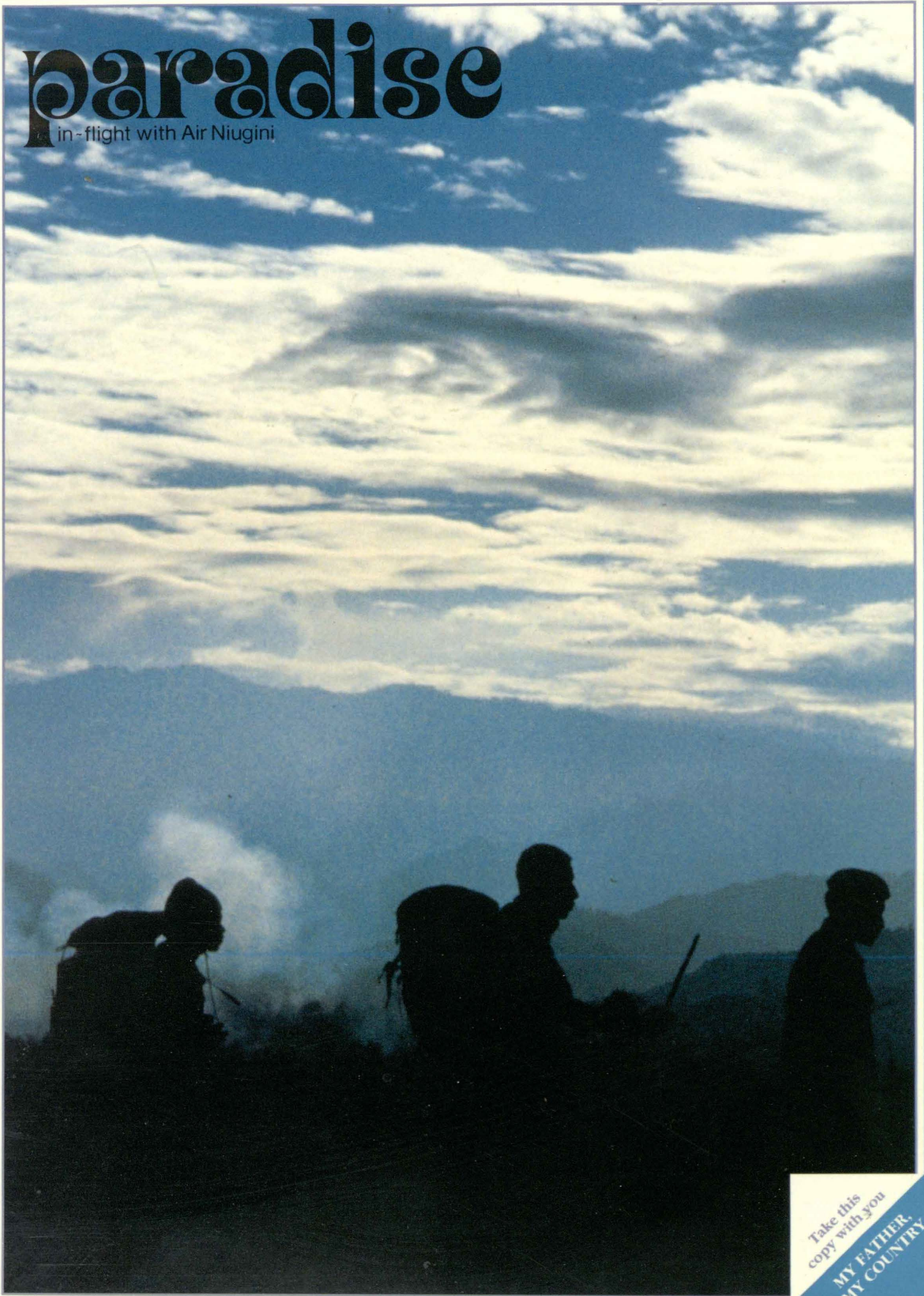


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Welcome aboard!

Fifty years after her father led the last great Patrol from the Highlands centre of Mt Hagen to Ambunti in the East Sepik Province, Margaret Taylor, Papua New Guinea's Ambassador to the United States of America, fulfilled a dream by retracing her father's footsteps on his historic expedition.

Gold nuggets! Almost everyone has heard of them, but very few know what a gold nugget really is, or what they look like. John Brooksbank explains to us some of the differences in gold nuggets found in Papua New Guinea.

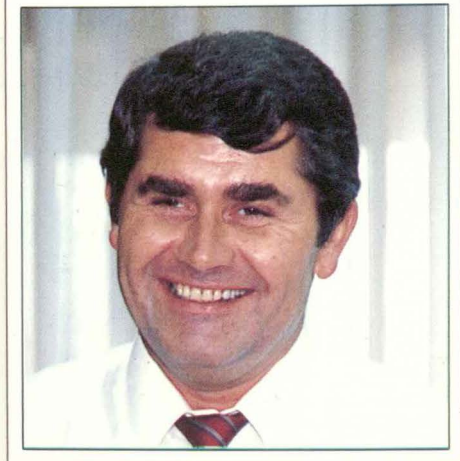
Enjoy these and other interesting and historic articles. Have a pleasant flight.

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**Cover:** Trekkers in the Victor Emmanuel Mountains retracing the 1938 Mt Hagen-Sepik patrol (see page 29).  
Photograph by Margaret Taylor.



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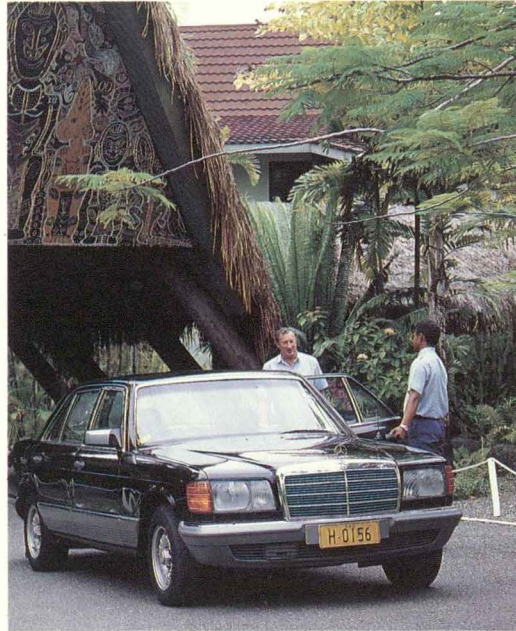
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# VICTORY IN PAPUA

Story and color photographs by Bruce Hoy



**F**ifty years ago, Japanese forces were on the doorstep of Port Moresby. Standing between their positions on Iorabaiwa Ridge and Port Moresby, were resolute Australians astride Imita Ridge, tired, a little demoralised, but a force to be reckoned with.

Also, the worsening situation on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands was causing considerable concern for the Japanese High Command. And so, on September 24, 1942, the first elements of the Japanese force began to withdraw, retracing the mountainous, sodden

ground where many had fought and died. It was generally thought at the time, hunger and exhaustion had defeated the Japanese but this was not entirely the case. Although the Japanese were experiencing severe problems with their supplies, the troops were needed on the north coast to defend against an expected sea-borne attack by General Douglas MacArthur's forces.

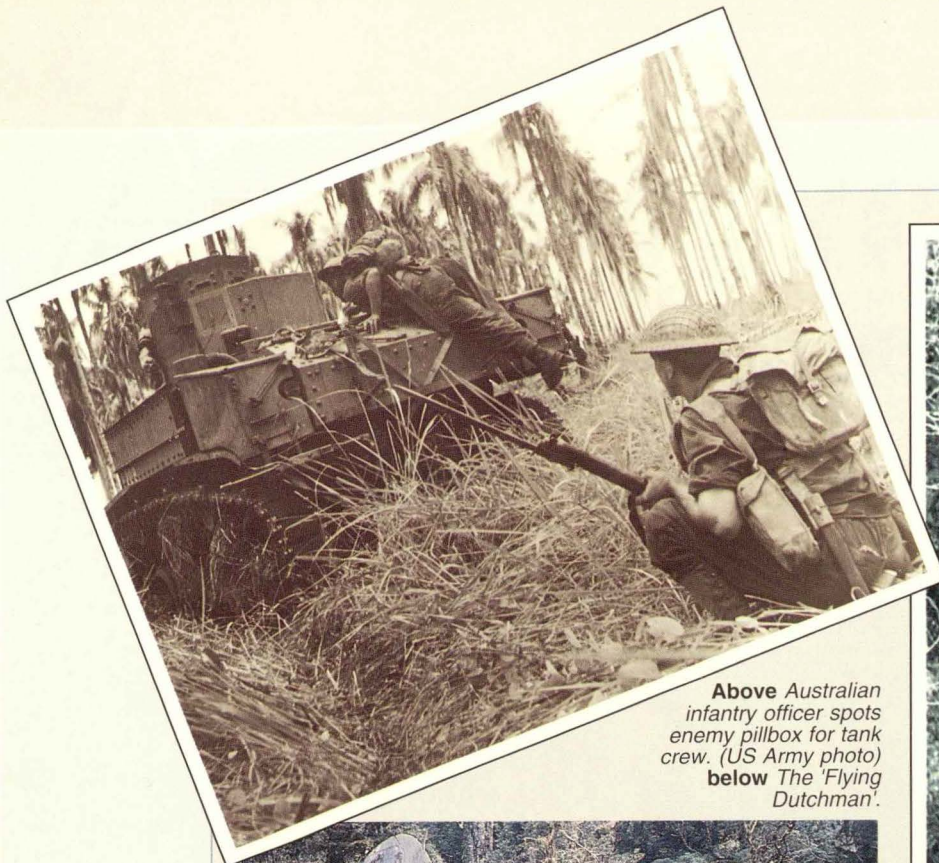
The Australians started moving north without at first meeting any Japanese resistance. General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Port Moresby for the first time on October 2 and the next day he

and his aides drove as far as Owers Corner for an inspection before returning to Australia.

The Allied air forces, using fighters and medium attack bombers, continued to strike targets of opportunity along the trail ahead of the advance.

When contact was made with the Japanese, a series of bitter engagements followed. As the Japanese withdrew towards the north, they fought tenacious rearguard actions against the advancing Australians.

**Above** Raphael Oembari escorts Pte 'Dick' Whittington to a field hospital near Buna where he died of his head wound. (Australian War Memorial photo)



**Above** Australian infantry officer spots enemy pillbox for tank crew. (US Army photo)  
**below** The 'Flying Dutchman'.



Throughout the advance, the Australian forces were supplied by air drops that supplemented the supplies arduously brought forward by almost 1,000 hard-pressed Papua New Guinean carriers. These courageous men had provided essential support during the previous months when the Australian forces were in retreat. On their return trips, the carriers brought with them many wounded soldiers, thus earning themselves the proud name of Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

Along the edge of Lake Myola, the Australians established a major field hospital and, in the first weeks of November, a small landing strip was prepared. Several small aircraft evacuated badly

wounded men to Port Moresby, the largest aircraft used, a 1929 three engine Ford Trimotor, a survivor of the prewar civil aviation used in the Wau-Buolo goldfields. On its second flight into Myola, it crashed and was abandoned, to be recovered 47 years later by the Royal Australian Air Force on behalf of the National Museum in Port Moresby.

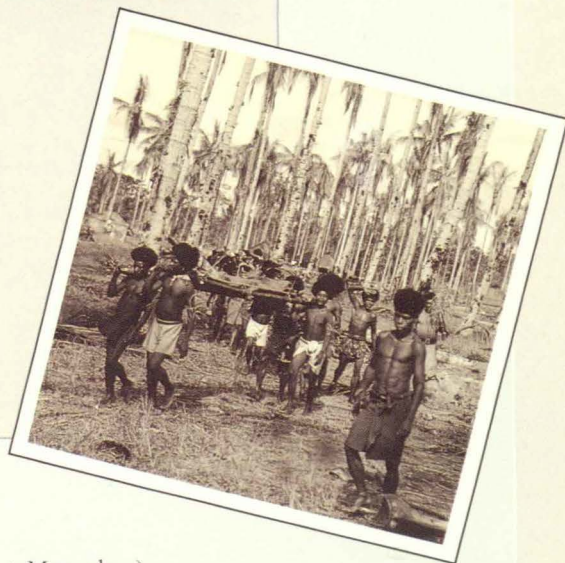
On November 2, the Australians reached Kokoda, finding that the Japanese had withdrawn two days previously. Meanwhile, the force advancing towards Oivi were temporarily halted by Japanese rear-guard troops, in well concealed emplacements. Another force skirted Oivi to capture Gorari village, east of Oivi, but the

Japanese had anticipated this move and fresh troops were despatched to defend Gorari. The Australian attack on Gorari on November 9 was again met with fierce resistance at heavy cost to the Australians, but by the next day, Gorari was captured.

With the loss of Gorari, the Japanese then retreated along a little-known track leading to the Kumusi River. From there they were to plod through sago swamps along the left bank of the Kumusi until they reached its mouth, north of Gona. While crossing the Kumusi River, the Japanese forces lost their commanding officer, Major-General Tomitaro Horii. The log raft carrying him and four officers from his headquarters



**Left** Australian infantry on the Kokoda Trail (Australian War Memorial photo) **above** Owen Stanley Range today. **right** Fuzzy wuzzy angels evacuate wounded from Sananda Point. (US Army photo)



overturned in the swift waters and Horii and his chief staff officer were drowned.

With the Japanese strategically withdrawing, the Australians reached the Kumusi River on November 13, after fighting the determined Japanese rear-guard. The day before, a battalion of American troops who had arduously walked over the Owen Stanleys from Kapa Kapa to Jaure, had moved down the Kumusi River and joined up with the Australians.

Meanwhile, down the coast, American forces were preparing to advance north towards Buna. A large percentage of these forces had been flown across the Owen Stanleys. An increasing

number of troops and supplies were flown from Port Moresby, flying into newly constructed Abels Field near Fasari. (On one such flight on 10 November, 1942, a C-47 named Flying Dutchman crashed on Mt Obree, and of the 23 on board, only six walked out alive. A diary, written on an internal door of the rear fuselage recorded the poignant last weeks and days of injured survivors who perished at the crash site. The last entry was for January 1 1943. The door-diary, recovered by an Australian Administration patrol in 1961, is now proudly displayed in the United States at the Air Force Museum in Dayton; a replica is currently displayed at the National Museum in

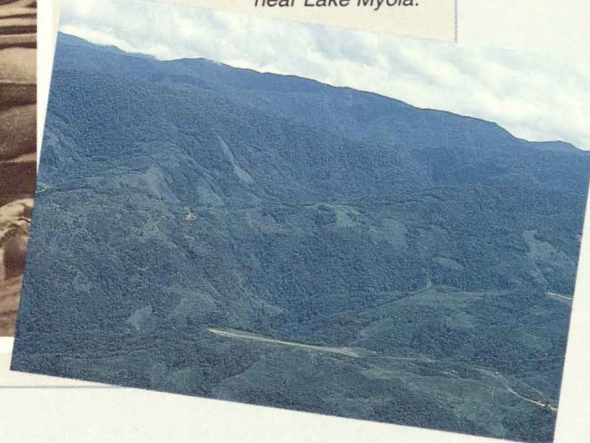
Port Moresby.)

With the Australians advancing from the west, and the Americans from the south, the stage was set for a decisive battle that would take a little over two months to conclude. On November 18, the battle for Buna began.

On November 17, additional Japanese troops had landed near Gona, bringing the total number of Japanese defenders to approximately 6,500 men. Heavy Allied attacks on Japanese shipping throughout the rest of November and December disrupted Japanese reinforcements to the Buna-Gotha beachhead, as did heavy and numerous attacks



**Above** 'Biscuit Bomber' drops supplies to Australian troops. **left** Australian dugout 30m from enemy positions at Sananda Point. (US Army photo) **below** Efogi airstrip near Lake Myola.



made on the Japanese entrenched in their dug-outs, weapons pits and shelters. The worsening situation for the Japanese on Guadalcanal, which held a higher priority for them than the Buna-Gona garrison, meant that supplies and reinforcements were often not shipped.

By December 9, after bitter hand-to-hand combat, the Australians captured Gona mission station. American forces entered the remains of Buna Village on December 14, finding that the Japanese had evacuated the village the previous night, although considerable forces still held Buna government station. In the early hours, Japanese reinforcements had landed at

Mambare Bay near Cape Ward Hunt, 64km north of Gona, bringing urgently needed medical, food and ammunition supplies.

The New Year, 1943, saw the final stages of fighting at the Buna government station, the Japanese finally withdrawing towards Girua with organised resistance ceasing in the late afternoon of January 2. The same day, the Australians over-ran the Japanese defensive positions on Giropa Point. By January 5, the only major obstacle to a complete Allied victory were the deeply entrenched defenders in the Sananada area.

Although facing certain defeat, the Japanese continued

to fight but by January 22, all organised resistance had ceased. The last of the Japanese invaders in PNG had been either killed, captured, or had escaped the encircling Allied forces, making for Salamaua by land. Once more, peace had come to this small part of PNG that had seen so much blood spilt.

Of the pre-war mission station at Gona, all that remained standing was a tall, wooden cross, scarred by gunfire. Buna village and its government station were virtually destroyed.

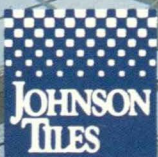
*Bruce Hoy was the first Curator of Modern History at the National Museum, Port Moresby, 1978-1988.*



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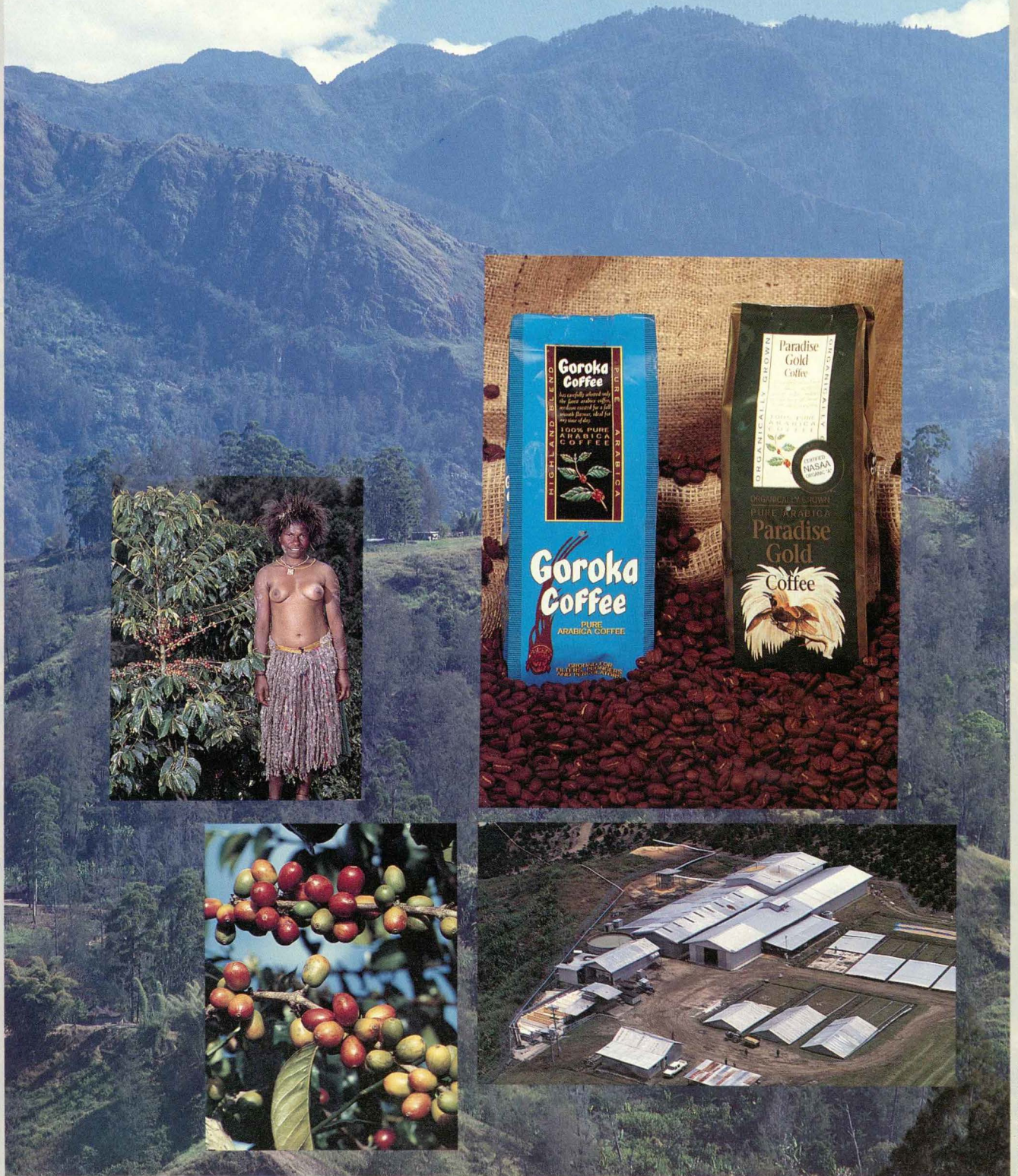
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# TEMPLES

Story and photographs by Liz Thompson



# of SRI KRISHNA APUR ORE

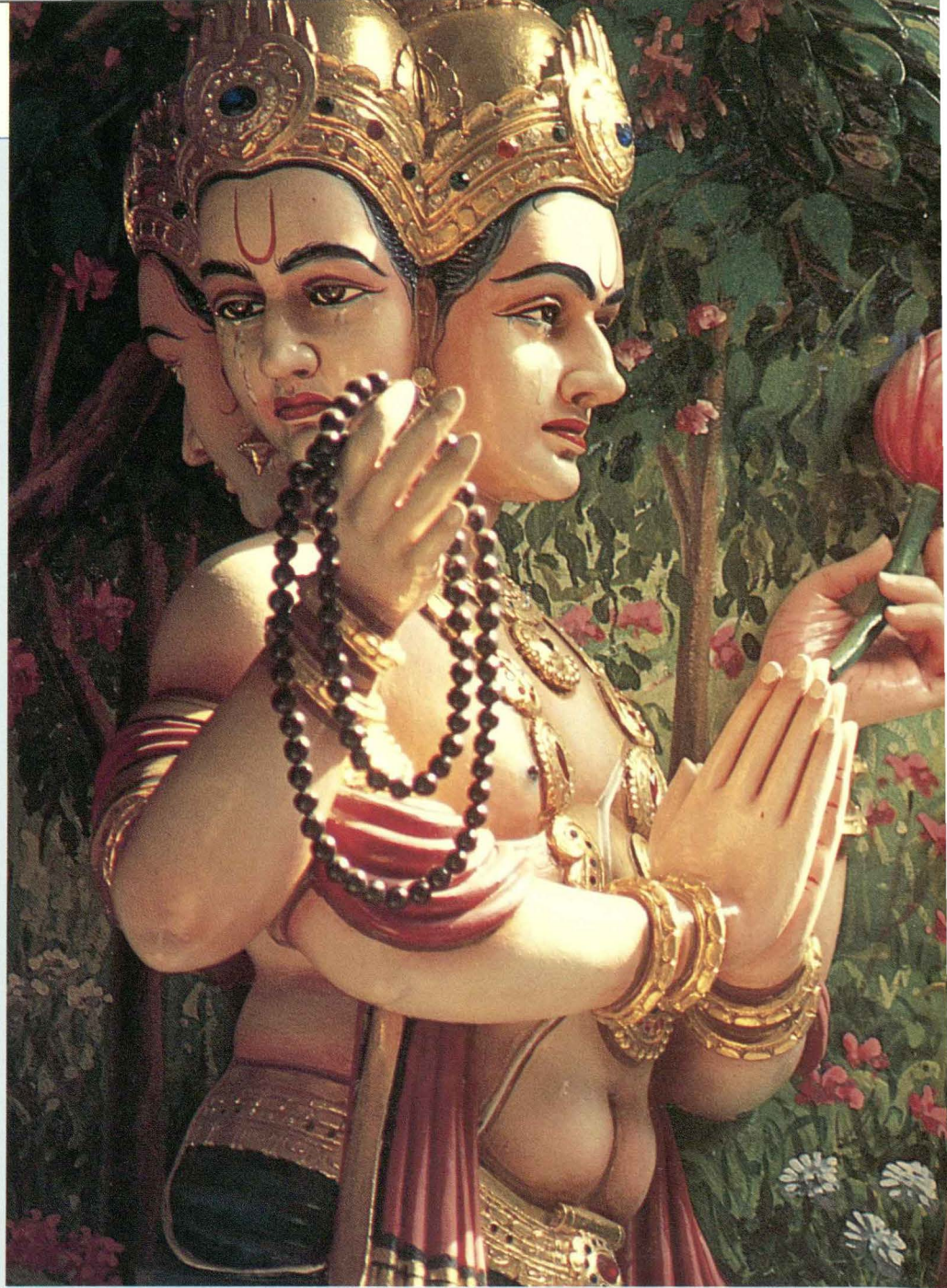
Left Four-armed deity of Sri  
Krishnan Hindu temple.

**A**n old wizened man, his hands pressed tightly together, eyes closed, head nodding backwards and forwards, prays. Smoke from hundreds of joss sticks rises in spirals. A Chinese temple on a busy main street in Singapore is a common sight. It blends with the steeples, domes and minarets which punctuate the skyline. Houses of worship are mixed and many, illustrating the cultural diversity of Singapore.

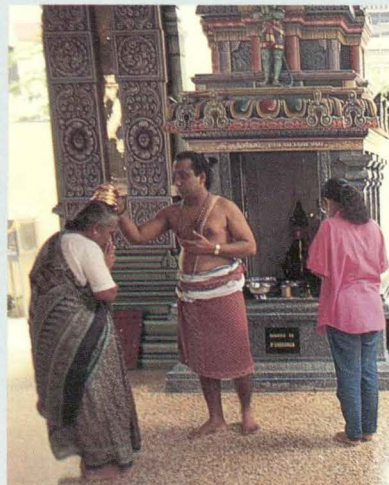
Businessmen buy large white lotus flowers from one of the many stalls established outside the temple. Women on their way to work, school children, shoppers, stop, light joss sticks, kneel and pray. In Singapore, prayer at breakfast is as common as coffee. Hundreds nip into the temple on their way to the office and again at night on their way home.

On Waterloo Street, tucked behind the Bencoolen Street, home of backpackers and cheap accommodation, sit two typical and fascinating temples, one Chinese, one Hindu. Side-by-side, they demonstrate a marked difference in ceremonial practices and in architectural design in which those practices take place.

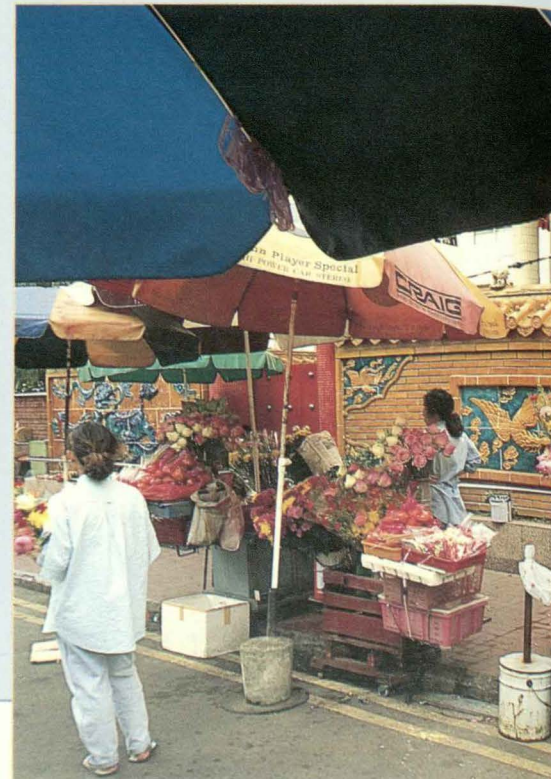
Outside the Chinese Temple, the pavement is blocked with hawkers' stalls selling the bright accessories of prayer - paper charms, fruits, flowers, candles and joss sticks. This is the temple of Kuan Yin, one of the most beloved of the Chinese deities. The name means 'to see and hear all'. Legend suggests that as Kuan Yin was about to enter nirvana she heard a cry of anguish from the earth, the cry so affecting her that she rejected the promise of paradise and devoted her life to the relief of suffering. The Chinese pray to deities for help and guidance and Kuan Yin is one of the most often sought out. People from all walks of life bow before her shining image adorned in dozens of layers of silk donated by worshippers as tokens of their appreciation.



**Above** Two of many holy figures in the Sri Krishnan Hindu temple.



**Above** Priest blesses worshippers in poojah ceremony. **right** Vendors sell offerings outside the Chinese temple.





As people enter, they cross to a small counter and collect a container filled with what look like chopsticks, which are divination sticks, each with a number, and two small red plastic triangles, divination stones. Worshippers remove their shoes and kneel before the deities, in front of which are spread fruits and flowers and burning incense. They rock backwards and forwards on their knees, running prayers and requests for guidance through their minds.

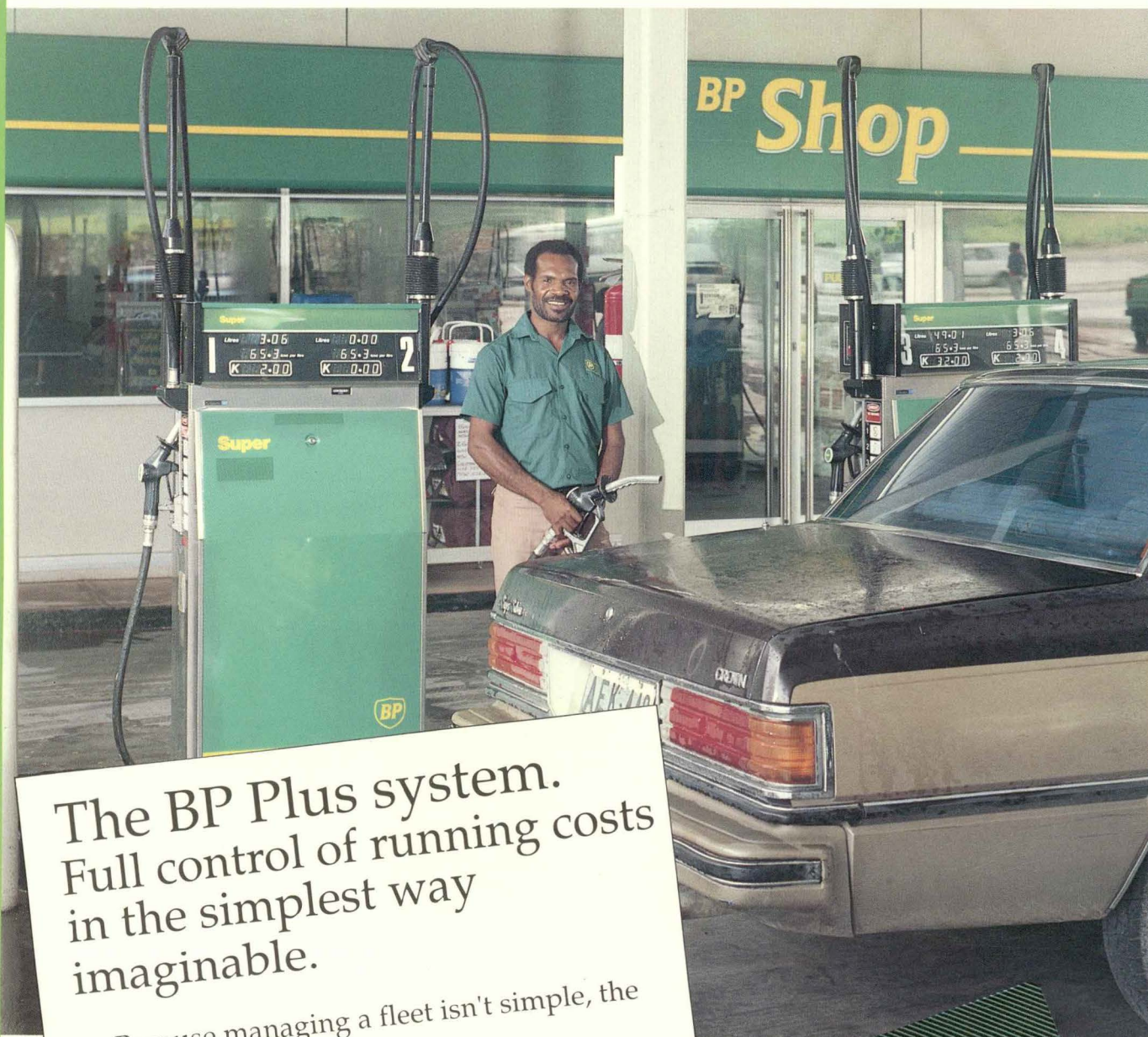
Throwing of the sticks is practised by the Chinese as a prelude to making important decisions. As they rock, they shake the container until one of the sticks rises from the group and falls out. When this happens the stones are thrown. One side of the stone is flat and one is rounded, and landing so that both sides are different confirms the god's approval and the prayer is over. If they fall both on the flat or both on the rounded sides the procedure has to be repeated.

**Below** Religious epic murals adorn Hindu temple.





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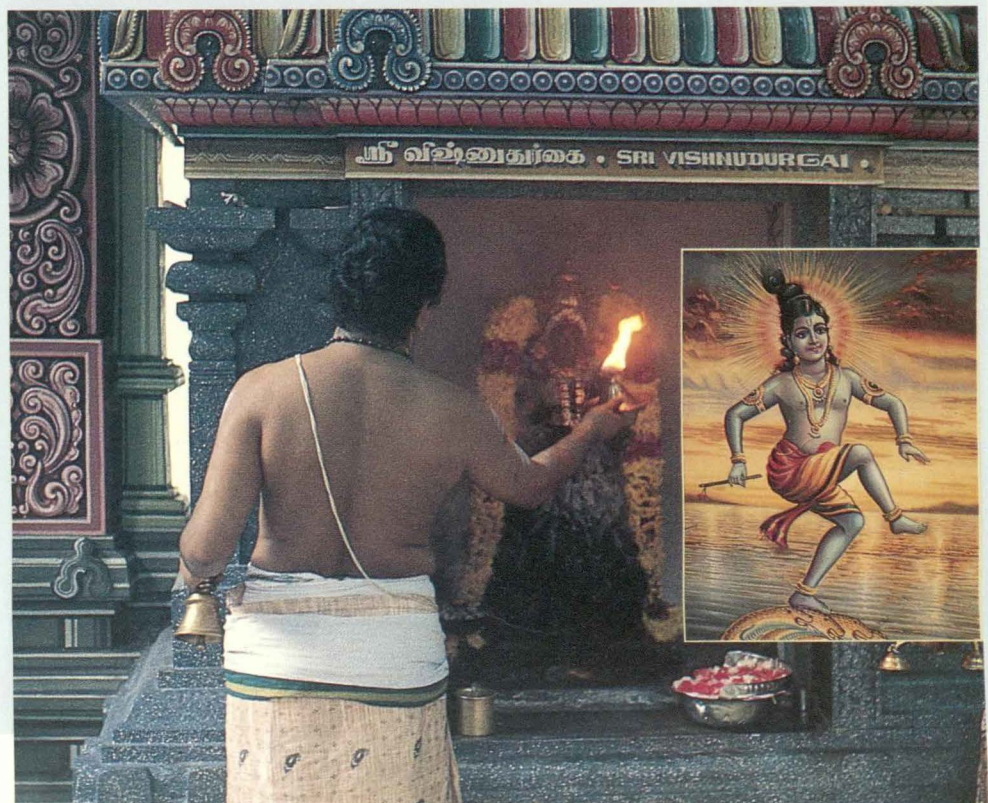
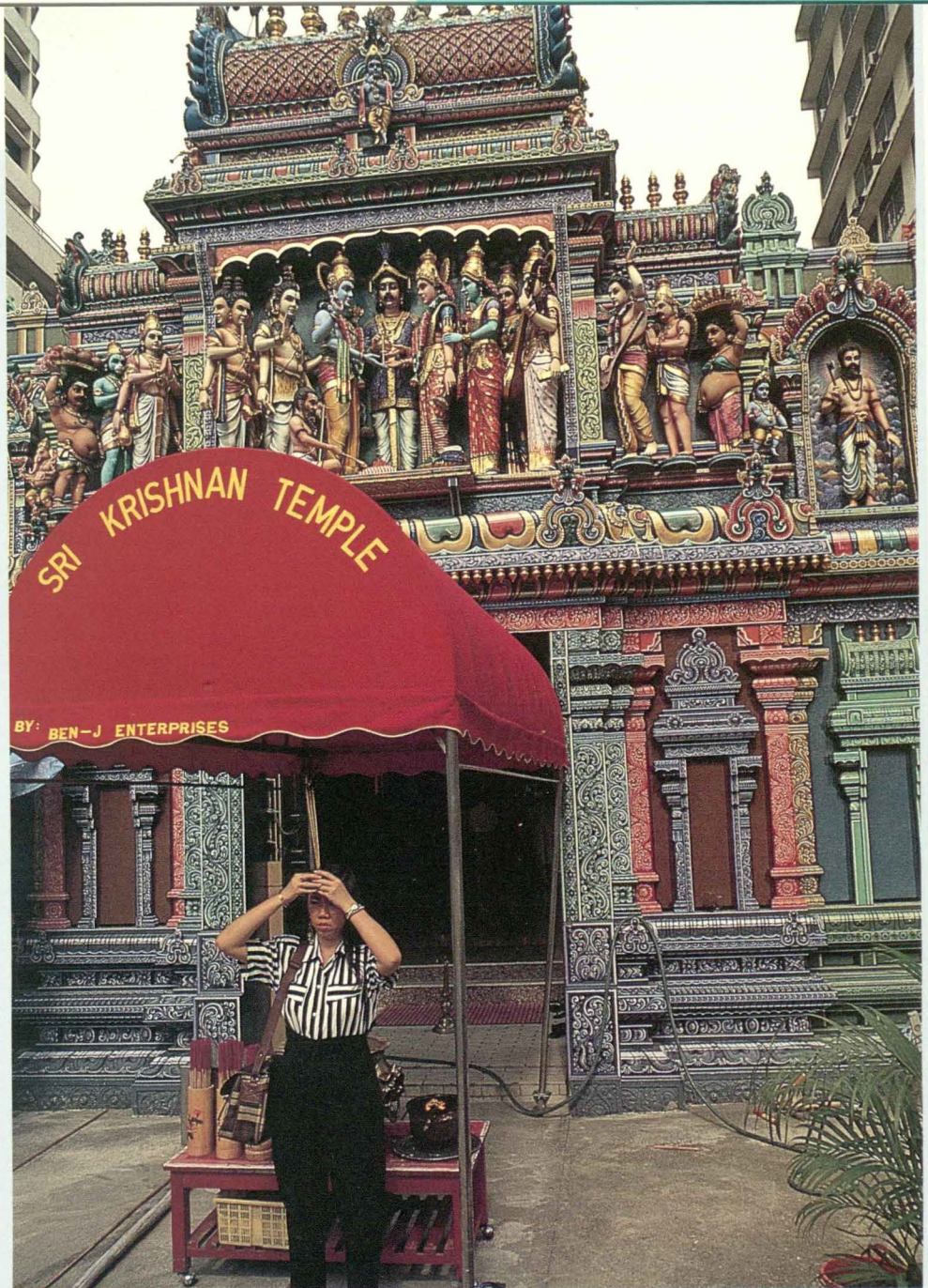
Once successful, the stick that fell from the container is taken back to the temple attendant who issues the divination slip which corresponds with the number on the stick. Each slip represents a particular prayer and these prayers are kept in old worn books within the temple. For those not very good at interpreting the advice, experts sit outside beneath sun umbrellas and for 50 cents explain exactly what the gods are saying.

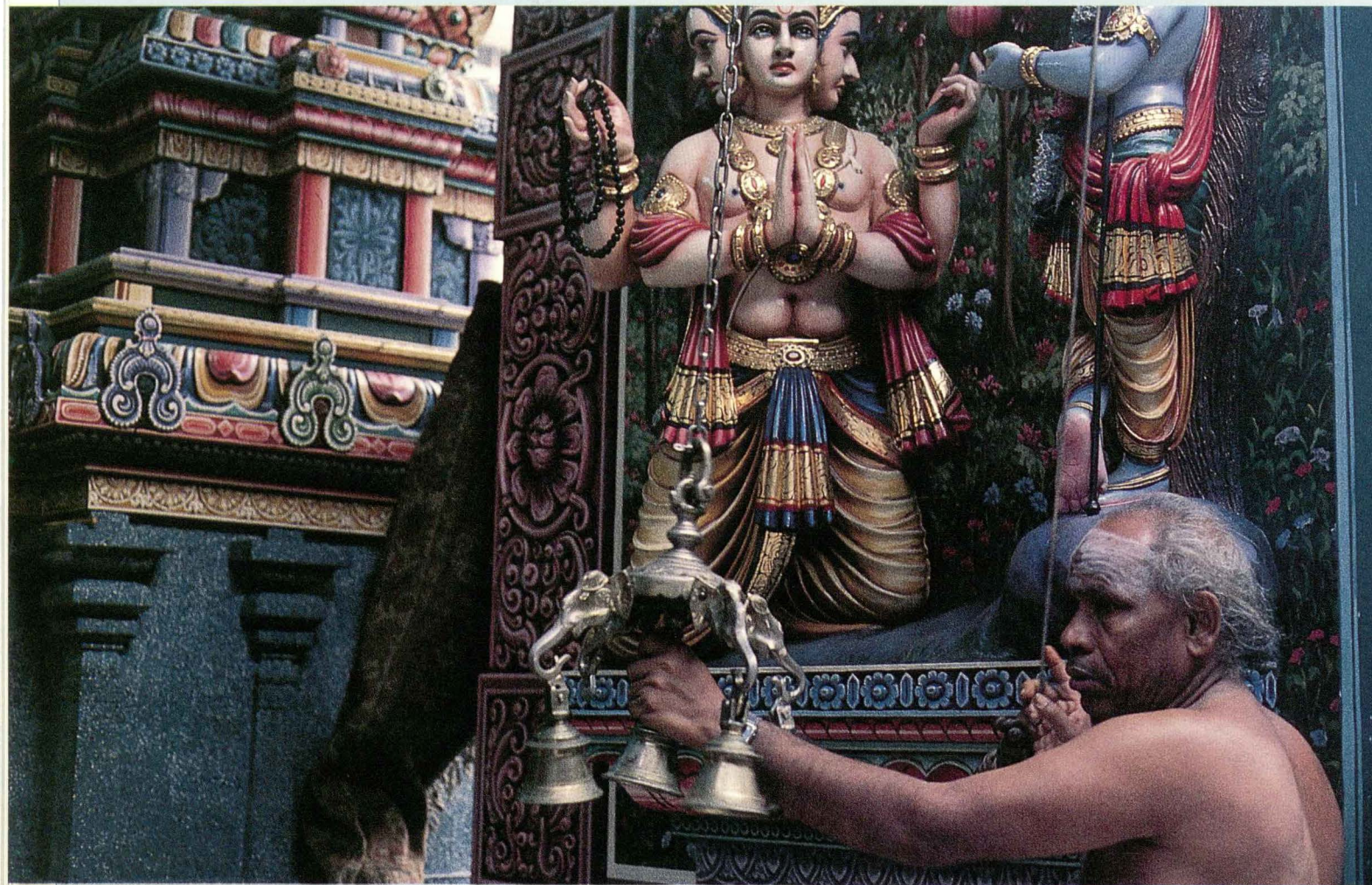
It is a meditative process, rewarding in its rhythmic quality and the sense of community. People wander forward pressing their foreheads to the table in front of the deities covered with flowers. As worshippers leave the temple, attendants remove fistfuls of joss sticks and douse them in water, allowing enough space for new entrants to place theirs.

In the Sri Krishnan Hindu temple next door, the deities are being woken. Women with flowing saris and dots on their foreheads open their hands over a small flame passed around by an attendant. Here, practices are more organised. In the morning a horn is blown and the deities are woken and dressed. This particular temple honors Vishna and importance is placed on lots of flowers and jewellery and silk around the deities.

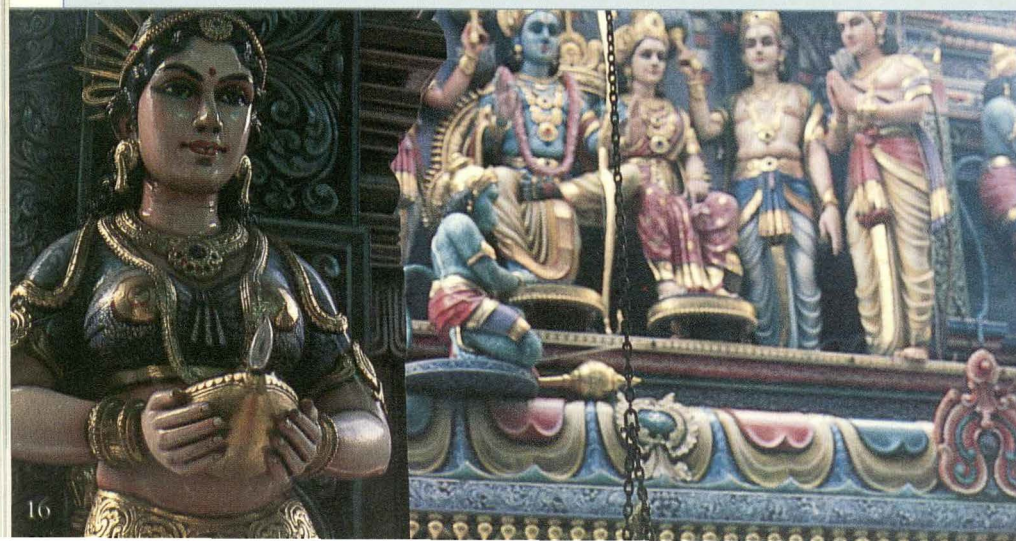
Here, there are two ways of observing prayers. One is Abishejam which takes place on Saturdays. In a ceremonial bath, all jewellery is taken from the deities and washed with a mixture of 32 items including fragrant water, soap, yoghurt, coconut milk, sandalwood paste and honey. The other form is a daily poojah in which the deities are elaborately dressed and offered rice, sweets, fruits and milk.

**Top** Saluting Krishna with joss sticks before entering the Hindu temple. **right** Priest passes prayer candles in front of Krishna deity. **inset** Detail from epic Hindu mural.





**Above** Bell ringing is part of poojah ceremony. **right** Morning prayer before work. **far right** Priests 'feed and clothe' deity by candlelight. **below** Opulent statuary in Hindu temple

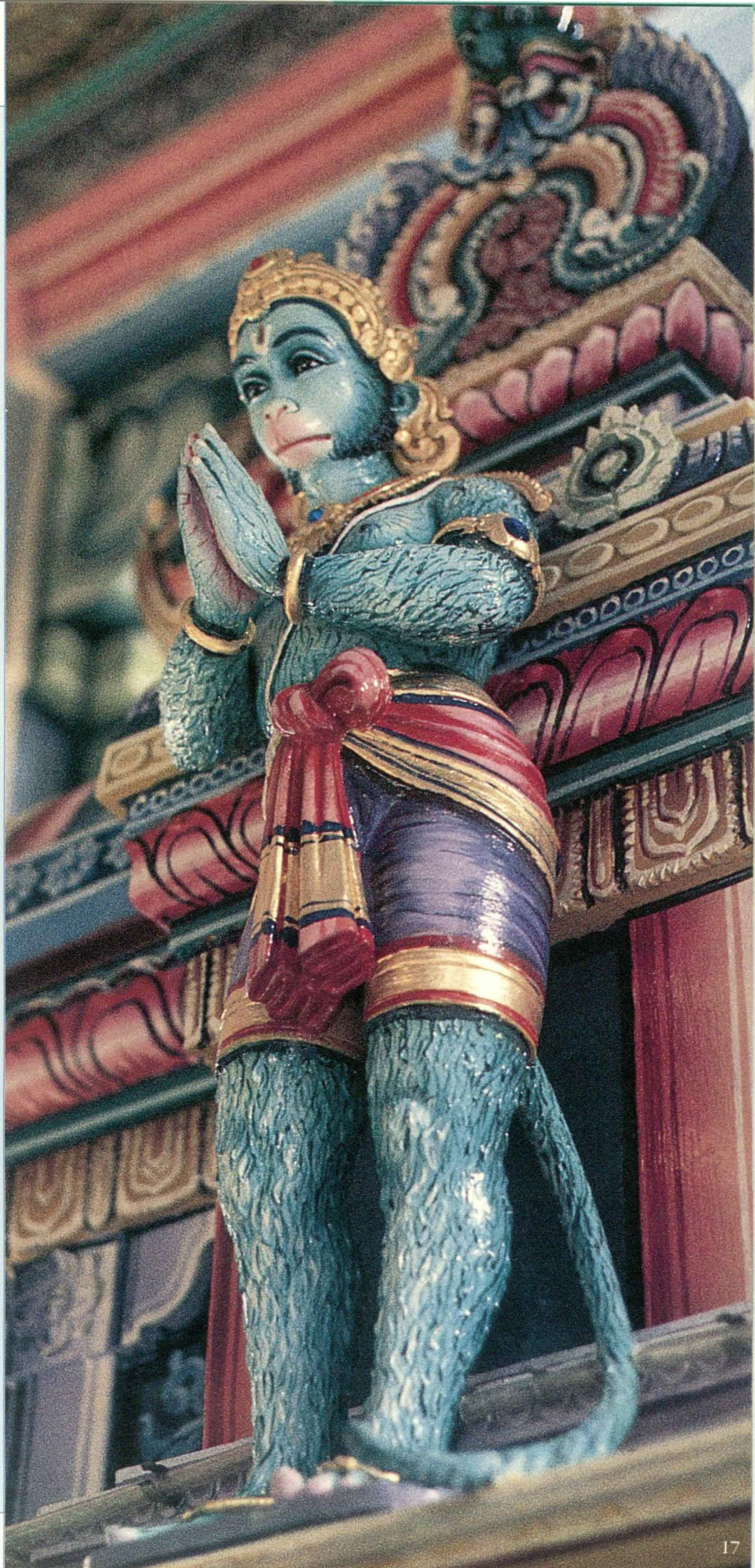




In the mornings, when the curtains before the deities are opened to the public, the chief priest passes a flaming torch before them. This flame is then carried among the worshippers. It is said to represent whatever you want within yourself, whatever you want to pray for. With considerable bell ringing and drum playing, the flame is carried before the numerous deities which sit in various parts of the temple. Much time is spent before the elephant god, Lord Ganesh, one of the most important and significant gods in any Hindu temple. He is believed to remove all obstacles. The priest and his attendants pass before the Hanuman, the monkey god, who is the ardent servant of the lord. They pass into the rear of the temple, the most powerful part of the temple. The power in Vishna is believed to come not from the eyes, but from behind the hand.

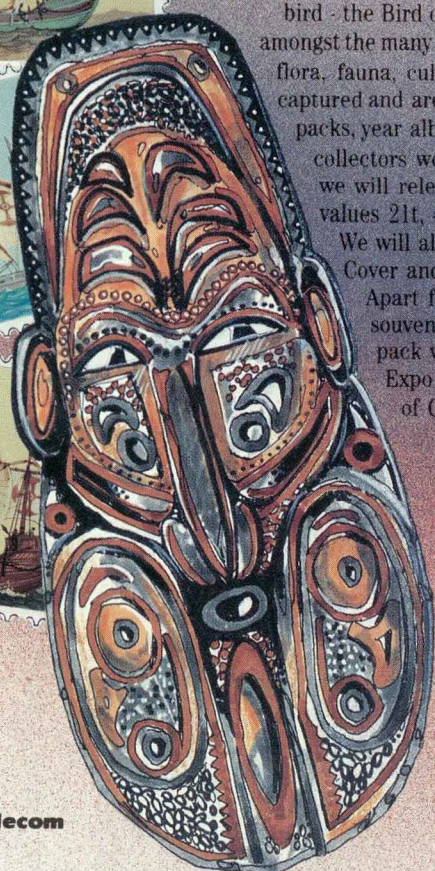
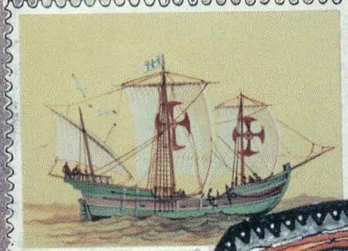
When the bells cease, the priest moves among the crowd, blessing each worshipper with the sacred white ashes symbolising the character of Siva as both destructive and aesthetic. When the flame is extinguished, women in saris distribute hot rice and sweets, milky rice balls in pieces of newspaper.

The worshippers leave, to go about their daily rituals, some returning later in the day. In the streets, their foreheads covered with streaks of ash, they pass the Chinese leaving the temples, the muslims who have recently left one of the city's many mosques, the Christians who have left the churches, the jews who have left the synagogues. In the streets you can hear the cymbals, the drums, the bells and calls of worship. Singapore is a city in which it is acceptable to escape the chaos and confusion of daily life and attempt to find peace and to calm the troubled soul in one of its many centres of worship.



**Right** Hanuman, the monkey god.

# WELCOME TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA



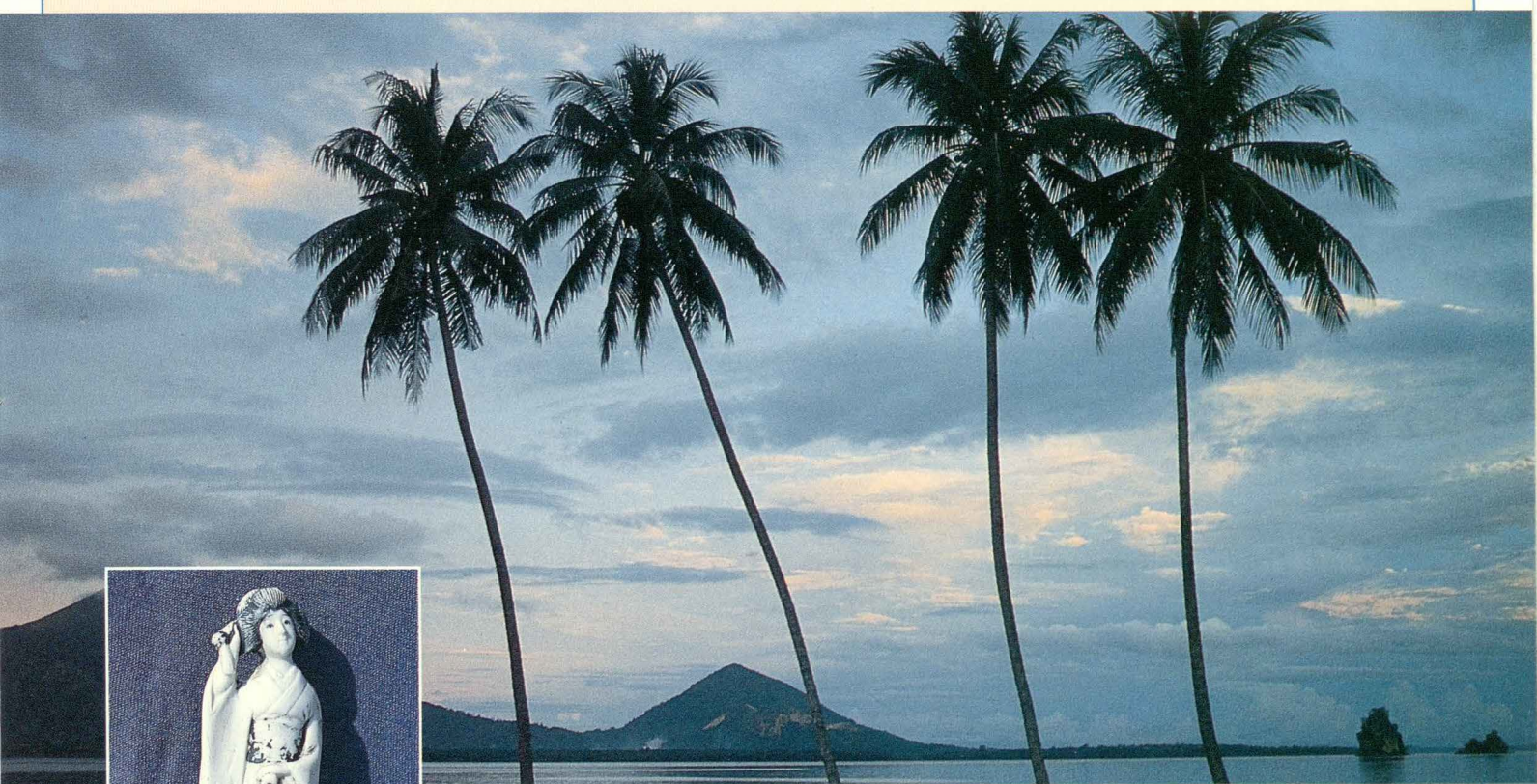
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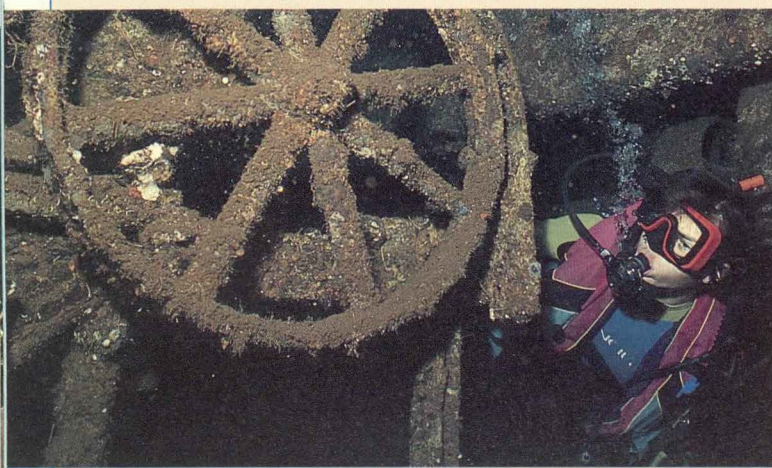
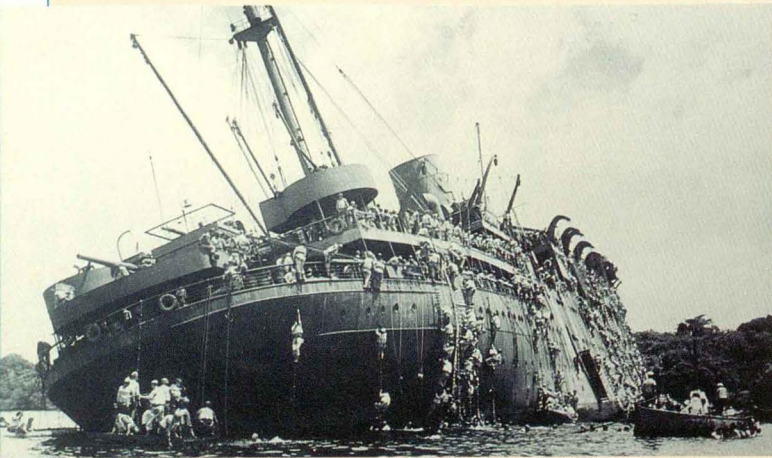




**Above** Simpson Harbor, Rabaul, site of 40 sunken wrecks. **right** 'Georges' wreck near Rabaul. **inset** Geisha figurine from sunken Japanese warship.

# Rust in Peace

Story and photographs by Peter Stone



Although World War II ended nearly 50 years ago, Pacific islanders continue to be influenced by the conflict. Sunken ships and wrecked aircraft are testimony to past invasion. On many remote islands contact with 'the outside world' has been maintained only because of these monuments to the ravages of war. Tourists, particularly scuba divers, visit old battlegrounds and dive on sunken ships, often with little appreciation of the terrible disruption of life that once occurred.

The defeat of the Japanese in Papua New Guinea and in the Solomon Islands, at an incredible cost of life, was a critical campaign in the defence of Australia.

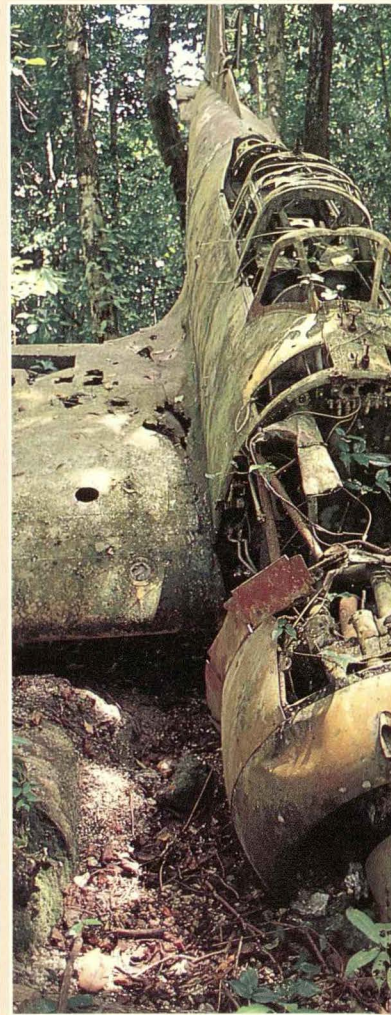
The northern islands and most of the north coast including the regions of Hansa Bay, Alexishafen, Madang and Lae, fell quickly in World War 11. The Japanese move south was swift before the Allies made their presence felt on land and sea. Then gradually the Japanese fell back.

At the peak of World War 11, 97,000 Japanese troops were stationed on the Gazelle Peninsula, East New Britain, with their base at Rabaul. Using Indian and local labor they dug 300km of tunnels through the hills, a honeycomb of interconnecting passages used for barracks, hospitals, gun emplacements and ammunition storage.

The tunnels were a safe haven but not so the harbor. In several effective raids in 1943 and 1944, more than 40 Japanese ships were sent to the bottom.

A particular favorite wreck for underwater photographers is an unidentified transport known as George's wreck on the north-east coast. She lies on a steep angle with her bow close to the surface. Another shallow wreck popular with divers lies just off-shore at Takabar.

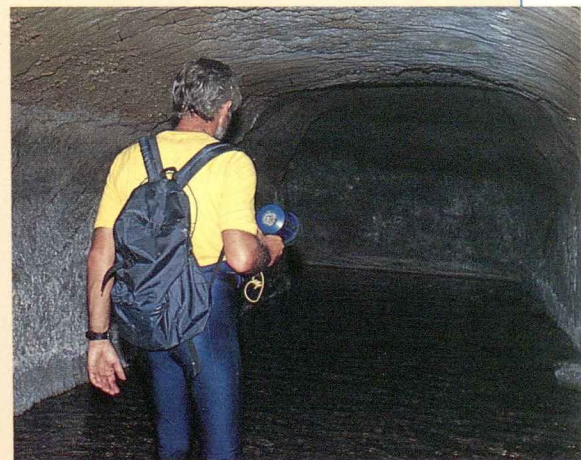
The wrecks attract divers from all over the world. The



tension of exploring a darkened cabin or an engine room, the bridge or a ship's hold full of machinery is an experience shared by early archaeologists entering the tombs of Egypt for the first time.

A skull lies on a shelf in the galley of the Kanshin Maru, placed there no doubt by a diver who should have left well alone. An exquisite figurine of a geisha is exposed as a diver's fin stirs the fine sediment on a cabin floor. Until a few years ago, souvenir hunting was a major attraction, after the salvage divers had removed much of the valuable non-ferrous materials. Now all wrecks in the Pacific are protected under various government regulations. Scavengers are replaced by photographers and marine naturalists.

Not all interest is beneath the sea. Just off Rabaul's Lakunai airstrip a Mitsubishi



'Sally' bomber lies where it 'tripped up' on landing and crushed its nose. Local lads make a few toea pocket money as guides.

Although Rabaul holds its own as a fascinating destination, set picturesquely on the rim of an extinct caldera, thousands of scuba divers have been attracted by the wrecks.

Likewise Madang, a delightful town on Astrolabe Bay facing the Bismarck Sea with parks and gardens, lakes, off-shore islands and a small but interesting commercial centre.

Scuba divers are attracted to a particularly interesting aircraft wreck, a B-25 Mitchell Bomber in a protected lagoon. Its pilot, Captain W. Cox, was taken to Japan as a POW and later released but his crewmen were beheaded.

Bomber and fighter aircraft lie scattered in the jungle growth along the old Japanese airstrip at Alexishafen, 25km

north of Madang. Children swim in flooded bomb craters ignoring the playground nearby.

The North Coast Road past Alexishafen north-west of Madang terminates at Hansa Bay. The Japanese used the bay as an anchorage for small transports during the war. There are about 30 wrecks or sections of ships and aircraft in the bay.

The largest and most interesting is the Japanese transport Shishi Maru. She sits upright and has two huge anti-aircraft guns still pointing skywards. Brass shell casings litter the deck and two fire engines and several truck chassis can be seen in the holds. Three other excellent wrecks in the vicinity are all accessible.

A token fee is paid to the local headman to dive on 'his' wrecks. Most of the vessels sunk in the bay were small wooden ships, hence little is

**Far left, from top** Troopship SS Coolidge was typical casualty of war; Trish Bohn inspects midjet sub; Japanese 'Kate' bomber; Helen Bird in the machine shop of the Hakkai Maru.

**Centre left** Japanese dive bomber rusts in the jungle. **centre right** Japanese 'Sally' bomber near Rabaul airport.

**Right, front top** Japanese underground hospital, Kokopo; bats now patrol Rabaul's wartime tunnels; Dick Whittaker inspects naval chart on a Rabaul bunker ceiling; Japanese landing barge in its tunnel haven.



left of these. An intact Aerocobra fighter aircraft lies in 30m. And a Nakajima 'Oscar' fighter lies upside down in shallow water off Bogia township. A local elder remembers it pancaking into the sea.

Hansa Bay is rarely visited except by hardy scuba divers and a contingent of Belgian marine scientists who have a base on the island in the bay.

At Talasea on the Willaumez Peninsula of New Britain, two US bombers, a B-24 Liberator and a B-25 Mitchell, both in reasonable condition, may be seen where they crashlanded. There are also wrecks in the lagoons off the peninsula.

The wreck of the Japanese transport Taisyo Maru on the north coast of New Hanover attracts scuba divers. The Taisyo Maru lies on her starboard side with her bow well intact, but the midships and stern were destroyed by the initial attack and later by salvage divers.

Like many of PNG's wrecks, what was once an unattractive warship is now a blaze of color. Shipwrecks form the basis of artificial reefs. Algae

develop, initiating the evolution of plant and animal life. Brilliant gorgonia fans grip rusted steel and spread their polyps to catch passing nutrients. Sponges, anemones and delicate soft corals cover all external surfaces in a profusion of colors. Reef fish species seek shelter and sustenance within the protection of the ship while schools of pelagic (open sea) fish hover above, waiting patiently for nature's food cycle to take its course.

A few years ago, a diver strayed from the wreck of the Taisyo Maru and discovered a fully intact Japanese miniature submarine, marine growth covering her characteristic shape.

Milne Bay was a major base for the Japanese and the scene of heavy fighting. Interesting shipwrecks and aircraft in the vicinity include a Lightning bomber, completely intact and rarely dived. A shipwreck in Discovery Bay near Alotau lies with its bow exposed.

The Pacific war is not forgotten. After half a century the carnage is still visible.

**Right** Cockpit of a Japanese bomber

**Left** Divers inspect wartime debris above Shore wrecks are easy dives.



**Above** American Mitchell B25 bomber at Talasea





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# Papua New Guinea



## Air Niugini





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**Above** Well established bush materials house

# Traditional House

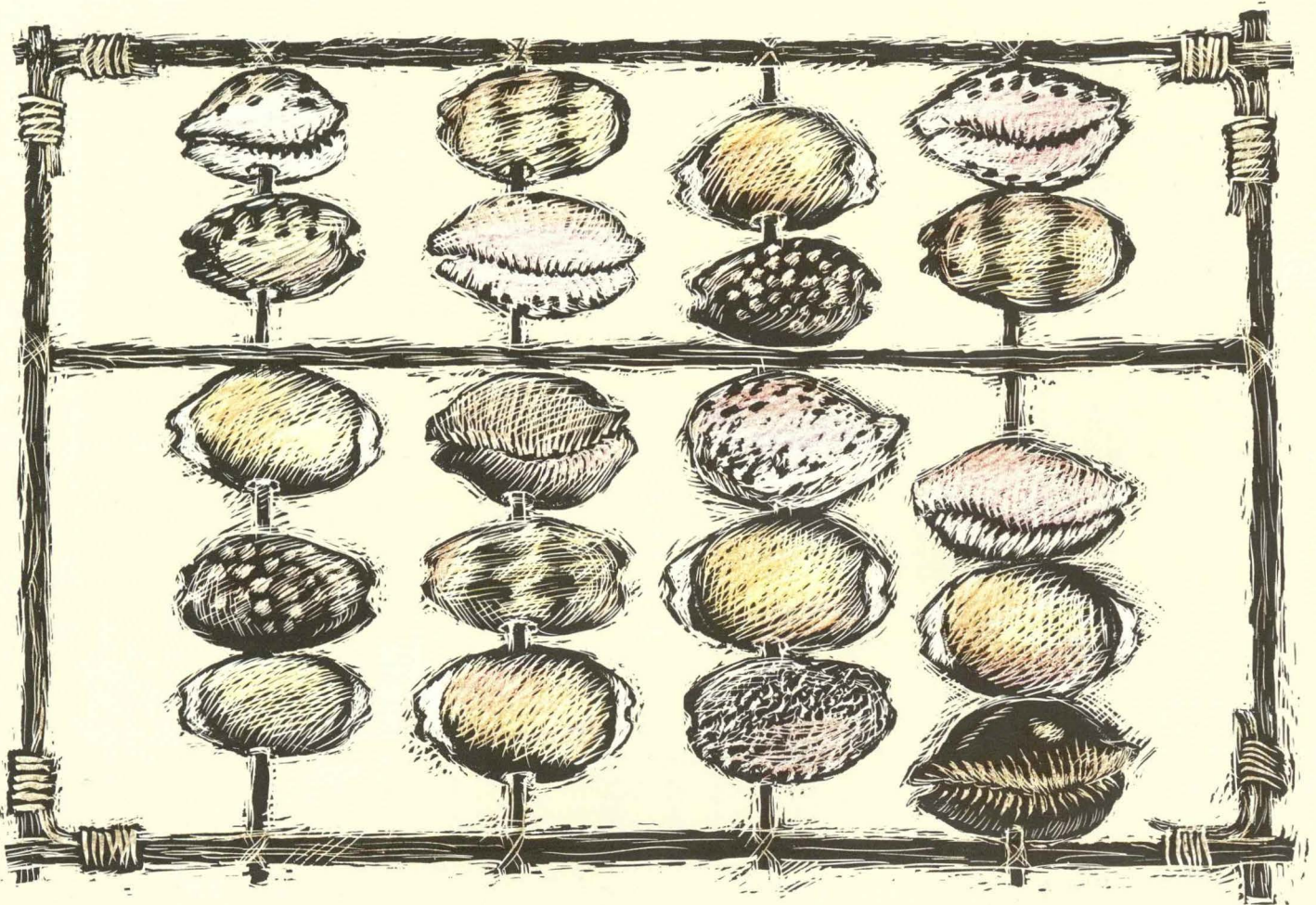
Story by Sanang Zazoring Photographs by Liesel Strauss



Smoke seeps through the grass roof of the bush house. I see no chimney. I enter the house and see nothing except the fireplace in the middle. No window, only a door. The family sits around the fire and I think about home. The place where the mother cooks the food radiates cosiness and life. I participate in this atmosphere. I sit silently and speechless, watching what is going on and I look around to admire the construction of the house.

**Left** Cook-up for the house builders. **right** Abundant cane does the work of screws and nails.





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**Above** Thatching a roof with kunai grass. **right** Framework takes shape.

I live in a town and I love to visit people who live in bush houses - places where families hold conversations, make their decisions, eat and live. In some areas, pigs and other animals live with people in the same house, separated by a curtain made of banana leaves.

The land with its people is part of myself. The way they live shows me that whatever they need for life they find in nature. The people are gifted. Their pig feasts, their method of cooking in the ground, growing their gardens and the way they build their bush house prove it

Many Paradise readers will not have a chance to see a bush house or experience the building of one. Let me describe the procedure.

Community participation is needed when a house is to be built in the Highlands. Everyone in the area knows how to build one, using methods passed down by their ancestors, employing traditional technology and materials.

People depended and relied wholly on themselves before foreign technologies were introduced. It was the father's responsibility to decide what kind of house to build and how big it should be. The family has to pay for the help received from the community by providing food and drinks.

Different regions of the Highlands have different styles of houses.

No modern technology or architectural planning is involved in building a house. All a person knows is what sort of materials he needs, how big the house is to be and where it should be built. He plans everything in his mind. He then starts collecting and gathering posts and other materials. The posts are fashioned from a certain type of tree that can last for at least



**Above** Men prepare pitpit cane fasteners to hold roof thatching.



**Above** Women collect pitpit for the roof. **left** Men do the thatchwork.



20 years. The roofing timbers are usually young timber. The builder does not have a machine to cut and saw them into standard sizes for roofing. Instead, he and his helpers shape them with axes.

Women and their daughters collect kunai grass for the roof, helped by other women in the community.

It takes some months for the man to collect the type of ropes needed to build a bush house. The ropes are kept in cool places. Some types of ropes are buried in the mud so that they do not get dried up in the sun. The mud also protects and makes the ropes firm and strong. Mostly cane ropes are used.



**Above** Vine ropes used to hold panels.

People often used tree bark for walls, but nowadays bamboo and pitpit are commonly woven around the house.

No foundation is laid. To show the position of the wall posts, sticks are planted. Wild

sugar cane (pitpit) and ropes are used to fasten across and around the roof where the kunai grass can be laid and firmly fastened. The kunai grass is then laid from the bottom end of the roof to the top to prevent rain leaking through.

It looks as if there is no window. It is hard to see because it is no bigger than a fist. Holes are left between the walls and roof where the smoke passes through and light is let in. Smoke also escapes by seeping through the kunai roof.

The fireplace is in the centre of the house where the family gathers to cook and eat. There are no bedrooms where children are separated from the parents. Boys sleep with fathers while girls sleep with mothers and spend most of their time with them.

The kunai grass of the roof is often replaced. The burning fire keeps the house from

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**Above** Cooking hearth is centre of home life. **left** Bush materials home is comfortable and sturdy.



rotting and prevents termites from eating up the timbers. It also keeps ropes from being rotted away.

The type of material collected to make the fire does not create too much smoke in the house. The fire burns all through the night providing warmth. In the evening a big fire is banked to provide embers that keep the house warm.

The spirit of co-operation ensures that every family has a chance to have other people help them build their house. In the same way, people rely on each other for food, work, defence and other aspects of their livelihood.

There are some things which do not look and feel inviting to those who are there for the first time: the tears from the smoke, the smell, the dust of the floor and the flea bites. But that is the way people live and have lived for ages. When we start knowing them better, then we can see that this is a good way of living.



**Above** Vegetable garden is integral part of home.



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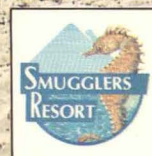
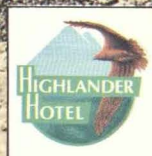
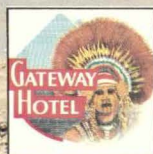
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# My Father, My Country

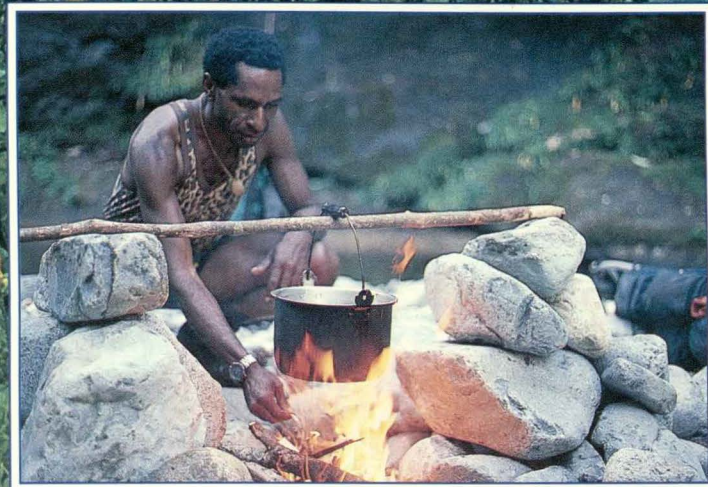
Story and photographs by Margaret Taylor

Morning mist in the Victor Emmanuel mountains. **inset** Explorer Jim Taylor, the author's father. **inset** Riverbank camp stove.

In March 1938, my father Jim Taylor led the last of the great exploratory journeys into the heartland of Papua New Guinea. This patrol was also one of the longest and most arduous in the history of PNG.

The Hagen-Sepik patrol left Mount Hagen in March 1938 and returned in June 1939. With three Australians, Jim Taylor, John Black and Pat Walsh, went 22 New Guinean policemen and 230 carriers.

This expedition was an epic journey in the history of our country. With the outbreak of war, topographical information collected by the patrol would have been valuable to the Japanese. Thus, with the approval of the explorers, Australian military intelligence banned the release of the report and the expedition never received the public acknowledgement it deserved.



While undertaking postgraduate work at Harvard Law School in 1985, I conceived the idea of retracing my father's footsteps. Even though Jim Taylor was my father, I was in awe of his person, the adventure of his spirit and the passion that he held for this country. I too wanted to know PNG more deeply, so there my dream began.

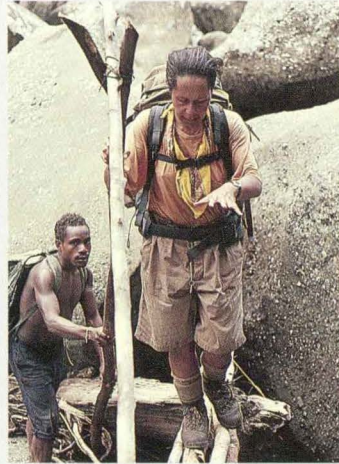
In June, 1988, 50 years after the Hagen-Sepik patrol, I left Goroka to retrace an extraordinary expedition led by my father.

We began from Goroka, the Taylor home, and journeyed westward travelling by vehicle where roads had become the means of transportation and communication. However, we soon abandoned cars and began our walk toward the Strickland Gorge. Some of PNG's most magnificent terrain lies beyond Lake Kopyago

towards the Strickland. One gets the sense of entering new and foreign lands, even in this age. It is majestically beautiful, the terrain so rugged that it is frightening.

After the placid evenings at Lake Kopyago, the Strickland made my blood rush. I felt an exhilaration. I felt that I was going back in time, before my father's feet had tramped over these rugged mountains. We camped overlooking the gorge and I recall the wind in my face, over the kunai and on each side of me. I gazed at the steep cliffs beyond the gorge. It was in the Strickland that my father wrote that he felt "he was an infinitesimal speck pitting itself against mighty nature". It was also at the Strickland that the 1938 patrol encountered its most difficult climb, a vertical ascent of 600m, carrying packs of cargo.

We arrived at the Strickland Gorge on July 15 exactly 50 years to the date of completion



**Above** Author on log bridge across the Arafundi river. **far right** Author meets two of her father's carriers, Sepeka (left) and Sako.

of the first cane bridge and the crossing of the Strickland by the 1938 patrol and the ascent on the other side without loss of men. John Black wrote in his diary that "the marrow of my bones froze when I saw the ascent on the other side and knew what the carriers would have to encounter to climb the ascent and then face new country and a totally new group of people".

My party crossed the Strickland by helicopter and we began our ascent of the Victor Emmanuel Range, the longest mountain range in PNG. The climb was extremely steep, wet and slippery. It is perhaps one of the steepest climbs I have encountered, also one of the most uncomfortable. We were continually in slushy mud.

Our camp site for that evening was in the middle of a karuka (pandanus) garden. It appeared to be 60m below the crest of the range,

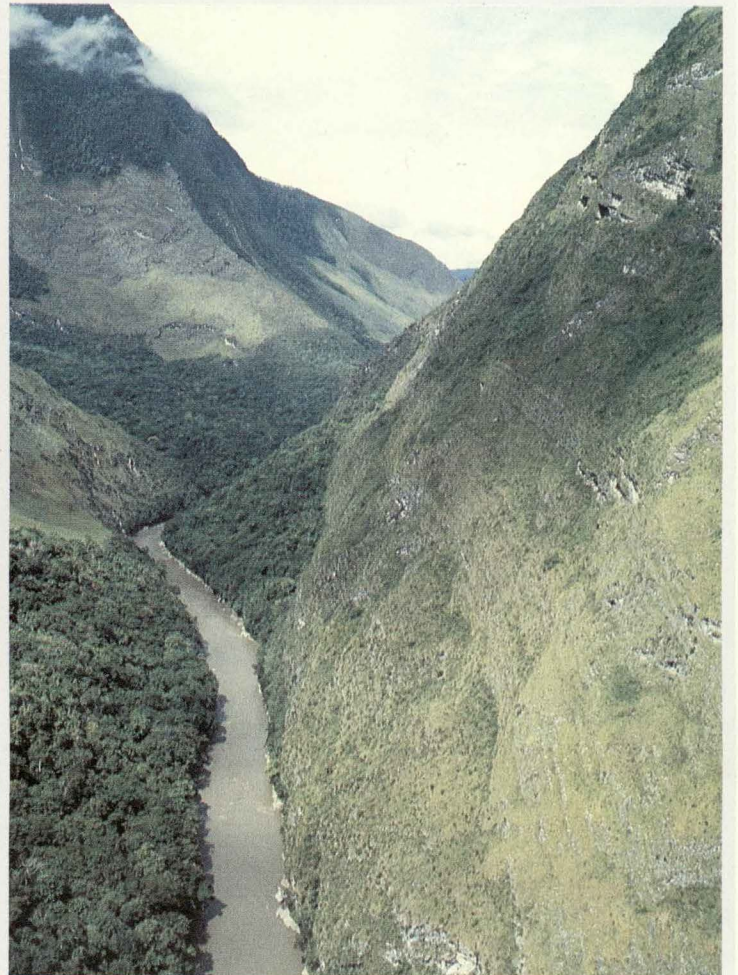
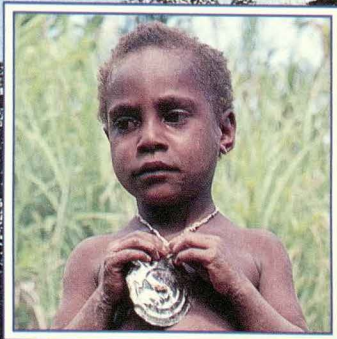


**Above** Author reminisces with explorer Daniel Leahy Snr. **right** Traversing shallows in the Arafundi River. **insets** Breadfruit farmer and Engan boy. **far right** Strickland Gorge.



mentioned in Taylor's diary. For some reason, I had the feeling that it was exactly the same place as no other suitable site was to be seen for a few hundred metres. It was one of the most uncomfortable camps we had made because we were on a slope and it poured with rain. Getting food cooked for everybody and finding a place to sleep was extremely difficult.

We descended the mountain next morning and were warmly greeted by the families of the Baptist missionaries at Tekan station. We were served hot coffee and then went about pitching our tents, washing clothes and ourselves and preparing the cargo for the onward journey that would take us all the way to Telefomin. Our journey to Telefomin took eight days and was indeed a learning experience. It was the first time that I had really encountered the PNG jungle,



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the rain forest and the alpine country for any length of time. Moving through all these different terrains and living in close quarters with our carriers, spending evenings discussing Tekan philosophy, was an extraordinary experience.

I wrote in my diary that my young faith had been moved and touched by these simple, wonderful people who were our carriers. What depth! As we reached the dangerous part of our walk, one of the senior carriers called out over the range asking God for His care and guidance through these difficult parts of our crossing.

One does not have to talk to share faith. One can share by being silent and letting others give of themselves. Their generosity, their strength, their firmness is here in the forest country that these men know so well. This journey across the Victor Emmanuel Range did not go



**Above Engan warrior, below Highlands warriors, friendly to the 1938 Taylor expedition. inset Author befriends mountain butterflies.**



without event. I walked for five days with malaria. With the assistance of carriers and a PNG Defence Force medical orderly, I came through thinner but resilient.

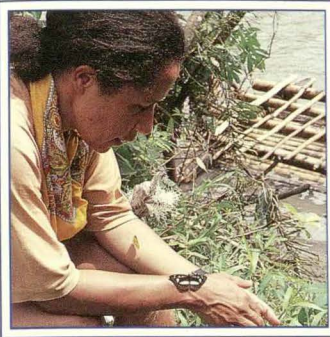
We left Telefomin and camped on the Elip River on July 31, my birthday. My birthday dinner was noodle soup, bulli beef with onions and brown rice, followed by a chocolate drink and I felt absolutely great.

One does not forget special days and one I recall was at a place called Simbol Sene between Mianmin and Hotmin, a spot we reached on August 3, an ancient ancestral home, a cave with several skulls, pig tusks and bones. The night was clear and we all slept in the cave. The floor was lined with lipsaksak (ferns and pandanus mats) and we slept in the cool of the night. I felt like a princess being surrounded by an entourage of knights. Above

me on the roof of the cave, the reflections of fire sent dancing streaks across the rooftop of this ancestral home. Who are these people whose skulls lie here? For what reason do they lie here? The carriers would not divulge their history.

One of the most exciting times on this patrol was our experience of August 4. We had reached the upper May river and needed to cross it to get to Fiak river which proved to be extremely difficult with currents high and swift. The carriers assessed the situation and said they would build a raft. Within an hour the raft was built, an amazing construction with two platforms of timber. We loaded all the cargo on top of this raft and while we clung to the sides we floated at great speed downstream towards Hotmin.

From Hotmin to Ambunti, we travelled five days in 25m outboard motor canoes down the May River and then down



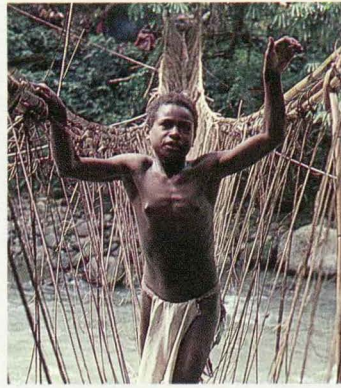
the Sepik until we reached our destination, Ambunti

There, the patrol was joined by members of my family and it was an emotional rendezvous with many old policemen from the Sepik who had served with my father in World War 11.

The journey back into the Highlands was through glorious scenery and unpopulated countryside. The streams were full of clear water and large fish with which we were able to supplement our diet. Our most memorable camp there was Kopin. The small population of 40 people live on the border between the Enga Province and the Sepik Province.

During our stay at Kopin, we did some walks and visited the camp of one of our carriers who lived in what was perhaps one of the most idyllic spots in this country, an area in the midst of forest, with his gardens and wildlife in abundance!

The tranquillity of isolation! I often think about this hamlet during my busy days in Washington.



The country from Maramuni into the Enga is truly the most magnificent scenery in this country. The original patrol took its route through the Ambum Valley to Lake Shirunki then on to Wabag. We travelled directly south, following the current route taken by the local people. The people here remember Taylor's journey with great fondness and were able to show me the old route the patrol had taken.

On mountain passes we encountered a caravan travelling to another village. Men with axes on their hips, women with their bilums on their heads and babies in their arms would each extend a hand and we would greet each other as in a reception line. It was extremely proper and I realised how social these people are.

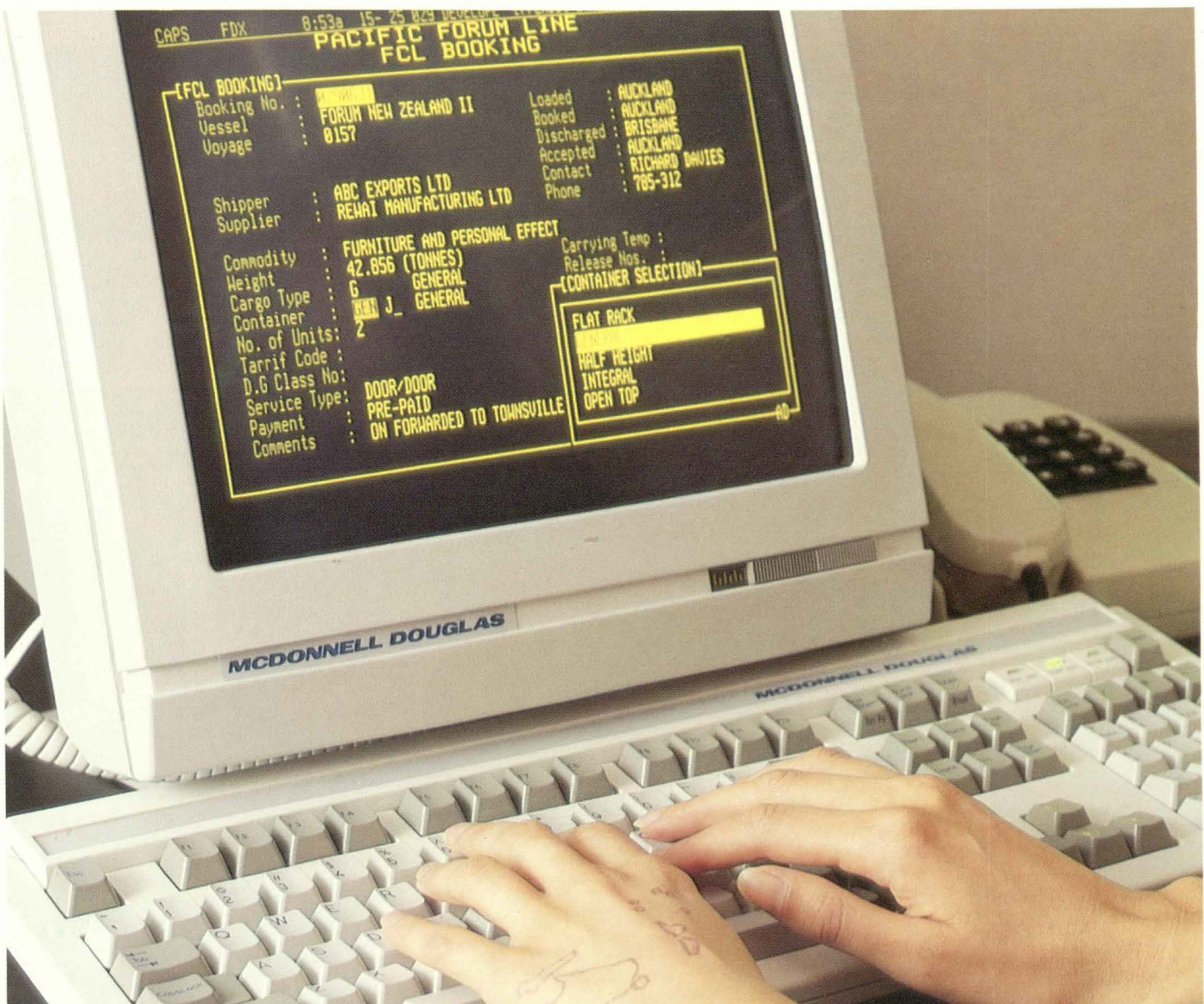
After five days more walking from Maramuni, we reached our destination at Multak where we were met by members of our patrol and PNG Defence Force who had left us at Maramuni.



**Top** Marimuni River bridge. **right** Ready to launch log raft on Fiak River. **below** Jim Taylor (centre) with John Black, Pat Walsh and some of their carriers. **inset** At journey's end.







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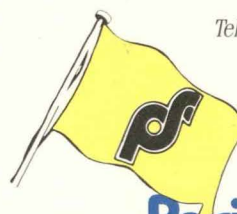
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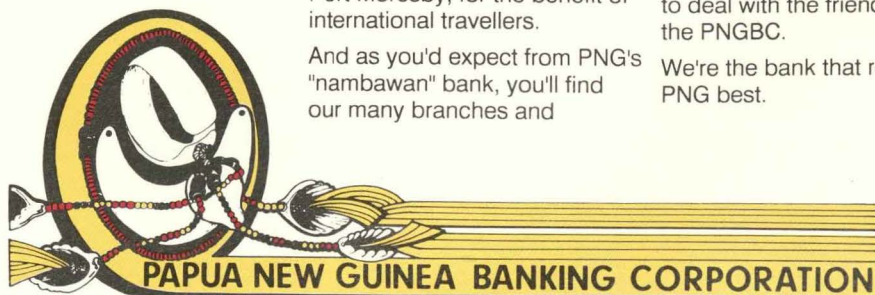
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# GOLDEN



Story by John Brooksbank  
Photographs by  
John Brooksbank  
and Neil Duncan

**Top left** Distinctively sharp-edged Mt Kare nugget. **top right** Thoughts of wealth keep spirits high. **left** Panners still work the Wau-Bulolo goldfields 60 years after the rush.

**E**veryone has heard of them, but who knows what a gold nugget really is?

Gold nuggets are naturally occurring pieces of gold and while many people have a notion of what they should look like, their forms are many and varied.

# nuggets

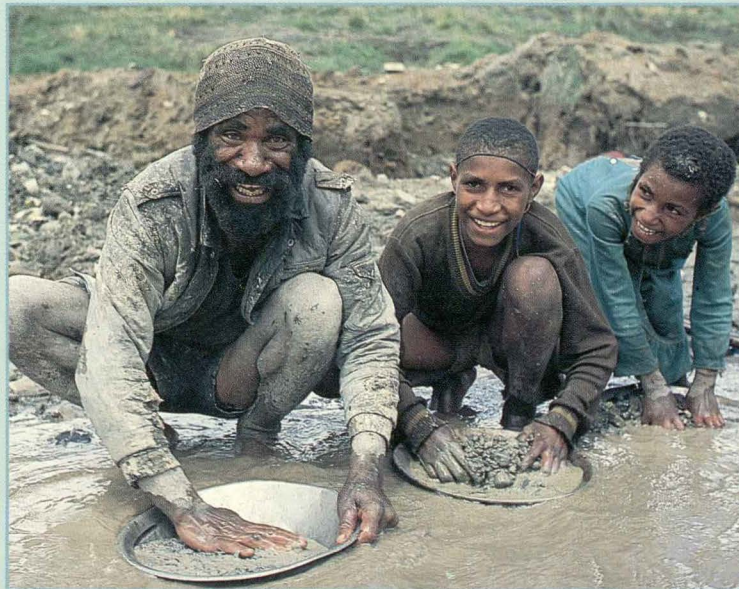
Most gold in the world occurs in a hard rock form which means it is usually finely dispersed throughout a rock matrix. For example, one could stand on top of the gold-bearing vein system at the Wild Dog prospect in West New Britain or on the high grade Lienetz zone on Lihir Island and not see any gold. In hard rock terms high grade could mean 5 to 20 grammes per tonne, that is the weight of a small ring in a cubic metre of rock. Hard rock gold can also mean the yellow metal occurring in veins or 'stringers', but even here it is often so dispersed it cannot be seen with the naked eye.

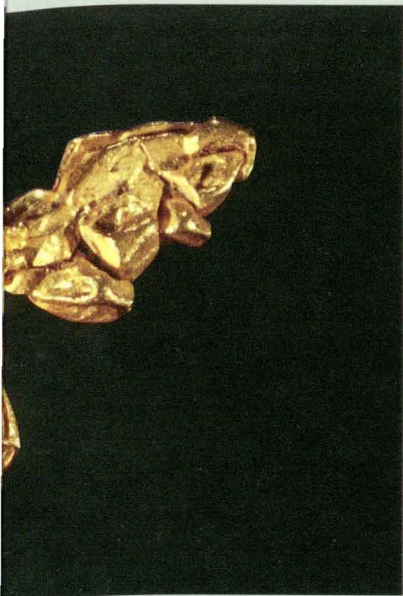
When gold is weathered from the rock by elements, it is washed downwards into the surrounding rivers and streams draining the area. Here it travels varying distances dependent on its particle size and tends to accumulate in areas where stream waters slow down and suspended material is deposited under rocks, in sand bars and other natural barriers.

This is alluvial or placer gold, the object of prospector's dreams but also useful to geologists surveying to determine the source of gold in the area. Nuggets are usually found in alluvial gold deposits. The abrasive effects of the elements and the movement along stream beds, smooth and round off the sharp edges of the nuggets. Often geologists can get an indication of how far nuggets have been transported by their degree of weathering.

An example of this is the very distinctive nuggets found in the recent Mount Kare goldrush area on the border of Enga and Southern Highlands Provinces. Here the gold was termed colluvial and had not been weathered very much at all, having very distinctive crystalline shapes and forms.

The largest nugget found in the world was the Welcome Stranger, weighing an amazing 2520 ounces - over 78 kilos! This was found in February 1869 by John Deason and Richard Oates in Victoria, Australia, apparently at a depth of only 2.5cm beneath the





**Top** Crystalline shape of Mt Kare nugget. **centre left** Hoping for money from mud. **centre right** Success means travelling in style to work. **left** Children forsake studies for possible riches. **right** Mt Kare miner equipped against the weather and claim jumpers.

surface. Large nuggets have been found in Papua New Guinea but for fairly obvious reasons have not been given much publicity.

A case in point is the nuggets of Mount Kare which had not been heard about by American collectors until a Mount Hagen-based gold buyer displayed specimens at the large annual show at Tuscon. After this, quite a few North American 'tourists' visited Western Highlands and Enga provinces!

The upsurge in interest in gold at various times in recent years has resulted in many people buying metal detectors and fossicking in old alluvial gold mining areas and mullock dumps. Prospecting as a hobby is a popular pastime in Australia, Canada and the United States.

The larger nuggets have been given colorful names by their discoverers such as The Precious, Nil Desperandum, The Golden Eagle and The Lady Barkly. The Hand of Faith nugget, weighing in at 876 ounces (25 kilos) found at Kingower, Victoria, is now on

display at the Golden Nugget Casino in Las Vegas.

Within PNG, small nuggets are still found and are relatively easily identifiable as coming from a particular area such as Mount Kare, Simbai or Amanab.

Apart from their shape, nuggets will vary in color, depending on their content of silver. Thus nuggets from Mount Kare tend to be paler than those from Simbai which have a lower silver content. Nuggets which have been deposited close to the surface often have a darker yellow color because over the years the silver has been progressively leached out by the humic acids produced by rotting vegetation.

Nuggets are unique and have a value in excess of their gold content because of their rarity and form, larger nuggets having greater value. In PNG, nuggets are used in many jewellery items and are available from all the main jewellers. Tourists who buy such items can literally take a bit of the country away with them.



**Above** Jagged edges of a Mt Kare nugget. **left** Every panful has gold potential. **below** Cashing in at the assay office.



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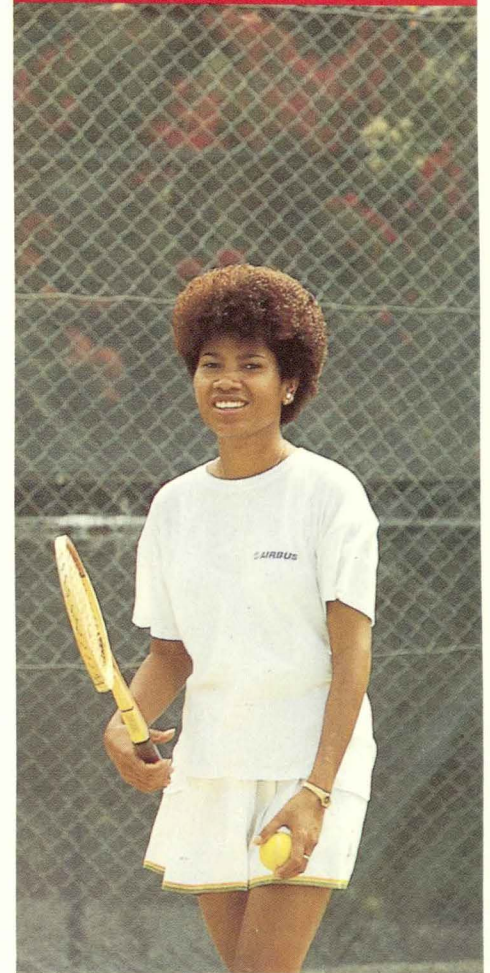
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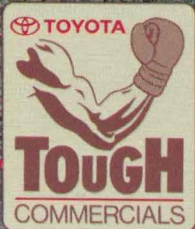
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