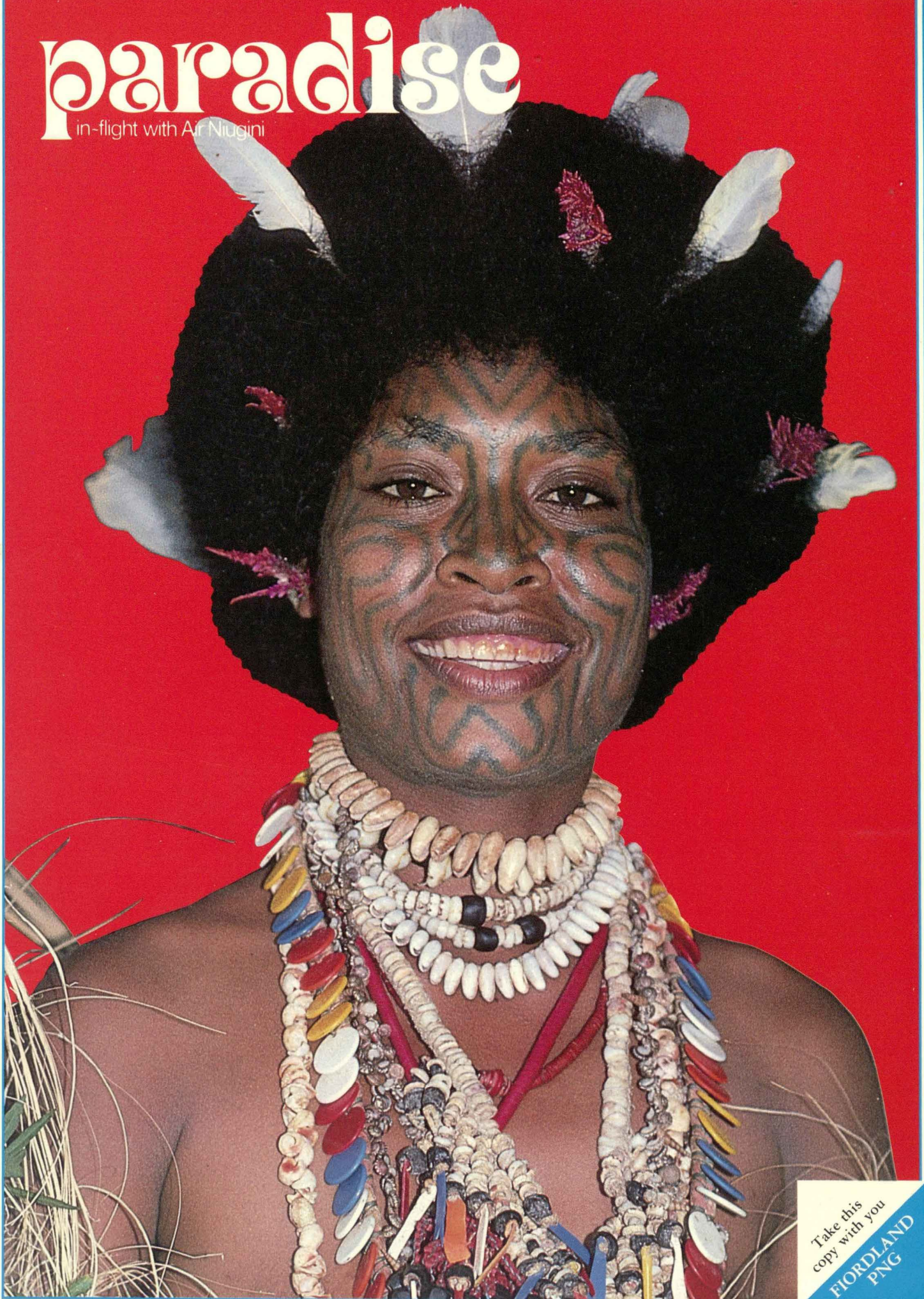


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# paradise

No 81 July-August 1990

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Contributors, such as Gold Award winners Lyn and Pat Manly in 1989 and Keith Briggs in 1990, are our lifeblood. Without our wonderful contributors we would not be in a position to provide you, our readers, with such a diverse coverage of Papua New Guinea. I wish to thank each and every contributor for their efforts.

Enjoy your flight.

Geoff McLaughlin MBE  
Publishing Editor



Geoff McLaughlin MBE  
Publishing Editor

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**Cover:** Young Tufi woman shows the tattoos, vivacity and finery typical of the region. Photograph by Greg Smith.

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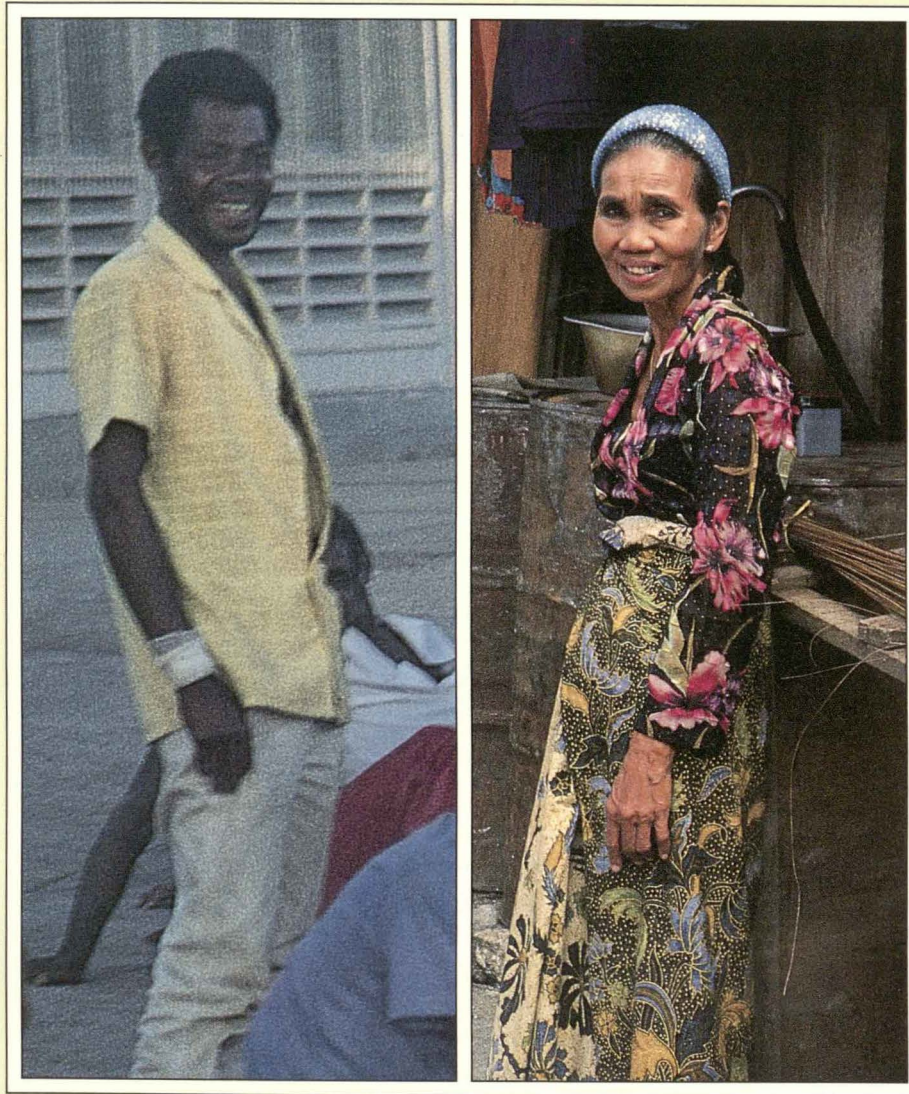
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# WORLDS

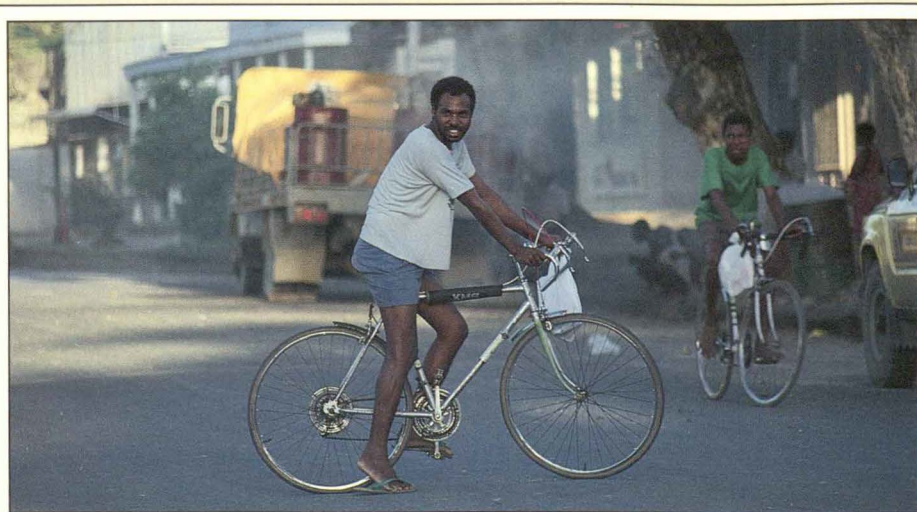


# APART

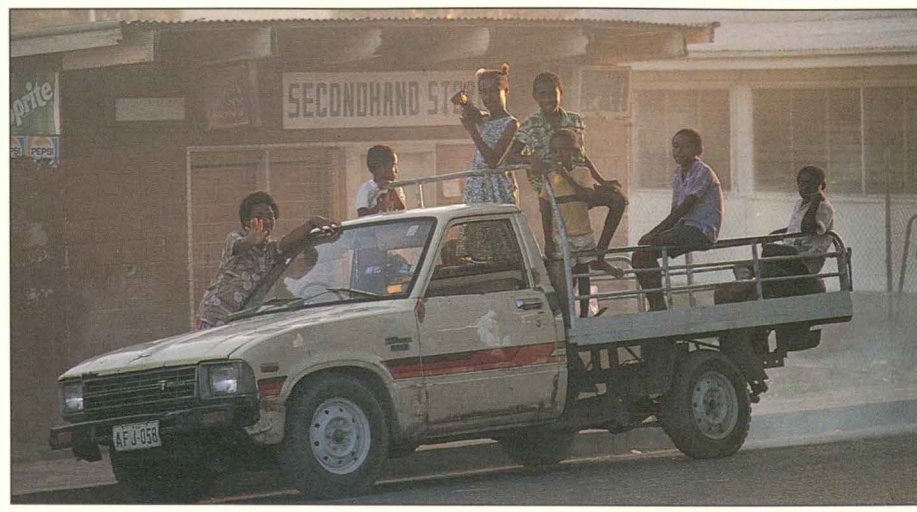
Story and photographs by Liz Thompson

**Above** *The faces of Melanesian Wewak (left) and Asian Jayapura (right) are geographically close but culturally far apart.*





Left Wewak's main street has an easy-going ambience.



For those travelling to Irian Jaya from Papua New Guinea, Wewak is often the last port of call. About 300 kilometres apart and separated only by the continuous flows of golden beaches lined by palms, Wewak and Jayapura, the capital of Irian Jaya, are truly different worlds. While Wewak symbolises the very essence of Melanesia, the Indonesian flavor of Jayapura is its opposite.

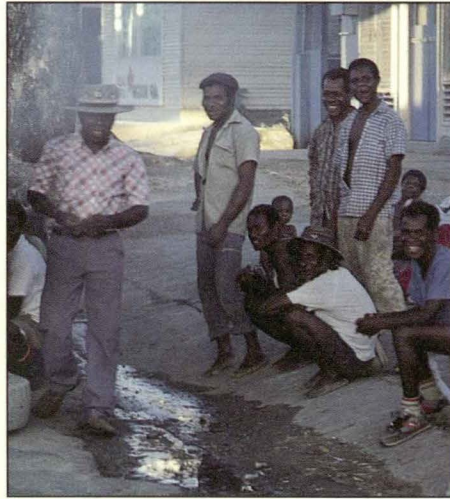
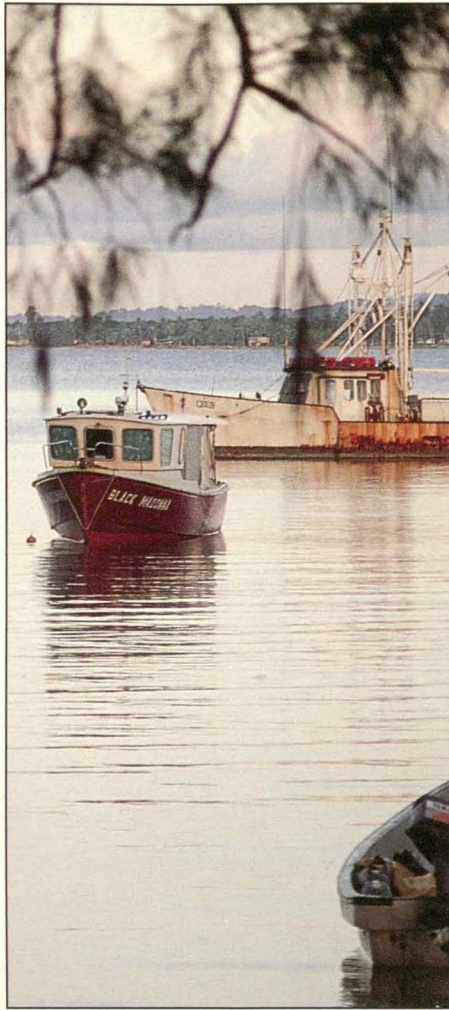
Wewak sits on the coastline of the East Sepik province. A relatively small town, it is hugged by aquamarine waters and white sand. One main street is shrouded by small shops and then the town radiates outwards, flame trees and houses with large leafy gardens occupying most of the space.

A small covered market provides

a place for villagers to sell their produce. Women come from the Sepik to sell their bilum bags. Strewn across the ground, the rolled bark is dyed with brightly colored powder paints. Betelnut and white lime in plastic bags are lined in tidy rows. Large red stains on the grass bear witness to the practice of chewing betelnut. Women sell pawpaws, coconuts, jamalacs, local nuts and limes, salted fish, sago pancakes, huge fists of bananas. Their faces are tattooed and in their billowing flowered meri blouses they smoke long cigarettes rolled in the local newspaper.

The yacht club and the Sepik International Hotel provide the major social focal points. The yacht club is decorated with Sepik





**Clockwise from bottom left** Wewak citizens and street vendors have a relaxed attitude, reflecting the tranquillity of the harbor as seen from Wewak Yacht Club.

carvings and is distinctly Melanesian. Large spirit chairs line the wooden bar which was carved from quila by local carvers. The hotel opens onto the beach. Large windows and open doors filter the ocean breeze across an expansive lounge, filled with bamboo chairs and a pleasant calm. For people travelling from Wewak, Jayapura is approximately two hours and another world away.

An Air Niugini aircraft carries passengers from Wewak to Vanimo, the last town before the border, then to Jayapura. Small villages are evident among the continuous blanket of green trees below; flatness gives way to mountains covered by jungle and finally to the rolling green hills surrounding Jayapura. Here,

everything changes. Indonesian officials in immaculate uniforms meet the plane. The atmosphere is frantic and Asian. Where one thought there would be Chinese trading stores and supermarkets there are Indonesian street vendors frying bean curd and brewing thick, sweet coffee. A mixture of buildings and shanties line the edge of the river which runs through the town's centre. Small street restaurants with fabric walls sell deep bowls filled with noodles and chilli sauce. Windows display bowls of boiled eggs, spinach and chicken legs.

In the afternoon heat, the siesta habit is indulged until, in the cooler hours of the evening, oil lamps illuminate the market stalls. Men with finely chiselled faces squat



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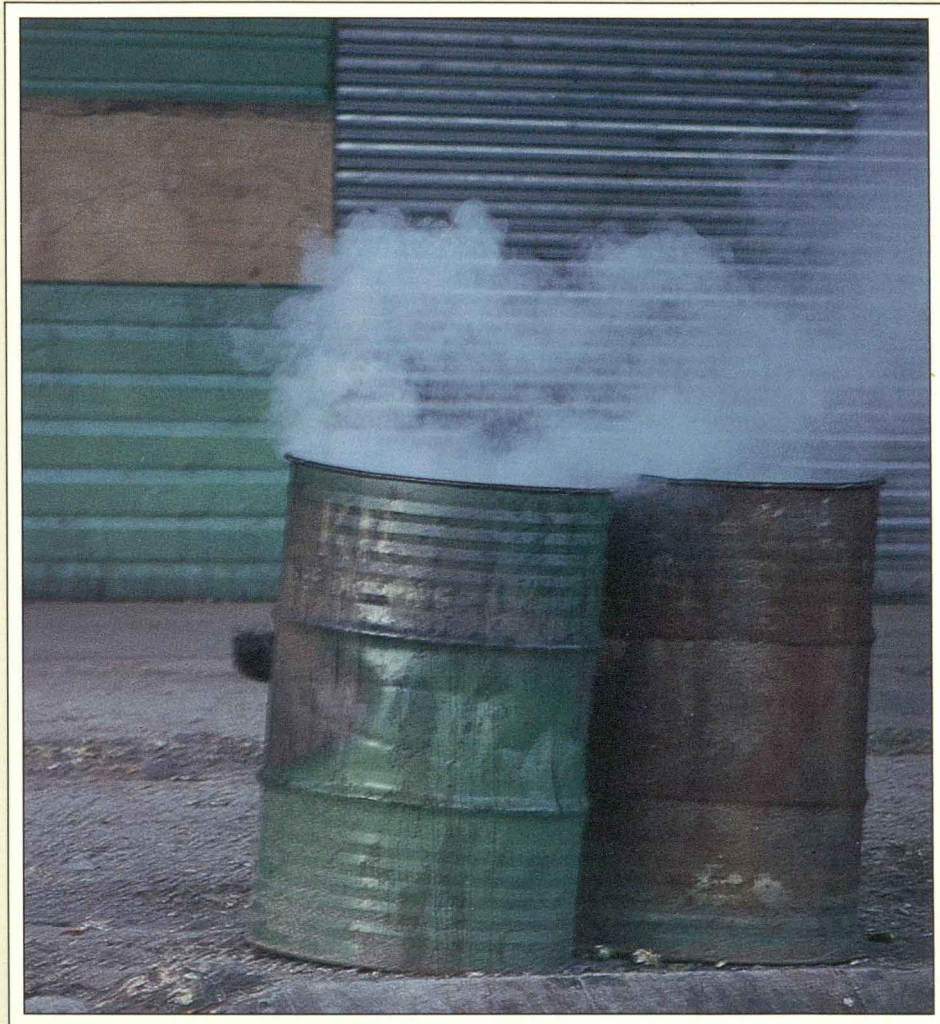
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Left Jayapura solution for street litter.

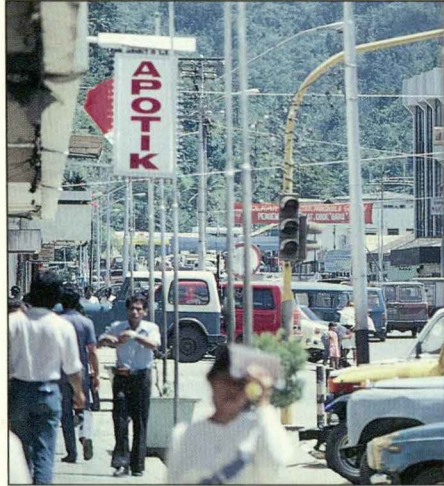
close to woks of hot oil watching the passersby. Sarongs and shirts made of Balinese fabric hang in rows. Piles of spices sit in pyramids of yellow, red and browns. Rice and colored ice, prawn crackers and pirate audio cassette tapes are heaped upon table tops. Prices are low and it's easy to understand why Papua New Guineans close to the border arrive in their dugout canoes on regular shopping sprees.

Noise precedes the activity. The sound of Muslim prayer escapes the mosque domes. Motor scooter horns sound as they career through the narrow streets carrying entire families and on occasions, live chickens and baggage. Taped music issues from the markets and the smell of clove cigarettes hangs in the air. In the midst of Jayapura,

it's hard to believe that the country stretches for thousands of kilometres unscarred by roads or telephone wires, that only an hour's flight away sits the Baliem Valley, one of Irian Jaya's most beautiful areas in which the Dugum Dani, the indigenous inhabitants, live.

Here the pace changes once again. From sharp mountain sides hang beautiful terracing systems. Some are so sheer that women hang by ropes so that they can plant cuttings in the ground. Dani wander, huge bilums decorated with yellow and rust colored orchid vine draped across their backs. In Wamensa, the township of the Baliem Valley, the cultural juxtapositions are incongruous. A Dani, standing close to the airport stands naked but for his penis





**Clockwise from top right** Jayapura's main street bustles with activity and on the banks of the river cleanliness really is next to godliness.

gourd. Hair tightly braided and smothered in pig fat he checks out his appearance in the rear view mirror of a 350cc Yamaha motorcycle. Not far from here is the place Robert Mitton described in his book 'The Lost World Of Irian Jaya, The True Baliem Valley'. "It is the only place where human beings have improved on nature," he said, speaking of the Dani. Living here for 25,000 years, their time has been spent in the practice of farming and ritualised warfare. Tall, bamboo watchtowers stand outside the walls of village hamlets. The valley floor is carpeted with tiny gardens bordered by deep irrigation and drainage channels. Men chop wood with axes, spear pigs and smear their skin with pig fat. Everywhere is green, air is

clean, water flows fresh in cold mountain streams. Jagged quartzite rocks rupture the highest grasslands, winding paths shrouded by trees traverse the edge of the Baliem River. Ochres and umbers and earth hues abound. Tranquillity is interrupted only by the beginnings of the road carving its way around the valley as it links Wamena to worlds otherwise thousands of years apart.

**Air Niugini operates regular air services to Jayapura.**





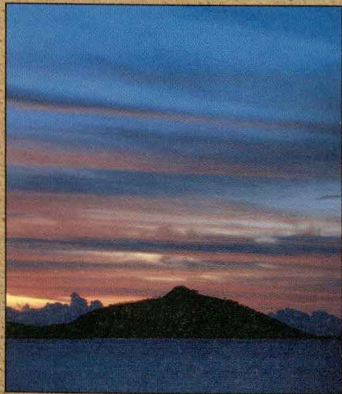
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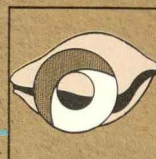
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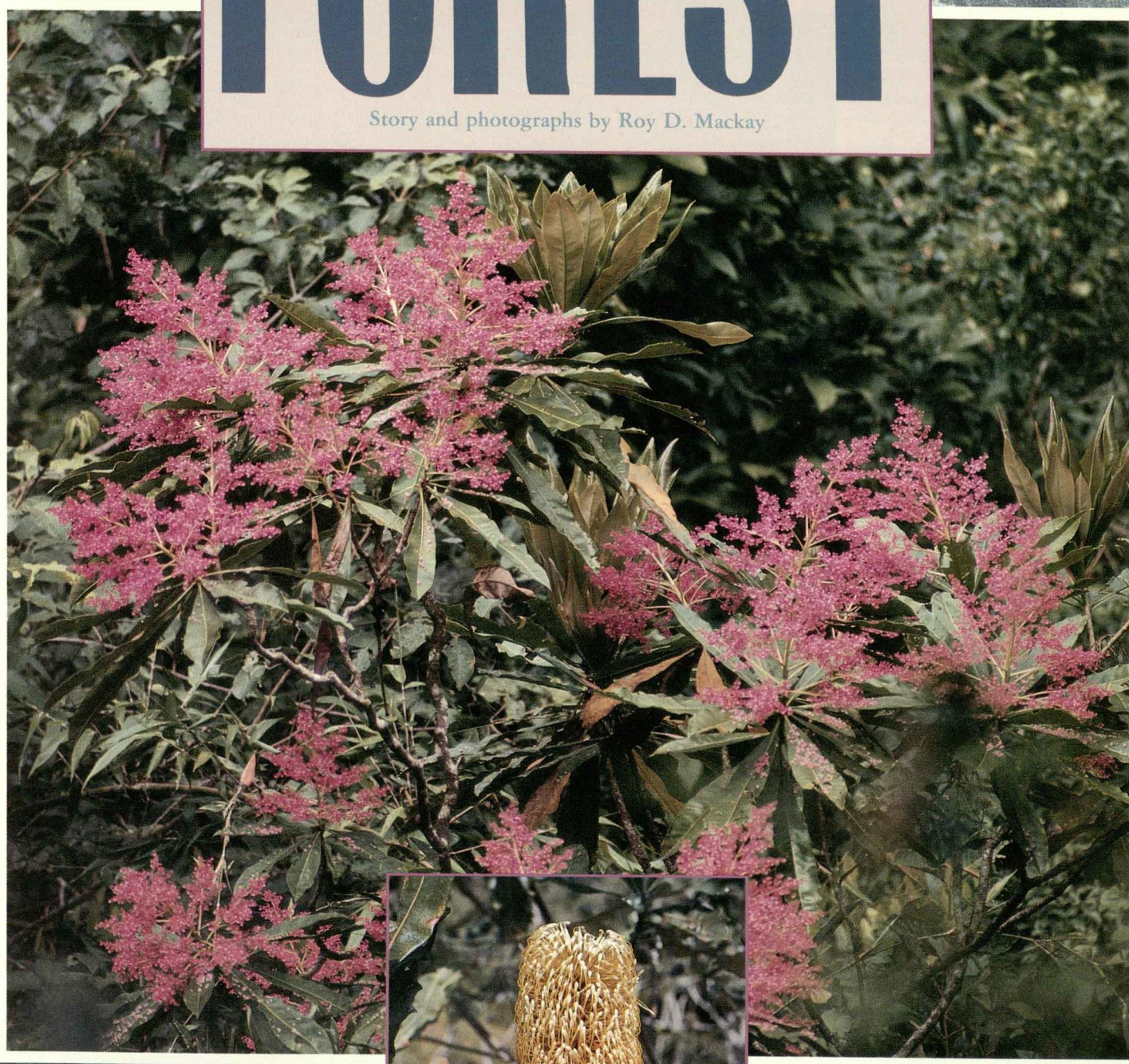


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# Flowers Of The FOREST

Story and photographs by Roy D. Mackay



**Above** High country shrub,  
*Schuurmansia henningsi*.  
**inset** Tropical banksia, *Banksia*  
*dentata*



When visitors fly over Papua New Guinea they generally get an impression of monotonous greenness, the deep green of the forests contrasts with the paler green of the grasslands. "Where are the flowers?" they ask. They are there and myriads of them but many are quite small and you have to look for them.

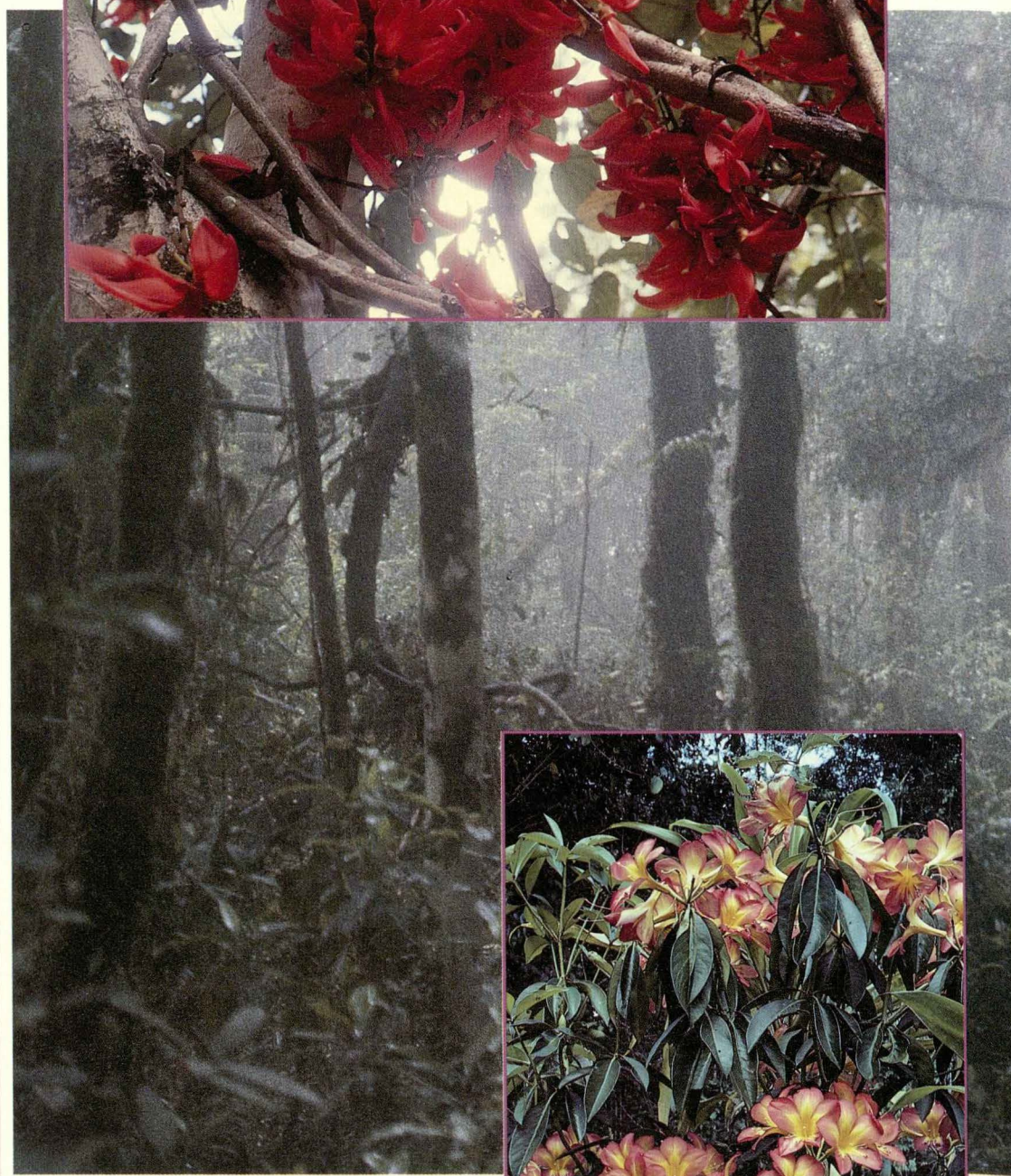
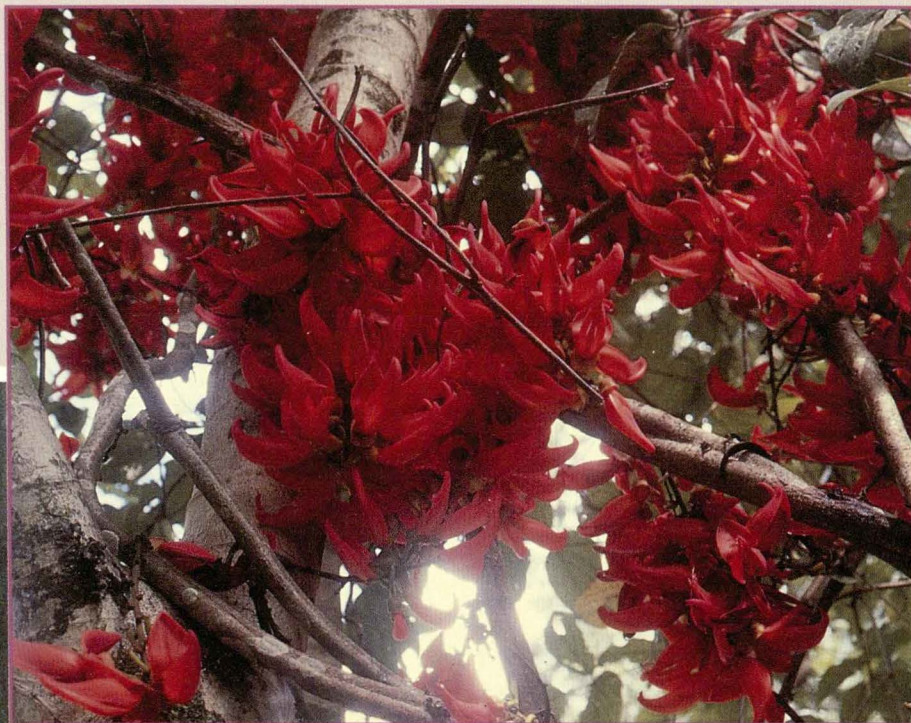
There are more orchid species here than in any other country and at least 150 species of rhododendron. We also have one of the richest rainforests in the world in its variety of trees and plants. When you fly over PNG you can, if you look carefully, see patches of white where some forest trees are in full flower. Patches of orange are rhododendrons and brilliant red can be long drapes of flowers of the D'Albertis creeper sometimes called the flame of the forest.

People on the road from Mendi to Tari, or from Mt Hagen to Wapenamanda, pass through large areas of upland moors where they may see a great variety of marsh plants, close relatives of well-known plants of the moors of Europe, Asia and Africa; lobelia, gentian, viola, hypericum and ranunculus.

Unless the visitor gets away from the town he may never know the variety and beauty of the native plants here. There is no shortage of flowers in the towns but about 90 per cent of those you see are introduced plants or at best have become naturalised here. Hibiscus, poinciana, golden shower, balsam, canna lily, and crotons are some of the introductions.

Let us get an appreciation of a few of the native floral gems of this country.

One, fairly well-known to residents, which usually amazes visitors who see it is the D'Albertis creeper (*Mucuna novaeguineensis*). This is a common vine of the lowlands and up to 1,200 metres in the hill forests.





**Clockwise, from top left**

*D'Albertis creeper*, better known as *flame of the forest*, forest floor dweller, the *Highlands bell* or *Dimorphanthera*; the *balsam* or *impatiens*, found everywhere in the tropics; one of the largest and most colorful rhododendrons, *Rhododendron zollerii*.



tree which prefers the edges of the forest and is outstanding when in flower is the golden bouquet tree (*Deplanche tetraphylla*). It can be seen from the roadside and is distinctive in the way its flowers appear in platforms. It is very fire resistant and its timber is sometimes used for light construction.

Australians may be surprised to find banksias growing here. The tropical banksia (*Banksia dentata*) is a native species commonly found in poorly drained areas on the Varirata tableland where there is open sedgeland with grasses, dwarf eucalypts, pitcher plants and even the wetter parts where mosses and sundew are found. It grows to five metres tall and is a rather straggly shrub but the golden flower cones are well worth seeing.

Orchids occur even in the driest environment, around Port Moresby for example; in the wettest, such as along the Purari River valley; and in the highest cold areas of Mt Wilhelm and the Star Mountains. There are nearly 2,000 species of orchids in PNG and I would not try to pick any one of them as being the most beautiful. There are hundreds of beautiful orchids here and I will mention only a few. In the dry coastal savannahs of the south coast the golden orchid (*Dendrobium discolor*) is probably the most common and obvious. Sometimes one can find a large mass of these fine orchids in a high fork of a tree with all the flowers creating a golden haze over the plant.

On a drive up to the Varirata National Park behind Port Moresby there are several plants to look for. However, they do not come into flower all at the same time of the year. As you drive up the escarpment of the Astrolabe Range you pass several small creeks. Some are dry in the dry season but if you look among the rocks on the damp grassy banks of the running creeks you should find two plants of interest.

One is the ground orchid (*Spathoglottis* sp). It has wide, grass-like leaves and very attractive pink to mauve flowers, with six to eight flowers to one stalk. Close to the spray of the tumbling water, a very delicate plant with soft downy leaves and with stalks of deep purple flowers can be found. This is the rock violet (*Boea d'urvilliana*), though it is not a true violet; it belongs to the Gesneriaceae. If you look in the dry creeks you will not see these plants for they shrivel up and await the next wet season to sprout again.

On the top of the escarpment there are several trees and shrubs to seek out. One

If you find yourself in the open grasslands, say between Goroka and Kainantu, look carefully into the grass near the roadside and you should find another ground orchid (*Phaias tancervilliae*) sometimes called the swamp orchid. It has large flowers of pink, white and brown, about four or five flowers on each stem and each flower may be 70 centimetres across. Their size makes them obvious as you drive along these grassy valleys.



While you are on the high roads looking at the moorland plants keep a lookout too for the many different orchids on the trunks of the tree ferns and trees. Most likely you will see small patches of red, creamy yellow or a mixture of these. Most of these will be the delicate and brilliantly colored high mountain orchid *Dendrobium cuthbertsoni* or a closely related species. These are considered by some orchid collectors to be the acme of orchid perfection.

Also worth looking for in the high country are the rhododendrons. They can be seen almost anywhere; on road-cuttings, rocky hillsides, among roadside grasses, festooned on trees. Look as well on fallen trees. Look also on old garden lands that have reverted to shrubland.

One large shrub, found very commonly from 700 metres up to 2,000 metres in open shrublands and young second growth areas, is known as (*Schuurmansia henningsi*). There are several species but this is the most commonly seen. The flowers are a deep pink and form steeples above the dark green leaves. It is a fine sight to see a whole hillside covered with these shrubs.

I have often been asked what the pink or white or yellow bell-shaped flowers are that we find along forest tracks. These are the highland bells (*Dimorphanthera* spp.) which occur as climbing canes or large shrubs. The flowers usually hang in bunches from the stems or branches, each straight-sided flower being about 20 to 35 millimetres long. The flowers may be pink with white tips or creamy-white with green tips.

While walking through the forest you will notice many vines, spiky palms, lianes and a wide variety of climbers. Among these are several species of a climbing pandan (*Freycinetia* spp.). Their long, pointed leaves grow in whorls but line up in three rows; a cross-section of a stalk looks

like the three-pointed star of the Mercedes-Benz emblem. The colorful flowering head is the main attraction. The different species have a beautiful cup-shaped flower of soft yellows or pale mushroom pink surrounded by equally bright colored bracts of similar or brighter colors of red, yellow and green.

Another group of plants to look for are the gingers. There is an amazing variety of forms from small ground dwelling species to giant shrub-like forms with leaf fronds over three metres long and climbing gingers and epiphytic (non-parasitic, but growing on other plants) species.

I have only touched on a few of the obvious flowers you can see on roadsides or on tracks branching off the roads. There are myriads of flowers to be found even by the most casual observer. Finding them can make a visit to PNG so much more rewarding.



**Top** Rock violets grow among rocks by tumbling streams.  
**bottom** One of the most sought after orchids, *Dendrobium cuthbertsoni*, shows various colors.





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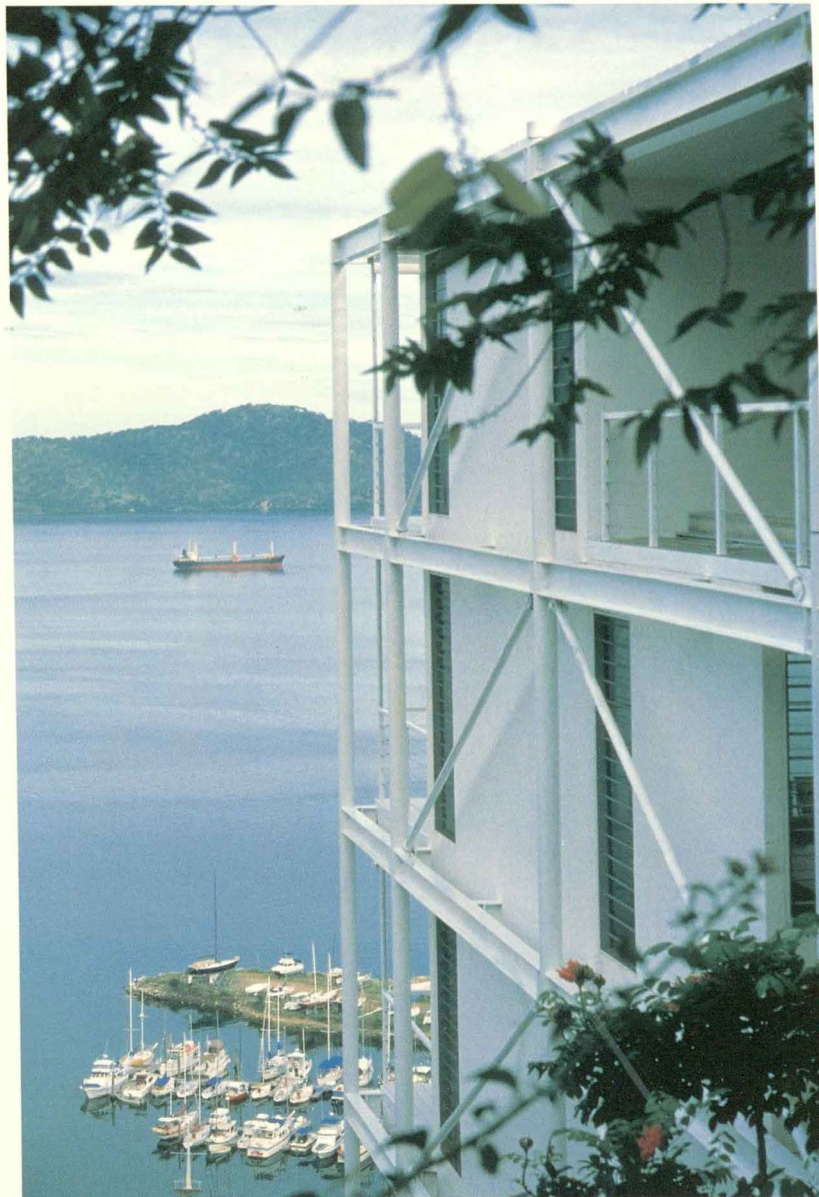
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# In the Eye of the Wind

Story and photographs  
by Peter Stone



**Above** Eye Of The Wind at anchor  
in Simpson Harbor, Rabaul.



**T**wo huge twin cannons loomed out of the green haze like the antennae of some grotesque aquatic insect as I landed on the wrecked ship. Startled by the intrusion of a bubble-blowing stranger into his domain, a large mottled rock cod scurried for cover. I was alone in a murky world resembling thin pea soup. Thirty metres above me, divemaster Eric Matson waited on the deck of the brigantine

Eye Of The Wind anxious to learn if we had found the wreck of the Japanese aircraft carrier we had heard about.

We needed local knowledge to find the wreck as we had no bearings. Eric and Melbourne diver Dick Whitaker located a young man by the name of Dominic in the small coastal village of Locomo south of Buin on Bougainville Island. Of course he knew where it was! He was delighted to visit our ship and came aboard with two friends.

Our skipper Anthony 'Tiger' Timbs, motored about a kilometre offshore until Dominic cried: "It is here!" We were sceptical; he didn't seem to be taking any bearings. Tiger put on the depth sounder and sure enough there was a significant bump in 30 metres.

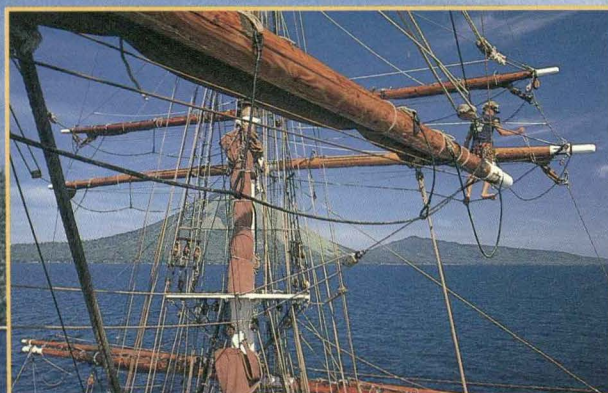
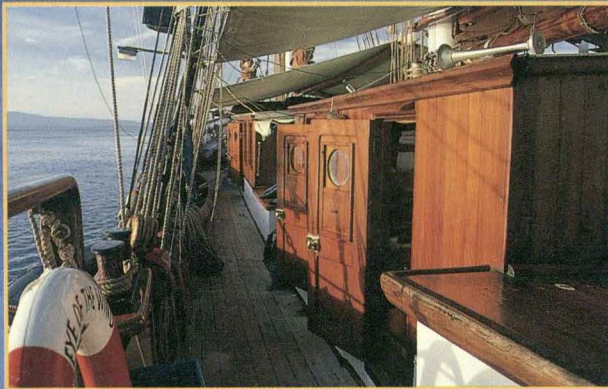
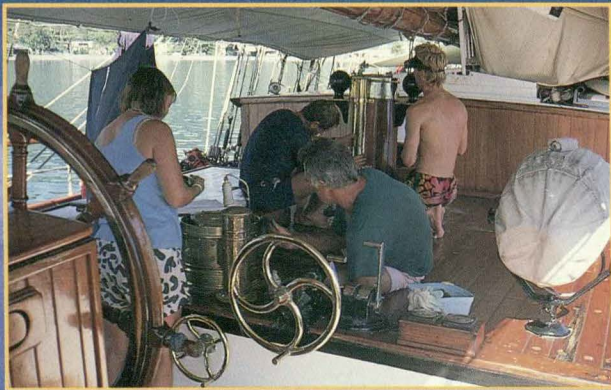
The water didn't look too inviting but I volunteered to go down and look. Those who joined me agreed that the two main guns were too large for an aircraft carrier. Possibly the unnamed ship was a large destroyer. Not to worry — our visit to the remote regions of

the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea was to explore the unknown. One objective, in part, had been fulfilled.

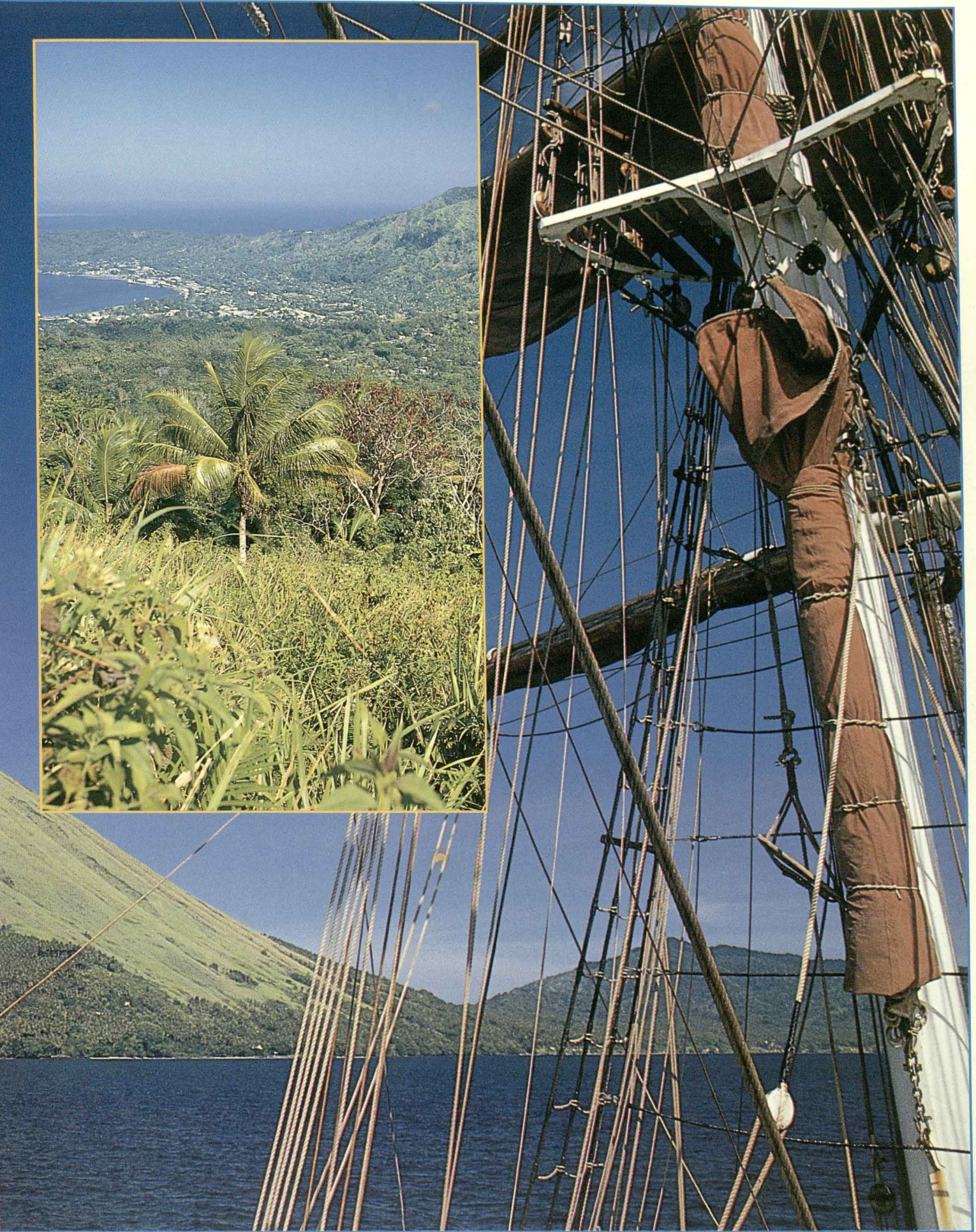
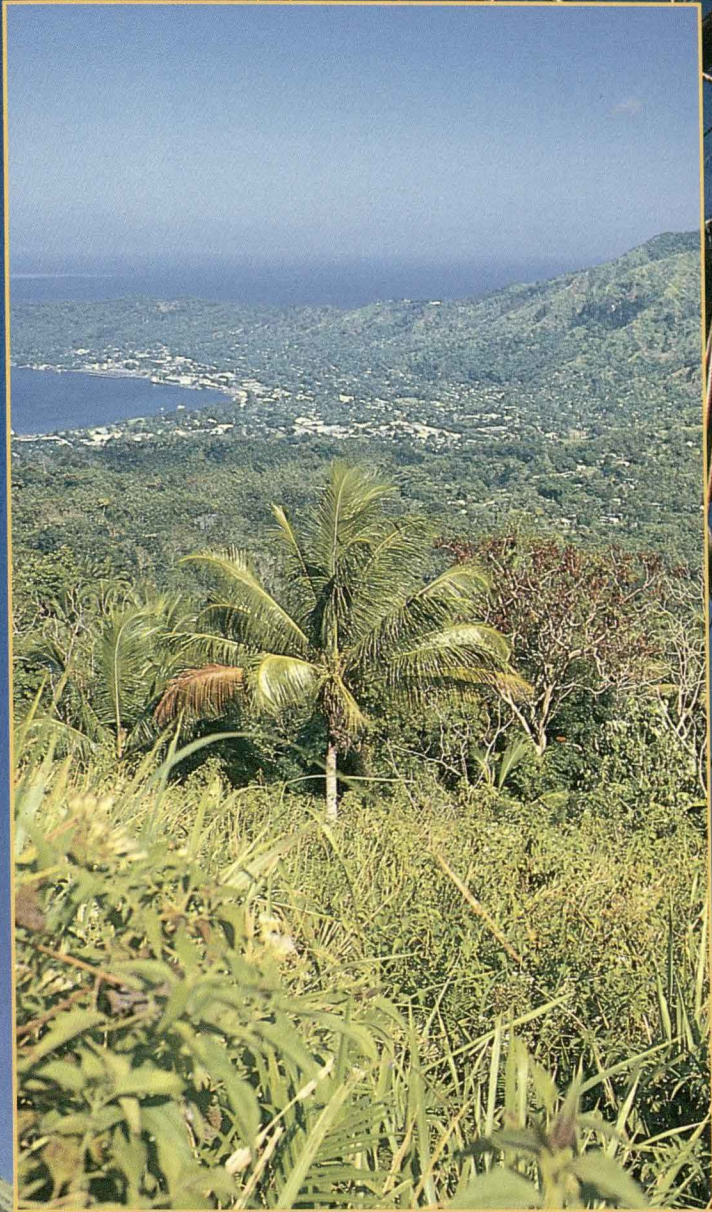
I had joined the 40-metre brigantine Eye Of The Wind at Gizo in the northern Solomons for a cruise to PNG with 12 crew and seven fellow Aussies. Why I should choose a voyage on a traditional tall ship I have no idea. I hate heights and I expected that any voyage on a sailing ship would necessitate a trip up the rigging sometime. Put me down-under with 50 metres of sea above and I can manage quite well, thank you. I delight in being face-to-face with a shark. But there is no way I want to eyeball a seagull 20 metres up a rope ladder. "One hand for yourself and one for the ship," they say. What about the two I need to pray with?

I was allocated a cabin on my own, one of seven twin cabins amidships, each with its own basin and twin bunks.

**Below** Shipboard scenes on the immaculately maintained brigantine. **centre** South Daughter volcano near Rabaul. **right** Rabaul is nestled in a huge caldera which forms Simpson Harbor.









Privacy aboard a sailing ship is often a problem, leading to tension on long voyages. Not so with this magnificent ship. A large saloon below decks and another top-deck saloon beside the galley provided ample separation for those wishing to read or write, or gather in boisterous repartee. Meals were a delight and the atmosphere on board typical of friendly adventurous spirit.

After several days in Gizo, diving the Japanese freighter *Toa Maru*, we sailed to the Treasury Islands and then to the Shortlands, the most western of the Solomon islands bordering PNG off Bougainville. Then we sailed for Buka Passage on the northern tip of Bougainville Island, swiftly passing through the narrow channel with a six-knot tide.

We had heard of another Japanese wreck south of the passage, off Toiokh Island and Eric once again took off in the inflatable dinghy to seek local

advice. He returned with a delightful lady, Josephine, from a plantation on Buka Island. She owned a great deal of land on Toiokh and was able to put us right above the wreck. It was a small two-hold Japanese freighter sitting upright in 24 metres of murky water. I would have to rate it as one of the worst dives I have ever done. This ship was nothing of interest to see; no marine growth, few fish and I could hardly see my hand in front of my face. Sometimes the unknown can be disappointing.

We now faced the longest sea leg of the three-week voyage, sailing from Buka Passage east toward the Gazelle Peninsula then north between New Ireland and East New Britain to the Duke of York Islands. It took 42 hours to sail the 110 nautical miles.

Initially we were virtually in the doldrums, but as a breeze picked up the crew set the foresails and we slowly made

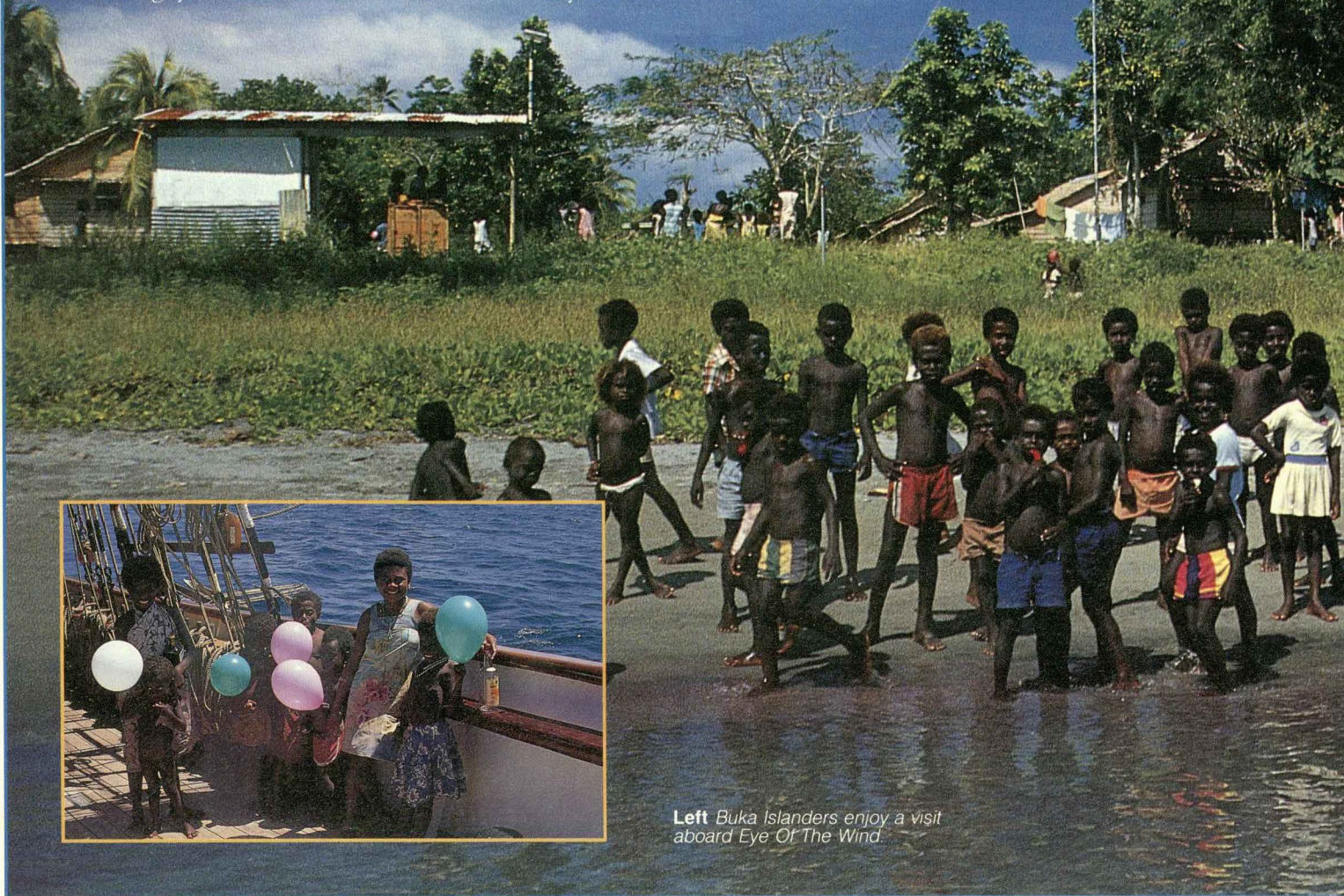
way. As dusk settled after our first full day of sailing, the wind picked up and the grand lady responded magnificently. In the dull early light of a crescent moon, white foam danced past the hull. The ship took a slight lean to port as a 14-knot breeze came up on the starboard quarter thrusting the ship forward on a flat calm sea.

This was sailing at its best. No words were spoken, crew and passengers ecstatic in their own emotions. Only the creaking ship's timbers and the gentle tune of the wind whistling in the rigging broke the silence. Now I could appreciate the romance of sail.

We arrived at the Duke of York Islands in high spirits. The group lies just to the north-east of Rabaul at the tip of the Gazelle Peninsula. The two major islands and five smaller isles are flat; excellent terrain for coconut plantations. No sooner had we anchored in Mioko Harbor

than we were surrounded by children in small canoes and adults selling shells, fruit and coconuts. 'Mother' could be seen in the distance — the largest of Rabaul's active volcanoes.

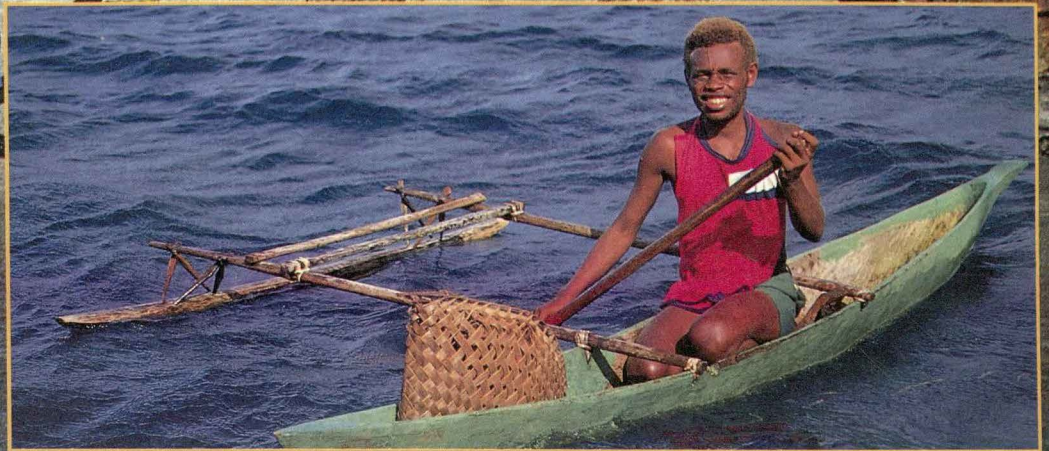
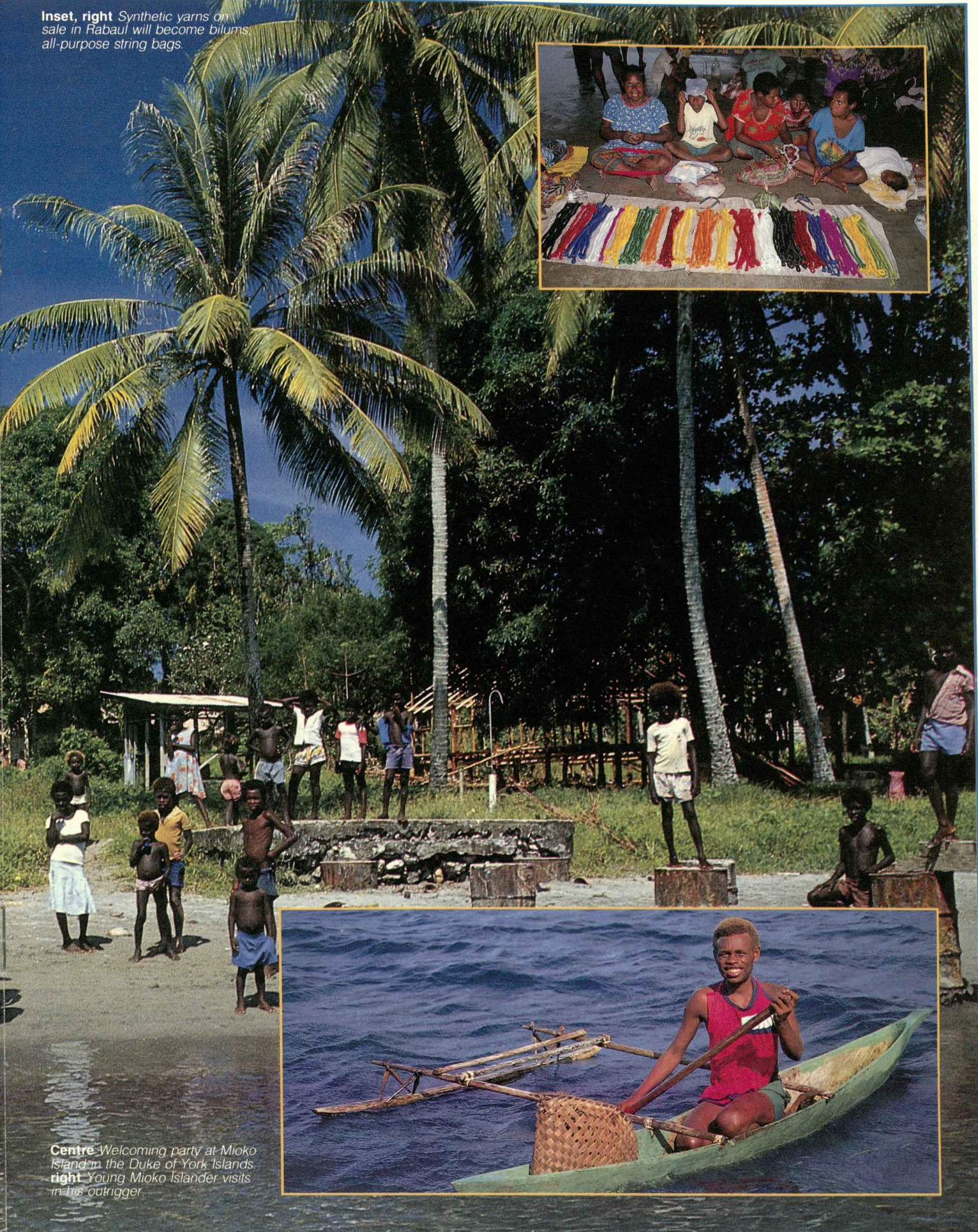
I went ashore with Eric to pay our respects and to see if the village could arrange a singing for us that evening. "A bit short notice but we will see what we can do," village councillor Leonard Tarum said amicably. We had no idea what to expect — perhaps a few of the young girls singing a few songs and a bit of dancing. We could not have imagined what was in store for us.



Left Buka Islanders enjoy a visit aboard *Eye Of The Wind*.

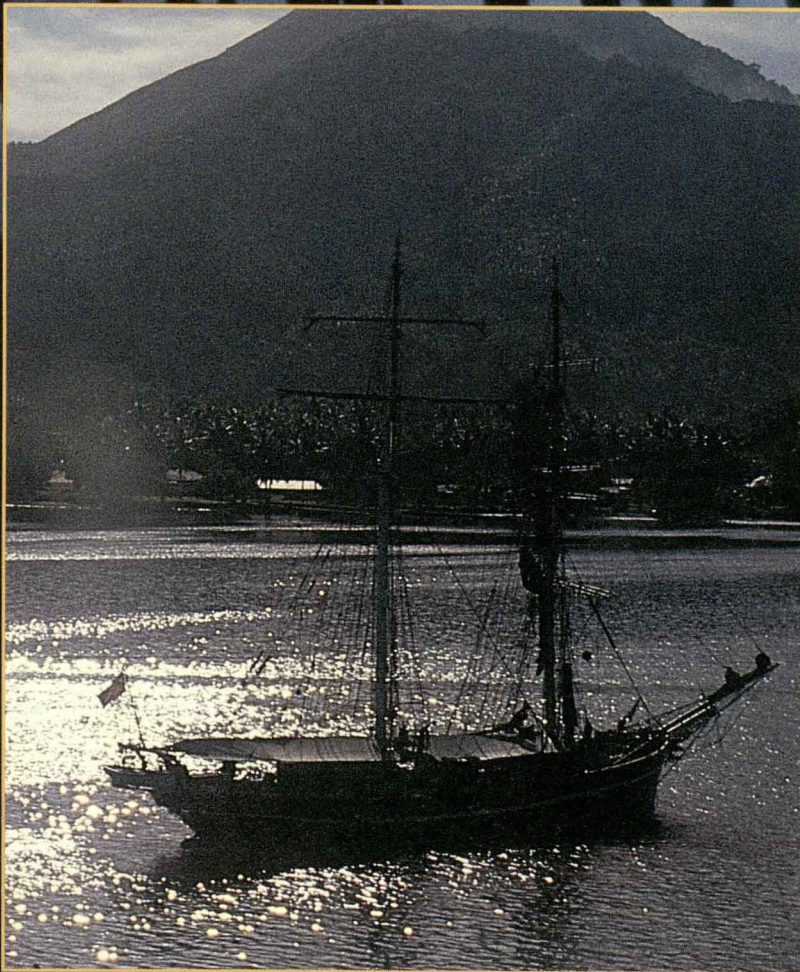
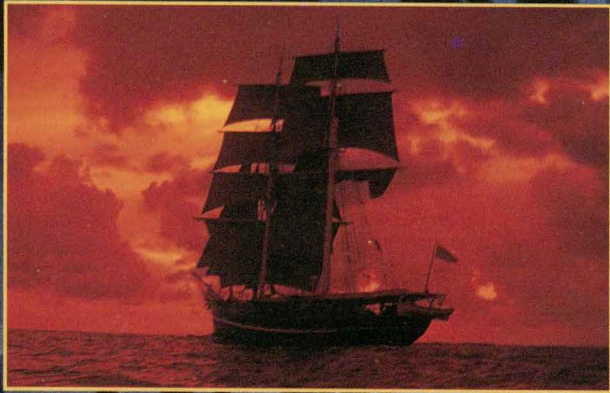


**Inset, right** Synthetic yarns on sale in Rabaul will become bilums all-purpose string bags.



**Centre** Welcoming party at Mioko Island in the Duke of York Islands.  
**right** Young Mioko Islander visits in his outrigger.





A friendly crowd escorted us from the small jetty into the village square, lit by kerosene lamps. Benches were set up for us and people fussed around to make sure we were comfortable. Leonard made a brief welcome speech and the festivities began.

For the next two-and-a-half hours we were treated to a wonderful performance of dancing, songs and humor. This was a fun gathering, to be enjoyed by all the village, in particular the performers. We could not understand the words, but Graham Tolitur, a retired government official, explained the meanings of the folk songs. Such was the spirit of the show that we could not but help join in the gaiety of the village.

Our final few days on the Eye Of The Wind were spent in Rabaul Harbor, enjoying the brilliant wreck diving and the comforts of what I believe to be the nicest town in PNG. A highlight of these last few days was a helicopter trip around the five volcanoes surrounding the caldera on which Rabaul is perched.

Rabaul is well known as a wreck diver's paradise. I have never tired of diving the huge Japanese transports Hakkai Maru and Kanshin Maru sitting upright on the harbor bottom in 60 metres. Or the fascinating 'George's' wreck in the Bismarck sea resting vertically on a steep incline like some huge creature trying to escape its underwater tomb, its bow clearly visible 10 metres below.

It was a reluctant group of Australians who farewelled Tiger and his crew for the two-day journey home by air. The brigantine had a further three weeks in northern PNG before sailing south to Sydney and Tasmania by way of the Great Barrier Reef.

I never did raise the courage to climb to the top of the main mast. But I did gain a fascination and respect for traditional sail. There is something extraordinary about a two-mast ship. It had character, a personality of its own entwined with the enthusiasm of the crew. The ship's immense height gives an impression of strength and dominance. The decks are busy but not cluttered. There was always something happening; brass to be polished, a rope to be spliced. That shows pride in the crew. The Eye Of The Wind is a proud ship.

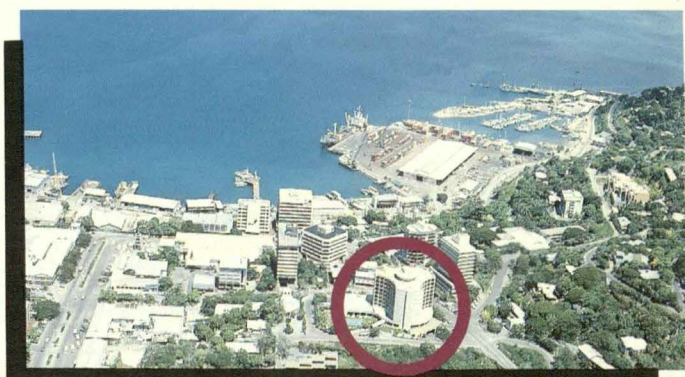
**Top** Sunset off Oema Island, near Bougainville. **centre** Nearing Rabaul late in the day **bottom** At anchor in Simpson Harbor, Rabaul.



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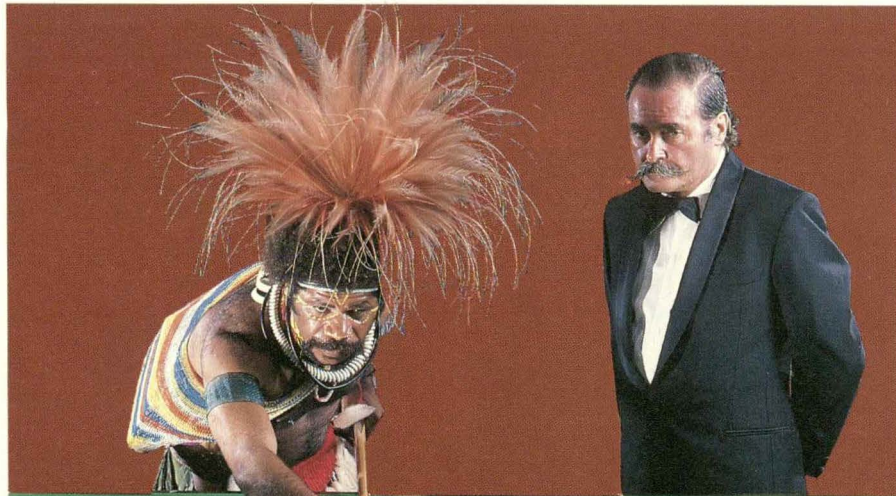
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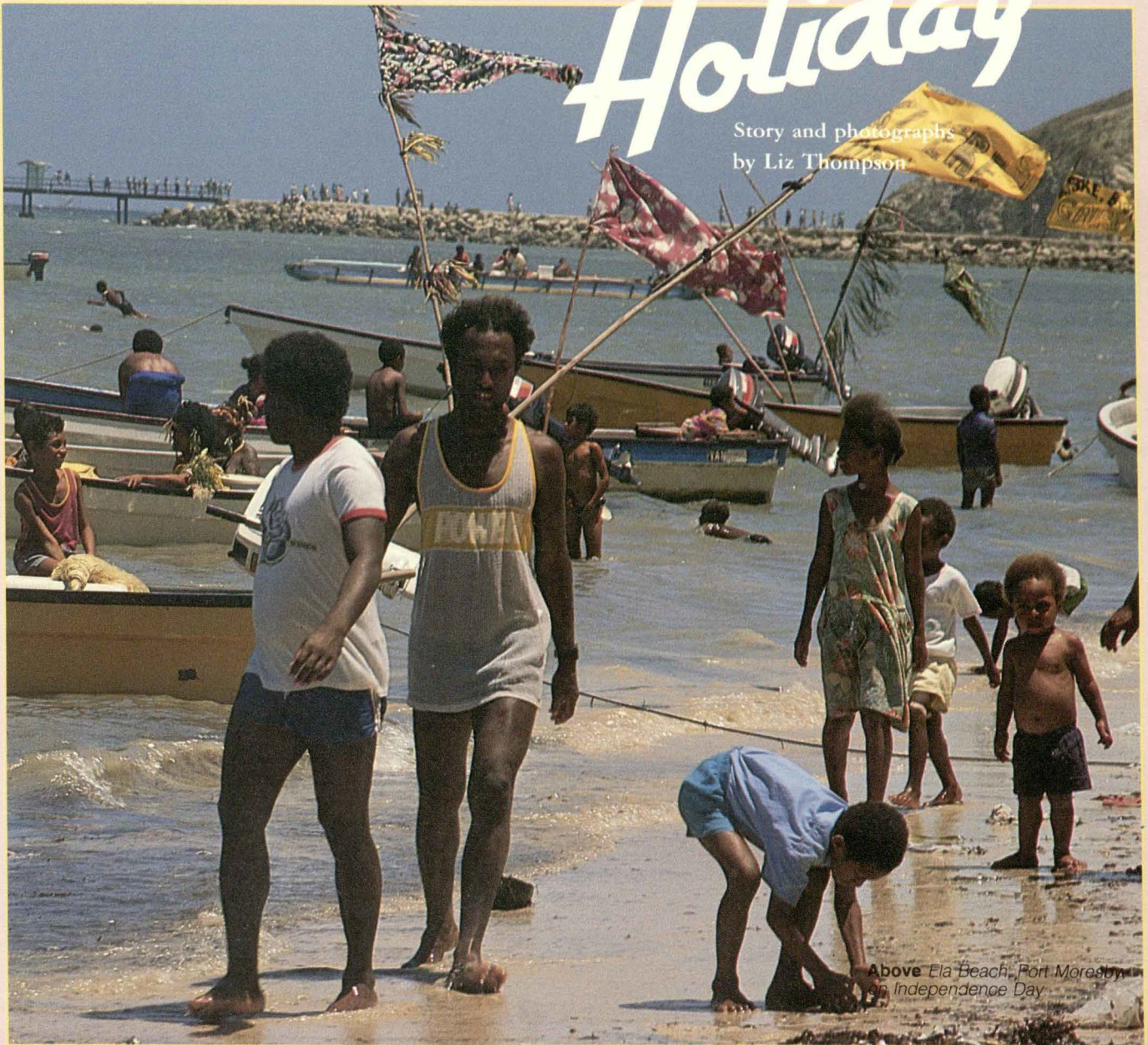
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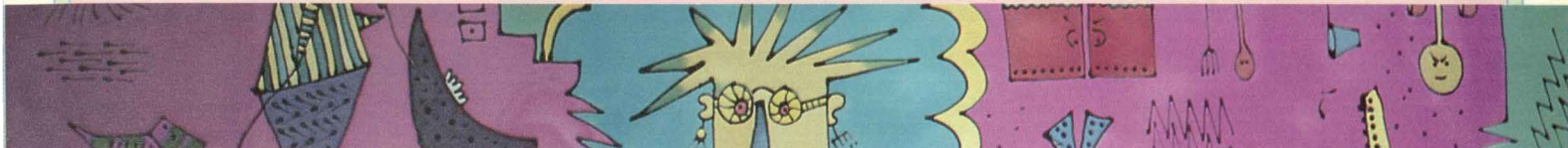
# HURRI

## Holiday

Story and photographs  
by Liz Thompson



Above Ela Beach, Port Moresby  
on Independence Day





Last year, at the 14th anniversary of Papua New Guinea's Independence celebrations, Prime Minister Namaliu looked to the future with confidence and enthusiasm in his address to the nation. He spoke of PNG as a "young and beautiful country, rich with a wide range of marketable resources". He outlined what he felt to be the country's achievements since independence on 16 September, 1975. A free press and continuing democracy were significant elements.

Independence celebrations coincide with, and so are marked by, the Hiri Moale Festival, strewn with sings-

ings, canoe races, the opening of the arts and crafts exhibition and numerous cultural performances. The Hiri Moale Festival commemorates the annual trading expeditions to the Gulf of Papua by the Motu-speaking people of 10 villages around what is now Port Moresby. The Hiri was initiated by a man from Boera village living, it is said, in the late 17th Century. Boera village elders say this man had a vision in which he received instructions on how to build a lakatoi, a double-hulled canoe with crab-claw sails. It was to be used to trade with people far away in coastal regions. Boera villagers traded cooking pots, clay bowls and dishes,

pots for carrying water, pig tusks, mother of pearl shells and armshells. In return they received sago logs and pigs from villages in the Gulf. The last voyage was in 1956.

One of the highlights of Hiri Moale last year was the re-enactment of the arrival of lakatoi after a successful trading voyage. The festivities lasted from Friday to Monday, during which Prime Minister Namaliu raised the official flag and Governor General Sir Ingatius Kilage officially opened the celebrations. Young girls wandered among the crowds dressed in grass skirts, their bodies decorated with ink pen tattoos in the traditional style. They wore

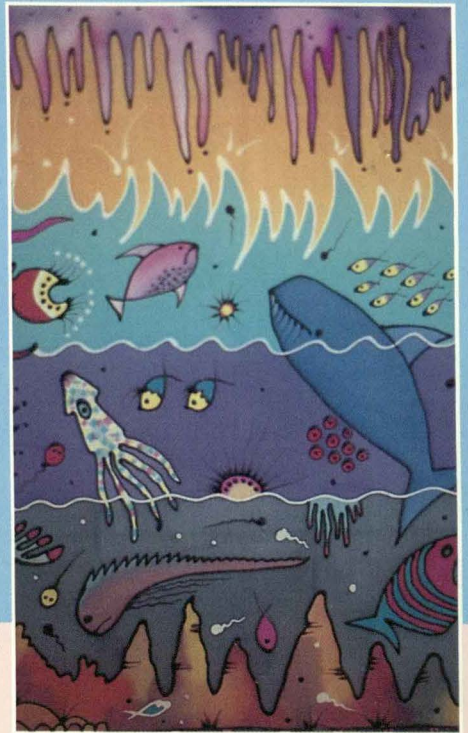
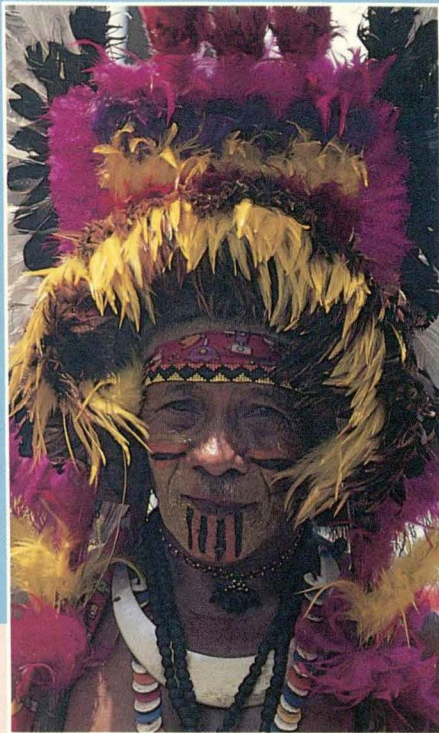
**Below** Heading home after a day of festivities. **inset, right** Body decoration Hiri Moale style on a dancer.



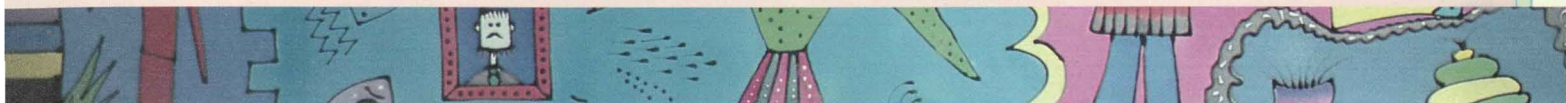


red hibiscus flowers in their hair and cordyline leaves tied to their arms. Barefoot, they danced on the sand, waving their arms in time to drum beats. Adults and children crowded towards the beach, looking out to the horizon and the gradual appearance of the huge Hiri Moale lakatoi, its giant sails billowing in the wind. This was one of the weekend's most dramatic spectacles. About 20 metres long, the boat was laden with people and baskets of food.

As the lakatoi came closer, smaller canoes were set further up the beach up to be released as the larger boat hit the sand. As it finally drew on to the beach, the crew and passengers

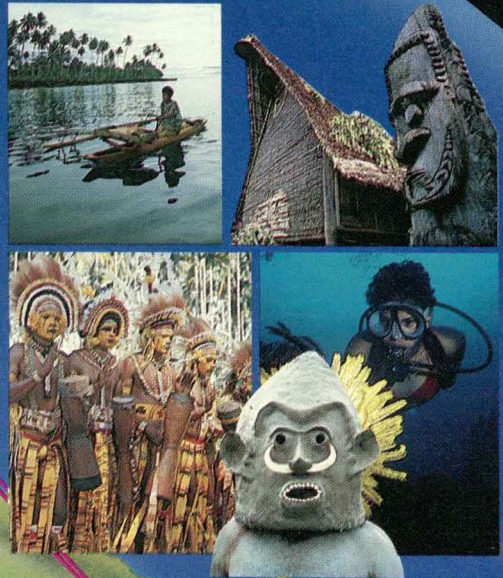
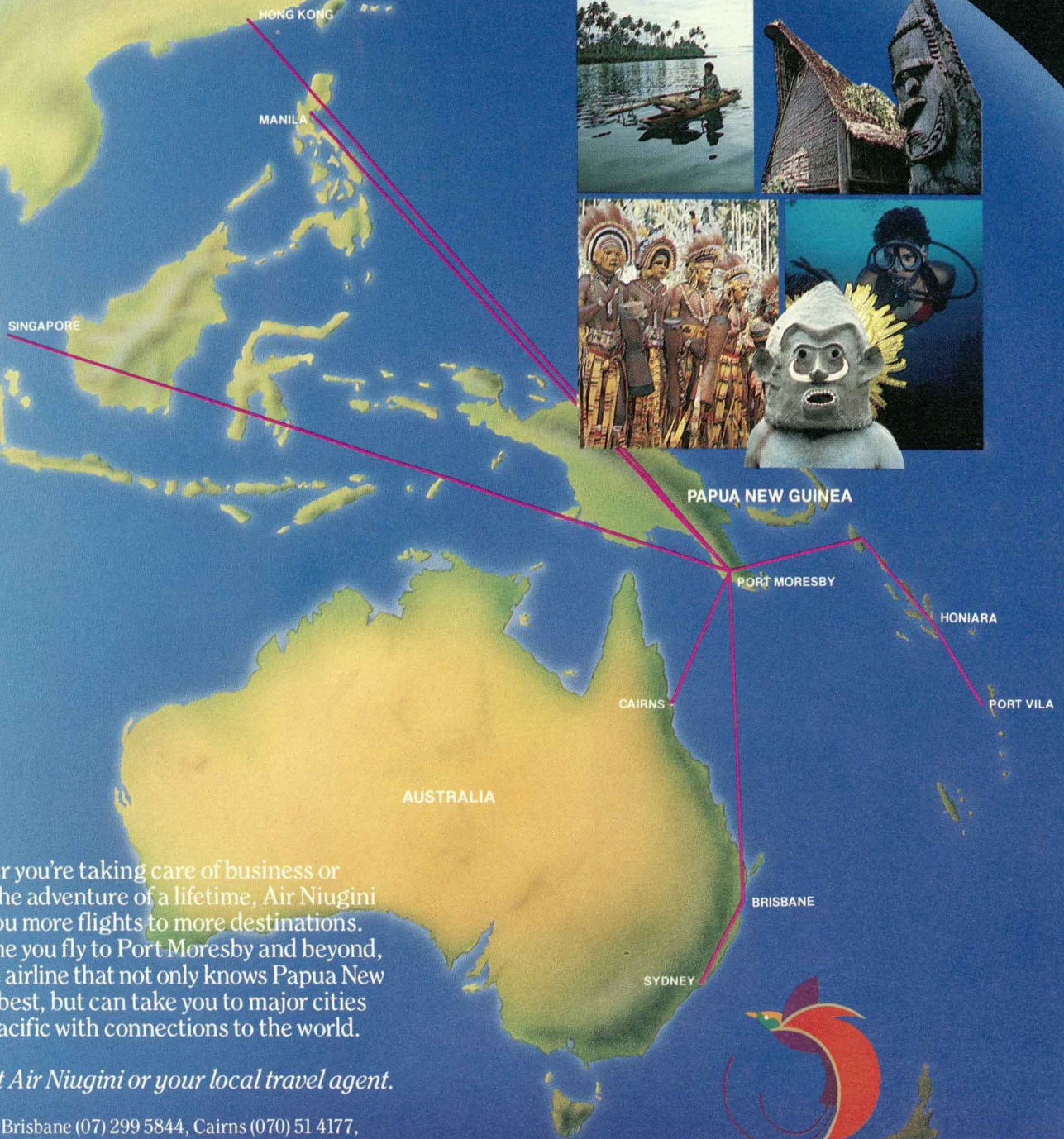


**Right** Dazzling headgear was 'order of the day' dress. **far right** Art Show exhibit, 'In The Deep' by Liz Jones.





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leapt from the decks and mingled with the dancers and musicians. The boat, built from natural materials, was surrounded by inquisitive crowds.

Traditionally, when the women spotted the lakatois approaching, they would run to the beach and a week of singing, dancing and feasting would begin. So too, the arrival of the lakatois at Ela Beach seemed to symbolise the real beginning of the celebrations.

Close by, men and women from Pari village and Central and Gulf Provinces sat cross-legged providing an art and craft demonstration. Men wove on a large wooden loom and women threaded shells on to strings to be worn as dec-

orative bilas (finery). Kokaru people came to demonstrate sago making next to the traditional house built at Ela Beach.

The Hiri Hanenamo beauty competition was one of the major events, along with the choir competition at the beach. Headdresses of dancers could be seen above the crowd's heads, brightly colored feathers interspersed sometimes with pieces of plastic and metal. The previous day, these traditional dancers had performed at the city markets, the stadium and Motu Koirabu villages in the city. String bands and gospel singers performed at Gerehu. The activity was constant and on Saturday

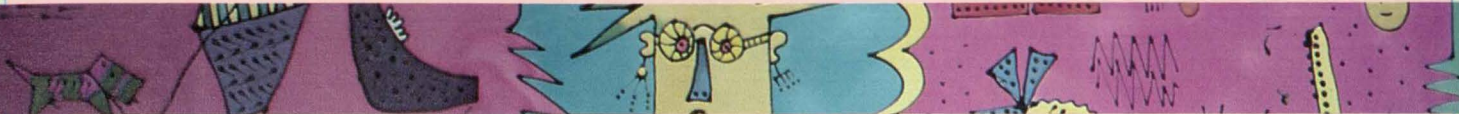
afternoon, as many rushed over to the stadium to watch drama groups and the police and defence force bands perform, others remained to lie about in the sand. Boats lined the water's edge, huge outboard motors being started by men in traditional costumes of seeds and leaves and feather headdresses providing an interesting incongruity. Families opened their picnics and young children dug holes in the sand.

The remainder of the weekend included a church service in front of the traditional house, a windsurfing race and drama competitions. Women sat across from the stadium selling tobacco to passersby

Below 'Woman' by Liz Jones.



Below Hiri Moale dance troupe.



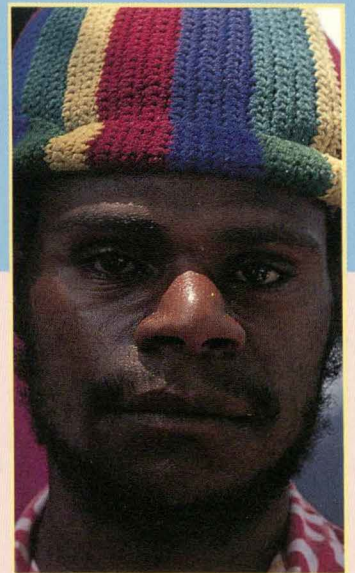


who had daubed themselves in paint. In the stadium, the people of Tubuserela village outside Port Moresby added a special attraction. They performed what is called a tabu, which in Motuan means the beginning of a feast or a dance. Carved and painted dobu posts were a part of the platform they created in the stadium on which they tied thousands of bananas, taro, yams and pieces of sugar cane while people sang and danced. The last such performance was in 1969 by the people of Hanuabada village and is a significant representation of Motuan culture. The Boera villagers also performed traditional Motuan songs in the old Motu lan-

guage, which, as time passes, is spoken only by the older generation.

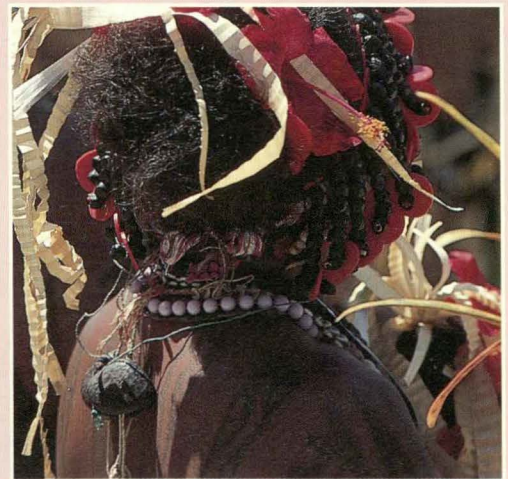
Sir Ignatius Kilage pointed out that there was more to the weekend than celebration. "The essential message of this day should be that we still belong to this great nation," he said. "The idea of unity should not be limited to independence celebrations. In the short time since attaining independence the people of PNG together have achieved great things and overcome many dangers. We still need to achieve greater things by working for the common good." He emphasised the importance of the country remaining spiritually alive, of

tradition and culture being retained and the nation shaped to benefit the children of the future.



**Above** Pensive visitor to the festival. **below** Bilas (finery) worn by a performer.

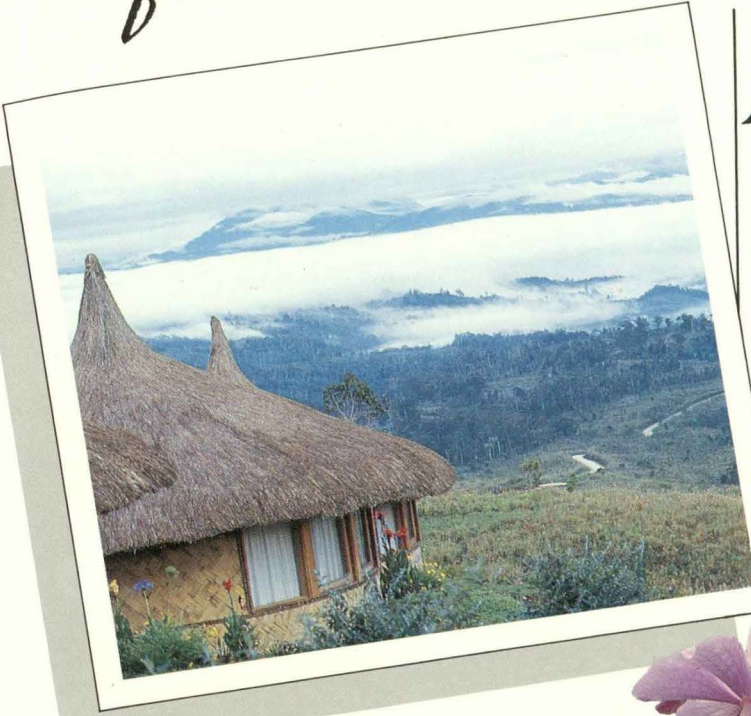
**Below** Distinctive crab-claw sails of the huge and laden Hiri Moale lakatoi canoe.





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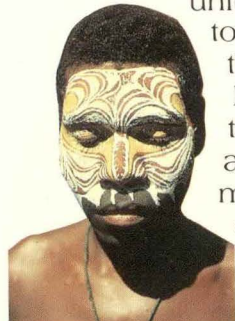
dignified and quite startling. The surrounding mountains are frequented by 13 species of the Bird of Paradise and these can be seen in the orchid studded forests behind Ambua Lodge. Send for our brochure "Papua New Guinea - tomorrow it won't be the same"



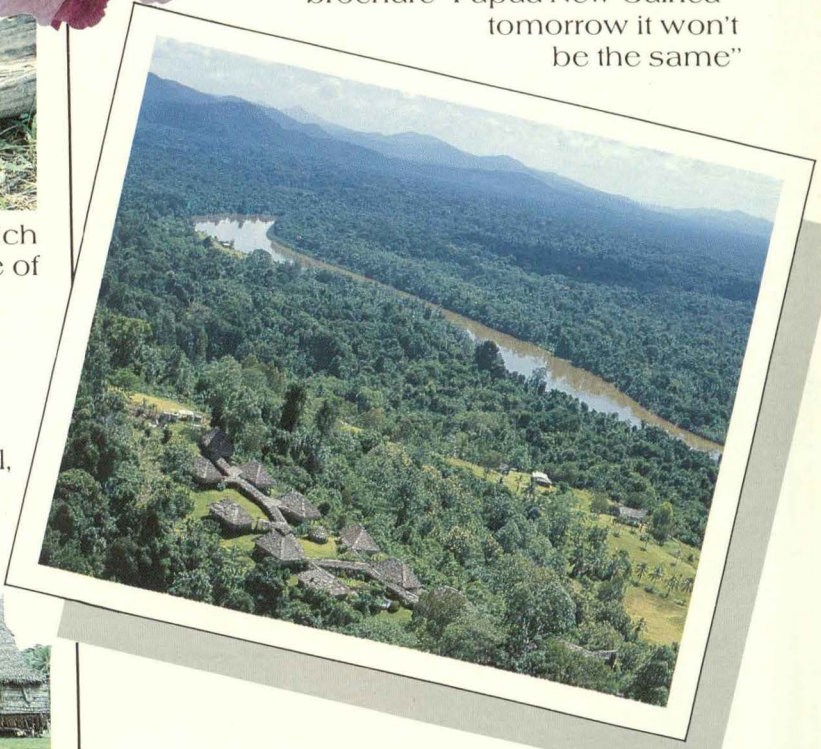
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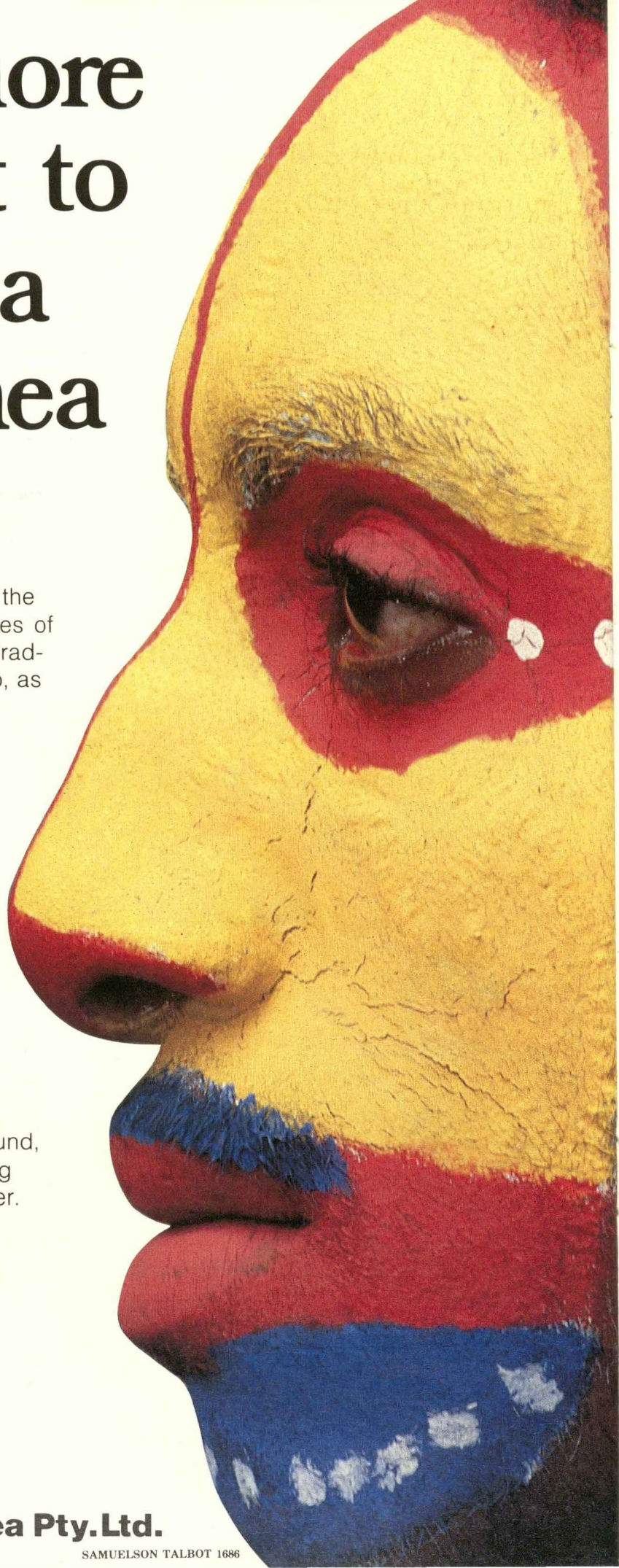
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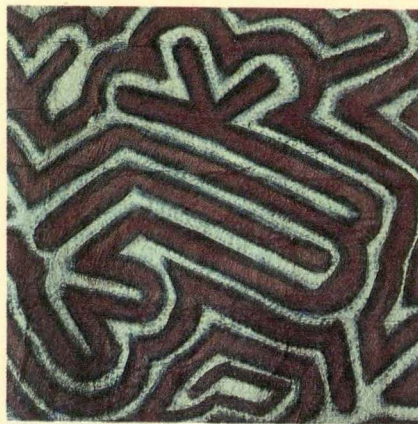


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The making of bark cloth, tapa, and the carving of wooden bowls have long been a tradition of the Killerton people of Oro Province. Now, the first steps are being taken in a project to produce these items for sale so that customs will be preserved while generating cash for the community. It is hoped that young people seeing there is money in tradition will perpetuate the skills of their elders.

The coastal strip of Oro Province is the home of tapa making, and the skills continue in parts of Morobe, Gulf and Western Provinces. Ceremonial use of tapa is also found in parts of southern Papua where there is no evidence of making it; so it seems that tapa was once an item of trade.

This bark cloth is both decorative and functional, having formerly been used by men and women as the main part of everyday dress. Its use now is restricted largely to ceremonial occasions where the tapa-clad dancers, with beads, armbands, feathers and other decoration, are among Papua New Guinea's most spectacular.

Tapa making is women's work. Young mulberry trees with a diameter of three to four centimetres or more are cut to the required lengths and the fine, outer bark is scraped away with the sharp edge of a mussel shell. A lengthwise cut is then made through the inner bark which is carefully prised away from the timber.

**Top** Tapa skirt, cape and cap worn in a traditional dance. **bottom** Typical tapa cloth design from Oro Province.

# TRADITION

Story and photographs by Greg Smith



Now the real work begins. Hour upon hour of pounding with a large black-palm beater is required before the bark becomes tapa. Water is added from time to time to keep the bark soft, so the beater has fine grooves criss-crossing its surface to allow air and excess water to escape as the beating continues. Continual folding, unfolding and refolding of the bark strip is required as its fibres are gradually flattened and stretched by the constant pounding.

It is obvious to anybody watching the process that considerable endurance is required by the women involved as they maintain the rhythm of the heavy beater against the soft bark. By the time the bark has become sufficiently thin and pliable, it will be three to four times its original width. Narrow sheets may be joined by beating their edges together until a permanent bond forms.

Drying rids the cloth of excess moisture before painting. At this stage, too, any small holes caused by knots or variation in the bark's thickness will be repaired by attaching a small piece to the rougher side.

Only one side of the cloth is painted with the characteristic tapa designs of hypnotic, geometric curves and swirls. Some patterns have significance to the clan and others are merely reflections of the steady hand and skill of the artist.

Black and red colors are used. The black is coconut husk charcoal mixed with water and is applied first in a series of parallel lines. Red is then filled in between the lines. Red dye is made by boiling leaves and bark, with its color varying from brown to red depending on the time it has been allowed to boil. The color is carefully applied using the frayed end of a pandanus nut as a brush. By leaving part of the tapa in

its natural, uncolored state, the black and red sections take on a greater prominence.

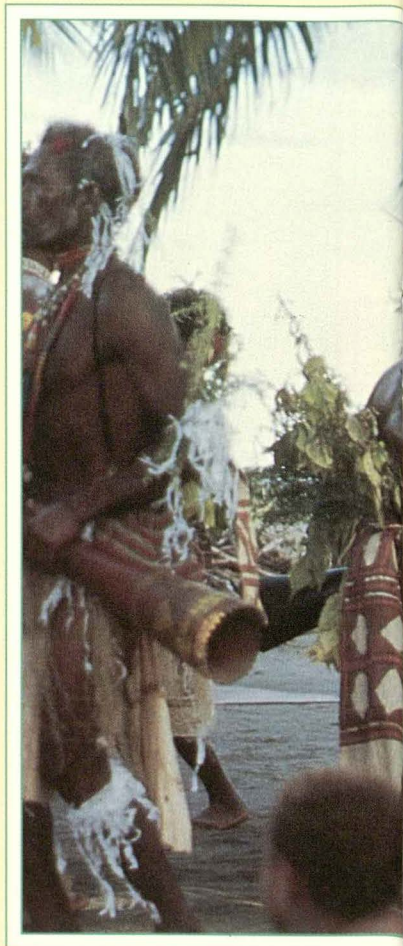
After many hours of labor and skill the completed cloth is hung to dry before being put to use. A quite surprising fact is that the cloth remains soft and felt-like even after many years of service. Tapa is used as a cape in many ceremonial performances and as women's skirts and men's loincloths. Tapa may be used as a mat, a wall hanging or table top, or made into purses, wallets and carry bags.

While the women are continuing the tradition of tapa making, the men are attempting to interest their youth in another age-old skill, that of carving wooden bowls. These are purely utilitarian in nature with none of the artistry common to carvers from the Sepik or Trobriands. The bowls are all of elliptical form and used for preparing and storing food. Lest it be thought that they are, therefore, an unworthy addition to an artefacts list, time needs to be spent observing how they are made.

Part of a tree some 50 centimetres long and 15 to 20 centimetres in diameter is split lengthwise down the centre and each half will become a



**Above** Applying red dye, obtained by boiling together leaves and bark. **right** Tapa is important for ceremonial occasions. (Both photographs by Dr John Barker, courtesy The Burke Museum, Seattle)



**Below** Making and decorating tapa is always women's work.







bowl. With deft strokes of a bushknife the carver forms the bowl's outside contour, rounded on the bottom and pointed at each end, rather like a child's carving of a wooden boat. The next and most difficult part is hollowing the inside. This is done with a single-handed, curved adze on a wooden handle about 40 centimetres long. As the chips fly the bowl forms, with the timber eventually reduced to a thickness of about five millimetres. Skilful work indeed, as one false cut would mean a bowl full of daylight!

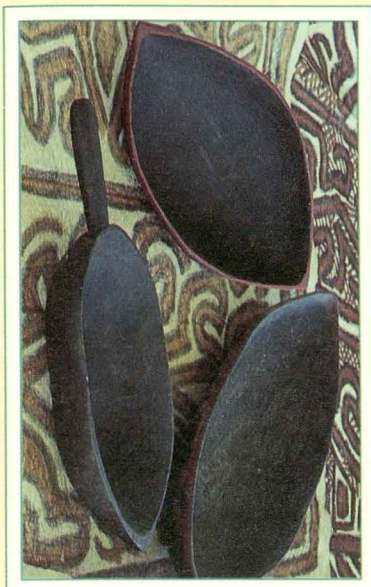
Stage three consists of smoothing the roughest parts inside and out with the leaves of the 'sandpaper' tree. The fresh, green leaves do exactly the same job as medium grade sandpaper. No attempt is made to remove all the marks from the shaping process as this would serve no useful purpose.

Two stages are involved in painting the bowls to help prevent cracking since green timber is used. Fresh, sappy bark is rubbed vigorously over the bowl, inside and out until the timber is sealed. Black paint (charcoal and water) is then applied over the sealed surfaces. Sometimes a minimum amount of red decoration may be given to the outside of the bowl by mixing crushed red seeds and water to produce a brilliant red dye.

When dry the bowl is ready for use. It is waterproof, heat-proof, nontoxic and environmentally safe. Also, it is a piece of living culture which makes it more interesting and valuable than a piece of pink plastic. The people involved in this project have shown initiative in attempting to stave off the death of their traditions. It is to be hoped that the flow of tourists to all parts of PNG can ensure the success of this and similar ventures aimed at retaining many aspects of this country's unique culture.



**Left** Oro bowls have a distinctive shape. **above** Coconut shell bowls hold the paint and dye which seals the raw wood bowl.





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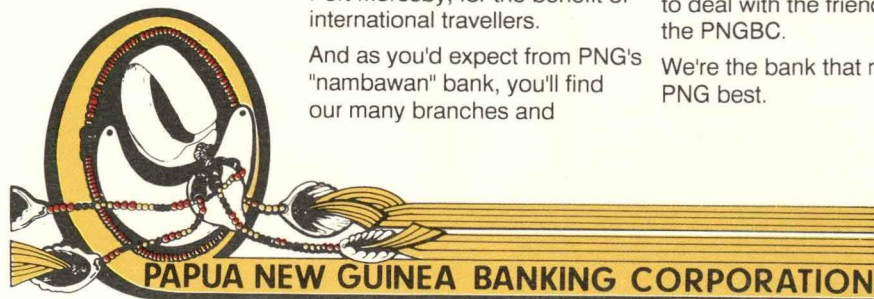
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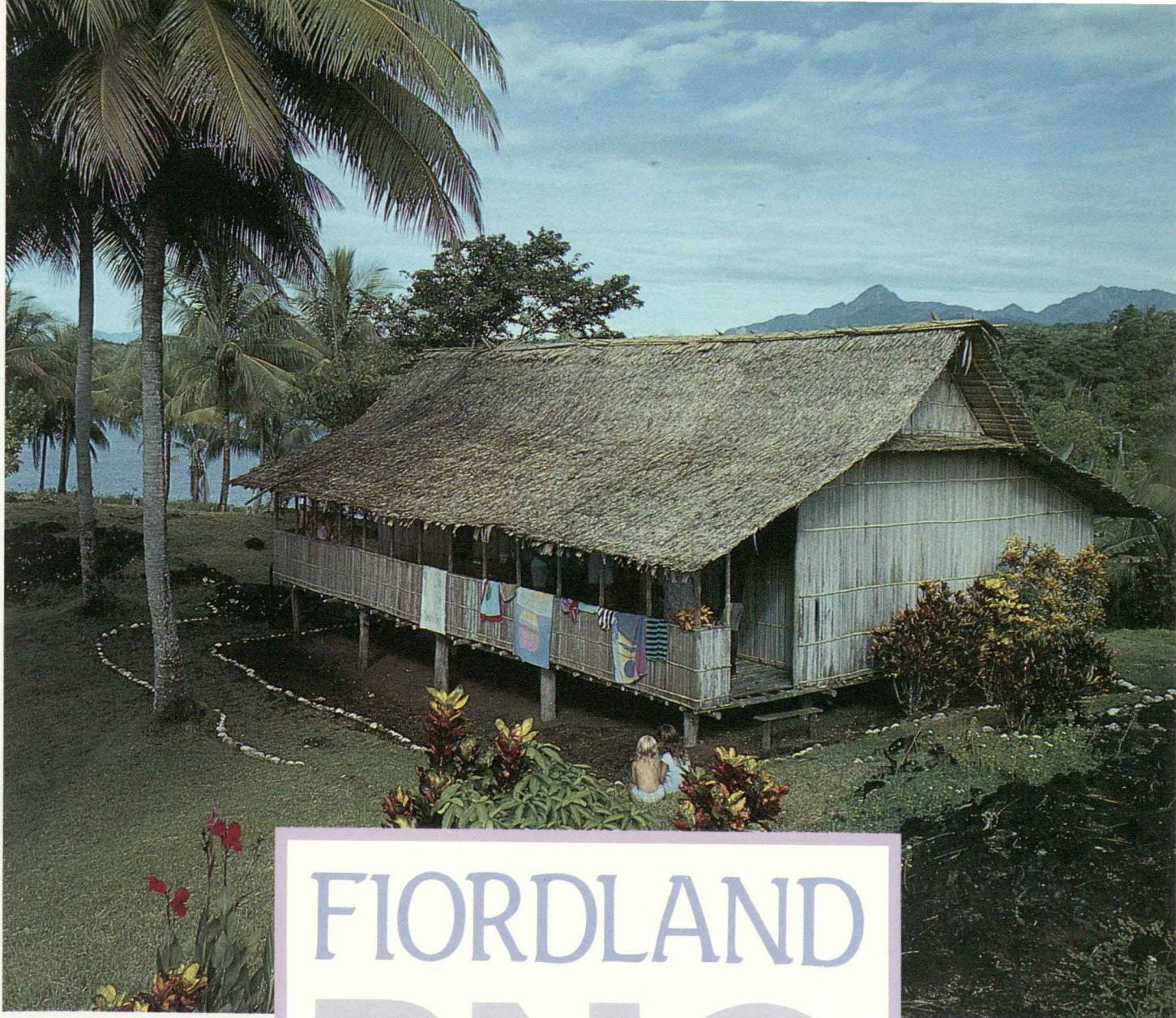
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**Above** Typical village accommodation in the Tufi region.

# FIORDLAND

# PNG

Story and photographs  
by Greg Smith

"Hello. My name is Carson from Kofure village. Are you Mr Greg Smith?" So it was that my wife and I began a memorable few days as guests of Kofure village at Tufi. Many potential tourists choose not to come to Papua New Guinea because of the mass of unfavorable publicity and a general lack of media balance.

Be assured that there are places to go, people to see and things to do in the Land Of The Unexpected that are in

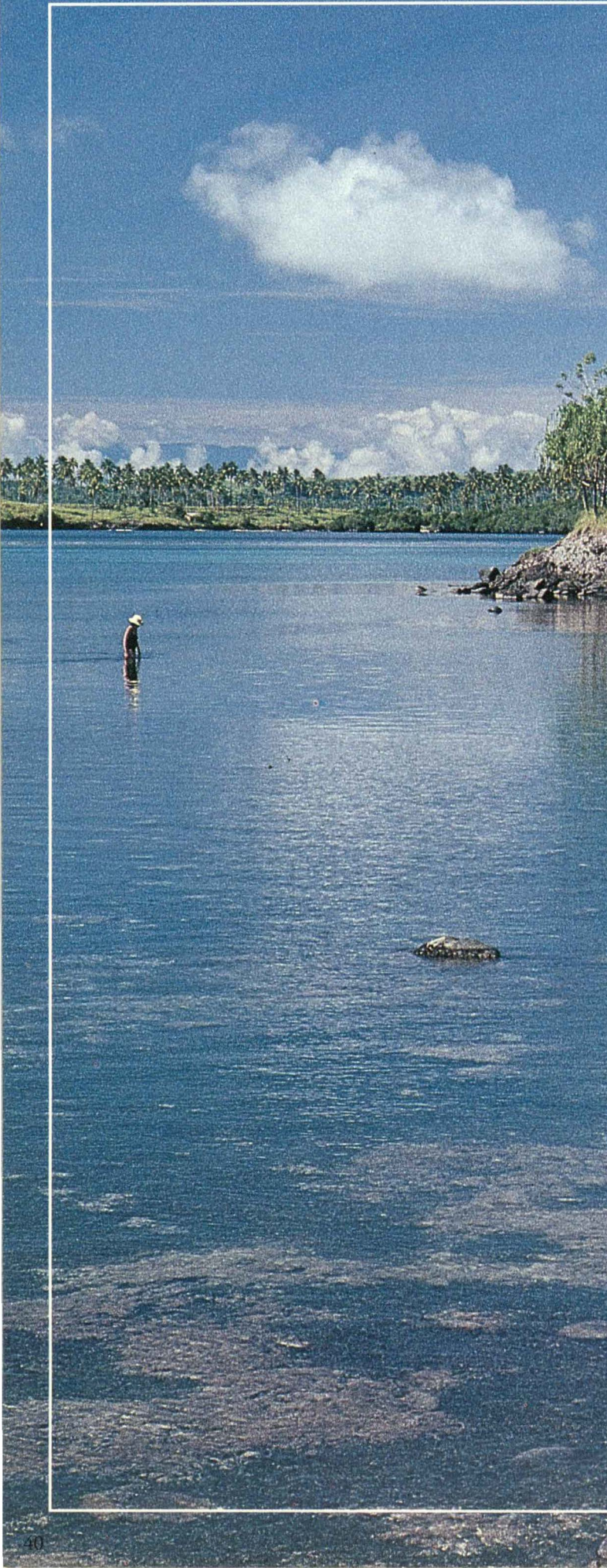
stark contrast to the familiar press reports.

Oro Province (it may be Northern on your map) has so far missed the boom of gold, copper and oil which herald great changes in much of the mainland and in the island provinces. But it does have Tufi, the spectacular point at the northern end of Collingwood Bay, where the fiords of Scandinavia and south-west New Zealand have been transplanted into a brilliant tropical setting.

**Below** Tufi fiord.







Tufi is a village of several hundred people with a government station, fish packaging plant, hotel, trade stores, school and airstrip. There are many smaller villages in the surrounding area, some built right at the water's edge while others sit high up on narrow ridge tops overlooking the sea.

Most building is done with traditional bush materials, though there is the occasional piece of corrugated iron or plastic sheeting. At locations each side of Tufi there is village accommodation available at a daily rate of around K20 all inclusive. Most have beaches and easy access to the coral reefs but lack such 'essentials' as telephone, electricity, television, noisy neighbors and motor vehicles.

Thirty minutes by light aircraft from Popondetta's Girua airport and the plane circles over the true paradise as it gently glides in across the flat, blue-green sea to touch down on the rich green of Tufi's grass strip. By prior arrangement from Port Moresby or Popondetta, someone from your chosen village guest house will greet you warmly, grab your luggage and invite you to follow. Then it's on to a platform between the waiting canoe and its single outrigger while the craft is deftly paddled and poled over

and through the coral to your destination.

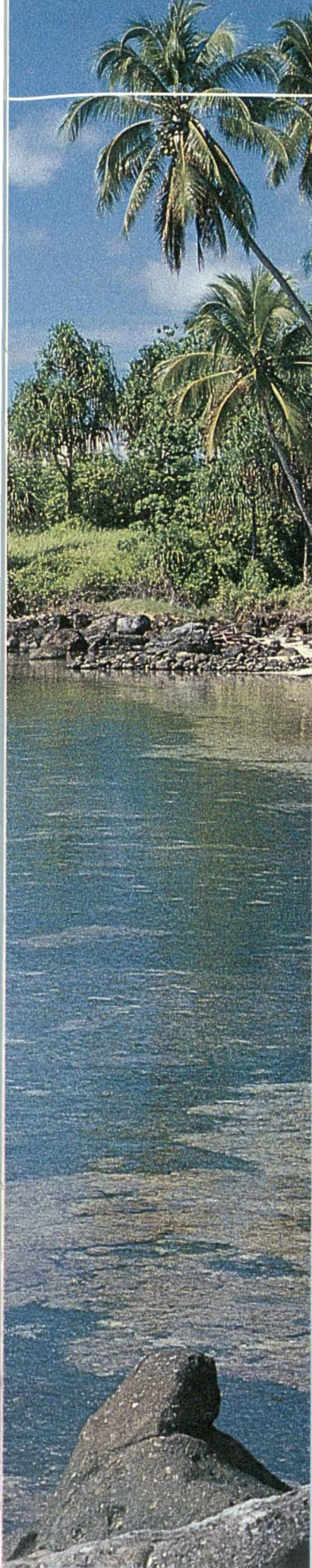
Upon our arrival at Kofure we were met and welcomed by a contingent of adults, teenagers and children all eager to carry our gear and show us to our temporary home. Built of bush material, it was complete with verandah and furnished with two chairs, a table, foam mattresses and mosquito nets. Who could wish for more?

Service to the guests at Kofure is typical of village life, where everyone contributes in some way, by providing garden produce, fishing, carrying water or preparing meals. And what meals! Despite very basic facilities, Vivian, the delightful young girl in charge of the kitchen, produced meals fit for royalty. Fish, poultry, mountains of vegetables, lobster, bananas, pineapple, pawpaw, watermelon and coconut filled the table three times a day. If there is a better way to enjoy a meal than sitting among the coconut palms while gazing over the brilliant blue of the sea as outrigger canoes slice serenely through the water, then someone has been hiding it from me all these years.

**Left** Kofure Village beach. **below** Guest transfer, Tufi-style.







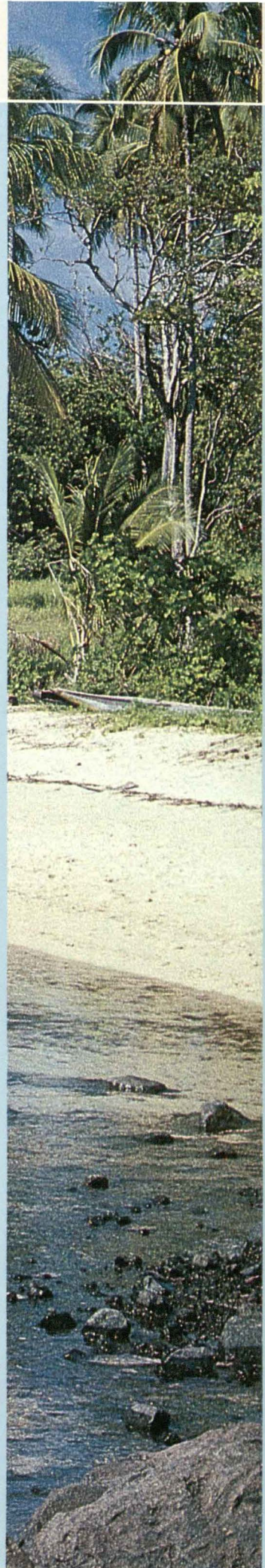
Days at Kofure can be as relaxing or as energetic as the guest requires. After greeting the sunrise of the new day while enjoying tea or coffee there is swimming from the white, sandy beach only 50 metres away. This can be combined with snorkelling to marvel at the infinite variety of coral and other marine life. Humans are not the only animals that find the waters off Tufi hold a great charm.

After an overwhelming breakfast, there can be more of the same, or a time to laze, or an interesting discussion of history and tradition. While the hosts never intrude, they are always at hand to talk or to offer advice.

Typical of the no-cost extras that are provided was a two-

hour canoe trip with Sore, an ex-teacher who has returned to his Kofure roots. Between snorkelling stops he entertained us with stories of his people and their legends; legends which have so much more impact when spoken than when written.

**Centre, below** Tufi family group in their bilas (finery). **bottom** Coming home through the shallows after a day at market.





For the cost of the fuel it was arranged for a member of the village to take us the full length of the Tufi fiord in his outboard powered aluminium dinghy. As the fiord narrowed we entered a different world, a world enclosed by thick mangroves, massive pandanus palms and sago palms and watched over by towering, vertical cliffs.

We tethered the dinghy, now above the tidal reaches, in clear mountain water to walk through and marvel at the forest. Only 200 metres on we struck an unexpected bonus; Sore's uncle and his family were making sago. A son was cutting the pulp from a newly felled palm which was then carried by a daughter (home on leave from her office job in Port Moresby) to her father who had the task of squeezing the sago from the pulp to let it settle in the trough before the final processing and transporting back to their village many kilometres away. They were thrilled that we were so interested in their tradition and took great trouble to explain the details of the operation.

Two things stand out to the visitor as special cultural aspects of the Tufi area. The first is tapa cloth made by many hours of pounding the bark of a special tree and further hours of meticulous painting of the designs in black (charcoal) and red (boiled bark). The tapa is worn by both male and female at traditional gatherings and the purchase of a length makes not only a great wallhanging but a constant reminder of the Tufi experience.

The second aspect is the intricate facial tattoos of many of the women and late teenage girls. Applied by pricking the skin with a sharp thorn and



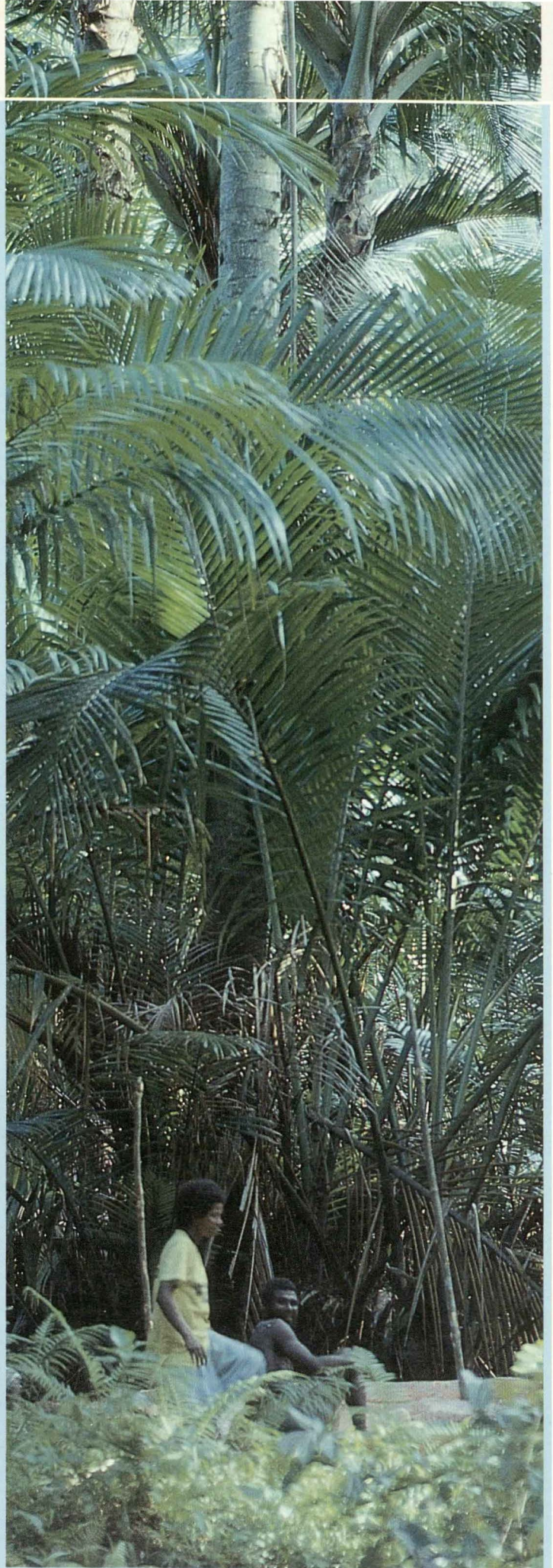
rubbing dye into the punctures, these tattoos are living, breathing works of art. Admiring these designs seems to put their owners at ease and they are usually happy to explain the process and the not inconsiderable pain involved.

To discuss both traditional ways and the merits of the world's leaders, to have small children who speak no English readily agreeing to pose for the camera, to find a beautiful girl with tattooed face and a Westpac T-shirt is to realise that people are more alike than different despite their color and culture.

To walk unguarded and without fear along Kofure's white sand in the moonlight is to give a large thumbs down to a common perception of PNG.



**Top** Tufi villager dressed for a singsing. **far right** Palm forest provides food (sago) and transport (canoe logs). **right** Fresh fish for dinner.





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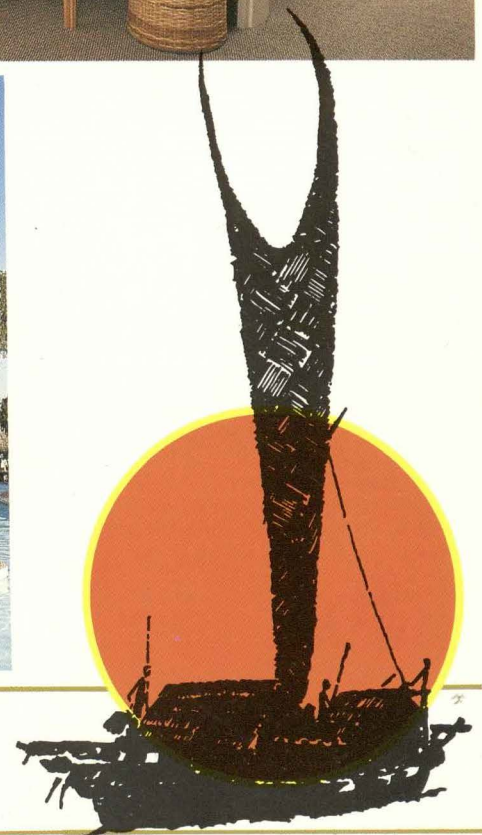
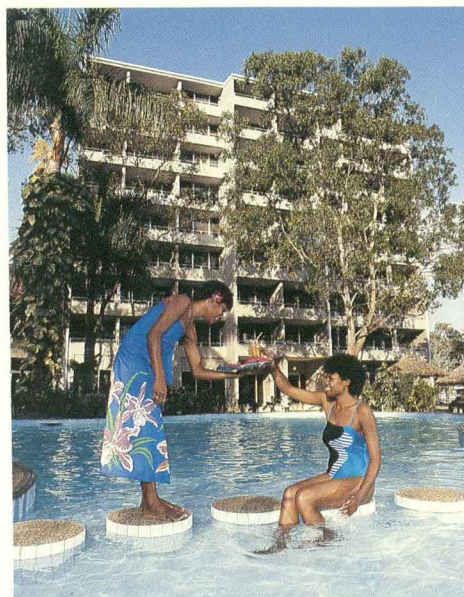
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