News from Canberra

In February, Ms Monica Wehner, a Graduate Student in the Division of Pacific and Asian History, commenced part-time employment as Administrator in the Bureau’s office. She has produced a PMB home page which will be launched in May within the auspices of the South Pacific Information Network (SPIN). The World Wide Web address is: http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/spin/RSRC/PMB.

The aim of the homepage is to provide general information about the Bureau’s activities, as well as to facilitate easier access to its microfilm catalogue. The most recent issues of *Pambu* are attached as secondary documents to it. The PMB intends to produce a permanent archive of these newsletters once it has the sufficient resources to do so.
The homepage was produced using a software program for which the Australian National University has an onsite licence. Unlike many other web editors, this software requires documents to be individually encoded with commands. These commands are then read by browsers (such as Netscape) producing an effect similar to that of a word-processed document. The language of web publishing is constantly evolving; the challenge is to keep up with these changes. The PMB has attempted to keep the homepage fairly simple at this stage so that people with older computer systems will not waste time and computer memory downloading graphics. The homepage represents the beginning of a more concerted effort to use the World Wide Web for publicising the activities of the PMB. The Bureau is excited at the prospect of taking advantage of this valuable resource.

The Bureau has recently purchased a new Hirakawa 35mm portable microfilm camera with an A2 copy board. The purchase follows the PMB Management Committee’s cautious approach to digitising PMB products. The new camera will enable the Bureau to make the best microfilms possible in field conditions with a view to scanning the microfilm images into digital format should a demand for digital products emerge in the future. This procedure is considered quite correct in archival terms: “production of microfilm masters for preservation, and digital masters for access, seems likely to become the preferred preservation strategy in the next decade” (Anne Kenny, “From Analog to Digital” in Preservation Microfilming: does it have a future?, Canberra, NLA, 1995; p.95).

The Bureau has just moved offices in the Coombs Building at the ANU. The new office (Room 7012) is slightly larger than the old one and provides plenty of space for both PMB officers, the camera and the increasingly large amount of archival material being microfilmed on the premises.

Retirement of George Miller

George Miller, Senior Librarian for South-East Asia, South Asia and the Pacific left the Australian National University Library on 18 April, taking early retirement. George has been responsible, as Senior Librarian, for the Pacific collection since 1989. He has been the Library’s representative on the Management Committee of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau for the past seven and a half years. He helped immensely to maintain equilibrium in the Bureau management during a period of transition and has given enormous support and encouragement to the Bureau’s current programs.

New Directory of Pacific Island Libraries and Archives

Adrian Cunningham
National Library of Australia

The International Relations Unit of the National Library of Australia in conjunction with the Asia-Pacific Special Interest Group of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) is currently compiling a directory of libraries and archives in the Pacific Islands. This directory will fill a real gap in Pacific information sources and should be of use to researchers, librarians and archivists alike.

The directory will include listings for more than 300 libraries and archives in Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. The only Pacific Island territory to be excluded from the directory is Hawaii, which produces its own detailed directory. Directory information is being supplied to the National Library by professional contacts in the various territories.

It is hoped that a hardcopy version of the directory will be published before July 1997. At this stage the compilers are hopeful that, with the help of AusAID funding assistance, it should be possible to distribute copies of the directory to the Pacific Islands free of charge. Anyone outside of the islands who
wishes to obtain a copy of the directory will be able to purchase a copy for a small sum from ALIA, which has its headquarters in Canberra.

Later it is hoped to mount the directory on the World Wide Web, either on the National Library of Australia's home page or on the ALIA home page. It is intended that the Internet version of the directory will be kept up to date and that future editions of the printed directory will be produced at appropriate intervals.

Anyone wishing to obtain further information on this project or who wishes to add a listing for their library or archive should contact Adrian Cunningham, International Relations Unit, National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT, 2600, Australia (fax: 616/2571703; email: acunning@nla.gov.au).

Solomon Islands Newspapers

Ian Frazer
University of Otago

The last 25 years has seen the steady growth of a small but highly active and independent press in Solomon Islands. This has reached the point where the private press is an accepted part of the social and political life of the country. The growth is marked by an increase in the number of papers being published, a more frequent rate of publication and steadily expanding circulation. In 1996 there were five privately owned papers being published, one coming out bi-weekly, the rest either weekly or fortnightly. There is also one government paper and a range of smaller publications put out by the churches, non-government organizations, and other institutions. The largest private paper is the Solomon Star which currently has a circulation of 6000.

Solomon Islands is marked by extreme urban primacy and this has influenced the development of the press. Most of the papers that have started over this period have been in Honiara and their circulation largely restricted to the urban area. There is a history of news-letter publishing in the provinces going back to 1951. However, these have not always been kept up on a regular basis. The most successful has been Sunset News brought out by Western Province. The Honiara-based press is starting to extend its provincial coverage and circulation, and this is likely to continue as the provinces continue to develop. One of the difficulties facing newspaper publishers as they try to expand their circulation nationally is a very low literacy rate throughout the country. Outside Honiara, the radio still has far more importance than newspapers.

Unlike some of the larger and more developed countries in the Pacific region such as Fiji and Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands has not attracted any foreign-based media companies. All private newspapers are owned and published by Solomon Islanders. Those who have tried newspaper publishing have not found it easy and not all have lasted the distance. They have had some outside help from aid donors and other sources, ranging from donations of equipment to free training and different kinds of technical assistance. Except for this, publishers have had to depend on their own experience and resources, having to overcome shortages of capital, lack of training, the small market and competition with each other in order to survive. There has also been an uneasy relationship with the Government which at certain times has shown a tendency to try and control the media and restrict coverage of particular issues and events. This has not stopped the private press from pursuing its task of investigating and reporting the news. Currently it is one of the most diligent and committed of all the countervailing institutions in the country, doing more than any other to try and make governments and the large public service accountable to the general public.

Most of the private newspapers and all government publications are in English even though Pijin is a much more common and widely used form of communication in the country. Much work has been done
by the churches and other interested groups in standardising a written form of Pijin and there is now a considerable Pijin literature and some Pijin periodicals. The Solomon Islands Development Trust uses Pijin publications for its rural extension work. The first regular Pijin newspaper, called Solomons Grasrut, started publishing in late 1996.

The oldest and longest-running news publications are those put out by the Government Information Service. This goes back to the late colonial period when the administration brought out a regular newsheet for national circulation. This was progressively upgraded until 1975 when it was decided to turn it into a weekly newspaper called The Solomons News Drum. This was run as a general newspaper for over seven years from January 1975 until mid-1982 when it was taken over by five Solomon Islanders, renamed the Solomon Star, and run as a private newspaper. The Government Information Service has continued to publish its own newsheet (changing the name at regular intervals), using it to provide information on major policy changes, report meetings of the National Parliament, report national and provincial elections, trace developments in the public sector, cover all the main events in the political and vice-regal year, and generally provide a useful public relations outlet for whichever government is in power.

All private newspapers have been strong advocates of private enterprise. They have supported the growth of indigenous business especially, while taking a more critical stance towards foreign investors. One reason for this is the high level of political involvement in this sector and a growing level of corruption associated with foreign investment. This has been particularly evident in the growth of Honiara-based commercial and industrial investment, and also in the vitally important resources sector among companies involved in logging and fishing. Trying to uncover this has been one of the most difficult and controversial areas of investigative reporting, and not without some risks to the papers themselves. After publishing an editorial and two letters in November 1994 attacking Asian investment in the country, The Solomons Voice found itself in conflict with one of its main distributors and advertisers in Honiara. The Chinese-owned business refused to stock the paper thereafter or offer any more advertising. This is not a new experience for the papers. Atkin (1977) mentions a similar episode in 1977 when he upset one of his main advertisers in Solomons Toktok.

Since the mid-1970s Solomon Islands has had a large and highly active union movement made up of public and private sector unions. The newspapers have provided regular coverage of their activities and the industrial disputes in which they have been involved. This includes the prolonged disputes between civil servants and government in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Generally speaking, the newspapers have tended to adopt a conservative view in relation to industrial relations, showing little support for trade unions, the Labour Party, or left wing causes overall. At different times the union movement has tried to get around this with its own publications but has yet to sustain a regular newspaper.

The most vital role played by the newspapers has been as a forum for public debate. The tradition was set originally by The Kakamora Reporter published between 1970 and 1975 (Raraka, 1973; Bugotu, 1983). Set up as an alternative to the government-controlled media, the paper set about generating discussion on some of the main policy questions in the years leading up to independence. Many of the issues raised in the Kakamora Reporter - like foreign relations, foreign investment, resource exploitation, the social changes associated with urban growth, the most appropriate education system, tourism, decentralisation - are as relevant now as they were then.

The first private newspaper after the Kakamora Reporter was Solomons Toktok (originally published as the Melanesian Nius and the Kiokio Nius). It started in 1977 and continued publication until 1992. The Toktok might be described as the Solomons' first tabloid newspaper with its own version of sensationalist reporting (one early headline: 'Sex and Politics in Honiara - a husband's lament'). It came out in competition with the government-owned Solomons News Drum and was intended to have more popular appeal. Two of the most serious incidents associated with newspaper publishing involved the News Drum and Solomons Toktok. They occurred in 1978, the year of independence and involved
publication of items regarded as ethnically offensive and provocative. Both resulted in action being
taken against the writers of the items concerned as well as editorial staff. The *News Drum* published a
poem 'Ode to the West Wind' which denigrated people from Western Province, and *Solomons Toktok*
published a letter which accused Guadalcanal people of cowardice during the World War Two (Atkin,
1983: 216). The 'West Wind' poem brought angry protests from Western leaders and added to the
secessionist unrest associated with the Western breakaway movement (Premdas et al 1983: 184-185).
The West refused to celebrate independence with the rest of the country and was only persuaded to do
so one year later after the Government paid $9000 compensation for publishing the poem. The author of
the 'West Wind' poem and the author of the *Toktok* letter were charged and each given three month
prison sentences. The editor and two staff of *Toktok* were charged with sedition but after several court
appearances were finally acquitted. The 'West Wind' poem might not have caused so much controversy
if it were not for the fact that the *News Drum* was a government newspaper and this all took place at the
time of independence when there was heightened awareness about ethnic divisions and the threat that
they posed to national unity and integration. These events represented a sobering lesson for the press
and were a major influence on its subsequent development. It went on to make an important contribution
to the growth of Solomon Island nationalism, still giving recognition to ethnic and regional differences
but also playing a part in the emergence of a national culture transcending those differences.

The leading private newspaper at the present time is the *Solomon Star* now in its fifteenth year of
publication and still growing in circulation. It recently celebrated its 1000th issue (8 April 1997). Being
the successor to the *News Drum* it had a slight advantage over *Solomons Toktok* but there was still the
same struggle at the beginning in trying to operate commercially. It started in a small way (weekly, A-4,
12p, 3000 circ.) and has since grown to become a more substantial publication (tri-weekly, A-3, 20-
24p, 6000 circ.). The company acquired its own printing machines and photographic equipment in 1991
enabling it to print the paper itself. A number of other private papers started in the 1980s and early
1990s. Even though they did not always last very long they widened the range of news reporting and
further stimulated political debate.

Collectively the papers represent an invaluable record of post-independence political and social history.
They also show the growth of what might be called a Melanesian Fourth Estate, made distinctive by the
kind of topics which are raised, the way in which they are reported and discussed, the values expressed
and the kind of humour and language found in the papers. The pace of newspaper development in the
Solomons might have been slower than some of its larger neighbours. The advantage of this has been
the growth of a more independent press outside the influence of foreign-based media organizations. The
continuing success of the press, playing a major role in the strengthening of the public sphere, means
that Solomon Islands has a much stronger democracy than it might have had otherwise.

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**Tonga History Association Conference Session on Tongan Archives**

The PMB helped convene an archives panel session at the Tonga History Association conference in Canberra in January. Unfortunately the Hon. Tuivanuavou Vaea, the Palace Archivist, was unable to attend, however Futa Helu graciously agreed to Chair the session instead.

The speakers surveyed the history, current management, research uses and possible future administrative arrangements for Tongan official archives. Ewan Maidment gave a brief report surveying the extent of Tongan official, unofficial and research archives. Bruce Burme noted that Dorothy Crozier, a previous Western Pacific Archivist, had transferred the British consulate records from Tonga to the Western Pacific Archives in Suva. As Western Pacific Archivist, Mr Burme had visited Tonga in 1972, encouraged by the wide interest in Tongan archives, and there had been several subsequent official visitors who had addressed questions associated with centralized local archival arrangements for Tongan official records, but there had been no result.

Dr Elizabeth Wood-Ellem referred to her *Report to ICA and UNESCO on a Proposed National Archives and Records Office in Tonga*, 1981. She had been disappointed at the time to find few papers older than 20 years, however she did see good material in the Premier's Office. She stated that the Palace Archives and Tonga Traditions Committee had been the best sources for her own work and that
their reinvigoration following the appointment of the Hon. Tu’ivanauvou Vaea was a promise of better things to come.

Dr Peter Orlovich pointed to two problems: the alienation of Tongan archives held in overseas repositories and the absence of a national repository. He said that an archivist, an archives repository and archival legislation were needed to preserve Tongan archives. The first steps required to gain control of Tongan official records was to survey them, to establish archival and contextual control for registration and to estimate the quantity.

Summing up, Futa Helu said that he had visited the Palace Archives in 1961 and again in 1991/2 with Fabian Hutchinson. He noted on the second visit that the sheer volume of material had been reduced. He commented that archival work is very low down in the priorities of Ministers. He said that at least two people need to be trained to manage Tongan archives and that it would be important to have people with real interest and training, and then get funding and resources. In discussion it was suggested that a workshop be set up to discuss these issues further, perhaps in conjunction with the next THA conference which is likely to be held in Tonga.

PMB Field Trip to PNG & the Solomon Islands, 23 Feb-30 Mar 1997

This trip was originally intended as an open survey of archives in the Solomon Islands. However a number of specific Solomons projects developed prior to departure and the time in the Solomons was mainly spent on those projects. The PNG leg was added on in order to recommence PMB operations in PNG.

The PMB’s new Hirakawa 35 microfilm camera was used for the first time on the trip together with a new dimmer/voltage meter which Tony Wheeler (of W & F Pascoe P/L) had designed and built for controlling the spotlights. Pascoes have processed the first batch of (PNG) films and have reported that the quality has improved with the new equipment. During the trip 35 rolls of microfilm were made, consisting of the following titles:

PMB 1116 PAPUA NEW GUINEA NATIONAL FISHERIES AUTHORITY, Kanudi Research Station Library: PNG Collection - research papers, P1-P360. Reels 1-11. (Available for reference.)

During the two weeks in Port Moresby the PMB Executive Officer, Ewan Maidment, worked with the PNG National Fisheries Authority and the PNG Trades Union Congress, making 18 reels of microfilm. He also visited the National Archives, the PNG Collection at the the University of PNG and Lady Elizabeth Kiki. The PNG Government plan to contract Sandline mercenaries in Bougainville was exposed in the local press during his stay. Many people in Port Morsby expressed strong opposition to
the deal, but the riots did not commence until after the PMB projects in Port Moresby had been completed. Strong winds and heavy rain from Cyclone Justin hit Port Moresby toward the end of the stay causing road blockages and damage to houses, but apart from abandoning work at the TUC on one evening due to a blackout, the cyclone did not hamper the PMB work.

PNG National Fisheries Authority, Kanudi Research Station: research archives

The project was organised in conjunction with Ursula Kolkolo, Assistant Manager, Research and Management Branch of the NFA. Maidment also had a brief meeting with Joel Opnai, the Manager of the Branch, who was happy for the project to proceed, but indicated that he did not consider that records of commercial fish catches should be made public at this stage. The Branch kindly provided the PMB with the assistance of Brigid Pondros, a temporary employee, and gave the PMB a room at the NFA Head Office in Investment Haus in Port Moresby. Records were selected at Kanudi and transferred to Investment Haus for filming, because Kanudi was considered too insecure to leave the Bureau’s camera set up there for the week. The Kanudi Research Station is situated approximately 10 kilometers to the west of Port Moresby. Most of the Station’s research functions have been abandoned and the facility is run down. The Library is used very little and was broken into during the week the the PMB was working there.

It is worth noting that there is an extraordinarily valuable collection of fish specimens at Kanudi. According to Dr Kailola’s FAO/UNDP report in 1988, at least 70% of fishes known to occur in PNG waters are represented in the collection which consists of approximately 25,000 specimens. The collection has had intermittent curatorial attention since 1983 when the last curator, John Paska, left the job. John Paxton, the Principal Research Scientist at the Australian Museum, is concerned that if the alcohol levels in the jars are not maintained the specimens will be destroyed. He said that the collection at Kanudi is the most important in PNG and is part of the national heritage of PNG. It had been intended that the PNG National Museum would expand its biological collection to include the Kanudi specimens and the type specimens which have been transferred from Kanudi in trust to the Australian Museum. On return to Canberra, Maidment reported the situation to John Paxton and Patricia Kailola, who have urged the PNG National Museum and the National Fisheries Authority to take steps to ensure the preservation of the collection at Kanudi.

This microfilming project was a follow-up to a survey of the archives held in the Kanudi Research Station Library which Patricia Kailola made for the Bureau in June 1996. Among other material for microfilming, Dr Kailola identified the “P Series” consisting of research papers, both published and unpublished, survey material and some administrative reports documenting PNG fisheries research from 1948 until 1986. It is held in a bank of three 4-drawer filing cabinets in the Library. The papers were selected and arbitrarily arranged in numerical order (P1-778) by John Lock, a scientist at Kanudi, in 1986. Approximately half the “P series” were filmed (P1-360) at PMB 1116/reels 1-11. As the original list is not available, Dr Kailola’s list of the “P series” was the key tool for arranging the items for microfilming.

Further research papers held in the Library at Kanudi were filmed as a separate PMB title at PMB 1118/reels 1-2, including fish survey data, a Gulf District field journal kept by Grant West; Wankowski’s atlas of tuna catches and his fleet analysis, 1970-1978, and his files on the Japan/PNG tuna negotiations 1979; Barney Smith’s files on the formation of the Forum Fisheries Agency, 1976-1979; and A. Haines’ diary of a Purari River survey, 1975-1977.
PNG Trades Union Congress archives

The PNGTUC had moved offices in February. A welcome move to far better premises, but the move disrupted its filing systems and made access to the records, which Maidment had listed in 1994, difficult. The move has also brought the TUC’s records management problem to a head, and will certainly result in the culling of some files, possibly the affiliate and international series.

The TUC General Secretary, Mr John Paska, was extremely cooperative in giving the Bureau free access to the records, space in the TUC building and as much time as possible to do the work. Five reels were made. The main series filmed are as follows:

Minutes of meetings of the Federation of Workers Associations, 1969-1980 (gaps)
Minutes and agenda papers of conferences, 1973-1996
Minutes of Executive Council meetings 1985-1989
Minutes of Management Board meetings 1986-1990
Minutes of meetings of Port Moresby based affiliates, 1989-1992
Miscellaneous administrative and management papers, 1985-1988
International correspondence, 1973-1984
Circulars and memoranda, 1985-1995 (gaps)
Press statements, 1985-1995 (gaps)
Research papers and reports (produced by the TUC), 1974-1990
Speeches, mainly by Lawrence Titimur, 1987-1990
SPOCTU Conference, No.2, Brisbane, meeting papers, Nov 1993

Towards the end of the last day John Paska produced several more files including: PNG TUC Management Board minutes, 1992-93; press statements, 1992-93; and correspondence, 1993-1995. There was no time to film this material but it would be available on a follow-up trip.

Archives of the Pangu Pati and Sir Albert Mauri Kiki

In an interview on 5 March Lady Kiki stated that she had none of Sir Albert Mauri Kiki’s records of the Pangu Pati, apart from documents in several folders which had been forwarded to the Bureau, through Albert Speer, for microfilming in December. Nor did she hold any of Albert Speer’s correspondence with Sir Albert Mauri Kiki. The Pangu Pati had also been asking her about its archives in relation to a dispute over ownership of a building which it had occupied. Lady Kiki expressed strong concern about the non-payment to her family of any royalties whatsoever on Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime. She inquired about royalty rights for custodians of documents microfilmed and published by the PMB.

Microfilming in the Solomon Islands

Politically Honiara was in a state of high excitement with prospects of peace in Bougainville apparently emerging from the civil unrest in PNG. Although the heavy rain continued in Honiara, the cyclone did not hamper PMB work, except that the Yumi Nao, on which Maidment had booked a passage to Yandina, cancelled the trip due to a cyclone warning. During the three weeks the Bureau arranged and filmed parts of the archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Honiara and Levers Pacific Plantations Pty Ltd/Lever Solomons Ltd, and filmed parts of two newspaper titles, BSIP News Sheet and the Solomons Tok Tok, making 18 reels of microfilm. As well as the National Archives, the Executive Officer visited the National Library, the National Museum, the USP Centre, the SI Information Service and a number of newspaper proprietors/editors.
Catholic Archdiocese of Honiara

Holy Cross was the main base for PMB operations throughout the stay. Archbishop Adrian Smith gave the Bureau use of the Archdiocesan office fax machine and a good room for microfilming, allowing filming over extended hours.

The Archdiocesan archives are held in a bunker-like cement brick repository with a strongroom door and no windows. High humidity is a problem in the repository, but the operation of a de-humidifier has minimised the damage in recent years. Significant mould damage had occurred in the past and many papers were destroyed. Currently the paper feels a little damp, but mould is under control. There is termite damage to some of the papers, but no sign of active termites in the material sighted. The archives boxes in use in the repository are too small for foolscap file covers and documents which are folded to fit in the boxes, causing major damage to the documents and consuming much storage space. Australian Archives supplied 40 larger archives boxes which the PMB shipped to Holy Cross. Sister Anne Baxter will rebox the archives using these boxes.

Hugh Laracy’s bibliography in *Marists and Melanesians* proved a useful guide to the archives and indicated significant gaps in them: the Mission Education Officer’s files, which according to Laracy date from 1931, were not located, nor the Vicariate annual reports, nor statistical summaries dating from 1934. There is no indication that any Mission Station journals were ever held in the Diocesan archives and Archbishop Smith believes some may still be held on the Mission Stations. However, Wanoni Bay Mission Station correspondence, 1905-1957, had been transferred to the repository and was filmed by the Bureau, together with the Diocesan correspondence with the following Mission Stations:

- Ata’a/Ususue 1957-1967
- Ata’a land 1961-1973
- Avu Avu 1946-1981
- King George VI School 1951-1954
- Buma 1927, 1947-1982
- Buma land 1946-1981
- Dala 1950-1976 (gaps)
- Malageti 1953-1971
- Makina 1971-1974
- Makina Marau District 1952-1977
- Manivovo 1949-1967
- Rokera 1946-1968
- Ruavatu 1944-1977
- Tanganare 1943-1968,
- Tarapaina 1950-1970
- Rohinari 1972-1974
- Tsuva 1964-1970
- Wanoni Bay 1945-1970
- Yandina 1963-1970

A box file labelled “World War II, and history and customs”, was also filmed, together with a good run (3 issues only missing) of the Mission journal, *Na Turupatu*, 1911-1958, 1970-1971, mainly in the Gari language of Guadalcanal.

Russell Islands Plantations Estates Pty Ltd

RIPEL, which is a subsidiary of the Solomon Islands Commodity Export Marketing Authority, took over Lever Solomons Ltd in 1993 and since then has been profitably running the copra and cocoa plantations on the Russell Islands and at Lunga. There were only a few days available to do the work. The RIPEL Manager, Mr Davidson Fekau, provided the Bureau with a room in the RIPEL office building to sort and film the archives, as well as unrestricted access to the archives repository. David and Grace Fekau kindly put Ewan Maidment up in their residence at Yandina.

Unilever Australia Ltd had given approval for the PMB to microfilm Levers Pacific Plantations Ltd archives at Yandina on condition that they reserve the right to impose restrictions on access to the microfilms. Archival material is held in a repository and in the Managing Director’s office. The General Office hanging file system holds current administrative records, including documents dating from 1976.
However key records, such as notes on meetings, are not held in that system. The main records appear to have been held in the Managing Director’s office. Some are still there in boxes and in a cupboard, while others have been transferred to the repository.

The repository, which is attached to the office block, is a fine building for its purpose. It is constructed of cement brick with an iron roof and a wired over vent about 30cm wide right around the walls just below the roof line. It holds about 130m of timber shelving. The repository is very dusty and few of the records are boxed, but being well ventilated there is little mould and the paper is in relatively good condition. There are quite a few silver fish, but no signs of termites. The shelves are overflowing with records. Some attempts to group archives have been obscured by piles of semi and non-current low level accounts records dumped on the shelves and floor. It was difficult to identify some material in the darker corners of the repository poor as some of the electric lights were broken. The records are all post World War II. About half are recent low level accounts documents which can be discarded. Maidment did some basic cleaning up and identified and roughly arranged some of the archives.

The following material was filmed on 5 and a half reels:

- LPPPL/LSL land: legal papers, 1902-1986
- LPPPL Managing Director’s report on Solomon Island Estates, 1941
- Kolumbanga Cocoa Project, 1954-1955
- LPPPL Annual reports, 1961-1971, including coconut acreage in production 1972-1976
- LPPPL Managing Director’s month-end reports, Jan 1961-Nov 1967
- LSL MD’s and others’ briefing papers, handover reports & notes for visitors, 1974-1989
- LSL Annual Estimates, 1982-1992
- LSL/SL National Union of Workers negotiations and agreements, 1982-1986

**Solomon Islands Newspapers**

Mr Johnson Honimae, Director of the Solomon Islands Information service gave written permission for the PMB to film the Government newspapers; Mr George Aitkin also gave written permission to film the *Solomons Toktok*; and Mr Henry Raraka and Mr John Lamanu gave verbal permission to copy The *Kakamora Reporter* and the *Solomon Star*, respectively.

This project was a follow-up to preliminary microfilming of SI newspapers held by Dr Ian Frazer in Dunedin. Ian had mapped out some of the newspaper holdings of institutions in Honiara and the plan was to fill as many gaps as possible. The Bureau copied early runs of the *BSIP News Sheet*, 1955-1965, a predecessor of *The Solomons News Drum* which we had already filmed in Dunedin, and also copied early issues of the *Solomons Toktok*, 1977-1979, 1982 (gaps) which are not held overseas.

**Church of Melanesia**

The Bureau’s last trip to the Solomon Islands was in 1975 when, amongst other things, Robert Langdon filmed some of the archives of the Church of Melanesia. Unfortunately a number of the microfilms made during that expedition failed due to a fault in the camera. Early this year the PMB asked the Church for permission to re-film the material on the failed reels: Dr Fox’s notes on Arosi folk tales, diaries of Dr Fox and Rev David Ruddock, and a diary kept on board the *Southern Cross* in 1877. Mr Nick Ma’aramo, the General Secretary, responded to the request in a letter dated 25 March stating that access to the Church’s records, documents and artefacts is suspended pending the adoption of general guidelines and procedures which are now being developed.
PMB 1996 Microfilm Release

The following PMB Manuscript Series titles were released to members in February 1997. The release amounted to 128 reels, which included 22 reels of microfilm of Methodist Overseas Mission archives which were supplementary to the 1995 release. Please contact the Bureau for detailed reel lists.

PMB 1062 METHODIST CHURCH OF AUSTRALASIA OVERSEAS MISSION: minutes of Executive Committee, Mission District and Mission Board meetings, Port Darwin Circuit and Tonga Committee, 1855-1914. Restricted access. Reels 1-22.


PMB 1089 GOVERNMENT OF TONGA: Premier’s (Shirley Baker’s) letterbooks out, 1873-1874 & 1880-1890. Available for reference. Reels 1-3.


PMB 1093 METHODIST CHURCH IN FIJI: Circuit reports, 1835-1898, and the Swanston Collection on the Ra and Ba military campaigns, 1873. Restricted access. Reels 1-5.


Unrestricted titles are available for purchase from the Bureau. Microfilm prices: silver halide $AUD60 per reel (Australia); $AUD70 (overseas), including postage; vesicular $AUD50 per reel (Australia); $AU60 (overseas), including postage. Pacific Island institutions should enquire regarding special prices.


Beginning with a poetic description of the South Sea - the Ocean that had brought the Spanish and Solomon Islanders together, Sister Claire’s history is organised along chronological and geographical lines, documenting the trials and tribulations faced by the Church in this region of the Pacific. She highlights the pitfalls of writing and constructing such a history: ‘History sees but the fin of the shark, and leaves the reader to guess the unseen beauty or blemishes below the surface.’

Sister Claire’s valuable history of the Catholic Church in the Solomons is now available from the Archdiocese of Honiara, G.P.O. Box 237, Honiara, Solomon Islands; fax No.(677) 22869. The price is SI$25.00 plus postage.