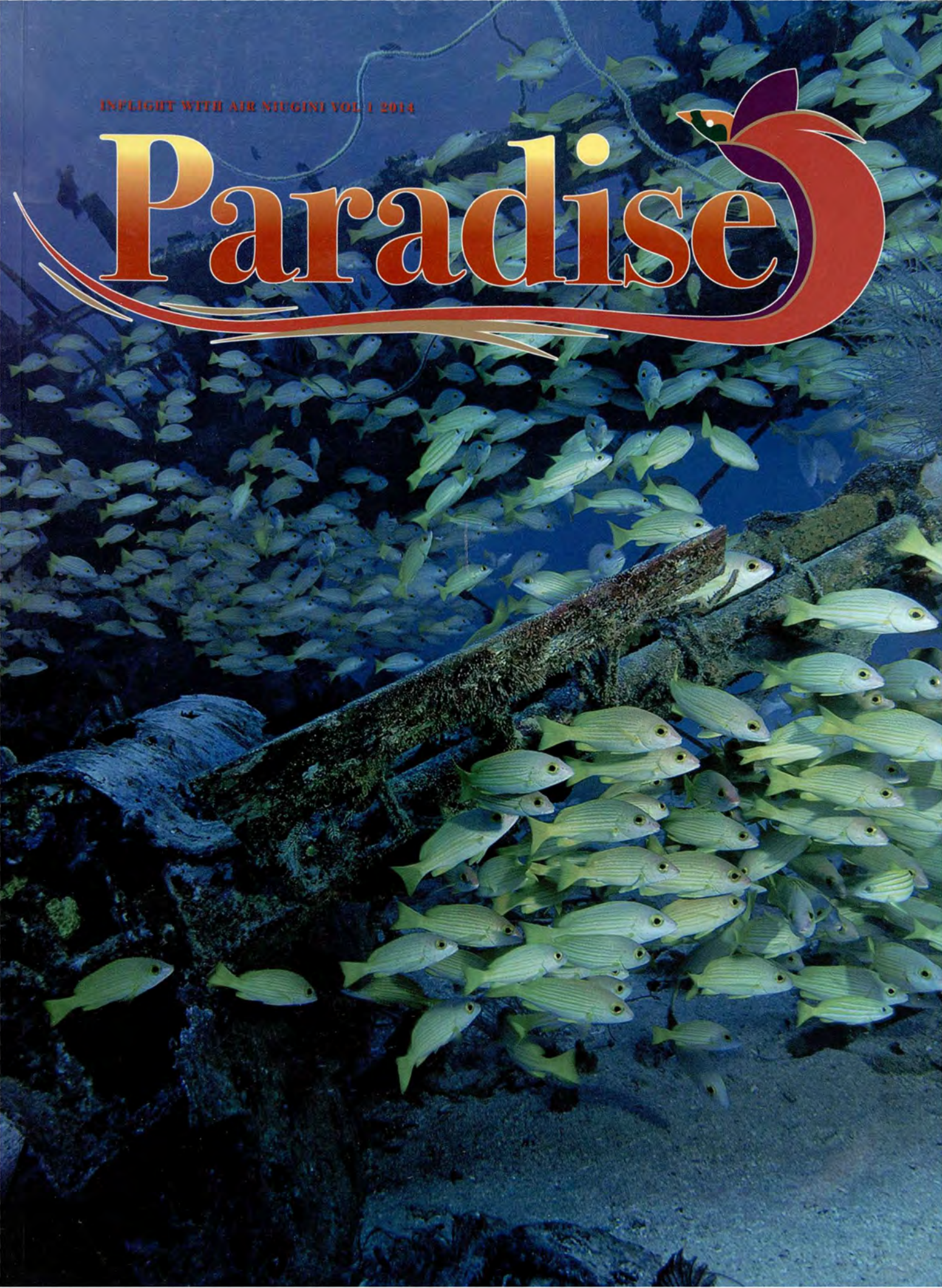


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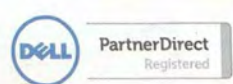


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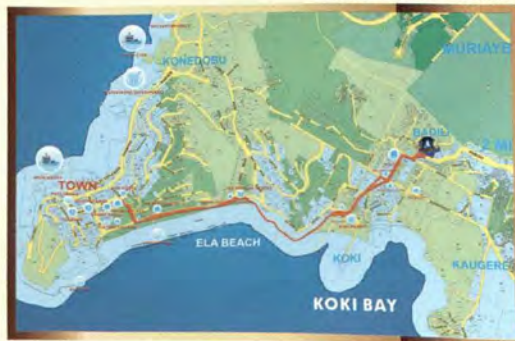
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PROJECT LOCATION MAP



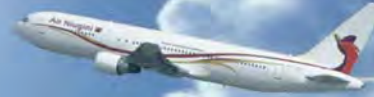
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Message from the Office of the Chief Executive Officer



Welcome Aboard

The festive and holiday season is now over and it is back to the commencement of the business year. I am pleased to say that our schedule delivery during the traditionally busy time of the year went smoothly and our passengers were able to travel to their holiday destinations comfortably.

Our focus now is to consolidate our operations, maintain schedule reliability and continue to improve service delivery to our valued domestic and international customers.

By the end of April, the cabin refurbishment for the Boeing fleet will be completed. To-date two B767s and one B737 have been upgraded to feature new business and economy seats, together with the installation of the state-of-the-art in-seat inflight entertainment system, RAVE. We trust our customers are enjoying the new-look cabin interiors, as well as our friendly cabin service.

An array of cultural festivals and shows will be staged in most provinces; the Mask Festival to be held in July this year in Rabaul, East New Britain Province, will coincide with the Melanesian Arts Festival which will be mainly staged in Port Moresby with plans for some performances and exhibitions to take place in other parts of the country.

For our visitors and residents, I hope you will take the opportunity to experience some of Papua New Guinea and our Melanesian neighbouring countries' performances and displays.

Air Niugini is also preparing for the PNG Games to be held in Lae in November this year. In 2012, when the PNG Games was held in Rabaul, we uplifted approximately 8,000 athletes and officials, as well as interested spectators from other parts of the country. Book early to see the future sports stars of Papua New Guinea.

I am very pleased to add that the 40th anniversary fare which was launched as part of our 40th anniversary celebration last year will continue during February for all domestic flights. Since its launch last year, over 60,000 passengers purchased this commemorative fare and I would like to encourage our customers to book early and take advantage of this great saving.

Enjoy your flight with us today and please do not hesitate to call on our friendly cabin crew for assistance to make your flight more comfortable.

Simon Foo, CBE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**“A smile is the most
important part of my job.”**

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That’s certainly something to smile about.

Elvira Hahis - Flight Attendant.



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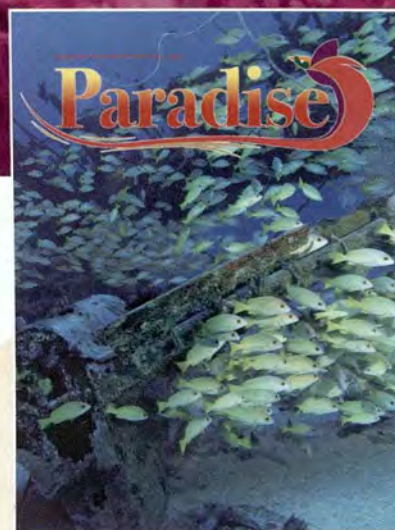
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The Shark Callers of New Ireland 32





Cover photo:
Ken Hoppen



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Services include:

- Short and long term vessel charters
- Reliable cargo liner services
- Fleet of geared, multipurpose vessels ranging from 500DWT to 6000DWT
- All vessels over 500GT are all IACS classed and comply with all international maritime regulations including SOLAS and MARPOL

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- 20,000 square meters of hardstand lay down and storage area

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- Life raft survey and service
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- Alongside berthage up to 60m LOA
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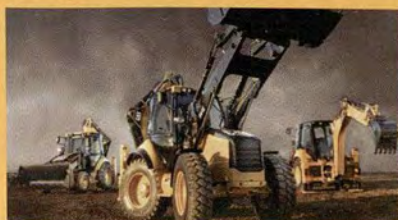
JVS, Coastal, Transport and MES operations map

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If there is anything our cabin crew can assist you with during your flight, please do not hesitate to ask them.

Hand luggage

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

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

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 seat belt sign is switched off.

Children and babies

The cabin crew will also be pleased to assist in preparing your baby's food and bottle. Baby food and diapers are also available. Please do not hesitate to ask our friendly cabin crew.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on any Air Niugini flight.

Entertainment

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

Pillows and blankets

On International flights, pillows and blankets are available on request from our cabin crew.

Cuisine

Our in-flight* meals have been specially prepared for your enjoyment. If you require a vegetarian meal or you are on a special diet, child or baby food, please inform us when making your reservation.

In-flight Duty Free

During the flight take some time to look through our In-flight Duty Free brochure located in your seat pocket. Duty free purchases can be made after Meal Service. All major credit cards are accepted.

Immigration and Customs Forms

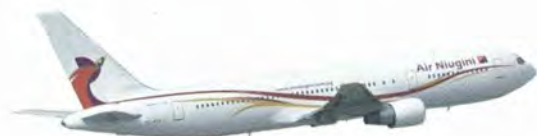
During your flight, our cabin crew will distribute Immigration and Custom forms before each landing point. Ensure that you carefully read and complete these documents and have them ready for inspection with your passport at the Immigration and Customs arrival counters.

Before you leave

Please check your seat pocket and overhead lockers before you disembark to ensure you have not left any items of value. We look forward to seeing you when you next fly with us on our Bird of Paradise Service.



Air Niugini fleet



B767-300ER - Boeing

Length: 59.94m	Power plant: 2 x PW4000
Wing span: 47.57m	Normal altitude: 11000 - 12000m
Range: 8100km	Standard seating capacity: 214
Cruising speed: 857kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 2



B737-800 - Boeing

Length: 39.5m	Power plant: 2 x CFM56 - 7B26
Wing span: 35.79m	Normal altitude: 11300m
Range: 8100km	Standard seating capacity: 158
Cruising speed: 857kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 2



B737-700 - Boeing

Length: 33.6m	Power plant: 2 x CFM56 - 7B22
Wing span: 35.79m	Normal altitude: 11300m
Range: 6370km	Standard seating capacity: 122
Cruising speed: 830kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 1



F100 - Fokker

Length: 35.528m	Power plant: 2 x Rolls Royce Tay 650
Wing span: 28.076m	Normal altitude: 11000m
Range: 3000km	Standard seating capacity: 98
Cruising speed: 780kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 7



DASH 8-Q400 NextGen - Bombardier

Length: 32.8m	Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW150 A
Wing span: 28.49m	Normal altitude: 7500m
Range: 3000km	Standard seating capacity: 74
Cruising speed: 670kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 6



DASH 8-Q315 - Bombardier

Length: 25.7m	Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW123E
Wing span: 24.4m	Normal altitude: 7500m
Range: 1700km	Standard seating capacity: 50
Cruising speed: 510kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 4



DHC-8-202 - Bombardier

Length: 22.25m	Power plant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney PW123D
Wing span: 25.89m	Normal altitude: 7600m
Range: 1800km	Standard seating capacity: 36
Cruising speed: 550kph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 4



Falcon 900EX - Dassault

Length: 20.21m	Power plant: 3 x Honeywell TFE731
Wing span: 19.33m	Maximum altitude: 51000ft
Range: 4500nm	Standard seating capacity: 12
Cruising speed: 650mph	Number of aircraft in fleet: 1

Your wellbeing



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 of sitting. They may be effective in increasing the body's 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 cannot be done with ease.



ANKLE CIRCLES

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

KNEE LIFTS

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

SHOULDER ROLL

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

ARM CURL

Start with arms held high at 90° angle - elbows down, hands out in front. Raise hands up to chest and back down alternating arms. Do these exercises in 30 second intervals.

KNEE TO CHEST

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

FORWARD FLEX

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



OVERHEAD STRETCH

Raise both arms straight up and over your head. With one hand grasp the wrist of the opposite hand and gently pull to one side. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat other side.

SHOULDER STRETCH

Reach right hand over left shoulder. Place left hand behind right elbow and gently press elbow towards shoulder. Hold stretch for 15 seconds. Repeat other side.

NECK ROLL

With shoulders relaxed, drop ear to shoulder and gently roll neck forward and to the other side, holding each position about 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

FOOT PUMPS

Foot motion is in three stages.
1. Start with both heels on the floor and point feet upwards as high as you can.

2. Put both feet flat on the floor.

3. Lift heels high, keeping balls of feet on floor. Continue these three stages with continuous motion in 30 second intervals.



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Your health inflight

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 be 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:

- ✧ Former or current malignant disease
- ✧ Blood disorders leading to increased clotting tendency
- ✧ Personal or family history of DVT
- ✧ Immobilisation for a day or more

- ✧ Increasing age above 40 years
- ✧ Pregnancy
- ✧ Recent major surgery or injury, especially to lower limbs or abdomen
- ✧ Oestrogen hormone therapy, including oral contraceptives
- ✧ 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.
- ◆ Follow our in-flight exercises programme.

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.

Recommendations

- ◆ Get a good night's rest before your flight.
- ◆ Arrive at your destination a day or two early, to give your body a chance to become more acclimatised to the new time zone.
- ◆ Leave your watch on home time if you're staying at a 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, adjust your meal and rest times to be closer to those of your destination.
- ◆ 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. Fly direct to minimise flight time. This allows you to relax more upon arrival.

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.

Recommendations

- ◆ Drink water or juices frequently during the flight
- ◆ Drink coffee, tea and alcohol in moderation. These drinks acts 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.

Recommendations

- ◆ 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 or flu or hay fever your sinuses could be impaired. Swollen membranes in your nose could block your eustachian tubes-the tiny channels between 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, equalizing pressure between your 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 equalize 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 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.



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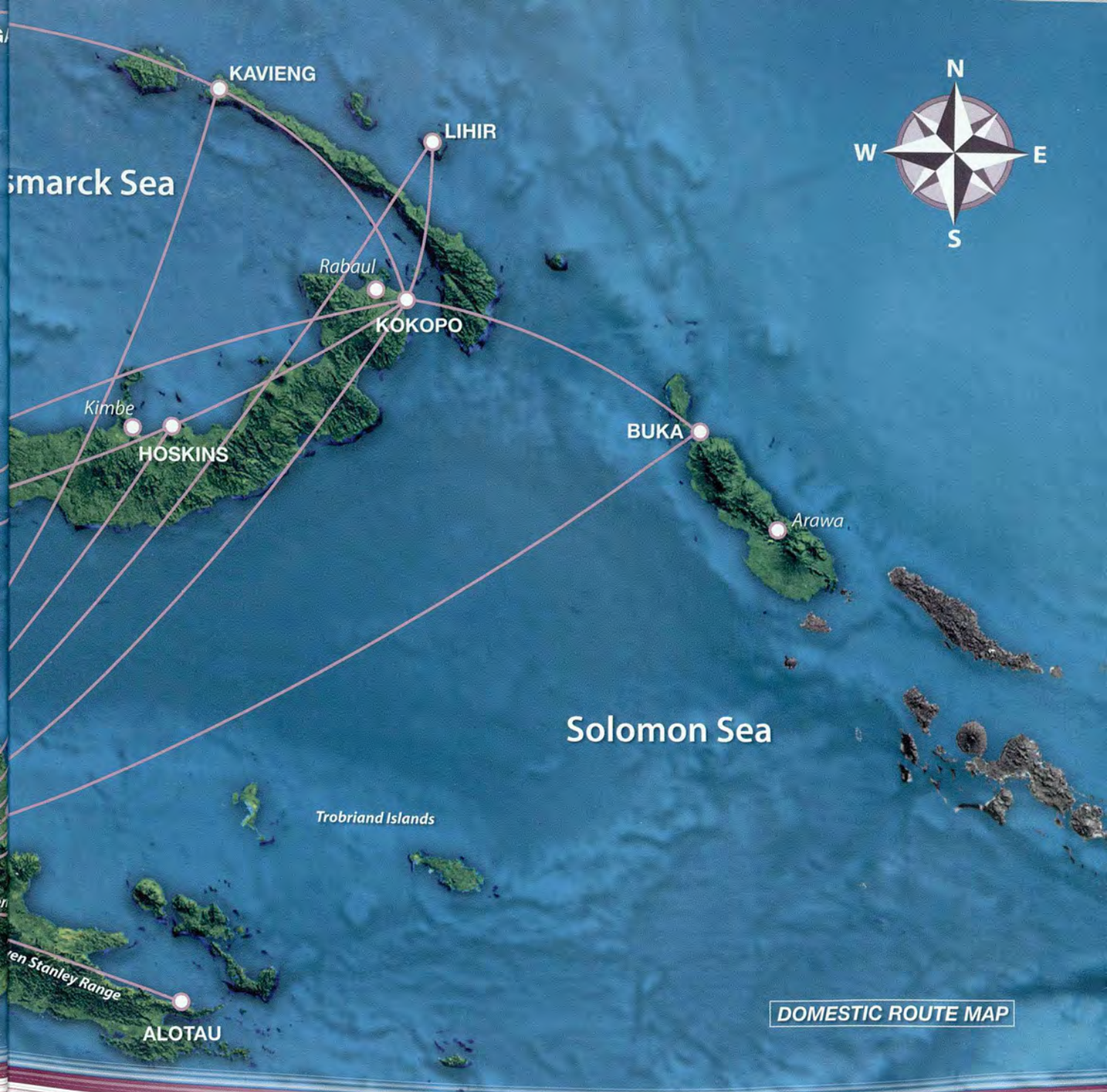
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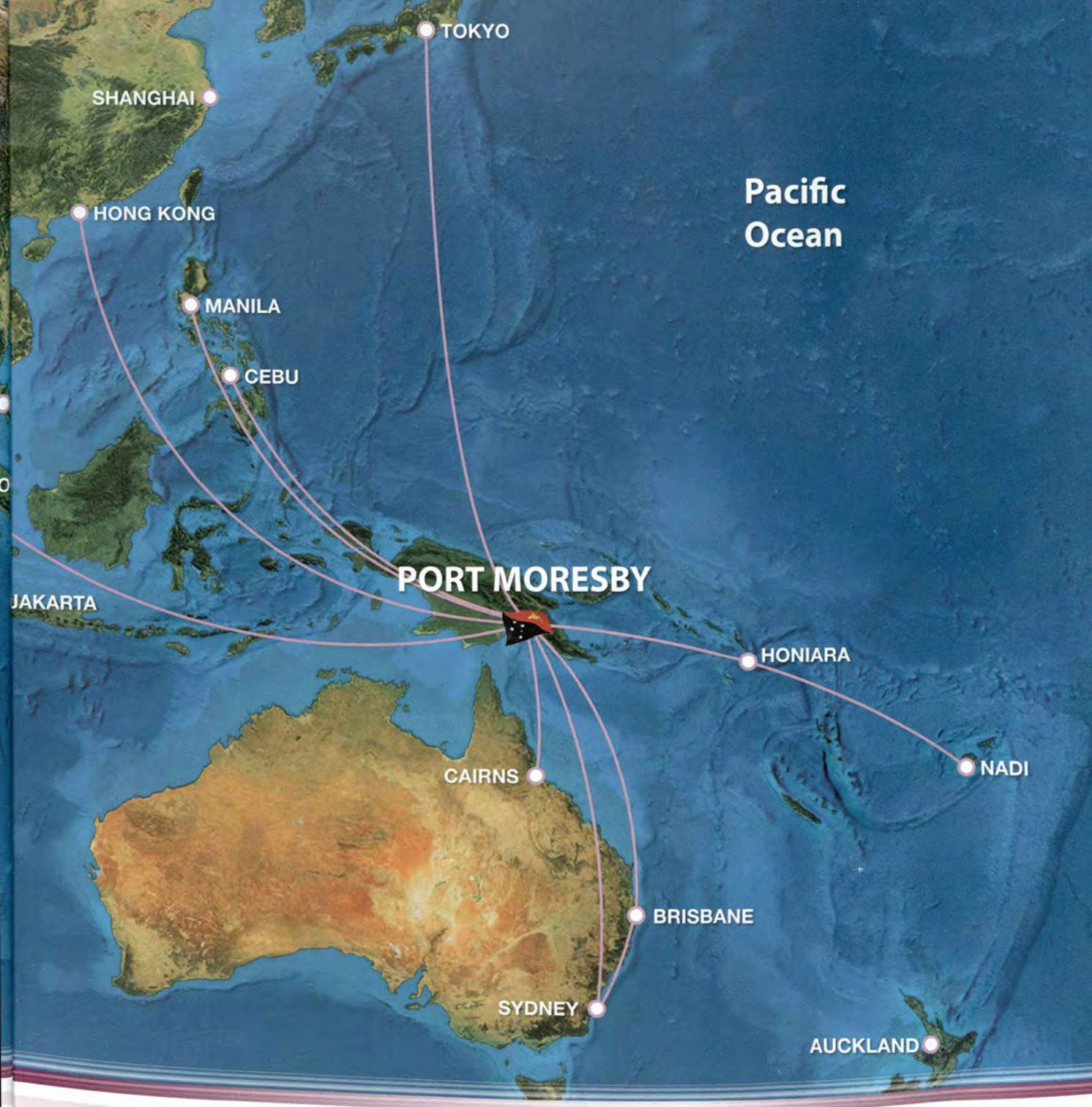
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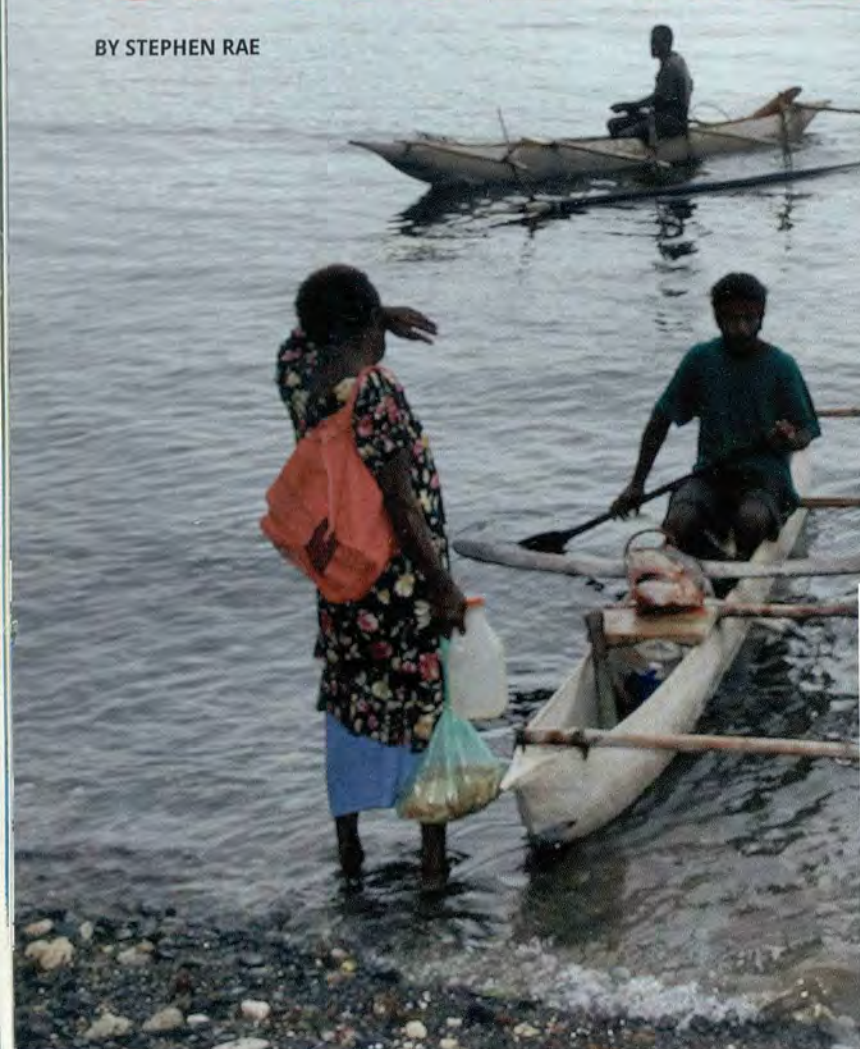
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The Shark Callers of New Ireland

BY STEPHEN RAE



Tears of joy...shark caller being met by his wife after a successful hunt.

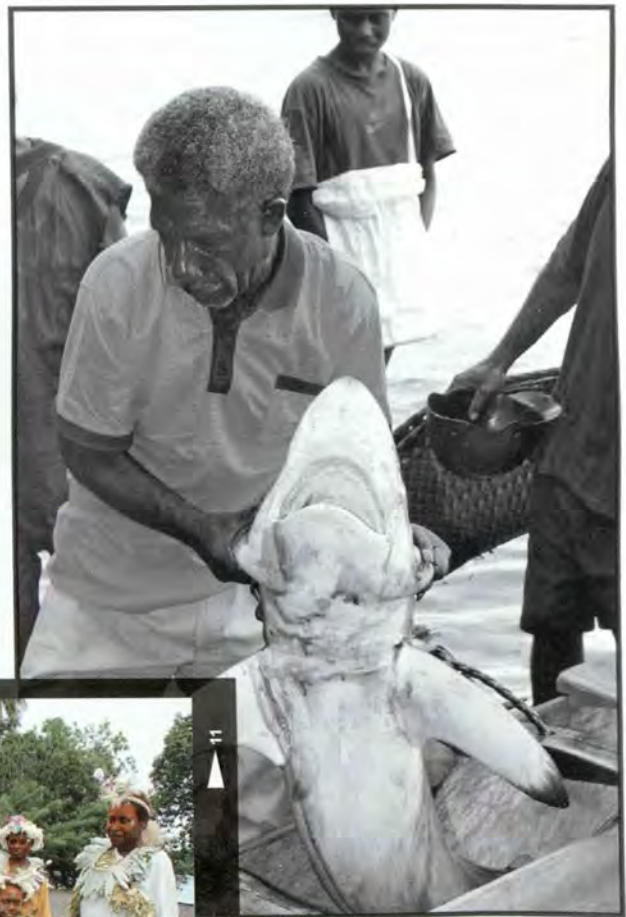
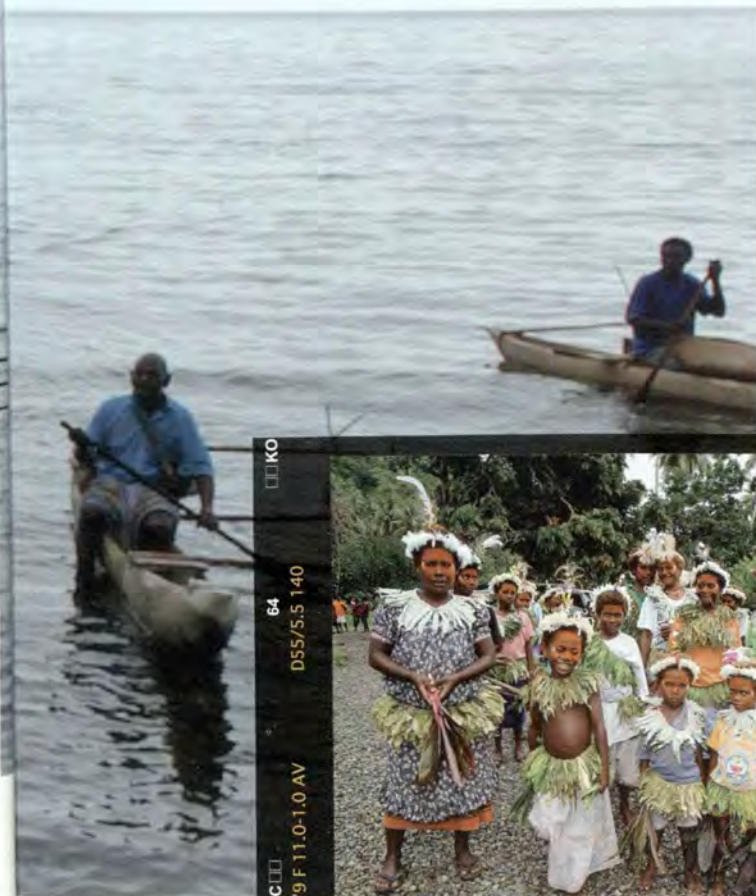
Custom, culture and traditions are synonymous with the people of Papua New Guinea, despite the country becoming more westernised.

Over 85% of the people still live in the rural areas - in the high mountains, vast flatlands and in the hundreds of islands that make up the country. Many of the lands are still untouched by the influence of mining and economic boom. And her people still practice the old ways of their ancestors.

New Ireland, the island province which lies within the confines of the Bismarck Sea in the north of Papua New Guinea, is littered with white sand beaches and a mountainous interior that divides the province.

We travel out of Kavieng town in the far north, down the Boluminski Highway, passing coastal villages before heading south into the interior. One must pass over the mountain ranges to get into the isolated southern part of the island, where electricity and running water a distant dream, telephones an unknown reality, and mountains end at the water's edge.

Numerous small villages and thatched roof built houses line the small dirt track that connects them all as we head west along the coast. This is traditional living with the sea as their backyard. I also have to say too, the greatest collection of blond-haired island kids I have ever seen. Something in the genes maybe.



Top: The shark being displayed.

Left: Tembin village dance group getting ready to perform.

After having a fear of sharks brought about by watching the movie "Jaws" in my youth, I now find myself on the journey to Kontu village to witness the traditional art of shark calling by the locals.

I do recommend however, no swimming in the sea while this three-day cultural festival is happening, for obvious reasons.

Maintaining ties

However, freshwater streams to bathe in and cool off are plentiful, coming down from the mountains that tower above us. A fantastic way to start and end one's day.

The festival is staged anytime between June and July which signals the end of the hunting season and a change in the weather pattern.

It's a three-day event where dance groups from the surrounding local villages plus dance groups from the mountains and the north coast journey to become part of the event.

In a way, it helps to strengthen and maintain ties

between these somewhat distant villages and for a small moment in time, the people of the shark calling villages of Kontu, Tembin and Mesi, proudly display their tradition to all who would listen.

While traditional dancers commence dancing on the festival grounds with intermittent rain and somewhat muddy field, which bothers no one, the men have taken to the canoes in the early morning and paddled out into the open sea.

Shark calling is almost religious in nature as it defines and determines the link between man, creation and shark - a skill and belief that has been practised over many centuries and is unique to this part of PNG.

It is said that there is a spiritual connection between the caller and shark, following the belief of the villagers that their ancestors reside in the bodies of the Mako shark.

By calling to their ancestors, they believe it will bring the shark to them. Strangely enough, often the patterns of the carvings on the side of the shark caller's canoe will match the markings and colourings

The successful shark caller with his catch at the front of the canoe.



The Larung (coconut shell rattle), bamboo noose and conch shell used by the shark caller when he successfully catches a shark.

of the shark's skin, signifying the spiritual connection between man and the beast.

There are a variety of sharks that reside in these waters - from reef sharks, black and silver tips, even the feared tiger and hammerheads. However, the shark caller calls to his ancestors and it is hoped the Mako shark appears.

The hunt

Once close enough to the reef, the shark caller will throw a spear, piercing the coral to arouse "Moru" the shark god, and to signal his arrival. He then uses a larung which is a rattle made up of coconut shells and bamboo. This is used to periodically thrash the water as the shark caller chants the age-old songs and awaits the coming of the shark.

The shark god has been quiet on the first day of the festival as no sound from the conch shell has been heard to symbolise the catching of a shark.

No one is deterred and as night falls and dinner is eaten, stories are told of past fishing exploits, shark catching and the potential for tomorrow's hunt.

The following morning as we eat our breakfast, the shark callers have already left for the open sea and surrounding coral shoals.

On the festival grounds, new dance groups from the north have arrived to take part in the event. There is rejoicing as old friends and family members meet up after a long absence as it is rare to travel to this part of the coast.

Then in the distance, the soft identifiable sound of the conch shell cries out over the festival grounds.



All dancing is stopped and everyone is on the move to the water's edge to witness the unfolding events. Out on the water, we can see the canoes coming together, closing upon one single canoe.



All dancing is stopped and everyone is on the move to the water's edge to witness the unfolding events. Out on the water, we can see the canoes coming together, closing upon one single canoe.

The cry from the conch shell rings out along the coast as all start to paddle to shore, with the successful shark caller leading the way.

He is met by his wife with tears in her eyes, for her man has given great honour and respect to the family by successfully displaying the skills of their forefathers and the first of the shark callers to succeed.

The shark is then presented to the people, photos are taken and chests swell with pride as tradition and culture are maintained by the shark callers of New Ireland.

On the rocky shore, the shark is then cut up

and the meat shared between the various families with the successful shark caller retaining the fin and a healthy portion for his immediate family to feast on.

Rituals

To enable the shark caller to be successful, he must follow certain rituals on land, out at sea, chant the songs and shake the rattle - to attract a shark close to his canoe.

He must then catch the shark by placing a noose made of platted cane attached to a wooden propeller float. By using bait, he then lures the shark into the noose.

Once captured and unable to move forward, the shark struggles violently before either slowly drowning or the wooden float brings it to the surface, where the shark caller must use a club and bash and kill the shark before pulling it aboard his canoe. It is sometimes a bloody affair.



Even though it's the biggest time of the year for the area as many local people travel to take part in the festival, the festival dates change depending on the will of the sea and the weather, amongst other things. But people do come. We saw a French advisor working for a local NGO in the country hitching a ride to the festival with her daughter. The cute white kid made an impact with the local children. It also shows that people are welcomed and the growing desire for more tourists to witness their tradition.

Keep an eye on the Tourism Promotion Authority's website or even the New Ireland Tourist Bureau on the exact dates. But if you're lucky, you can also catch the Malagan and the Yamat cultural festivals on the north side of the island which showcase many of the traditional masks of the region.

Accommodation is available in the few bungalows, guesthouses and homestays they have between Tembin and Kontu villages. Locals are happy to help out and they're excited to see you. Travel time from Kavieng is about three hours on a good day and remember bring heaps of bottled water.

The festivals are an endless and exciting opportunity to witness the culture and traditions of the many tribes of Papua New Guinea, so be brave and venture forth.

The festivals are an endless and exciting opportunity to witness the culture and traditions of the many tribes of Papua New Guinea, so be brave and venture forth.





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— ALWAYS A PLEASURE —

Lesley's Art

Carving out a lifestyle between two worlds



BY BETHA SOMARE

Young children run to the edge of the riverbank to see the houseboat come in while someone calls out to the others, 'Come see Lesley'.

For many, it would have been two generations ago that art dealer Lesley Martin first started buying artifacts on the Sepik River. Very little has changed. Life expectancy is still low and many of the elders have passed away and the new generation is being introduced to Lesley again for the first time.

Lesley is now over 60 years old and intends to return a couple more times to the river before calling it quits.

Her parents came to the Sepik in 1949 (64 years ago) and lived out most of their lives there. Her late father Frank Martin was a member of the House of Assembly before being unseated by Michael Somare in 1968.

Her late mother Laura was affectionately known as Mama blong ol Sepik. Lesley recalls that the expats that left at independence looked down on families like hers that opted to stay in the newly independent PNG.

Being refused citizenship in PNG, Lesley finally settled in the United States where she raised her late sister's children. This did not stop from her returning to PNG and the Sepik almost every year until the recent Global Financial Crisis of 2008.

She admits that making ends meet in America has been difficult but considers herself fortunate to be able to return home to PNG.

The Sepik is a vast area to cover, so Lesley visits different places on different trips. This time, she focused on the Upper Sepik starting from the relatively large village of Kupkain where she bought elaborately decorated stools, male and female paddles, canoe prows, tops for a game to resolve village disputes and ceremonial penis gourds.

Leaving Kupkain on the main Sepik River, she travelled up the April River. Lesley had not visited parts of the April River like Kakiru and Bitara in about 10 years and noted how much smaller the villages had become.

She was not quite sure why there were fewer houses and people but says there was a spate



How much? Lesley Martin checking out the artifacts.

of deaths 10 years ago that forced the Kakiru people to seek out a new place on the river to resettle.

She enquired about elders she knew in these two villages but was told they had died years ago. The remoteness of these villages meant there were no regular visitors and almost everyone had stopped carving.

Lesley was able to pick up a carving of the one legged spirit from Kakiru and other small items like the cassowary bone daggers with traditional markings and pigs' tusks.

In Bitara, she picked up some clan boards and another carving of the one legged spirit.

Powerful deity

Before Christianity and independence, the one legged spirit was a powerful deity in the area. Aripa, as the one legged spirit is known in parts of the Sepik (Karawari), was feared and revered and always kept hidden in the haus tambaran (spirit house) and used by elders through magic to inflict harm and even cause the deaths of opponents.

But today they are ornamental hooks devoid of power and sold to tourists and art

collectors. But the stories of its power are still sacred and never shared with women, children and non-initiates.

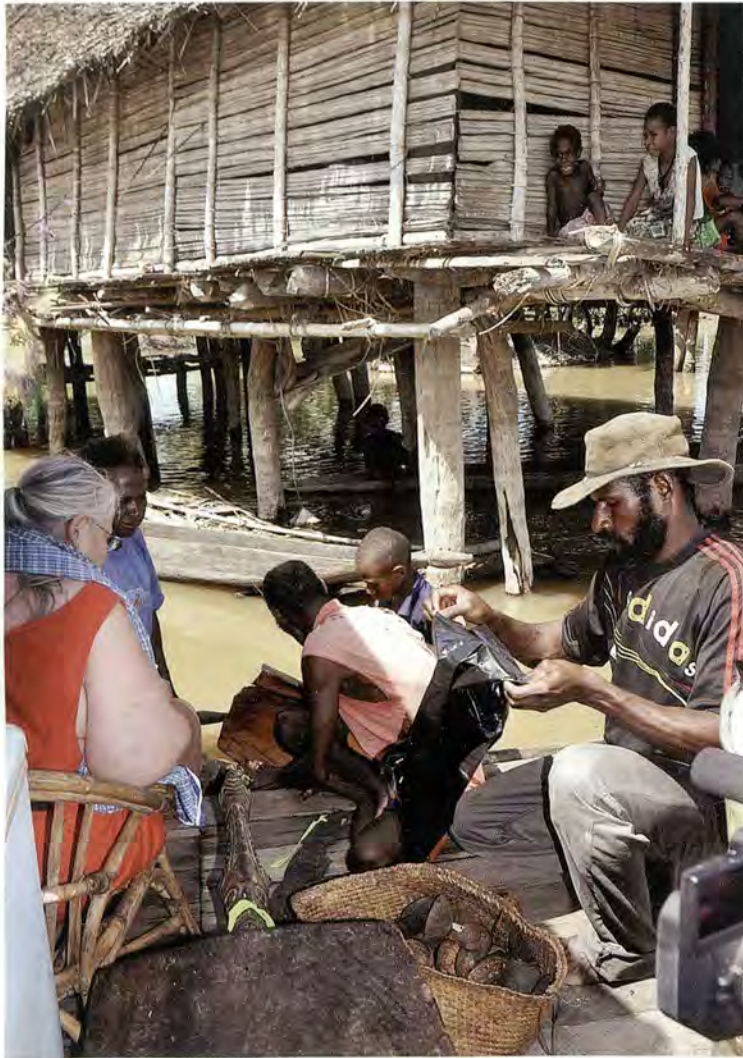
The clan boards are designs and markings of different clans of a particular spirit house and are used to decorate the façades of these haus tambarans in the Upper and Middle Sepik areas.

The many artifacts available for sale.



“Each clan has its own designs that go back generations and it is forbidden to copy the design of another clan,” says Lesley.

As the April River was still high, Lesley was also able to easily visit using a smaller boat the remote Paru village where she picked up some more clan boards, a dagger and a shield before travelling down river again to the village of Wogamosh.



Lesley's interest in the Sepik River began when she was nine years old while accompanying her late father Frank on his campaign trail.

As the regional member for East Sepik at the time, Frank and daughter Lesley covered Wewak District including the Schouten Islands, Maprik, Yangoru, Angoram, Ambunti and Wosera electorates. From these early visits, she became fond of her province and its people and developed a deep understanding of their arts, culture and traditions.

Lesley said: “I started in 1983 buying artifacts in my home Sepik Province and taking them to America to sell; to try and come up with a life that combined both places because I missed being here and I liked being there.

Two different worlds

“I consider myself very lucky to be able to come out here almost every year for 30 years and collecting traditional art has allowed me to call two different worlds home.”

Over the years, Lesley has also brought out groups of overseas visitors to the Sepik. Before this current second houseboat, Lesley says they used dugout canoes and slept in villages.

The houseboat has the luxury of a toilet on board, but all else is rudimentary. The 1.6kva generator runs a small freezer and charges mobile phones. And Lesley's laptop is turned on in the morning and turned off in the afternoon. She has a single burner stove and a 13kg bottle of gas is more than enough to last her an average 10-day trip on the river.

The crew on Lesley's houseboat - Pius, Bahm and Jambé - have been with her for more than 20 years.

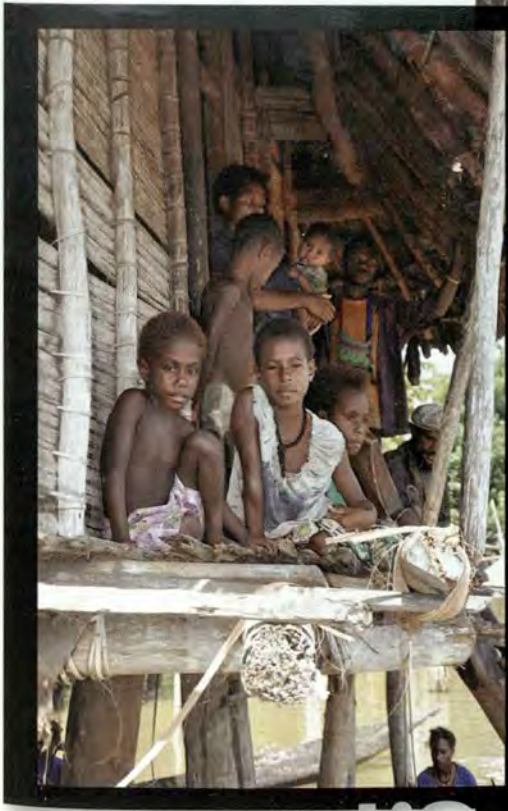
Pius Apiak (the captain) says in tokpisin, “I hadn't even started shaving yet when I first began working with Laura (Lesley's mother) then later with Lesley. Over the years, we've had our differences but we've all grown together and all need each other.”

Pius of Kambaramba in the Lower Sepik is a motor mechanic and takes care of the overall running of the houseboat.

Jambé, also of Kambaramba village in the Lower Sepik, built the 30 x 12ft houseboat that sits on two 64-foot kwila dugout canoes that come from the May River.

Previously in the Sepik the preferred timber to build dugouts was the red cedar but they have all been used to build canoes over the years and are now hard to find along the river.

The dugout canoes serving as two large hulls are also used to store artifacts and the beams holding up the roof of the houseboat



allow for smaller pieces to be stored above.

Getting back on the main Sepik River again from the April River, Lesley visited Swagap. The language of this Ngala tribe is unique to this village but the culture is similar to that of the Iatmul of the Middle Sepik and the Wogamosh of the Upper Sepik.

The tides had receded on the main river so the normal passage into the village was blocked forcing Lesley to take a detour to the bottom end of the village where men were carving their canoes.

She pulled up just outside where the haus tambaran used to be so the women and children in the village stayed clear of the site and looked on at a distance as Lesley talked to the men.

No trouble shopping

The Swagap's totem is the grasshopper and Lesley picked up a stunningly well-decorated clan board in the shape of a grasshopper, some ornately carved paddle tops, a double-sided mask used for ceremonies (singsings) and other pieces unique to this village.

Leaving Swagap, Lesley headed for Amaki. These villages are not close together and it takes a day through small waterways off the main Sepik River to reach the two Amaki villages at the foot of the Waskuk Hills.

Lesley had no trouble shopping here. The

two villages had three main spirits for fertility, wellbeing and power namely Yina, Minja and Nokwi.

Lesley knows the traditional pieces of each village and can tell you the legends behind them. She collects traditional art, not necessarily old pieces and would like to see more buyers as well as tourists return to the Sepik so the people can continue to etch out a living from selling their traditional art.

"Obviously for art dealers like me, I have to have a market where I can sell pieces that I buy," said Lesley.

Lesley has a warehouse in San Diego, California, and a shop in Santa Fé, New Mexico, where she sells collections she gathers mainly from PNG but also from China, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

She sells her objects of art to museums, art collectors,



Lesley...a welcomed visitor in the Sepik.

individuals, and among others, small jewellers in America. But being able to return each year to PNG and export traditional art and artifacts means Lesley has to comply with strict requirements of the National Museum and the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Officials fly out to Wewak and check all her items to ensure none are heritage items or other items that are banned for export

while environment officials check the classification of feathers, lizard skins and other animal parts on the pieces that have been collected.

This ensures that no protected animal species are leaving the country in a clandestine manner.

In Port Moresby, these items undergo a further inspection to see that everything

matches before permits are issued for their shipment. Many buyers have been banned for one reason or another which ultimately affects people in communities like Sepik that rely heavily on this important means of income.

A villager said, "We are very happy to see Lesley as buyers are not coming here anymore and many of our carvings have become firewood.

Lesley with her crew and behind them is her houseboat.



“Only some can harvest cocoa or hunt crocodile but everyone carves or makes traditional ornaments and artifacts. It is a good way of ensuring everyone in the village gets some money to buy items such as soap and kerosene.”

The Director of the National Museum, Dr Andrew Moutu encourages bona fide buyers such as Lesley to make more trips to remote parts of PNG. He also says however that, “The responsibility is also on buyers to report their activities to appropriate authorities for monitoring. Ignorance of the law will result in the imposition of bans that are not good for anyone.”

Invariably in each village someone would ask Lesley when she intends to return. She tells them and they assure her that they will have more items ready when she returns.

The Sepik was once full of spirits whose images are still kept alive today through art. Hopefully, when Lesley finally stops collecting art, there will be a new generation of interested visitors to enable these traditional craftsmen to maintain their skills and proudly display images of spirits that were once central in the lives of their ancestors.



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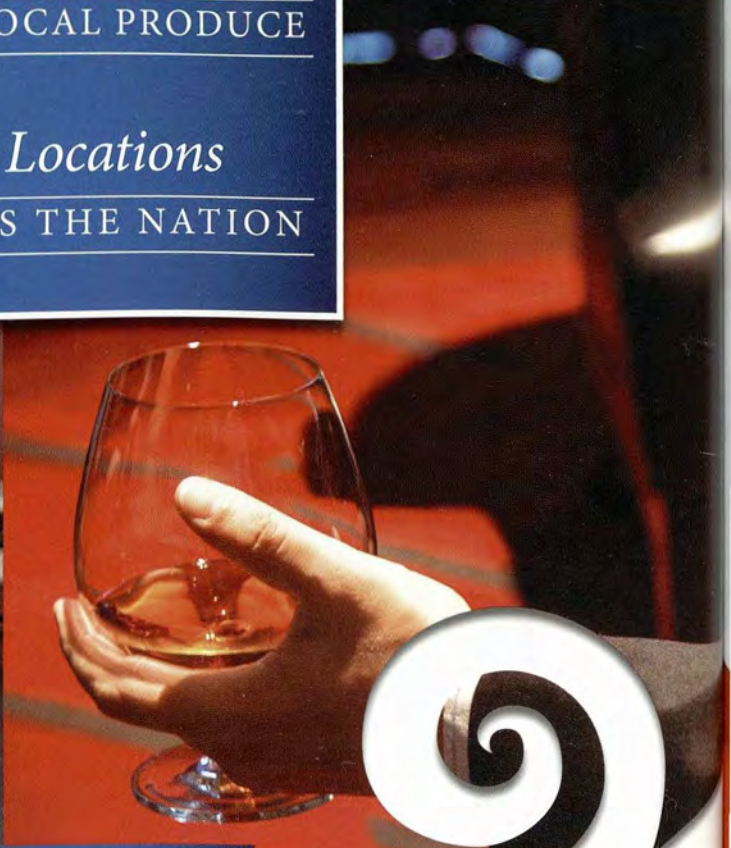
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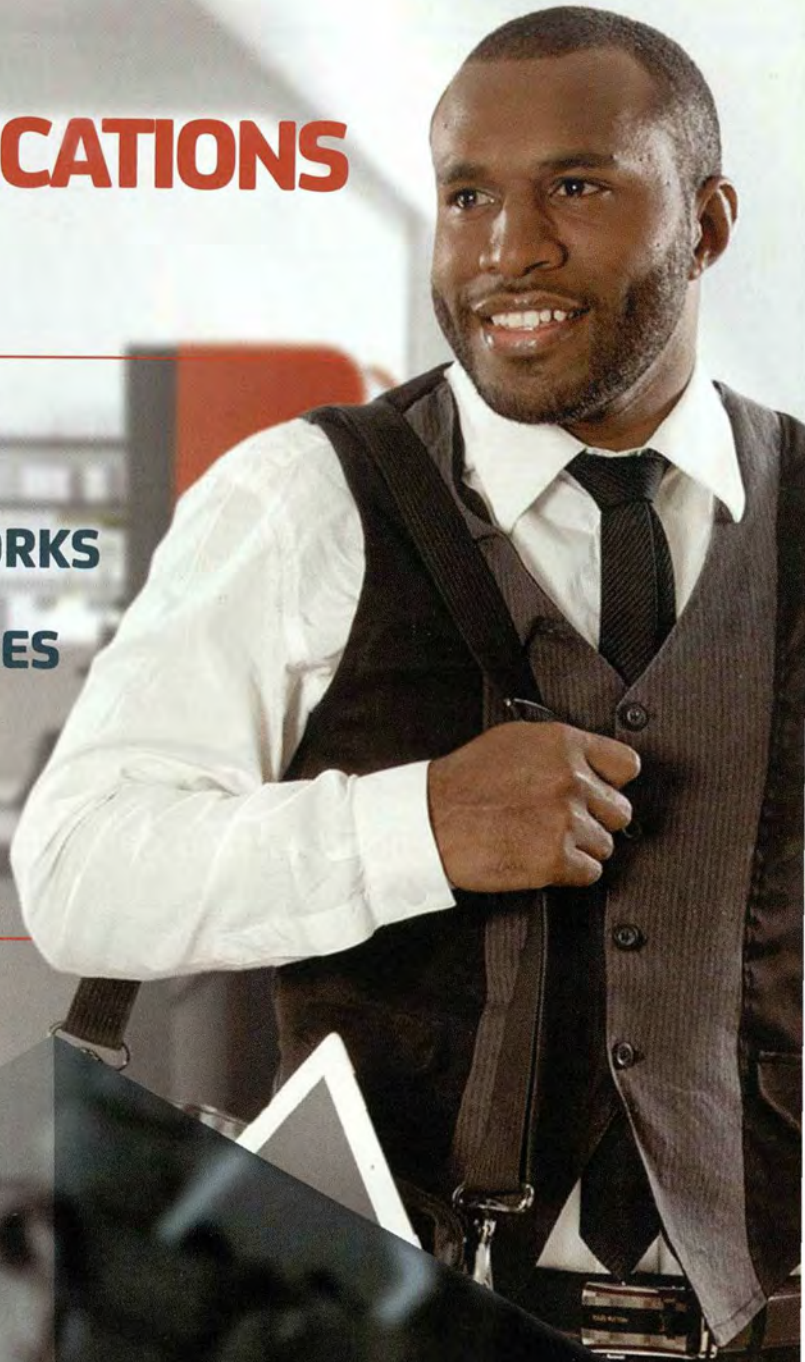
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Creating Business opportunities for Papua New Guineans

The Spirit of Balangut which made a rare appearance in Madang recently.



Drifting peacefully near the Coronation Drive waterfront, stealthily rotating with the tide, the Balangut made a rare appearance in Madang recently.

This giant two-masted canoe with a superstructure in the centre painted in the Madang colours of red, white and black to accompany the natural brown wood delighted visitors to the Madang Festival. Many stopped by to capture the rare image on their cameras and mobile phones.

Aptly named the Spirit of the Balangut, this sea-going vessel of the Bel speaking people who inhabit the coastal areas and islands around Madang town had rarely been seen for nearly 70 years. In fact, there had been concerns that the knowledge to build this once famous trading vessel that plied the coast of Madang may have been lost. Therefore, the appearance of the Spirit of the Balangut - which was built by the Bilbil villagers just south of Madang - was a great relief.

The last time a similar vessel was built was in 1978 also by Bilbil villagers. This vessel was a smaller version of the Balangut known as the Lalong. Generally, a Balangut (also known as Palangut) is 10 to 12 metres long while the Lalong is less than 10 metres. The canoes were widely used in Madang from Karkar, Riwo, Siar, Krangket, Yabob, Bilbil, Suit, Singor to Bongu in Rai Coast.

The Spirit of *Balangut* Makes a rare appearance

BY PATRICK MATBOB



The Bilbil people who made and traded their famous clay pots as far as parts of Morobe province, used both types of canoes. Other Bel villages also built the canoes and traded food and valuables such as wooden plates and bowls, tobacco, loin cloth, betel nut, sago, taro, paint, weapons and meat.

The 1978 project was encouraged by well-known historian Mary Mennis who was living in Madang at the time. Mennis was concerned that the knowledge to build these canoes was dying out. She found out at the time that the last canoe was built in the late 1930s. The story of the canoe project can be found in her book *'A Potted History of Madang'* published in 2006. A shorter version with pictures was also reproduced by PARADISE magazine in 1979.

The Balangut and the Lalong have been defined by Haddon and Hornell as five-part canoes with the hull, the wash-strakes on each side and the breakwaters at each end and an outrigger on one side.

Nikolai Maclay, the famous Russian explorer to live amongst the Bongu people of Rai Coast, was one of the first foreigners to describe the traditional vessels which he called pirogues. Maclay was amazed at their size and beauty and sailed in them along the coast finding them very comfortable.

He described them as made from bush materials with tools of shell, bone, wood, bamboo, stone and decorated in bright ochres. He gave an account of their construction: "In general, everything in the pirogue is fitted out very conveniently and nowhere in the hut was any space wasted.

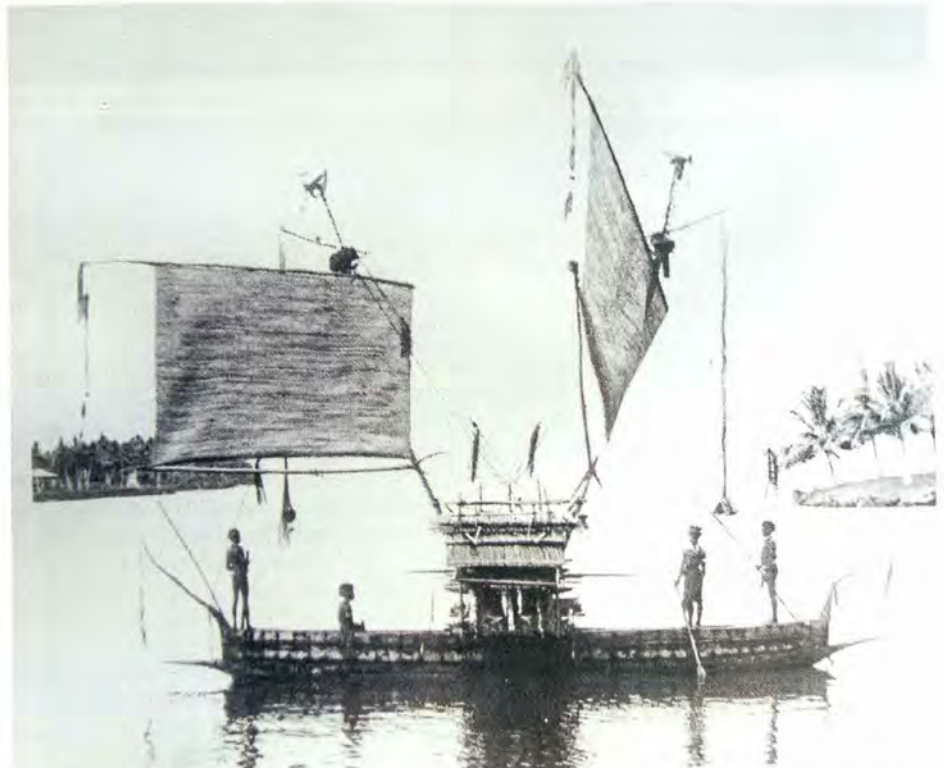
"I found the proposed accommodation very convenient for me, being lighter and cleaner than a hut, and the idea came to me right away to use a similar large pirogue in

due course for visiting villages along the coast."

The arrival of modern vessels built by Chinese boat-builders on Siar Island near Madang provided the first serious competition to the production of the Balangut and the Lalongs. The locals opted for the foreign boats which they could buy with cash or with pigs using the local bartering system.

The Bel found the new vessels more convenient as it cuts down the amount of time and work it took to build the canoes. The Balangut and the Lalong lasted only up to five years and so building them was a regular and demanding occupation.

Late Ber Nansi of Yabob was interviewed by Mennis in 1981 and this is what he said about the why the locals preferred the Chinese boats: "You know these big canoes; there is a lot of work making them.





"The men build them and go to Rai Coast. Then they come back and the canoe sits on the beach. Then they go and come a few more times and then they have passed their usable life. So we decided to sell pots for money and make some copra and also grow vegetables for the locals working in town. We would invite them to have a party here too and cook vegetables. The money from all of this was enough to buy a Chinese boat."

However, the demand for these vessels did not last as the introduction of the modern cash economy began rapidly to replace the ancient trading system. The arrival of the aluminum cooking pots soon reduced the demand for clay pots.

Likewise, other items that were traded such as wooden plates and bowls, tobacco, traditional weapons and food were no longer in demand as modern equivalents could be bought in Chinese merchant shops around Madang.



Also the clearing of forests for plantations by the German Neu Guinea Kompagnie depleted the supply of large trees used for making the canoes. In fact, in the past, logs for the hull and parts of the canoes were also traded as they were not easily available.

For instance, the log for the hull of the 1978 Lalong project was carved and supplied by a Krangket islander to the Bilbil people. Today, there is some demand for large clay pots for cooking and bride price payments. However, clay pots are mostly being produced in smaller sizes as souvenirs for tourists and visitors to buy.

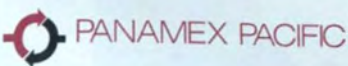
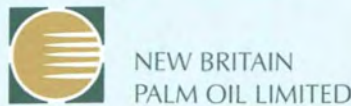
Without the demand for traditional vessels, the continued production of the Balangut and the Lalong is still not guaranteed except as museum pieces. The Spirit of the Balangut now sits on the beach at its home in Bilbil, its future uncertain.

Maybe, the Madang Festival can learn from the Port Moresby Hiri Moale Festival that features the traditional Lakatoi and ensures its construction each year. Making the Balangut and Lalong as the centerpieces in the Madang Festival can keep alive the knowledge of the construction of these ancient vessels and their colourful history.



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Faces of Dance

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK

Three women prance around, shaking their rattles, facing the two rows of their male and female counterparts singing and stepping rhythmically towards them, presumably urging them on as they gradually move backwards.

It was the Seane Koluba dance from the Fasu village of Fogomaiyu - the women with black cassowary headdresses and the men with jet black markings around their eyes and splendid, towering white semi-circular headpieces adorned with the odd contrasting coloured feather or two.

Celebrations tend to bring out the best in people. Today, there is a sense of freedom and desire to join in - in some way, no matter how small.

Even if not dancing, people wanted to feel involved in the festivities on this special day. The most common by local villagers and overseas tourists alike is having one's face painted.

The occasion was the Kutubu Kundu

and Digaso Festival held recently at Fiwaga village - a spectacular showcase for the cultures of the Lake Kutubu area of the Southern Highlands, with traditional dance groups from different ethnic groups vying to win prestige and cash prizes.

Appropriately, the festival dance arena, where the audience respectfully kept behind the flimsy barriers, sits in the shadow of a magnificent men's longhouse constructed on a ridge line with views to the horizon.

This communal men's dwelling, more than 100 metres long, is flanked on either side by rows of more humble residences for the women and children of the men who sleep in the longhouse alongside the fireplaces of their respective clans.

The dress and body decoration demonstrates the diversity of culture between neighbouring groups whose interactions were traditionally limited to trading, warfare or perhaps marriage.

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Today, with increasing levels of education and the movement of people as students, teachers, health workers or employees of government and other organisations, there is much more mixing of people belonging to these unique ethnic communities.

Many women in particular wore the traditional rain capes common to people in the Foe-speaking area, beaten from the bark of the tulip trees.

When new, these capes are a brighter pale buff colour which gradually fades with age to a dull brown. They are sometimes painted for use in dances; bush rope bilums are then carried around the head on top of these capes.

This was the third Kundu and Digaso Festival, blessed on its first day with perfect clear blue skies although the second day was initially a little damper.

It was the first festival held after its recognition by the National Cultural Commission earlier in 2013 as a national cultural event. The theme being "Our forest, Our culture".

Overseas visitors included the youngest son of the late Murray Rule, inaugural missionary to the Kutubu area who arrived with the Unevangelised Field Mission, now part of the Evangelical Church of PNG, in 1951. He had come along with his son and others to show them the places where he had spent some of his childhood years.



A total of 13 dance groups participated in the festival - those from Fasu and Foe-speaking villages such as Damaiyu, Fiwaga, Fogomaiyu and Yo'obo, along with singing troupes from the Onabasalu-speaking people of Mount Bosavi, villages in the Samberigi Valley to the south-east and another from Vearibari village on the Kikori River.

Although the songs and dances were the highlight of the show, there were also other aspects of traditional culture that were on display including basket weaving, bilum making, bows and arrows and playing of musical harps.

As the festival title suggests, there was a focus on the various types of drums used and the importance of Digaso oil to the Foe and Fasu people. Although these groups were traditionally middlemen in the multi-stranded trade networks between the Highlands and the coastal communities, this plant oil was the only product they actually made themselves.

Digaso oil is extracted from the sap of a particular tree, *Camposperma brevipetiolata*, collected from a cavity cut



in the trunk and which turns dark on exposure to the air. It is used to give the skin a sheen in sing-sings.

The oil was a source of wealth, traded in bamboo containers with the Huli communities to the north-west, Nipa and Poroma communities to the north-east, as well as south to the people of Baina and upper Kikori River communities.



In exchange, these trading partners provided the Foe and Fasu with black palm bows, Bird of Paradise plumes, pigs, tobacco, cowries, pearl shell, salt, stone axe heads and other essentials of traditional village life.

Kundu drums in the Kutubu area have two distinctive shapes, one with a round, flat and bulbous base whilst the other has a bottom which is more pointed or 'fish-tailed', very similar to designs found along the Papuan coast.

The drum head is made from the skin of a tree snake, stretched and held in place with a glue of tree sap and a band of woven cane. Fine tuning is achieved by attaching blobs of beeswax to the drum skin; during use the skin is kept taut by gently heating it, which is why the dancers during breaks carried pieces of smouldering firewood with them, also useful to light cigarettes of course!



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Drum decoration is black, white and red reflecting the pigments available from wood ash, limestone and the seeds of the Bixa tree respectively.

Interestingly, the drums are one of just a very few traditional products that were manufactured, the others being shallow wooden bowls, woven bilums and baskets and rattles filled with plant seeds, as used by many of the dancers.

Performing their various dances, accompanied by rhythmic chants in their particular tok ples, the gaudily decorated and adorned participants invariably have rather severe expressions - culture is obviously a serious business!

In some ways a photographer's nightmare - only rarely does a smile crack the dancers' stern faces.

The variety of culture that the festival highlights from just this one small part of Southern Highlands is a microcosm of the diversity that still exists across Papua New Guinea as a whole. As illustrated here, the faces of dance - the performers as well as those in the audience - are nothing if not colourful.

Festivals like this are evidence that traditional cultures are alive and well in Papua New Guinea and can exist side by side with all the changes that rural communities have to manage as development, in whatever form, proceeds.

In line with the theme of the festival, development of people and their natural resources can go hand in hand with the continuation of traditional culture and practices - merging the best of both!



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at times was to be seen racing the most fit member of the group, Joe Knight, to the finishing line.

The tour company provided mountain bikes which were in great condition. The younger members of our group, Nathan and Ruth - the eight and seven-year old, were provided with new bikes on the first morning of our ride. The island cycling tours hadn't catered for such young riders before.

Day 1 - saw the team fitted out with the correct size bikes and helmets and after a substantial breakfast, we rode out towards the south-east on a flat sealed road. The first stop of the day was Laraibina eel farm to feed the large freshwater eels.

An unreal experience

Our host here was Cathy Hiob, an ex-Air Niugini cabin crew. This was an unreal experience for everyone, as we stood in knee-deep water with large eels sliding between our legs.

We patted them as they were fed tuna from one of the carers. Lunch was on the road. In the afternoon, we cycled to Fissoa Waterhole to enjoy a swim in the crystal clear, cold, freshwater.

Loading all the bikes into the truck and climbing into the bus, we drove to the Bol Guest House for a traditional welcome

Cycling New Ireland

BY ROBERT KNIGHT

The extended Knight families have been holidaying in Papua New Guinea for several years. Driving, camping, trekking and diving to name a few. So it wasn't surprising when the leader of the group, Dik Knight, suggested the families try cycling.

So the plan was that we cycle the iconic flat Boluminski Highway, New Ireland, starting in Kavieng - the provincial capital - and finishing in Namatanai, a distance of 280km.

Our trip was planned by Shaun from Nusa Island. Shaun had enlisted the help of Kavieng local guide, John Knox and his cycling friend Terrance and 4WD, driver Paul, who would provide the group with exceptional hospitality and an in-depth knowledge of the island.

Terrance cycled with the group the whole journey and



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and a cultural immersion. The host Demas Kavavu is a high chief of the island. Demas is passionate about keeping his culture alive and prepared a traditional mumu with pork, sweet potato and taro, more than enough for us after a long day cycling.

Day 2 - An early start after a great night's rest and healthy substantial breakfast. The first stop for morning tea was at the Laxasilang Guesthouse, Malom.

Our host Cathy Nason provided us with tea and coffee and the exclusive use of the beautiful gardens which included a small freshwater stream gushing from the mountains into the sea. Some distance down the road, we stopped at the master carver, Ben Sisia's Libba village. Ben is the last remaining craftsman living in New Ireland.

We cycled to Konas village for lunch where the ladies of the village prepared fresh fruit, tea and coffee.

Many of the locals along the way had made

Many of the locals along the way had made floral garlands which they handed to us, or ceremoniously placed around our necks as we cycled passed each village. Some of us would end the day adorned in floral arrangements. The local people enjoyed our presence and encouraged us by waving or running alongside.



floral garlands which they handed to us, or ceremoniously placed around our necks as we cycled passed each village. Some of us would end the day adorned in floral arrangements. The local people enjoyed our presence and encouraged us by waving or running alongside.

They were always happy and delighted to see us. The remainder of the afternoon was spent cycling to Dalom Village.

The hosts at Dalom were Kana and Melika. The village and guesthouse are nestled on the mouth of a large swift flowing stream, where it entered the ocean.

The location was stunning with white fine sand and aqua blue cold water flowing into a deep blue ocean. The guesthouses were spacious and open - allowing the breezes to flow through.

Big cycle day

Many of the family members were swimming until dark - moving from salt to freshwater. After a day's cycling and an afternoon of swimming, most of us were in bed by 7pm.

Day 3 was a big cycle, taking on hills and unpaved roads. We stopped at a small private school in Karagan village, run by Emmanuel and his daughter. Emmanuel

offered us free coconuts for refreshments. By the end of the morning, we had ridden to our finish line at Rubio Plantation Resort.

We stayed two days at Rubio enjoying the hospitality of Shane and his wife, the owner-managers. Rubio, a surfing/diving resort, offers excellent food and accommodation.

Rubio Plantation is a great surfing and swimming resort and Shane will drive you to the best surf along the coast if you are searching for the big waves. Guests spend many weeks at Rubio. It's such a relaxing peaceful place.

Day 4 - After a final swim in the morning, we reluctantly drove some 200km back to Kavieng. Our final night in New Ireland was spent on Nusa Island Retreat, managed by Shaun and friends. The island is across the water from Kavieng so after a wait at the wharf, we found ourselves again at a beautiful place, offering bungalow accommodation and a grand feast for dinner. The kids spent the remainder of the afternoon swimming in the ocean and some of us went trawling. Others strolled to the local village to look at the shell jewellery.

Our early departure the next morning meant that we didn't get to explore all that Nusa had to offer. Nusa Island Retreat is again a multi-sport resort offering surfing, diving and fishing. The hospitality is great and the staff are very helpful.

The remainder of our holiday was spent in New Britain. We flew to Kokopo Airport and drove to Rabaul to climb Mt Taruvur, an active volcano, sightseeing as we went.

The final few days were spent at Walindi Plantation Resort, owned by the Benjamin





Family, Max and Cecelia. It's a splendour on the coast of East New Britain lapped by the waters of the Bismarck Sea. All of us were treated to days of snorkelling, walks, guided tours of the new Oil Palm refinery and trips to hot water streams.

At night, we relaxed with drinks on the deck, enjoyed restaurant quality food, complete with grand wines. Every morning it was a treat to wander through the enchanting tropical gardens and take in the splendour of the beautiful birds, plants and flowers of West New Britain.

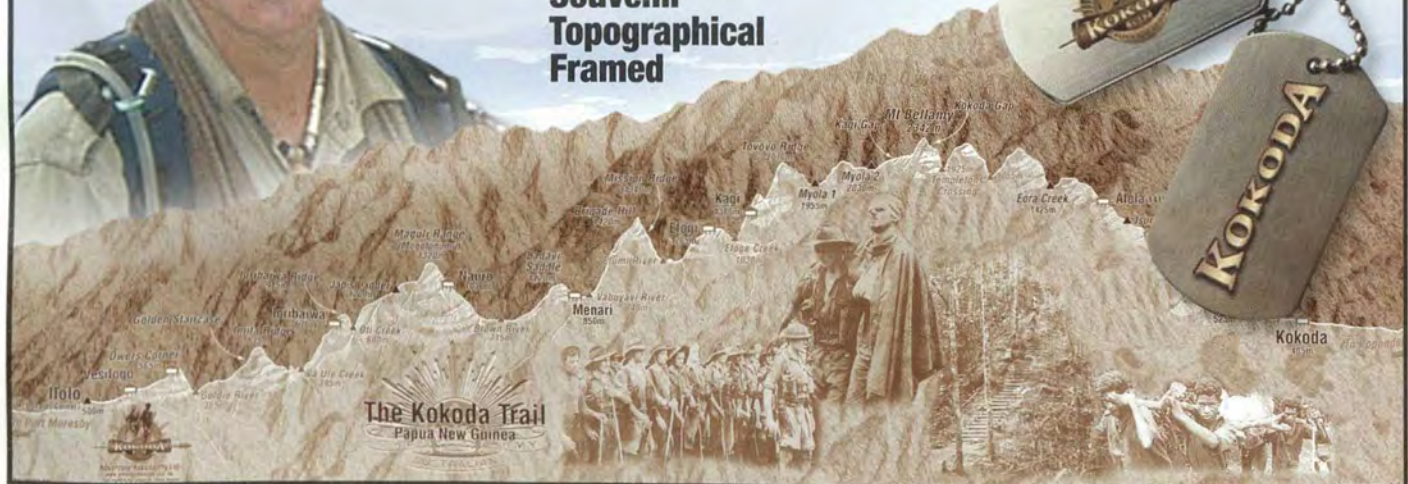
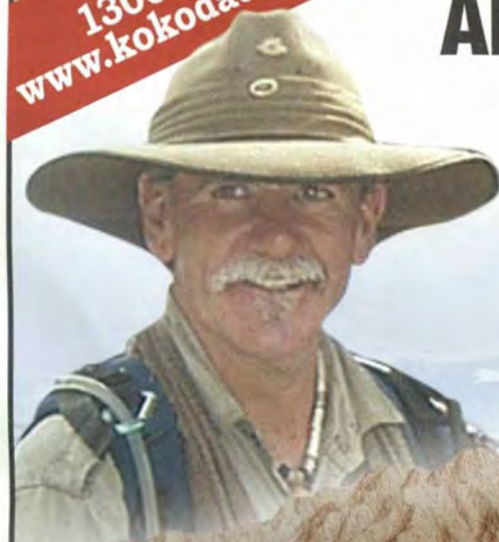
Our return to Port Moresby and Loloata Island, owned and managed by Dik Knight (family member), found us contemplating our next adventure. Maybe Milne Bay next, who knows?



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Rescue Mission in Milne Bay

BY BOB HALSTEAD

A ship runs aground and a boy's life is saved. It is indeed an ill wind that blows nobody good when a shipping accident occurs and the calamity for the ship that ran into Kwaiawata Island on Christmas Eve 2012, resulted in the rescue of a village boy who had sliced open his leg two weeks later and was almost certain to die.

A cargo ship 136 metres long and weighs 8,000 tons without cargo on board, was cruising at about 18 knots when, in the dark of night, it struck Kwaiawata Island in the remote Marshall Bennett group, Milne Bay Province. The hull made contact with the fringing coral reef just off the beach and rode up on it. When the ship came to rest, it was stuck fast with its bow high in the rainforest.

When events like this occur, and, amazingly, considering modern aids to navigation, they trigger an international response.

In this case, the PNG National Maritime Safety Authority was the first to hear by means of a radio message from the captain. Then international owners, insurers and salvage teams are contacted. Their prime concern is to get the ship afloat again.

In addition, the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation, an industry funded non-profit organisation based in the UK, is informed. They are the organisation whose responsibility is to minimise the environmental damage, particularly any oil spills and effects of the grounding on the lives of the local inhabitants.

They sent out Michael O'Brien, a technical advisor, who, within one week of the grounding, had flown over the wreck and on 1st January landed on Kwaiawata by means of a helicopter flying at the extreme end of its fuel range. And this is how the rescue occurred - the village boy was able to be flown to the hospital in Port Moresby on the helicopter and receive the medical attention that saved his life.





THE RESCUE MISSION

The ship had a tear in its thick steel hull but luckily no bunker fuel tanks were breached directly into the sea. Some leakage occurred inside the hull and a small amount of heavy fuel oil was discharged from the vessel each time the tide dropped - but no massive spill occurred. The tear was temporarily patched by the salvage company as a matter of priority and by January 2 the discharge into the sea had ceased.

Some of the oil was washed onto a 130-metre stretch of beach near the ship and a large crew of local villagers was recruited, fitted with protective clothing, taught the necessary skills and set about scrubbing the oil from the beach. The shipowners paid them for their efforts and the villagers were thankful for the paid employment.

On January 11, the salvors refloated the ship and the operation on the island terminated with the understanding that a further assessment of environmental damage would occur some months later.

I was contacted in May by a long-time friend Brian White, of the law firm Brian White and Associates, who is the Protection and Indemnity Club representative for the shipowners and whose task was to coordinate all the parties.

Brian was putting together a team to go out to the island again to assess any remaining environmental damage but also to make a meaningful community contribution to the villagers.

Some thirty-five years ago, I had taught Brian to dive - and in 1979, he skippered our first dive boat Solatai from its builders on Bougainville Island to Port Moresby where I operated a dive business with my wife Dinah. I was still learning to navigate at that time and was grateful for Brian's help.



Before he became a lawyer specialising in maritime affairs, Brian had been a Master Mariner.

At the time, I asked Brian if the 11-metre Solatai was the smallest boat he had ever skippered - "Yes", he said, "by about 4000 tons". Solatai still operates as a dive tourist vessel in Port Moresby, run by The Dive Centre.

Brian knew that I was familiar with Kwaiawata Island as I had taken tourists there several times on our 20-metre live-aboard dive boat Telita, Solatai's successor. I am also an underwater photographer and so would be able to contribute photographs to the report and dive with the marine biologist in charge.



Kwaiawata is so remote that it takes 20 hours or more to reach by boat from the provincial capital of Alotau. There was no means of communication from the island, and travel to nearby islands is not possible in rough weather.

It was decided after consultation with the provincial government that if the shipowners were to offer a gift to the villagers at Kwaiawata, the most useful one would be a state-of-the-art HF radio communication system, complete with solar charging and large fixed aerial.

So our party consisting of Brian, myself, two representatives from the Milne Bay Provincial Government, two radio technicians to install the radio, and a marine biologist.

Brian chartered a converted trawler, the PNG Explorer, based in Kavieng, that

usually provides tourist services to surfers and divers and owned by Andrew and Jude Rigby.

To save cruising time, we boarded the PNG Explorer at the Trobriand Islands after flying in from Port Moresby, and departed Kiriwina in the middle of the night in order to arrive at Kwaiawata early the next morning. The South East Tradewinds had kicked in so it was a bumpy ride and we were glad to be aboard a comfortable seaworthy ship.

The voyage included crossing one of the main shipping lanes in PNG and from my own experience, I advised Andrew to keep a lookout for the many huge ships, ore carriers and the like, that we were likely to see at night.

They travel fast, often over 20 knots, and no matter the marine rules of the road, my

advice was to give way to all of them, and nip across their track when it was clear to do so!

The Marshall Bennett group of islands is unique in PNG. The islands consist of raised limestone, dense with rainforest, and have flat tops, 137metres high at Kwaiawata, falling steeply to the ocean, where, past a narrow beach and fringing reef, the seabed falls rapidly to the abyss.

The villages are all on the raised plateau and not easy to climb. In these islands, old age is often signalled by the final hike to the beach and back, even for me, starting at the beach of course. In the 1980s, I made the hike myself, alas this time I declined.

There had been some showers and slipping on the muddy track - and falling onto the fossilised coral rocks, still sharp as bush knives, could result in a wicked wound. I left it to the more agile members of the team - and anyway my responsibilities lay mostly underwater.

We anchored in the lee of a cliff and through the crystal blue water I could look down to see a white sand bottom and coral outcrops. I first cruised out here in 1973 and every time I return, I remember my first wonder at seeing this paradise.

In those days, the only difference was that villagers wore traditional clothing - grass skirts and pandanus briefs. Today's clothing is not as romantic - but probably much healthier particularly for small girls whose grass skirts were perilous when close to open fires. It was not long before canoes appeared and friendly welcomes offered.

I asked them to spread the word we had arrived, permission to go diving -





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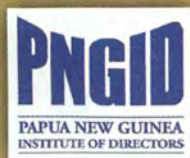
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and added that we were interested in purchasing canoe decorations, something I knew they carved.

ISLAND TRADE

Kwaiawata island trades with other islands by means of exquisitely carved sailing canoes, and I asked for Lagim, Tabuya, Saku and Kuk respectively; splashboards, prowboards, prow ornaments and masthead rigging. These are all wonderfully carvings using traditional motifs from Kwaiawata.

When a canoe has finished its life, these are removed and stored for possible future trading with visitors, and if the white ants don't get to them first, they make superb ornaments.

With the knowledge that they have sailed around Milne Bay for decades, they make rather more meaningful keepsakes than the other traditional carvings of the area.

Soon carvings started to appear, paddled out to our boat on small canoes. We were also offered paddles and bailers and general carvings. Since very few boats cruise to Kwaiawata, they had ample supplies for us to choose from, and soon the local economy was boosted by several hundreds of Kina that they will be able to use when the local trading boat pays them a visit. We also traded using supplies of rice, sugar, flour and tea that Andrew had wisely stocked on board.

While I set off to dive the grounding site, others went to meet the village leaders. With the help of the villagers ashore, we

soon located the spot that the ship sank. The water was a bit sloppy and stirred up but it did not take long to locate the evidence we were looking for.

Amazingly the ship had just hit one coral bommie very close to the shore and not in the zone of live coral growth. We could see some skid marks and a small amount of antifouling - not the very poisonous type used in the past - and a very small berm of old dead coral pushed to the side of the bommie. We took some photographs, and measurements and then dived deeper to see the pretty live coral reef that remained untouched. Everything looked just fine.

When I dived here previously, I discovered specimens of a fish that was new to science which eventually was named after me, *Xyrichtys halsteadii*. The fish typically lives in deep, current prone, sand slopes and dives into the sand when disturbed. I had a quick look, but was not able to get deep enough for their habitat so did not see them this time. But I did see many of the exquisite fish and corals that live in this area. They are beautiful and healthy. Anemonefish were abundant.

The next morning was calmer and so I dived again hoping to improve my photographs in the shallows that had been stirred up the day before. As we were preparing to board the dinghy, the sky went dark. I immediately thought that a squall might be imminent and





scanned the horizon, but it was clear. Then someone shouted to look up and, blow me down, an eclipse was underway! I had not heard about this one so it was a complete surprise, but the partly cloudy conditions made it quite eerie – and easy to photograph.

Our next job was to inspect the beach for any oil residue so we took the dinghy as far down current around the island as we were

able, landed and walked back along the beach. It was of course fascinating, and we were very happy that there was no sign of any oil at all.

Back near the boat, villagers had gathered beside a canoe shed and I asked if I could inspect the canoe inside. I was hoping it would be one of the spectacular ‘Kula’ canoes famous in the region. This was not the case but nevertheless it was a superb example of one of their trading canoes.

By this time, the shore parties had set up the radio station and trained an operator, the government officials had made sure everyone was happy with the arrangements and we set off to check the nearby islands to make sure no oil had drifted to their beaches. I dived to check that the reefs were also healthy, and soon it was time for our return to Kiriwina.



CARVINGS GALORE

On Kiriwina, our bus, hired from the Butia Lodge, was waiting at the dock at the appointed time the next morning and we drove to the airstrip where an assembly of villagers had more carvings for sale. These were traditional walking sticks and bowls and other carvings fashioned from Ebony

and other precious hardwoods, also bags and necklaces.

One man was urgently trying to sell me a fabulous pure ebony walking stick, one of the best I have seen, and his price kept dropping until I could not resist anymore and I parted with the last of my Kina. Just then of course another villager appeared with a carving that I had been searching for over several years. Now all I had was US dollars - but he was happy and got about twice the asking price. I should stop buying these items, I have plenty, but they are special, unique to the Trobriands, and I expect I never will.

This was a splendid adventure. We had established that there was no lasting damage to the environment and lives of the villagers, and had set them up with the communications that they had wanted and needed for years.

I was interested to learn of the responsible ways of shipowners and international bodies who oversee the grounding of ships, and happy to make my contribution.

The villagers have only happy memories of the unexpected visit of a ship in the night.



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During 2013, we were privileged to support a range of community activities across our office locations. These activities included sponsoring the Mate Ma'a Tonga Rugby League (Tonga), raising funds for victims of the Philippines earthquake (Vanuatu), and sponsoring the dux prizes for St Nicholas Secondary and Primary Schools (Solomon Islands).

We also continued our support of the Ausenco Foundation's partnership with Buk bilong Pikinini (BbP) in PNG. This organisation aims to develop the learning and literacy skills of disadvantaged children by supplying books to small BbP-created community libraries.

Our local community is important to us and we aim to develop and assist community members where we can. We value the relationships we have built within our region and look forward to continuing to contribute positively to the community that has been so supportive of us.



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Rust in Peace

The country's first commercial copper mining development

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK

There is precious little, in all senses of the word, to see in the hills behind Bootless Bay today. At the beginning of the last century however, it was buzzing with all the mechanical sounds that accompanied the operation of Papua's first commercial copper development.

We had trekked off the road to the Seventh Day Adventist's (SDA) Mt Diamond High School, which like many roads in the area follows the route of the railway that once clanked along here, looking for some signs of what was once the major industrial enterprise of the territory.

For an operation that at its peak in 1925 employed more than 100 expatriates and 1000 locals, not a lot remains. This is due mainly to the zeal with which scrap metal merchants scoured the countryside after the Second World War.

Noel Chapman, on whose family's land

much of the copper processing facilities were once sited, says, "I blame my father, he let them just come in and take it all, even the steam engine that sat down at Tahira for years."

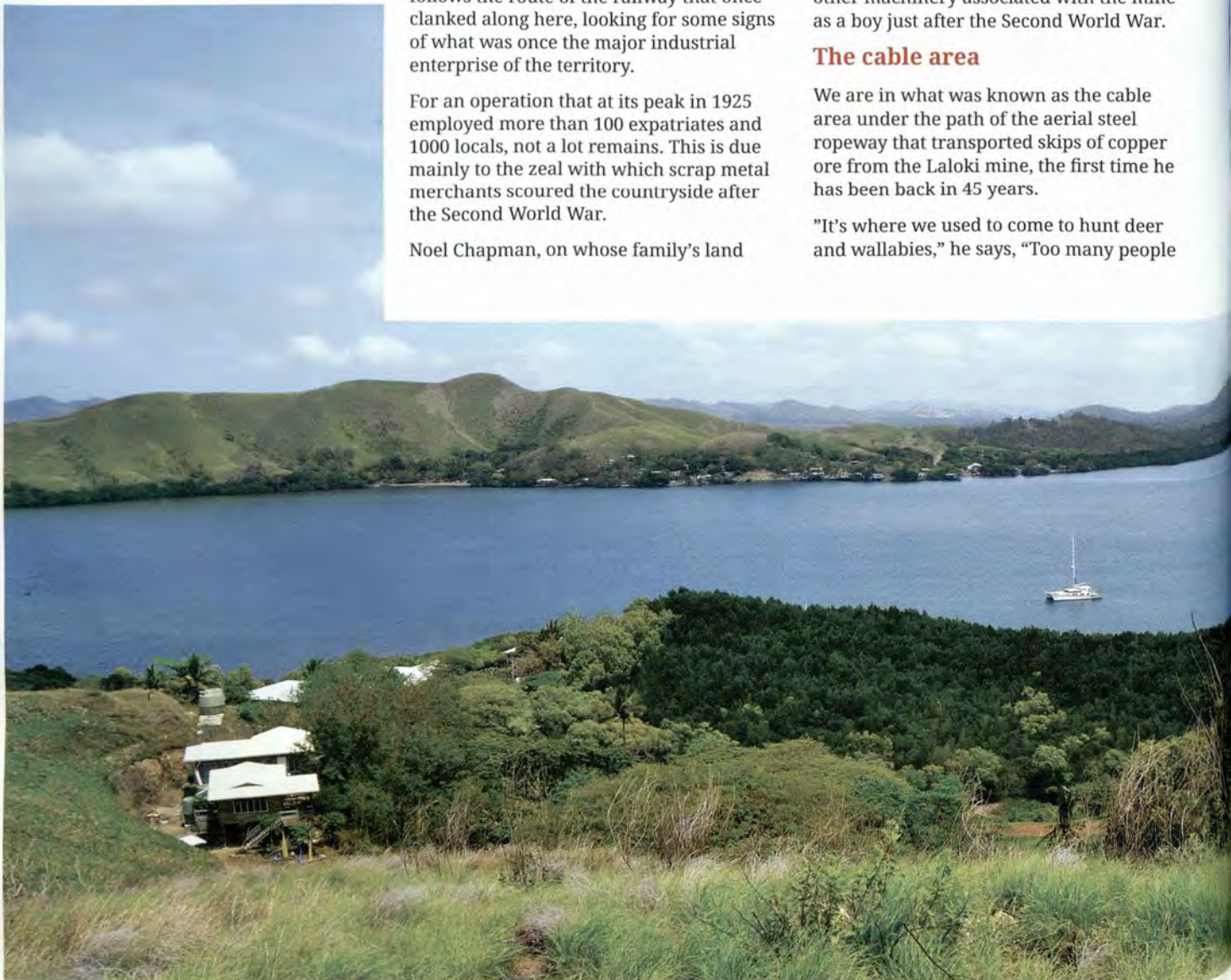
Of course at the time, it was just industrial waste and scrap metal prices that meant more than any heritage values.

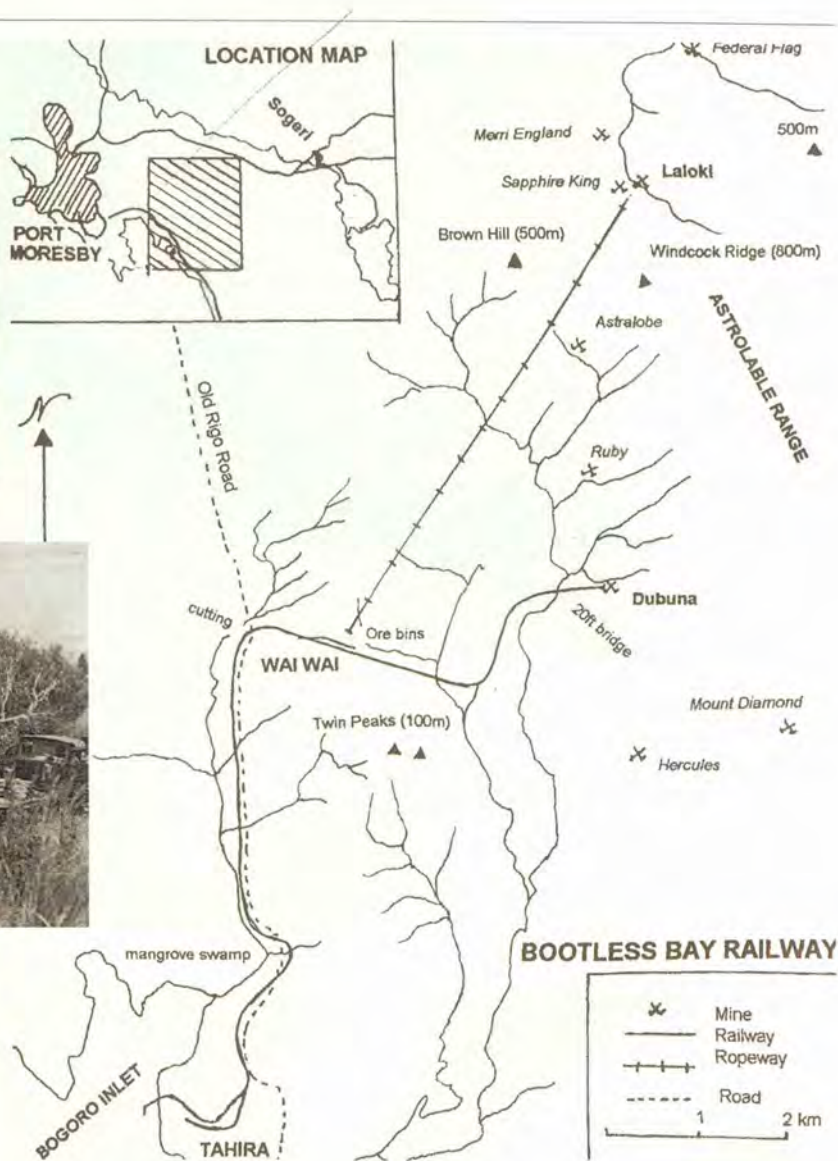
Noel still remembers the rusty skeletons of the ore storage hoppers, winding gear and other machinery associated with the mine as a boy just after the Second World War.

The cable area

We are in what was known as the cable area under the path of the aerial steel ropeway that transported skips of copper ore from the Laloki mine, the first time he has been back in 45 years.

"It's where we used to come to hunt deer and wallabies," he says, "Too many people





around nowadays, the animals have all gone back into the hills”.

He recalls that whilst hunting with his family they would come across long, snaking lengths of cable still lying in the grass at that time.

We had chosen to find the cableway pylons at the end of the dry season when the grass had been largely burnt off and the rain had not come, re-growth had not started and so we could see where we were putting our feet, not that I was worried about Papuan blacks of course!

The Astrolabe mineral field was discovered in 1905 and declared as such a year later. By 1909, four mines were in operation - Hector, Merrie England, Laloki and Tobo. Ore was carried down the Sapphire Creek road by large steam traction engines. Laloki mine was the most successful and by 1923 its main tunnel was a mile long.

The Dubuna mine started operation in 1910, carrying the copper ore 18 miles to the coast using mules.



The high cost of this mode of transport started people thinking about constructing a railway and the Port Moresby to Rouna Railway Ordinance was passed in August 1914, but all plans were put on hold during World War 1.

The only sign of this plan today are the trees along Ela Beach that would have flanked that end of the track that was never built!

Rugged terrain

A railway line to join Dubuna to a wharf and smelters at Tahira on Bootless Bay was started by the Laloki Copper Company in 1918 and the 10.4 kilometres of rails were completed two years later, by which time the venture had been taken over by the New Guinea Copper Company. The lines ran right out to the end of the 140-metre long jetty at Tahira where deep water was not far offshore.

The terrain was too rugged for a railway line to link up with the Laloki mine, so a six-kilometre aerial cableway supported by 31 steel towers was constructed through the hills from the mine to Wai Wai Junction.

The tallest tower was 102 ft high, with the cable which apparently moved at 7.5mph, at one point 250ft above ground.

Buckets on the cableway were filled from

A large advertisement for Coca-Cola. The background is a solid red color. In the center, the Coca-Cola script logo is written in white. Below the logo is a white, wavy ribbon that curves across the bottom. On the right side, there is a vertical strip of traditional PNG tribal art, featuring intricate black and white patterns. At the bottom right corner, there is a small logo that says "PNG MADE" with a star and a gear icon.

a hopper at Laloki and emptied into bins at Wai Wai Junction ready for discharge into ore wagons drawn by a Barclay steam locomotive called Polygon, for transport to processing facilities at Tahira. There the ore was smelted and exported overseas - PNG's first copper mine!

Starting from the site of Wai Wai Junction near where the Mt Diamond SDA school is now located we walked up and down the scrubby hills looking for the pylons that once carried the cables that transported the Laloki mine ore.

Surprisingly difficult to see in the scrubby undergrowth, once we located one, we soon saw the other pylons which, considering they are more than 90 years old, appear to be in a remarkable condition - obviously the steel was of better quality than what is used today!

Noel remembers that the pylons nearer the road were unbolted from their foundations so people could dismantle them for the strong angle iron girders they were constructed from, the only downside being that the resultant steel was a challenge for the sharpest of drills and saws.

Unfortunately, the mine was beset with problems and never really profitable, in 1922 asking the Australian Government to acquire the Dubuna wharf and railway for 45,000 pounds, an offer that was taken up with support from Sir Hubert Murray, who felt the venture was vital to the Papuan economy.

At the time, the Tahira mine township threatened



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to rival Port Moresby in size and population stakes. Copper smelters completed in 1924 never operated effectively and although the intention was to produce blister copper, most exports were in the form of a low grade matter.

The New Guinea Copper Company collapsed and went in to receivership in 1926, whilst regular train operations continued until early 1927.

It's not clear what the exact cause was for this demise but it is likely the result of over-capitalisation on housing, stores and infrastructure combined with ineffective smelting techniques.

With no maintenance, culverts soon failed, anything flammable suffered during dry season bush fires and the locomotives and rolling stock were parked at Tahira until being put up for tender in 1932.

Noone was interested to take them away at the time, although Catholic missionaries apparently lifted some of the rails and took smaller trucks for their wharf on Yule Island and sawmill railway at Arokopina.

Remnants of the once thriving industry

The facilities continued to rust until after the Second World War when many parts of the country were pillaged for all sorts of scrap metal, including the Dubuna railway tracks, train and rolling stock, which was also taken and sold by various



middlemen, usually to Japan, in the 1960's.

Today, not a lot remains of this once thriving industry - almost all the steel buildings, smelters, trucks, trains and rail tracks themselves have gone.

All that can be seen are the concrete foundations of ore bins at Wai Wai Junction and some of the other smelter buildings.

Even the mines are hard to find - they were principally underground operations that chased the veins of copper bearing ore, so there are no open cuts to be seen and there has been 90 years for the trees and shrubs to grow back. The mine adits were apparently sealed by the Australian army in 1942.

Outside the Mt Diamond SDA school, there are a few old gear wheels that appear to be part of the winding and tramway power house machinery for the cableway - a guide for the cable, a step down gear and a drive pulley that would have been driven by a belt from a standing engine, possibly the one whose remains are to be found in the



play area on beach opposite the Ela Beach.

Amazingly, the grooves of the pulley wheel were still lined with rubber, presumably there to prevent the steel cable wearing it away.

Where the smelter and processing facilities once stood there are just a few pieces of rusting steel and a rapidly diminishing heap of metallic particulate slag.

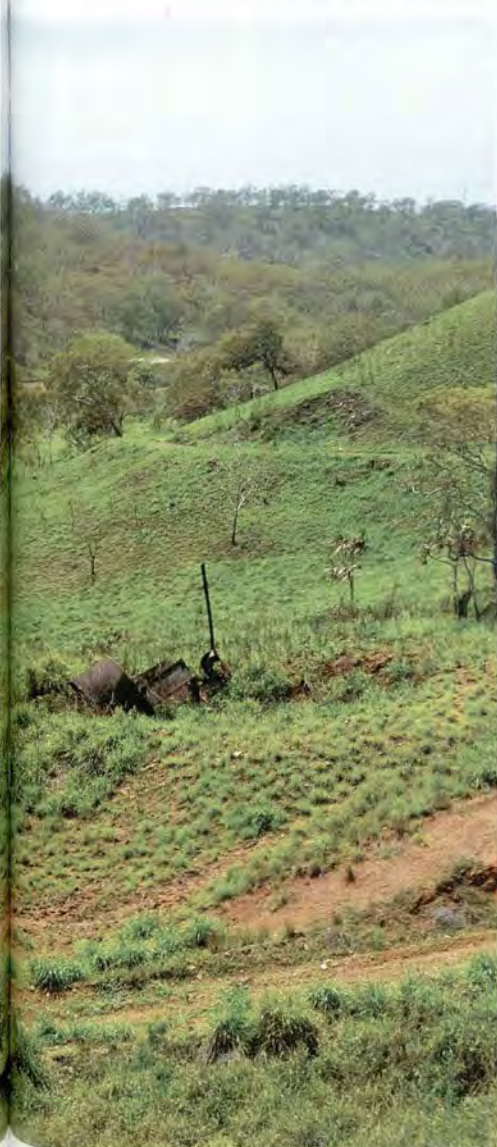
Once a massively huge pile it has almost disappeared, not to the elements though - Noel and his family have been selling it off over the years for use in sand blasting - the local shipyards reckon that its better than other materials, being able to be used up to

three times.

Looking down over Bootless Bay and the offshore islands of Loloata, Manununa and Matupore from the grassy ridge where the New Guinea Copper Company staff houses once stood adjacent to the smelter, it can be see that Tahira was a promontory that jutted out into deeper water.

Tahira and its surrounding hills are delightfully calm and quiet nowadays.

It's interesting to think that this wasn't always so and if one knows where to look, there is still some evidence of the country's first commercial copper mining development, rusting in peace!



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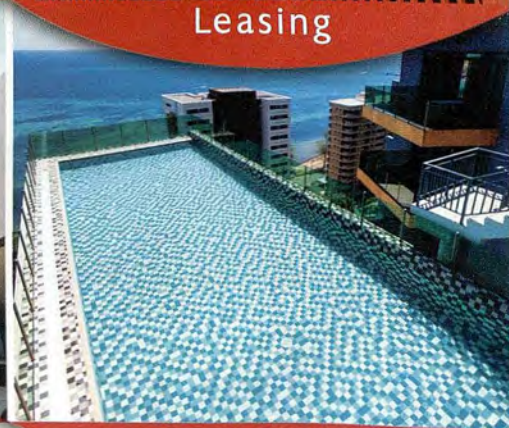
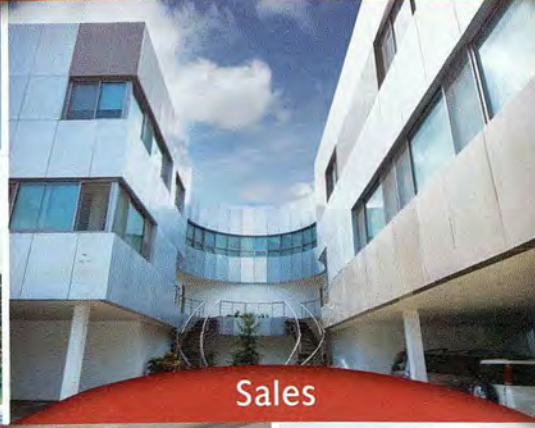
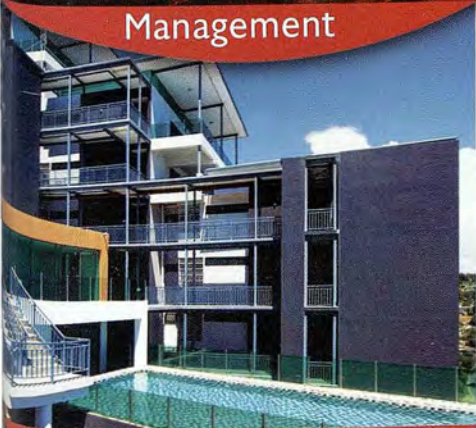
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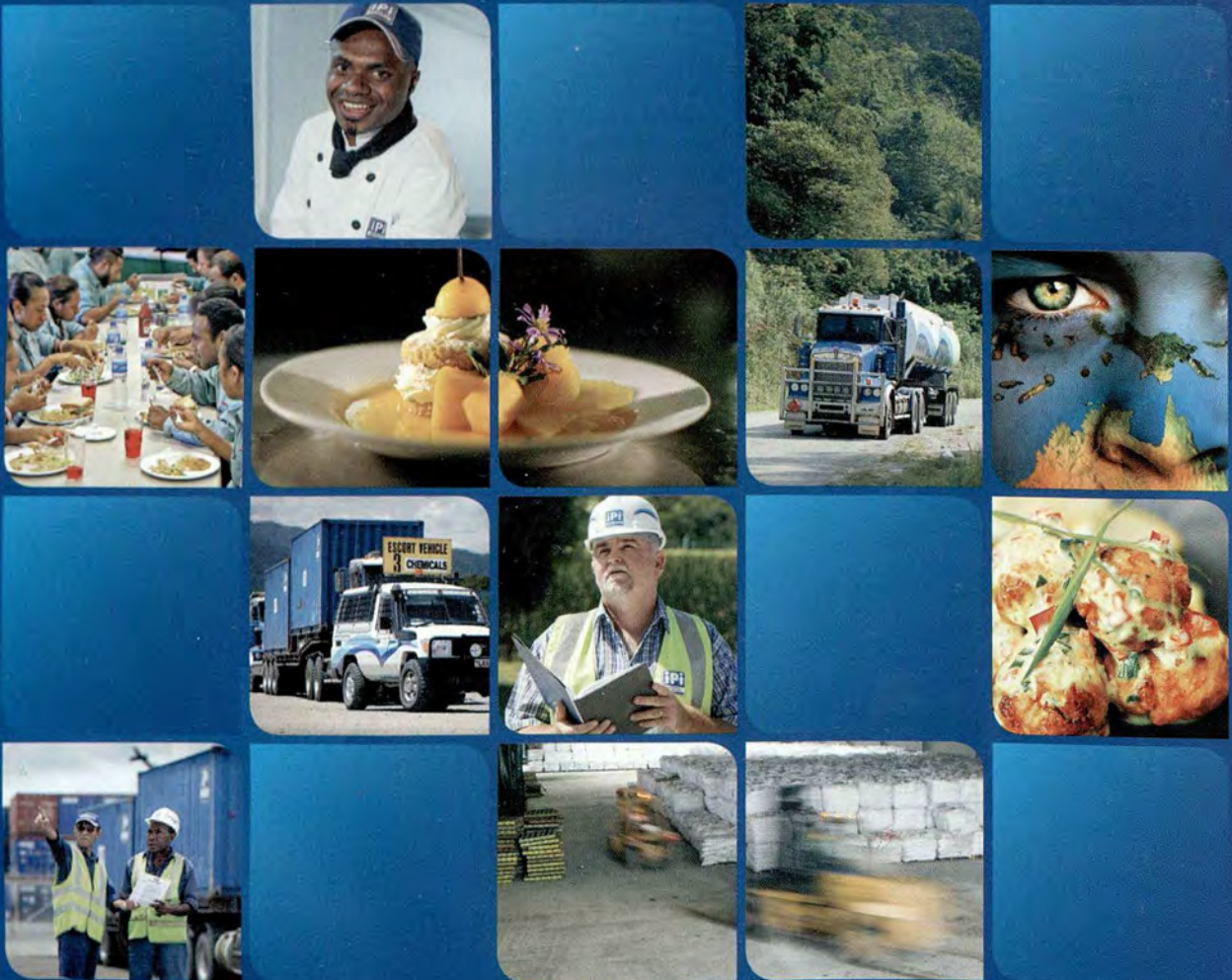
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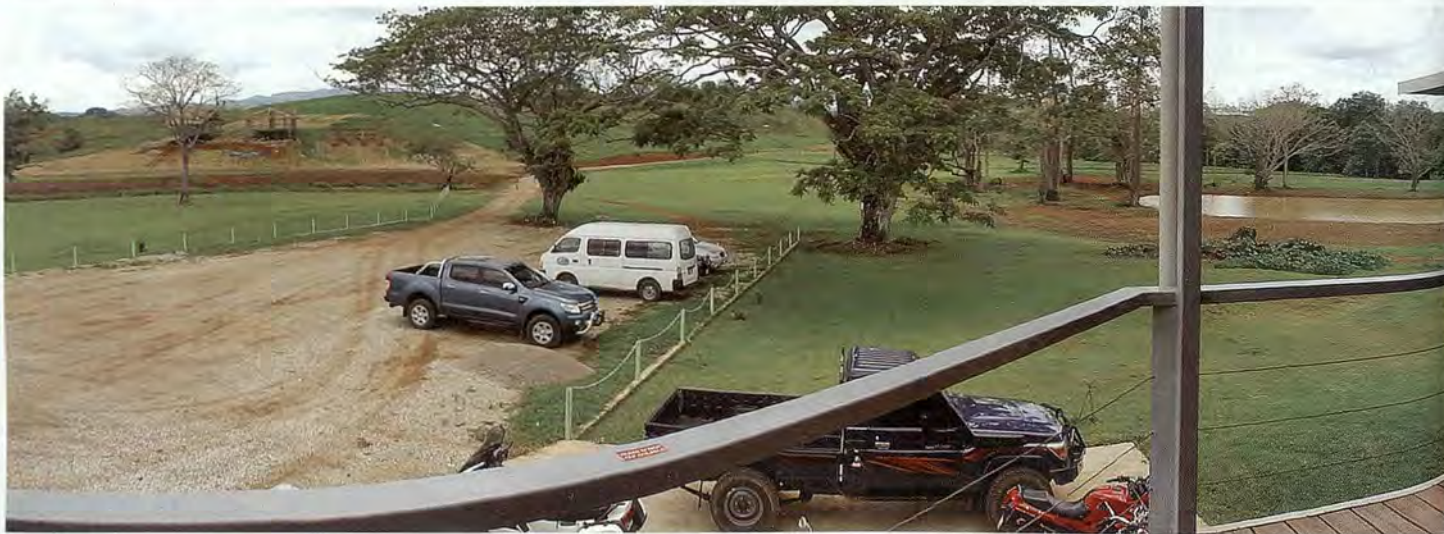


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Country

A haven away from 'the big smoke'

BY DIANA MCMANUS

One of the most beautiful and spectacular drives accessible to Port Moresby residents is the route to Sogeri, up on the hinterland Tablelands.

However, unless you're going to visit the famous arches at the end of the Kokoda Track at Owers Corner, walk a little for a picnic down at Goldie's River, bushwalk the ranges or swim and barbeque at Crystal Rapids, for short-term and sedentary visitors, there's not a lot to do once you get up there.

But now there's an exciting new option for nature lovers, those who aren't necessarily the outdoor type, and most importantly for families; the newly revived Koitaki Country Club.

This is still a work in progress, but even now, it offers a haven away from 'the big smoke' and a relaxing variety of leisure activities for a day out or a weekend stay.

The original Koitaki Country Club was built in the late 1960s and was a popular playground and country escape, mostly for expats.





Escape

For horse lovers, it was the venue for games of polocrosse and carnivals which took place throughout the sixties. This is of great interest to me, as I was playing country polocrosse myself in Australia at this time, as a young teenager.

Polocrosse reputedly began in PNG when Colin Sefton, manager of the Koitaki Rubber Plantation established by his parents in 1910, was given a polocrosse racquet by his mother.

The rubber was initially packed down to Port Moresby on a mule's back. Horses were always a part of early plantation life, used for checking on the trees and their crop.

Interest in polocrosse was kindled in the New Guinea Highlands at Goroka, Kainantu and Mt Hagen, mostly amongst coffee

plantation owners and staff.

It became popular not only at Koitaki on the Sogeri plateau, but also in the lowlands at Tiaba. One early Australian visitor was the then polocrosse guru Jack Riley who came to coach and play with the local players.

Today, the Koitaki Country Club is being brought back to life by Robert and Sharon Bradshaw and offers employment opportunities in the hospitality trade to the young people from Sogeri or the coast.

Robert is a Highlands man from Jiwaka and lived on Sogeri Plateau as a UPNG student.

He loves the area and when the previous owner passed away in 2011 and the property came up for sale, he snapped it up. His vision is to create a family-oriented escape from the dry, dusty lowlands.





After you take the left fork over the bridge and continue about 4 kilometres past the famous Sogeri High School, a huge sign welcomes you to the Koitaki Country Club. Once you enter the property and cross the little river bridge, you definitely feel like you're on a farm.

On the left, barely visible amongst the long grass, graze several goats. Beside the block columns of the original cubhouse, you're likely to be greeted by Charles holding a horse, wanting to know if you're interested in going for a horse ride.

Another kilometre brings you to the elevated new clubhouse with its wide, wrap-around verandahs, polished wood and plenty of glass. There's a spacious car park in front, a full sized Olympic pool out at the back, complete with a warning about sharks, and an airy, attractive bar within which houses a mini pool table. There is also an attractive little dam in the adjoining field.

From the verandah is a sweeping view of clean, green, rolling hills and the beautiful homestead on the hill of the adjoining hydroponics farm.



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Country breezes ruffle the decorative string of flags and set off the musical little wind chimes. Here where the rainfall is much higher than the coast, it's a charming change from the dust and grime of the city.

The lunch menu offers a range of fairly simple dishes (chicken, fish, lamb and beef) with eminently affordable prices and a glass of wine at K8. It's a relaxing place to while away the time, gazing, reading, chatting, playing scrabble or cards; (you have to bring your own). Or you can browse the range of photos and information adorning the walls for a bit of history.

Robert and Sharon encourage people to come and enjoy what's on offer. There is no active advertising campaign, and Robert hopes the word will spread by mouth. As a club, there is a small membership fee of K200/per annum, basically to try and keep the clientele respectable. The proceeds will go to help maintain the facilities available. Sightseers are welcome to come and check it out free of charge for the first time.

At present, three accommodation bungalows are being constructed, with traditional roofing but modern materials elsewhere. The vision is for 12 bungalows ultimately, and the next three will be built in the Highlands' round-house style, again with traditional roof and modern materials. However, campers are welcome and there is a wide open expanse of flat green grass beside the car park for tents and other camping paraphernalia.

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LOCAL DESTINATIONS

The club provides firewood and a pit toilet in the field. The club toilet is open all hours, and the club showers are available to campers; cold water only! Some of my friends, with several other families, tried out this option some weeks ago and were delighted with their experience. The kids were happy with the horse riding activities. The club has two horses available for this at present.

Others splashed about in the swimming pool or swam in the river. There was room to kick around a soccer ball and plenty of space for walks around the property. There is also a cricket pitch, another legacy of the 1960s, and competing teams sometimes come up for matches.

During the independence weekend in September, the club had more than two hundred campers sleeping over and people are already booking to have their Christmas functions there.



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Koitaki is actually built over the top of the former swimming pool, so there is a huge storage space and a kitchen down below for bulk catering.

If there is a downside to the experience, it's the clay road access from Sogeri onwards which renders it a definite four wheel drive experience. I imagine in the wet season it could become a bit of a quagmire. Nevertheless, it's

worth a visit for day-trippers and Port Moresby residents might think seriously about the benefits of a country getaway only an hour away.

For more details or bookings, you can call Robert on 72143893 or Sharon on 70513096. Imagine no-one milling around in the morning when you wake up except the cows! Dream clean green!



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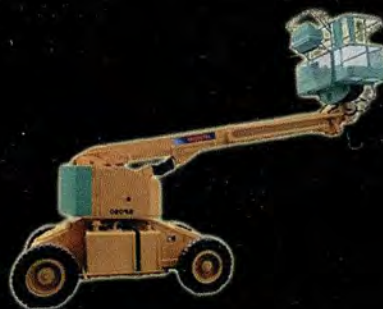
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Tuapa United Church in Alofi, Niue, that bears a Bird of Paradise Plaque presented to the Papuans of Tuapa Village by Grand Chief Somare during an earlier visit to Niue in 1978.



The Niue/PNG Connection

Connecting the dots via a Hanuabada maiden

BY FRANK AISI

In mid-August 2008, I accompanied then Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare, to the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meeting in Niue.

The delegation also included Leonard Louma (former Chief of Staff to the PM), Peter Eafeare (PNG High Commissioner to Fiji), the late Ipai Edward Karara (Protocol Officer to the PM) and Kora Nou, then Director of the PM's Media Unit.

We were fortunate to have Kora on board, as he captured some of the history that connects Hanuabada village in Port Moresby and Niue which is the basis of this story.

A quick search on WIKIPEDIA reveals that Niue is an island located in the Pacific Ocean and is commonly referred to as the "Rock of Polynesia", given that it is a huge mass of rock elevated in the middle of nowhere in the Pacific Ocean.

In fact, Niue is situated 2400 kilometres north-east of New Zealand in a triangle between Tonga, Samoa and the Cook Islands. The people there are predominantly Polynesian.

2007 estimates show the population at 1679 on Niue whilst the bulk of the Niueans numbering about 20,000 have migrated to reside in Auckland. With the influx of regional leaders, ministers, officials and relevant personnel during the 39th PIF meeting, the population would have slightly shot up to 3000 plus.

I had travelled ahead of the Prime Ministerial entourage with High Commissioner Eafeare and our other colleagues from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to cover the officials meeting and set the agenda for the leaders meeting.

The 39th PIF Leaders Meeting took place at the Matavai Beach Resort against a picturesque backdrop of the vast blue ocean.

Prior to visiting Niue, I was already made aware of the existence of a special connection between Hanuabada village and Niue. I am part Hanuabadan, but not from the Botai clan where this story originates from.

I had first heard of this special connection in 1980 when

the South Pacific Festival of Arts was being hosted in Port Moresby and witnessed a group of Niueans visit their long lost relatives of the Botai clan at Hanuabada for a reunion.

The scenes were very emotional and I recall my mother later telling me that a young fair skinned and beautiful lady named Geua Lulu from the Botai clan had married a South Sea Island pastor in the early part of this century and moved with her husband to Niue.

She only returned once to Hanuabada before permanently settling in Niue until she died in 1960. The Niuean men and women at that reunion, she said, were her direct descendants. Geua is pronounced as Keua by her Niuean descendants.

The PNG delegation was hosted by the Papuans of Tuapa village in two four-bedroom houses whilst the Grand Chief was accommodated at the Matavai Beach Resort with other PIF leaders.

On settling us into our accommodation, the landlady warmly welcomed us and advised that the house was at our disposal throughout the duration of our stay and that there was nothing to fear in terms of crime.

There is no criminal activity apart from petty quarrels on Niue, she said. In fact, she told us to leave the windows and doors open 24 hours a day during our stay there and only close them to keep the village dogs, cats and chickens out. My colleagues and I were stunned and looked at each other in absolute amazement.

We were specifically hosted by the Papuans of Tuapa village who are the direct descendants of Keua at their request. On Sunday, we were invited to a service at the Tuapa Church which also proudly displays a PNG plaque bearing the Bird of Paradise and thereafter for lunch at the Tuapa Women's Community Hall.

I enquired about the plaque and was advised that the Grand Chief had presented it to the Papuans during an earlier visit to the island in 1978.

At lunch, we were served an array of local Niuean dishes comprising chicken, fish, pork, gigantic coconut crabs, taro, sweet potatoes, yams, greens and lamb flaps which were cooked the local style. Pork was plentiful, given that the number of pigs has increased dramatically on the island, outnumbering humans.

The Niuean government in taking steps to

control the pig population introduced a culling system whereby the islanders are paid NZ\$100 per pig slaughtered. Some of the meat land on the family dinner table while the rest are disposed off.

Following lunch, we visited Keua's grave site. I must say that I was deeply moved and kept wondering as I looked towards the ocean. Now how did this lady from Hanuabada cope with the situation?

I mean she was miles and miles away from her immediate family and with irregular shipping and air services then, she would have had great difficulty trying to maintain any form of contact.

Her descendants told me that it was her love and faithfulness to her South Sea Island husband pastor and her dedication to serving the Lord that allowed her to persevere and remain in her adopted country until she passed on.

I spent a moment with Keua at her grave site speaking to her in the Motuan language, telling her that I was in her country for a meeting and that I had come to say hello and thank her descendants for hosting the PNG delegation. I also promised her that I would write her beautiful story.

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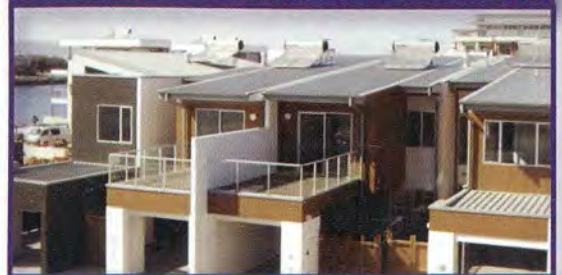
Former premier of Niue Sani Lakatani, a direct descendant of Keua, at her grave. Keua died in 1960.



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After the visit to the grave site, I sat down with her grand-daughter Boni Pihigia, who told me that this very fair-skinned and beautiful lady had married her grandfather and decided to dedicate her life and love to her husband's pastoral duties in PNG and Niue.

Boni said Pahetogia Snr (pronounced Pahetongia) a South Sea Island pastor went to Papua in the early part of this century as a pastor or trainee pastor.

However, he unfortunately passed away leaving behind his wife and son Pahetogia Jnr. Following Pahetogia Snr's demise, the principal of the Bible College in the village asked Pahetogia Jnr if he could continue with his late father's pastoral duties and training.

He agreed to carry on where his late father had left off, but was a single person. Pastoral duties then and present day requires a pastor to marry, so the college looked for a wife for him. A young lady happened to be in the same college. That lady was Geua Lulu, Boni's future grandmother.

They stayed together and over the years were blessed with eight children (3 girls and 5 boys). Two boys sadly passed away in PNG.

On 15 October 1905, Boni's father was born at Selesele Gabone in the Central Province of PNG. Boni's father was the fourth child of Keua and Pahetogia.

In 1913, Pahetogia and Keua decided to return to Niue. Boni's father was only eight years then. They stayed in Niue for one year and in August 1914, decided to return to PNG.

They left two of their girls, Hariesa and Lekei in Niue and took two boys Tamatoa and Haleleta and a girl, Moare.

In 1917, Tamatoa and Haleleta attended Vatorata Lawes College in the Central Province of PNG.

They helped with the cooking and accompanied the Reverend visit other London Missionary Society (LMS) parishes in Central Province villages such as Kapakapa (Gaba Gaba) and Boku.

In 1922, Keua and Pahetogia decided to return to Niue and were called to do God's work at Avatele village on the southern side of Niue Island as their residential pastor.

Boni explained that her grandmother Keua was clearly a very dedicated follower of the Lord until she passed away in 1960 at the ripe old age of 95.

Even though she passed away, up until now she has five generations that dwelled in Niue Island.

Five of her great grandchildren are resident ministers in the villages in Niue and some of them have Motuan names such as Toua, Heagi and Boni.

From Keua, a strong bond and relationship continues to exist between Niue and PNG, especially the village of Tuapa Uhomotu where most of Keua's descendants and relatives are.

The Papuans at Tuapa are only too pleased to host any PNG visitors to Niue. Prior to our visit there, they had hosted the PNG Pukpuks Rugby Team.

Boni in her closing remarks expressed sincere thanks to the PNG delegates and dignitaries for publishing Keua Lulu Pahetogia's story and conveyed her regards to her immediate cousins and relatives of the Botai clan at Hanuabada village namely Anna Tarabu (nee Toua), Ganiga Rea (nee Hoek) and the Kavera (Gavera) family.

The writer, Frank Mohi Aisi is currently the Director of International Relations Unit within the PNG Department of Prime Minister & NEC.

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ROME



The Colosseum is simply spectacular.

One Day in Rome

The famous landmarks in Eternal City

BY KEN HOPPEN

Somehow, through bad luck or bad management, I wound up with only a day to see the sights of the Eternal City.

It should have been a longer stopover, but fortune didn't go my way through a series of events, so a day it was. How can you see as much as possible of the famous landmarks found here in such a short time?

Through sheer good fortune, my hotel was brilliantly placed in the old town, close to the Colosseum, so that was where we started in the early hours of the morning after a quick Italian breakfast of foccacia and coffee. Two thousand years of history hits you in visiting this monument to an age where Italy was the world's superpower.

A 50,000+ seat stadium in this day and age is not rare, but this is the original design that all others ultimately spring from.

It is magnificent now and I can only imagine what it would have looked like in its heyday though I'm not sure I would have liked viewing the life and death struggles that would have held precedence in its arena. Times have thankfully changed. Entering the stadium, and for a small fee, we rented an audio tour which explained the workings of the Colosseum as we walked around the different areas, marvelling at the views.

Whilst Rome is quite a large city, the ancient marvels are spread over a much smaller area, and a brisk walk can take you quickly to the next point of interest.

As we only had a day, we did have to make some sacrifices and prioritise what we wanted to see. We walked past the Forum and decided that with the long queue, it would be better to keep going, so we made our way quickly to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Throughout the old town of Rome, spectacular arches, old town walls and beautifully appointed buildings litter the landscape.

Larger than expected, the mass of stone used to create the Trevi Fountain is mind boggling.



Massive fountain

This is a magnificent structure dedicated to those who have fallen in war and have not been recovered.

From there, we continued north to the Trevi Fountain. This was high on my list of places to visit, and was well worth it.

Quite a few other people obviously thought so too, as the small square was packed, though only a little patience was required to get into a good position. Like me, most people seemed determined to see as much as possible on this Roman weekend and didn't stay long.



I knew this was a large fountain, but I probably wasn't as prepared for its size and scale as I should have been. This is a massive fountain!

Moving on to the north, we came to the Spanish Steps, which we decided not to climb, but sat and had lunch as we viewed the comings and goings of the crowd, surveyed the steps and the church on top, and took time to admire the architecture of the buildings that cover the seven hills that are the old city of Rome.

Still on our way north, another ten-minute walk brings us to the Piazza del Popolo. Here, a huge obelisk that was brought from Egypt in 10BC has prominence in a large square.



Rome has a splendid cafe culture, with many small establishments being tucked into small laneways.

Late on a Sunday, the morning service can still be recalled at St Peter's Square.



Vatican City

Slightly out of place in Rome, it is a reminder of the vast Empire that the Caesars ruled. Still buoyed by the sight of so many wonderful historic locations, we decide to really move and make our way to the Vatican City.

Travelling south then west, we pass the Piazza Augusto, travel over the Tiber, Rome's River, and past the Caste San Angelo, with only time to stop for a photo or two until we reach St Peter's Square, where we just had to stop and admire the view. It was fascinating just taking in the range of people who were admiring it with us, from Americans singing in a group, to tour buses stopping to take time listening to one of

the local priests talk about the history of this sacred site, to watch Buddhist monks dressed in orange take 'selfies' to prove that they were here, and watch the parade of t-shirts pass proclaiming their wearer is from a country far and wide, with people from all five continents being viewed in a matter of moments simply by standing still and reading a shirt. No time for the Sistine Chapel, that will have to wait for the next trip.

Tired and footsore, a direct line for the hotel was called for, and we unfortunately managed to bypass the Pantheon which we had hoped to see, but came upon some ancient ruins that we had no idea about, so you can't really complain, can you?

Rome lights up at night, with fantastic colours adding to the scope of the ancient monuments.



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Rome at night is different.



Rome at night

An hour's rest, dinner following, and back on the streets. Rome at night is a different place, with many areas being beautifully lit with coloured lights. Some areas that were not as spectacular during the day came into their own at this time, and we halted at several places that we had skimmed over during the morning.

This ultimately may have been an error as teeming rain disrupted our plans and forced an early end to the evening, far short of even the small itinerary we had planned. Still, our toes enjoyed the break, even if we were pining for more.

Two nights and one day in Rome was certainly not enough but what we managed was far beyond what we hoped for. Though a longer stay is called for next time!

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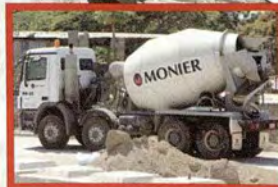
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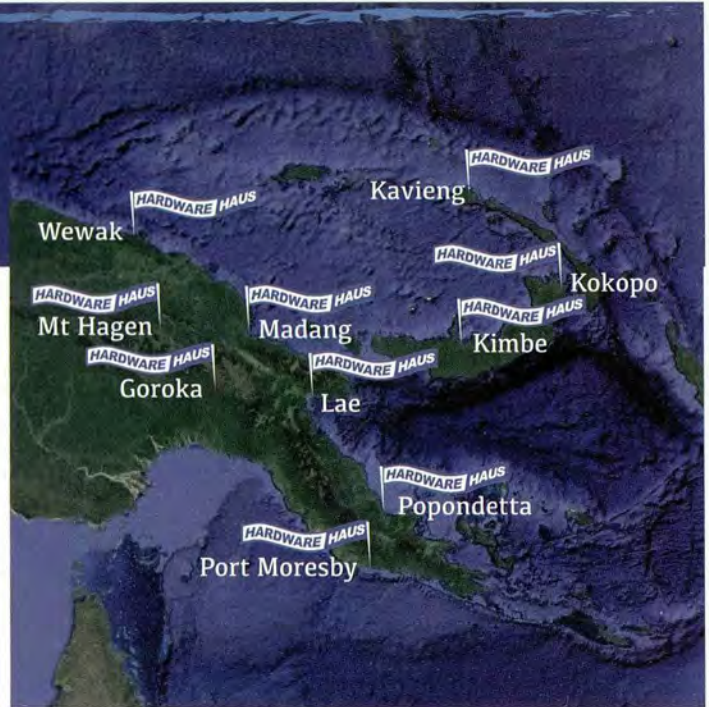


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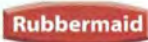
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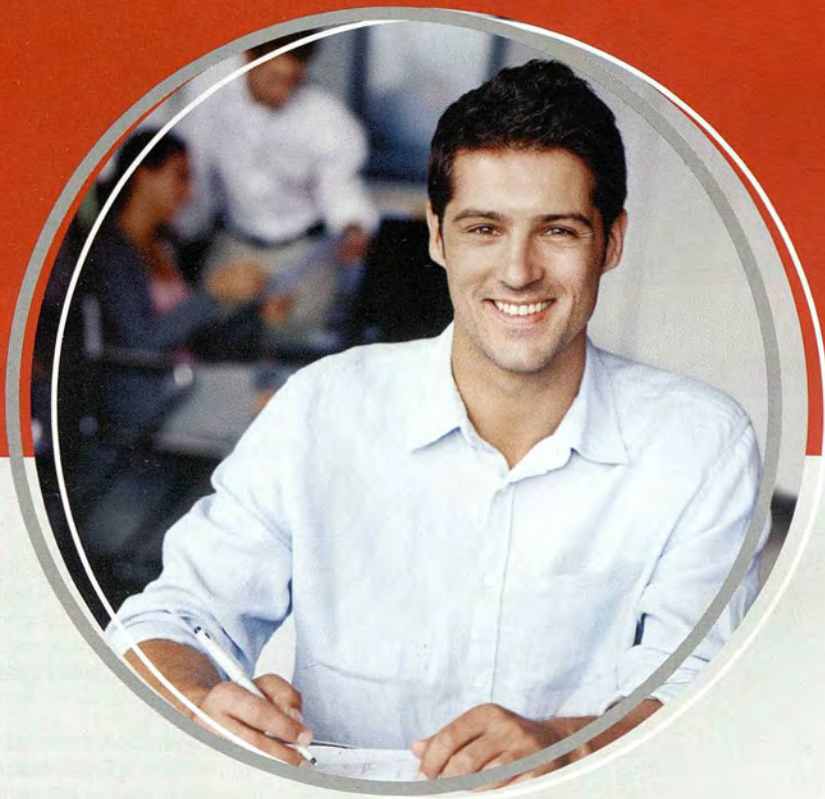
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Going Green, Singapore Style

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK



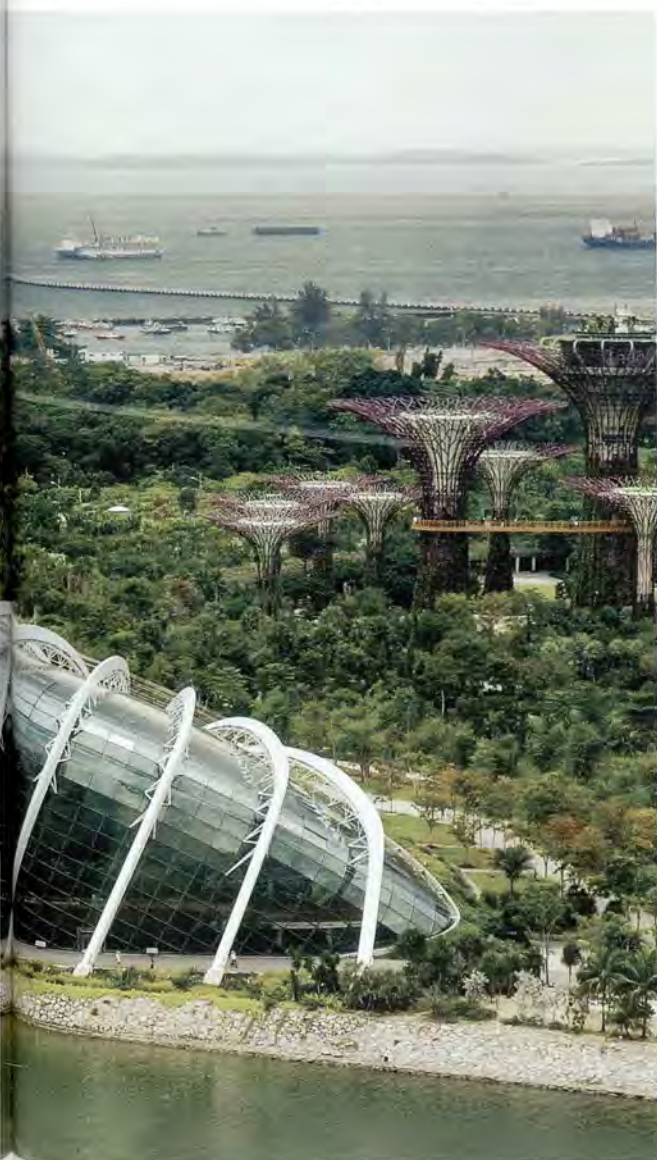
You can't miss the small crowd of distinctive Sepik figures close to the entrance to the Cloud Dome, particularly the large orator's stools.

First thoughts are "what on earth are they doing here?", but all is revealed once you pass through the airlock into the dome.

Here you suddenly feel as if in a sauna, with 100% humidity courtesy of a waterfall more than 35 metres high that cascades the whole height of the glasshouse, which seems an inappropriate name for such a huge structure, constructed to emulate a tropical rainforest.

Along with the occasional artefacts from Papua New Guinea, interspersed amongst the greenery are also statuesque carved pieces from the Asmat region of West Papua, another area where many of the plants displayed originate from.

The central 'mountain' structure through which one can walk through and out of on aerial walkways is festooned with masses of ferns, creepers, bromeliads, orchids and many other tropical plants.



Throughout the dome, there are stopping points and interpretative locations detailing plants of particular interest. In a pool at the top, Sepik canoes carry clumps of orchids along with islands of pitcher plants of many different varieties.

Low-key garden attendants are present, quietly removing any dead leaves or flowers that might distract from the visual impact of the displays.

Some of his fellow employees can be seen in full safety harnesses on the outside of the dome, keeping the glass clear and clean.

The Cloud Dome is just one part of the more than 100 hectares of Gardens by the Bay, established on reclaimed land, and is the newest addition to Singapore's green places. Opened in June 2012, it is the latest episode in the government strategy to transform the island from being a 'Garden City' to being a 'City in a Garden'.

The founder of Singapore, Sir Stamford Raffles,

an able administrator from England, was also an avid naturalist who collected all types of what at the time were really exotic examples of flora and fauna.

He set aside parts of the island as reserves so that such interesting plants and animals could be preserved and admired by everyone; his vision has not been lost and large areas are still parks, gardens and public areas.

The Singapore Botanical Gardens were established in 1859 and now also contain the National Orchid Garden.

Easily accessible by the excellent public transport system are the Bird Park at Jurong, the Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve on the north coast near the causeway to Malaysia, the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and the Singapore Zoo.

The zoo is located on 40 hectares lining the shores of the Pierce Reservoir in the centre of the island and its layout is such that most animals have plenty of space to move around in.



Here, one can see animals from all parts of the world, from the big cats of Africa, giraffes, elephants and a range of our closest relatives - the various apes of the world.

Apart from the enclosures, at particular times of the day there are shows that feature working Asian elephants, colourful birds and birds of prey. At the Jurong Bird Park, for those who are feeling lazy or just plain tired, there is a monorail that travels around the various enclosures, which you can hop on or off as required.

Similarly, at the Singapore Zoo, there are electric buggies that provide a regular 'bus service' along the broad walkways between enclosures and display areas.

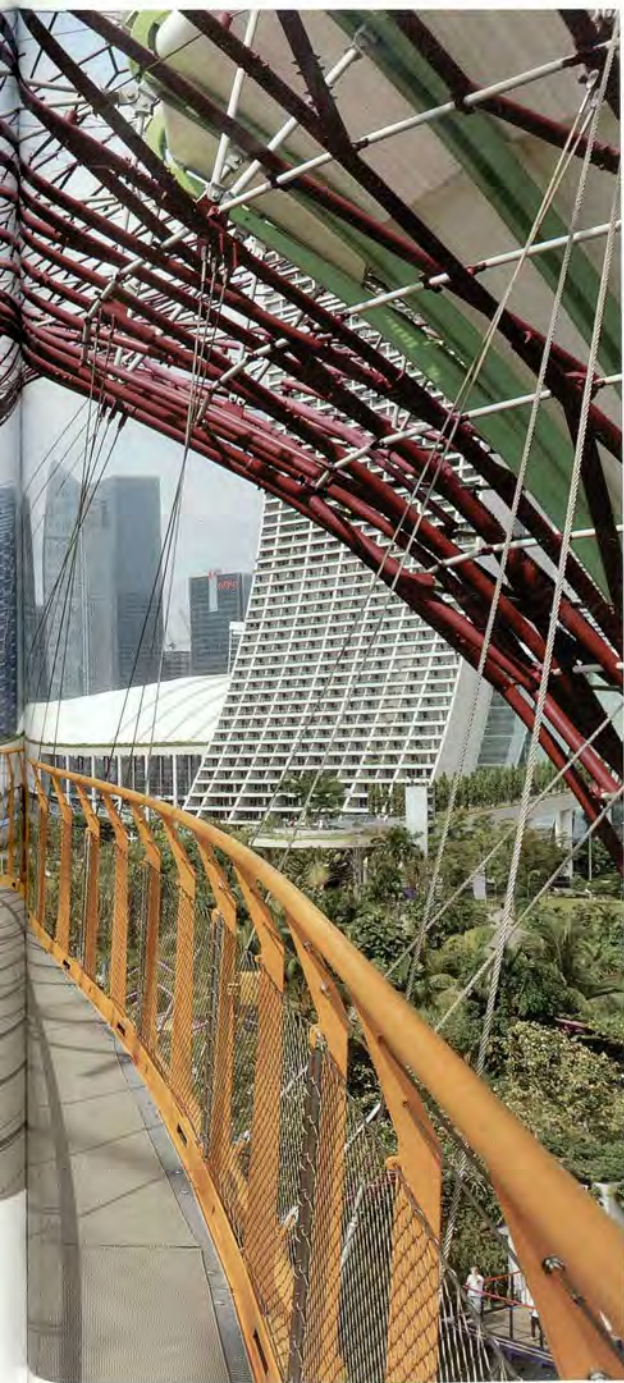
In the evening, one can experience what is billed as the Night Safari when some of the 1,000 nocturnal animals at the zoo are

active and the special shows staged provide a very different night-out.

The government has enacted by-laws requiring land developers to plant a certain number of trees on the boundaries of their properties so that greenery can be maximised even in industrial and built-up areas.

Some notable parts of the CBD have remained green, such as Pearl's Hill, Hong Lim Park, Fort Canning Park, Esplanade Park and Padang, the latter adjacent to the Singapore Cricket Club and set aside for sports. One can't have a British colony without a cricket pitch!

Despite the high density public housing areas and the crowded skyscraper studded skyline of the central business district, there are parts of Singapore Island that are still natural and verdant.



Many of these are popular venues at weekends or on public holidays for Singaporeans, eager to breathe the fresh air of a green rather than concrete jungle.

It's hard to believe that just a couple of years ago the whole reclaimed area adjacent to the Marina Reservoir resembled a muddy building site. Its transformation into such magnificently organised jungle is a real achievement, and best viewed from above in one of the gondolas on the massive Singapore Flyer ferris wheel that rotates leisurely over the whole area giving plenty of time for photographs.

Vertical gardens are a feature of many of the structures found in Gardens by the Bay. The creations in the Supertrees Grove resemble steel-strutted

mushrooms of various heights, covered in tropical greenery. Some can be climbed and are linked by a 22-metre high aerial walkway suspended from cables - not recommended for those who experience vertigo!

Next to the Cloud Dome is the Flower Dome, one of the largest column-less glasshouses in the world. Here dryer environments are featured with sections on flora from places as diverse as California, Africa, Australia and the Mediterranean.

There are crowds of cacti of all shapes and sizes, ancient olive trees, fully-grown date palms and familiar oil palms, succulents and fully grown examples of huge bottle shaped Baobab trees.

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In a quirky twist, there are also attractive ornamental gardens formed from vegetables such as tomatoes, capsicums, cabbages and other edible plants.

So whilst the city expands its island boundaries outwards into the sea, its tower blocks upwards into the sky and its major transport routes downwards under the ground, the government commendably appears intent on keeping Singapore green at the same time. A fine example of commerce and environmental management marching hand in hand!



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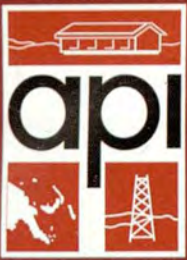
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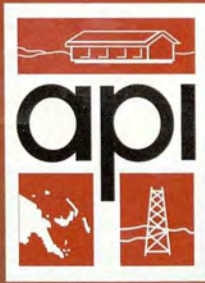
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BRISBANE



In just over a decade, Brisbane's Teneriffe and New Farm have gone from urban fringe embarrassments to international hotspots of cool and something different from the brashness of the city centre.

Last year, Teneriffe has shrugged its reputation for cheap housing and low rent criminality. Today, it has that mix of young blood shops, bars, restaurants and galleries combined with gritty tradition and that hard-to-define 'extra something' which great destinations have, but with that laconic irreverence and optimism that is inimitably Australian. Next time you fly there, take a trip to these areas of style.

Neighbourhood of Style

The metamorphosis of the once neglected CBD-fringe of Australia's cities is turning former nowhere into must-do destinations. **MIKE BUTLER** got the inside line to Brisbane's finest.

New Farm and Teneriffe

Located on a lazy U-bend on the hazelnut brown Brisbane River and spilling over from the edge of "The Valley" on the eastern fringe of the CBD, this area once hosted warehousing and heavy industry.

Today, its monolithic wool stores and remaining architecture are now filled with cafes, design stores, galleries and world-class eateries.

"It's definitely changed over the past five years that I've been here. The demographic has shifted more to stylish and savvy people in their 20s and businesses are cropping up all over the place to cater for it," says Luke Minto, general manager of national radio station Nova that now has its offices on Commercial Road.





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This is a great location to spoil yourself with walking around for a day or an afternoon. Even better is to base yourself here, at somewhere such as the **Limes Hotel** (42 Constance Street, www.limeshotel.com.au).

Ever since it opened in 2008 it has become a visual statement for the area. Designed by local superstar, Argentinean-born designer Alexander Lotersztain, it has just 21 perfectly proportioned and detailed rooms - and the views from the rooftop bar are stunning.

Foodies will love the **Sourced Grocer** (1 Florence St, www.sourcedgrocer.com.au). This converted warehouse space sells seasonal organic fruit and veg, meat, cheeses, flowers and delicious artisan products and there's a cafe too, so you can hang out and enjoy people watching and the industrial-chic décor. "That's changed now and there has definitely been a cultural shift across the city from larger pubs to smaller venues that's changed the nature of going out," he adds.

Around a ten-minute drive from the area and well worth seeking out is **Paterson's Southside Tea Rooms** (639 Wynnum Rd, www.southsidetearoom.com).



Opened with his wife and singer of The Grates, Patience Hodgson, the pair were inspired by the quirky community-based businesses of New York and other great American cities they found when touring.

The result is this quirky café/night spot has the most eclectic mix of people imaginable from rich mums whiling away their days on coffee and cake to video gamers and young hipsters drinking locally brewed beer into the night. They do awfully good coffee too.

One drinking and dining venue that Minto recommends is the **London Club** (38 Vernon Terrace, www.thelondonclub.com.au).

Established in 2007 this funky venue has beautifully themed interiors and a sprawling outside deck.

It's food is modern European and its drinks menu is packed full of Fine Wines, Imported Spirits, French champagne, over 40 Australian Craft beers & Ciders and pages of impressive cocktails.

Lovers of interior design will go gaga over the store **Black & Spiro** (768 Brunswick Street, www.blackandspiro.com.au).

Home to blogger Anna Spiro who has somewhat of a cult following in Brisbane with her Absolutely Beautiful Things blog, this homewares and interior pieces are a treasure for both buying and inspiration.



Finally, sitting like a big old toe in the bottom right hand corner of the peninsula is **Brisbane Powerhouse** (brisbanepowerhouse.org). Whether you're watching a show, taking in an exhibition or enjoying a picnic at New Farm Park next to it, there's no escaping its striking pre-war industrial architecture which has now been turned into an iconic art centre.

This is a building which made the power for the city's former tram fleet, holds its memories of the city close. When it was abandoned in the 60s, a new crowd moved into to live amongst its industrial red brick façade, interior steel beams, gantry leaving a legacy of graffiti - or what is now officially known as heritage-listed "aerosol art".

Today, it's a home for arts, culture and creativity. Still, the building pays tribute to its older days, exuding the rustic charm and modern grunge of its time. If you can, make it for the Saturday markets, it's home to Brisbane's premier outdoor food markets in terms of both quality and quantity.



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MELBOURNE



Melbourne

City of Trams

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK

Trams are the iconic Australian image associated with Melbourne, much like San Francisco in America.

The trams rattling around the city streets today are multi-hued mobile billboards rather than the classic yellow and green colours that used to be associated with these stalwarts of Victoria's public transport system.

Different tram routes criss-cross the city, used by everyone from smart be-suited businessmen to small hordes of foreign students and lost-looking tourists like myself, desperately clasp route maps.

Electric trams in the city date from 1906, although the system was started in 1884 and the following decades when horse and cable trams operated.

A little known fact is that Melbourne has the largest and longest urban tramway network in the world, ahead of those in St. Petersburg, Berlin, Moscow and Vienna.

Yarra Trams is the authority that manages 250 kilometres of track, 487 trams, 30 routes and 1,763 tram stops that provides an amazing total of 183 million passenger trips a year in Melbourne, second only to the railway system in moving residents in, out and around the city.

No cash is involved when travelling, one just swipes a myki card - obtainable from almost all stores - across a reader when boarding the tram and it is debited for the journey. This trust-based system could be easily abused through not swiping the card but the trams are policed by inspectors who can ask to see your card and check that it has in fact been used.

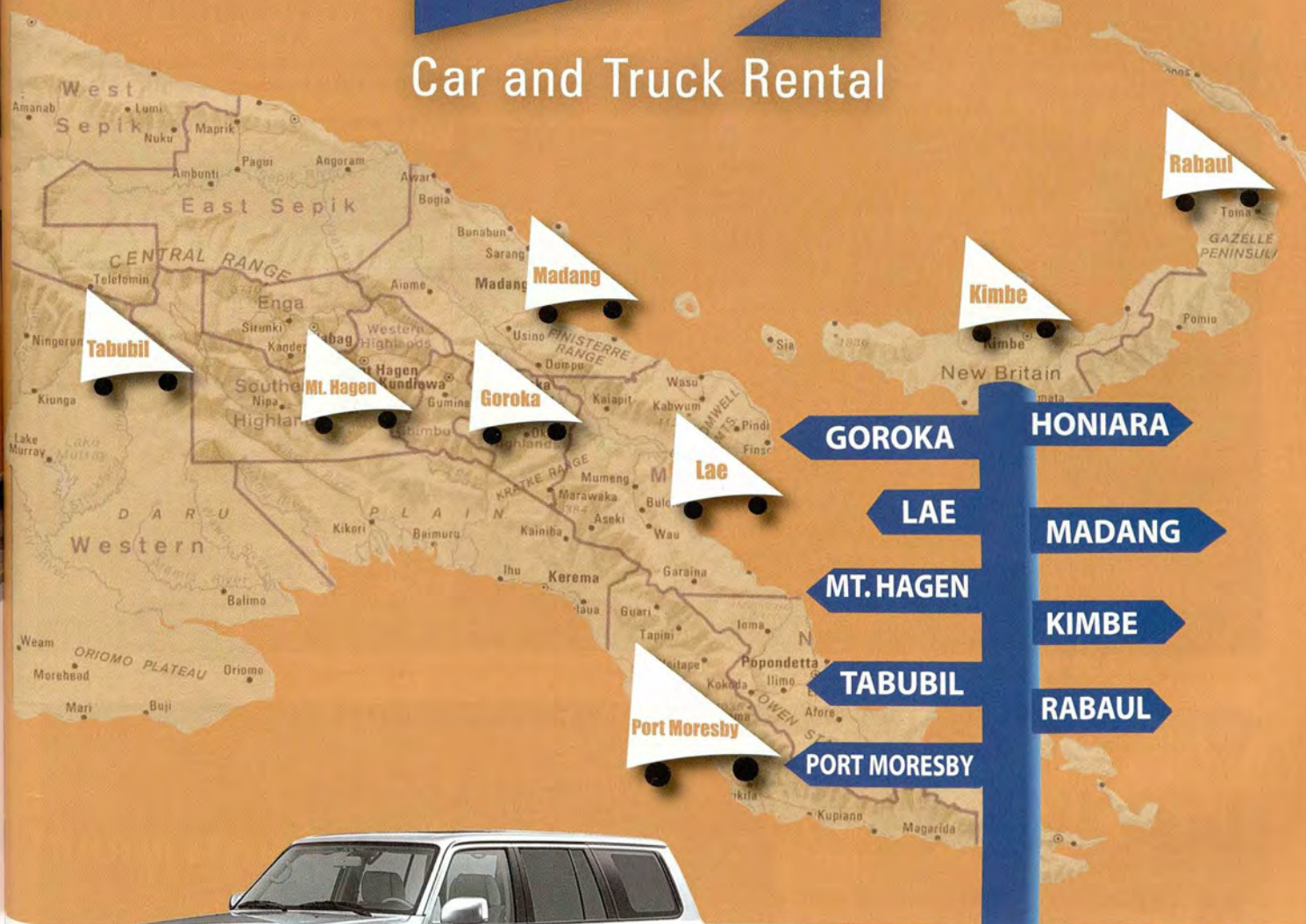
This capital of the state of Victoria has a population of just over 4 million people, is the second largest city in Australia and is renowned for its multiculturalism, being home to more than 200 ethnic groups speaking more than 180 languages.

Melbourne is marketed as a top destination for many activities and services including chic clothing, food and wine, sports of all kinds, culture and the theatre.

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St. Kilda

Better known perhaps as the name of the Australian Football League team established in 1873, with its distinctive black, red & white shirts and a reputation as underachievers, and which took its name from this Melbourne seaside suburb. Sitting on the shores of Port Phillip Bay, St Kilda is located about six kilometres south-east of the city's central business district and has had an interestingly chequered history.



Known as Euro Yroke by its original Kulin Aboriginal inhabitants, whose presence is evidenced by the remains of huts and shell middens discovered along the foreshore, St Kilda became a fashionable area for wealthy settlers since the high ground above the beach offered a cool fresh breeze during Melbourne's hot summer months. Inevitably, the indigenous peoples were driven out to surrounding areas.

The suburb was in fact named after a schooner, Lady of St Kilda, owned by Sir Thomas Acland and which had moored at the main beach for much of 1841.

The first European settler around 1839 was Ben Baxter, a settler from Melbourne on a grazing lease. In 1840, St Kilda was the home to Melbourne's first quarantine station for Scottish immigrants.

During the Edwardian and Victorian eras, it was a favoured suburb of Melbourne's elite and many palatial mansions were constructed along its hills and waterfront. After the turn of the 20th century, St Kilda served a similar function for Melbournians as did Coney Island to the residents of New York City - a place to escape to for a bit of rest and recreation. Densely populated post-war St Kilda became Melbourne's red-light district, home to low-cost rooming houses. However, since the 1960s, the area



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has become known for its culture of bohemianism and as home to many prominent artists, musicians and subcultures which in turn has led to a certain gentrification - an ironic cycle of identity change.

St Kilda is home to many of Melbourne's famous visitor attractions including the Sea Baths, the unmistakable Luna Park, the art deco style Palais Theatre, Esplanade Hotel, Acland and Fitzroy streets, Melbourne's most famous beach, several renowned theatres and hosts several of the city's big events and festivals.



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The Esplanade Hotel was built in 1878 overlooking the beach and cable tram lines were opened in 1888 and 1891 to run from the central city area along to St Kilda Junction and then branch out along Wellington, High and Fitzroy Streets.

If you are lucky enough to be around at the weekend, get down to St Kilda for a walk around the arts and crafts market which has been run on the Esplanade every Sunday since the 1980s. It has a wide variety of handcrafted paintings, woodwork, home-made foodstuff and other knick-knacks.

St Kilda is also home to many major annual events such as the St Kilda Festival, the annual gay Pride March and the many venues of the Melbourne Underground Film Festival.

The suburb has a vibrant local music scene that has produced many Australian music acts such as the band Hunters & Collectors



and its front-man Mark Seymour. Men At Work started playing in St Kilda as an unnamed group.

Recreation on St Kilda beaches involves a variety of water sports, including windsurfing, sailing, kite surfing, rollerblading, beach volleyball, jet-skiing, water-skiing, sunbathing and skydiving. One also can't miss Luna Park, an early 20th century amusement park with its famous "Moonface" entry and historic railway.

The St Kilda Sea Baths is a Moorish themed building built in the late 1920s and demolished in the 1990s, leaving only the front facade. It was redeveloped in keeping with the original style and continues a local history of sea baths which dates back to the 1850s. Acland Street is a shopping and restaurant precinct, famous for its numerous cake shops and cafes.

Queen Victoria market

After a hearty breakfast at St Kilda overlooking Port Phillip Bay, we are told to get on a Number 96 or 112 tram to get to one of the other landmarks that personify Melbourne - the Queen Victoria market.

After much rattling and numerous stops, we arrive outside the markets that spread out from behind an impressively solid façade, apparently covering an area of seven hectares.

The Queen Victoria Market, obviously named after the Queen who ruled the British Empire from 1837 to 1901, is the largest open air market in the Southern Hemisphere, although almost all stalls are under simple roofing; very sensible given the well-documented vagaries of Melbourne weather.

Starting as a small market to the east of the city in the 1850s, it gradually expanded into space made available by the closure of the old Melbourne cemetery west of Queen Street and north of Franklin Street.

The reburial of human remains from the closure of the cemetery caused a great deal of controversy at the time. There were about 10,000 burials on the site, so it is a sobering thought that there still remain approximately 9,000 people buried under our feet as we walk around the sheds and car park of the market!

The Queen Victoria Market was officially opened on 20 March 1878, originally for the wholesale and retail of fruit and vegetables, but has since expanded into a huge range of meat, fish, dry goods and numerous attendant cafes and restaurants. The roofs of the market are equipped with 1,328 solar photovoltaic panels, covering 2000 square metres and generating 252,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity each year, the largest single renewable energy installation in Melbourne.



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Today, the market is a major tourist destination and is a place for local Melburnians to gather at the weekend, offering a variety of fruit and vegetables, meat, poultry and seafood, gourmet and deli foods as well as specialty delicacies.

It also has a large non-food related market, selling a diverse range of clothing, shoes, jewellery and handmade art and crafts.

The market is open every day of the week except Mondays and Wednesdays and on Wednesday evenings in the summer there is a night market which offers dining, bars, live entertainment and a variety of other stalls.

A bewildering array of aromas assaults the senses from stalls cooking Spanish paella, Korean savoury potato twists, crepes, and all sorts of European and Asian barbeques whilst close by is a talented and cowboy-hatted Japanese gentleman who entertains patrons with his one-man singing, mouth organ, steel slide guitar and foot drum renditions of rock classics, hoping that some will 'invest' in one of his CD's.



Fresh is the flavour of the market. More than fresh seafood and fresh fruits and vegetables, the market takes a fresh approach. You will find clothing, baggage, toys, jewellery, new-age products and souvenirs at sinful prices.

The market is divided into a number of precincts; the Deli Hall, Elizabeth Street Shops, many shed laneways, fruit and vegetables, the meat hall, organics, general merchandise, Victoria Street shops and the wine market or more or less labelled.

Reflecting the variety of ethnic backgrounds of Melbourne residents, just walking through the Queen Victoria market one hears the many different languages of people all living and interacting together in harmony in the cultural stew that in some ways personifies the city - one that has many faces.



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Rolling, Rolling, Rolling...

Each year, Great Southern Rail hosts a famous musician on board to perform platform concerts at remote railway sidings.



WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: MARIE BARBIERI

Threaded through the hazy aura of the Blue Mountains' valleys and mounts, my carriage creaks and squeaks above the clanks and clunks of the railway before the last streaks of sunset are laid to rest.

I'm on the Christmas train that brings festive merriment to outback communities.

Having departed Sydney to experience Australia's most iconic rail journey that carves across 4,352km of the continent's shifting landscapes, I get intimate with my retro cabin, which has aged gracefully.

It comprises a double bunk and a compact bathroom, with sink, toilet, vanity unit, shower, and a cleverly waterproofed towel cabinet. I won't reach my destination in a hurry, as this chain of silver bullets is no bullet train, chugging along at a genteel average of 85km/per hour. But this is its very charm.

Changing canvas

After a night observing stars shooting past my cabin window, my voluntary insomnia allows a couple of hours' sleep, before awaking to a landscape that has morphed from lush and green to dry and yellow as we trade New South Wales for South Australia.

Becoming transfixed by my window's slideshow, passing frames dehydrate into a thirsted wilderness. The nude landscape is dry, but lives and breathes with a mob of kangaroos and an emu racing at breakneck speed across a terrain in varying shades of sunburn.

In the Outback Explorer Lounge, we meet Barbra White, from the legendary Royal Flying Doctor Service, who provides a talk on the work of the 'angels of the sky'.

She tells us how the iPhone has streamlined the consultation process, and remarkably, how they can even run an ECG over the device.

Coming to a halt at Watson.



Mingling with locals at Watson.



Advancing west, ochre sands sprout bluebush and mallee trees, and occasionally, a camel. These ships of the desert assisted the railway's construction. Robust colleagues, they would close their nostrils during dust storms, and shake the sand off their three rows of eyelashes.

Post shower, I stagger through several carriages in search of the dining car. Elvis would have been proud watching my pelvis bounce off the corridor walls, and I make a note to wear beige tomorrow, to complement the elbow bruises that are currently a work in progress.

Celebrity moments

At the door to the Queen Adelaide Restaurant is a charming gentleman with a striking handlebar moustache. Hospitality manager, Jos Engelaar, graciously seats me at my table.

The gourmet menu entices with braised Angus beef cheek, kangaroo loin mignon or roasted pumpkin saltbush lasagne. Life can be difficult.

Right: Brian McFadden plays to the crowd at Watson.

Below: Santa gathers the crowd at Watson.

Cameras get clicking when Irishman, Brian McFadden (ex band member of Westlife) arrives for dinner. As voices get louder and glasses chink harder, the main discussion is how did people survive living in the heart of desolate Australia? A good question!

Those who lived near The Indian Pacific railway line had no permanent source of water or refrigeration. Fresh meat and dairy produce (which had to be eaten on the day) was delivered by the Tea and Sugar train that ceased chugging in 1996. The Aboriginal people, of course, survived this challenging land for over 40,000 years!



Indigenous moments

Approaching the siding of Watson, the train squeals to a halt. Our windows frame Utes and trucks anticipating celebrations. An elder shuffles forward, cradling a baby dingo; verification that we're in the bare bones of the Outback.

Ears prick and eyes widen when Brian McFadden and Robbie (Brian's fellow guitarist) play to the crowd, unplugged. It's the yearly highlight for the children from Oak Valley Aboriginal School.

Singing through the searing heat, we're rewarded with a priceless movie-set scene of bare, sooty feet, runny noses, shredded shorts and beaming smiles.

Teachers watch on, feet a-tapping, and mothers spectate from benches while dads stand on vehicle roofs. Then Santa Claus steps off the train and empties his stocking. Kids play footie with their new balls, and the panorama paints a priceless unification of cultures.

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Fun moments at Watson.

Post autograph-signing, departure prompts tears from the children that run alongside the train as fast as their tiny legs can take them. Watching them from the Outback Explorer Lounge, they wave continuously until they are mere dots on the landscape. The sight mutes us for minutes.

Ghostly hamlets

Crossing the Nullarbor Plain there is little to see other than the odd solar panel or ruddy airstrip. Mirages tango on the horizon's tightrope, shimmering before clouds of rusty dust, parted only by the wings of wedge-tailed eagles.

Trundling along we reach the quirkiest stop of all: Cook. Disembarking trainiacs are bemused by the sign reading: 'If you're crook, come to Cook!' We then spot two corrugated iron jail cells. Beyond this there seems nothing else. But oscillating in the heat haze beyond, I find the skeleton of a school that once echoed with children-chatter. And a water tank states: "No food or fuel for next 862km."

The locomotive hoots, and again we edge into nothingness, where time refuses to exist. On this journey, I soporifically abandon my watch, and my diet, but the thirst for escaping the modern, technology-dominated world strengthens.

At the 1,047-km mark, we pass the border of South Australia and Western Australia. Within minutes an electrical storm marks the beginning of a hammering downpour. It floods pockets of red sand and the landscape impersonates a smoking frying pan.

Striking gold

After performing to a crowd of jackaroos at Rawlinna station (where McFadden is swarmed by bushflies!), our final stop is Kalgoorlie. Steeped in gold-rush fame, this city was blessed with the luck of the Irish when Paddy Hannan discovered gold in 1893.

The final platform concert pulls a thronging crowd, opened by the Indigenous Ngadju Dancers. They capture all eyes as they enact the Dance of the Father Emu, all decked-out in their carefully applied body paints. The Kalgoorlie Primary School then continues with carols before Brian McFadden shakes the stage.

Brian McFadden draws *The Indian Pacific's* Christmas train journey to a close at Kalgoorlie.



The Ngadju Dancers perform Dance of the Father Emu in their traditional paints at Kalgoorlie.



On the final leg of this three-day/three-night journey to Perth, minds quieten in preparation for good-byes. Whether you take the Christmas train or any of the weekly scheduled journeys aboard *The Indian Pacific*, the experience will stay with you long after your land legs stop you swaying.

• For more information, check out *Great Southern Rail*: www.greatsouthernrail.com.au

✈ Air Niugini flies daily to Cairns and Brisbane and to Sydney two times a week on Friday and Sunday.

Aloha, PALM COVE

A little bit of PNG on Cairns' northern beaches

BY JOHN BROOKSBANK



Aloha owner...Bernie Oberleuter.

It was dinner time and the children at the table were talking animatedly about the crocodiles they had seen earlier in the day on the Daintree River at the edge of the Daintree rainforest.

Bernie overheard and immediately asked whether they wanted to taste crocodile meat as well...so the next day, the family came back to sample some croc kebabs.

Always ready to indulge a patron or three, Aloha owner Bernie Oberleuter first learnt about cooking and customer service literally at his mother's apron strings at Red Rose, the Chinese restaurant his family operated in Lae.

As the chief cook's assistant, waiter and bottle washer, he learnt all aspects of the trade and helped out even when home on holiday from school or work as he grew up. One could say that cooking was almost bred into him.

As a child, his nickname was Warupi, meaning a type of cooking banana in his father's Roro language, and today, he incorporates this name into his email address.

A glance at the Aloha Bar & Grill menu provides many examples of Pacific themed dishes or colourful interpretations of old favourites.

Bernie can prepare a PNG-style mumu to order; there is ceviche which is a Tahitian raw fish salad similar to the Fijian Kokonda (kokoda) and even white bait or silverfish fritters.



Aloha Bar & Grill provides many examples of Pacific-themed dishes or colourful interpretations of old favourites.

Bernie is a bit of a genetic smorgasbord himself - his father being part German and part Yule Island in the Kairuku District of Central whilst his mother is a mix of Malay Chinese and Amele village near Madang.

He grew up in Lae before being awarded an Australian Government scholarship to attend Holy Cross College in Sydney. He returned to PNG to work in the public service, where he held positions in various government departments for more than 25 years including Plant and Transport, Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Public Service Commission, where he was a senior inspector of overseas recruitment.

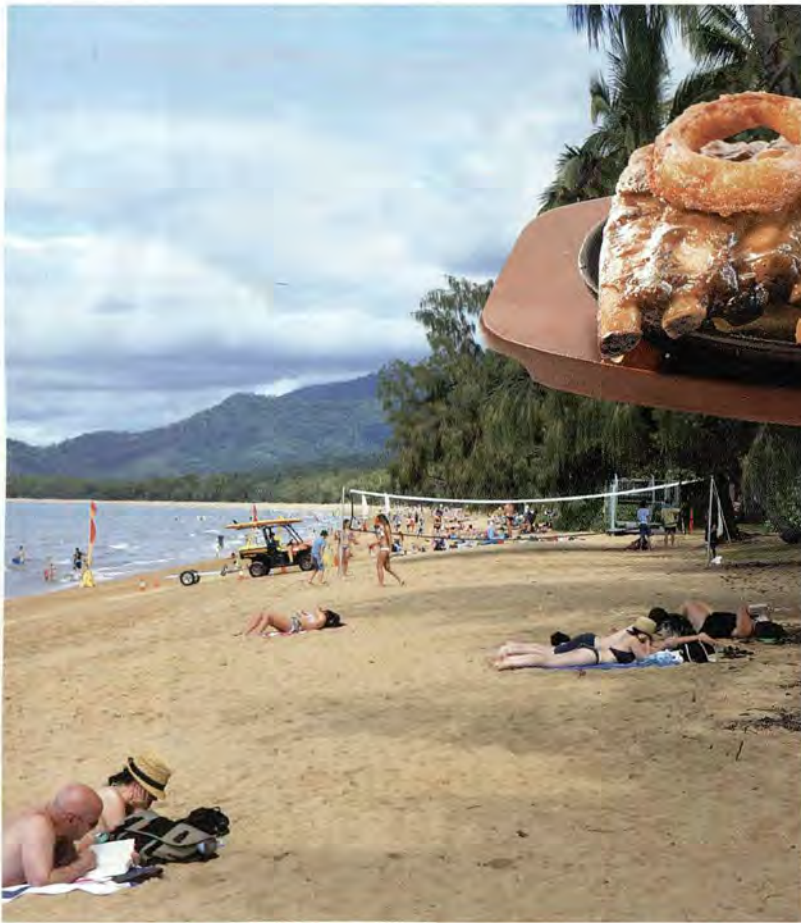
Bernie also spent some time on secondment to the Morobe Provincial Government as provincial planner under then Governor Utula Samana.



In 1982, he resigned from the PNG public service and emigrated to Australia where he worked in a variety of management positions in the hospitality industry. However, he still had cooking in his blood and found time to attend Certificate 3 and 4 cookery courses at TAFE, which in fact he completed in half the normal time since he did so well in his practical block course assessments. So he was now equipped with formal cookery qualifications to complement the hands-on training received under his mother's tutelage.

Government then got in the way again and he took up positions with the Australian Federal administration, working for nine years in the management of Aboriginal communities in Mornington Island and then Doomadgee, both in the Gulf of Carpentaria region of Queensland. Whilst at Mornington Island among other duties, he was asked to cook at a construction camp; whilst at Doomadgee he was offered the opportunity to start up a bakery, which he did after resigning (again) from the public service.





Bernie might still be in Doomadgee baking bread, cakes and scones today if the local corporation that owned the bakery premises hadn't drastically increased rentals and made the business uneconomic to operate. After much haggling in July 2012, he purchased a restaurant building on Williams Esplanade at Palm Cove, the prestigious northern beach suburb of Cairns which he has named Aloha to reflect the Pacific theme that he intends to pursue for the enterprise.

To Bernie, running Aloha Bar & Grill is a chance to have a lifestyle he enjoys, mixing a wonderful location with his passion for cooking. After many years of working in management and cooking for others, training others and passing on his skills and experience he now has the chance to put all of these skills together in his own restaurant.

This admirable goal is not going to be that easy to actually achieve in practice. Amazingly, there are an 32 cafes and restaurants along the esplanade at Palm Cove, all competing for the attention of the tourists and locals who live near or are visiting what is the nicest of Cairns beach suburbs with its laid back village attitude and colonnade of the magnificent paperbark Melaleuca trees that line the shorefront.

About two kilometres long, it has been able to win the accolade of 'Queensland's Cleanest Beach' and has a neat jetty that always seems to have hopeful fishermen hanging from its railings.

Like many restaurants in Cairns, Bernie advertises widely and participates in the local Entertainment Guide

and Table 52 schemes that provide people with the chance to get a significant discount on meals at certain establishments when they present the appropriate vouchers or cards.

In order to secure all available customers, Bernie has three shifts of staff to run Aloha from 7am till evening, and so is able to serve breakfast, lunch and dinner - morning, noon and night. But what is it that Aloha has got that none of the others can match? It's the PNG or Pacific connection.

Apart from being brought up intimately involved in the herbs and spices of Chinese creations, European cookery training in classic dishes such as steak Diane, crepe Suzette or beef Wellington, Bernie is prepared to utilise as many local ingredients as possible - which in Cairns extends to kangaroo, emu, camel and crocodile in the meat department. If you want, Bernie can prepare dishes that include all the usual PNG staples such as coconut, sago, cassava, kau kau, yam and taro and the range of kumu available in Rusty's Market.



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It is not just the orange kau kau that one can find in Woolworths. Bernie likes to use the white and especially the purple variety which is not as sweet and is in fact healthier for those certain dietary conditions. He has on occasion even been able to bring in the distinctive short red bananas from his hometown of Lae, albeit pre-cooked and frozen, a method which is acceptable to the Australian quarantine folk.

Looking around the restaurant, looking out at the barbeque area, central pool and waterfall feature of the neighbouring residential complex at the quiet back of the premises I spot the distinctive green leaves of aibika growing in pots alongside some ginger.

Bernie says that he wants to start growing more herbs and spices also so that they are immediately available fresh for use in the restaurant.

Apart from the intimate inside tables alongside the thatched bar there is an expansive outside deck where one can sit under shady umbrellas, look out at the sea and watch the passing parade of humanity at this northern end of Williams Esplanade.

Apart from the taste, dishes at Aloha are as colourful as Bernie's Hawaiian shirts and presented in an attractively different manner, using banana leaves, beach washed clam and nautilus shells as containers and other shells as decoration or as part of the structure of certain dishes. Although I didn't get the chance to sample it, the description of a 'kahuna burger' sounds as if it makes a visual as well as a taste statement.

There are regular customers, often Papua New Guineans or others who have worked or visited PNG, who make a point to visit Aloha whenever they are in Cairns and it is this 'wantok connection' that Bernie hopes to cultivate - to satisfy those who want a little taste of home when they are away from PNG.



Don't be confused when you walk along the this end of the Palm Cove esplanade, HYDRANT BOOSTER is not an exotic cocktail, Bernie has in fact got permission from the local Fire Service to use the white space under the emergency hose box outside the restaurant, marked in bright firehouse red letters, to place some advertising images.

Sitting on the front deck of Aloha, as the waves of the Coral Sea gently wash ashore, the expanse of Palm Cove beach in front stretches away to the prominence of Yorkeys Knob to the south towards Cairns city, eating a delightful gourmet meal and perhaps sipping a cold SP, could this be paradise?

Maybe not, but it is certainly a little bit of Papua New Guinea in northern Queensland - so call in and say hello to Bernie the next time you fly Air Niugini from Port Moresby to Cairns.



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AUCKLAND



Sail of the Century

BY IAN LLOYD NEUBAUER

When the Team USA stole the America's Cup from New Zealand in San Francisco bay in September after bouncing back from an 8-1 disadvantage in what is now remembered as one of the most improbable comebacks in the history of sport, it rekindled interest in the prestigious sailing series that hadn't been seen since 1983, when the Royal Perth Yacht Club became the first non-American team to win the cup in 113 years in a winged-keel challenger called Australia II.

It takes nerves of steel and a lifetime of sailing experience to become a crew member on an AC72-class hydrofoiling catamaran - multimillion-dollar

engineering marvels designed to levitate above the water on wing-like foils at speeds of up to 47.75 knots or 88.43 km/hour. Crew are also required to wear an array of safety gear: body armour, high-visibility crash helmets, emergency positioning beacons and hands-free breathing apparatuses - the latter of which was only recently introduced after British Olympic gold medalist Andrew Simpson died when an AC72-class owned by the Swedish America's Cup flipped and capsized on him during a training exercise in San Francisco Bay. But just about any able-bodied person can experience the thrill of what it was like competing in the world's most prestigious sailing event before the 2010 switch from conventional monohull yacht to high-speed catamarans onboard NZL 68 - an America's Cup class monohull yacht built for Germany's sailing team in 2003 and now operating as a pleasure craft in Auckland, the City of Sails.



Ten minutes after leaving port the team of five young Aucklanders commanding NZL 68 cut the engine which, along with steel rails fixed along the either side of the hull and the principal sail, are the only modifications made to the \$10-million 24-tonne yacht to render it safe and suitable for general use.

“The original sail was transparent and threaded with carbon fibre and designed for speed and power rather than longevity or strength,” says skipper Jason Hendy.

“It cost \$120,000 and would last no longer than a month until it started tearing apart. The one we’re using now is a lot stronger and made from kevlar. It costs about \$70,000 and can last for up to two years.” The sail, however, is just the icing on the cake of the phenomenally expensive exercise of keeping NZL 68 afloat. The high-tensile rope used to keep the sail taut cost \$1,300 a metre.

The carbon fibre handles on the oversized grinders used to winch the sails up and down the mast cost \$2,500 a piece. And every two years the yacht has to be hauled out of the water, disassembled piece by piece and then put back together again for preventative maintenance.

FORMULA ONE OF BOATS

The wind is blowing at a gentle 15 knots as we motor out of Viaduct Harbour into Waitemata Harbour, an arm of the Hauraki Gulf, one of the most geographically and biologically diverse marine parks on earth.

Each direction of the compass offers gobsmacking views: to the south is Auckland’s statuesque CBD crowned by the 328m-high Sky Tower, with the Auckland Harbour Bridge to the west.

The well-heeled beachside suburbs of Auckland’s North Shore to the north and Rangitoto Island, the largest of Auckland’s 55 extinct volcanoes, shimmering in the west.



Not surprisingly, going for a ride in it doesn't come cheap: when Richard Branson hired it out for a two-hour private charter during a recent visit to Auckland, he forked out \$2,5000 for the pleasure.

"To be honest, we shouldn't even be sailing this thing," Hendy says. "It's like you and your mates going out, buying a Formula One racing car, tinkering with the suspension and taking it for a spin around the block."

Yet sail it we do, though not before a quick

safety lesson during which passengers from Australia, the US, a group of Chinese with very expensive cameras and three British guys riding around New Zealand on a BMW Motorrad motorcycle tour learn three very important don'ts: don't stand inside a bundle of rope lest you want to get yanked overboard; don't put your hand anywhere near a titanium cog under the sail lest it chew your fingers off mid-spin; and don't hold onto the masts' high-tensile ropes unless you favour being sucked up through the 35-metre mast.

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“Sometimes people misinterpret the safety briefing and sometimes they don’t listen,” Hendy says. “But so far we’ve been lucky. Nobody has ever been hurt.”

Normally it takes 17 hardened, burly sailors to sail NZL 68. Yet with only five crew aboard, volunteers are called to grind the chunky steel grinders used to raise the sail. They take their places, one on either side of the grinders and, on the skipper’s command, begin hand-peddalling with all their might as the sail creeps it’s way up the mast.

The New Zealand sailing team that used NZL 68 as their training vessel from 2005 until 2010 once raised the sail in nine seconds.

It takes our crew nearly a minute to get it up there but the result is much the same, our vessel now coasting at 16 knots through the choppy blue waters of Hauraki Gulf.

As we pick up more speed the vessel tilts to the starboard side and we find ourselves lying nearly completely upright, holding onto the side rails for dear life.

Someone yells and points to water where a seal breaches the water’s surface and flashes us a curious look. The Chinese fumble for their cameras but in a flash the creature is gone, though we also get to see a pod of bottlenose dolphins and in the distance, a whale.



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And while the adventure comes to an end much too soon, the memory of sailing a boat built to win glory in the world's oldest and most prestigious yachting event lingers indefinitely.

"It's the nicest feeling when they turn the engines off," says Trevor Stafford from the UK, "and you're left with nothing but the sound of the sail and the wind in your hair."

HOW MUCH?

Sail New Zealand (explorenz.co.nz; +649 359 5987) charges NZ\$160 for a two-and-a-half-hour America's Cup Sailing Experience in Auckland and \$NZ210 for a three-hour America's Cup Racing Experience.



 Air Niugini flies to Fiji, Brisbane and you can catch a partner airline to Auckland.



OUR WEEKEND



OUR BEER



ENJOY RESPONSIBLY

AIR NIUGINI'S RESUMES SERVICE TO KUNDIAWA



Minister for Public Enterprises and State Investments Ben Micah arriving at Kundiawa Airport.

AFTER ALMOST TWO YEARS, Air Niugini resumed services to Kundiawa in December last year.

Flights into Kundiawa ceased in May 2011 due to lack of perimeter fencing at the airport and illegal intrusion of the runway by people and domestic animals near the airport area.

It was also made clear that because of the way the airport runway is designed, Air Niugini can only uplift limited loads out of Kundiawa which was not commercially viable for the airline.

The good news, however, is that the Simbu Provincial Government has agreed to underwrite the service.

The agreement provides for the Provincial Government to pay for and use an agreed

number of seats per flight throughout the year.

Air Niugini is now operating twice weekly to Kundiawa on Saturday and Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Minister for Public Enterprises and State Investments, Hon. Ben Micah, welcomed the initiative by Air Niugini to resume services and commended both the airline and the National Airports Corporation for working together to address the outstanding issue of security, safety and scheduling of flights into Kundiawa.

Minister Micah also acknowledged the efforts of the Governor of Simbu, member for Sinesine Yongomul, the Attorney-General and all members of Parliament from Simbu Province who have committed to support the resumption of flights.





Minister Ben Micah happy to be in Kundiawa.



Minister for Public Enterprises & State Investments – Hon. Ben Micah MP (second from left) with other guests at Kundiawa Airport.

ENB Provincial Administrator Aquila Tubal (third from right) presenting the cheque to Air Niugini General Manager, Dominic Kaumu (second from right) and ANG Cairns Airport & Cargo Services Manager, Maree Keygan in Kokopo recently.



Air Niugini/East New Britain Govt Promote Tourism

A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT GRANT was recently presented to Air Niugini on behalf of the East New Britain Provincial (ENBP) Government.

The second half of the payment of K150,000 was handed to the airline's General Manager for Commercial, Dominic Kaumu by the ENBP Administrator Aquila Tubal. The initial payment of K100,000 was made last September.

The East New Britain Provincial Government is keen to promote Kokopo as the hub of tourism in the New Guinea Islands region and the direct Rabaul/Cairns service by Air Niugini is one incentive the provincial government is fully backing to promote the many tourism products.

ENBP Administrator Tubal said that tourism is a sustainable industry which his provincial government is keen to see develop and they are happy to work closely with Air Niugini to bring tourists directly from Cairns and other parts of Australia to the East New Britain and the islands region.

Air Niugini's General Manager Commercial, Mr Kaumu said the money will go towards marketing the route as well as the promotion and advertising of the service both within the country and Cairns.

"Tour packages will also be put together for Cairns and the New Guinea Islands and the airline is encouraging people in East New Britain and New Guinea islands to make use of the direct Cairns/Rabaul

service," said Mr Kaumu.

Parents of students from the New Guinea islands who are attending schools in Cairns are encouraged to use the direct service rather than travel via Port Moresby.

Tourists that arrive in Kokopo from Cairns can also continue to Kavieng, Hoskins and other New Guinea Islands provinces and return the same way to Cairns.

Mr Kaumu also appealed to all stakeholders including Immigration, Customs and Quarantine to work together with the airline to ensure the direct Rabaul/Cairns service operates smoothly to grow the route.

The direct service operates once weekly on Friday.



AIR NIUGINI'S 'CITY OF LAE' FLYING



AIR NIUGINI'S LATEST FOKKER 100 JET aircraft acquisition named "City of Lae" commenced operation last year on December 13.

Registered under P2-PXJ, the aircraft arrived just in time for the traditionally busy festive season and operates specifically between Port Moresby and Lae.

Air Niugini's Chief Executive, Mr Simon Foo said passenger surveys in the domestic market revealed a high consumer preference for jet aircraft which enables faster travel and offers more cabin and cargo space.

Air Niugini currently operates five daily flights between Port Moresby and Lae.

The arrival of the additional Fokker 100 brings the number of this aircraft type to seven and further increased the total aircraft in the fleet to 28.

Air Niugini Promotes 2015 Pacific Games

AS THE COUNTRY'S NATIONAL FLAG CARRIER, Air Niugini has taken a major step in promoting the 2015 Pacific Games by having three of its aircraft painted with games logo on the fuselage.

The popular yellow lagatoi with red, green, black and blue colours which capture the spirit of the games and Papua New Guinea is proudly visible on two B737s and a Fokker F100 aircraft.

Air Niugini's Chief Executive, Mr Simon Foo said the 2015 Pacific Games is a momentous regional event that will coincide with the country's 40th anniversary and Air Niugini as the national airline is proud to promote the event.

About 4,500 participants including 3,000 athletes from the South Pacific countries will attend the Games to be held in Papua New Guinea. Air Niugini is the official airline of the 2015 Pacific Games.

The three aircraft carrying the Pacific Games logo is promoting the event in the regions that the airline operates to including Australia, Asia and the Pacific.

"Air Niugini has one-and-a-half years to promote the Pacific Games and Papua New Guinea to the rest of the world and the airline is proud to participate in the



The B737 with the popular yellow lagatoi with red, green, black and blue colours which capture the spirit of the Pacific Games.

promotion of this forthcoming event," said Mr Foo.

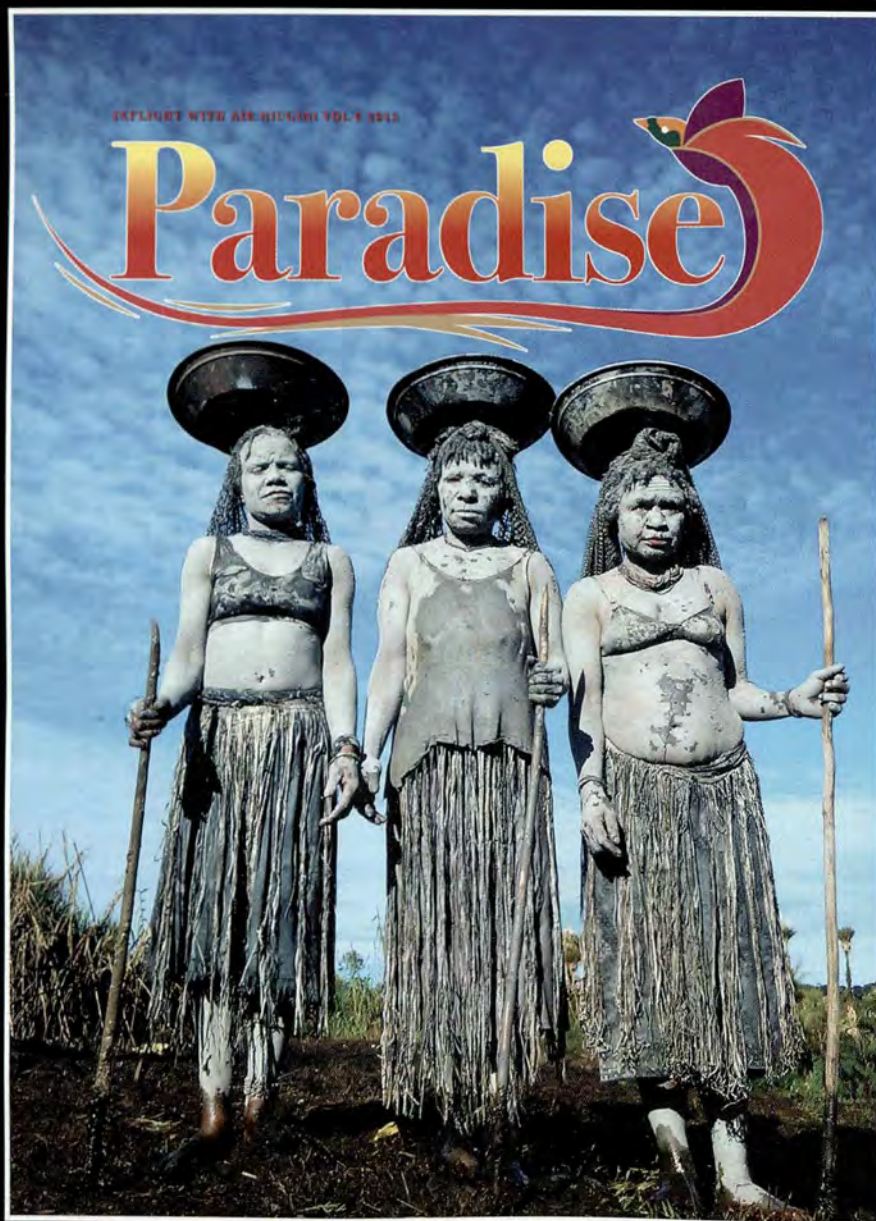
The 2015 Pacific Games will be held in Port Moresby from July 4-18, 2015. Twenty two countries in the South Pacific are expected to participate in 28 sports.

An estimated 4,500 people are expected in Port Moresby.

This will be the country's third time to host the Pacific Games; the first being in 1969, followed by 1991.



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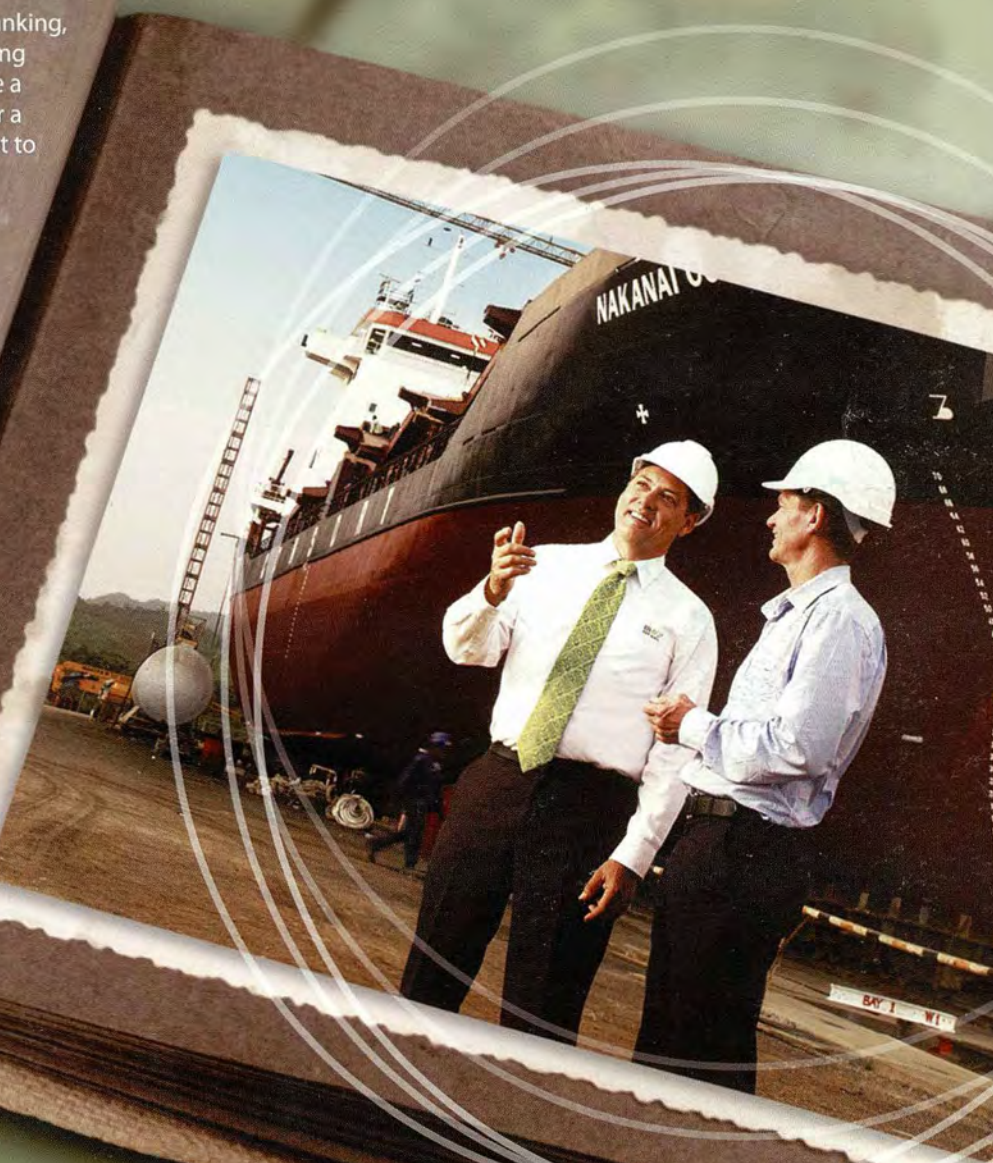
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