigning for a greater appreciation of sculpture in Australia; suing an insurance company that wanted to modify a sculpture they had commissioned him to do for their lobby; or just generally stirring the creative pot and raising the level of artistic debate. I saw that he had lost none of his outspokenness and each time his name came up, I thought of our brief meeting on that Greek island.

Late in 1986, I noticed his name again, in a story in a Sydney newspaper. He was working at the tiny Hawkesbury River hamlet of Wondabyne, about one hour out of Sydney. It has a few holiday shacks, a minute railway station alongside the river and that's about it. There are no roads and the only access is by train or boat.

For Beck however, the important fact was that it possessed a recently reopened quarry of the finest Hawkesbury sandstone. He had convinced the company which owned the site, to supply a dozen, five to six-tonne blocks of this white stone valued at K6,000 each. The



Left Apkwina Asanambi on top of his work.
below Nawi and German-Australian Vern Foss
 converse; Nawi sings at the official opening; and
 Bulgarian Pavel Koichev rests from his labors.



idea was to match these blocks with an equal number of sculptors from a variety of backgrounds and countries and to create a sculpture garden on the banks of the river. With support from the State Rail Authority and a grant of K15,000 from the Gosford City Council he gathered together the talent that he needed to bring his vision to fruition; a park that would contain the best work of some of the world's finest sculptors in a location of great tranquillity and beauty.

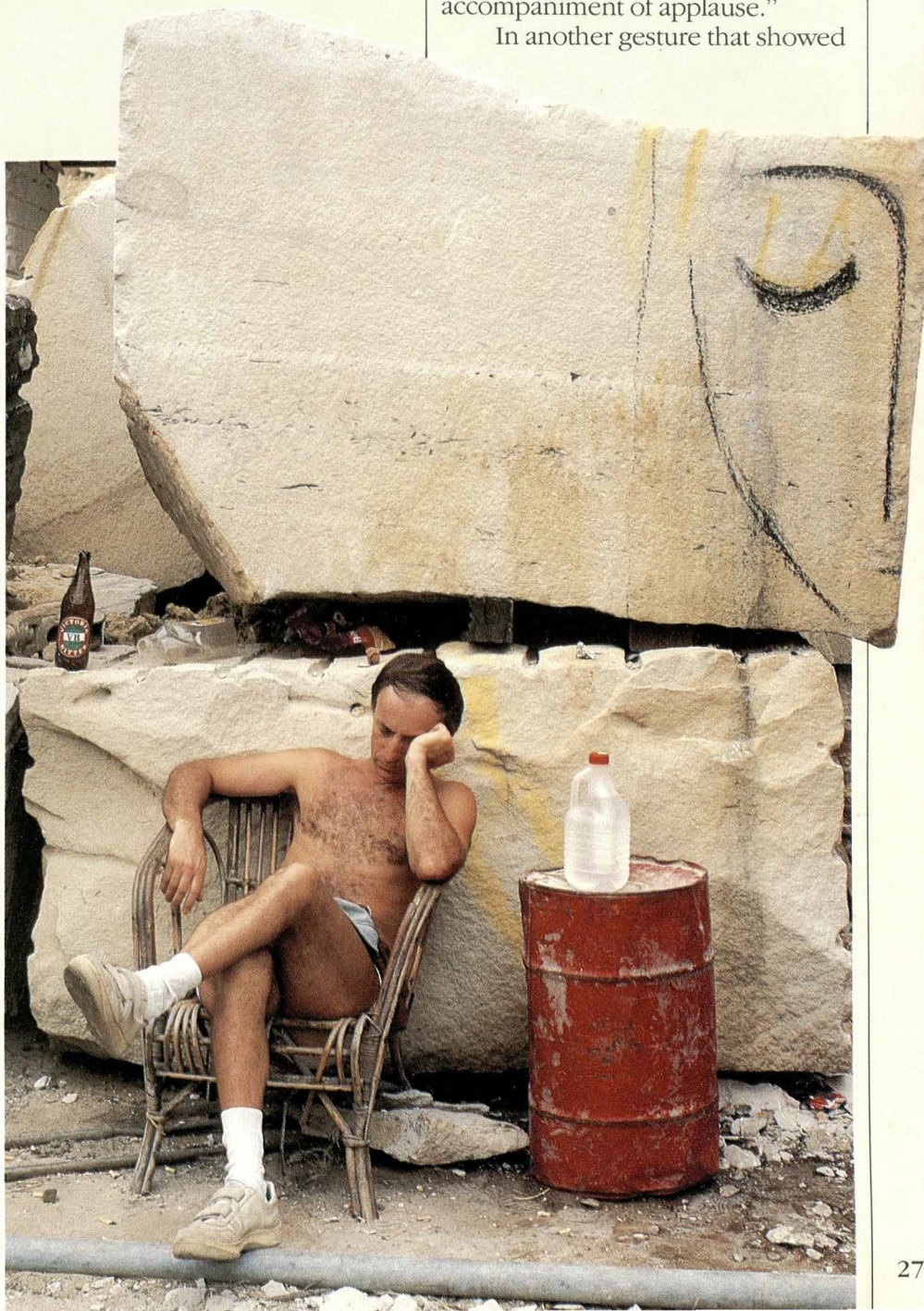
He recruited 12 sculptors; two from Nepal, two from Bulgaria, one from France, five Australians and two talented carvers, Nawi

Saunambi and Apkwina Asanambi, from Bangwis village near Ambunti in Papua New Guinea's most prolific art region, the Sepik. Beck had met Nawi on a study tour, which Beck undertook in 1972. Apkwina had been recommended to him by the kiap (patrol officer) at Ambunti.

The site of the sculpture garden, only metres from the quarry is lapped by the sheltered waters of the river. The quiet is only

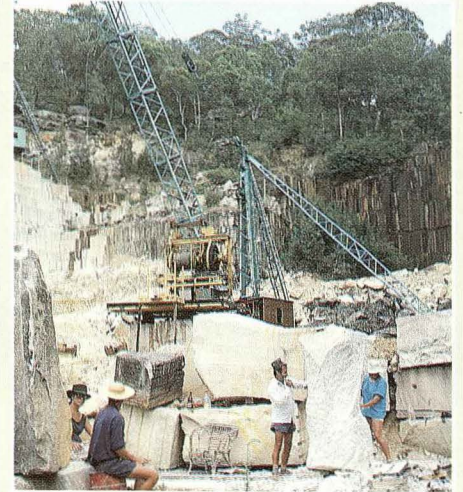
occasionally disturbed by the smooth low rumble of the trains that slide through. Each morning and evening, during the six weeks the sculptors labored to complete the project, the workers commuting to and from Sydney cheered and waved their encouragement from the passing trains. As Beck said: "That's what we call support. This is probably the only time in history that sculptors have worked to the accompaniment of applause."

In another gesture that showed





Top left Lawrence Beck. **below left** Nawi at work. **below** Nepalese Nu Nem and Frenchman Christian Giraud collaborate. **Top right** The official opening. **below** Australian Bruce Copping checks his notes.



the widespread public support, the widow of a stone mason who had been in PNG during the World War II read about the work of the sculptors in a local newspaper. She came to the site bringing her late husband's stoneworking tools and presented them to the two Papua New Guineans. Using these tools, even though it was their first time working in stone, they readily adapted their style to the new medium, translating the traditional tribal forms more often carved in wood, and embedding their legends in the beautiful sandstone of the Hawkesbury River for generations of visitors to the site. Nawi, the elder and more outgoing of the two, especially delighted in explaining his work. He talked for hours in pidgin to the many visitors that came to watch the work in progress. Not all understood his explanations but few could doubt the warm sincerity and artistic integrity of this dignified elder statesman of the Sepik.

A few of the artists more used to using power tools, had to revert to traditional methods because of the lack of electricity at the site. Like Nawi and Apkwina, the Nepalese bronze caster, Ratna Kaji Sakya had to learn to work in stone. In a moment of inspiration, Ratna discarded the traditional tools that



were offered and used two sharpened railway spikes that he found lying near the line. His sculpture with that of fellow countryman, the always smiling Nu Nem Raj Shakya, form a gateway to the park.

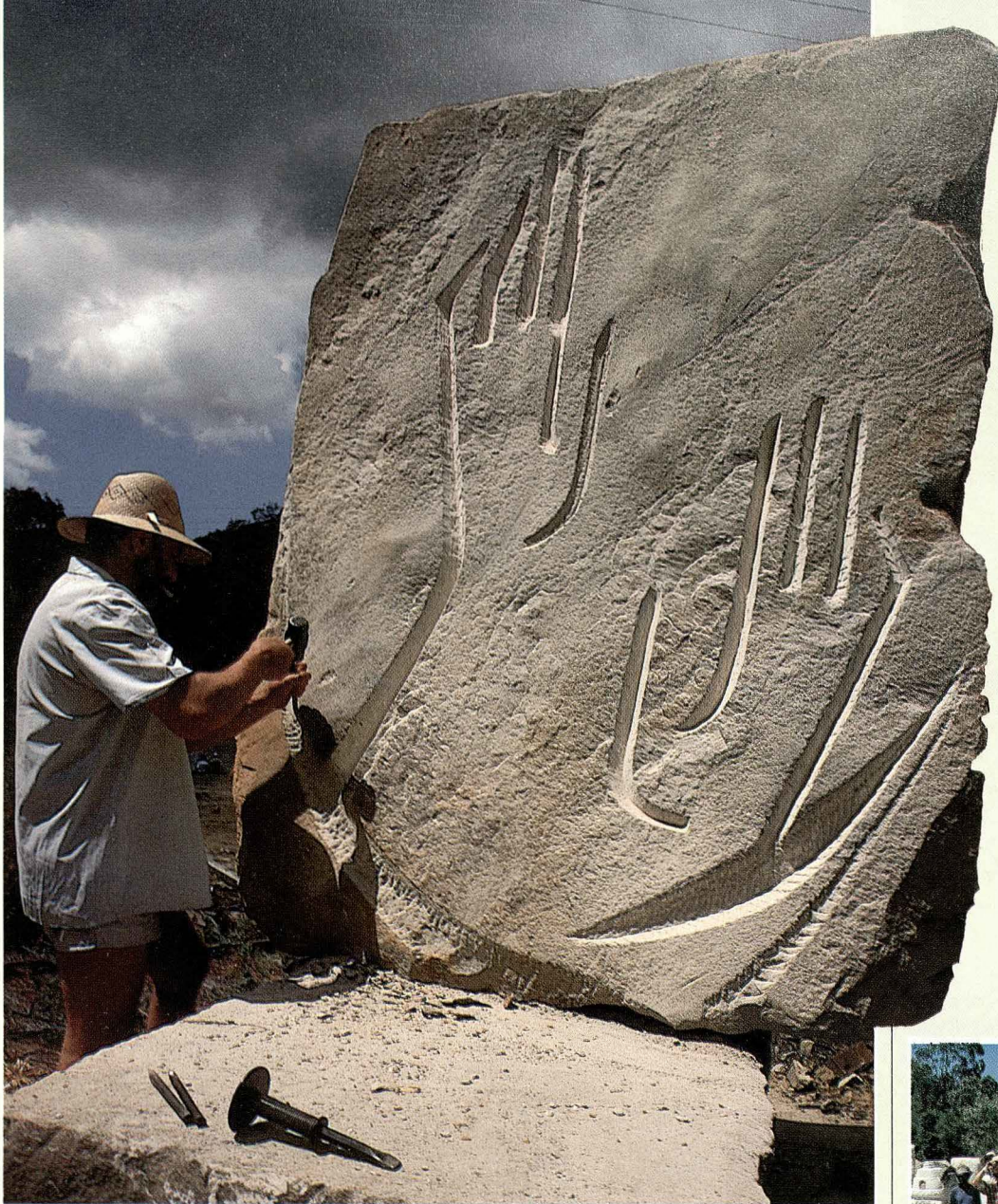
In the beginning the sculptors found it hard to adjust to sleeping in their camp in the forest, high about the quarry. They were plagued by mosquitoes and kept awake by the scurrying of bush rats over their tents. But then, the 16-hour days of

working in the heat of an Australian summer soon left them too tired to worry about such minor hardships. Conditions such as this were no problem for Nawi and Apkwina. The others were constantly amazed at their toughness, especially since both men were in their seventies.

It would appear communication amongst such a polyglot group, sustained in five different languages, would present certain difficulties. These were generally overcome by the international language of art and the common purpose. Lunch breaks at the site bubbled with storytelling in a mixture of French, Bulgarian, Nepalese, English and pidgin and

laughter continually rang out from under the canvas awning that protected them from the fierce summer heat. Between hammering away at his own sculpture, Beck's role as site foreman included overseeing social arrangements, meals, and transport. He speaks fluent Bulgarian from his student years and although his knowledge of pidgin is only rudimentary, he still managed to include both Nawi and Apkwina in the discussions. Perhaps the most interesting outcome of the lingual mix was to hear Pavel Koichev, one of the Bulgarians inquiring of the edibility of a goanna he had seen that morning. Trying to communicate this question to German-born Australian, Vern Foss,





Left Bulgarian Alexander Diacov at work on his stone. **below** The team poses between two Nepalese sculptures.

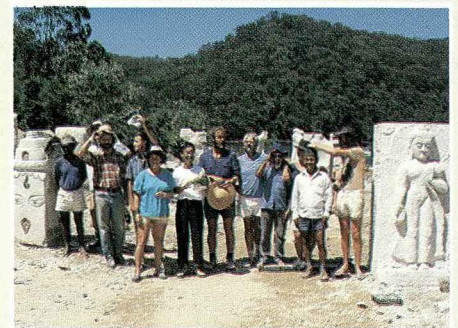
finally in desperation he lapsed into pidgin. "Kai-kai goanna?" he asked. More laughter. pidgin-speaking Bulgarians are rare.

The garden was opened officially to the public by Senator Bruce Childs and the Mayor of Gosford, Patricia Hannan. It was declared a sacred site to be held in perpetuity for all people. The project, originally intended to be a singular enterprise has been so successful that the Gosford City Council has decided to sponsor a sculpture garden each year.

For the sculptors the ceremony was the culmination of weeks of work in an atmosphere of peace and harmony that will be remembered all their lives. For Nawi and Apkwina it was not only an opportunity to bring the art of the Sepik directly to the people of Australia, but an experience of creating with artists

from other backgrounds and disciplines. They found that artists from other parts of the world share a common bond forged by the expression of their creativity and unfettered by the manacles of language and tradition. Nawi in one of his typical moments of eloquence, explained that he had seen the Germans and Japanese come and go in his country. In the ensuing years he had met and made friends with many of the Australians who followed them, and he felt happy at his time in life to see the nation from which these people came.

With the others, Nawi Saunambi and Apkwina Asanambi leave behind them a gift to all people, that will convey the universality of art and the generosity of artists, no matter what their origin.



POSTSCRIPT:

The story of how the art of the Sepik River was brought to the Hawkesbury River does not end here. As a result of their collaboration at Wondabyne, on the recommendation of their Nepalese colleagues, Apkwina and Nawi have been invited by the King of Nepal to bring their skills to Kathmandu. Next year they will be working in the shadows of the Himalayan mountains on the decoration of a temple pagoda. Future generations of anthropologists could find some difficulty in explaining how Sepik art came to be found on a temple in Nepal.

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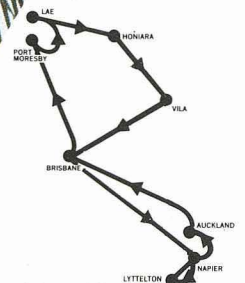
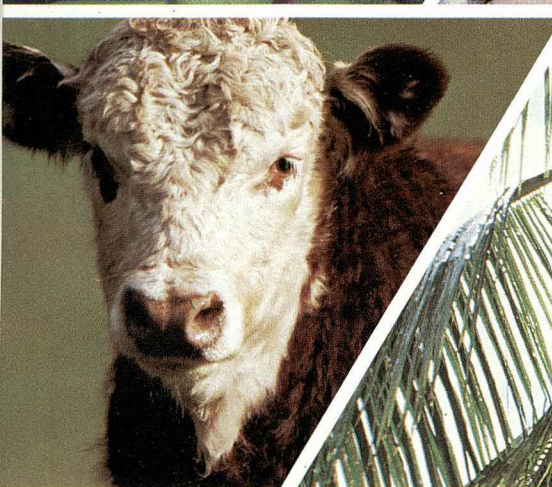


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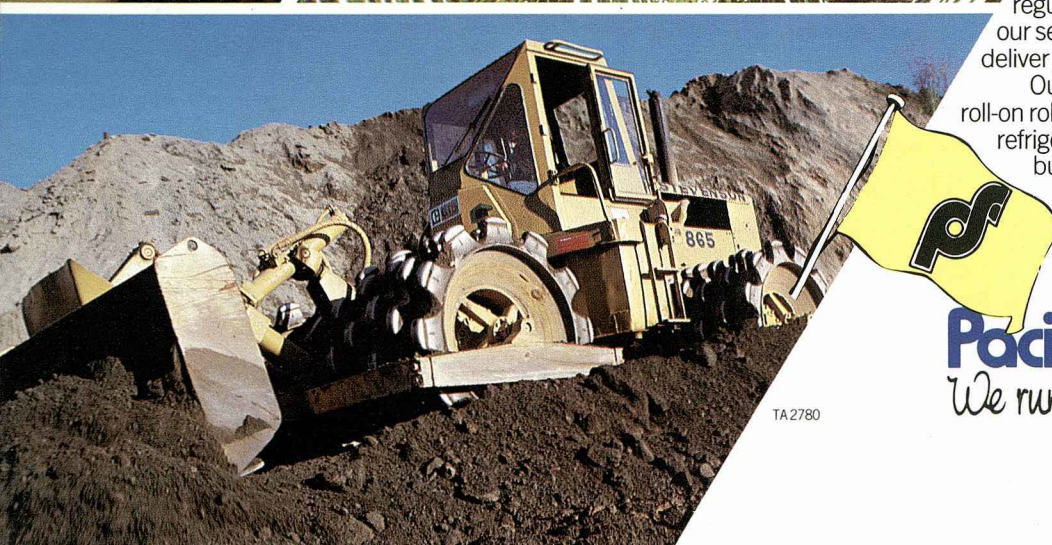
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GAUGING THE TIDE

Butcher's paper serves many purposes, but it is doubtful if anyone other than retired jeweller Len Smith of Samarai Island has used sheets of this paper for recording data on sea-level changes in the tropical Pacific Ocean.

When he conceived the idea of developing a tide gauge as a hobby 15 years ago, he needed to find materials. Scientists have since marvelled that his device consisting of biscuit tins, jam jars, drawing pins to mark heights, and a host of other "ingredients" could ever have worked let alone survive long enough for some of the parts to be used again in a second gauge built years later.

Len was a jeweller in Port Moresby (with PO Box No 1) before he retired to Samarai Island, formerly the capital of Milne Bay Province. He is virtually housebound because of ill health, but an interest in the environment led to what has now become his all-consuming interest, monitoring the sea.



"The gauge was a real Heath Robinson invention, one thing leading to another, but also incorporating some of Len's jewellery craftsmanship along with the paraphernalia," said scientist Ken Ridgway of the CSIRO Division of Oceanography, which is based in Hobart, Tasmania.

"The important thing is that Len's meticulously-kept records of day-to-day variations in sea levels date back before most scientists recognised the importance of monitoring this region."

The western Pacific, especially north of Papua New Guinea site of the widest stretches of warm water in the world is now a key interest area for researchers who believe it is where the changes that lead to El Nino/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) events first occur.

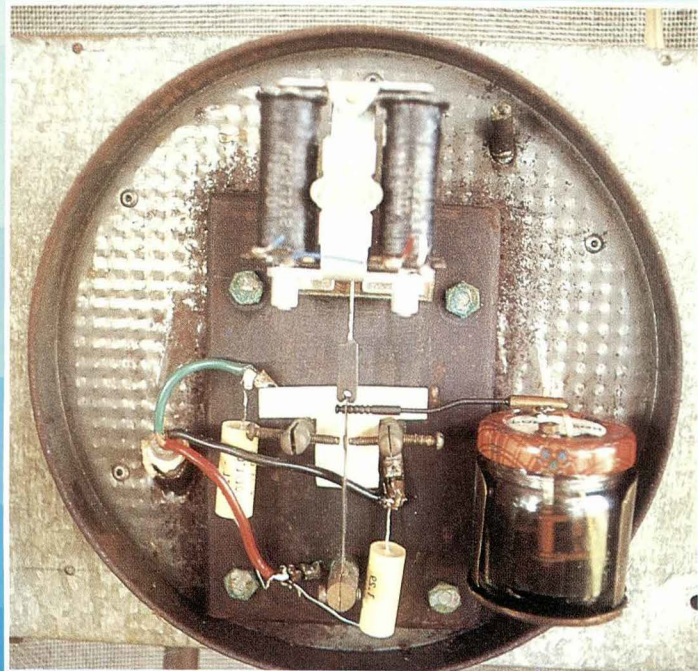
Under the El Nino phenomenon, the normally cold waters off the South American coast are reversed every two to

seven years, resulting in warming of the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. Fisher-folk of South America named it El Nino, meaning baby or newborn (supposedly referring to the Christ Child, as changes typically begin near Christmas). The El Nino is linked with the Southern Oscillation, a global seesaw of pressure with its ends in the eastern and western Pacific.

The combination can result in serious disruption to the fishing industry of Peru and Ecuador, drought in Australia, Africa and India, devastating storms on the west coast of the United States, and losses worth billions of dollars to primary industry. This link is a new concept advanced by oceanographers and other scientists who are investigating the interaction of oceans and atmosphere to produce climate.

Len's tide gauge was one of

Left Len Smith, innovative oceanographer. **below** Len's homemade tide staff did the job; and so did his tide gauge made from a jam jar!



only two in operation on mainland Papua New Guinea during the 1982-83 ENSO event. The other was at a Belgian research station on Laing Island near Bogia.

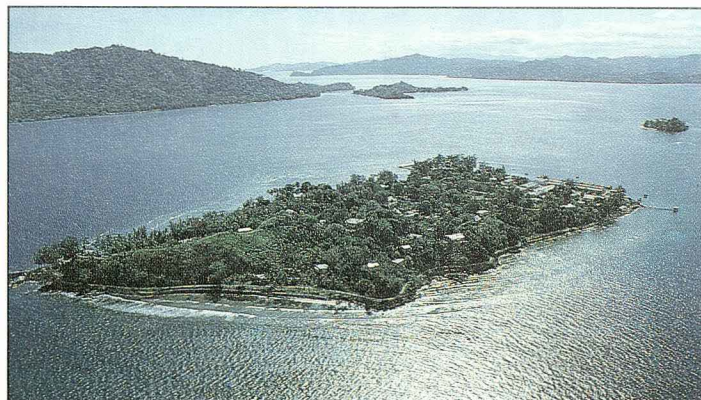
CSIRO scientists approached Len for his records after hearing about his work. His recording station formed a link in what now has developed into an international network of sea-level gauges that will be maintained for the 10-year period of a Tropical Oceans and Global Atmosphere (TOGA) program, which began in 1984. Australia, the USA and France are participating in the study, and in 1984-85 the CSIRO Division of Oceanography extended the network in the equatorial Pacific into the region to the north of Australia.

In the western Pacific, sea-level stations have been installed at Port Moresby, Alotau, Lae, Madang, Wewak, Manus Island and Kavieng. Others are in the eastern Indian Ocean at Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island and, in association with Bakosurtanal (the Indonesian



survey agency) at Pelabuhan Ratu, South Java.

The tide gauges are similar to those which have been in use around the globe for at least 100 years (but not necessarily quite as ingenious as those of Len Smith). They employ a system in which a float measures the water level within a stilling well. This well is usually a long tube with a small hole at its base to allow the passage of water in and out, acting as a filter to dampen wave motion.



Clockwise from left Modern tide gauge at Alotau; Samarai Island; Ken Ridgway and tide gauge at Madang; and Ken with Len Smith's now-famous butcher paper.



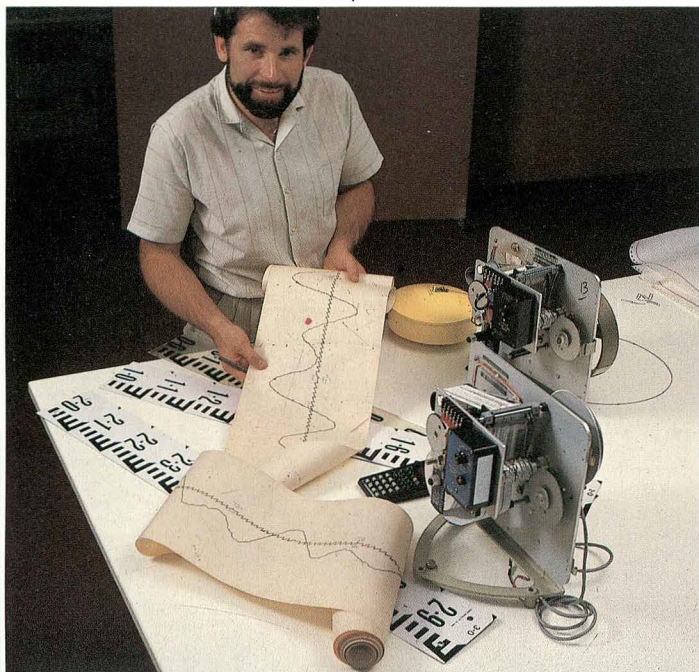
Tides can be measured over a range of 10 metres with an accuracy of 1 cm and are recorded on punched paper tape (not butcher's paper!) at 15-minute intervals. Timing is controlled by a quartz crystal oscillator.

At each location a local tide observer is responsible for daily maintenance and supervision of the gauge. His main task is to make regular comparisons of the instrument reading of sea level with that indicated by an adjacent visual tide staff, the position of which has been fixed with reference to an external benchmark.

Each month the observer sends the tape to the Division of Oceanography in Hobart for processing. It will take at least 10 years of continuous records before scientists can begin to understand how sea-level differences from one year

to the next are related to climatic changes.

Their results will be based on sound scientific investigation, but there is no doubt that jeweller-cum-ocean observer, Len Smith, still may be called upon for his input in the future.



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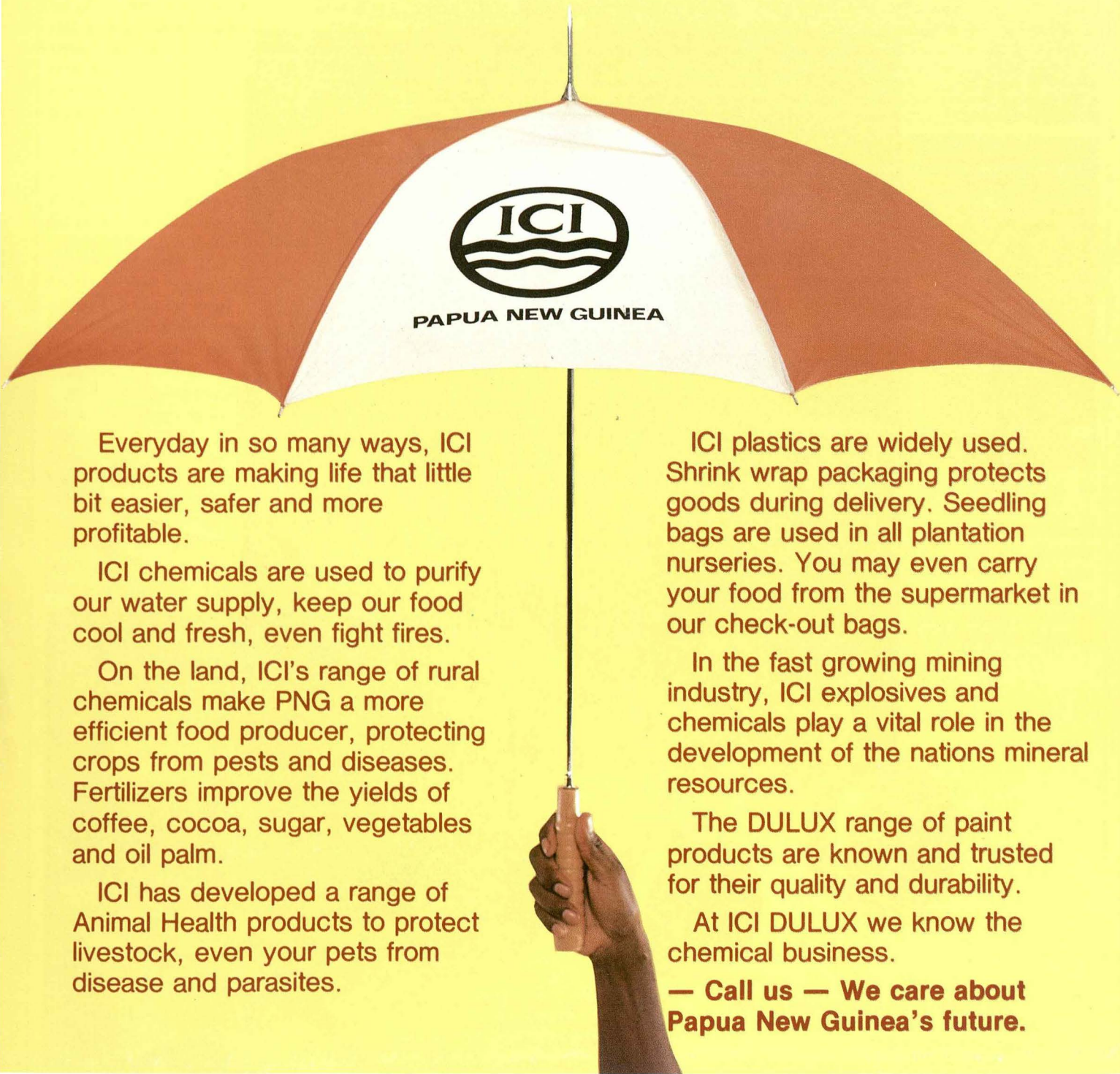
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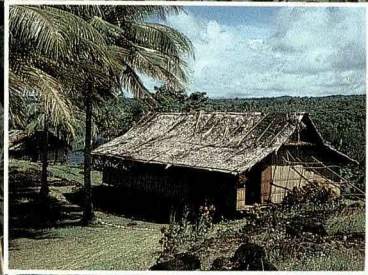
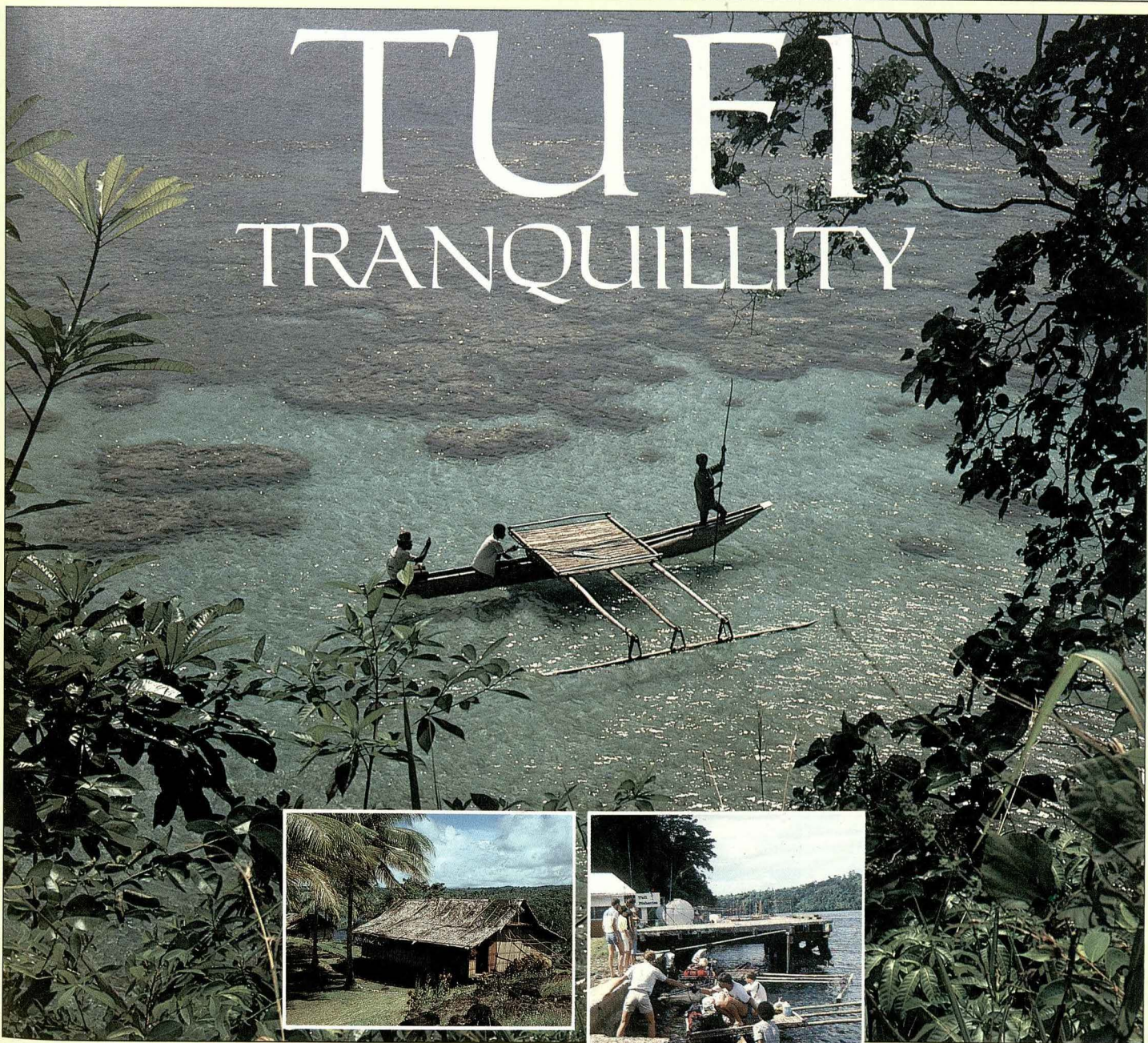
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TUFI

TRANQUILLITY



Story and photographs by Trevor Smythe

Robinson Crusoe would have felt at home at Tufi, where usually the only sounds to be heard are those of nature. Peace and serenity are preserved in this delightful place far from the madding crowd. It is an ideal spot to relax under a palm tree, to day dream while the sunlight shimmers on white sandy beaches.

Tufi lies at the tip of Cape Nelson which juts into the Solomon Sea and is just a short flight by light aircraft from Port Moresby. From the air one appreciates the miles of beaches that stretch away on either side

of the landing strip and settlement. Deep-channel fiords, like spider legs, cut deep into the land, their entrances from the sea protected by reefs.

Hospitality and friendliness are bywords at Tufi where visitors are welcomed by the easy-going populace. The locals enjoy contact with outsiders who can wander at ease among the villagers and perhaps watch them prepare their staple, sago, or stitch leaves for traditional-style dwellings. Tufi people are ever ready to give lessons on the intricacies of their Korafe language. The people of this language group live in the area

which extends between, and includes, the villages of Angorogo and Siu.

At intervals between the two villages are the guest houses Kofure, Komoa, Konambu,

Scenes of idyllic Tufi, a quiet backwater where residents and visitors share a peaceful and unhurried existence.



Top Mangroves are reflected in the still waters of a channel running from the fiord **above**. **Inset** Villagers stitch together palm fronds on the beach to make a new roof.

Tainabuna and Jebo each with its own private beach.

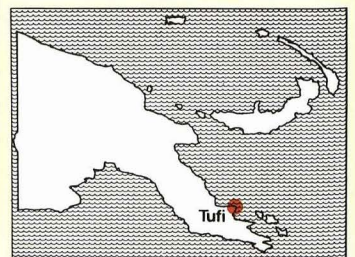
Outrigger canoes are the standard mode of transport and they constantly ply between the fiords and the beaches. Visitors who like to explore can easily persuade boatmen to take detours into narrow channels thick with mangroves where wildlife,

including large lizards, is abundant.

For three months of the year, June through August, the "eva yaura", a sea wind, blows. For the rest of the time only gentle breezes caress land and sea. The air is clear to the horizon where Goodenough Island appears like an illusion. The waters reveal the color and beauty of fish and corals, inviting divers to revel in an undersea wonderland.

This is the environment of rock fish who circle the coral ledges stacked tier upon tier. It is the home of puffer fish which seem to stare resentfully at human intruders. Shy moray eels share the reefs with crayfish whose antennae protrude like straws from their hiding places. Patrolling nearby and in the deep channels are tuna, barracuda, red emperor, spanish mackerel, turtles and rays.

Evenings are enchanting at Tufi as the shadows darken on romantic vistas. Perching birds and nestlings chatter in the tree tops and the moving tide whispers along the shore. To sit on a thatched hut verandah with a meal of sea food and to watch and listen is to be at peace with the world. Tufi is a retreat where the beauty of nature and undisturbed tranquillity reign supreme.



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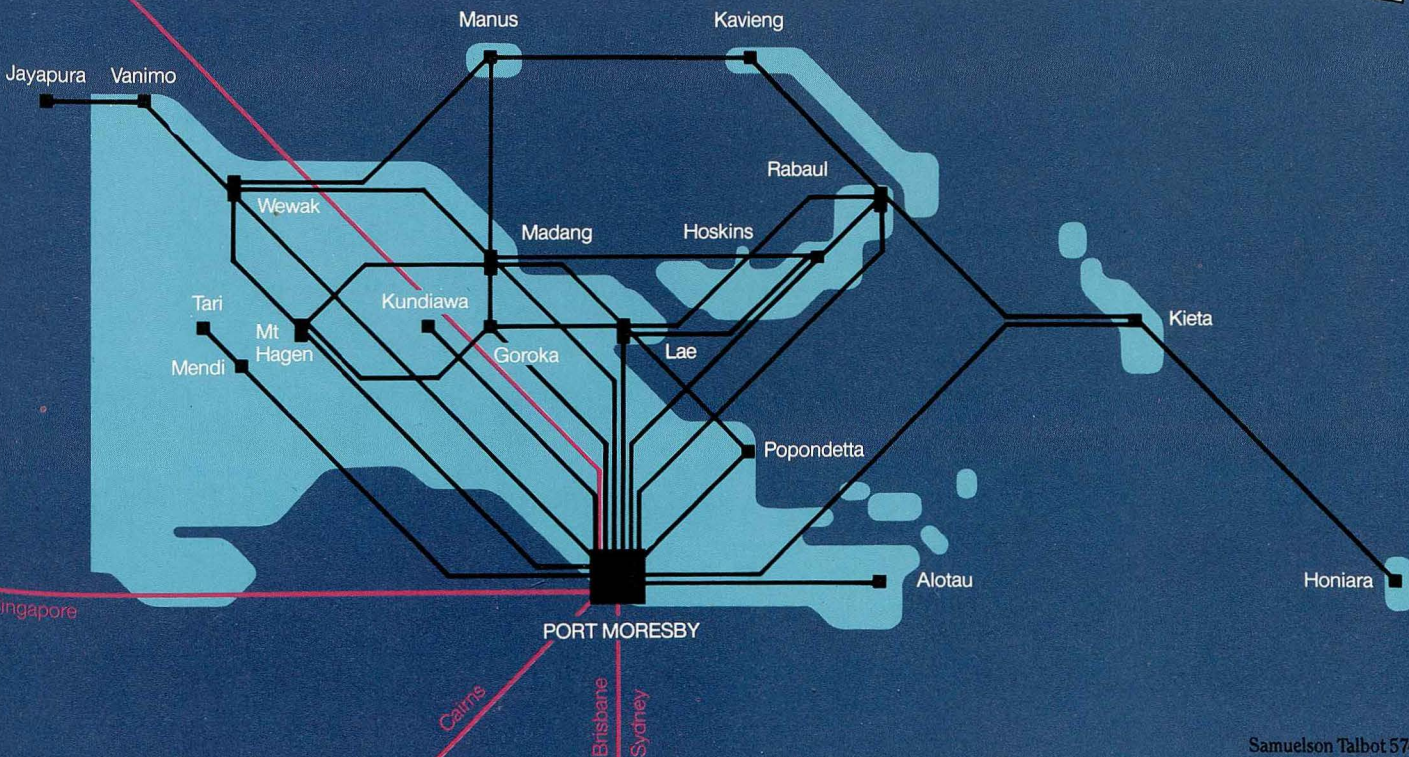
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broad black stripe down the centre of its back, has already been bred at La Trobe University.

Little is known of the habits of *Murexia rothschildi*. These fast moving predatory animals probably hunt for their food – mostly insects – at night. They are equally at home on the ground and in the trees but they build their nests underground. In the wild, litters of up to four young are produced.

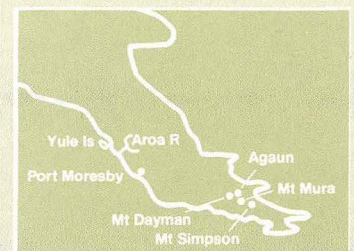
Many other small mammals live in the forests near Agaun and in 1986 several kinds of rodents were collected. One of these, *Rattus verecundus*, is closely related to the rats with which we are all familiar but, like the marsupial *Murexia rothschildi*, is found only in New Guinea. This sleek, rather slender long-nosed rat eats both plant material and insects and seems to have adapted well to life in captivity. Several litters have been produced and reared to maturity at La Trobe University.

Less familiar are the *Pogonomys*, or prehensile-tailed tree rats which, despite their common name, spend much of their time in communal nests underground. They have very long tails which they usually carry coiled over their backs as they move around. They do not appear to use the tail very much for support while climbing but they have been observed using it to carry nest material. Two kinds of these very gentle rats were collected in 1986. Both have very large eyes and dense soft fur but the two species can be easily distinguished by the color of their belly fur; that of the *Pogonomys loriae* is pure white while that of *Pogonomys sylvestris* is grey. Both species eat plant material and insects. Their communal nesting habit makes it very easy for hunters to collect them in numbers.

Another rather unusual small rat which was trapped at Agaun is *Leptomys elegans*. These rats have very small eyes and very long whiskers and their short dense fur is

Top left *Pogonomys sylvestris* grooming. **centre** *Murexia rothschildi*, a broad striped marsupial mouse. **below** The valley at Agaun.

strikingly colored, reddish brown above and white below and the tail is usually white-tipped. Very little is known of their habits. Unlike most rodents whose food consists largely of plant material, the only foods that they would eat in captivity were meat, insects and small crustaceans (prawns and yabbies). Although they are found in many parts of New Guinea they are not often collected by hunters, perhaps because they are extremely fast moving and aggressive. It is hoped that this first attempt to keep these small mammals in captivity will lead to a better understanding of their requirements for survival in the wild, in a country where increasing population will put pressure on natural resources.



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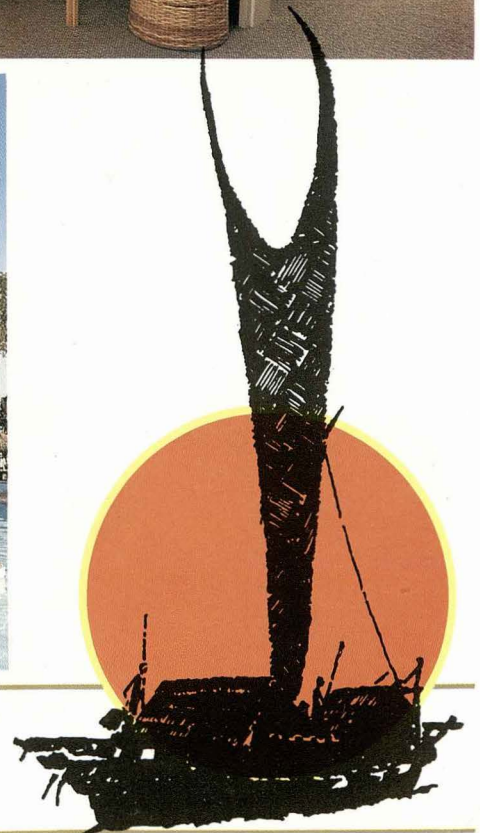
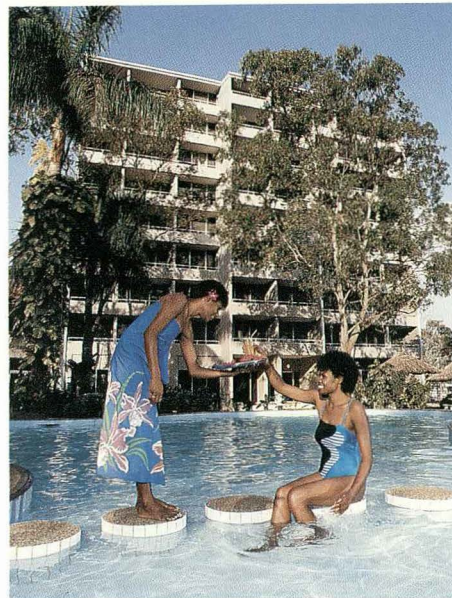
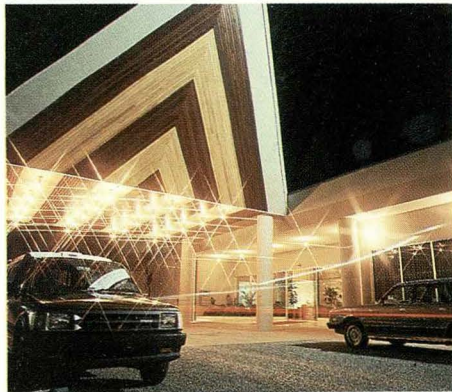
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Animals from Agaun

Story and photographs by Pat Woolley and David Walsh

Agaun Mission lies in a deeply eroded valley in the Owen Stanley Range in Milne Bay Province. Nearby are the peaks of Mt Dayman, Mt Mura and Mt Simpson. Over the years villagers living in the vicinity of Agaun have witnessed a number of expeditions by people interested in learning about the wildlife of the area.

Collection of specimens for scientific study commenced in the 1890's and for many years interest centred on the birds, butterflies and other insects, and on the beautiful orchids found in the forests. The first large collection of mammals was made in 1940 by Mr Shaw Mayer, who worked from a base camp on the northern slopes of Mt Simpson.

Among the specimens that he collected and sent to the



British Museum of Natural History in London were six of the broad-striped marsupial mouse known scientifically as *Murexia rothschildi*. Four of the six were collected on Mt Simpson and two on Mt Mura. Before this only two of these distinctively marked animals had been recorded, both of them obtained by the intrepid collector Mr Meek during his travels in 1903 into the mountains inland from the south coast of New Guinea near Yule Island. Meek obtained his two specimens near the headwaters of Aroa River and, to the present day, this area and localities near Agaun are the only known homes of *Murexia rothschildi*.

Collectors on the Fourth Archbold Expedition to New Guinea in 1953, who approached the Maneau peak of

Mt Dayman from the north, did not find the mice at any of the localities along the route but in more recent times additional specimens have been obtained on the slopes of Mt Mura and Mt Simpson. Two were collected in 1969 by the Alpha Helix Expedition, five in 1985 by a joint Bishop Museum/University of California Expedition and another eight in 1986 by the author Woolley from La Trobe University in Melbourne, bringing the total number known to science to 23.

Unlike the earlier collections, which were sent to museums, the animals collected in 1986 have been kept alive and an attempt is being made to breed them in captivity. Their close relative, the much commoner *Murexia longicaudata* which lacks the

Left *Pogonomys loriae* have distinctive white belly fur and prehensile tails. **top right** Quick, aggressive *Leptomys elegans*. **centre** *Pogonomys sylvestris* has grey belly fur. **below** *Rattus verecundus*.



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