

PACIFIC MANUSCRIPTS BUREAU

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Report on PMB fieldtrip to Suva, 7-13 December 2008

General. Kylie Moloney, the new PMB Archivist, and I travelled together on this PMB fieldtrip. The main aim was to attend the Pacific History Association conference at the University of the South Pacific, 8-12 December. Professor Lal had suggested that it would be a good opportunity for Kylie to meet Pacific scholars, as well as Pacific librarians and archivists, including representatives of PMB member libraries. Libby Fong, Deputy USP Librarian, and I convened a Library-Archives stream of presentations at the conference. A meeting of the PMB Management Committee was organised in conjunction with the PHA conference. In addition Kylie and I microfilmed missing issues of two Tuvalu newspapers held at the Fiji National Archives.

We took advance copies of the PMB's most recent publication, *Tahiti and the Society Islands: Shipping Arrivals and Departures, 1767-1852*, for the author Rhys Richards and co-publisher Jean-Louis Boglio, both of whom were participating in the conference.

Kylie and I met with Libby Fong at the USP Library and toured the Pacific Collection with Tony Dadalo, the Pacific Collection Librarian. Joan Yee, the University Librarian, was away at the time. The USP Library is considering making a large order for back titles of PMB microfilms documenting USP regional interests.

I purchased a large set of current Fiji Lands Department maps for the Department of Human Geography, RSPAS, ANU, to fill gaps in their holdings.

Pacific History Association conference, 8-12 December. Dr Morgan Tuimalealiifano organised the conference with the assistance of a team of USP students. The conference was well organised and well attended. Papers were presented in the following streams: kava, race, Pacific Islanders at war, oral history in local languages, Pacific sports, cultural heritage and management, libraries and archives in Oceania, decolonisation, photography, institutions of confinement, depopulation and re-population, religious history, minority communities, and other topics. A Postgraduate Research Forum and a History Teachers Workshop were held in conjunction with the PHA conference.

An exhibition of Captain Brett Hilder's Pacific paintings – portraits and landscapes was on display in the USP Library foyer, curated by Max Quanchi and Jean-Louis Boglio. Mr Boglio gave the PMB permission to make and distribute a reference set of digital copies of Captain Hilder's art works as the paintings are being dispersed by sale. Mr Boglio purchased the paintings from Captain Holder's estate 15 years ago. The paintings are held by Mr Boglio in Brisbane. Dr Quanchi has already made digital photographs of Hilder's portraits of Islanders which he will make available to the Bureau.

PMB Management Committee meeting, 9 December. Brij Lal chaired the meeting which was attended by Diane Woods and John Sullivan (Turnbull), Paul and Carol Stuehrenberg (Yale), Meredith Batten (NLA), Setraeki Tale (PARBICA), Monica Rothlishberger (DWU), Tony

Dadalo (USP Library), Karina Taylor and Chris Ballard (ANU), Kylie Moloney and me (PMB). Minutes of the meeting will be distributed in due course.



PMB Management Committee meeting, USP, Suva, 9 December 2008.

Fiji National Archives, 10 & 12 December. With approval of Setareki Tale, the Government Archivist, and with the kind assistance of FNA staff, Kylie and I microfilmed issues of *Tala o Tuvalu* (PMB Doc 482), *Valo* (PMB Doc 484), and *Headquarters Information Notes* (PMB Doc 483) missing from the runs held at the Tuvalu National Library and Archives which I had microfilmed in 2006 and 2007 but have not yet distributed to PMB members.

We also had the opportunity to join the PHA conference tour of the magnificent new FNA archives repository, which had been opened in October, and to be shown plans for the conversion of the existing repository into a reading room and additional stacks for a National Library of Fiji.

Library-Archives stream at PHA conference, 11 December. The session was titled, "Resources for Pacific History: recognition and access". The following papers were presented:

- Libby Cass (Information for All Program, USP), "Information for all in the Pacific - reality and hopes".
- Paul Stuehrenberg (Yale University Divinity Library), "Kenneth Scott Latourette Initiative for the Documentation of World Christianity".
- Robert Appel (SPC, Noumea), "Moving the SPC archives to the Territorial Archives in New Caledonia".
- Karina Taylor (Pacific Research Archives, ANU), "An Overview of the Pacific Research Archives at the ANU".

- Meredith Batten (National Library of Australia), “Pacific Collecting at the National Library of Australia”.
- Diane Woods (Turnbull Library), “Digitisation Projects at the Turnbull Library”.
- Eleanor Kleiber (SPC), “The CROP Library digitisation project”.
- Libby Fong (USP Library), “The USP Library's Digital Efforts”.
- Monica Rothlisberger (Divine Word University Library, Madang, PNG), “Report on Divine Word University Library holdings, programs and developments”.
- Bishop Terry Brown (Church of Melanesia), “The establishment of the Archives of the Church of Melanesia in Honiara, Solomon Islands.”
- Ewan Maidment (PMB), "A history of Australian involvement in archives administration in Fiji".

In addition, Karyn Gladwish (Attorney General’s Department Librarian, Canberra) had prepared a paper, on Pacific Islands—Australian Law Library twinning projects, but had not been able to attend due to a funding problem.

The presentations were of a consistently high quality and were well received. About 30 people attended the morning session and about 18 people attended the afternoon session, including some USP Library staff and other local librarians and archivists. It is planned to collate the papers for publication.

In discussion during the session concern was expressed about the inability of some of the national libraries and archives in the region to meet their responsibilities and user expectations. This concern was referred to the general meeting of the Pacific History Association for its consideration.

Pacific History Association General Meeting, 12 December. The meeting re-elected the existing executive and committee. The executive is:

President – Dr Kampati Uriam (Tangintebu Theological College, Tarawa)

Vice-President – Dr Jacqueline Leckie (University of Otago, Dunedin)

Secretary/Treasurer – Dr Teresa Teaiwa (Victoria University, Wellington)

Newsletter Editor – Dr Max Quanchi (Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane)

The meeting agreed to hold the next PHA conference at the Goroka University, Melanesian Studies Centre in 2010, possibly coinciding with the Goroka Show.

In general business, the meeting carried the following resolution arising out of concerns expressed in the Library-Archives stream of the conference: “That Pacific History Association notes that urgent attention is required to address the inability of some national libraries and archives in the region to meet their responsibilities and user expectations. These responsibilities are critical to good governance, preservation of culture and social stability. That the PHA collaborate with regional stakeholders to lobby Forum leaders, national governments and development partners for regional initiatives to address this issue. That the PHA appoint a working group to take this matter further.”

Ewan Maidment
PMB Executive Officer
5 Jan 2009