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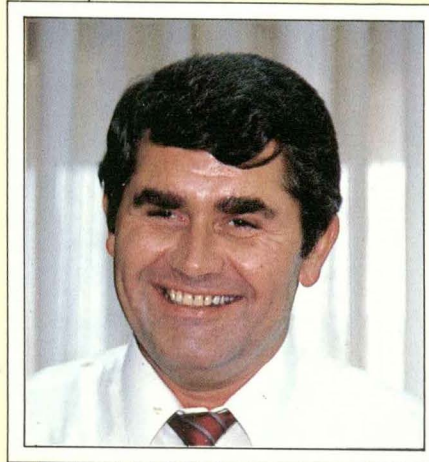
Welcome aboard,

The Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary is marking 100 years of history in 1988. In this issue we look at how the first police units were formed and how they evolved into the present modern force.

Also in this issue a scientist describes the world's largest butterfly, unique to PNG, and the steps being taken to save it from extinction. In other articles we visit the scuba diving sites of Rabaul; the dancers of East New Britain; and accompany a museum curator as she discovers the stories behind treasured artefacts.

Enjoy your flight.

Dieter Seefeld
General Manager
Air Niugini



Dieter Seefeld
General Manager
Air Niugini

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Cover: Delightful children of New Ireland (see page 5).
Photograph by Kevin Glennon.

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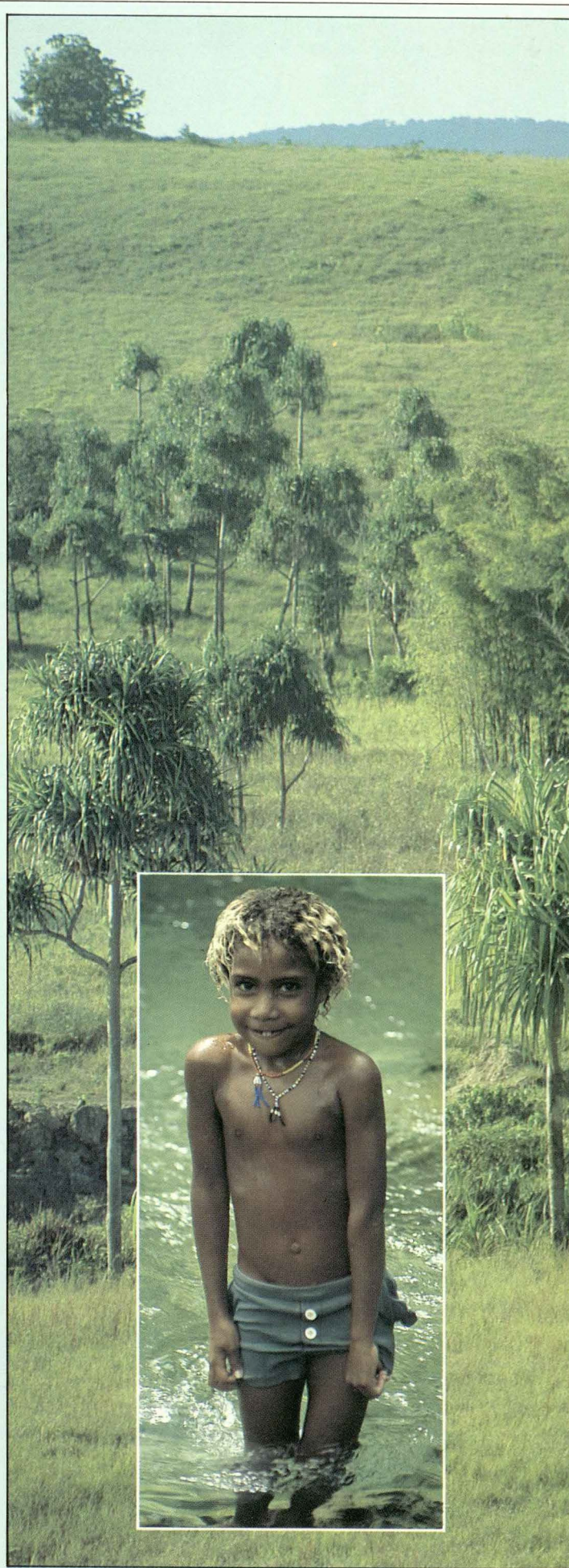


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Story and photographs by Kevin Glennon

New Ireland



There's a certain, inherent tranquillity in New Ireland. Perhaps it's the way the coastal road ribbons past picturesque villages, framed by the South Pacific. Maybe it's the central spine of mountains running almost the length of the island, rising steeply to stand sentinel over its inhabitants. Or it could be the lack of television, telephones and sealed roads that lends an aura of other worldliness, a sense that London, New York and even Port Moresby are separated from the island in time.

New Ireland forms part of the Bismarck Archipelago, a string of small coral islands, massive landforms, volcanoes and rainforests. The islands arch from the Papua New Guinean mainland up to the Equator. Captain William Morrell on his voyage aboard the "Antarctic" to the Bismarck Archipelago in search of beche-de-mer (sea slug), wrote on November 4, 1830:

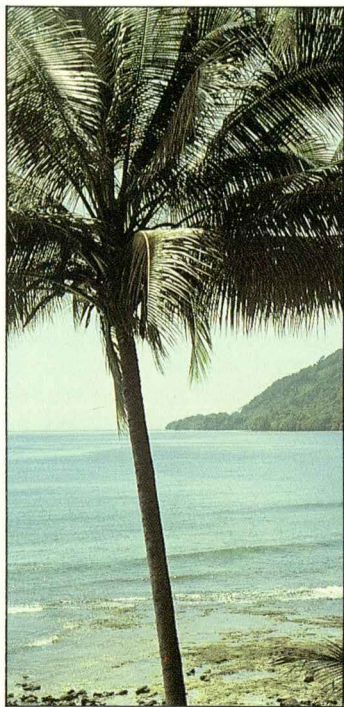
"We continued through St George's Channel, which is formed by the west side of New Ireland and the east side of New Britain. This channel of strait has been justly represented by Captain Carteret as being the most beautiful passage ever formed by nature.

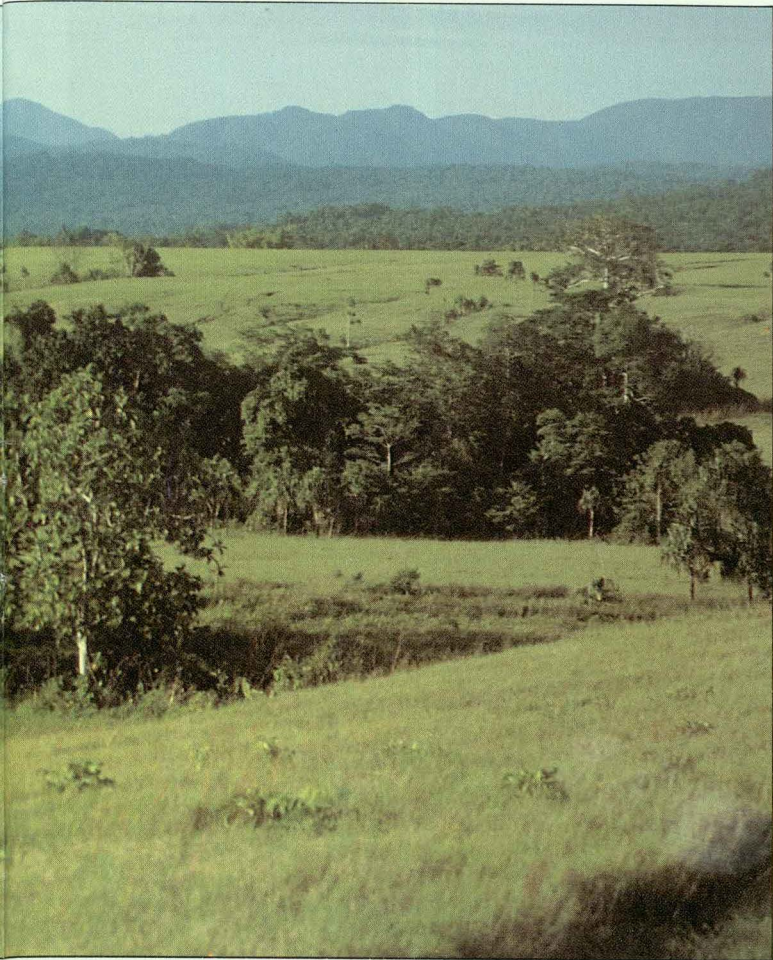
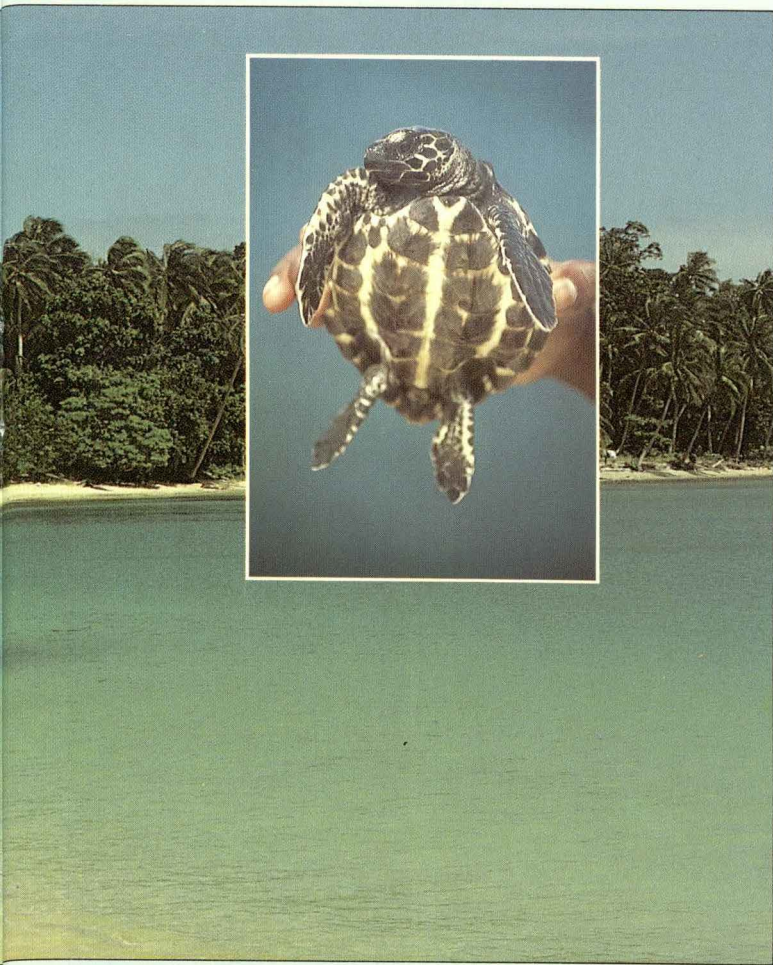
"The lofty hills on each side, which appear to tower above the clouds, are covered to their very summits with forests of gigantic growth. These mighty eminences, in their gradual descent towards the shores, gently decline into an undulating surface of plains and valleys, swilling mounds, level lawns, and meadows of the deepest green. These are intersected with crystal streams, and interspersed with groves of the richest foliage; fruits, flowers, plants, and herbs, besides many valuable drugs and minerals."

At the time of Morrell's enthusiastic writings, the New Ireland inhabitants were oblivious to the growing foreign interest in their land.

Centuries of complex social mores, art and malangan

Preceding page Young New Irelander pauses midstream; against a background of coastal grasslands. **top** White sandy beaches at Huris in southern New Ireland. **bottom** Grassy plains separate the beaches from the mountains. **insets** Coconut palms fringe the shore (**left**) and a malangan carving (**below**).





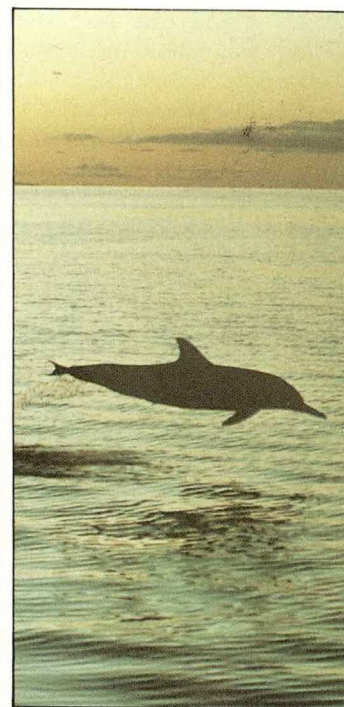
preceded the European blunderbuss. The acclaimed malangan, which has its home in northern and central New Ireland, is the general name for a complex series of ritual ceremonies carried out for varied purposes but mainly as a mortuary ritual. Carvings created as an integral part of malangan have been described as among the most intricate and brilliantly original Pacific ethnic art. They generally display a fundamental feature of society – its moiety (two parts) organisation.

New Ireland society is divided in two: one half under a big bird (sea eagle or amningulai) and the other under a small bird (hawk or tarangau). Marriage must be to a member of the opposite moiety and descent is matrilineal.

In 1985, the Papua New Guinea Philatelic Bureau issued a series of stamps depicting the complex malangan carvings termed the Nombowai Artefacts because they were hidden in a cave where Awai the snake lives. The carvings portray the moiety of the deceased person. According to a malangan researcher they reflect mortality by visible rib bones and an open mouth with lips uncovering the teeth in a grin of death.

This complex malangan culture did not develop in total isolation. Evidence of extensive early trade has been discovered in archeological sites in New Ireland and the Bismarck Archipelago. Obsidian, a hard vitreous volcanic stone used in tools, was traded to various locations in New Ireland from Talasea in New Britain and Lou Island in the Admiralties. Early development of efficient means of ocean transport was simplified by these extensive trading patterns.

Today, trading systems are obviously different from those which allowed exchange of obsidian and other trade items. Trucks, planes, and coastal vessels take days that previously took years. Cargo



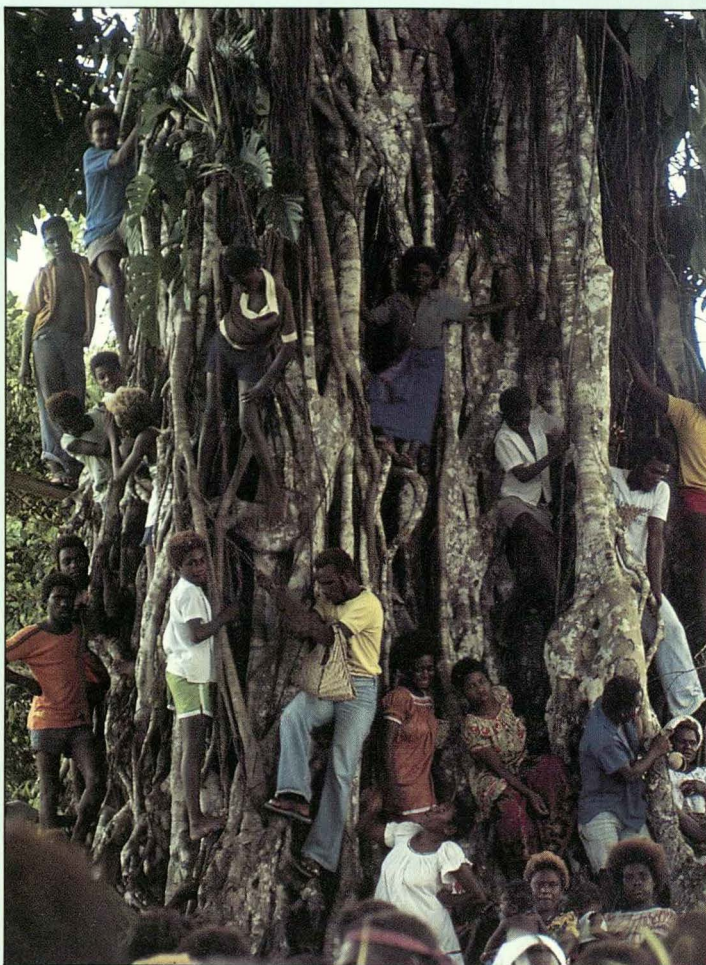
Insets Juvenile green turtle being raised to replenish wild stock (top left) and a dolphin playing at sunset (above).

also has changed. Cash crops, such as copra and cocoa, move in one direction and trade-store consumer items and various hardware in the other.

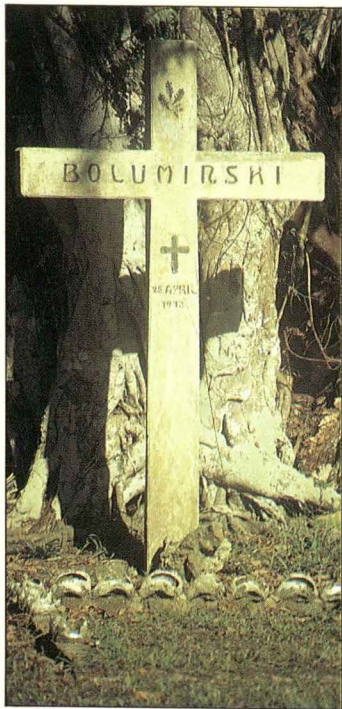
From its beginnings under the German administration which established plantations early this century, copra production increased from about 7,000 tonnes in the immediate post World War I period to 20,000 tonnes in 1940, just before World War II came to New Ireland. By 1969, annual production rose to 28,000 tonnes of which around 30 per cent was smallholder produced. In 1987, production dropped to 16,500 tonnes. In part this change was caused by depressions in the industry.

Cocoa, cattle, rubber and coffee play relatively minor roles as cash crops on New Ireland. Because of the heavy dependence on copra, fluctuations in copra prices have a significant effect on the island's general economic activity. On Leldet Plateau, nearly halfway down the island, a cool climate at 1,000 metres above sea level enables production of a wide variety of vegetables and efforts are being made to further develop this area. Significant amounts of time and labor are expended on subsistence agriculture in rural areas. Logging of natural rainforests also has occurred in various permit areas. Reassessment by the local landowners is now taking place in light of the level of royalties paid and the environmental damage which accompanies uncontrolled logging.

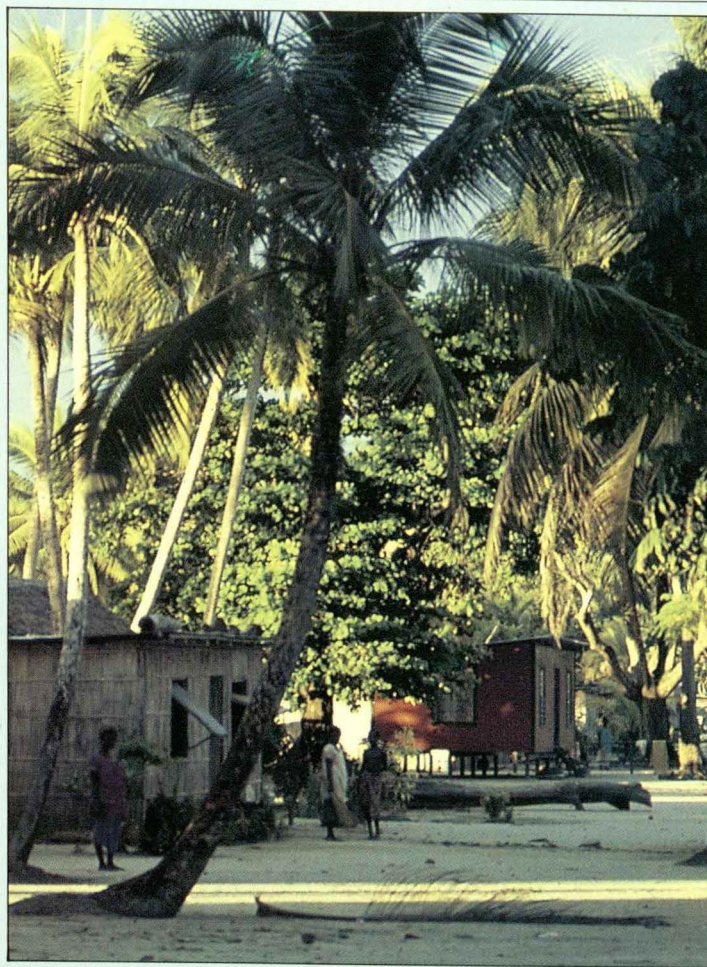
For the tourist, New Ireland's attraction lies in the people and their environment. The island defies a definitive description. The harborside road in Kavieng, the main town at the northern end of the island, is splendid, following the curves of the beautifully calm Nusa Harbor and with old, majestic raintrees overhead. Graceful and sleek, outboard-powered mons slice through the water, travelling to



Top left New Ireland singing group celebrates a church opening. **bottom left** Banyan tree becomes a grandstand for the singing audience. **above** New Ireland butterfly on bamboo.



Top right Typical New Ireland village. **bottom right** Bright blooms at Silom Catholic Church. **above** Grave of colonist Franz Boluminski who started the road that now bears his name.



the morning market. During the south-east monsoon, from June to October, crayfish are abundant at the Kavieng market. Delicious mud crabs, collected from the mangrove forests throughout the year, and plentiful seafood provide a gourmet's feast.

In villages, New Irelanders give friendly receptions to visitors. Children display uninhibited curiosity. Everywhere, broad expanses of coral coast front blue ocean and are backed by plantations, gardens and rainforests. The rainforest can be a strange sensation – the sun not visible but its light filtering through the luxuriant foliage, until it rests on the littered forest floor. All around are endless shades of brown and green.

Recent history has left its mark. During World War II New Ireland was in the front line of the Japanese southward advance. Following heavy air attacks, the Japanese landed on January 23, 1942, in a predawn attack and quickly established control. Kavieng was turned into a major base. Rusting tanks, naval and anti-aircraft guns are silent reminders of this time. For the scuba diver, wrecked seaplanes, ships and submarines lie at shallow depths in clear water at various points along the coast.

New Ireland is an island of contrasts. The stifling heat of the midday sun is relieved by a refreshing and intense tropical downpour in the afternoon. Trucks and utilities carrying bags of smoke-dried copra line up outside the Copra Marketing Board depot: some new, almost straight from the car salesman's yard, and others, skewed, twisted and bent, their bumpers held on with wire. Radios exist with kundu drums; simple outrigger canoes share the water with fume-laden work boats.

New Ireland is an island remote and away from regular tourist spots, but well worth a visit.

Air Niugini operates regular services to Kavieng from Port Moresby and other centres.

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PIONEER POLICE

Story by Molly McGuire

Papua New Guinea's first policemen explored and mapped the country while maintaining law and order among the people. They were also a civilising influence as they extended their patrols into the hinterland, acting to suppress tribal acts of murder, head-hunting, cannibalism and sorcery.

The Royal Papua New

Guinea Constabulary is marking 100 years of achievement this year. A century on from their beginnings, the problems they confront are those of any modern police force in a modern society.

PNG's first official guardians of the law were outsiders, appointed by a Scot, William McGregor, the Administrator of British New Guinea, when

he took up his position in 1888. He brought in 12 Solomon Islanders and two Fijians, all experienced in police work, to form the Native Armed Constabulary. He then augmented them with Papuans.

PNG 100 years ago was two colonies, British New Guinea (Papua) and German New Guinea. The German colony's

constabulary was formed in 1895 from a group of 24 original officers whose numbers soon swelled to 1,000. The police of the two colonies merged after World War II.

Although the first official, uniformed police in PNG were outsiders, the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary is now the most localised of



Members of the
Armed Native
Constabulary of
British New Guinea
in the 1890s.



Government departments. Only 30 expatriates, mostly British, serve in a force which has a strength of close to 5,000 men and women.

Sir William McGregor is considered to be the founding father of the Armed Native Constabulary of British New Guinea.

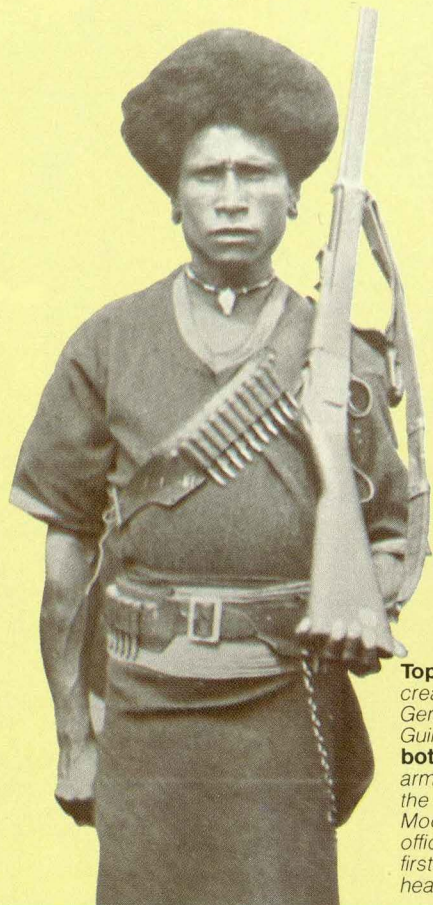
"Short, square, slightly bald, speaking with a strong Scottish accent, showing signs of overwork and the ravages of malaria, there was nothing in the first appearance of the man to stamp him as being out of the ordinary, but I had not been three minutes in his cabin before I realised that I was in the presence of a master of men – a Cromwell, a Drake, a Caesar or Napoleon – his keen grey eyes looking clean through me, and knew that I was being summed and weighed. Once, and only once in my life, have I felt that a man was my master in every way, a person to be blindly obeyed and one who must be right and infallible, and that was when I met Sir William McGregor."

The words were written by Captain Monkton who was to

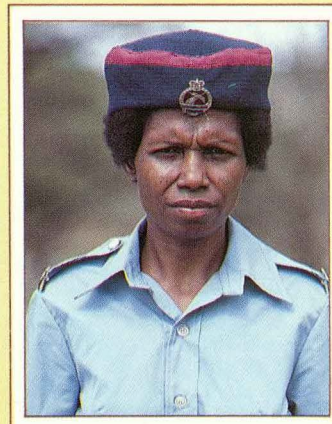
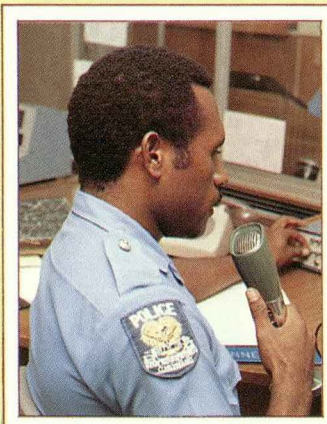
become author of two famous books based on his experience as a Resident Magistrate of British New Guinea. When Monkton formed these impressions, he was only a young man of 23, but he never had reason to change his mind about the character of the Lieutenant Governor, Sir William McGregor.

Monkton's impressions were not wrong. History has shown McGregor to be a "model of what a Colonial Governor should be". He was ever concerned for the wellbeing and future of those he governed. He expressed concern about the futures of primitive people as diverse as New Guineans, Eskimos and Australian Aborigines at a time when such a view was extraordinary.

William McGregor was born into a poor Scottish farming family in 1846. Because he was intelligent, gifted and hard-working he was encouraged by the local headmaster to attend school. He later attended university and trained to be a doctor. Soon after he completed his training he joined the British Colonial



Top Dr Albert Hahl, creator of the German New Guinea police.
bottom Papuan armed constable of the 1890s. **right** Modern police officers; Dr Hahl's first police headquarters.



Service and served for 15 years as a Medical Officer and Administrator in the Seychelles, Mauritius and Fiji. His hard work and talent won the approval of his superiors. On arrival in British New Guinea, he had 15 years' service and was well qualified to administer the new British colony.

McGregor and his police did a magnificent job of exploration and pacification and patrolled much of Papua to bring the rule of law into violent areas. Police helped map rivers, climbed mountains and were the first explorers to cross the country from north to south.

McGregor and his police did a great deal to establish Government influence through their patrols, and maintained control by appointing Resident Magistrates and Village Constables in various districts.

McGregor was knighted and made Lieutenant Governor in 1895. He left New Guinea in 1898 and was later posted to Lagos, Newfoundland and Queensland before he retired. He eventually returned to Scotland in 1914 but retained a keen interest in Papua until his death in 1919 at the age of 73.

The German New Guinea police were the creation of Dr Albert Hahl who was born in Germany on 10 September, 1868. Soon after graduating from University with a Doctorate in Law in 1894, he joined the German Colonial Service and at the age of 27 was appointed as Imperial Judge in the Bismarck Archipelago. He became Vice-Governor of the East Caroline Islands in 1899, and on his return to

Kokopo, worked as acting Governor. He was appointed Governor of New Guinea in 1902.

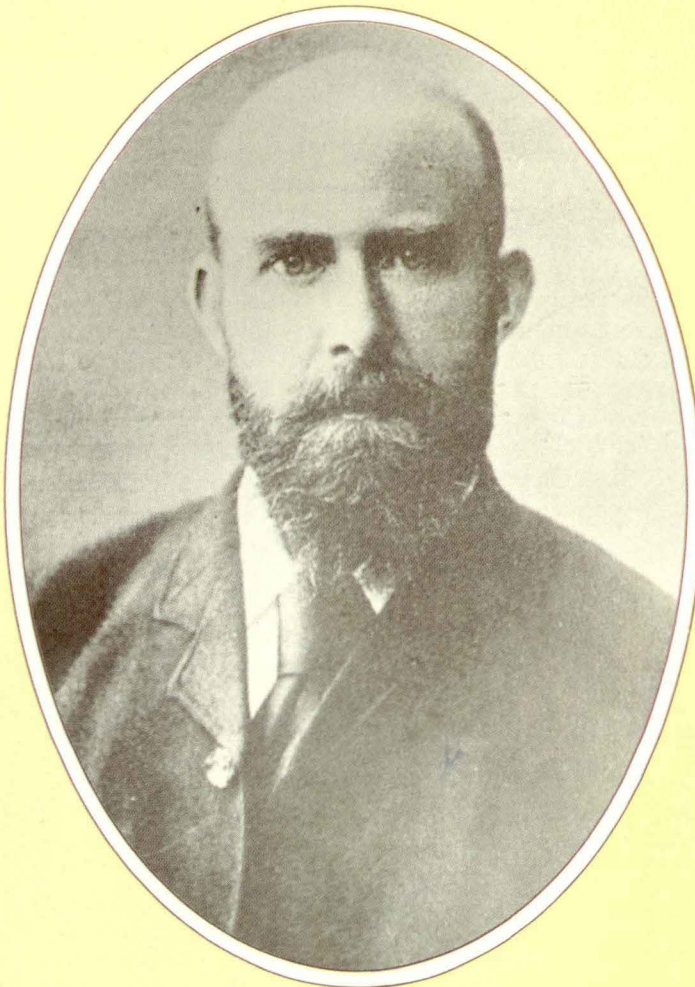
Hahl's term of office expired in 1914. He was in Germany when World War I broke out and German New Guinea passed in to Australian hands ending German control in the Pacific.

He was considered to be the most successful of all the German Colonial Governors, physically courageous, intelligent, kind and humane.

The main work of his force was to make contact with the people, suppress head-hunting, cannibalism, tribal-fighting, murder, sorcery and crime related to attacks on German settlements, enforcement of labor laws and the collection of head tax.

Hahl maintained his control of contacted areas by appointing headmen as Luluais and Tultuls. The Luluai was a sort of Village Magistrate and the Tultul assisted him. They were responsible for tribal matters but reported other crimes to Hahl or to his German Police Masters, stationed in the area. Each Police Master had his own police troop and they received the same pay and training as Hahl's own men stationed at headquarters, Kokopo, later shifted to Rabaul.

The German Government gave Luluais and Tultuls the power to judge minor disputes in the village and to recruit men for road building. They were also responsible for keeping the village clean and tidy and had to collect head tax from each villager. The Luluai



Top Sir William McGregor, founder of the British New Guinea police.
bottom Police officer of 25 years ago. **left** British officer with original Papuan Armed Constabulary.

received no pay for these duties but were allowed to keep 10 per cent of all taxes collected.

When Hahl left for Germany in 1914, he left behind a reputation for being a kindly and humane administrator. He was a man, unusual in his time, showing respect and concern for the rights of native people. Many New Guineans called him father and friend. He knew several local languages, made many foot and sea patrols, and could converse with village elders in their own language.

Until his death in Germany in 1945 he retained an interest in New Guinea and its people, and left behind a 1,000 strong police force.

Both forces continued much as they were under Australian administration up to World War II when the two forces joined under the title of Royal Papua Constabulary and New Guinea Police Force. The uniform of McGregor's force was retained up to 1964, when the famous Papuan navy-blue serge jumper and laplap, trimmed in crimson, without hats, was replaced by shorts

and shirts. The only reminder of the old uniform is the retention of the red-garter flash.

In 1972 the force was renamed the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary.

For police administrative purposes, PNG is now divided into five Police Command and 20 provinces with Police Headquarters in Port Moresby.

The Constabulary is headed by Commissioner Paul Tohian. He is assisted by two Deputy Commissioners, five Assistant Commissioners, Superintendents and other ranks down to

Probationary Constables. All play their parts in the extraordinary force, recognised by King George VI and later Queen Elizabeth II, as deserving of the honor of having the prefix 'Royal', bestowed in recognition of its long and meritorious work.

Photographs courtesy of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary.

Below Queen Elizabeth II inspecting RPNGC Band during an official royal visit.



To honor the 100th anniversary of the police force of Papua New Guinea, the Post Office has issued a set of four stamps. The series shows the founding fathers of the two police forces of German and British New Guinea.

The 35t stamp shows the face of Sir William McGregor who founded the first regular Armed Native Constabulary of British New Guinea in 1888. Behind McGregor, stands a

member of the force in the famous V-neck uniform and laplap.

The 45t stamp shows the badges worn by the forces from 1888 to the present.

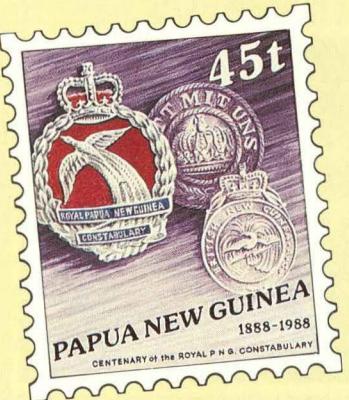
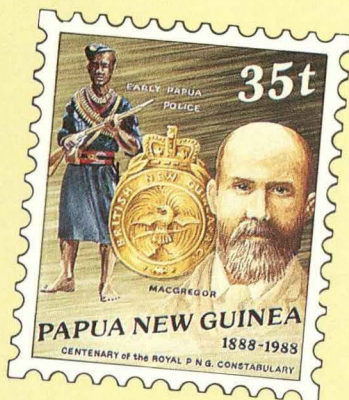
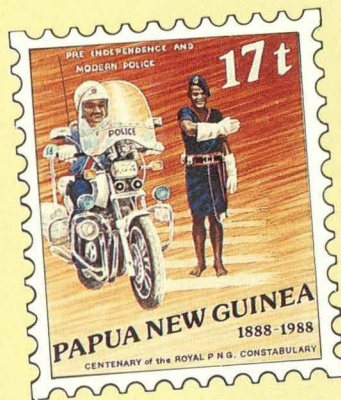
The 17t stamp shows the modern force and a constabulary member from the turn of the century. He is wearing the heavy navy-blue serge laplap and V-necked jumper, trimmed in crimson, with a crimson cummerbund worn under a broad leather Sam Brown belt

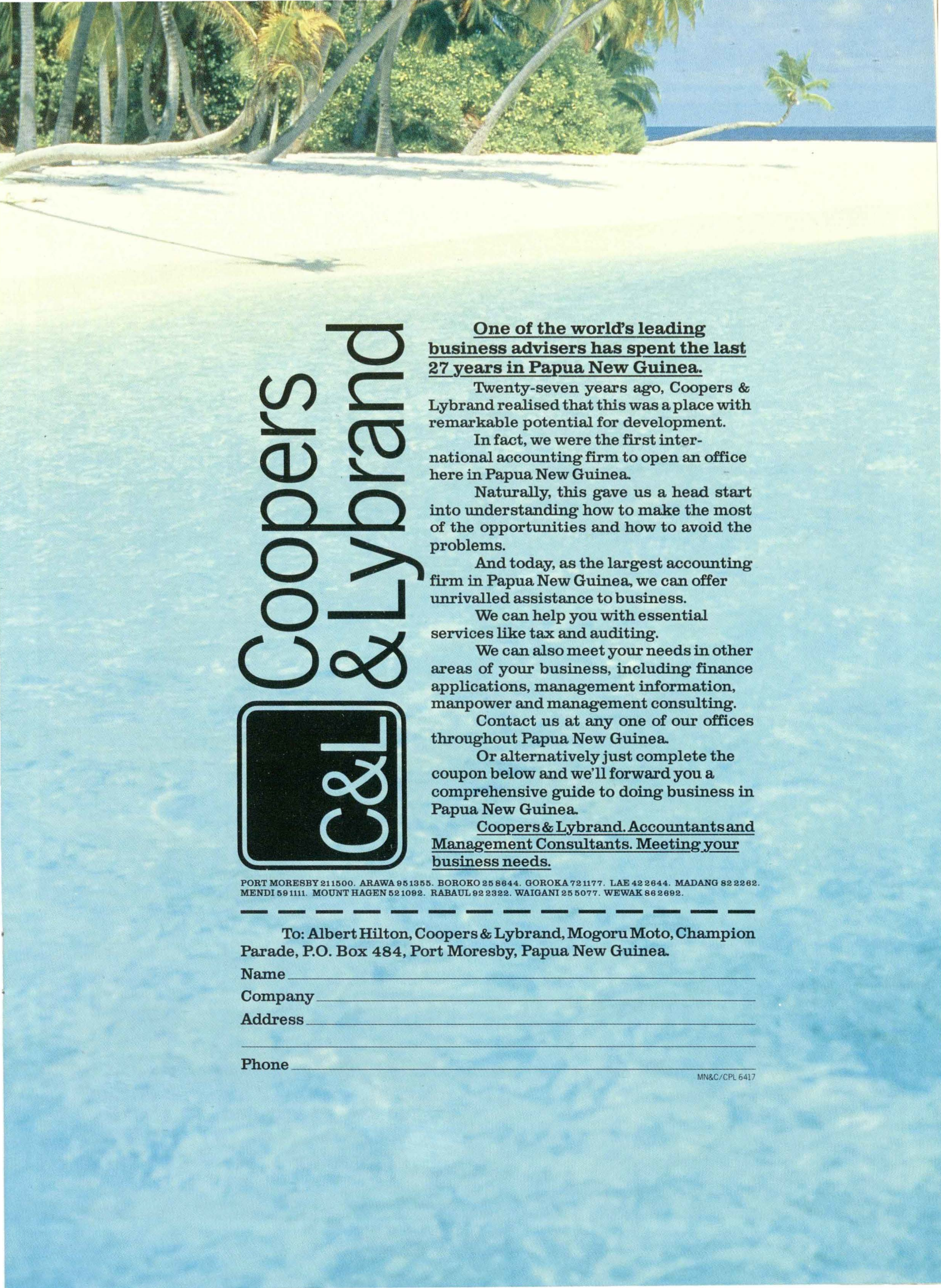
with ammunition pouch. A long brass chain is looped from the belt which could be used as simple handcuffs. This uniform remained virtually the same for 60 years up to the introduction of the modern uniform in 1964. The modern police wear a red stocking flash as a reminder of the crimson trim worn on the famous old uniform (unseen on this stamp).

The 70t stamp shows the face of Dr Albert Hahl who is


the founding father of the first force of German New Guinea. The men of his force wore a sailor-type uniform with either trousers or a serrated laplap. Most of his men were recruited from Bougainville, and trained in seamanship as most policing was done by sea. Dr Hahl armed his men with the military model rifle, Model 88 as shown on the stamp.

Stamps in honor of the Police centenary.





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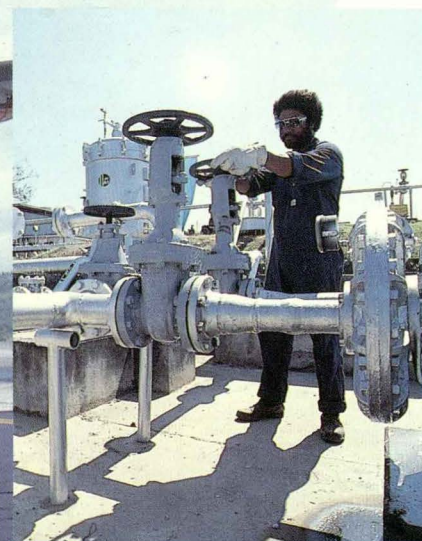
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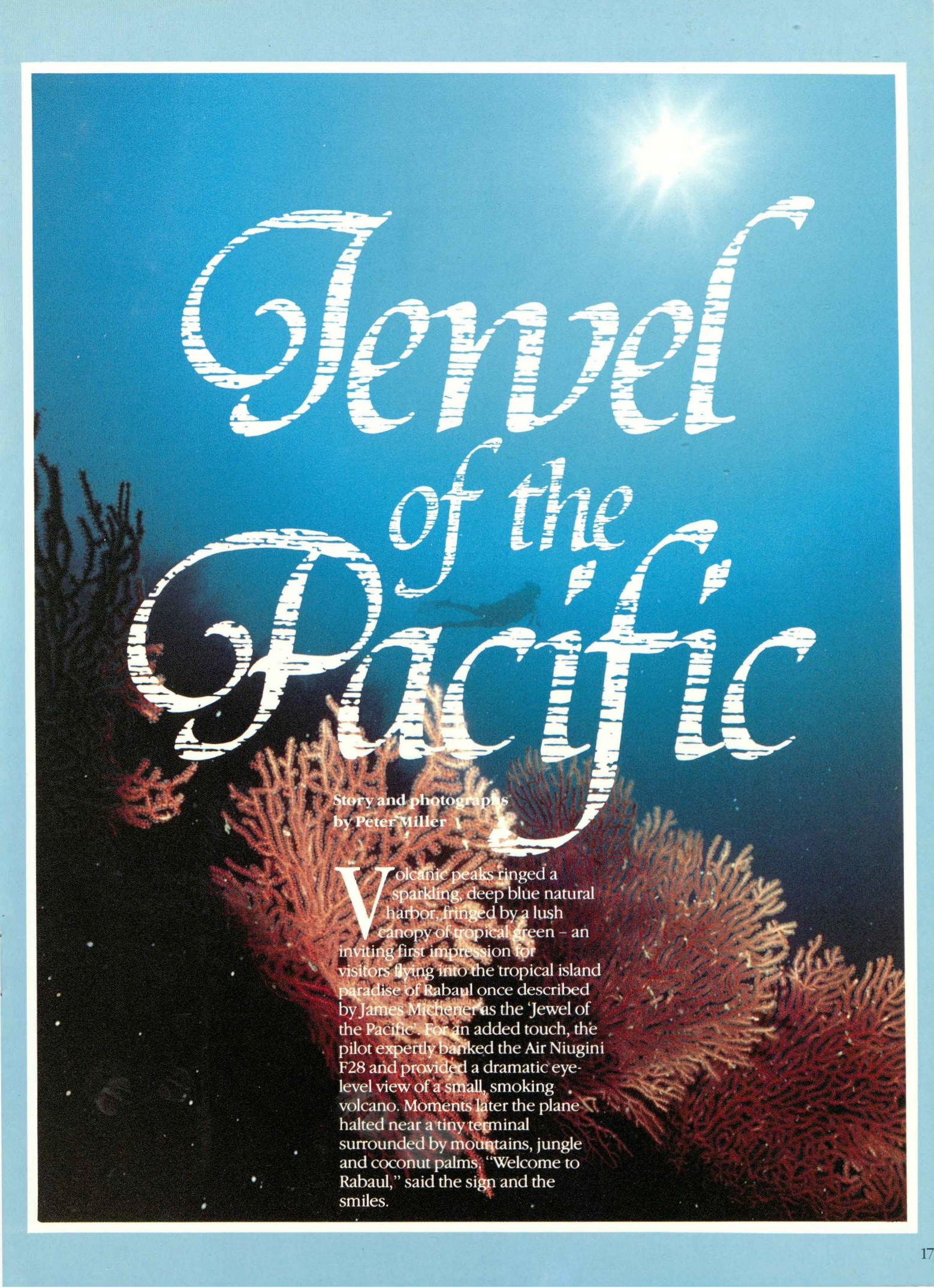
Aviation Safety is of paramount importance to Shell, and each Shell employee takes pride in the fact that for the past 1100 days, there have been no lost hours due to accident. The prior record was an amazing 1500 days.

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products used, be they fuel, oils or greases are only of the highest Shell quality — not surprising that Air Niugini's safety record matches that of Shell.



Shell



Jewel of the Pacific

Story and photographs
by Peter Miller

Volcanic peaks ringed a sparkling, deep blue natural harbor, fringed by a lush canopy of tropical green – an inviting first impression for visitors flying into the tropical island paradise of Rabaul once described by James Michener as the 'Jewel of the Pacific'. For an added touch, the pilot expertly banked the Air Niugini F28 and provided a dramatic eye-level view of a small, smoking volcano. Moments later the plane halted near a tiny terminal surrounded by mountains, jungle and coconut palms. "Welcome to Rabaul," said the sign and the smiles.

Rabaul has endured a turbulent history of destruction from war and volcanic eruption. One of the first sites of European contact and influence in Papua New Guinea, Rabaul also has a romantic history, not the least of which recounts the intriguing life and loves of American-Samoan beauty, 'Queen Emma'. Controlled in turn by Germany, Australia, Japan and again Australia, Rabaul is now the main centre for the islands region of the now proudly independent nation of PNG.

In addition to the natural tropical splendor of Rabaul, there are many attractions for both the active explorer and the quiet observer. These include exotic orchids, beautiful coral reefs, rusting war relics, an incredible underground labyrinth of war-time tunnels, bush walks, volcano climbs and big-game fishing. The town also boasts a most bountiful fresh food market. The friendly, sophisticated Tolai people of East New Britain have unique cultural traditions and typify the easy-going nature of Melanesians. Moreover, the clear, calm harbor of Rabaul, itself the deep caldera of an ancient volcano, offers one of the greatest concentrations of ship and plane wrecks known.

During World War II, Rabaul was the major naval headquarters for the

Japanese South Pacific Fleet, as well as the command centre for General Yamamoto. Allied air raids dropped 200,000 tonnes of bombs and destroyed 150,000 tonnes of shipping. It was a crucial blow to the Japanese and part of General Macarthur's winning strategy.

Today, 12 of those wrecks are considered accessible to scuba divers who thrill to these exhilarating yet haunting spectres of war. There are wrecks outside the main harbor still to be researched and located. New dive sites are being found by local operators Rabaul Dive & Tour Services who offer personal professional services to small dive groups and individuals.

Local experts, Henrietta Kikuchi and James Potau head a friendly team who cater for guests needs above and below water. Most dives are within minutes of their base and usually two dives are conducted daily, leaving plenty of time for



exploring the topside of this remarkable island.

Warm, clear, calm conditions, expert guidance, professional advice and a choice of wreck sites ranging from three to 40 metres deep, make Rabaul a feast for avid wreck divers.

Reef enthusiasts are treated to dramatic drop-offs, outstanding visibility, sharks, turtles, beautiful coral formations and marvellous varieties of fish. A night dive at the famous submarine base is one of the most thrilling of all diving experiences.

The rich offerings underwater simply augment the land attractions. Rabaul, like most of PNG, has only just come to the notice of international divers and travellers. Certainly, Rabaul is now considered one of the newest and most exciting dive destinations in the world.

Above Divers setting out from a beach. **right** Tolarua Beach, Rabaul. **left inset** Henrietta Kikuchi examines soft corals on a sunken bi-plane. **right inset** Air bubbles mark divers at the bow of Georges' Wreck.



BENSBACH RIVER

Daru FLY RIVER

Kiunga

Ok Tedi Mine

Tari PORT MORESBY Mendi

Mt Hagen

Kundiawa Vanimo

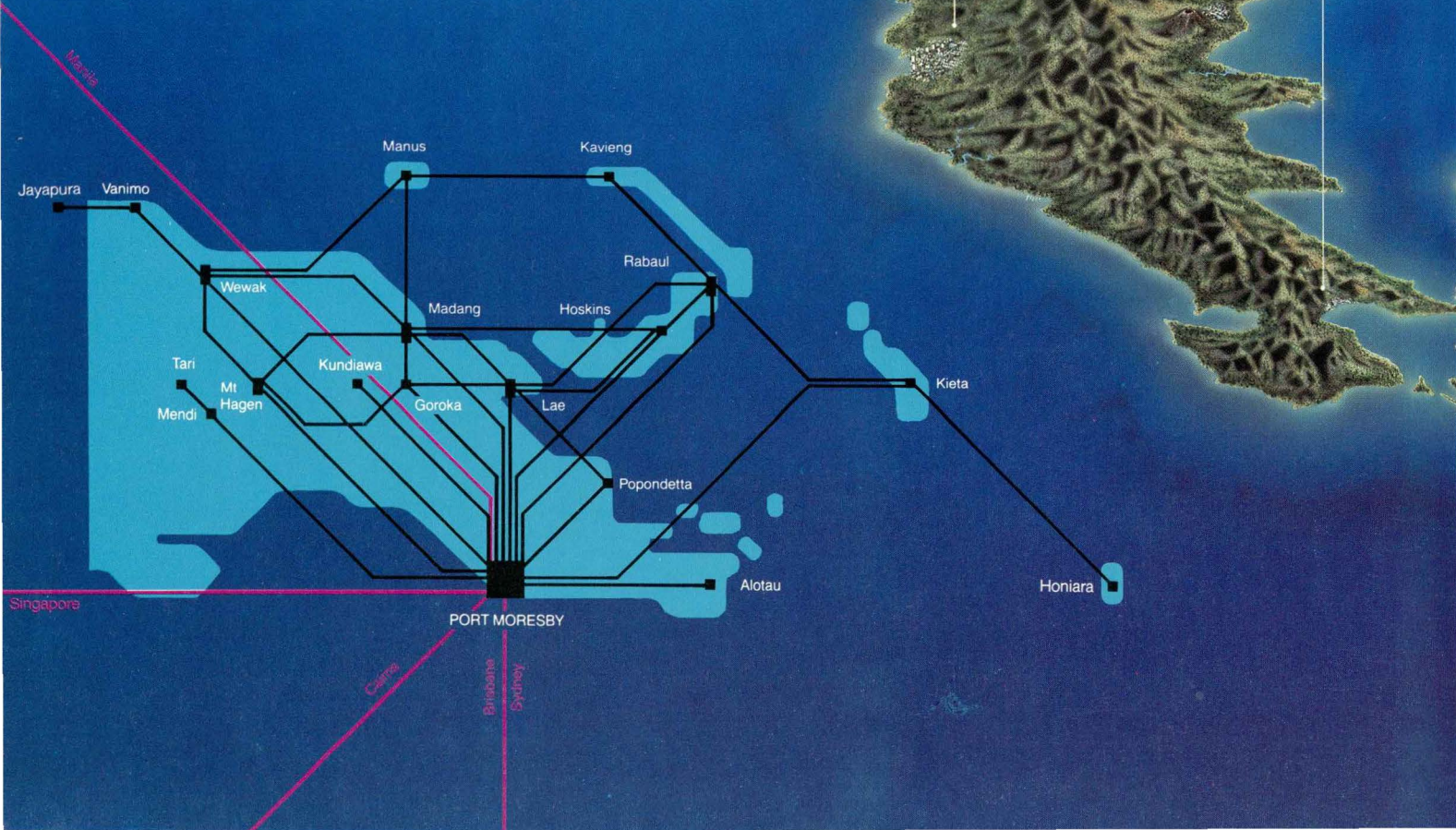
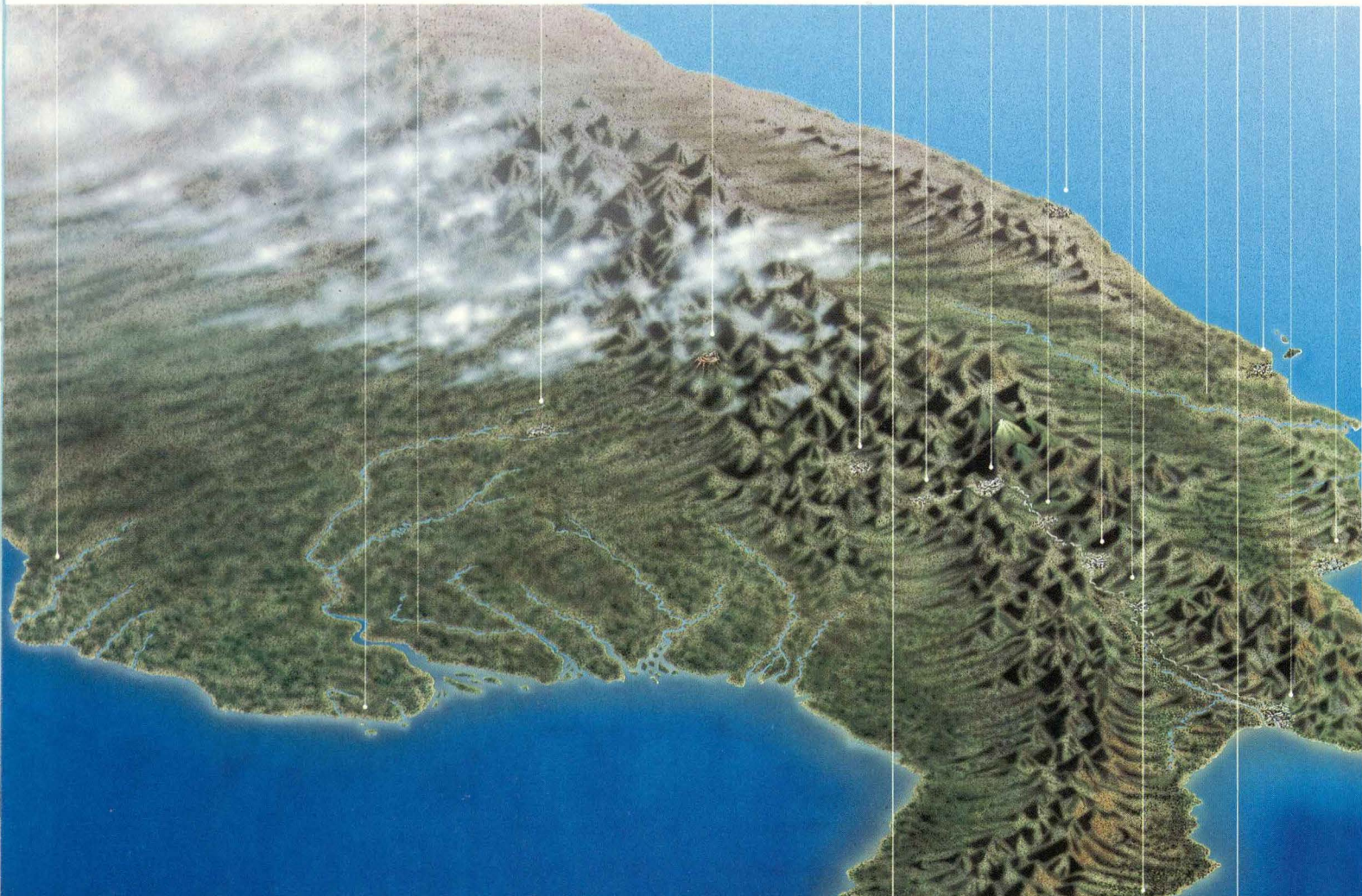
Goroka Kainantu

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SEPIK RIVER

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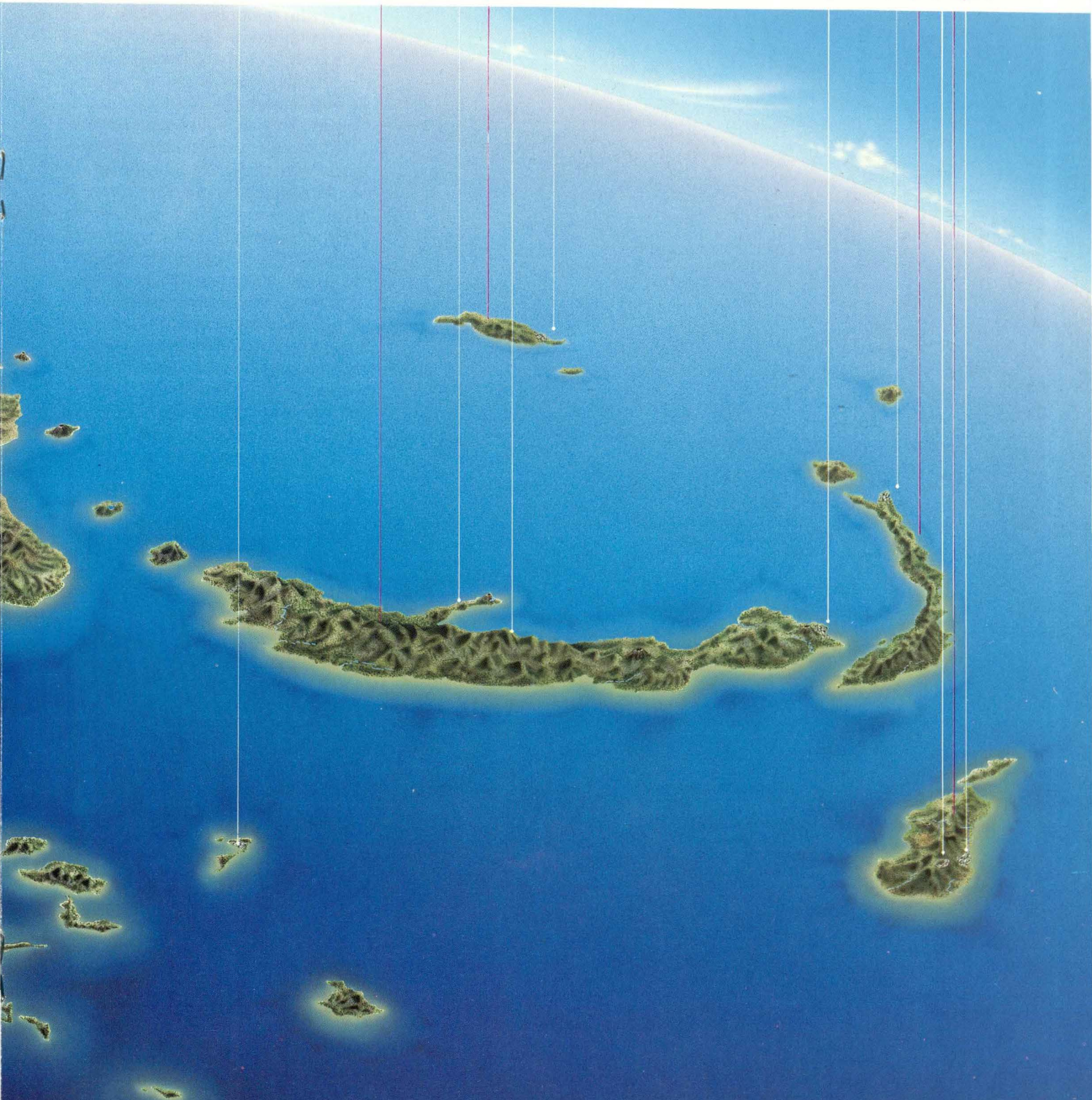
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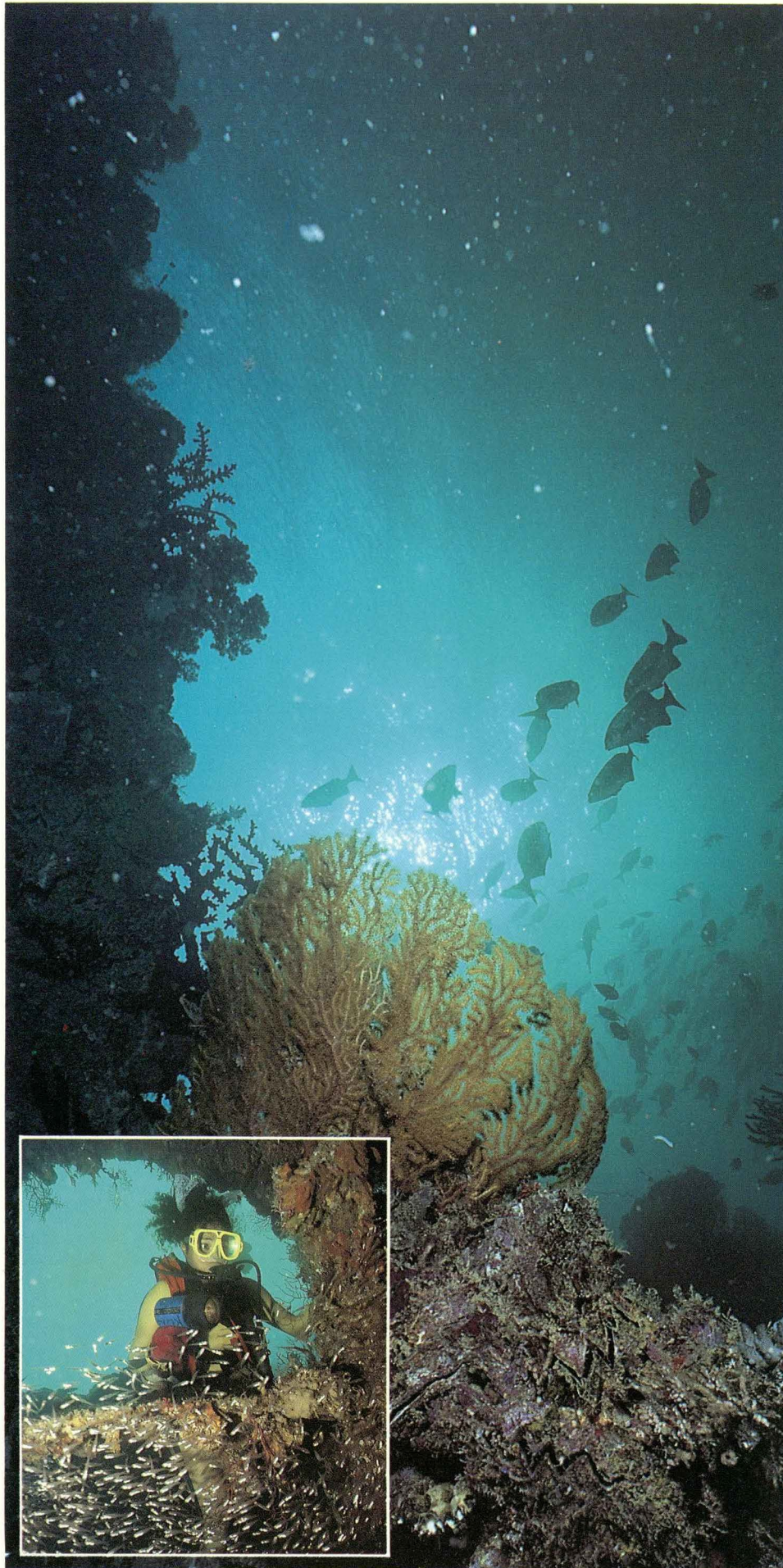
Rabaul

Kavieng
NEW IRELAND
Panguna
NORTH SOLOMONS
Kieta



Papua New Guinea

Air Niugini Route Network



On a glorious morning recently in Rabaul, a small group of excited divers were told: "Settle back folks, this is one of our longest trips. We'll have you there in about 30 minutes." With that, James Potau the dive-leader, eased the throttle forward and the boat quickly skimmed the smooth harbor. James, a shy, serious and proud Mortlock Islander, is obviously at home on the sea. This quietly spoken young man offers 16 years of diving experience in Rabaul waters.

Assured by their confident guide, the group relaxed and chatted with charming dive-mistress, Henrietta Kikuchi, throughout the boat ride. She pointed out various attractions as they cruised past two volcanic pinnacles in the main harbor, out to the open sea and the site of a Japanese shipwreck known, for want of a more accurate name as Georges' Wreck. The short, comfortable trip provided close up views of no less than five volcanic peaks.

Hugging the coastline the group encountered a pod of playful dolphins and could see on the beaches, concrete pill-boxes at regular intervals, mute evidence of Japanese occupation years ago. There were also glimpses of churches and village dwellings enveloped by tropical greenery and of laughing, waving Tolai villagers.

At the base of a towering sheer cliff, topped by swaying palms, the boat stopped and the group peered incredulously down into the clear blue at the ghostly features of a shipwreck. Suddenly it was a race to get into the water first! Henrietta profiled a safe dive plan while James ensured that buddy checks were completed as he helped the group into cumbersome scuba tanks. They both smiled at the group's eager anticipation. Down they glided, the followers passing through a brilliant, shimmering curtain of ascending bubbles released by the deeper divers.

The bow section of Georges' Wreck looms out of the depths to within 12 metres of the surface. Soft corals and colorful crynoids cling to the hull and superstructure which

has become home for an amazing kaleidoscope of marine creatures. The forward hold still contains ammunition, boots, paint tubes, saki bottles, all covered with the fine volcanic silt common to Rabaul wrecks. The funnel stack is broken, exposing a shattered engine room and the stern hold contains rusted radios and steel buoys. Georges' Wreck was once a small cable-recovery vessel of about 1,000 tonnes. She was incorporated into the Japanese Merchant Navy and fitted with a 7.5 centimetre forward cannon which, since her violent fate, has tumbled from its platform to the sea bed. Her captain must have deliberately but vainly attempted to beach her after being damaged in an attack, but his ship slid back and now lies upright on the reef incline at a spectacularly steep angle. The stern drops away into very deep

water but the whole wreck can be seen in visibility that often defies estimate.

On the reef wall opposite the wreck is a collection of fascinating sea anemones and resident clown fish which delighted the divers until dwindling air supplies forced a return to the boat. There, Henrietta and James, helpful to the last with equipment removal and storage, smiled as they parried appeals to return to the site.

"Oh, we've got so much more to show you yet," explained Henrietta and commenced to list the treats awaiting the group. "You're going to dive the Hakkai Maru, the bi-plane, the Zero, the Manko Maru, the Yamayuri Maru, the Italia Maru, the Kikosan Maru, the Kenshin Maru, the Iwate Maru, the . . ."

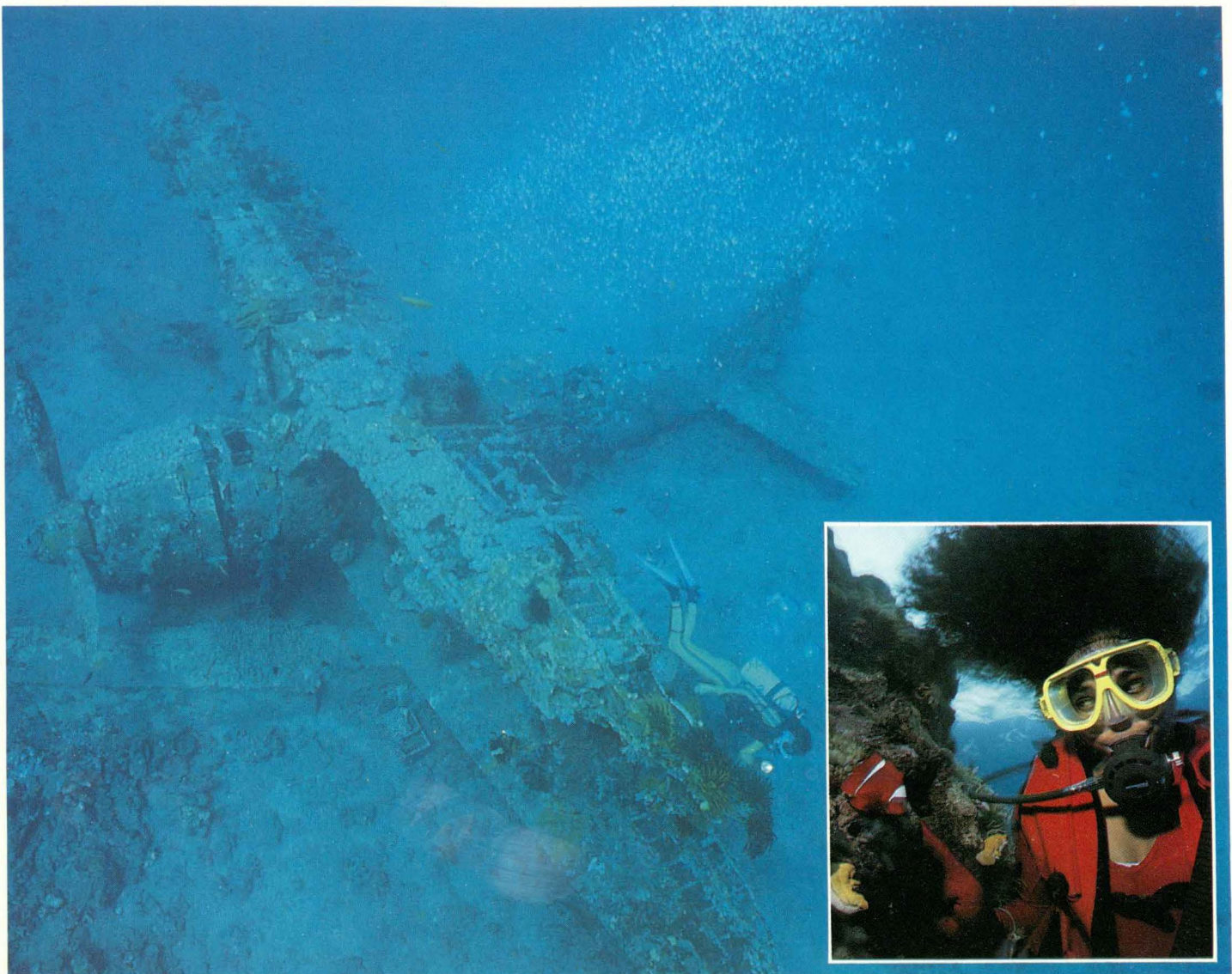
Her words were lost as James, almost on cue, started the powerful

engine. There were amused and expectant smiles all around as they cruised away.

Author Peter Miller is a member of the National Association of Underwater Instructors and has lived and dived extensively throughout PNG over the last eight years.

Air Niugini flies regular services to Rabaul from Port Moresby and other centres.

Left page Coral reef fish, **inset** Henrietta inside Georges' Wreck. **this page, below** Mitsubishi bi-plane at 30 metres depth; Henrietta with wreck-dwelling clownfish.



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singsing bilong TUMBUNA

Story and photographs by John Wilson

Dancing is an integral part of every culture in the world but nowhere is dance so closely linked to the heart and character of people as it is in Papua New Guinea. Despite rapid changes that have seen much of the customary lifestyle either disappear or greatly alter, singsing tumbuna, (traditional dance) plays a vital

part in cultural activity and identity.

Births, deaths, weddings, initiations and religious festivals are occasions when communities gather to celebrate. Dancing is invariably a major feature of the celebrations. Most visitors to PNG do not get to experience these authentic and spontaneous aspects of life. They usually

Top The colorful spectacle of the Bainings fire dance.



take place in villages far from main tourist centres. Tourists are familiar with the great dance festivals held at Mt Hagen and Goroka Shows which present a cultural abundance of dance and song – but these lack the simplicity and intimacy of the smaller village celebrations.

In East New Britain, a surprising amount of traditional dancing takes place at village level, almost continually throughout the year. During my seven years there, I experienced a good number of these traditional festivities. At one time, I was even coerced into taking part – an experience which deepened my understanding and appreciation of the artistry involved. Outsiders who attend traditional dances see the finished,

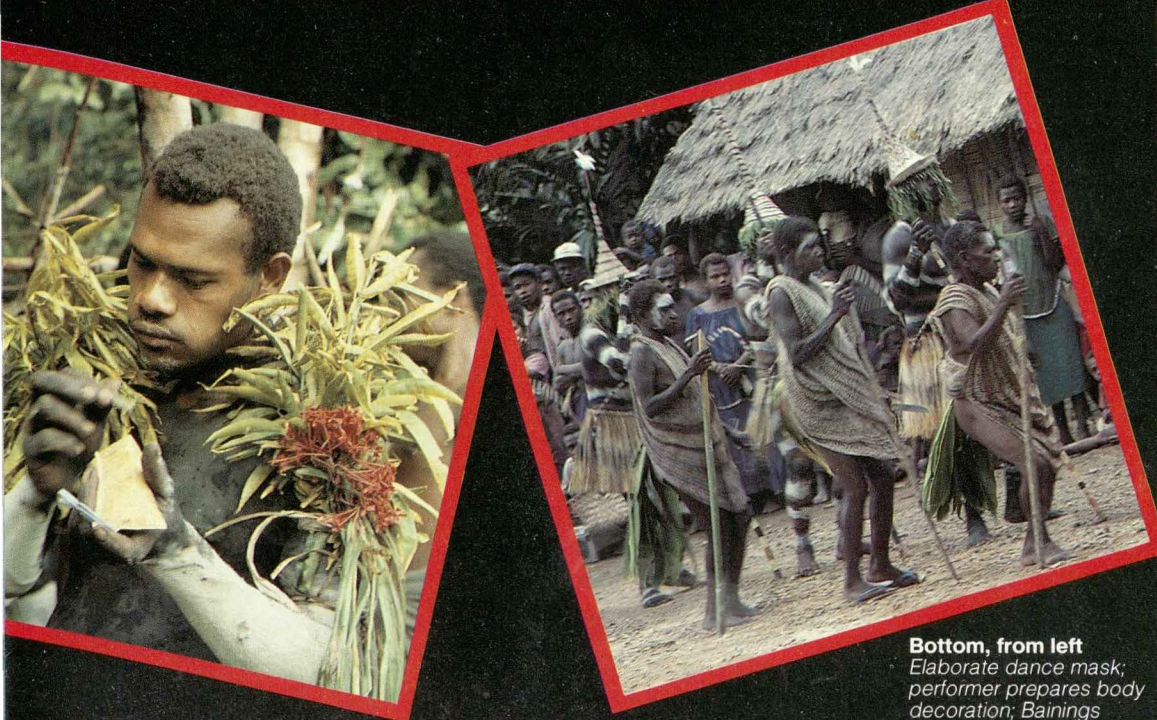
polished product, unaware of the amazing amount of preparation these dances require.

Body painting is the only feature of singing tumbuna that is common to the three indigenous groups of East New Britain: the Tolais, the Taulils and the Bainings. The Bainings are well known for their fire dance, surely the most memorable of all dances.

The paint, like all materials used in traditional dances, comes from the bush. Black, white and brown come from clay ochres; orange from a mixture of lime and the root of a ginger plant; red from either the tree sap or a flowering seed-pod; and green comes from crushed ferns. These colors are used in varying ways by the Tolais and Taulils. The

Top left Bainings dancers before the fire ritual. **top right** Secret pre-dance rituals occur away from uninitiated eyes.





Bottom, from left
 Elaborate dance mask;
 performer prepares body
 decoration; Bainings
 women join the singsing.

Bainings use only black and white, particularly for the fire dance, and these colors take on a plastic sheen after the painted dancer is sprayed with wild honey.

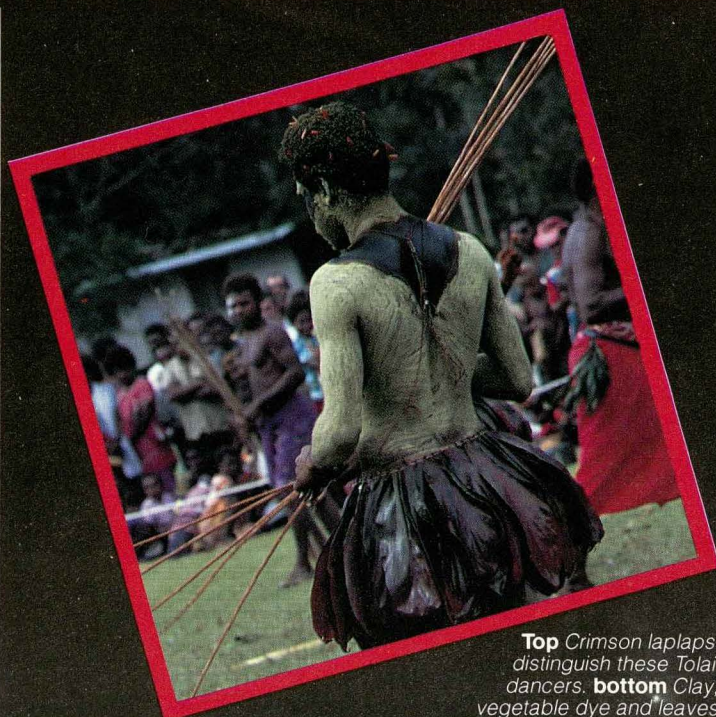
Next comes the preparation of headdresses, leaf and grass skirts, dance wands and the secret ingredients that constitute the purri-purri (magic) – a vital requirement for Tolai and Taulil dancers. The Bainings will spend weeks preparing masks for their fire dance, unique creations of cane and tapa cloth, some up to three metres long. Perhaps the most time-consuming part of their preparation is the search for large pythons which the dancers carry when they make their entrance. The snakes are given to the musicians later, as traditional payment for their



services, and subsequently eaten.

The Tolais' whip dance seems more of a public punishment than a dance. Dancers are hit on the wrists, ankles and stomach with stems of a plant which has been dried to produce the resonant whipcrack as the flesh is struck. Strangely, the dancers feel no pain, because this seeming masochism has been tempered by purri-purri applied before the dance.

Collecting bush materials for bilas (decoration) is only half of the preparation. The dance itself needs to be practised. Weeks before the dance are fully occupied as musicians and dancers gather at night to rehearse the songs and dance movements. In the beating of drums and pound-



Top Crimson laplaps distinguish these Tolai dancers. **bottom** Clay, vegetable dye and leaves decorate a Tolai whip dancer.

ing of feet there is much laughter and chewing of betel-nut. These are social occasions and every bit as enjoyable as the performance on the special day.

These were the times I found most precious, seeing people joining together to celebrate their cultural 'oneness', and to share the work, and share the fun. This collective effort is the feature that helps bind PNG people together. There is a noticeable sense of pride in what they are doing.

Next time you see a traditional dance, think about the preparation that went into it. I'm sure this will add to your appreciation.

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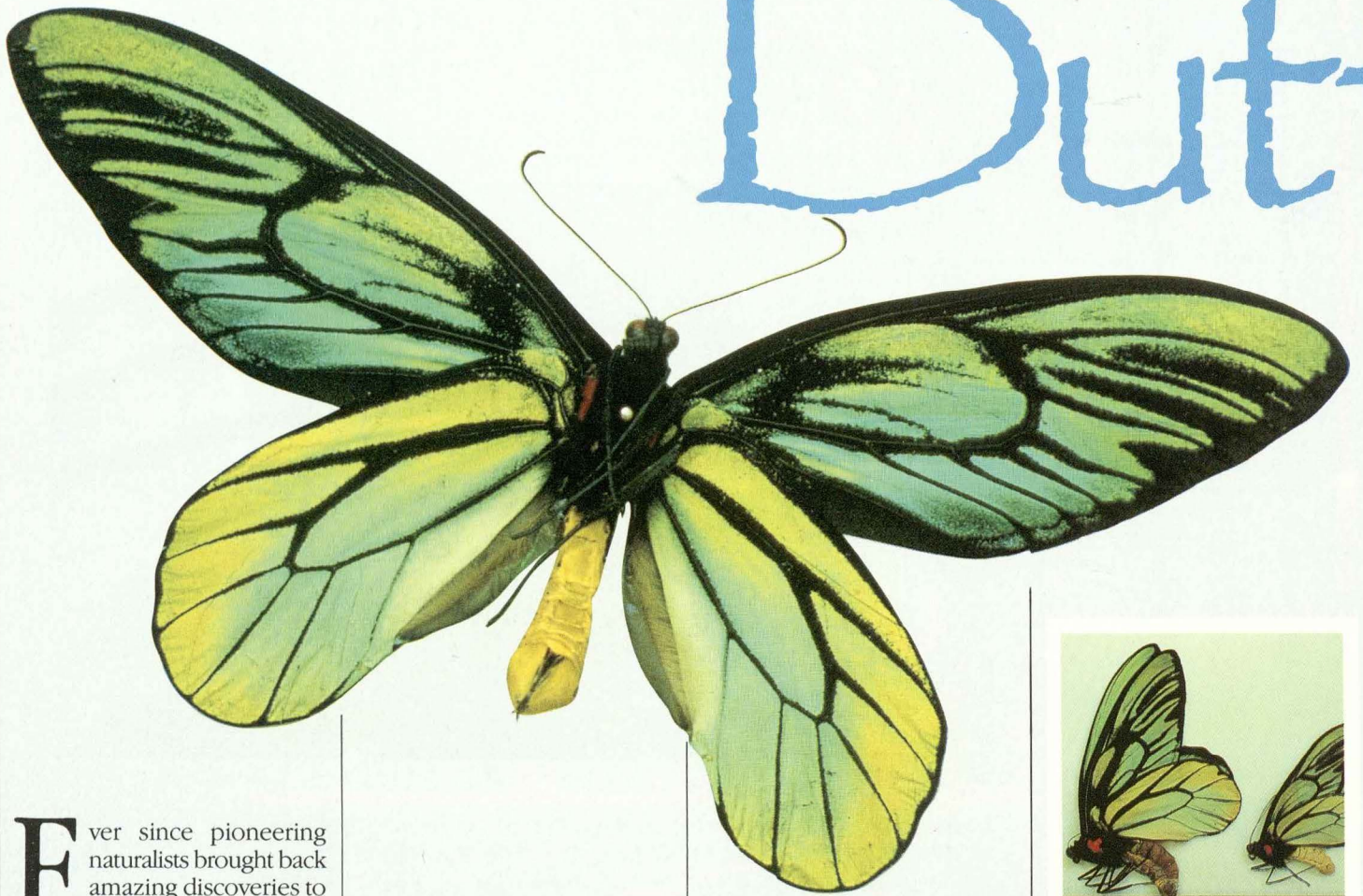
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Ever since pioneering naturalists brought back amazing discoveries to Europe, the beauty and diversity of Papua New Guinean insects has astounded wide-eyed collectors. Many of these tropical insects are now facing extinction due to the destruction of rainforest habitats. One such species is Queen Alexandra's birdwing butterfly, *Ornithoptera alexandrae*.

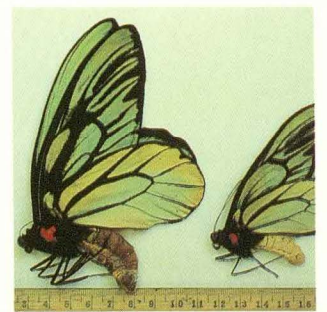
Alexandrae is the world's largest butterfly, some females having wingspans of more than 25 centimetres. Because of its huge size and high flight, the first specimen was brought down by a blast from a shotgun in January 1906. Collected by Alfred Meek for his employer Lord Walter Rothschild in London, the

species was named for Queen Alexandra of Great Britain. Rothschild published its description in his museum journal, *Novitates Zoologicae* in 1907. A year after discovering the single female, Meek captured the first male and more females before finding the butterfly's huge larvae and pupae.

Most *Ornithoptera* species are rare and localised. They were placed on the Fauna Protection Ordinance by the Australian Government in 1966. As the rarest of these butterflies, *alexandrae* warrants its protected status. The species does not occur elsewhere in the world and is found only near the town of

Popondetta in the Northern Province of south-eastern Papua New Guinea. A detailed conservation study of its biology and behavior was begun by the PNG Wildlife Division in 1979.

Alexandrae now ranks among PNG's most protected national animals which include other birdwing butterflies, birds of paradise and the sea mammal, the dugong. Of the nine species of *Ornithoptera* all but three are endemic to New Guinea, and are much sought after by collectors because of their size, beauty and unavailability.



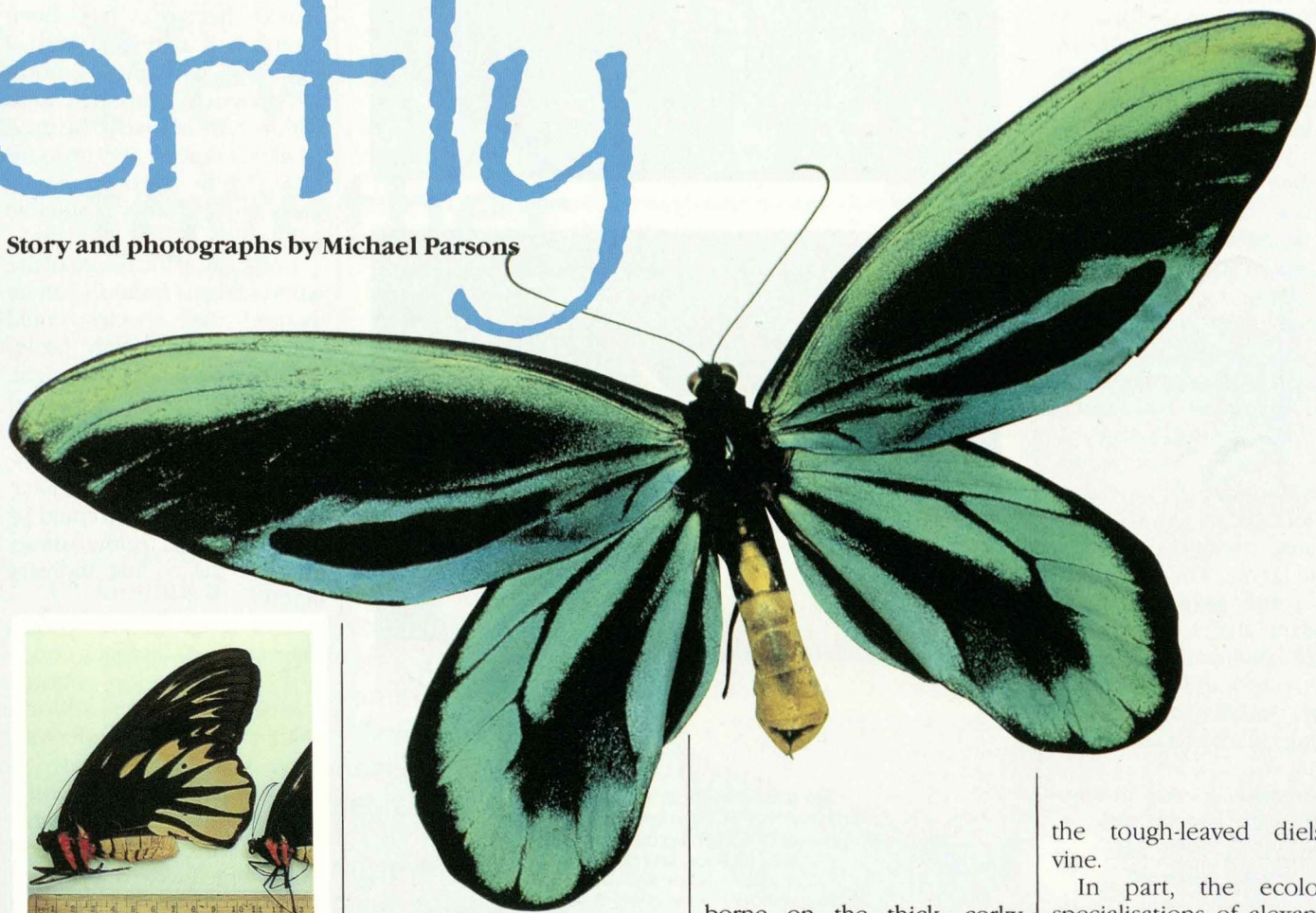
Alexandrae is typical of its genus. The male and female are different in appearance and exhibit extreme sexual dimorphism. Unlike most other *Ornithoptera*, *alexandrae* adults possess narrow, elongated wings, especially the male. The female is predominantly brown, marked with cream and pale yellow, with a bright red thorax and bold yellow abdomen. The smaller male is more brightly colored, with wings of pale blue, yellow and pink on black, but with similar body coloration.

Alexandrae's habitat comprises tracts of lowland

THE
LARGEST

erfly

Story and photographs by Michael Parsons



rainforests of heights of 40 metres (primary), and 5-20 metres (secondary). Often linear in shape, they form a mosaic across the Popondetta plain. The plain is a small, flat coastal region of volcanic ash soils, deeply dissected by rivers which radiate from Mt Lamington,

south-east of Popondetta. The volcano's northern slopes collapsed during a violent eruption in 1951 causing extensive destruction of forest for a radius of 10 kilometres.

The tracts are divided by large areas of hot, monotonous kunai grasslands which are regularly burnt to keep them open for wallaby hunting. Otherwise the fields would revert to forest.

As a larva, *alexandrae* feeds exclusively on a particular vine which grows to 40 metres in primary forest. Its leaves sprawl throughout the canopy and its flowers and fruits are

borne on the thick, corky lower mainstems. These beautiful maroon-red, three-petaled blooms, with tubular yellow throats and a covering of hairs similar to felt, grow in small clusters. Its pendulous, six-sided green fruits which resemble cucumbers hang at intervals from segmented stalks.

Although *alexandrae* has a restricted distribution, its foodplant is far more widespread. The vine occurs throughout south-eastern mainland PNG and also on two islands off the north coast. *Alexandrae's* larval foodplant choice is decided by the adult female which lays her large, rounded yellow eggs only on

the tough-leaved *dielsiana* vine.

In part, the ecological specialisations of *alexandrae*, explain its rarity. Its range covers about 1,200 square kilometres, almost entirely bounded by the Kumusi River to the west, the Embi Lake to the east, the 400-metre contour of Mt Lamington to the south, and to within 10 kilometres of the coast to the north. Within this range this rare butterfly occurs sporadically. Even ideal areas of habitat, where *dielsiana* grows abundantly, may have no *alexandrae*. The butterfly appears to restrict its flight to 'home range' areas and also may be slow to colonise new areas. Both the butterfly and its foodplant apparently are absent from forests of more

Above Underside of an adult male Queen Alexandra's birdwing butterfly (left) and upperside (right). **insets** Adults differ in size and pattern as seen in males (left) and females (right).

irregular structure, such as those found on the alluvial soils of the Lower Mambare and Gira River floodplains to the north-east of the Popondetta Plain.

Alexandrae adults live up to three months. They are seen soaring above the forest canopy and occasionally come into Popondetta to feed on hibiscus, ixora, poinciana and poincettia, but little is known of their movements. Alexandrae appears to have few predators although some are eaten after being trapped in the huge webs of the large, common orb-weaver spider, *Nephila maculata*.

Females can lay at least 240 eggs. From egg to adult is about 122 days, during which eggs, larvae and pupae may fall prey to ants, wasps and small marsupials or develop fatal viral or fungal diseases. Some birds, such as kookaburras, and especially the grey-breasted brush cuckoo, are specialist predators of alexandrae larvae. The larvae can store some toxins from its foodplant and are warningly colored black with bright red, fleshy spines and an obvious yellow saddle-mark. These markings deter ordinary predators.

International trade in alexandrae was halted with its protection in 1966 although some illegally collected specimens are sold still. Easily concealed for transport, the rewards to smugglers are high and even now alexandrae often is advertised in American, German, British and Japanese insect-dealer catalogues. Not all of these are pre-protection ordinance specimens.

The main threat facing the alexandrae is the constant loss of its habitat. Entomologists are concerned for its future because of rapid development of the oil palm industry on the fertile volcanic ash soils around Popondetta. About 5,500 hectares of small holdings were recently completed and a private company has developed another 4,000. This has



Top A Solovi villager inspects the dielsiana vine and fruit on which Queen Alexandra's birdwing butterfly lives. **centre** The huge and distinctive caterpillar with its black and red warning colors. **below** Flower of the dielsiana foodplant.



meant the loss of at least 2,700 hectares of actual or potential alexandrae habitat and no long-term limit has been set on the area's development. About 60,000 hectares to the west of Popondetta have been loosely defined the Kumusi Timber Area; logging began in 1983.

A large Wildlife Management Area (Hurapa-Jajiko), of about 10,000 hectares, has been established at the request of traditional landowners north of Popondetta. Although areas within it are known to be used by alexandrae, it also includes large tracts of open kunai grassland and other unsuitable habitats.

Ironically, if the future of the world's largest butterfly can be assured, the species could become an extremely profitable export in its own right. This has been achieved already with the common, non-protected birdwings, priamus and oblongomaculatus. Alexandrae also could be promoted as a prime attraction for the tourist industry in PNG.

The future of the world's largest butterfly remains uncertain. Conservation efforts, sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, are underway. Plans have been made to establish new areas of habitat with plantings of dielsiana. Some of these are on land blocks which were rejected for oil palm planting. Still wooded and government-owned, hopefully they will remain as alexandrae reserves in the future. Other Wildlife Management Areas will be set aside to conserve and study alexandrae at the request of traditional owners: those who realise this butterfly is an important heritage of the people of PNG and one to be preserved for generations to come.

It takes more than paint to hold Papua New Guinea together

From the rusty reds of the Sepik to the vivid vermilion of Milne Bay, the faces of Papua New Guinea tell a story rich in tradition and culture. But paint is skin-deep, as we at ICI DULUX know only too well.

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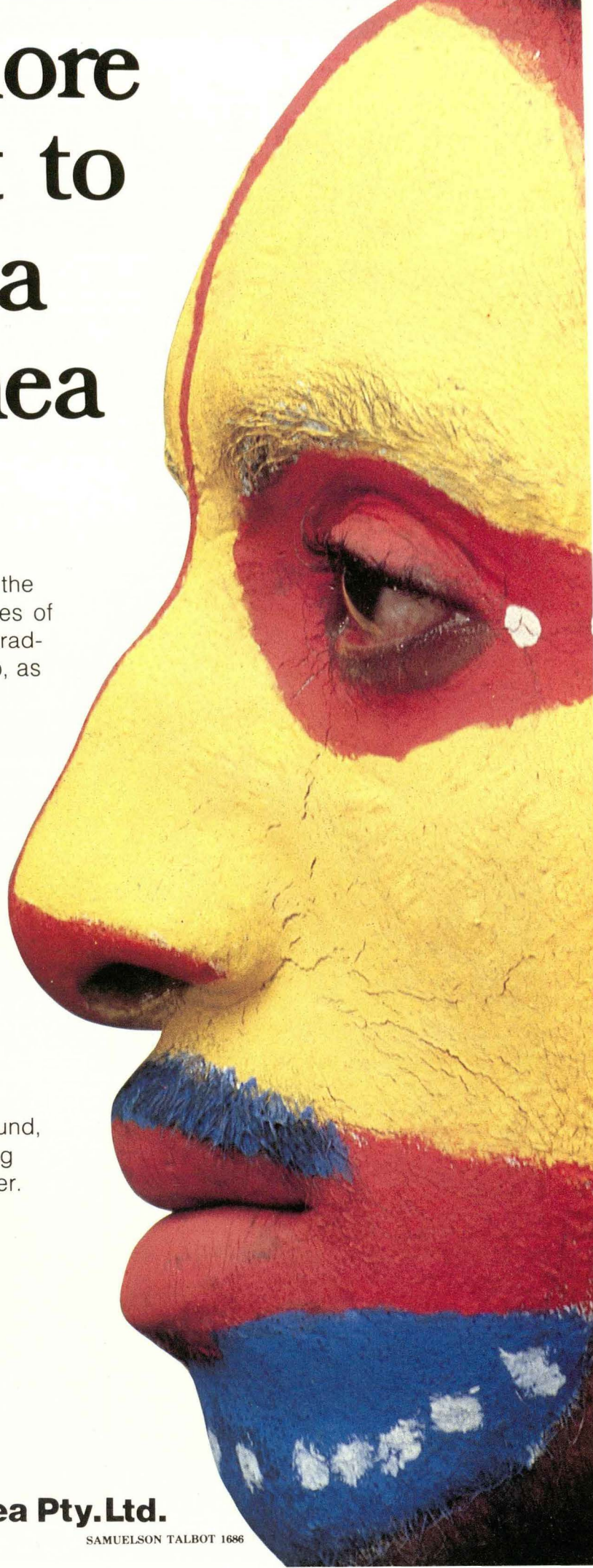
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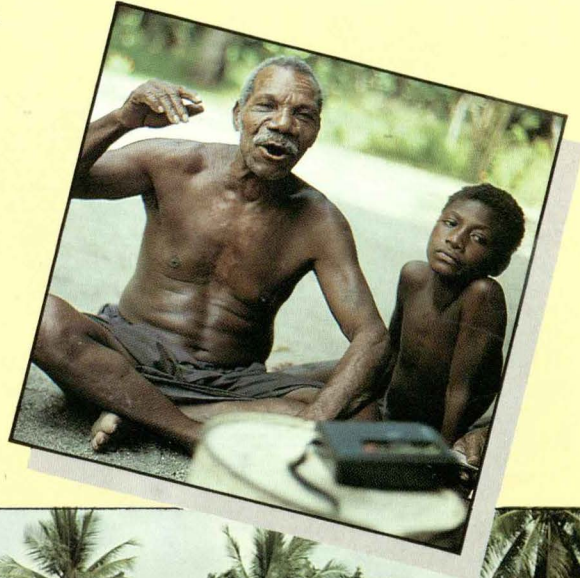
Story by Lissant Bolton
Photographs by David Lipset

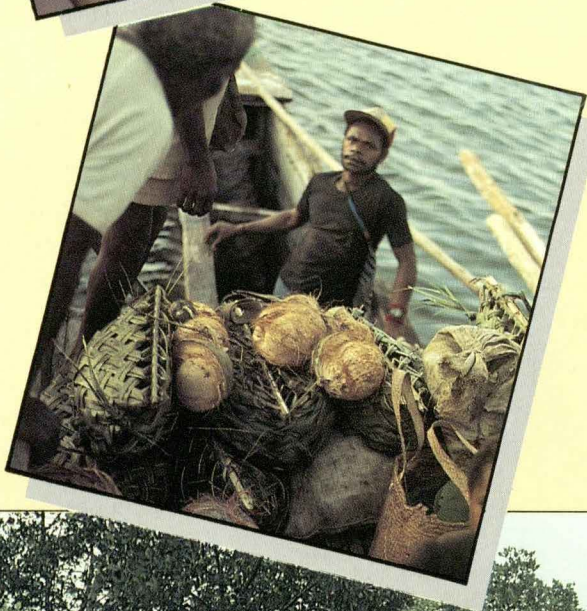
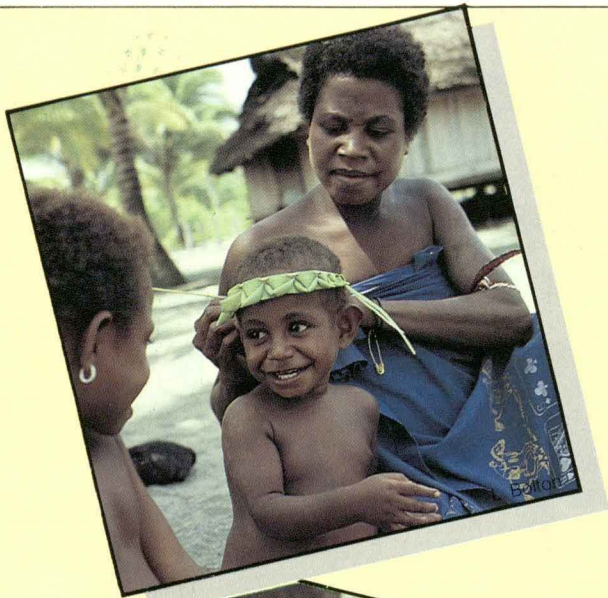
In museums around the world, masks, baskets, shields, spears, headrests, paddles, bowls, canoe models and other objects from Papua New Guinea are stored on shelves or in cupboards, mostly in the dark. They rest far from the villages where they were used, away from the jungle, beach or garden from which they were made.

In a small society, especially one in which people do not possess much personal pro-

perty, each object they own means a lot. People not only know what their objects are made from, but also who made them, when, where, and why. Designs on items are often a direct reflection of the people's beliefs and ideas about the world. The designs may represent spirits or ancestors, or refer to a story about the past, a certain feature of their landscape, or some valued local resource.

Often the people who





collected objects for museums failed to recognise how much information there was to learn. In museum catalogues the entry for each object simply names it 'headrest', then indicates where it was collected 'Murik Lakes, Papua New Guinea'. Complex data has been left in the village where the object was found. So when a museum has an object in its collection, it often has only half the story.

The Australian Museum in Sydney has an active program to use and develop its PNG collection, one of the finest collections of the country's material in the world.

The Museum hopes to find out as much as possible about each of the objects it holds. One way is by taking photographs back to villages from which the objects have come, asking people what they know or remember about each piece. This information is made available in Sydney, PNG and elsewhere, through publications, catalogues and exhibitions.

Understanding the meaning of the objects to their traditional owners involves

more than simply writing down what people know about each object. It involves understanding how the society in question operates as a whole, and how objects fit into that, similar to pieces in a jigsaw.

At present the museum is working jointly with the PNG National Museum to study its collections from the Lower Sepik River area. Although many people have studied and written about the Middle Sepik, not much is known about the lower river area.

The museum holds significant collections from the Lower Sepik, mostly bought by an Australian, Ernest Wauchope, who took over a remote German coconut plantation, east of the Sepik River mouth, after the First World War. Several of the first anthropologists who worked in the region visited Wauchope and his wife. Probably the influence of one of them, Camilla Wedgewood, led Wauchope to the Australian Museum with an offer to make a collection.

A number of different groups of people inhabit the Lower Sepik. Each speaks a different language and has a separate cultural style. Each group also makes objects distinctively its own so the use of different materials or decoration marks the object as belonging to one group rather than another.

For example, a village may make clay pots, which are not made elsewhere. Other groups have to trade with that village in order to acquire the pots. This trade is important, not only as a way of getting objects they want, but also for the connections and relationships created with their trade partners.

From a museum's point of view, the trade in objects is confusing. An object may have been made in one place, then

Preceding page Matapau village storyteller (top) and Murik trading canoe. **this page from top** Yakamul village mother and child; loading a trading canoe; Wokemot village in Murik Lakes.

traded to a second where it is bought by the museum. For example, we were given an unusual string bag some years ago. It was unlike any other bag we had seen or read about. We knew it had been collected in 1927 in Wewak, but did not know if it was made there, whether it had an unusual style because of a special purpose, or even if the designs had a special meaning.

A poorly documented collection which contains a lot of objects acquired after trading presents a mixed picture of which designs, materials and object types belong to one village rather than another. Wauchope's collection was one which failed to make these distinctions.

The Australian Museum decided to investigate its objects from the Lower Sepik in a study of the trade network in the region. We not only would learn about individual objects traded, but also how the trade in objects, resources and ideas connect and distinguish different groups in the region. At a more sophisticated level, we wanted to learn how people exchange ideas about art and design.

At the centre of the Lower Sepik region near the river's mouth is the Murik group. The five Murik villages are built on narrow sandbanks which divide the lakes and mangrove swamps from the sea. Although the Murik have the rich resources of the sea, lakes and mangroves to fish, they have almost no land. More than other groups, they have to trade to acquire many of the things they need. Trade is the focus of Murik life. They trade fish, shells and dried clams, as well as objects they have made, in exchange for food-stuffs such as sago and objects made by other groups. Rights to songs and ceremonies are also traded.

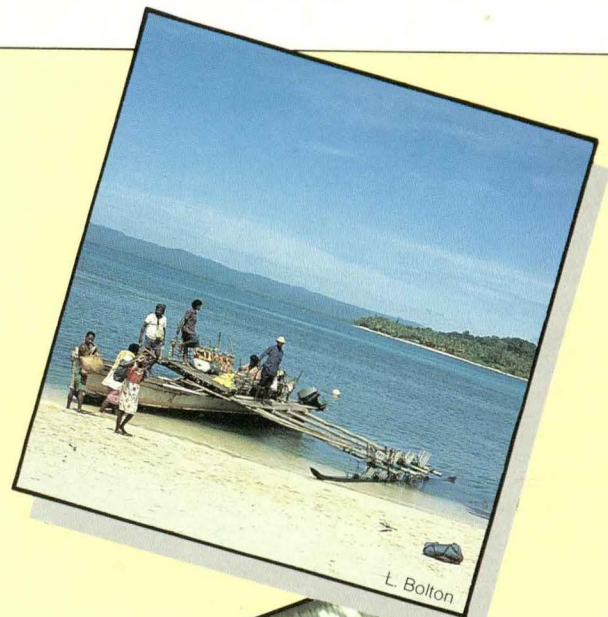
Because of their trade connections the Murik know the culture of the whole region. This made them an ideal group with whom to work.

We decided to divide our

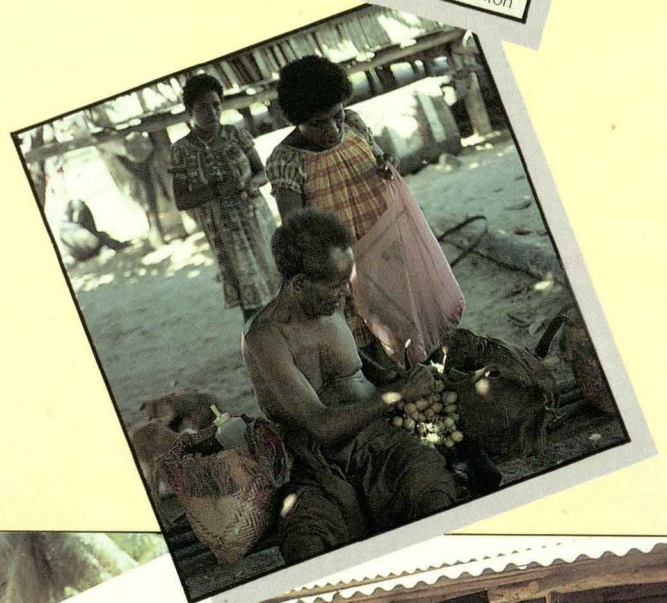
research in two field trips. The first of these, which studied the western arm of the Murik trading network along the Wewak coast, took place in 1986. The second trip, based on Murik trade connections on the Sepik, was in July and August, 1988.

We first gathered all the information available within Australia about the Lower Sepik. We checked publications that referred to the region, talked to people who had been there and studied collections in other museums in case we learned something by comparing collections. The field research team comprised Dr David Lipset and Dr Kathy Barlow, Johnny Saulo from the PNG National Museum, and myself. Dr Lipset and Dr Barlow were employed especially for the project as they had already spent time with the Murik.

Top Trading canoe on Muschu Island being loaded with tobacco, vegetables and betel nut. **centre** Trading for betel nut on the island. **bottom** David Lipset trades for stories in East Sepik Province.



L. Bolton



L. Bolton

In 1986 we visited key village centres in the trading network along the Wewak coast. At each village we were accompanied by a Murik man who had a trading partner in that village to whom he could introduce us. We first talked about their participation in the trading network, about what and with whom they traded. Then we brought out albums of photographs of the Australian Museum's collection and asked what they knew about the objects.

The Murik were very interested to see the collection and passed the albums from person to person, discussing the objects in them. In other villages people also were interested and they recognised objects they would have acquired by trade. They were able to tell us from whom they would have acquired them.

The trade network in the Lower Sepik is thriving. People regularly make trading expeditions over a wide area, and they value highly the goods they receive as well as friends they make. The range of trade networks has been extended by building on connections made since European contact. Men working on plantations, for example, were able to set up connections with other plantation workers from places they now reach with an outboard motor on their canoes.

This trading network exists next to the market economy. These different means of acquiring goods are treated as distinct spheres. Different rules apply to what and how may be acquired in each. The same objects may be used for both trade and sale, but the rules by which transfers are carried out are different.

In recent decades, the Murik have started to trade with one village in particular, Yakamul in the Sundaun Province. To the Murik, Yakamul is a kind of heaven on earth, with access to all kinds of natural resources. We took a Murik man, Tamau Game, with us on our visit to Yakamul. We presented the Yakamul with

rice, dried clams and tobacco and in exchange, received sago, taro and bananas, filling our vehicle to overflowing with their largesse.

We were struck by the strength of Tamau's relationship with his Yakamul trading partners, and their mutual pleasure in meeting. We saw their exchanges were not only of goods and friendship, but also of information. Tamau knew a great deal about the myths and stories that belong to the Yakamul people.

Our visit to Yakamul also resolved the mystery of the unusual bag. As soon as we arrived I recognised a string bag similar to the one we had from Wewak. I showed the photograph of our bag to the family with whom we were staying. They said it was a special bag of a king, made only in Yakamul and by the Sissano, who lived further up the coast. The designs are privately owned and indicate the family to which the owner belongs.

The Yakamul use these bags for special occasions. They wear them in dances, unless they are in mourning; fighting must stop if someone, decorated and wearing such a bag, walks between the fighters; and a first-time guest of Yakamul, is given one. Josephina, an elderly member of the family with whom we were staying, gave one of these bags to me.

The Yakamul brought out many examples of the bags, old and new, to show us. Some were made of traditional fibres, some of wool, re-

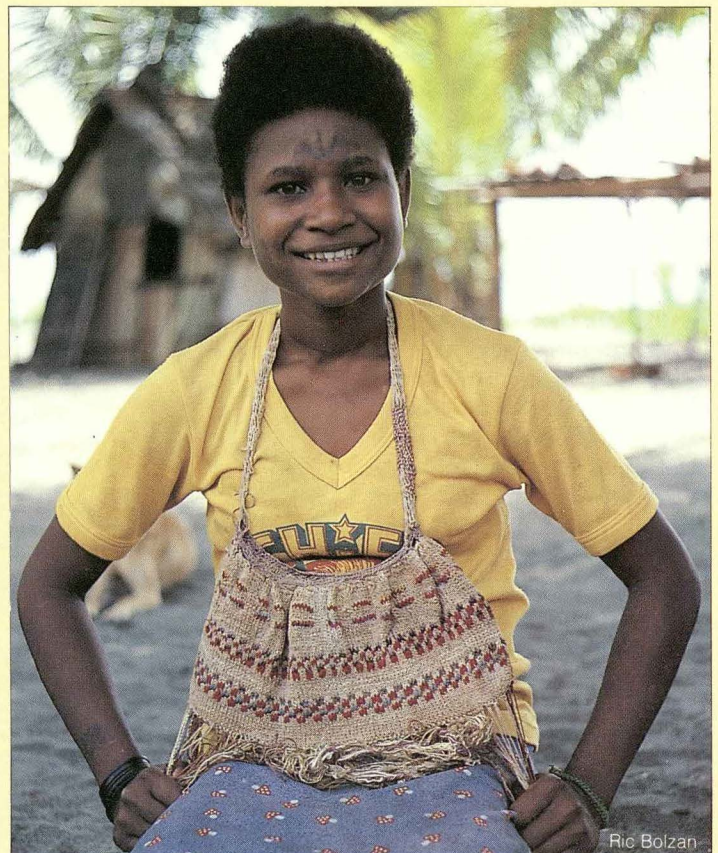
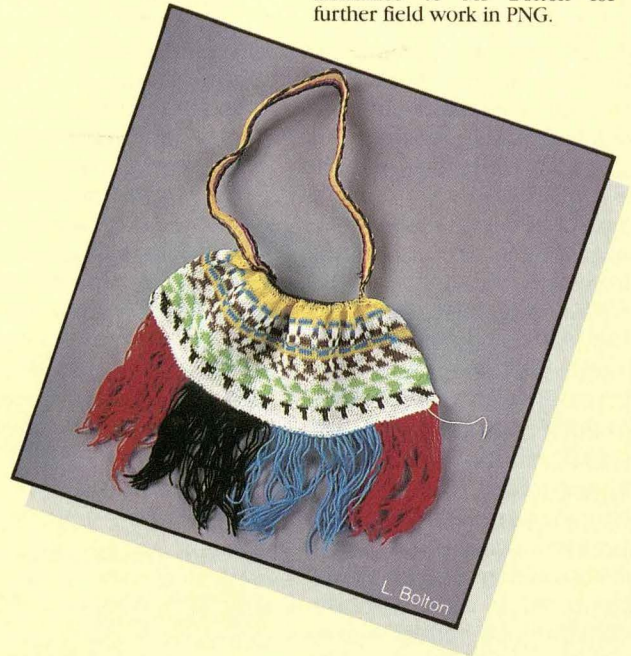
worked, some of nylon. They trade these bags and offered to sell us some so that we could put them in the museum. They were very proud of their bags and pleased we wanted to learn about them.

Although we did not learn how our particular bag reached Wewak, we learned a great deal about the bags and how they fit into Yakamul life.

The bag lying on the shelves in our storeroom now is something with meaning and significance. We are able to use it in exhibitions and publications to talk about the Yakamul, and explain the significance this bag holds.

Lissant Bolton is the manager of the Pacific Collection, Anthropology Division, Australian Museum, Sydney.

Air Niugini has provided assistance to Ms Bolton for further field work in PNG.



Top The design of this traditional style bag from Yakamul village is unique to the maker's family and copying by other bagmakers is forbidden. **bottom** Yakamul woman proudly shows a bag she made.

Ric Bolzan

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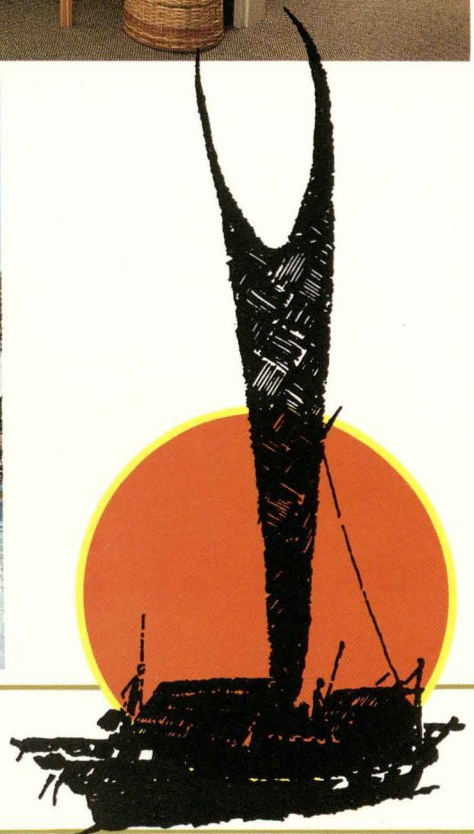
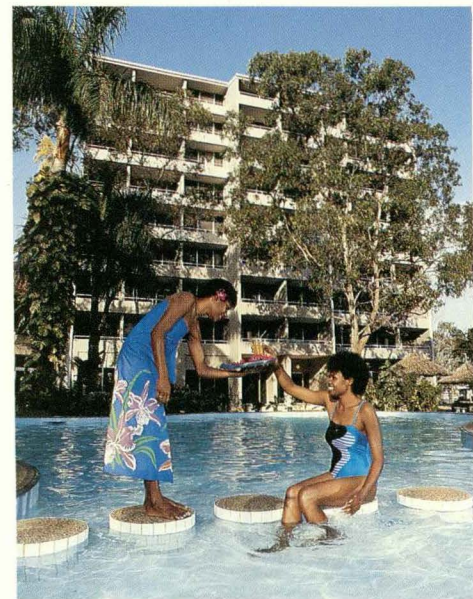
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