



Paradise

inflight with air niugini

VOL 1, 2006



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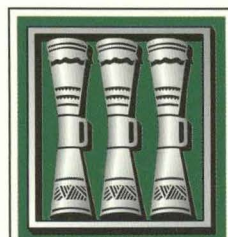


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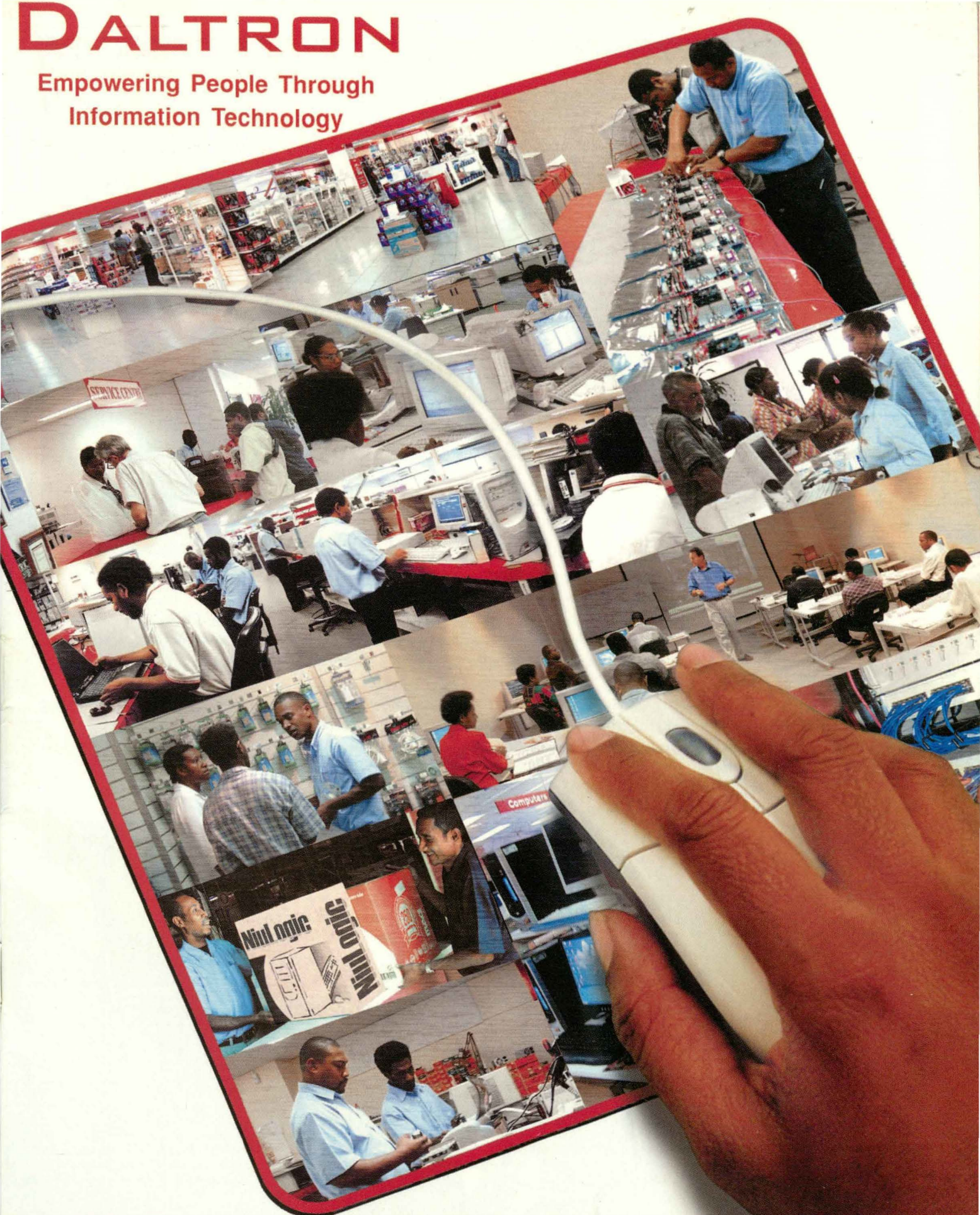
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Chairman's Message

Papua New Guinea's economic reforms are winning the growing confidence of investors, both local and foreign. This welcome trend is a platform from which Air Niugini, as the national airline, can operate with confidence in 2006.

The year, 2005, was a hard one for the airline, with the greatest hurdle being fuel prices that ran at premium levels. In 2006, we are hoping that the recent moderate trend towards lower prices continues.

The company did its best to absorb the impact of fuel costs and minimised the fuel surcharges it regretfully had to pass on to its customers.

2005 was nevertheless Air Niugini's third consecutive year of profitable operations. The improvement in Papua New Guinea's economy and prospects for large amounts of investment in the gas pipeline, mining and petroleum sectors offer exciting business opportunities for the airline that it is ready to grasp.

Fleet modernisation continues with the plan for suitable regional jet aircraft commencing in 2006. Our hard-working F28-4000 series are being phased out with P2-AND already out of the fleet.

Air Niugini's efforts to work closely with the tourism industry in promoting Papua New Guinea as an exceptional destination for the intrepid traveller in search of cultural experiences, and for such niche sports as diving, sports fishing and trekking, will continue unabated.

We are now seeing the first fruit produced by our network of strategically appointed General Sales Agents in Sweden, United Kingdom, Italy, as well as our online sales office in Japan.

On the domestic front, Lukim PNG Nau is growing in stature as Papua New Guinea's national tourism industry market show and can be assured of Air Niugini's steady support, as can efforts to market Papua New Guinea's range of unique attractions at major international travel and dive shows.

Air Niugini continues to foster the development of young national talent through the Cadet Pilot, Engineers and management schemes. We are extremely pleased that Ms Joyce Saun recently gained her licence as a qualified electrical systems engineer with Air Niugini, making her PNG's first female Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (LAME).

Happy New Year and welcome aboard Air Niugini's Bird of Paradise flight.



Joseph Tauvasa
Chairman

75th ANNIVERSARY OF INVESTING IN PNG

Oil Search Limited was incorporated in PNG on January 17, 1929, and began a systematic search for oil and gas in the country.

Being severely capital constrained, Oil Search successfully introduced a number of large companies to the exploration effort, and in 1938, the Australasian Petroleum Company (APC) was born, comprising a joint venture between Oil Search, Standard Vacuum New Jersey (Mobil) and Anglo Iranian (BP), each group holding one third equity.

APC was the dominant explorer in PNG for almost 40 years. Oil Search's and APC's exploration activities through the 30s, 40s & 50s were unsuccessful, with a number of small gas discoveries made from an investment equivalent to hundreds of millions of dollars.

Activities centred on PNG's southern lowlands, known as the Foreland. The prospective Highlands fold belt, which displayed large surface anticlines, was practically inaccessible for drilling operations.

Using heavy lift helicopters in the late 1950s and 1960s opened up the area to more intrepid geologists.

The primary exploring group then, led by BP and Gulf/Chevron were close to ceasing activities when, following a major gas discovery at Hides, oil was discovered at Kutubu in 1986. This led to the development of the Kutubu oilfield.

Oil Search Limited's election as operator in 2003, and the acquisition of ChevronTexaco's PNG assets, together with the merger with Orogen Minerals in 2002, has taken the company full circle to where it once again has the dominant role in all major fields and prospects in PNG. We are responsible for PNG's oil production and export.

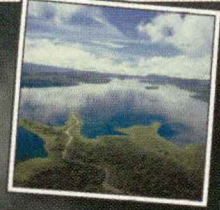
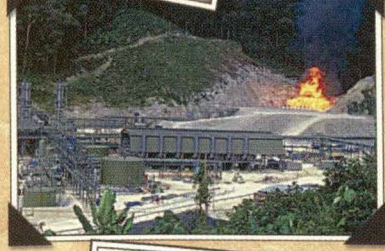
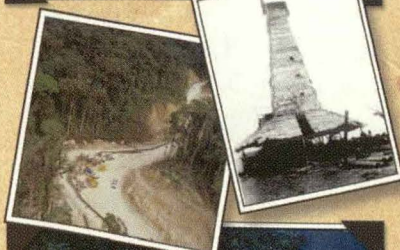
Oil Search now has the financial strength and the asset base - not thought possible by the original promoters in 1929.

Oil Search is now embarking on what will be the biggest resource project ever to occur in PNG - the PNG Gas Project which comprises the piping of gas from the PNG Highlands over 2,000 kilometres to markets in Australia, and is also looking at other initiatives to commercialise its vast gas resources.

2005

OIL SEARCH LIMITED

P.O. Box 842, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea Tel:(675) 322 5599 Fax:(675) 322 5566 Web:www.oilsearch.com



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Publisher

Robert Keith-Reid

Managing Director

Godfrey Scoullar

Group Editor-in-Chief

Laisa Taga

Design

Stanley Prasad

Editorial Consultant

Eva Arni

Advertising & Marketing Manager

Sharron Stretton

Islands Business International

GPO Box 12718, Suva, Fiji Islands

Tel: +679 330 3108

Fax: +679 330 1423

E-mail: advert@ibi.com.fj

Correspondence to the airline to:

The Chief Executive Officer

Air Niugini

PO Box 7186

Boroko, NCD, Papua New Guinea

Tel: +675 327 3498

Fax: +675 327 3350

Editorial correspondence to:

Paradise Inflight Magazine

PO Box 12718, Suva, Fiji Islands

Tel: +679 3303 108

Fax: +679 3301 423

E-mail: editor@ibi.com.fj

Printing

Inprint Pty Limited

Cnr Bilsen & Zillmere Roads

Boondall, Queensland, 4034

Australia

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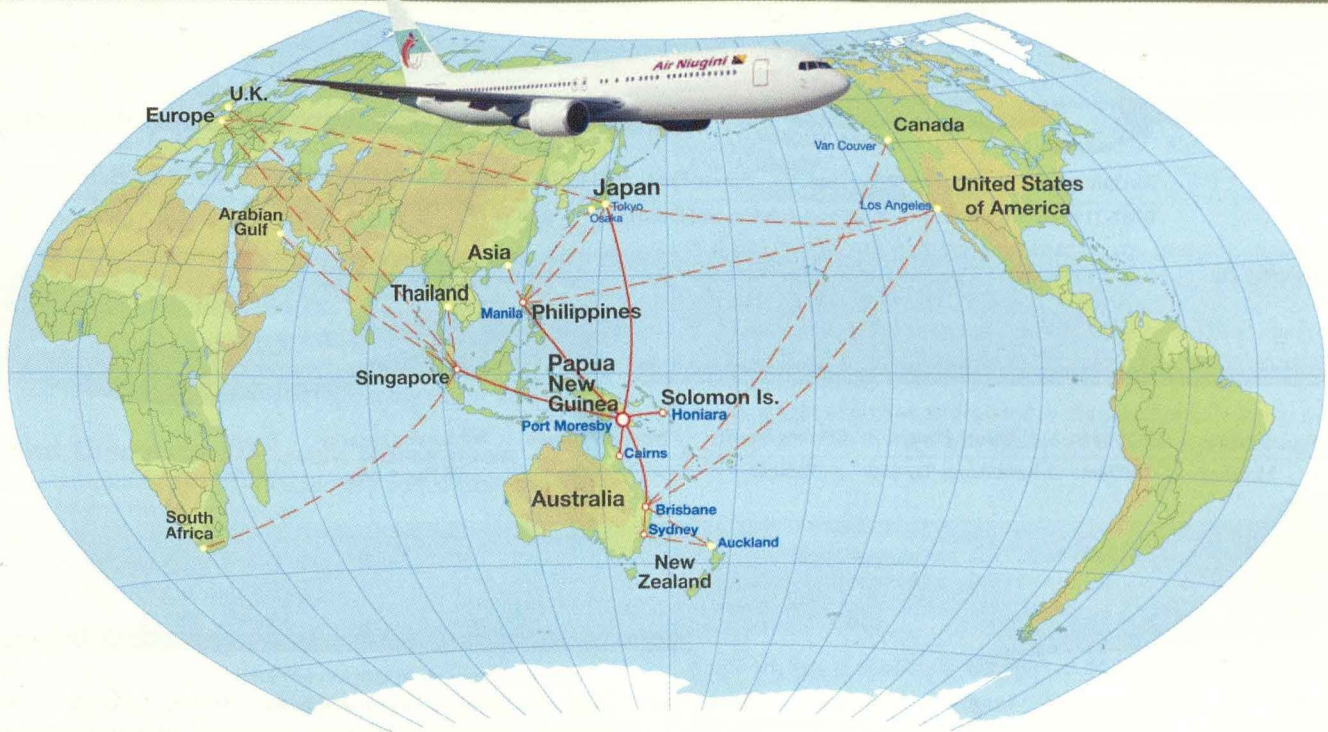
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Fax: (61 2) 9290 2026
Email: sales.sydney@airniugini.com.pg

Brisbane
Level 4
99 Creek Street
GPO Box 2216
Brisbane QLD 4001
Tel: (61 7) 3221 1544
Fax: (61 7) 3220 0040
Email: sales.brisbane@airniugini.com.pg

Cairns
Shop 2 Tropical Arcade
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Cairns QLD 4870
Australia
Tel: (61 7) 4031 1611
Fax: (61 7) 4031 3402
Email: sales.cairns@airniugini.com.pg

Manila
3rd Floor
Fortune Office Building
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Legaspi Village
Makati City
Philippines
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Singapore
101 Thomson Road
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Singapore: 307591
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Fax: (65) 6253 3425
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Tokyo
6th Floor Chiyoda Kaikan
1-6-17 Kudan Minami
Chiyoda-Ku
Tokyo, 102-0074 Japan
Tel: (81) 3 5216 3555
Fax: (81) 3 5216 3556
Email: info@air-niugini.co.jp
Website: www.air-niugini.co.jp

Air Niugini GSA Offices

Auckland/Fiji/Cook Islands
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Fax: (67) 723 887
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Air Niugini

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Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
B767-319ER	59.94m	47.57m	2 General Electric	857kph	11,000 -12,000m	230 + bags	8100km

F100



Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
F100	35.528m	28.076m	2 Rolls Royce Tay 650	780kph	11,000m	98 Pax + Bags	3000km



F28-4000

Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
F28-4000	29.61m	25.07m	2 Rolls Royce	750kph	9,000m	74 + bags	1600km

DHC-8-202



Aircraft type	Length	Wing Span	Power Plant	Cruising Speed	Normal Altitude	Std Seating capacity	Range*
DHC-8-202	22.25m	25.89m	2 Pratt & Whitney	550kph	7600m	36 Pax + Bags	1700km

Welcome Aboard

We ask that you acquaint yourself with the following features of our service...

Takeoff and landing

Ensure that your seat is in the upright position during takeoff and landing. Folding tables must be returned to their original position in the seat back or the armrest.

Safety first

Your seatbelt must be securely fastened during takeoff and landing or whenever the seatbelt sign is on. When the seatbelt sign is off you may move about the cabin as necessary. However, while seated, keep your seatbelt fastened securely in case of unexpected turbulence.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on any Air Niugini flight.

Before you leave

Please check your seat pocket before you disembark to ensure you have not left any items of value.

Entertainment

A movie and a selection of music including classical, modern, country and local are available on international services. Programmes can be found in the inflight entertainment section of this magazine.

Hand luggage

Please ensure that your luggage is placed in the overhead locker or under the seat in front of you.

Pillows and blankets

On international flights, pillows and blankets are available on request from cabin attendants.

Children and babies

Our flight attendants will provide a Paradise Kit that includes a colouring book and pencils, games and puzzles. The flight attendants will also be pleased to assist in preparing your baby's food and bottle. Baby food and diapers are available on international flights.

Electronic equipment

Cellular telephones, TV receivers or radio controlled devices are not to be used at any time on board an aircraft. Electronic devices such as portable computers, compact discs or cassette players and video games can be used only when the seatbelt sign is switched off.



Air Niugini

Medical information

In Flight Health Tips and Exercises

Your Health In-Flight

At Air Niugini we care about your comfort and safety. We have included the following information about your health in-flight that we hope you will find helpful and useful. When you are flying you can be seated and inactive for long periods of time. The environment can be low in humidity and pressurised up to an altitude of 2240 metres above sea level. Unlike other forms of transportation, air travel allows for rapid movement across many time zones, causing a disruption to the body's "biological clock". Although these unique factors do not pose a health or safety threat to most passengers, there are guidelines you can follow that will improve your comfort level, during and after a flight. We hope the following recommendations will help you have a more pleasant flight today and in the future.

Blood Circulation/Muscle Relaxation

When you're sitting upright in a stationary position for a long period of time, several things can happen:

- The central blood vessels in your legs can be compressed, making it more difficult for the blood to get back to your heart.
- The long inactivity of your body muscles in this position can result in muscle tension, back aches or a feeling of excessive fatigue during, or even after, your flight.
- A stationary position inhibits the normal body mechanism for returning fluid to your heart, and gravity can cause the fluid to collect in your feet. This results in swollen feet after a long flight.
- Studies have concluded that prolonged immobility may be a risk factor in the formation of clots in the legs (DVT - deep vein thrombosis). Particular medication and medical conditions may increase the risk of formation of clots if associated with prolonged immobility. Medical research indicates that factors which may give you an increased risk of blood clots in the legs include:
 - increasing age above 40 years
 - pregnancy
 - former or current malignant disease
 - blood disorders leading to increased clotting tendency
 - personal or family history of DVT
 - recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
 - oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
 - immobilisation for a day or more

- dehydration
- heart failure
- trauma
- varicose veins
- obesity
- tobacco smoking

Recommendations:

- If you fall into any of these categories or you have any concern about your health and flying, Air Niugini recommends you seek medical advice before travelling.
- While inflight, move your legs and feet for three to four minutes per hour while seated and move about the cabin occasionally, if conditions allow.
- Doing light exercises as depicted in the sketches below may be effective in increasing the body's blood circulation and massaging the muscles.

Jetlag

The main cause of jetlag is travelling to different time zones without giving the body a chance to adjust to new night-day cycles. In general, the more time zones you cross during your flight, the more your biological clock is disturbed. The common symptoms are sleeplessness, tiredness, loss of appetite or appetite at odd hours.

We recommend that you:

- Get a good night's rest before your flight
- Arrive at your destination a day or two early, if possible, to give your body a chance to become more acclimatised to the new time zone.
- Fly direct to minimise flight time, when possible. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.
- Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at your destination less than 48 hours. Also try to eat and sleep according to your home time.
- Change your watch to the local time if your stay is longer than 48 hours, and try to eat and sleep in accordance with the local time.

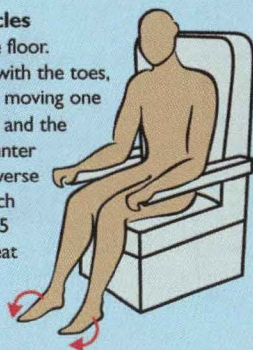
On longer stays, try to prepare in advance for your destination with its different time zone; adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.

In Flight Workout

These exercises are designed to encourage a safe way to enjoy movement and stretch certain muscle groups that can become stiff as a result of long periods sitting. They may be effective in increasing the body's blood circulation and massaging the muscles. We recommend you do these exercises for three or four minutes every hour and occasionally get out of your seat and walk down the aisles if conditions allow. Each exercise should be done with minimal disturbance to other passengers. None of the following should be performed if they cause pain or can not be done with ease.

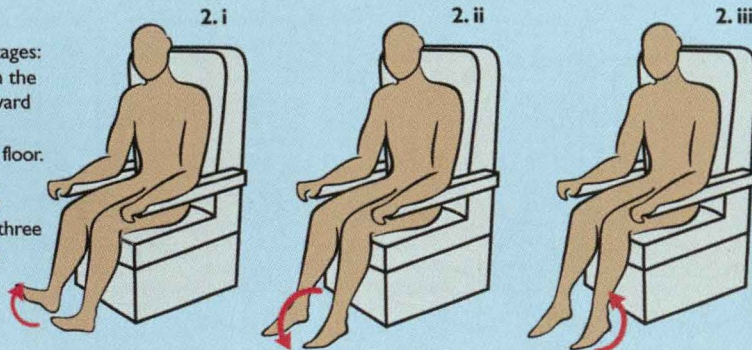
1. Ankle Circles

Lift feet off the floor. Draw a circle with the toes, simultaneously moving one foot clockwise and the other foot counter clockwise. Reverse circles. Do each direction for 15 seconds. Repeat if desired.



2. Foot Pumps

This exercise is in three stages:
(i) Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upward as high as you can.
(ii) Put both feet flat on the floor.
(iii) Lift heels high, keeping balls of the feet on the floor. Continue these three stages with continuous motion at 30 seconds intervals.



Medical information

In Flight Health Tips and Exercises

- Try some light exercise - go for a brisk walk, or do some reading if you can't sleep after arrival at your destination. It generally takes the body's biological clock approximately one day to adjust per time zone crossed.

Cabin Humidity/Dehydration

Humidity levels of less than 25 percent are common in the cabin. This is due to the extremely low humidity levels of outside air supplied to the cabin. The low humidity can cause drying of the nose, throat, eyes and it can irritate contact lens wearers.

We recommend that you:

- Drink water or juices frequently during the flight
- Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks act as diuretics, increasing the body's dehydration.
- Remove contact lenses and wear glasses if your eyes are irritated.

Use a skin moisturiser to refresh the skin.

Eating and Drinking

Proper eating and drinking will enhance your comfort both during and after your flight.

We recommend that you:

- Avoid overeating just prior to and during the flight. It is difficult to digest too much food when the body is inactive.
- Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks act as diuretics, increasing the body's dehydration.

Cabin Pressurisation

It is necessary to pressurise the outside air drawn into the cabin to a sufficient density for your comfort and health. Cabins are pressurised to a maximum cabin altitude of 2440 metres. It is the same air pressure as

if you were at an elevation of 2440 metres above sea level. The cabin pressure and normal rates of change in cabin pressure during climb and descent do not pose a problem for most passengers. However, if you suffer from upper respiratory or sinus infections, obstructive pulmonary diseases, anaemias or certain cardiovascular conditions, you could experience discomfort. Children and infants might experience some discomfort because of pressure change during climb

and descent.

If you are suffering from nasal congestion or allergies, use nasal sprays, decongestants and antihistamines 30 minutes prior to descent to help open up your ear and sinus passages. If you have a cold, flu or hayfever, your sinuses could be impaired. Swollen membranes in your nose could block your eustachian tubes - the tiny channels between your nasal passages and your middle ear chamber. This can cause discomfort during changes in cabin pressure, particularly during descent.

Recommendations:

- If you have a pre-existing medical condition that warrants supplemental oxygen, you can order from us. Please give at least seven days notice before travelling.
- To "clear" your ears try swallowing and/or yawning. These actions help open your eustachian tubes, equalising pressure between your middle ear chamber and your throat.
- When flying with an infant, feed or give your baby a dummy during descent. Sucking and swallowing will help infants equalise the pressure in their ears.

Motion Sickness

This ailment is caused by a conflict between the body's sense of vision and its sense of equilibrium. Air turbulence increases its likelihood because it can cause movement of the fluid in the vestibular apparatus of the inner ear. If you have good visual cues (keeping your eyes fixed on a non-moving object), motion sickness is less likely to occur.

Recommendations:

- When weather is clear and you can see the ground, sea or horizon, you are less susceptible to motion sickness.
- You can buy over the counter medications but we recommend that you consult your doctor about the appropriate medications.

With thanks to Qantas and the Boeing Corporation for allowing us to reproduce this material.

3. Knee Lifts

Lift leg with knee bent while contracting your thigh muscle. Alternate legs. Repeat 20-30 times for each leg.



4. Neck Roll

With shoulders relaxed, drop ear to shoulder and gently roll neck forward and back holding each position about five seconds. Repeat five times.



5. Knee to Chest

Bend forward slightly. Clasp hands around the left knee and hug it to your chest. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Keeping hands around the knee, slowly let it down. Alternate legs. Repeat 10 times.



6. Forward Flex

With both feet on the floor and stomach held in, slowly bend forward and walk your hands down the front of your legs toward your ankles. Hold stretch for 15 seconds and slowly sit back up.



7. Shoulder Roll

Hunch shoulders forward, then upward, then backward, then downward, using a gentle circular motion.



Air Niugini



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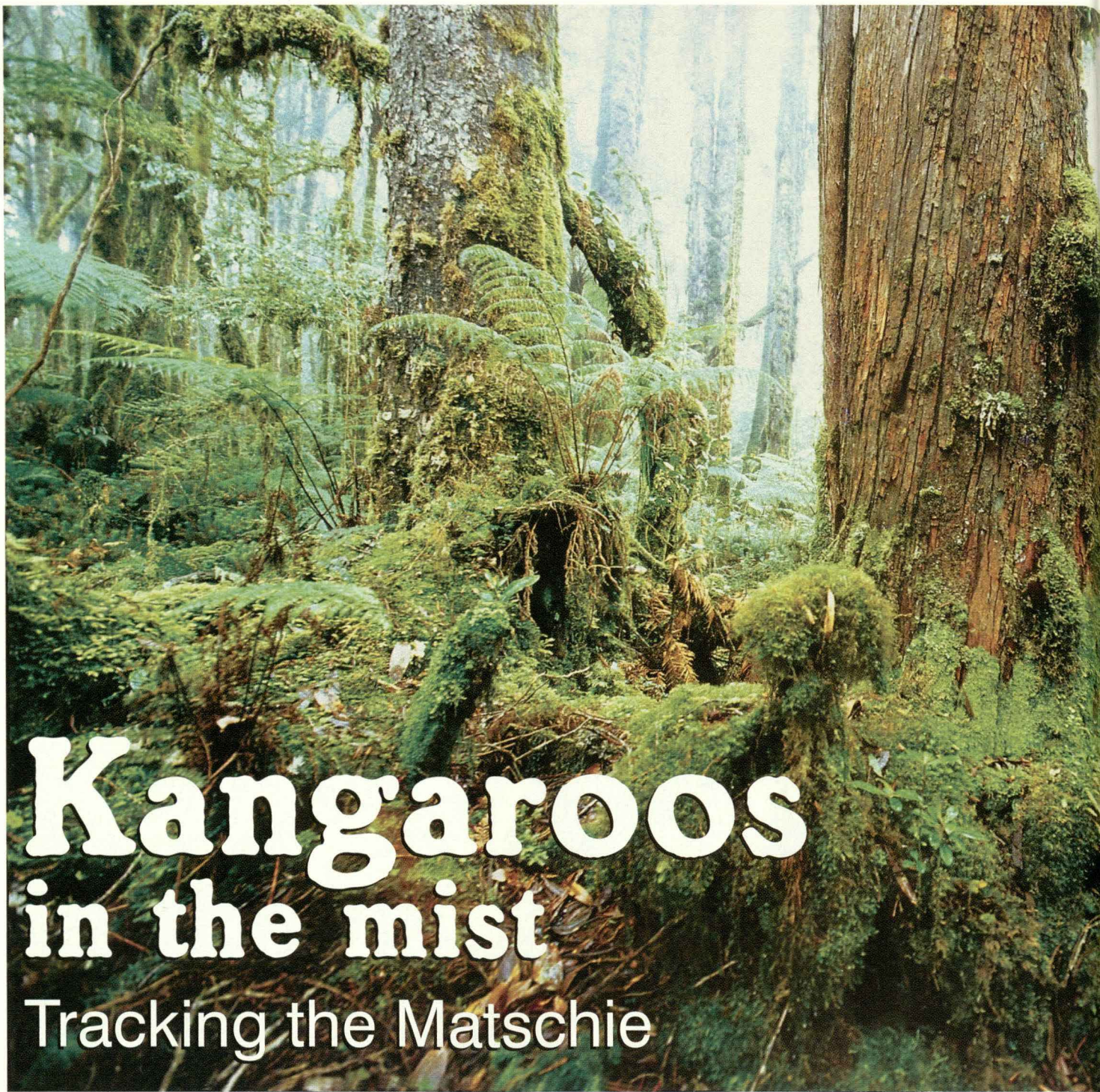


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Kangaroos in the mist

Tracking the Matschie

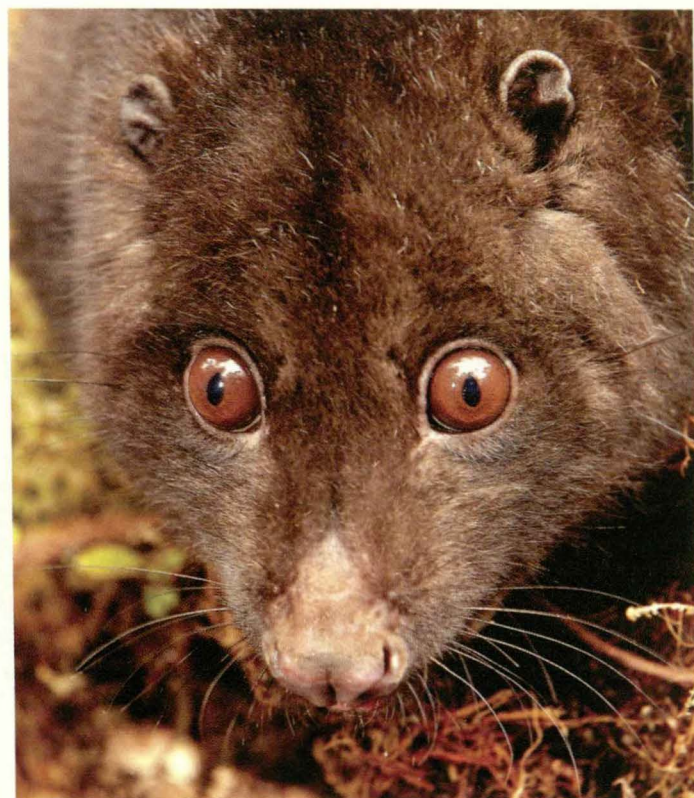
Words by Sy Montgomery | Photographs by Nic Bishop

The cloud forest looks like the setting for a fairy tale: among the mist and the moss, the ferns and the orchids, the giant ancient trees bearded like wizards with trailing moss, you half expect a dwarf of an elf or a gnome to appear. But what does live here is even more fantastic: unlikely creatures with strange and alluring names like cuscus, pandemelon, triok, quoll - pouched mammals with soft fur and enormous eyes.

But surely the most unlikely of all the creatures in this forest is the Matschie tree kangaroo: a true kangaroo

which can hop on the ground, but which also climbs into these moss-clad trees. It's a beautiful and mysterious marsupial with chestnut and lemon-coloured fur, a pink nose, and a long golden tail. In all the world, the rare and endangered Matschie tree kangaroo is found only here, on the Huon Peninsula, along the northeast region of PNG. This is our quarry today.

Our team reflects an unusual collaboration: landowners from the remote mountain villages of Morobe Province and scientists and volunteers from the United States, United Kingdom, and Papua New Guinea - all supported by an international consortium of conservation



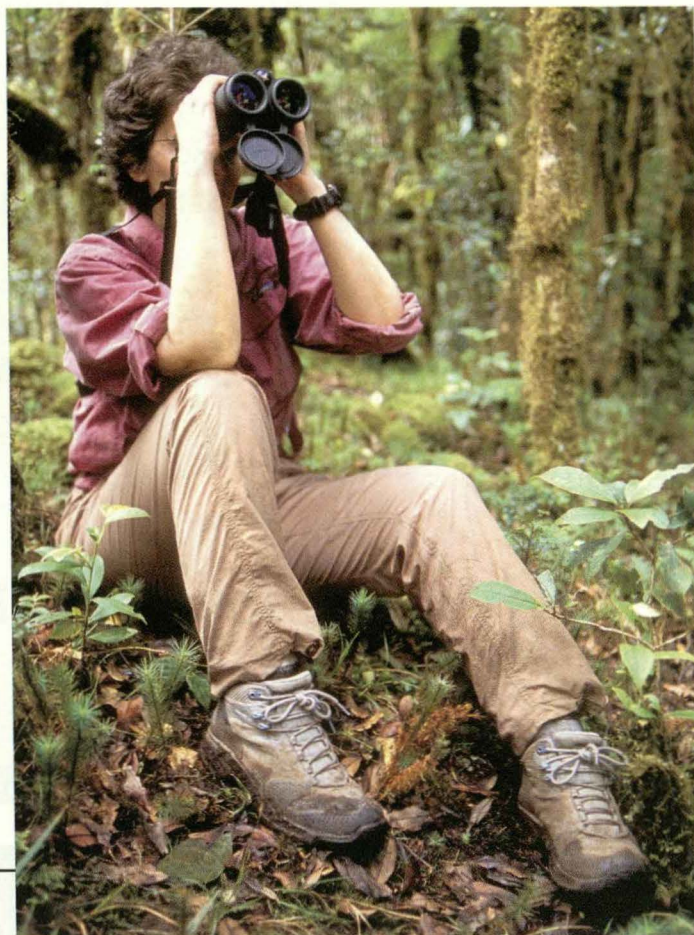
At an altitude of almost 3000 metres, the cool moss-cloaked cloud forest is an extraordinarily rich habitat for plants and animals alike.

Mountain cuscus are among the many marsupials found at the field site.

organisations, zoos and Morobe Provincial government officials.

"I think I see him!" cries Dr Lisa Dabek, the Seattle-based director of the Tree Kangaroo Conservation Program (TKCP), scanning the mossy treetops for the animal. But clumps of moss perched on the branches hunch exactly like a tree kangaroo; vines covered with golden moss hang down precisely like a tail. But wait - it is a clump of moss. "You can't go tracking looking for them," Dr Dabek explains.

Dr Lisa Dabek scans the canopy for tree kangaroos.





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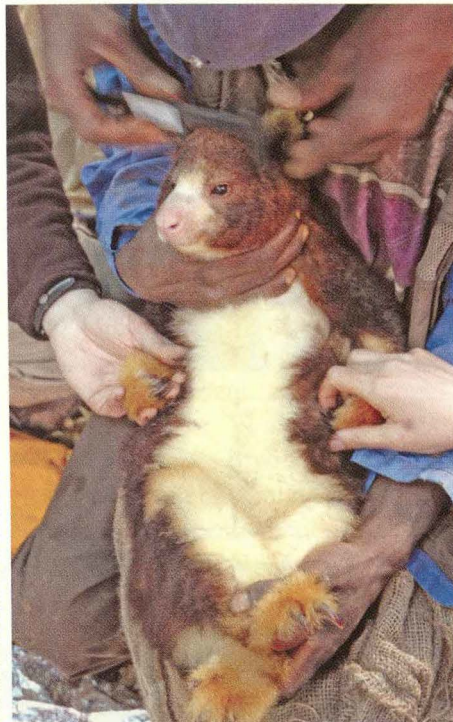
Field scientist Gabriel Porolak uses a radio receiver to track tree kangaroos in the wild.

"There's just no way. You'd never find them without radio telemetry."

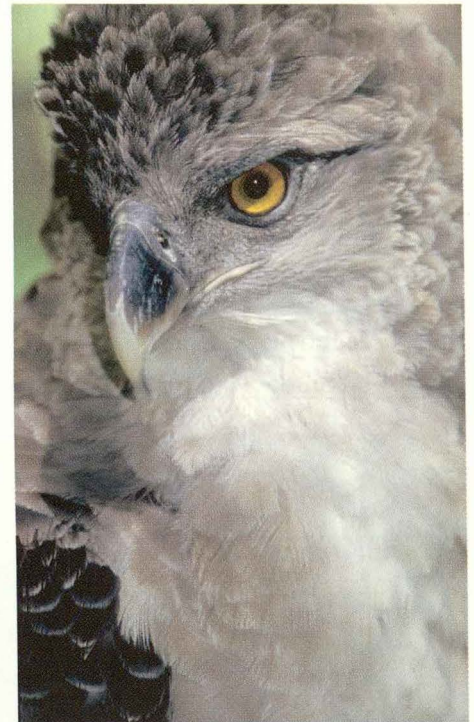
That's precisely why this one-of-a-kind study is making scientific history here in Morobe Province: it's the first-ever study to equip any of Papua New Guinea's six species of tree kangaroos with radio telemetry, and the first to track any animal here using collars equipped with global positioning system units for precise mapping of their travels.

Scientist Joel Glick swings the receiver along an arc, and is answered by a growing beep from the animal's radio collar. "This way - over the ridge," says in-country field scientist Gabriel Porolak.

The signal swells. The tracking group is advancing towards a goal that Dr Dabek struggled for nine years to achieve. When she began her pioneering studies of this elusive species in 1996, "I was told that this work could not be done," Dr Dabek



A young Matschie tree kangaroo is readied for its radio collar, prior to being released back on the same tree where it was captured.



The large New Guinea Harpy Eagle is a natural predator of tree kangaroos.

explained. The animals would be impossible to find in the tangled forest, other scientists said. No one could catch them, they said. Even if caught and radio collared, the signals would bounce off the ridges and trees and be impossible to track.

“Gabriel and Joel proved everyone wrong,” Dr Dabek said. In 2004, for the first time, with the help of local landowners who caught the wild tree kangaroos without harming them, the PNG-American pair successfully radio collared and tracked three female Matschie kangaroos for five months. During 2005, the team again made history by collaring four more animals, including the first two males to be studied. Now we are on the track of the first successfully collared male, an eight-kilogramme four-to six-year-old tree kangaroo, named Christopher.

The slippery, muddy path Gabriel cuts through the tangled cloud forest takes us up a 65-degree slope, beside a huge mountain cedar. It gives us a great vantage point from which to observe the moss-covered tree from which the loudest signal is coming.

Dr Dabek scans the branches with her binoculars. But it’s Gabriel who finds the tree kangaroo first.

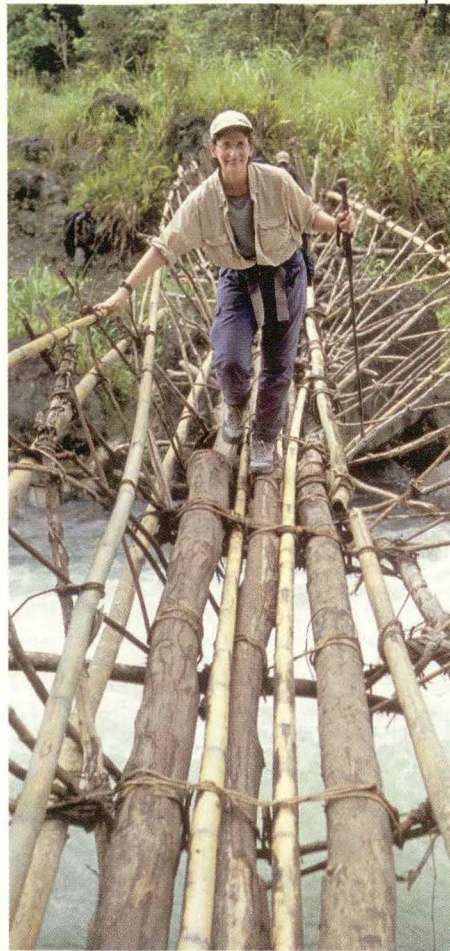
“I see him! I see the ears, I see the eyes, I see the pink nose...”

“Yes! I see the black collar!” says

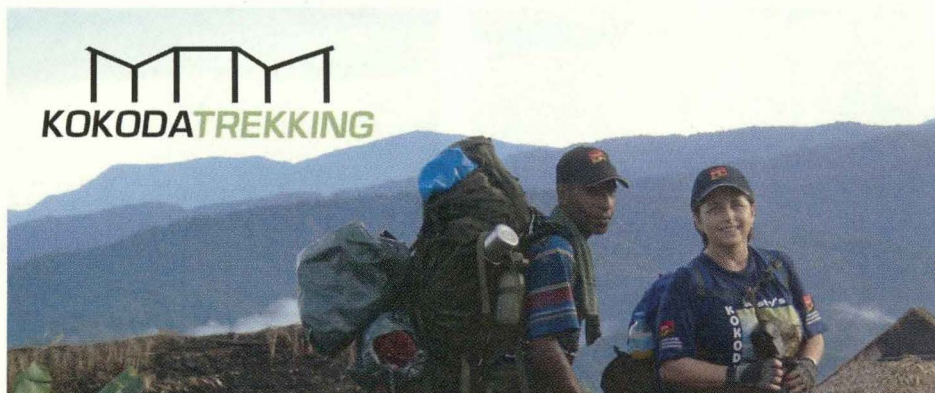
Dr Dabek. “It is Christopher!” The mahogany and gold creature stares down at us from his perch 70 metres up the tree.

For the Woodland Park Zoo researcher, this is a dream come true. She first began studying captive Matschies in United States zoos, and fell so in love with the beautiful,

Dr Dabek en-route to the study site, which is a two-day trek from the nearest village.



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The help of local trackers, such as Joshua Nimoniog, have been essential in finding animals for the project.



Wild rhododendron flowers.



The endangered Matschie tree kangaroo found only on the Huon Peninsula.

gentle but endangered creatures that "I wanted to learn everything I could about them, to help them in the wild."

The radio telemetry studies will now be able, for the first time, to reveal which trees they use for food and for travel, how much and what kind of land they need. This information will be crucial to protecting the animals - a goal towards which Papua New Guinea's Morobe provincial government has pledged its whole-hearted support.

Shortly before our team began the spring 2005 field season, Morobe provincial officials and policymakers met with Dr Dabek in Lae, along with Gai Kula, Executive Director of Conservation International, and Vagi Ganuroba of the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation, to plan the creation of the first Conservation Area on the Huon Peninsula.

It will be the first Conservation Area in Papua New Guinea to be protected under the nation's Conservation Areas Act.

The meeting, said Ginson Saonu,

a former Member of Parliament from the Huon Peninsula and TKCP facilitator, "is unlike other government meetings. Many meetings are about development. This meeting is about creation. In the name of development, we destroy God's creation," he said. But conservation is about preserving it.

"We are the only place in the whole wide world with this tree kangaroo," said the Honourable Luther Wenge, Governor of Morobe Province. "Conservation is very important." The Conservation Area will protect more than 100,000 acres that landowners have pledged for the programme in the Yupno Urawa Som watershed, under the YUS Local Level Government.

Dr Dabek hopes it will be a model for protecting natural habitat in other areas - for the benefit of both animals and people. As part of the programme, a team of American conservation educators work with teachers in local schools, fund student scholarships at Balob Teachers College in Lae, and organise art exchanges between schoolchildren on the Huon Peninsula, Australia and the United States.

"It is a small world," the governor told the 19 scientists and officials who gathered at the conservation meeting in Lae. "Whatever we do, influences you - not only human beings, but plants and animals, too. We need to help each other.

"This tree kangaroo," he said, 'is the biggest kangaroo I knew as a kid. She is like our identity. But if we do not care, they will all be wiped away. But in the long run, they will be there - so we will ALL survive."

At the conclusion of the historic meeting, the Governor announced he planned to establish an Environment Committee within the provincial government and asked Dr Dabek to join it. "I would be honoured," she answered.

Editor's note: Inspired by her visit to Dr Dabek's study site, author Sy Montgomery subsequently wrote a children's book, **QUEST FOR THE TREE KANGAROO**, to be published by Houghton Mifflin of Boston in autumn 2006.

For more information about the TKCP, please see the Woodland Park Zoo website, www.zoo.org

KUNDU KINGS

By Diana McManus



It's not often that Port Moresby gets the chance to sample the vibrant culture of the Middle Fly District of Western Province. But in early November, the city was in for a real treat.

The Gogodala Cultural Group, on its return journey from participating at the Kundi and Canoe Festival in Alotau, Milne Bay, put on a display of dancing and artefacts at one of the regular Arts and Crafts Markets in Boroko.



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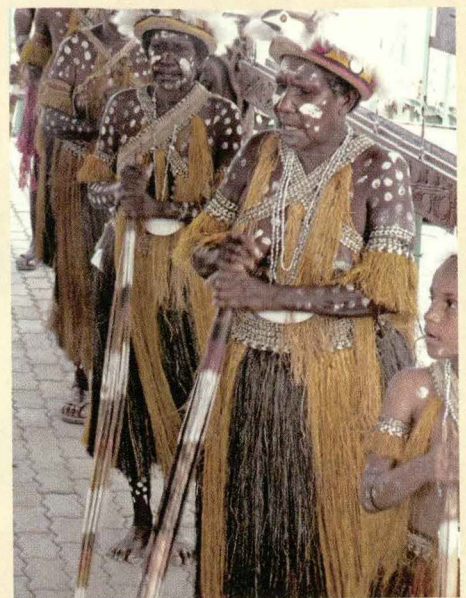


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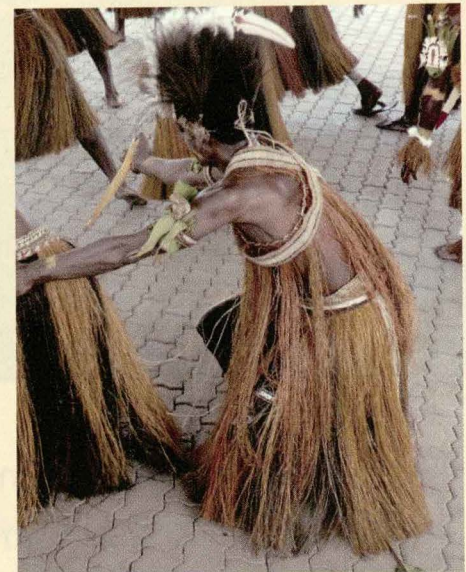
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Kudu dancers displaying their skills.



Ladies with split cane sticks



Dagger dancers in action.

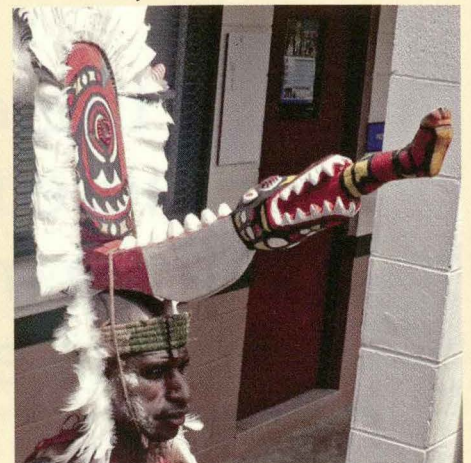
What struck the eye first were the dancers' magnificent head dresses which bobbed and swayed to the rhythms of chanting and kundu drums.

Each one had an individual motif or theme. Some had carved birds or carved monitor lizards on them. One was quite dramatic with a leg protruding from a crocodile's mouth. Others were so huge that they had to be strapped to the dancer's body. All were adorned with brilliant white shaped chicken feathers or black cassowary feathers.

The appearance of this style of head-dress is common throughout the Western Province and even through the Torres Strait Islands, with variations of course.

The other visual delights were the body decorations and swaying orange and brown striped grass-skirts. Both men and women danced together at times, the women pounding the ground with their split cane sticks which would flex open and closed, creating a snapping, tapping accompaniment to the kundu drums. Sometimes the men alone would perform their dramatic warrior

One of the more dramatic head dresses.





The king-size kundu drum...the madulabali. Nobody remembers who made it.

dances with their bone like daggers thrust in mock battle choreography.

The presenter and organiser of the morning's entertainment was Kamo Abaiya, a Balimo primary teacher and chairman of the Gogodala Cultural Show.

When I mentioned that I might write a short article called Kundu Kings he immediately said, "You haven't seen anything yet. Come with me and I'll show you a real kundu."

We went behind the scenes and there the men were proudly preparing the giant 'madulabali' for the final dance, in which only the men participated, and the hugest of masks took pride of place, second only to the king-sized kundu.



"This kundu is so old that no-one remembers who made it. It is the biggest one of its kind in our region. Once there were many kundus this size, but when the missionaries came in the 1920s and 1930s they destroyed them. This one survived because it was hidden away. Now it is a very special one and of historical importance to our people," said Kamo.

The kundu drum is one of the recognisable icons of PNG. It is used by PNG's Bank South Pacific as its logo. It is made from hollowed branches and one end has a skin stretched over it. This group's kundus use lizard skins.

A handle is usually fashioned into the outside carving and then the whole thing is decorated with traditional colours and designs.

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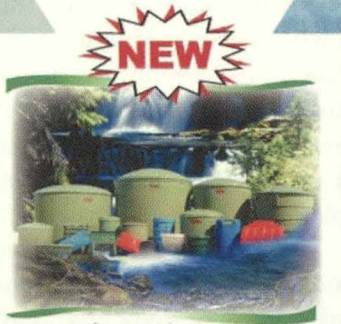


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Getting ready to display their skills.

Kunde men.

The king-sized kundu seemed to have a gaping python mouth at its open end. The kundu is usually held by hand and can be played by dancers while they are performing, or it rests on the knees of the accompanying musicians.


When played, it creates a deep resonating boom. It is quite a different instrument from the garamut, the other traditional-style drum, made from a hollowed log which sits on stands and is beaten with thick drumsticks.

The group was on a high after having won K20,000 prize money, put up by Governor Tim Neville in the major canoeing event at Alotau. Their traditional war canoes measured between 18 to 20 metres in length and can have up to 40 to 50 paddlers.



They were sponsored to travel to the festival by the Minister for Labour and Employment, the Honourable Roy Biyama, who represents that constituency, according to his brother Kawe Biyama, councillor and member of the Gogodala Show Committee, who was part of the group.

Normally you would have to be prepared to travel to the remote district in May to observe this culture in action. Now, they were performing for the last time in Port Moresby and selling off their artefacts at the market before the long, arduous bus journey home to Balimo.

What a great incentive to keep culture alive and bring cash to the community. 



Kawe Biyama with his daughter.

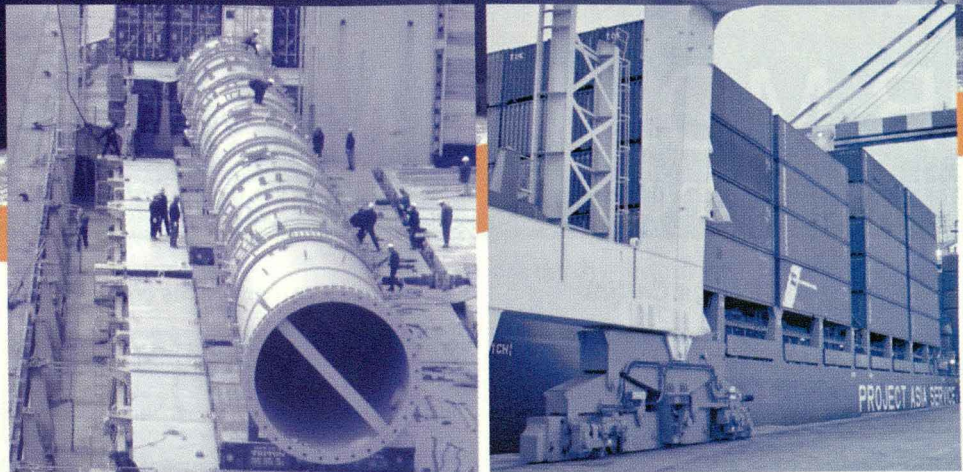


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MR MONEY MAN

Bart Philemon: PNG's Finance Minister

By Rowan Callick

Bart Philemon was one of Papua New Guinea's best known businessmen before he became Treasurer and Finance Minister three years ago.

Since then, he has fought off a string of attempts to hijack the budget and stabilised an economy lurching towards the precipice.

And while forecasting is perilous in PNG's public life, it is safe to predict that over the next 18 months, as the country prepares for its next tumultuous election, he will have to fight a few more times to defend PNG's newly regained economic equilibrium.

The well-received 2006 budget, which he handed down on November 15, is the final full-year document before the next national election is due in mid-2007.

Philemon has come under immense pressure to distribute through members of parliament the windfall revenue PNG has gained from surging prices for the country's commodities, especially oil and gold.

At the last election in 2002, 80 of the 109 MPs lost their seats. And while this government, led by Sir Michael Somare, is odds-on to become the first to complete a full five-year term since independence 30 years ago, it faces a huge challenge to survive into another parliament.

So the pressure to blow the budget to save the political

careers of his colleagues has been immense.

Sir Mekere Morauta, the previous prime minister and a former central bank governor and finance department head, accomplished much during his three years in office.

But he suffered a severe budget blow-out in the election year, when the deficit reached eight percent of gross domestic product.

Philemon is confident, however, that he has learned from PNG's 30-year rollercoaster ride.

Philemon says he has a strategy in place that will present the next government - possibly comprising a similar line-up - with a firm base for pushing GDP growth up to 6 percent a year by 2010, a modest enough aim.

There's still a long way to go. Living standards have halved over 10 years, to about \$US500 per head.

But inflation is down, from 20 percent early in 2003 to 1.6 percent. The cash rate has fallen by more than half since early 2003, to 6 percent, while the currency, the kina, has been stable at about 30 US cents for about two years.

The budget moved to surplus last year and was expected to be 0.6 percent in surplus again in 2005, thanks to a strong increase in government revenue from crude oil, gold and copper exports, along with the recovery of the state-owned PNG Power, Telikom PNG and Air Niugini.

Private sector lending rose K240 million (\$US 74 million)

in the first half of 2005, and a national working group is bringing a list of impediments to investment before cabinet.

Philemon grew up in Butibum settlement in Lae, PNG's second city and its export and processing centre.

His father was a Lutheran pastor who ministered at the church during World War II, while the Japanese occupied the city.

"American soldiers were very surprised to find him conducting a thanksgiving service as they arrived," he says.

He won a scholarship to St Peter's Lutheran College in Brisbane for six years and worked as an administrator at the University of PNG after dropping out of an undergraduate course.

He joined the Australian airline TAA as a PNG sales representative, and when it merged with Ansett in PNG to form state-owned Air Niugini at independence in 1975, he became port manager at Mount Hagen, secretary of the board in Port Moresby and then assistant general manager, marketing.

When former transport minister Iambakey Okuk flew to Canada to sign a deal with aircraft company De Havilland and ordered Air Niugini without consulting its management to sell much of its fleet to pay for the new

planes, all the top managers, including Philemon, quit to protest against such naked political interference.

He then utterly changed his career course, starting a chicken farm selling 120,000 birds a year and producing 10 tonnes of bananas.

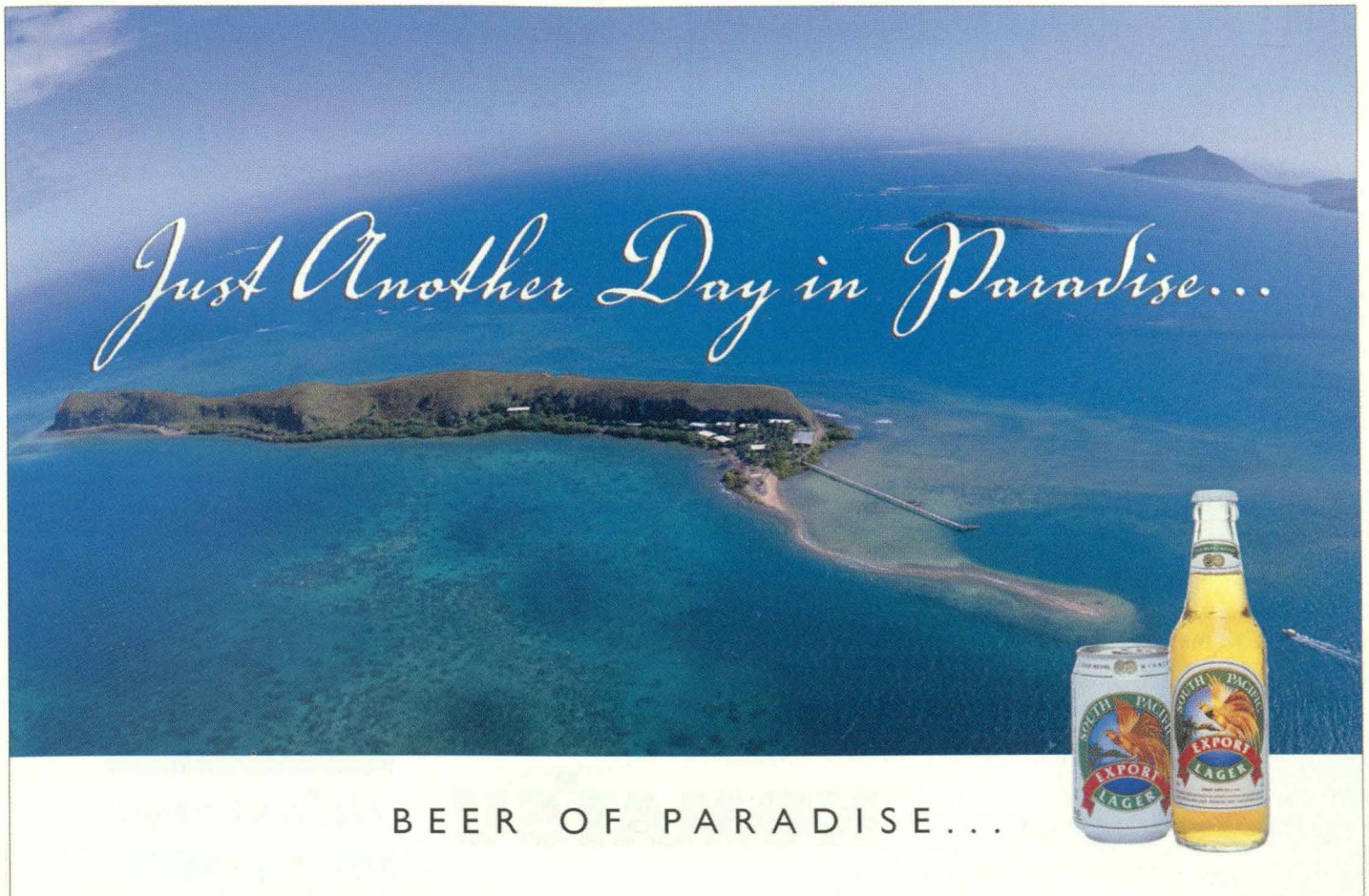
By then, he had three small children with his Australian wife, who was running a coffee shop and pre-school in Lae.

For a dozen years, he worked hard building his businesses, forging close personal links with a group of Lae businesspeople, most of them originally Australians, who remain among his firmest friends and supporters.

Partly as a result, Philemon is perceived by PNG's private sector as one of the few leading politicians with a real grasp of what it takes to build a business there.

In 1992, he was appointed chairman of the then ailing Air Niugini. The board invited consultants McKinsey to review the operations, and as a result interviewed and appointed new managers after advertising internationally.

But politicians began, again, to interfere. "I and Mekere [Morauta], who was also a director, made what we regarded as a very rational presentation to cabinet and they rejected it. We turned to each other afterwards and asked - in more earthy language - 'How on earth do they



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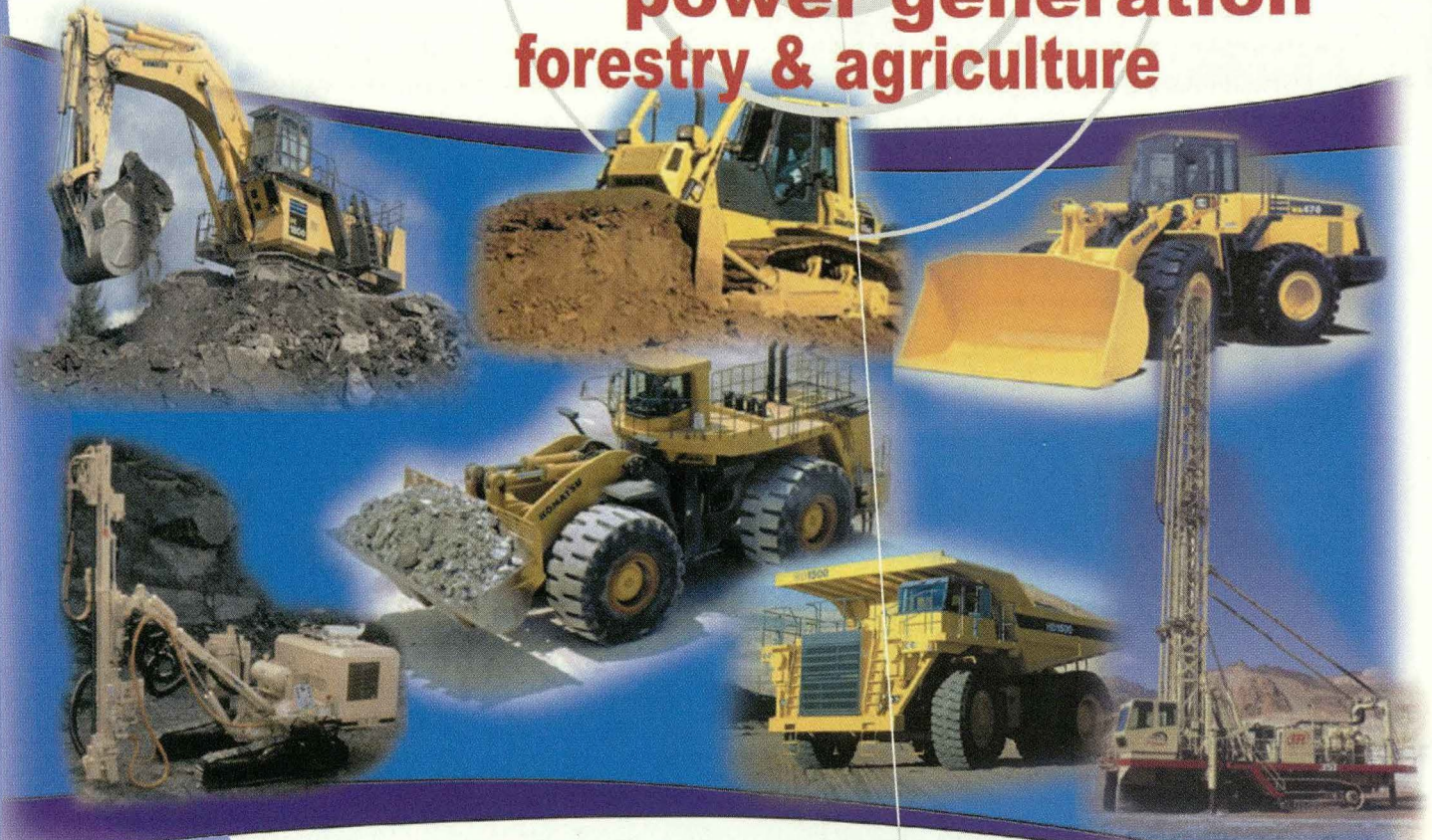
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run this country?"

Philemon first, then Morauta, decided to answer the question by entering politics themselves.

He has since been elected three times for Lae, and is one of four deputy leaders of the National Alliance led by Prime Minister Somare.

In 1994, he became public service minister. He reviewed with distaste

the trend of the bureaucracy to ignore maintenance requirements and simply abandon buildings once they became dysfunctional, obtaining money from aid donors and the national budget for successive new office blocks.

Philemon approached the Public Officers' Superannuation Fund, which was willing to put up K10 million to renovate the "Pineapple Building" - less than 20 years old - which had housed prime ministers but fallen into disrepair, although the structure remained sound.

Instead, the fund was directed by the then prime minister and treasurer to "invest" the money in the Cairns Conservatory, a building bought by West Australian developer Warren Anderson for \$A 9.75 million and onsold to the fund within a month for \$A18.7 million.

Since then, Philemon has taken a more pro-active position on governance issues, his confidence grounded in his crucial role in stabilising the economy.

He applauds the Australia's Enhanced Co-operation Programme (ECP) which, despite the problems in the police component, has deployed 20 experienced economists and other public servants to his departments - treasury, finance, tax and customs.

He recalls watching from an upstairs window one Friday afternoon when a large, restive crowd formed seeking payments for various claims from his office.

An Australian with the ECP jumped on to a wall and shouted explanations and assurances to the crowd, which quietly dispersed.

Philemon met his Australian counterpart, Peter Costello, in Washington during the World Bank annual meeting in 2002, where he asked if PNG could defer repayments on \$US80 million borrowed by the previous government for balance of payments support as reserves were falling dramatically.



Bart Philemon (third from left)...has taken a pro-active role in governance issues.

"[Costello's] response was that we should put some runs on the board first. I made the same request in Dubai in 2003 and he said: 'You've got runs on the board, can you sustain the performance?'

"I can understand that on past performance. I don't mind constructive criticism. Now we've repaid the \$US80 million anyway, without any

assistance. I'm quite pleased with that and I wanted to tell Costello that at the last bank meeting, but he arrived late."

Philemon says he inherited K8.7 billion debt, almost 80 percent of GDP, which has since been cut to 54 percent. His aim is to reduce it below 40 percent during his term. And he has instituted a long-term domestic bond market, replacing the sale of short-term Treasury bills that for years sucked the liquidity out of the banks.

The prevailing interest rate has also been reduced over the past three years from about 18 percent to about 4 percent. Pension fund arrears have been paid off, and the government has set aside K400 million from the surplus for its equity in the forthcoming gas pipeline project to Brisbane.

Philemon says 90 percent of the windfall earnings from soaring commodity prices has been used to retire debt.

He gives considerable credit for the political stabilisation that has made economic stabilisation easier to former prime minister Morauta, who introduced political integrity legislation that halted the constant shuffling of MPs between parties as they offered their parliamentary votes to the highest bidder.

He also points to "the group of like-minded people in cabinet" - including Petroleum and Energy Minister Moi Avei, Foreign Minister Rabbie Namaliu, Lands Minister Puka Temu, Mining Minister Sam Akoitai and Police Minister Bire Kimisopa. And to the quality of the staff at Treasury and Finance.

Inevitably in PNG, politics continues to pose the biggest challenge to sound policy and administration, despite the recent stabilisation.

Philemon says he had to fight to keep his new departmental secretary, Simon Tosali, in his job in the

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face of "a political push to change him, making him responsible for the country's economic ills over the past 10 years".

And he says, "corruption is an everyday thing, in one form or another".

A crucial tool for combating corruption is the medium-term development strategy, a fiscal framework that Philemon has resurrected.

It commits the cabinet to an expenditure strategy for five years - which should include taking it beyond the 2007 election.

This is how he opposed the proposal from an American - who later sent a bill for US\$8 million - to market a maverick US\$200 million bond issue. It had been agreed to by cabinet while Philemon was abroad.

He says it did not fit the agreed framework. But he had to threaten to resign to gain Somare's agreement to scrap the scheme, for which K3 million compensation had to be paid.

Philemon also fought off proposals to pay all parliamentarians with 25 years of service an ex-gratia payment of K500,000, as well as the purchase of a government VIP jet for K38 million.

"I told cabinet that would pay for 1 million children to receive basic immunisations, for 300,000 primary school places, or for 600 kilometres of roads to be maintained."

The usually mild-mannered Philemon gets wound up as he recounts what he views as outrageous raids on the public purse.

He describes opposing another attempt to reward public servants and politicians, asking "who in the last 10 years deserves it? From my memory, the country has been f---ed up."

He halted an attempt to increase spending on celebrations recently for the 30th anniversary of independence from K10 million to K14 million. "I asked how it would benefit the country beyond Port Moresby. Such requests reflect the view that we have lots of money, that we can still spend, spend, spend."

In an attempt to ensure services start reaching the rural majority, he has begun to establish treasury offices in the country's 89 districts, which coincide with parliamentary constituencies, and to train staff so they get paid where they work rather than have to take days off to travel to the major provincial centres. Community police stations, education and health services and lock-ups will also be funded over the coming year.

This, Philemon hopes, will head off MPs' requests for bigger discretionary payments or "slush funds".

He says: "I want to change that culture."



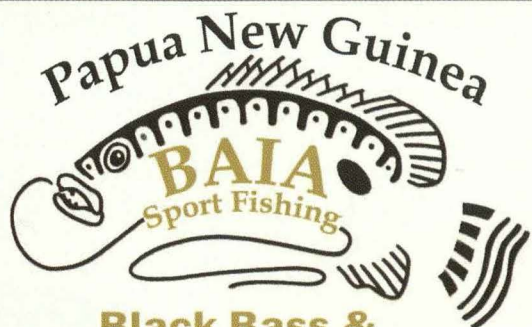


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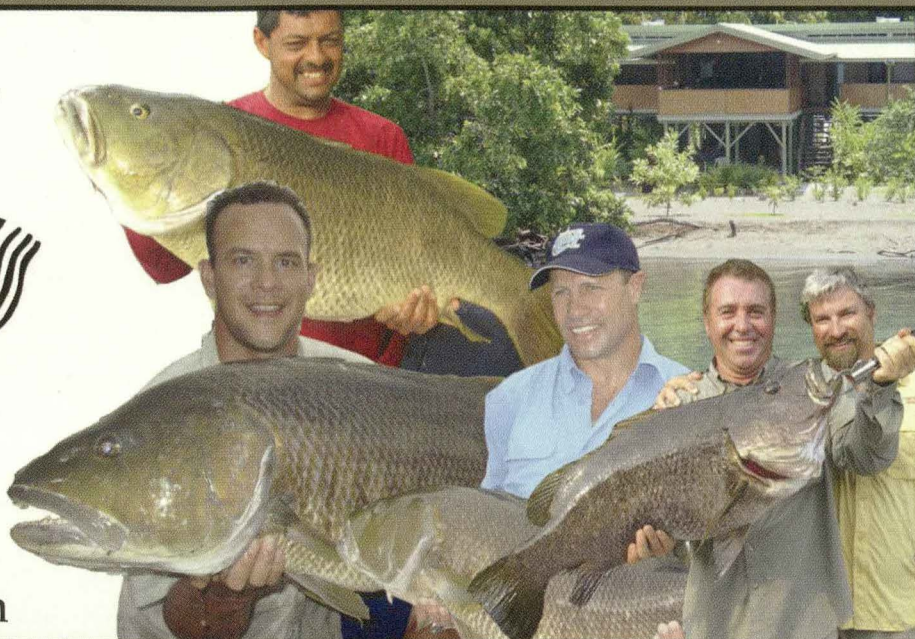


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Air Niugini



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Lindenhafen Fishing Resort, on the south coast of West New Britain, is constructed on the seafront of an 800-hectare copra plantation built by the Germans in the 1930s.

John and Sharyn Scallan bought the unkempt plantation two years ago. They decided to build a resort after exploring nearby atolls surrounded by massive reef systems and with seafloor shapes and prevailing currents that are ideal habitat for billfish, mackerels, tuna and other fish.

Six rivers that begin their journey from the rugged Whiteman Ranges provide the perfect snags that house bass, mangrove jacks and spot tails.

The resort has been visited by a group of prominent Australian fishing personalities, including former national rugby league star Andrew Ettinghausen, who hosts the

ANGLING AT LINDENHAFEN

PNG's newest fishing resort

How to get to the fishing lodge

Lindenhafen is located on the south coast of West New Britain. The airport to access West New Britain is Hoskins, a one-hour flight from Port Moresby on Air Niugini.

Flights to Port Moresby are again by Air Niugini from Sydney, Brisbane and Cairns.

From Hoskins it is about a 30-minute drive to Kimbe and to Walinda Resort to overnight. Guests are off to the fishing lodge by helicopter the next morning.

The ride over the Whiteman Ranges is an exciting experience. Clients fly over oil palm plantations near Kimbe, then rainforests, limestone gorges, waterfalls, along rivers and on to the south-coast coastline - a 35-minute journey.





popular "Escape with ET" fishing programme on Australia's Channel Nine television station.

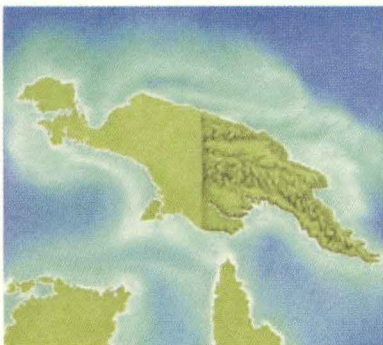
Other guests were the editor of Australia's Bluewater Boats and Sport Fishing magazine's David Granville, and world renowned fishing and tackle industry guru Peter Pakula. While big ones got away, Pakula in particular, could not help but keep saying "beautiful country" as the game fishing boat Tsunami took them past pristine coral islands with pockets of hamlets built under swaying palm trees.

Lindenhafen is situated in a natural harbour protected by a line of islands with golden sandy beaches. The Germans named it Linden (citrus) hafen (harbour) and built small railway tracks on the plantation to transport coconuts to the waterfront for processing and shipment.





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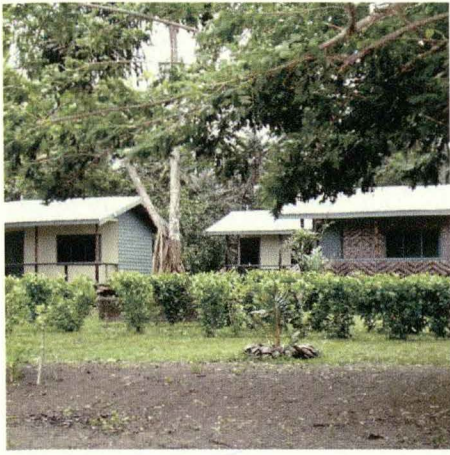
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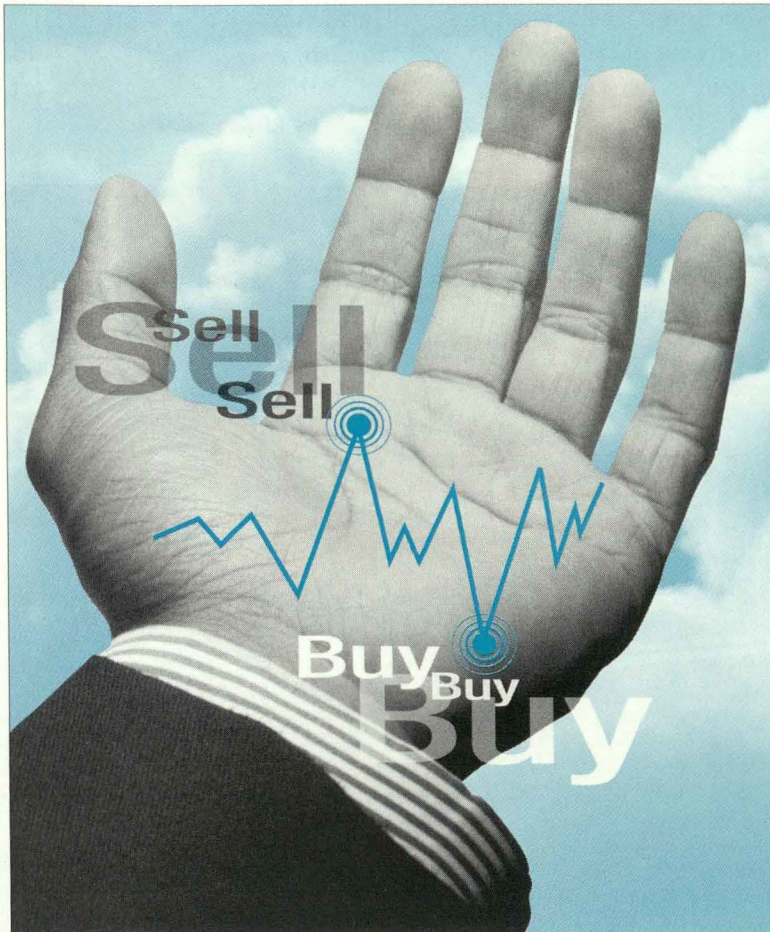
Relics from the German era can still be found at Lindenhafen.

The area is also littered with relics from World War Two, including bombers and ships, providing excellent opportunity for land tours and diving in these clear blue seas.

The resort has a helipad, a jetty and 10 comfortable spacious bungalows with en suites facing the Solomon Sea.

A keen fisherman, John Scallan takes visitors on long banana boats to one of the six rivers for fishing bass. Lindenhafen is 100% catch and release, especially for the river fish.

This part of the world is almost untouched and remote. Authorities have reopened the nearby Gasmata airstrip and began development schemes for the local villagers. Lindenhafen is run as a 100% eco-tourism resort and encourages locals



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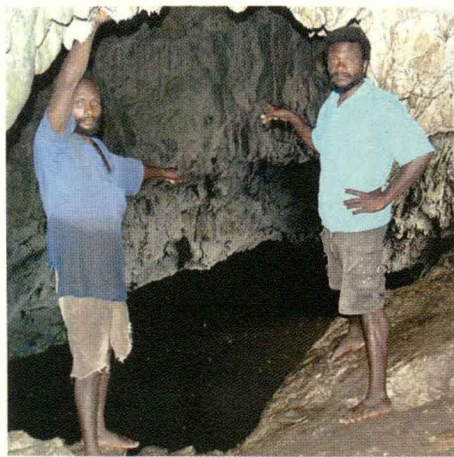
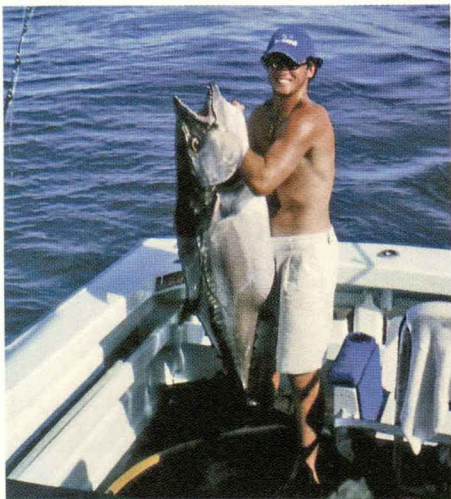
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to open up to international visitors so they too can benefit from their resources through tourism activities generated by the resort.

Nearby, the Amulus River begins its journey inside a cave with a thermal spring. Locals believe that inside one of the cave's chambers a giant serpent guards precious treasure.

In conjunction with the popular Walindi Dive Resort, the Scallans hope to sell diving packages when the fishing season (November-April) is over.

The area is full of mud crabs, crayfish, prawns and other seafood which the locals sell to the resort for a few kinas.



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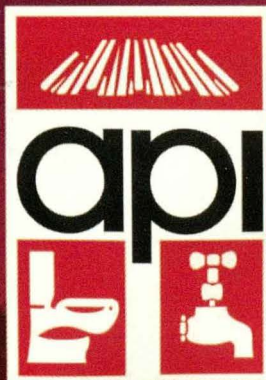
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ESCAPING TO SERO BEACH

A Surfing Escapade

By Malum Nalu

Sero Beach, behind Taurama Barracks, just outside Port Moresby, is one of the best places to escape from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Whether it's for a picnic, barbecue, birthday party, wedding, fishing, snorkelling, diving or surfing, Sero has something for everybody.

Sero Beach is 15 minutes from downtown Port Moresby. It offers an easy access to a great surf break and has great facilities for a full day of sailing and surfing. There is a large shallow lagoon off the beach, which leads out to the reef break, 500 metres out.

I've been there a couple of times, but have never been out to the deep, until avid surfer Andrew Abel - who is the president of the Surfing Association of PNG and a PNG Tourism Promotion Authority board member - took me there with some of his fellow surfies.

Andrew, his three-year-old son Cheyenne, Australian youth ambassador's volunteer Julian Toscaro, and Port Moresby International School Grade 12 student Genevieve Daniels picked me up from my flat at Angau Drive, Boroko, one Saturday morning.

From here, a drive through Taurama Barracks and on to Sero Beach - which is well protected by Albert Taligatus and his family, as well as the great Martin Beni of boxing fame. Here, the surfers, spotting the big waves breaking on the reefs off Sero, pull down their surfboards from the truck and head out to sea in a dinghy.

I chose to remain in the dinghy and do some snorkelling in the relative calm of the coral reefs - seeing the fish and coral - rather than be tossed around by those big waves.

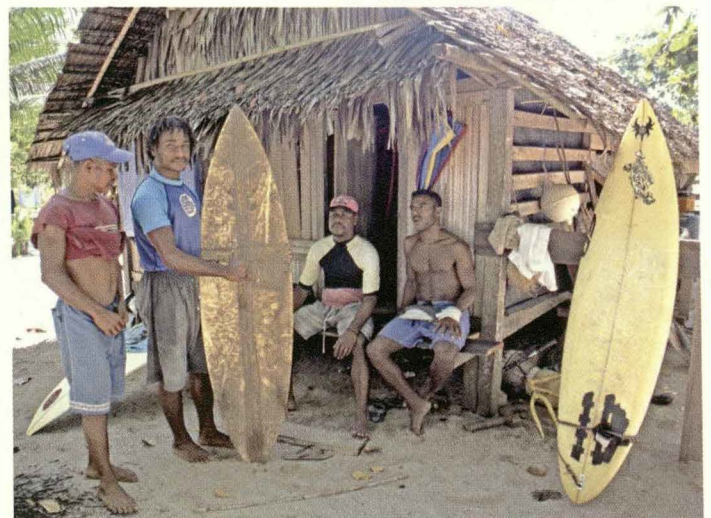
Baby Cheyenne, fast becoming a surf junkie like his dad, probably holds the title of being one of the youngest surfers (grommets, in surf slang) in the world.

I was amazed that the young fella wasn't scared of the deep, big waves and the reefs.

Anyway, this was just a reconnaissance trip for me. Next time I'm bringing my two sons here!



PNG surfing fanatics...there's now a rapidly growing number of grommets.



Sero Surf Club is modelled on the pioneer Vanimo Surf Club in Sandaun (West Sepik) Province, which has over 23 female surfers, 50 males and a rapidly growing number of grommets.

"We have about 45 members here at Sero Surf Club, 10 of whom are females," Abel says.

"This is not a recreational club; it's a water sports club.

"It encompasses specifically: surfing, kite surfing and wind surfing."

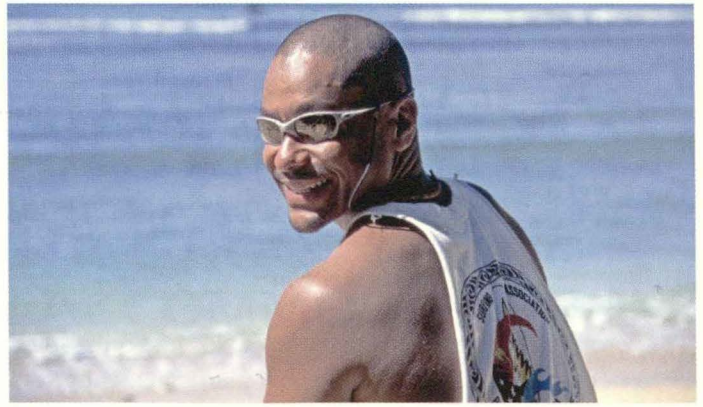
The other surf clubs in Papua New Guinea are Taurama in Port Moresby, Kavieng in New Ireland, and Sunset in Sandaun.

"The Surfing Association of PNG, in collaboration with Sero Surf Club (SAPNG) and other affiliate clubs, is working on promoting and developing surfing as a sport and surf tourism in parallel," Abel explains.

"This is based on the foundations that have been built over the last 18 years, which have now evolved into a recognised niche tourism market, collectively contributing to the social and economic development and nation building in Papua New Guinea.

"SAPNG and our affiliated clubs are focusing on encouraging the participation of women and children in the sport.

"With over 17 million surfers worldwide, Papua New Guinea has one of the last surfing frontiers in the world.



Andrew Abel and his PNG surfing association are working on promoting and developing surfing as a sport.

"That is why we are working with our strategic partners such as Air Niugini and the PNG Tourism Promotion Authority, to promote our beautiful country and to break down the negative perceptions the outside world has of our country and people."

For further information about surfing check out the website www.surfingpapuanewguinea.org.pg. To make a booking for a relaxing weekend at Sero Beach, contact Albert Taligatus on telephone (675) 3252411 or email albert@pngair.kenmore.com.pg

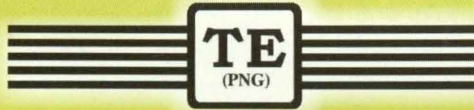
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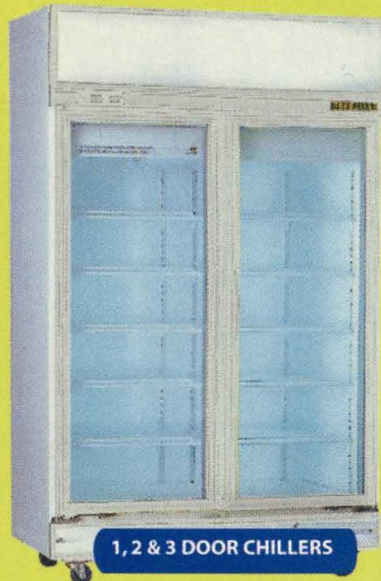
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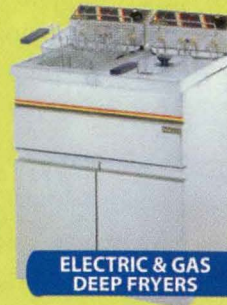
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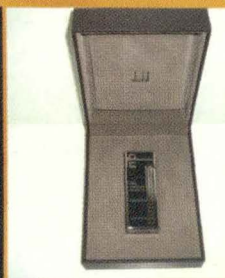
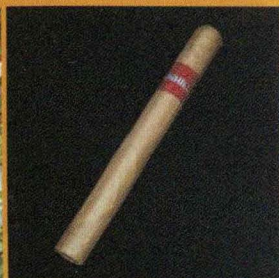
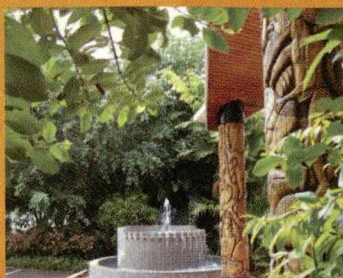
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Man of the moment...PNG basketballer Casey Stafford.

By Malum Nalu

It was while taking a much-needed break in Lae recently that I bumped into a former schoolmate, former champion PNG basketballer, Casey Stafford.

Casey was excited and couldn't stop talking about the life-changing Personal Viability (PV) course he was attending.

I have heard about PV courses, which come under the auspices of what is commonly known as Grasruts Univesiti, but other than that my knowledge of it is quite limited.

That is until I attended Casey's graduation and 10 others in Lae on November 3.

Among the graduates were three directors of the 100 percent nationally-owned Mainland Holdings, which counts among its assets Niugini Tablebirds and ABCO Transport.

They will be encouraging 20,000 Mainland Holdings' coffee growers from the remote areas of Morobe Province to attend PV courses.

Also present at the graduation ceremony were senior management staff of Mainland Holdings as well as the local Rural Development Bank manager. The Rural Development Bank is a major supporter of the PV concept.

So what is this PV concept? Its greatest supporter is Governor General Sir Paulias Matane, a person who unashamedly says that PV is the answer that Papua New Guinea has been searching for.

It's a 100 percent PNG-developed concept that is attracting international attention.

In a nutshell, the PV concept - founded by Chinese businessman 'Papa' Tai Sam of Rabaul - aims to develop PNG's human resource holistically: physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and financially.

It is a life-changing two-week programme that has helped many Papua New Guineans over the past nine years.

Such has been the success of PV that graduates are now eligible for loans from the Rural Development Bank to help their businesses.

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PV graduates.

It has taken off in a big way in East New Britain and East Sepik provinces, while Morobe has been a bit slower.

"The PV course is for all kinds of people," explains master trainer Paul Wiau, "whether you are educated or not, employed or not, rich or poor, young or old, it doesn't matter.

"There is no entry level requirement. Illiterate people to university graduates are coming in because this PV school is a holistic human development training programme.

"Holistic means that it develops a person physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and, of course, financially.

"All these five aspects of growth of a person come in one package. That's why we are attracting a lot of people.

"It's a self-discovery training course where men and women who attend discover who they are and the potential they have.

"The biggest part of this training is to develop the mindsets of people: the way people think and do things.

"The bulk of the population in this country has the mindset of poor people.

"For example, just taking money and spending it. This is how a poor person thinks and does things.

"PV courses have shifted the mindsets from that of poor people to that of rich people, prosperous people.

"That means using time, time becomes an asset, use his money, use all his resources, the way he thinks and talks.

"He looks at himself as someone with potential.

"That is the mindset of prosperous people.

"So the bottom line is that PV training courses take participants through the process of changing a poor mindset to a rich mindset."

The PV concept does not advertise itself. It is spread by

word of mouth by participants themselves.

Courses have already been run in the Solomon Islands and Fiji, with requests coming from around the globe.

"We've already reached the Solomon Islands, we've gone to Fiji, and we have requests coming in from other countries like Holland, Cameroon in Africa, Vanuatu, Jamaica and Venezuela in South America. PV is a home-grown product of PNG."

Wiau, who is also president of the Grasruts Mekim Pawa Kamap Asosiesen, concluded: "Thirty years is long enough for us to sit down and wait for other people to develop us.

"Now is the time to develop ourselves. The main thing that we must develop is the human resource of this country.

"We must develop holistically, in such a way that someone does not become a 'kago boi' for other people. Our focus for the next 30, 50 years and beyond must be on developing our human resource holistically.

"I support the call for everyone in this country, including leaders, to come into this programme. Do not wait for others to come and help us!"



- Further information on Personal Viability can be obtained from the Entrepreneurial Development Training Centre on telephone 3250978, fax 3250978, or email edtc_pv@datec.com.pg.

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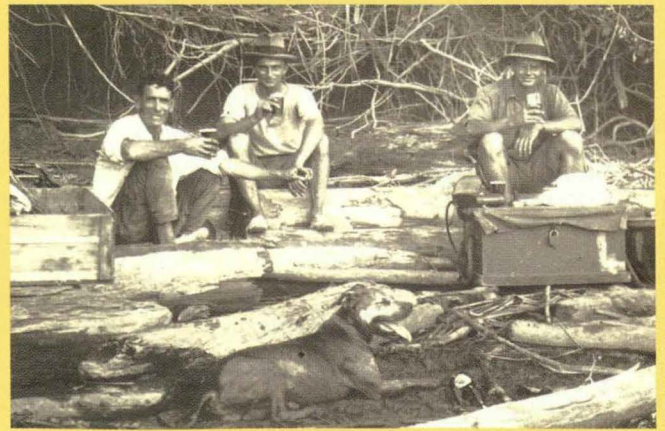
A FAMILY OF CHAMPIONS

PNG's colonial trailblazers

By Jim Sinclair

On September 16 last year, Papua New Guinea celebrated its 30th independence anniversary. It seemed an appropriate time to briefly outline the story of a family intimately connected with the Territory of Papua during most of the colonial era, a family that produced several outstanding administrators and a famous explorer: the family headed by Herbert William Champion.

Born in New Zealand, Herbert arrived in the tiny town of Port Moresby, British New Guinea, in 1898, as a junior clerk with the island traders and shipowners, Burns Philp & Co.



The white population at Port Moresby at the time was only some 35 men and 15 women. The Lieutenant-Governor of British New Guinea lived a mile or so from the township in a sprawling residence that bore the grand name, Government House.

The Lieutenant-Governor at the time Champion arrived was Sir George Le Hunte.

In 1902, Champion accepted Le Hunte's offer of employment. He became the government storekeeper and married a widow, Florence Chester, in 1902.

Their three sons were born in Port Moresby: Ivan Francis on March 9, 1904; Frank Allan on April 27, 1905; and

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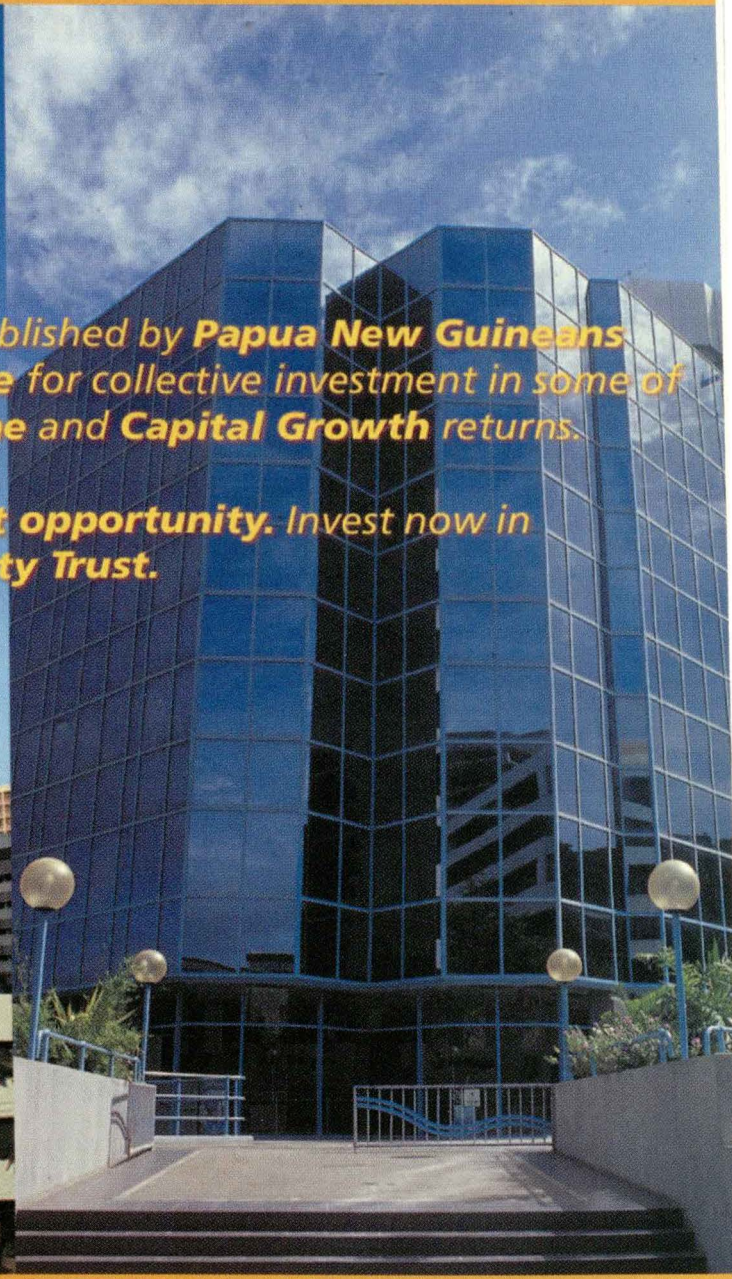
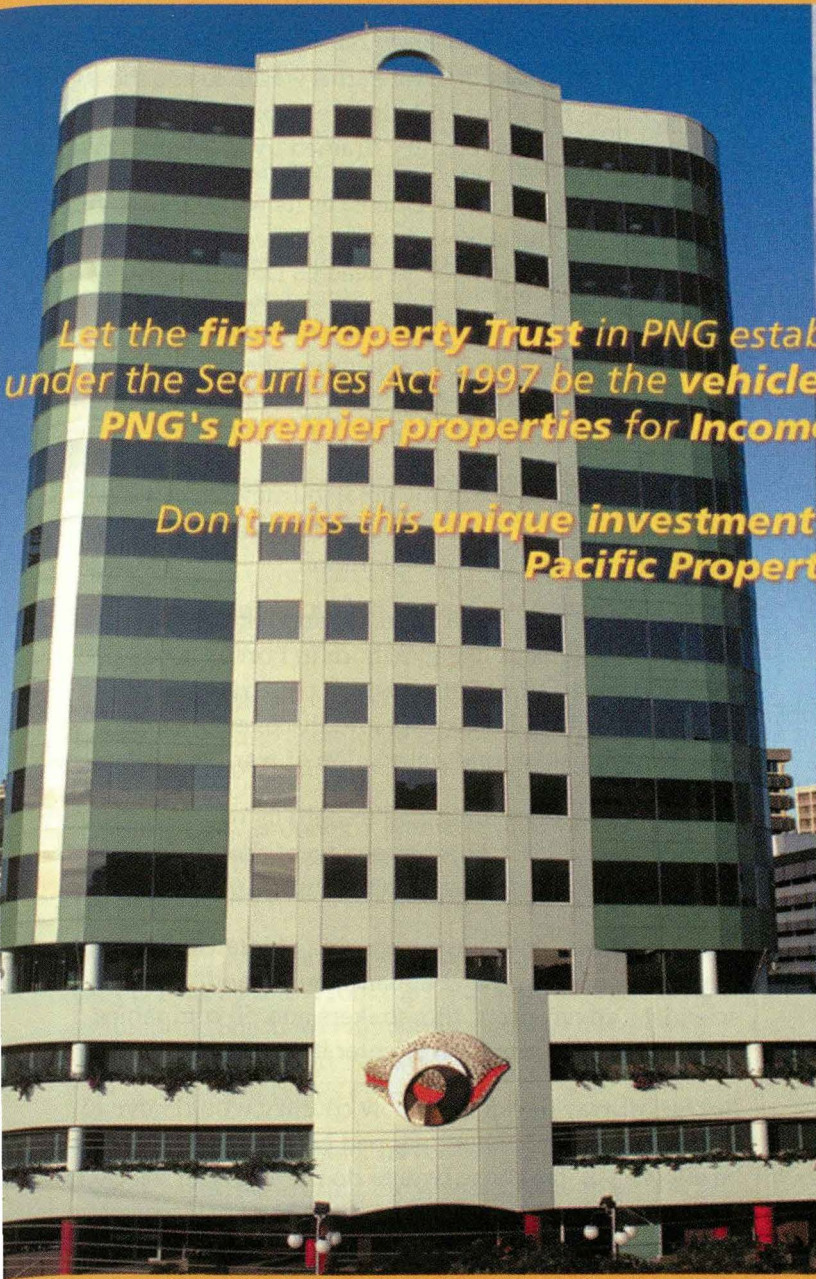
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Claude on June 30, 1906. In 1907, Herbert was appointed Treasurer.

In 1906, Australia assumed control of what became the Territory of Papua.

Two years later, the Chief Judicial Officer, John Hubert Plunkett Murray, became Lieutenant-Governor. Thus began an association between Murray and Herbert that was to continue until Sir Murray's death in office in February 1940 (he was knighted in 1925).

Herbert became government secretary, head of the minute Magisterial Service, and acted in Sir Murray's position during his absences on leave or duty.

Herbert was awarded a CBE for his distinguished service and retired when the civil administration was suspended when the Pacific War broke out.

He lived to the ripe old age of 92. On his death, he was the last surviving member of the old Administration of British New Guinea.

Ivan, Allan and Claude Champion obtained their primary education in Port Moresby and their high school education in Southport, Queensland. Ivan, the eldest, returned to Papua in November 1923 and became a patrol officer. He expected no favours from his stern father, the Government Secretary, and got none.

Ivan wore thick spectacles and was only five feet eight inches tall and ten stones in weight. But he was a young man of steady, dogged character. Early in 1925, he was posted to the remote Kambisi Police Camp under the experienced Charles Henry Karius, Assistant Resident Magistrate.

The work that Ivan did in the wild Kambisi country established his reputation as an outstanding field officer.

He so impressed Karius that when he was offered the leadership of the biggest exploratory patrol ever mounted in Papua, he chose the relatively junior Ivan as his companion.

The object of the North-West Patrol was to locate the source of the Fly River and discover a passage through the mountains to the country drained by the Sepik River.

It involved crossing New Guinea as its widest point, from coast to coast. The task was accomplished, although it took two attempts to do it, between 6 December 1926 and 19 January 1928.

Sir Murray, never one to exaggerate, called it "by far the most important and the most difficult feat of exploration ever performed in New Guinea".

Ivan wrote a book about the great journey, '*Across New Guinea from the Fly to the Sepik*', which is regarded as a classic in the literature of exploration.

In 1935, ARM Jack Hides (a friend and contemporary of Ivan Champion and like him, born in Port Moresby) led the Strickland-Purari Patrol, which penetrated today's Southern Highlands Province and discovered a large, previously unsuspected population of warlike tribesmen.

The patrol, unfortunately, had to fight its way through and at least 32 tribesmen were shot dead and undoubtedly many more than that number died.

There was a world-wide outpouring of interest in what Hides described as the "Papuan Wonderland" and scientists, adventurers, film-makers and oil companies clamoured for permission to enter it.

But Sir Murray decided the new country would have to be explored in detail and mapped before outsiders would be allowed in. He chose Ivan to do the job. Ivan selected

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a tough ex-pro prospector called Charles Thomas Johnston (Bill) Adamson as his companion.

Adamson had only recently become a patrol officer, but he had prospected the wild parts of the Papuan interior for ten years and he was a good man in the bush.

The Bamu-Purari Patrol took eight months to complete, between April and December 1936 and was a triumphant success.

It penetrated within a few miles of the Mandated Territory border and contacted many thousands of tribesmen without firing a single shot.

Ivan was a navigator and map-maker and he brought back the most accurate map of the interior yet made.

During preliminary aerial survey flights, a beautiful lake had been discovered in the interior - Lake Kutubu.

In 1937, Claude (who had also become a patrol officer, as did Allan Champion) led a patrol to Lake Kutubu and beyond, to the country that Hides had walked over.

A base camp was established at Lake Kutubu and Sir Murray decided to establish a station there, from which the Southern Highlands could be opened.

Again the job was done by Ivan and Bill Adamson, aided over the years by three young officers: Alan Timperley, Jack Bramell and Kevin Atkinson.

Lake Kutubu was the first station in Papua to be supplied entirely by seaplane. From the Lake, patrols went out and explored the Southern Highlands in detail. It took the outbreak of the Second World War to force the closure of the Lake Kutubu Police Camp.

The three Champion sons served with distinction in various capacities during the war. Each re-joined the PNG Administration after the war. Ivan became acting Director, Department of District Services & Native Affairs, and afterwards Chief Native Lands Commissioner. He retired in 1964 and eventually settled in northern New South Wales in Australia. He died in March, 1989.

Claude became Government Secretary - like his father - and was Director of Civil Affairs when he retired in 1961. He died in 1972. Allan became a District Commissioner, retiring in 1960. He too, has passed on.

It is easy to overlook the contribution people like the Champions made to the development of PNG.

Young Papua New Guineans should not forget the work done by men like the Champions in the departed but still not forgotten colonial era, upon which the foundations of the modern independent state of PNG had been built.



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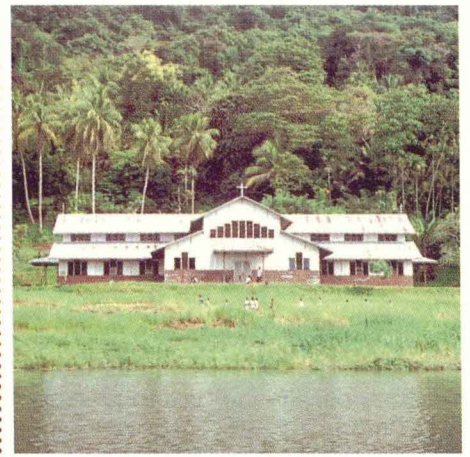
POTTERY COUNTRY

The Magic of the Sepik

Words and pictures by Steven Mago



All smiles for the camera...the Japanese visitors with their local guides.



Beneath the boiling blue Sepik skies, the raintree at Pagwi River station provided life-giving shade to the seven Japanese potters who had just gone through a rough, safari-type ride on the back of a Toyota four-wheel drive with me and legendary driver and tour guide Paul Kosof, from Maprik.

Our scenic drive from Maprik over a small part of the Sepik Plains started after overnighting at the

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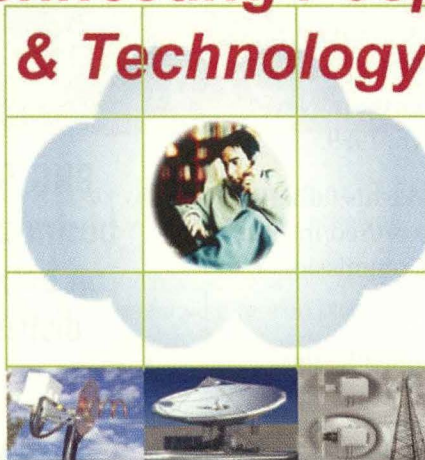


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New Tribes Mission Guest House, run by American missionaries. We had arrived there from Wewak after spending a night at Wewak Airport Lodge and a welcoming feast on lobster, courtesy of Wewak resident Margaret Hayward, a long-time friend and lodge proprietor.

Looking across the river, the wide expanse of water looked serene and quiet, apart from the distant sound of a motorised canoe and the sound of children washing at the edge of the river.

Even the logs that drift by on the long journey to the river's mouth are a subject of conversation, not to mention the never ending clicking of

digital cameras. The seven Japanese visitors, members of the Nagano Ceramic Club, find the first glimpse of the mighty Sepik dazzling and awesome. As the cameras click away even more, the young, tall Tolai, Japanese-speaking guide, Norbet Pirrie, smiles and tells the visitors that they have yet to embark on the Sepik canoe tour and should save their films for later encounters along the Sepik.

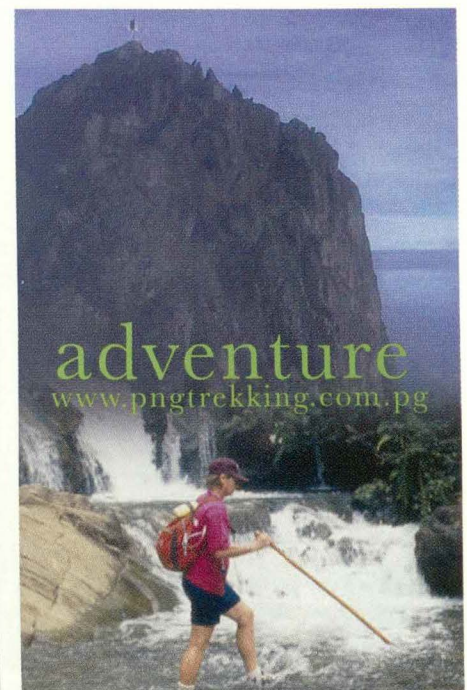
For the visitors, even the start of the two-day canoe trip to Aibom pottery village on Chambri Lakes is a moment to be savoured. But for the locals, who by now had gathered, the excitement is no big drama - it is just another day on the Sepik.

An exciting experience...a ride along the Sepik River.

Our journey through the Sepik started in Port Moresby where I joined the group from Sydney as tour leader. After meeting and transferring the group from the early Sunday flight from Narita, the group proceeded to Madang for a quick tour of the Bilbil pottery and a singsing, Madang museum, housed inside the Madang Visitors and Cultural Bureau complex, and a scenic drive along the North Coast to Kubugam Village, under the guidance of Madang tour leader, Lina Siming.

Pirrie and I picked up the group in Madang. The flight to Wewak, one that I have taken so many times before, gives a different kind of feeling now as I am wearing a different hat - this time as tour leader of my first Japanese tour group.

Our journey to Aibom started very early when we loaded a hired Toyota Hilux 4 X 4 with our food supplies, water, first aid kit and luggage. The



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Checking out the local pottery and how it's made.

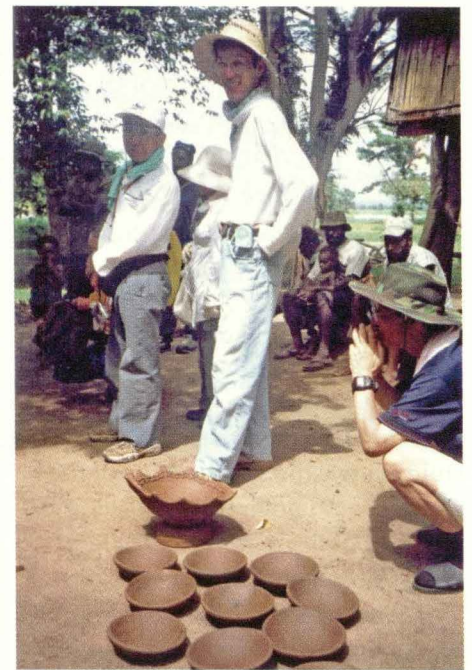
trip along the highway to Passam was a nostalgic ride for me.

I last walked and rode through this part of the world 20 years ago when I attended Grade 11 at Passam National Highway School. We drove past the school, the road did not look familiar; it was now sealed and the dust I knew had gone.

There were more traffic with dusty highway trucks filled to the top with bags of garden produce and people sitting on top of the cargo.

For the tourists, seeing the steady flow of trucks as they make their way to Wewak with their load of people and garden produce provided both amusement and wonder at the reality of public transportation and travel in rural PNG.

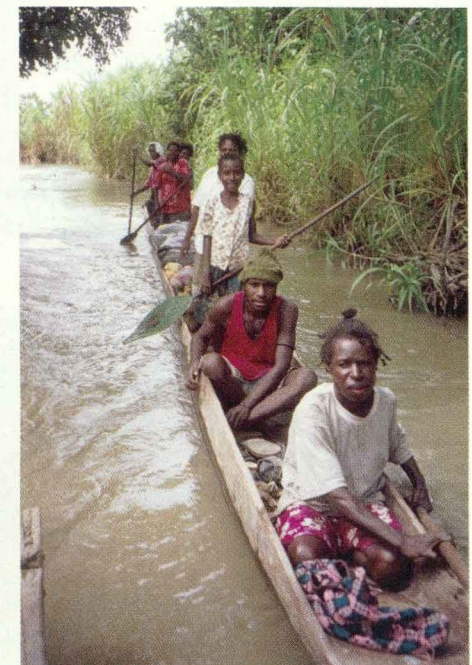
After arriving at Maprik, we had a picnic lunch at the lodge's haus win before checking into a large house given by the missionaries - complete with cooking facilities, a clean bathroom and shower, and clean, comfortable beds and linen. A

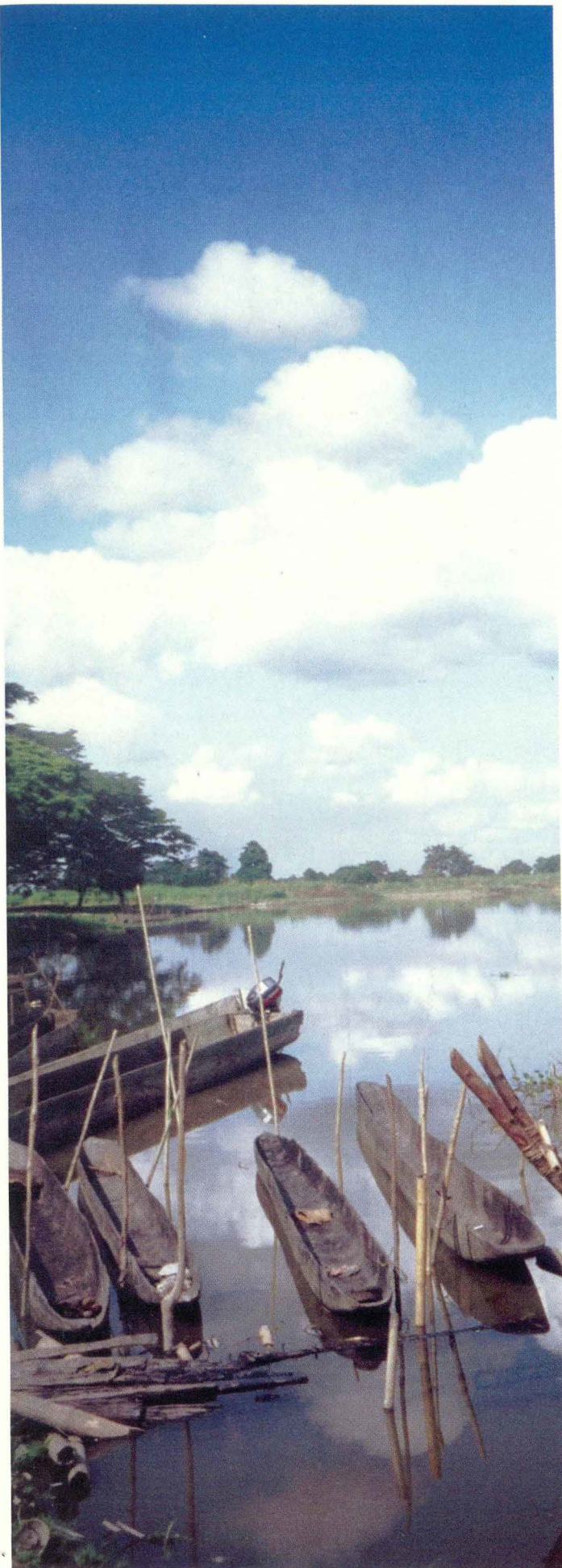


tour of two haus tambarans were the highlight of the Maprik stopover.

The next morning after re-stocking our fuel, food and water supplies, we headed for Pagwi on a trip that many advised against, due to the condition of the road.

It wasn't until an hour along the Pagwi Highway that we realised and understood why all vehicles, except 4x4 drives, did not dare taking the highway. The road had deteriorated so badly that PMVs now only drive





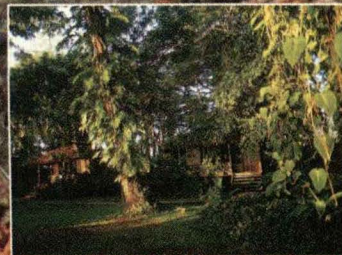
up to Pagwi on Thursdays. Those who do not make it on PMVs from Pagwi walk for two days on foot and sleep on the way to Maprik, where it is easier to catch a PMV to Wewak.

Our mode of transport to Aibom from Pagwi station was a large dugout canoe, powered by a 15hp Yamaha motor. It was skippered by a jovial character named Charlie, who loves his betelnut so much that there wasn't a moment during the three-hour canoe journey that his mouth was not moving apart from his hands at the control of the canoe.

The Sepik really is a mighty piece of nature and you don't realise its enormity and power until you plough its waterways. It's an amazing part of PNG's natural attractions and as much as it is awesome in terms of the amount of water that flows through it, it is the source of life and livelihood for PNG's best known river people, the Sepiks.

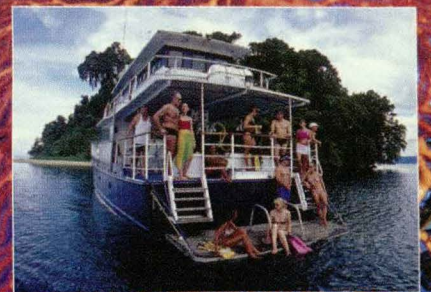
Apart from its importance as a life source for its people, the Sepik River has given PNG some of its unique art forms expressed in primitive wood carvings and pottery. Best of the ceramic creations of the Sepik is the pottery

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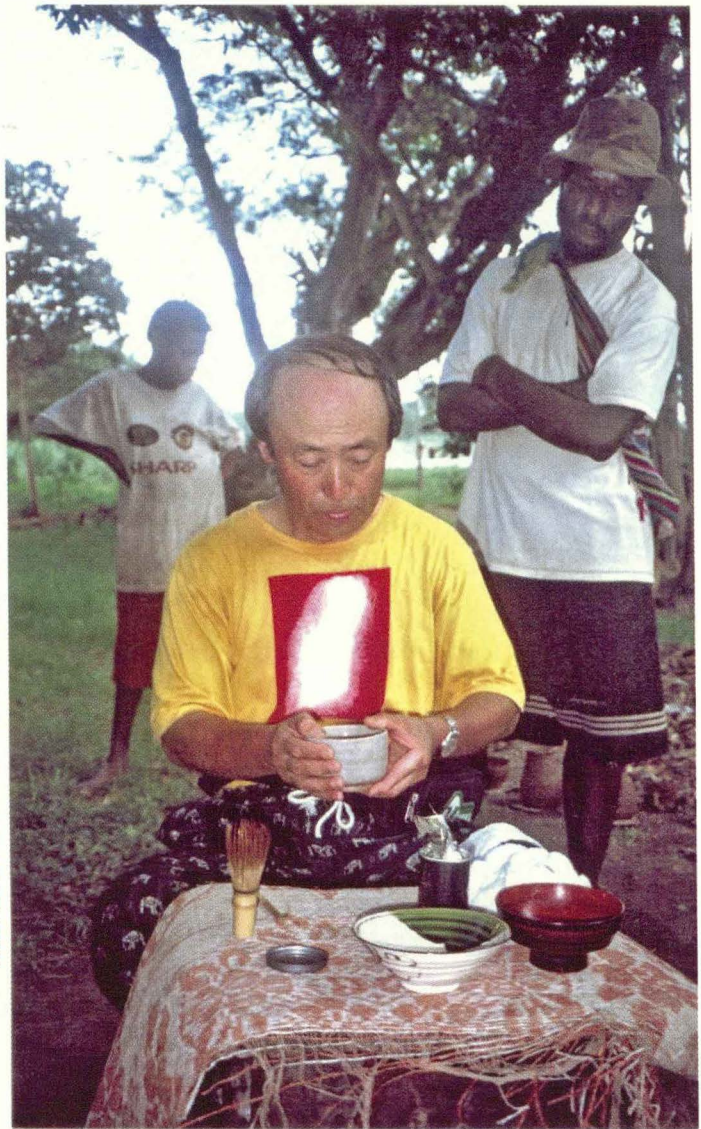
of Aibom village, a quiet, peaceful and lively river community, tucked away behind the Chambri Lakes and the reason for our journey.

The biodiversity of the Sepik River is enthralling. There are numerous species of water birds and fish species that provide the river people with their main source of protein. Among them are carps, phaku and tilapia.

Crocodiles rule supreme in these waterway. It is a predator that is seen differently by the river inhabitants, not as an enemy but as a "friend" and a source of inspiration for the numerous creative artistic expressions in face and body paintings, skin cutting ceremonies, intricate wood carvings that carry deep ritualistic meaning and designs on pottery.

Our hosts at Aibom Village were the school headmaster Aiwo and his nephew, Jerry, who prepared a new house for us with such additional comforts as mosquito nets I brought from Port Moresby, four cartons of bottled water and cans of insect repellent that the Japanese visitors packed as vital ammunition against malaria.

The programme at Aibom included a visit to a village where visitors mingled with locals to learn about their traditional lifestyle, a visit to the local school where



Tea time...Japanese style.

the visitors spent an hour teaching Aibom children "origami", a pottery demonstration and pottery making participation by the group.

Despite the bad road experience, the trip to Aibom was a memorable one for our visitors.

Not only did they come to visit the site of the famous art of Sepik pottery; there was also an exchange of values and cultures through the teaching sessions at the local school and a tea ceremony held in the village to mark the formal end of the tour.

The visitors had every opportunity to savour local foods and dishes such as sago, taro, banana, sweet pawpaw, and to cap it off, "mumu kakaruk", a special PNG dish that the Windjammer Beach Motel is known for.

For the visitors, they came, they saw and they left. They say, they will return again one day for this unique PNG experience.



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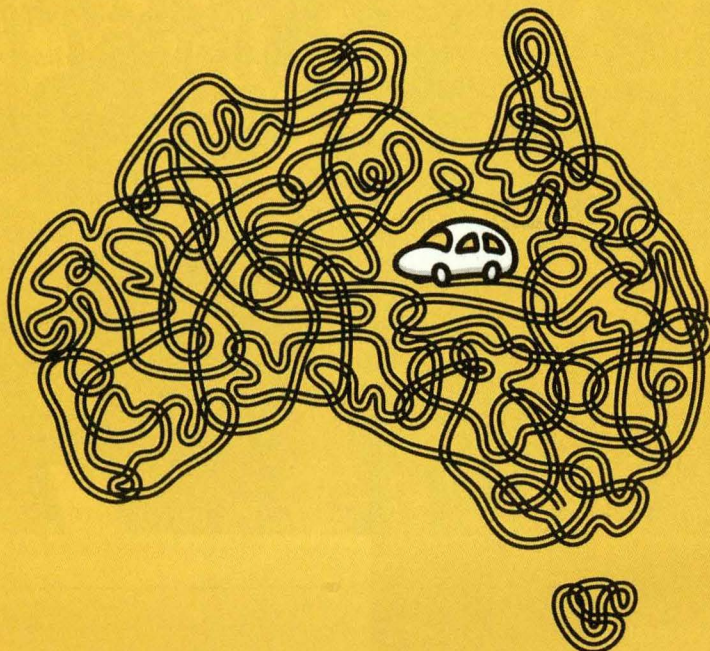




Local children and their Japanese visitors.



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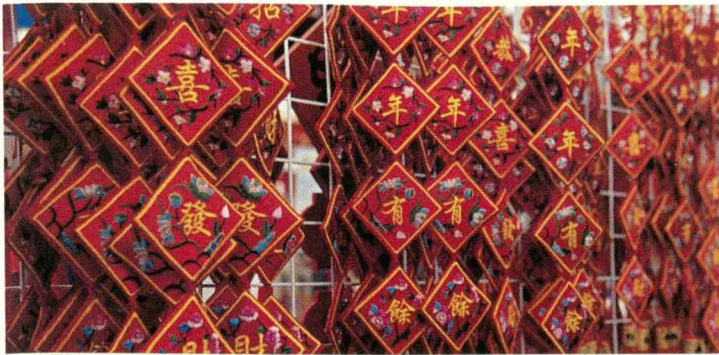
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CHINESE NEW YEAR

Paint the Town Red!

Text and pictures by Hoo Chwoon

With our New Year resolutions freshly made - ah, and almost as immediately broken! - and as we slowly groove into the frantic pace of academic pursuits and the corporate whirligig, Singapore once again, comes aglow with overhanging lanterns and necklaces of beaded light bulbs.



A fevered excitement hangs in the air. Preparations gear up to usher in the Chinese New Year which falls between 21 January and February 19 of the Gregorian calendar. This year, it is on January 29 and celebrations are set to last for a full month.

Weeks before Chinese New Year, the streets are strung with stalls that are decked with festive goodies: pomelos, mandarin oranges, tangerines, red melon seeds, longans, lotus seeds, waxed ducks, sausages, new year cakes, tarts and cookies. Shoppers elbow their way through the crush of the crowd and make a beeline for these hot items and perennial favourites lest they be snapped up by others in the frenetic rush.

Fierce haggling shrieks through the air, vying with the blare of evergreen Chinese New Year songs that extol the return of spring and the



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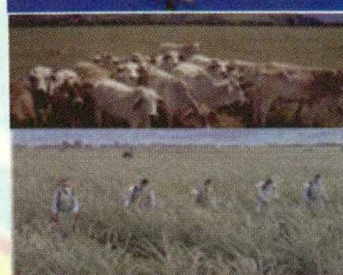
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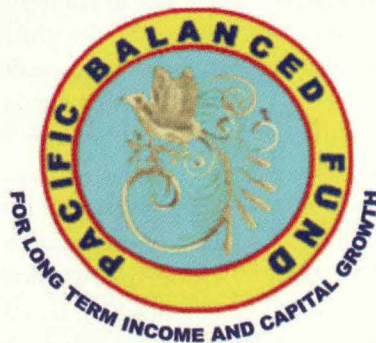


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reawakening of life as dreary winter thaws away. All this in tropical Singapore where it summers the whole year through? Yes!

Hidden at a nook of a street, you may chance upon a soothsayer dispensing sagely advice on the arcane art of seducing Lady Luck as he pronounces his auguries: What will the forthcoming year portend for each of the twelve Chinese zodiac signs? Will the New Year be propitious for marriage, embarking on a new business venture, changing jobs or moving house? Let's see what the trusty, old almanac counsels.

At another corner, a calligrapher lends his masterly touch on a spring couplet to bless a couple or elegantly flourishes his brush on an auspicious Chinese painting for the buyer to exorcise the evil spirits in his house and pave the way for providence to favour the family again. To get to the bottom of it, luck is the name of the game.

Hardly surprisingly then that Chinese temples are thick with incense smoke swirling teasingly as each devotee makes a benediction with joss sticks that the ill luck of the previous year will be buried behind him and that the New Year will brim with good fortune. Ah, let's not forget good health too, for it is the very foundation of all mortal joys.

At home, address books, yellow and musty with age, are

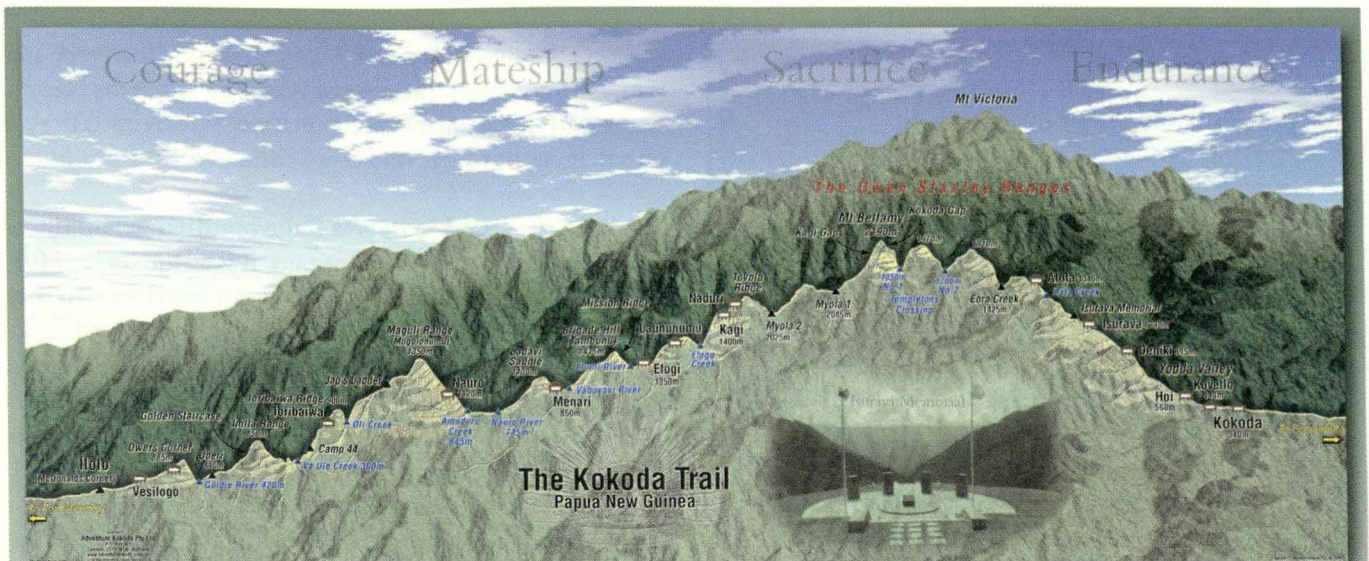
dredged from deep drawers and the eyes pore through a list of almost forgotten names and half-remembered faces; swiftly, the pen scrawls a few auspicious words and well wishes on a greeting card. By a simple stroke, friendship is renewed, ill-feelings forgotten and ties reaffirmed.

Then the accounts book are combed to ensure that all old scores are settled so that the new year will start on a clean slate. Unpaid debts carried over from the previous year will bring bad luck!

About a week before Chinese New Year, the Chinese womenfolk send the Kitchen God off on his annual furlough to heaven where he will report to the Supreme Deity (the Jade Emperor), on the family's behaviour. Hence, in such prayer sessions, new year cakes (made of sweet, sticky glutinous rice) will be offered so that his lips will either be sealed or he will only coo sweet words of the family's deeds in the past year to earn the Supreme Deity's blessings in the forthcoming year.

Then in the final run-up to Chinese New Year, every family makes a feverish effort to spruce up the house. Doors and windowpanes are brightened with a new lick of paint, usually in blazing red or screaming yellow colour. Every nook and cranny of the house is swept to purge any semblance of ill luck that has cloistered in the filth of dust and cobwebs. Doors and windows

大展鴻圖



Kokoda Trail Map – Poster Size (800 x 300mm)

This impressive wall map of the Kokoda Trail was developed from wartime sketches held by the Australian War Memorial, data from army survey maps, satellite images and GPS readings. The Australian Army rising sun badge and an image of the Isurava War Memorial are embedded in the mountains. The words etched in the granite pillars of the memorial: "Courage – Mateship – Sacrifice – Endurance" are watermarked in the sky as a solemn reminder of the qualities displayed by our diggers and the "fuzzy-wuzzy" angels during the Kokoda campaign in 1942.

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are emblazoned with papercuts and couplets that spell auspiciously of 'joy', 'riches', 'longevity' and 'blissful matrimony with offspring aplenty'.

Then the living rooms are adorned with vases of pretty blossoms as live blooming plants are emblematic of rebirth, new growth, wealth and a high station in life. Blessed is the home with plants that blossom on New Year's Day for that augurs a year of plenitude. For there is a Chinese saying that from the blossoming of flowers, fruits are begotten. And everyone wants a bountiful harvest!

To complete the picture, platters of mandarin oranges and tangerines and a fortune candy tray laden with all things sweet and saccharine occupy pride of place in the living room where visitors will cluster and exchange warm greetings. With firm handshakes laced with sunny smiles, old grievances are forgotten and past grudges buried behind. Sweet words bring good cheer and set the tone for the nature of things to come. Thus it is paramount to get the new year off on a good footing. To that, naughty children will be spared the rod lest their cries of pain betoken a new year of domestic woes.

The length that the Chinese go to during this festive

season is rooted in legend. By all accounts, the word nian, which in modern Chinese parlance solely means 'year', was originally the name of a monster which once preyed on villagers in China on New Year's eve.

The beast was said to have a huge mouth that could gobble up many people at one go. It was the terror of the villagers. One day, a sagacious old man came to their rescue, offering to subdue the nian.

He chastised it: 'Your reputation for atrocity precedes you. But I think it is most unbecoming and cowardly of you! You should ravage the other beasts of prey instead of these poor, helpless Chinese villagers who are by no means worthy of your supper.'

So the nian diverted its voracity to the other predatory beasts that had erstwhile been harassing the Chinese and their domestic animals from time to time.

His task accomplished, the old man promptly took flight from the Earth riding the nian into the clouds. It transpired that he was a god who had descended from heaven to save the Chinese in distress.

But before the nian flew back to heaven with the old

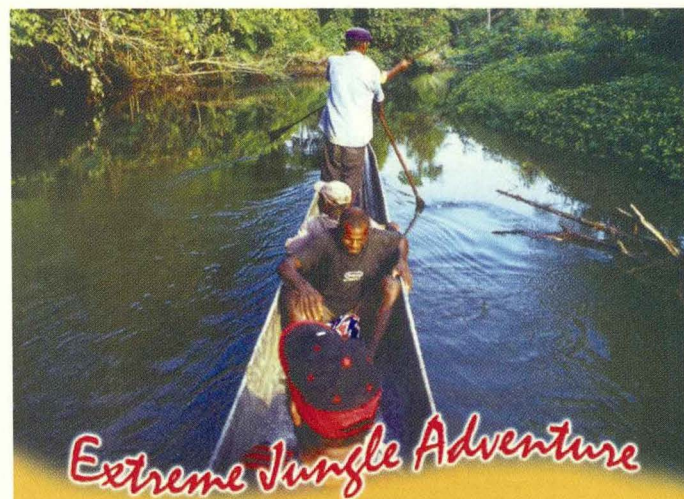


man, the other beasts of prey which had so terrorised the Chinese before, had already beaten a hasty retreat to the jungles. With peace restored, the Chinese began to enjoy a harmonious life that called for a gala celebration.

The old man's parting words of wisdom were that the Chinese should always festoon their house with red paper decorations on their windows and doors at each year's end and drum up a cacophony to scare the living daylight out of the nian - which was fearful of the colour red and noise - should it ever return to go on the rampage.

The term guonian which originally meant 'survive the threats of the nian' has metamorphosed to mean 'Celebrate the New Year' as the word guo in Chinese carries the double meaning of 'cross over' and 'observe'. But the custom of putting up red paper and firing crackers to scare away the nian - should it ever run loose again - prevails.

But, as in all things, with the inexorable flow of time, many younger Chinese have somewhat lost sight of the original import of this hallowed tradition. They merely feel the colour red and the deafening sound do myriad wonders to rack up the excitement of the festivities.



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papua new guinea experience

MT HAGEN SHOW - MT HAGEN

To promote and preserve unique cultures for future generations; to promote tourism development for the province; and to carry on its great tradition of unifying the highlands provinces and people of other provinces.

Background: Started in 1994, the show immediately became an annual event gaining international and domestic recognition. The organizing committee endeavours to use this show as a measure for Unity, Pride, Presentation and Progress. The kinds of performance that occur during the show include, Traditional dance groups, Typical Western Highlands rituals, Primitive arts & crafts, Western Highlands Province Products fair and others.

Duration: 2 - 3 days

Month: August

Venue: Kagamuga Show Ground.

Located seven kilometers from Mt Hagen town and five minutes from Kagamuga airport.

Transport: Public transport, Hire cars

Places of interest:

Mt Hagen market, Surrounding villages.

TUMBUAN MASK FESTIVAL - RABAU

Staged in Port Moresby for the first time in 1995, it is the National Cultural Commission's desire to maintain and preserve, in live form, this important aspect of Papua New Guinea culture.

Background: The Mask festival was staged as a National festival to promote Mask cultures of Papua New Guinea, particularly the provinces where the mask culture is prevalent, the New Guinea Islands, the Momase region and the Gulf province. The festival is on rotational basis.

Duration: 2 days

Month: July

Venue: Queen Elizabeth's Park, Rabaul, ENBP.

Transport: Public transport, Hire cars.

Places of interest:

Yamamoto Bunkers, Submarine Base Tunnel, Japanese Tunnel-Karawia, Watom Island, Rabaul Observatory.

GOROKA SHOW - GOROKA

To promote and preserve Eastern Highlands and other Highlands cultures as well as showcase other provinces arts and cultures.

Background: The first Highlands show was staged at Goroka in 1956. The Australian Administrator's initial aim was to bring together various clans from around the Highlands provinces. The tradition continues and in recent years the show has hosted between seventy and one hundred and forty singing groups- each comprising of between ten and twenty participants. Groups now come from all corners of the country and are hosted for a week by neighboring villages around Goroka. This is by far the largest gathering of groups at any show.

Duration: 3 days

Month: September

Venue: Goroka Show Ground

Transport: Public transport and Hire cars.

Places of interest:

JK McCarthy Museum, Eastern Highlands Cultural Centre (Kainantu), Daulo Pass.

HIRI MOALE FESTIVAL - PORT MORESBY

To observe and preserve the Hiri Trade expeditions between the Motu- Koitabu people and Erema (Kerema) people on the south western coast of Papua New Guinea.

Background: Using traditional means of navigation, the Motu-Koitabu people would sail west to trade clay pots for sago and canoe logs from the Erema (Kerema) then return some months later. The Hiri trade remained an integral part of Motu- Koita life even after the first expatriate arrived. However, with the onset of western influences, WWII carrier duties and the population seeking employment, this saw the decline of this voyage and in 1957, it was officially banned after a lagatoi capsized killing a number of crew members. This cultural event was staged to maintain and remember the spirit of the Hiri trade thereby imparting Hiri expedition experiences and skills that would otherwise be lost. Performances include traditional dances, Hiri queen contest, Lagatoi arrival, canoe racing, musical presentations plus arts & crafts exhibitions.

Duration: 2 - 3 days

Month: September

Venue: Selected areas around Port Moresby, But mainly around the Hubert Murray Stadium and Ela Beach.

Transport: Public transport, Taxis and Hire cars

Places of interest:

Varirata National Park, Sogeri Plateau, National Museum & Art Gallery, PNG Arts, National Capital Botanical Gardens, Bomana War Cemetery, National Parliament.

CANOE & KUNDU FESTIVAL - ALOTAU

Background: Initiated by the National Cultural Commission and the PNG Tourism Promotion Authority in close consultation with the Milne Bay Tourism Bureau as agent in 2004 as an annual cultural event. Milne Bay a maritime province where the main form of transport in the past and today is by sea of different forms and character. The choice of awarding Milne Bay with this festival is not only an appropriate selection, but truly a somewhat grand mix of culture and tourism working together to promote our living traditions and eco-tourism.

Duration: 6 days

Month: November

Venue: Aotau. Feeder starting points will also stage cultural activities before racing canoes off to Aotau.

Transport: Hire cars and taxis

Places of interest:

Skull caves, Bat caves, World war II relic tours, local village tours, nearby island tours, snorkel & dive tours, bird-watching tours, Samarai & Kwato Historic site tours.

ENGA CULTURAL SHOW - ENGA

To identify the heritage and pride of their forefathers.

Background: Started in 1994, the show immediately became an annual event gaining international and domestic recognition. The organizing committee endeavours to use this show as a measure for Unity, Pride, Presentation and Progress. The kinds of performance that occur during the show include, Traditional dance groups, Typical Enga rituals, Primitive arts & crafts, Enga Products fair and others.

Duration: 2 - 3 days

Month: August

Venue: The Enga Show Ground

Transport: Public transport, Hire cars

Places of interest:

Surrounding villages

authentic cultural experience

MOROBE SHOW - LAE

To display and promote agricultural, manufacturing, educational and cultural products to visitors.

Background: Displays at the show include varied displays such as mining, poultry, animal shows, building materials, school displays and non government organizational groups. It is also an arena to promote the Morobe people's art and culture in terms of performing arts. Performances include traditional singing groups mainly from the Morobe province plus contemporary rock and string-band music.

Duration: 3 days

Month: October

Venue: Lae Show Ground

Transport: Public transport and Rental cars.

Places of interest:

Rain Forest Habitat, Lae War Cemetery, Lae Botanical Gardens

when & where in 2005

May 5 - 7th
June 5 - 7th
June 24 - 26th
July 5 - 9th
July 6 - 12th
July 13 - 16th
Aug 12 - 14th
Aug 12 - 14th
Aug 20 - 21st
Sep 2nd - 3rd
Sep 15 - 18th
Sep 16th
Oct 15 - 16th
Nov 2nd - 5th

PNG Coffee festival & Trade Fair
Central Agriculture show
Lukim PNG Nau Tourism exhibition
Milamala Yam festival
Total Warwagira
National Mask festival
Engan Cultural show
Tufi Cultural show
Mt Hagen Cultural show
Garamut & Mambu festival
Hiri Moale festival
PNG Independence celebrations
Morobe show
Kundu & Canoe festival

Goroka, Eastern Highlands
Port Moresby, NCD.
Port Moresby, NCD.
Kiriwina, Milne Bay
Kokopo, East New Britain
Kokopo, East New Britain
Wabag, Enga
Tufi, Oro
Mt Hagen, Western Highlands
Wewak, East Sepik
Port Moresby, NCD.
All throughout the country
Lae, Morobe
Aotau, Milne Bay

Smaller shows and events do take place throughout the year. Colourful cultural activities from schools, church groups and communities also take place throughout the country.

For further information

Papua New Guinea
Tourism Promotion Authority
5th floor, Pacific MMI House, Champion Parade
P.O. Box 1291, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
Telephone: (675) 320 0211
Facsimile: (675) 320 0223
Email: info@pngtourism.org.pg

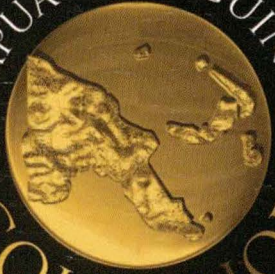
Australia contact:
Gavin Anderson and Company
Tel: + (612) 9552 4499
Fax: + (612) 9552 4899
Email: pngtourism@gavinanderson.com.au

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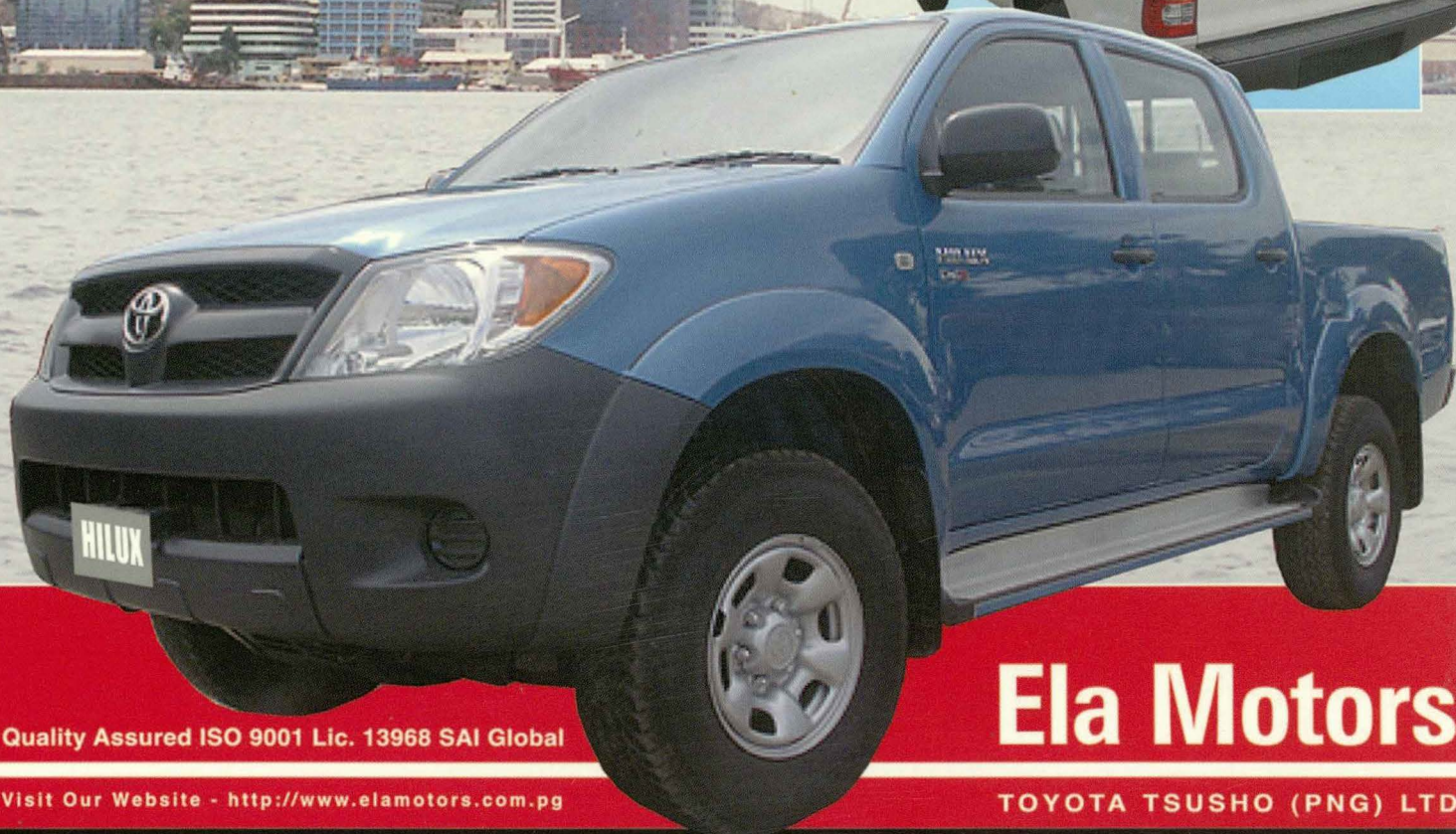
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4x2 Double Cab



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