

# Pambu

## Pacific Manuscripts Bureau Newsletter

Room 4201, Coombs Building (9)  
College of Asia and the Pacific

The Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200 Australia  
Ph: (612) 6125 2521; Fax: (612) 6125 0198; Email: [pambu@anu.edu.au](mailto:pambu@anu.edu.au)  
<http://rspas.anu.edu.au/pambu/>

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<i>Pambu News</i>	p.1
Kylie Moloney, <i>Trip Report, PMB Fieldwork in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 6-29 August 2010</i>	p.3
Rachel Reeves, <i>Mangaia records at risk, 29 Apr 2010</i>	p.4
Brandon Oswald, <i>Field Report – Island Culture Archival Support (ICAS) September 2010</i>	p.5
Ewan Maidment, <i>Report on PMB fieldwork in PNG Lands Commissions, 14-18 February 2011</i>	p.6
<i>CSIRO Land Research Series Online</i>	p.8
<i>Frank Filmer's account of the 1913 eruption of the Ambrym Volcano, New Hebrides</i>	p.8
<i>Library Destroyed, National Agricultural Research Institute, Keravat, New Britain, PNG</i>	p.9
Brij V. Lal, <i>Ewan Maidment wins ANU Outreach Award, September 2010</i>	p.11
<i>New Book! Kauri, Coal and Copra, 19<sup>th</sup> century voyages of Captain James Robinson, by Jennifer Clark</i>	p.11
<i>Latest PMB Manuscripts &amp; Printed Document Series Titles</i>	p.12

### PAMBU NEWS

Three great Pacific archivists have died recently; two of them far too young. Karen Peacock, Curator of the Pacific Collection at the Hamilton Library, University of Hawai'i, died in August 2010. Sam Kaima, PNG historian, librarian, bibliographer, archivist and aspiring politician, died on New Year's Eve. An older archivist, Bruce Burne, the last archivist of the Western Pacific High Commission, died last week. Their legacies are the archives and manuscripts which they have helped to preserve.

Jill Durney, Manager of the Macmillan Brown Library, reported that the Library survived the devastating earthquake in February relatively unscathed. We feel sorrow for the people of Christchurch who lost relatives, friends and their homes.

The PMB has been following a busy schedule of fieldwork and in-house processing. In August 2010 Kylie Moloney, the PMB Archivist, worked in Rarotonga completing the microfilming of papers of

Don Marshall and microfilming Resident Agents' correspondence from Niue and Rakahanga, as reported in more detail in this issue of *Pambu*.

In September 2010 I digitized parts of the *Fiji Times* photoarchives, working with Margaret Keni, the *Fiji Times* Librarian, Asaeli Lave, formerly *Fiji Times* Chief Photographer, and Seóna Smiles, retired journalist. In total about 6,000 prints were copied. About 4,000 in the *Fiji Times* photo archives and about 2,000 in the *Pacific Islands Monthly* photo archives, as follows:

PMB Photo 35. *FIJI TIMES*, Photo Archive – Selected prints, 1970-2001.

PMB Photo 36. *PACIFIC ISLANDS MONTHLY*, Photo Collection – Fiji, 1933-1987.

PMB Photo 37. HOARE, Charles (?), Album of Prints – Papeete, Nuku'alofa, Apia, Rarotonga, *et al.*, n.d. (c.1875?).

The digital copies of photographs in the *Fiji Times* photoarchives will be made available to readers at the PMB member libraries without restriction for research

purposes only. Readers who wish to publish any of the photographs must seek permission of Fiji Times Ltd for publication and must credit the *Fiji Times* in any publication.

In Melbourne in October, Kylie Moloney attended copyright training sessions with the Australian Copyright Council and participated in the conference of the Australian Society of Archivists where she presented a paper, "Pacific archives at risk: programs and strategies aimed at assisting Pacific Archives". Kylie also surveyed papers held by Mrs Barbara Dean, whose father and mother, Frank and Rita Paton, were missionaries in Tangoa (Vanuatu) from 1931-1933, and Miss Isobel Paton whose parents, William (Wilfred) Frederick Paton and Maisie Paton, were missionaries in Paama, north Ambrym (Vanuatu) from 1933-1948.

In January 2011 Kylie visited Honiara, working with the YWCA, Bishop Terry Brown, the National Archives of the Solomon Islands and others, to produce the following microfilms:

PMB 1359. CHURCH OF MELANESIA (Anglican Church in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), Selected archives, 1852-1932. Reels 1-5. (Available for reference.)

PMB Doc 456. JOURNALS OF THE MELANESIAN MISSION (Anglican Church of Melanesia), 1953-2011. Reels 1-2. (Available for reference.)

PMB Doc 501. PACIFIC ISLAND COOK BOOKS. 1 reel. (Available for reference)

PMB 1360. YWCA, Solomon Islands, Administrative records, 1975-2009. Reels 1-2. (Available for reference.)

PMB 1361. BISHOP PATTESON THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, Theses for the Diploma in Theology, Bachelor of Theology, and other staff papers, Kohimarama, Solomon Islands, 1970-2010. Reels 1-3. (Available for reference.)

In February Ewan worked with Roy Kriegler, Mr Vagi Igo, PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General, to set up a large scale digital copying project in the offices of the PNG Lands Commissions in Port Moresby, as reported in this issue of *Pambu*.

In April Kylie travelled to Santo to continue PMB work with Bishop Terry Brown on the archives of the Vanuatu Diocese of the Church of Melanesia and then back to Honiara, producing the following microfilms:

PMB 1333. CHURCH OF MELANESIA, Diocese of Vanuatu, Bishop Derek Rawcliffe Papers, Santo, 1949-1982. Reel 9. (Restricted access.)

PMB 1344. CHURCH OF MELANESIA, Diocese of Vanuatu, Bishop Harry Tevi Papers, Santo, 1979-1992. Reels 2-4. (Restricted access.)

PMB 1360. YWCA, Solomon Islands, Administrative records, 1975-2009. Reels 3 & 4. (Available for reference.)

PMB 1361. BISHOP PATTESON THEOLOGICAL

COLLEGE, Theses for the Diploma in Theology, Bachelor of Theology, and other staff papers, Kohimarama, Solomon Islands, 1970-2010. Reels 4-7. (Available for reference.)

The PMB has received the following materials on loan for arrangement, description and reformatting:

- R.M. (Mike) Bourke, Field data on the altitudinal range of crops in Papua New Guinea, 1979-1984.
- Division of Pacific & Asian History, RSPAS, ANU, Annual Reports and Records Room administration files, transferred by Dorothy MacIntosh.
- Ellestan Dusting, collections of Pacific Islands photographs and vinyl records, collections, publications and papers, including papers of the Pan-Pacific and South East Asia Women's Association, transferred to the PMB with assistance of Merrell Davis and David Kaus.
- Frank Gordon Filmer, Diaries relating to his service with the Church of Christ Mission on Pentecost Island, New Hebrides, 1908-1918, lent by Kevin and Bernard Hull and the Filmer family.
- Jan & Bill Gammage, PNG slides and poster collection.
- Dick Keevil, *Custom Stories of the Solomon Islands* (Small Malaita) and *Memorabilia of R.A. Keevil, 1921-1983* (2 vols.), lent by Frances Keevil.
- Br. Bryan Leak, SM, Bougainville correspondence and related documents, 1990-1992.
- Alan L. Lindley, Solomon Islands papers, printed material and photographs, 1952-2008.
- Madang Motor Cycle Club papers, newsletters & press cuttings, 1969-1970, transferred by Gavin Carter on disk.
- Albert Speer MBE, Correspondence and research papers for transfer to the NLA.
- Commander Roy Struben, *South Seas Cannonade: stories about the Solomon Islands and the life of Ernie Palmer*, transferred to PMB by Bro Palmer on disk.
- G.A.M. (Tony) Taylor, papers on volcanological work in PNG, transferred by Dr R.W. Johnson
- Te Rangi Hiroa Fund papers transferred by Dr Niel Gunson.
- James L.O Tedder Solomon Islands papers, photographs and artefacts.
- Margaret Tedder, Solomon Islands ethno-botanical index cards.
- Dick Thompson, Solomon Islands slides and photographs.
- Paul Richards, Solomon Islands photographs.

Field notebooks of Don Laycock and audio recordings made by Murray Groves, mostly in Manumanu village, Papua, have been transferred to PARADISEC for digitization.

Ewan Maidment  
PMB Executive Officer

**TRIP REPORT  
PMB FIELDWORK IN RAROTONGA,  
COOK ISLANDS 6–29 AUGUST 2010**

In August 2010 I undertook 2 weeks of fieldwork in Rarotonga, Cook Islands. It was a successful trip, with 9 rolls of microfilm exposed producing the following PMB titles.

- PMB 1337 MARSHALL, Donald Stanley (1919-2005), Cook Islands Research Papers, 1951-1989. Reels 7-10. (Available for reference.)
- PMB 1354 COOK ISLANDS ADMINISTR-ATION, Resident Commissioner's Office, Correspondence with Niue Resident Agents, 1905-1965. Reels 1-3. (Restricted Access.)
- PMB 1355 COOK ISLANDS ADMINISTR-ATION, Resident Commissioner's Office, Correspondence with Rakahanga Resident Agents, 1922-1970. Reels 1-3. (Restricted Access.)



A traditional handmade hat women wear to church, Cook Islands Christian Church, Avarua, Sun. 15 August 2010.

**Cook Islands National Archives**

At the Cook Islands National Archives I copied correspondence between the Resident Agents to and from the Resident Commissioner's Office for the islands of Niue (1905-1965) and Rakahanga (1922-1970). The papers were often out of date order and it took time to put them back into date order before I could begin microfilming.

The papers on Niue were particularly interesting with the Resident Agent asking for cuttings of citrus, pistachio, java (coffee) as well as ladybirds, lace wings, bees, minah birds (!) and owls to destroy rats and mice – but also questioning if owls will eat the chickens! In one telegram of 2 Sep 1957 the Resident Agent says “Can you spare five thousand aspirins (to be replaced)?”

**USP**

At the University of the South Pacific Cook Islands Centre I copied the remainder of documents from the Don Marshall papers which Ewan began copying in

2009. The microfilming was routine and included documents relating to the demographics of Mangaia, Mangaian stone tools, field trip notes, ethnohistory of Mangaia, correspondence and draft articles on kinship.

**Ron Crocombe's papers**

I compiled a listing of Ron Crocombe's papers at the Crocombe home. Professor Crocombe was a Pacific historian and lecturer who passed away in June 2009. He was the founding Professor of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific and the founding Director of the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific. He was awarded a PhD. from the Australian National University in 1961. From 1957 to 2009 he published extensively on a large range of topics relating to the Pacific including land policy, rural sociology, ethnohistory, regional organization, social, cultural and educational policy, politics, international relations and Asia and the Pacific. Much of his work was devoted to facilitating and coordinating research by Pacific Islanders. The Crocombe collection is a significant resource for scholars of Pacific studies.

The Ron Crocombe collection is held in two rooms. The majority of the collection is well organised and labelled with subject headings on manila folders. Ron used a numbering system developed by the Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, but has also added to this listing and with his own system of subject headings.

**Other matters**

I met with Ms Jeannine Daniel, Assistant Ombudsman, to learn about the Cook Islands Official Information Act which was passed in February 2008 and how she has implemented the PARBICA Record Keeping Toolkit with Government Departments throughout the Cook Islands.

Jeannine Daniel and I then met with, Ms Janet Maki, Ombudsman, Mr Mark Short, Secretary for the Ministry of Justice, Ms Marie Haupini, BDM at Ministry of Justice and Ms Grace Chynoweth, Land Title at Ministry of Justice regarding assistance the PMB may be able to offer the Ministry of Justice with the preservation of Birth Death Marriage and Land court records. Mr Mark Short is supportive of the project because improving Ministry of Justice Record Keeping is one of the Ministry's goals for the next year. (See article on Mangaia records at risk later in this edition of *Pambu*.)

I met with Ms Jean Mason, Director, Cook Islands Library and Museum (CILM), who explained that she has been working on stabilizing the building and is now moving towards conservation of the collection. She had just wrapped and taken several rare books including Banks' diary to a local industrial freezer as they were infested with pests.

Ms Jeannine Daniel also introduced me to Mr Tangimetua Tangatatutai, President of the Cook Islands Christian Church and Mr Nga Mataio, General Secretary, Cook Islands Christian Church, at Takamoā Theological College, Avarua. The Mission house renovations are now complete and the house and college is beautiful. Mr Tangatatutai showed me the CICC archives which include church land deeds, birth, baptism, notice of intention to marriage, marriage and burial registers and a book containing the names of all students who have attended Takamoā Theological College from 1823 until the present.



Takamoā Mission House of the Cook Islands Christian Church, Rarotonga. The house was built by members of the London Missionary Society in the 1830s and extensively renovated in 2009.

Future work for the PMB in the Cook Islands includes copying select parts of the Ron Crocombe papers, copying the Cook Islands Christian Church archive, copying correspondence between the Resident Agents and the Resident Commissioner's Office for the following islands Pukapuka, Suvarrow, Palmerston, Takutea and Mitiaro. Rod Dixon is working towards locating the personal papers of several prominent Cook Islanders in preparation for the next PMB field trip. I would like to thank all of the Cook Islanders who assisted and supported me with my work in Rarotonga.

Kylie Moloney  
PMB Archivist, September 2010

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**Receiving *Pambu* in Electronic Form**

If you would prefer to receive the *Pambu* newsletter in an electronic form, please send an email to: [pambu@anu.edu.au](mailto:pambu@anu.edu.au).

**MANGAIA RECORDS AT RISK**

The Office of the Ombudsman is echoing secretary of justice Mark Short's concerns that justice records are not being handled or preserved appropriately. Assistant ombudsman Jeannine Daniel is responsible for training relevant government departments in the Official Information Act, which came into effect last year.



Storage container holding land records at the main office of the Ministry of Justice in Rarotonga.

While administering training to the Mangaia Island Council and Island Administration, she saw that vital Ministry of Justice records were not being properly managed.

She mentioned a need for more effective preservation methods in regards to justice documents, particularly births deaths and marriages records.

"Given the lack of resources faced by Mangaia, like many if not all outer islands, it appears that there has never been any real attention given to the value of these records whether it be of evidential, legal, administrative, historical or genealogical significance," Daniel said.

She said that ministry of justice staff do not receive proper training in terms of storing records, "as (records) are haphazardly stored in old cupboards, stored in places conducive to dust mites and silver fish and the fluctuating temperatures promoting faster deterioration of the paper".

The Office of the Ombudsman has also reported that "no thought has been given to disaster recovery in the event of an office fire, cyclone (or) roof leakages". There are no copies of births deaths & marriages records stored elsewhere, so if the justice office gets destroyed, so do the records.

Daniel said that given resource constraints, an electronic back-up of the records may not necessarily be the best option. As part of its OIA training and evaluation on Mangaia, the Office of the Ombudsman also discovered that original CICC births, deaths and

marriages records were sent to Rarotonga to be duplicated but were never returned to Mangaia.

“The Mayor and Island Secretary both agreed that Mangaia will take steps to ensure the preservation of their records by having all BDM registers and other records of significance stored in a ‘strongroom’, purpose-built for Mangaia,” Daniel said.

As the National Archivist George Paniani was also a member of the review team, he agreed to the repatriation of old records, which are currently on Rarotonga, to Mangaia when the Mangaia Island Records Room has been completed.

The Office of the Ombudsman has made enquiries with other regional and international institutions to explore options for the preservation of the Births Deaths & Marriages records in Mangaia.

By Rachel Reeves

*Cook Islands News*, 29 April, 2010.

Article reprinted with permission from *Cook Islands News*: [www.cookislandsnews.com](http://www.cookislandsnews.com)

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## **FIELD REPORT ISLAND CULTURE ARCHIVAL SUPPORT SEPTEMBER 2010**

### **Vanuatu National Archives, Port Vila**

ICAS fieldwork began at the National Archives of Vanuatu on the grounds of the Cultural Centre in Port Vila. I met with the National Archivist, Anne Naupa, and the Archivist Trainee, Augustine Tevimule, to get an update on the development of the new National Archives. Good news awaited me upon my arrival, as I learned that the Australian Government had agreed fund the construction of the new National Archives building as a gift for Vanuatu’s 30 year Anniversary of Independence.

Much progress had been accomplished since my last visit in February 2009. Anne had taken over a storeroom near the loading bay and had converted it into the Archives office. It is a small room, but will be sufficient until something more suitable becomes available when the new building is constructed. Also, a second forty-foot container was obtained to store records; it is now placed adjacent to the other container. This, of course, is a temporary solution to keep records dry and pest-free, however it works well as a place to store materials in substitute of the very limited space throughout the Cultural Centre.

Since the archive is mostly in the accession stage, I wrote up a very simple Accession Procedure. This was used to help train the Archivist Trainee. Sorting records and creating container lists is another major priority at this stage. During my two weeks, I helped sort records belonging to the Ministry of Finance, the

Ministry of Agriculture, and the Educational Department, as well as Medical and Presbyterian records. When sorting through records, it is not unusual to come across some true gems. In one particular box, we found the Records of Land Transfers/Sales of 1913. These included individual land requests, oppositions to the request, and the Joint Court decisions on these requests.

During this visit, I created a Preservation Policy that was revised and approved by Anne. On a previous volunteer trip to the National Archives of Solomon Islands, I had written a Disaster Management Plan. Anne and I also created a brochure to promote the Vanuatu National Archives. It contains pertinent contact information, and states the archives’ mission. Additionally, the brochure colourfully and simply articulates what are archives and why they matter.

One of the 2010 objectives for the National Archives is to draft guidelines. We finalized the document “Guidelines for National Archives Vanuatu Procedures”. This included guidelines for accessioning, appraising, processing, preservation & conservation access, as well as references, disposal, and the formation of a National Archives Committee. Simply written, it also offers a sense of checks and balances to ensure that records will neither be added unnecessarily, nor disposed of accidentally or prematurely. The guideline was then translated into Bislama and French.

### **National Archives of Solomon Islands, Honiara**

I arrived to the National Archives of Solomon Islands to a surprise, as Julian Chonigolo, Government Archivist, and the rest of the staff were waiting with lunch. It was a very nice way to arrive, and a terrific way to see to the entire staff once again.



Solomon Islands National Archives.

There have been some major changes at the National Archives of Solomon Islands over the past couple of years, in particular, there are a number of new staff. Although these new employees have very little archival training, they are truly devoted to learning archival practices and making their archives more accessible. I spent a couple of days with them

processing a collection and producing a finding guide. The collection we used for the training purpose was the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation composed of one series of bulletins. It turned out to be in excellent collection to use for training. Now, they can apply what they learned to other collections, as well as to more complex ones.

I also worked with Margaret Inifrim, Deputy Archivist, who was interested in writing policies for their archives. I showed her the Guidelines for National Archives Vanuatu Procedures that I had accomplished a week earlier. Margaret liked it, and together we wrote one for the National Archives of Solomon Islands. Also, Margaret expressed an interest in writing a policy for their research room. I drafted a Search Room Policy to help establish rules to ensure the safety of the staff, the users, and the material.

#### **Church of Melanesia Archives, Honiara**

During my time at the National Archives of Solomon Islands, I met with Bishop Terry Brown who is acting as a volunteer archivist of the Anglican Church of Melanesia. He is currently working at a desk in the conservation unit at the National Archives that contains pre 1975 Church of Melanesia records. He gave me a tour of the collection, and showed me the material he has digitized and placed on the Web site, Project Canterbury. We also discussed conservation issues relating to the J.W. Beattie photograph collection. Finally, he expressed a need for archival supplies to help him continue his work processing collections. I told him that I had some acid-free file folders, and would send him a box of 500 upon my return home. Anything will help!

#### **Youth Women Christian Association, Honiara**

I paid a quick visit to the YWCA of the Solomon Islands to meet with Kiri Dicker and the staff. They had some preservation concerns regarding their small collection of predominantly paper records dating back to 1975 when the YWCA was established. We agreed that it would be a good idea for the Pacific Manuscript Bureau (PMB) to come and microfilm the most important documents.

Brandon Oswald  
6 Oct 2010

### **PNG LANDS COMMISSIONS, DOCUMENT DIGITISATION PROJECT, PORT MORESBY, FEBRUARY 2011**

In May 2007 the late Sam Kaima invited the PMB to survey the archives of the Land Titles Commission (LTC) and National Lands Commission (NLC) in Port Moresby. Sam Kaima was then a consultant on records systems with the PNG-Australia Law and Justice Sector Program.

In July 2010 the PMB made a follow-up survey of the Lands Commissions' records at the invitation of Roy Kriegler, Adviser Organisational Development and Change Management at the PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG). Key aims of the survey were to discuss permanent preservation of the original records and advise on the possibility of reformatting part or the whole of the records.

In October 2010 Dr Lawrence Kalinoe, DJAG Secretary, Mr Benny Metio, DJAG Deputy Secretary – Corporate Affairs and General Administration, Dr Kriegler and other DJAG officials visited the PMB office at the Coombs Building. The visitors were impressed by the PMB's digital document copying system (developed for the Endangered Archives Tuvalu National Archives Major Project).

Consequently, the Bureau was engaged to assist the Department to establish a document preservation program in the Lands Commissions and to participate in a workshop at the Lands Commissions with the aims of:

- defining and establishing the file management system
- installing the scanning hardware and software
- initiating the scanning of documents, and
- training staff in the use of the filing and scanning equipment.

The PMB work was undertaken under the direction of Mr Vagi Igo, the Project Coordinator, and with the invaluable advice of Dr Kriegler.

The workshop and training were held 14-18 February at the Lands Commissions' offices at Four Mile. The workshop was held on the first morning. It was attended by Mr Benedict Batata, Acting LTC Chief Commissioner, about 16 LTC and NLC staff, and DJAG IT staff, Mr Igo and Dr Kriegler.

Most of the workshop was occupied with a presentation of a draft Access database by DJAG IT officers, Jerry Maiapu and Daniel Sakumai. There was a thorough discussion of how the database would categorise the LTC applications files. Specifically: type of application with cross reference to the land description (District/Ward, Section and Lot number) allocated by the Lands Department. The existing card index to the LTC applications files is arranged by Province and customary land name. The Lands Department allocates a land description after the LTC

makes its decision on the application, but the land description is not recorded on the index cards. It was agreed that the system would be improved by including the Lands Dept land description in the database. It would then be easier to trace a land inquiry back from the current land description to the original application.

Agi Ila, the LTC Registrar, gave an estimate of 4,655 files held in the LTC applications file series. There was also discussion of whether the digitised material should be linked to the database or embedded in it. Work flow and staffing for the reformatting project were considered. I demonstrated the 'remote capture' operation of the camera.

Mrs Ila and Mr Igo set up a digitisation workspace in the Lands Commissions' Records Room. We set up a Canon 550D SLR camera with 18-55mm lens, hung on a Velbon 'Sherpa' tripod (with reversible camera post), operated via 'remote capture' from an LTC Registry computer dedicated to the digitisation project.



Gela, Gabriella and Mrs Agi Ila reformatting LTC applications case files, Feb 2011.

Over the rest of the week LTC Records Officers, Gabriella (LTC Deputy Registrar), Susan and Gela, learnt how to organise files for copying, how to name and arrange the digitised files into folders, how to operate the camera and how to rotate images when necessary. Later in the week NLC staff, Veronica and Arua Leva, the Registrar, began learning how to prepare and film their documents.

The LTC Records Officers quickly became familiar with the digitisation process and, having gained confidence and skill, worked on their own without direction, including: setting up and dismantling the photographic equipment; linking the camera to the computer; preparation large format documents, *i.e.* survey maps and genealogies, and adjusting the camera to successfully film them; and tracing and re-naming stray images.

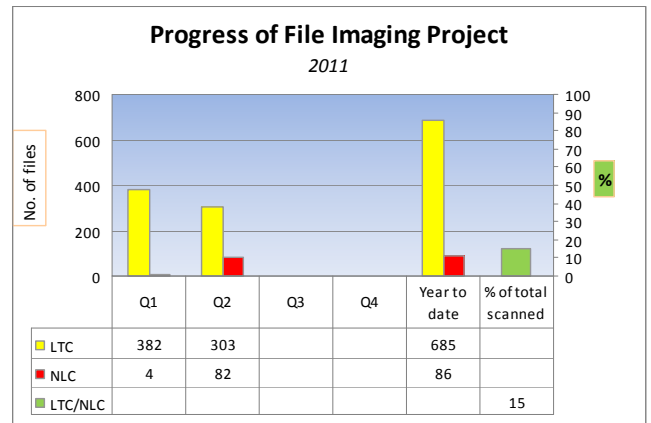


Vagi Igo, Agi Ila, Roy Kriegler (standing), Gela and Gabriella (sitting), Land Commissions' Records Room.

By the end of the week LTC Records Officers were able to digitise 20 files a day in the LTC applications file series. Based on established rates of processing, Mr Vagi and Dr Kriegler made estimates of the total amount of time required to complete reformatting of the various Lands Commissions records series.

DJAG IT staff installed a revised version of the Access database for listing the LTC applications case files. Records Officers were trained in downloading backup digital files to an external hard drive. Arrangements were made for the regular transfer of the external drive to and from the DJAG IT section in Waigani where a digital archive would be maintained. It was clearly understood that on completion of digital reformatting, the closed Lands Commissions' file series would be transferred to the PNG National Archives for permanent retention.

Mr Benedict Batata, Mr Vagi and Dr Kriegler reviewed the work undertaken and indicated that they were satisfied with the operation of the equipment, the digital product and the capacity of the Lands Commissions' staff to undertake the tasks involved. However they did not lose sight of the scale of the reformatting project and the dedication and persistence which will be required of the Lands Commissions' staff in order to complete it.



Progress chart supplied by Dr Kriegler, May 2011.

I am very grateful to the late Sam Kaima, Mr Metio, Mr Batata, Mr Vagi and Dr Kriegler for the opportunity to be involved in establishing the Lands Commissions' records digitisation project and deeply appreciate the time spent working with the Lands Commissions' Registrars, Records Officers and other staff. I expect that the PMB will maintain contact with the Lands Commissions and, if necessary, provide further support throughout the life of the project.

The DJAG Librarian, Wilma Marakan, reported that the Library had commenced a program for scanning key legal decisions to be up-loaded to the PACLII database.

### **PNG National Archives & Public Records Services**

Dr Kriegler and I met Puro Hanua, the Acting National Archivist, at the National Archives briefly on the Thursday morning. I was pleasantly surprised to meet Joe Naguwean there. Mr Naguwean is a former UPNG New Guinea Collection Librarian and Divine Word University Librarian. He had been working at the National Archives for the past four months.



Mr Joe Naguwean, Ewan Maidment handing over photo scanner to Mrs Puro Hanua at the PNG National Archives.

Ewan Maidment  
PMB Executive Officer

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### **CSIRO Land Research Series Online**

Robin Hide notes that all of the PNG (and Australia) reports on the land system surveys of Australia and PNG from the 1950s-1970s of the CSIRO Land Research Series are now available online. The Land Research Surveys commenced in 1946 and were conducted by teams of scientists and technicians working together in the field and laboratory. The surveys include 13 PNG land survey reports and maps of the land resources.

See:

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/289/aid/16092.htm>

### **FRANK FILMER'S ACCOUNT OF THE 1913 ERUPTION OF THE AMBRYM VOLCANO, NEW HEBRIDES**

Kevin Hull and his family recently contacted the Bureau to ask if we would be interested in copying the diaries of his grandfather Frank Gordon Filmer. Frank Filmer was a missionary with the Church of Christ on Pentecost Island, New Hebrides from 1908-1919. Frank became engaged to Rosa Jane Fountain and in 1908 left to work as a missionary for the Church of Christ. He returned to South Australia and on 6 April 1909 Rosa and Frank were married in the Grote Street Church of Christ, Adelaide, South Australia. They had five children, four of whom were born in the islands.

The PMB copied four of Filmer's diaries (PMB 1358), ranging from 1908-1918. Kevin Hull has transcribed Frank's diary and kindly allowed us to publish the entries from 6 and 7 December 1913 detailing his riveting account of the Ambrym volcano eruption below. Frank and his wife Rosa were living at Banmatmat, South Pentecost, at the time, which gave them a fine view of the eruption on the nearby island of Ambrym.

"6 Saturday 1913. Made boxes for boys most of day. In afternoon the Ambrim volcano roared for hours on end. In the evening there was a red glow in the Ambrim hills about midway between the old crater and Dip Point. I awoke several times in the night & saw a molten river flowing into the sea.

7 Sunday 1913. As dense smoke was rising from Dip Point I set off to see if there was any danger. When about 8 miles off, the sea became warm & patches of ash floating were met. This increased until we were plowing [*sic*] through a column of it about a mile wide & 8 inches thick: on the other side the sea was hot, yellow in appearance & covered with scores & scores of dead fish from tiny sprats to great schnappers [*sic*]. When nearing the point, we saw a mount this side of Carmichael's house in flames: rent upon rent was twisting forth & through these the flames were roaring & hurling skyward ashes, stone & smoke. The water became so hot we feared the engine would overheat & so put out to sea again. Two immense water spouts here met our gaze. Logs, charred, uprooted, twisted & broken in pieces were floating in all directions. We ran around what appeared to be threatening eruption in the sea, (& which hours later broke forth into a crater), & then, thinking to get ashore at Craig's Cove & walk overland, we went near the shore & came upon Dr Bowie, Mrs Bailey & several natives in the old launch which was not working. Their natives were pulling. The new launch was away at Malekula with the patients. We hooked onto his launch & ran around the coast a little where

we loaded up both launches with natives. Some of them wished to carry great bundles but these we threw ashore & ran for Mal [*Malekula - BH*]. About 4 miles out we met Mr Robertson in the Dr's Launch, to whom we gave all the people & returned for more. A schooner also came from Mal. When nearing the point we heard an awful roar like the bursting of 10,000 cannons, an immense cloud was hurled upward of smoke heavily laden with cinders & ashes which spread & spread in all directions like an avalanche on a pyramid's sides. About 60 people were on the beach at a bad landing place waiting to be taken off: we signalled them to run over the mountain to Craig's Cove & ourselves headed there; here we came upon two natives struggling in the water; they had set out for Malekula in a canoe which had sunk under them. We rescued them & then putting into Craig's Cove before the people we had signalled arrived, picked up a load of others who were waiting. While getting these the cinder laden cloud was rolling on toward us in a most threatening manner. Several boats, Mr Stevens, the schooner & we were now making all the speed we could in the endeavour to escape those hot cinders: our engine was running badly on account of being so heavily laden. We were making a lot of water above the ordinary water line: that dense cloud of death by suffocation was coming on apace. Could we avoid it? Would the wind keep it back? Could we get a few more revolutions out of the engine? Would some of us jump overboard & so lighten the launch that it might make better speed? As we looked back we saw the hill those 60 natives were then on, swallowed up in the cloud, on, on it rolled. All left at Craig's Cove were gone, still on against the wind it came, a score of natives in a pulling boat making frantic efforts to escape were next enwrapped in its pall. Still on it came. The stern of the schooner was enveloped then the bow, poor people. Would the wind hold it back just a little? No! On it comes, now a hundred yards from our stern. —In a few moments we will be in eternity. The horror of the thought of being suffocated with hot — burning ashes which would eat their way into the lungs.

Now the native bailing out became excited & got the bailing tin between the cog wheels & we stopped. I jumped below & started the engine again & then came on top to meet the end. The ashes were now around us & although we could see very little, praise God, we were so far away they were not hot. Oh! What a relief, what a change, we are not going to be taken after all. Soon the ashes ceased falling & we met a boat half full of natives so gave them a few good oarsmen & ran on. Very soon, however, we re-passed the boat but running in an opposite direction about half an hour later we got a faint glimpse of the sun & found we had run about three miles back towards Ambrim. About 4:30 we ran

into Jafferie's place & landed our human cargo. Poor Mrs Bowie who would not go in the launch had been pulled over in an open boat with no hat & was much sun burnt as well as disturbed. We had tea & then about 8pm Mr Lang who had stood out to sea while the ashes had fallen ran into Craig's Cove & got 27 of those we had signalled to cross the mount & had since given up for dead. Later Mr Paton called there again & picked up 17 heathen. Thus ended the most eventful day of many lives.

The great cloud which rose to the heavens & spread out to sea so many miles must have been caused by the whole hospital valley being thrown miles into the sky by one terrific explosion."

\* \* \*

**LIBRARY DESTROYED,  
National Agricultural Research Institute, Keravat,  
New Britain, PNG**



Lowlands Agricultural Research Station (NARI) Keravat, burnt down, 11 April 2011. Photo by Prof. George Curry.

**NARI loses vital info as centre burns  
*Post-Courier*, 13 April 2011**

THE nation's prime archive of agriculture research went up in flames at the Keravat base of the National Agricultural Research Institute on Monday night.

NARI'S administration block and offices for scientists, plus records dating back to early last century, were destroyed by a blaze that roared through the old, timber construction buildings.

Staff put their lives at risk running into the buildings to try to retrieve computers and files, eye witnesses told the *Post-Courier*.

They said the islands regional centre manager, Ofara Petilani, suffered a cut to the head when glass fell on him as he tried to get into his office during the blaze. He had broken a window so he could climb in and unlock the doors, but a piece of glass fell on him, causing a sizeable cut.

Mr Petilani said at the fire scene yesterday that staff and onlookers tried their best to stop the fire, but there was no fire brigade available and staff had to make do with the nearby hydrant and a normal hose. However,

power was disconnected because of the fire and the water pump stopped working.

Several staff members brought fire extinguishers from their houses but it was not enough.

The NARI organisation has been in that rural location since 1928, officers said.

They mourned the loss of invaluable research records in the blaze, saying that rural industries like cocoa and oil palm had their beginnings in PNG at the research station.

NARI'S new cash crop prospect is the galip nut and a building housing equipment to process the nuts was saved from fire damage.

Scores of employees were stunned by the blaze but were encouraged yesterday by senior staff to keep up good spirits and to be ready to revive the institute's operations. Mr Petilani said the most urgent task was to restore water supply and power, then to get salvaged property to safe storage, to get communications going again, and to talk to the bank about commercial matters.

A team from NARI's head office at Bubia, near Lae, was due to arrive at Tokua late yesterday to examine the damage.

Article reprinted with permission from the *Post-Courier*.

\* \* \*

Also reporting on the disaster, "NARI block razed", in *The National*, 13 April, Abigail Apina wrote that:

"Witnesses at the scene believed the fire started at 6.45pm in the library section and later spread to other departments, razing the icon to the ground.

"Investigations are underway to find out the cause of the fire but locals believed there were gas leaks from large gas cylinders that were usually stored outside the library.

"They believed that with the colonial building being repainted regularly over the years was a tinder box once set alight.

"All that remained of the building were the brick posts and only two tables, a few office valuables and a few mattresses that were saved.

"The community was shocked and some cried over the loss of the iconic building, which was built in 1928, and served NARI and Papua New Guinea for more than 80 years.

"The people were unable to put out the flames and save more office valuables because there were explosions of gas cylinders and chemicals resulting in thick blue and black smoke being emitted.

"Most of their data collected over the years was burnt, including project papers and laboratory samples."

\* \* \*

The PMB surveyed records at LAES on 21 May 2007 but could not obtain permission from NARI to

proceed with preservation reformatting. The survey was made at the request of Mike Bourke (ANU) to see whether unpublished agricultural reports and related trial data listed in Dr Bourke's, *Accessing Unpublished Agricultural Research in PNG*, Appendix 2 (Feb 2000), were accessible for PMB microfilming. These documents had been identified by Dr Bourke and Janine Conway as part of a PNG-wide survey supported by AusAID.

Dr Moxon, the Station Director at the time, advised that such material was held by the LAES Librarian, Elisabeth Ling, and may be available for PMB microfilming at the discretion of the Director-General of the PNG National Agricultural Research Institute so long as protection of the authors' and NARI's intellectual property were assured. Mrs Ling showed me the Trial Files (16 drawers) and Document Collection (20 drawers classified by subject using Agdex) in her efficiently administered Library. Mrs Ling undertook to check Dr Bourke's listing against her holdings and confirm availability and location in due course.

Mrs Ling has also indicated that LAES had a 'room full' of administrative files, papers and duplicates kept separately from the Library. Mrs Ling was hoping to attend a one-week workshop in Lae on archives and records management so that she could commence a review of these archives.

Extract from *Report on PMB trip to PNG, 16 May-3 June 2007*.

\* \* \*

**Note:** "The Chuuk State Legislature building and all of its contents (including legislative documents, library, etc.) was burned to the ground on the night of Thursday 28 April. Although no cause has been determined, arson is suspected." (ASAONET Listserv.)

"At the Chuuk State Legislature building fire, it was sad watching the filing cabinets burning with all the state government papers inside! Considering that the Legislature keeps the originals of all laws, one wonders what state documents may have been burned irretrievably!" Comment by Taxi-Womw on MicSem Discussion Forum, 3 May 2011.

\* \* \*

**EWAN MAIDMENT WINS  
ANU OUTREACH AWARD**



Ewan Maidment, PARBICA conference, Brisbane, 2009.

I am delighted to inform you that Ewan Maidment has been awarded The Australian National University Vice Chancellor's Staff Award for Outreach!

The Vice Chancellor's Staff Award for Community Outreach is given to a staff member who volunteers their work-related skills and expertise to the wider community beyond the normal requirements of their substantive position.

An excerpt from the Award Nomination is below:

*"The most important reason for PMB's success is one person: Ewan Maidment, who has been its Executive Officer since 1995, and who will retire in 2011. During his tenure, the membership of the PMB has been raised from six to ten, its finances stabilised, its standing and reputation higher than it has ever been. Ewan has been 'an excellent communicator, ensuring that participating libraries are kept up with developments and informed about his busy microfilming schedule throughout the Pacific region,' write Jill Durney, Prof Karen Nero and Prof Serge Tcherkzoff of the University of Canterbury." 'Ewan is very well known in the Pacific academic circles for the enormous amount of microfilm work he has done around the Pacific,' writes Rt Rev. Dr Terry M Brown from the Solomon Islands. Not only has Ewan microfilmed at-risk records in the islands, he has also helped Pacific libraries and archives 'build their capacities to protect, manage and make available their own records.' Ewan 'has been a towering force and inspiration for scholars and students in Pacific Studies, and for countless Pacific Islands communities and individuals,' writes Dr Chris Ballard. The accolades from around the world for Ewan go on.*

*Ewan Maidment is a rare individual, humble and unassuming, an unsung hero of the ANU, whose*

*selfless work of preserving records in the islands has enriched Pacific research and enhanced the reputation of the ANU for leadership and excellence in Pacific Studies in the region and beyond. In more ways than one, Ewan is 'ANU Outreach' personified."*

This award is a tribute to Ewan's dedication and commitment to the work of the Bureau over a long period of time, and also a significant demonstration of the high regard in which the ANU holds the work of the PMB.

Professor Brij V. Lal  
Chair, Pacific Manuscripts Bureau

\* \* \*

**New Book!**

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The book looks at the hazardous conditions faced by James Robinson, as a master mariner and trader in the 19th century era of sail, when he explored the South Pacific under the

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