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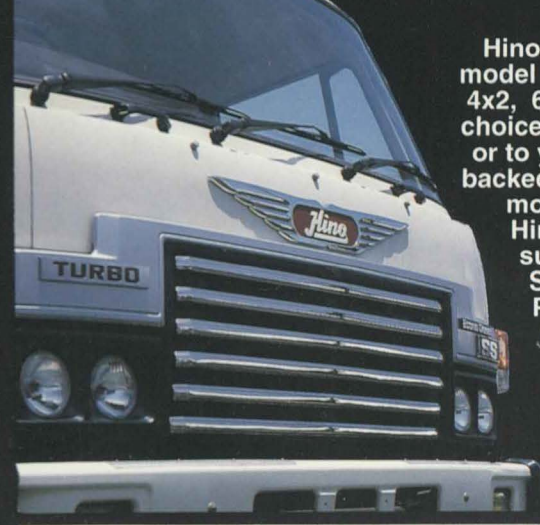
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No 97 Mar-Apr 1993

Welcome aboard!

Thousands of years before Europeans colonised the islands of the Aegean Sea, the outer islands of Papua New Guinea and beyond were being settled by the world's first sea voyagers. Evidence of these pioneers is being unearthed by archaeologists.

One of the most unusual farming programs in PNG is the Insect Farming and Trading Agency, a Village industry of small scale butterfly farms.

Also in this issue, Kevin Glennon introduces us to the beauty and grandeur of the Pacific region's highest mountain.

Have a pleasant flight.

Dieter Seefeld
Chief Executive & General Manager
Air Niugini



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Chief Executive & General Manager
Air Niugini

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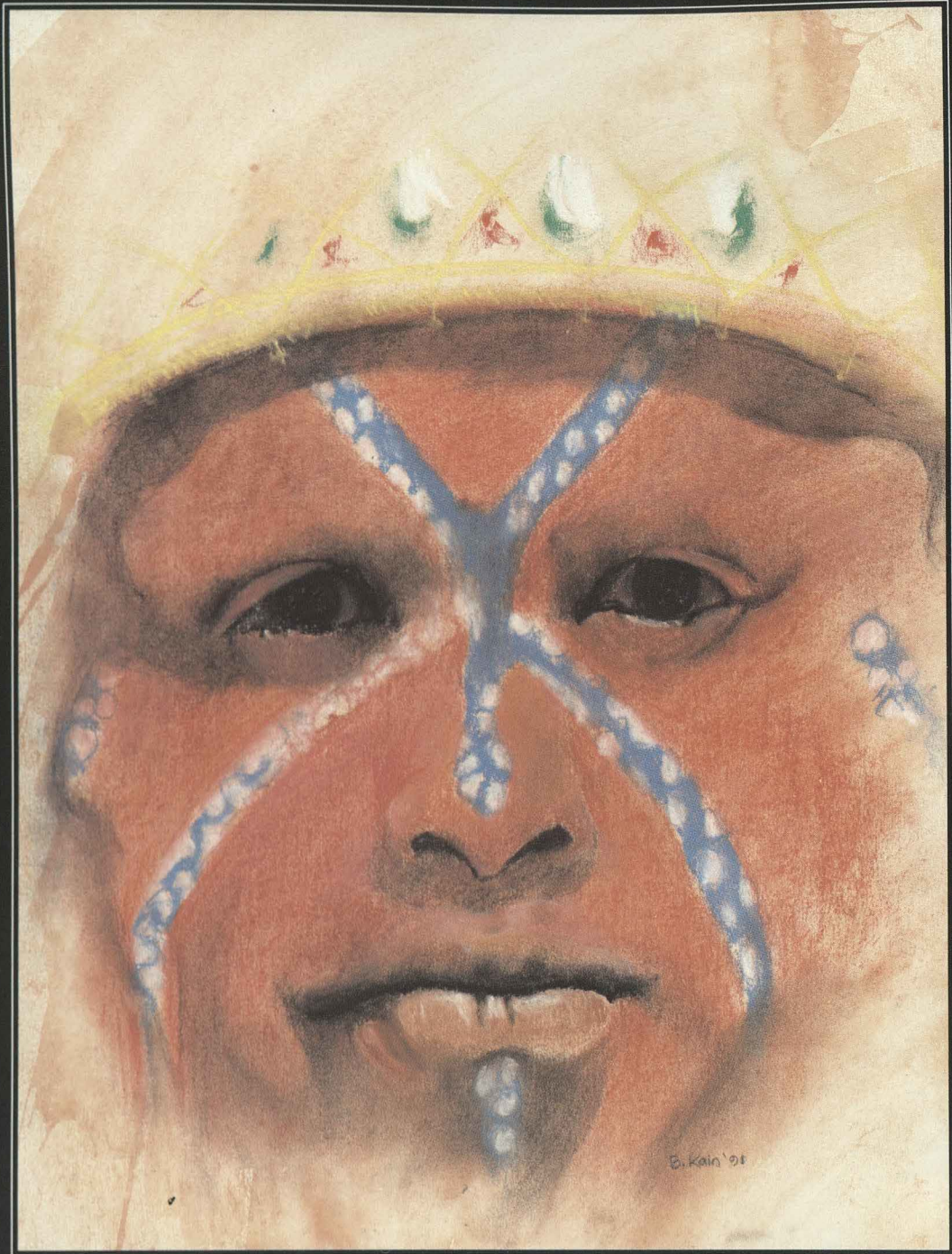
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Cover: Ulysses swallowtail butterfly, one of the giants of the PNG jungle (see page 11). Photograph by Roy Toft.

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THE FACE



An extract from the 1992 Shell Collector Series Calender. Artist: Bob Kain.

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Just after sunrise, swirling mist flows over the track ahead of us. We pause a little further on where a plaque has been fixed to a natural rock wall. The mist wavers from thin and eerie to thick and impenetrable, and then back again. The plaque commemorates Chris Donnan, an Australian army officer who was last seen here during a climb in 1971. We rest at what is known as saddle camp and I contemplate fate. After 10 minutes our party continues on the final ascent.

Mount Wilhelm lies in the Bismarck Range, a range characterised by razorback ridges and steep drops in lowland valleys, which forms part of Papua New Guinea's central chain of mountains. This mountain chain is complex, with broad upland valleys between the numerous ranges. The summit of Mount Wilhelm borders three provinces, Simbu, Madang, and Western Highlands. However, the mountain is best approached from Kundiawa in Simbu Province along the Simbu Valley. At an elevation of 4,509 metres, Mount Wilhelm is the highest peak in PNG. It dwarfs Australia's Mount Kosciusko, is taller than Europe's Matterhorn and nothing higher is found across the Pacific until South America.

Soon after leaving saddle camp, we hit patches of snow which become thicker along the trail ahead. We are 650km from the equator and the steamy coastline around Madang is visible. There is something incongruous about it but also exciting. One for the grandchildren - tropical snow!

PEAK

Of Perfection Story and
photographs by
Kevin Glennon

Above Tropical snow on the final approach to the summit of Mt Wilhelm.

Closer to the top, the snow is thick on flat surfaces but has trouble gaining a hold over most of the steep rocky surfaces. The summit is reached in 40 minutes from saddle camp. Our party is lucky - views extend for well over 100km in all directions. The volcanic mountains of Manam and Karkar are visible off the north coast. To the south, the Gulf of Papua disappears in haze and most of the Highlands valleys are filled with cloud. A line of pure white cloud joins the lowland Ramu and Markham

valleys while the mountains encircling the Waghi valley resemble a ragged-edged container full of soft cotton wool.

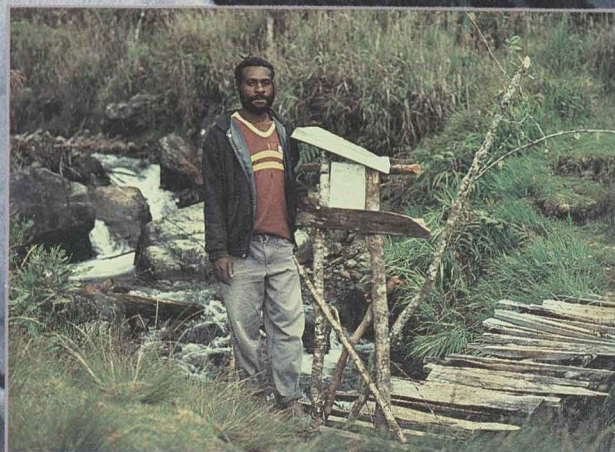
One of the more eccentric members of our party has lugged a bottle of champagne to the summit. It is put on ice while we await the stragglers, then uncorked. We toast PNG and ourselves. It has been a solid four-hour climb from the A-frame hut near the shore of Lake Aunde.

The danger of climbing Mount Wilhelm should not be exaggerated. With a guide and

a reasonable level of fitness the climb can be accomplished easily. No technical equipment is required and hands are used only for the final scramble up the rocks to the summit. Climbers should be aware of the dangers of altitude sickness and take the required precautions.

On the ascent, my mind was focused on reaching the summit. However, as we descend, I can more fully appreciate the beautiful environs leading up to the top. During the last ice age, slow-moving glaciers carved

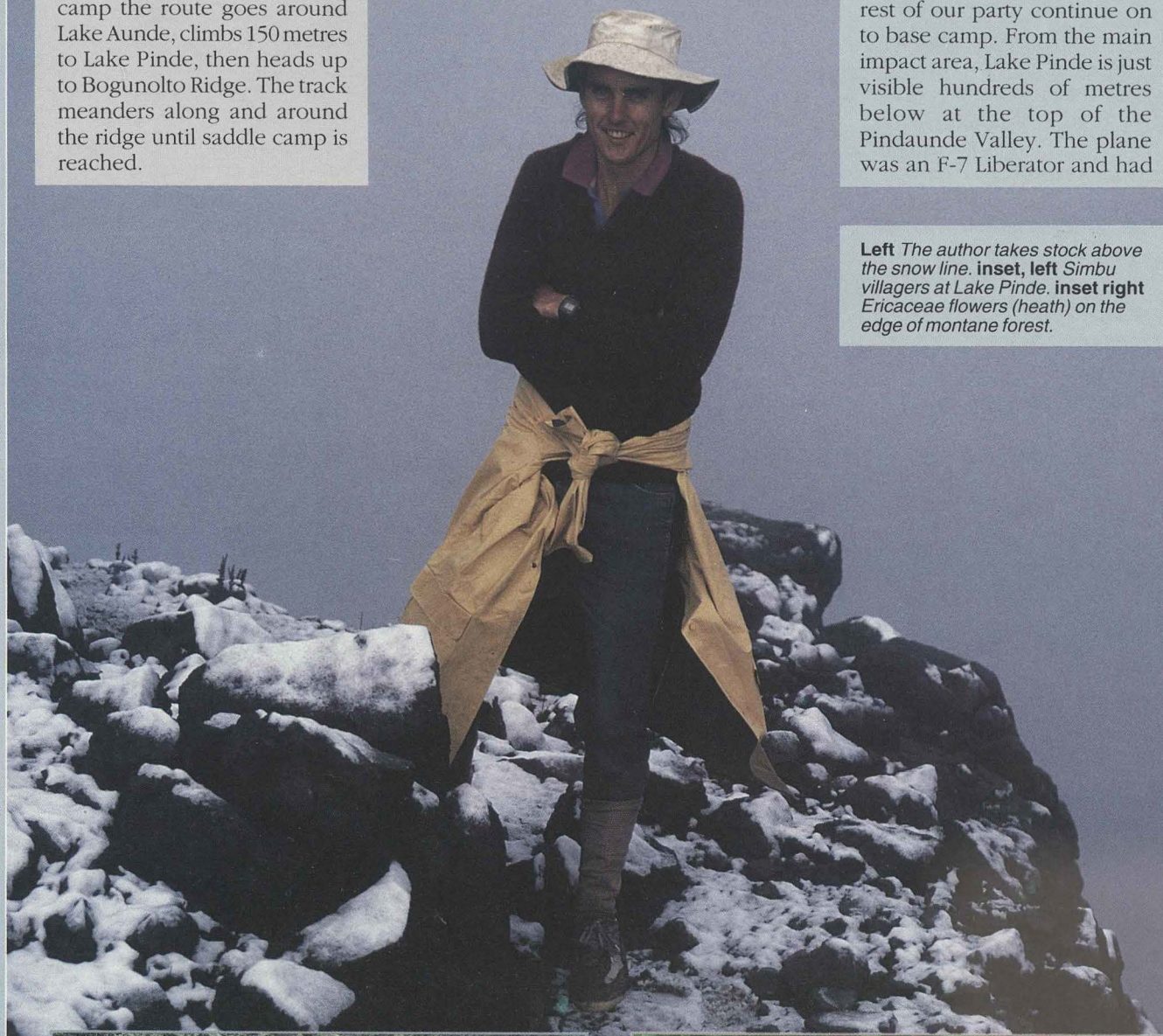
Below champagne on ice to celebrate the ascent. **inset** Foot track to the top starts where road stops at Pengagl Creek.



deep U-shaped valleys around Mount Wilhelm and today four large lakes exist as a legacy to the glaciers. The main base camp is beside Lake Aunde at 3,480 metres. We reached this camp in around three hours from Keglsugi at the top of the Simbu Valley, just below the end of the road from Kundiawa. From the base camp the route goes around Lake Aunde, climbs 150 metres to Lake Pinde, then heads up to Bogunolto Ridge. The track meanders along and around the ridge until saddle camp is reached.

On the climb back down from Bogunolto Ridge, parts of an aircraft wreck lie beside the track. We had passed them without noticing in the semi-darkness on the way up. The point of impact is higher up on the ridge where pieces of aluminium and other wreckage cover a large area. I detour up the ridge while the rest of our party continue on to base camp. From the main impact area, Lake Pinde is just visible hundreds of metres below at the top of the Pindaunde Valley. The plane was an F-7 Liberator and had

Left The author takes stock above the snow line. **inset, left** Simbu villagers at Lake Pinde. **inset right** Ericaceae flowers (heath) on the edge of montane forest.



taken off on a photo reconnaissance flight out of Nadzab in May 1944. Eleven crew were killed in the crash. The war touched even very remote parts of PNG.

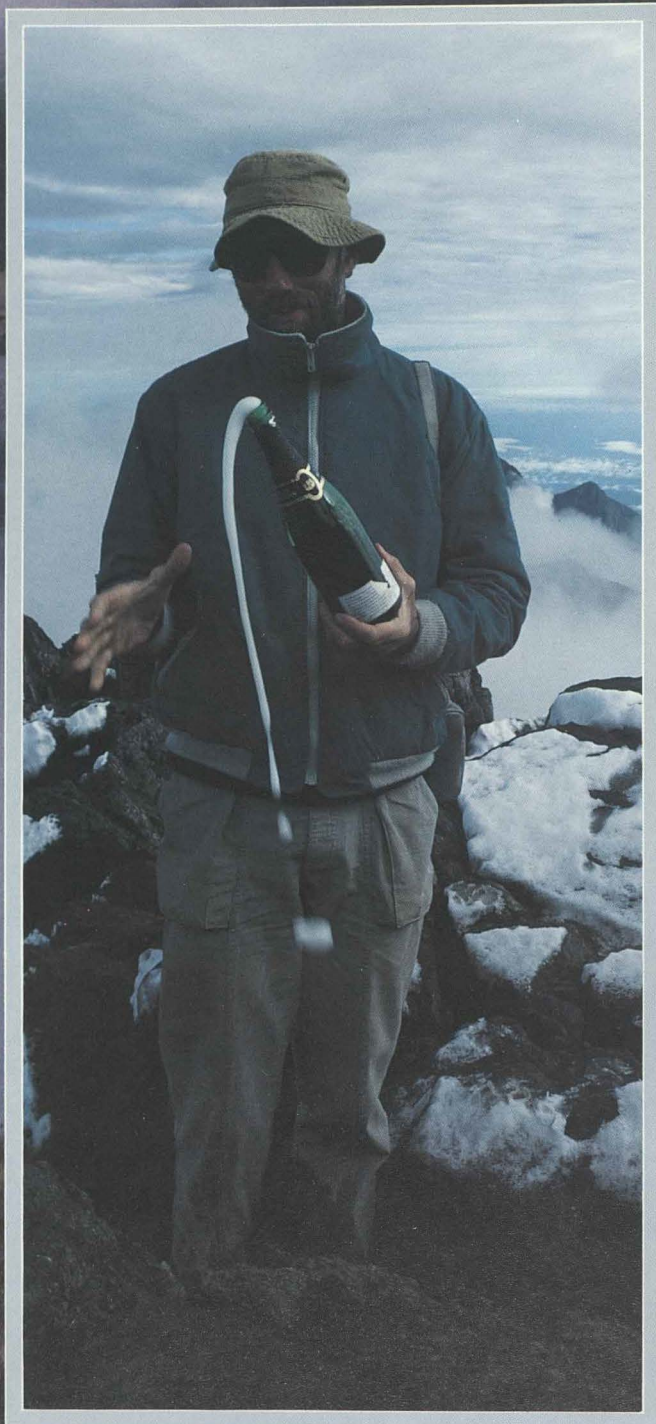
Further down, the glacial lakes again come into full view and are friendlier in the full morning light than they were in semi-darkness. The lakes increase the variety of habitats and add interest to the region, warranting a day or two to explore them. Being tropical alpine, the area is unique. The flora and fauna here is interesting especially in regard

to the origins of various plant and animal species. Researchers have determined that although most alpine flora immigrated to PNG, some evolved from forest ancestors. This habitat is home to many species of mammal and other animals. Sightings may be made of the Princess Stephanie bird of paradise in the splendid montane forests between Keglsugl and Lake Aunde.

As I approached the safety and security of the hut at Lake Aunde my thoughts wandered back to the climb. My initial feeling upon reaching the

summit was one of satisfaction; satisfaction with conquering the mountain. As my pulse rate slowed and the incredible views were taken in, I felt a sensation of sheer admiration and empathy with the mountain environment. A while later, after the champagne, the photos, and rest, the mood changed again. Clouds started rising and the wind slowly became gusty and stronger. Our fragility standing on the top of PNG become obvious. We started our retreat, leaving this beautiful but hostile environment.

Background Lake Pinde from above. **right** Climber Terry Frohm pops the cork. **below** Alpine *labiatae* flowers.



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*THE BEER OF PARADISE...
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Flowers Of The AIR

Story and
photographs by
Thomas Hanscom



Above *Weiskei* swallowtail butterfly, coveted by collectors.

Like the weather, everybody talks about rainforest destruction but few do anything about it. In the battle over our rainforests, money carries more weight than ethics. Money drives the tractors, lights the fires and wields the chainsaws. Today's conservationists have developed an appreciation for this power, and some have begun to use it rather than fight it. One of this new generation is Peter Clark, who guides a more gentle use of the jungle of Papua New Guinea. Peter Clark farms butterflies.

Clark is director of the Insect Farming & Trading Agency, a non-profit organisation created by the Government in 1978 to establish a village industry of small-scale



Below New Guinea race of the Cairns birdwing butterfly. **above left** Bougainville race of the Cairns birdwing. **above right** Weiskei swallowtail butterfly.

butterfly farms. The initial premise of the venture was no different from that of many Third World industries - find something of value to rich Westerners, gather some, and sell it. PNG insects have always fetched top dollar from collectors in Europe, Japan and the United States, who place them in decorative cases and hoard them as others do stamps and coins. Beetles, spiders and grasshoppers grow to tremendous size and unusual shape in the rainforest; but of particular worth are the country's magnificent butterflies. PNG is home to several species of the coveted birdwing, the largest and most colorful of the world's butterflies. Retail prices of certain specimens can reach \$US500 and higher.





"The economic measure of insects is commonly a negative one, because they destroy crops and property," Peter Clark points out. "Here, they make us a good bit of money."

This fact is particularly amusing to a man who spent several years as an agricultural advisor for the Australian Government, devoting his expertise to the improvement of farming techniques in the fertile Sepik River region. Echoes of his former vocation can be heard as Clark leads a tour through the IFTA storage room, which holds over 200,000 individually wrapped specimens awaiting sale. "This one is the *Batocera wallaci*, which is a major breadfruit pest; and the rhinoceros beetle here feeds on coconut trees."

Once concerned by the destruction such insects wreaked on cash crops, Peter Clark is now equally concerned by the effect that those same crops and other activities are having on the virgin forests of PNG. Clark now presents yesterday's pests as an economic alternative to the clearing of large land tracts.

Ranchers rather than farmers - farming refers to the raising of animals produced by captive parents - IFTA's participants are scattered throughout PNG. Some 600 to 800 ranchers regularly supply the agency with butterflies propagated, prepared and shipped according to methods carefully defined by Clark and his staff. The typical farm is small, averaging a half-acre (0.2 hectares) and requiring no more than 500 maintained plants. The IFTA recommends that farmers use abandoned garden plots, since they have already been cleared of primary forest growth and, though unsuitable for other planting, are quite capable of sustaining the species of plants used in a butterfly farm. The farm is bordered by such nectar-bearing flowers as poinsettia and hibiscus, which act as adult-attractive food plants. Inside the




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the sun and the Lounge Bar is the place to meet friendly faces, while the Aero Bar promises a private, guests only, atmosphere.

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compound, aristolochia and other host vines are planted in rows. The process is a simple one - adult butterflies are attracted to the flowers and subsequently enticed to breed and lay eggs in an area that provides ample food plants for their offspring.

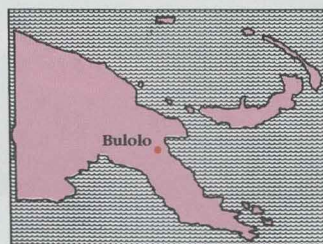
About two weeks after the eggs are laid, larvae emerge and feed on the vines. Four weeks in the caterpillar stage, the larvae then pupate on the same plants and

begin their four week metamorphosis. Ten weeks after egg-lay, adult butterflies emerge.

During this period, the farmer gauges his food supply against the caterpillars' demands, and culls a percentage of the crop if they threaten to overeat. Later, about 70 per cent of the pupae are picked from the vines and placed in a protective hatching cage; the other 30 per cent, left to complete a normal life cycle, include the



Top Eva Hanscom and a female Cairns birdwing butterfly. **above** A male of the same species. **left** A display case of PNG butterflies.



production of the farm's next crop. The density of host plants allows an abnormally high percentage of insects to reach adulthood and human activity near and within the garden discourages predators; thus, farming maintains and often increases the population of free-flight butterflies in the area.

The captive butterflies are killed by an alcohol injection four to five hours after they emerge, placed in paper envelopes and dried on an

outdoor tray. When enough butterflies have been gathered and prepared, they are packed in cotton and mothballs and sent by post to the IFTA office in the Highlands town of Bulolo. "It's not too complicated, really," says Clark. "If you have an old garden and can make it to a post office once a month, you can farm butterflies."

The agency accepts wild and captive-raised specimens, but it is quick to emphasise its preference for the farm animals. "We reject most of the wild butterflies because they are damaged, either before or during the act of capture," says Clark. "We point out that farming will give you prime-grade



Above *Ulysses swallowtail butterfly*, **below** IFTA director Peter Clark at the Wau Ecology Institute. **bottom** *Hercules moth*.

in nearly \$US400,000 a year. He directs his staff on the filling of each order, then devotes himself to the most important part of his job - swift payment of his farmers.

"We need to keep them happy and interested," explains Clark. "Sometimes we even pay them more than the insects are worth, or buy insects that we know will be difficult to resell. But that's what they mean by 'non-profit', eh?" Seventy-five per cent of the IFTA's sales receipts is returned to the villages; the remaining 25 per cent covers operating costs, maintenance of the IFTA business office, and salaries for the director and his nine employees.



butterflies, and you don't have to spend all that time running about in the humid bush waving a net. We get most of our new farmers with such logic."

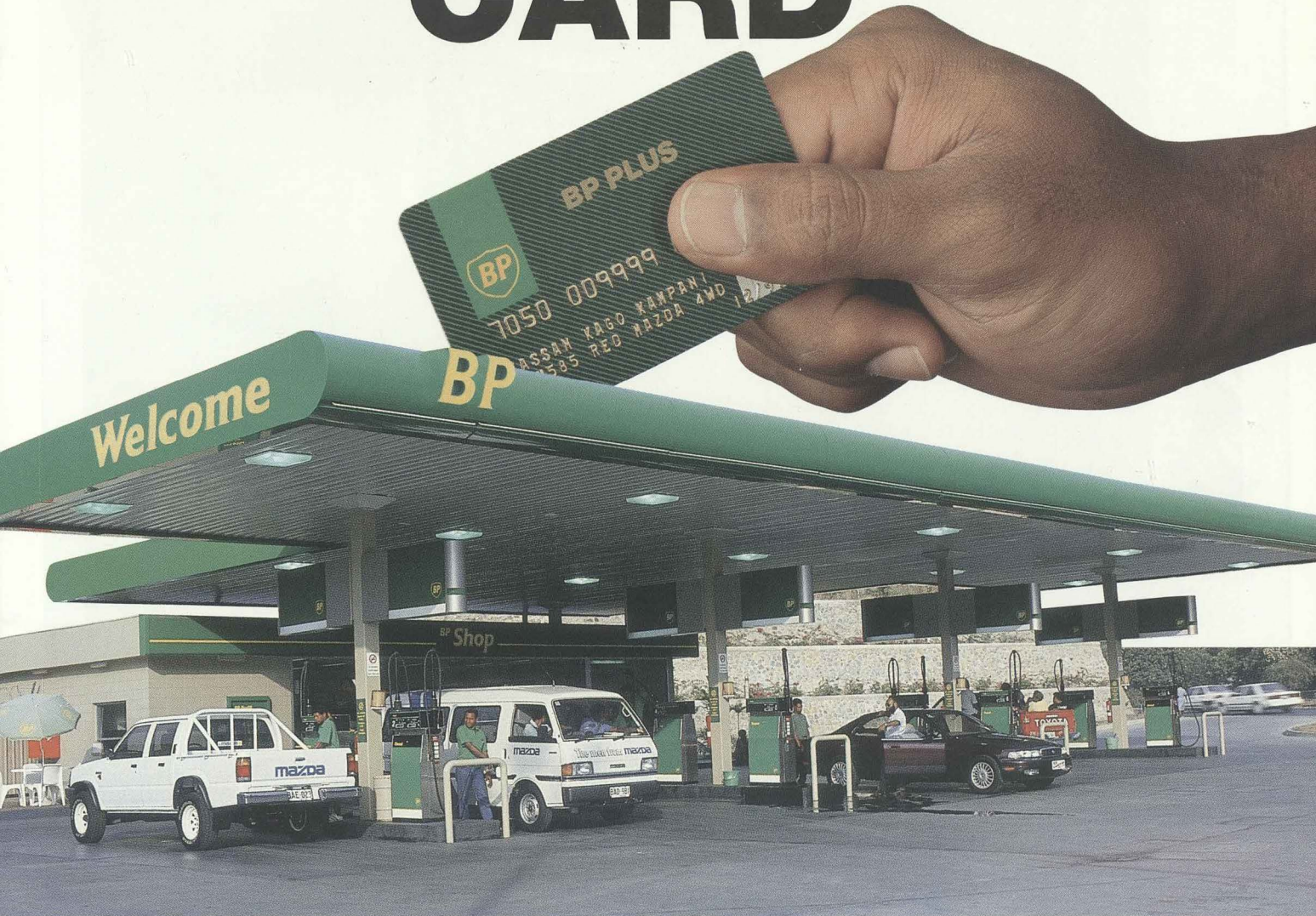
After Peter Clark picks up the mail, flown into Bulolo daily aboard a light plane, he delivers the insect packages to his staff for inspection, sorting, identification and labelling. Clark goes through the other mail, which includes orders from dealers and collectors all over the world; orders that bring



"We need to teach them that their environment can be used but not abused, that the forest can serve a good purpose for a longer period than it takes to chop it down. With the right tools, they can make some money yet pass onto their children the same natural treasures they received from their parents."

In a rainforest filled with the sights and sounds of mechanised progress, Peter Clark has found a gentler tool in the butterfly.

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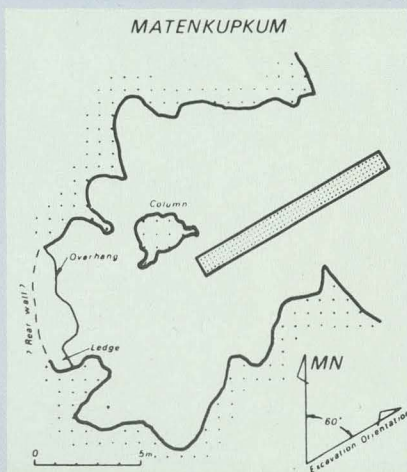
by Chris Gosden and Christina Pavlides



Left
A present-day canoe of the Bismarck Archipelago. **below** Plan of the Matenkupkum cave and excavation trench.

The Pacific covers a third of the earth's surface, but has only a small portion of its land area. As a huge body of water dividing small areas of land, the Pacific presents a difficult task for human colonists. However, recent archaeological discoveries in Papua New Guinea show that the first human groups voyaged to Pacific islands 35,000 years ago.

This fact was unexpected because islands in most parts



of the world were settled much later. In the stories that Europeans tell about the history of the world, places like the Mediterranean are seen as the origins of civilisation and culture. However, the islands of the Aegean were permanently settled less than 10,000 years ago. The same is true of other major sets of islands, such as those in the Caribbean.

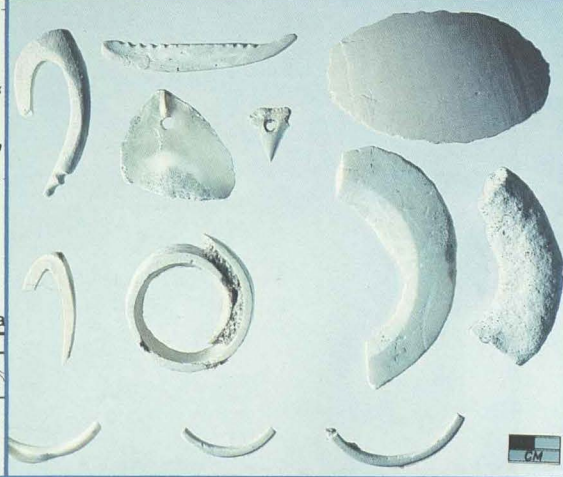
Viewed in a world perspective, moves into the Pacific occurred when human

populations elsewhere were restricted to continental land masses. Confronted by the Pacific evidence we must ask the questions: 'How did people sail to these islands at such an early date and how did they survive when they arrived?'

To tackle these questions we must look at the evidence. Thirty-five thousand years ago a small group of people started to visit a cave today called Matenkupkum, which lies south of Namatanai, New Ireland. These people must have come from the mainland of PNG, which meant that they had to sail across the relatively narrow water gaps separating New Britain from the mainland and the St Georges channel between New Britain and New Ireland. These are not great feats of navigation, but indicate an unusual desire and ability to cross water on the part of our early human ancestors.

Much more impressive is the water crossing made from the south end of New Ireland to Buka, involving a crossing of up to 150km which took place 28,000 years ago. The movement into Buka shows that people were relatively at home on the sea and could move about with relative ease. Although we have no knowledge of the craft used, we can say that these craft could be kept afloat for several days and that the world's earliest mariners had the confidence and the ability to sail out of sight of land.

Staying alive in the new island world may have been more challenging than crossing the sea to reach the Pacific islands. Moving onto New Ireland and Buka, people would have encountered familiar vegetation; the rainforest on these islands had much the same plant species as that on PNG but few animals. In the lowest layers of Matenkupkum cave we found animal bones from a small range of species, such



Maps Bismarck Archipelago, showing archaeological sites, including those with lapita pottery, top right Stone age tools shaped from flint, above right Shell fishhooks, bracelets and discs, below animal bones from Matenkupkum cave.



as lizards, snakes, rats and bats.

Some of these animals may have lived and died in the cave and others would have been the remains of animals eaten by the new human arrivals. More important in terms of diet was food from the sea. Abundant shell fish have been found in the earliest layers, together with the bones of fish. This provides some of the earliest evidence for fishing in the world. Plant foods which must have been important in people's diet have not been preserved.

Although we cannot be sure, it seems likely that only small numbers of people lived on New Ireland in this early period. They may have been extremely mobile, moving between scarce resources. The later periods of Matenkupkum's occupation produced much greater evidence of human activity and around 20,000 years ago, a second cave, Matenbek, was occupied just around the corner from Matenkupkum.



Above Entrance to Panakiwuk cave, occupied 15,000 years ago. **below** Garden plots in present day New Ireland.



The evidence from Matenbek reveals a picture of changing forms of life. First of all there is evidence of a new animal species, the cuscus. This weighs up to 4kg and would have represented a welcome addition to the diet. There is a strong likelihood that these animals were introduced into New Ireland by people and quickly became food animals. Along with the cuscus bones we found a material that had definitely been transported to the cave by people, a volcanic glass, obsidian. This outcrops in central New Britain and was transported some 350km from its source. Obsidian's sharp cutting edge has made it a sought after material for making stone tools down to the present.

These two pieces of evidence suggest that people were not passively suffering the limitations of island environments, but from an early period were trying to boost local resources. From the period after the first appearance of new tools and animals there are indications that more people lived on New Ireland.

First of all, in the caves like Matenkupkum which had already been inhabited there was more debris. This was thrown away around hearths and contains large numbers of stone tools, animal bones and shell, providing us with a picture of groups carrying out a range of tasks around fires used for cooking food. It seems unlikely that people lived full time in Matenkupkum. Rather, it represented an important spot to which people returned regularly in their travels around the landscape.

Evidence of what other sorts of camps people might have had come from different parts of New Ireland. From 15,000 years ago, new sites have been found, providing further evidence of an increase in population. These new sites occur in different parts of the landscape from Matenkupkum and Matenbek, both of which are on the coast. Evidence from a limestone sink hole, known as Panakiwuk, in northern New Island starts around 15,000 years ago. This site is in the centre of the island (although only 3.5km away from the coast) and may represent a temporary camp for groups exploiting rainforest resources.

This is the first evidence we have of people using the interior of New Ireland. It indicates that they were changing their patterns of life, relying more on land resources, as well as those from the sea. This site also has New Britain obsidian in it in small amounts, indicating that the connections moving this

material extended to the north of the island.

In all, five caves have been excavated in New Ireland and although the first evidence of human usage occurs at different dates, they all appear to go out of use about 6,000 years ago. The reasons for the abandonment of the caves are unclear, but may well stem from the major changes in people's way of life. One obvious possibility is that the occupants of New Ireland started living in villages and supporting themselves through agriculture at this time. We have no direct evidence of farming from this period on New Ireland, but archaeological work in the Highlands of PNG has shown that complex farming systems were in existence by 6,000 years ago (indeed, they may date back to 9,000 years ago).

Only further archaeological work in the Province can determine when and how the moves towards agriculture took place. In any event, we can say that many of the caves were used again in the last 1,600 years, by which time pottery was being used as well as all the plants and animals associated with gardening. We also find obsidian in these upper levels, but by this time it comes from sources on Manus, rather than New Britain, indicating a change in the social connections through which this material moved.

The New Ireland sites provide evidence that people were able to change their environment some 20,000 years ago. From 35,000 years ago people existed on the fringes of the rainforests; from 15,000 years ago they were regularly foraging within it, having increased the original resources of New Ireland. About 3,500 years ago people started to move out into the remoter islands of the Pacific between the Solomon Islands and Tonga and Samoa.

These islands had few of the resources necessary to support



Above Beach excavation on Kumbun Island. **left** Sea shells provided meals for Matenkupkum dwellers 35,000 years ago. **bottom** Stone tools from Matenkupkum, made from river cobbles and obsidian.

life and the early colonists had to take all their plant and animal food sources with them. By this time, however, they could draw on techniques of island life stretching back more than 30,000 years to New Ireland.

Archaeological evidence from the islands of PNG have much to tell us about the history of life in that region. We can also gain much insight into the bigger story of human groups in the Pacific as a whole. Local and Pacific-wide themes are illuminated by the evidence from the neighboring island of New Britain.



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TASMANIA

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Sissano
Aitape
Imonda
Lumi
Amanab
Green River
May River
Sepik
Ambunti
Nuku
Dreikirikir
Maprik

Wewak

Angorum
Manam Island
Hansa Bay
Bogia
Karawari

Karkar Island
Bagabag Island

HINDENBURG RANGE

Telefomin
Oksapmin
Ok Tedi Mine
Ningerumi
Rumginae

Tabubil

Kiunga
Nomad
Lake Murray

CENTRAL RANGE
Lake Kopyago
Porgera

Wabag

Baiyer River
Wapenamanda

Madang

Long Island
Umboi Island
Sialum

Stassi

Gloucester

Mount Hagen
Tari
Mendi

Kundiawa

Goroka

Mt Wilhelm

Kainantu
Okapa

Kalipit

Nadzab

Lae

Finschafen
Tami Island

Noro

Lake Kutubu

Kagua

Erave

Kundiawa

Kainantu

Okapa

Wabo

Baimuru

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**NEW GUINEA
MOTORS**



HIGHLANDS

Story and photographs by Pierre van Damme

Jackson's International Airport is our introduction to Papua New Guinea. After a five months' tour through India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Indonesia, we two Netherlanders are used to the staring people and the heat of the tropics.

Eight months earlier Linda and I had decided to visit PNG. In our village in Holland we had met Willy, a Dutch priest who is more or less in charge of a Marist seminary in Boroko, one of Port Moresby's suburbs. Willy warmed us up to coming to extraordinary PNG.

Father Willy, who has been patiently waiting for us at the airport, takes us to the seminary. Here we talk to him about our plans for getting married. Our journey has brought us very close together and we both felt the PNG Highlands would be the one and only place for us to get married. It will all happen on Palm Sunday in Koge, a small village in Simbu province. Father Willy will be there too.

First we want to explore, and the next morning we pack our bags and take a small plane to Kundiawa, the capital of Simbu province. The views of the canyons are spectacular, but this is a heart stopping experience when you are used to a wide-body airliner. The weather is bad and air turbulence and wind play with the plane. Kundiawa has a spectacular airstrip on a sloping ridge surrounded by



mountains. We have every reason to be glad to have landed safely.

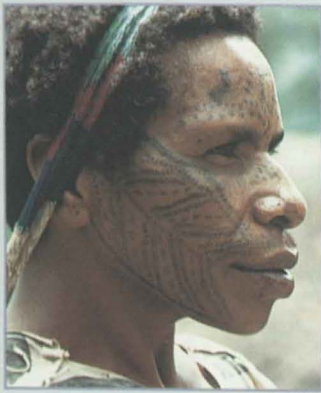
We explore Kundiawa and a friend of a friend takes us to Gumini, a few hours' drive away. The road is slippery and dangerous because of the rain, with a risk of landslides. In Gumini we meet an American couple who, at our request, have arranged for us to stay with the local people. They take us to the nearby village of Nimini, where Paul and Dominica are our hosts. We make them happy with 25kg of rice and a carton containing 48 tins of fish in exchange for their hospitality. We talk all evening in their bush materials home about everything and nothing, mostly in English but this is also the time and place for us to practise pidgin.

We have a wonderful time with Paul and Dominica. She

Left The author and wife Linda in their wedding 'bilas' (finery at Koge village, Simbu).



MARRIAGE



Left, from top Koge villager with tribal tattoos; Koge family; Koge sing sing; flying fox is on the menu.



shows Linda how to make string bags (bilums) and he takes me to a singsing. Later Paul is very sad. One of his two pigs (of great economic value in the Highlands) is dying. We mourn with him as if it were one of our own family members.

Our next destinations are Mt Hagen, capital of Western Highlands and Goroka, capital of Eastern Highlands.

When a small plane crash-lands near the beautiful 2,450 metres high Daulo Pass, we take the opportunity of going there with a rescue team - an unforgettable operation. Travelling back to Kundiawa, we are held up by a major landslide. We have to walk through the mud to the other side where a public motor vehicle (PMV) is waiting to bring us back to Kundiawa.

The next day we do some shopping for our wedding and drive to the other side of Simbu province to Koge, the village where it is all going to happen.

We meet Father Willy again and he suggests we marry in traditional Simbu clothes. We do not know what to say but the housekeeper Hilda and seminarist Peter take care of everything. The whole parish is excited about the wedding and gathers traditional clothes for us, while we make our own wedding rings, by turning, twisting and sewing a dried leaf of corn together, and learning marriage vows in pidgin.

Within a few days there is a strong bond of friendship

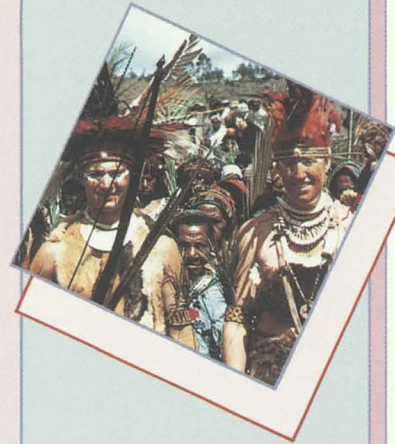
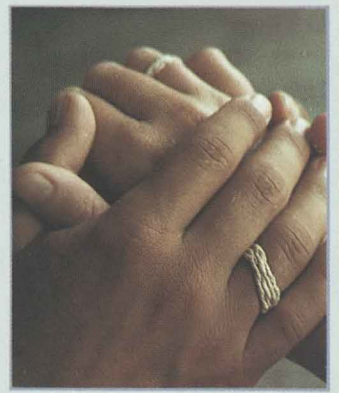
between us and the villagers. On Palm Sunday people from all over the village bring us all they can to make us look festive. A woman called Bu prepares Linda and considers herself today as Linda's mother. We are dressed up with birds of paradise feathers, furs of cuscus, shells, tanget leaves, pig's teeth and clay.

Linda carries a beautiful string bag and I have a bow and arrows. How proud I am being a warrior, Linda's protector.

In church we sit on a small wooden bench, being nervous amongst almost 1,000 happily smiling people and think about our parents in the Netherlands. Father Willy calls us to the front. With a trembling voice we say our wedding vows in pidgin and exchange corn rings. With our eyes full of tears we listen to the loud and devoted singing of the crowd. After church they congratulate us and some old people give us a long warm hug.

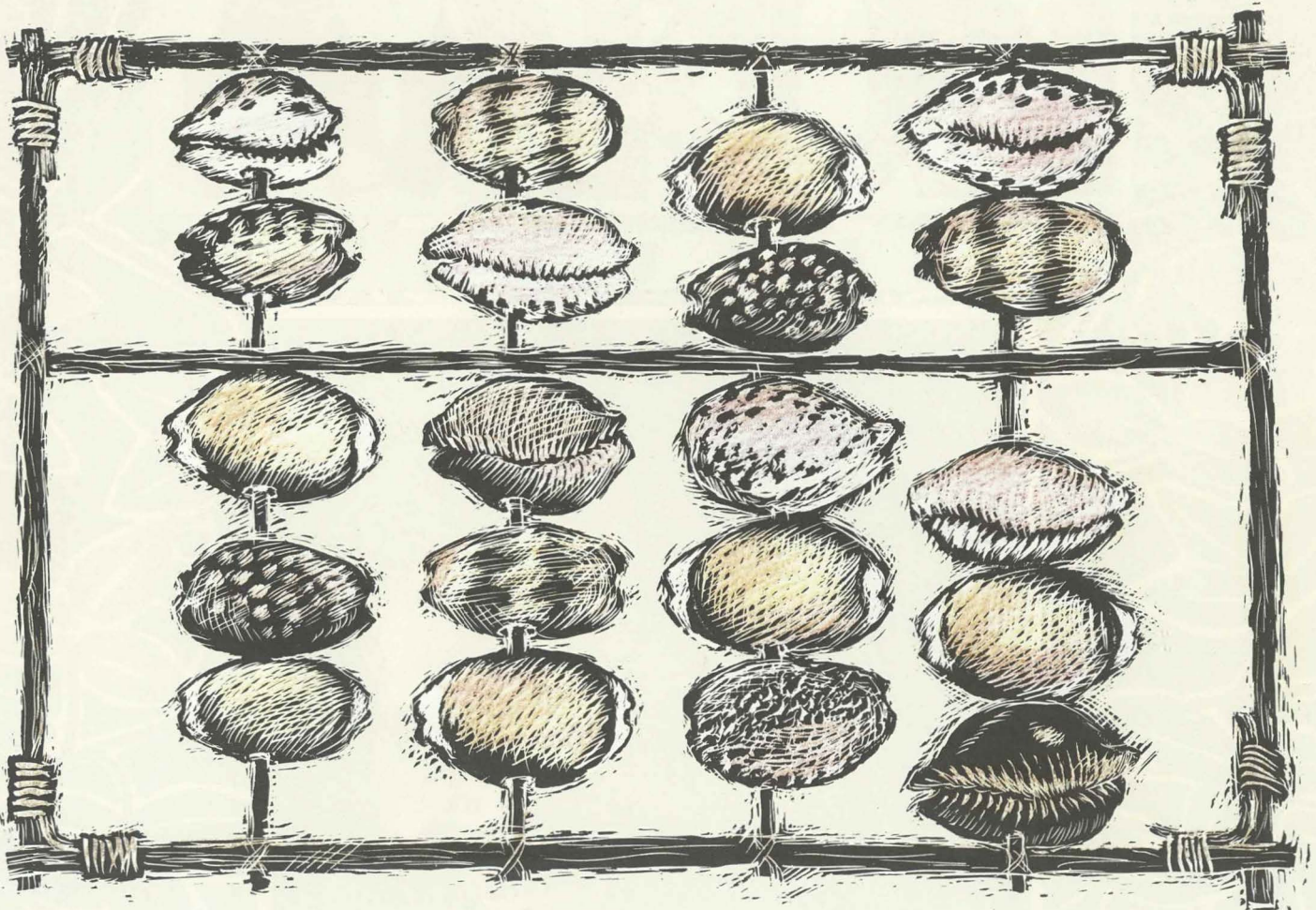
Bu makes us a traditional mumu dish, with sweet potatoes, vegetables and chicken. We treat guests to cakes, fruit juice and champagne.

Our fondest memories of our six months' tour are of the people of PNG. The people we met, we stayed with, talked with, laughed with and cried with. These simple pleasures, the great variety of experiences, including our honeymoon in tropical Madang, made our stay in PNG unforgettable.



Right from top The married couple's corn leaf wedding rings; the newly-weds; Linda with Koge children; the author's shoes after traversing a landslide.





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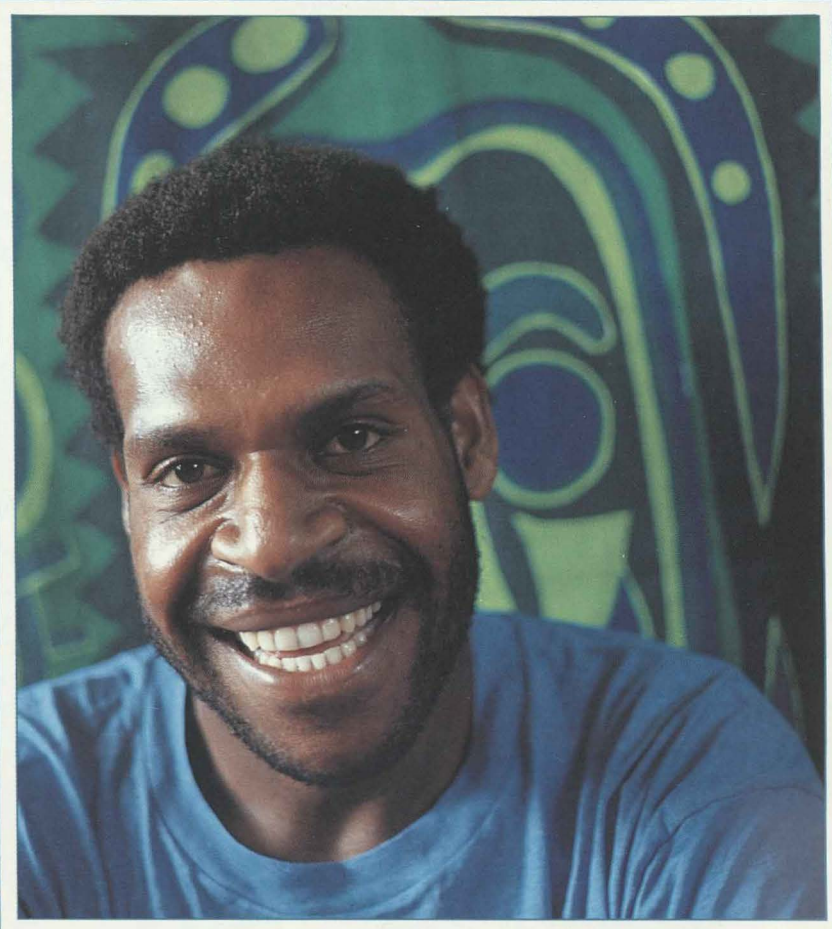
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AARON

TALUFAR



Story and photographs by Liz Thompson

Above The artist A'aron Talufar. **below** Design based on traditional mask.



Papua New Guinea's traditional craftsmen did not consider themselves artists in the Western sense of the word. The painting and carving they added to things they made was everyday work, not something they did separately. Their handiwork fulfilled their need for artistic expression. Nevertheless, many everyday and ceremonial objects they created are regarded by the

Western world as works of art. Although craftsmen expressed themselves in their work, their decorative designs were regulated by a kind of copyright. Many patterns on wood carvings, bark paintings, bones, shells, weapons, canoes, paddles, plates and bowls were controlled by strong ties of clan or tribe ownership. So too were the motifs which appeared on the gables and facades of spirit houses.

Below Variation on a traditional mask design.

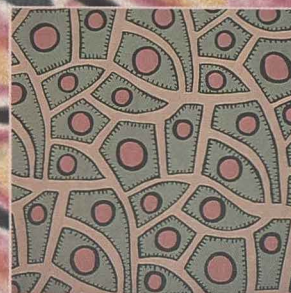
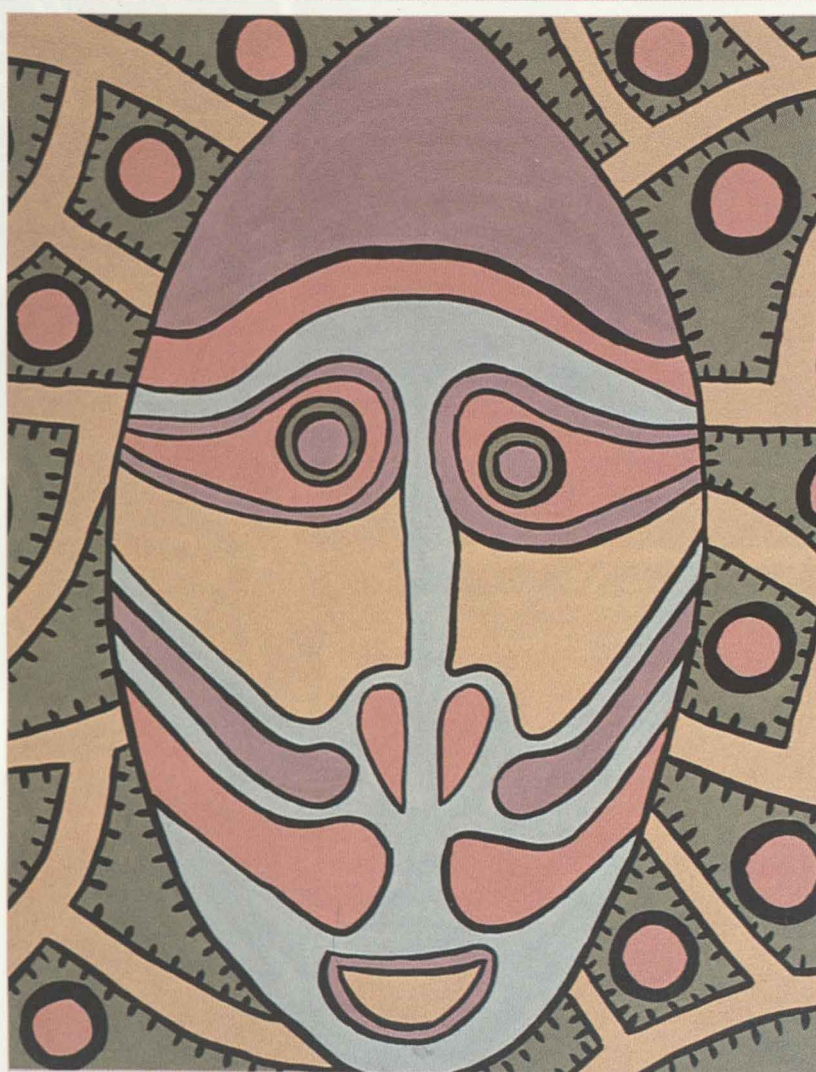


Designs, complex in execution, drew on stories, legends and natural features of the environment. While the Highlands produced fewer art objects, art was expressed in extensive and varied body decoration. Using fur, feathers, shells, dog teeth, bones and natural pigments, Highlanders transformed their bodies. Intense and vibrant colors were found in bark and flowers, ochres and umbers. More muted tones came from clays and rocks.

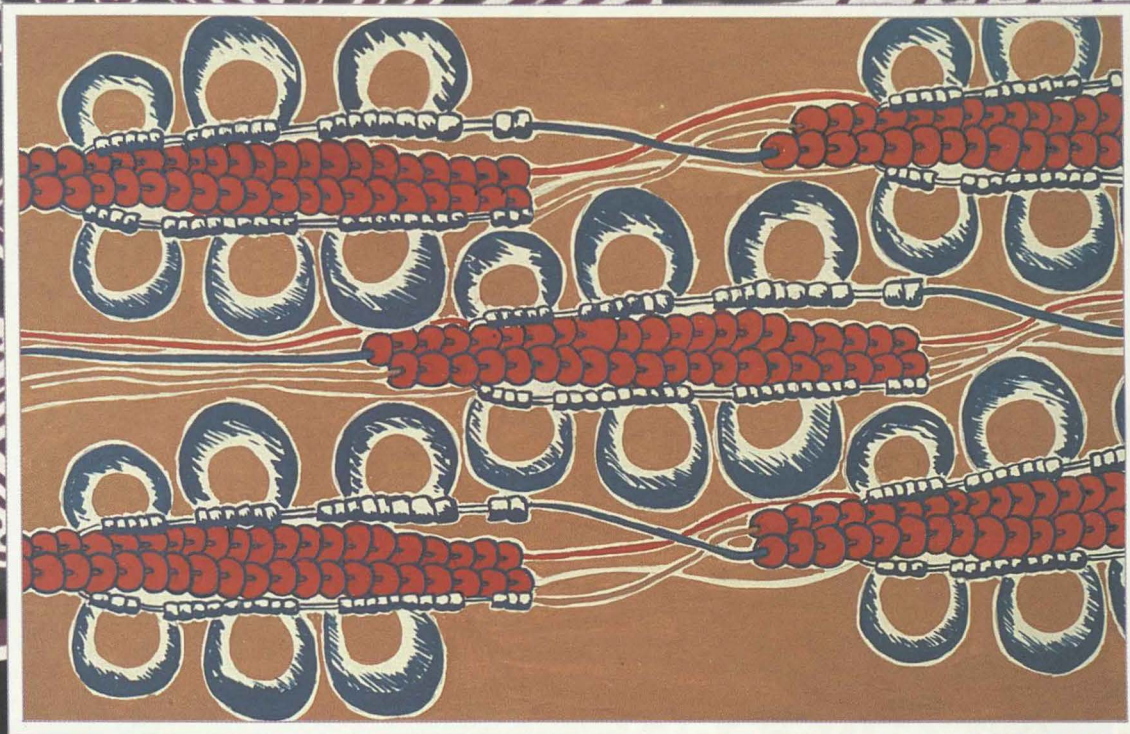
As PNG develops, there is an inevitable decline in the production of traditionally designed objects and body adornment. However, there is an increasingly powerful development in the area of contemporary design.

Students who have left their village for the art schools and colleges around the country frequently draw on their traditions for inspiration. They incorporate the sensations, the form and line of traditional imagery into their contemporary designs.

This process is very evident in the work of A'aron Talufar who comes from a small village in the Kainantu district of the Eastern Highlands. His home and village are rich in culture and are the source of his creative inspiration. Talufar is employed as an assistant by the Textiles Department of the University of PNG. His work is powerful and distinctive and clearly draws on traditional influences. Bold colors and sharp lines recall masks and



Left One of artist A'aron Talufar's idiosyncratic mask designs. **top inset** Bows and arrows inspired this motif. **inset, above** Leaf detail pattern.



Above Fabric decorated with stylised armbands. inset, below A'aron Talufar's representation of plants. inset, bottom Another of the artist's renditions of a mask. inset, far right Design taken from traditional necklace.



designs which would have been carved onto shields or spear heads. Others draw from objects of body adornment, arm bands, feathers or tapa.

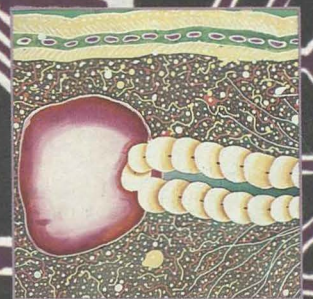
Strong green panels depict faces which look like abstract masks. His sources are books at the university library which illustrate old cultural objects or his observation of artefacts and decorative objects in his home area. Bird of paradise feathers are broken down to their abstract form of lines and circles. On some occasions he crops, focusing on the small part of a mask which interests him, drawing a design from the area of the eyes.

Body decoration from Talufar's Kainantu district is rich in potential for abstract design. Rows of green beetles, strings of cowrie shells, the huge curves of Kina shells, sweeping feathers, the breasts of mountain parrots, cassowary bones. Their combined colors and lines suggest a thousand patterns. Talufar's work draws on these suggestions and expresses them with a great simplicity. He searches for the fundamental lines and forms

in the objects and images which inspire him. His designs are strong, clear, uncluttered and distinctly Papua New Guinean.

Quiet and shy, Talufar talks of his village with great affection. When he returns, he gardens and hunts along with the others, he cooks kau kau and other vegetables he collects from the gardens. His connection with village life emerges in his designs. All of his art focuses on translating visions of traditional design into a contemporary medium. "There is no other way I can work," he says. He is adamant that PNG can produce enough fabrics to avoid importing from overseas. He rejects the stimulus of imported designs, believing that his own environment and traditional imagery provide more than enough inspiration.

With fashion recently introduced into the textile design syllabus, Talufa is hoping to be involved in setting up a fabric shop within the university campus. Student production of fabrics, he says, now have to be taken one step further. Students have to





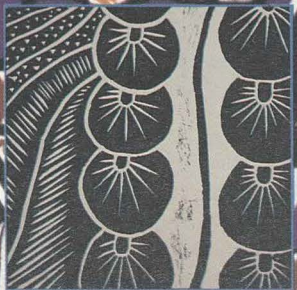
Right Pattern taken from traditional shield. inset, below Tapa cloth design. inset, right Design from sea shells.



learn how to make practical things from textiles to provide themselves with an income and develop a healthy market for their work.

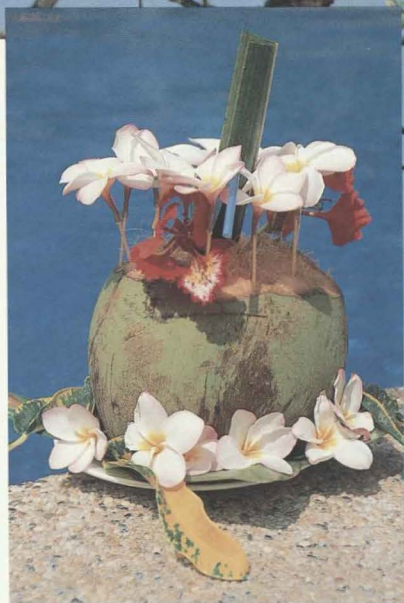
Designs such as those of A'aron Talufar are far from anything found in an Australian, New Zealand or even Asian fabric shop. PNG has a string of highly innovative designers

emerging. While their talents are nurtured within an education system, they now have to work on promoting and selling their products. Contemporary Papua New Guinean designers' work often bears the powerful signature of traditional influence. Exciting and dynamic, it is part of the evolution of modern artistic expression.



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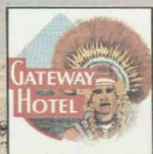
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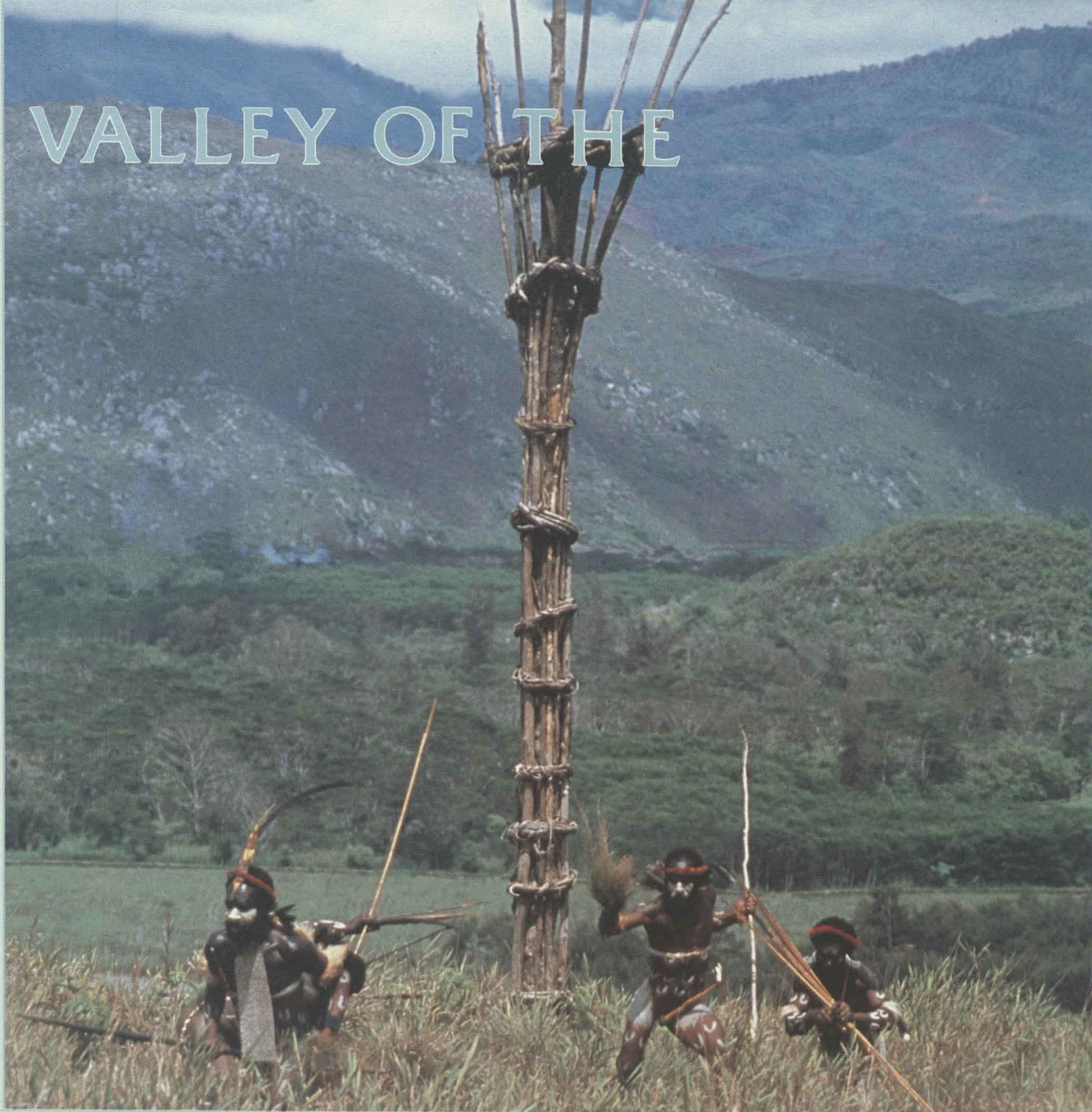
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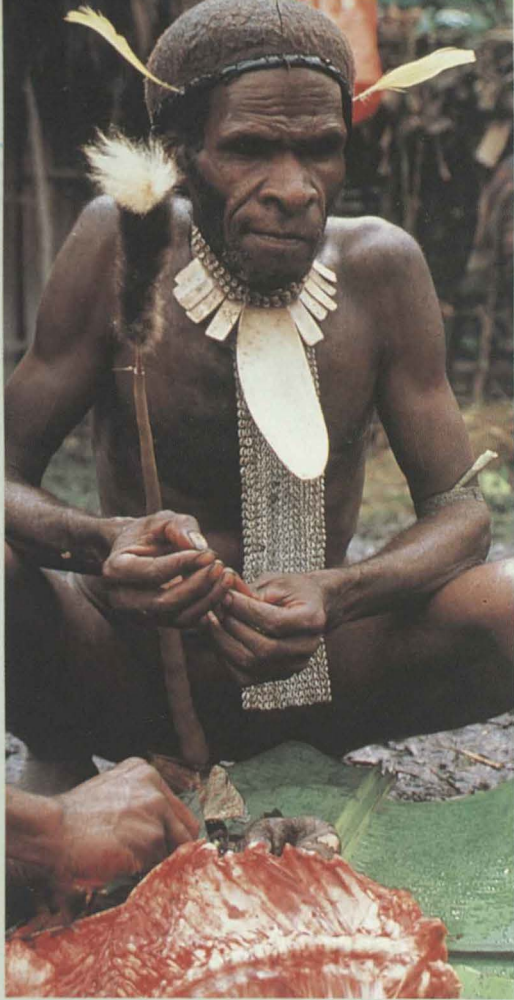


DANI

Story and photographs by Julian Loader



Above
Traditional Dani
war party
lookout tower.
left Decoration
favored by the
well-appointed
Dani male.



Far left Dani villager enjoys ceremonial meal of hot pit pork. **left** Bird of paradise feathers, pig tusks and sea shell form the basis of Dani man's finery, **below** Danis prepare for mock battle to entertain visitors.

Indonesia's Balim Valley, in the province of Irian Jaya just west of Papua New Guinea, has no hotels, little variety in food, no beer and lots of rain. But this same area is cheap, peaceful, attractive and brimming with colorfully dressed men and women observing curious customs.

While the Balim and adjacent valleys are exciting hiking areas - pretty and not too vertical - the real draw is the Dani people, their customs and dress.

Their staple, indeed almost only food, is sweet potatoes, invariably cooked over a friction-started fire in a smoke-choked communal kitchen. Pots, pans and other utensils do not exist, so neither does alcohol, since containers are needed for fermentation.

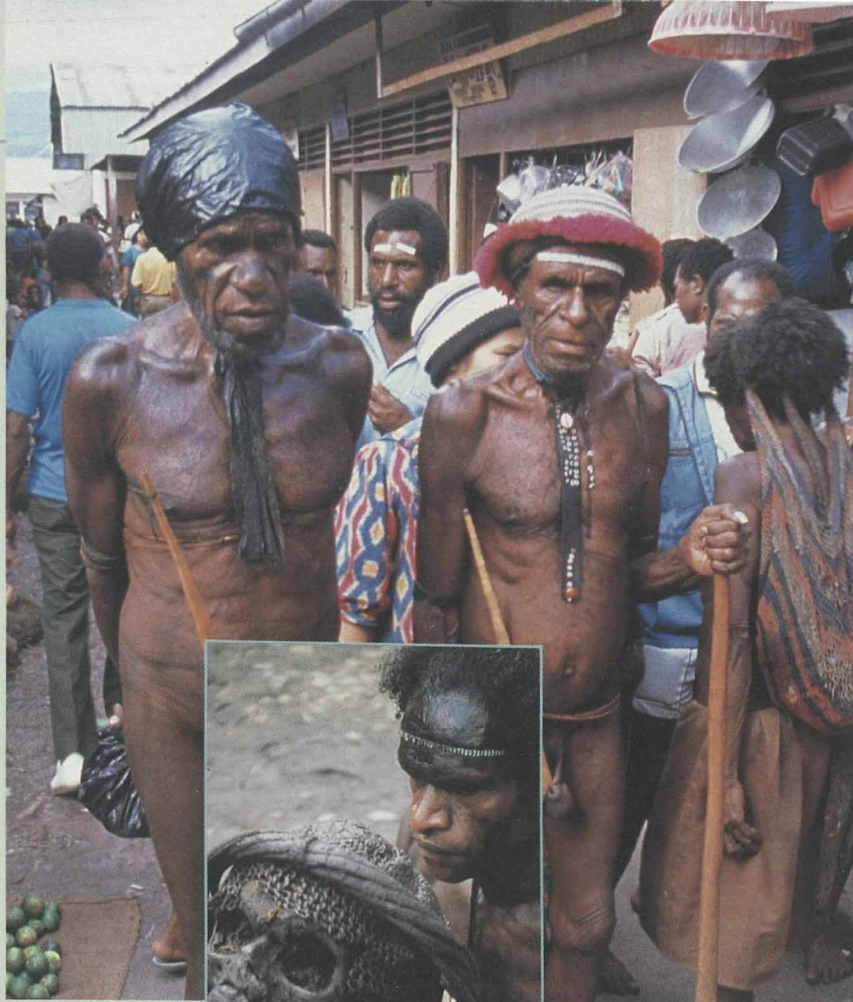
The classic Dani village is a rectangular, muddy plaza, encompassed by a long thatched kitchen, pig pens, one or two mossy huts for women, and one double-decker hut for all the village men, married or single. The



top floor of the men's hut can also be occupied by the mummified body of a long dead chief. The mummy is often taken out for tourist photos, on receipt of a contribution,

The most colorful and photogenic part of the Balim experience is Dani fashion. The well-dressed Dani male, outside the central town of Wamena, wears feathers in his hair, pig fat mixed with soot over the upper body, face and hair, and a penis gourd. Pig tusks through the nose, war paint, and a bundle of spears are also common.

Most females go topless; single women in grass skirts, married women in woven colored string skirts given to them by their husbands on their wedding day. The women usually wear a kind of long string bag hanging down their backs from a head strap.



Above Dani men join shoppers in Wamena. **left** Past and present village chiefs.



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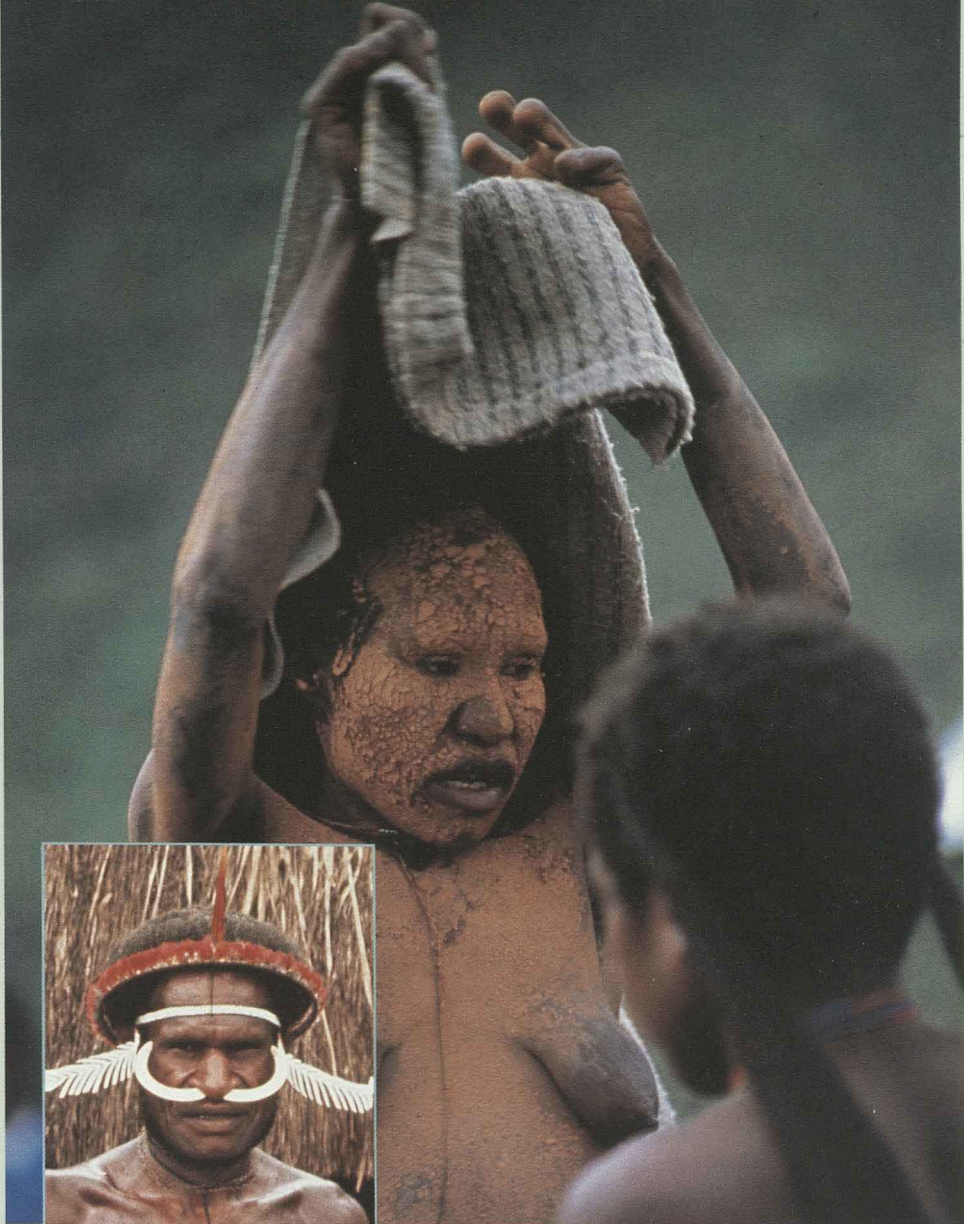
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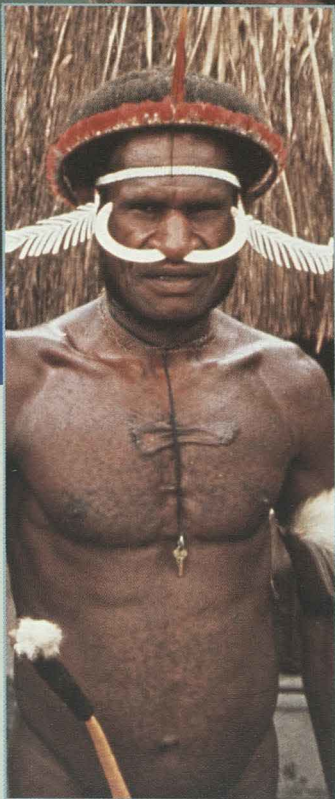


Widows plaster orange mud over their torsos and faces for several months after their husbands die. In addition, it is a tradition to remove one finger joint for every dead relative. The amputations are initially concentrated on one hand, so eight joints missing on one hand is commonplace. Older women often have all fingers cut down to the stumps.

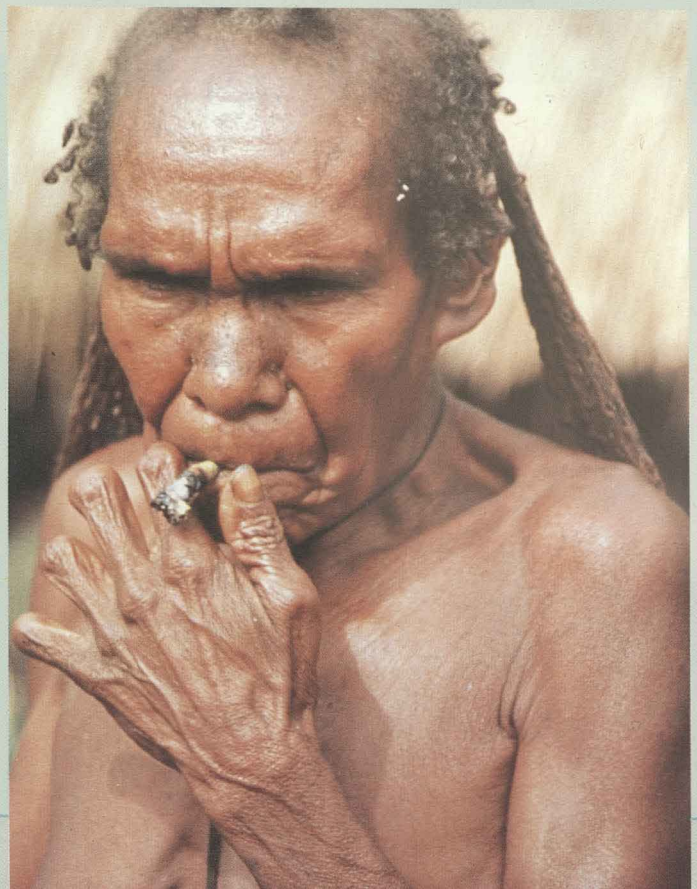
In spite of this self-mutilation, the Dani women still manage to deal with most of the daily chores of potato cultivation, wood collection and cooking.

The Dani, like many ethnic groups exposed to different practices, are changing their ways. The process will accelerate with the opening of the first coast-to-Balim road in about five years.

The Balim Valley is warm and wet for much of the year. January to March is the most comfortable season. July and August are busy months for visitors.



Above Dani widow displays mourning mud and amputated fingers. **left** Everyday dress is minimal for Dani men. **right** Missing finger joints indicate the loss of eight close relatives.





Wamena, Balim's main town and the market area are an agreeable introduction to the Dani, but for the real thing visitors should hike around the Balim and adjoining valleys, taking at least two or three days and stay in Dani villages.

Above Typical Dani village. **right** Dani men dress more extravagantly than the women. **below** Holding hands is a friendship gesture.

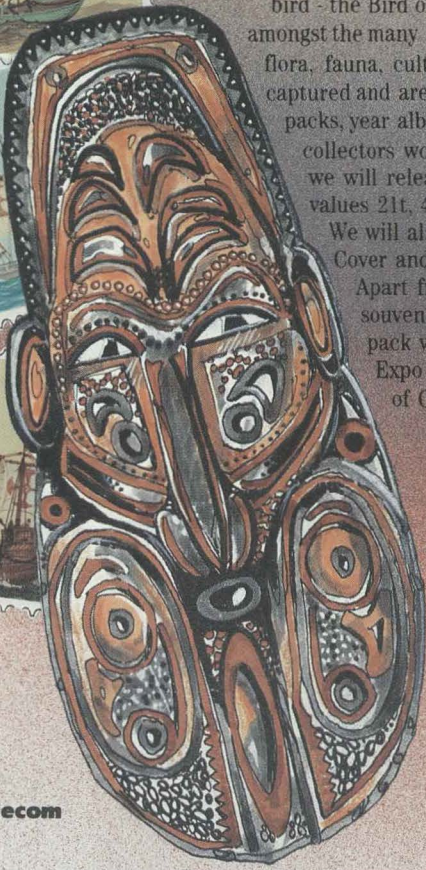


An experienced English-speaking guide with some knowledge of Dani language is vital for a full exploration of such an alien environment. Because few Dani people speak English, and inter-clan rivalries may affect their information and contacts, some of the best guides are from Indonesian islands, such as Sulawesi.

Trails are twisted and often wet and slippery, so a guide and hiking boots are useful, though not essential. Visitors not enthusiastic about sweet potatoes for three meals a day can buy chocolate and peanut butter in Wamena, supplemented by vegetables bought on the trail and cooked by guides - in their own pots and pans.

There are no roads at the Balim Valley but there is an air service from Jayapura. Air Niugini operates regular flights to Jayapura from Vanimo.

WELCOME TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA

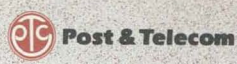


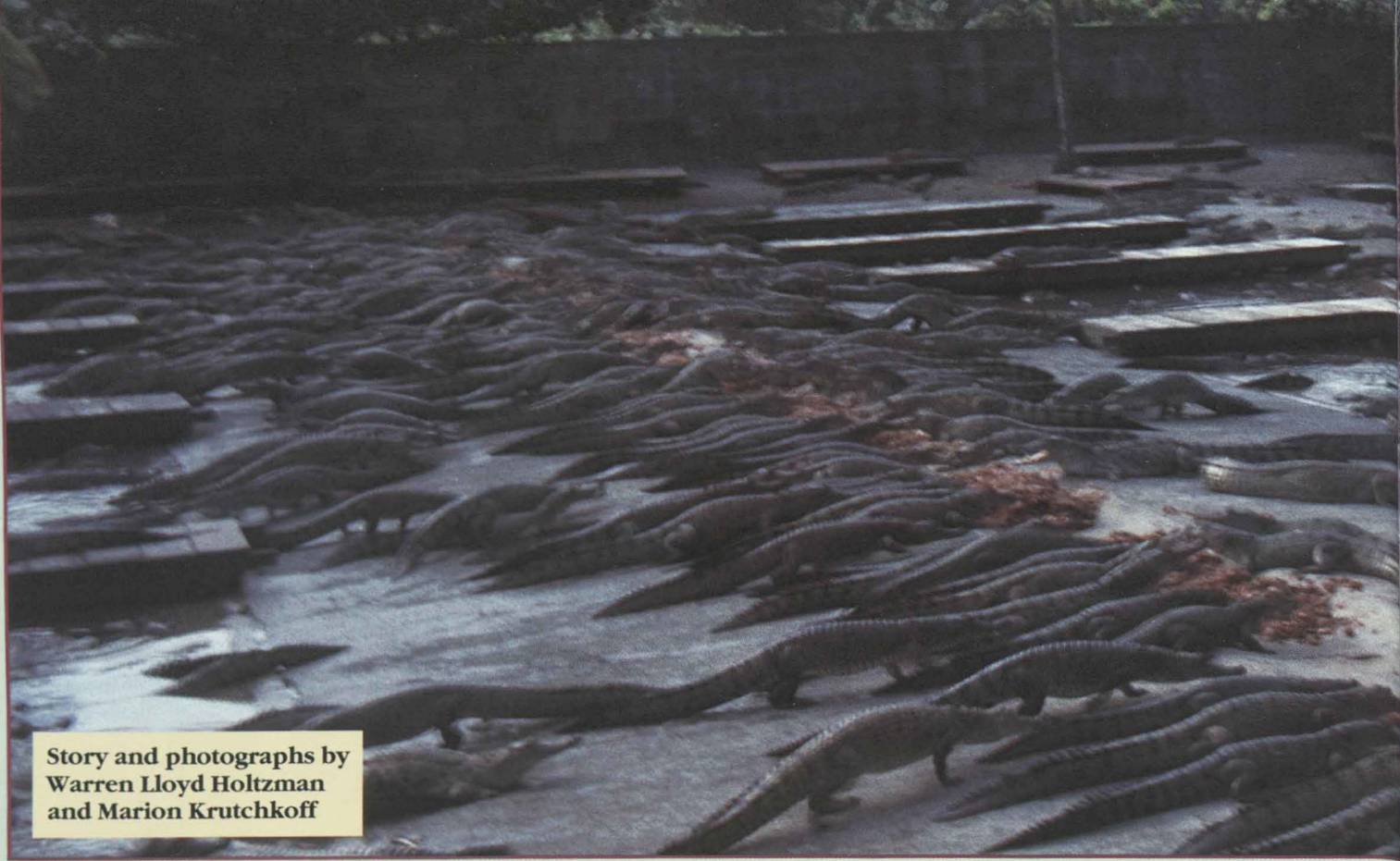
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Story and photographs by
Warren Lloyd Holtzman
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Cash Crop

Crocodile gathering has become a source of income to remote villages in the swamp areas of Papua New Guinea. The money helps pay for medicine, children's educations, ready-made clothing and other goods available through the cash economy. However, to save the crocodile from being hunted to extinction, possession, sale and export of skins from undersized or large

mature animals is illegal.

Papua New Guineans on the Fly and Sepik Rivers have an ancient spiritual and cultural association with crocs. Puk puk (pidgin for crocodile) motifs have been common in their art for thousands of years. Crocodiles are not considered dangerous beasts to be eliminated. The PNG system allows a person to kill a crocodile if attacked, but if the skin is not within the legal limit, it is illegal for the hide to

be traded, sold or marketed in any way. This approach allows mature animals to survive and breed while encouraging smaller specimens to be gathered, rather than slaughtered. The PNG experience indicates that social, economic and conservation goals can be woven into a successful blend for village improvement and wildlife protection. In recognition of the success of its program, PNG has received

a CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) exemption which allows PNG to export and trade in saltwater and other crocodile hides.

Puk puk gathering usually starts at the new moon, on the darkest nights, along numerous PNG rivers, where teams of eight men paddle quietly in canoes. Lead gatherers aim strong search lights, targeting young crocodiles by the red





Left Feeding time at the Lae crocodile farm. **below, from left** Segregation pen for young crocodiles; youngsters gather for companionship; mature crocodile in the wild; measuring treated skins.

Crocodiles

reflections of their eyes. Another member of the team quickly grabs the crocodile's snout, holds the jaws together and lifts the thrashing reptile into the canoe. There, another team member is ready to tightly tie the startled crocodile's mouth shut. The struggling animal is put into a cool wet bag after which it tends to quieten down. This scenario is repeated by suppliers all over PNG during the dry season from May

through October, when crocodiles tend to bunch near receding waters and are easier to catch. Gathering teams deliver their catch to regional holding pens, although a few villages do their own puk puk rearing. When sufficient numbers have been accumulated, Mainland Holdings, or another crocodile feeder farm, is notified. The animals are measured and inspected and if they are of legal size, healthy and of

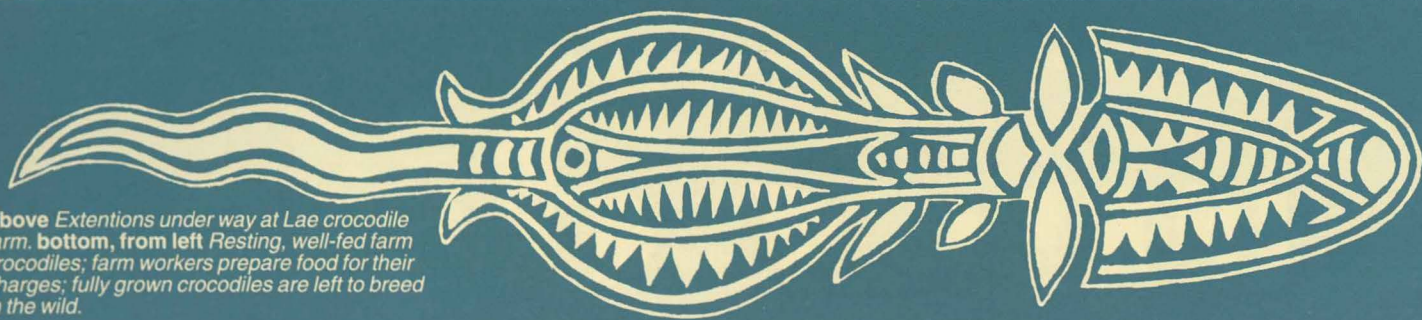
commercial potential, are packed into special corrugated boxes. The last step is to load the boxes into a chartered aircraft. The plane then flies to the next holding area and the procedure is repeated. By day's end, about 300 young crocodiles fill the aircraft which brings living cargo to Mainland's feeding farm near Lae, PNG's second largest city. Crocodiles mate at the beginning of the wet season. When a female is ready with

eggs, she builds a nest a few metres above high water mark. The eggs are then carefully covered over with soil, grass and brush. For three months the female remains in the general area of her nest. After their incubation period, while still in their protective shells, the soft chirping of baby crocodiles can be heard. The female removes the nest cover material and the hatchlings break out of their shells. She gently places her offspring in





Above Extensions under way at Lae crocodile farm. **bottom, from left** Resting, well-fed farm crocodiles; farm workers prepare food for their charges; fully grown crocodiles are left to breed in the wild.



her mouth and carries them into the water.

For the next few weeks, the brood and mother are inseparable. Her infants follow her like ducks in a row. They lounge and sun bathe on her head and on her back.

Freshwater crocodiles lay about 20 to 35 eggs and their saltwater cousins about 55 to 70. However, the survival rate of both species in the wild is about the same, only three or four from a brood usually reaching maturity.

At the feeding farm, the 12 primary growing pens each have about 2,000 animals. Saltwater and freshwater species are intermixed without problems. The newly arrived young crocodiles are weighed and placed into concrete growing pens according to size. Most are ready for harvesting when they are between three and four years old.

When customers' orders are received, each order is packed in copra sacks for shipment.

The orders are delivered by air to highly specialised tanneries. After tanning, they are colored and finished. The soft shine associated with grade one crocodile leather is a natural result of the finish polishing. It is not artificially induced by the application of a gloss or satin sheen lacquer.

PNG hides are bought by some of the world's most exclusive high fashion designer houses. French companies buy about 60 per cent of Lae's production. Firms

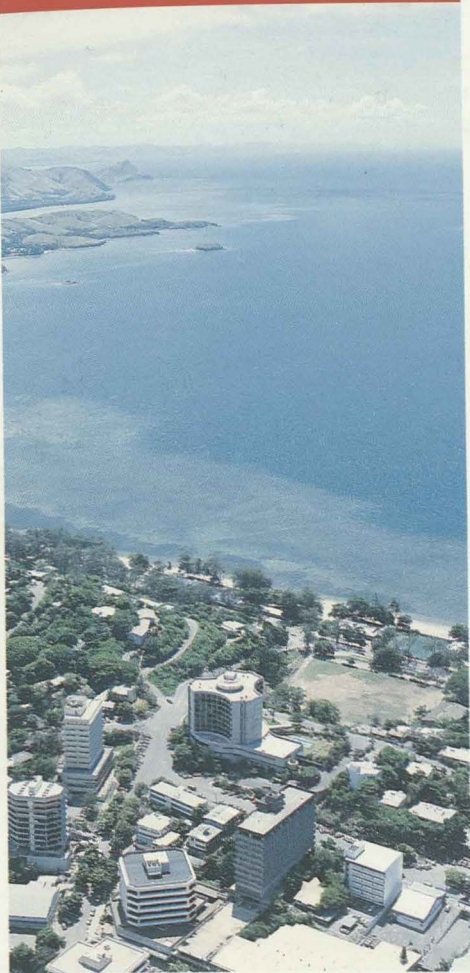
in Japan take about 35 per cent, the balance going to the USA and South Korea. Lae hides rank among the finest quality available anywhere. They are converted into the accessories desired by the world's jet setters and wealthy. End products include shoes, belts, wallets, briefcases and women's hand bags.

The Lae crocodile farm is a division of Mainland Holdings Pty Ltd, a diversified company, which is wholly owned by PNG nationals.



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