



*The Governor General of PNG, Sir Paulias Matane with Mary Mennis when she received the MBE in 2008 for her work with the Bel people of Madang.*

## FOREWORD

Mary Mennis (nee Eccles) has written a number of books, and research papers on Papua New Guinea since she first arrived in Rabaul in 1962. Mary's husband Brian, a

surveyor, was posted to Madang in 1971 and the family arrived there just as the centenary of Miklouho-Maclay, was being celebrated. Mary was fascinated by Miklouho-Maclay's description of the large *balangut* canoes. for forty years, she interested a group of five Bilbil

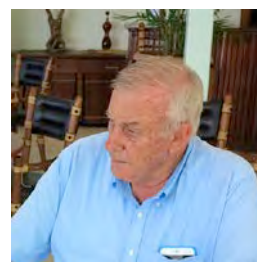
village headmen to build another one in 1978. Mary went to the jungle with them collecting material and recording the process. This information was subsequently published by Queensland University in a book called *Mariners of Madang*. In 2013 a group of young Bilbil men built the large *balangut*, photographed here with a great celebration. It is hoped that future generations may continue to use this knowledge and the expertise of their forefathers..

In 2014, I asked Mary to rejuvenate the Madang Museum which is part of the Madang Visitors and Cultural Bureau. Mary decided to use the theme of flags from all the countries that had influenced the development of the Town and Province. This present **booklet *The Flagged History of Madang*** was written to accompany this exhibition but can be used independently as an outline of the history of the Province. It also contains some information of the local artefacts housed there from around the Province.

Mary's research led to two masters' degrees, an MA from the University of Papua New Guinea and a M.SocSc from James Cook University in Queensland.

Sir Peter L C Barter, GCL, OBE. Kt

Madang - 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2018







Russian imperial flag

1871 - 1883



German Naval Flag in

1884



German New Guinea flag

1884 – 1914.

Flags of different nations who came to Madang and influenced some political changes 1871 – 1975.



Australian flag.

1914 – 1941



The Japanese flag of Occupation in Madang

1942 – 1944.



Australian flag

1945 – 1975.



Papua New Guinean flag

1975 to present.



## Authors Note

This Flagged History of Madang is a short history based on the flags of the various countries that had an influence on the town and province. From the beginning of outside contact, people from many countries brought their own flags and agenda and recorded their impressions with diaries, illustrations and photographs of the local villages and people.

But before we begin on the outside contacts, the people's own history is investigated and their myths studied. It was their beliefs and customs that laid a strong basis for their society. We will see that the people retained knowledge of historical events by weaving them into myths to pass on their history through the generations, for example in the myth of Kilibob and Manup. In the days of pre-literacy this was one of the main ways to record historical events. But the people also had their own oral history - true history connected to their genealogies. They could point out true events that certain ancestors experienced such as the story of Yomba Island which sank 500 years ago and from where their ancestors came from twelve generations ago. The existence of this island has now been verified through scientific data and the date of its sinking in the genealogies tallies with scientific evidence. The last chapter of this booklet gives information about the material culture of the Madang people.

The first outsider to the Madang area was Nicholay Miklouho-Maclay who did not want to change the people's beliefs, customs or daily life. He was a scientist who was keen to study the people, although he did want their interests to be protected by Russia. He first arrived in 1871 on a Russian ship, the *Vitiaz*.

Next came Otto Finsch in 1881, an ornithologist interested in birds and the local culture. He wanted to establish a German colony and by 1884, the German Naval flag was raised declaring the area to be a Germany colony.

At the beginning of the First World War, Australian officials took over. They raised the naval White Ensign and then Madang became a protectorate under the Australian flag which was flown from 1914 until the beginning of 1941 when the Pacific war began.

Then the Japanese invaders came and their flag flew over New Guinea with its red rays from a central red point. During the war, the villagers fled to the mountains and their culture was disrupted.

After the war, with the help of the Australian administration, the town and nearby villages were re-built so that life could return to normal once again under the Australian flag.

In 1975, Papua New Guinea gained Independence and the flag of the new country with its golden bird of paradise and the stars was raised in all cities and towns in the country, replacing the Australian flag. Lastly the Madang Province gained its own flag with its red, yellow and black stripes to represent the national flag; the memorial lighthouse surrounded by coconut palm branches for agriculture and a slit drum for tradition. The six white stars represent the six districts of Bogia, Madang, Middle Ramu, Rai Coast, Sumka and Usino/Bundi. The Museum has displays of artefacts from those six districts including wooden



ladder steps, slit drums, canoe models, canoe prows, grass skirts, pots and wooden plates of all shapes and sizes.

In April 2015, the Museum at the Madang Visitors and Cultural Bureau in Modilon Road was awash with colourful flags with matching information about the nation involved in Madang's history. Joanne Arek and staff, were enthusiastic with the project as were the three workmen Yowa Noido, Samson Seme and Baahame York. Nor can I forget the assistance of two volunteers, Wasagne Gamo from Ethiopia and Linda Nicholls of the Divine Word University. My husband, Brian, also assisted for a week with scanning and printing of photographs. The members of staff of the Madang Resort including Sir Peter Barter were very helpful with transport, photocopying and printing. I thank them all. Additional thanks must be given to Sir Peter for paying for the new booths and his on-going interest in the museum and the grant from the Melanesian Foundation of publishing this book, My grandson, Sean Mennis assisted in the final set up of fonts and photographs

Mary R. Mennis MBE November 2017.





## Chapter 1

### The Pre-history of the people



Kilibob and Manup totem posts are in the foyer of the museum. These two posts are important to the Madang culture. Kilibob and Manup were two creator-beings who are credited with creating the islands near Madang, placing men on them, giving them weapons, food and the basis of their culture. There are many chapters to this myth which have been added to over the centuries. Many places like Karkar and Budup claim to be the birthplace of Kilibob and Manup.

**Photograph: Statue of Kilibob in the Madang Museum.**

#### Here is one version of the myth:

The two brothers, Kilibob and Manup, lived on the North Coast of Papua New Guinea in the bush near Budup. They were always quarrelling. One day Manup decided to go fishing while Kilibob went off hunting. Kilibob wandered up near the village gardens and shot an arrow at a bird. The arrow missed the bird and fell into a garden. Manup's wife found it and decided to keep it because of its beautiful design. She would only return the arrow to Kilibob if he tattooed the design on her skin.

Manup later saw the design on his wife's skin and recognised it as Kilibob's mark. This began a big fight between the brothers and they separated. Manup built a trading canoe, took his men on board and sailed towards the Sepik. On the other hand, Kilibob built a large ship with three sails, never seen before, and sailed in the other direction towards Madang paring off parts of the mainland to create the islands of Sek, Riwo, Malamal, Siar and Kranket. He put men on these islands and gave them their culture. It was said that when Kilibob returned he would come with fighting men wearing *mal* (loin cloth) and bringing much cargo for the people. One villager said, "when the Japanese arrived and we saw they were wearing *mal*, our thoughts went back to our *Tabuna* (ancestors) and we said, 'now the good times will come up'."

#### A Wrecked ship

In the 1970s, Larnau of Budup pointed to a place close to the beach where he said an actual ship had been wrecked. Could there be historical evidence in the myth of Kilibob and Manup? Further investigation of a possible wreck showed up the story of Captain Bond, of



the *Hydrus*, a three-mast sailing vessel which had run aground in this area in about 1830. Captain Bond left the wrecked ship and most of the crew, and with a few sailors, sailed to Indonesia in a small boat. The story of his wrecked ship was reported in the Sydney newspapers with the latitude and longitude of its position. Captain Bond stated that the rest of his crew members had been eaten by cannibals. Was this true? According to local oral traditions, these sailors climbed to the top of the hill to get an estimate of their position. The village people came from miles around to see the cuts their steel knives had made on the jungle growth. These sailors lived there at Budup, re-built the ship and managed to sail away, promising to return with goods for the people.



In the 1920s, Franz Moeder talked to an old Budup man who said his father had seen this wrecked ship when he was young which would have been about 1830. Franz went to this site with missionaries from Alexishafen and they found ebony statues, *kris* and chains which were later sent to the Vatican. The presence of these items is evidence that a ship had been wrecked there. To remember this event, the people had incorporated it into their

Kilibob/Manup myth. It shows that, through the medium of storytelling, events like this have been transmitted from one generation to the next.

### **The Islands in Madang Harbour**

In the version of the myth already mentioned, Kilibob shot arrows to make the islands of Sek, Bilia, Riwo, Malmal, Siar and Kranket and carved out Dallman passage. Just how old are these islands? Could the myth of Kilibob and Manup be trying to record the sudden appearance of these islands in the distant past? According to earth scientists, the islands in Madang Harbour were once a chain of reefs which rose from the sea as part of a process of uplift caused by the northward tectonic movement of the Australia tectonic plate.

The Halopa people, in the hills above Sek, told of a time centuries earlier, when their ancestors had witnessed big earthquakes and a tidal wave, which had swept over the land and then retreated far out to sea causing a very low tide. When the sea returned many of the reefs were left exposed and never covered again and they became the new islands along the coast. It appears that this historical fact was incorporated into the Kilibob myth so it could be passed on through the generations.

Bek, an old clan leader of Riwo Island, said that, before his ancestors went to live on Riwo, the island was bare, as also was Siar Island. "These islands were all just reef and then they got higher. Sek was first, later Riwo rose and men lived on it. Then Bilia Island rose up and a man from Bilbil Island went to live there." Bek's ancestors had left Budup and gone to live on Riwo Island after it rose from the sea. The story of Manup and Kilibob came after they were settled on the islands. So again this was apparently added to the myth, showing up Kilibob as a heroic creator in the past history of putting the people on these islands and giving them their culture.



## Yomba Island: Real History Through the Generations

The people living on the islands of Sek, Riwo, Malmal, Siar, Kranket, Yabob and Bilbil are called the Bel people and belong to an Austronesian language group. These Bel people say their ancestors once lived on Yomba Island at Hankow Reef where they made pots and built large canoes. According to their oral traditions Yomba sank about 12 generations ago. In the 1970s, Madmai, of Kranket Island, said that he was descended from Berma and Glomba who



escaped from Yomba Island as it was sinking and then came to Kranket Island. Madmai had a genealogy of twelve generations connecting himself back to them and stated that the Bel people are all from Yomba. Other people went to Karkar and Bagabag Islands. In fact the Bagabag people claim ownership of Hankow Reef because it is near their island and

their people once lived there. These Bel people all point to a common origin “we swam together from Yomba” they say. Linguistically and biologically, they are correct in saying they are connected and that they brought the art of pot-making and building canoes with them.

To verify the oral traditions, earth scientist, Simon Day of London University and a team from the U.S. dated this tsunami to about five hundred years ago which fits in with this local history. These scientists pointed out boulders on the beach at Bilbil Village that originated from Yomba Island at this time. However some scientists think Yomba Island may not have been at Hankow.

As mentioned the Halopa people witnessed a tsunami when the sea rolled in along the coast before receding out to sea several times. When the sea settled, the reefs in the Madang Harbour rose to become new islands. Once these islands became habitable, they were occupied by the Bel people from Yomba like Madmai’s ancestors. This would be the oldest historical event found in the oral traditions and backed up by genealogical evidence.

Oral traditions are the people’s perception of their past as heard from their fathers and grandfathers around the fires at night. In some cases, changes may occur in the telling but the essential truth is there. Oral traditions are not myths like the Kilibob and Manup story which have facts imbedded in the story, but are the people’s real history about population movements, disappearing islands and facts about their culture. To the people, Yomba Island was no myth. It did exist. Its sinking into the sea would have caused a tsunami along the coast breaking off points of land and leaving reefs exposed.

## Volcanic History

The large off-shore islands near Madang have a long history of volcanic eruptions. Manam Island near Bogia has an almost perfect peak and erupted so violently in recent years that the population has moved to the mainland. Karkar Island is the largest and has a volcanic cone inside a caldera which also erupts but is contained. Arop/Long Island erupted in about 1760 causing a Time of Darkness not only along the coast but also in the Highlands of PNG. The Arop eruption happened about two generations after Yomba Island disappeared into the sea.



## Chapter 2

### The Earliest Explorers in Madang and Rai coasts

#### Nikolay Miklouho-Maclay, Russian Scientist

Nikolay Miklouho-Maclay was born on 17 July 1846. As a youth he became interested in marine life and planned to go to the Pacific to further his studies. He was also interested in anthropology and decided to combine these two interests with the backing of the Russian Imperial Society.

#### The Russian Imperial Flag.



He arrived on the Rai Coast on 20 September 1871 on board the *Vitiaz*, a Russian corvette flying the Russian naval flag. He lived with the people of the Rai Coast during three visits between 1871 and 1883. The diaries of his travels in New Guinea provide a rich knowledge of what the pre-contact culture must have been like. When he arrived, he decided to go ashore, unarmed.

He wrote:

“As we were beaching the boat, I noticed a narrow path leading into the thick jungle. Impatiently jumping out of the boat, I followed the path, without giving any directions to my men, who were busy tying up the boat to the nearest tree. Proceeding along the path about 30 paces, a few roofs became visible among the trees and, a little further along, the path led me to a small open space, around which stood some huts with their roofs reaching almost to the ground. The village had a very neat and pleasant appearance. The middle of the open space had been pounded flat and smooth and all around are varicoloured bushes and palms giving shade and coolness.”



**The painting of the Nikolay Miklouho-Maclay (above) and the Russian Frigate Vitiaz arriving on 20<sup>th</sup> Sep 1871 at Gorendu Village. Vitiaz painted by Evengyi Voishvillo 1907 – 1993. By courtesy of Sir Peter Barter.. (Copy at Madang Museum.)**



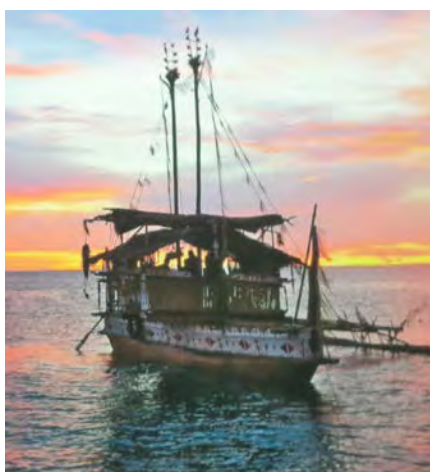


**Nicholay Miklouho-Maclay Jr. The Grand Nephew of Maclay visiting Gorendu Village on 20<sup>th</sup> Sep 2017.**

Maclay took particular note of the sombre colour of the village houses compared to the bright colours of the foliage. He was

about to meet his first villager and he was excited. It was a meeting that was to happen again and again during Maclay's stay on the Rai Coast as the villagers came to make his acquaintance. Approaching a hut, I heard a rustle and looking around I saw a man standing as if rooted to the ground. He glanced for a second in my direction and then dashed into the bushes. I went after him, almost at a run, waving a piece of red cloth, which I found in my pocket. Looking back, seeing I was alone and completely unarmed, and that I was making signs to him to approach, he stopped. I slowly approached him, silently offering him the red cloth, which he took with obvious pleasure and bound round his head.

This man was Tui who became Maclay's good friend during the time he stayed in Bongu. Maclay described him as having, "a broad flat nose and eyes looking out from overhanging brow ridges and a large mouth." He described his *mal* which was a long piece of bark-cloth wrapped around his loins he was also wearing armbands above the elbow. Tui did not have the usual breast ornament, the mark of a chief, but he gained authority through his friendship with Maclay. At first, the Rai Coast people stared at Maclay wondering if he were a spirit or human. When they saw him with a lantern, they thought he had broken off part of the moon and was carrying it around with him. He became known as "the moon man". They could see the moon but they could not comprehend that there were other countries on the other side of the world.



**Right: Photograph: Kain, friend of Maclay.**

Maclay described the *balangut* (two mast canoes) in the bay. Kain, of Bilbil, was on board one of these canoes and later Maclay sailed on them and found them very comfortable with their sheltered accommodation.

**Left: Photograph: of Palangut in 2014 (Sir Peter Barter).**







Large canoes once traversed the Madang Coast carrying loads of earthenware pots. They were an important part of the material culture of the Bel people. Fleets of these canoes, with their *tanget* leaves fluttering and with colourful designs painted on their sides, from Kranket, Yabob and Bilbil would set off together on a trading voyage, the *Dadeng*.

Their trading friends recognised their canoes by the totem on the top of the mast. These canoes were built from bush materials with tools of shells, bones, wood and stone. They were their highest form of technology in their Bonga Village in 1994 (M. Mennis).

While he lived there, Miklouho-Maclay gave the Bonga men various “trifles” (as he called them) as gifts, but these beads, nails, fishhooks and strips of red cloth were not mere trifles. They were the first items these people would own which had not come from the forest or the sea. Imagine the impact a steel nail would have on the people whose only tools were bone, stone, shells or wood. The lengths of red cotton material must have also been a thing of wonder. The softness of the fabric would have been compared with the toughness of the *mal* cloth that the men wore as a loin cloth and made from bark. Within a few decades the *mal* would be discarded for cotton material.



**Miklouho-Maclay's house at Gorendu Village on the Rai Coast.**

Miklouho-Maclay took part in secret plans to have a Russian naval station established in New Guinea. Indeed, the Russian Navy financed his last trip. Later, he sent a telegram to Lord Derby stating, “The people of the Madang Coast claim political autonomy under a European Protectorate”.

The European country he had in mind was, of course, Russia, which he thought would protect the interests of the people. However he did not succeed in this endeavour and left the Rai Coast in 1883, never to return. But, even today, one hundred and forty years later,

Maclay is still remembered on the Rai Coast through the oral stories of his exploits and sayings.



## **Otto Finsch, German Scientist, visited the Rai Coast in 1881 and 1884**

Otto Finsch was born in Warmbrunn in Silesia, Germany on 8th August 1839. He was a self taught naturalist and travelled extensively in Oceania, between 1879 and 1882. He first went to the Rai Coast in 1881 on behalf of Adolph Von Hansemann's Trading Consortium, but also because he wanted to study the birds and animals there. As an ethnographer and ornithologist he moved in the same circles as Miklouho-Maclay and they first met in Berlin in 1882.



When Finsch was in Sydney in August 1884, he again met Miklouho-Maclay at a meeting of the Linnean Society and spoke only of his scientific interests in New Guinea glossing over the fact that he was planning an expedition for Von Hansemann.

When Maclay heard that Finsch was about to sail again for New Guinea, in September 1884, he unwittingly gave him details of Bongu words and phrases, including the greeting *Aba Maclay*. In doing this, Maclay ensured Finsch of a welcome on the Rai Coast. Finsch, a German, claimed brotherhood with Maclay, a Russian, and won the people's friendship thus laying a peaceful foundation for a German colony. Otto Finsch, a pragmatic man, used all his power to help Germany annex northeast New Guinea. He was both an Empire builder for Germany and a scientist and should be recognised for his great contribution to our knowledge of the Madang people in the 1880s. He has been viewed unfavourably for using his friendship with Maclay to help establish the German colony, but this should not detract from his work as an ethnographer and ornithologist.

**Illustration: Bel Man in 1884.  
(Otto Finsch).**



### **Finsch wrote:**

The people understood their agriculture and, what is more, despite their primitive tools, they managed the forest. We saw this best at places where clearing had just begun. Gigantic trees lay on the ground; branches had been chopped and burnt. The stumps had been left standing man high, and this gigantic effort had been carried out with stone axes, which in the hands of the natives were not as primitive as one would have thought. We admired how the people had established their gardens.



After Otto Finsch visited Astrolabe Bay and established friendly relationships with the people, he convinced Adolph von Hansemann that having colonies would enhance Germany's place in the world.

Through the journals and diaries of both Maclay and Otto Finsch, we can picture the scene in the Madang/Rai Coast in the 1880s, before outside contact had affected the area.

German Scientist, Otto Finsch noted the large canoes drawn up on the beach when he visited the island in 1884 on board the Samoa and described their rich culture:

Everything here pointed to affluence and wealth. The houses were larger and more substantial than the ones seen before, as were the richly adorned natives themselves. Bilbil is an affluent island and the inhabitants, who are the aristocrats of Astrolabe Bay, constantly have to maintain their position. The ugly spear and arrow wounds, which I saw on the bodies of several warriors, bore witness to this. Although their war-like appearance gave them superiority over the coastal tribes, they were also



protected by the position of their island. Their prosperity was due to their being diligent and industrious (Mennis, 1996: 27).

**Photograph Women potters on Bilbil Island in 1884 by Otto Finsch.**

It was the women who made the pots which were the basis of their economy. They were traded far and wide across Astrolabe Bay and beyond in exchange for many trade items.

Being an ornithologist, Otto Finsch was particularly interested in the birds along the coast of Madang.

**Photograph Gouria Pisin. (Victoria Crown Pidgin or Goura Victoria)**



**Kokomo bird. (Papuan Hornbill)**





## CHAPTER 3

### The German Colony, 1884 to 1914

In November 1884, a German warship sailed along the north-coast of New Guinea and raised the German Imperial flag at Mioko, Duke of York Islands and, later, on the north coast.



Finsch wrote. “The hoisting of the flag itself aroused great pleasure. Its colours especially appealed to the people as they are the same earth colours that they were familiar with. Soon they would be entirely under the protection of this tri-colour”.



**Photograph: Hoisting the flag at the Duke of York Islands.**

The local people were used to the white, red and black colours in their own culture. They made white paint from lime, red from ochres and black from mud found in swampy areas. Unfurling flags and acquisition of land from the villagers in return for a few axes or trinkets was enough to establish

possession over large areas of land in those colonial times. When the people witnessed the unfurling of the German flag, they had some idea of its significance as they had totems on their canoe masts to distinguish one clan from another. In 1884, Hansemann and Bleichroder formed the German Neu Guinea Compagnie and called the new settlement Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen after the German crown prince.



**Prince Friedrich Wilhelm**

In the 1890s, Kurt Von Hagen was the Director General of the Neu Guinea Kompagnie as well as the Administrator of the Colony. The Madang Bel people liked Von Hagen, seeing him as a friendly *tibud* (foreigner) who might bring the cargo promised by their spirit being,



Kilibob. Their hopes were dashed in 1895 when Von Hagen was killed while trying to apprehend some murderers of the Ehlers-Piering expedition. His death was seen as a lost opportunity and tensions mounted between the villagers and the German officials.



**The German Compagnie flag**



**Photograph: Kurt von Hagen**

In 1896, Lajos Biro, a Hungarian, arrived to collect artefacts for the Hungarian Museum. He met Dr Dempwolff and used his word lists to communicate with the people when visiting Kranket Island. Here the people joked that Biro's mind was, "wrapped in paper" when he fumbled for the words on the list.

**Photograph: Dr Otto Dempwolff**

The German Neu Guinea Kompagnie controlled the new colony from 1884 until 1899. During this time, roads and plantations were developed but the company was not successful. The Imperial German Administration then took over from 1899 to 1914 and



Governor Albert Hahl administered the colony from Rabaul. He established friendly relationships with the local people, passing laws to protect their land. When Hahl discovered that the chiefs in the villages paid their workers with feasts at the completion of a project, he established the same procedure and it worked. He also appointed the village chiefs as *luluai* and *tultul* and they had special hats to denote rank. Many of the old villagers, still alive in the 1970's, saw the German times as the good old days. The Germans may have been strict, but the people knew where they stood with them.

**Picture: Kurt Von Hagen Memorial Bogajim, Rai Coast**





Dr Dempwolff, a German doctor with the Kompagnie from 1895 to 1899, learnt the local Bel language and wrote word lists for the government officials. Later in East Africa he met some of the Bel men who were fighting as part of the German army and they were delighted to be able to talk with him in their language. Later when he returned to New Guinea, Dr Dempwolff sent home postcards depicting local policemen, German officials and canoes. These cards were brought back to Madang by his daughter, Irmgard Duttge of Hamburg and are now stored in the Madang Visitors and Cultural Bureau. (*Haus Tabuna*).

**Photographs of German postcards**

**(Dr Dempwolff).**

**Top: Local police trained by the German government.**

**Middle: Tramway with the carts being pulled by donkeys.**

**Bottom: German officials near the Madang waterfront in the 1890s.**

**Below: Cassawary, Leatherback Turtle & Goura Pidgin.**





## The 1904 Revolt

However, not all village people were happy with the new German Government. In August 1904, the Bel people revolted against the Germans. They were tired of filling in the swamps around the town with large rocks and sand from the shore. Furthermore, plantations were being developed near their villages and they were losing a lot of their land.



Traditional *lalong* canoe Bilbil Island by Otto Dempwolff

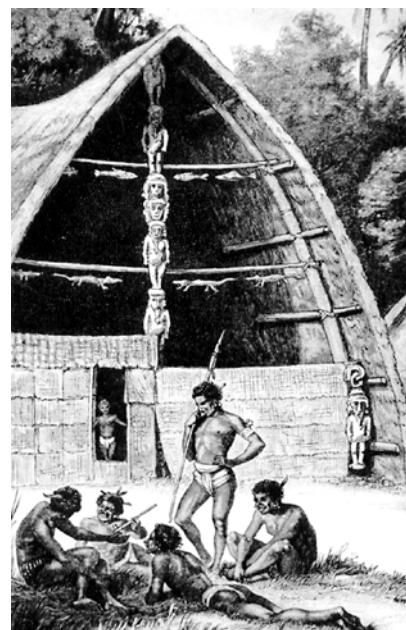
The Bel people were also unhappy with the disruption to the traditional trading patterns of the Yabob and Bilbil people. They still had their large canoes and their pots were seen as the local currency buying everything from canoe hulls, food, tobacco, wooden plates. However their monopoly on the trade up and down the coast was threatened by the new German currency. To rouse the other villages to revolt, the Bilbil men sent a magic potion in a pot to the Kranket and Siar villagers to *hat im bel* (make them angry).

The warlord of Siar, Maszeng, became the leader of the revolt and summoned men from Siar, Kranket, Yabob and Bilbil to a meeting in the men's house on Bilbil Island (seen below)

They planned to kill the Germans after a ship brought in supplies and the officials might be drunk. They would paddle their canoes from their islands across the harbour to Madang carrying vegetables for the market as normal but hiding weapons under the produce. After killing the guards, they planned to get the keys to the gun supplies.

However, their plans were thwarted when Nalon of Bilbia warned a missionary about the revolt. The German officials were ready for the villagers the next morning and fired over the approaching canoes. One man, who was out fishing in his canoe, was shot dead.

The District Officer, Stuckhardt, believed the Bel people of Yabob and Bilbil were also part of the plot and wanted to go to their islands, but the seas were too rough. August is the time of the *karag* (angry man) winds but this did not prevent the Yabobs and Bilbils sailing their large canoes to the Rai Coast to hide with their trading friends. They broke up their canoes so they would not be found. Later the officials searched for them but the Rimba people would not betray their whereabouts even though one man was dragged along the beach by his neck with a rope.





In the end, the Siar and Kranket people bore the brunt of the German anger when the officials realised how close they had been to annihilation. Six men from Siar and Kranket were arrested: two men Mas Maian and Kiau, of Siar Island and four men Matan, Ijai, Mirop Dum, and Kairp from Kranket. On 17 August 1904, they were blindfolded, lined up against the stone pig fence on Siar village and shot. The village people were forced to watch. One of the men called out, “*Oh Siar me lusim you nau.*”



**Photograph: Men on Kranket Island**  
(Lajos Biro).

Maszenz, the warlord, escaped from Siar Island and hid. The Germans arrested his son, Amangzen, and took him to the jail in Madang. Word was sent out by the local policemen that, if Maszenz surrendered, Amangzen would be released. To save his son,

Maszenz surrendered to the police and was taken to the Madang jail. His son-in-law, Kinang, had also been arrested. The three men, Maszenz, Amangzen and Kinang were kept in jail. Sadly, Amangzen was not released.

On 17 September 1904, the three of them were taken to the area where the memorial lighthouse is now. Three posts had been hammered into the ground and each man was tied to a post. People from many villages were forced to watch. Then Maszenz, Amangzen and Kinang were blindfolded, shot and buried nearby. After these men were shot, the Siar villagers were banished to the Rai Coast, where they stayed with their friends at Mindiri Village, but after a few years they were allowed home.



**Maszenz, the warlord.**  
(Dempwolff)

## The so-called second revolt.

As already mentioned, in about 1908, some of the Bel people went to Africa with the German army including Tagari, *tultul* of Bilbil. They were away for so long their wives thought they were dead. Minai was Tagari's first wife but he had not finished paying the bride price, so her brother, Tagog, found her another husband. When he returned from Africa, Tagari was so angry, he went to the German officials and reported, “We have three bigheads here: Tagog, Nusimai and Kangu”, implying that Tagog wanted to revolt against the German Government again.



Peter Sack stated the official German view:

At the time of the alleged uprising in Madang in 1912, Hahl was almost at the scene. *Tultul* Tagari of Bilbili informed District Commissioner Scholz of the plot on 23 August, and Scholz had just begun to arrest the ringleaders named by Tagari when Hahl passed through on the Lloyd steamer *Coblenz* on 24 the August, taking the first prisoners with him to Rabaul (Sack 1979).

Before he died, Tagari confessed to his son, Pall Tagari that he had concocted the story to get back at Tagog. The government called this the 1912 Revolt and banished the Bilbil, Yabob, Kranket and Siar people to the Rai Coast. So, in 1912 the Siar Islanders once again found themselves living with their Mindiri friends on the Rai Coast. Some travelled to Mindiri in canoes and others in a small German boat, the *Kapok*, which they had bought from the missionaries.

In 1914, the Siar people had been on the Rai Coast for two years and were ready to defy the German officials and return home. A group of them put to sea in the *Kapok*. However, the First World War had already begun and Germany was at war with Australia. Some Australian and British soldiers had taken over the German town of Rabaul and were sailing towards Madang in three ships. When Captain Sir George Patey, on board the HMAS *Australia*, saw the *Kapok* he thought Germans were on board and pulled alongside. The Siar people thought the HMAS *Australia* was a German ship and were frightened. After Sir George Patey heard their story, he gave a flag to headman, Walok, saying, “Take this flag back to Siar with you as a protection. From now on no-one can tell you to leave your village.”



**The White Ensign**

Years later this flag was lost, possibly in the Pacific War, so a teacher wrote to Buckingham Palace requesting another flag.

When the Duke of Edinburgh visited Madang in 1971, he brought a White Ensign with him and presented it to the Siar people amidst much rejoicing. This flag is kept in Siar Village in a special frame but is becoming very faded. In 1971, Simon received a letter of thanks from Buckingham Palace for making “Siar Island such an attractive setting for the Duke of Edinburgh’s visit on Sunday 21 March 1971”. It is now over a hundred years since the Siar people received the first flag while they were on the Rai Coast in 1914 on board the *Kapok*. In 2014, the author presented the Siar people a new flag to commemorate the centenary of the flags. The man who received the flag was the grandson of Walok.



## Chapter 4

### The Australian Occupation and Mandate, 1914 to 1942

In 1914, after the capture of Rabaul, three ships made their way to Madang to take over the German town. They were all flying white ensigns. They were the battle-cruiser *HMAS Australia*, the transport *HMAS Berrima*, and lastly the cruiser *HMAS Encounter*.



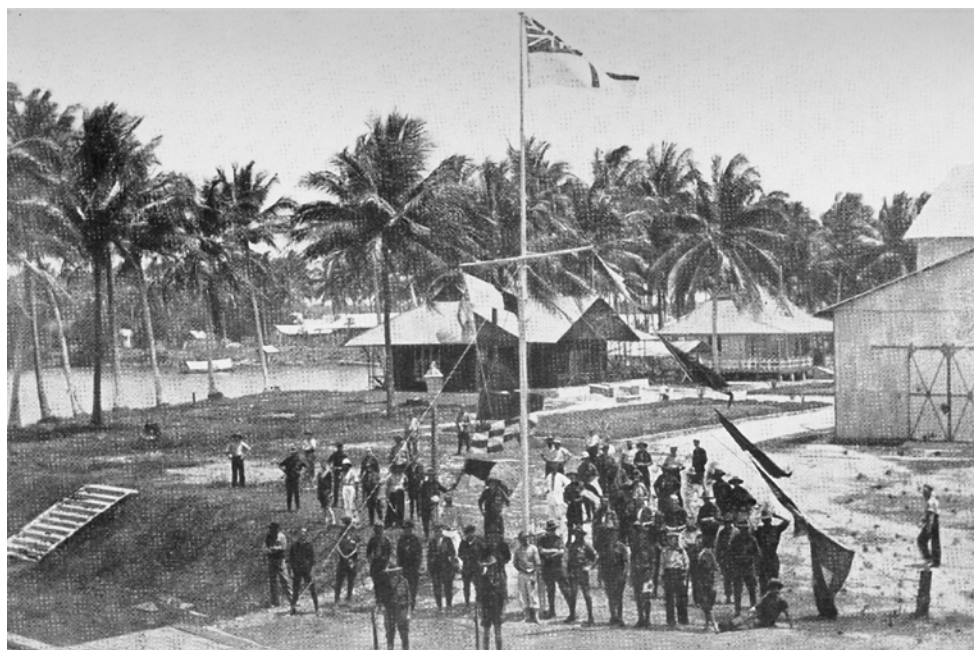
**HMAS Australia**



**HMAS Berrima**

**HMS Encounter**

After these ships arrived in the Madang Harbour, the Germans surrendered peacefully on orders from the German Officials in Rabaul and met the Australians hat in hand on the wharf. The town was occupied without any opposition and on 24 September 1914, the Australian forces raised the White Ensign in Madang.



**Photograph: Raising the white ensign in Madang in 1914.**

Lieutenant Clarence Read, RANR, arrived on board the HMS Berrima and on 24<sup>th</sup> September 1914 he wrote:

At 8 o'clock in the morning I was notified that I was to land at Friedrich Wilhelmshafen (Madang) in charge of the Naval Guard. About three hours later the Berrima dropped anchor off Madang and here I am" – under gentle persuasion of the Encounter's guns, the town surrendered and the troops took possession. The Naval Guard consists of 32 all told and our duty is to take charge of all boats and regulate all shipping trading to the port" (Read, 2016: 33 Brian Mennis)



On paper, this appeared to be a very significant date in the history of the town but, in many ways, life continued normally. However, one of the Australian sergeants decided to put the telephone exchange out of action to ensure there were no hidden spies. Later, when they followed the line, they found it connected Madang with various houses and the mission at Alexishafen (Townsend, 1968: 80).

For the rest of the First World War, the Australian Military Administration ruled the former German New Guinea until 1921 when Australia received a mandate from the League of Nations to govern the area. The flag used was the Australian flag and not the ensign.



While World War 1 continued in Europe, the possibility remained that Germany might win and demand her colonies back. Emphasis was placed by the Australian administration on making money from the existing plantations rather than on development.

The military administration's main aim was to continue the production of copra. To this end, the German plantation owners and managers were allowed to continue to run their plantations provided they took an oath of neutrality. Because they no longer were allowed to keep arms or ammunition, the German planters felt insecure and had no way of protecting themselves against aggression from the local villagers. There was also much indecision about the terms of capitulation. Under the Australian Military Administration, the German native Development Programme was scrapped and European commerce was once more allowed to dominate policy.



**Photograph: The District Office in Madang was formerly Kurt von Hagen's house.**

Holmes had a tough job when the Australians took over. There were language difficulties, not only with the Germans, but also with the village people still loyal to the Germans. Many labourers on the plantations absconded and returned to their villages. Holmes did not understand the temperament of the local villagers and thought they could be compelled to return.



Holmes wrote:

During the Military occupation, I am devoting my attention principally to keeping things going and controlling the people, who are an ever-present danger. In one or two districts, advantage was taken of the absence of Planters and Arms and Ammunition which had been collected, to cause some trouble, but expeditions of Armed Constabulary were at once sent out and quiet restored, but not without some of the offenders being shot, which has taught them a useful and much needed lesson (Rowley 1958).

When Holmes was recalled, S.A. Pethebridge succeeded him. The first District officer and Garrison Commander in Madang was Lieutenant Ogilvy who took office in 1915, with 3 officers, 21 NCO's and about 80 local police. They carried out few patrols in the district and little was known of the inland areas apart from several German scientific expeditions. Ogilvy was trying to extend the road system into the Ramu, but failed and the existing roads that the German had constructed fell into disrepair.

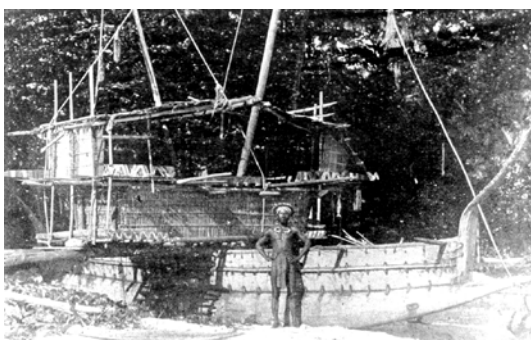


**Photograph: Looking across to the District Office on Madang's foreshore in the 1920's**

In 1921, Germany suffered severely in the Treaty of Versailles, losing many of its overseas colonies to the allied Powers including their colony of New Guinea. The situation for the German planters became desperate as they could see little hope of retaining ownership or getting paid for their plantations. Their worst fears were realised with the setting up of the Expropriation Board under which many German owned plantations were transferred to Australian ex-servicemen.

The New Guinea Act was passed by the Australian Parliament and came into force in May 1921. The Military Administration was replaced by a civilian government. The Territory of New Guinea was to be administered separately from Papua, under the Australian flag.

In the villages, life continued as normal although changes were beginning to happen. The local Bel people still built their large canoes which were the main method of transport, but they also had access to small boats built by Chinese labourers. The women continued to make and their pots which were still used as trade items.



**Photograph: Bek of Yabob Village stands in front of his father's *balangut* canoe in 1935.**

The people accepted these technical innovations. They were pragmatic and wanted to use the best methods they could afford. Economic changes to the labour force in the villages occurred on plantations and goldfields and the villagers were becoming aware of a far wider world. It was up to them how they met the challenges. Economically, technically, spiritually and politically the people's lives were gradually changing. As one writer said, "it was ten thousand years in a lifetime".



## Lutheran missions

By the mid-1880s, the Rhenish Lutheran Mission was established in Madang. The Lutheran missionaries taught the local children, took care of their health and learnt their languages.

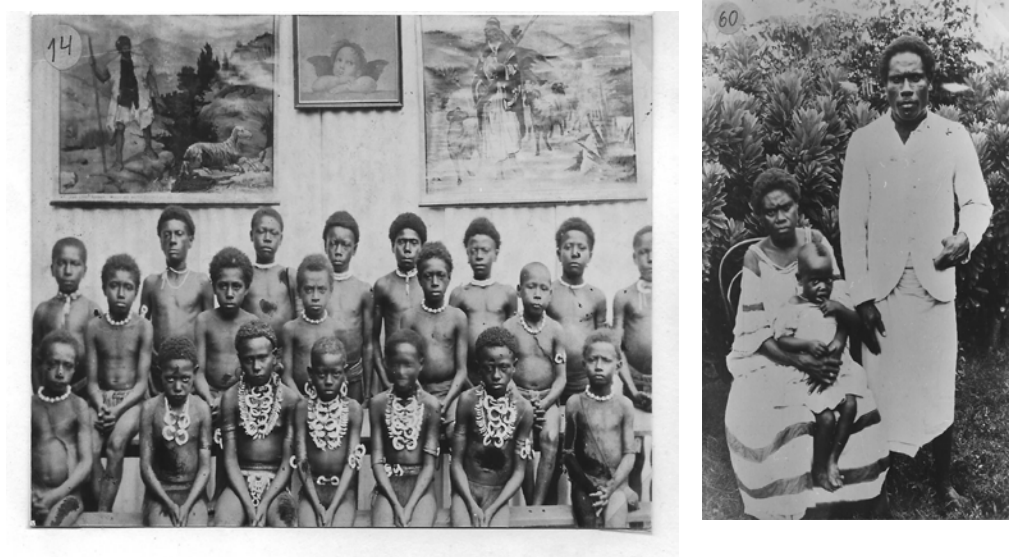
### Photographs: A newly built Lutheran church on Kranket Island 1925



E Hannemann, Lutheran Pastor and ethnographer, arrived in Madang in 1923 and studied the Kranket language (Graged), which was later used throughout Madang in Bibles and readers. During his time in New Guinea, Hannemann wrote extensively, leaving an important legacy to the people of New Guinea. The two most interesting works are *Village Life and Social Change* which was mimeographed in 1944 and *Papuan Dancers and Dancing* published in 1935. Another work, *Keys to the Papuan's Soul*, describes rituals and legends of the Madang people. Hannemann wanted to analyse these to determine if any of them were compatible with Lutheran teachings. Sadly, he concluded that even the most harmless dances had an element of ancestor worship in them and so had to be discouraged. This had an impact on the culture of the people.

In 1932, Lutheran Missionary activity was taken over by the American Lutheran Church and by 1934, there were 19 ordained missionaries, 10 laymen and some doctors working for the mission.

### Photographs: Left School children on Siar. Right Lutheran teachers





## **Catholic Missions**

The first Catholic missionaries in the area arrived in 1896. Because of pressure from the Lutherans and the German Government in Madang they began the first mission at Tumleo Island near Aitape, over one day's sailing away. Fr Limbrock was anxious to move nearer to Madang and gave presents to the Sek people who sold him the land where Alexishafen was established. Over the years the mission centre developed with several schools, a hospital and workshops. In 1922, Bishop Wolf, a German, was appointed to Alexishafen, which became the Vicariate Apostolic of East New Guinea. When he arrived, the chapel was falling into disrepair. There were no cars, only donkeys and buffalo, but there was a plantation and coconut factory. Bishop Wolf set about developing the mission. He planned for a cathedral and the corner stone was laid on Easter Monday 1932.

The Catholic area of influence was from Riwo to the north-west. In 1895 they established a mission centre at Alexishafen. The Lutheran area of influence was from Riwo Village south to the Rai Coast.



**Photograph Bishop Wolf of Alexishafen**

In 1922, Bishop Wolf saw the necessity of having an English-speaking priest as his secretary to act as liaison officer between the mission and the Australian officials. He wrote to the American branch of the Divine Word Mission and Fr William Ross of Techny was sent out to New Guinea in 1926. With him were three Sisters of the Holy Spirit – Sister Alexis, Sister Antonia and Sister Ehrintrudis.

The Brothers at the mission had been trained as carpenters, cobblers, farmers, mechanics or cooks while the priests were often anthropologists, philosophers and linguists. In Yabob Village, Fr Aufinger SVD, collected the beautiful songs which the weathermen sang to the spirits to influence the elements to produce windy or sunny days. By 1930, the figures for the Catholic mission were 18,000 Catholics, 29 Priests, 29 Brothers and 53 Sisters. The mission complex at Alexishafen was much larger than the Madang Township, with its workshops, sawmill, schools and hospital. The crowning glory was the Cathedral subsequently destroyed in World War II.

When Bishop Wolf visited Rome, he met the Pope who told him to expand the mission work and not just concentrate on building Alexishafen up. So when an opportunity came to advance into the Highlands Bishop Wolf supported the move. Frs Schaeffer, Cranssen and Anton Baas were the first to cross the mountains into the Chimbu area from the north in November 1933. Earlier that same year Mick and Danny Leahy and Jim Taylor had come in from the east and contacted the highland people who had lived unseen and unknown for thousands of years. They wrote to Fr William Ross inviting him to come in there.







Fr Ross pictured here with the school children at Rempi was the first Catholic Missionary to go to Mt Hagen.. He arrived there in 1934. and began the mission at Wilya in Mt Hagen which at that time was under the government in Madang. By the end of that same year, the Lutherans had established a mission at Ogelbeng also near Mt Hagen.



The mission plane, the Miva which took missionaries to the highlands of New Guinea. Later Divine Word Airways was established and continued to serve the mission and the people in the Highlands until 2000.



## Chapter 5. The Japanese Occupation. 1942 – 1944.

When the Japanese bombed Madang on 21 January 1942, the Australian government officials were evacuated and ANGAU was in command but soon withdrew. In April 1943 the Japanese Army occupied Madang and the surrounding areas. General Hatazo Adachi, was the commander of Japanese 18th Army in Madang with the help of the 20th Division and 41st Division troops.



Ber Nanci of Yabob Village said that, when the Japanese arrived in Madang, there were ships in the sea as far as the Rai Coast, lit up by the full moon. Further along the coast, some village men had been out

fishing by moonlight. As they walked back along the beach with their catch, they noticed the bushes at the edge of the beach were moving in funny little flutters.

There was no breeze. Perhaps it was an animal they could add to their catch. Curious to know what was causing the movement, they crept closer. Suddenly Japanese soldiers emerged with their camouflaged hats and pounced on the hapless fishermen. Thinking they were being attacked by tambarans or masalai they screamed in sheer fright. The Japanese did not harm them but forced them to help unload the barges.

When the Riwo people were paid in occupation money, they decided that the coconuts in the corner of the note depicted Budup point, the birthplace of Kilibob and Manup, their two creator beings. When Kilibob sailed off in a boat he promised to return. The Riwo called the money Kilibob's money and decided the Japanese vessels must belong to Kilibob returning with friends and cargo. They soon realised their mistake as the soldiers were not very friendly. In the end the local people took to the hills to avoid being killed by allied bombing. The local



people saw the Japanese as just a new set of bosses they had to obey. First there were the Germans, then they went and the Australians came then they went and the Japanese came. They all had rules and regulations to be obeyed.

In 1944, the Australian Army 5th Division troops advanced along the north coast towards Madang and contacted village people who had been hiding in the hills. Shaggy Ridge terrain was very dangerous



**Photograph. Stretcher bearers of the Australian 2/9th Infantry Battalion carry a casualty on the slopes of Shaggy Ridge back to the Aid Post, 23 Jan. 1944.**



**AWM 064239 (Australian War Memorial)**



**Japanese wreck near Madang (Brian Mennis)**

During the New Guinea Campaign, which was a major campaign of the Pacific War, some 200,000 Japanese soldiers, sailors and airmen died and many thousands of Australian and American troops as well. Major battles included the Battle of Kokoda Trail, Battle of Buna-Gona and Battle of Milne Bay.

The offensives in Papua and New Guinea of 1943–44 were the single largest series of connected operations ever mounted by the Australian armed forces. Fighting continued in New Guinea between the Allies and the Japanese 18th Army based in New Guinea until the Japanese surrendered in 1945.



**Photograph: AWM 064239 (Australian War Memorial). The surrender ceremony at Wewak 13 September 1945. General Adachi hands over his sword to Major General H.C. Roberston.**





A group of soldiers pose in front of the ruined Madang Hotel (now Madang Resort). Courtesy

Australian War Memorial  
073038

These Australian soldiers took part in the mopping up exercises along the Rai Coast, Ramu Valley and Finisterre Range. When Madang was finally taken the soldiers helped develop roads and bridges around the Madang-Alexishafen area. The village were told about the end of the war by leaflets dropped over the areas where they were hiding. They were met by Australian soldiers carrying relief food parcels.

While the war waged, the people of New Guinea were very conscious of the Royal Family. When Malcolm Wright landed from a submarine in New Britain in July 1942, he was met by an old *luluai* who had a gift for the King: “We would like to send this to the King. Tell him that we are still his people and we look forward to the day when the Australians return to New Guinea”.



Left:  
Corporal Merire received the British Empire Medal for bravery



Right:  
Chinese people being rescued.

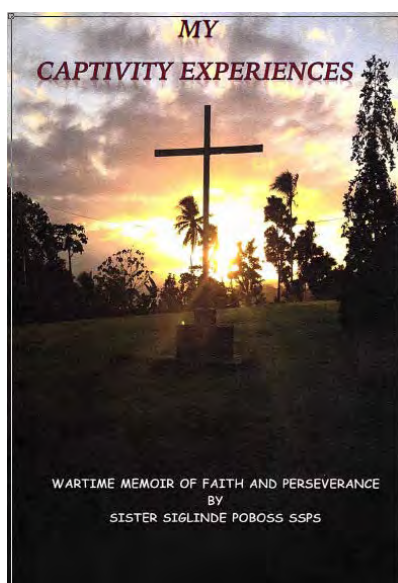


Many of the Madang prisoners of war including nuns and priests had been taken by the Japanese to Hollandia on board the Dorish Maru many died when the boat was strafed by allied soldiers. In Hollandia, they were left in the bush behind the shore.

On 22 April 1944, when the American troops landed, they began to strafe the beaches and the missionaries were in danger of being shot. At last contact was made through the trees.



**Photograph: Nuns and priests of the Catholic mission being rescued by the American soldiers. They were sick and starving.**



Sister Siglinde Poboss SSPS maintained a diary throughout their ordeal and the diary was recently published by courtesy of Archbishop Stephen Reichert OFM Cap. Currently the Archbishop of Madang.

The Diary is available at selected bookshops including the Madang Resort Gift Shop and Tanget Book Store, Madang.

It describes the hardship the Sisters, Priests and Lutheran Missionaries suffered in 1943 until the end of war where the few survivors were finally found by the American and Australian Forces in Hollandia (Now Jayapura, Indonesia).



## Chapter 6. The Australian Trusteeship, 1946 to 1975

On 13 December 1946, Australia entered into a trusteeship Agreement for administration of the former Mandated Territory of New Guinea, as approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Papua and New Guinea were then combined in an administrative union for administrative purposes called the Territory of Papua and New Guinea.



The Coastwatchers Memorial Lighthouse in Madang stands 90 feet high and its light can be seen offshore for fifteen kilometres. The stunning structure was erected in memory of the Coastwatchers

One plaque reads:

In honour and grateful memory of the Coastwatchers and of the loyal natives who assisted them in their heroic service behind enemy lines during the Second World War in providing intelligence vital to the conduct of Allied operations. Not only did they transmit by means of teleradio from their jungle hideouts information which led to the sinking of numerous enemy warships, but they were able to give timely warning of impending enemy air attacks. The contribution towards the Allied victory in the Pacific by the small body of men who constituted the Coastwatchers was out of all proportion to their numbers."







The first District Officer in Madang after the war was Harold Woodman who was replaced in 1947 by Keith McCarthy. Their early tasks were to re-establish Madang and help the local people re-establish their villages which had been destroyed by the bombing.

McCarthy was followed in 1949 by Charlie Bates whose title was now District Commissioner. He is remembered by Bates Oval and for establishing the beautiful golf course on the previous Modilon plantation. With many eager residents, the plantation was cleared of debris and grass and the Golf Club was built.

**Photograph: Charles Bates,**

In 1962, the United Nations Visiting Mission under the Chairmanship of Sir Hugh Foot recommended to the Australian Government that it make rapid constitutional changes in Papua New Guinea. The Local Government Ordinance of 1963 cancelled the power of the former *tultuls* and *luluais* in the villages and passed it on to the councils. The councils were to be elected and not imposed as the *luluai* system had been. New councillors were often young and not familiar with the village affairs and there was some opposition. The House of Assembly replaced the Legislative Council in 1963, and the first House of Assembly opened on 8 June 1964. In 1972, the name of the territory was changed to Papua New Guinea.

The 1972 elections saw the formation of a ministry headed by Chief Minister Michael Somare, who pledged to lead PNG to Self-Government and then to Independence. Leading up to Independence, Papua New Guineans were appointed to senior positions in government. Following this trend the next District Commissioner in Madang was Benson Gegeyo of Popondetta. In 1978, Madang became a Province with its own Provincial Government. Madang in the 1970s was a peaceful town. Few houses had security fences around them for security. Children roamed around the streets quite safely. There was the yacht club, the golf club and the Madang Club where the public service people met. The Country Women's Association was very active and run by Maureen Hill who did a lot for the women in Madang. The CWL cottage was available for women visiting Madang from the outstations. High Schools were built for the local children but children of ex-pats generally went to Australia for High School. The Madang Teacher's College trained local teachers and increasingly they were the ones teaching in the schools as every department became localised.

Kenneth BurrIDGE interviewed a man on Manam Island who said:

You see, we do not understand. We are just in the middle. First the Germans came, and the Australians pushed them out. Then the Japanese pushed out the Australians. Later, the Australians and the Americans forced the Japanese to go. It is beyond us. We can do nothing. When a kiap tells us to carry his baggage, we have to do it. When a German told us to carry his baggage, we had to do it. If we did not we might be killed. All right, there it is. Take it or leave it. *Nogat tok*, I didn't say anything, that's just how it is. That's life (BurrIDGE, 1960: 12).

**Desmond Clifton-Bassett** became District Commissioner in 1965 and stayed in Madang until retirement. He was a member of Rotary, began the Madang Musical Society and



joined the Madang Amateur Theatrical Society. It was during his term that the Duke of Edinburgh visited Madang on the Royal yacht *Britannia* in 1971 and made the historic trip to Siar Island with the white ensign flag. Des left Madang in 1973 at the time of Self government and leading up to Independence when Papua New Guineans were obtaining some of the top positions. In the 1970s, Madang both Town and Province was catapulted into the national and international scene. In 1978, Madang it became a Province with its own Provincial Government.



Modilon General Hospital, Madang

## Economic Development in the Madang Province

The Rural Development Incentive was introduced in 1988 to help economic progress in less developed areas. In the early 1980s, the Madang Province's main industry was agriculture with cocoa and copra being the most important. The Pioneer Industries Scheme targeted development of new industries in the country. This scheme provided a five-year tax holiday for pioneer or new industries. The idea of the grant was to help set up projects that would make the people economically independent.

At this stage the European Union had approved a total of K23.5 million for projects including the Yandera rehabilitation program, rural water projects and the sealing of the Ramu Highway. Ramu Agri-Industries Limited (RAIL) is located at Gusap in the Ramu Valley and produces Ramu sugar, palm oil and beef. Further expansion of Palm oil is being planned in the Ramu and Sogeram valleys in the Madang Province.. A Korean Company has indicated the construction of a large shipyard in the Madang Lagoon which has been fiercely opposed by the community on grounds it could cause irreparable damage to the environment.



RD Tuna processing plant and cannery has been established with a fleet of purse seiners with foreign crew. Despite bans placed on logging, logs continue to be exported under approval by the National Forestry Authority. Very little processing is undertaken in PNG which again is a matter that needs to be overcome so youths can gain employment from our natural resources.



The Ramu Nico Processing plant at Basamuk.

Madang and many other provinces suffer through the exploitation of timber without any noticeable improvements to infrastructure and services. Madang has a number of foreign timber companies

exporting logs as opposed to downstream processing which would create added value and provide many youths the opportunity of work.

In the Province, there are also a major nickel and cobalt mining operation in the lower Ramu valley. Ramu Nico Limited has a mining operation at Kurambukari, a processing plant located at Basamuk on the Rai coast, limestone quarrying activities associated with the processing plant and a new port for bulk carriers.



Log Exports



Along with the construction of Ramu Nico plant at Basamuk and mine at Kurambukari they have constructed roads and bridges which will ultimately extend to the Yandera Copper Project and over the Bundi Gap to Kundiawa in the Simbu Province.

.Ramu-Nico Bridge over the Ramu River near Usino Junction.



### **The Tourism Industry.**

Tourism is an important industry in Madang with its excellent scenery and beautiful waterways. Fishing, snorkelling, boating are all great activities in these surroundings. Melanesian Tourist Services were pioneers of tourism in PNG based in Madang for 40 years they own and operate the Madang Resort & Kalibobo Village, Niugini Dive Adventures, the 30m luxury motoryacht, Kalibobo Spirit on scheduled and charter expeditions throughout PNG including the Sepik River.



Pictures: Above Young lads from Bongo Village | Madang Resort & Kalibobo Village along Dallman Passage.



Above the Madang Resort & Kalibobo Village has many fine facilities including 4 outdoor swimming pools, 4 restaurants and complimentary breakfast, The PADI dive facility provides equipment for scuba diving. The Resort is set on 15 acres of beautiful tropical gardens - a beautiful location set along the harbour near the town centre.

The Madang Lodge has an attractive garden overlooking the seafront and offers 65 rooms facing the Finisterre Mountains.



Jais Aben Location is on 12 acres of a former coconut plantation, near Nagada Harbour it has a conference A Place to relax. Other hotels include Star International, Coastwatchers Motel and the Smuggler Inn.



Madang is served by 2 Air Niugini F100 jet services and 2 PNG Air flights daily between Port Moresby and Madang. Later in 2018 a new passenger terminal will be constructed.







In 1971, a group of Russian scientists came to Madang to celebrate the centenary of Miklouho-Maclay's time on the Rai Coast between 1871 - 1883. They placed this monument (inset) on the Rai Coast near where his house once stood and next to the track he first took into

the village. In 2017, Nicholay Miklouho Maclay Jr. (pictured) the Grand Nephew of Maclay who shared his Grand Uncles name visited Gorendu & Bongu which was telecast live in Russia.

In 1963, the House of Assembly, in Port Moresby, replaced the Legislative Council in 1963, and the first House of Assembly opened on 8 June 1964. In 1972, the name of the territory was changed to Papua New Guinea. The 1972 elections saw the formation of a ministry headed by Chief Minister Michael Somare, who pledged to lead PNG to Self-Government and then to Independence.

Leading up to Independence, Papua New Guineans were appointed to senior positions in government. Following this trend the next District Commissioner in Madang was Benson Gegeyo of Popondetta. In 1978, Madang became a Province with its own Provincial Government and Administration.

Madang in the 1970s was a peaceful town. Few houses had security fences around them for security. Children roamed around the streets quite safely. There was the yacht club, the golf club and the Madang Club where the public service people met. The Country Women's Association was very active and run by Maureen Hill who did a lot for the women in Madang.



Grand Chief, Sir Michael Somare being welcomed at Gorendu Village | Group includes Asek, descendant of Tui, Nicholay Jr. Stepan Crenan, and Russian Party with Somare and Sir Peter Barter pictured at Gorendu Village to mark the visit of Maclay which was telecast live on Russian Television.



## Chapter 7

### Independence 1975



#### Papua New Guinea flag was designed on Yule Island

In 1971, all Papua New Guineans were encouraged to enter designs for a new flag. Various ideas and colours were listed to help stimulate these designs.

On Yule Island, Sister Joseph Mary taught the art class and she encouraged her students to take part in the competition by colouring in their own designs. She saw the various possible designs for the new flag and thought them a bit insipid in green, white and gold. She copied them and gave them to the girls in her art class. Fifteen year old Susan Karike was one of the girls in her class and chose the bird of paradise and the stars for her design. Sister Joseph Mary told her to draw the diagonal line across the page to fit them in. This Susan did and the rest is history.

When the Constitutional Committee came to Yule Island, Susan's design was presented to them. Within a few days it was accepted by the Parliament. Sir John Guise had the casting vote and he voted in favour of accepting this design for the flag.

During Independence Day celebrations in 1975 when Susan Karike raised the new flag, Sister Joseph Mary proudly looked on. Each morning, when the flag was raised on the flagpole she remembered the other occasion in the art class and the part her Yule Island School took in it. (I interviewed Sister Joseph Mary in about 1981 when I lived in Port Moresby).





Raising the flag in Madang 1975. Photograph Brian Mennis

In September 1975, Madang became part of an Independent country, Papua New Guinea, with its own colourful flag, laws, government and the Prime Minister, Mr Michael Somare. The passage of the Papua New Guinea Act had followed the Independence Act 1975, during the term of the Whitlam Government in Australia.

The Independence ceremony began in Madang with a parade by Police, Defence Force and Corrective Services at the District Headquarters on 15 September. A special guest was Mr Clifton-Bassett, the former District Commissioner of Madang who gave a speech to a large assembled crowd of Madang people. While he spoke, the Australian flag fluttered above Madang for the last time. A school choir sang the Australian National Anthem and the flag was lowered slowly. Many of the older men wept to see the ties being cut with the Australian Administration. That evening, there were fireworks at Yabob Hill and bonfires on the hills around Madang while the church bells rang.

On the following day, Independence Day, 16 September 1975, marching groups advanced from the Laiwaden Reserve to the Area Authority Building for the official flag raising ceremony at 9.30. The new Papua New Guinea flag was raised slowly with its large golden



bird of Paradise and group of stars on a red and black background. This was followed by a volley, fired by the Defence Force and then the school choirs sang the Papua New Guinea National Anthem giving promise to the new nation.



The Prime Minister's Speech to the Nation was broadcast and this was followed by an address by Mr Benson Gegeyo, the new District Commissioner of Madang who said, "In a comparatively short period of time our country has undergone rapid development and change bringing us to the stage where we are proud to enter into participation in world affairs as one united and progressive nation."

Photograph: Benson and Gladys Gegeyo in the middle with two friends

Jerry Nialau was the next District Commissioner in Madang in the 1980s. He was knighted in 2008 for his contribution to Papua New Guinea since Independence.

Photograph: Jerry Nialau with the Governor General Sir Paulias Matane in 2008 at Government House in Port Moresby after he was knighted.

### Premiers of Madang

|              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Bato Bultin  | 1978 – 1984  |
| Max Moeder   | 1985 – 1986  |
| Andrew Ariak | 1986 – 1993. |

The Provincial Government was suspended between 1993 and 1995..

On 19 July 1995, provincial government reforms were certified, taking full effect on 16 October 1997. One of the changes was to replace the office of the premier with a governor.





## Flag of the Madang Province.



As a Province, Madang became the proud owners of their own colourful flag featuring six stars for the districts, the memorial lighthouse and palm fronds and a *kundu* drum as an emblem of the traditional life.

## Governors of Madang 1995 - 2018

**Sir Peter Barter**, 1995 – 1997. Sir Peter was the first Governor but was later appointed, Minister for Health and Bougainville Affairs in the Papua New Guinea National Government.

**George Wan**, the member for Usino/Bundi became the Governor.

**Jim Kas** won a regional seat and became governor 1997 – 2000.

**Pengau Nengo** 2000 – 2002 (acting).

**Sir Peter Barter** became governor again in 2002 until requested by the Prime minister to take up the Ministry of Inter Government Relations & Bougainville Affairs in the National Government.

**James Yali** 2002 - 2007.

**Sir Arnold Amet** 2007 – 2010 and was later requested to take up the position as Minister for Justice in Somare's government. (He was formerly the Chief Justice)

**James Gau** was Governor of Madang in 2011.

**Jim Kas** won a regional seat and became governor 2012 – 2017.

**Peter Yama** was elected in 2017. Previously he was Member of Parliament for Usino/Bundi between 1994–1997 and 2002-2007. His election is currently being contested by Brig. General Jerry Singirok (Rtd), former Commander of the PNG Defence Force in the court of disputed Returns. (12 May 2018)



## The Dawn Service on April 25 2015: The centenary of Gallipoli



Above centre Maureen Hill, the grand lady of Madang. Below Sir Arnold Amet and Lady Hitola at the ANZAC Service at the lighthouse. On the right Sir Peter Barter.



e  
**Sir Peter Barter**,  
GLC,OBE, Kt. was the  
first Governor of  
Madang, later Minister  
for Health and  
Bougainville Affairs in  
the National  
Government.

**Sir Arnold Amet**  
formerly Chief Justice  
and was elected as the  
Regional (Member/  
(Governor) and served  
as Justice Minister

PNG Maritime College  
Students at ANZAC





## Education is an important part of the Provincial Life.



Teachers at Tusbab High School in the 1990s

Open day at the Divine Word University 3 May 2015



Human Resource Management Students



Students of the physiotherapy Course



The handbook of the Divine Word University states, “DWU offers its educational services only to those interested in improving themselves intellectually and spiritually so they can become responsible citizens and positively affect the development of Papua New Guinea society. ----

Its program of education was designed to help students develop into concerned professionals, dedicated to social justice, to the national wellbeing and to international understanding”. Emphasis was placed on the value of work, self-reliance, responsibility to community and the acquisition of critical thinking.

DWU has become one of the most progressive tertiary institutes in PNG with campuses in Port Moresby, Mt Hagen, Wewak, Rabaul with a combined student intake of over 4000 full time and flexible learning programs. DWU is one of the major industries in the Madang Province and recognised as one of the best in the Pacific.



## Chapter 8. The Madang Provincial Cultural Council.

Under its Constitution, the Cultural Council had the following objectives - to foster, promote, encourage and assist the preservation and development of local indigenous cultures and to promote the arts by:

- a. the establishment of a provincial cultural council;
- b. the establishment of a provincial local cultural institution at district and centres;
- c. the establishment of a centre of creative arts;
- d. to provide guide lines for the development of a provincial museum;
- e. providing for the protection of cultural property;
- f. educating the people of Madang to value their own cultures and to preserve them.

The functions of the Council were to formulate and implement a program for the preservation and development of all aspects of culture and the arts of the Madang Province, its adjoining provinces and Papua New Guinea as a whole and to formulate and implement provincial cultural plans To make recommendations to the national cultural council about A need was expressed to establish district cultural institutions and cultural centres so that local culture is preserved and appreciated. Furthermore, the people should be encouraged to practice their arts and promote knowledge of Madang culture not only for the local population but also for visitors from other countries.

In the early 1970s, there was a growing interest in preserving the culture of the Province. Moves were afoot to build a Madang Cultural Centre to house artefacts and treasures from all the sub-districts of the Province. To this end, the Madang Cultural Committee was formed in 1975 with Kaki Angi as president and Mrs Christine Holmes as secretary.



[The Madang Visitors and Cultural Bureau and Provincial Museum](#)

The Madang visitors and Cultural Bureau and Museum (Haus Tabuna) was designed by architects, Murray Clayton and John Proctor, following the recommendations of the Cultural Council. The building is in the shape of a men's house from the Madang Coastal Region. The building is 10 metres high and almost 40 metres long with a steep sloping roof. The interior



of the building is daunting with high ceiling central support poles of thick kwila trunks stretching up to the apex of the roof. A special glass fronted room, sectioned off from the main exhibition hall, houses the old and most valuable artefacts.

In 1980, as the liaison person for the collection, I helped with the selection of artefacts from the National Museum in Port Moresby including masks, shields, headdresses, bows and arrows, spears, axes, fishing nets food bowls, drums, body ornaments, frontlets, combs, headrests, pots, wooden plates, and grass skirts from all the districts of the Province. A total of 103 items were carefully packed and sent by air cargo to the Madang Centre ready to be displayed by Peter Watlakas, the Cultural Officer, Ellis Williams and the Information Officer and visiting artist, Tabah Silau.



Photograph: Pottery display in 1981

In June 1981, the Madang Visitors and Cultural Bureau and Provincial Museum, was opened by its patron, Mr Kaki Angi, the Provincial Minister for Commerce, Culture and Tourism with Sir Michael Somare being an honored guest. Before the ceremony, *singsing* groups from Madang, Morobe, West Sepik, Oro and Manus performed their contrasting styles of



traditional dancing. The Madang Museum and Cultural Centre, was the first attempt in Papua New Guinea to combine a tourist information service with a museum. The National Museum lent the Madang Cultural Centre most of the items for its opening exhibition. The development of the Centre showed the interest the Madang people had in their own culture and other provinces were expected to follow their example.

Photograph: Opening of the museum 1981.

By 2014, after thirty-three years the Cultural Bureau building was riddled with white ants which had to be eradicated. I was approached by Sir Peter Barter to help with a new arrangement of the displays and decided to use the flags mentioned.. Sir Peter Barter and other friends of the Museum were anxious that the building be freed of the white ants and this was done. Then new booths were installed, the cost amounting to K90,000 was covered by Sir Peter. Through the photographs and collections on display, we can study the past lives of the Madang people. This booklet was written to accompany the museum displays of which the flags are a part. Much of the museum holds the artefacts of the Madang people with the descriptive information accompanying them.



The present museum has many artefacts from the six districts of the province. There are pots from the Usino District; wooden plates from the Rai Coast; canoe prows from the middle Ramu; kundu and garamut drums from Karkar Island; headdresses, ornaments and grass skirts from Bogia; pots of various sizes from Yabob and Bilbil Villages as well as model canoes.

**Canoe model in the museum.** This is a balangut two-sail canoe for trading the pots that the women made. The long hull is built-up with planks which are tied on to wooden elbows with vines. The prows made from aerial roots of a tree and the cabin is built on top as a shelter. The two sails have totem fish painted on them in red ochre paint showing which clan they belong to.



Photograph The *balangut* model canoe in the Madang museum

When Miklouho-Maclay lived on the Rai Coast in 1871, he saw many of these canoes and was amazed at their size. The entry in his diary for October 6th was as follows: -

At 4 o'clock a sail appeared from Cape Observation. It proved to be a large pirogue, of a peculiar construction with covered accommodation on top in which several people were sitting while only one person stood at the helm and managed the sail" I had not seen such a large pirogue in the neighborhood. The pirogue went in the direction of Gorendu, but in about five minutes another one appeared, still larger than the first. On it there stood a whole little house or, perhaps, more exactly, a large 'cage' in which there were six or seven natives, protected by a roof from the hot rays of the sun. On both pirogues were two masts, one of which was inclined forward and the other backwards (Sentinella1975: 40).

The lalong (one mast) and the balangut (two mast) both took part in trading trips. Their trading friends knew what clan each canoe belonged to by the totem on the top of the mast. Long trading trips would take them to the Rai Coast where they traded pots for wooden plates, bows and arrows, pig-teeth, paint, food and many other trade items. One of the main characteristics of this canoe was the pot-cage, which straddled the hull and the outrigger. In the old days the men used stone or wooden tools to build those canoes which sadly ceased to be built within the next seventy years as the last of them were destroyed in the 1940s.



In 1978 the last group of canoe builders built another canoe and I wrote a manual of its construction, called *Mariners of Madang*. With this knowledge recorded and the training of their fathers, the next generation built a large *balangut* with two masts which took dozens of men to drag it into the water. This is a significant part of the Madang culture as it was these canoes that were marvelled at by Miklouho Maclay in 1871.



Photograph: The three canoe builders in 2013 with the *balangut*. Sungai Damun, Kubei Balifun and Nupem Tegil who learnt the technique from their fathers.

## Madang Pottery and an Archaeological Dig.

Forty years ago in 1974, I, the author, first saw pottery sherds on Bilbil Island when I visited the island with headman Maia Awak, leader of the Gapan Clan. He was 70 years old and explained how his people had once lived on Bilbil Island which was visible about 2 kilometres offshore. His people had been shifted to the mainland in 1912 after the revolts against the German government. We had taken a canoe over to the island and pulled it up on the small beach.



Photograph; Maia Awak

Maia gave a description of the life he experienced there as a young lad. Houses were built with long roofs that reached the ground on either side thus eliminating the need for side walls. The women worked on the pots in front of their house. Clay for the pots had to be collected on the mainland behind their *small* gardens. That day, Maia showed me evidence of the past in the low cliff-wall alongside the beach. Here we saw pottery sherds and bones sticking out of the cliff-wall testimony of a long standing occupation of the island. It looked like a possibility for future archaeological research.

In 2014, I was back on Bilbil Island with Professor Glenn Summerhayes and Dylan Gaffney of Otago University to do an archaeological dig there with a team of helpers including Affrica from Oxford University; Dr Judith Field, NSW University; Herman Mandui of the



Papua New Museum and Teppsy Beni of the University of Papua New Guinea and myself from Brisbane. In June 2014 Professor Glenn spoke to the people of Bilbil village about the project and what they hoped to achieve.



Photograph: Group of the archaeologists with local helpers in Bilbil Village 2014.

After the dig was finished Dylan Gaffney and Prof Summerhayes produced a booklet “*An Archaeology of Madang Papua New Guinea*” with a summary of results. They had found that the initial occupation by the Bel-speaking groups 500 - 600 years ago, which is in line with the oral history and linguistic evidence.

They concluded that the technique for making the pottery has hardly changed over the centuries. “Five hundred years ago the ancestors of modern Bel potters were using paddles and anvils and bright red slip in a similar way to today. The Bel traded these pots for shell armbands, stone axes, obsidian and pigs which were uncovered in the investigation. Examples of many of these objects can be seen in the Madang Cultural Centre or other D. museums around the Pacific and in Europe.” Gaffney D. and Summerhayes G. 2016.

Photograph: Pottery display in the museum.



**Madang Pottery.** In Bilbil village, clay is taken from the bush at Margui behind the village. One woman shovels the clay up to another who then rolls it into large balls. These balls are placed in *bilums* and carried back to the village where they are stored

under a house to dry out. When needed the clay balls are broken apart, and the clay is placed on top of a big piece of bark and hammered with a stone. These flaky pieces of clay are then put on a large piece of bark, sprinkled with water and left for at least two days. Again they are pounded, mixed with sand and water and shaped into a mound of wet clay. A sizeable lump is then prised off and shaped into a ball of clay. This is then spun around in an anti-clockwise in the palm of the hand until an opening has been formed with the opposing thumb. The hole is widened and the flange of the top of the pot is formed by the extended forefinger running under its edge. The top at this stage is symmetrical and is moistened with water. In the next stage, a hole is made in the middle of the circle of clay with the fingers and a stone (mortar) is placed inside the clay, which is then pummelled with a stone. A paddle is used to beat against



it on the outside of the pot. Finally the pots are placed in a trough and covered with dried coconuts branches and grass which is set alight and burns at a very high temperature.

**Photograph: Yeyeg, the last Yabob potter.**



These days the Bilbil pots come in many shapes and sizes. Some are small for the tourist market but the large cooking pots and water pots are still made in Bilbil Village.

The Ham people in the Gogol Valley are Austronesian speakers. Here the men make the pots. They dig the yellowish clay from the ground and then roll it on limbum to make many long thin “fish lines” which are coiled around to make the shape of the pot. When the pot is finished it is put inside a house for several weeks until strong and is then fired. These Gogol pots were once traded with the Bilbil ones. The Barum pots are made in a similar way but not as deep.

Photograph: Gogol pot on the left, Bilbil pot and Barum pot on the right. (Brian Mennis).

**Usino Pots.** The Usino people live on the foothills of the Finisterre Ranges and traded their long pots for food in their area.. Each of these pots was known for certain advantages. The Bilbil Ones cooked food sweeter than the others but gogol ones were said to last longer. They were included beside each other as part of a Bride price.



Photograph: Usino pot in the Queensland Museum. (M. Mennis)



## Other artefacts in the material culture of Astrolabe Bay

Artefacts can be divided into several categories: weapons and tools; clothing and ornaments; musical instruments; and domestic objects.

### A. Weapons and tools.

#### Spears

The throwing spears were usually made from areca palm and carved in one piece with the tip sometimes in a different material. Some were for fighting, and not decorated, some for fishing or hunting and others had the owners mark on them. The main weapon was the throwing spear, which is a heavy, round stake about seven to ten foot long, usually made from palm wood.

#### Round shields - Photograph



Shields had a circle carved in the middle called "the eye" and a handle carved on the back. In Bogadjim, Biró bought a little shield, which had been traded from Balas Village. Specially made carry bags held these shields over the men's shoulders as they walked. Little shields were only 1-cm thick and known assabama in Bogadjim.

#### Tools.

Tools all had to be made from shell, sharp stones or sharpened boar tusks, and bones were also used as tools, longer bones which served as needles, and a shell with a serrated edge<sup>35</sup> was used for scraping coconut. An axe-blade stone was tied to the adze haft and used for chopping down trees and hulling canoes.

Mager, in his dictionary, noted that there were different types of stone adzes and axes: "The axe called adiu was used to hollow out canoes; balod was used to make adzes; an axe with a rounded cutting edge was known as makak liwon by the Bilbil people" (1952: 16).. Stone axes were amongst the first objects to change in the time of first contact. As soon as Mikloucho-Maclay arrived with steel axe and nails, the people could see the benefit of these new tools and were able to adapt them for their own use and as a result, stone tools were no longer seen as important objects in the culture. If a more efficient tool became available the old tools were discarded.

### B. Clothing and ornaments

**Mal** The *mal* was the main item of dress worn by the men. It was wound around the waist and between the legs. The best *mal*, came from nearby Malalamai and Bongu because they were soft on the skin. The mountain people behind the Rai Coast made them and traded them for pots. The *mal* was used as a loincloth, as well as a bark-cloth cover or blanket.

Here a group of Bilbil men have just been attending an initiation ceremony held on Bilbil Island. Today they wear red laplap.





In former times, during the initiation ceremony, the boys went to the *Assar* house where they fasted and were beaten, and could not be seen by women. Their fathers and guests had to sit outside and eat and whirl the bullroarers and play the drums. The big day was the day of the circumcision.. Initiation in modern times is training to be take a responsible part in society. There are rules to be learnt and lessons taught.



**Grass skirts.** The women wore grass skirts which were trade items from Karkar or the Rai Coast. The skirts were layered on the side and knotted at the top in pigtails. The back part of the skirt was always longer than the front. In 1896, Biró commented on the grass skirts worn by the women in Astrolabe Bay. Small girls began wearing skirts as soon as they could walk.

***Bilums*** were also used to store things in the home, to carry things and as a hammock for a baby. *Bilums* came from Malalamai and Bonga on the Rai Coast. The string is made from the fibres of trees or shrubs of the ficus variety.

**Ornaments:** Headdresses were an important part of village life. Possum skin headdresses could be found in many of the coastal areas. It is doubtful if possums would have lived on the Bel islands as they were too heavily populated - this being so, the fur would have been imported as a trade item.

**Armbands:** Armbands are made from plaited vegetable fibre strips with shells or dogteeth head-gear for decoration. The red armbands came from Karkar and the woven material was dyed with red clay; the black ones were from the Rai Coast.

**Boar tusk ornaments, the *paramat*:** These were chest ornaments made by men as a symbol of manhood. Mostly they were made from two tusks tied together with vine. When the

pigs were young, certain teeth were extracted so that the lower teeth grew into tusks. The *paramat* closest to being a perfect circle were the most prized of all and were worth a pig. They served as an ornament of honour for the men on festive occasions. They also played an important role in the exchange of gifts to obtain a wife”.



Necklaces and headbands were made from white *nassa* shells or dogteeth. The ones shown here from the Macleay museum at Sydney University are beautifully crafted necklaces with dogteeth woven with vine. Worn by the men they were brought out for special occasions.

Photograph : Dogteeth necklace. (M. Mennis)





Photograph on right: Mouth Ornament, the *bul*, in the Madang Museum M. Mennis.

Photograph below. The *bali badam*, a shoulder bag. (Anton Gideon of the National museum).



The bag was used by men to carry their lime and betel nuts. Earrings were made from a loop of tortoise shell, damala, or an engraved ornament, painted red. A special accessory was made from strings of fine thin shell slivers, a half fruit kernel and a few dogs' teeth as a tassel.

Tattooing was unknown; instead the entire body was painted red after being vigorously rubbed with oil. The hair was coloured black with a colouring named kummu. The necessary red colour was bartered from the mountain inhabitants.

## C. Musical instruments

Musical instruments were important in the village scene, both in the usual singsings that were performed, and in the secret men's society.

**Bullroarers** were made by men and were sacred musical instruments. Mager describes bullroarers as being attached to a pole and whirled around to make the whirring sound to warn women and children to leave the area because the ancestral spirits were coming. The music of the Bel group was basic, as there were not many tones.

**Drums and flutes** with two holes cannot give complicated music so they were used mainly for the rhythm. The men added the bullroarers as music instruments and flutes made from gourds were also used. These egg shaped gourds were cut at the stem and drilled through to make a hole in the side and the top to get two tones. The player would cover one of the holes at a time. The flutes, *korsi*, or *kasuzi* with two holes, were made from a coconut and served as instruments of the *meziab*. These were blown in the *dazem* before the *meziab* ancestral spirit comes into the village in order to prepare the way for him and warn the women and children to flee. The women and children were told the sound was the voices of the spirits, particularly those of their dead ancestors.



The *kundu*, is a hand-held drum and the wood comes from the tree called *tezaus*. The end of the drum has a snake skin or lizard skin glued on with old honey. Hand drums were made on Karkar Island and the Rai Coast..

Photograph: Kundu drum.



**Large drums, *garamut*:** Hannemann noted that the large drums, *garamut*, were called after the place where they were made, usually from the local tree called *bon*. If a good tree is found, two sections are cut from it and laid on top of logs to dry. A clan leader, Bais, had a

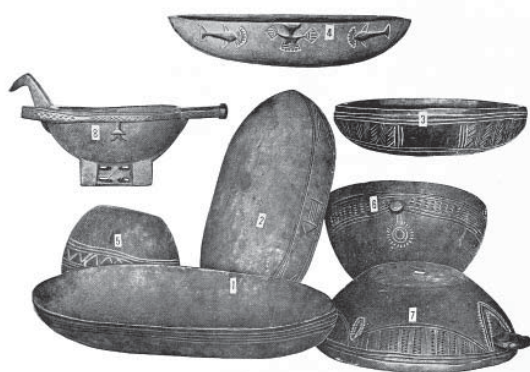


large *garamut* on Bilbil Island. It was made at Rimba on the Rai Coast and it was as high as a man's waist and 1.8m (six foot) long. If a man dies, then the *garamut* must be beaten; if war is declared, then the *garamut* must be beaten to call on the allies. At the time of the New Year when the Pleiades appear in the sky the *likon* will beat the *garamut* to waken the villagers so they can rush to the sea and wash before dawn.

Photograph: *Garamut* drums in the museum

## D. Domestic goods

Mortars and pestles were trade items over a wide range between Manam and the Rai Coast in the traditional trading system. The tool used to hollow out these mortars, *sarur*, was made of stone and it was used to hollow out canoes, mortars, drums etc. Wooden plates, mortars and pestles from Karkar and the Rai Coast were exchanged for pots, and were used daily in traditional customs in the Bel villages, especially in preparation of special dishes. The pestle is the long object, used in conjunction with the mortar, to mash or pound food or grind nuts.



Photograph.

Wooden bowls and plates used on the trading routes in Astrolabe Bay in the 1890s. The top three are from Tami Island and are more decorative than the others that are from the Rai Coast. Biro, 1899. State Library of Queensland.

**Wooden bowls** are made of hardwood and come in various shapes, oval or round. They can be used to hold taro before it is cooked in the earthenware pots or to carry hot steamed food for the family meal. The Rai Coast produced wooden bowls, which were commonly used as plates by the Bel. They are called after the beach where they are bought. If they are bought in Singor, they are called *Singor daig* if they are bought from Galek, *Galek Daig*. The Siassi and Tami made a different sort of plate from the Rai Coast ones. They brought them to Bongor and Malalamai and the Bilbil went there to trade the pots. Other prized bowls are those from Siassi or Tami islands. These bowls are well carved and were highly desired trade items. They are recognised by the curved design on the side and were particularly prized by the Bel people even though they were expensive. (For more information see *A Potted History of Madang*).





Photograph: The flag display in the Madang Museum 2016.

There were many artefacts peculiar to the Astrolabe Bay area and while many places had various pots, plates, weapons and other items of material culture, it was in their design and sometimes the material they were made from that identified the area they were from. These artefacts and the earthenware pots they were traded against once formed the basis of the economic structure before the arrival of outside influences.

**In conclusion** we have seen that although the people of the Madang area have experienced many changes since 1871 when Miklouho-Maclay arrived, but they have kept their own identity in their singsings, traditions and culture. In 1884, Madang became a German colony until 1914 when it was taken over by Australian forces. In 1921, Madang became part of the Australian Mandated territory which was invaded by the Japanese in the 1940's. After the war, reconstruction took place under the Australians, and many areas were developed. Then in 1975, the Madang people along with the rest of Papua New Guinea gained Independence. Finally as a Province, Madang became the proud owners of the own colourful flag as mentioned featuring six stars for the districts, the memorial lighthouse and palm fronds and a *kundu* drum as a emblem of the traditional life.





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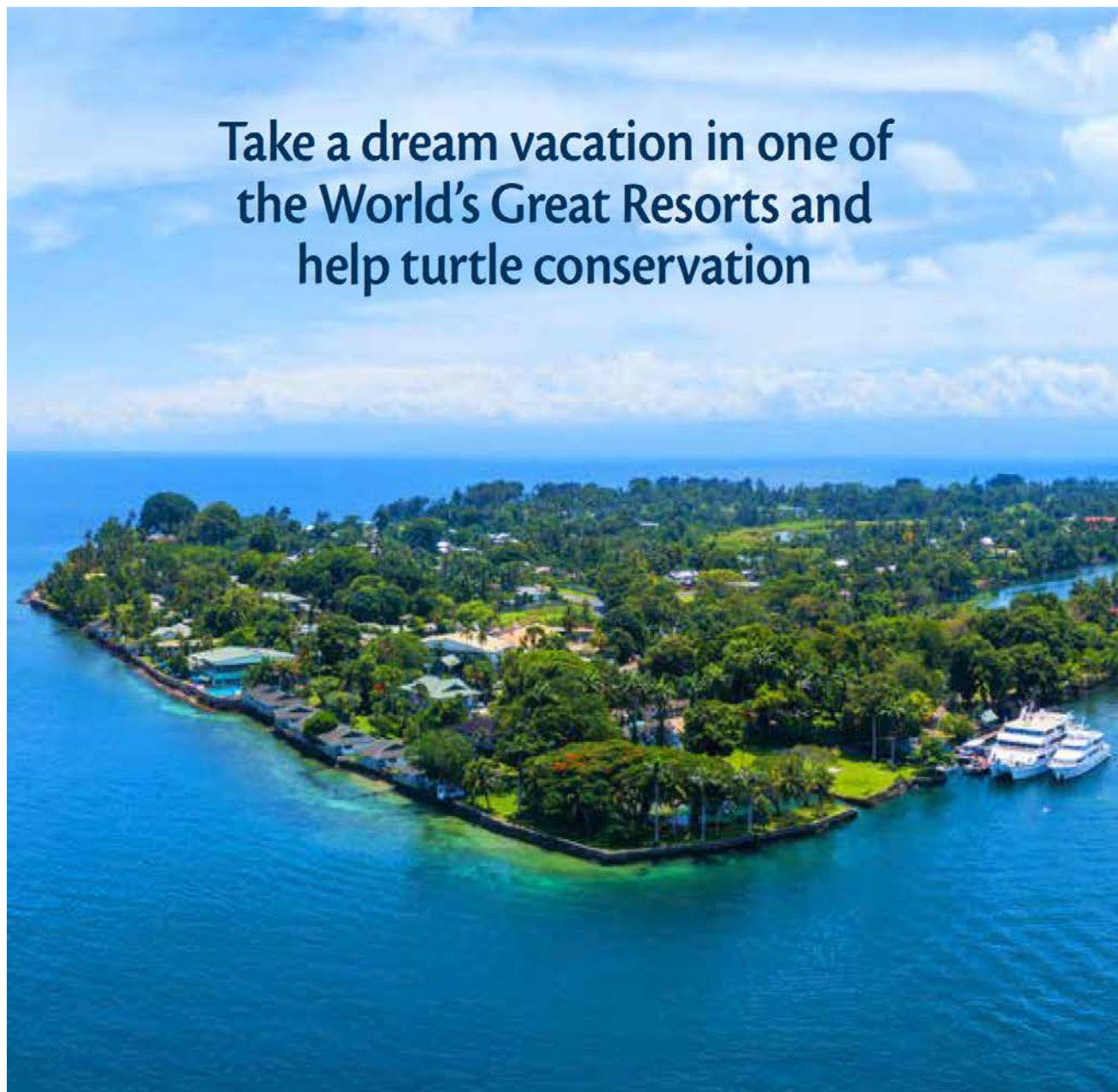
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